

# Ann R. Page and Mary L. Custis

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## *From Annfield and Arlington to Africa, with Love*

DEBORAH A. LEE



First, she emancipated herself. In 1810 Ann Randolph Meade Page—the daughter of slaveholders and, with her husband, Matthew Page, one of the largest slaveholders in Frederick County, Virginia—could no longer uphold the status quo. By her own account, an old, blind black woman rescued her from a deep depression, a quagmire of guilt and self-condemnation, and helped her to see the world with fresh eyes, infused with the joy and power of evangelical religion. She realized that slaveholding could not be reconciled with the spirit of Christianity. She acted on her new spiritual convictions and found solidarity with her cousin Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis—known as Molly—the wife of George Washington Parke Custis of Arlington. Together they labored to end slavery and prepare those in bondage for freedom.

At first frustrated by their inability to work beyond their households, the women found agency through the American Colonization Society (ACS), which was founded in Washington, D.C., in December 1816 to colonize free people of color on the west coast of Africa. The women hoped that this organization would encourage manumissions and gradually end slavery. They worked tirelessly for the organization, advocating, collecting donations, recruiting, mentoring male leaders in the cause, and preparing and emancipating emigrants. They developed social networks that crossed the Atlantic Ocean and religious, gender, and racial boundaries. Their activism shows how certain white slaveholding women, influenced by their close relationships with enslaved people and acting on an expanded social consciousness and sense of responsibility, exercised leadership in transforming the nation and the world. The people they emancipated helped

establish and develop the colony of Liberia, which became the first independent republic in Africa in 1847. While their legacy is profoundly mixed, their intentions, activism, and effects should be acknowledged and understood.<sup>1</sup>

Although (and because) they were affluent slaveholders, few antislavery activists, northern or southern, were as committed and influential as Ann R. Page and Mary L. Custis. They embraced colonization, a movement that began and had its greatest support in the Upper South, because it relied on moral suasion, offered African Americans a refuge from the prejudice and legal inequality they suffered in the United States, and helped to defuse whites' fears about the growing number of free blacks. They believed their efforts would benefit Africa by helping to end the illegal slave trade, spread Christianity, and boost commerce. Colonization was also the limit of what was possible for southern antislavery activists, especially elites, at that time. Unlike many white southerners who opposed slavery, however, Page and Custis wanted to end slavery for the benefit of black people as well as white. In the 1830s, as moral suasion yielded little progress, northerners increasingly supported abolitionist demands for immediate, unconditional emancipation. While colonization and abolition had markedly different philosophies, strategies, and tactics, they shared the humanitarian goals of ending slavery and uplifting African Americans.<sup>2</sup>

Ann Randolph Meade Page and Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis's transformation into antislavery crusaders began with their mothers, who were close kin. Ann's mother, Mary Fitzhugh Grymes Meade, was a niece of Molly's parents, Ann Bolling Randolph and William Fitzhugh of Chatham in Fredericksburg. Ann Meade was born at Chatham in 1781. Ann Fitzhugh's first child, Mary Lee, followed in 1788. The two girls were thus first cousins, one generation removed. Their mothers worked to instill values of Christian piety and republican simplicity, along with that sense of order, entitlement, and responsibility that came with being at the top of a hierarchical society. Mary Meade recognized enslaved people's humanity, taught them to read, and saw that they were cared for. She warned her children, "Your guests see your well-spread table, but God sees in the negro's cabin," and in her will she allowed the enslaved people to choose their new owners from among her heirs. At the same time, Meade cautioned her children not to mix with their slaves socially lest they lose their respect. Ann Fitzhugh seemed similarly inclined. Ann Meade copied extracts from Fitzhugh's writings, such as "Narrow is that man's soul, which the good of himself, or his own immediate family, engrosseth. But he who with benevolence, warm as the heat of the sun, and diffusive as its light, takes in, all mankind, and is sincerely interested for the welfare of the whole, enjoys all the good that is



ANN RANDOLPH MEADE PAGE

Soon after marrying a wealthy slaveholder in 1799, Ann Page experienced a spiritual crisis and renewal. Slavery, she then understood, was irreconcilable with the teachings of Christ. Wielding power from her religion and social position, she enacted reforms and manumissions in her household, promoted emancipation and the education of black people, and campaigned to end slavery through the American Colonization Society.

Frontispiece of C. W. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page* (New York: Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, 1856).



**MARY LEE FITZHUGH CUSTIS**

From her home at what is now known as Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, Mary L. Custis was a leader in the movement for the gradual end of slavery. A key figure in a network of uneasy slaveholders and progressive clergy in the Upper South, Custis worked closely with managers of the American Colonization Society. Her daughter Mary married R. E. Lee, who, like many others, admired Custis for her intelligence and character.

Virginia Historical Society.

done in the world.” Such socialization prepared the girls for benevolent work in the future.<sup>3</sup>

Their world had its dark side, however, which was exposed in a violent incident in 1805. On January 2, after the enslaved people at Chatham had enjoyed their customary six-day Christmas holiday, the overseer ordered them back to work. Six men refused. When the overseer became more forceful, the Fitzhugh slaves tied him up and whipped him, then allowed him to escape. The overseer returned with four “gentlemen,” but “these were also secured by the negroes, and underwent a severe corporal punishment.” The white men were released, but returned with warrants and an armed posse. They shot and killed one enslaved man and severely wounded another as they attempted to escape; a third drowned in the river. Three men apprehended were tried for “conspiracy and insurrection” and condemned to death, though two were instead transported out of the country. One white man later died of the injuries sustained in the beating. Whether they were present or not, surely this violent conflict made a considerable impression on the young women, and probably reminded them of Gabriel’s thwarted slave insurrection in Richmond five years earlier.<sup>4</sup>

While such events might frighten one into questioning slavery, there were also religious reasons to do so. On March 23, 1799, Ann Randolph Meade had married Matthew Page, a wealthy planter, who owned roughly one hundred slaves and a large plantation in Frederick County near Berryville. Page renamed his estate “Annfield” in honor of his new wife. As Ann adjusted to life as a plantation mistress, she began to question slavery and sank into a deep depression. Her spiritual conversion was facilitated by an elderly, blind black woman, who came into her bedchamber when no other white person was near. On that occasion, Ann later recalled, “We began a conversation in which she used expressions respecting entire confidence in Christ, which made an indelible impression upon my mind.” After this exchange, Ann often visited this spiritual counselor—who lived nearby but not on the Page plantation—in her cottage. Ann believed that this woman was “a living example of Christ formed in the soul,” and admitted, “I think I owe her, under God, much of my religious joy in after-years.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, the meeting changed her life.

