

- 0. BUYING AND SELLING PEOPLE Story Preface
- 1. SLAVES IN THE NEW WORLD
- 2. KIDNAPPED AFRICANS
- 3. PASSAGE TO THE NEW WORLD
- 4. FREEDOM BUT NOT FOR SLAVES
- 5. POWERS OF THE MIND
- 6. REBELLION
- 7. ESCAPE
- 8. TRIPS ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
- 9. TRICKS AND DETERMINATION
- 10. FUGITIVE SLAVE LAWS
- 11. PUNISHMENT for HELPING RUNAWAYS
- 12. FORMER SLAVES BECOME ABOLITIONISTS

#### **13. BUYING AND SELLING PEOPLE**

- 14. A TERRIBLE TIME
- 15. PLANTATION LIFE
- 16. SPLIT-UP FAMILIES
- 17. LAST FREE LABOR
- 18. WHAT WAS IT LIKE?
- **19. HUMAN SPIRIT PREVAILS**

On the 27th of September, 1856, *The Illustrated London News* published a wood engraving which depicts a slave auction in Richmond, Virginia. Appearing at page 315, the image shows a black woman being auctioned-off in the presence of a crowd of men. Online, courtesy the Library of Congress. Click on the image to expand the view.

For \$1,500 Jacob Cook bought several slaves in 1850. Those slaves had been owned by Mary Caton before her death.

When she died, and her estate was probated, Caton's Will <u>listed</u> slaves as "inventory." Her heirs <u>inherited</u> people just as they inherited tangible things like furniture. And as they could sell inherited goods, Mary's heirs could sell inherited people. Sometimes those people were <u>sold</u> to satisfy debts of the estate.

Such ownership documentation was required for the "master" to claim a runaway slave was a fugitive. Jacob Cook, like many other slaveholders, made such a <u>claim</u> against his slave.

The United States Federal Court even had a <u>special book</u> for tracking fugitive slaves.

After the Civil War was over, North and South wanted to move past slavery issues. "Enough" had been said and done - to cause damage. Why perpetuate animosity and negative feelings? As a result, the opportunity to contemporaneously record the oral histories of an emancipated people was lost.

In the 1930s, however, the federal government employed writers who interviewed thousands of elderly, former slaves. What follows, in the succeeding chapters, are examples of those narratives.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BUYING-AND-SELLING-PEOPLE-Slave-Voices

### See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

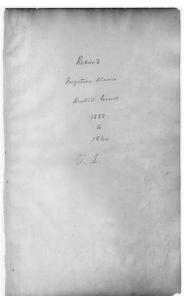
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BUYING-AND-SELLING-PEOPLE-Slave-Voices

# BUYING AND SELLING PEOPLE



# Media Stream





<u>Mary Caton - Will</u> Image of text online, courtesy U.S. National Archives. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mary-Caton-Will</u>

## U.S. District Court Record Book - Fugitive Slaves

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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