THE CHARGER

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FEBRUARY 2018 VOL. 39 # 5

Executive Committee 2016/2018

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Message From the President

Warm greetings to all members and friends of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable! I begin with the sad news that Ed Bonekemper, our speaker this past September, passed away on December 9, 2017. We had the benefit of hearing Ed speak on the Myth of the Lost Cause, how false remembrance of the Civil War has influenced our history and the debate of why the war the fought. A resident of Willow Street, Pennsylvania, he succumbed to a brief and unexpected illness. An attorney and military historian, Ed authored seven books on the Civil War and lectured extensively. If you heard Ed speak, you know that his mixture of wit, wisdom and compassion was unmatched. I was honored to introduce him as the first speaker of our lecture series this year, and he truly captivated our group with his presentation in September. Ed will be sorely missed in the community of Civil War scholars.

This month, the Roundtable welcomes Milann Ruff Daugherty to the speaker lectern. A former educator, in 2004 she came across a box of yellowed letters in the bottom of an old dresser, all written by James Cleaver, her great-great-uncle 150 years earlier. These letters contain a fascinating first-hand account of the Civil War as seen through the eyes of a young soldier. At the outbreak of the war, he enlisted in Company F of the 8th Pennsylvania Reserves, and was mustered into service on June 11, 1861. He was promoted 2nd Lieutenant on October 30, 1863, and took part with his company in many battles during the Peninsula campaign, the Wilderness campaign and numerous other engagements. He was wounded four times, the last being at the Battle of the Wilderness on May 10, 1864. Ms. Daugherty provides a moving narrative based on James' letters, many of which ended with the salutation "Your Affectionate Son". Please join us for this unique and interesting journey back into the Civil War!

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Message cont.

I end this message with a special shout out to our secretary, Steve Pettyjohn, who conducted our book sale of Civil War writings last month. All books were sold and $285 was generated for the CWRT, which will help us sponsor more great speakers at future meetings. Thanks also to Rich Hronek and Dennis Zelvis, who assisted Steve with this sale. I walked away with three interesting books, all in great condition, which I plan to enjoy and expand my knowledge of the Civil War.

I look forward to seeing you on February 14. Please consider bringing your spouses and loved ones to our meeting on this special day.
Hans Kuenzi

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Speech Delivered at the Annual Memorial Day Ceremonies
of the City of Bay Village, Ohio
on May 29, 2012

BETTER AND BETTER

by

John C. Fazio

Why do we honor our fallen, every day, but especially on this day? Because they honored us. They honored us as individuals and they honored us as a collective entity, which is to say, they honored our country, which was also their country. Is our country worth being so honored? Of course it is; what man or woman would say that it is not? What *sane* man or woman would say that it is not? Let us let the facts speak for themselves. John F. Kennedy called us a Nation of Immigrants. In this connection, it is noteworthy that hundreds of millions, indeed billions, around the world, have no greater aspiration than to become residents and citizens of our country. It is also noteworthy that after the hundreds of millions who came here put their roots into the soil, they quickly and happily shed their former identification and adopted the new one of "American", and this was true irrespective of their ethnicity, race, national origin and creed. Who then are our fallen? They are indeed the Smiths, the Joneses, the Bakers and the Millers, but they are also the Kluzewskis, the Marinos, the Rittershauses and the Yamaguchis. So if you want to know if our country is worth being so honored – worth the ultimate sacrifice, the last full measure of devotion – ask their survivors.

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Better & Better cont.

Does that mean we are exceptional? No. Regardless of what you may have heard, American Exceptionalism is a myth. Unlike some species, like dogs, we humans are all the same animal. Whether Eskimo or Hottentot, Swede or Brazilian, Shinto or Jew, we all have the same nature, even though we do not always behave the same, because of differences in climate, geography, culture and history.

Indeed far from being Exceptional, with a capital "E", we Americans have some things to regret. We have made mistakes. That shouldn't surprise anyone. Does anyone suppose that we could have been perfect for 223 years? For example:

- We expressly preserved and protected the institution of slavery in our Constitution.
- Pursuant to that Constitution, we enslaved an entire race of people from the beginning of our Republic (March 4, 1789) through 1865, a period of 76 years.
- We attempted to conquer Canada from 1812 through 1815. (President Madison said: "Canada is worth a march.")
- We all but annihilated the indigenous Indian population, not excluding specific massacres (Gnadenhutten, Sand Creek, Washita and Wounded Knee), forced marches (The Trail of Tears) and the violation of treaties.
- We made war on our southern neighbor from 1846 to 1848 and effectively took 55% of their country from them. Asked why he made war on Mexico, President Polk said "We had to have California."
- As a direct result of that war, we made war on ourselves between 1861 and 1865 at a cost of at least 620,000 dead. Some are now revising that figure upward to 750,000. In either case, it is more than five million in today's population. Imagine a war in which we had more than five million dead.
- We made war upon the remnants of the Spanish Empire in Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and elsewhere.

Well, with all that to regret, why is our country worth the ultimate sacrifice? The last full measure? Because all those mistakes occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries and virtually everything we have done since then, in the 20th and 21st centuries, has redeemed them. Furthermore, even when those mistakes were being made, there were always Americans who had the courage to speak up for, to act for, and in some cases to die for, right, truth and justice.

Examples:

1. In the Constitutional Convention of 1787, when Southern states let it be known that their price for ratification of the Constitution was the preservation and protection of slavery, Elbridge Gerry and Rufus King of Massachusetts, Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey, George Mason of Virginia and Governeur Morris of Pennsylvania, and others, spoke out forcefully against slavery. One representative from New

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Hampshire – God rest his soul, wherever he is – asked "Can we who have fought so hard for liberty give our consent to having it taken away from others?"

2. As for the institution of slavery itself, it was constantly under attack by Americans who were known as abolitionists and who were the conscience of the nation. These included Elijah Parish Lovejoy, who gave his life for the cause, as well as David Walker, William Lloyd Garrison, John Greenleaf Whittier, Wendel Philips, Theodore Parker, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher, Frederick Douglass, Henry David Thoreau and Susan B. Anthony. Most would live to see the end of the peculiar institution.

3. During the War of 1812, some states refused to place their state militias under Federal control. The pool of army volunteers dried up. Congress asked for 50,000 recruits, but only 10,000 showed up. Opposition to the war was so great that President Madison was forced to sue for peace without victory.

4. Against the near annihilation of Native Americans, many voices were raised. Some opponents even gave their lives for principle. Perhaps the most prominent 19th century voice was that of Helen Hunt Jackson, who wrote two classics on that subject, "A Century of Dishonor" and "Ramona". Among her supporters in her opposition were three prominent journalists: William Hayes Ward, also a clergyman; Richard Watson Gilder, also a poet; and Whitelaw Reid of Ohio, also a politician; and the poet, Emily Dickenson. Their efforts bore fruit in the policies of Grover Cleveland, the first American President to adopt enlightened policies that favored Indian rights.

5. The Mexican War, including the annexation of Texas, was planned and executed largely by Southerners and Southern sympathizers whose purpose was the acquisition of territory which would be admitted to the Union as slave states, thereby increasing the economic and political power of the South relative to that of the North. Ulysses Grant wrote that the Mexican War was "one of the most unjust wars ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation. It was an instance of a republic following the bad example of European monarchies, in not considering justice in their desire to acquire additional territory".

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Joshua Giddings, a Congressman from Ohio for 21 years, led a group of dissenters in Washington. He called the war with Mexico "an aggressive, unholy, and unjust war". He went on to say:

> In the murder of Mexicans upon their own soil, and in robbing them of their country, I can take no part either now or hereafter. The guilt of these crimes must rest on others. I will not participate in them.

Other vociferous opponents of the war were Abraham Lincoln, Henry David Thoreau and John Quincy Adams. Northern abolitionists were unanimous in their opposition to the war.

6. In the Civil War, countless acts of cruelty and cowardice were redeemed by an equal number of acts of kindness and bravery, on both sides. The prisoner of war camps come to mind as especially egregious; the men who held the line on Cemetery Ridge against 15,000 of their countrymen who were bearing down on them, determined to kill them, come to mind as especially brave.

The war was also redeemed by three men who deserve special mention: Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States and Commander in Chief of her army and navy; Father Abraham Lincoln, who shepherded his country through the worst crisis in its history; and Abraham Lincoln, the man, one of the finest human beings who ever lived, martyred at Ford's Theatre.

7. The Spanish-American war came largely because the public was whipped into a frenzy by the blowing up of the *Maine* in Havana Harbor. War was declared despite opposition to it from President McKinley, Frederic Remington, the famous artist and writer, Speaker of the House Thomas Brackett Reed and almost the entire business community. The declaration was made easier by passage of the Teller Amendment (named for Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado), which disclaimed any intention of annexing Cuba and made its independence from Spain the sole purpose of the war.

That was the 18th and 19th centuries. Observe that with each mis-step, there were courageous and conscientious Americans who were willing to step to the plate and demand that the error cease or be corrected and that right be done. In the 20th century, they would become the majority, because it was in that century that:

1. We accomplished the greatest engineering feat in the history of the human race. It took 10 years and cost 5,000 lives, but it linked the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans forever.

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2. We then played a major role in breaking a stalemate in Europe and consigning oppressive and anachronistic monarchies to the dustbin of history. By so doing, we made possible not only the preservation, but the expansion, of democracy, a work that is still in progress.

3. We followed that with the conquest of the worst economic reversal in our history.

4. We followed that with the defeat of fascism and the worst dictatorship, the worst paranoid megalomaniac, in the history of the world, replacing dictatorships in Germany, Japan and Italy with democracies.

