

THE DESCENDANTS OF PRINCE ABDUL RAHMAN
OR FUTA JALLON

by
David S. Dreyer

Copyright, 2007, David S. Dreyer

This document has been made available
To Spark Media for its website on the
Documentary film Prince Among Slaves
By permission of the author.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The chart on the facing page is a summary and overview of both known and potential descendants of Prince Abdul Rahman. It shows the bare elements of the various lines of descent from the 10 individuals believed by this writer to be the most likely children of Abdul Rahman.

Lines of descent can be traced by following the hyphens (-----), and a question mark (?) precedes names where the lines of descent is in doubt. Those bracketed together by a single parentheses, (, are brothers and sisters unless a hyphen intervenes to show a different parent, in which case they are cousins.

In later generations, not all the known descendants are shown because they become too numerous in some families. Family names are noted and carry forward to future generations, and some marriages are noted to show changes in family names. The last know location of these families is also noted.

SOME DESCENDANTS OF ABDUL RAHMAN

<u>1st Generation</u>	<u>2nd Gen.</u>	<u>3rd Gen.</u>	<u>4th Gen.</u>	<u>5th Gen.</u>	<u>6th Gen.</u>	<u>7th Gen.</u>	
--Al-Husayn-----	??	(In Futa Jallon in today's Republic of Guinea)					
--Charles----- & Mary	(Briget----- (Charity(adpt) (Abraham (Jeff (James	(Margaret (William----- (Robert (Charity (John	(Lucy Foster (Jane " (Henry " (Eliza " (Ada " (Patrick"	---(These children were in <u>Iberia Parish, LA in 1880)</u>			
--Simon I----- & Hannah	(Simon II----- Susan Christina Nancy Hester	(Frances (Simon II-----	(Anna Rahhahman (Susan " (Clara--" (Lemuel "	----in Liberia (Blama (Sarah"Zoe"--- (Foday	---(Borbor Gaye--Artemus (in Chicago from Liberia)		
--?Esther----- & ????	(Benjamin (Margaret----- (Daniel----- (Parker----- (Spencer	?Marg. America m.Prince Collins ?Esther----- m.Samiel Collins ?(Parker Lyons-- ?(Noland Lyons-- ?(Mary E. " ?(John "	(Willie----- (Prince (Hannah Collins (Andrew " (Daniel----- (Cass Anna " James Lyons-- (Charles Lyons (Tom " (Garfield " (Pompey"Dunk" (Everett " (Jessie----" (Bettie "	(Bertha----- m.C.Jarvis (Josephine----- (m.Brown (Easter, Dan (Robert Lyons (Eliva " (David (Edith (Dora (Jim (Elic	(Clarketta----- m. Prince Collins m.Flemming --(in Coahoma Co. MS in 1920)	---9 children in Wilkin- son Co. MS (In Adams Co. MS today) (James Brown--Eddie Marie m. Smith (Hannah-----Eddie(male	
--Prince----- & Bridget	(Ferriby----- (Alfredo (Violet----- (Eli (Edmund (Elijah (Lige) (Lee (Mary	?Andrew----- Collins (Simon (Morrison (Alfred	(Susie----- m*Stew*Foster (Eliza (Sarah (Selah(Celia) (Winston (Minerva (Ellen	(Lizzie Foster- (Ben (Willie----- (Susie " (Scharlott " (Stewart " (Permelia " (Samuel (Clarence "	(Andrew----- Johnson (Geneva Harris (Beatrice Gaylor--Robt. (Sam Woods (Earnest Woods (Charles Foster	(Albert (Willie (Robt. (in ADAMS CO. MS today)	
--?Susy----- & ??	(Lize (Fontenett?) (Peggy (Butler?) (Judge (Waiters?) ?(Charles Jackson ?(Lafayette Jackson	(St. Mary Parish, LA) (Port Hudson, LA) (Port Hudson, LA) " " " "	:	(Ruth----- m.Harris	(Pearl----- (Clara--- (Leon---	Lee Edna Bacor Augustine Harri Rev.W.D. Harris	
---Abraham	(sold to Angus McNeil)						
--Levi (Lee)	(to Liberia where he died childless)						
--?Kate----- & Ned	(Little Abraham (Sold to Angus McNeil) ?(Catherine---?Sam Jefferson (in Iberia Parish, LA in 1880)						
--?Phillis----- & Sam	(Matilda (Allen (Sold to Angus McNeil)						

*Stewart Foster was a bi-racial son of Barbara Calvit and a descendant of Thomas Foster's brother, James Foster.

THE DESCENDANTS OF ABDUL RAHMAN
(THE SON OF IBRAHIMA SORI MAWDO)

There are likely to be hundreds, if not thousands, of descendants of Ibrahima Sori Mawdo's son, Prince Abdul Rahman, living today, Abdul Rahman had ten children whose births were clustered around the year 1800. This study identifies some 30 individuals who are likely to be his grandchildren born between about 1816 and 1851.

Assuming 1830 to be the average age of birth in that 2nd generation, and a very conservative two children per descendant every 30 years thereafter, that would result in some 960 individuals in the 7th generation from Abdul Rahman centered around the year 1980. (That generation would include Mr. Artemus Gaye from Liberia who appeared at the end of the film *Prince Among Slaves* and was born in 1975.)

It would seem that we ought to be able to easily identify a number of the present-day descendants of the seven children and some 25 grandchildren who remained in the United States.

However, finding these descendants can be difficult because census records almost never included enslaved African-Americans by name. The 1870 census is the first to attempt to record all African-Americans. It is also the first time that all of them had surnames, seldom used in slavery times.

The estate papers of Thomas Foster, Sr. which included most, but not necessarily all of Abdul Rahman's children, were dated approximately 40 years earlier, and did not list any surnames, most of which would not be acquired until they also acquired freedom.

In between those two dates (1830 and 1870), one must rely primarily on discovering recorded transfers of his enslaved children and grandchildren which are often found as part of plantation sales or estate records of their deceased slaveholders which might list, identify or group them in such a way that they can still be identified by first name as the same child or grandchild of Abdul Rahman found previously.

Additional sources might include the pension records of any descendants who may have joined the U.S. armed forces during the Civil War, Freedman's Bank records, and lists of enslaved people in any preserved plantation records of former slaveholders.

These records can also be useful in disproving possible lines of descent from Abdul Rahman by finding alternative ancestral lines or otherwise denying the possibility of such descent.

The names of only five of Abdul Rahman's six sons are known for certain, and only two of those, Prince and Abraham, remained in the United States. The names of one son and four daughters must be ascertained from circumstantial evidence.

THE SONS

The names of Abdul Rahman's known sons are Al-Husayn (by his wife in Futa Jallon), Simon, Levi (or Lee), Prince and Abraham. The first four were identified by Dr. Alford in his book Prince Among Slaves from the recorded statements of Abdul Rahman. Abraham was identified as a son of Abdul Rahman in a recorded indenture in 1832 from Isaac Foster to the partnership of Barnard & McNeil (Angus McNeil).

Simon and Levi (Lee) were purchased in 1830 with funds raised by Abdul Rahman during his travel in the North, and they arrived in Liberia later that same year. Prince and Abraham presumably remained in the U.S.

THE CASE FOR CHARLES

There is very strong circumstantial evidence that Charles was the name of Abdul Rahman's son held by Thomas Foster's son, Levi Foster, in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana. (An unnamed son in Louisiana, was referred to by Abdul Rahman.)

Charles was not included in the initial inventory of Thomas Foster's estate made at Foster's Fields shortly after his death, but he was included in the distribution of Foster's estate to his son Levi Foster. This suggests that he was already in Louisiana, but that there was no record of his being previously given to Levi Foster in Thomas Foster's day book (used in the allocation of his estate, but not known to exist today.

No other names of enslaved people in Levi Foster's 1834 estate papers suggest any relationship to Abdul Rahman, other than of Charles and his children.

Charles named his first two children Bridget (Bridget and Abraham. Bridget was the name of the wife of Abdul Rahman's son Prince, and Abraham was not only the name of Abdul Rahman's son Abraham, but it was also a familiar name applied to Abdul Rahman Himself, "Prince Ibrahima", as well as the name of Abdul Rahman's father, Ibrahima Sori (the Great), Almaani of Futa Jallon.

Charles may well have been named after the King of Spain at the time of Abdul Rahman's arrival in Spanish Natchez. It would have been a fitting tribute to his captors from a Prince of Futa Jallon, a reminder of his own royal heritage, and a subtle appeal for recognition.

Given the age of Charles found in several Louisiana documents, it would appear likely that Charles was born prior to the arrival of Isabella on the Foster plantation, possible to a women named Sylvia who was also transferred to Levi Foster with Charles and three others in the distribution of Thomas Foster's Estate.

A later son of Charles was named Jeff, possibly after Jefferson who was transferred to the heirs of Levi Foster in the distribution of Sarah Foster's estate in 1838. The name of the last son, James, has no clear antecedent at Foster's Fields. However, he may have been named for his slaveholder, James Muggah, who died about the time of his birth.

The likelihood that Charles was the son of Abdul Rahman seems almost as certain as documented male parentage can be, short of DNA testing.

THE DAUGHTERS

The names of Abdul Rahman's four daughters were never given by him in any of the surviving documents written about him. His first priority was to emancipate his sons, and he may have considered his daughters as the wives of other men whom he could not hope to liberate. However, this does not mean that the names of these four daughters cannot be ascertained or inferred.

The probabilities of each of five women to be one of those four daughters will now be examined. Those five include Esther, Susy, Kate, Phillis and Kezziah.

