

THE CHARGER



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

JANUARY 2018

VOL. 39 # 4

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Message From the President

Greetings to all members and friends of the Roundtable! As we begin a brand new year, spirits are lifted by the expressions of good cheer and hope for our future we hear with the turn of the calendar. At our meeting this month, the feature presentation will be the Dick Crews Annual Debate, moderated by William Vodrey, at which the following topic will be argued: What was the most influential weapon of the Civil War? So as to avoid chilling anticipation, I will refrain from revealing those weapons each of our debaters has chosen as the most influential of the Civil War. Suffice it to say, each has chosen a conventional weapon, which each will explore in depth as to both utility and significance. At the end of the debate, in accordance with custom, those in attendance will cast secret ballots and name the winner of the debate, who will be awarded fabulous prizes worthy of their effort. This evening is always a lively and interesting affair, so please make your plans to attend our meeting on January 10.

Thoughts of the most influential weapon this month led me to consider the most influential written or spoken words of the Civil War, insofar as political expression can be more damaging than ordnance. The Gettysburg Address is certainly not political speech, and was written by President Lincoln to help heal the nation. Its significance however is profound, even today, as debate about our national identity rages in the media. The following is taken from an essay written by Tim Huebner, the L. Palmer Brown Professor of Interdisciplinary Humanities and chair of the Department of History at Rhodes College, Memphis, in 2013. In short order, he sets forth the true essence of the speech, which I believe constitutes the most influential address of the Civil War.

"One hundred fifty years ago, amid lingering northern doubts about whether the Civil War was worth the cost, President Abraham Lincoln traveled to Gettysburg to dedicate a cemetery. Some months before, Union forces had repelled a Confederate incursion into Pennsylvania at the tiny crossroads town, forcing the Rebel invaders to retreat. But the three-day battle had been costly for both sides, and despite the Union victory, war pessimism hung over the North.

In a concise 272 words, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address attempted to convince the northern public to stay the course.



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History Brief cont

Perhaps the most lofty expression of immortality is found in an ode by the ancient Roman poet, Horace. In that ode, Horace described his concept of immortality as "a monument more lasting than bronze and higher than the royal structure of the pyramids, which neither devouring rain, nor the unrestrained North Wind can destroy, nor the immeasurable succession of years and the flight of time. I shall not totally die, and a greater part of me will evade death." Horace's concept of immortality is the kind of immortality that comes to people who live on in history through their deeds and accomplishments. This type of immortality fits with Napoleon's version, and while it does not satisfy Woody Allen's version of immortality, it at least avoids the highly unpleasant aspects of the immortality of Tithonus. Moreover, the immortality of which Horace wrote is especially fulfilling, because, as Horace wrote regarding his concept of immortality, "a greater part of me will evade death." While the immortality that was espoused by Horace is not perfect, it is certainly very desirable. This kind of immortality came to many people who were part of the Civil War, and it came to one Civil War recipient of the Medal of Honor in a way that remains unique to this day.

The person who has this unique immortality is Mary Edwards Walker. Mary was born on November 26, 1832 near Oswego in upstate New York. She was the youngest of five daughters, and she had a younger brother. Her parents, Alvah and Vesta Walker, were abolitionists who were strong supporters of education for all of their children. Alvah and Vesta instilled in their children the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. Mary's father had an interest in medicine and owned a number of medical texts. During her youth, Mary read these books and became interested in medicine. After she spent a few years working as a teacher, Mary entered Syracuse Medical College (which is now Upstate Medical University). She was the only woman in her class, and she graduated in 1855 with honors. She was reputedly the second woman in the United States to receive a medical degree. Shortly after graduation Mary married one of her classmates, Albert Miller. Mary's feminist views were evident in three aspects of her wedding. First, she kept her own surname rather than take the surname of her husband. Also, she deleted the word "obey" from her wedding vows. Lastly, she wore trousers and a coat rather than a wedding dress. Mary's clothing choice for the wedding was due to her belief that women's clothing of that time was unnecessarily restrictive and also unhealthful, which is an opinion that was instilled in her by her father. Even during her youth, Mary did not wear women's clothing. Instead, she wore clothing that was not conventional for young women of her time, which led to her being taunted. Mary and her husband went into medical practice together, but their marriage quickly began to unravel, and there is evidence that Mary's husband was unfaithful. They separated around the time that the Civil War began, and their divorce was finalized in 1868, 13 years after their wedding.



Shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War, Mary attempted to join the Union army as a surgeon, but she was denied. She was able to volunteer as a civilian, and her first duty was in a hospital in Washington. She later served in hospitals at a number of battlefields, including the first battle of Bull Run, in Chattanooga after the battle of Chickamauga, and in Atlanta. Although Mary worked as a surgeon, she was listed as a nurse, and she actively petitioned to have her designation changed to reflect her true status, but without success. Finally, in September 1863, Mary was appointed a contract acting assistant surgeon (civilian) in the Army of the Cumberland. During her service in battlefield hospitals, Mary designed and made clothing for herself that consisted of a calf-length skirt over trousers. This clothing allowed her to more easily move about and care for the wounded.

In April 1864, seven months after her appointment as a surgeon, Mary was taken prisoner in northwest Georgia when she went alone behind enemy lines to treat some wounded civilians. She was held as a prisoner of war in Castle Thunder near Richmond, Virginia. While Mary was there, her captors voiced disdain for her. This contempt is apparent in a description of Mary that was written by a Confederate captain. This Confederate wrote that those who saw Mary were "both amused and disgusted," and he went on to characterize Mary as "a thing that nothing but the debased and depraved Yankee nation could produce—a female doctor." He also took note of Mary's clothing when he added that she was wearing "the full uniform of a Federal surgeon, looks, hat & all, & wore a cloak." Regarding Mary's appearance and feistiness, the Confederate captain described her as "not good looking and of course had tongue enough for a regiment of men."

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A Richmond newspaper wrote about Mary, "She is ugly and skinny, and apparently above thirty years of age." Mary spent four months as a prisoner of war until an exchange of prisoners swapped her and a number of other Union physicians for some Confederate physicians. At the time of her release, Mary, who weighed 110 pounds when she was captured, weighed only 65 pounds. Mary spent a few weeks recuperating and then returned to duty in Georgia. Her title was soon changed from contract acting assistant surgeon to acting assistant surgeon, and she was assigned to a female military prison in Louisville, Kentucky, where 2,000 inmates, mostly spies, were confined. Mary served there until March 1865 when she was transferred to an orphanage in Clarksville, Tennessee, and she remained there until the end of the war. After the war she returned to her home in upstate New York.

