



“The colored people have lost their best friend on earth! Mr. Lincoln was our best friend, and I will give five dollars of my wages towards erecting a monument to his memory.”



dollars of my wages towards erecting a monument to his memory.” Charlotte Scott’s former master, Dr. William Parks Rucker, “a Union refugee, from Virginia... who took along with him Charlotte Scott, and perhaps others belonging to him,” initiated the contacts that put her founding five-dollar contribution into the hands of trustworthy fundraisers. Several months after the president’s death, Charlotte Scott’s “grain of a mustard seed” had grown to a grand total of \$16,242.

The story told at the ceremony offered only a glimpse at the relationship between Charlotte Scott and her former owners, a husband and wife from two well-known Central Virginia families. The long version—a wider and slightly more detailed overview of the connections among the Scotts, the Ruckers, and their slaves—is complicated and compelling, and it begins with a land purchase that took place about thirty years before Charlotte Scott was born.

## Lincoln Park

Not all city plans are completed as designed, not even plans for the new Capital City of Washington developed by the distinguished architect and civil engineer Pierre L’Enfant. One square, about a mile east of the Capitol, was meant to hold a monumental column from which all points in the continent would be measured. Instead, the location became the city dump.

The land was needed for more important purposes in 1861. The rubble was cleared away and the Lincoln United States General Hospital for wounded Union soldiers was established—a large hospital often visited by Walt Whitman. After the Civil War, the canvas-covered log buildings were removed, but the Lincoln name had become attached to the square, later called Lincoln Park.

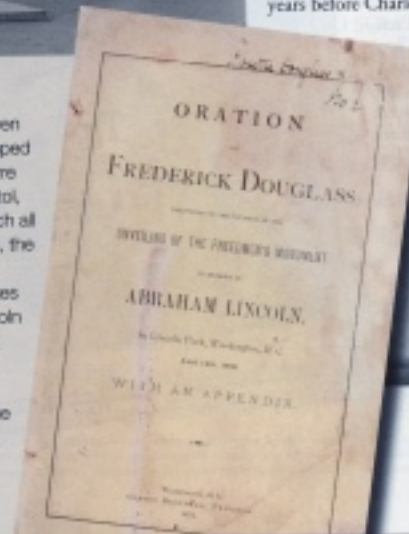


Photo courtesy of Virginia General Hospital





Five dollars  
in 1865 was  
equivalent to  
\$385.52  
today.

### The Scott Plantation

In 1784, twenty-eight-year-old Captain William Scott, a Revolutionary War veteran, bought 1,150 acres on the James River from his brother-in-law, James Gatewood. On the north side of the river the land lay in Amherst County, and on the south side of the river the land straddled the recently delineated line between Bedford and Campbell Counties. The tract started well above Judith Creek at Tremis Ferry and extended close to the frontier town that would become Lynchburg.

The current Virginia Episcopal School campus is likely the site of the dwelling house and some farm buildings built by William Scott on the Campbell County portion of his newly purchased plantation. Prior to the purchase, Scott had married his Caroline County neighbor Ann Jones. The couple settled in Spotsylvania County and started a family that eventually included twelve children.



Writing about the white farmhouse known as Mingea Cottage, architectural historian Calder Loth pointed out that a portion of the brick foundation was "typical of the Federal-period Flemish bond of the Virginia Piedmont...circa 1800." The foundation had "apparently survived" from an earlier structure on the Scott plantation (now the Virginia Episcopal School campus). Mingea Cottage was demolished in 2013.

## Sympathy or Savvy?

When Captain William Scott granted his sons Thomas and Hugh joint ownership of sixteen slaves, he stipulated that the slaves remain together on the plantation. Since slave marriages were not legally binding, any effort to keep a slave family intact seems like a thoughtful, humanitarian gesture. However, in the South's slave-based economy, keeping slave couples in close proximity also made good business sense. According to Reginald Washington, senior archivist with the National Archives and Records Administration:

Slave marriages had neither legal standing nor protection from the abuses and restrictions imposed on them by slaveowners. Slave husbands and wives, without legal recourse, could be separated or sold at their master's will. Couples who resided on different plantations were allowed to visit only with the consent of their owners. Slaves often married without the benefit of clergy, and as historian John Blassingame states, "the marriage ceremony in most cases consisted of the slaves simply getting the master's permission and moving into a cabin together."

