African-American Lives 2: A Way Out of No Way (Transcript)

Announcer: COMING UP NEXT ON "AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2"... THE CIVIL WAR BRINGS A CHANCE TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM... YOU HAVE A DIRECT ANCESTOR WHO SERVED IN THE CIVIL WAR. I'M GONNA CRY. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. FOR OPPORTUNITY... YOUR GRANDFATHER MADE IT POSSIBLE TO CREATE FLAGG'S GROVE SCHOOL. I WENT TO FLAGG GROVE SCHOOL, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. GREAT. JUST GREAT. AND FOR EMANCIPATION. FREE AT LAST... FOR REAL. NEXT ON "AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2." MAJOR FUNDING FOR "AFRICAN AMERICAN LIVES 2" IS PROVIDED BY...

Woman: SHE HAS HER GREAT-GREAT-GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S EYE FOR ADORNMENT. HE IS FIT AND AGILE, LIKE HIS FOREFATHERS. LIKE HIS ANCESTORS BEFORE HIM, HE IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S BEST COOK. DISCOVERING OUR PAST HELPS US UNDERSTAND HOW WE CAME TO BE WHO WE ARE TODAY. COCA-COLA IS PROUD TO JOIN THE EXPLORATION.

Man: AS YOU TRAVEL THE ROAD TO SUCCESS, WHAT'S DRIVING YOU? IS IT THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE YOU? BUICK CELEBRATES THE GENIUS IN THEIR GENES AND THE VISIONS IN THEIR MINDS. TAKE THEM ALONG ON YOUR JOURNEY, AND YOU'LL ALWAYS DRIVE BEAUTIFUL.

Announcer: AND... ♪ OH, FREEDOM ♪ ♪ OH, OH, OH, FREEDOM ♪ ♪ OH, FREEDOM ♪ ♪ OVER ME ♪ ♪ OH, OH ♪ ♪ MM MM MM ♪ ♪ MM ♪ ♪ MM MM ♪ ♪ MM MM MM MM ♪ Henry Louis Gates Jr.: IMAGINE SPENDING YOUR ENTIRE LIFE AS A SLAVE, DREAMING ABOUT FREEDOM, BUT IT'S ALWAYS OUT OF REACH. THEN ONE DAY, IT'S YOURS. THE END OF SLAVERY WAS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE PIVOTAL MOMENT IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY. EMANCIPATION MARKED THE BIRTH OF OUR PEOPLE. REMEMBER, WHEN YOU ARE A SLAVE, YOU ARE A PIECE OF PROPERTY AND SOMEONE OWNS YOU COMPLETELY. AND ALL OF A SUDDEN, YOU'RE FREE. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT THAT'S LIKE? NO. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THAT'S LIKE AT ALL. I'M VERY FORTUNATE. ONE DAY SOMEBODY TAPS YOU ON THE SHOULDER AND SAYS, "NEGRO, YOU ARE FREE." WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT FELT LIKE? I THINK FOR SOME, DEPENDING ON THE SPIRIT OF THE PERSON, WOULD HAVE BEEN AFRAID. "I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GO. I CAN'T IMAGINE ANOTHER LIFE OTHER THAN BEING HERE," ESPECIALLY IF HE'S TREATED NICELY. NOW IF HE'S TREATED POORLY, I WOULD SAY THAT IMMEDIATELY HE SAYS, "I'M OUT OF HERE. "I HATE THIS PLANTATION OWNER. I DON'T CARE IF I STARVE. I WANT MY FREEDOM." YOU'RE FREE. BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? WHERE ARE YOU GOING? AND THIS IS THE BUNCH THAT WALKED OFF AND TURNED AROUND AND WALKED RIGHT BACK BECAUSE THE VERY FIRST THING YOU REALIZE, BY THE TIME YOU GET TO THE EDGE OF THE PLANTATION IS, "WHERE THE HECK ARE WE GOING?" WITH NO MONEY. NO MONEY. SO THE IDEA OF FREEDOM WAS, I THINK, MUCH MORE ENDURABLE THAN THE REALITY OF FREEDOM. THAT'S A GOOD WAY TO PUT IT.

Gates: WHATEVER CHALLENGES FREEDOM MIGHT ENTAIL, OUR ANCESTORS DIDN'T JUST SIT IDLY BY, WAITING TO BE DELIVERED FROM BONDAGE. THIS MONUMENT COMMEMORATES THE SERVICE OF OVER 200,000 AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES FOR OUR PEOPLE'S FREEDOM. THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF MEMORIALS TO THE CIVIL WAR, BUT ALMOST NONE HONORED THE SERVICE OF THE BLACK SOLDIERS UNTIL THIS MONUMENT OPENED IN WASHINGTON, D.C., JUST A FEW YEARS AGO. ONE OF THOSE SOLDIERS IS A RELATIVE OF MINE. I'M HOPING THAT THE CURATOR, HARI JONES, CAN HELP ME FIND HIS NAME. YOU KNOW, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN HERE. GIVES ME GOOSEFLESH. GIVE ME A NAME, AND I'LL FIND IT FOR YOU. OK, GREAT. J.R. CLIFFORD, WHO WAS MY GREAT-UNCLE. J.R. CLIFFORD. CAN YOU HELP ME FIND HIM IN THESE 209,000 NAMES? AND HERE HE IS. THERE HE IS, YEAH. JOHN CLIFFORD. THAT'S THE MAN. ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO SHOW A DESCENDANT ONE OF HIS ANCESTORS ON THIS WALL. THANKS. IT'S REALLY MOVING. COLD CHILLS.

Gates: J.R. CLIFFORD WAS BORN A FREE MAN, BUT NEARLY HALF OF THE BLACK SOLDIERS WERE FORMER SLAVES. THOUSANDS OF THESE MEN RAN AWAY FROM THEIR MASTERS IN ORDER TO SERVE. ENLISTING IN THE UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS WAS THEIR VERY FIRST ACT AS FREE MEN. THESE SOLDIERS ARE OUR FORGOTTEN HEROES. DID YOU EVER HEAR ANY STORIES FROM YOUR MOTHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY ABOUT JULIUS TINGMAN? NEVER. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'M EVER HEARING OF A JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN. WOW. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS. "VOLUNTEER ENLISTMENT, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA." SO HE WAS IN TCE. YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER, JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN, SERVED IN THE U.S. COLORED TROOPS DURING THE CIVIL WAR. WOW. HE ENROLLED ON MARCH 7. I'M GOING TO CRY. I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS. AFTER 21 YEARS LIVING AS A SLAVE, HE RISKED HIS LIFE BY JOINING THE UNION SOLDIERS. WOW. I NEVER KNEW ANY OF THIS. WOW. THIS IS GREAT... YOU GOT ME. AND THERE'S MORE? HA HAT'S NOT THE EN? WHEW. YOU KNOW, FREDERICK DOUGLASS HAD TO GO TO SEE LINCOLN OVER AND OVER AGAIN BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T WANT BLACK PEOPLE TO HAVE GUNS. SO THEY HAD TO BE LOSING THE WAR BEFORE THEY LET BLACK PEOPLE... SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE. SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE. AND JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN WAS PROMOTED FROM PRIVATE TO CORPORAL. I MEAN, HE HAD TO BE A SERIOUS SOLDIER... IN JUST A FEW MONTHS AFTER HE ENLISTED. OR A LOT OF BROTHERS GOT KILLED. IT WASN'T LIKE THEY PUT THE BLACK TROOPS IN THE BACK.

