

INTRODUCTION

“LORD, Lord! Yes indeed, plenty of slaves uster run away. Why dem woods was full o’ ’em chile,” recalled Arthur Greene of Virginia.¹ He knew that some stayed there for a few days only but he also knew that his friend Pattin and his family had lived in the woods for fifteen years until “Lee’s surrender.” Like them, over more than two centuries men, women, and children made the Southern wilderness their home. They hid in the mountains of Virginia and the low swamps of South Carolina; they stayed in the neighborhood or paddled their way to secluded places; they buried themselves underground or erected “snug little habitations.”² They were Africans two days off the slave ship and people who intimately knew the geographic and social environment, its constraints, and the way to navigate it. They were not “truants” who had absconded for a short while, to rest, avoid a beating or recover from one, take a break, or visit relatives and friends on neighboring plantations. They were not runaways making their way through the wilds to reach a Southern city or a free state or to cross international borders to find freedom under a foreign power. The people whose stories are the subject of this book went to the Southern woods to *stay*.

Although it is based on scores of cases, *Slavery’s Exiles* neither attempts to relate all documented instances of marronage nor is it about all maroons. The individuals and groups studied here shared three key characteristics: they settled in the wilderness, lived there in secret, and were not under any form of direct control by outsiders.³ These criteria, which

seem to encompass all maroons, do not. The well-known maroons of Spanish Florida, for example, are absent from these pages because they were officially recognized as free—even if in a limited way—by Spain who offered sanctuary to runaways from the British colonies and later the United States. People who settled among American Indians in their territories are not covered either for the same reason. They lived in villages and towns and not the wilderness, where their hosts openly accepted them and controlled them to various degrees.

This book also excludes individuals and communities that some scholars define as maroons, based on a broad definition of marronage as the act of fleeing enslavement. In this vein historian Steven Hahn notes that black enclaves in the North, which attracted new runaways and gave rise to autonomous leadership, social structures, institutions, and cultural practices are “historically specific variants of the broad phenomenon of maroons.”⁴ But by lumping together divergent experiences, we run the risk of flattening each group’s specificities and of obscuring the maroon experience (as defined here) in favor of better-known forms of resistance. Moreover, this approach hides key differences between maroons and runaways who lived in black enclaves. The latter refused enslavement but not the larger society, which they wanted to be a part of even if they knew it could only be at its periphery. Although they organized to challenge them, runaways and free blacks continued to live under the discriminatory laws of white society, still subservient and controlled.

The experience of the people hidden in the wilds—the maroons examined in this book—could not have been more different. Autonomy was at the heart of their project and exile the means to realize it. The need for foolproof concealment, the exploitation of their natural environment, and their stealth raids on farms and plantations were at the very core of their lives. Secrecy and the particular ecology of their refuges forced them to devise specific ways to occupy the land and to hide within it. Negotiating and manipulating their landscape dictated the types of dwellings they could erect, when they could walk outside, or light a fire. They determined if, where, and how much land they could cultivate, what

kinds of animals they could keep, how they got weapons and clothes, and what types of interaction they could have with the world they had left behind.

AN UNDERSTUDIED PHENOMENON

While numerous books have been devoted to the maroons of South and Central America and the Caribbean, none focus on the Thirteen Colonies and the United States. The first historian to seriously tackle the issue was Herbert Aptheker who published the classic article, “Maroons within the Present Limits of the United States” in 1939, and “Additional Data on American Maroons”—which relates to one case—in 1947.⁵ Aptheker’s research was groundbreaking because it established the existence of maroons, but it did not describe or analyze their experience.

At the other end of the spectrum, some post-Aptheker historians have denied the reality of marronage in the United States. For Michael Mullin, “The absence of a maroon dimension in the South, a serious loss for Southern slaves, is symbolized by the emphasis in studies of resistance on such individuals as Harriet Tubman.”⁶ Writing about the Southern maroons—with the exception of those in Florida, whom he recognized as genuine—Eugene Genovese affirmed, they “typically huddled in small units and may be called ‘maroons’ only as a courtesy.” Many, he claimed, “degenerated into wild desperadoes who preyed on anyone, black, white or red, in their path.” Southerners, who reserved the terminology maroons for the people of Jamaica and Suriname, were precursors in the denial of the American maroons’ existence. They called the people in their midst outliers, or simply and much more often, runaways and banditti; and in the same spirit never called maroon settlements by their names or gave them any, thus negating their very existence.⁷