The marriage arrangement of couples who resided on different plantations ("broad" marriages) was often the cause of great concern for most slaveowners. Fearing that slave marriages between plantations could potentially contribute to lost time from work and increase the risk of slaves developing attitudes of independence, owners encouraged their slaves to marry on the plantation where they lived. When this was not possible, wealthy owners would in some cases buy the spouse of his slaves. Children of "broad" marriages were the property of the slave woman's owner, and the owner of a slave man had no legal right to their services. Between 1865 and 1867, most Southern states in some form or another legalized former slave marriages and recognized the children of such marriages as legitimate.

Reginald Washington, "Seeking the Sacred Bonds of Holy Matrimony: Freedmen's Bonds Marriage Records," *Prologue Magazine*, Spring 2006, Vol. 37, No. 3, 182-177. [www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/spring/freedmen/marriage-records.html](http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/spring/freedmen/marriage-records.html)

When Scott died in 1818, his will left land, livestock, and personal property—including some of his slaves—to his seven oldest surviving children. Other slaves and the remaining 900 acres of his plantation went to his wife for her use during her lifetime and then to their two youngest sons, Thomas and Hugh, to be divided equally between them when she died. William Scott also left sixteen named slaves for these two sons.

In 1831, Ann Scott took mercy on her two youngest sons and decided not to make them wait any longer for their inheritance. She drew up a document giving Thomas and Hugh her land and slaves in exchange for care for the rest of her life—and she lived another fifteen years. By this time, Thomas was already married to Margaret Parks Burks, who had grown up across the James River in Amherst County, and they had two children. Hugh was newly married to Margaret's sister, Elizabeth Jane Burks, known as Jane.

Before 1831, the two sons had unofficially divided the slaves, and they had also divided the land into two sections where they were already farming. Thomas kept the manor house and surrounding land in Campbell County, across from the family cemetery, and his mother continued to live with his family. Hugh lived on the Bedford County portion, and he also farmed about two miles of fertile land along the James River in Campbell County.

The two Scott families that lived on the remaining 900 acres along the James experienced many marriages, births, and deaths between 1831 and 1860. The matriarch Ann Jones Scott died in 1846. Thomas lost his first wife two years after the birth of their third child. He married again, had two more children, and also lost his second wife. Four of Thomas's children, including his daughter Margaret, the final owner of the slave Charlotte Scott, were all married in the 1850s. Hugh Scott and his wife Jane had three children, two of whom were married by 1860.

"At the death of my beloved wife I give and devise to her for life, to my two sons Thomas H. Scott and Hugh D. Scott and their heirs forever to be equally divided between them I also give and bequeath to my said two sons Thomas and Hugh the following slaves with the increase of the female; Aranna, George, Micah, Pamela, Suskey, Spencer, Theodor, Fronten, Andrew, Witney, Mary, Lucy, China, Baxter, Charlotte, and Sarah It is my will that these slaves be kept together unless either of my sons ormes at the age of twenty one years or married and then that the said slaves be equally divided between them. & I leave to my beloved wife all the stock upon the Lands before devised to her for life, also the crop which may be growing upon the lands at the time of my death, with all my plantation utensils, tools,



### The Scott Slaves

The slaves owned by the Scotts also experienced many births and deaths between 1831 and 1860. There may have been slave marriages, but families were certainly separated as slaves were given or loaned to various Scott family members. The record is largely silent on the fate of the Scott plantation's enslaved population, owned first by William Scott and then by his sons Thomas and Hugh, except for those slaves who were alive and named at the time wills or deeds were made.

Over the years, the Scotts seemed to have tried to keep at least some slave families together. When William Scott died, his will left a group of sixteen slaves to be used jointly by Thomas and Hugh, and it was William's desire that the group of slaves be kept together, not sold off the plantation.

Two slaves named in William Scott's will were very young in 1818, and they are unusual in that they can be traced into the post-war period. Hugh inherited a slave named Willis, and Thomas inherited another named Charlotte, the slave destined to become "a freedwoman from Virginia." As the brothers' farms were adjacent, there would have been opportunities for the slaves to see each other, and it is possible, based on later information, that Willis and Charlotte had a slave marriage.