On November 11, 1865, Mary Edwards Walker became the first woman to be awarded the Medal of Honor. Mary's Medal of Honor citation notes that she "devoted herself with much patriotic zeal to the sick and wounded soldiers, both in the field and hospitals, to the detriment of her own health." Mary's Medal of Honor citation also indicates that the Medal of Honor was that the Medal of Honor was conferred with the recommendations of William T. Sherman and George H. Thomas. (Ironically, in light of one of the primary reasons that Mary received the Medal of Honor, her medal was awarded to her on the day after the execution of Henry Wirz, the commandant of the notorious Confederate prison, Andersonville.) Mary's Medal of Honor and over 900 other Medals of Honor were rescinded in 1917 when the criteria for the medal were changed to include only those who had engaged in combat. But Mary refused to relinquish her Medal of Honor, and she continued to wear it every day for the rest of her life. In 1977, 58 years after Mary's death, Mary's Medal of Honor was restored by President Jimmy Carter.



Mary's post-Civil War years were marked by her involvement in two causes. One, not surprisingly, was women's suffrage. However, Mary only tepidly supported the Constitutional amendment that was the goal of the women's suffrage movement. This is because Mary and some others in the women's suffrage movement felt that the Constitution, as written, gave women the right to vote. When the suffrage movement became focused on an amendment, Mary fell out of favor. The other cause that Mary championed involved women's clothing. This is a cause that she had both embraced and put into practice from a young age. In 1866 Mary was elected president of the National Dress Reform Association, a little-known organization that advocated changes to women's clothing. Eventually Mary lost standing in this group because of her extreme views and practices with regard to women's clothing. In her later years, Mary took to wearing men's clothing and regularly dressed in trousers, a men's shirt and jacket, bow tie, and top hat. Having fallen out of favor with the two movements that she had actively supported, Mary spent the last three decades of her life on her family's farm near Oswego. During that time, those who knew Mary and interacted with her considered her eccentric, but harmless. Mary died poverty-stricken on February 21, 1919 at the age of 86.

Economist John Kenneth Galbraith once noted, "If all else fails, immortality can always be assured by spectacular error." There are many people who followed this path to immortality, and it can be debated whether this type of immortality is better or worse than the immortality of Tithonus. Nevertheless, this is not the route that Mary Edwards Walker traveled to immortality. Mary Edwards Walker achieved immortality by being the first and thus far only woman to receive the Medal of Honor. In the movie *Gladiator*, as the main character, Maximus, was entering the arena for the the competition that many expected would end with Maximus' death, Maximus' owner shouted to him, "We mortals are but shadows and dust." Sadly, that is the reality for most of us mortals. But Mary Edwards Walker is one mortal who was able to escape this fate, because she achieved the kind of everlasting immortality that was extolled by Horace. Some people felt, and some people might now feel, that Mary Edwards Walker does not deserve the Medal of Honor. In large part this is because she never saw service in combat, but Mary's valor, patriotism, devoted service, and personal sacrifice are beyond question. In the end, this controversy does not matter, because it is a fact of the historical record that Mary Edwards Walker is the first woman to be placed on the roster of Medal of Honor recipients, and she will hold this honored distinction for all time. By virtue of this extraordinary accomplishment, Mary Edwards Walker achieved the most fulfilling kind of immortality.

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SPECIAL CIVIL WAR BOOK SALE

THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL SALE OF FINE CIVIL WAR BOOKS IN EXCELLENT CONDITION ON A WIDE VARIETY OF TOPICS AT OUR JANUARY MEETING. INCLUDED IN THE TITLES ARE SEVERAL BIOGRAPHIES OF CIVIL WAR GENERALS AND OTHER PERSONALITIES. THE BOOKS ARE THE RESULT OF A DONATION FROM A COLLECTOR OF HISTORICAL TITLES GIVEN THROUGH LYNN PETTYJOHN, RETIRED LIBRARIAN. PLEASE BE SURE TO BRING SOME EXTRA CASH OR CHECK TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY.



John Gibbon (This article appeared in the Dec., 2017 issue. Part of the text was left out so it is repeated here in its entirety)

By Dennis Keating

John Gibbon was one of the best combat commanders of the Army of the Potomac. He was also one of the few Southern West Pointers to side with the Union. Post-Civil War, he participated in two of the most memorable western campaigns of the Plains Indian wars.

Born near Philadelphia in 1827, his family later moved to Charlotte, North Carolina and became slave owners). Entering West Point at age fifteen, he flunked out but then returned. But, this meant that he arrived in Mexico in 1847 as an artillery officer too late to experience the fighting. He was assigned to Florida during the conflict with the Seminoles. Returning to West Point as its artillery instructor, in 1859 he published *The Artillerist's Manual*. At the outbreak of the rebellion, Gibbon was stationed in Utah. After his decision to serve with the Union (in contrast to three brothers who served with North Carolina Confederate units), he was assigned to lead an artillery battery in George McClellan's Army of the Potomac in the division led by Irvin McDowell. Gibbon would be an admirer of George McClellan.

On May 7, 1862, McDowell promoted Gibbon to command of a brigade consisting of four western regiments: the 2nd, 6th, and 7th Wisconsin and the 19th Indiana. A strict disciplinarian, he ordered the brigade to wear the distinctive Hardee hats (and the brigade became known as the "Black Hats").

Gibbon's brigade saw its first combat at Brawners' farm on August 28, 1862 when they fought the Stonewall brigade during Robert E. Lee's campaign against John Pope's Army of Virginia at Second Manassas. His outnumbered command suffered heavy casualties but held against Stonewall Jackson's forces. It then marched North to face D.H. Hill's force guarding the passes on South Mountain against McClellan's advance. On September 14, 1862, Gibbon's command attacked the Confederates at Turner's Gap, losing about one-quarter of its remaining number. Supposedly, an impressed Joe Hooker and McClellan called Gibbon's regiments the "Iron Men of the West". The name stuck

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Gibbon cont..

On the morning of September 17, Gibbon's Iron Brigade of Hooker's I Corps advanced through the Miller farm against Stonewall Jackson's command. In the furious fighting in the cornfield and beyond, about 40 percent of the Iron Brigade were casualties. After these three battles within a few weeks, the Iron Brigade strength was reduced from an initial 2,888 to only 465. On October 8, 1862 the 24th Michigan became the fifth regiment of the Iron Brigade. However, Gibbon was promoted to command of the second division of the First Corps, now commanded by John Reynolds.

