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1847 to 1849. Although he was educated as a lawyer, Rufus apparently preferred the life of a farmer. By mid-nineteenth century standards Rufus was also very wealthy.

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon on Friday, November 11, 1859, Rufus Ayres was conducting business in Rectortown, Virginia when he encountered his neighbor, forty-four-year-old, William Wesley Phillips. According to eye-witness, Nelson Gibson, the two men, who had been involved in a dispute over a farm gate, got into an argument. The argument escalated. Ayres, who was armed with a Colt revolver, menaced Phillips with the weapon.

The Fare Facs Gazette

The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

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Winter 2015

A Sad Story of Redemption

by

William Page Johnson, II

"The dead continue to live by way of the resurrection we give them in telling their stories." —Gerda Lerner



Slave Redemption refers to the practice of purchasing, or otherwise acquiring, the freedom of slaves before and during the American Civil War. This was typically accomplished through the support of abolitionist groups in the North.

Master Ayres

Charles Rufus Ayres of Fauquier County, Virginia was murdered by his neighbors in 1859 in a dispute over a farm gate. This incident changed the lives of his family, friends, and *slaves* forever.

Charles Rufus Ayres was the only son of Charles Wesley Ayres and Catherine "Kitty" A.M. Floweree. He went by his middle name, *Rufus*, likely to distinguish himself from his father. Rufus Ayres was orphaned at an early age. In 1837, his widowed mother married Alfred Rector, a prosperous merchant for whom the village of Rectortown, Fauquier County is named.

Rufus attended Yale University in 1843, leaving after one year. He later attended the University of Virginia from



Rectortown Depot and Warehouse of Alfred Rector, Rectortown, VA
Photo credit: Craig Swain, June 16, 2007

Fairfax, Virginia - January 2015

Greetings from the President -

Have you seen the new lighted entry way to Blenheim? If not, drive by in the evening. It is impressive--the sign and entry drive are lighted. Flood lights bathe the stone entry wall. Also, the front of Blenheim is now illuminated. We greatly appreciate the city funding this project which is a distinct asset for both safety and appearance.

This has been a busy and productive year for the HFCI Community Outreach Committee chaired by Al Leightley. The group has met with and made presentations to ten community organizations including approximately two hundred people. The purpose of our power point presentation is to inform our community about HFCI's mission, goals and programs and to encourage membership and participation in historic preservation, education and restoration in Fairfax. Good work, Al!

We have just completed four new oral histories. They will be presented at our Spring membership meeting, April 15, 2015, at Blenheim. So look for the announcement and save the date. The new oral histories present the reminiscences of Mary Petersen, John Mason, Fred McCoy and Jim Wycoff. Videographer Rachel Roth will share her experiences "behind the camera" as we enjoy our most recent oral histories.

Sandra Wilbur



Welcome New Members!

The President & Board of Directors of HFCI extends a hearty welcome to all new HFCI members.

Philip Anton

David & Claudia Brown

Michael Chenworth

Patricia Hall

Edward & Elaine Senft

At the Fairfax Museum and Historic Blenheim...

Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center

New Exhibit at Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center Opened July 4:

"Dressing for the Occasion: An exhibition of costumes and textiles representing Fairfax personalities and events," - July 4, 2014 - February 8, 2015.

The Fairfax Story - Hamill Gallery. Permanent Fairfax history exhibition.

Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center "Second Sunday" Programs

Programs are held at **2 p.m.** on the second Sunday of each month. Unless otherwise noted, programs are held at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main Street. Free (unless noted). Check back to find out about additional programs planned throughout the year. Information: **703-385-8414**.

Sunday, March 8, 2 p.m.

"The Suffrage Prisoners at Occoquan Workhouse"

Alice Reagan, Professor of History at Northern Virginia Community College, will look at the women imprisoned at nearby Lorton for Picketing in Washington, D.C. in 1917 for the right to vote.

Sunday, April 10, 2 p.m.

"Discovering the Universality of the Soldier Experience"

Andrew H. Talkov, Vice-President for Programs, Virginia Historical Society will use drawings and photographs to explore the experiences of soldiers in the Civil War and the Vietnam War.

Sunday, May 9, 2 p.m.

“Dr. Kate Waller Barrett: More than a Mother to Many”

Curator Susan Inskeep Gray will explore Dr. Barrett’s contributions to Progressive Era reform initiatives beyond her leadership of the National Florence Crittenton Foundation, which established homes for unwed mothers and their children.

Historic Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center

“Blenheim’s Civil War Soldier Signatures: A Diary on Walls”

Permanent Civil War Soldier Graffiti exhibition.

