

ADELINE JOHNSON

*Age 93, when interviewed by
W.W. Dixon in Winnsboro, S.C.*

I born on what is now called the Jesse Gladden place, but it all belong to my old marster, William Hall, then.

My old marster was one of the richest men in the world. Him have lands in Chester and Fairfield counties, Georgia and Florida, and one place on the Red River in Arkansas. He also had a plantation to raise brown sugar on, in old Louisiana. Then him and his brother Daniel built and give Bethesda Church, that's standing yet, to the white Methodists of Mitford, for them to attend and worship at. He remembered the Lord, you see, in all his ways and the Lord guide his steps.

I never have to do no field work, just stayed round the house and wait on the missus, and the chillun. I was whipped just one time. That was for marking the mantelpiece with a dead coal of fire. They make Mammy do the lashing. Hadn't hit me three licks before Miss Dorcas, Miss Jemima, Miss Julia, and Marster Johnnie run there, catch the switch, and say, "That enough, Mama Ann! Addie won't do it again." That's all the beating I ever received in slavery time.

I was about raised up in the house. In the evening, I fill them boxes with chips and fat splinters. When morning come, I go in there and make a fire for my young missuses to get up by. I help dress them and comb their hair. Then, I goes downstairs and put flowers on the breakfast table and lay the Bible by Marster William's chair. Then I bring in the breakfast. Table have to be set the night before. When everything was on the table, I ring the bell. White folks come down, and I wait on the table.

After the meal finish, Marster William read the Bible and pray. I clear the table and help wash the dishes. When that finish, I cleans up the rooms. Then, I acts as maid and waitress at dinner and supper. I warms up the girls' room, where they sleep, after supper. Then go home to Poppy John and Mama Ann. That was a happy time, with happy days.

The white folks near was the Mellichamps, the Gladdens, the Mobleys, Lumpkins, Boulwares, Fords, Picketts, and Johnsons.

After Freedom I marry a preacher, Tom Johnson. Him die when in his sixties, thirty years ago. I hope and prays to get to heaven. I'll be satisfied to see my Savior that my old marster worshipped and my husband preach about. I want to be in heaven with all my white folks, just to wait on them, and love them, and serve them, sorta like I did in slavery time. That will be enough heaven for Adeline.