At Fredericksburg, Gibbon's division joined with George Meade's attack south of the town against Stonewall Jackson's force (once again). Their momentary success was repulsed and Gibbon was wounded by an artillery shell. Returning to the army, Gibbon became commander of the second division of the II Corps. At Fredericksburg under John Sedgewick when Hooker was at Chancellorsville in the Wilderness, Gibbon's division did not see action.

This was not the case at Gettysburg. With Winfield Scott Hancock in command of the II Corps (and then of a wing of the Army of the Potomac following Reynolds' death on the first day), Gibbon's division was posted on Cemetery Ridge. After the late evening conference on the second day, George Gordon Meade now commanding the army warned Gibbon that if Lee attacked again the following day, it would probably be against the II Corps. Mounted at the Angle, Gibbon was wounded as he helped lead the successful repulse of the Pickett-Pettigrew (a cousin of Gibbon) charge. Two of his brothers serving in the 28th North Carolina also participated in the charge. His division suffered 61 percent casualties.

Recovering from his second Civil War wound, Gibbon briefly became commander of the draftee depot in Cleveland in October, 1863. Gibbon was at Lincoln's address in November at the dedication of the Union cemetery in Gettysburg.

In the Spring, the Army of the Potomac, now joined by Union Commander-in-Chief U.S. Grant, entered the Wilderness again. On May 6, Hancock ordered Gibbon to advance against James Longstreet's counter-attack but Gibbon said that he failed to receive the order. This dispute led to a lifelong conflict between the two, fueled by more issues in the future. In Grant's Overland campaign, Gibbon's division participated in the terrible battle at Spotsylvania and the failed assault at Cold Harbor.

These battles took a heavy toll on Gibbon's command, requiring replacements to make up the heavy losses (72 percent of its original strength at the beginning of the campaign). This resulted in the embarrassing defeat on June 16, 1864 at the Jerusalem Plank Road where II Corps was to cut the Weldon Railroad as part of Grant's siege of Petersburg. This was followed on July 25 by another dispute between Hancock and Gibbon about attack orders at Deep Bottom.

In September, Gibbon was assigned temporary command of the XVIII Corps of the Army of the James. This was then followed by his transfer to command of the 24th Corps of the Army of the James and its movement to a position with the Army of the Potomac. Gibbon's command played a prominent role on April 2 in breaking through the Confederate Petersburg defenses. They overwhelmed Fort Gregg and Battery Whitworth. Entering Petersburg they joined the pursuit of Lee's retreating army. At Appomattox Court House, Gibbon was one of the three Union surrender commissioners who oversaw the surrender of Lee's army.

After the Civil War, Gibbon, now a colonel in the Regular Army, first became commander of 36th Infantry headquartered in Nebraska. In 1871, Gibbon was re-assigned to command of the 7th Infantry in Montana. While serving on the western frontier, Gibbon got into more disputes with Hancock, as well as McDowell.

1876 saw Gibbon commanding one of three columns under Alfred Terry intended to converge against Sioux and Cheyennes who refused to accept the forced "sale" of the Black Hills. Although ill, Gibbon pushed his force toward the Little Bighorn, where it arrived two days after the disastrous defeat of the 7th Cavalry under George Armstrong Custer. 1,600 miles in pursuit.

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Gibbon cont.

In 1877, Gibbon became involved in the pursuit of the Nez Perces under Chief Joseph attempting to flee to Canada to join Sitting Bull. On August 8, 1877, Gibbon's small force attacked the unsuspecting native camp in the Big Hole Basin in Montana. In a desperate battle that Gibbon compared to Antietam Gibbon's force withstood furious Nez Perce counter-attacks. Gibbon was shot in the thigh and his horse was killed. Chief Joseph would surrender on October 5 to Nelson Miles at Bear Paw Mountain, just short of the Canadian border. Gibbon and Chief Joseph would later become friends and Gibbon opposed the defeated tribe's relocation far from its ancestral lands in Oregon.

In 1885, Gibbon succeeded Miles as commander of the Department of the Columbia which included the territories of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. His major challenge was to suppress rioting in Tacoma and Seattle against Chinese immigrants. His army career ended as commander of the Military Division of the Pacific with his retirement in 1891.

Gibbon wrote his *Personnel Recollections of the Civil War*, which was not published until 32 years after his death in 1896. With his several commands, many Civil War battles and his participation in the Indian wars of 1876-1877, this distinguished soldier was most remembered for his command of the Black Hats and the Iron Brigade of the Army of the Potomac. In 1911, the Iron Brigade Association funded a monument over Gibbon's grave in Arlington National Cemetery. In July, 1988, a monument of Gibbon was dedicated on the Gettysburg battlefield.

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A Civil War Buffs Visit to the South Carolina State House

By Paul Siedel

The state capitol buildings of the eleven Confederate States played a major part in the secession crises of 1860 and 1861. Alabama, Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina all have state houses that played important parts in the Civil War and are still in use. Of these four only one has the scars of the war still visible. The South Carolina State Capitol Building stands in Columbia and is a riot of Victorian decorative arts. Constructed of blue granite, it features such amazing works of art as stained glass windows, a fifteen ton copper dome, marble parquet floors and one of the largest law libraries in the U.S. The building was begun in 1855 to the plans formulated by architect John R. Niernsee of Baltimore and built to replace a frame building erected in 1790. By 1860 the building was only partially complete and because of the war construction was brought to a halt. In February 1865, General William T. Sherman with his army of 65,000 appeared across the Congaree River. The fleeing Confederates had burned the bridges but still proceeded to take shots at the army encamped on the other side of the water. The Union forces immediately responded shelling the city, several shells hit the unfinished State House and embedded themselves in the walls, and these marks can still be seen today on the exterior of the building. This damage along with the other monuments to that tumultuous era are there on the grounds. The statue of General and post war Governor Wade Hampton III, the memorial to the women of the Confederacy, The monument to all the African-Americans brought over forcibly from their home in Africa, the memorial to Senator Storm Thurman, and the memorial to the Confederate dead all add proudly to the uniqueness of this remarkable building.



South Carolina is a remarkable state, one with a fascination history and one that can be fully appreciated by visiting this most remarkable of state capitol buildings.

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Visit to South Carolina's State House cont.