Historic Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center Program Series

Programs are free and held at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway (unless otherwise noted). Check back to find out about additional programs planned throughout the year. Information: 703-591-0560. HOURS BEGINNING JAN. 2014: 10am to 3pm, Tuesday through Saturday. 1 p.m. guided tour of historic house and site. FREE.

Saturday, February 28, 2 p.m.

SPECIAL WWII Program

“D-Day (+1) thru The Battle of the Bulge: The 70th Anniversary”

Local historian and author Jim Lewis will recount the American battles across France and Germany from June-December 1944.

Saturday, March 21, 2 p.m.

“The Richmond-Petersburg Campaign, October 1864”

Hampton Newsome will describe the October 1864

battles between Grant and Lee in Virginia. He will examine the Confederate attacks along the Darbytown Road on October 7 outside Richmond, one of Lee’s last offensive operations of the war. The talk will also cover Grant’s major offensive on October 27 to seize the South Side Railroad, the last open rail line into the Confederate stronghold at Petersburg. Mr. Newsome is the author of *Richmond Must Fall: The Richmond-Petersburg Campaign of 1864*, and an editor of *Civil War Talks: Further Reminiscences of George S. Bernard and His Fellow Veterans*.

Saturday, April 25, 2 p.m.

“Fairfax Civil War Day” 10 A.M. - 5 P.M. at Historic Blenheim

Period music, living history encampments and demonstrations, military firings and drills with Company D, 17th Virginia Infantry, “Fairfax Rifles,” C.S.A., tours of the Historic Blenheim House and more. \$5/adults and \$3/children 12 and under.

Saturday, May 30, 2 p.m.

“William ‘Extra Billy’ Smith: The Governor’s Odyssey”

Following the collapse of the Confederate lines at Petersburg on April 2, 1865, Governor Extra Billy, began his “odyssey”—a thousand-mile journey to take the pulse of Virginia citizens, govern the Commonwealth, and to avoid capture by the Federal Army. Living historian Dave Meisky, portrays Extra Billy Smith as a member of *Lee’s Lieutenants*.

Other Information of Interest:

Walking Tour

11 am Guided walking tour (approx. 90 min.) of Old Town Fairfax with stops at the Fairfax County Courthouse, several antebellum homes with a Civil War history, and the City of Fairfax Cemetery (formerly Fairfax Confederate Cemetery).

Location: Meet at Fairfax Museum and Visitors center, 10209 Main Street, Fairfax 703-385-8414. Wear comfortable shoes and bring water.

Phillips, who was unarmed, mounted his horse and started to ride off. He turned and insulted Ayres with a parting epithet, *"You are a damned son of a bitch!"*¹ Highly offended, Ayres lashed out at Phillips with a small riding crop that he was carrying. William Phillips then rode off ominously exclaiming to Ayres, *"You'll pay for that."*²

Phillips returned to his house which was located a mile or so outside of town. He armed himself with a rifle and an Allen revolver. He returned to Rectortown on horseback accompanied by his oldest son, eighteen-year-old, Samuel C. Phillips, who was armed with a double-barreled shotgun.

The two men searched all over town inquiring of several people as to Ayres whereabouts. They were about to give up, when the Phillips' stopped in front of Andrew Cridler's shoemaker shop. They encountered an unidentified man standing in front of the shop. They asked him for a piece of paper as they wished to leave a message for Rufus Ayres. The man opened the door of the shop to retrieve the requested paper, unaware that Ayres was inside. Ayres, who had heard Phillips outside, already had his Colt revolver in his hand and was moving toward the open door. The unidentified witness immediately seized Ayres and pushed him back inside the shop and tried to restrain him. Hearing the commotion inside, Phillips and his son dismounted and leveled their guns at the window.

From inside the shop, Rufus Ayres shouted, *"Let me go, they will shoot me through the window."*³ William Phillips allegedly called out to Ayres, *"Have you got your pistol now?"* If you have, I've come to kill you."⁴ Ayres replied that he did. The unidentified individual holding Ayres called out to Andrew Cridler to hold Ayres while he went back outside in an attempt to restrain Phillips. Rufus Ayres broke free and advanced to the window and fired at the elder Phillips. The shot missed. Ayres then moved to the open door and fired a second shot, missing Phillips again. Simultaneously, William Phillips discharged his rifle. The shot struck Ayres in the left breast. Ayres staggered backward, clutching the wound with his right hand, exclaiming *"They have got me through the heart."*⁵ Samuel Phillips then fired his shotgun. The blast struck Ayres in the hand and the breast. Ayres fell

backward, dead. He was just thirty-three-years old.