5. We followed that with the defeat of communism, a 46-year struggle that finally ended successfully in 1991.

6. We followed that with a war on naked terrorism, a work that is still in progress.

Clearly, we have put our mistakes behind us, learned from them, and have become a positive force for good throughout the world. We got better and better.

What about domestically? Have we gotten better and better there too? Yes we have.

Consider, first, our democracy. At the beginning of our Republic, in 1789, only white men who owned property could vote. In the first national election, that meant that 3% of the population of Delaware voted; 5% in Georgia; 3% in New York; and 0.7% in Rhode Island. That passed for an election.

One by one the barriers came down. By 1840, all property requirements were gone; by 1870, blacks could vote; by 1920, women could vote; and by 1971, 18-year olds could vote. Today, all citizens over 18 can vote and national elections typically bring between 60 and 70% of the electorate to the polls.

We got better and better.

Consider, second, our Constitution. When it became effective in 1789, there was no Bill of Rights. That meant there was:

1. No freedom of religion, speech, press or assembly;

2. No prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures;

3. No prohibition of double jeopardy and self-incrimination and no right to due process of law;

4. No trial by jury; no right to counsel;

5. No prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment.

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All of that was rectified in 1791 with the adoption of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. But we weren't done.

The 13th Amendment prohibited slavery.

The 14th guaranteed national citizenship, due process of law and equal protection of the laws.

The 15th gave voting rights to blacks.

The 16th gave us a graduated income tax.

The 17th gave us popular election of senators, replacing their appointment by state legislatures.

The 18th was a mis-step: prohibition.

The 19th gave us voting rights for women.

The 21st repealed prohibition.

The 22nd gave us presidential term limits.

The 23rd gave rights to residents of the District of Columbia, correcting an oversight by the Framers.

The 24th abolished poll taxes, and

The 26th gave voting rights to anyone 18 years of age or older.

I repeat, we got better and better.

Consider, third, the grossly disproportional distribution of wealth that occurred in our country in the post-Civil War period and into the 20th century. Mark Twain called it the Gilded Age, because, he said, one had only to scratch the surface to reveal the cast iron which the brilliant exterior concealed. It was during this period that tens of millions of Americans knew grinding, crushing, almost indescribable poverty. Many millions were crammed into cold water flats, which had common toilets for as many as six families, and which were infested with rodents and vermin. In the winters they shivered and in the summers they sweltered. It was during this period that labor unions were suppressed; there were no restrictions on child labor or the exploitation of women; and there were no such things as unemployment compensation, workers' compensation, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Were there courageous and conscientious Americans then, too, who objected to this state of affairs? Of course; they were called "muckrakers" and they made a difference. Here are just a few:

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Ray Stannard Baker, who wrote *The Right to Work*;

Nellie Bly, who wrote *Ten Days in the Madhouse* (Bellevue Hospital);

Lewis W. Hine, whose photographs of the working class, and particularly of child labor, shocked the nation, though perhaps not enough;

Frank Norris, who wrote *The Octopus*, about railroads.

Jacob Riis, who wrote *How the Other Half Lives* and *Children of the Poor*;

Upton Sinclair, whose book, *The Jungle*, exposed the meat-packing industry and is an American classic;

Lincoln Steffens, who wrote *The Shame of the Cities*;

Ida Tarbell, whose rake found Standard Oil and John D. Rockefeller in her book *The History of the Standard Oil Company*; and

Ida B. Wells, who wrote *A Red Record,* about lynching.

Conditions were so bad around the turn of the century that even that old rugged individualist, Teddy Roosevelt, would say:

> There are, in the body politic, economic and social, many and grave evils, and there is urgent necessity for the sternest war upon them. There should be relentless exposure of and attack upon every evil man, whether politician or business man, every evil practice, whether in politics, in business, or in social life. I hail as a benefactor every writer or speaker, every man who on the platform or in book, magazine or newspaper, with merciless severity, makes such attack, provided always that he in his turn remembers that the attack is of use only if it is absolutely truthful.

He also said, significantly, that: "The welfare of each of us is dependent fundamentally upon the welfare of all of us."

Largely because of the efforts of the muckrakers and of leaders like Teddy Roosevelt, a series of reforms were enacted which improved the quality of life for tens of millions of Americans, including:

1. The Interstate Commerce Act and the Interstate Commerce Commission, intended principally to regulate rail-roads (1887).

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2. The Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890).

3. The Food and Drug Act and the Food and Drug Administration (1906).

4. The Meat Inspection Act (1906).

5. Workers' compensation laws (Employers' Liability Acts of 1906 and 1908).

6. The Federal Trade Commission Act and the Federal Trade Commission (1914).

7. The acceptance of the right of workers to organize and to strike for higher wages and better working conditions.

8. The creation of the Federal Reserve System.

9. The abolition of child labor.

10. The regulation of working hours, especially for women.

By the middle of the 20th century, poverty had been ameliorated; labor was free to organize and did so; child labor was abolished; hours of work, especially for women, were regulated; unemployment and workers' compensation were realities; Social Security covered everyone; and Medicare and Medicaid were just around the corner. Harry Truman summarized the spirit of the age when he said:

> Every man should have the right to a decent home, the right to an education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in the making of public decisions through the ballot and the right to a fair trial in a fair court.

Observe that he spoke of the "right" to these things, not the privilege or prerogative, but the "right".

To summarize and conclude: Our place in the world, our Constitution, our democracy and our domestic life, which is to say our history, has been a history of constant improvement; a process of learning from our mistakes and thereby getting better and better. We have now reached the point where we are a force for positive good in the world and where, domestically, there is vastly more justice and equity than at any time in our history. Much remains to be done, of course, but is there a doubt in anyone's mind that we will do it? Is there a doubt in anyone's mind that this process of getting better and better will never end with us? Is there a doubt in anyone's mind that American men and women – of every ethnicity, every race, every national ancestry and every creed – will always

answer the call of t

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and women irrespective of their backgrounds, be dispelled by a memory of this brief exchange between an Army Doctor and an American soldier in Vietnam. The exchange was heard in *The Deerhunter*, a 1978 movie starring Christopher Walken as the soldier. Here is the exchange:

Army Doctor: Chevrotarevitch. Is that a Russian name?

Soldier: No, it's an American name.

Ohio Civil War Letters and Diaries: Collections
by Dennis Keating

Ohio History Connection: The Ohio History Connection contains hundreds of collections that contain correspondence, diaries*, and journals of Ohio Civil War veterans: https://www.ohiohistory.org [*including the William McKinley Civil War diary]

Civil War Correspondence: This digital archive contains Civil War era documents from 15 manuscript collections held in the Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections from a diverse array of Ohioans: http://cdm15808.contentdm.oclc.org

Miami University Libraries: Civil War Diaries: They have Civil War digital materials housed in the Walter Havighurst Special Collections collection: http://digital.lib.miamioh.edu/landingpage/collection/cwdiaries/

Rutherford B. Hayes: The 5-volume edited diaries and letters of Rutherford B. Hayes were published in 1922 and they have been digitized: http://resources.ohiohistory.org/hayes/

Salmon P. Chase: David Donald edited: I*nside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase* (2015)

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Confederate Graves at Flat Rock **Paul Siedel**

As one makes their way through North Carolina they may come upon a small town just about 20 miles southeast of Asheville. The name of the town is Flat Rock, North Carolina. In antebellum days it served as the mountain retreat of many of South Carolina's elite families fleeing the hot weather of the low country for the cool air of the mountains. It was in fact known as the "Newport of the South". During the 1840s and 50s many cottages were built and are marked today as belonging to such families as the Drayton's, King's, Middleton's and Rhett's. Among the graves at the Church of St. John's in the Wilderness are graves of these scions of pre-war southern society. Nestled there in the pines and ferns are the graves of two cabinet members of the Confederate Government. It seems that Christopher Memminger, Confederate Secretary of the Treasury, and George Trenholm Secretary of the Treasury after Memminger both had summer homes in Flat Rock before 1860, and it was here that they lived during the summer months in the years following the Civil War. . Memminger resigned from the Davis Cabinet in July 1864 and returned to Flat Rock. He was arrested there and imprisoned at Ft. Pulaski near Savannah, Ga. In 1866 He was released and returned to his law practice in Charleston. He also became involved in several business interests and became instrumental in establishing the public school system in South Carolina. He died in 1888 and is buried in Flat Rock, North Carolina.

It was to Flat Rock the Mary Boykin Chesnutt fled as Sherman approached Columbia and it was here that she established connections with Mrs. Joseph E. Johnston who was also fleeing Sherman. As Stoneman's Raiders approached Flat Rock, the women fled to Lincolnton, North Carolina, and they were there when Gen. John Bell Hood came through on his way to recruit volunteers in Texas. A task he never completed. It was while at the Memminger home in Flat Rock that they heard the news of Lee's surrender.

Also at the Cemetery of St. John is the grave of William Seabrook, killed at Chancellorsville and never found. His memorial stands today in the cemetery along with several other graves of the son's of prominent South Carolina families.

If by chance one finds themselves in this "Newport of the South" they may also visit the home of Carl Sandberg. It was from Flat Rock that he wrote some of his best loved stories.

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JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT MEETING

Feb. 14, 2018

Program: "Your Affectionate Son" : A Civil War Narrative Based on letters of James Cleaver.