Tours are free and offered to the general public. A video program features the story of the construction, demise and resurrection of the State House, and some of the remarkable men and women who have been part of South Carolina's dynamic history. South Carolina is a remarkable state, one with a fascinating history and one that can be fully appreciated by visiting this most remarkable of state capitol buildings.



JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT MEETING

Jan. 10, 2018

Program: Dick Crews Annual Debate, moderated by William Vodrey

“What was the most influential weapon of the Civil War? “

Drinks @ 6pm, Dinner @ 6:40 Judson Manor

East 107th St & Chester

Meeting will begin at 7 pm.

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Lee's Daughters (part 3 of 6) by Dave Carrino

Anne Carter Lee

Anne Carter Lee was born on June 15, 1839, the second daughter and fourth child of Robert E. and Mrs. Lee. Annie, as she was called by the members of her family, was named for Robert E. Lee's mother. In May 1839, the Lee family left St. Louis, which was the location of Lee's assignment at the time, and traveled to Arlington. Mrs. Lee, who was pregnant with Annie, preferred to give birth there, if only because after the birth of Annie, Mrs. Lee's parents could help her with the three older children, Custis, Mary, and Rooney. Lee was able to obtain a leave to accompany his family to Arlington, but he soon returned to St. Louis and was not present when Annie was born. He received a letter from his mother-in-law shortly after Annie's birth, in which he was informed that his second daughter had a prominent reddish birthmark on her face. In his reply, he expressed concern about this and went on to say about the birthmark, "We must endeavor to assist her to veil if not eradicate it by the purity and brightness of her mind." The method which Lee proposed to deal with the birthmark shows his belief in the power that can be wielded by a vigorous and virtuous intellect. In Lee's reply to his mother-in-law, he also made a prayer-like statement in which he expressed his hope for the safety of his children. "God grant that they may all be preserved to us." The way that Lee worded this plea indicates that he wished for his children's well-being not only for their sake, but also for himself so that he would be able to have them with him for a long time. Lee had no way of knowing that this prayer would not be answered for the latest addition to his family.



In the fall of 1840, the city of St. Louis was satisfied that the harbor improvements that Lee supervised were sufficient, although Lee felt that further improvements were needed. Nevertheless, Lee's services were deemed no longer necessary, and he returned to Arlington. Shortly before Annie's second birthday, Lee received a new assignment. By this time, the next member of the Lee family, daughter Agnes, had arrived. Lee's new assignment was in New York City, and he traveled there alone in the spring of 1841, because Mrs. Lee was still recovering from her latest delivery. Mrs. Lee and the children came to New York a few months later, and the family lived at Fort Hamilton. For Annie, the time at Fort Hamilton was marked by a serious accident that left her sightless in one eye and with a permanent disfigurement. After about a year at Fort Hamilton, Annie, who was three years old at the time, came upon a pair of scissors and pushed the point of the scissors into her eye. In light of Annie's afflictions, her father felt a special responsibility toward her, and when he wrote his will prior to the Mexican-American War, he saw to it that there was a specific provision for Annie, because he was concerned that Annie "from an accident she has received in one of her eyes may be more in want of aid than the rest." Annie was self-conscious about her appearance throughout her life, and, perhaps because of this, Annie is the only one of the four Lee daughters for whom no photograph is known to exist. A portrait of a young woman, which was taken from Arlington

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Lee's Daughters cont.

by a soldier and returned decades later by the soldier's descendants, was identified as Annie by a former slave. The portrait was painted without the eye disfigurement or the birthmark and is the only known image of Annie. As a girl at Arlington, Annie slept in a four-poster bed that had been owned by George Washington. At first she had her own bedroom, which was next to Mary's bedroom. Eventually Annie shared her bedroom with her younger sisters, Agnes and Mildred, while Mary continued to have her own bedroom except for those times when Markie Williams stayed at Arlington.

One event in the Lee family that greatly affected Annie's life, although she could not have known it at the time, was the birth of her younger sister, Agnes. Annie and Agnes were the two Lee children who were born closest together temporally, and they were the only consecutively born Lee children who were of the same gender. This led to Annie and Agnes having a very close relationship. In fact, Annie and Agnes had such a close relationship that the family referred to them as "the Girls," as if they were the only girls in the family. Annie and Agnes were educated together, first by their mother at Arlington beginning in the fall of 1847. At that time Annie was eight years old, Agnes was six years old, and their father was serving in the Mexican-American War. After Lee returned from the war and received his assignment to Baltimore, Annie and Agnes lived there with the family. When Lee was appointed superintendent of West Point in 1852, Mrs. Lee, Mary, Rooney, Rob, and Mildred lived there with him. Annie and Agnes remained at Arlington and were schooled by a tutor. Several months after Annie and Agnes had been left at Arlington with their tutor and with Mrs. Lee's parents, Annie received a letter from her father that was dated February 25, 1853. Lee indicated to Annie that he did not have much time to write that letter to her, but that "my limited time does not diminish my affection for you." Lee continued, "I hope...that you will endeavor to improve and so conduct yourself as to make you happy and me joyful all our lives. Diligent and earnest attention to all your duties can only accomplish this....I do not know what the cadets will say if the Superintendent's children do not practice what he demands of them." In that letter, Lee acted toward Annie both as the caring, affectionate father of a 14-year-old daughter and the stern commanding officer of a cadet.

During the winter and spring Annie and Agnes began a task that put them on the other side of education. Although Virginia law forbade it, Annie and Agnes were given the responsibility of educating the Arlington slave children, which was a practice for the slave children that their mother and grandmother had consistently adhered to in the past. The spring of 1853 saw Annie and Agnes experience their first real family loss when their grandmother, Mary Fitzhugh Custis, died on April 23, the day after her 65th birthday. According to an account of her death which Agnes, at the age of 12, wrote in her journal, Annie and Agnes witnessed their grandmother's last breath as she "clasped us in her arms and murmured some affectionate words for her little grandchildren." As such, Mary Fitzhugh Custis experienced the kind of idealized death that people in the 19th Century longed for and that the vast majority of soldiers and sailors in the Civil War were denied. In part because of the death of Mary Fitzhugh Custis, the Lees decided that Annie and Agnes would move to West Point when the family returned there for the next academic year. At West Point, Annie and Agnes attended the post school. Their older sister, Mary, had attended the post school for a short time the previous year, but transferred to an all-girls school near

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New York City. Annie and Agnes, who were ages 14 and 12, respectively, when they first arrived at the U.S. Military Academy, did not enjoy life at West Point. The sisters, who were at a typically awkward age, felt ill at ease being surrounded by so many young men, even though one of those young men was their older brother, Custis, who was in his third year at West Point. When the Lees entertained cadets at the superintendent's house, Annie and Agnes usually left the gathering early. Agnes mentioned the discomfort that she and Annie felt toward the cadets in an entry in her journal a few months after the sisters arrived at West Point. Agnes also wrote about her attempt to deal with this. "To be surrounded by several cadets at once is no very pleasant feeling, but I am overcoming my bashfulness a little." Annie and Agnes were also dismayed by the harsh treatment given by the older cadets to the incoming ones. Agnes wrote in her journal, "Poor fellows, they are teased [sic], tormented & tricked almost out of their lives."