William and Samuel Phillips were immediately arrested. They were refused bail and placed in the Fauquier County Jail.⁶

On Sunday, November 13, 1859, Charles Rufus Ayres was buried in the *"Church-yard of the village, followed by a large concourse of sympathizing friends and relations."*⁷ The Reverend Charles H. Shield of the Rectortown Episcopal Church *"gave some very appropriate remarks."*⁸

The Rectortown Episcopal Church, South was demolished by Union soldiers under General George B. McClellan in the fall of 1862. Its former location is the now the Rectortown Cemetery. Rufus Ayres is likely interred in this cemetery, although no gravestone for him has been found there.

Three weeks later, William and Samuel Phillips were arraigned on murder charges. They were tried the following spring in Fauquier County Circuit Court before Judge John Webb Tyler. The case was prosecuted by Rufus Ayres friend and executor, William H.F. Payne, Commonwealth's Attorney for Fauquier County. Both men were convicted of manslaughter and were sentenced to 3 years in the State Penitentiary in Richmond, Virginia by an angry Judge Tyler.⁹

Freedom?

The murder of Rufus Ayres was a senseless tragedy. At the time of his death Rufus Ayres was considered a wealthy man. He owned more than 500 acres of land that surrounded the village of Rectortown, Virginia.¹⁰ His farm included the Milan Mill and adjoined the Rectortown Depot on the Manassas Gap Railroad.¹¹ Rufus likely benefited substantially from the relationship with his step-father, Alfred Rector, who owned a store and a grain warehouse in Rectortown. However, Rufus apparently held some animosity for the Rector family as indicated by a bequest in his will:

"I bequeath two hundred and fifty dollars yearly to Harriet E. Rector, while she lives a modest, virtuous and single life away from the Rector family."^{12,13}

In a later codicil, he cut Harriet Rector, his step-sister, out of his will entirely:

*"I hereby revoke the above bequest to H.E. Rector being satisfied from circumstances I have ascertained that she is in every respect unworthy of any honorable consideration."*¹⁴

Although he was a Union man, Rufus was also a slaveholder. According to his estate records he owned at least 12 twelve slaves.¹⁵ Like many slaveholders, Rufus, who was unmarried, took full advantage of the relationship and had at least three children by his slaves Mary Fletcher, Jane Payne, and Ann Gleaves. However, unlike most slaveholders, he acknowledged them and provided for them in his last will and testament.

*Well my ol' missus promised me,
Raise a rukus tonight
When she died she'd set me free,
Raise a rukus tonight
She live so long dat her head got bal',
Raise a rukus tonight
De Lawd couldn't kill her wid a big green
maul,
Raise a rukus tonight*¹⁶

In his will, Rufus Aryes freed all three women and their children and provided "five hundred dollars, or some sufficient sum of money for their settlement in a free state."¹⁷ Rufus also stipulated in his will that "the two oldest children of Mary, Vianna & Sallie, and the oldest child of Gleaves and Jane, each after it reaches the age of ten years old, one hundred dollars annually a piece, to be applied in raising and educating them."¹⁸

Although Jane, Mary, and Ann were now free, all three women faced an impossible choice—leave Virginia, or return voluntarily to slavery.

A Virginia law, enacted in 1806, required that manumitted slaves and free blacks had to leave the state unless they petitioned the Virginia General Assembly to remain. The act further prescribed that if slaves thereafter emancipated shall remain in the State more than twelve

months thereafter they shall forfeit the right to freedom and be sold.¹⁹

Additionally, in 1856, the Virginia General Assembly passed *An ACT providing for the voluntary enslavement of the free Negroes of the Commonwealth*. Under this statute, free female Negroes, who were at least 18 years old, and free male Negroes, who were at least 21 years old could choose their own master upon petition to the local circuit court. The children of free female Negroes, born before the voluntary enslavement of their mother, were to remain free.²⁰ In her petition filed with the Fauquier County Circuit Court, on September 5, 1860, Mary Fletcher describes the choice she made and the reasons why:

*"[She] was born and raised in the County of Fauquier and that all her kindred and friends are now living in the county. That she is married and her husband is a slave who could not accompany her. That she has several children, besides those provided for by the will of her late master, all of whom are young and helpless, and that if she goes away she parts from all whom she has ever known and goes, a friendless stranger, to a new state encumbered by helpless children. Your petitioner declares that she deliberately prefers slavery in Virginia to freedom outside of it."*²¹