Speaker: Milann Ruff Daugherty

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

East 107th St & Chester

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Lee's Daughters (part 4 of 6) by Dave Carrino

Eleanor Agnes Lee

Eleanor Agnes Lee, the third daughter and fifth child of Robert E. and Mrs. Lee, was born at Arlington on February 27, 1841. She was named after Eleanor (Nelly) Parke Custis Lewis, one of G.W.P. Custis' sisters. This sister, along with G.W.P. Custis, was adopted by George Washington after the death of their father, John Parke Custis. Throughout her life, Eleanor Agnes Lee went by the name Agnes. Shortly after Agnes' birth, Lee left for his new assignment in New York City, and the family joined him there a few months later after Mrs. Lee had recovered from the delivery of her latest child. During the family's stay in New York City, Mrs. Lee wrote in a letter to her mother that young Agnes "scarcely eats enough to keep a new bird alive," which suggests that Agnes was a fussy eater. Much of Agnes' youth was connected with her older sister, Annie, with whom she had a very close relationship. They shared a bedroom at Arlington, and eventually their younger sister, Mildred, was added to this room. Agnes, the child about whose arrival Lee wrote that he "could have dispensed with for a year or two more" grew to become an introspective and contemplative woman. One Lee biographer wrote the generally held opinion, including among contemporaries of the Lee daughters, that Agnes was "the prettiest of the Lee daughters." It is clear from Agnes' writings that she was fervently attached to her Arlington home. For instance, when Agnes' parents decided that she and Annie would move to West Point in late summer of 1853, Agnes, with the spirited emotions of a typical 12-year-old, wrote in her journal of her strong affection for Arlington. "I long for Arlington my precious Arlington, my own dear *home*....O how I love my home—thou art an old and tried friend."

While Lee was in Mexico serving in the war, Agnes and Annie began their education at Arlington and were taught by their mother. An exercise that the girls engaged in was to practice their penmanship by writing letters to their father. Most often when Lee corresponded with Annie and Agnes, he sent a single letter to both girls. But one of Lee's letters, dated February 12, 1847, about two weeks before Agnes' sixth birthday, was sent only to Agnes. The text of Lee's letter suggests that the little girl was displeased about not receiving her own letter, and it is not difficult to imagine a child of six being unhappy about not receiving individual attention. In the separate letter to Agnes, Lee wrote, "I was delighted to receive your letter & to find that you could write so well. But how could you say that I had not written to you? Did I not write to you & Annie? I suppose you want a letter all to yourself. So here is one. I am very anxious to see you again & to know how you progress in your studies....You must therefore study hard & be a very nice girl & do not forget your papa, who thinks constantly of you & longs to see you more than he can express." Because Agnes and Annie were so often grouped together during their young lives, it would not be surprising if one or the other, particularly the younger one, sometimes felt the desire for individual attention, and Lee's heartfelt letter to Agnes most likely satisfied her wish for this.

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Lee's Daughters cont.

In January 1852 Robert E. and Mrs. Lee decided that Agnes and Annie needed a more formal education, and they hired a woman as a governess and teacher. Lee wrote to his wife from Baltimore in March 1852 regarding his expectations for their daughters' education from the newly hired governess. "I particularly desire that she will teach them to write a good hand, & to be *regular*, *orderly*, & *energetic* in the performance of all their duties." Lee's stipulations for Agnes' and Annie's education are not surprising, since the regular, orderly, and energetic performance of duties was precisely the standard that Lee expected of himself and followed throughout his own life. When the Lee family moved to West Point in the fall of 1852 as Lee began his tenure as superintendent, Agnes and Annie remained at Arlington under the tutelage of their governess. It was not until the following fall, after the death of Mrs. Lee's mother, that Agnes and Annie went with their family to West Point, the move for which Agnes voiced so much displeasure in her journal, because it involved her leaving her "precious Arlington."

The journal in which Agnes complained about leaving her "precious Arlington" was a Christmas gift to her in 1852 from her governess, who thought that writing in the journal would be an effective way for Agnes to practice her penmanship. At first Agnes, who was almost 12 years old at the time that she received her journal, found it difficult to make entries into it. In one of her early entries in her journal, Agnes wrote about what she considered the unremarkable life that she was recording in her journal by commenting, "The everyday life of a little school girl of twelve years is not startling. And my thoughts, they say you ought to put your thoughts in a journal—but I cannot." Agnes' lack of enthusiasm about keeping a journal and her opinion that her life was unexciting suggest that she would not have been an avid participant in social media had she lived in the 21st Century. But Agnes' journal evidently became more appealing to her over time, because she continued to make records in her journal for more than five years until January 1858. And in contrast to her comment about being unable to put her thoughts in a journal, Agnes recorded her thoughts in a very impressive and heartfelt way. The last sentence of her first entry expresses the greatest benefit of Agnes' journal, not just for her, but for future generations who have been able to obtain a glimpse into Agnes' character and into the life she lived. "At any rate it will be amusing in after years to know what I did and felt when I was young!" One entry that Agnes made a few years after she received the journal fits with her prediction that "it will be amusing" to read her opinions. This particular entry deals with Agnes' distaste for tobacco use, which Agnes stated "disgusted me more than ever." Agnes proclaimed, "If I were 'Queen of these United States' not one plant should remain in the country any hour." An entry that Agnes made at the time that she received the journal as a Christmas gift reveals her disappointment at the family being separated that Christmas. With her parents, her brothers, and her sisters, Mary and Mildred, at West Point, only Agnes, Annie, and their grandparents were at Arlington for Christmas in 1852. In her initial entry in her journal, Agnes wrote about the missing family members, "How I wish they all were here then my cup of happiness would be full."

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Lee's Daughters cont.

The following spring, in April of 1853, Mrs. Lee's mother died, a loss that Agnes described in her journal as "the first person I loved that has been ever taken from me." Years later, during the second year of the Civil War, Agnes wrote similar words about someone she loved who was taken from her, namely, her sister, Annie. Agnes was so deeply affected by the death of her grandmother that she wrote in her journal, "I am almost tempted to murmur against God for calling Grandmamma away." A few months after the death of her grandmother, Agnes had another encounter with death, which occurred on a visit to the estate of some relatives. Agnes and her younger brother, Rob, went by themselves late in the day to the graveyard on the estate. Agnes recorded their experience in an eerie entry in her journal. "In the evening we went to the grave-yard where my beloved Grandma's father & mother and only brother are buried....After climbing to the top of the high wall which surrounds it & which with the trees near are covered with poison-oak, we obtained a view of the scene inside....Courageous as I usually am I confess I felt something like fear or rather awe steal over me as I sat on that mouldy wall surrounded by dark cedars & other trees, the poisonous vines waving over & around me & looking down upon that mass of rank & poisonous weeds while my thoughts sank to those who rested beneath the tombs." In another entry, which focuses on the death of Agnes' aunt, Agnes shared her thoughts on what constitutes a righteous life. Agnes wrote of her deceased aunt, "We have good reason to believe she went to Heaven for everyone has faults & we could not expect her to be more perfect than the rest of mankind." This insightful comment indicates that Agnes had an enlightened tolerance regarding morality in spite of the very strict religious teachings and attitudes to which she was exposed. Living with personal imperfections is a subject which Agnes often addressed in her journal.

After the death of Mrs. Lee's mother, the decision was made that Agnes and Annie would live at West Point, and the services of their governess were no longer needed. Agnes wrote in her journal of her sadness at the departure of the woman who had become a friend to her and Annie, but Agnes added that, with her governess gone, "it may be of benefit to my journal; it is so impossible to write unrestrainedly when you feel some one is going to look over what you have just written." With this statement, 12-year-old Agnes made clear that she was looking forward to putting in writing whatever thoughts, feelings, or opinions she wanted to, now that she felt that her journal entries would remain private. Another important event that summer was the confirmation of Agnes' older sisters, Mary and Annie. Their father, who had never been confirmed, decided to be confirmed with his two eldest daughters, which most likely made the event even more solemn for them. Agnes, however, could not avoid feeling excluded and wrote in her journal, "I wish A(nnie) & I could have been confirmed together." It is interesting that when Agnes confided her feelings of exclusion to her journal, she expressed a desire to be confirmed with Annie and neglected to include Mary and her father in that yearning. Agnes' expressed desire to be confirmed more so with Annie than with the others is a further indication of how close she felt to Annie. and wrote in her journal, "I wish A(nnie) & I could have been confirmed together." It is interesting that when Agnes confided her feelings of exclusion to her journal, she expressed a desire to be confirmed with Annie and neglected to include Mary and her father in that yearning. Agnes' expressed desire to be confirmed more so with Annie than with the others is a further indication of how close she felt to Annie.

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In late summer of 1853 Agnes and Annie traveled with the family to live at West Point, a move that displeased Agnes, because it required that she live away from the home that she called "an old and tried friend." Prior to leaving Arlington to live at West Point, Agnes expressed in her journal the hope that she would be away from Arlington "only for a little while," because Arlington "is always *my home*." But this hope was not fulfilled, because she lived at West Point for an extended time. After living at West Point for a short time, Agnes wrote in her journal, "I am perfectly miserable here." Elsewhere in her journal Agnes even expressed disdain at the name of the place that was her home for two years. As if grasping for a way to further disparage the place that in her view could never surpass Arlington, Agnes wrote of West Point, "what an unromantic name!" Agnes also recorded in her journal her first impression of the superintendent's house, which was about to become her home. Agnes characterized the superintendent's house with the lackluster description of "large and convenient." Eventually Agnes came to feel that West Point possessed scenic beauty, and she even wrote, "I fear no description of mine can convey the smallest idea of its beauty." But to Agnes, Arlington was not only more beautiful, but was also the place that she considered home, as she recorded in her journal after Lee's tenure as superintendent ended and Agnes returned to Arlington in April 1855. "I am very happy here my dear old home that has *always* been my home—not a two year sojourn! West Point is probably more striking & picturesque, but Arlington with its commanding view, fine old trees, and the soft wild luxuriance of its woods can favorably compare with any home I've seen!"