Ann’s cousin Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis of Arlington became her close confidante and ally in family matters and in the antislavery cause. Molly married George Washington Parke Custis, a grandson of Martha Washington, in July 1804 and moved into a partially completed house at Arlington. The columned home with its large collection of Washington family artifacts, situated high on the banks of the Potomac overlooking the capital city, signified its residents’ high status. Nevertheless, the ensuing years were challenging for Molly, who lost

her parents, gave birth to four children, and buried three. There is evidence that her husband also fathered children with enslaved women.<sup>6</sup> In 1807 Molly Custis was at Annfield when she gave birth to a daughter, Mary Anna Randolph Custis. This future wife of Robert E. Lee, the hero of the Confederacy, came to share her mother's evangelical religious views and antislavery sentiments.<sup>7</sup>

After Ann Randolph Page's conversion experience, she found slavery unconscionable and devoted herself to improving conditions for the people who suffered as a result of it. She excluded herself from Sunday "dining about" and spent more time and money to elevate the lives of those in bondage at Annfield. She conducted classes for children and others "not employed on the plantations," teaching them to read and giving them Bibles. To replace the old dormitory-style slave dwellings, she designed duplex quarters with corner cupboards, fenced yards for the safety of young children, and bedrooms for the girls to support nuclear family life and values. In one case, she protected an orphaned girl from the predations of their overseer. She conducted religious services for those who would attend. She wrote, "I earnestly desire to fix on a plan for the most speedy and advantageous delivery of these slaves from bondage, not only temporal but spiritual." She talked with white visitors to Annfield about religion and the immorality of slavery, and kept a supply of tracts and pamphlets to distribute among them. Meanwhile, Molly Custis undertook similar efforts at Arlington.<sup>8</sup>

While a number of enslaved people at Annfield and Arlington learned to read and write, and some eventually professed Christianity, they often resisted their mistresses' efforts to further shape their lives. Ann Page poured out her frustrations in pages of written prayers, lamenting the "murmuring and rebellious language toward me," while reminding herself of her own shortcomings and need for a proper spirit and self-control. After visiting both Annfield and the home of Ann's brother William Meade, Ann C. Robinson remarked, "I could not help being a little comforted . . . by finding that the servants of William and Mrs Page are not more Godly than my own; I was comforted not by finding sin abounded in the families of my friends, but because I hoped all the evil which I see at home, is not caused by my unfaithful teaching." At Arlington, the situation was even less controlled; the estate was notorious for the unruliness of its enslaved workers and the haplessness of the Custis and Lee families in governing them. Since many of these individuals proved accomplished both in slavery and in freedom, their behavior probably reflected their natural resistance to slavery itself. Selina Gray, for example, managed the household and the Washington artifacts admirably when Mary C. Lee left Arlington during the Civil War, and afterward operated a fifteen-acre produce farm and business with her husband.<sup>9</sup>

Both Page and Custis cultivated emotionally intimate relationships with their enslaved people, especially the women, most demonstrably when they were sick or dying. When Page's son-in-law the Reverend Charles W. Andrews overheard her speaking to an enslaved woman "in the most sweet and heavenly manner," it moved him to tears. Not all slaves appreciated this sort of intervention, however: Anna, an enslaved woman at Annfield, died suddenly of an abscess without professing faith in God. Nonetheless a bond had existed between Ann and Anna. "She was so much in my affection from different circumstances of friendship and attention and feeling, she had often shewn me when I have been in trouble," Page lamented. "I know I will miss her so much. . . . I did not know how much I loved her till now." The distraught mistress decided to "take hope even against hope" that "*some* must possess the requisite gifts of the new covenant without knowing it—while others who possess knowledge have not the true spirit."<sup>10</sup>

One who deeply appreciated such ministrations was Lilly, whom Molly Custis had attended during a prolonged and serious illness. Unable to reciprocate when Molly herself became ill, Lilly wrote her a long letter in which she credited her own survival to Molly's visiting in "all weathers to read & encourage me to persevere," adding, "you are the person I love next to God & it must be a gift from God or I could not love you as I do." Now it was Lilly's turn to minister. "Jesus whispered to my heart & told me I was his," she wrote. "*I not only felt glory in my heart* but the whole house seemed enlightened[.] *I felt that my heart could not be the same* that it had been. I felt in an entirely new frame. I hope you have felt the same." These women—free and enslaved—shared some of their deepest and most meaningful life experiences through the language of Christian love. These relationships were not true friendships because the inherent violence of slavery made trust across the color line problematic. But the black women demonstrated a strength of character and a generosity of spirit that reinforced the white women's religious antislavery convictions. Lilly lived in New York City by 1845 and remained in touch with the Custises who, without formally emancipating her, likely allowed her to live as free.<sup>11</sup>

Many of Ann Page's peers criticized her activities as "endangering the peace of the community." Others called her a slave to her slaves. As son-in-law Andrews explained, "The troubles of those who undertake to labor for the slaves in the Southern States can not well be conceived, if the laborer's standard of duty rises much above that of the community. He has to do with a subject on which people quickly become violent, and on which too many Christians are soon angry. This state of things tries the fidelity of ministers, and strongly tempts them to keep back things which can not be kept back consistently with a good

conscience.” Ann Page attested that “the fear of God enabled me to overcome the fear of man.” She had the tacit support of her husband, who allowed her to conduct the school and religious services and agreed not to sell his slaves—and thereby separate slave families—though he forbade manumissions.<sup>12</sup>