Ann Gleaves testified that "she prefers to remain a slave in Virginia amongst her friends and relatives, than to go amongst strangers helpless and encumbered with the child who is several years too young to enjoy the bequest of her masters will."²²

Jane Payne testified that "she has no kindred outside of the said County of Fauquier and no friends to whom she can go. That her child, for who temporary provision is made by her late master's will, is several years under the age at which she can claim the benefit of this provision. That she is in delicate health and that to go alone,



encumbered with a helpless child, amongst strangers would subject her to great hardships, to avoid which, she declares, that she desires to become a slave."²³

All three women initially petitioned to become the slaves of William H.F. Payne,²⁴ the executor of Charles R. Ayres estate, and his friend. The court appears not to have acted on their petitions however, presumably because that had not first petitioned the Virginia General Assembly. On March 13, 1861, all three women received permission from the Virginia General Assembly to petition the Fauquier County Circuit Court to select a master.²⁵ All three then went back to court on April 1, 1861. Ann M. Rector,²⁶ the half-sister of Charles R. Ayres, was listed in their petition as their new prospective owner. However, when they were examined individually by Judge Tyler, all three indicated that they *did not* wish to be slaves to Ann Rector. Their original petitions to become the slaves of William H. Payne were formally dismissed in September 1861, and no final action appears to have been taken on the petitions to name Ann Rector as their mistress.

Although the three women failed to choose a new master, they were *still* reduced to slavery. According to Virginia law they had remained in the state for more than twelve months. However, before their status could be challenged in court the Civil War began.²⁷

The Escape

The women returned to Rectortown and the home of Alfred Rector. There they were under the charge of Kitty Rector, Alfred's wife, and their daughter Ann Rector. Grandma Kitty, or *Kidda*, as Rufus' mother was known, was a kind and benevolent woman. Grandma Kidda told the women to remain with her until her death then make their way to Union lines. Grandma Kidda died in August 1862. After her burial, the slaves made their escape from Rectortown.²⁸

*When de sun goes down an' de quail call,
Follow de drinkin' gourd
Den it's time, chillun, one an' all,
Follow de drinkin' gourd.
Keep a movin' de Cap'n say,
Follow de drinkin' gourd.*



Viana Ayres, age 12,
at the time of her adoption in 1864.

Source: Autobiography. Sketch of the Life and Labors of Miss Catherine S. Lawrence..., by Catherine S. Lawrence, © 1896.

*Ol' Ben gwine a sho' de way,
Follow de drinkin' gourd.*²⁹

The large group of slaves included Mary Fletcher, Jane Payne, Ann Gleaves, and their children, Viana, Sallie, and Fanny (Fletcher) Ayres; Bettie (Payne) Ayres; and, Selina (Gleaves) Ayres. The group likely included Jane Payne's other daughters, Ellen and Rachael Payne, along with several other unknown slaves. They were all led by a slave by the name of Uncle Ben, who had been Rufus Ayres personal body servant.

Taking only what possessions they could carry and a small amount of food, they walked east toward Fairfax County and Union lines. They took turns carrying Fanny, Selena, and the other children who were too young to walk on their own. They kept off the roads for fear that they would be captured by the *Rebs*. The party was also





Sarah Ann "Sallie" Ayres, age 10,
at the time of her adoption in 1864.

Source: *Autobiography. Sketch of the Life and Labors of Miss Catherine S. Lawrence...*, by Catherine S. Lawrence, © 1896.

fearful of vicious wild hogs, which then freely roamed the countryside. After walking all night, an estimated seventeen miles, they stopped the next morning to rest in a thicket. They ate a meager breakfast and lay down on the ground and slept.

Several hours later, Uncle Bill woke with a start. He had been sleeping with his ear pressed to the ground and thought he had heard the sound of approaching horsemen. Panic ensued. Belongings and children were quickly gathered up and everybody ran headlong through the woods. After they had gone a couple of miles, they slowed when they realized they were not being pursued. It was then discovered that little three-year-old Fanny was not among them. There was significant debate about what to do. All were still fearful of being captured and would not agree to turn back. Someone suggested that Fanny

had probably already been eaten by hogs by this time. Hearing this, Viana and Sallie began to cry for their baby sister. Uncle Ben would later say, "*Their cries were more than I could bear.*"³⁰

