

## Willis Mays searching for his aunt Sophia and uncles Ruben Grimes and John Ray

Willis Mays placed this ad in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* in 1885. 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.

Mays infers that his search for his aunt and uncles is on his mother's behalf. Although it is unclear under what circumstances the siblings parted, they all made (or were presumed to have made) their way to Texas after emancipation.

**MR. EDITOR: I wish to inquire for my mother's brother and sister She left them in Kentucky. Mother's name was Lucinda Toltem, her brothers were Ruben Grimes and John Ray. She belonged to Alfred Toltom. She has not heard from them since 1865. She then heard they had come to Texas. Mother's sister was named Sophia. Address Willis Mays, Nechanitz, Fayette county, Texas.**

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