In the two years that Agnes stayed at West Point, she and Annie, who were ages 12 and 14, respectively, when they arrived, were expected to behave as befitted the daughters of the superintendent, and those standards of behavior very likely were even more stringent in light of the person who was both the West Point superintendent and their father. Because this West Point superintendent had earlier written, when his daughters were living in a civilian location, that he expected Agnes and Annie "to be *regular*, *orderly*, & *energetic* in the performance of all their duties," it would not be surprising if he ratcheted his expectations for them to an even higher level for their time at a military academy for which he was the commanding officer. In fact, Lee had given a strong indication of his high expectations for Agnes and Annie in a letter that he sent to Annie while she and Agnes were still living at Arlington, in which Lee noted that it would be inappropriate if "the Superintendent's children do not practice what he demands of them." Agnes expressed an opinion in her journal about the demanding expectations that were imposed on her and Annie when she wrote in an angry stream of words that "young as I am I must sit up & talk & walk as a young lady and be constantly greeted with ladies do this & that & think so all as if I was twenty." Agnes also wrote about the requirement to pass muster under "Papa's scrutinizing eye." The discontent that Agnes vented is not at all surprising for a girl her age, and it is interesting to wonder if Agnes would have been so candid with her remarks had she not felt that she could "write unrestrainedly" in her journal.

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Another aspect of living at West Point which irked Agnes and Annie was interacting with the cadets. According to Agnes' journal, Lee, as West Point superintendent, held dinners for groups of cadets "every Sat. evening," and although Agnes enjoyed helping to prepare the dinners, "to be present is not to my taste." Agnes also wrote about what she and Annie typically did during the dinners. "I have met a great many cadets, but it frightens me so, I am so dreadfully diffident I believe Annie & I generally sitting on the steps & having a good cry than remaining in the parlour to enjoy their society." Regarding a different recurring problem involving cadets, Agnes expressed her exasperation in a scornful entry in her journal that describes an incident which occurred near the end of her time at West Point, when she was walking to the superintendent's house with a female friend. "We were soon joined by two 'gray coats'. Now if there is anything I fairly *hate* it is to have anyone, especially a cadet, join me when walking, I willingly see them in the house but elsewhere I can't stand them. Fortunately this one was a little Virginian whom I knew as well as my own name so I didn't mind him *much*." It is easy to imagine 14-year-old Agnes, with the petulance that is stereotypical of someone in her early teens, becoming miffed at what she perceived as an unwanted intrusion that she imagined was deliberately directed at her, and then taking to her journal to angrily write a scathing account of what was at most a trivial imposition, if it was an imposition at all.

But there were some West Point experiences that Agnes found enjoyable. In June 1854, as the first year of her stay at West Point was nearing an end, Agnes sat in at an oral recitation on national law and proudly wrote in her journal afterward, "Every one told me I wouldn't understand one word of National law, but to my great satisfaction I did [understand] many words & liked it very much." Agnes also noted with satisfaction in her journal that her brother, Custis, graduated first in his class in 1854. "We are quite proud of him as he is several years younger than those next to him & then he was born & educated in Virginia where 'tis thought people are so lazy." However, not everything associated with Custis' graduation was pleasant. The commencement speaker gave an address that Agnes found unappealing, and in her journal she described the speech as "the longest most uninteresting thing...stupid to a degree." During the ensuing summer at Arlington, Agnes reflected on her first year at West Point and even wrote fondly about it "as a very happy period of my long life for I have reached the respectable age of thirteen." The young lady, who eight months earlier had described herself as "dreadfully diffident," wrote about the initial difficulties she experienced when she was required to behave like someone older than she was, and she went on to proclaim her guarded expectation that she was now able to handle that responsibility. "I was wholly unfit for such a position never aspiring so high, however now I am up to it....Anyone might think from my manner of talking now I had become a perfectly self possessed young lady only let them see me!" During that summer Agnes also confided to her journal that she did not want to return to West Point in the fall, although she admitted that she was "resigned to my fate," because even though she "expostulated and begged and reasoned—Papa is inexorable."

When Agnes and the family returned to West Point after spending the summer of 1854 at Arlington, Agnes wrote in her journal, "I was only a little glad to get back." At the end of that academic year came Lee's new assignment in the Second Cavalry and the end of his tenure as West Point superintendent.

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Agnes recorded in her journal her thoughts on hearing the news that "we are no longer in the Engineers but the cavalry....At first I was delighted, the idea of promotion, of leaving W.P. [West Point] changing our corps etc. was something new & charming. But second thoughts—Papa's going way out West." Agnes, perhaps surprisingly given her initial feelings toward West Point, found herself writing plaintively about her imminent departure, that "leaving West Point, that I now almost consider as home was very sad." In another entry in her journal, Agnes, at what she evidently considered the advanced age of 14, conceded that her time at West Point had been helpful, because "my residence at W.P. has given me the experience of an ancient." Agnes later wrote in her journal that on the rainy day that she left West Point with her family, "I felt so sad & forlorn I cried 'till my eyes were blinded. The Heavens seemed to sympathize with us, it shed torrents of tears." With her opinion of the place with the "unromantic name" apparently changed, the sadness that Agnes expressed toward leaving West Point markedly contrasts with the unhappiness she felt toward moving there almost two years earlier. In entries that she made at later times after leaving West Point, Agnes expressed fondness for her time there, which suggests that her altered feelings toward West Point were more than simply momentary feelings that she had at the time of her departure.

In the fall after leaving West Point, Agnes and Annie began boarding school in Staunton, Virginia. Agnes and Annie had a welcome break from school at Christmas and returned home to Arlington for the holiday. Sometime after that Christmas break with her family, Agnes wrote in her journal, "We all went to our homes for Christmas. Papa was there all the time. He is now in Texas O so far away he seems. I love him so much." But any relief from the longings for home that the Christmas break gave to Agnes eventually came to an end, because a few months after returning to boarding school Agnes wrote in her journal, "I am a school girl an inmate of the so called 'Staunton Jail.' " In the spring of 1856 Agnes became afflicted with swelling and pain in her fingers and feet. These symptoms were likely related to rheumatic disease and may have been the beginnings for Agnes of the same disease that her mother suffered. With her homesick feelings no doubt intensified by her illness, Agnes wrote forlornly in her journal near the end of March, "I feel miserably. The girls have all gone to church so alone, home sick and in pain I must pour out my sad thoughts to my journal....But why I am so miserable I can't fine [sic] out. I am not in love certainly....I only know I want to go home O so much!"

As her first year at boarding school in Staunton was almost over, Agnes wrote to her father in Texas that "time *creeps* now," and added that "it is so hot we can't study, so I can not help thinking and talking *only* of home." Agnes tempered her complaining by telling her father, "I expect you think, dear Papa I will never learn to be moderate, or in fact do as I ought" and then wrote apologetically, "I must not complain any more nor write you such a *doleful* letter." Lee chided his daughter in his letter of reply to her. Alluding to the constancy of duty that Lee demanded of himself and expected of his children, Lee wrote, "I must take you to task for some expressions in your letter. You say, 'our only thought, our only talk, is entirely about going home.' How can you reconcile that with the object of your sojourn at Staunton! Unless your thoughts are sometimes devoted to your studies, I do not see the use of your being there." In her reply to Lee, Agnes, who was not yet 15 years old, demonstrated that she understood what her father expected from her when she wrote contritely, "I know you will say the best way to

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manifest my affection will be to do my duty & study my lessons. This I know, and *do* try but I also know not hard enough....I know I am very *very* bad & just the opposite of what I *ought* to be. Perhaps as I grow older I may know how to do better." In a subsequent letter, Lee complimented Agnes for the choice she had made to concentrate on her studies and expressed his opinion, in a way that parents typically do, on why that decision would ultimately lead to her personal gratification. "I think you must feel better satisfied in doing what was right....The time is near at hand, when you will leave school for good, & enter upon a new course of life. I hope you will find yourself prepared for it, & ready to meet all of its necessities." After Agnes received the firm exhortations from her father, she devoted herself to her studies. From some of Agnes' letters to her father, it seems that she often needed encouragement from him in order to maintain her focus. But even with Lee's encouragement, Agnes sometimes expressed doubts about herself, for example when she wrote to her father, "I am very happy for the pride you take in me, Papa, but alas it is far, far from being merited." It is possible that Agnes felt these doubts because she thought that she could never meet the stringent standards that Lee set for his children.

Eventually the end came to the school year that seemed to Agnes to be creeping along, and Agnes and Annie returned to Arlington for the summer. During the summer, Agnes wrote a revealing letter to a mutual friend of hers and Annie's. In that letter Agnes wrote, "I can't expect you to care for me as much as you do for Annie, but can't you love me *some* in return?" This statement gives a hint that, even though Agnes and Annie had a very close relationship, there may have been some instances of sibling rivalry. When Agnes and Annie returned to Staunton for their second year of boarding school, Agnes gleefully recorded in her journal that she felt "so much more confident in myself, so much more independent!" But soon after returning to boarding school, Agnes again fell ill, this time with chicken pox. Agnes recovered and was able to continue her studies at the school. In the spring Agnes wrote an entry in her journal that shows just how similar teenage girls of the 1850s were to those of contemporary times. In this entry, Agnes mentioned that she was reading the journal of another student named Decca Urquhart, and Agnes' entry reads like a synopsis of the movie *Mean Girls*, with the person whom Agnes called Sue M— in the role of the character Regina George. Agnes wrote, "I read Decca's journal it was chiefly filled with the praises of her idol Sue. I think Sue M— is such a strange girl....You can hardly help liking her, she has such sweet fascinating manners, she flatters you by being attentive to you. But I pity the girl who blindly loves her and tells her so, in a short time the once devoted Sue quarrels and casts her off for some new worshipper. Decca is now wrapt up in her. I only hope Sue has a heart (which she is accused of *not* having) & will not throw away Beccie's absorbing though silly affection." Less than a month later the students were able to attend a concert which featured a renowned Italian operatic soprano named Teresa Parodi. Agnes wrote of Parodi that she "presented herself in pink gauze decidedly 'bas' a vast amount of jewelry & she remarkably *un*pretty." Despite this unfavorable opinion of Parodi's appearance, Agnes did write that "she has a splendid voice." Another of the singers came in for greater criticism, as Agnes wrote that she "looked perfectly horrid in a blue gauze black pompadore [sic]

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dressed with red flowers much colour supposed not to be her own!" The anecdotes about "Sue M—" and the concert are insightful, because they show that Agnes was very much like other teenagers, in that she was capable of the petty criticism that teenagers typically display. This kind of behavior gives Agnes a reality that contrasts with the exalted status that some people have bestowed on Agnes' father. In fact, in a later entry written at the Virginia Female Institute, Agnes set herself in stark distinction from the kind of lofty status to which her father ascended by characterizing herself as "only an *insignificant* schoolgirl!"

