



Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America

Sylviane A. Diouf

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America

Sylviane A. Diouf

Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America Sylviane A. Diouf

In the summer of 1860, more than fifty years after the United States legally abolished the international slave trade, 110 men, women, and children from Benin and Nigeria were brought ashore in Alabama under cover of night. They were the last recorded group of Africans deported to the United States as slaves. Timothy Meaher, an established Mobile businessman, sent the slave ship, the Clotilda, to Africa, on a bet that he could bring a shipful of niggers right into Mobile Bay under the officers' noses. He won the bet. This book reconstructs the lives of the people in West Africa, recounts their capture and passage in the slave pen in Ouidah, and describes their experience of slavery alongside American-born enslaved men and women. After emancipation, the group reunited from various plantations, bought land, and founded their own settlement, known as African Town. They ruled it according to customary African laws, spoke their own regional language and, when giving interviews, insisted that writers use their African names so that their families would know that they were still alive. The last survivor of the Clotilda died in 1935, but African Town is still home to a community of Clotilda descendants. The publication of *Dreams of Africa in Alabama* marks the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. Winner of the Wesley-Logan Prize of the American Historical Association (2007)

Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America Details

Date : Published February 8th 2007 by Oxford University Press (first published January 1st 2007)

ISBN :

Author : Sylviane A. Diouf

Format : Kindle Edition 352 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Cultural, African American, North American Hi..., American History, Africa, Race, Historical

 [Download Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda an ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America Sylviane A. Diouf

From Reader Review Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America for online ebook

Doris Raines says

Thats. Good. News. They. Finally. Made. Born. With. A. Real. Name. Know. Games. Doris

Courtney says

Such an important book!

Perry says

Fascinating historical account and anthropological study

Impeccably researched, very well-written book exploring how it happened that the last slave ship came through the port of Mobile, Alabama in the summer of 1860.

As it happened, a scofflaw businessman from Alabama decided to hedge his bets in covertly bringing in slaves from Africa on the slave ship Clotilda in defiance of laws outlawing international slave trade. This is a splendid account of the slave ship Clotilda and its 110 women, men and children who were delivered into an already existing slave community.

The author covers how these slaves handled life after emancipation in 1860 and tried, but failed, to return to Africa and then started a settlement later called Africatown, which makes the book also one fit for anthropological study on how these last slaves held onto their customs and social systems and language into this century despite the fact that the final Clotilda survivor passed away in the 1930s.

Rosa Rose says

An amazing story, wonderfully written and extremely well researched. A fine piece of scholarship.

Amaru says

Very interested book about a tight knit group brought to the shores of the United States and their struggle to go back home and co-exist with their new neighbors.

Christophe says

I didn't actually finish this book but what I read was really interesting.

Margaret Sankey says

In 1860, an American slave dealer won a bet that he could bring a shipload of people into Mobile despite British and Federal prohibitions on the slave trade, and he won--the Clotilda delivered several hundred West Africans into the south just as the Civil War sealed off the trade forever. Amazingly, most of the survivors were able to reunite after emancipation, and they secured a section of land in south Alabama where they and their descendants live today (the last original settler died in 1935). Because they were first generation Africans, still speaking their native languages and practicing Islam, they remained isolated from other African-Americans nearby and became largely self-sufficient on their isolated river bend. It is both good and sad that a new bridge has brought them into wider contact with the 21st century, especially for young people who have a reason to return home, but at the cost of the loss of their independence, surviving craft skills and carefully passed on oral history.

Christina says

For such a potentially interesting subject- this book is all over the place. Not only is it all over the place, but it is repetitive. I wanted to know more about the Africans who came over on Clotilda and their stories instead of Zora Neal Hurston's plagiarism. I wanted to know more about the Africans and their interactions with each other after freedom and this part of the story was indeed lacking. I wanted to know if any of the original group that came over on the boat and died here- did anyone back home connect with their history. Maybe this was briefly discussed somewhere in the book and got lost?

Marcus Nelson says

A bet. 50 years after the international slave trade was banned, Timothy Meaher bet that he could, "bring a shipful of niggers right into Mobile Bay under the officers' noses." And in 1860, that slave ship, The Clotilda, arrived in Alabama carrying the last known African imports into slavery.

This is their story. The journey and the legacy.