In the 1990s Gilbert C. Din and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall each devoted one chapter in works on larger issues to the community led by St. Malo in 1780s Louisiana, and John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger covered the maroon dimension in *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* in a short section titled “Collective Resistance.” More recently, Timothy Lockley has compiled a well-researched sourcebook of records

and newspaper articles on the maroons of South Carolina, and American maroons have also appeared in swamp, environmental, and literary studies that focus on the interaction of wilderness dwellers and nature, and connections between the representation of swamps and maroons in literature. Alvin O. Thompson's *Flight to Freedom: African Runaways and Maroons in the Americas* is a review, synthesis, and analysis of recent works "on the main Maroon states and colonies," which explains why it centers on Brazil, Jamaica, and Suriname and why the United States appear only very briefly.⁸

The absence of large colonies and the lack of "maroon wars," both thought of as characteristics of marronage, may explain why American maroons have for the most part remained under the radar. It is telling that only those of Florida, who lived in large communities and fought in the Seminole Wars, have generated attention and come to mind whenever one mentions maroons in the United States.⁹ The overall invisibility of the American maroons thus seems to be due to restrictive definitions of marronage that do not correspond to the reality, whether in North America or in the rest of the hemisphere.

BEYOND PETIT AND GRAND

For the past few decades, when and wherever marronage has been studied, it has generally fallen into two neat categories: petit and grand. Gabriel Debien created and popularized these concepts in his 1966 article, "Le marronage aux Antilles françaises au XVIIIe siècle."¹⁰ "Planters distinguished two types of marronage," he asserted, "Grand marronage was, in the true sense, flight from the plantation with no intention of ever returning," while absences of a few days were called petit marronage. Debien's categories have been tweaked over the years. To grand marronage have been appended notions of guerilla activity, high numbers, and long distance and the terminology has become synonymous with large, long-lived, warring communities in the Caribbean and South America despite the fact that, as anthropologist and historian Richard Price has remarked, "Known variously as palenques, quilombos, mocambos, cumbes, ladeiras,

or mambises, these new societies ranged from tiny bands that survived less than a year to powerful states encompassing thousands of members and surviving for generations or even centuries.”¹¹ Alvin Thompson notes that since most slaves escaped individually and collective flight was rare, it is perhaps more useful to speak of individual and collective marronage in order to recognize the lonely deserters.¹²

The study of marronage in the United States has led me to reconsider the various definitions and classifications used so far, and to develop a more expansive vision to better reflect what happened on the ground. It is clear that neither numbers, distance, longevity, nor guerilla-type activities are the most significant factors that define marronage, yet these criteria are often applied collectively or singularly as researchers see fit. Such practices prevent one from noticing, let alone understanding, the experiences of a large number of maroons: those who lived, individually and collectively, not far away but on the periphery of farms, plantations, and cities. Contemporary documents refer to these people as runaways or outliers, but neither term takes their specificity into account. Some of the men and women who lived behind the plantations were not technically “runaways” because they settled right where they were or went back to their homeplace, still on owners’ or former owners’ property. Their particular experience needs to be described by a new terminology. I call them “borderland maroons.” As is manifest here, borderlands is taken in its most basic sense: it means the wild land that bordered the farms and plantations and the cities and towns.

The other terminology used in this book is “hinterland maroons,” which refers mostly to communities—whatever their size—that settled in areas further away than the borderlands. Their main characteristic was that they were secluded and hard to reach, not primarily because of distance but because of the difficulty of the terrain. Thus, within the larger definition of the maroons who are the focus of this study—using wilderness, secrecy, and self-determination as parameters—geography helps bring to light the whole range of maroon life that evolved in what I call the “maroon landscape.”

THE MAROON LANDSCAPE

Maroons are commonly imagined as occupying small perimeters deeply hidden in swamps and woods, and as detached from the surrounding slave territory as possible. But marronage is better apprehended, explained, and understood as being anchored in and making use of interconnected areas within the larger landscape. Only when viewed from that geographical perspective can its true scope and importance be uncovered.

