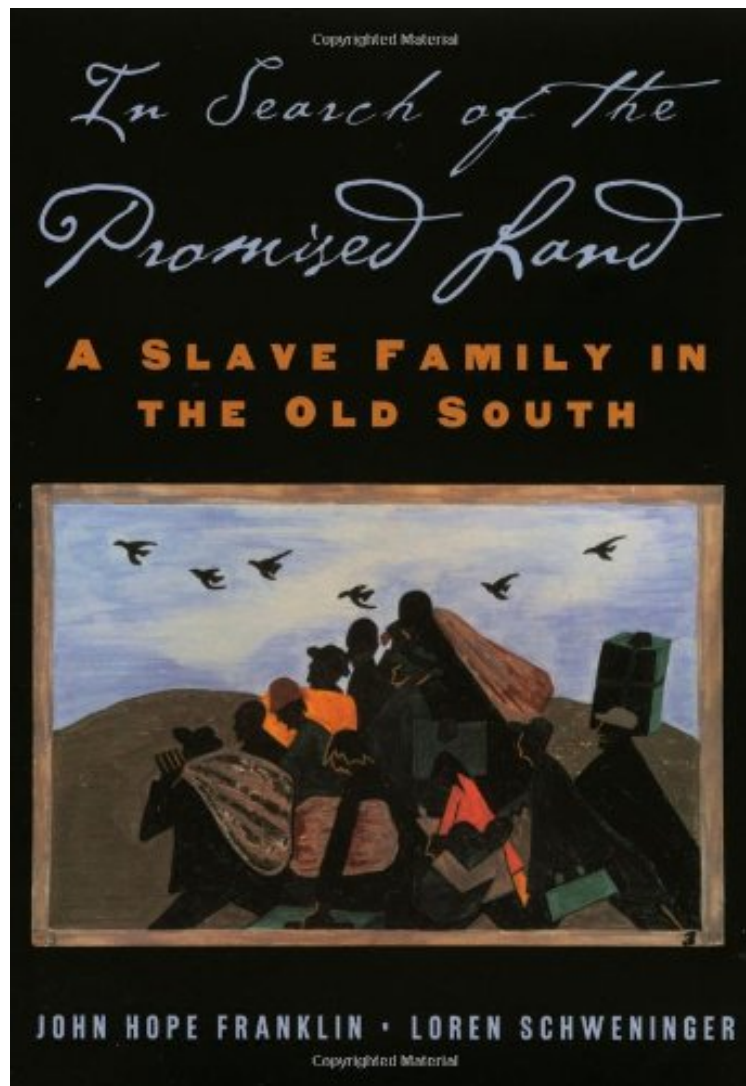


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John Hope Franklin, Loren Schweninger
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John Hope Franklin, Loren Schweninger : In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South (New Narratives in American History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South (New Narratives in American History):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy GerryNever had read anything more interesting. Full of

detail, not just general information.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. history book about a slave familyBy CustomerReally nice history story. Book was in great condition and arrived on time.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An extended yet focused case studyBy L. Speyer_Promised Land_ does indeed cover an interesting family. The true tales of the Thomas clan, descendents of a "semi-free" entrepreneuring slave in mid-nineteenth-century Nashville, have the potential to enlarge the boundaries of our imagination of American history. The telling is another matter: far less imaginative. Much of what one learns in _Promised Land_ one could get more amusingly and emotionally wrenchingly from Edward Jones's _The Known World_. If one prefers history in non-fiction, though, _Promised Land_ is a good bet.

The matriarch of a remarkable African American family, Sally Thomas went from being a slave on a tobacco plantation, to a "virtually free" slave who ran her own business and purchased one of her sons out of bondage. In *Search of the Promised Land* offers a vivid portrait of the extended Thomas-Rapier family and of the life of slaves before the Civil War. Based on family letters as well as an autobiography by one of Thomas' sons, this remarkable piece of detective work follows a singular group as they walk the boundary between slave and free, traveling across the country in search of a "promised land" where African Americans would be treated with respect. Their record of these journeys provides a vivid picture of antebellum America, stretching from New Orleans to St. Louis, from the Overland Trail to the California Gold Rush, and from Civil War battles to steamboat adventures. John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger weave a compelling narrative that illuminates the larger themes of slavery and freedom. To a remarkable degree, this small family experienced the full gamut of slavery, witnessing everything from the breakup of slave families, brutal punishment, and runaways, to miscegenation, insurrection panics, and slave patrols. They also illuminate the hidden lives of "virtually free" slaves, who maintained close relationships with whites, maneuvered within the system, and gained a large measure of autonomy. The Thomas-Rapiers were keen observers of the human condition. Through the eyes of this exceptional family and the indomitable black woman who held them together, we witness aspects of human bondage otherwise hidden from view.

