

Donna Wyant Howell

Slave Auctions

SUSAN CALDER HAMLIN: All de time, night an' day, you could hear men an' women screamin' to de top of deir voices as either ma, pa, sister, or brother wus take without any warnin' an' sell. Sometime a mother who had only one chil' wus separated fur life. People wus always dyin' from a broken heart.

JOSIE BROWN: I seed chillun too li'l to walk from dey mammies sol' right off de block in Woodville. Dey was sol' jus' like calfs.

HATTIE ROGERS: If a woman was a good breeder, she brought a good price on the auction block. The slave buyers would come around and jab them in the stomach and look them over. If they thought they would have children fast, they brought a good price.

MAHALIA SHORES: He sold my grandpa and Uncle Steve. Grandma wanted him to sell her and he wouldn't do it. I don't know what become of Grandpa. Grandpa was crying. He come to our house and said he had to go. We never seen him no more.

DELIA GARLIC: Course dey cry. You think dey not cry when dey wuz sold lak cattle? I could tell you 'bout it all day, but even den you couldn't guess de awfulness of it.

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