THE CASE FOR ESTHER

The prominent place in which Esther and her children are listed in the inventory of Thomas Foster's Estate (immediately following Abdul Rahman's friend Samba and his family, and immediately before Abdul Rahman's sons Simon and Prince and their families), suggests that Esther is very likely to be related in some way to this group of people.

This makes her a prime candidate for one of the four daughters. Indeed, another candidate for one of the daughters, Phillis, also follows Prince's family in the inventory with her husband and children.

One can imagine that the person taking the inventory either went door to door in the slave quarters at Foster's Field, or that he had a mental picture of it in his mind as he sought to list enslaved people. He may also have been simply associating people in his mind as their names came to him, perhaps with the help of Mrs. Foster.

Esther is the only woman with children who is not listed with a husband on the entire plantation, and she appears in the middle of the most prominent people in Abdul Rahman's life.

Her given name of Esther and the Biblical role Esther played as concubine to a foreign king who has captured her people in persuading him to be lenient towards them, has all the ear-marks of a name bestowed upon her by two knowledgeable scholars of early Biblical history such as Abdul Rahman and Isabella.

Esther's own children also include two with Biblical names, Daniel and Benjamin, and three other rather formal names, Margaret, Parker and Spencer.

It is possible that the father of Esther's children was dead, had run away, or was estranged and separated from her by the Fosters and/or Abdul Rahman. (It is even conceivable that Abdul Rahman's solitary son, Abraham, might have been the father of Esther's children in which event Esther would be a daughter-in-law rather than a daughter, but her children would still be descendants Abdul Rahman. However, their ages would seem to make this unlikely.

It is also conceivable that the father of Esther's children was Abdul Rahman's comrade Samba, and that the listing of Esther's family after Samba & Celia's family recognized this. This would not however preclude Esther from also being Abdul Rahman's daughter. Indeed, it might support that inference. Such a dual role would give her a central position on the plantation in the absence of Isabella, which might account for her apparent prominence in the inventory.

There is also a possibility that some or all of Esther's children were bi-racial. The most likely candidates for such a father would be Thomas Foster, Jr. and his younger brother, James, but this seems unlikely.

THE CASE FOR SUSY

Dr. Alford in Prince Among Slaves presents his reasons for believing that Thomas Foster, Jr.'s enslaved mistress "Susy" was one of the four daughters. These include the timing of his letter to Washington, D.C. appealing for his own freedom shortly after the scandal surrounding the notorious affair of Thomas Foster, Jr. with Susy. (Thomas Foster, Jr. was a man given to alcoholism and possibly other psychological and physiological problems.)

Those events may have made Abdul Rahman contemplate the future of his family after the death of Thomas Foster, Sr., and decide to make on last attempt to gain his own freedom in order to free them as well.

Also significant is that Abdul Rahman's son Simon named his eldest daughter "Susan." That name was not carried by anyone else at Foster's Fields when his daughter was born except by "Susy" and by Susan Carson Foster, the wife of Thomas Foster, Jr.

THE DESCENDANTS OF SUSY (or SUSIE)

There is some additional evidence that might also support Dr. Alford's claim found in the name of one of Susy's possible sons. The story of that potential on follows:

Susy was eventually sold by Thomas Foster, Jr. to his brother Levi Foster in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana, shortly before Thomas Jr.'s death in 1830. Susy is sold with her three children, Lize, Peggy and Judge. (Peggy and Judge may have been Thomas Jr.'s children.)

Susy and two of these children, Peggy and Judge, later came under ownership of Levi Foster's widow, Zeide Demaret, beginning in 1835. Their ages are listed in that transaction, and those ages would result in Susy being 67, Peggy being 46 and Judge being about 44 in 1870.

In 1870, in the vicinity of Port Hudson, Louisiana, (the last Confederate holdout on the Mississippi), three individuals are found who might be the same Susy, Judge and Peggy: Susie Jackson is listed as 61 living in E. Baton Rouge Parish with two children, Charles 21 and Lafayette 19. As often occurred, Susie's age may have been adjusted downward for various reasons.

In the same vicinity of Port Hudson, Peggy Butler is listed as 45 in E. Feliciana Parish, and Judge Waiters is listed as 44 in E. Baton Rouge Parish. (The community of Port Hudson sits on the border between these two parishes.)

Their surnames all vary, perhaps because of different histories of previous enslavement and marriage, but their location, ages, and the existence of a son of Susie Jackson's named Charles (after her brother who she knew on both Foster plantations), all suggest that they may be Susy and her children, Peggy and Judge. The third child Lize had been sold by Levi Foster's estate to someone else, and Lize may have appeared in the 1870 census as Lize Fontennet in St. Mary Parish.

The naming of Susie Jackson's own child "Charles would also add some weight to the belief that they were both Abdul Rahman's children. Descendants of these children of Susie's may be living today, but they have not been identified.

THE CASE FOR KATE AND PHILLIS

Candidates for the two other daughters include (1) Kate who named her son by her husband Ned "Little Abraham", and (2) Phillis who had two children, Matilda and Allen, by her husband Sam. (Dr. Alford in his new Afterword to the new 30th Anniversary Edition of Prince Among Slaves, 2007, refers to my "preliminary findings" in the Natchez Area Family History Book (2004) in which I then suggested that Samuel, rather than Abraham, might be the son of Abdul Rahman. Since that time solid evidence that Abraham was his son has been found, and that opens the way for Sam's wife, Phillis, to be considered as one of his likely daughters.)

These two families along with Abdul Rahman's son, Abraham, and two other enslaved people, Dick and Kezziah, were distributed to Thomas Foster's youngest son, Isaac Foster. They are listed together, but separate from other enslaved people who were also distributed to Isaac Foster.

These ten people may have been listed separately because all or most of them were in some way related to each other and to Abdul Rahman. Sam and Phillis and their children were also listed in the inventory immediately after the families of sons Simon and Prince, while Kate and Ned have a child named "Little Abraham".

Isaac Foster eventually sells this entire group including Abraham, Ned & Kate and their son Little Abraham, Phillis & Sam and their two children, along with another possible daughter Kezziah, to Angus McNeil. Their fate is uncertain, but the appearance of a Ned and Phillis Edwards of roughly a similar age with a grandson named Sam Jefferson in Iberia Parish in 1880, provides one plausible explanation of what may have happened to them, ie. that they were sold together and eventually their spouses died, and they lived together with Ned's grandson who was named after Phillis's first husband, Sam.

However, if these are the same people, then there is one piece of evidence which disputes Phillis's descent from Abdul Rahman: Phillis Edwards says that her father was born in Mississippi, not in Africa. This kind of evidence is frequently in error, but if not, and Phillis Edwards is the Phillis from Foster's Fields, then Phillis is not Abdul Rahman's daughter.

Sam Jefferson appears to have been the son of a woman named Catherine who has a child by a man named Jefferson. Catherine would appear to have been the daughter of Ned and Kate. (If Kate and Phillis were not sisters, then the connecting link between the two may have been that Ned and Sam were brothers.)

The fate of Sam Jefferson, as well as Matilda and Allen, Little Abraham and Catherine has not been discovered. Without a better alternative scenario, it would appear that the lines of one, if not two, of Abdul Rahman's possible daughters, may have largely disappeared.

The last known slaveholder, Angus McNeil, is found near the end of his life in Eagle Pass, Colorado, in 1870.

THE CASE FOR KEZZIAH

It is possible that Kate, Phillis & Kezziah were distributed together because they were three of the four daughters. However, Kezziah was previously listed in the estate inventory with "Joe & Sarah, his wife, George & Kezziah, their family" (emphasis added).

In all other cases in the inventory, children are listed as "their child" or "their children" or "her children". Thus Kezziah may not have been a daughter, but a daughter-in-law. (Sarah was too old to be Abdul Rahman's daughter as I once suggested in my article in the Natchez Area Family History Book (2004).)

However, while Joe, Sarah & George are given to Thomas Foster's widow, Sarah Foster, Kezziah is given to Isaac Foster and listed last in the distribution to Isaac Foster after a man named Kick who had been listed alone at the end of the estate inventory.

Dick and Kezziah may simply have been the last enslaved people allocated and were given to Isaac to "even-up" the distribution to him so as to give each of Foster's children and equal part of the estate. Isaac, the youngest son of the Fosters, would initially remain at Foster's Fields with his mother, Sarah Foster, just as his father, Thomas Foster, Sr., had remained with his mother, Mary Foster, when he was young.

It is also possible that George & Kezziah (whoever she was) were not getting along together, and that they were separated in the distribution for that reason. It may be just as likely that George and Kezziah were both children of Joe and Sarah, not mates as the distinctive terminology "their family" might suggest.

Kezziah has to be considered as a possible substitute for any one of the four other candidates to be one of Abdul Rahman's daughters because she was placed in the group of ten allocated separately to Isaac Foster in his father's estate distribution.

However, we know little about Kezziah's fate. This entire group including Kate, Phillis, Abraham, Dick & Kezziah were late sold by Isaac Foster to Angus McNeil who eventually moved westward and probably died in Colorado.

McNeil may well have been aware of the relationship of those enslaved people to Abdul Rahman as indicated by the previous indenture naming Abraham as his son (but none of the women his daughters). It seems likely that McNeil may have sold members of this group to others in Louisiana or even Texas, if not in Mississippi, providing little evidence to identify any descendants today.

THE CASE FOR OTHER POSSIBILITIES
(i.e. not all of the above)

It is possible that some of the four daughters were among the other women in Foster's Estate inventory, or like Suzy, held at Thomas Foster, Sr.'s death by some of his other children and their husbands.

