



Finding Linked Descendants

Presenter

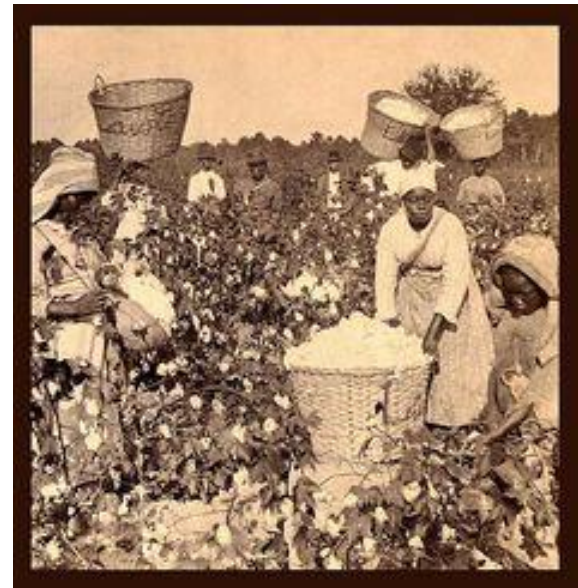
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www.OurBlackAncestry.com

Were your ancestors enslaved?

*If your ancestors were born in deep southern states prior to 1870...
they were likely enslaved*

- ▶ In 1860, 394,000 people held 4 million people in bondage
- ▶ 4 million enslaved people were emancipated after the Civil War
- ▶ Only 10% (400,000) of Black population was “free”



Were your ancestors slaveholders?

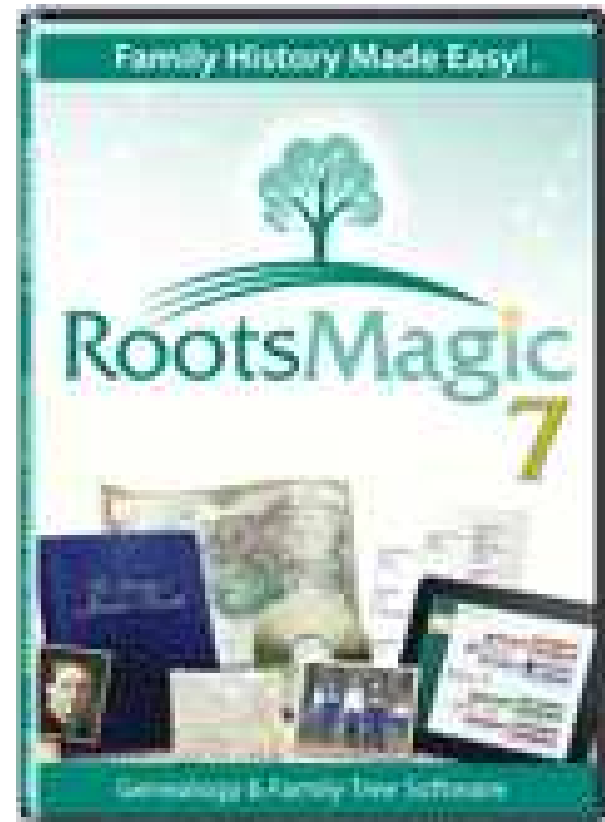
*If your ancestors owned land too big for one family to work....
they were likely slaveholders*

- 1 in 70 people were slaveholders
 - Most were Scots-Irish
 - Average slaveholding = 10 people
 - 80% of free adult males in South did not own slaves
 - Owners of 200+ slaves = less than 1% of total, held 20-30% of all slaves



Basic Tool

- ▶ Buy family tree software
 - ▶ Essential to keep track of information & documents
 - ▶ Build trees for slaveholders & enslaved



Research Sources

ONLINE

*Zillions of records
to research, download & print
without leaving home*

➤ **SUBSCRIPTION**

- Ancestry
- OurBlackAncestry

➤ **FREE**

- FamilySearch
- Google

OFFLINE

- State archives
- County courthouses
- Libraries
- Historical societies
- Cemeteries

TIP

You **MUST** do
old fashioned paper research!

Research Process

Enslaved People

- Begin @ ancestral homeplace
- Find ancestor in 1870 census
- Track descendants on censuses (thru 1940)
- Find documentation (BMD records)
- Do “community study” to identify people related by blood or affinity of slavery

Slaveholders

- Begin @ ancestral homeplace
- Find ancestor in that location
- Track slaveholding (1790-1860)
- Find slave schedules, wills, probate files & deeds
- Look at associated people = wives & relatives

TIP

- ✓ Check online family trees for matches
- ✓ Check Intelius for living people

Surnames

- ▶ Enslaved people did not have public surnames before 1870
 - ▶ Related family members often took different names after Emancipation
 - ▶ Many people changed names between 1870-1880

TIP

- Do line-by-line census reads
- Look for family groups
- Look at neighbors
- Check neighboring counties

- ▶ Only 15% of African Americans took the name of their last slave owner
- ▶ Others chose names of
 - A previous owner
 - The first owner
 - Someone they admired
 - A skill they possessed
 - An aspiration
- ▶ Some simply made up a name they liked

One thing for sure....
African Americans did not leave Africa with European names – first or last!

