

AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

- Slaves could get food, clothing, and shelter only from their masters.
- Slave life operated under the doctrine of paternalism by which slave owners defined their role as taking responsibility for a less civilized and developed people.
- Generally, urban slaves fared better than their counterparts on the plantations in terms of the physical necessities of life: Frederick Douglass wrote, "A city slave is He is much better fed and clothed, and enjoys privileges altogether unknown to the slave on the plantation."
- Urban slaves worked what we would call blue collar jobs in warehouses and skilled crafts.
- Urban slaves lived in their masters' homes or in housing built for them adjacent to their masters' residences.
- Large numbers of slaves working a task were more likely to be treated more as field hands.
- Slaves rented to others sometimes were allowed to keep part of the money their labor earned and used it to purchase their own freedom.
- Most rural slaves worked on farms with 20 - 30 other slaves rather than on large plantations.
- Poor nutrition among field hands often led to conditions such as scurvy and rickets.
- Clothing allotments depended upon the amount of labor performed, leaving many children virtually unclothed until they could enter into significant field work.
- Work in the fields was often supervised by a slave who himself had to administer punishments to his fellow slaves.
- House slaves generally fared better than field slaves in terms of nutrition and labor.
- House slaves frequently developed close – and even sympathetic – relationships with their mistresses.
- Books on the African-American Experience include the following:
 - *The Journal of Darien Dexter Duff, An Emancipated Slave* – K. J. McWilliams
 - *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp: An African American Woman's Civil War Memoir* – Susie King Taylor
 - *Forty Acres and Maybe a Mule* – Harriette Gillem Robinet
 - *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* – Harriet Jacobs
 - *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman – Portrait of an American Hero* – Kate Clifford Larson
 - *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* – Frederick Douglass

For more detailed information, go to the following website:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/experience/living/history.html>

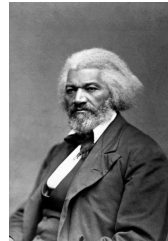


Photograph. May 1862. Cumberland Landing, Virginia. *The Civil War*.
<http://www.sonofthesouth.net/slavery/photographs/slaves.htm>

African American Writers During Lincoln's Lifetime

1837 Victor Séjour writes "Le Mulatre" ("The Mulatto"), acknowledged as the first known work of fiction by an African American. Séjour was a free black man who lived in New Orleans who emigrated at 19 to Paris where his story was published in a French abolitionist periodical. Set in Saint Domingue (Haiti), the story is an antislavery revenge tale that sets the precedent for all the elements of its genre.

1845 Frederick Douglass publishes *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Douglass will become the focal leader of African Americans before, during, and after the American Civil War, conferring with Lincoln on the treatment of black soldiers and plans for Reconstruction which included removing African Americans from the South. He also authors *My Bondage, My Freedom* in 1855 and *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* in 1881.
<http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/douglass.htm>



Frederick Douglass. Wikipedia. 18 July 2008.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Frederick_Douglass_portrait.jpg

1847 William Brown writes *Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself*. He goes on to write the first novel - *Clotel; or The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States*, the first travel book, and the first play by an African American. The son of a plantation owner in Lexington, Kentucky, Brown escaped slavery in 1834, became an important worker on the Underground Railroad, and a recruiter of African-Americans to serve in the Union Army.
<http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap3/brown.html>

1848 Henry Bibb publishes *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, an American Slave*. The son of a Kentucky state senator, he watched as his mother's six other children were sold away from the plantation. He escaped slavery twice only to be retaken and finally sold to Native Americans from whom he also escaped. He went on

to become a major activist for abolition and equal rights, publishing a newspaper in Canada.

- 1850 Sojourner Truth publishes *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*. Having suffered greatly as a slave and after she gained her freedom, she nevertheless supported the cause of the Union, recruited black troops, worked at a refugee camp for former slaves in Virginia during the war, served the National Freeman's Bureau, and met with President Lincoln. <http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/struth.htm>



Sojourner Truth. Alamo Community Colleges. 18 July 2008.
<<http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/struth.htm>>

- 1853 Solomon Northrup writes *Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northrup*. Born into a free African American family in New York, Northrup was tricked and sold into slavery at 33. He was freed 12 years later when the son of his father's one-time owner traveled to Louisiana at the behest of the governor of New York to restore Solomon to freedom. http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/narratives/bio_northrup.htm
- 1857 Austin Steward publishes *Twenty-two Years a Slave and Forty Years a Freeman*. After escaping slavery, Steward led a life filled with struggles to establish himself in the white world of New York state. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/steward/bio.html>
- 1859 Martin L. Delaney publishes *Blake, or the Huts of America*. His novel tells the story of an African American insurrectionist making his way through the South, attempting to foment rebellion. He becomes the first champion of American black nationalism. During the Civil War, is receives a field commission.
- 1859 Harriet E. Wilson writes *Our Nig, or Sketches from the Life of a Free Black*, the first novel by an African American to be published in the United States. The daughter of an African American man and an Irish woman who abandoned her after Wilson's father's death, Wilson may have based her novel largely on her own experience. <http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/hwilson.htm>
- 1861 Harriet A. Jacobs writes *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*. It was not published until 1987. After escaping a cruelly abusive master, she lived for seven years in the crawlspace of her grandmother's attic until she was able to escape to Philadelphia.

African American Artists During the Life of Lincoln

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| 1763-1824 | Joshua Johnson | Painter: somewhat two-dimensional portraiture |
| 1821-1872 | Robert Scott Duncanson | Painter: a portraitist who turned to the Hudson River School and landscape painting |
| 1828-1901 | Edward M. Bannister | Painter: strongly influenced by the Barbizon School |
| 1837-1911 | Harriet Powers | An exemplar of the quilting art |