Foster's will indicates that he had made substantial gifts to his children while he was still living, and that the allocation of his estate upon his death was to "even-up" those previous distributions in the final distributions from his estate. Unfortunately, the book which was used to record those gifts has apparently not survived.

It is conceivable that all of Abdul Rahman's daughters were gifted to Foster's children before his death. Apparently the absence of a record of Charles being given to Levi Foster in that book resulted in his not being listed in the distribution of Foster's estate even though he was not in the inventory. Isabella's possible oldest son, Jacob (Jake) by a previous relationship before her arrival at Foster's Fields, may have been given to Thomas Foster's son James Foster and recorded in the distribution but not the inventory of his estate just as Charles had.

Isabella's youngest son Limerick (Limbrick) was transferred to Foster's daughter Cassandra in Thomas Sr.'s estate distribution. The other son prior to her marriage to Abdul Rahman named "Anaky" does not appear by that name in Foster's estate papers. He too may have been gifted during Foster's lifetime.

If one chooses to believe that Susy, Esther, Kate, Phillis or even Kezziah were not Abdul Rahman's daughters, the possibility of alternative candidates having been given to the children of Thomas & Sarah Foster during Thomas's lifetime appears likely.

They might even have been sold outside the family entirely. Alternative candidates on Foster's plantation itself do not appear to be strong possibilities.

IN SUMMARY

In summary, the named of Abdul Rahman's six sons are almost certainly Al-Husayn, Simon, Prince, Lee or Levi, Prince and Charles. The names of his four daughters are probably Susy, Esther, Kate and Phillis, but the evidence for each of them is less conclusive and convincing than that of any of the six sons. The most likely alternative to them would be either Kezziah or some unknown children already given to Foster's children.

This genealogy will proceed on the assumption that these ten are Abdul Rahman's children subject to correction if further evidence becomes available. Failure to make this assumption creates a standard that restricts a full view of Abdul Rahman's potential descendants today.

The standard being set here is not that of being beyond a reasonable doubt, but of the preponderance of the evidence. It might be noted however, that when several steps in the chain become questionable, confidence falls rather rapidly, as when two links of only 70% probability combine to produce a probability of just 49%.

Indeed there is some small potential of error in every step of even the most well-documented genealogies, which over time erodes the confidence one can have in ancient genealogies unless one takes into account the potential of marriages in the false lines to actual descendants thus correcting those errors.

This genealogy will note some possibilities of descent that may not meet the preponderance standard, but which cannot easily be completely dismissed, and deserve continued investigation. After all, everyone has different ways of evaluating the evidence, and significant evidence may tip the scales one way or another for any given observer.

While the list of six sons including Charles seems rather well-established, one might want to create a list of probabilities that each of these women was indeed Abdul Rahman's daughter. For example:

Esther	85%	
Kate	75%	
Susy	65%	
Phillis	55%	
Kezziah	20%	
Someone else at Foster's Fields	20%	Possible names: Hetty, Hester, Jude
Someone else like Susy elsewhere (e.g. unknown, all others)	<u>80%</u>	Possible names: Isabella, Celia, many others

400% = 100% certainty for 4 daughters

SOME CLUES

Of the seven children left in the United States, there are three slaveholders who seem to hold the key to their fate: Wylie M. Wood (purchaser of the families of Prince and Esther in the early 1840s), Angus McNeil (purchaser of Abraham, Kate, Phillis & Kezziah in 1832), and Levi Foster and his wife Zeide Demaret Foster (who inherit Charles and purchase and later repurchase Susy).

The Barnards, McMillans and Adelard Demaret are also involved. Each appears to be holding one of the children of Abdul Rahman's son Prince, namely Ferriby, Elijah (Lige) and Violet.

It is possible that those children with Wylie M. Wood and Angus McNeill were sold willy-nilly in the slave markets or elsewhere and were separated and vanished forever. This is more likely the case with McNeil who left the area. Wood on the other hand survives past the Civil War, in which case he may have held these families until they became free in either Adams County or Wilkinson County where he lived.

One possibility is that Wood sold some of the grandchildren of Prince and Esther to the Trask-Ventress plantations where a large number of enslaved people bearing similar names as those of the grandchildren are found. The problem is that most of those enslaved people with those names appear to have been on the plantation prior to Wylie Wood's purchase of the grandchildren, and the later appearance of some of these people together in the 1870 census records may or may not indicate their descendancy from Abdul Rahman.

Nevertheless, the Percy's Creek-Ft. Adams vicinity in western Wilkinson County appears fertile ground for search. It is notable that in the period following Reconstruction, commonly known as "Redemption," pitched battles were fought in that area between whites and blacks over control of the county government in the 1870s. Some of them may have involved veterans of the U.S. Colored Troops who had fought in the Civil War vs. former Confederate soldiers. Even without descent from Abdul Rahman, their story is a fascinating epic of resistance to enslavement and later oppression.

There also appears to be an off coincidence (which may not be entirely a coincidence) in the last name of some of the most likely descendants: namely that of Collins. Although the family of Esther is held by William K. and Mary Foster Collins, the name not only appears around Pine Grove in 1870, but also in Wilkinson County among people who appear to have been on the Trask-Ventress plantation and bear names similar to Esther's children. The name also appears with the descendants of Ferriby who was held by descendants of Barbara Foster Bernard, but may have married a Collins from Barbara's sister, Mary Foster Collin's plantation at Pine Grove.

Strikingly, none of these grandchildren bear the name of Wood. The family of Wylie M. Wood seems to disappear from the area after the War. Prior to the War, Spencer Wood is found selling a number of people to a Mr. Conner, and some of the children of these bear the names Prince and Isabella. However, their parents cannot be identified as grandchildren of Abdul Rahman. Other families may have picked up on naming their children after the Prince and his wife because of stories about them on the plantations where they lived.

Other individuals have indicated their fervent belief that they are descended from Abdul Rahman, or have stories about their descent, but it has not yet been possible to document any possible connections, let alone prove their likelihood.

It seems likely, however, that descendants will eventually be found of William & Charity Foster from southern Louisiana. William's family is found in the 1870 census in St. Martin Parish and in the 1880 census in Iberia Parish. William is almost certainly the grandson of Abdul Rahman's son, Charles, thus bridging the 40-year gap. Sales track the passing of William and his parents through the Muggah family, which purchased them from the estate of Levi Foster. William has children named Lucy, Jane, Henry, Eliza, Ada and Patrick Foster.

KEY ANCESTRAL LINES OF MOST LIKELY KNOWN DESCENDANTS TODAY

(1) Sylvia ?? & PRINCE ABDUL RAHMAN & ISABELLA
 Charles & Mary Simon (b.1794) & Hannah Prince & Bridget
 to St. Mary Parish: Margaret & ? & ???
 Bridget Abraham Simon Rahhahman II Ferriby & ? Collins? Parker
 (Lyons?)
 William Foster Simon III Andrew Collins & Charlotte America
 Henry Patrick Clara Dordor Vannah Susie Collins m. Stewart Foster Prince
 Foster b.1874 Sarah "Zoe" m. H. G. Meyer Ruth Foster m. Horace Harris m. Prince
 ? ? Borbor H. Gaye Pearl Harris Clara Leon Clarketta Collins m. Prince James Brown Hannah
 ? ? Artemus Gaye Lee Edna m. Paul Bacon m. Bernard Wilton : Dave Prince : Walter : Bennie : : Marie
 Bertha Rosetta Dorothy Pat Mary m. Eddie
 Harris Frazier Brown Chas. Smith Flemming

Louisiana Family Liberian Family
 Initially held Descendants are
 by Levi Foster, presently in the
 ancestor of two United States.
 LA Governors ---
 Murphy Foster &
 his grandson,
 Gov. "Mike" Foster.
 Pine Ridge Family of
 Stewart & Susie Collins Foster
 (Pearl Harris has family Bible
 of Stewart & Susie C. Foster)
 Prince's daughter, Ferriby was
 once held by William & Barbara
 Foster Barnard & their son
 William T. Barnard. "Ferriby"
 was living with Andrew and
 Charlotte Collins in 1870.
 Whitestown Rd. Wilkinson Co. Cranfield Rd. Adams
 Family once lived on Mt. Co. Family
 Pleasant - Ventress plantatn. (has pie-shaped
 Clarketta talks of her family tree of
 great-grandparents Prince recent generations)
 & America Collins. Some of --shows large no.
 Esther's children were of people who would
 purchased by Wylie M. Wood be descendants.
 of Wilkinson Co. in 1840 Cranfield Road is
 including "Parker" who may near the old Pine
 have been the Parker Lyons Grove Plantation
 living next to them in 1870. owned by WM. & Mary
 Was "Maggie" his daughter Foster Collins
 or niece?? who held Esther
 & her family before
 sale to Wylie Wood

POSSIBLE TIMELINE FOR BIRTH OF CHILDREN

1762 Abdul Rahman born in Futa Jallon

1763 Isabella born based on her age (80) in the 1843 Liberian census

1768/69 Isabella born according to her age (25) in sale to Thomas Foster

1780 Al-Husayn born to Abdul Rahman & his wife in Futa Jallon

1788 Abdul Rahman arrives in Natchez

1793 Charles born to (Sylvia?, b. 1774)

1794 April 23 Purchase of Isabella by Thomas Foster, Sr.
Dec. 25 Marriage of Abdul Rahman & Isabella

1795 Simon born (according to Alford, p. 53)

1797 Esther born (estimated based on age of her children in the 1840 purchase of
Pine Grove by Wylie M. Wood**)

1799 Prince born "before 1800" (according to Alford, p. 55)

1802 Susy born (based on estate records in Louisiana)

1804 Abraham born (based on age in Isaac Foster's sale to McNeil)

1806 Levi (or Lee) born (based on date in Appendix, unnumbered p. 191 in
"Prince Among Slaves")

1810 Kate born (based on age in Isaac Foster's conveyances to McNeil)

1812 Phillis born (based on age in Isaac Foster's conveyances to McNeil)
(Isabella would have been 49 then, if she were born in 1763)

1828 Abdul Rahman & Isabella leave Natchez

1829 Abdul Rahman & Isabella arrive in Liberia and Abdul Rahman dies

1830 Simon and his family arrive in Liberia

Children Purchased with Isabella in sale by Stark to Thomas Foster:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year of Birth</u>
Jacob	1783/84
Anaky	1788/89
Limerick	1791/92

**Esther's Children	Approximate Year of Birth
Benjamin	1821
Margaret	1822?
Daniel	1823
Parker	1826
Spencer	1827?

THE OFFSPRING OF ABDUL RAHMAN'S CHILDREN

A timeline has been created regarding the timing of the births of Abdul Rahman's and Isabella's likely children on the previous page. They begin to have children in the 1790s. It is not known that Al-Husayn, Levi (or Lee), and Abraham ever had any children. It seems likely that Al-Husayn did if he survived wars and internal strife in Futa Jallon. Perhaps that will become known as a result of this film.

