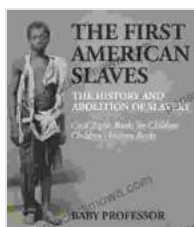


# Unveiling the Forgotten History: The First American Slaves

In the annals of American history, stories of slavery often begin with the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. However, the true origins of slavery in the United States reach far beyond this pivotal date.



## The First American Slaves : The History and Abolition of Slavery - Civil Rights Books for Children | Children's History Books by Baby Professor

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4237 KB

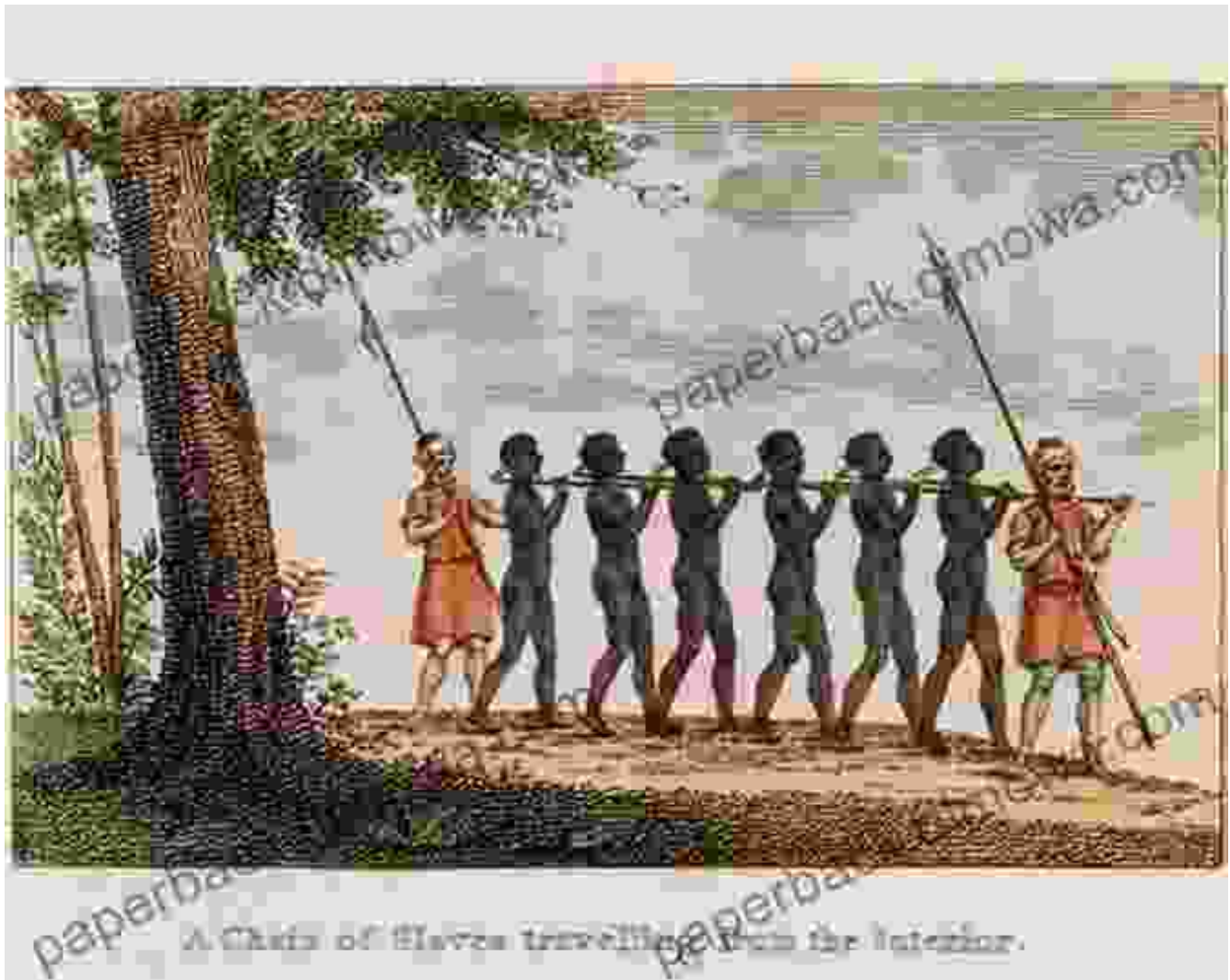
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In his groundbreaking work, "The First American Slaves," historian James H. Merrell meticulously uncovers the hidden chapter of slavery in Colonial America, tracing its roots to the early 16th century.

Merrell's research meticulously reconstructs the lives and struggles of these forgotten ancestors, revealing their African origins, their experiences as enslaved laborers, and their enduring legacy.

### **Origins in Angola**

The first enslaved Africans arrived in America not from the familiar shores of West Africa, but from the remote kingdom of Ndongo, in present-day Angola. In 1526, Portuguese traders forcibly brought these men and women to the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo, marking the inception of African slavery in the New World.



Over the next century, thousands of Angolans were shipped to the Americas, primarily to Brazil and the Caribbean islands. They toiled in brutally exploitative conditions, laying the foundation for the vast slave economies that would later flourish in British North America.

### **Arrival in Virginia**

In 1619, a Dutch ship carrying 20 enslaved Angolans arrived in Jamestown, Virginia. These individuals were not the first Africans to set foot on American soil, but they were the first to be sold as permanent slaves.





The arrival of these enslaved Africans marked a pivotal moment in American history, but their true identities and experiences have remained shrouded in obscurity.

## **Reclaiming Lost Identities**

Merrell's painstaking research meticulously unveils the names, origins, and families of these first American slaves. He pieces together fragmentary records, oral traditions, and archaeological evidence to paint a vivid picture of their lives.

Through the stories of individuals like Isabel, a skilled midwife from Ndongo, and Antonio, a runaway slave who sought freedom in the wilderness, Merrell breathes life into the forgotten voices of our ancestors.



These stories illuminate the resilience, determination, and cultural contributions of enslaved Africans in shaping the fabric of American society.

## **Enduring Legacy**

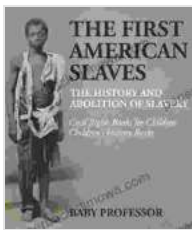
The legacy of the first American slaves is not confined to the past. Their experiences continue to resonate in the present, shaping the ongoing struggle for racial justice and equality.



Understanding the origins of slavery in America is crucial for confronting the systemic racism and oppression that persist today. By delving into the forgotten stories of our ancestors, we deepen our empathy, broaden our perspectives, and forge a more inclusive and just society.

"The First American Slaves" is a groundbreaking work that sheds new light on a hidden chapter of American history. Through meticulous research and evocative storytelling, James H. Merrell unveils the forgotten faces and voices of our enslaved ancestors.

By reclaiming their lost identities and exploring their enduring legacy, we not only expand our knowledge of the past but also contribute to a more inclusive and equitable present and future.



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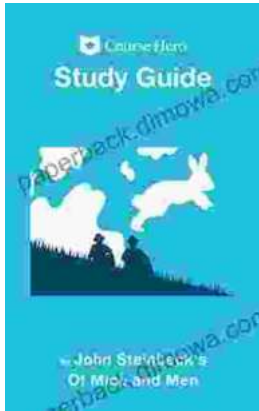
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