

Interview with Mary Johnson (85)

Newberry, S.C.

—*G.L. Summer, Newberry, S.C.*

"I live in town in a little two-room house wid some of my grandchilluns. We rent de house. I am too old to work, but do what I can.

"I was de slave of John Johnson. His wife was Miss Polly. Dey was good to de slaves, and I had no trouble. My mother was Eliza Johnson and my pa was Daniel Johnson. Dey was both slaves to Marse John Johnson. My mother was from Georgia. We always lived in de yard behind de house in a small one-room cabin, a pretty good place to live, I reckon.

"We didn't git no money fer our work. We got something to eat, but not much clothes to wear. We worked hard dem days; got up at sun-up and worked all day till sun-down or as long as we could see. We didn't git much time off, 'cept maybe a day at Christmas.

"No, de white folks didn't learn us to read and write. We had no school and no church in slavery time, but some of de niggers was made to go to de white folks' church and sit in de back seat.

"Yes, de Yankees was bad. Dey burn't everything in deir way, and stole cattle; but dey didn't come near our place.