That leaves only three males who are known to have children: Charles, Simon, and Prince. Because their descent from Abdul Rahman is most certain, their likely descendents will be considered first.

DESCENDANTS OF CHARLES

Charles, his wife Mary, and daughter Bridget (Briget) were sold to James Muggah, Sr. from Levi Foster's estate in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana, in 1834. Later Charles, his wife and three sons, Abraham, Jeff and James were given to Charles R. Muggah in 1834 distribution of his father, James Muggah, Sr.'s estate.

Bridget, the daughter of Charles, was distributed from that same estate to James M. Muggah, and Bridget's son William is likely to be the William included in James M. Muggah's 1857 estate inventory.

William later shows up with his own family in the 1870 U.S. Census of nearby St. Martin's Parish with a wife named Charity. William and his children can still be found without Charity in the 1880 U.S. Census of neighboring Iberia Parish. The children are listed as Lucy 10, Jane 8, Henry 6, Eliza 4, Ada 3, and Patrick 1.

Charles and Mary						
:	b.1793	:	b.1806	:	:	:
:		:		:		:
<u>Bridget & ?????</u>			<u>Charity</u>	<u>Abraham</u>	<u>Jeff</u>	<u>James</u>
:	b. 1830	:	/b.1832	b.1837	1844	b.1847
:	:	:	("adopted"			
<u>John</u>	<u>Margaret</u>	<u>William</u>	<u>Robert</u>	<u>Charity</u>	by C. & M.)	
1844	1846	m.('47)	b.1850	b.1852		
Charity						
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
<u>Lucy</u>	<u>Jane</u>	<u>Henry</u>	<u>Eliza</u>	<u>Ada</u>	<u>Patrick</u>	
1870	1872	1874	1876	1877	1879	

Those great-grandchildren listed in the 1880 census almost beg for recognition in someone's family history. However, they have yet to be clearly identified in the census records of the 1900s. Did some perish? Did they move to Texas or California? What about Chicago, St. Louis or Memphis? Who did they marry, when and where?

Here is a family with very strong evidence of descent from Abdul Rahman that is traceable through estate papers to census records in both 1870 and 1880, but then with six children has not yet been clearly identified in the 1900s.

In 1930, they would range in age from about 51 to 60 with the surname or maiden name of Foster. They might have named their children after each other or themselves (Lucy, Jane, Henry, Eliza, Ada and Patrick), or after their father William or their aunts Margaret and Charity or their uncles John and Robert, or even after their grandmother Bridget or their great-uncles Abraham, Jeff and James, not to mention Charles.

Most appear to have left coastal Louisiana, but may have stayed in the state. Someone who sees this will almost certainly have family that will recognize some of the names or know someone who does, and they will be able to trace that family back to one of these individuals.

DESCENDANTS OF SIMON

Artemus Gaye, the Liberian descendant of Prince Abdul Rahman who appears at the end of the film Prince Among Slaves provided a chart he prepared from family sources on his line of descent from his great-great-great-great grandfather, Simon I. Mr. Gaye is a 7th generation descendant of Abdul Rahman.

The chart lists members of his family in each generation with dates of birth and dates of death when known. The dates on this chart given for the first generation of Simon's children correspond roughly to the ages given for the surviving children of Simon in the 1843 Liberian census.

As a result of this approximate, but not exact, correspondence to the Liberian census, it would appear that this record was made primarily from family, not official, sources, and that it is an authentic record of his family in Liberia as best as it was known to them. Some dates are indicated to be in doubt or unknown, which also suggests authenticity.

The Liberian census corroborates the authenticity of this particular genealogy in its earliest period by the absence of the two children who are said to have died by 1843, and by the approximate or unknown dates of death of the three children who are shown in the 1843 census.

If Artemus Gaye had been previously aware of this census record (which was found in the Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History by researcher Dawn Dennis), then he would already have known the name of Isabella and Adurai (Abdul) Rahman when he arrived in the United States, and would have claimed as much.

What is particularly noteworthy is the fact that almost from the time of Thomas Foster, Sr.'s death, Simon and his family lived in freedom in Liberia. The preservation of his family's history occurred in freedom.

This chart treats him as if he were the original founder of his family in Liberia although he and his family arrived a year after his parents Isabella and Abdul Rahman. Many Americans also begin their genealogies with their immigrant ancestor.

It is also noteworthy that the documentary gap, which often exists in the U.S. records, between the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Abdul Rahman during slavery does not exist for the great-grandson Simon III in Liberia. Simon III died in 1905 having been born about 1851.

If he had been living in Mississippi or Louisiana, we would probably not have known his name nor that of his brother or sister. We might be thinking of looking for someone who might be named Simon (after his father) whose last name and birthdate would not be known to us because the name of his father would be our only clue.

We would be relying on circumstantial evidence with a great variance of potential birthdates possible for any missing "Simon", although we now know that his father was approximately 31 when Simon III was born. If we found someone or someone like him, we would only have the coincidence of the first name Simon, and might not know which of a number of Simons he was unless he was found in a particularly significant location.

Instead, the Liberian family has no trouble identifying Simon III as the son of Simon II. The challenge which existed for Artemus Gaye was bridging the gap between Simon Sr. and the once unknown-to-him father, Abdul Rahman. The 1843 Liberian census confirms what Mr. Gaye discovered from Dr. Alford's research in the Foster Estate papers, but Mr. Gaye was unaware of either of those sources when he arrived here as a young man in exile from the Liberian Civil War.

THE FAMILY OF SIMON I

(FROM CHART PROVIDED BY ARTEMUS GAYE)

SIMON I & HANNAH					
	:	(1794-1833)	:	(1802-1834)	:
	:		:		:
<u>Simon II</u>	<u>Susan</u>	<u>Christina</u>	<u>Nancy</u>	<u>Hester</u>	
& (1820-1880s?)	(1822-??)	(1825-1832)	(1828-??)	(1830-1831)	
<u>Mary</u>					
:(1823-1880s)	:		:		
:	:		:		
<u>Frances</u>	<u>Simon III</u>	<u>Elijah</u>			
(1849-??)	& (1851?-1905)	(1855-??)			
	<u>Zoe</u>				
	:		:		:
	:		:		:
<u>Anna</u>	<u>Susan</u>	<u>Clara</u>	<u>Lemuel</u>		
(1880-??)	(1885-1990)	& (1886-1979)	(1889?-??)		
	<u>Dordor Vannah, ("Ba") Vai Chief</u>				
	:		(1875?-)		:
	:		:		:
<u>Blama "Borbor"</u>	<u>Sarah "Zoe" m.(2) George Johnson</u>	<u>Foday</u>			
(1917?-1990)	& (1920-present)	(1915-1987)	(1925-present)		
	(1)Hendrick G. Neyor				
:	:		:(1910-1983)		:
:	:		:		:
<u>B.H. Gaye*</u>	<u>Clara Johnson</u>	<u>George Emmanuel</u>	<u>Franklin</u>	<u>Lydia</u>	<u>Jerry</u>
(1945-	(1948-	(1950- (1952-	(1959-	(1962-	(1965-198?)
4 children	2 children	5 children	2 children	1 child	3 children none

*Liberian soccer star Borbor Gaye pronounced "Bubba",

-father of 4 children including Artemus Gaye

The name Gaye is derived from Hendrick Gaye Neyor.

Sept. 1843 Number of Emigrants & Recaptured Africans sent to the Colony of Liberia

Census of the Colony of Liberia Sept. 1843

<u>Name</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Date of Arrival</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Health</u>
Isabel Rahhahman	none	80	March, 1829	Widow of Addurai Rahhahman	Nurse	feeble
Simon Rahhahman	"	21	Dec. 1830	Isabel Rahhahman's grandson	-----	good
Susan Rahhahman	reads	17	"	Isabel Rahhahman's granddau.	-----	"
Nancy Rahhahman	"	15	"	"	-----	"

DESCENDANTS OF PRINCE

The names of the children of Prince are fairly well-established:

Feraby, Alfredo, Violet, Eli and Edmund are listed in Thomas Foster's Estate Inventory in 1829, and Ferriby, Alfred, Violet, Eli, Edmund and Elijah are listed in the Foster Estate distribution in 1830.

In 1837, Alfred, Eli, Edmund, Lee and Mary are listed in Sarah Foster's Estate Inventory. In 1838, Alfred, Eli, Edmund, Lee and Mary are allotted to Frances Wells in the distribution of that Estate.