Uncle Ben agreed to go back for Fanny. He told the group to keep going, but to break branches and mark trees so he would be able to find them. Ben ran back to the spot where they had left the child. He searched but could not find her. His heart grew heavy thinking about the poor child being devoured by wild hogs. He called out softly to her, "*Fanny? Fanny?*" his voice barely a whisper, fearful that either the rebels or the hogs would get him too. He was about to turn and leave when he saw some bushes moving a little ways off. He moved cautiously forward not knowing who, or what, it might be. On drawing nearer he saw the child, Fanny, rising and crying softly. Uncle Ben gathered her in his arms and asked her why she did not answer him when he called. She replied, "*Cause, I was afraid the hogs would hear me!*"³¹

Ben lifted the child onto his shoulders and raced back towards the rest of the slaves. He recalled:

*"Her tiny hands clenched my wooly hair, she knew how to ride that way, and I didn't gallup my best till I overtook the rest of the company, and didn't I keep an eye on that little gal all the rest of the time, till I sot her down inside Union lines at Fairfax?"*³²

In the meantime, the rest of the group had continued on. They looked back periodically, straining to see if Ben and Fanny were in view. They began to lose hope, and thought that Ben and Fanny were lost, captured, or worse, eaten. However, faithful old Ben had been moving steadily throughout the day following the signs left for him.

Shortly after sundown, Viana and Sallie start crying again for their lost sister. Someone looked back and saw what they thought was a *beast with two heads* coming at them fast. Viana and Sallie began to wail, "*Something's coming to eat us up.*"³³ Then they recognized that it was Uncle Ben, with Fanny on his shoulders – the beast with two heads. Suddenly everyone was jumping and singing and praising the Lord for their safe return.

They would spend another night on “*rebel groun*”³⁴ before arriving at Fort Williams, a Union army fortification just west of Alexandria, Virginia. Their route, *as the crow flies*, from Rectortown to Fort Williams was approximately forty-two miles, and passed directly through Fairfax Court House (now Fairfax City). However, their actual route was likely considerably longer as they had to avoid the roads, Confederate cavalry, and enemy pickets. What is true is that after traveling for two days and nights they arrived at Fort Williams as Uncle Ben would later state, “*mostly dead and starved.*”³⁵

After the slave escape, W.H.F. Payne, the executor of Charles R. Ayres, fearing more slaves would try and runaway, sold the remaining slaves of the estate for \$8,000.³⁶

*“In the fall of 1862, being then in command of the outpost at Warrenton [I] succeeded in capturing a few of the slaves of whose plans to escape [I] had been informed. I not knowing where to keep them, and what better to do with them, sold them and I invested their proceeds in Confederate bonds.”*³⁷

Catherine S. Lawrence

Just before Christmas 1862, Viana, Sallie, and Fanny met Catherine S. Lawrence, a Union Army Nurse from New York who was working in the Convalescent Hospital at the Episcopal Seminary near Alexandria. Catherine Lawrence, who was unmarried, was a staunch abolitionist. One day she happened to see several white girls amongst a group of freed slaves. In her autobiography Catherine Lawrence described the smallest child:

*“The little girl had flaxen hair and dark blue eyes, but dark complexion, or terribly sunburned.”*³⁸

Catherine asked her servant woman, “*Helen, see there, where did that white child come from?*” Helen replied, “*Well missus, they come, a company of them, here a short time ago. The family all died and left the three children to the care of the slaves and were told to go into Union lines, and that one is the youngest of*



Source: Library of Congress, Washington, DC

them.” Catherine was shocked to learn that the girls were actually light-skinned slaves. Helen then pleaded with Catherine, “*...[she] has no one to see to her..I’ll go with you to the other two girls, if you will take her.*” Catherine responded, “*Oh, Helen, not now, I am going away tomorrow, and I have no time now.*”³⁹

The following day Catherine was visited by Helen and twelve-year-old, Viana Ayres. With a trembling voice, Viana said to Catherine, “*This one [Fanny] you can have as your own. I have no home for myself, nor for her. I reckon she’ll be better off with you, than with me. I have a sister [Sallie] younger than I am. I reckon I must look after her some.*”⁴⁰ Catherine agreed. She was certain she could find a home for Fanny with a family in New York. She promised that she would come back



Fannie V.C. Lawrence and Catherine S. Lawrence, 1863.

