



Denmark Vesey: The Buried Story of America's Largest Slave Rebellion and the Man Who Led It

David M. Robertson

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In a remarkable feat of historical detective work, David Robertson illuminates the shadowy figure who planned a slave rebellion so daring that, if successful, it might have changed the face of the antebellum South. This is the story of a man who, like Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, and Malcolm X, is a complex yet seminal hero in the history of African American emancipation.

Denmark Vesey was a charismatic ex-slave--literate, professional, and relatively well-off--who had purchased his own freedom with the winnings from a lottery. Inspired by the success of the revolutionary black republic in Haiti, he persuaded some nine thousand slaves to join him in a revolt. On a June evening in 1822, having gathered guns, and daggers, they were to converge on Charleston, South Carolina, take the city's arsenal, murder the populace, burn the city, and escape by ship to Haiti or Africa. When the uprising was betrayed, Vesey and seventy-seven of his followers were executed, the matter hushed by Charleston's elite for fear of further rebellion. Compelling, informative, and often disturbing, this book is essential to a fuller understanding of the struggle against slavery.

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