In 1843, Alfred, Eli, Edmund, Lee and Mary are listed among the enslaved people on Col. Samuel Well's plantation, Dry Bayou, in Franklin County who are sold with the plantation to Wylie M. Wood of Wilkinson County. Wood later sold his plantation without the enslaved people, just as he had done with Pine Grove.

Wylie M. Wood still held 50 unnamed enslaved people in Wilkinson County in the 1860 census when he was 83 years old. He died on 28 May, 1867, holding some 1,618 acres of land, but the enslaved people had already become free during the Civil War.

The Wood estate was concentrated on Pineywood Creek near Brick Kiln Creek in T4, R2. This location is near the Geter cemetery on Hazlitt Creek near Sections 35 and 36. Mrs. Wylie M. Wood was Nancy Hazlitt. (Hazlipp)

There was also a Spencer & Margaret B. Wood (possible a brother & sister-in-law of Wylie) of Wilkinson County who conveyed some 70 enslaved people to W.C. Conner on Jan. 12, 1843. This conveyance is notable for a number of children bearing the name of Prince and Isabella, including

Sims, Milly & their child Prince

Sam, Sukey & their child Isabella

Ben Davis, Celeste & their children Prince, Lucy, Hosiah & Diana

However, none of these parents can be associated with any of Abdul Rahman's grandchildren, although Milly might be the Milly (19) in 1840 who is the daughter of Mercer and Hester who was given by Sarah Foster's Estate to Mary Foster Collins in 1838.

However, Ferriby, Violet and Lige (Elijah, Elisha) were not distributed to Sarah Foster Wells, and the fates of Ferriby and Violet will be considered before returning to the other children.

Ferriby (Fereby, Pharaby, Phenba, etc.)

Ferriby (Phereby, etc.) is a very rare name today. It was not all that common in the early 1800s. The oldest known daughter of Abdul Rahman's son Prince was named Ferriby, and she was probably born around 1817 because her younger sister Violet was born in 1819 according to later records of Violet's age when she was 30.

In 1870, a Fereby Collins, 42, appears after the children in the household of Andrew, 38, and Charlotte Collins, 33, in the Pine Ridge vicinity of Adams County. Generally, Pine Ridge (Census Beat 4) is located north of Natchez and included Foster's Fields and the Barnard plantation to which Prince's daughter, Ferriby, was sent when she was allotted in the settlement of Thomas Foster's Estate to Barbara Foster Barnard, the wife of Wm. Barnard, Sr.

Andrew and Charlotte's children bear many names from the Barnard plantation on Pine Ridge such as Susy, Selah (Celia), Minerva and Ellen. Charlottes' name is not found on that plantation. However, there is a child named "Andy" on that plantation who was allotted to Wm. T Barnard, Jr. Andy did not appear in the 1834 inventory of that estate, so he may have been born after that date, in which event Andrew may be several years younger than he was listed in 1870. (Of course, Andy and Andrew may not be the same person.)

However, Ferriby was given to Henry Clay Barnard in that 1842 division, not to his brother, Wm. T. Barnard, like Andy was. Is it possible that Ferriby was nevertheless Andy's mother, and that she was living with his family in 1870? Is it possible that she was either not sure of, or was fudging her age by 10 or 12 years in both the 1870 and 1880 census records?

An answer to the first question is that unlike the Foster estate, little recognition was given to family units in the Barnard estate papers. Enslaved people appear as if they lived in a commune on the Barnard plantation with no reference to families—at least that is the way the Barnard estate divisions and inventories read.

Andy was among seven of the seventeen enslaved people allotted to Wm. T. Barnard who were not sold to Wm. Cannon in 1846. Those seven included Andy, Susan, Ellen, Thornton, Old Patsy, Old Cely and Will Barland. Their further fate during slavery times is not known.

Barbara Foster Barnard remarried a William Brooks shortly after her husband William Barnard Sr.'s death, but Ferriby was not allotted to her in the 1842 division even though Ferriby was originally given to her in the division and distribution of her father's estate.

As to the origin of the name Collins in the family of Andrew and Charlotte, a Phenba Collins, 52, appears in the household of Anthony and Ellen Collins in 1880 in the Pine Ridge vicinity, not far from Andrew and Charlotte Collins. However, in 1870 Anthony and Ellen were living in the Cranfield vicinity (Census Beat 5) east of Natchez in the vicinity of Travelers Rest, Duck Pond and Pine Grove plantations.

This Phenba Collins is the same age and appears to be the same person as Fereby Collins, 42, who was previously living with Andrew and Charlotte Collins in 1870. Anthony and Ellen also had a son named Andrew who was born about 1844, possibly named after "Andy"?, but who was killed by "friendly fire" at Vicksburg in 1863. His pension records provide some history of this family name under the Winston's at Traveler's Rest and Duck Pond plantations.

It is possible that Andy's father may have been a visitor (such as a carriage driver) from Pine Grove plantation owned by William K. and Mary Foster Collins or from the neighboring Traveler's Rest plantation where the name Collins also became attached to Anthony Collins, a long-time resident of Traveler's Rest. It is also possible that Ferriby acquired the Collins name while visiting there with Barbara Foster Barnard.

It should be noted that Ferriby's relationship to both of her "host" families is not given. In 1870 family relationships were not asked for in the census. In 1880, Phenba Collins is listed first without any relationship given, followed by Anthony without any relationships given, but his wife and granddaughter are listed as such after him.

Andrew Collins acquired his wife Charlotte before acquiring freedom. His oldest three daughters, Susy, Eliza and Sarah were born by 1863 and Selah (Celia) was born shortly after. It is notable that his son Winston was born 1868-70 after freedom and was possibly named after the Winstons at Traveler's Rest and Duck Pond.

Minerva and Ellen followed in the mid-1870s. Ellen, Minerva, Celia and Susan were also the names of slightly younger contemporaries of Ferreby in the 1834 inventory of Wm. Barnard, Sr.'s estate (based on their valuations). They were all somewhat older than Andy who was not yet born in 1834.

When all the available evidence is considered, one has to consider Fereby Collins, despite the age she gives in the census records, to be a likely mother of Andrew Collins with whom she was living in 1870. If she is his mother, and therefore somewhat older than she says she is, then it is likely that she is Prince's daughter, Ferriby.

Andrew and Charlotte's daughter, Susie, married Stewart Foster. Stewart Foster is listed in the census records as "mulatto" (bi-racial), and his mother is listed in the census as Barbara Calvit, the wife of Benjamin Calvit. The tradition in the family is that Stewart was the son of a descendant of Thomas Foster's brother, James Foster.

There is also a tradition in several parts of the Stewart and Susie Collins Foster family of descent from African royalty. Barbara Calvit came from Kentucky, so if the Abdul Rahman tradition is true, the African royalty must come from Susie Collins Foster's side of the family.

While the notoriety of the story of the Prince following the publication of Jallon by James Register in 1968 and Prince Among Slaves by Terry Alford in 1977, (added to the name Foster in this family) may have created this tradition, the tradition may nevertheless have some basis in reality.

However, Susie Collins (12) living in Vicksburg in 1870 is not the Susie Collins who married Stewart Foster as hypothesized in the article written by this author in the Natchez Area Family History Book (2004) and referred to as "preliminary findings" by Dr. Alford in the Afterward of the new edition of his book, Prince Among Slaves. The Natchez Area Family History Book does have many reliable articles; mine is unfortunately not one of them.

Violet

The third child and second oldest daughter of Prince & Bridget was allotted to Mrs. Sarah Foster in the distribution of her husband Thomas Foster's estate in 1830 along with her parents and all of her siblings except Ferriby.

When Sarah Foster died in 1837, Violet already had her first child, Simon, and Violet and Simon were distributed by the Estate of Sarah Foster to the heirs of Thomas Foster, Jr. along with Joe & Sarah and their son, George. It is not known who the father of Simon was, but George is of course one possibility.

The rest of Prince's family is distributed to Frances Foster Wells, the wife of Col. Samuel Wells of Opelousas, LA, who also owned Dry Bayou plantation in Franklin County, MS. However, Prince's son Lige (Elijah or Elisha) was given to Sarah Foster McMillen, the wife of Daniel McMillen, also in Franklin County.

When Thomas Foster, Jr. died in 1830, he had already sold his slaves to his brother, Levi, but his heirs were all minors, namely Thomas L. Foster, Orlando O. Foster, and Pamela Z. Foster. James Carson, Jr. was made the guardian of the heirs of Thomas Foster, Jr.

There is a revealing document in Thomas Foster Jr.'s estate papers in the Chancery Clerk's Office in Adams Co. MS, showing how the employment and earnings of Joe, Sarah and Violet were used directly to pay for the upkeep and education of the three Foster heirs. That document is a dramatic example of the transfer of wealth that slavery represented.

On 13 October, 1849, Joe (60), Sarah (70) and Violet (30) with two children, Morrison (6) and Alfred (1) are listed as the only property in St. Landry Parish under authority of the Estate of Thomas Foster, Jr.

They would be left to Orlando O. Foster and Pamela Foster, the two surviving heirs. Pamela had by then married Martin Felix Demaret II, the nephew of Zeide Demaret Foster. Pamela and her husband moved to Brazil following the Civil War. Orlando Foster had already moved to Texas.

By 1870, Violet would have been 50 or 51, Morrison 26 or 27 and Alfred 20 or 21. There is a Morrison Hector, age 60 in St. Mary Parish who might be the father of Morrison, but there is no Violet Hector, nor a younger Morrison or Alfred.