From Publishers WeeklyStarred . Tracing the Thomas-Rapier family through three antebellum generations—from about 1808 to 1865—distinguished historians Franklin and Schweninger present an absorbing, impeccably researched account of "blacks who [have] only received passing notice—the free and quasi-free persons of mixed racial ancestry." Through this uncommon but not unique family, Franklin and Schweninger compress vast strata of slavery studies into an awesomely compact monograph, treating the reader to enough material (and drama) for a door-stopper; if the book were not so gemlike in size (it's 4¾"×6¾"), style and substance, one could call it a page-turner. From Tennessee, Thomas-Rapiers travel widely (sometimes as slaves), and there is a panoramic quality to their immersion in American historical events: one attends a Jenny Lind concert; one seeks gold in California; one escapes to Buffalo and later settles in Canada; one is involved with the filibusters in Nicaragua. They become entrepreneurs and adventurers, gamblers and teachers, churchmen and a congressman. They talk politics; they worry about their children. The brutalization endemic in slave culture is ever present. The authors bring it all to life with startling clarity, using documents, letters and diaries with such judiciousness that the scholarly apparatus enlivens rather than deadens. A genealogy that keeps the family connections clear, maps that trace their peregrinations and the fully informative captions that accompany the illustrations supplement this remarkable text. (Aug.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "A compelling narrative of African American lives.... Using primary sources, including letters, diaries, legal records, reminiscences, and newspaper clippings, as well as the autobiography of Sally Thomas's son James, the authors have presented an account unique in its archival richness, further illuminated by images and maps. This is a distinguished contribution to American history and social sciences."--Library Journal (starred review)"For an African-American family in the early-19th-century South, the Thomas-Rapiers had a surprising amount of control over their lives. With her master's benign neglect, Sally Thomas earned enough money as a laundress to buy property, and she saw her three sons into freedom.... The authors argue that this 'highly unusual family' illuminates relatively unexplored aspects of Southern history, and they tell its story elegantly."--Caleb Crain, New York Times Book "A marvelous and rare piece of historical research that is both rigorous in its construction and accessible in its presentation, making it an invaluable resource for academics and non-experts alike."--Atlanta Journal Constitution"This slim but fascinating book about the Thomas-Rapier family seeks to add another layer to our understanding of American slavery.... The authors might be academics, but their book reads like a novel."-- Sharon Broussard, Cleveland Plain Dealer"An absorbing, impeccably researched account.... From Tennessee, Thomas-Rapiers travel widely (sometimes as slaves), and there is a panoramic quality to their immersion in American historical events: one attends a Jenny Lind concert; one seeks gold in California; one escapes to Buffalo and later settles in Canada; one is involved with the filibusters in Nicaragua. They become entrepreneurs and adventurers, gamblers and teachers, churchmen and a congressman. They talk politics; they worry about their children. The brutalization endemic in slave culture is ever present. The authors bring it all to life with startling clarity, using documents, letters and diaries with such judiciousness that the scholarly apparatus enlivens rather than deadens. A

genealogy that keeps the family connections clear, maps that trace their peregrinations and the fully informative captions that accompany the illustrations supplement this remarkable text."--Publishers Weekly"A unique and exciting addition to the literature on slavery and 19th-century history. It shows the complexity of slave life and challenges existing historical interpretations without completely overturning the studies of the last thirty years. I love the story itself--what a story!" --James Fuller, University of Indianapolis"One of the more vivid presentations of antebellum race relations I have seen. So much of scholarship on slave life tends to lose sight of individuals who had to confront life in a slave society. This book brings individuals back into the picture." --Dickson D. Bruce, University of Irvine California"This work is unique in its combination of archival richness, narrative accessibility, and interpretive range. I'm impressed by the authors' abilities to maintain a focus on the big picture of slavery and emancipation while bringing to life related histories of gender, the city, and filibustering, among others. The 'wholes and parts' dilemma seems to be reconciled in this telling of one family's remarkable history." --David Quigley, Boston College

About the Author
John Hope Franklin is Professor of History Emeritus at Duke University and the author of numerous books, including *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* and *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (co-authored with Loren Schweninger). One of the most revered historians at work today, he is past president of the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the Southern Historical Association. Loren Schweninger is Elizabeth Rosenthal Excellence Professor and Director of the Race and Slavery Petitions Project at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the author of *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915*.