**PLANTATION LIFE DURING THE WAR**

**Diary of Victoria Clayton, Mobile, Alabama—1863**

While my husband was at the front doing active service, suffering fatigue, privations, and the many ills attendant on a soldier’s life, I was at home struggling to keep the family safe and comfortable. There was no white person on the plantation beside myself and children, the oldest of whom was attending school in Eufaula, as our Clayton schools were closed, and my time was so occupied that it was impossible for me to teach my children. Four small children and myself constituted the white family at home. So, I entrusted the planting and cultivation of the various crops to old Joe, our trusted slave. He had been my husband's slave in infancy, and we always loved and trusted him. I kept a gentle saddle horse, and occasionally, accompanied by Joe, would ride over the entire plantation on a tour of inspection. Each night, when the day's work was done, Joe came in to make a report of everything that had been done on the plantation that day.