### Patrolmen and Soldiers

Increasing political tension about slavery was tearing the country apart in the 1850s. The two Scott brothers, Thomas and Hugh, along with their adult sons, were assigned to serve time patrolling at night for runaway slaves. At the same time they had to hope that their own slaves would not join the hands of runaways in the area.

According to the 1860 slave census, there were forty enslaved people owned by Thomas and Hugh Scott,<sup>2</sup> and none of the Scott slaves were fugitives on the particular days that census takers recorded data for the two brothers. It is not known if any of their slaves ran away during the war, but most slave owners were concerned about the possibility.

When Virginia seceded from the Union in April 1861, Thomas and Hugh had eight sons or sons-in-law combined, all of whom were eligible to volunteer for the military. Six of the eight men did serve. Hugh's son-in-law John Cabell Ward was a captain in the Virginia 11th Infantry Regiment, and his son Frank was a private in the Virginia 2nd Cavalry. Thomas's son Griggby was also a private in the Virginia 2nd Cavalry. Dr. Cyrus Palm Bryan, one of Thomas Scott's three sons-in-law, was briefly a private in the Bath Grays and then served in the Virginia Legislature. Another son-in-law, James Staples Rucker, was in Moorman's Company of the Virginia Horse Artillery. The third son-in-law of Thomas Scott was Dr. William Parks Rucker, elder brother of James Rucker and a colorful character, to say the least. Dr. Rucker was a staunch Unionist.

<sup>2</sup> Three of the slaves, all women, were older than forty years old. Sixteen of the slaves were children age twelve and younger. Thomas owned five men and five women between the ages of children and forty, while Hugh owned four men and six women in the same age range. Roughly half of the slaves owned by the two brothers were in the age brackets considered appropriate for performing extensive labor others demanded of slaves.

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### The Rucker Rift

The Rucker family, originally from Amherst County, divided their living between the old Rucker home place near Tobacco Row Mountain and Lynchburg where the father and grandfather of William and James were successful tobacco merchants. William and James were both very young when their parents died, two years apart. The boys were then raised by family members. The brothers married sisters, but the two men had opposing views about the Confederacy, and their sisters-wives apparently agreed with them, or at least tolerated them. (See below).

William studied law at the University of Virginia. In 1852, he married his second cousin Margaret Ann Scott, the younger daughter of Thomas Scott and his first wife, Margaret. After their marriage, William and Margaret Rucker lived with her family at the Scott home place in Campbell County, and their first child, Hedley Scott Rucker, was born there. Rucker then left his wife and son with her father in Campbell County while he attended medical school in Philadelphia. After graduation in 1855, he moved his family to Covington where he practiced medicine until 1862.

When Thomas Scott died in May

1861, his daughter Margaret inherited three slaves, including Charlotte who had been loaned to Margaret for many years. The will described Charlotte as a woman, valued at \$500. At that time, Charlotte and several other Scott slaves from Campbell County—all owned by Margaret or promised to her—were already living with the Ruckers in Covington.

While owning slaves was uncommon in the western area of Virginia, support of the Confederacy was strong in Allegheny County. The Ruckers, however, displayed the inverse. William and Margaret owned numerous slaves, but Rucker was a staunch Unionist and refused on several occasions to declare his allegiance to the Confederacy. Margaret's convictions are unknown except that she extracted a promise from her husband that he would not join the Union army.

### Burning Bridges

Rucker was a wealthy and respected doctor in Covington. He also owned several small businesses near Covington including an inn named Steeles Tavern for a previous owner, which he leased out to a pro-South man.

The inn was a stage stop for travelers, and Rucker often met strangers there,

demanding strict privacy for his meetings. The innkeeper became suspicious that Rucker was a Union spy and reported his concerns to local Confederate officials. When these officials confronted Rucker, he again refused to take the Confederate oath and was then attacked by a hostile crowd. In self-defense, Rucker stabbed the leader of the mob with a knife, and held off the rest of the attackers with a pistol. After he was arrested, Dr. Rucker was forced to sew up his wounded victim, who died the following day. Since Rucker had studied law before he studied medicine, he conducted his own defense in the murder trial that followed and, amazingly, was acquitted.