[LAUGHTER] "BUT I JUST GOT HERE YESTERDAY!" "DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT." HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE AN ANCESTOR, A DIRECT ANCESTOR, WHO SERVED IN THE CIVIL WAR? IT IS, UM-- I DON'T KNOW-- THIS WHOLE THING IS MIND BLOWING. I MEAN, I KNEW NOTHING OF THIS. NOTHING. NOTHING. AND WE'LL FIND HIM HERE ON THE WALL.

Gates: CHRIS ROCK WAS NOT THE ONLY PERSON WE INTERVIEWED WITH AN ANCESTOR WHO SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS. 25th REGIMENT, UNITED STATES COLORED... IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER IN THE REGIMENT. LET'S SEHERE WE GO. THERE HE IS. MYERS KENNELLY.

Gates: DON, YOU ARE DESCENDED FROM A CIVIL WAR VETERAN. WOW. DO I GET ANYTHING FOR THAT? HA HA! YOU WANT THE PENSION! YES. YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER, MYERS KENNELLY, ENLISTED IN THE UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS BEFORE THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR. WOW. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE A SLAVE ALL THOSE YEARS AND THEN BE IN A UNIFORM WITH A GUN FIGHTING FOR THE FREEDOM OF ALL THE SLAVES? AND STILL BEING. AND STILL BEING CALLED NIGGER. YEAH, UNBELIEVABLE, AMAZING. TO WANT TO GO DO THAT. I MEAN, TO REALLY BELIEVE IN IT... YEAH. YOU KNOW, TO REALLY BELIEVE IN THE DREAM.

Gates: THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR TRANSFORMED THIS COUNTRY FROM A SLAVE SOCIETY INTO SOMETHING AS YET UNKNOWN. BLACK PEOPLE WERE THRUST INTO A NEW WORLD, ONE SEEMINGLY LIMITLESS IN POSSIBILITIES. FREEDOM WOULD CHANGE EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR LIVES. THEY TALKED ABOUT THE DAY OF JUBILEE. THEY SPOKE IN TERMS OF AN APOCALYPTIC MOMENT. THIS WAS THIS GREAT NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR SLAVES TO FREE THEMSELVES FROM ANCIENT BONDAGE. SO THEY HAD TO DO SOMETHING GOOD WITH THEIR LIVES. THEY BELIEVED THIS. MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER, MAUD SCOTT GATES, IS BURIED IN THIS CEMETERY. SHE WAS BORN IN 1857, AND SHE WAS BORN A SLAVE. MAUD HAD A CALLING--SHE WOULD MAKE SURE SOMEHOW THAT HER FAMILY SURVIVED AND THRIVED IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING SLAVERY. SHE WAS THE DOMINANT FORCE WHO SET OUR FAMILY ON THE ROAD TO EDUCATION AND THE OWNERSHIP RTY. I ADMIRE HER SO MUCH THAT I NAMED MY FIRST CHILD MAUD. BUT I WANT TO KNOW MUCH MORE ABOUT HER, ESPECIALLY HER EXPERIENCE AS A FORMER SLAVE. MY FHER AND HIS COUSIN, DR. ROBERT THOMPSON, KNEW MAUDE WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN. I'VE COME TO RANSACK THEIR MEMORIES. WHO WERE THEY, DADDY? THAT'S GRANDMA. THAT'S MAUD. WAS SHE A NICE PERSON? VERY NICE. ONE OF THE SMARTEST PERSONS THAT I EVER MET. AND EVIDENTLY SHE DIDN'T GO TO SCHOOL. AS FAR AS WE KNEW, HER SLAVE-OWNERS HAD A DAUGHTER HER AGE, AND SHE TAUGHT GRANDMA YOU KNOW, WHAT SHE KNEW.

Gates: SO SHE TAUGHT GRANDMA HOW TO READ AND WRITE. YEAH. MY MOTHER JUST SAID THAT SHE WAS A VERY STRONG PERSON, THAT'S ALL, AND THAT SHE WAS THE DECISION MAKER AND SHE TOOK CARE OF BUSINESS AND TOOK CARE OF THE FAMILY. SHE LOOKS LIKE A TOUGH COOKIE. FROM WHAT I GATHER, YES. I WASN'T AFRAID OF NOBODY. TWO PEOPLE-- GOD AND GRANDMA. ONLY TWO PEOPLE.

Gates: MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER STILL CAPTIVATES OUR FAMILY. SHE WAS ONLY 8 YEARS OLD WHEN SHE BECAME FREE. HOW DID SHE AND THE OTHER FORMER SLAVES ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH? TO UNDERSTAND THAT, I NEED TO KNOW MUCH MORE ABOUT WHAT THEY DID WITH THEIR NEWFOUND FREEDOM. AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF BEING TREATED LIKE PROPERTY, EVEN THE SMALLEST ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION WAS ENORMOUSLY SIGNIFICANT. HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF YOUR SURNAME--FREEMAN? ABSOLUTELY, ABSOLUTELY. AND SO YOU HAD FREEMAN AND YOU HAD FREEDMAN. MM-HMMM. SO WAS IT FREEDMAN AS A RESULT OF HAVING BEEN SLAVES AND LET GO, OR IS THIS, IS THIS HANDED DOWN FROM FREE MEN? I FEEL CERTAIN THAT IT'S FREEDMAN. RIGHT. AND MANY OF OUR ANCESTORS TOOK THE NAME. IT SIGNIFIED THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE BEFORE AND AFTER SLAVERY, WHICH IS THAT YOU WERE FREE.

Gates: TAKING A SURNAME WAS THE FIRST STEP IN CREATING A NEW IDENTITY AS A FREE PERSON. WE STILL DON'T KNOW THE ORIGIN OF MY OWN SURNAME, GATES, EVEN AFTER YEARS OF RESEARCH. SOME FREEDPEOPLE TOOK THE NAMES OF THEIR FORMER MASTERS, BUT NY SEVERED ALL TIES WITH THE SLAVE PAST. MY GRANDMOTHER WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A FORMER SLAVE. AND HER MOTHER, AS SOON AS SLAVERY WAS ABOLISHED, SHE RENAMED HERSELF. AND SHE NAMED HERSELF KENTUCKY SHANNON. AND WHEN ASKED WHY, ASKED, "WERE YOU ENSLAVED IN KENTUCKY?" SHE SAID, NO, THAT SHE LIKED THE SOUND OF THE NAME.

[GATES LAUGHING] AND SHE ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED ANYBODY FROM KNOWING ANYTHING MORE ABOUT HER BACKGROUND. SHE SAID, "I AM KENTUCKY SHANNON, AND THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW."

Gates: WHAT STORIES HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF THE WOODBRIDGE THING? WHAT WE WERE TOLD, AND THIS STILL GOES ON IN FAMILY GATHERINGS, THAT WHEN PAPA-- AND I'M NOT CERTAIN WHO PAPA WAS-- WHEN HE LEFT FROM THE PLANTATION--YOU KNOW, DEPENDING ON WHO TELLS IT, THE STORY GETS GRANDER-- BUT, UM, HE WALKED ACROSS THE PATH AND HE DECIDED HE WAS GOING TO RENAME HIMSELF. AND THE FIRST THING HE CAME ACROSS WAS A WOODEN BRIDGE. AND SODED, "HMM, I'LL CHANGE MY NAME TO WOODBRIDGE."