The women saw the opportunity to expand their efforts beyond their households when, in 1815, they read about the antislavery ideas of the Congregationalist minister Samuel John Mills and the Presbyterian minister Robert F. Finley, who advocated forming an organization to establish a colony for free blacks on the west coast of Africa. The clergymen hoped that colonization would encourage manumissions, which had become more difficult in Virginia after 1806, when a new law required any former slave to leave the state within a year of receiving freedom. Mills and Finley, both northerners, had many allies in the mid-Atlantic region, including the northern Virginia congressman Charles Fenton Mercer and Maryland’s Francis Scott Key. To Ann Page, the plan appeared as a distant candle in the darkness. Surely she and Molly Custis encouraged participation in the American Colonization Society’s organizing meeting in Washington in December 1816. Ralph Gurley, the longtime secretary of the ACS, later recognized their early antislavery activism. He remarked that even “long before the formation of the Colonization Society, . . . a few devout ladies in Virginia” devoted themselves “to teach, comfort and save” the “afflicted Africans,” and through their “zeal and charity . . . inspired ministers and statesmen . . . in their cause.” For the rest of their lives, their support and commitment never wavered.<sup>13</sup>

Ann Page and Molly Custis mentored men in the colonization movement, beginning with their younger brothers, William Meade and William Henry Fitzhugh. Their mothers had chosen the College of New Jersey at Princeton for their sons because of its evangelical orientation. The cousins tied for first honors. William Meade delivered the valedictory address on the importance of education for women; a copy of the oration is written in his sister Ann’s hand. He felt called to enter the ministry, but Ann and Molly believed that he was not ready, and Molly arranged for him to continue his studies under Walter Addison, an evangelically inclined Episcopal minister in Georgetown. Under Addison’s tutelage, the earnest young man experienced the requisite spiritual conversion and recognized the immorality of slavery. He was ordained in 1811, helped revive the Episcopal Church in Virginia, and was ordained the bishop of Virginia in 1829. Throughout his career, Meade considered African Americans an important part of his ministry.<sup>14</sup>

Meade also became a founder of the American Colonization Society and an early agent for it. He traveled the east coast, speaking and establishing auxiliary



societies. His local ACS group, the Frederick County Auxiliary, was the first one formed and contributed more money than any other in the commonwealth. Its published 1820 annual report was a bracing antislavery document that recognized the merits and potential of people of color and maintained that their exclusion from full political participation was a danger to the republic: "Who would submit to a negro president or a negro chief justice? The very idea inspires indignation and contempt. Thus degraded in the scale of existence, the emancipated negro must be habitually prone to infamy and rebellion." Conceding that white elites considered race prejudice nearly immutable, the report maintained that African colonization would reduce racial tensions in the United States and would offer black Americans a place where they could live and work free of such prejudice. While Africa would benefit from Western-style civilization, commerce, and Christianity, white Americans would have an opportunity to atone for the sin of slavery.<sup>15</sup>

William Meade was circumspect about criticizing slavery in public, but he made his feelings clear in private. In 1823 he confessed to his cousin Molly Custis that he regarded the issue "as the first in importance to our unhappy and I must say guilty land." He lamented, "We make the sins of our Fathers our own, we clasp our chains, entail misery & vice upon our children by not adopting the most effectual means of removing an evil which grows with our growth and strengthens with our strength, and will soon outgrow us & bear us to the ground." Meade emancipated his own slaves—he held eleven in 1830—and honored their wishes by helping them to settle in Pennsylvania. After his sister Ann died in 1838, however, he became less involved in the colonization movement and, like most white male Virginians in the 1830s, he backed away from anti-slavery. Later in his life, another clergyman wishing to emancipate his slaves sought Meade's counsel. According to his memoirist, Meade advised that "if he could not retain his servants himself, he should provide them with good masters."<sup>16</sup>

Ann Page and Molly Custis similarly worked with Molly's younger brother William Henry Fitzhugh. He and his wife, Anna Maria, lived at Ravensworth, the largest farm in Fairfax County. Their home served as a place of gathering and retreat for a large network of extended family and friends. The women urged William to build single-family slave quarters at Ravensworth rather than the dormitory style. Fitzhugh became the ACS's vice president in 1820 and eloquently defended the colonization cause against both proslavery and antislavery critics in the 1820s. He developed an emancipation plan and a promising pilot program for his slaves at Ravensworth, by which they rented his farmland and received credit for the goods they produced, with the surplus going toward the

purchase of their freedom. Fitzhugh served in the state legislature and as a delegate to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829–30, where he supported democratic reforms. He died tragically in 1830. In his will, he directed that his slaves be freed in 1850 and provided funds for their resettlement outside of Virginia, as the law required, plus a \$50 incentive if they chose to go to Liberia. The delay provided financial support for his widow and time for Liberia to develop, but these freed people chose to remain in the United States. Molly Custis and Mary Lee forewent cash bequests of \$1,000 to enable the executor, Anna Maria Fitzhugh, to better manage the estate and carry out the desired emancipations.<sup>17</sup>

Ann Page also mentored the Vermont Congregationalist Charles Wesley Andrews, who came to Virginia and worked as a tutor for her brother Richard Meade. Andrews was ordained in the Episcopal Church in 1832 and married Page's eldest daughter, Sarah, the following year. The couple lived at Annfield while he worked as Bishop William Meade's assistant and as general agent for the Virginia Colonization Society. In 1836 Andrews traveled throughout the state and heard many people remark that "they had never felt any particular interest in the condition of slaves, or had their conscience awakened respecting them, until they heard of the efforts of Mrs. Page." A colleague observed that Andrews "was very much impressed by the earnestness and devotion of her Christian life," and "her influence upon himself he gratefully recognized, especially as deepening and enlarging his views of Christian and ministerial obligation." After her death in 1838 he wrote a memoir of his mother-in-law, the first of his many publications.<sup>18</sup>

Ann Page and Molly Custis cultivated other young men outside their families for the colonization cause. The Scottish immigrant Robert Munro spent time in Frederick County, likely at Annfield, where he found "much joy and comfort" with the "Christian females" who "eagerly watched for opportunities to strengthen his pious resolutions," and soon he had a spiritual conversion. He joined the Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, adopted the colonization cause, and organized Sunday schools in Washington for white and black students. He reported to Page that there were a total of 360 students and 50 teachers in these two schools in 1818. Page and Custis mentioned Munro frequently in letters. Ann believed that "God sent him at this critical period of our course to lend us heavenly assistance," but his death in 1821 ended his promising career. When Ann sent Molly another young man burning with enthusiasm for the ministry, she advised her to "speak with him fully & freely on the sorrows of heart respecting slavery—on the sad burden of conscience—on your desire that your child never marry without the preliminary of holding continual power to liberate, as fast as the colony preparing, will receive them."<sup>19</sup>

