

THE EDITOR SAYS:

I BELIEVE -

This man, born a slave, deserves recognition on this unique and very special day.



JOHN WARE has made a good start on his second century of life aboard Planet Earth. His 105th anniversary is this Thursday, July 18.

On Monday morning he made his 6th annual birthday visit to the Leader office, accompanied by his 33-year-old son Roosevelt, with whom he makes his home, just off Government St. in Roanoke.

The venerable Negro began these visits when he was 100, and at that time he walked to town from his home with some regularity. He no longer comes to town at all unless there is a good reason for the trip and he has a ride. Walking, with the aid of his cane, is becoming more difficult for him. With this one exception, he seems every bit as "peart" as he was 5 years ago.

A former school teacher, he likes to read. Never in his life has he had any need for glasses. His hearing is as good as the next person's. When talking to him, one has no need to raise his voice—or to wonder if this young man fully comprehended.

At age 105, John Ware "sees good, hears good, thinks good." His expressive eyes and face, and his quick smile, confirm this judgment of him.

Not quite so good is his toothless talking. A person not accustomed to hearing him will have some difficulty, for a time at least, in understanding him.

He continues to feel he has no need for doctors. He takes a little medicine in the winter, none in the summer.

Asked about his appetite, he grinned and flashed a quick answer, "I eat all I can get!" Not only this, but he enjoys his chewing tobacco. Pretty good for a man without teeth!

Regardless of the weather, John Ware will always be seen wearing a coat of some kind. For his visit to town Monday, he had on an army jacket someone had given him.

He has never gone without a hat, and after more than a century he has an ample head of hair—much more, in fact, than son Roosevelt. The accompanying anniversary picture makes the hair appear whiter than it actually is. There are still traces of black in it.

One of the Ware "secrets" of long life: early to bed, early to rise. He is usually in bed for the night by 7, and always up by 4 the next morning.

Regularly for years he has eaten a simple, health-giving supper — always cornbread and buttermilk.

And, according to Roanoke's chief authority on living long, there is a third valuable "trick" to know and practice. Every night before retiring, wash your feet in cold water. "This makes you sleep good." a side benefit is that it keeps the feet clean.

Who are we youngsters to question the wisdom of these steps to healthful long life? All we can say is: "No matter how you did it, John Ware, living 105 years is quite an achievement. Congratulations, and may you keep going strong!"