At the end of that academic year, Custis graduated on July 1, 1854, and the family spent the summer at Arlington with G.W.P. Custis, who was trying to adjust to life after the death of his wife. When the family returned to West Point for the following academic year, which was Lee's third year as superintendent, Annie and Agnes felt more comfortable interacting with the cadets. Near the end of that academic year, in March 1855, Lee was assigned to the Second Cavalry and was to report for duty in Texas. In a letter to a friend, Annie expressed a desire to journey to Texas with her father "to see the beautiful west with its immense prairies, proud mountains, & broad rolling streams." After the family had packed their belongings, they departed West Point and returned to Arlington. Annie and her sister, Agnes, returned to their Arlington home as maturing young women, who had become more mature than their actual ages due to all of their experiences in the different places where they had recently lived. But in spite of their enjoyment of living in different places, they were very happy to be in the place that to them was home.

Annie's affection for Arlington is evident in some of her letters. In the summer following Lee's transfer to Texas, when Annie was 16, she described a morning horseback ride at Arlington in a letter to a friend. In Annie's words, "You have no idea how beautifully everything looked in the morning dew. Our ride for some distance lay along a row of high hills which commanded a beautiful view of Washington with fields & meadows on one side & dark forests on the other." In another letter, Annie drew a word picture of a winter sunrise at Arlington with the vivid description, "The Sun is struggling up tinging with gold the heavy clouds which oppose its progress, & throwing its reflection full upon the water beneath, leaving it like a sheet of fire....The mist still hangs over Washington, & the rest of the river, is tossed about by the wind, its waves instead of gently flowing on, as blue as the sky, have a greenish angry appearance & are all crested with foam." When Annie was 19 and Christmas was approaching, she expressed a desire for an Arlington Christmas like those of her youth, which Annie recalled "used to be so very bright and joyous that we wished Christmas would come all the time...the night before so excited that we could hardly be got to bed."

During the summer of 1855, while Lee was traveling to Texas for his assignment with the Second Cavalry, Lee

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and Mrs. Lee exchanged correspondence in which they discussed boarding school for Annie and Agnes. As this discussion was taking place, Annie wrote about the impending departure from Arlington in the same letter in which she described the morning horseback ride. She did not seem enthusiastic about attending boarding school when she wrote that during the summer she was having "a delightful time here, except for the prospect of going to school in the fall, awful!" The decision was made to send the sisters to the Virginia Female Institute in Staunton, Virginia. (The Virginia Female Institute currently operates as a pre-K to 12 coeducational school, and the original buildings are still standing. The school is now named Stuart Hall School after Flora Cooke Stuart, the wife of Jeb Stuart. Flora Stuart headed



the school from 1880 to 1899 and guided the school through some difficult times, which prompted the school to rename itself in her honor in 1907.) At the time that Annie and Agnes attended the school, it was run by the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia. According to the school's 1876 catalog (which is considerably later than the Lee daughters attended the school), students were charged tuition of \$40 per year, a fee of \$200 for room and board, and an additional fee of \$2.50 for pew rental. Living accommodations involved five students sharing one large room in a dormitory. The strong religious underpinning of the school was evident in the first of the "Daily Exercises." As stipulated in the schedule for the students, "Three quarters of an hour after the rising bell, the Boarders assemble with an Officer, for the silent study of the Scriptures."

There were stringent rules regarding letters, visitors, and time away. "Parents should specify the epistolary correspondents of the pupils and inform the Principal in general terms as to the visits they may make and the calls they may receive. The calls of gentlemen who may be strangers to the Principal and not specified by the parents are not received by the pupils unless authorized by letters of introduction. From 4 o'clock to 5 P.M., is the most convenient hour for such calls. *Pupils will not be allowed to receive calls on the Sabbath unless under very extraordinary circumstances.* Pupils will not be allowed, *under any circumstances*, to spend the night out of the Institute." Although the strict discipline at the school was beneficial in forcing the students to apply themselves to the taxing curriculum that included algebra, chemistry, botany, theology, geography, and philosophy in addition to New Testament, Latin, French, and piano, it is no surprise that the school's policy on discipline led to the students calling their school "Staunton Jail." The school's faculty also fell victim to the students' criticism, such as when Agnes recorded in her journal her impressions of some of the faculty. Agnes' descriptions included the pointed remarks "handsome and attractive but I am still not so perfectly fascinated as most of the girls," "smart & intelligent, besides very funny—but *no* beauty," "a particular little man," "makes you feel she can be very severe," "quite strict and rather cold," and "so odd." One male teacher was characterized as "the only *young* man," but "his looks will prevent our being very desperate." Like teachers at schools since schools have existed, the teachers at the Virginia Female Institute were targets of sharp criticisms from their students, and the daughters of Robert E. Lee were no

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Different than typical teenaged students with regard to hurling petty criticisms at their teachers.

The two years that Annie and Agnes spent at the Virginia Female Institute were not filled entirely with studying and diligence. One evening in March of their first year, Annie, Agnes, and their roommates engaged in a prank. Perhaps they did this because they were going to be given a test in mathematics a couple of days later and needed to relieve some tension. The girls burned a piece of bristol board and then used the charred material to mark their faces in the pattern of male facial hair. Agnes and one of her roommates were even courageously rebellious enough to go to dinner with the markings still on their faces. But when they were informed that the teacher whom Agnes described as "very severe" was going to be at dinner, the girls quickly wiped their faces clean, or as Agnes wrote in her journal, "caused...my *whiskers* to vanish." Agnes ended her journal entry about the prank with the scandalous statement, "The girls were much amused even the dim similitude to a masculine in the V.F.I. [Virginia Female Institute] caused great disturbance." While the students were amused, the same emotion may not have been felt by the ardently dutiful father who expected disciplined behavior from Annie and Agnes.