On Easter Sunday of 1857 Agnes was confirmed in Staunton, receiving the sacrament that she had wished she could receive almost four years earlier with Annie. The following month, May 1857, Annie had to return home due to illness, and Agnes was left in Staunton alone to finish the term and attend graduation. Agnes made a brief record of this in her journal. "Then Annie's sickness & leaving—my frantic longings for home...& then so busy I could hardly miss her." In spite of these difficulties, Agnes successfully completed her studies and received a diploma. Although it sometimes seems from the entries in Agnes' journal that she was not a very conscientious student, and Lee had characterized Agnes as "less constant...in her application," Agnes did perform well, at least at times. One monthly report card that Agnes saved in a scrapbook indicates that Agnes received perfect grades for that month, including in algebra, chemistry, political economy, physical geography, piano, and evidences of Christianity as well as some other subjects. After graduation, while Annie and Mrs. Lee were at a hot spring spa to help relieve their illnesses, Agnes went to Arlington, and she and Markie Williams, the orphaned cousin of Mrs. Lee who spent much time living at Arlington after the deaths of her parents, took care of G.W.P. Custis, who was 76 years old. Agnes wrote in her journal about how much she cherished this time with her grandfather. "How thankful I am I did return & how grateful *he* was. I then, more than ever before, ministered to his wants, sought his comforts, & prized his companionship. O how much & how undeservedly he thanked me." During that summer, Markie's younger brother, Orton, also spent a great deal of time at Arlington, in particular with Agnes on long horseback rides. That fall G.W.P. Custis died, and Robert E. Lee, as executor of his father-in-law's will, returned from Texas on leave. After the death of her grandfather, Agnes wrote in her journal, "None can ever fill *his* place. So kind he was, so indulgent, loving us so fondly, humouring our childhood caprices, grateful for our little kindnesses." Later in her journal, when Agnes reflected on her grandfather's death, she mournfully wrote about the question of whether or not someone her age possesses the capacity to experience the full depth of loss. "Don't tell me that sixteen can't feel grief—anguish." On the day of G.W.P. Custis' funeral, Agnes sorrowfully put into words the irreversibility of her loss by writing that "though I may have a long life I will never have again a Grandpapa." Agnes could not have known that at the time that she wrote those words, her own life was almost half over.

After returning from Texas to take care of his father-in-law's will, Lee remained at Arlington on extended leave until February 1860, although he did carry out some military duties during his stay at Arlington, the most important military duty being the head of the force that suppressed John Brown's Harpers Ferry raid. During this lengthy stay, Lee saw Orton Williams spending so much time at Arlington that he referred to his sons'

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bedroom, which was being used by Orton, as "Orton's room." The principal reason that Orton spent much time at Arlington seemed to be a growing romance with Agnes. As Markie recollected years afterward, "it was always—where are Agnes & Orton?" Orton and Agnes went on long horseback rides together. Markie recalled that after one long ride Agnes returned with a "glowing face & streaming hair," and Orton looked at Agnes with "admiring glances." During the Civil War, Orton played a leading role in a significant incident in Agnes' life, an incident that affected Agnes for the rest of her life.

Shortly after the calendar turned to 1858, Agnes reflected on the previous year, which to Agnes had been an eventful and difficult one. Regarding that year, Agnes wrote in her journal, "57 has indeed been a year of incident, of *thought* in my short life. One of happiest & the saddest I have ever numbered." From the elation of graduating from boarding school to the sadness of her grandfather's death, 1857 was both happy and sad for the young woman who was approaching her 17th birthday. To prepare herself for her transition into adulthood, Agnes made several resolutions. "I have commenced to live another year—& with a sad sad heart. Yet I trust & know this is a season intended for my discipline, & though I have not a light heart—may it be submissive nay cheerful. I am going to make a few resolutions for '58, 1st, to rise earlier, 2nd, to strive to be *gentle*, 3rd, to take good care of my 'good intentions.' 4th, to pay greater attention to morning & evening prayer & to reading my bible." Agnes' resolutions reveal what she perceived to be her worst shortcomings. The second of Agnes' four resolutions may have been at least partly motivated by something that her mother referred to in a letter to Agnes several months earlier. In that letter Mrs. Lee wrote, "I accept my dear child your penitence for all your faults towards me & freely *bestow* my forgiveness." This statement suggests that Agnes and her mother had had some of the disputes that very often are a part of the relationship between a mother and her teenage daughter and that Agnes had apologized to her mother for them. In that same journal entry that Agnes made early in 1858, she also wrote, "I am no longer the free thoughtless child at sixteen. I am but truly commencing the *battle of life*." This suggests that Agnes saw herself as progressing beyond her childhood, and it may have been because of this that she made resolutions for the new year. Whether or not Agnes succeeded in her resolutions is not known from the writings in her journal, because this was the final entry that Agnes made.

In the early months of 1858, Agnes spent some time in Baltimore with relatives, although she was not enthusiastic about this. Agnes' parents felt that the time away would help her overcome the despondency she was showing, presumably a lingering effect of her grandfather's death. But leaving Arlington for an extended period made Agnes unhappy. Regarding her impending trip, Agnes had confided to her journal a few weeks earlier, "dear dear Arlington my home of joy and sadness I cannot bear to leave it—& Papa & Mamma—& all of them I shall miss them & long for them very much." Annie, in particular, missed Agnes, and their separation was made longer due to their father's concern over the health of both his wife and Annie.

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That summer Lee, who was still on leave to act as executor of G.W.P. Custis' will, observed the poor health of Mrs. Lee, who continued to suffer with her rheumatic disease. Lee also saw that Annie was still suffering from the illness that struck her over a year earlier near the end of her time at boarding school. It was one thing to read about these maladies in letters while he was on military duty away from home. But seeing it in person caused Lee to take matters into his own hands and bring Mrs. Lee and Annie to a hot spring spa, while Agnes, Mildred, and Rob stayed with relatives in Virginia. This was the excursion on which Annie saw, and wrote about, the little streams gurgling over the stones and the last rays of light illuminating the clouds as she and her parents were traveling to the spa. The following summer, the summer of 1859, Agnes and Annie were again separated when Mrs. Lee and Agnes went to a hot spring spa near Winchester, Virginia. In October of that year, Lee led the forces that suppressed John Brown's raid, and then four months after that Lee resumed his duties in Texas. In the summer of 1860, with Lee back in Texas, Agnes, along with Markie Williams, accompanied Mrs. Lee to a spa in Canada, while Annie was left at home to oversee the operations at Arlington and also to make preparations for her younger sister, Mildred, to leave for school in the fall. On the return trip from Canada, Agnes stayed in New York to spend some time in New York City and to visit West Point. Agnes' decision to visit West Point indicates her changed opinion regarding that place relative to her initial feelings and also reveals the fondness she later felt toward her time there.

Agnes was back at Arlington in time for two significant events of December 1860: the Christmas holiday with those members of her family who were able to be at Arlington and the secession of South Carolina. A few months later, Lee was at Arlington after he had been summoned to report to Washington. In short order thereafter, Virginia seceded, Lee resigned from the U.S. Army, and Lee departed Arlington for Richmond to begin his service for the Confederacy. On April 19, 1861 Agnes, after hearing that Virginia had seceded, wrote a letter to Mildred, who was at school in Winchester. In that letter, Agnes called the situation in the nation "dreadful" and expressed both disbelief about the current events and the hope that Virginia was making the correct choice. Regarding Virginia's decision to secede, Agnes wrote, "It is a very solemn step & I fear we will have to go through a great deal of suffering." The "we" in Agnes' foreboding statement most likely referred specifically to her own family, and the Lee family definitely suffered during the Civil War. But every family in America suffered during the Civil War, and when Agnes wrote that statement, she almost certainly could not have imagined how much suffering the entire country would go through.

