

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 14



LEARNING IS FUN



BLACKS IN U.S. HISTORY

How Blacks Came to the New World

Part II

The traders set up trading posts all along the coast of West Africa. Ships brought goods from Europe which the traders used to "buy" Africans. These goods included cotton material, brass and pewter pots, guns and gunpowder, whiskey, brandy and rum.

The traders carried gifts to the chief of a tribe to get permission to trade in his village. The trader and the chief had already agreed on the prices for the slaves. The slaves were members of other tribes who had been kidnapped or taken prisoner in war. Many wars between African tribes were caused by the slave trade.

Trading in slaves involved much more than sailing into a port, filling up the ship with slaves and sailing away. The native chiefs had to be kept in a good mood. The ship could not sail until enough slaves had been purchased to make the trip **worthwhile**. The traders would buy only the strongest, youngest and healthiest

Africans. It might take two or three weeks to complete a sale. Sometimes, the traders had to go to four or five posts before they could fill the ship.

The Africans who were brought to the trading post to be sold as slaves were chained and heavily guarded. If they got the chance, many of the slaves would jump into the sea to drown or be eaten by sharks.

The ships were always packed full because many of the slaves died during the trip. In order to increase their profits, captains of slave ships packed in as many people as they could. There was hardly room for the Africans to stand, lie down or sit up. They were chained together hands and feet by twos.

The Africans often went on "hunger strikes" during the voyage. This caused a lot of disease and illness on the overcrowded ships. Only about half of the Africans on the slave ships ever reached the New World alive and fit to become workers.

Many people have tried to **estimate** the number of Africans that were sold as slaves in the New World. Here is one set of figures:

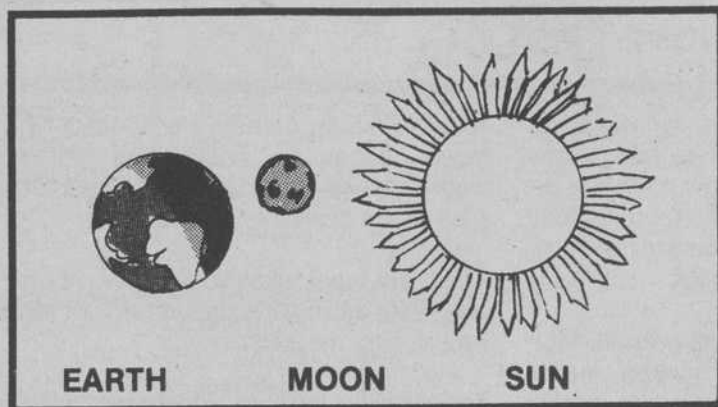
Century	Number of Slaves
16th	900,000
17th	2,750,000
18th	7,000,000
19th	4,000,000
TOTAL	14,650,000

This number is probably much too low. Well over 15,000,000 of the strongest, youngest and healthiest Africans were taken from their homeland and sold as slaves in the New World. These Africans were members of some of the most advanced tribes in West Africa. Thousands more were lost in the wars between tribes that were fought with guns from Europe to furnish slaves for the European traders.

SCIENCE

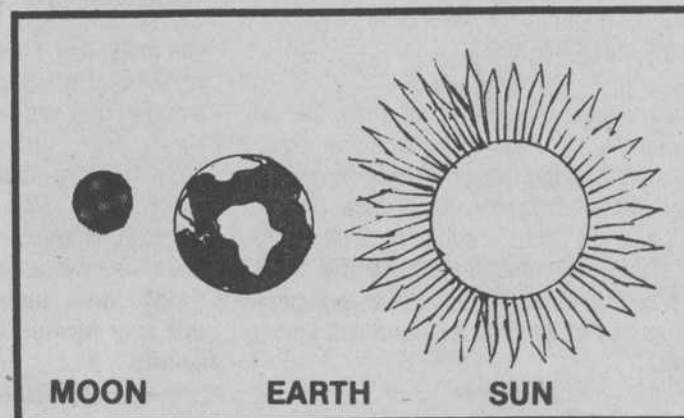
Eclipses

An *eclipse* is the cutting off of light from the sky. There are two types of eclipses.



An eclipse of the sun **occurs** when the moon comes between the earth and the sun. The moon blocks our view of the sun. This is called a *solar eclipse*.

An eclipse of the moon **occurs** when the earth comes between the sun and the moon. The earth blocks the sunlight from hitting the moon. This is called a *lunar eclipse*.



MOON EARTH SUN