

Jack Johnson

Interview with Jack Johnson, 84 years old

—*W.W. Dixon, Winnsboro, S.C.*

"You see me right here, de sin of both races in my face, or was it just de sin of one? My Marster was my father, his name was Tom Reed, and he lived six miles from Lancaster Court House. Dats where I was born. My mammy name Jane, don't know where she come from. My marster was kind to us. I done no work much, just picked peas and sich like during de war. I was my mammy's only child, and when de war was over, and I grow up, I left dere and come to Cedar Creek, low part of Fairfield County. I marry a gal, Bella Cook, and us had sixteen chillun, thirteen of them is a livin' now. I then marry Hannah Dubard, a widow. She and me have had no child.

"I b'long to de Sanctified Church, and you have to go down into de water and come up straight way out of de water to b'long to dat church. Where is it? Its on Little Cedar Creek in dis county. Who de preacher? His name is the Reverend Edmunds. Us sings spirituals, one is, 'Dat Heavenly Railroad Train', another is 'Dere is a Rock in my Heart', another, 'So glad I'm here, but I'd rather be up yonder Lord'. Some colored churches 'sinate a child born out of wedlock can't enter de kingdom of heaven. Our church say he can if he ain't a drunkard, and is de husband of one wife and to believe on, and trust in de Lord as your Savior, and live a right kind of life dat he proves of. Dat seem reason to me, and I jine and find peace as long as I does right.

"Never was sick a day in my life, can plow yet, eat three meals a day, but can't sleep as much as I use to, six hours plenty for me now. I's just here today findin' out 'bout dat old age pension dats a comin'. Will you kinda keep a eye on it for me and let me tend to de ox and de grass at my home on Little Cedar Creek? A short hoss is soon curried, so dats 'bout all I kin 'member to tell you now."