Find Slaveholder

“Nettie Rule”

- Do line-by-line read of 1870 census in home community
 - Look for people with surname you are interested in
 - From that name, go 10 up & 10 back
 - If you find a white person with that surname, they are the likely last slaveholder
- Search white family to prove connection
 - Wills
 - Deeds
 - Court cases
 - Insurance records
 - Personal papers
 - Freedmen records

Deeds

Wedding Gift



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Sylvester Dunn to Mary J. Gavin

Know all men by these presents that I Sylvester Dunn of Amite County for and in consideration of the natural love and affection which I bear to my daughter Mary J. Gavin as well as in the further sum of one dollar to me in hand paid, have and by these presents doth give grant and confirm to Joseph S. Dunn his Executors and assigns the following negro slaves to wit Sandy about twenty one years of age Lawler about five Abel about twelve & Nancy a small girl all of dark complexion. To have and to hold the said negro slaves above named to the said Joseph S. Dunn his Executors and assigns in trust to and for the use hereinafter mentioned that is to say in trust to and for the sole & separate use and behoof of my said daughter Mary J. Gavin and the heirs of her body forever together with all the future increase arising from said negroes. Signed sealed & delivered in

In presence of
Witness my hand & seal
This 27th day of February 1853
Sylvester Dunn (Seal)

The State of Mississippi
Amite County
Personally came before the undersigned Notary Public for said County Sylvester Dunn and acknowledged that he signed sealed and delivered the within instrument as his voluntary act and deed on the day and date therein mentioned for the use and purposes mentioned in the same

Gavin under my hand and seal
the 27th day of February 1853

W. Baker Not. Pub. (Seal)

Probate Records

- Enslaved people were often bequeathed in wills, mortgaged &/or sold to satisfy debts

RESOURCE: County courthouses maintain estate files, including inventories & annual distribution reports

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in Probate Court at New York S.D. 1828

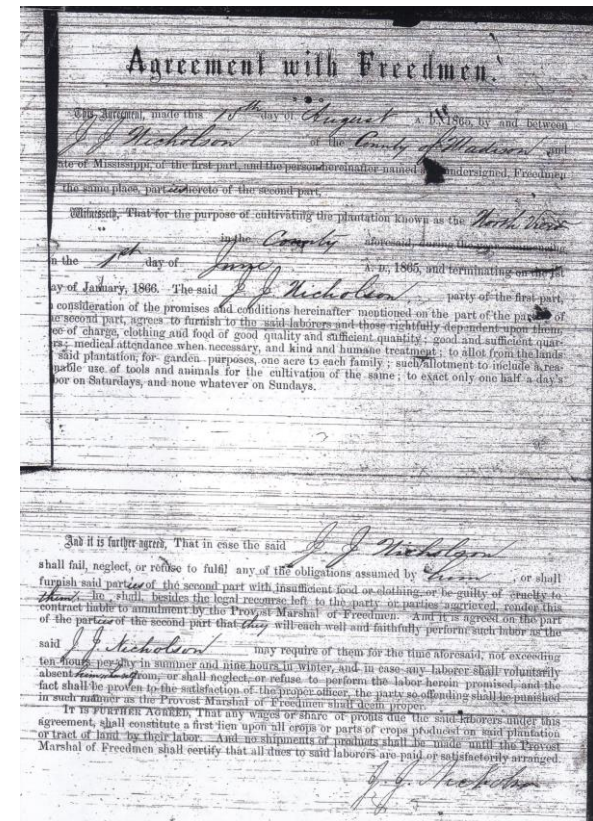
John C. Brown one of the Executors of the last Will and Testament of Charles Brown Dec'd affords in Court and made a Return of the appraisement of said Estate, which was received by the Court, and ordered to be reviewed.