Of all the men who worked closely with women in the colonization movement, none was more kind, effective, and enduring than Ralph R. Gurley. He and Molly Custis made a truly remarkable team. The Yale-educated son of a Connecticut Congregationalist minister and his wife, Gurley moved to Washington in 1818. A good writer and orator, he was licensed to preach in the Presbyterian Church and served three terms as chaplain to the U.S. Congress. In 1822 the ACS hired him as an agent. Two years later he traveled to Liberia and negotiated a settlement between the settlers and governing agent Jehudi Ashmun, which included settlers in the colony's governance. Gurley was a man of integrity whose promotion to executive secretary in 1825 signaled a turn toward more benevolence and voluntarism for the ACS. The Washington socialite and writer Margaret Bayard Smith called him "a most interesting man; in his looks, a hero of romance; in his temper and life, one of the most perfect Christians I ever saw." Gurley hated slavery and devoted his life to "the elevation of the negro race" in the way he thought most promising. "The measures of the Society," he believed, "tend to elevate most surely and rapidly a community of men of colour, who may exhibit to the whole world the capabilities of the colored race for high moral and social improvement, and self-government."<sup>20</sup>

How Gurley's personal and professional relationship with Molly Custis developed is unclear, but a letter he wrote her from New England in 1826 revealed their intimacy. Addressing her as "My Dearest Sister and Friend," he informed her of his intent to marry his cousin Eliza McClellan, whom he hoped Custis would embrace "with delight" as a sister. Gurley also reported on various aspects of ACS business. He concluded, "You perceive that I have not only *valued* but *taken* your advice, I hope you will be encouraged to give it freely at all times for you stand finest & unequalled on my list of friends."<sup>21</sup> Ralph and Eliza Gurley indeed were accepted as virtual members of the Custis family. He seemed much more invested than most male colonizationists in the emigrants and their well-being. After Molly Custis's death, Gurley remained close to her daughter Mary Lee. He also corresponded with the black emigrants who eventually left Arlington to settle in Liberia.<sup>22</sup>

Such close personal and working relationships between activist women and men were important for effective social action. As the abolitionist Lydia Maria Child observed, one sex trying to work alone would "be like half a pair of scissors."<sup>23</sup> Colonization enabled these elite women to participate in the public sphere while conducting their private lives; indeed, their letters show that it is difficult to separate the two. They not only influenced men; they also *led* (morally and intellectually), and they recruited, trained, and continuously collaborated.<sup>24</sup>

While relationships with men were important, women also valued their re-

relationships with one another for emotional and physical support, personal and spiritual growth, and social and political action. Their antislavery views complicated their lives and made their jobs as household managers more difficult. They complained often to one another, questioned their motivations and methods, and found comfort and encouragement in the colonization movement. Ann C. Robinson was particularly candid in her letters to Molly Custis. "Send me all the information you can collect about the colonization society," she wrote. "I grow more and more anxious to be relieved from the burden of slavery, and am in constant trouble for fear what I am doing should not be in the right spirit, sometimes." She and others frequently consulted Molly Custis for advice. "Do you think it would be right to compel men and women to learn to read against their will?" Robinson asked, adding, "I should not like to be forced to do anything for my own good against my inclination, and there is no authority that I can find in scripture which seems to authorise making people do things for their own good against their will. Sometimes I am afraid my arguing in this way is dictated by a love of ease, for it would be much more pleasant to spend my evenings reading than teaching those who are compelled to learn." One historian of colonization observed that these women viewed "slave emancipation as their own emancipation" and envisioned a "domestic utopia" without bonded labor.<sup>25</sup>

Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis seemed unique among her circle of correspondents, as she rarely complained and seemed to possess a calm cheerfulness that usually escaped the others. That quality coupled with her compassion, intelligence, and knowledge made her a valuable counselor. Elizabeth Carter Turner wrote, "You always seemed to me, my dear Molly to be one of the happiest Christians I ever knew; and I have always thought I would give worlds to resemble you." Rosalie Stier Calvert concurred, observing, "she is a woman in a thousand."<sup>26</sup>

In their correspondence and conversations with one another and with men, these women explored and discussed the theological and philosophical underpinnings of their faith and social action. They often shared books. Ann Page read William Wilberforce, the British evangelical antislavery politician, at Custis's recommendation. National and international politics related to slavery concerned them as well: "I live in too constant a knowledge of the sin & sorrow of Slavery to have any hope of comfort but in its extinction—Mr Brougham in the British Parliament, is of the right mind" in introducing a bill to make slave trading a felony.<sup>27</sup>

The women also became emancipators, although only some of the people they freed were willing to go to Africa. In 1823 Ann and William's younger sisters Susan and Lucy Meade died of fevers on the same day; their wills emanci-

pated their slaves for Liberia, but even Ann Page could not convince them to go. Some settled near Arlington, probably in Washington, D.C., and occasionally contacted Molly Custis for assistance.<sup>28</sup>

The opportunity for Ann Page to act on the emancipatory imperatives of her heart came with the death of her husband, Matthew, in 1826. In widowhood, Page grieved and prayed for protection for their “helpless female band.” Because she would not sell slaves, their population grew to about two hundred—many of them children. Matthew’s estate was mired in debt, however, and his executors had to sell personal property to settle the estate. Slaves counted as personal property; both Page and her enslaved people feared that traders would purchase them for sale in the Deep South, separating families, a fate that befell many enslaved Virginians as planters increasingly divested themselves of slave property to pay their mounting debts. Page’s fifteen-year-old daughter Sarah consoled her by saying that now she need “wait . . . *only only* upon God,” and, legally helpless, Ann and others prayed mightily. The executors held two large sales at Annfield, and approximately one hundred people were sold, but surviving records indicate that community members purchased them with the intention of keeping families together. Some remained with Ann and others went to her daughters. Sarah signed her slaves back to her mother “so that she may have it in her power to liberate & send them to Africa or elsewhere whenever she desires to do so.”<sup>29</sup>