During Annie's first year at boarding school, she wrote a description of herself in a letter, and this description reveals that she was self-conscious about her appearance. Annie considered herself "long and gaunt, sharp as a razor...nose communing with the skies,' sharp voice and long fingers, with the sourest expression imaginable." The previous summer she had described herself in another letter as "quite a *spinster* sour as *vinegar*." Neither of these comments about herself mentions her eye disfigurement or her birthmark, but it is possible that Annie's opinion of her appearance was influenced by these physical traits. In spite of her self-consciousness, Annie was studious and reliable, characteristics that she shared with her father, and Annie did well at boarding school, as did Agnes. Lee wrote of his pride in the performance of both of his daughters in their first year at boarding school, although his praise was greater for Annie, and he spoke of Agnes as a parent might speak of the child whose work ethic needs improvement. In a letter to his wife, Lee wrote, "I am very glad to hear that Annie recd so many prizes. I am also very glad to hear of Agnes success. She is less constant than Annie in her application, but I am in hopes will improve with years." The hopefulness about Agnes that was expressed by the concerned father might have been diminished had he read the worried comment in Agnes' journal regarding an upcoming exam. Agnes wrote about the exam, "I dread it for I don't believe I know two questions *properly*."

After a summer at Arlington, Annie and Agnes returned for their second year at boarding school. Perhaps because of their good performance the previous year or because of familiarity after their previous time at the school, the sisters were more enthusiastic as they prepared to leave Arlington for their second year of boarding school. Annie's enthusiasm toward her education was evident in a letter that she wrote near the end of her first year at the school. In that letter, she expressed her excitement about becoming educated in disciplines that were not typical for women of that time. Annie gushed, "What do you think of our studying Geometrie [sic]?"

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Annie also wrote, with the heady exuberance of a young person anticipating that her generation will correct the flaws that past generations inflicted on the world, "We are going to effect *wonders* & to raise our sex above the weak trammels of novels and fashions." Annie's and Agnes' education continued to progress during their second year at the Virginia Female Institute, but as their second year at boarding school was ending, and Annie and Agnes were approaching graduation, Annie became so ill that she was sent home to Arlington. Despite missing her sister greatly, Agnes completed the semester and received her diploma. Annie also received a certificate even though she was not able to take final examinations.

In the summer following graduation from boarding school, Annie's health showed only modest improvement from the illness that had come on her while she was at school. Mrs. Lee's health was also continuing to decline due to her rheumatic disease. In fact, when Annie and Agnes had returned from boarding school the previous summer, Annie wrote to a friend about Mrs. Lee's poor health when they arrived at Arlington. "Oh! how strange it seemed not to see Ma waiting for us, but she [has] been an invalid upstairs for nearly a month with rheumatism." Lee, who was still in Texas, urged his wife to go to a hot spring spa. Mrs. Lee agreed, not only for herself, but also in the hope that it would help Annie. Soon after Mrs. Lee and Annie arrived at the spa, Agnes, Custis, and Rooney joined them. Annie's health improved, but the health of Mrs. Lee did not. While Annie was recovering from her illness, she received a letter from her father in which he wrote, "I wish you to be very good, very wise, very healthy, & very happy." Lee's wish for Annie is the kind of hope that a father has for his daughter, but Lee could not have known that in just five years his wish for Annie's health would come to naught.

Within months after the family's return to Arlington from the spa, G.W.P. Custis died on October 10, 1857. As executor of his father-in-law's estate, Lee returned to Arlington from Texas. Lee spent the fall and winter handling those duties as well as tending to Arlington, itself. The following summer Annie still had not fully recovered from the illness that began near the end of her time at boarding school, and Mrs. Lee continued to suffer from her rheumatic disease. Lee decided to bring them to another hot spring spa, and in a letter to a friend, Annie described some of the scenery that she saw during the trip. In that letter Annie wrote that "the mountains, & the little streams...running, gurgling over the stones, the last rays of light as they lit up the clouds & mountains were very beautiful."

The tranquil scene that Annie described was in contrast to the growing secession controversy, which was progressing from an abstract debate to a contentious issue to a grave crisis and eventually to civil war. A little over a year after Annie wrote about the little streams gurgling over the stones and the last rays of sunlight illuminating the clouds, the flames of the crisis that was engulfing the country touched the Lee family when Robert E. Lee, who was still on leave from his duties in Texas due to difficulties with the will of G.W.P. Custis, was sent to lead the military force which put down John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry. Another four months passed before Lee returned to Texas. In a letter that Lee sent to Annie shortly after his arrival in Texas, he

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Wrote "I thought of you, when I got in my blankets & knew you were happy for you were asleep, with Agnes by your side....You must all be happy & agreeable [sic] to each other. Youth is so fleeting & life so short." When Lee wrote those words to his daughter about life being short, Annie had only two and a half more years of her short life left to her.

A few months after Annie received that letter from her father, she entered a summer of great responsibility. Because her mother's rheumatic afflictions had not improved much at the spas she visited, Mrs. Lee decided to try a spa in Canada. She traveled there with Agnes and with Markie Williams, who was living at Arlington. Annie, who was 21, was left to supervise Arlington's operations and upkeep. One specific instruction that Annie received from Mrs. Lee in this regard was to carefully monitor the wine cellar, "as the wine there is a tempting article." Toward the end of summer Annie also had to handle preparations for her younger sister, Mildred, who was to leave soon for boarding school in Winchester, Virginia. Mildred, who was 14, had been enrolled in the school before her mother left for Canada, and Mrs. Lee and the others were not planning to return to Arlington by the time Mildred left for school. Annie received letters from her mother with instructions for Mildred, such as making sure that Mildred was "reasonable about her clothes," by which Mrs. Lee presumably meant that Mildred take only as much as necessary and be agreeable to using any clothes that her older sisters no longer needed. The preparations that Annie was making for Mildred also had to be done in compliance with instructions from the boarding school, which stipulated that "each pupil must bring with her a list of her clothing, which must be marked with her name in full; half a dozen towels, also marked; over-shoes and an umbrella." With all of the duties that had been thrust upon her, the summer of 1860, which was the last summer that Annie spent at Arlington, was most likely arduous and hectic.