An Schedule of the Estate of Charles Brown Deceased

Richard 3 Children, Wm. Carter, Daniel.	500 00
Harmon and two Children, Martin & Jm.	700 00
By and Child, Cloc.	700 00
1 Negro Man, Charles.	550 00
1 Negro Boy, named, Bill.	550 00
1 Do Girl, called, Betty.	500 00
1 Do Boy 3 ^o Sam.	500 00
1 Do Boy 3 ^o Sam.	265 00
1 Do Boy 3 ^o Perry.	275 00
1 Do Man 3 ^o Sam.	250 00
1 Do Man 3 ^o Sam.	100 00
Eighty Seven head of Cattle.	455 00
1 Yoke of Oxen.	40 00
1 Set of Hogs.	15 00
1 Set of Sheep.	45 50
1 Man & Ass.	120 00
1 Set of Hays \$12.50 - one Saddle \$2.00	15 00
1 Set of Hays \$2000 - 4 New Hens \$12.00	56 00
1 pair of Cart wheels \$800. plow, ho and Hoes \$3.00	11 00
2 Beds and furniture \$7000, 1 Table \$2.50	72 50
1 Set of Crochery, Sewing.	5 00
10 sitting Chairs.	5 00
1 Cupboard.	3 00
3 Spinning Wheels.	6 00

Freedmens Bureau

- ▶ Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands established by Congressional act in March 1865
 - ▶ Supervised relief & educational activities relating to refugees & freedmen, including legitimizing marriages, issuing rations, clothing and medicine
- ▶ Many formerly enslaved people worked as sharecroppers for their former masters



RESOURCE: www.freedmensbureau.com

Newspapers

COMMITS SUICIDE.
DES MOINES, Feb. 19.—After dividing a dollar among his 15 children, Owen Gavin, colored, 51, committed suicide today by blowing off his head with a shotgun. Receipt of a notice from the overseer of the poor to leave the county less he become a charge upon the county is given as the cause of his act.



RUN away from the subscriber in *Albemarle*, a Mulatto slave called *Sandy*, about 35 years of age, his stature is rather low, inclining to corpulence, and his complexion light; he is a shoemaker by trade, in which he uses his left hand principally, can do coarse carpenters work, and is something of a horse jockey; he is greatly addicted to drink, and when drunk is insolent and disorderly, in his conversation he swears much, and in his behaviour is artful and knavish. He took with him a white horse, much scarred with traces, of which it is expected he will endeavour to dispose; he also carried his shoemakers tools, and will probably endeavour to get employment that way. Whoever conveys the said slave to me, in *Albemarle*, shall have 40 s. reward, if taken up within the county, 4 l. if elsewhere within the colony, and 10 l. if in any other colony, from
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

- Community news
- Obituaries
- Fugitive slave ads
- Find my people ads

RESOURCE: Digitized images from historic newspapers
www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov

DNA Testing



- Autosomal
- Genealogy oriented
- No chromosome browser
- \$79



- Y-DNA, mtDNA & atDNA
- Genealogy oriented
- Samples stored for future tests
- Surname projects
- \$59+

Who to test?

- Person(s) with Y-DNA or mtDNA that will solve your puzzle
 - 10% of enslaved people were recorded in 1870 census as “mulatto”
 - Look for White fathers

RESOURCE: *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations and Reconciliation After the Genome* by Alondra Nelson

Test Types



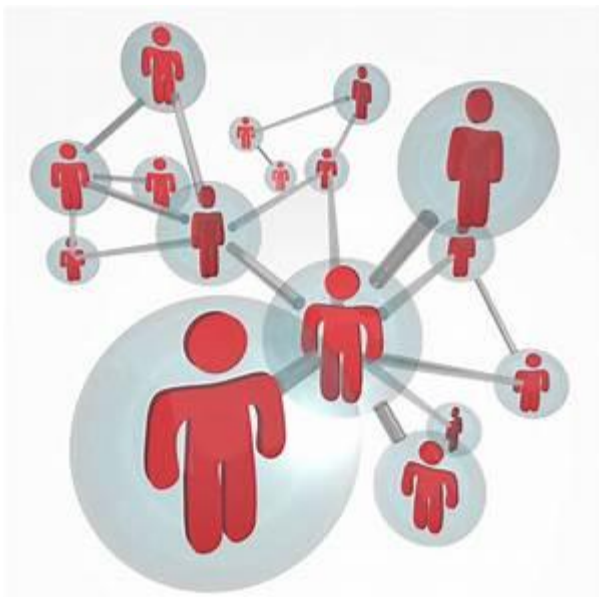
Y-DNA

- Males whose surname is unknown or changed
- Males searching ethnicity of surname
- Males who want to confirm common male ancestor
- Males who can serve as proxies on Y-chromosome inheritance line
- Male adoptees



- Males or females searching ethnicity of maternal line
- Males or females who want to confirm common female ancestor
- Males or females who can serve as proxies on mitochondrial inheritance
- Male or female adoptees

atDNA Test



- Male & female testers
- Shows inheritance from all ancestral lines
- DNA from each line halved in each generation due to recombination
 - Inheritance/recombination is random
- Estimated to reliably match relatives with a common ancestor up to 5 generations back
- Ethnicity estimates based on reference populations

End Goal



- ▶ Use genealogy as a tool for healing
- ▶ Open your heart & build bridges
- ▶ Use what you learn to pursue Restorative Justice
- ▶ Transform “done wrong” to “done right”



“I have a dream that one day ... the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit together at the table of brotherhood.”

~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.