Gates: AFTER OUR FIRST SERIES AIRED, PEOPLE WOULD STOP ME ON THE STREET AND ASK, "WHY DID YOU ONLY DO THE FAMILY TREES OF WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE? WHY DIDN'T YOU INCLUDE A PERSON LIKE ME?" Kathleen Henderson: WHY DID WE GET THIS BUG TO WANT TO KNOW...

Gates: SO THIS TIME, WE INVITED THE PUBLIC TO SUBMIT THEIR OWN FAMILY STORIES. THE RESPONSE WAS ASTONISHING! WE CHOSE KATHLEEN HENDERSON FROM OVER 2,000 APPLICANTS. THIS WAS YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER HIS NAME WAS DUDLEY WOODBRIDGE. WELL, THIS IS THE SLAVE SCHEDULE FROM THE 1860 FEDERAL CENSUS, AND THIS IS A PAGE FOR A SLAVE-OWNER NAMED GRAFTON D. WOODBRIDGE. KATHLEEN, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE "D" STANDS FOR IN GRAFTON'S NAME? UH, DUDLEY. DUDLEY. YEAH. THE SAME NAME AS YOUR ANCESTOR. HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN WALKING ACROSS THE BRIDGE...

[LAUGHTER] BUT WE ALSO THINK HE WAS WALKING ACROSS THE BRIDGE OWNED BY HIS OWNER NAMED GRAFTON WOODBRIDGE.... GRAFTON DUDLEY WOODBRIDGE. SORRY, FAMILY. HA HA! MANY FREEDPEOPLE REINVENTED THEIR PAST AS WELL AS THEIR NAMES. THIS MAKES LEARNING ABOUT OUR ANCESTORS EVEN MORE CHALLENGING. WHAT ARE YOU MOSTTO LEARN ABOUT YOUR FAMILY? I DON'T KNOW. EVERYTHING. ALL OF THE LITTLE STORIES ARE AMAZING, ARE FASCINATING.

Gates: ACTOR DON CHEADLE HAS NEVER HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT HIS ANCESTORS WHO LIVED THROUGH THE AFTERMATH OF SLAVERY. SO WE SEARCHED FOR CLUES ABOUT HIS FATHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY. THE PAPER TRAIL THAT WE UNCOVERED CONFOUNDED OUR EXPECTATIONS. UNLIKE MOST AFRICAN AMERICANS, WHO ED BY THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR, YOUR ANCESTORS WEREN'T. THEY COULDN'T GET IT RIGHT. WELL-- THEY JUST STUCK TO IT. WELL, SOMEBODY DIDN'T GET IT RIGHT, BUT IT WASN'T YOUR ANCESTORS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE WHO OWNED THEM. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS. "CHICKASAW NATION. FREEDMEN ROLL." THIS DOCUMENT IS AN OFFICIAL ENROLLMENT CARD FOR THE CHICKASAW FREEDMEN, THE FORMER SLAVES OWNED BY THE CHICKASAW NATION. OWNED BY THE CHICKASAW NATION. OWNED BY THE CHICKASAW NATION. YOUR ANCESTORS WERE ENSLAVED BY NATIVE AMERICANS. HERE IS YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER MARY KEMP, HER 11 CHILDREN, IN BILL CHEADLE, YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER WILLIAM. AND YOU CAN SEE WILLIAM'S FATHER, HENDERSON, OR HENCE, CHEADLE... HUH. YOU ARE ONE OF THE FEW AFRICAN AMERICANS THAT WAS NOT ENSLAVED BY WHITE PEOPLE BUT ENSLAVED BY NATIVE AMERICANS. IT'S CRAZY BECA YOU FEEL LIKE, OH, THE TWO BIGGEST BLIGHTS ON THE WAY THIS COUNTRY STARTED, YOU KNERY AND THE GENOCIDE OF THE NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE TRAIL OF TEARS AND ALL THOSE HORRIBLE STORIES OF WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE NATIVE PEOPLE HERE. AND THEN OUR FAMILY WAS OWNED BY PEOPLE WHO HAD SUFFERED... IT'S JUST, THAT'S MIND BLOWING. THAT THE CHEROKEE, CREEK, SEMINOLE, CHOCTAW, AND CHICKASAW NATIONS OWNED SLAVES. AS SELF-GOVERNING ENTITIES, THEY WEREN'T SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES. SO WHAT DID THIS MEAN FOR DON CHEADLE'S ANCESTORS? WHEN THE CIVIL WAR ENDED, THE 5 CIVILIZED TRIBES KEPT THEIR SLAVES. EVERYBODY WANTED TO ROLL WITH THE SLAVERY THING AS LONG AS THEY COULD. THAT'S RIGHT. THEY SAID, "COME AND GET THEM." "YEAH, YOU GOT TO TAKE MY SLAVE, PRY HIM FROM MY COLD DEAD HANDS." AND I HAD NO IDEA. I HADN'T EITHER. THIS IS AMAZING.

Gates: THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DIDN'T MAKE A TREATY WITH THE CHICKASAW UNTIL 1866, FORCING THEMRATE THEIR SLAVES AND MAKE THEM CITIZENS. THE CHICKASAWS FREED THEIR SLAVES BUT THEY DID NOT, THEY DID NOT OFFER THEM CITIZENSHIP IN THE CHICKASAW NATION. ARE THEY HONORARY WHITE PEOPLE? I MEAN, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? DON, YOUR ANCESTORS WERE IN INDIAN TERRITORY, YET THEY WERE NEITHER CHICKASAW, N THEY AMERICANS. THEY WERE A PEOPLE WITHOUT A COUNTRY AND WITHOUT ANY LEGAL STATUS AT ALL. THAT'S CRAZY.

Gates: THE CHICKASAW FREEDMEN WOULD SPEND DECADES IN THIS STATELESS LIMBO, INVISIBLE AND FORGOTTEN. ST OF THE FORMER SLAVES ENTERED THE RECONSTRUCTION ERA WITH UNPARALLELED HOPE. THEY WERE EAGER TO BUILD NEW LIVES IN THE SOUTH. DID YOU THINK THAT YOU WOULD LIVE YOUR WHOLE LIFE IN TENNESSEE? OH, NO. I KNEW I WANTED TO GO SOMEWHERE, BECAUSE I DIDN'T LIKE THE COTTON FIELDS. ONE OF THE FIRST SONGS THAT YOU WROTE, I BELIEVE, WAS ENTITLED "NUTBUSH CITY LIMITS." IT'S TRUE. COULD YOU SING IT FOR ME? ♪ CHURCH GIN HOUSE ♪ ♪ DA DA DA DA ♪ ♪ SCHOOLHOUSE, OUTHOUSE ♪ ♪ HIGHWAY NUMBER 19 ♪ ♪ DDOO DOO ♪ ♪ PEOPLE KEEP THE CITY CLEAN ♪ ♪ DA DA DA DA DA DA ♪ ♪ THEY CALL IT NUTBUSH ♪