When applied to the study of slavery, geography has been an enlightening device that has revealed the existence of a slavery landscape, slave landscape, plantations landscape, and swamp landscape.¹³ The various studies geography has inspired have offered new ways of understanding the world of the men and women whose lives were constrained by it and whose work transformed it. They have also brought to light the manner in which they appropriated the land, creating in it their own spaces of culture and resistance. But absent from this geography, although it was well trodden and of singular importance in resistance, is the “maroon landscape” that simultaneously touched on others, overlapped with some, and was to some degree separated from all the others.

Studies have shown that while there were variations due to different owners’ wealth, as well as the terrain and type of crops grown, the general landscape of the plantations was made up of three main sections. The most tightly controlled consisted of the so-called Big House, built on high and dry ground, close to the river landing or the main road. Adjacent were its dependences: the kitchen, dairy, carriage house, stable, smokehouse, laundry, and the domestics’ quarters. It was a world of stringent social and racial boundaries, under lock and key, where everything and everybody had to be in their assigned place. Below and behind, as an overt symbol of their supposed inferiority and expected submission, lay the sphere of the enslaved, the “quarters”: the cabins, the family gardens, hog pens and chicken coops, when allowed, and on larger estates, the mess hall and the “hospital.” Cabins were usually placed in neat rows along a street—they were occasionally scattered in clusters in the fields on very large estates—an imposed arrangement that reflected

a European sense of control and order.¹⁴ Their close proximity one to the other was not conducive to concealment, not even to privacy. Run-down and cramped, the quarters were the centers of African and African American life, the places where culture was maintained and created, where knowledge, hope, love, and despair were shared. They were of course completely open to overseers, planters, patrollers, and militia who could—and by law had to—search them at will.

Beyond was the work ground: the blacksmith and the carpenter shops, the mule barn, the cow house, the fields, and the pastures. On large holdings, quarters and work areas could be located far from the Main House. A 1742 map of John Carter's *Shirley* plantation in Virginia shows that the distance between these two sections was about a mile. On the sugar estate *Laura* in Louisiana, the last of sixty-nine cabins stood four miles from the mansion. As anthropologist John M. Vlach has observed, enslaved men and women "were under control but they were not totally coerced by that control because, while they were being held down, they were also being held out and away from the center of authority."¹⁵

Behind the Big House, the cabins and the fields were woods, bayous, marshes, swamps, pocosins (palustrine wetlands), and creeks, some of which belonged to the farms and plantations; land still undeveloped that provided game, firewood, and timber and that could be cleared, dried, and exploited. To planters and overseers, these marginal lands were untamed, out of control, savage, dark, and mysterious, just like the "negroes and other slaves," whom the preamble of the 1712 South Carolina slave code described as having "barbarous, wild, savage natures."¹⁶ It is, for example, in one of these areas that a group of men dubbed "daring banditti" had established their "*sculking [sic] quarters.*" Two had been seen in the summer of 1808 and hotly pursued, but they had made their escape "into a thick and almost impenetrable underwood." It may seem that they lived deep in the forest, but their camp was located between "Rich Will's mansion house, and Mr. Strider's mill" near Leetown, West Virginia.¹⁷

To the men and women in the quarters, the borderlands were concurrently wild and social. At night and on Sundays, or whenever they had finished their daily assignments, men could exert their talents as hunters

of raccoons, opossums, squirrels, birds, ducks, alligators, and rabbits. With their traps, snares, fire, wooden boxes, blowguns, and occasionally dogs, some became providers for their families of perhaps as much as half the meat they consumed.¹⁸

From the shore, or the dugout canoes they made with the tree trunks they felled in the backwoods, families gathered oysters, turtles, terrapins, and crabs, and fished with poles, nets, weirs, and traps.¹⁹ Depending on farmers' and planters' acquiescence, they kept pigs, sheep, and occasionally cattle there and they could also have their own gardens. In Georgia, Charles Ball worked in a plot a mile and a half away from the quarters.²⁰ In the borderlands, men and women gathered the herbs, barks, and roots that formed the basis of their medicinal remedies. They collected black moss to fill mattresses, and sea grass and bark to make baskets for their own use and for sale. Some ventured quite far, like Ball, who had "become well acquainted with the woods and swamps for several miles round [his] plantation."²¹ The secret paths men used to circulate without a pass, as they illicitly visited potential mates or their wives and children, crisscrossed the borderlands up or down to neighbors' plantations. Natural clearings were gathering places to pray and listen to liberating sermons, or barbecue hogs and cows. Borderlands were spaces of freedom that provided what enslaved people were denied elsewhere: autonomy, mobility, enterprise, a sense of physical security, freedom from scrutiny, control over their time and movement, and access to varied foods. As historian S. Max Edelson stresses, "Planters tried to impose a hard line of separation between plantations and wilderness, but slaves opened and inhabited the spaces in between."²²

