

Auction Block

This is a Negro spiritual that dates back to the United States Civil War. This song was first heard during that war as a marching song for black soldiers, and there is no known original author. It would have been performed unaccompanied so fits well with shanty style.

The lyrics of the song refer to things that were part of a slave's life, and declare that they will no longer be part of the singer's life. Unlike many of the other anti-slavery songs of the time, this song deals with the issue of slavery directly, as opposed to having a double meaning. Paul Robeson popularised this among many other Negro spirituals in the 1920's. It is most famously recorded by Bob Dylan on The Bootleg Series.

One pint of salt was part of the legal minimum monthly allowance in Louisiana for an adult slave. This may seem a lot to us now but is not much for a person labouring hard in blistering heat 6 days a week from dawn 'til dusk.

No more auction block for me

No more, no more

No more auction block for me

Many thousands gone

No more driver's lash for me

No more whip lash for me

No more pint of salt for me

No more peck of corn for me

No more children stole'n from me

No more mistress call for me

No more slavery chains for me

No more auction block for me