Rucker continued practicing medicine in Covington and at the same time maintained contact with the Union army. In February 1862, he traveled to a plantation he owned near Summersville in Nicholas County, about sixty-five miles west of Covington. On the way to his plantation, Rucker met with Colonel George Crook who was stationed with the 36th Ohio Infantry in Summersville. Rucker later claimed that during this meeting it was he who suggested burning the Cow Pasture River Bridge on the Virginia Central Railroad east of

## Two Brothers, Two Sisters, Two Armies

James Rucker, younger brother of William Rucker, was married to Nannie Scott, the youngest child of Thomas Scott and his second wife, Belinda Grigsby Scott. Nannie Scott Rucker was a half-sister of William's wife, Margaret Scott Rucker. James Rucker's response to the increasing tension between the North and the South during the 1850s led him on a sojourn to Kansas.

In 1854, a group of settlers in the Territory of Kansas built Leocompton, a town on the Kansas River fifteen miles east of Topeka. The town grew rapidly and by 1857 it was not only the seat of government for the territory, it also became the headquarters of the proslavery faction in Kansas. The abolitionist John Brown and other free-soil advocates lived nearby, and their resistance to proslavery forces received national attention. Both proslavery and free-soil advocates were flocking to Kansas in order to influence an upcoming election that was to decide whether Kansas would be a free or slave state.

Newly married, James and Nannie Scott Rucker took up residence in Leocompton sometime after 1857 and the couple had two children born there. On January 1, 1861,

Kansas was admitted to the Union as a free state and the James Rucker family soon returned to Virginia.

Tragic events rapidly affected this young family. The two children born in Kansas both died after the family returned to Virginia. Happily, another son was born in March 1862, but two months after the new baby was born, James enlisted in Moorman's Company, of the Virginia Horse Artillery. His enlistment occurred while the Lynchburg papers were publishing derogatory articles about his brother William.

Nannie Scott Rucker died in October 1862 when her baby was just seven months old. The final tragedy occurred a year later. James Rucker was wounded and captured by Union army forces near Cupeper after the Battle of Brandy Station, a battle in which his brother-in-law, Grigsby Scott, also fought. James was sent to the Old Capitol Prison in Washington and died from dysentery in the prison hospital a few weeks later. The orphaned James Clifton Rucker was left in the care of the Scott family during the war. After William and Margaret Rucker settled in Lewisburg, West Virginia, Clifton went there to live with his aunt and uncle.



Clifton Forge.

After he had agreed to help the Union army, Rucker moved to his Nicholas County plantation, thought to be a safer location, while Margaret continued to live in Covington with their four sons and their group of Covington-based slaves.

Rucker's role in planning the bridge burning might not have been as central as he claimed, but one thing is certain: as a civilian guide, Rucker led a group of seventy-five Union cavalrymen who successfully burned the railroad bridge on May 19, 1862, a significant but not disastrous loss to the Confederacy.

After the bridge-burning incident, as Rucker and the Union cavalry were returning to the Summersville area, they stopped in Covington and added Margaret, the children, and a few Rucker slaves to the entourage. One of the slaves that Margaret took with her was her personal maid, Charlotte.

Two months later, Rucker went to stay overnight in a house near Summersville that was occupied by Union officers. Shortly after he arrived, all the men in the house were captured by a Confederate cavalry unit, led to the house in a night raid by the notorious spy Nancy Hart.

Rucker and the Union officers were first taken to Salt Sulfur Springs, then to Lynchburg, and finally to Richmond. In Richmond, all the Union officers were released in a prisoner exchange while Rucker was sent to the brutal Castle Thunder prison, a former tobacco warehouse on Cary Street, converted by the Confederacy to house political prisoners, including those charged with treason.

An antagonized Governor John Letcher insisted Rucker be tried for treason among other charges such as bridge-burning, murder, and stealing. In response, Colonel Crook, the Union officer in western Virginia, sent word to three prominent Lewisburg residents that they would be hanged if Rucker were harmed.

Though Rucker had been offered a commission in the Union army (five times, he claimed), he had turned it down, and therefore had to be tried for the ten charges made against him as a citizen, not a soldier. Still, there was a lengthy argument between the Confederate and Virginia authorities concerning who would get to try him. It was



Castle Thunder Prison, a former tobacco warehouse on Cary Street in Richmond

finally decided that Rucker should be tried as a citizen by the Virginia authorities, and that he would be returned to Covington for trial. Rucker was sent by the Virginia Central Railroad as far as the bridge over the Cow Pasture River that he had helped burn and then by wagon on a very bumpy road to Covington—a delicious irony.