Within weeks of Agnes' letter to Mildred, Orton Williams, the man whose relationship with Agnes had begun to develop into a romance, went to Arlington to warn Mrs. Lee that her property was going to be seized by the Union army. At the time, Orton was a staff officer in Winfield Scott's office in Washington, which made him privy to much U.S. military information. Shortly after Orton delivered his warning, he tried to submit his resignation from the army in order to fight for the Confederacy, but he was arrested because it was feared that he had

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sufficient knowledge about ongoing military plans and preparations that he could harm the early U.S. war effort. Orton was imprisoned at Governors Island in New York City, where he was held for several weeks, and then he was released when it was felt that any information he had was no longer of use to the enemy. In the meantime, Mrs. Lee, Agnes, and Mary, who were at Arlington at the time, packed up as many of their belongings as they could move and locked the remainder of their possessions in the cellar. In a letter to Annie, who was staying at White House plantation, Agnes wrote, "We have packed up a good many things, but it is hard to tell where they will be safest." On May 15, 1861 Mrs. Lee, Agnes, and Mary left their home and moved west to stay with relatives. A little over a week later, Union troops seized Arlington. While Mrs. Lee and Mary moved further west in Virginia, Agnes went to White House with Annie. When Mildred's school term in Winchester ended, she joined Mrs. Lee and Mary. Eight years earlier, when Agnes had to leave Arlington to live at West Point, she wrote in her journal, "How can I say farewell to Arlington! How can I quit this dear place never *never* perhaps to return." Despite Agnes' overly emotional comment, the departure from Arlington that occurred eight years earlier did not result in the terrible and lasting outcome that Agnes feared. But the departure from Arlington that happened less than a month after the beginning of the Civil War did end that way.

For the first year of the Civil War, the Lee women lived in various places, often not together. For Christmas 1861, Mrs. Lee, Annie, and Agnes were at White House, while Mildred had returned to school in Winchester, and Mary was in Richmond. That was the winter when Mary visited the camp of Jeb Stuart. In March 1862, Mildred's entire school was dismissed early, because the school administration became fearful for the safety of the students due to the withdrawal of Stonewall Jackson from Winchester. Mildred was able to make her way to White House, where she joined her mother and her sister, Annie. Agnes had gone to the estate of some relatives. It was during this spring that Mrs. Lee, Annie, and Mildred became trapped behind enemy lines when the Army of the Potomac advanced toward Richmond in the Peninsula campaign. The three women were allowed to pass into Confederate territory and were reunited with Lee in Richmond. That summer, Annie, Agnes, and Mildred went to a hot springs resort in North Carolina, and they remained there into the late summer. In September Mildred enrolled in a school in Raleigh, while Agnes and Annie remained at the hot springs. Annie and Agnes were not able to return to Richmond at this time, because Annie had taken ill.

In October Annie's condition worsened considerably, and eventually a diagnosis of typhoid fever was made. Upon hearing of Annie's illness, Mrs. Lee went to be with her seriously ill daughter. However, no ministrations could save Annie's life, and she died at age 23 on October 20, 1862. In the letter that Agnes sent to Mildred to tell her younger sister of Annie's death, Agnes wrote of her disbelief that their sister had died. "I never had an idea of it, never felt she was even seriously ill until yesterday morning, nor until last night that she was to die. I wish you could have been with us so much, it would have been a comfort to be to-gether." In addition to conveying her disbelief at Annie's death, Agnes expressed her profound feelings of loss to Mildred when she wrote, "We will have to be more & more to each other now that Annie is taken away from me."

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In this statement of her grief, Agnes characterized the death of Annie as a deeply personal loss by writing that Annie had been "taken away from me." As such, Agnes phrased the loss of her sister in the same way that she had worded the loss of her grandmother more than nine years before. With her plea to Mildred "to be more & more to each other now," Agnes indicated not only how close a relationship she and Annie had shared, but also the unique place that Annie had occupied in Agnes' life.

Agnes and her mother returned to Richmond, but by this time Mary had left to stay at the estate of relatives on the Potomac River, where she became trapped behind enemy lines as a result of the advance of Ambrose Burnside's Army of the Potomac. Burnside's advance culminated in the battle at which Lee, while he watched the carnage in front of the stone wall, uttered his famous quote that one of the benefits of the horrors of war is to dissuade people from developing a fondness toward it. Eventually Mrs. Lee and Agnes went to another estate of relatives, which was located about 20 miles north of Richmond. It was here that the two women spent Christmas of 1862. This was to be a very eventful Christmas for Agnes, because she had an unexpected visit from Orton Williams, the man who had begun a fledgling romance with Agnes prior to the Civil War. After Orton was released from Governors Island and joined the Confederate army, he was sent west. In December 1861 Agnes had become concerned about Orton, because she had not received any letters from him. She sent Orton a letter dated December 1, 1861, in which she wrote, "I have been hoping, dear Orton, ever since I sent my last long letter written the 29th of Sept...to have a response in due time....I have been tempted to believe you have forgotten your old Virginia friends generally, me in particular, but ashamed of this skepticism...I am going to do what I rarely ever do—write again." Agnes continued almost pleadingly for information about him. "In fact, Orton, I know nothing about you & am writing in perfect mental darkness....I wish indeed you would come." Agnes also expressed to Orton how much it seemed that both she and their world had changed since the outbreak of the war. "How differently Orton we will pass this winter from last. I can hardly realize sometimes I am the same girl." Orton, however, was too busy becoming unhinged to write a letter to Agnes.

Orton fought with distinction at Shiloh, but thereafter his Confederate military career began to unravel. The men he commanded considered him arrogant and condescending. One incident that truly alienated Orton and his men occurred when Orton killed an enlisted man who resisted one of Orton's orders. Orton was not prosecuted for this, but he reputedly brazenly commented about the incident and about the man whom he killed, "For his ignorance, I pitied him; for his insolence, I forgave him; for his insubordination, I slew him." Orton was soon transferred to Braxton Bragg's staff, most likely because of the problems between him and his men. At Christmas in 1862 Orton visited Agnes in Virginia at the estate where she and her mother were staying. According to an account by one of the relatives who lived at the estate,

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Orton looked "handsome and charming." The gifts that Orton brought for Agnes, "a pair of ladies' riding gauntlets and a riding whip," evoked the long horseback rides that Agnes and Orton had gone on before the Civil War. During Orton's visit, he and Agnes resumed their practice of taking long horseback rides together. At one point, Orton and Agnes, who was then nearly 22 years old, were secluded in the parlor, and everyone expected a proposal to happen. Years later, one of the young residents of the estate where Agnes was staying wrote about the expected proposal. "He was the Prince Charming and she the Sleeping Beauty that our fairy tale book had made us acquainted with, and we became excited partisans of Prince Charming, and believed the Sleeping Beauty would awake, and they would ride away together and live happily ever after." But after Agnes and Orton spent some time together in the parlor, Orton "came out, bade the family goodbye, and rode away alone."

Whether or not Orton proposed to Agnes is not known for certain, but in all likelihood he at least made his intentions known to her. It is also not known why Agnes spurned Orton, but it most likely was due to a couple of factors. It had been only two months since Annie died, and by the time of Orton's visit Agnes most likely had not recovered from the loss of her sister. Moreover, the Civil War had hardened Orton Williams, as indicated by his killing of the enlisted man and his callous comment about the incident. There is evidence that Orton had turned to drinking, which caused him to change markedly from the dashing young man who had captivated Agnes prior to the war. Because Agnes was such a perceptive person, it is certainly possible that after spending time with Orton that Christmas and after being alone with him in the parlor, she sensed the disturbing changes that had occurred in him, and this perhaps contributed to Agnes' decision to spurn Orton. On June 9, 1863, Orton Williams and another Confederate officer, Walter Peter, were executed by hanging at Fort Granger near Franklin, Tennessee. Orton had concocted a bizarre and foolhardy espionage scheme, but he and Walter Peter were discovered, tried, and executed. (A brief description of the espionage scheme and the subsequent execution is in the history brief of April 2017, which is archived on the web site of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable (http://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/articles/comment/history_briefs17.htm).) When Agnes learned of Orton's fate, she was shocked and greatly anguished. Although Agnes' affection for Orton had diminished, she was deeply troubled by his death. A relative wrote after Orton's execution, "The terrible death of Orton Williams was a shock to Agnes from which she never recovered."

Early in 1863 Mrs. Lee and Agnes returned to Richmond from the estate where they had been staying. The two women were in Richmond when the funeral of Stonewall Jackson took place in that city. Thousands of mourners watched the procession through the streets, but it is not known if Agnes or Mrs. Lee was among them. Agnes received a letter from her father in late May 1863 in which he told her that no matter how despondent she felt regarding the sour fortunes of the Confederacy, "you have a sacred charge, the care of your poor mother."

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Mrs. Lee's rheumatic disease grew progressively worse throughout the war, and by this time she required a wheelchair. That summer Agnes, Mrs. Lee, and Mary traveled to various spas in western Virginia in an effort to improve Mrs. Lee's health and also the health of Agnes, who was suffering neuralgia. When they returned to Richmond over a month later, they rented a house and lived there until January of 1864, at which time they moved into the house on East Franklin Street where they lived until the end of the war. A few days after Christmas 1863, a year after Agnes saw Orton for the last time, Agnes received a letter from Orton's sister, Markie. The tragic romance of Agnes and Orton already resembled a soap opera, but Markie's letter conveyed some news that made this resemblance even stronger. Markie wrote that she had met a woman who claimed to have been engaged to Orton before his fatal mission. To Markie, the woman seemed "deranged," but Markie gleaned from one of Orton's letters to this woman that he was serious about marrying her. Moreover, at the time of the engagement, the woman was married to another man. This news had to be shocking to Agnes, and Markie, perhaps expecting this reaction from Agnes and wanting to soften the blow, also wrote, "You were children together. In my mind's eye I can see you now. You & our darling Annie & he [Orton], sitting around the nursery fender telling fairy tales. But then when you had grown up, it was always—'where are Agnes & Orton?' Those forest shades could tell....You are very dear to me dear Agnes—and ever will be. You seem like my little sister."

