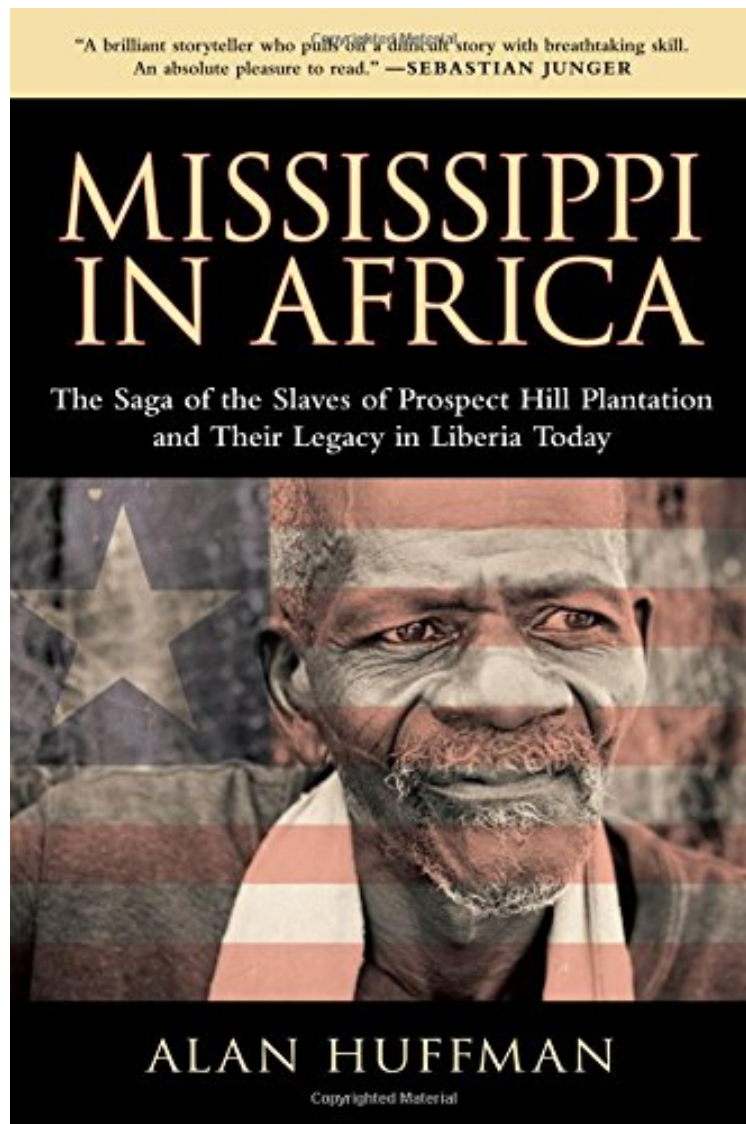


[Download] Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and Their Legacy in Liberia Today

## Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and Their Legacy in Liberia Today

Alan Huffman

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**Alan Huffman : Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and Their Legacy in Liberia Today** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and Their Legacy in Liberia Today:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Views to ComprehendBy fredric leighI read an earlier edition

several years ago. Later I gave books to three Kru men from the area \_ they appreciated the gift and what it meant for their understanding. I bought this edition for a Kru woman who knows these three Kru men. She did not want to read it. I do not know why. Perhaps her suffering during the war years affected her differently. Now I have an older and newer version of the story. (smiles) Not much was new. Settling in Liberia and the subsequent dominance of the settler class is not the most profound story in this book. That reality is told well elsewhere. What is shamefully profound and still telling today is the account of family members who wanted to ignore the will and oppose the daughter that they might profit from enslavement and hold on to privilege. Redistricting, voter ID initiatives are the legacy of the shameful. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Awesome slave history from Africa to The U.S. And back to Liberia, Africa and back to the U.S.- must read By Philip Thompson Outstanding historical perspective of one man's ownership of slaves in Mississippi and his intent to free them so that they could emigrate to Liberia. One greedy member of his family took legal action to discredit the Will. The migration to Liberia was not well planned and filled with significant issues threatening the survival of the immigrants. Just an awesome story! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wow! just Wow! By Joell now live in this part of Mississippi and was very familiar with all the places around Port Gibson and Jefferson County. This book has filled in so many blanks and enriched my knowledge of the area. I wasn't able to put it down. I am reading it for the second time now. I love southern writers! so easy to read yet still rich in detail!