### Hints of Hypocrisy

It is hard to imagine the enmity that must have existed between William and Margaret Rucker and their extended Lynchburg family during the fall of 1862. How did Margaret feel about her husband collaborating with the Union army while her brother Grigsby and brother-in-law James Rucker (William's brother) were serving in the Confederate army? In the previous six months Grigsby had been fighting in the Valley with Jackson and most recently had helped cover the retreat from Antietam. James had just fought at the Second Battle of Manassas. Besides her siblings, Margaret had been close to her cousins, the three children of Hugh and Jane Scott, including her cousin Frank, who was then in a Northern prisoner of war camp. If there was any communication between Margaret and her siblings—older sister Mary Scott Bryan in Warm

Springs, younger sister Nannie Scott Rucker who was close to death, or her brother Rice in Campbell County—it must have been strained at best. Since May, *The Lynchburg Daily Republican* newspaper had been carrying a running account of Dr. Rucker's escapades that his Lynchburg family would have had to work hard not to read.

During this tumultuous time, while Rucker was in jail in Covington, Margaret and William managed to correspond. They decided that she should move to a safer location. Margaret, their four sons, and her household slaves were transported to Marietta, Ohio, but before the Federal army would transport the group, Margaret was required to free her slaves. No records of manumission have been found—perhaps freedom simply was bestowed by crossing the Ohio River—but Margaret's family and their newly minted free servants remained in Marietta for the rest of the war.

While Rucker was still in the Covington jail, he and Margaret sold all their real estate and also sold—not freed—the rest of their slaves. As it turned out, this was a wise financial decision because real estate property values plummeted during the war and personal property values invested in slaves disappeared.

## He is a desperate villain

*His deeds of villany and scoundrelism while residing in Amherst and Bedford . . .*

HIS RASCALLY CONDUCT WHILE LIVING IN BEDFORD FORCED HIM TO LEAVE THERE, AND WE ARE GLAD THAT HE HAS FOUND CONGENIAL COMPANIONS IN THE INVADERS OF HIS COUNTRY, WHO, WHILE THEY PROFIT BY HIS TREASON . . . WILL DESPISE THE MISERABLE TRAITOR.

noted horsethief, traitor, and murderer

one of most consummate rascals and traitors unhung

### On the Run

While in the Covington jail, Rucker requested a change of venue for his trial and, surprisingly, got one. In November 1862, he was arraigned in Botetourt County Court in Fincastle. Rucker was lucky in two ways: the judge was an old friend and there were many delays of the trial.

The Confederates, or rather the State of Virginia, still held Rucker and did not intend to release him. There were two failed attempted raids by Union forces to free him. The correspondence in the Official Records of the National Archives consists of sixty-four separate messages, an unusual amount of wrangling for just one prisoner. Secretary of War Stanton and General Crook both attempted to have Rucker released. And President Lincoln sent word to the Confederates that if Dr. Rucker were put to death, a Confederate doctor held at Fortress Monroe would also be put to death.

Rucker was moved from jail to jail ten times, including time in Lynchburg at both the Lynchburg jail and the POW camp at the fairgrounds, until he arrived at the Pittsylvania County jail in Danville. Rucker had now been in custody for fifteen months. The correspondence between the two agents for the North and the South concerning Rucker's exchange continued until October 27, 1863, when the Confederate agent wrote his Union counterpart that the arrangement proposed for Dr. Rucker's release was not possible. Rucker had fled!

Somehow Rucker managed to escape, with the help of some friends, from a private cell in the Danville jail the night of October 18, 1863. (This was nine days after his brother James died in a Union prison in Washington.) Rucker was outfitted with a Confederate uniform, a pistol, saber, and buggy. He rode during the night to Lynchburg where he rested a few days in the third floor apartment of a friend. During this time, did any of the Scott family members know Rucker

**THE TRAITOR DR. RUCKER.**—This notorious and infamous individual was brought to this place last night on the Western train, and turned over to the military authorities, here for safe-keeping. He has been examined, but the result has not transpired, the testimony and the finding of the Court Martial having to be submitted to the Secretary of War before being made public. The charges upon which he was examined were treason and murder. He is a desperate villain, and will attempt every means to escape the ignominious fate he is conscious he deserves, and which we have no doubt has been awarded him. While in confinement at the Salt Sulphur he attempted to bribe the guard, offering him \$1,000 to permit him to get away, which doubtless gave place to the report that he had escaped. He is now in prison, and we hope will be soon hung. No mercy.

