

*Charles Nelson Hartford*

ON this date Of 64- I - 22 - a freedom day took place in Hattiesburg, which is located in Forrest County, at that time there was four hundereds people imtipicated in it. I think that was the largest freedom day that had ever took place in Mississippi, and we did nt have any violent at all. and at that time the freedom day lasted longer then any other; because here in Mississippi, there is a anti picketing law which prohibit any kind of demonstration in the State, but that freedom day lasted for three Months, or more on the day that the freedom day took place it was cold and rainy. and there were a gross number of whites standing on the oppsit side of the street hecking us, but no one retaliated. but it was awful cold and wet, and I know that the people, was over whelmed with emotional. because wanting would nt with stand a long as the people were standing in the rain and partially snow as they did later that day it still was raining and half way snowing when Mrs. Fannie, Lou, Hamber, came and she came in with the inspiration that the people needed. she begined to sang freedom songs such as which side are you on/ go tell it on the mountians/ and orcrouse this littel ligt of my/ thes are the songs that helped the spirits of the people on the picket line. I feel that I can truely say this because I can explain just how it helped me keep going. Mrs. Hamber, she came on the scence about ten forty five; and at that time man was it cold and I was just about ready to call it aday. but when I heard a lone voice up farther on the pickek line and later more voices singing which side are you on/ my body begined to become warm with emotion and I begined to sing and the songs that I didnt know I just hum and claped my hands. and later I forgot that my garments were wet and that it was raining. and I guess that is the way that all of the people felted; so we marched all day untile the court house closed. after that we would go to the church where the mass rally were helded to farther our spirits; the mass rallys lasted about three hours. and we would retire and go home and go to bed; on the next day we would go back to the picket line and march untile it close. it went on like that for three Months; but on the last two Months the people decrease into nothing pratilly. and there were only ten persons that helded the picket line but it soon was only three or four persons left, and my friend Ulysess and my self was two of the four. and later there were only Ulysess and myself left and we heled- helded the line for the remained time. doing the four Months that the picket line existed we were arrest twice the first time was in April the Ioth, and we stay in jail for one week and our bond was set for five hundereds dollars eachs and ten hunderreds dollars land bond. and the first arrest there were forty eight people arrested, and the second arrest the number were five time decreased; and myself and Ulysess, were the only Negroes that was arrested and the others were whites church clercks. and the whites people that was arrested with us they were out of jail within two dayes. on a five hundereds dollars bond; where as we stayed in jail for two Months and two dayes. and our bond was fifteen hundereds dollars land bond and ten hunderds dollars cash bond eachs. the reason that we was helded in jail so long is because every time the people came to get us out the sheriff would pretented to be busy if it was nt that he would be gone out of time if not that he would say that he lost the papers. all of this was did to break our spirits, but it never happen. so we final got out on July the 2- and we was promptly shipped to Laurel, because there were only three people in Jones, County, and it was raw a virgin no one had ever maed any progress there and the three peopl were college coeds. oh Hattiesburg is my home town, and the onlt thing that the jailer broke were my stomach the rotten food that we were served gave me the uclers; but my spirit it never touched in fact it just made me angry; angry enough to keep swinging at Mr. Charlie s, the same night that I got out of jail a big policeman stoped me on the street and told me to pull my car over; he then came and pull me out of my car and throw me on top of the hood cussing and threaten me of what he would do if he see me agian on the picket line, but the next day I was there again confonting him he begin to cuss me and walked away. and he never harassed me agian, this was the first time that I went to jail. he tried to put fear into me but he didnt know that I am a person that talk-~~sease~~-and brutality dont bother me.