Gates: MUSIC LEGEND TINA TURR GREW UP IN TNESSEE, WHERE HER GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER LOGAN CURRIE HAD BEEN ENSLAVED. LIKE MOST FORMER SLAVES WITH NO FINANCIAL RESOURCES, LOGAN HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO REMAIN ON THE PLANTATION AFTER HE WAS FREE, YET HE WANTED TO MAKE ONE THING PERFECTLY CLEAR: HE WAS NOW THE MASTER OF HIS OWN FATE. THIS DUMENT IS DATED JANUARY 6, 1866, AND IT'S A LABOR CONTRACT. RIGHT. NOW WE'VE SEARCHED POST-CIVIL WAR LABOR CONTRACTS UP AND DOWN, LOOKING FOR AS MANY AS WE COULD FOR EVERY GUEST IN OUR SERIES, AND THIS IS THE ONLY ONE THAT WE'VE EVER FOUND, THE ONLY ONE. "THE SAID JESSE CURRIE ON HIS PART PROMISES TO FURNISH "THE FARMING TOOLS, THE HORSES, THE MULES. "AND WE, THE ABOVE NAMED FREEDMEN, ON OUR PART PROMISES "TO CULTIVATE SUFFICIENT GRAIN FOR THE USE OF THE FAMILY AND STOCK THE BALANCE IN COTTON." RIGHT. I HATED THE COTTON FIELDS BECAUSE THERE WERE THOSE HAIRY WORMS CRAWLING. THERE WERE THE SPIDERS AND ALSO THE PICKING OF THE COTTON. I COULDN'T QUITE GET AS MUCH IN MY SACK AS EVERYBODY ELSE. EVERYONE WAS PICKING AND PUSHING IT DOWN. AND THEIR SACKS WERE REALLY FULL, AND I REALLY WANTED THAT. HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU STARTED? YOU KNOW, I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER. YOUR HANDS,U DO AND THE CUTICLES... AND THE SUN. THE SUN WAS SO HOT... TINA, THIS DOCUMENT LAYS OUT THE TERMS BY WHICH YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER LOGAN AND HIS FAMILY WOULD BARTER THEIR LABOR WITH THE WHITE MAN NAMED JESSE CURRIE, THE SAME MAN WHO HAD OWNED THEM BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR ENDED. YES. SO THEY DIDN'T LEAVE. THEY STAYED, BUT THEY STRUCK UP A DEAL WITH HIM... YES. AN ARRANGEMENT, AS YOU KNOW, THAT CAME TO BE CALLED SHARECROPPING. YES.

Gates: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOGAN CURR AND HIS FORMER MASTER CHANGED DRAMATICALLY. INSTEAD OF OWNER AND PROPERTY, TH WERE NOW EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE, AN IMPORTANT STEP S GENUINE EQUALITY. WE SEARCHED THE RECORDS TO SEE WHAT ELSE WE COULD FIND OUT ABOUT LOGAN CURRIE. "I SOLEMNIZED THE RIGHT OF MATRIMONY "BETWEEN THE WITHIN NAMED PARTIES ON THE 27th DAY OF DECEMBER 1870." "LOGAN CURRIE, M.G." MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL. A. IT SEEMS THAT YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER LOGAN HAD BECOME A MINISTER. BETWEEN THE YEAR 1870, FIVE YEARS AFTER SLAVERY ENDED, AND N CURRY MARRIED MORE THAN 50 BLACK COUPLES. INCREDIBLE. AS SOON AS SLAVERY ENDED, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS BLACK PEOPLE DID... YES. WAS THEY SOUGHT OUT A MINISTER AND A COURTHOUSE TO LEGALIZE THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WHICH HADN'T BEEN LEGAL UNDER SLAVERY. AND YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER LOGAN WAS ONE OF THE PEOPLE SANCING THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE. THIS IS GREAT INFORMATION, REALLY GREAT.

Gates: MARRIAGE WAS NOT ONLY AN ACT OF LOVE AND COMMITMENT. IT WAS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY THE FORMER SLAVES TO EXERCISE THEIR NEW RIGHTS AS CITIZENS. BUT SOME FAMILIES STILL BORE THE SCARS OF SLAVERY, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT CROSSED RACIAL LINES. DO YOU CONSIR ALFRED CARR PART OF YOUR FAMILY? SURE. HE'S MY GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GREAT- GREAT-GRANDFATHER. THAT'S RIGHT. THERE'S NO GETTING AROUND THAT. NO. IS THERE ANY WAY TO GET AROUND THAT? NO. ACTOR MORGAN FREEMAN IS FASCINATED FAMHISTORY. HE'S TRACED HIS ANCESTRY ALL THE WAY BACK TO HIS GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER, CEELE JOHNSON, WHO WAS BLACK, AND HIS GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER, ALFRED CARR, WHO WAS WHITE. WE WONDERED IF CEELE JOHNSON HAD BEEN A VICTIM OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, LIKE SO MANY OTHER BLACK WOMEN BACK THEN. SO WE WERE SURPRISED TO SEE THAT THE 1870 CENSUS FOR MISSISSIPPI SHOWS CEELE JOHNSON AND HER 8 CHILDREN LIVING WITH ALFRED CARR 5 YEARS AFTER THE END OF SLAVERY. GOING BACK EVEN FURTHER, WHAT ELSE COULD RECORDS S ABOUT CEELE AND ALFRED? WELL, WE LOOKED AT THE 1860 CENSUS FOR ATTALA COUNTY. ALFRED WAS 60. HE WAS LABORING ON A FARM. VALUE OF PERSONAL ESTATE WAS $2,000, AND HE WAS BORN IN NORTH CAROLINA. NOW, IF YOU LOOK TWO LINES UP, YOU CAN SEOF HOUSEHOLD, IN OTHER WORDS, THE FARM OWNER FOR WHOM ALFRED CARR WORKED. IT SAYS MR. ANDREW JOHNSON. AND THIS SAME JOHNSON FAMILY OWNED YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER CEELE JOHNSON. SO GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER WAS WORKING FOR THE JOHNSON FAMILY AND LIVING ON THEIR FARM AND, MORGAN, HAVING CHILDREN WITH ONE OF THEIR SLAVES, WHICH MEANT THAT ANY AND ALL CHILDREN THAT SHE BORE... WERE HIS. WERE THEIR PROPERTY AS WELL. HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL? WELL, I DON'T KNOW, REALLY.