While they were living in Richmond, the Lee women began a concerted effort at knitting for the Confederate soldiers, in particular socks. As the women knitted, they observed the news about the declining fortunes of the Confederate war effort in Virginia, and they came to learn that the army that was being led by their husband and father was under siege a little over 20 miles south of Richmond. On March 29, 1865 Agnes took a train from Richmond to Petersburg to visit her father. Three days later Ulysses Grant launched the assault that resulted in the breaking of Lee's lines. On the second day of Agnes' visit, she tried to see her father, but he had left the place where he was staying to personally examine the concentration of enemy forces opposite one part of the Confederate lines. The following morning Lee wrote a note to Agnes, in which he told her, "I was so sorry I was not here to see you yesterday....Now I have to go to the right of our lines again, & do not know when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you." Lee had the pleasure of seeing Agnes a little over two weeks later, after he endured one of the most unpleasant experiences of his life at Appomattox Court House. The last day of Agnes' visit, April 1, 1865, Agnes was still hoping to see her father, but Lee wrote again to his daughter, "I do not know when I shall see you. You must therefore make your arrangements to return irrespective of me." While Agnes, in reaction to her father's note, was making preparations to leave Petersburg, George Pickett, Thomas Rosser, and Agnes' cousin, Fitzhugh Lee, were enjoying a meal of shad rather than directing the defense of Five Forks. That night Agnes left Petersburg on one of the last trains to depart the city and arrived in Richmond in time for the fall of the Confederate capital. By leaving Petersburg when she did, Agnes barely escaped being cut off by Grant's attack.

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Lee's Daughters cont.

When Richmond fell, Agnes was in the rented house with her mother and her sisters, Mary and Mildred. The flames that burned Richmond came very close to that house and even reached the house next door. Fortunately for the Lee women, the fire went only that far. A few days later the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered, and a few days after that Robert E. Lee arrived at the house on East Franklin Street. A couple of months thereafter, the Lee family moved to Derwent, the cottage on the James River that had been offered to them as a residence. Shortly after the move, Agnes contracted typhoid fever, the same disease that had taken the life of her older sister, Annie, almost three years earlier. But with diligent nursing from her sister, Mildred, Agnes survived the disease. When the family moved to Lexington in November 1865 after Lee was named president of Washington College, Agnes did not move with them. Agnes had been asked to take part in a friend's wedding in eastern Virginia. She sent a letter to her father, who had already moved to Lexington, to ask permission to go to the wedding. Lee consented to Agnes' request in a letter and added that "it is very hard for you to apply to me to advise you to go away from me." Even though Agnes was 24 years old at the time, she still felt the need to ask her father for permission to leave the family. This contrasts with Agnes' sister, Mary, who left the family whenever and for however long she wanted without seeking permission. Agnes rejoined her family in Lexington in May 1866.

Despite Lexington's isolation and its austere environment, Agnes, Mildred, and Mary, when she lived there, became accustomed to their new city, particularly after they made new friends. Agnes and Mildred organized a reading club for a dozen young women in the community. Lee jokingly wrote about this reading club, "As far as I can judge, it is a great institution for the discussion of apples and chestnuts, but is quite innocent of the pleasures of literature." There were also gentlemen visitors for the Lee daughters, although no serious romances. Mrs. Lee wrote to a friend in January 1867, "My children seem not to be disposed for matrimony." Lee in particular was not anxious to see his daughters marry. He had written in an August 1865 letter to a friend, "I know it will require a tussle for any one to get my children from me." Many years after Lee's death, Mildred wrote about her father's views regarding men who showed interest in his daughters. "He was apt to be critical on the subject of our young men visitors and admirers." For Agnes, any prospects for romance were complicated by the grief she still seemed to carry over Orton Williams. While the Lee family was living in Lexington, a Washington College professor who met Agnes described the reticence that he observed in her as "haughtiness." However, the relative who wrote that Agnes never recovered from Orton's death believed that this trait simply arose from Agnes' continued grieving about Orton even long after his death. In a photograph of Agnes that was taken in Lexington, the despondence in her face and her hauntingly melancholy eyes reveal a sadness that was born of a longing for

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Lee's Daughters cont.

One of the most significant events for Agnes during her time in Lexington occurred in the spring of 1870. The winter of 1869-1870 had taken a toll on Lee's health, which was already in decline. In March Lee had a conversation with a Washington College professor named William Preston Johnston, who was the son of Albert Sidney Johnston, one of the two Confederate generals who had outranked Lee. In that conversation, Lee told Johnston that if his health did not improve, he planned to resign as president of the college. Johnston brought this information to the faculty, and they issued a resolution urging Lee to take a lengthy vacation south, where he would find warmer weather and rest. Lee reluctantly agreed, and his family decided that Agnes would accompany him, since the warmer weather might also improve the poor health that she was enduring at that time. The ultimate destination was Florida, but there was one place that Lee most wanted to visit: the grave of his daughter, Annie, in North Carolina, which Lee had never seen. As it happened, Lee did find warmer weather, but the expectation for rest was not realized. The itinerary was ambitious with travel to, among other places, both Warrenton and Raleigh in North Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina, Augusta and Savannah in Georgia, and then Jacksonville and Palatka in Florida. The return trip was along the east coast, first to Savannah again, then Charleston, South Carolina, Wilmington, North Carolina, and Portsmouth and Norfolk in Virginia. On a trip that began on March 24, Lee and Agnes were away from Lexington for over two months.

But if the ambitious itinerary was a strain, what detracted even more from the restfulness of the trip was the reception that Lee received at each stop once it became known that Robert E. Lee was in the city. From Warrenton, Lee and Agnes were able to visit Annie's grave in somber solitude, an excursion that Lee described as "mournful, yet soothing to my feelings." But that evening there was a dinner to honor Lee, at which it seemed to him that he and Agnes were in the presence of "all the citizens of Warrenton." Agnes wrote in a letter to her mother, "I wish you could travel with papa to see the affection and feeling shown toward him everywhere," and she added, "At Raleigh and another place the people crowded to the depot and called 'Lee! Lee!' and cheered vociferously." At a brief stop in Columbia, a band played and a large crowd gathered, including many Confederate veterans who saluted Lee with the rebel yell. Regarding a reception in Augusta, Agnes wrote, "Crowds came. Wounded soldiers, servants, and working-men even. The sweetest little children—namesakes—dressed to their eyes, with bouquets of japonica—or tiny cards in their little fat hands—with their names." Among the throng at Augusta was a boy 13 years of age, who managed to squeeze through the crowd and stand next to Lee. That boy, who had the alliterative name Woodrow Wilson, was residing in the White House as president of the United States when death came to Mary Lee, the last surviving child of the man whom that boy had worked so hard to stand next to. The stay in Savannah was longer, almost two weeks, and more restful, but there were still crowds, receptions, and bands. Savannah had been the place of Lee's first assignment after graduation from West Point, and he still had friends who lived there. On their way to Florida, Lee and Agnes visited the grave of Lee's father, "Light Horse Harry" Lee, on Cumberland Island. At Jacksonville the reception was the complete opposite of the boisterous receptions elsewhere. When it became clear that there would not be enough time for all the well-wishers to greet Lee on board the steamer that was transporting Lee and Agnes to their next destination, Lee walked out on deck alone and faced the

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crowd that had gathered on the dock. As if by some prearranged plan, the men took off their hats in a wave that moved through the crowd, and the people in the crowd silently stood and simply gazed at Lee. In its report about Lee's visit, a newspaper in Jacksonville stated, "The very silence of the multitude spoke a deeper feeling than the loudest huzzas could have expressed." On the return trip, the arrivals in Portsmouth and Norfolk included salutes from cannon and fireworks in addition to crowds and cheering. In early May, Lee and Agnes began their trek on the James River back to Lexington. One stop along this last leg of their long journey was at the estate that had been the childhood home of Lee's mother. One young woman who lived there remarked about the perceived magnitude of a visit by Robert E. Lee here and elsewhere during his journey and also captured the outpouring of reverential sentiment that had been directed at Lee throughout his trip. In a statement that bordered on blasphemy, this woman said, "We had heard of God, but here was General Lee." For Lee, the trip that was meant to be a restful vacation was far from relaxing. For Agnes, the trip was an immense revelation of the stature that her father held among the people of the South. On nearly every day of the trip Agnes saw tangible evidence of the esteem and reverence felt toward her father, and perhaps for the first time she came to realize the exalted standing that her father had among Southerners.

The trip that the Washington College faculty had hoped would improve the health of the college's president fell far short of its intended effect. Moreover, Lee's health continued to worsen. He walked more slowly and complained that he could no longer walk for long distances without stopping to rest, distances that he was able to walk without difficulty when he first came to Lexington. Lee was then 63 years old. His father died at age 62 and his mother at age 56. A photograph of Lee taken at that time shows an old man whose worn face bears no resemblance to the strong, handsome face of the vigorous man whose virile countenance stared powerfully at a camera decades earlier with his son at his side. On September 28, 1870 Lee went to a late afternoon meeting at his church. After the three-hour meeting, Lee went home for dinner, and as he stood by the table, he attempted to speak, but was unable to. Lee was helped to his chair, and a physician was summoned. The most likely explanation was that Lee had suffered a stroke, although the diagnosis that was made at that time was "venous congestion of the brain." Bedridden, Lee lingered for two weeks and died on October 12. He was interred beneath the chapel of Washington College, where the Lee family crypt was added. Almost immediately after Lee's death, the college that he had served as president was renamed Washington and Lee University. In so doing, the name of a famous Virginian was added to that of the famous American who was already memorialized in the college's name. Adding Lee's name to that of the person who was grandly eulogized by Lee's father was indisputably merited. George Washington had saved the financially struggling academic institution, then named Liberty Hall Academy, when he gave a large endowment in 1796, and the institution recognized this by changing its name to Washington College. Lee saved the college when it faced financial crisis after the Civil War, and, in addition, he greatly improved and expanded the academic programs. When Lee's daughter, Mary, was living in Lexington near the end of her life, she made a donation to the students of

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Washington and Lee University. Mary's donation was accompanied by a handwritten note in which she urged the students to keep in mind the two men for whom the university was named and to "live up to such examples."