They slaved until the Emancipation Proclamation and once freed, they established African Town. A settlement they modeled after their homeland. Speaking their, native tongue, retelling their stories and rearing their children in the tradition of the motherland. Although the last surviving member of the original settlers passed away in 1935, their legacy has carried on as an example of making the best of a terrible situation.

People always want to equate slavery with a hidden history of yesteryear but my grandfather was born in 1919 and he spoke to slaves; I spoke to my grandfather - and that's how modern and close slavery is to the present day.

Living history.

Catherine says

Written in 2007, 10 years before the remains of the Clothilda ship, which transported the last slaves from Africa to Mobile, Alabama in 1859, were found. I never knew that it had been illegal since 1808 to bring slaves to the U.S. from another country, but law enforcement often looked the other way.

This well-researched book follows the planning and transport of the slaves by Timothy Meaher, and continues with the remaining events in the lives of Meaher and many of the enslaved people who arrived on the Clothilda and became free 6 years later. Probably deserves four stars, but it was somewhat dry and at times didn't hold my attention. I was more interested in reading Nora Zeale Hurston's book on this topic, *Barracoon*, which was written in the early 1930s but not actually published until May 2018 after I was a good 100 pages into this book. And now I'm not sure I want to read it for reasons hidden in the spoiler below.

(view spoiler)

bill Holston says

This book was quite interesting to me, as it is an account about the last slave ship to enter the US, into Mobile, illegally, just prior to the Civil War. The event happened in Mobile, where I grew up. Thus there were Africans, speaking their tribal language, and living according to African culture well into the twentieth century. It's a very good look into the brutality of slavery as well.

Stacie C says

It wasn't until a few months ago that I had ever heard the name Clotilda. I had no idea that in 1860, the Clotilda sailed to the west coast of Africa and brought back with it to the United States over one hundred Africans, that were then enslaved in Alabama. I only learned about this because of the soon to be released *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* by the late Zora Neale Hurston, that highlights the life of Cudjo Lewis, who in the 1930s was the last living survivor of the Clotilda. It's also around the time the east coast got quite a bit of rough weather and someone thought they had located the Clotilda. They hadn't but I took that as a sign, that this was a history I needed to learn more about. Not only to satisfy my own curiosity but because this was a significant piece of African, African-American and American history.

I started reading this book, immediately after finishing Hurston's *Barracoon*. While that story was enjoyable it focused solely on the story of Cudjo Lewis. *Barracoon* adequately lit a spark and I wanted to know more. More than just the names of the other survivors but their stories. Where were their homes? Where did they go? What were their stories?

Dreams of Africa in Alabama is an incredibly well researched book that details the history of the passengers of the Clotilda, the people who enslaved them and what life was like while living in Africa, while being

enslaved and the reality of freedom after the Civil War set them free. It's a unique history because the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade was closed decades before their arrival, making their passage to the United States illegal. This also meant that the majority of the people enslaved at the time, were born and raised in slavery. They had no memories of their homeland or of ever being free. That's not true for any of the passengers of the Clotilda who had to adjust to the concept of no longer being free and had to try to preserve their culture while enslaved.

I would definitely recommend this book. Diouf did an incredible job compiling all of this information and keeping it uncomplicated. This is a dense book because as much as it highlighted the story of the Africans, it also detailed what life was like in the U.S. before their arrival during their enslavement, after the Civil War. It's a layered and complicated story. One that still isn't finished yet, as the families still in Africatown or still fighting to have their history recognized. I give this book 5 out of 5 stars.

Albert says

I lost interest and did not finish; the tone is much too scholarly, focusing less on a great story and more on details and the different arguments/theses on each. Otherwise, it's the most complete and thorough telling of the Clotilda story.

Kijani Mlima says

Engrossing Non-Fiction. The last slave ship to land in America on July 8, 1869. An illegal landing due to the outlawing of importing Africans into the US. Dreams tells the story of the men who flaunted in order to "import" 115 souls into the US and sell them into slavery. More importantly it tells the story of those African slaves, and how they adjusted (never actually full adjusted) to life in America. They managed to hold onto their language and cultures. They were from different ethnic groups, yet several of the African coalesced, and formed a unique, sustained community after the Civil war.

Cherisse says

Fascinating and extraordinarily well researched. Diouf explores the experiences of the last Africans brought to America as they made sense of a new environment while being informed by their understanding of the world they left behind. Dreams of Africa adds to the rich tapestry of scholarship that examines the the complexity and the diversity of the black experience in slavery and in freedom.
