

Charles Green
Ex-Slave
78 Years

19/3/270

Minnick
District # 6
Clark County
Racial Group
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B.W.

"I wuz bawn in Mason County, Kaintucky, in 1859, en I wuz 78 my last birthday, May 3. Mother en father wuz Mary en Henry Green. Ole man Wallingsford owned mother, en my two sisters en me; father he belonged to Charles Dobbins."

"Wallingsford owned a fair size plantation, en he raised rye, wheat, cawn, en cattle en sheep. He allus had about 1500 sheep."

"Ole Miss wuz good ter us; but him, de devil wuz'nt no meaner."

"Us allus slep' in de kitchen en de winter, but when de weather got warm nough us slep' out on er porch. Mother wuz de cook, en done all kine er wuk bout de place - washing, iron', weavin', all else what dey tole her to do. Den she died, en us chilluns wuz left ter de care er Ole Miss. She wuz jus' as sweet - lak er angel."

"I doan guess none er de slaves knowed whut it wuz ter have much clothes, us went bar'foot fum March ter November whilst Ole Marse lived, but Ole Miss wuz heap mo' considahrat; all de same us went bar'foot mos' all er time en good weather."

"Us nebber had no books, en nebber played no games 'cept marbles en mumblin' peg."

"When we went to church us goes ter de white folks church

en set en er back seats. Dey wuz Ironside Baptist. Dey uster sing a song called "Come Ter De Ole Church Yard."

"When ole John Morgan came through a raidin', he tuk meat en hosses fum ouah place, en jes' lef de smokehouse empty."

"Father en my half-brother George Spencer Green jined up with the 112th Kaintucky boys, en wuz with Gen'ral Sherman marchin' ter de sea. Father he died, but Spence comes home arter de war en settled en er lower paht er Mason County. Us, me en the girls, Martha en Nannie went ter live with George Spencer kaze he wuz my half-brother. I worked roun' on farms, en finely in 1881, I came ter Springfield.

"I built me er shanty on East Main St. jes' below de stan'pipe. All roun' wuz woods. East Street shops wuz just startin' ter be built en I carried de hod fer it en de Arcade, en Metallic Casket, en er Y.M.C.A.; en I mixed all er mortar fer de Fairbanks Building.

"I got married. My wife en five er my chilluns are daid. I got five chillun livin'."

"Way back in de days when I was a chile, folks tole us chilluns dat ef us wuz bad de witches gwin'ter make de gown' hot whe'evah us walked, en our feet wood burn sho'. Dey say de ole devil gwine'ter stick er pitchfork en us ef us wuz bad, en snakes ud crawl en our hair, en lots o' things dat nobody nebber teaches chillun now. But fact is; folks is got lots more reasonin' now den

when I come 'long."

"Us thought de Yankee soldiers wuz comin' ter carry us off, en dey tole us ter hide if us seen em. I member one night, twuz mos' dark, I seed some Yankee soldiers, en I wuz skeered ter death. Dey yelled at me, en I tuk ter my heels, den dey shot en de air en I run all de faster gittin' back ter de house. But when Ole John Morgan come along a-raidin' en carryin' off de meat en good hosses us wuz'nt fraid."

"Dey wuz'nt sca'cely no churches fer cullud folks till atter de war; den lots er churches sprung up. Hood many er de preachers could'nt read, but de could take er text en preach er good sermon fum it.

"Rev. George W. Downings, Brother DuFree, Leslie Green, en lots like em gotter be moughty great preachers."

"I learned to read a little atter de war, en I is moughty glad, kaze since I caint do much, its lots er company ter be able ter read.

Interviewed at his residence, 231 Buxton Ave.

Editor's note:

Charles Green is 78, brown skinned, tall and thin. He is very bald with a fringe of grey hair, and wears glasses. His main avocation is gardening.