With the return of Mrs. Lee and Agnes, the family members who were living at Arlington spent the rest of the year anxiously observing the tumultuous events that culminated with South Carolina's secession, which itself was the catalyst for the most cataclysmic event in U.S. history. For the Lee family, all these events led eventually to the abandonment of the family's home, Arlington. This happened after Lee was recalled from Texas, declined the offer to serve with the Union, and decided to fight for the Confederacy. After Lee had gone to Richmond, he foresaw that his family would have to abandon Arlington for their own safety. On April 26, 1861 he wrote in a letter to his wife, "You *have to move*, & make arrangements to go to some point of safety....War is inevitable & there is no telling when it will burst around you." Less than a week later, Lee wrote in another letter to Mrs. Lee that she must "prepare all things for removal....When the war commences no place will be exempt." In this letter, Lee made a comment which contrasted with the many optimistic statements that were being proclaimed at that time about the war being brief. Lee ominously predicted, "The war may last 10 years." Although Lee considerably overestimated the length of time that the coming war would last, he was correct that it would be a protracted conflict .

Soon after Mrs. Lee received this letter, Orton Williams, Markie's younger brother, delivered his message about the impending seizure of Arlington by the Union army, and Mrs. Lee then realized that abandoning Arlington was a necessity. During this time, Annie was at White House plantation on the Pamunkey River.

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When she was informed about the preparations that were being made to flee Arlington, she wrote in a letter to Agnes, "Are you really getting ready to leave?" Mildred, who was still at school in Winchester and evidently did not comprehend the severity of the situation, had written to her mother and complained that she was in need of more clothes. Mrs. Lee, who no doubt was distraught and frantic, gave Mildred a stern reprimand in a letter in which she told her daughter that she was "both hurt & mortified that a *daughter of mine* at a time when her Father's life is in peril, her home in danger of being trampled over by a lawless foe should allow a disappointment about a *bonnet* to be so deep in her mind." In all likelihood, after Mildred read those harsh words, she had a better understanding of the gravity of the situation at Arlington and of the relative priorities of her garment needs compared to the other issues facing the Lee family.

At the time that these events were transpiring, Mrs. Lee, Mary, and Agnes were the only members of the family at Arlington. After the family's belongings were removed or locked in the cellar, the three women fled west, and nine days later Arlington was seized by the Union army. In July Mildred finished her term at school and traveled to be with her family. Because Arlington was in the possession of the Union army, the women of the Lee family were forced to live in various places with family or friends during the first year of the Civil War, most often not all of them together. In mid-July Mrs. Lee received a letter from Markie Williams, who remained loyal to the Union and was given permission to visit Arlington to retrieve her belongings. In her letter Markie wrote, "The poor House looked so desolate.... Oh! who in their wildest dreams could have conjectured all this last summer? It was but one year ago that we were all there, so happy & so peaceful." Near the end of 1861, Mrs. Lee, Annie, and Agnes were at White House plantation, Mary was in Richmond, Mildred as again at school in Winchester, and Lee was still on his assignment in South Carolina. Lee sent a letter to Annie and Agnes in late November, in which he described the Union occupation of Arlington by saying that the home which "we so loved has been so foully polluted." In a separate letter to his wife that he sent on Christmas, Lee gloomily, but accurately as it turned out, counseled Mrs. Lee to relinquish any hope of ever recovering Arlington. "As to our old home, if not destroyed, it will be difficult ever to be recognized.... It is better to make up our minds to a general loss. They cannot take away the remembrances of the spot, & the memories of those that to us rendered it sacred. That will remain to us as long as life will last."

In the spring of 1862 Mrs. Lee, Annie, and Mildred were staying at White House plantation. On March 2, 1862 Lee, who was in Savannah, Georgia at the time on his assignment to develop defenses in the southeastern Confederacy, sent a letter to Annie in which he harshly criticized what he perceived to be a serious problem in the Confederate war effort. "Our people have not been earnest enough, have thought too much of themselves & their ease, & instead of turning out to a man, have been content to nurse themselves & their dimes, & leave the protection of themselves & families to others. To satisfy their consciences, they have been clamorous in criticising what others have done, & endeavoured to prove that they ought to do nothing. This is not the way to accomplish our independence."

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A short time later, as George McClellan led the Army of the Potomac up the York-James Peninsula on his drive toward Richmond, Lee, who had returned to the Confederate capital, observed anxiously, since he knew that his wife and two of his daughters were in the path of the Union army. In early April, Lee sent a letter to his wife, in which he gave her what must be considered an obvious warning. "No one can say what place will be perfectly safe or even quiet, but I think a locality within the route of the invading army will be least so." Mrs. Lee, Annie, and Mildred moved to a house a short distance away from White House, but eventually the tide of McClellan's advance rolled past the three women, who were caught behind enemy lines. A Union search party was sent to the place where the women were staying, and an officer in that group wrote after the war, "Upon our arrival our reception was not very gracious." Despite the rough treatment that was doled out by Mrs. Lee, she, Annie, and Mildred were eventually allowed to pass through the lines and go to Richmond. The three Lee women were reunited with their husband and father in mid-June, several days after he was named to command the Army of Northern Virginia and a couple of weeks before the start of the Seven Days battles.

Near the end of July 1862, Mrs. Lee received a letter from Markie Williams, who had made another trip to Arlington to retrieve some of her belongings. Markie described Arlington with the somber words, "so changed, so changed & yet so like itself...Where once, peace & love dwelt, now, all the insignia of war is arrayed." Three months after Mrs. Lee received this letter, which had to bring the loss of the family's home into disheartening clarity, the family endured an even more agonizing loss. Shortly after Mrs. Lee received the letter from Markie, Annie, Agnes, and Mildred traveled to North Carolina to visit a medicinal spring named Jones Springs. In pre-war summers, the Lee family typically spent some time at mineral springs in Virginia in order to escape the heat. In the summer of 1862, Annie, Agnes, and Mildred went to Jones Springs in North Carolina, because the mineral spring spas in Virginia were too close to the enemy. They were still in North Carolina in September, and at this time Annie began to suffer headaches and dizziness. In addition, Mildred decided to attend boarding school in Raleigh, because her previous school in Winchester was no longer an option with the war so close by. Because of Annie's illness, Agnes took charge of helping Mildred make preparations to leave for school. After Mildred's departure, Annie took a turn for the worse, and by early October she was suffering fever and intestinal discomfort. A physician was called to examine Annie, and a diagnosis of typhoid fever was made. When Mrs. Lee was informed of her daughter's condition, she managed to travel to Jones Springs to minister to her. At first it appeared that Annie would recover, but several days later Mrs. Lee wrote ominously in a letter to her daughter, Mary, "Annie passed a very uncomfortable night...The Dr. considers her extremely ill." On the day that Mrs. Lee wrote that letter, Annie suffered greatly, and that night Annie was in great distress. On the following morning, October 20, 1862, Annie Lee died at the age of 23. In a letter to Mildred, Agnes wrote that Annie "breathed her last—very quietly and peacefully," and Agnes added, "O Mildred, I cannot realize it; it is too strange, too unnatural."