However, it is possible that someone today might recognize one of them as their ancestor.

Alfred(o), Eli, Edmund, Elisha (Lige), Lee and Mary

Five of these children of Abdul Rahman's son Prince (except Lige) are last found together in the 1843 recording of the purchase of Dry Bayou plantation in Franklin Co., MS by Wylie M. Wood of Wilkinson County from Col. Samuel Wells of Opelousas, LA.

The above names of these children are rather common names among enslaved people. However, the following article in the March 20, 1855 edition of the Woodville Republican brings to life some of the many contradictions of slavery even if it does not definitely establish the identity of the two enslaved people in question:

"For the benefit of whom it may concern, we give the following as we find it among the police reports of the Daily N.O. Crescent of the 16th inst.

SUSPECTED NEGRO THIEF.---On Monday evening, officer Holmes arrested a man in Algiers for not only a loaded revolver and bowie knife, but more whiskey than the law of Algiers allowed. He had two negroes with him, who were locked up also. Next morning, before Justice Fortimer, the white man gave his name as O.P. Wilkinson, and said that he had found the negroes in the woods, and brought them down to the city in order to send them back on some steamer to their owner, Seymour Taylor, in Clinton, La.---a story so very fishy that the negroes were brought in and questioned. One is a yellow boy named Alfred, and the other a black named Edmund. They stated that they belonged to Charles Adley, in Wilkinson county, Miss., and that Wilkinson had persuaded them to come to New Orleans, where he promised he would set them free. They stated that they had all come down the right bank on horseback to Bayou Lafourche, where they took a skiff and went down the bayou to the Opelousas Railroad crossing, and there took the cars for Algiers. Justice Fortimer sent the trio over to the parish prison for safekeeping, and wrote to Mr. Adley; and so soon as he receives an answer the examination will take place."

No further report of this story appears in the Woodville Republican. In 1850, O.P. Wilkinson, 26, was living in the household of J.M. Rogers in Amite County, MS next door to an Ann Robinson (45). That same year, Seymour Taylor, a slaveholder is found living in Amite County, but by 1860, S. Taylor was in E. Feliciana Parish, the location of Clinton. While the name Adley is not commonly associated with Wilkinson County, it has been found in northwestern Louisiana in DeSoto, Natchitoches and Caddo Parishes.

However, 1870, there are some 10 Africa-Americans in Wilkinson County named Edmund and 11 named Alfred. There is an Alfred Johnson (50) and an Edmund Roberson (50) living in the southwestern corner of Wilkinson County near Ft. Adams listed on the same page in the U.S. Census. Violet, the sister of Alfred and Edmund, the sons of Prince, was born between them in about 1819. So their actual ages were about 52 and 49 in 1870 if they survived.

As for Alfred's (Alfredo's) complexion, it is possible that Bridget's first child was by a white man. There are also several families named Wells in that vicinity, including an Esther Wells (24) with a child named Lige (3), the name of Prince's son who was given to Sarah Foster McMillan, wife of Daniel McMillan, in the distribution of her father's estate.

All this could be just coincidental, but it is also interesting to note that western Wilkinson County was the seat of black resistance to whites who took control of the county by force in the mid-1870s. Some of those involved were former U.S. Colored Troops who returned to Wilkinson County after the Civil War and defended the ballot box. They included the grandfather of author Richard Wright, Richard Wilson.

The names Wells, Robinson and Johnson remain common in that vicinity, but present day descendants of these individuals have yet to be identified, nor are the ancestral names rare enough to clearly establish their identities in 1870. It may all just be coincidence, but this area probably warrants further research.

DESCENDANTS OF ESTHER

The names of Esther's children are well-established: Ben, Margaret, Daniel, Parker and Spencer are listed in the inventory of Thomas Foster's Estate. They are also listed in that estate's distribution to Mary Foster Collins, the wife of Wm. K. Collins, owner of Pine Grove Plantation located east of Natchez between today's Dunbarton Road and Cranfield Road. They were valued at \$275, \$250, \$275, \$200 and \$250 respectively in Foster's Estate.

However, only Benjamin (19), Daniel (17), and Parker (14) are listed among the enslaved people held at Pine Grove when the plantation and its enslaved people were purchased by Wylie M. Wood of Wilkinson County on May 22, 1848. At any time after that they may have been sold by Wood. On July 18, 1850, Wiley M. Wood conveyed Pine Grove to Alexander Boyd without its enslaved people. Wood remained alive past the end of slavery, and may have held them through that time.

There is also Mary (20) listed on that plantation who might be 'Merica if Margaret's full name was Margaret America. Spencer however is not among them, although we might estimate his age to be somewhere around 13 in 1840.

Nor is their mother, Esther, who had valued in the Foster estate at \$250, an indication that she was growing older. From the ages of her children, we might guess that she was born around 1800 beginning her child-bearing years in the 1820s.

For reasons of explication, the fate of these children will be discussed in the following order: Daniel, Parker, Margaret, then Ben and Spencer.

Daniel

Esther's son Daniel cannot be located in the 1870 or 1880 census. Although Daniel was among those listed in the sale to Wylie M. Wood in 1840 at the age of 17, we do not know what happened to him after that sale.

We do not know whether Wood kept the enslaved people on Pine Grove until he sold that plantation in 1850, or whether he immediately took them to Wilkinson County where he lived. We do not know whether he kept them in his possession or sold them.

We do not know whether Daniel was taken from Pine Grove vicinity and later returned, or whether he was sold to someone nearby who remained in that vicinity. Daniel may not have survived until 1870.

However, the 1880 census of Adams County, MS reveals another Esther-Daniel, mother-son combination. The combination bears the family name Collins from this younger Esther's husband, Samiel Collins, and they are living in the vicinity of the old Collins plantation Pine Grove-namely among families such as the Wrights, Boxleys, and Buchhannons who are living in the vicinity of Cranfield Road and sharecropping on Traveler's Rest plantation adjoining Pine Grove.

This younger Esther is listed as 30 years old in 1880, which would place date of birth around 1850. With the elder Esther's son born about 1823, the younger Esther is certainly a candidate to be a daughter of the older Daniel, especially when she also names one of her own sons, Daniel.

There are also other names in this family that suggest possible connections to Foster's Fields. The younger Esther's daughter Hannah bears the name of Abdul Rahman's son Simon's wife Hannah. A daughter, Cass Anna (Cassandra) bears the name of one of Thomas Foster's daughters, Cassandra, and Andrew was the name of Andrew Collins who is associated with Prince's daughter, Ferriby.

Only the names of Samiel's two older children, Carrie and Carroll Malbry, do not fit in the family tradition. They are listed as children, not step-children of Samiel Collins, and one of them was born in South Texas around 1870.

One might conjecture that Samiel and Esther may have both grown up bearing the name of Collins, and that about 1870 Samiel went to Texas and was working on a plantation owned by Malbry or that he had these children by a woman whose last name was Malbry. Samiel may have been in Texas in 1870, although he does not appear under either name in Texas or Mississippi in 1870.

After parting with the mother of the Malbrys, Samiel returned to Mississippi with his two children where he married Esther and used the name of Collins. This is only conjecture, but one of the many explanations of this confrontation of family names, none of which are very satisfying about why two of his children bear the name of Malbry.

We are unable to find the younger Esther under the name of Collins in 1870 or with a father named Daniel. It is of course possible that the younger Esther was not a descendant of Esther's son Daniel, but an Esther living in nearby Franklin County in 1870 because several young people of that age by the name of Esther appear in various families there.

However, with the combination of names being repeated, it seems more than coincidental given their location and family name. The younger Daniel, son of the younger Esther, continued the naming pattern with a daughter named Easter rather than Esther, and a son named Daniel, Jr.

Another one of the younger Daniel's daughters, Josephine Collins, married Isom Brown, and some of those descendants continue to live near Pine Grove on both Cranfield Road and on Duck Pond today. A different member of this family attended each of the gatherings of Abdul Rahman's potential descendants in 2002 and 2006.

Parker

Among the more unusual names of Esther's children was the name Parker. The name is rare in this vicinity in 1870, but there is only one Parker of his approximate age in the Natchez vicinity in 1870 – that is Parker Lyons who is found among a group of 23 people listed next to each other at Mt. Pleasant in Wilkinson County, MS, in 1870 – 13 of whom bear the last name Collins. (Mt. Pleasant was the name of one of the Trask-Ventress plantations whose extensive papers are available at the Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History.)

The following is from the 1870 census record for those 23 individuals:

1	1	George Collins	47
		Maggie A. Collins	50
		Richard Brown	21
		Maggie A. Brown	18
		Cemmy Collins	15
		Francis Collins	9
		Charlotte Walker	6
		Spencer Collins	5
		Rosana Collins	1
1	1	Parker Lyons	47
		Rachel Lyons	32
		Johanna Roy	15
		Nolan Lyons	12
		Mary E. Lyons	3
		John Lyons	1
1	1	Wyatt Collins	38
		Martha Collins	36
		Benjamin Scott	10
		Mary S. Collins	2
		Sophia Collins	3 mo.
1	1	Prince Collins	26
		Maggie A. Collins	23
		Willie Collins	

What leaps out from this list are four names which correspond to the names of Esther's children: Margaret (Maggie), Benjamin, Spencer and Parker. Only the name of Daniel is missing, and that name can be found back in Adams County near Pine Grove.

Furthermore, Collins was the married name of Mary Foster Collins, husband of William K. Collins, the owner of Pine Grove, to whom Esther and her children were allotted from the Estate of Thomas Foster. It is also the last name of 13 members of this group. In addition, the name Prince raises further questions about how he might fit into this group and where his name came from.