It was behind the farms and plantations that people recuperated after a beating or escaped the most debilitating cadences of the crop cycles. But it was also where others settled, determined to stay. The maroons inhabited the fluid landscape of the borderlands that shifted with the tides and was remodeled by the floods and the droughts, and the clearing and drying of lands for cultivation. The men and women who made it their home can be called "borderland maroons." They stood at the intersection

of three worlds. One was their refuge, another the white-controlled territory of the fields, the Big House outbuildings, and sometimes the Big House itself. The third was the physical and social terrain carved out by the enslaved community, from the quarters to the neighboring plantations and farms. To be successful, maroons needed to build and maintain a symbiotic relation with these three geographical and social nodes. Hidden during the day, they cautiously appropriated the plantation grounds at night, walking from the borderlands to the quarters; and up to the dairy, the smokehouse and the kitchen on whose supplies they largely depended for survival. They intimately knew, and night after night, year after year traversed the entire map that they transformed into a space of interdependence, networks, and exchange.

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With time, cities, farms, and plantations superimposed their ever-increasing geography of cleared grounds and fields upon part of the Southern land. As South Carolina Lt. Governor William Bull remarked in 1770, many large swamps that offered “inaccessible shelter for deserting slaves and wild beasts” had been drained and planted with rice.²³ Yet this manmade environment was still surrounded by dense forests and/or wetlands and the sight of vast swathes of wild land was often surprising to Northerners. One traveler describing the region in the 1850s wrote, “it abounds with interminable swamps, impenetrable cane brakes, and inaccessible everglades. The safe and secure hiding place, for Indians, run away slaves; . . . there is a most luxurious growth of canes, shrubs, vines, creepers, briars . . . forming a dense brake or jungle.”²⁴ Lewis W. Paine, a white man who spent six years in jail for trying to help a maroon escape from Georgia, noted that maroons often stayed in the woods “for years” thanks to the natural cover offered by the thick vegetation. “There are large tracts of land,” he wrote, “covered with heavy timber, containing not only deep and almost impenetrable swamps, but caves, holes, shelving rocks and banks. In these they secrete themselves during the daytime, venturing abroad only by night.”²⁵

Past the borderlands, further away from the seat of white power, maroon communities, sometimes of several dozen individuals, settled in the secluded zones of the hinterland. They chose spaces whose topography offered good cover, vantage points for sentries, closeness to a source of clean water, and adequate soil to grow crops. Not only did these places have to be hard to reach, but they also had to provide easy access to the plantations and towns where some items continued to be traded or stolen. Therefore, seclusion, not distance, was in most cases the determining factor in the establishment of a settlement in the hinterland.

Borderlands and hinterlands formed the “maroon landscape,” a vast area whose several parts were connected by secret paths, discreet trails, and waterways navigated under cover of night and whose outer, intangible limits reached, dangerously, into the plantations and cities. Situated miles apart, borderlands and hinterlands were not exclusive. Some maroons settled in the borderlands and did not venture elsewhere; but others migrated to the hinterland, and then returned to the borderlands. Hinterland maroons sometimes moved to the borderlands before going back to their secluded settlements. These maroon migrations were complex, especially for large groups. At the point of departure, the migrants had to collect enough food for the journey and the days ahead. They had to establish a safe itinerary that would take them through the woods, and sometimes across rivers and creeks. Their travel had to be done at night and they had to find secure spots where a dozen or more people could safely rest during the day. At the point of destination, they needed to locate a space with adequate hunting and gathering prospects, and easy access to farms and plantations; and they had to build a new network of complicity. Each relocation, whether at the borderlands or in the hinterland, was a jump into the unknown. Some maroon groups succeeded in establishing camps in several counties, not a small achievement.