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During the summer after she graduated from the Virginia Female Institute, Annie wrote a sadly prescient statement in a letter to a friend. In that letter Annie wrote, "If we could only realize that only a few short years must pass and then all must leave, how different would be our lives." Annie was granted far fewer of those "short years" than she could have anticipated. At the time of her death, Annie was almost the same age that her mother was when Mrs. Lee married Robert E. Lee. The day that Annie died was a little more than one month after her father experienced his first major setback as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia at Sharpsburg, Maryland. Less than two months after Annie's death, Lee won one of his greatest victories in a battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia, which ended the advance of the Army of the Potomac that had led to Annie's older sister, Mary, being caught behind enemy lines. Annie was buried near Warrenton, North Carolina, although it was Agnes' preference that her sister be buried in Richmond so that she could more frequently visit the grave of her beloved sister.

Mrs. Lee and Agnes returned to Richmond after Annie's funeral. In a letter that Mrs. Lee sent to her husband, she told him the sad news. Walter Taylor, a member of Lee's staff, wrote after the war of the day that Lee learned of the death of Annie. According to Taylor, he met with Lee on that day to discuss some "matters of army routine upon which his judgement and action were desired." These matters were discussed, and, as Taylor recollected, Lee "gave his orders in regard to them. I then left him, but for some cause returned in a few moments, and with my accustomed freedom entered his tent without announcement or ceremony, when I was startled and shocked to see him overcome with grief, an open letter in his hands." With all three of his sons serving in the Confederate army, Lee no doubt understood that any one of them could be killed. But Lee was very likely not prepared to lose one of his daughters. Lee wrote to his wife, "I cannot express the anguish I feel at the death of my sweet Annie. To know that I shall never see her again on earth, that her place in our circle, which I always hoped one day to enjoy, is forever vacant, is agonising in the extreme." Lee continued his letter with an expression of condolence that seemed to be intended to alleviate his family's sorrow. "But God in this, as in all things, has mingled mercy with the blow, in selecting that one best prepared to leave us." It is not clear why Lee felt that Annie was the member of his family who was best prepared to die, but perhaps Lee was simply trying to give comfort to himself by putting this sentiment into words. It was Lee's desire that Annie's body stay in North Carolina, but in 1994, at the request of descendants of the Lee family, Annie's remains were moved to the Lee family crypt at Washington and Lee University, where, after more than a century of separation, Annie was reunited her family.

In the overall context of history, Annie Lee's life was unremarkable. Like many children then and now, she spent her childhood being educated and playing with her siblings and friends. As some children are required to do, she moved with her family and lived in different places due to the career of a parent. When she was older, she attended boarding school and did well in her studies. She helped tend to her mother, who was afflicted with progressive rheumatic disease, and she did various household chores. Most of what Annie experienced during her youth is not unusual. When Annie was a young adult, she experienced war firsthand, which is not a widespread personal

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experience, although this experience was shared by all Americans who lived at the time that Annie lived. Annie died at a young age, and while this was tragic, it was not an uncommon occurrence during the time when she lived. In Annie's unremarkable and too brief life, she made no significant historical contribution, yet in spite of this she has a place in history. Annie's qualification for a place in history can be stated similarly to the explanation that was offered for the special treatment that her older sister, Mary, received in Egypt, that is, Annie was the daughter of a particular defeated general. In this respect, Annie has the sad distinction of being the only child of that defeated general to die before he did.

Had Annie lived a long life, as her sister, Mary, did, perhaps Annie could have made a significant contribution to history. A few months before her 17th birthday, Annie exclaimed in a letter to a friend that she was going to do wonders and in so doing lift women beyond the constraints of 19th Century customs. Annie's premature death put an end to those enthusiastic dreams. But in light of Annie's statement about raising women "above the weak trammels of novels and fashions," if Annie had lived long enough, perhaps she would have become involved in the women's suffrage movement, which was a focal point for women during a time when Annie could still have been alive. Annie's optimistic statement in that letter suggests that she would not have had the dismissive attitude toward women's suffrage that Mary expressed in her cynical comment about appearance being as effective for a woman as the vote. Annie's statement in her letter makes it seem reasonable that Annie would have participated in the women's suffrage movement, had she lived long enough to do so. After Annie experienced war firsthand, she may have harbored feelings toward war that are similar to those that Mary expressed in 1914 in her prescient comment about the war that was beginning in Europe. Hence, it is not unreasonable to think that Annie might have become part of the women's peace movement in World War I.

These speculations aside, Annie, like many in the years 1861 to 1865, died far too young and never had the opportunity to even attempt to reach the goals that she set forth earlier in her life, when she was at an age at which the exuberant sunshine of youth illuminated a future in which virtually any accomplishment seemed to her to be within her reach. But even if Annie, with the benefit of a long life, never reached the lofty expectations that she articulated in her letter, if she simply had had the opportunity to live out her post-war life in the peaceful and rewarding obscurity of family, then she would have had the kind of fulfilling life that was the realistic aspiration she likely embraced as a young woman at Arlington. This sort of life, which is not historically noteworthy, is viewed by some, perhaps by many, as mundane and trivial. However, this kind of life was elevated to exalted status by the ancient Greek playwright Euripides in his play *The Bacchae*. The final lines of the play state, "Various men outdo each other in wealth, in power, in all sorts of ways. The hopes of countless men are infinite in number. triumphs and marred by historically insignificant tragedies, seems unimportant. But such a life should not be considered irrelevant. Annie Lee did not have any historically recognizable achievements. Yet Annie, like countless other Americans, deserves a place in history and has a place in history, because

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Some make men rich; some come to nothing. So I consider that man blessed who lives a happy life, existing day by day." This kind of obscure, blessed, day-to-day life is the life that Annie most likely would have lived had she not died prematurely. This kind of life, which is marked by historically insignificant triumphs and marred by historically insignificant tragedies, seems unimportant. But such a life should not be considered irrelevant. Annie Lee did not have any historically recognizable achievements. Yet Annie, like countless other Americans, deserves a place in history and has a place in history, because Annie Lee was one of the innumerable, seemingly faceless individuals who constitute the indispensable threads in the remarkable fabric of American society and American history.