**THE CAPTURE OF DR. RUCKER.**—The capture of the notorious renegade and spy, Dr. William P. Rucker, at Nicholas Court House, will be found under our telegraphic head. To those, in this section who know the man, his deeds of villany and scoundrelism while residing in Amherst and Bedford, of the former of which counties he is a native, his capture will be a source of rejoicing. And to the people of Botetourt and Alleghany, among whom he was at the breaking out of the war, and who have suffered by his treason to the land that bore him, no event could be productive of a greater degree of satisfaction. We would ask for him no surer doom than would be meted out to him by the people of Covington, in Alleghany, who yet have a full share of the fruits of their mispleasure.

have held no intercourse with him. The family of his wife also refused years ago to recognize him, and in consequence he is deeply exasperated against them. His rascally conduct while living in Bedford forced him to leave there, and we are glad that he has at last found congenial companions in the invaders of his country, who, while they profit by his treason, if not utterly degraded, will despise the miserable traitor. Of such material as Rucker, upon investigation, will be found all who have proven themselves traitors in this war between the North and South.





During the summer and fall of 1864, Rucker was recruiting in West Virginia and had a major conflict with Brigadier General Jeremiah Cutler Sullivan. Rucker faced a court martial, but, rather than face trial, he was permitted to resign with an honorable discharge. He spent the rest of the war with his family in Marietta.

After the war, Rucker practiced law instead of medicine in West Virginia, though he was always known as "Dr. Rucker." The Rucker family moved to Lewisburg in 1870, which had been home to many rebels during the war. Rucker spoke loudly and often in support of allowing former Confederates to have full rights of citizenship, including voting. Significantly, he also argued that black men should be allowed to vote. He continued his law practice and relished his renegade role to the end.

The animosity between the notorious Rucker family in West Virginia and the Scott family in Bedford and Campbell Counties faded over the years. William and Margaret raised their nephew, Clifton Rucker, the orphaned son of James and Nannie Rucker, Hedley Scott Rucker—their oldest son who had been born on the Scott plantation in Campbell County—married his second cousin, Elizabeth Camm Scott, the eldest daughter of Margaret's cousin Dr. Samuel Burks Scott,

### Charlotte Scott's Journey

As a young girl Charlotte was owned by William Scott. As a young woman she was owned by Thomas Scott. As an older woman, during her final year of servitude, she was owned by Margaret Scott Rucker.

There are no records indicating exactly when Charlotte became Margaret Rucker's personal attendant. Margaret was two years old when her mother died, and Charlotte, who was just a few years older than Margaret's mother, likely became her childhood nurse at some point during this early period. The continuing presence of Charlotte must have been a comfort to Margaret whose stepmother and grandmother also died during her childhood and adolescence. However, Margaret was not the sole recipient of Charlotte's care and attention. During the years that she served the Scott family, Charlotte bore twelve children of her own. Charlotte was freed in 1862—a change in status required before the Union army would transport her to Marietta, Ohio. She was in her late fifties at this time, adopted the surname Scott, worked as a cook for the Rucker family, and took in washing as well.

Charlotte Scott had just begun to save some money when Lincoln was assassinated in 1865. She was so moved by the loss that she scraped together five dollars of her hard-earned money and told Margaret Rucker that she wanted to con-



Dr. William Parks Rucker, Margaret Scott Rucker, and their family at home in Lewisburg





tribute it toward a monument to Lincoln's memory.

The Ruckers suggested that Scott entrust the money to a Marietta minister who then set about collecting additional offerings from the local black community. News of the grassroots movement spread, and James E. Yeatman, president of the Western Sanitary Commission in St. Louis, took on the project and saw it through. A letter sent from Dr. Rucker to Yeatman urged that every dollar should come from former slaves. Donations were solicited by white officers of black regiments, and by December 1865, more than \$16,200 had been collected from former slaves.

