

Donna Wyant Howell

Descriptions of Plantation Life

BETTY POWERS: 'Twas lak a town wid de diffe'nt businesses. Thar am de blacksmith shop, shoe shop, carpenter shop, de milk house, de Marster had 'bout 100 milk cows, de weavin' room, de gin, an' de feed mill.

FLORENCE NAPIER: Ise sho 'joy myse'f on de old plantation, an' weuns all had a good time. Allus have plenty to eat. Marster use to says, "De cullud fo'ks raised de food, an' dey's 'titled to all dey wants." Same wid de clothes. W'en de Marster says de cullud fo'ks raised de food, 'twas true fo' sho. Ever'thin' on de place weuns raised right dere. All de meat, veg'tables, co'n, fruit, an' sich, an' all de cloth an' clothes am made right thar. No, sar, 'twarn't much de Marster have to buy.

WILLIAM MOORE: We had a purty hard time to make out and was hongry lots of times. Marse Tom didn't feel called on to feed his hands any too much. I 'members I had a cravin' for victuals [food] all the time. I'd take lunches to the field hands and they'd say, "Lawd, Gawd, it ain't 'nough to stop the grip in you belly."

MARY REYNOLDS: The times I hated most was pickin' cotton when the frost was on the bolls. My hands would get so sore that they would crack open and bleed. We would have a little fire in the fields and iffen the ones with tender hands couldn't stan' it no longer, we would run and warm our hands a little bit.

JACOB BRANCH: Slavery, one to 'nother, was purty rough. Every plantation have to answer for itself.

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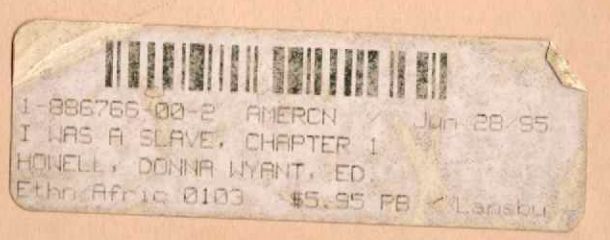

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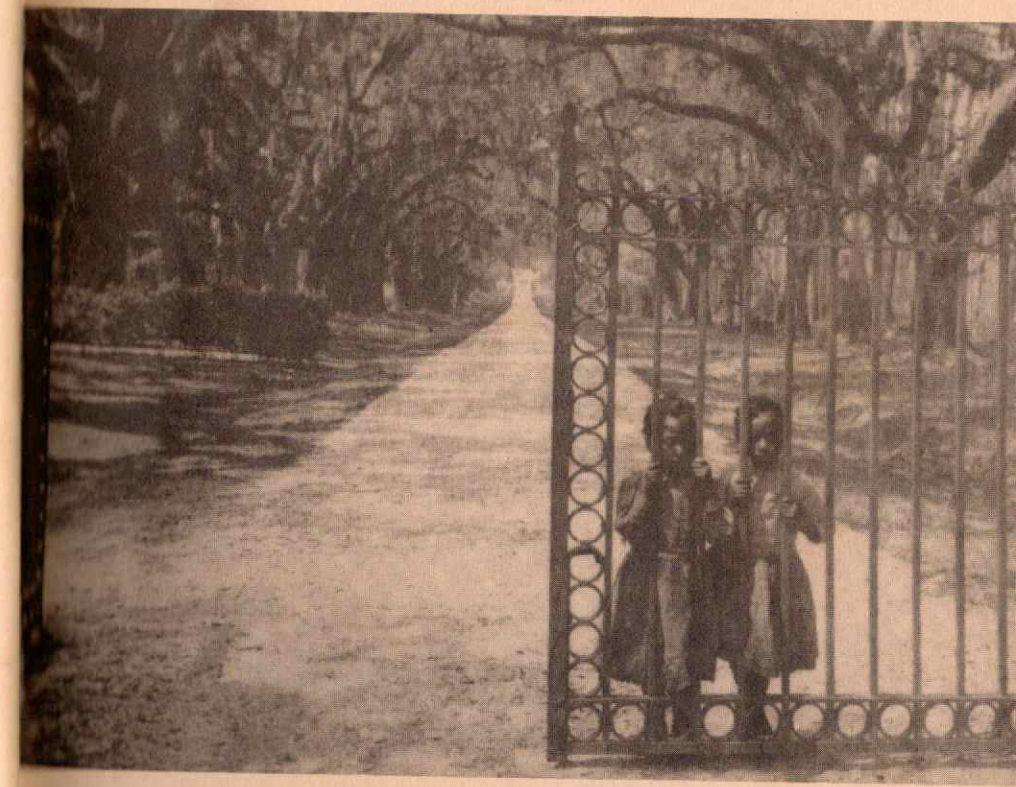

Compiled by Donna Wyant Howell