Gates: ALFRED CARR JUST STOOD BY WHILE CEELE JOHNSON AND THEIR 8 CHILDREN WERE HELD IN SLAVERY FOR YEARS. WHY DID SHE END UP LIVING WITH THIS MAN ONCE SHE WAS FREE? WE WENT TO ATTALA COUNTY TO EXAMINE THE RECORDS. WHAT WE FOUND WAS A REVELATION ABOUT CEELE AN'S RELATIONSHIP TO ALFRED. WE DISCOVERED THAT IN 1869, ALFRED CARR PURCHASED PROPERTY WITH JAMES, HIS ELDEST SON WITH CEELE. IS THAT RIGHT? THEN A YEAR LATER, ALFRED CARR SELLS THE SAME PIECE OF LAND TO JAMES AND TO 3 OF HIS BROTHERS. WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP, DID YOUR FAMILY EVER... NOT ONE WORD. NOT RD. IF 4 VERY YOUNG MEN, WHO HAD BEEN SLAVES, HAD THE SUM OF $1,500 JUST 5 YEARS CIPATION. OK. ACCORDING TO MISSISSIPPI LAW, ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN COULD NOT INHERIT PROPERTY FROM THEIR FATHERS. MAYBE THIS WAS A WAY FOR ALFRED CARR TO PROVIDE FOR CEELE AND THEIR MIXED CHILDREN. WENT TO THE LAND THAT ALFRED BOUGHT AND SOLD TO HIS SONS 140 YEARS AGO. AND LOOK WHAT WE FOUND. WOULD YOU MIND TURNING THE PAGE OF THE SCRAPBOOK TO 18? YOU DID. MORGAN, WHATEVER THE NATURE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP, WHATEVER IT MAY HAVE BEEN DURING SLAVERY TIMES, YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDPARENTS DECIDED THEY WOULD SIDE BY SIDE ON THE OLD CARR LAND SURROUNDED BY THE GRAVES OF THEIR CHILDREN. AND IT'S STILL THERE. AS OF FRIDAY, BROTHER, IT WAS STILL THERE. WHEN WE LOOKED BACK AT THE RECORDS, WE FIGURED OUT THAT CEELE AND ALFRED HAD BEEN TOGETHER FOR ABOUT 35 YEARS BY THE TIME THAT ALFRED DIED IN 1882. MAYBE THAT'S WHY THE PERSON WHO MADE THESE HEADSTONES CALLED HER CEELE CARR.

Gates: WHATEVER HER REASONS MAY HAVE BEEN, MORGAN'S GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER DEFIED CUSTOM BY LIVING WITH THIS WHITE MAN. MAYBE THIS WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF BEING FREE: FINALLY, CEELE AND ALL THE OTHER FORMER SLAVES COULD MAKE CHOICES OF THEIR OWN. WHAT STORIES DID YOU HEAR ABOUT YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER WILLIAM McALPINE WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP? I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT MY MOTHER REALLY DIDN'T TALK THUC ABOUT HIM. HMM. I KNOW THAT SHE WAS FROM A VERY PROMINENT FAMILY, BUT NOT MUCH CONVERSATION THERE.

Gates: SOON AFTER LINDA JOHNSON RICE'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER, WILLIAM McALPINE, GOT HIS FREEDOM, ECAME A BAPTIST MINISTER, BUT HE HAD EVEN GREATER ASPIRATIONS BEYOND LEADING A CHURCH. THIS IS A PAGE FROM 1873--THE COLORED BAPTISTS OF... ALABAMA. ALABAMA. THE STATE CONVENTION. "REVEREND W.H. McALPINE INTRUC "THE FOLLOWING... "RESOLVED THAT WE PLANT IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA A THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL TO EDUCATE OUR YOUNG MEN." 1873, LINDA. SLAVERY JUST ENDED IN 1865. 8 YEARS LATER, THIS BROTHER HAS THE AUDACITY TO INTRODUCE THIS RESOLUTION. OK, WOULD YOU READ THE NEXT PART? "THE WHITE BAPTIST CONVENTION ASSEMBLED "IN THE SAME CITY AT THE SAME TIME ADVISED AGAINST THE EDUCATIONAL SCHEME." OF COURSE. WHY DO YOU SAY, "OF COURSE"? BLACK PEOPLE, INTELLIGENT, COMING TOGETHER AS A GROUP? STRENGTH IN NUMBERS. OH, NO. "HOW ARE WE GOING TO CONTROL THEM?" EVEN THE CHURCH AT THAT TIME, WHICH RECOGNIZED BLACK PEOPLE HAD SOULS, EVEN THE CHURCH DID NOT WANT BLACK PEOPLE TO BE AUTONOMOUS. YOU KNOW, "THE LORD DON'T WANT YOU ALL TO BE TOO FREE YET." "MM-MM. YOU'RE OUT OF OUR CONTROL. THAT'S NOT WHAT WE WANT."

Man: BLACKS CAME OUT OF SLAVERY NOT A LUMP OF CLAY, BUT THEY CAME OUT OF SLAVERY WITH DEFINITE IDEAS AS TO WHAT THEY NEEDED FOR THEIR PROGRESS. AND THE BLACK BAPTISTS OF ALABAMA WERE CONVINCED THAT EDUCATION WAS THE KEY. THEY SAID WITHOUT EDUCATION, BLACKS WILL PERISH. BUT WITH EDUCATION, BLACKS WILL UPLIFT THEMSELVES.

Gates: AFTER FIVE YEARS OF TIRELESS EFFORT, WILLIAM McALPINE WON HIS BATTLE. IN 1878, THE ALABAMA BAPTIST NORMAL AND THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL, NOW KNOWN AS SELMA UNIVERSITY, OPENED ITS DOORS. McALPINE'S VICTORY SHOWED THAT OUR PEOPLE COULD MOVE FORWARD CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW MUCH COURAGE IT TOOK FOR WILLIAM McALPINE TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS PLAN JUST A DECADE AFTER HE HAD BEEN A SLAVE? YOU'RE ABOUT A PERSON WHO HAD A GREAT, I THINK, SENSE OF SELF SO BELIEVED IN THE INTELLECT AND IN THE INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS.

Gates: OUR ANCESTORS' ULTIMATE GOAL WAS FULL THEY WANTED THE SAME RIGHTS AS WHITE PEOPLE, AND THEY WOULDN'T SETTLE FOR LESS. ONE OF THE GREATEST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SLAVERY AND FREEDOM WOULD BE THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

Man: THERE WAS A TREMENDOUS SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICANS BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT THAT THEY COULD USE THE POLISTEM TO CHANGE THEIR SITUATION. YOU KNOW, IT WAS A TREMENDOUS TIME. IT REVOLUTIONARY TIME IN THE SOUTH.

Gates: THESE ARE THE STATE RETURNS FOR THE CHARLESTON COUNTY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION OF 1872. OUT OF 70 CANDIDATES, VOTERS CHOSE 20 REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY. W. J. TINGMAN. AT JUST 27 YEARS OLD, JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN WAS ELECTED TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE LEGISLATURE. IT ALL MAKES SENSE NOW.

[LAUGHTER] IT ALL MAKES SENSE. WHEN I WAS A KID, I WANTED TO BE PRESIDENT. IT WAS THE ONLY JOB I WANTED JOB BESIDES COMEDIAN. I WANTED TO BE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. AND MY MOTHER WOULD GO, "NO, DON'T SAY THAT." I MEAN, BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, I WAS BORN FEBRUARY 7. 4 DAYS LATER, MALCOLM X IS SHOT. THAT'S RIGHT. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN? LIKE... THAT WAS THE WORLD I WAS BORN INTO. LIKE, "HMM, YOU WANT TO BE SOMEBODY? THAT MIGHT GET YOU KILLED." YOUR ANCESTOR WAS A FORMER SLAVE WITH NO PROPERTY, OBVIOUSLY, TO SPEAK OF. BUT HE WAS A LITERATE MAN... AND HE HAD SERVED HIS COUNTRY DURING THE WAR. NOW, AT THE TIME, THE STATE LEGISLATURE WAS MAJORITY BLACK, WITHOUT A DOUBT, JUST LIKE THE POPULATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA WAS. THROUGHOUT THE FORMER CONFEDERACY, THERE WERE AFRICAN AMERICAN ELECTED OFFICIALS AT EVERY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT. IT REALLY WAS A WHOLE NEW THE WHOLE WORLD HAD BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN, AND BLACK FOLKS RULED. NOW I'M GOING FROM BEING SAD AND CRYING TO BE, LIKE, NOW I'M PISSED OFF THAT...