When wealthy Mississippi cotton planter Isaac Ross died in 1836, his will decreed that his plantation, Prospect Hill, should be liquidated and the proceeds from the sale be used to pay for his slaves' passage to the newly established colony of Liberia in western Africa. Ross's heirs contested the will for more than a decade, prompting a deadly revolt in which a group of slaves burned Ross's mansion to the ground. But the will was ultimately upheld. The slaves then emigrated to their new home, where they battled the local tribes and built vast plantations with Greek Revival-style mansions in a region the Americo-Africans renamed "Mississippi in Africa." In the late twentieth century, the seeds of resentment sown over a century of cultural conflict between the colonists and tribal people exploded, begetting a civil war that rages in Liberia to this day. Tracking down Prospect Hill's living descendants, deciphering a history ruled by rumor, and delivering the complete chronicle in riveting prose, journalist Alan Huffman has rescued a lost chapter of American history whose aftermath is far from over.

.com For most Americans, Liberia is a remote place in a distant continent with no connection to their daily lives. Few of us know that in the early 19th century, it was, in fact, an American colony, and to this day, contains communities called Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland founded by freed American slaves and populated by descendants of those slaves. Author Alan Huffman tells this story in his remarkable *Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and Their Legacy in Liberia Today*. The book begins as the author's attempt to flush out the details of a fascinating Mississippi family story about a prominent plantation owner's (Isaac Ross) desire to repatriate his slaves in Africa, but ends up being a complex and sensitive exploration of the legacy of slavery in the American South and Liberia. As Huffman traces Ross' descendants and those of his family's repatriated slaves, an intricate story of displacement, cultural identity, immigration, oppression, and racial politics unfolds. Ironically, when America's freed slaves immigrated to Africa, they brought with them the only social paradigm they knew, that of the Southern plantation. Overcoming severe hardship, they recreated that culture, and by the time Liberia became Africa's first independent republic in 1847, the minority American settlers had become the country's ruling class. Huffman adeptly shows how this legacy contributes to the current crisis in Liberia. *Mississippi in Africa* is at once historical and contemporary, personal and universal, local and global. As Huffman indicates, slavery "has existed throughout Africa's recorded history, and still has not entirely passed from the scene." Its pernicious consequences continue to affect the lives of millions caught in the devastating and endless civil war in Liberia, just as they continue to impact American life. Yet, Huffman repeatedly shows that this extraordinary story cannot be simply reduced to a polemical rendering of white oppression of blacks. It is so much more about the powerful versus the powerless. Thus, Huffman presents the subtleties that have shaped both the politics and human relations in this story with profound humanity and nuance. --Silvana Tropea From Publishers Weekly A former staff writer for the Jackson, Miss., *Clarion-Ledger*, Huffman tells two tales here. One concerns the life, legacy and legatees of Isaac Ross (1760-1836), "the man responsible for sending the largest group of freed-slave emigrants to the colony of Liberia." The other combines travelogue and reportage of current events as Huffman seeks their descendants in present-day Liberia. The former is a good yarn, but the latter makes for a plodding read as the diligent author reports all. Ross's will stipulated that on his daughter's death, his slaves should be freed and his Mississippi estate sold to pay for their transit to Africa. The daughter worked toward this goal; her cousin, against it. From probate and chancery to appellate courts and legislative halls, the case moved in Dickensian manner before the will was finally put into effect in the late 1850s. A suspicious fire and a death occurred at the house, but the emigration proceeded apace. In his sleuthing, Huffman meanders a bit, sometimes from one historic house to another or from one repatriate's letter to another and frequently from one person he meets along the way to another. A little less Huffman would have done

more justice to the Ross story. Alternatively, a little less Ross might have freed Huffman to go ahead and write the account of his Liberian trip, one where the reader didn't have to wonder where al Qaeda and the Mississippi state flag controversy fit with Isaac Ross, his repatriated slaves and their descendants. Yet the idea behind this book - the who, what, when, how, and why of this body of retransported slaves and its effect upon Liberia today - is fascinating enough to keep readers going. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist This book was reviewed from galley proofs in our August 2002 issue under the title Prospect Hill, but it was never published. Now Putnam/Gotham has scheduled it for a January 2004 release with a new title. -- Ed. This is an incredible tale of two Mississippis--one in the American South, the other in Liberia. Isaac Ross, a wealthy plantation owner in the 1840s, created a furor in the family and among other slaveholders by providing in his will for the emancipation and repatriation of his slaves in Africa. Like other supporters of the American Colonization Society, Ross was motivated more by concerns that blacks--who would inevitably be freed--were dangerous to American society than by altruism. With inadequate support, the repatriated slaves begin a settlement that re-creates the American slave culture they've left behind, with themselves in the master position. Ross and his will set in motion 165 years of tangled family history and race relations on two continents. Based on research and interviews with descendants--both black and white, American and Liberian--Huffman reveals how the effects of slavery reverberate in modern Mississippi politics as well as continued conflicts in Liberia. Vanessa Bush Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved