

Resource Sheet #13

Source: Deed of Manumission for Robert Hemings, December 24, 1794.
From *Free Some Day: The African-American families of Monticello*, by Lucia Stanton, and Courtesy of the University of Virginia Library.

Note: Robert Hemings was the son of Betty Hemings and brother of Sally Hemings.

"This indenture witnesseth that I Thomas Jefferson of the county of Albemarle have manumitted and made free Robert Hemings, son of Betty Hemmings: so that in future he shall be free and of free condition, with all his goods and chattels and shall be discharged of all obligation of bondage or servitude whatsoever: and that neither myself, my heirs executors or administrators shall have any right to exact from him hereafter any services or duties whatsoever. In witness whereof, I have put seal to this present deed of manumission. Given in Albemarle County, this twenty-fourth day of December, one thousand, seventeen and ninety-four."

*Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of D. Carr
Th. Jefferson*

Document Analysis:

1. Define or describe exactly what the term manumitted means to a slave.
2. When Robert was freed, what happened to his possessions?
3. If Jefferson were to die, what would Robert's obligation be to the Jefferson family?
4. Explain how this document could be used to help answer the question, "Where Did Thomas Jefferson Stand on the Issue of Slavery?"