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## North and South to a Black Yesterday and Today

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## NORTH AND SOUTH TO A BLACK

### YESTERDAY AND TODAY

by Margaret Ann Horison

#### Northboun'

O' de wurl' ain't flat,  
An' de wurl' ain't roun',  
Hits one long strip  
Hangin' up an' down--  
Jes' Souf an' Norf;  
Jes' Norf an' Souf.

Talkin' 'bout sailin' 'round de wurl'..  
Huh! I'd be so dizzy my head 'ud twurl.  
If dis heah earf wuz jes' a ball  
You know the people all 'ud fall.

O' de wurl' ain't flat,  
An' de wurl' ain't roun',  
Hits one long strip  
Hangin' up an' down--  
Jes' Souf an' Norf;  
Jes' Norf an' Souf.

Talkin' 'bout the City whut Saint John saw--  
Chile you oughta go to Saginaw;  
A nigger's chance is "finest kinds"  
An' pretty gals ain't hard to find.

Huh! de wurl' ain't flat.  
An' de wurl' ain't roun';  
Jes' one long strip  
Hangin' up an' down.  
Since Norf is up  
An' Souf is down,  
And Hebben is up,  
I'm upward boun.'

The flatly written poem above, "Northboun", written by Lucy Ariel Williams, a Southerner, born in Mobile, Alabama, clearly explicates the Black race's previous views about the North and South.

Until the latter years of the twentieth century, Blacks have possessed an abiding hate for the South. In opposition to their hate for the South, Blacks have possessed an abundance of love for the North.

With reference to North and South, North is the upper region of the United States, consisting of states from grassy,

green North Carolina, to the heavily populated state of New York; South's the lower region of the United States, occupying the states from mountainous South Carolina to the sunny state of Florida.

The Black man's hate for the South originated when Blacks, in 1619, were sold to inhabitants of the English colonies for labor needs. Therefore, until the latter years of the 1900's the Black race's recollection of the Southern states has been a nightmare.

The Black man's limitless supply of love for the North originated when Blacks discovered that opportunities were available to them in the Northern states. Consequently, the Northern region of the United States was regarded as "heaven" to the Black race.

To the Blacks the South was "hell". The only thing Blacks were allowed to put into life in the states of Alabama and Louisiana, among others, was hard labor. The only profit the Blacks received from this strenuous labor was pain, turmoil, and humiliation. When a Black of the latter years of the 1800's and early years of the twentieth century reminisced about the South, his recollections painted a vivid, horrid picture of slaves on the auction block; dawn to dusk work in hot cotton fields; the familiar dinnertime, with food brought in pails and poured into troughs; the painful punishment of a girl strung from a tree and a man being savagely and severely whipped; the white painted house of the watchful overseer; white-washed slave cabin; and emancipated slaves asking "Uncle Sam" for what has been promised--a mule, forty acres of land and fifty dollars. All of these incidents were conceived in the hate of the South by the Blacks.

One day Blacks discovered that a better life awaited them in the North. The news of this "heaven" was broadcasted by a slave girl who had escaped to the North, after being severely beaten by her master. She was Harriet Tubman. Her stories of the North painted a happy picture of work in large factories, stores, and manufacturing plants, along with money that was yours; a home decent for a family of ten to live in; food prepared, properly, in your home and placed on your table; no more domineering figure of an overseer; and free Blacks walking and talking up and down the streets of "heaven". These enlightenments gave birth to a love for the North by the Black race.

Today, the views of Blacks have changed toward the North and South. The poem, "Northboun'," written by Lucy Ariel Williams, could be revised, each word meaning the opposite of what it says now.

Blacks found out that their "heaven" soon was very much like their "hell". The bubbles of opportunities that were blown for Blacks soon burst. They discovered that in the Northern region of the United States, there existed, also, turmoil, pain, and humiliation. Although they were derived from other sources, they were still present.

One day a Black minister called the Blacks "back home" again. He was Martin Luther King, Jr. A Southerner who wasn't a slave, but had felt the pain of slavery from the incidents told to him by older Blacks and from his studying of history, Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of the great leaders of the Civil Rights Movement of the sixties. This movement opened up doors to the Black race that had been closed before. This movement brought and is constantly luring Blacks "back home," to the South. The Civil Rights Movement brought about the realization to Blacks that there is no "heaven" on earth, nor "hell". The movement made the Blacks aware, also, that opportunities are just as great as or greater in the South than in the North.