After sufficient funds were collected, the Western Sanitary Commission began to consider the type of monument to be erected. The Commission did not consult the donors about which monument they might prefer—and there were several other options. Instead, the Commission chose Thomas Ball's Emancipation Group, also called the Freedman's Memorial. Congress agreed to pay for the pedestal, and a place in Lincoln

Park, near the Capitol in Washington, was chosen for the site.

The monument depicts Abraham Lincoln and a newly freed slave (modeled after Missouri freedman Archer Alexander). The black man is kneeling at Lincoln's feet, but his head is raised and he looks poised to spring into his new life. Lincoln holds the Emancipation Proclamation in one hand and the other hand is raised in a sort of benediction.

The plaque on the monument honors Charlotte Scott, the woman who inspired the grassroots movement to build the memorial to Lincoln, a woman who started life as a slave on the William Scott Plantation near Lynchburg.

Charlotte Scott had returned to Virginia after the war and was living with her husband, Willis, in a cabin, likely an old slave cabin, on the former Scott plantation. She attended the 1876 dedication ceremonies of the memorial, and a photograph of her was taken and sold to raise further funds for its upkeep.

She died on January 24, 1891, at about eighty-seven years of age. The event was reported in the Marietta, Ohio, newspaper, where one of her daughters lived, but not in the Lynchburg papers.



Ohio native Marjorie Hainer has lived with her family in Lynchburg since 1975. After her retirement from Centra, she began pursuing two passions: quilting and delving into neighborhood

history. Marjorie has been researching the people who lived and worked on the 1,100-acre plantation established by William Scott and his wife, Ann Jones Scott, in 1784. The story spans two centuries and is in progress.

This is Hainer's second contribution to Lynch's Ferry. Her portrait of the Thurmood and Myers families, "4402 Burnboro Road," appeared in the *Fall/Winter 2011 issue*. The story of issue of Charlotte Scott's descendants who continued to live on the former Scott plantation will appear in a future issue.

Charlotte's journey has been an eye-opening expedition for the author, with many confounding twists and turns. Commenting on William and Margaret

Rucker's decisions regarding their slaves, she writes: "While most Southern Unionists were not devoted abolitionists, it is still difficult for a person living in the twenty-first century to understand the dissonance in William and Margaret's minds that allowed them to free some slaves as an expediency for Margaret's safety and convenience, and then sell their other slaves for a profit while William was in jail for aiding the Union army."



PHOTO COURTESY OF PETERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Architectural historian Calder Loth noted that this early nineteenth-century log cabin was probably "contemporary with the house that preceded Minge's Cottage" on the Scott plantation (now the Virginia Episcopal School campus). The log home, which may have served as a slave cabin, was torn down in the 1960s.