Gates: FORMER SLAVES LIKE CHRIS ROCK'S GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER NOW GOVERNED THE VERY PEOPLE WHO HAD ONCE OWNED THEM. IN SOUTH CAROLINA, WHICH BOASTED THE GREATEST NUMBER OF BLACK ELECTED OFFICIALS, THE FREEDMEN'S DREAM OF A TRUE INTERRACIAL DEMOCRACY SEEMED TO BE A REALITY. FINALLY, THEY COULD RIGHT CENTURIES OF WRONGS. AND THIS WAS EXACTLY WHAT THEIR FORMER MASTERS FEARED MOST. W. Marvin Dulaney: THE WHITE RESIDENTS OF SOUTH CAROLINA VIEWED THE RECONSTRUCTION-ERA GOVERNMENT HERE IN SOUTH CAROLINA AS BEING ILLEGITIMATE, AS BEING CORRUPT, AS BEING---IN FACT, I'LL USE THIS WORD--BARBARIC. THEY BELIEVED THAT AFRICAN-AMERICANS WERE NOT QUALIFIED TO SERVE IN THE LEGISLATURE, TO PASS LAWS THAT GOVERNED THE LIVES OF WHITE CITIZENS, IN PARTICULAR.

Gates: THE DEFEATED SOUTHERNERS RESENTED THEIR LOSS OF WEALTH AND POWER. THEIR BITTERNESS FUELED RACIAL TENSIONS THAT ERUPTEDNTO VIOLENCE. THE GOVERNMENT HAD TSEND ALMOST 2,000 FEDERAL TROOPS TO SOUTH CAROLINA JUST TO KEEP THE PEACE... YET OUR ANCESTORS WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED. YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER RAN FOR OFFICE AGAIN IN 1876. JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN, THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING. NOW HERE ARE THE RESULTS OF THAT ELECTION. I SEE HIS NAME. WOW. IT'S LIKE IT'S STARING ME IN THE FACE. YOU KNOW, YOU HEAR THE THING PARENTS ALWAYS SAY, "I WANT MY KIDS TO SEE" BLANKETY-BLANK "SO THEY KNOW THEY CAN BECOME ANYTHING." I MEAN, IT'S WEIRD. IF I HAD KNOWN THIS, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE I WOULDN'T BE A COMEDIAN. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE BECOME? UNTIL I LUCKED INTO A COMEDY CLUB AT, YOU KNOW, AGE 20, JUST ON A WHIM, I ASSUMED I WOULD PICK UP THINGS FOR WHITE PEOPLE E REST OF MY LIFE. IF I'D HAVE KNOWN THIS, IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN AWAY THE INEVITABILITY THAT I WAS GOING TO BE NOTHING.

Gates: WHEN CHRIS ROCK'S GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER WON HIS SECOND TERM IN 1876, TENSIONS CAME TO A HEAD. DISPUTED ELECTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENCY AND FOR SOUTH CAROLINA'S GOVERNORSHIP RESULTE IN A STANDOFF THAT LASTED FOR MONTHS. BETRAYED THEM IN EXCHANGE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE. IN RETURN, THEY GAVE CONTROL OF THE SOUTH BACK TO THE DEMOCRATS. RECONSTRUCTION WAS OVER. IN 1877, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, RUTHERFORD B. HAYES, PULLED ALL THE FEDERAL TROOPS OUT OF THE SOUTH. DAFOR THE BROTHERS AND THE SISTERS. THE CONTESTED LEGISLATORS LIKE Y GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER WERE KICKED OUT OF OFFICE. THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE. I MEAN, HE WAS THE MAN, RIGHT? AND THEN THESE RACISTS COME IN, KICK HIM OUT. MIND BLOWING.

Gates: RIGHT AWAY, THE NEW GOVERNMENT ED BACK THE CLOCK ON PROGRESS, REDUCING BLACK PEOPLE TO SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS. THEIR DREAM OF TRUE EQUALITY WAS SHATTERED. MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS LEFT HOME IN SEARCH OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE, INCLUDING SOME OF MY MOTHER'S ANCESTORS. MOVED AWAY FROM WEST VIRGINIA IN THE 1880s,  TUGH THEY OWNED HUNDREDS OF ACRES OF LAND IN THESE HILLS. MYDAVID COLEMAN, HAS BROUGHT ME HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME. THIS WAS OUR FAMILY'S PROPERTY? YEAH, THIS IS WHERE IT ALL STARTED. WELL, THINGS WERE HARD HERE. MOST OF THEM WERE FARMERS OR LABORERS. AND, YOU KNOW, BACK IN THOSE DAYS, YOU WEREN'T GETTING MUCH MONEY LABOR-WISE. AND THE PREJUDICE THAT WE WENT THROUGH IN THE EARLY DAYS SO ON. SO THINGS GOT ROUGH, AND THAT'S A PORT TOWN UP THERE IN EUBENVILLE. AND SOMEHOW, SOME WAY, SOMEBODY LET THEM KNOW THAT THERE WAS AVAILABILITY OF WORK UP THERE. MM-HMM. HOW IN THE WORLD DID THEY GET FROM HERE TO STEUBENVILLE, OHIO, WELL, MY MOTHER ALWAYS TOLD ME THE STORY80s? THAT 6 WAGON LOADS LEFT HERE AND FORFEITEDERYTHING THEY HAD AND JUST WENT IN TO STEUBENVILLE, AND HADN'T HEARD FROM A LOT OF THEM SINCE THEN. Gates, voice-oNG THESE , MAYA ANGELOU'S GRANDMOTHER MARGUERITE WAS BORN. YOU KNEW HER AS GRANDMOTHER BAXTER, RIGHT? THAT'S RIGHT. IN "I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS," YOU DESCRIBE YOUR GRANDMOTHER BAXTER AS QUADROON OR OCTOROON, AND I'M QUOTING, "OR IN ANY CASE SHE WAS NEARLY WHITE." MM-HMM. DID YOU EVER WONDER WHY YOUR GRANDMOTHER WAS SO LIGHT-COMPLECTED? NO. BECAUSE THERE WERE IN THE FAMILY. ALL SORTS OF LIGHT-COMPLECTED PEOPLE LIKE MOST AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES, WE RANGED IN COLOR FROM PLUM BLUE TO MILK WHITE. [CHUCKLING] THAT'S RIGHT. SO, NO, I DIDN'T. THAT THE RACIAL DYNAMIC OF SLAVERY HAD NEVER REALLY CHANGED. MARGUERITE'S MOTHER, MARY LEE, WAS THE SLAVE OF A MAN NAMED JOHN SAVIN WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD. FOLLOWING EMANCIPATION, SAVIN MOVED FROM MARYLAND TO ILLINOIS. SURPRISINGLY, MARY MOVED WITH HIM, WORKING AS A SERVANT FOR THE SAVIN FAMILY. JOHN SAVIN WAS TO ALL APPEARANCES A PROMINENT AND UPSTANDING CITIZEN. ALL THIS IS NEW TO ME. WELL, HE SERVED AS JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, AND HE WAS ELECTED TO TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR, BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER SIDE TO HIM. WE FOUND A TRAGIC STORY HIDDEN IN THE ARCHIVES IN CLINTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS. ACCORDING TO COURT RECORDS, MARY LEE BECAME PREGNANT OUT OF WEDLOCK. JOHN SAVIN FORCED MAN A FAL, ACCUSING ANOTHER MAN OF BEING THE BABY'S FATHER. A GRAND JURY INDICTED SAVIN FOR MAKING MARY LEE COMMIT PERJURY. THISNDICTMENT SAYS THAT JOHN SAVIN, AND I QU "DID UNLAWFULLY AND WICKEDLY SOLICIT, INSTIGATE, AND ENDEAVOR "TO PERSUADE A CERTAIN MARY LEE ATEMENT AS TO WHO WAS THE CHILD'S FATHER." GOOD LORD. THE INDICTMENT GOES ON TO SAY, IN FACT, THAT JOHN SAVIN WAS THE FATHER. IME, LEE WAS 17 YEARS OLD. AND BY THIS TIME, HE'S 50... THAT'S RIGHT.