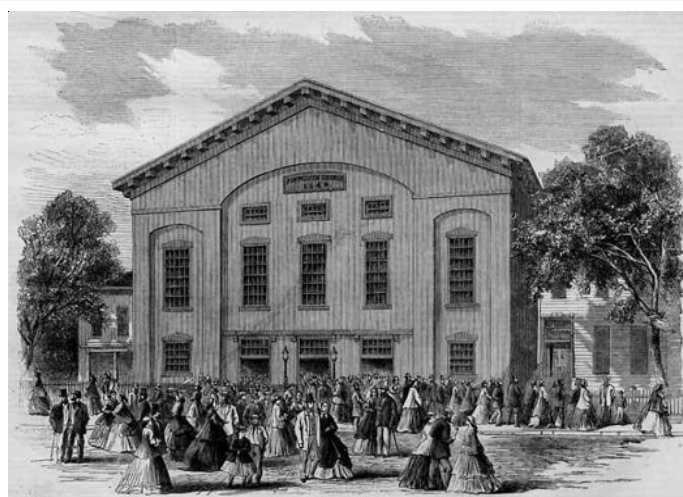
Source: Library of Congress, Washington, DC

and do the same for Viana and Sallie, as well.

Fanny is Redeemed

In the spring of 1863, Catherine and Fanny traveled to Brooklyn, New York. On the way, Catherine determined that she would adopt Fanny as her own daughter and see that she was baptized and properly educated.

In Brooklyn, Catherine met with the abolitionist preacher, Henry Ward Beecher. Reverend Beecher was a famous evangelical abolitionist. He had recently held a mock slave auction and conducted a baptism for a *redeemed* slave in his Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. Reverend Beecher took one look at Fanny and immediately



Exterior of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, NY where Fannie Lawrence was baptised, May 10, 1863.

Source: Wood engraving, by C.H. Wells, Harper's Weekly, August 1866.

asked Catherine Lawrence if he could baptize her in his church.

Several weeks later, on Sunday, May 10, 1863, Catherine and Fanny were waiting patiently at the end of a long line of parents inside Plymouth Church. This Sunday was the regular day of baptismal of infants. Reverend Beecher was concluding his baptismal duties before an immense crowd. Reverend Beecher, a skilled and gifted preacher, had carefully staged the day's events for maximum dramatic effect. After he baptized the last child, he turned to his audience and stated that there was one more child to be christened. A flutter of excited murmuring rippled through the congregation. Beecher stepped off the pulpit and walked over and gathered up Fanny in his arms and carried her, alone, to the center of the altar. Fanny, her head nestled against his chest, timidly eyed the crowd.^{41, 42} Beecher addressed his congregation,

*"This child was born a slave, and is redeemed from slavery!"*⁴³

There was an audible gasp from the astonished, and equally horrified, parishioners who assumed the child to be white. Beecher continued,

"A benevolent woman, who was nursing our sick soldiers in the hospital at Fairfax, found her, sore and tattered and unclean, and requested the good sister who has adopted her, to bring her North and take



Reverend Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, NY

Source: Library of Congress, Wash., DC.

care of her. She will be treated as this lady's own child, and it is designated to educate her as a teacher for her race. Look upon this child. Tell me have you ever seen a fairer, sweeter face? This is a sample of the slavery which absorbs into itself everything fair and attractive. The loveliness of this child would only make her so much more valuable as a chattel; For while your children are brought up to fear and serve the Lord, this little one, just as beautiful, would be made, through slavery, a child of damnation."⁴⁴

Reverend Beecher was telling the audience that because of her near-white complexion, Fanny, and others like her, were in danger of being abused by their white masters, or worse, of being sold as *Fancy Girls*, a 19th century euphemism for light skinned slave prostitutes, which were then common in New Orleans. Beecher, his voice rising with emotion, continued,

*"The whole force of my manhood revolts and rises up in enmity against an institution that cruelly exposes such children to be sold like cattle."*⁴⁵

Beecher was interrupted at this point by spontaneous applause from the audience. He concluded, repeating:

*"Look upon this child, and take away with you the impression of her beauty, and remember to what a shocking fate slavery would bring her! May God strike for our armies and the right, that this accursed thing may be utterly destroyed."*⁴⁶

Renewed and sustained applause erupted from the congregation. Reverend Beecher then baptized her *Fanny Virginia Casseopia Lawrence*. *Fanny*, for her birth name; *Virginia*, for where she came from; *Cassiopeia*, for the mythological Greek Queen of unrivaled beauty; and, *Lawrence*, the sir name of her adoptive mother.

Afterwards, the Reverend Beecher requested that the congregation contribute liberally to help her adoptive



Mr. Beecher selling a beautiful slave girl in his pulpit. Interior view of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, NY.