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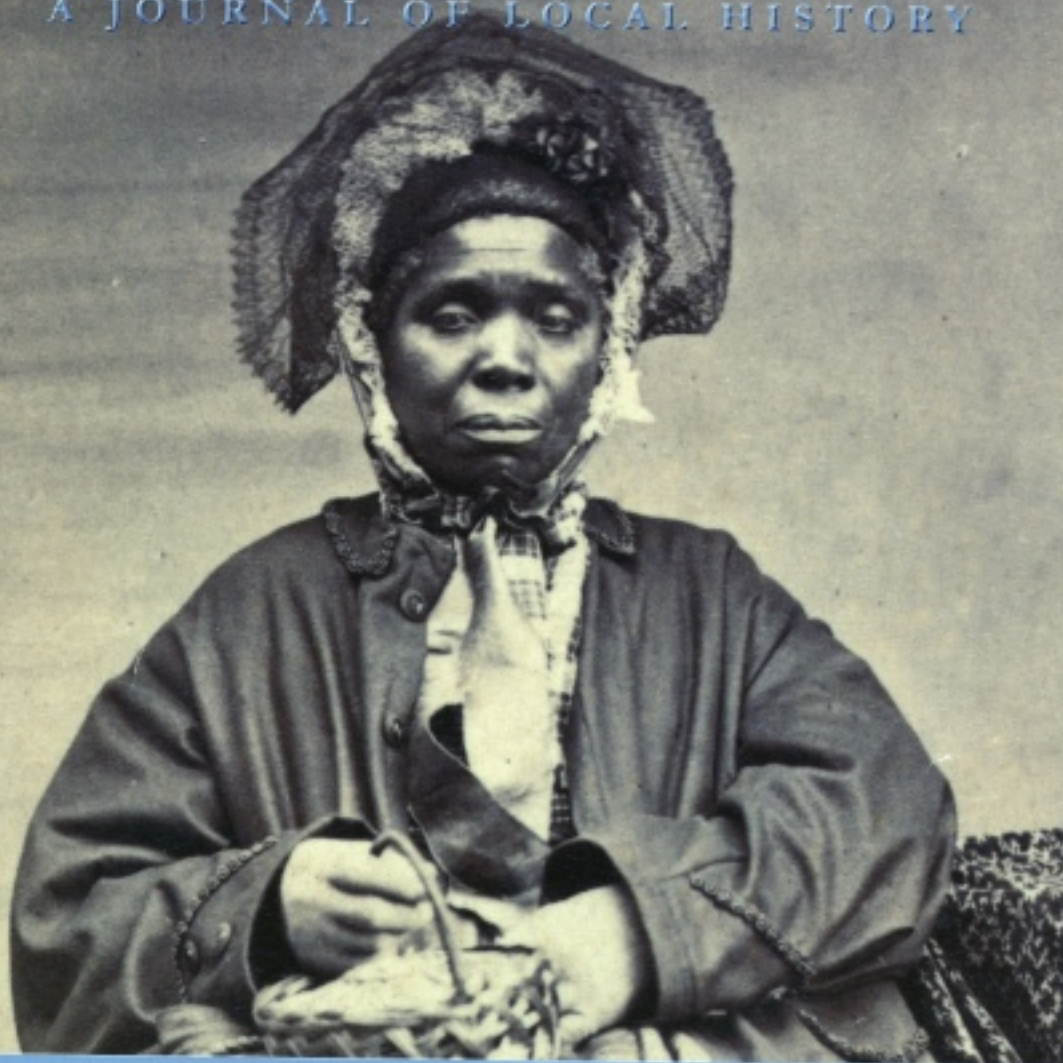


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# LYNCH'S FERRY

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"A FREEDWOMAN OF VIRGINIA": CHARLOTTE SCOTT AND THE SCOTT & RUCKER FAMILIES • MILLNER'S DEPARTMENT STORE  
LYNCHBURG FOUNDRY'S UNLIKELY HISTORY MAGAZINE • LEGACY'S CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT

# “A Freedwoman CHARLOTTE SCOTT and the Scott and Rucker Families of Lynchburg



**O**n the eleventh anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's assassination—April 14, 1876—a monument to the martyred president was dedicated in Lincoln Park, Washington D.C.<sup>1</sup> The day was “declared a public holiday,” and “every one was free to participate in the exercises” which included a parade featuring almost “all of the colored organizations in the city.” The monument, known as the Freedman's Memorial or Emancipation Statue, had been funded exclusively by donations from African Americans. Frederick Douglass was the keynote speaker. President Grant was given the honor of unveiling the bronze before an estimated crowd of 25,000.

Among the spectators was an ex-slave named Charlotte Scott. Her presence held a special significance. After Lincoln's, hers was the only other name on the plaque at the base of the statue:

FREEDOM'S MEMORIAL  
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED  
BY THE WESTERN SANITARY COMMISSION  
OF SAINT LOUIS MO:  
WITH FUNDS CONTRIBUTED SOLELY BY  
EMANCIPATED CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES  
DECLARED FREE BY HIS PROCLAMATION  
JANUARY 1 A.D. 1863.  
THE FIRST CONTRIBUTION OF FIVE DOLLARS WAS MADE  
BY CHARLOTTE SCOTT, A FREEDWOMAN OF VIRGINIA,  
BEING HER FIRST EARNINGS IN FREEDOM  
AND CONSECRATED  
BY HER SUGGESTION AND REQUEST  
ON THE DAY SHE HEARD OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S DEATH  
TO BUILD A MONUMENT TO HIS MEMORY.

**BY MARJORIE HUINER**

<sup>1</sup> The event, including speeches, was covered by the *Washington Republican*, April 15, 1876, and published in a pamphlet titled “Inaugural Ceremonies of the Freedman's Memorial Monument to Abraham Lincoln, Washington City, April 14, 1876,” (St. Louis: Levisson & Dwyer). The pamphlet is available online at <http://www.usgwarchives.net/washdc/inauguralceremonies01.htm>.