One of the questions which must be asked is how Parker obtained the name of Lyons, and how that name might have been acquired by one of Esther's children.

There is a Len Lyons family living next to the L.P. Hazlip family in Wilkinson County in 1870. Len and his children are all listed as "mulatto" (bi-racial). A John R. Lyons is prominent in Wilkinson County in the 1840s and is involved in land dealings in the vicinity of the Wm. Hazlip family property. Mrs. Wylie M. Wood was a Nancy Hazlip, and the Wood and Hazlip families were neighbors.

It is possible that Parker was sold to or took the name of Lyons from neighbors of the Hazlips and Wylie M. Wood, but found his way to Mt. Pleasant after the Civil War because he was aware of other family members living there. Parker was not a name found on any of the lists of enslaved people on the Trask-Ventress plantations.

Parker appears with a wife Rachel and four children in 1870. One named Johanna Roy apparently preceded their relationship, as did Nolan "Dunk" Lyons, b. 1858. There is also an even older son of Parker's named Parker Lyons, Jr. who like his father was sometimes referred to as "Pompey" Lyons. However, Mary Lyons, b. 1867 and John Lyons, b. 1869, were apparently born to their marriage after slavery. Rachel can be found on Mt. Pleasant plantation in the Trask-Ventress records.

Parker Sr.'s children grew up in the Mt. Pleasant vicinity, but his grandchildren were raised in southeastern Wilkinson County in the Whitestown vicinity. In the early 1900s, most of the descendants of this family migrated north to Coahoma County, MD in the Mississippi Delta around Clarksdale and Stovall.

Any African-American family named Lyons whose family comes from the Clarksdale vicinity may be descendants of Parker Lyons, although the name Lyons is also associated with a community adjacent to Clarksdale named Lyon—a name which preceded their arrival.

The Lyons name also has an association with Abdul Rahman: Dr. Cox's daughter, Aurora Deborah Cox, married a Dr. Joseph B. Lyons. She was the sister of William Rousseau Cox who continued to seek the freedom of Abdul Rahman after his father died. It is possible that Dr. Lyons also maintained an interest in the family of Abdul Rahman, and Parker might have been purchased by him or taken his surname.

Any family named Lyons from the Coahoma County, MS vicinity may well be able to trace their ancestry back to Parker Lyons. It then remains a question as to whether Parker Lyons could be anyone other than Esther's son Parker. The answer to that question may lie in how Parker Lyons came to marry Rachel on the Mt. Pleasant plantation west of Woodville. Had he originally gone there because of the presence of some other family member who was living there when slavery ended?

Margaret

Esther's daughter Margaret does not appear in the list of enslaved people on Pine Grove plantation when it was purchased by Wylie M. Wood in 1840, unless she was listed as "Mary about 20" which might have been short for 'Merica, or a misreading of "Marg." (Margaret's brother "Benjamin about 19", "Daniel about 17" and "Parker about 14" are listed near "Mary about 20" on the list. Spencer is absent).

In the U.S. Census of Wilkinson County in 1870 at Mt. Pleasant among a group of 23 seemingly related people in which Parker Lyons (the likely son of Esther) appears, a Margaret America Collins (50) is listed as the apparent wife of Prince Collins. Prince is the son of George and Margaret American (America Ann) Collins.

Margaret America might have been named after her future mother-in-law, but it is also possible that she might be the daughter of Esther's daughter, Margaret, given the presence of Parker Lyons (Esther's likely son) in this group.

The presence of the names Benjamin and Spencer among younger members of this group of 23 also raises the possibility that they were named after Esther's sons. However, enslaved people by the name of Benjamin, Spencer and Margaret were already on Mt. Pleasant plantation prior to the purchase of Pine Grove by Wylie M. Wood. In Margaret's case, it is possible that she arrived on the plantation prior to that purchase.

The descendants of Prince and Margaret America Collins include a great granddaughter, Clarketta Jarvis Collins, who appears in the documentary with some of her descendants. She was aware of her descent from Prince and Margaret America Collins because she remembered seeing them as a child. However, there had been no tradition of descent from an African prince handed down to her despite the presence of the name in the family.

Clarketta Jarvis married a Prince Collins who was likely named after great uncle Prince Collins, one of the children of Prince and Margaret America Collins. The name continued into future generations.

The lineage of Clarketta Collin's great grandfather Prince Collins goes back through his mother Margaret American to an African woman named "Zingo" who was living with George and Margaret American (America Ann) and their son Prince on Mt. Pleasant plantation as shown in the Trask-Ventress papers. That part of their African ancestry seems more certain.

At the time of the new writing of an article in the Natchez Area Family History Book (2004) referred to in the new addition of Prince Among Slaves by Dr. Terry Alford, this writer mistakenly believed that Margaret American was Esther's daughter and the mother of Margaret America, the wife of Prince. However, it has since become apparent from the Trask-Ventress papers that Prince was the son of George and Margaret American (America Ann) Collins.

Although the evidence that Prince's wife Margaret America is a granddaughter of Esther is now less convincing, the possibility that Margaret America was the daughter of Esther's daughter Margaret cannot be dismissed given the presence of Parker Lyons, Esther's likely son, in the group of 23.

To clarify the difference, which can be confusing with the similarity in names, a chart showing both the earlier and revised lines is attached.

PRINCE & MARGARET AMERICA COLLIN'S ANCESTRY

<u>???</u>	&	<u>???</u>	<u>???</u>	<u>Zingo</u>	<u>Esther</u> —(likely daughter of Abdul Rahman and Isabella)
(origin : unknown to Geo.)		(origin : unknown to Geo.)	(African) :	(African) :	/ : : : : :
<u>George Collins & Margaret American</u>		<u>Margaret</u>	<u>Benjamin</u>	<u>Daniel</u>	<u>Parker</u>
	:	/(America Ann)	?		<u>Spencer</u>
	:	/	?		
	:	/	?		
<u>Prince & Elvira</u>		<u>Prince & Maggie America Collins</u>			
<u>Holliman ? Jones</u>		<u>Collins</u> :	:		
?		:	:		
?		:	:		
<u>Willis & Charlotte</u>		<u>Willie Collins</u>		<u>Prince Collins</u>	
<u>Collins : Jones</u>		:			
:		:			
:		:			
<u>Jonas "Full" Collins</u>		<u>Bertha Collins m. Chalmers Jarvis</u>			
:		:			
:		:			
:		:			
		<u>Prince Collins m. Clarketta Jarvis</u>		/	
		:		/	= indicates disproven line of descent
		:		/	shown by the writer in the <u>Natchez</u>
		:			<u>Area Family History Book</u> (2004)
		<u>Prince Collins, Jr.</u>		:	
		:		:	= very probably line of descent
		:		:	
		:		:	
		<u>Prince Collins, III</u>		?	
				?	= possible line of descent
				?	

From the evidence found in the Trask-Ventress papers, Maggie America Collins, the wife of Prince Collins, is not as likely to be a descendant of Prince Abdul Rahman through his daughter, Esther, as it initially appeared because much of the collaborating circumstantial evidence no longer supports that claim.

That evidence included the presence of the names of four of Esther's children (Margaret, Parker, Benjamin and Spencer) among a small group of 23 people most of whom carried the surname of Esther's slaveholder, Wm. K. Collins, along with the presence of man named Prince who might have been the descendant of Esther's brother Prince because both families had been purchased by the same Wylie M. Wood of Wilkinson County.

We know from the Ventress-Trask papers that Margaret American was the mother of Prince, not his wife Maggie, and that she was most likely the daughter of an African named Zingo, not Esther, and we also know that the name Collins might well have come from another Collins family in Wilkinson County.

However, the central circumstance which led to Maggie A. Collins's consideration as a granddaughter of Esther remains, namely the presence of Parker who still appears to be a descendant of Esther, although some of the collaborating evidence of his own descent in the form of the presence of a likely sister of the right age named Margaret has also vanished.

Nevertheless, Margaret did not appear by that name in the 1840 purchase of Pine Grove by Wylie M. Wood. She might have been sold by Wm. K. Collins to the Trask-Ventress or Wilkinson Co. Collins family prior to Wylie M. Wood's purchase of Pine Grove, and Maggie America, the wife of Prince, could be her daughter. There are a large number of Margarets among the enslaved people held by the Ventress family, and she might be one of them. It is no longer a strong case, but it is not beyond the realm of possibility, especially given Parker's presence there.

Spencer

Esther's son Spencer was not listed among the enslaved people at Pine Grove plantation who were purchased by Wylie M. Wood of Wilkinson County in 1840. Spencer was always listed last among Esther's children, although his valuation exceeded that of the next oldest son Parker who was born about 1826.

There was a Civil War soldier in Wilkinson County named Spencer Collins who was born about 1819-20. He lived on the Mt. Pleasant plantation, but died of smallpox shortly after enlisting in the 6th Colored Heavy Artillery at Vicksburg. One of his daughters was named Ester or Easter, but it seems unlikely that Spencer Collins was Esther's son Spencer because of his older age.

It is not known what happened to Esther's son named Spencer.

Benjamin

Benjamin was the oldest of Esther's known children and was listed as 19 years old in the purchase of Pine Grove by Wylie M. Wood in 1840. This would place his birth around 1820-21.

In 1870, there is a Ben Collins, 57, with a wife Nancy, 30, and four children: Walter, 9, Daniel, 6, Russel, 11, and Mary, 11 mo. in Amite County "between Jackson & Woodville Road". However, given his birth around 1813, it seems unlikely that he is the same man, although one of his sons is named "Daniel".

It is not known what happened to Esther's son named Benjamin.

