

Clarissa Reed searching for her mother, stepfather, and siblings

Clarissa Reed placed this ad in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* in 1883. The Methodist Episcopal Church published the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* every week from 1877 to 1929. This African American newspaper published thousands of “Lost Friends” ads between November 1879 and November 1896, as formerly enslaved people tried to reconnect with their families and friends.

Reed’s ad details not only her family separation, but also her resistance.

DEAR EDITOR—I desire to inquire for my people. Mother was Pearlina, stepfather was Sam. Mother had two sets of children. There were five of us, and two died before I left home. The oldest, Sophronia, was sold first; there were Fannie, Morgan, Anderson and myself. Parents belonged to John Ronden. The old man and I was sold to a Mr. Currel, and he died, and mistress married again and carried me to Kentucky. My people were living in St. Charles county, Missouri, when I was sold for cutting off two of my young boss’s fingers. It has been about 46 years since I saw or heard from my people. Then I was sold from Kentucky to New Orleans. Last owner was Mrs. Moore. Write to me at Union Chapel M. E. Church, New Orleans, care Rev. S. Priestley.
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