Named to succeed Lee as president of the college was Lee's eldest son, Custis. This appointment allowed the Lee family to continue to reside in the president's house. Custis was the only one of the three Lee sons to remain unmarried his whole life, so he had no wife or children to occupy the house with him. Agnes and Mildred settled in for the same daily routine that they had lived while their father was alive, but now with their brother as president of the renamed university. In the fall of 1873, Agnes was suffering another of her frequent illnesses. But as Mildred ministered to her sister, she could see that this time Agnes' illness was much more serious than the typical illnesses that had afflicted her in the past. Rather than only the neuralgia and rheumatic pain that Agnes suffered during one of her periodic illnesses, this time she also had severe intestinal discomfort. Mildred later wrote that at one point while Agnes lay in bed, the gravely ill woman said, in a seeming resignation to her imminent death, "I never cared to live long," and then added, perhaps as an acknowledgement that she had grown tired of the life to which she had been consigned, "I am weary of life." Agnes asked that her Bible be given to Markie Williams, the sister of the man whom Agnes had spurned when she sat alone with him on a Christmas visit over ten years before. When Agnes made this request, she gave evidence that on her deathbed she was thinking of Orton Williams, because Agnes said of that Bible, "You know Orton gave it to me." Just before Agnes died, she called for her older brother, Custis, and said to him that "you must not forget me when I am gone." Custis reassured his dying sister, "Aggie, none of us will do that."

Thus it was that October added to its distinction as the cruelest month for Mrs. Lee by putting another name on the roster of Mrs. Lee's loved ones who died in that autumn month. Mrs. Lee had already lost her husband, her daughter, Annie, and her father in October. This time it was Agnes, who died on October 15, 1873, the third day after the third anniversary of the death of her own father and five days short of the day on which her older sister, Annie, died 11 years earlier. The little girl who ate barely enough "to keep a new bird alive" and who complained about not receiving her own letter from her father, the teenager who was miffed about walking with "two 'gray coats' " at West Point and who mischievously marked her face to resemble male whiskers while she was at "Staunton Jail," and the young woman who spurned her "Prince Charming" and did not "live happily ever after" departed this life when she was just 32 years old. Mildred recalled that she prayed the Lord's Prayer while Agnes was on her deathbed, and that Agnes "joined in at '*Forgive* us our trespasses,' murmuring 'ah that's the part.'!" With this dying remark, it was as if Agnes desired to acknowledge her faults as she approached death. In an even more stark acknowledgment of this, Agnes told her sister, "Mildred, you will forgive my being exacting at times—you know I was always *contrary*"! According to Mildred's account of Agnes' death, the last word that Agnes uttered before her breathing stopped was, "Annie." It was fitting that the name of the person who was Agnes' closest companion in this life was the last word that Agnes spoke as she joined Annie in death. When Mrs. Lee was told that Agnes was dead, dead, she put into mournful words the most dreaded fate of any parent.

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"My poor child, that I should have outlived her." In less than a month, Agnes' mother followed her in death. On November 5, 1873, one month and four days after her 65th birthday, Mary Anne Randolph Custis Lee, the frail woman who had once been the privileged daughter of Arlington, died in her sleep after living a star-crossed life that had changed course substantially from the future that she anticipated during her youth at the estate on the southern shore of the Potomac River.

In the first entry in Agnes' journal, which was made on December 24, 1852, Agnes wrote a religiously insightful statement about the woman after whom Agnes was named, Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis, who had died a few months earlier. Agnes, who was not yet 12 years old at the time, wrote, "Death is so dreadful to the wicked but delightful to the righteous." For anyone who has lost a loved one, Agnes' statement is hard to accept without an unquestioningly firm belief in an afterlife wherein the souls of the dead are subjected to merciful divine judgement. But if Agnes' statement is correct, then Agnes' tragic death at a young age was delightful, because she lived a righteous life. In spite of this, Agnes often questioned her behavior. In fact, one of the most engrossing aspects of Agnes' journal is the uncertainty and conflict that come through in some of her entries in which she expressed doubts about her conduct and her yearnings. For example, in an entry Agnes made on April 17, 1855, she wrote about one morning when she did some fervent praying. "I went into a little room knelt down...& prayed...that Our Father in Heaven...would satisfy that longing within me to *do* something to *be* something. I long I don't know what for but for something to fill the void in my heart....Will I ever be...worthy of the love & esteem of anyone? O I hope so—but I am afraid not." The "longing within me" and the "void in my heart" that Agnes saw in herself at the age of 14 are personal struggles that Agnes carried with her for all her life. Her father recognized this and noted it in a letter to Mrs. Lee that was written while Lee and Agnes were on their long trip through the South in 1870, when Agnes was 29 years old and was nearing the end of her short life. Lee, who saw this same trait in himself, wrote to his wife about Agnes, "You know she is like her papa—always wanting something [i.e., longing for something]."

Agnes also struggled with what she perceived as personal shortcomings. In another entry in her journal, Agnes wrote about her mistreatment of a classmate at boarding school and how this incident troubled her. "One Sunday evening, I remember it well, for some forgotten reason I did not go to church. Nannie G— & I sat...before a bright fire talking. I felt so restless so dissatisfied with myself I could not help being contradictory & disagreable [sic]. Presently I jumped up, went to my own room with the consciousness of having distressed a friend & having made myself absurd....I remember how unhappy I was for days." In a lengthy entry that Agnes made at the age of 15 while she was in school in Staunton, she reflected on herself and her missteps and on her deep self-doubts about ever being a good person. "I have such longings sometimes, such *yearnings* for something I know not what. Is it to be loved, to be worshiped by something or some one—No—that is *sinful*, silly & impossible. I hope, I pray my *yearnings* my 'streachings into the unseen'—the unknown may be for something holier higher than I have yet felt—That I may know what true satisfaction, true peace is....Sometimes the awful thought comes to me, I am one of those who are never to be good—one of the doomed.

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If any one hereafter should see what I have here written, they must not judge me too harshly, if they could only feel as I feel sometimes....I confess there are times when I feel scarcely sensible, when my poor weak, miserable nature makes me despise myself with a force which no language of mine can describe, then every slight, every sarcasm, every neglect seems to go my heart almost to breaking....O may a time come for me, weak & wicked as I am, when I may be perfectly happy." These journal entries and others like them, which display Agnes' vulnerability and self-doubts, bring her into historical reality as the imperfect person that all people are, in contrast to the marble man image of her father, which began to be formed on the long journey through the South on which Agnes accompanied Lee. Because Agnes experienced war and the loss of her home, she lived in stressful uncertainty about her life situation. But whenever Agnes reflected on herself and how she was living her life, she felt profound uncertainly about her own personal character.

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The Civil War certainly took away much from Agnes, but the Civil War also gave something to Agnes: a place in history. Like her sisters, Agnes' place in history came about primarily because of her father. However, Agnes had a grasp on this that went far beyond what her sisters could fathom, and this was due to the lengthy trip that Agnes took with her father in the spring of 1870. On that trip, Agnes was the only person, other than Lee, himself, who

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witnessed every instance of adulation directed at Lee. Agnes saw all the crowds and the fireworks, heard all the cheers and the cannonades, and listened to the thunderous chants of "Lee! Lee!" In experiencing this, Agnes was present at the creation of the legend of Robert E. Lee. Each stop on the trip was a step in the process of transforming Lee's wartime fame into post-war veneration. The emotion and reverence that were directed at Lee throughout his long trip in the South were the foundation of the Lee legend, and Agnes experienced all of it. Agnes saw in the adoring crowds the personification of the Southern reverence for Lee, and she came to appreciate why her father, even though he had been defeated, would become, for many people, not just remembered in history, but enshrined in history. This was hardly fair payment for all that Agnes had personally lost, but at least Agnes was able to revel in this as some kind of recompense for all that she and her family had lost as a result of the Civil War.

During the time that Agnes was a student at boarding school in Staunton, she expressed a wish in her journal that no one other than she would read her journal. Agnes wrote, "O my journal I hope no eyes will ever see you save mine, they only [i.e., only Agnes' eyes] will excuse my follies & my weaknesses." In another entry Agnes said of her journal "bad as it is it is original to myself. Here I scratch off whatever comes first to my mind, so it would never bear criticism from another less partial critic." Her practice of "scratch(ing) off whatever comes first to my mind" gives her writings a spontaneity and honesty that are enjoyable to read, and her journal entries reveal the person that she was. Agnes' journal was published in 1984, and far from exposing Agnes as someone who was characterized by "my follies & my weaknesses," the entries which Agnes made over the five years that she kept her journal show her to be a perceptive, thoughtful, caring, and contemplative person. Agnes' life can be summarized in an entry in her journal that she made in the summer of 1853 just before she left Arlington to live at West Point. In an attempt to resolve her inner conflict at being required to live at West Point, Agnes wrote, "I don't want to stay there & I am afraid I'll have to, however we can't do everything in this world we 'want to', so I must not think my lot harder than others." Agnes lived a short life which included a good deal of "have to" rather than "want to," and there had to be times when she had difficulty clinging to her belief that her lot was not "harder than others." Shortly before Agnes died, she made the somber request to her older brother that "you must not forget me when I am gone." Agnes Lee is by no means a well-known historical figure, but her dying request should be honored, and she should not be forgotten. Agnes Lee's life story is so compelling that it reads like the kind of historical fiction which is found in novels that are discussed at book clubs like the one which Agnes and her sister, Mildred, organized. But Agnes Lee was not a character in a novel. She was a real person with a real life. Her life is not historical fiction, but history.

The superintendent's house and the Plain at West Point