We Lived in a Little Cabin in the Yard



EDITED BY BELINDA HURMENCE

$7.95

"Shep Miller was my master. Bought my mother, a little girl, when he was married. She was a real Christian and he respected her a little. Didn't beat her so much. 'Course he beat her once in a while. Beat women! Why, sure he beat women. Beat women just like men. Beat women naked and wash them down in brine."

Elizabeth Sparks

"When you gather a bunch of cattle to sell they calves, how the calves and cows will bawl, that the way the slaves was then. They didn't know nothing about they kinfolks. Most chillun didn't know who they pappy was and some they mammy, 'cause they taken away from the mammy when she wean them, and sell or trade the chillun to someone else, so they wouldn't get attached to they mammy or pappy."

Elige Davison

■ ■ ■

In the 1930s, the Federal Writers' Project undertook a massive effort at gathering the oral testimony of former slaves. Those ex-slaves were in their declining years by the time of the Great Depression, but Elizabeth Sparks, Elige Davison, and others like them nonetheless provided a priceless record of life under the yoke: where slaves lived, how they were treated, what they ate, how they worked, how they adjusted to freedom.

Here, Belinda Hurmence presents the interviews of 21 former Virginia slaves. This is a companion volume to Hurmence's popular collections of North Carolina and South Carolina slave narratives, *My Folks Don't Want Me to Talk about Slavery* and *Before Freedom, When I Just Can Remember.*