The maroon landscape as a whole encompassed the slaves’ landscape, what historian Rhys Isaac has termed their “alternative territorial system” comprised of personal gardens, paths, trails, meeting spots, granaries, and storehouses clandestinely “visited.”²⁶ Maroons used these trails, searched the same outbuildings for food and supplies, and went up to the quarters

to get their share of their relatives' vegetables. But whereas their landscape covered the whole map of slave territory—official and secret—parts of the maroons' own land—especially the hinterland—remained unknown to most people on the plantations. Africans added another dimension to this secret landscape. As some attempted to return to their homelands, they embarked on clandestine journeys through the wilds in order to get to the ultimate place of autonomy, outside white control and power. The most remote border of the maroon landscape was Africa.

The maroons' landscape was a place of exile whose settlers sought not only freedom but also self-determination. It was a dynamic site of empowerment, migrations, encounters, communication, exchange, solidarity, resistance, and entangled stories. It was also, of course, a contested terrain that slaveholders, overseers, drivers, slave hunters, dogs, militias, and patrollers strove to control and frequently invaded. Still, it was a space of movement, independence, and reinvention where new types of lives were created and evolved; where networks were built and solidified, and where solidarity expressed itself in concrete ways that rendered the maroons' alternative way of life possible.

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

This social history of the maroons has a wide span; it focuses on Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Louisiana, with occasional forays into other colonies and states. This regional approach can vividly retrace the maroons' experience because it conforms to the reality on the ground: maroons moved around the South; the maroon landscape was not contained by county, colony, state, and international lines and borders. On the contrary, maroons used them to their advantage, crossing and recrossing them as needed. This very "appropriation" of various spaces was an intrinsic part of their experience.

Slavery's Exiles also has a long temporal scope—the entire slavery period—and is organized thematically rather than chronologically because its focus is on the maroons' individual and communal experience. Their world is at the center and the rest of Southern society—black and white—at its periphery. Viewed from that perspective, outside events

were not overwhelmingly significant because the inescapable reality that superseded everything else and made many external factors almost inconsequential was that the maroons' experience rested on their remaining invisible no matter what the circumstances were. This was true in the 1600s, continued to be true during the Revolutionary War and remained so in 1862. It was the case in Georgia as it was in Virginia. The eighteenth-century laws that governed runaways and maroons were essentially current in the 1800s. The punishments the maroons risked were also consistent. Although extreme sentences like dismemberment were no longer practised by the nineteenth century, the most common—severe whippings, sale, outlawry, and death if not compliant when captured—hung over the heads of all maroons, whether they lived in 1772 Virginia or 1856 North Carolina. Variations in time and space are noted if relevant but, as will become clear, the diversity of circumstances did not supersede the basic consistency of the larger experience.

While secrecy surrounded their lives, the experiences of the maroons are far from being unknowable, even if they have not been as well documented, in firsthand accounts, as those of the runaways who settled in the North and Canada and gave oral and written accounts of their adventures to promote abolitionism. For the maroons, the alternative to bondage was a clandestine life outside white-controlled space and abolitionists had no use for them, except to paint them as lost souls living among and like wild beasts, so as to underscore the cruelty of slavery. Still, maroons could have shared their stories after Emancipation; but as was true for the majority of runaways—those who remained in the South—they lacked the high drama of the escape to the North. There was little sensationalism to be found in the maroons' daily lives, and their narrative of autonomous survival without benevolent white involvement would likely have had little mass appeal.

To complicate matters, nothing in the United States approaches the kind of resources on maroons available for some countries. There were no Captain Stedman or Moravian missionaries to the Southern maroons as in Suriname.²⁷ There are no twenty-eight slave hunters' diaries to be explored, as in Cuba. No maps of settlements are to be found, as they

have been for some communities in Brazil, Suriname, Hispaniola, or Cuba.²⁸ Moreover, descendants of maroons still live in some of the communities their ancestors founded in Brazil, Jamaica, Colombia, Suriname, or French Guiana, for instance, where oral history, memories, myths, religious practices, languages, crafts, material culture, and farming techniques have been passed on over several centuries and are still alive today. No such rich reservoir of information exists in the South, where most settlements disappeared within a few years or even less.

That being said, a variety of primary sources inform this study. For the seventeenth century, most of them consist of legal documents such as Acts passed by the legislatures and court minutes. Although they do not address the maroon experience, they provide, in filigree, valuable evidence about the profile of the maroons, where they established themselves, and what activities they engaged in. For the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, white society's perspective can be found in petitions, letters, county books, parish records, official correspondence, travelers' accounts, and plantation records. An abundance of runaway slave advertisements and jail notices map maroon geography, detail individual stories, and go to the heart of some of the very reasons for their existence. Newspapers also related their activities, the killings of white men who tracked them down, the destruction of settlements, and the capture of individuals and groups.