Gates: BUT WHO WOULD BELIEVE THIS YOUNG BLACK GIRL IN THE ERA'S RACIAL CLIMATE? AS WE MIGHT EXPECT, THE RECORDS SHOW THAT A JURY OF 12 WHITE MEN FOUND JOHN SAVIN NOT GUILTY. BUT, MAYA, BY THE TIME JOHN SAVIN WAS ACQUITTED, MARY LEE, UNFORTUNATELY HAD BEEN SENT TO THE CLINTON COUNTY POOR HOUSE ALONG WI HER CHILD, YOUR GRANDMOTHER BAXTER. THAT POOR LITTLE BLACK GIRL, PHYSICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY BRUISED... MM-HMM. JUST BOWLED OVER. ME, TOO. PRCTS FOR BLACK PEOPLE WERE LOOKING JUST ABOUT AS BLEAK AS THEY HAD EVER BEEN. INJUSTICES MULTIPLIED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. EVEN THOSE WHO HAD ACHIEVED THE MOST DURING RECONSTRUCTION WERE FORCED TO SETTLE FOR FAR LESS. THIS IS THAGRICULTURAL CENSUS OF CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA. "JULIUS TINGMAN RENTS FOR FIXED MONEY RENTAL "10 IMPROVED, 10 UNIVED... ACRES OF LAND." HEOM A SLAVE TO A SOLDIER TO AN ELECTED STATE OFFICIAL, AND NOW HE'S BACK TO BEING A TENANT FARMER IN 15 YEARS. WHAT A ROLLER-COASTER RIDE YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER HAD HAD. THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE. I'M SORRY. I'M JUST AT A LOSS.

Gates: IN THE FIRST DAYS OF FREEDOM, TENANT FARMING AND SHARECROPPING HELPED BLACK PEOPLE GET ON THEIR FEET. BUT SOON THEY BECAME A TRAP, LITTLE MORE THAN SLAVERY BY DEBT. THE SAME OLD MASTERS WERE BACK ON TOP, EXPLOITING OUR PEOPLE ALL OVER AGAIN. THE UPS AND DOWNS OF YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S LIFE GIVE US A SENSE OF WHAT IT WAS LIKE, EVEN FOR BLACK PEOPLE WHO BECAME SUCCESSFUL, VERY QUICKLY THE TIDE D TURN. IS REVERSED. WE HAD TEN YEARS OF FREEDOM--1866 TO 1876-- AND WE RAN THINGS. IT'S NOT REALLY FREEDOM IF IT'S ONLY 10 YEARS. YEAH. TRUE FREEDOM IS FOREVER.

Gates: THE SOUTH SANK EVEN DEEPER INTO POVERTY. AFRICAN AMERICANS LOST THEIR RIGHTS. RACIST VIOLENCE INTENSIFIED, AND JIM CROW SEGREGATION BECAME THE LAW OF THE LAND. THE QUESTION FOR THE BLACK LEADERSHIP WAS, HOW CAN WE IN THIS WORLD BEHIND THE VEIL, IN THIS WORLD THAT WE ARE DENIED ACCESS TO SO MUCH, HOW CAN WE GAIN CONTROL OF OUR LIVES? WHAT COULD PEOPLE WHO WERE SEGREGATED, WHO WERE EXPECTED TO LIVE IN AN INFERIOR POSITION, AND LITERALLY USE IT TO THEIR ADVANTAGE?

Gates: THIS IS WHERE MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER MAUD RESIDED CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND. MY COUSIN JOHNNY STILL LIVES HERE. WE HAD HEARD THAT DURING THE 1890s, WHEN OUR PEOPLE'S HOPES WERE AT THEIR LOWEST, MAUD HELPED FOUND AN ALL-BLACK EPCOPAL CHUR-- SAINT PHILIP'S CHAPEL. WE'VE COME TO TALK TO FATHER CHAPMAN AT THE EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH TO HEAR WHAT HE KNOWS. THIS IS THE ORIGINAL LIST OF THEAINT PHILIPS CONGREGATION.

Gates: SO MRS. EDWARD GATES... YEAH. THAT'S MAUD. PANSY, THEIR DAUGHTER, MY GREAT-AUNT PANSY. BOY, I WISH DADDY COULD SEE THIS. SKIP AND I HAVE TALKED OVER THE YEARS AND ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT EDWARD, SKIP'S GRANDFATHER AND MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER, WAS THE ONE WHO WAS DRIVING THE FAMILY TO THE CHURCH HERE, BUT IT APPEARS THROUGH RECORDS THAT MAUD WAS THE FIR. SO THAT'S PRETTY AMAZING IN ITSELF THAT SHE-- MAEM ALL!

Gates: SO WE HAVE NO IDEA WHY THESE PEOPLE BROKE OFF? I JUST THINK IT WAS SOME COMBINATION OF THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES... AND ALSO AN EFFORT AT SOME KIND OF LF-ACTUALIZATION. THIS WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE SOMETHING THAT WAS THEIRS AND NOBODY COULD PUSH THEM AROUR CHURCH.

Man: HERE WAS A WORLD IN WHICH WE COULD FEATURE. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO US, AND WE WERE IMPORTANT TO IT. I THINK THAT'S WHAT THE SECRET OF THCH IS. I DON'T THINK IT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THEOLOGY. AND WHEN EVERYBODY JUST ASSUMED THAT WE WERE BRUTE BEASTS AND TREATED US THAT WAY, THE CHURCH REMINDED US THAT WE WERE CHILDREN OF GOD. THAT WAS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT. WE'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN THAT.

Gates: WHEN JIM CROW AMERICA SHUT OUR ANCESTORS OUT, THEY DIDN'T JUST GIVE UP. THEY CREATED THEIR OWN INSTITUTIONS OFTEN AT GREAT PERSONAL SACRIFICE, BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE. THIS IS A LAND DEED FROM BENJAMIN B. FLAGG, YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER GEORGE FLAGG'S OLDER BROTHER. "I, BENJAMIN B. FLAGG"... YES, MA'AM. "B.B. FLAGG OF HAYWOOD COUNTY, TENNESSEE, "FOR THE SUM OF $25 CASH HAVE SOLD TO THE TRUSTEE OF FLAGG." THAT'S RIGHT. FLAGGS. "FLAGG GROVE SCHOOLHOUSE"? MM-HM. ONE ACRE OF LAND. ONE ACRE OF LAND. E WAS MY--NO. THE GOING RATE FOR LAND IN TENNESSEE AT THIS TIME WAS APPROXIMATELY $75 OR $80 AN ACRE. SO BENJAMIN FLAGG SOLD HIS LAND BELOW MARKET VALUE SO THAT OUR PEOPLE COULD HAVE A SCHOOL. HE MADE IT POSSIBLE TO CREATE FLAGG'S GROVE SCHOOL. I WENT TO FLAGG GROVE SCHOOL, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL... GREAT. HA HA. JUST GREAT. WOW!