Source: Library of Congress, Wash., DC.

mother “defray the expense of educating the child.”⁴⁷ The donations were said to be sizable. One gentleman later told Catherine Lawrence that he had given one hundred dollars.⁴⁸

After the service, Catherine Lawrence waited “a suitable time, but received no returns”⁴⁹ from Beecher or the church. She then called on Reverend Beecher to ask him about the donations, but he directed her to the church treasurer. The treasurer stalled, telling her, “that they had not all paid in their subscription[s],” which she was told amounted to about \$1,200. Catherine Lawrence would later bitterly write, “I was deaconed out of it all. Whoever received the benefit of it the public has a right to judge.”⁵⁰

After her baptism, Reverend Beecher arranged to have Fanny photographed. In fact, Fanny posed for photographs at least seventeen different times, sometimes with her adoptive mother, Catherine Lawrence. The truth is Reverend Henry Ward Beecher exploited Fanny from the pulpit, and later with her image, as propaganda to further his abolitionist aims. It worked. Fanny’s photographs were distributed widely. The little carte-de-vista (CDV) photographs of Fanny were wildly popular in the North, making Fanny the most photographed slave child in history.

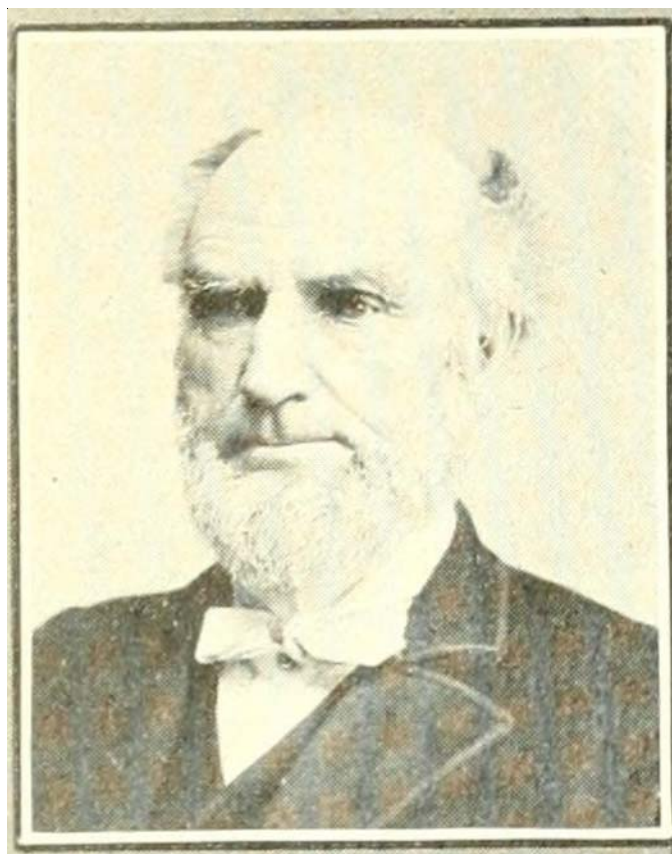
Sadly, Catherine S. Lawrence too, used similar exploitive tactics with her adoptive daughter. Ostensibly, this was to raise money for Fanny’s education. Fanny sang at church gatherings and Sunday schools at which, donations were encouraged.⁵¹

“THE SABBATH SCHOOL CONCERT

... At the close of the speaking, a little girl named Fanny Lawrence (an adopted daughter of Miss Lawrence, of Fulton, who followed the fortunes of the late war for more than three years as hospital nurse) sang a beautiful solo with fine effect. About four years of ago she, with some forty other slaves, escaped from bondage by getting into the Union lines, after traveling for several days amid great danger. She is

a beautiful child, of light, fair complexion, blue eyes and flaxen hair, has a fine voice, and, with proper culture, she will become a most excellent singer. At the close of the meeting a collection was taken up to aid Miss Lawrence in educating the above named child and two other children (adopted by Miss L.) who were rescued from slavery. The sum raised was about fifteen dollars.

In the evening of the same day a Union Sabbath School meeting was held at the Baptist Church...Before the meeting closed, Miss Lawrence’s little girl, of whom mention is made above, sang another solo, which greatly pleased the audience. At the close of the meeting the sum of fifteen dollars was raised from the sale of photographs of this little girl. One



John A. Rumsey, (1819-1888) of Seneca Falls, NY.
Ward of Viana Ayres.

Source: Grips Historical Souvenir of Seneca Falls, NY, © 1904.





Rumsey Hall, the home of John A. & Anna Rumsey, Seneca Falls, NY. Viana Ayres was sent to live here in 1865.