In 1830 Christian Blackburn of Jefferson County, whose sisters married into the Washington family there, became the first in this kinship network to emancipate emigrants to Liberia: the Greens and the Hatters. Andrew and Priscilla Green named their first son George Washington and the youngest Lott Cary, after the already renowned black missionary in Liberia. Blackburn’s brother-in-law Bushrod Corbin Washington emancipated Priscilla Green’s mother so she could accompany them. Blackburn had carefully groomed Elizabeth Hatter to become a teacher in the colony and sent with her “a pretty good library . . . and a dozen spelling books.” She purchased and freed her husband, Reuben Hatter, so the couple could remain together. After the ship arrived in Liberia, Blackburn was frantic for news. Her sister Judith wrote to Ralph Gurley, asking for “any minute tidings of the dear people who left us,” adding that Christian “suffers much anxiety of mind about Elizabeth Hatter, a young woman she reared with great tenderness.” At first taken aback by the rough conditions, and likely, too, the tropical diseases that especially afflicted newcomers, the Hatters later sent back favorable reports. “I never was better satisfied in my life, if I only had my dear relations and friends with me,” Elizabeth wrote. “We enjoy the same liberty that our masters and mistresses do in America.”<sup>30</sup>

Ann Page continued to educate and prepare the remaining enslaved people at Annfield for freedom. She stepped up classes and religious services and assembled stores of goods they would need to live for a year and practice their trades. Even though she was candid about the hardships and dangers they could expect to face, a considerable number were willing to go. Between 1832 and 1836, thirty-two interrelated people, almost all with the Page surname, sailed for Liberia in four groups.<sup>31</sup>

In a long letter to Ralph Gurley after the first group embarked, Ann Page reported that she told the departing black Virginians that, while she expected them to prosper in Liberia, she had sent them there to “live an upright life before God” and “be as a light set on a hill.” She related that “I yearn to have you in a situation where your children cannot be sold from you, *that* bitter woe to my view—your children will receive *education* there.” She explained, “I cannot set you free here. . . . You cannot expect that as white people have taken the trouble to settle this country they will give it up to you, so as that you could have sufficient advantages here to become an independent people—that will not be—to continue together must be to continue in bondage, and of course liable to be sold at the will and for the debt of white people. I cannot die in peace without using all the means in my power to place you safe from that dire anguish, giving up your children for sale.”<sup>32</sup>

Historians have debated southern slaveholding women’s sincerity and motivations in wanting to end slavery. The prayers of Ann Page are unequivocal: “O my father Thou seest I would never have chosen it—Thou seest how Thy grace has taught me to desire above all earthly things, the abolition of Slavery.” It is clear, too, that women like Ann Page considered ending slavery to be important for both races, and that they empathized considerably with people of color. These women’s expenditures in time, energy, and money furthering antislavery and preparing African Americans for freedom bear out their words. Their faith both empowered and constrained them, as they strove to be virtuous and exemplary wives, mothers, citizens, teachers, and managers in a slaveholding society. They had a utopian vision in which Africa redeemed them and the American nation for the sin of slaveholding. But they were practical, too, in wanting people of color to enjoy real freedom in the present, to keep their families intact, and to educate their children in a way that was impossible in the United States, or at least in Virginia.<sup>33</sup>

The colonizationists’ strategy proved inadequate, however, and their vision of the separation of the races too conservative. Most people of color did not want to leave the country they had helped build and where they had deep roots, nor could the ACS afford to send even the small number who wanted to emigrate

to Africa. Liberia struggled, and mortality rates due to tropical diseases there were high. Northern antislavery activists increasingly supported the movement for immediate, unconditional emancipation. Abolitionists' bold and insistent rhetoric fed the fears of Virginia's colonizationists. Many colonization women shifted their energy into mission schools, and members of the Page-Custis network were likewise committed to that cause.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, Ann Page and Molly Custis's legacy passed to their family members, colleagues, emigrants, and descendants. Page died in 1838, but the Pages in Liberia corresponded for decades with her son-in-law and daughter Charles Wesley and Sarah Andrews. In 1839 the emigrant Robert M. Page reported from Liberia, "Africa is a new country with some inconveniences, yet we enjoy many blessed privileges. We have to work hard, but we get a toler[a]ble comfortable support." Peggue Potter testified in 1847 that "any man can live here that will work and if a man is got money he can live[.] all the fault I find in this place the things is so dear that I has to work to get something for me and my children to eat and as fast as I can get a little money I have to take it all the buy [buy] some cloths for my children to wear." Around 1850 Sarah Page Andrews replied to letters from John, Peter, and Solomon Page, who had been young children when they left Annfield. She rejoiced to hear they were well, obtaining good educations, and that Peter had "become pious," declaring, "I loved you & your Parents before you." She recalled each of them clearly along with the "delight I used to take in your little ways and words when you were little children." In 1855 John M. Page wrote to Charles Wesley Andrews about coming to visit and bringing African goods with him, referring to Andrews's offer to reimburse him for the cost of his passage. All of the letters are filled with family news, including the latest, from Peter Mead Page to Ralph Gurley in 1858, twenty-six years after the first emigrants sailed.<sup>35</sup>

The Arlington emigrants left for Liberia after Molly Custis died suddenly in the spring of 1853. In her grief, Mary C. Lee reflected on her mother's life, perused her papers, and concluded that "the great desire of her soul was that all our slaves should be enabled to emigrate to Africa—For years this has been the subject of her hopes & prayers not only for their own benefit but that they . . . might aid in the mighty work of carrying light & Christianity to that Dark heathen country." She then addressed her family: "May you all feel it as a sacred duty to unite in its accomplishment." And if her mother's wishes were not enough, she added, "If you were only to consult your own comfort & happiness you would rid yourself of them & I am sure you would never wish to do it in any other way than by liberation. Let it be done gradually & surely. William & his family who I hope will go to Africa this fall will act as pioneers." She also

pledged to make good on a promise made to Eliza years ago that she would free her, and penciled a note in 1860 to say she had done so, apparently unofficially.<sup>36</sup>

William Burke and his wife, Rosabella, the enslaved servants to whom Mary C. Lee referred, were grieved to hear of Molly Custis's death, but seemed to welcome the opportunity to gain their freedom and sail to Liberia. The family was living in Baltimore, and William responded to Mary Lee's letter to Rosabella with some of his own reflections. "Although I might not have done all that I might or ought to have done for her comfort when I was with her," he admitted, "yet her kindness & instruction to me in my youth is what I can never forget." He imagined that, as she crossed over, a heavenly voice told her, "Well done. Enter into the joys of thy Lord." The Burkes' reason for being in Baltimore is unclear. William may have been hired out or he may have hired himself out, as he wrote, "If you want me to do any thing for you I can Leave my work at any time."<sup>37</sup>