Gates: BY THE TIME URY DREW TO A CLOSE, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAD TURNED ITS BACK ON OUR PEOPLE ALL OVER THE SOUTH. BUT OUT WEST, WHERE THE CHICKASAW FREEDMEN HVING AS STATELESS PEOPLE FOR OVER 30 YEARS, IN THE LATE 1890s, THE UNITED STATESRY GOVERNMENT DREW UP OFFICIAL ROLLS OF THE CITIZENS AND FORMER SLAVES OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN NATIONS. DON CHEADLE'S ANCESTORS WERE AMONG THOSE WHO WERE READY TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED. YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDPARENTS, WOULD HAVE HAD TO TRAVEL TO TISHOMINGO, THE CAPITAL OF THE CHICKASAW NATION, IN ORDER TO ENROLL. BUT IT WAS A LAST CHANCE FOR FORMER SLAVES LICESTORS TO CLA CHICKASAW IDENTITY. THIS IS THE LAND ALLOTMENT JOHNSTON COUNTY, OKLAHOMA. THEY GOT SOME LAND. AND THE NUMBER OF ACRES? 40.

[LAUGHTER] THE FABLED 40. 40ESF ND GIVEN TO THEM FREE AND CLEAR BY THEIR FORMER SLAVEHOLDERS. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT THIS MEANT TO YOUR ANCESTORS? THAT'S HUGE. THAT'S ECONOMIC FREEDOM IF YOU CAN FARM IT AND WORK IT AND USE IT. YEAH, DON, YOUR ANCESTORS SUFFERED FOR DECADES AS A PEOPLE WITH NO STATUS AT ALL, YET IN THE END THEY RECEIVED SOMETHING THAT OTHER AFRICAN AMERICANS, AS YOU KN ONLY DREAMED ABOUT. THEIR 40 ACRES. THE VAUNTED 40 ACRES. THERE IT IS. AND RIGHT DOWN THERE WHERE YOUR ANCESTORS HAD THEIR HOMESTEADS, YOU CAN SEE THE TOWN OF WILEY, OKLAHOMA. YUP. NOW, WILEY WAS ONE OF THE ALL-BLACK TOWNS FOUNDED BY FORMER SLAVES. SO THE WHOLE TOWN WAS FREED SLAVES. WHOLE TOWN, ALL BLACK... COULD YOU IMAGINE WHAT IT WAS LIKE FOR YOUR ANCESTORS TO LIVE THROUGH SLAVERY, FINALLY GET FREE, AND BE STATELESS FOR 30 YEARS, AND THEN FIND THEMSELVES SUDDENLY LANDOWNERS, AND LANDOWNERS IN AN ALL BLACK TOWN? YEAH. AMAZING. IT MUST HAVE FELT F. FINALLY. FREE AT LAST FOR REAL.

Gates: IN 1907, OKLAHOMA BECAME A STATE, AND THE CHICKASAW FREEDMEN WERE UNITED STATES CITIZENS AT LAST. IT HUMBLES ME TO THINK OF HOW OUR ANCESTORS PERSEVERED IN THE FACE OF SO MUCH ADVERSITY. SOMEHOW, THEY MANAGED TO MAKE A WAY OUT OF NO WAY. THIS IS THE WILL OF JULIUS CAESAR TINGMAN. WOW! AND IT TELLS WHAT HE LEFT HIS FAMILY WHEN HE DIED IN 1917. 40 ACRES MORE OR LESS IN ST. STEVENS PARISH. OK. MM-HMM. WOW. MORE LAND. MM-HMM. 65 1/2 ACRES. AND THIS WAS AN AMAZING ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR ANYBODY, WHITE OR BCK, AT THAT TIME AND PLACE. ANK N, IT WAS A MIRACLE. YOU KNOW, I DON'T OWN THAT MUCH LAND NOW.

[LAUGHTER] YOU KNOW?! SO... AND AD LICIES... WOW. WHICH WERE GOOD. EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NO RESOURCES WHEN HE WAS KICKED OUT ALONG WITH ALL THE OTHER BLACK PEOPLE OUT OF THE LEGISLATURE, JULIUS TINGMAN STILL MANAGED OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS TO FIND A WAY TO PROVIDE FOR HIS I'M VERY PROUD O GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER. AND I'M REALLY SAD THAT I WENT THROUGH MY WHOLE LIFE NOT KNOWING THAT, YOU KNOW, THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE IN MY FAMILY THAT ACHIEVED, LIKE, ENORMOUS HEIGHTS-- PEOPLE IN MY FAMILY THAT GREW UP DURING SLAVERY AND JIM CROW AND THE FALL OF RECONSTRUCTION THAT STILL MANAGED TO EXPERIENCE SOME OF THEIR DREAMS COMING YEAH. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN? YEAH. A MIRACLE. A MIRACLE! IT IS. MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER LIVED THROUGH A TIME OF INCREDIBLE HOPE BUT ALSO CRUSHING DISPOTMENT. DESPITE THAT FACT, HOWEVER, SHE AND THE ER GENERATION LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR WHO THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE TODAY. THEY TAUGHT US HOW TO BE FREE. AND THAT'S INCREDIBLE WHEN WE REMEMBER THAT THEY WERE BORN SLAVES. ♪ OH OH OH OH... ♪ ♪ OOH OOH OOH... ♪ OUR GUESTS EXAMINE THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY... S SO MANY THINGS NOWADAYS WHERE YOU CAN BRAID IT BACK DIRECTLY TO THE FACT THAT OUR ROOTS WERE CUT OUT FROM UNDER US. YOU'RE JUST LOST. AND DISCOVER WHO THEIR ENSLAVED ANCESTORS WER THIS IGRGRDMOTHER'S SLAVRRATIVE. "MY MASTER WAS MR. HERB CAIN. I'VE NEVER HAD ANY IDEA. THERE'S JUST SO MUCH MORE I CAN LEARN. MAJOR FUNDING FOR "AFRICAN AMECAN LIVES 2" IS PROVIDED BY...

Woman: SHE HAS HER GREAT-GREAT-GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S HE IS FIT AND AGILE, LIKE HIS FOREFATHERS. LIKE HIS ANCESTORS BEFORE HIM, HE IS THE NEIG BEST COOK. DISCOVERING OUR PAST HELPAND HOW WE CAME TO BE WHO WE ARE TODAY. COCA-COLA IS PROUD TO JOIN THE EXPLORATION.

Man: AS YOU TRAVEL THE ROAD TO SUCCESS, WHATDRG IS IT THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE YOU? BUICK CELEBRATES THE GENIUS IN THEIR GENES AND THE VISIONS IN THEIR MINDS. TAKE THEM ALONG ON YOUR JOURNEY, AND YOU'LL ALWAYS DRIVE BEAUTIFUL.