Fortunately, a number of other sources help reconstruct the maroons' stories in their own voices and the voices of their relatives and friends. Trial records are an important source of first-person accounts. To be sure, any such document must be handled with caution as defendants and prosecutors can distort, lie, and minimize or overstate facts and claims. The threat of and actual use of torture, sometimes bluntly acknowledged, must add a layer of circumspection to the person's account. But valuable information can be gathered by comparing testimonies and paying attention to details that were not central to the trials. That people planted rice, fished, or pounded China-smilax (a bushy plant with small fruit) did not matter to the prosecution, but these bits of evidence illuminate the maroons' daily life.

Introduction

Memoirs and autobiographies of former runaways and freedpeople are a surprisingly rich source of information. Some lived in the woods and swamps for extended periods of time and when unable to continue, decided to migrate North; while others marooned as they waited for an opportunity to leave the South. They and others had relatives or friends who settled in the wilds and relayed what they knew of their particular experience.

Additionally, in the 1930s the Works Progress Administration (WPA) interviewed over two thousand formerly enslaved men and women, and these records reveal a wealth of details about numerous aspects of the maroons' lives, how their community perceived them, and how kin and friends supported them. Numerous interviews offer unique insights into their experience—from building a shelter to getting food—and provide invaluable information about the support they enjoyed on the plantations, what they looked like when they emerged from the woods, how they were treated when captured, and other details.

* * *

Who the maroons were, what led them to choose this way of life over alternatives, what forms of marronage they created and how they differed from one another, what their individual and collective lives were like, how they organized themselves to survive, and how their particular story fits into the larger narrative of slave resistance are questions that this study seeks to answer. To uncover, re-create, and analyze the world of slavery's exiles, this book is built around one chronological and subsequent thematic chapters.

Chapter 1 looks chronologically and geographically at marronage in Southern history; its development, the legal measures taken to try to prevent it, and the efforts launched to capture or kill individuals and destroy their communities.

Studies throughout the Americas show that Africans ran away disproportionately and were also represented in maroon communities in excess of their percentage in the larger population.²⁹ Chapter 2 examines the

characteristics of African marronage and the specific experience of newly arrived Africans.

The chapters that follow focus on the experience of American-born maroons.

Chapter 3 explores the main reason why some people chose to settle in the borderlands and how they related to the slave world that stretched beyond their “doorsteps.” A detailed description and analysis of the various aspects of their lives is the subject of chapter 4.

Past the borderlands, hinterland maroon communities were born, lived, and disappeared. Chapter 5 investigates the ways they formed and tried to ensure their survival through diversified economic and protective strategies. Chapter 6 delves into the complexity and fluidity of the maroon experience. It follows an eighteenth-century Louisiana community that straddled the whole breadth of the maroon landscape as it migrated and lived alternatively on the borderlands and in the hinterland. Chapter 7 explores the tribulations of a Georgia/South Carolina colony under siege, re-creating the personal and collective lives, activities, and defensive strategies of this large community retrenched in a fortified camp.

The exiles of the Great Dismal Swamp are the subject of chapter 8. The area—between Virginia and North Carolina—is believed to have held the largest number of maroons in the country. From the borderlands to the hinterland, they pursued contrasting social and economic strategies, from living in isolation to working for enslaved men.

Maroons have sometimes been portrayed as bandits by their contemporaries and by modern historians. But as chapter 9 shows, bandits were rather a maroon subgroup. The most ubiquitous types of banditry and the personalities and activities of a number of bandits are examined in order to assess their impact on the enslaved community and society at large. Chapter 10 focuses on the role maroons played or are supposed to have played in slave conspiracies and insurrections in the Carolinas and Virginia. Marronage only vanished with the demise of slavery, but as the last chapter shows, death, raids, sickness, and imprudence were

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the immediate causes that ended most maroons' lives in the woods and swamps.

Yet despite all odds, in generation after generation, with apprehension doubtless, and self-confidence unquestionably, countless men and women, determined to carve out of the wilderness a better life for themselves and their children, continued to embark on hopeful freedom quests.