The Burkes were emancipated, according to ACS records, by Colonel Robert E. Lee. They sailed from Baltimore in November 1853 on the *Banshee* with their children, Cornelia, seven years old; Grandison, six; Alexander, three; and William, four months. The overcrowded ship landed safely in Monrovia, Liberia's capital; from there the Burkes headed upland on the St. Paul River and settled in the new town of Clay-Ashland. William expressed satisfaction with the place and the ACS provisions for new settlers, and asked for books and papers so he could begin teaching. By August he had managed to clear land and build a cabin, twenty-two by thirteen feet—quite an accomplishment given that many settlers as well as Native people lived in thatch huts. He was recovering from the acclimating fever and worked during the heat of the day as a shoemaker when he could get leather. Rosabella Burke reported to Mary C. Lee that they had met with President Joseph Jenkins Roberts in Monrovia, but she was uncomfortable among the society people there. She liked Clay-Ashland and their new home. It seemed a modest version of Arlington: "We have a lot and house upon a beautiful hill in the township, which we have named Mount Rest. It is about 200 yards from the river, overlooking the town." William was ordained a Baptist minister in 1858.<sup>38</sup>

The Burkes loved Liberia and were among their nation's biggest boosters. William Burke and Ralph Gurley were frequent correspondents. The letters are warm, affectionate, respectful, and full of news about family members and friends along with concern and hope for Liberia and its agriculture. Some were published in the ACS's quarterly, *African Repository*. Five years after their arrival, William Burke reported having experienced the sort of hardships and the difficulties "common to the first settlement in any new country," but he was not



“disappointed or discouraged . . . and so far from being dissatisfied with the country, I bless the Lord that ever my lot was cast in this part of the earth . . . for which I feel that I can never be sufficiently thankful.” Still, he cautioned that because many who were persuaded to go to Africa were unhappy and returned to the United States, only those who were prepared to “take everything just as they find it, and be satisfied” should emigrate. Rosabella Burke’s letter to Mary C. Lee followed her husband’s. She reported on the children, their health and schooling, and said that she often thought of the Lee family, asking particularly to “give my love to Mary Ann, and tell her for me that she must try and behave herself, that it will do her good in the end”; she added, “I have thought and dreamt much about you lately.” Rosabella asked her correspondent to tell aunt Elleanor “that I love Africa, and would not change it for America,” and requested that Mary write about Rosabella’s father as “he never will write to me.” While the letter could have been written between white friends, she closed it, “Yours humbly.”<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps because of the changing times and the lack of substantial progress in the colonization movement, Sarah Page Andrews and Mary C. Lee did not carry on the work of their mothers. Nor were they particularly active in another cause. They held quiet Unionist sentiments until after Virginia seceded in April 1861. They did, however, continue to hold the emigrants in their hearts. In 1867 Mary C. Lee sent a photograph of her husband, General Lee, to the Burkes. William Burke thanked her and said that their four-year-old son born in Liberia, Robert Edward, “is quite proud of it, and calls it his Gen. Lee, and is very anxious to share it, when any one comes in—he is a remarkable fine child.”<sup>40</sup> The affection was returned and passed along.

Ann Page and Molly Custis’s legacy also continued through the men they mentored and influenced and through the Liberians they trained and emancipated. In 1857 George Washington Parke Custis died and by will decreed that his slaves should go free within five years. Robert E. Lee reluctantly executed the manumission of his father-in-law’s slaves during the Civil War but, perhaps because these black Virginians sensed the imminent attainment of freedom at home, none wanted to go to Liberia. After the Civil War, Charles Wesley Andrews helped black residents establish an African Methodist Episcopal Church and a school, and gave Bibles to students who learned to read. A Freedmen’s Bureau teacher remarked, “He has always been a friend to the colored people.” Ralph Gurley carried on the colonization work, including two additional trips to Liberia, until the late 1860s. William Burke studied Greek and Latin for a deeper understanding of the Bible, and in 1859 he was the preacher at nearby Millsburg, where the pious Peter Mead Page, formerly of Annfield, was the

teacher. Burke also expressed respect for and community with Liberia's indigenous people—qualities that were often lacking in other Westerners—and concern for the poor. He and Rosabella took in refugees from a captured slave ship who had been released in Liberia.<sup>41</sup>

Although women have received relatively little attention in histories of Liberia, in part because primary sources are scarce, they played important roles in its development. Americo-Liberian women tended to share the sense of superiority of their former owners and of Westerners generally. Indigenous women conducted formal “sende” schools for older girls to teach skills they needed for adulthood in their own cultures, but Americo-Liberians dismissed them as “bush” schools. They instead encouraged girls and boys alike to attend mission schools where they would learn English, reading, writing, and Christianity. Officials there gave them English names and encouraged them to wear Western dress. Girls and boys alike worked as servants, sometimes indentured, in the homes of Americo-Liberians, including that of the Burke family, often in exchange for education. Inevitably, the cultures mixed, especially noticeably in architecture and foodways, and indigenous women eventually began organizing mutual aid societies within their own religions.<sup>42</sup>

Sometimes, indigenous people embraced Western culture and intermarried with Americo-Liberian families. The Page family provides an interesting example. Mary Louise Page, born in 1883 to Thomas Page and Angie Tucker of Little Bassa, was likely a granddaughter of Annfield emigrants. Because few documents have survived, many American descendants cannot definitively document their lineage, but naming patterns provide considerable evidence. Mary, her father, and her uncles Peter and Sol all shared given and surnames with Annfield emigrants. In 1904 Mary married Albert Komoyah Peabody, an indigenous man of the Bassa tribe who had been educated at the Presbyterian mission—where he was given his Western name—and at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and Storer College in Harpers Ferry, not far from Annfield. The couple taught school in Liberia, had three children, and adopted a nephew. Ann Page would have been pleased to read this line in Mary Louise's obituary: “In her earlier days, one of her greatest concern[s] was how she could have all of her children trained, educated and christianized to be of benefit to her, themselves and the Church and State.” Her goals were accomplished, and her legacy has continued through the lives of grandchildren such as Stanton Peabody, an acclaimed Liberian journalist, and Christian Peabody, a dentist in the United States who has been researching their family history. He visited Annfield and was deeply moved by the tangible connection to his American ancestors.<sup>43</sup>