THE CHILDREN OF SUSY, KATE, PHILLIS AND KEZZIAH

The children of these potential daughters were discussed previously, and with the notable exception of Susy, it is unlikely that descendants of these women will ever be found living today.

THE OTHER CHILDREN OF ISABELLA

When Isabella arrived at Foster's Fields, she came with three children: Jacob, b. abt. 1783-84 in Edgefield District in South Carolina, Anaky, b. abt. 1788-89 also in Edgefield District, S.C., and Limerick, b. abt. 1791-82 in Natchez District, MS.

It is not certain that Jacob was her own son because her age was listed as 25 in her sale to Thomas Foster, putting her birth at round 1768-69. The much later Liberian census of 1843 put her age at 80 placing her birth around 1763.

There is a Jake who was allotted by the Foster Estate to Foster's son James. James shortly thereafter killed his wife, but escaped a mob and vanished. The fate of this Jake and/or Isabella's son Jacob is not known.

The name Anaky is not found in the Estate of Thomas Foster, but Limerick is found with a wife Bidy and a child, Bella (Isabella). Limerick's family was allotted to Cassandra Foster Speed in Thomas Foster, Sr.'s estate. Cassandra died in 1831, Limerick's fate is not known. Bella (\$400) is listed next to Bartlett (\$575) in the distribution of Thomas Foster Sr.'s estate to Cassandra Speed. They may be mates.

THE CHILDREN OF SAMBA & CELIA

Samba and Celia his wife, and Andy, Solomon and Little Samba, their children are all given to Thomas Foster, Jr. Their valuations in the distribution are as follows:

Samba	15
Celia	-
Andy	575
Solomon	550
Lit. Samba	375
	1,515

On May 13, 1830, Thomas Foster Jr. conveyed 10 enslaved people to his brother Levi, and among them is Andy, age 23. In Levi Foster's estate it is noted that Andy died in possession of Adelard Demaret, the brother of Zeide Demaret Foster and the second husband of Susan Carson, the first wife of Thomas Foster, Jr.

Little Samba and Solomon are not found again.

Celia and Samba are found in Sarah Foster's Estate inventory in 1837 valued at \$100 and \$900 respectively, but not in the later distribution of her estate, probably because it was determined that they belonged to the heirs of Thomas Jr., but were kept at Foster's Fields by Sarah on their behalf.

Their further fate is not known. It is possible that one of Sarah's other daughters kept them on behalf of the heirs of Thomas Jr. It is possible that the guardian of the heirs took them at this point.

DESCENDANTS OF THE FOSTERS

The contrast between the "shape" of the known family histories of Prince Abdul Rahman bin Ibrahima and his slaveholder, Thomas Foster, Sr. is quite striking: The genealogy of Abdul Rahman's family is well developed for a number of generations in Africa and for a few generations here in the United States before it is swallowed up in the anonymity of slavery.

Even the great notoriety which Abdul Rahman received near the end of his life did not result in those who believed they were his descendants handing down any more than the idea of their descent from African royalty. Even where the family line was well-preserved in Liberia, it did not reach back to Abdul Rahman and his origins in neighboring Futa Jallon.

In contrast to the detailed knowledge we now have of the early overseas history of the family of Abdul Rahman, the Foster families of Pine Ridge vicinity have only a very sketchy knowledge of their history prior to their arrival in the Natchez District, and little is known by them about any overseas connections.

However, the Fosters have made a significant effort to compile their early history at Pine Ridge north of Natchez, and in Louisiana:

The known origins of their oldest ancestor in the Pine Ridge vicinity, Mrs. Mary Foster and three succeeding generations of Fosters are outlined in a booklet entitled Descendants of Mary Foster, Natchez District Pioneer, compiled by Nan Foster Schuchs and Jacquelyn Foster Weiss, a 3rd edition of which was published in 2005.

A superbly organized and illustrated genealogy entitled A Family Montage, Beign the Families Kramer, Frère, Foster, Marsh, Gates and Allied Families by Thomas Frère Kramer, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., F.A.C.S. was published by The Center for Louisiana Studies of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana, in 2002.

Dr. Kramer's publication includes details of the family of Levi Foster, the son of Thomas & Sarah Smith Foster, from their parents to the present day. Members of this family include two Governors of Louisiana who are descendants of Thomas Foster, Sr., the slaveholder of Prince Abdul Rahman, and several paragraphs are devoted to the Prince's story in Dr. Kramer's sketch of Thomas Foster, Sr.

AFRICAN AMERICAN DESCENDANTS OF THE FOSTERS
ATTENDING THE REUNION OF ABDUL RAHMAN'S DESCENDANTS

African-American descendants of the Fosters have not been recorded in any of the genealogies of the descendants of the white Foster families. Not only was inter-racial marriage forbidden until recent years, but mention of these inter-racial liaisons was taboo for many years in white families. As one Foster descendant put it, "They were not of the manor born." Today, little documentation is available.

The offspring of such unions were nevertheless often told of their mixed heritage and this knowledge was carried down in family stories from generation to generation. At the 2006 reunion of Abdul Rahman's descendants at Foster's Fields, one family in attendance claimed their descent from a white man named Albert Foster who was a descendant of the large family of Thomas Foster's brother, James Foster.

This family had no known descent from Abdul Rahman, but claimed kinship to the other descendants of Stewart and Susie Collins Foster at the Reunion through Stewart Foster. Stewart is described in the 1870 census as "mulatto" or bi-racial. Stewart was the son of Barbara Calvit, and his father is believed by John Foster to also be a descendant of James & Eliza Smith Foster.

John Foster is the one who first introduced Artemus Gaye to his Foster cousins, the descendants of Stewart and Susie Collins Foster, whose likely line of descent from Abdul Rahman goes back through the Collins side of the family to Abdul Rahman's granddaughter, Ferriby.

CONCLUSIONS

Of the hundreds, if not thousands, of likely descendants of Abdul Rahman living in the United States today, have we found at least some of them? In almost every case of potential descendants, some significant doubts can be raised about their line of possible descent.

However, if these are not his descendants, who and where are they today, and what happened to them? Indeed, the largest contingent seems to have been held at one time or another by Wylie M. Wood. Did he sell them, or keep them? If he kept them, where did they go when they obtained their freedom, and by what surnames are they known?

Certainly some must have remained in or returned to the vicinity of Pine Ridge and Foster's Fields. The possible descendants of Ferriby are an illustration of one such set of families. Others may have remained or returned to the Pine Grove vicinity. Daniel's descendants are illustrative of that.

Some may have been left in Wilkinson County. The descendants of Parker Lyons who moved to the Mississippi Delta in northwestern Mississippi, and then left there in the 20s are such an example. The descendants of Margaret America Collins, wife of Prince Collins, and the possible descendants of the some of Prince's and Bridget's children living in western Wilkinson County are illustrative of these possibilities.

Others may have arrived at freedom in the southern parishes of Louisiana. The families of Charles, Susie and Violet are examples of these, even though we have yet to find any potential descendants living today.

Others may have simply vanished to the winds with westward migration----the descendants associated with Angus McNeil are examples of that.

Artemus Gay's Liberian family is to-date the most likely known example of living descendants of Abdul Rahman. Seven generations from Abdul Rahman & Isabella, he carries less than 1% of Abdul Rahman's DNA (1/128th). Although attraction of likes may have brought similar-looking people together, it would be difficult to see more than a glimpse of Abdul Rahman in the feature of present day descendants.

Each of the families found today also has distinct traditions apart from their potential relationship to Abdul Rahman. The Susie Collins Foster family not only has a tradition of descent from African royalty, but has family Bibles carrying their family back to slavery times.

The Daniel Collins family has a fan chart of their family tree showing over one hundred relatives. The Clarketta Collins family has a distinct set of names taking them back to Prince and America Collins in Slavery times, and from research in the Trask-Ventress papers, they also have an African ancestor who is almost certainly named "Zingo".

In Addition, there is circumstantial, but not conclusive evidence linking each of these families to Abdul Rahman and Isabella. This may be the closest one can come to likely descendants in Mississippi. However, there remains the possibility that living descendants of Parker Lyons may be found. There is also the possibility that living descendants of William Foster, the son of Bridget, Abdul Rahman's granddaughter in St. May Parish may be found as well.

It is also possible that some other families in the United States with a tradition of descent from Abdul Rahman can provide some plausible line of descent that will bridge the gaps in the census records and the 40-year gap during slavery times between the Estate records of Thomas Foster, Sr. and the 1870 census.

Foster's Fields is but a memory with only two graves of the slaveholder and his daughter Cassandra attesting to its history, as well as a home built partly from the timbers of the previous home the Fosters lived in. The site of the slave quarters overlooking St. Catherine's Creek might yet benefit from an archeological dig despite years of disturbance in that area by a nearby railroad track.

One of the families also claims descent from Thomas Foster's mother through her son James. This claim cannot be confirmed by written records, but it remains displayed in their family name "Foster", in family tradition, and in some circumstantial evidence.

It is the nature of many families that as time passes, the known history begins to fade. No one can replace life past. Sixth cousins are but quaint reminders of that past unless it is bolstered by living ties, and that is the distance that family members in Artemus Gaye's generation sometimes have to each other.

Yet the closing paragraphs of Dr. Alford's book remain to tease us to search for the elusive strands of his DNA among present-day survivors of the hard-fought battle for survival.

Abdul Rahman's descendants are still among us, and although we may not always recognize them as such, and we may not always be certain as to who they are, they have hallowed this ground on which they lived and labored.

In Memory of Robert Lee "Struck" Gaylor

(1948-2004)

Who tried to remember the stories told to him

About his ancestors while trying to forget