After decades of social and political turmoil and civil war stemming from

tensions between Americo-Liberians and indigenous people, Liberia is now recovering, with women playing notable roles. Leymah Gbowee led a women's movement credited with ending the second civil war in 2003 and electing Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as president in 2006. Sirleaf was the first female head of state in Africa, and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient with Gbowee and a woman from Yemen. Sirleaf wrote a memoir with a brief history of Liberia in which she mentioned William and Rosabella Burke and their ties to Robert E. Lee. "Liberia," she surmised, "is a wonderful, beautiful, mixed-up country struggling mightily to find itself."<sup>44</sup> Since the civil wars, Liberians with American ancestry have felt pressure to keep it hidden, even if they personally value it. Despite conflicted feelings about their nation's African American heritage, Liberians generally feel a kinship to the United States. They have many American influences in their culture, and some American institutions, such as the Library of Congress, recognize those connections.<sup>45</sup>

In 2010 National Park Service (NPS) staff members associated with Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial—Kendell Thompson, Emily Weisner, and Mary Troy—obtained a travel grant and researched the Burke family in Liberia. Despite wartime-like security measures, they enjoyed warm hospitality everywhere they went. They interviewed a Burke descendant, Robert Lee "Ray" Burke, whose father was Edward Lee Burke. His family has retained the naming patterns and an oral history of association with Robert E. Lee and his family. Ray Burke said that his line's births and deaths were recorded in the old family Bible, but when they attempted to escape the violence, carrying it and the General Lee photograph, militants snatched and burned the items. The NPS team also visited the Reverend Dr. Olu Menjay, the principal of Ricks Institute, a Baptist-affiliated school in Clay-Ashland named for the benefactor Moses Ricks, another successful Virginia emigrant. Menjay showed them the ruins of the Baptist church where William Burke served as pastor, the overgrown cemetery where he is likely buried, and Burke Hill, where the family lived. Reflecting on their visit, Kendell Thompson, then the site manager of Arlington, recalled the warm smiles of the Liberian people despite the pervasive devastation and decay, coupled with their deep sense of abandonment by the American people.<sup>46</sup>

Americans, by and large, know little about the complex and fascinating history the two nations share, and still less about women's roles in Virginia's anti-slavery movement and the fruit it bore in Africa. The vision of the NPS staff is to incorporate research on William and Rosabella Burke—and on Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis's antislavery activities—into their interpretation of the Lee family property at Arlington. Telling these transatlantic colonization stories

complicates the history of America's grand manor houses and their inhabitants, slavery and the opposition to slavery, the ideals and realities of white southern womanhood, and the history of Liberia. These stories explore the nature of loving relationships that were unequal and constrained, but that found expression in religion and the flawed but important work of colonization. They reveal nineteenth-century elite white women using their strength in service of a vision, exercising leadership, and changing the world.

## NOTES

1. For colonization, including women's roles, see Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

2. Elizabeth R. Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), chap. 2.

3. C. W. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page* (New York: Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, 1856), 8, 27; John Johns, *Memoir of . . . William Meade* (Baltimore, Md.: Innes, 1867), 110; Mary Meade, will proved September 7, 1813, Will Book 9:251, Frederick County Courthouse, Winchester, Va.; Page, "Valuable extracts; selected by my dear aunt Fitzhugh" (n.d.), Annfield Collection, Clarke County Historical Association, Berryville, Va. (hereafter CCHA).

4. *Virginia Herald*, January 4, 1805; and Ronald W. Johnson, *Preliminary Historic Resource Study: Chatham, Fredericksburg, and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park, Virginia* (Denver, Colo.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1982), 50–52. On Gabriel's Rebellion, see generally, Douglas R. Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 50–118.

5. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 10, 18–19.

6. Elizabeth Brown Pryor, *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee through His Private Letters* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 138–39.

7. National Park Service, *Arlington House: The Robert E. Lee Memorial* (Washington, D.C.: Division of Publications, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 1985), 12–14.

8. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 18–19, 27, 30–32.

9. *Ibid.*, 47; Robinson to Custis, September 14, 1818, Mary Custis Lee Papers, 1694–1917, Virginia Historical Society (hereafter vhs); Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 128–31; the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington, Virginia, Virtual Exhibits, "The Gray Family" and "The Syphax Family," <http://www.arlingtonblackheritage.org/exhibits.html> (accessed May 1, 2013); Karen Byrne, "The Remarkable Legacy of Selina Gray," *Cultural Resources Management* 4 (1998): 20–22.

10. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 31; Page to Susan and Lucy Meade, [1823], Charles Wesley Andrews Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

11. Lilly to Custis, [n.d.], vhs; Mary A. R. [Custis] Lee to Mary Lee [Fitzhugh] Custis, June 18, [c. 1844–45], Custis-Lee-Mason Family Papers, 1756–1863, Library of Virginia.

12. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 18, 21, 33–35; Frederick D. Goodwin, "The Diary of Rev. Frederick D. Goodwin," *Proceedings of the Clarke County Historical Association* 4 (1944): 38–39; Page to Mary L. Custis, May 12, 1817, Mary Custis Lee Papers, vhs.

13. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 37–39; Tyler-McGraw, *African Republic*, 20, 26–35; Ralph Randolph Gurley, *Life of Jehudi Ashmun, Late Colonial Agent in Liberia* (Washington, D.C.: printed by J. C. Dunn, 1835), qtd. in C. W. Andrews, “Obituary [for Ann R. Page],” *African Repository and Colonial Journal* 14, no. 4 (April 1838): 123–27.
14. William Meade, Oration, [n.d.], William Meade Correspondence, St. Mark’s Library, Union Theological Seminary, New York; Mary Meade to Mary Lee (Fitzhugh) Custis, July 12, 1808, Mary Lee Custis Papers, vhs; William Meade to Custis, August 1 and 9, 1808, *ibid.* See also David Lynn Holmes, “William Meade and the Church of Virginia, 1789–1829” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1971), and Arthur Dicken Thomas, “The Second Great Awakening in Virginia and Slavery Reform, 1785–1837” (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1981).
15. *The Annual Report of the Auxiliary Society of Frederick County, Va., for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States* (Winchester, Va.: Auxiliary Society, 1820), 14; Deborah A. Lee, “The Frederick County Auxiliary of the American Colonization Society, Est. 1817,” *Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society Journal* 9 (1996): 17–40.
16. Meade to Custis, April 9, 1823, Mary Custis Lee Papers, vhs; Johns, *Memoir of . . . William Meade*, 77; Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 59–62, 65.
17. Page to Susan Meade, [c. 1815], Charles Wesley Andrews Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.; “William H. Fitzhugh, Esq.,” *African Repository* 3, no. 6 (August 1827): 185; “Obituary Memoir,” *African Repository* 6, no. 3 (May 1830): 91–96; William H. Fitzhugh Will, August 16, 1830, Fairfax County, Va., Will Book Q-1, 57–59; Will of Mrs. A. M. Fitzhugh, August 23, 1870, vhs.
18. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 52; Cornelius Walker, *Memoir of Rev. C. W. Andrews, D.D.* (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1877), 49–50; Marie Tyler-McGraw, “Charles Wesley Andrews,” in *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1998–), 1:163–64.
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20. P. J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816–1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 15, 78, 99; R. R. Gurley, “Remarks on the Principles of the Colonization Society,” *African Repository* 10, no. 3 (May 1834): 68.
21. Gurley to Custis, November 16, 1826, Mary Custis Lee Papers, vhs.
22. See, for example, Gurley to Lee, October 6, 1858, *ibid.*
23. Lydia Maria Child to Lucretia Mott, March 5, 1839, qtd. in Dorothy Sterling, *Ahead of Her Time: Abby Kelley and the Politics of Antislavery* (New York: Norton, 1994), 80.
24. See, generally, Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, chap. 2.
25. Robinson to Custis, March 16, [1810s], and others also from the 1810s, in Mary Custis Lee Papers, vhs. See also Tyler-McGraw, *African Republic*, 87–88.
26. Turner to Custis, May 26, 1833, George Bolling Lee Papers, 1872–1948, vhs; Calvert to Isabelle van Havre, July 15, 1811, in *Mistress of Riversdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert*, ed. Margaret Law Callcott (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 240, both cited in Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 228–29.
27. Page to Custis, December 6, 1810, and October 17, [1820s], Mary Lee Custis Papers, vhs.
28. Susan Meade Will, dated July 3, 1820, proved June 8, 1827; and Lucy F. Meade Will, August 1, 1820, Frederick County Will Book, 15:5–7; William Meade to Mary Lee Custis, April 18, 1836, Mary Lee Custis Papers, vhs.
29. Andrews, *Memoir of Mrs. Ann R. Page*, 45; Matthew Page estate accounts, December 28, 1826,

and August 17, 1827, Frederick County Will Book 15:75–77; Ann R. Page, prayer, n.d., Annfield Collection, CCHA; Sarah W. Page to Ann R. Page, February 28, 1833, Charles Wesley Andrews Papers, Duke University.

30. Jane Ailes and Marie Tyler-McGraw, “Leaving Virginia for Liberia: Western Virginia Emigrants and Emancipators,” *West Virginia History* 6 (2012): 1–34 (quotations on 11–12).

31. For more on the Page emigrants, see *Virginia Emigrants to Liberia*, <http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/liberia> (accessed December 31, 2013).

32. Ann R. Page to Ralph R. Gurley, April 4, 1831, American Colonization Society Records, Library of Congress (hereafter ACS Records).

33. Two overviews of the vast literature on slaveholding women are Tyler-McGraw, *African Republic*, 203–4n6; and Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 179n1. See also Page, prayer, November 1823, Annfield Collection, CCHA.

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35. Page to C. W. Andrews, May 6, 1839, Charles Wesley Andrews Papers, Duke University; Potter to C. W. Andrews, December 29, 1847; and Sarah W. Andrews to John, Peter, and Solomon Page, [c. 1850], both in Mary F. Goodwin, “From the Society’s Collections: I. A Liberian Packet,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 59 (1951): 86–87; Page to C. W. Andrews, April 1, 1855, *ibid.*, 85; Page to Gurley, January 31, 1858, Incoming Correspondence, ACS Records.

36. Mary A. R. Custis Lee, Diary, 1852–58, Lee Family Papers, vhs.

37. Burke to Robert Mary A. R. Custis Lee, May 8, 1853, Robert E. Lee Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

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39. Burke to Lee, February 20, 1859, in *African Repository* 35, no. 7 (July 1859): 213–16.

40. Sarah Andrews to Nanny Andrews, May 31, [1853], C. W. Andrews Papers, Duke University; Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 566n77; Burke to Lee, August 16, 1867, Mary Custis Lee Papers, vhs.

41. Pryor, *Reading the Man*, 261–75; Anna Wright, “Freedmen’s Mission,” *Dover (N.H.) Morning Star*, February 28, 1866, qtd. in Sarah Jane Foster: *Teacher of the Freedmen: A Diary and Letters*, ed. Wayne E. Reilly (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1990), 141n39, see also 116 and 147n88; Bell I. Wiley, *Slaves No More: Letters from Liberia, 1833–1869* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1980), 188–214; “Southern Baptist Missions,” *African Repository* 35, no. 9 (September 1859): 262–63.

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43. George B. Peabody, *Bahr-Fofoe: A Bassa Boy* (Lancaster, Pa.: New Era, 1891); Albert K. Peabody obituary, (Liberian) *Weekly Mirror* (c. September 22, 1938); Mary Louise Peabody obituary, February 1956 (in possession of author); Stanton Peabody obituary, *All Voices Global News*, May 17, 2011; telephone interview with Christian Peabody, April 13, 2010.

44. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, *This Child Will Be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa’s First Woman President* (New York: Harper, 2009), 1, 14.

45. See, for instance, "The African American Mosaic: Liberia," <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam003.html> (accessed December 31, 2013).

46. Katrina Lashley, Deborah Lee, Emily Weisner Thompson, Kendell Thompson, and Mary Troy, "Interpreting Historic Sites Transnationally: A Case Study Stretching from Virginia to Liberia," panel presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians and the National Council on Public History, Milwaukee, Wis., April 2012.