Source: Grips Historical Souvenir of Seneca Falls, NY, © 1904.

gentleman gave two dollars for a photograph, and another gentleman gave three dollars. We learn that a number of these photographs (25 cents each) are on sale at Loomis & Hoose's Store, in this village."⁵²

Shortly afterward, Catherine and Fanny returned to Washington, D.C. Catherine once again took up her duties as a Nurse in the Union army hospitals of Washington, D.C. In the summer of 1864, Catherine and Fanny drove into Virginia to retrieve Viana and Sallie. Both girls were right where they had been left, near the Convalescent Hospital on Seminary Hill, Alexandria.

A New Life Up North

Sometime after August 1864, Catherine, Viana, Sallie, and Fanny left Virginia for good. They traveled by railroad to Sharon Springs, New York. On the way, Sallie remarked that she had not seen a real Yankee yet as she was told "*that they all had horns and looked awful.*"⁵³

Shortly after arriving in Sharon Springs, Viana was sent to live with John A. and Anna (Freeland) Rumsey of Seneca Falls, New York. John Rumsey, was a manufacturer of iron pumps and fire apparatus. He, along with his brother, Moses Rumsey, and another partner, started Rumsey & Company, Ltd. in 1864. According to their letterhead they were "*Proprietors of the Seneca Falls Pump and Fire Engine Works.*"⁵⁴ By the time

Viana came to live with them, the Rumsey's were very wealthy. They resided in a mansion, *Rumsey Hall*, on Terrace Row in Seneca Falls.

Viana was baptized in the Seneca Falls Wesleyan Church where she was also a member of the choir.

In the meantime, Catherine, Sallie, and Fanny went to live with Catherine's brother, Henry Lawrence, in Schoharie, New York. In April 1865, Sallie was sent to live with Doctor Diocletian Lewis in Lexington, Massachusetts. In a letter to Catherine Lawrence, Doctor Dio Lewis, who operated a female seminary in Lexington, promised to adopt Sallie into his family and educate her. Unfortunately, he did neither. According to Catherine Lawrence, Doctor Lewis "*held Sallie as a servant, and that without pay.*"⁵⁵

About 1866, Catherine Lawrence purchased a home in Mexico, New York. She arranged for Viana to attend the Falley Seminary in nearby Fulton, New York. At about this time Catherine received a letter from Doctor Lewis informing her that Sallie was sick and wanted to come home for the summer. Catherine brought Sallie back to Mexico and for the first time in several years all three sisters were together again.

Viana continued at Falley Seminary until she too, like her sister, was abused while in their care. One of the teachers had an insane brother who could not be left alone. This teacher recruited Viana to care for her brother while she was at school. The teacher promised to give Viana her *lessons* at night, but apparently this arrangement was not honored. Catherine Lawrence sent Viana back to the Rumsey's in Seneca Falls at the end of the term. Sallie remained in Mexico until the fall when she indicated that she wanted to go back to the Lewis' in Lexington. Catherine obliged. When they arrived in Lexington, unannounced, Doctor Lewis, who clearly already knew how grave Sallie's condition was, said, "*You must...take her back she is consumptive and we can't have her die here.*"⁵⁶ This statement both enraged and saddened Catherine. Catherine took Sally to another Doctor in Boston, but her case was ruled hopeless. Inexplicably, Sallie went back to the Lewis'. The following fall Viana was summoned to

the Lewis' as Sallie was dying. The two sisters were together when Sallie died on October 21, 1867. The location of her grave is unknown.

After Sallie's death, Doctor Lewis had the gall to write to Catherine and offer to adopt Viana. He made the same promises to adopt and educate her as he did with Sallie. The Rumsey's, with whom Viana had been living, however, thought this was Viana's best opportunity for a good life. Reluctantly, Catherine agreed but swore to keep an eye out for any selfish motives by Doctor Lewis. Shortly afterward, Viana was found to be living in Auburn, New York caring for Doctor Lewis' mother, a virtual slave. While Doctor Lewis never formally adopted Viana, her name was changed to *Mary Ayres Lewis*.⁵⁷ Viana (aka Mary) likely divided her time between the home of Doctor Lewis' mother, Delecta Barbour Lewis, who lived at 43 Perrine Street in Auburn, and the home of Doctor Lewis' brother, Loran L. Lewis, who lived at 48 Franklin Street in Auburn.⁵⁸ In fact, the 1871-72 directory for the city of Auburn lists a "*Mary J. Lewis, domestic*" at 48 Franklin Street.⁵⁹

In January 1871, Catherine received word that Viana was sick at Auburn, New York. She had a bad cough and cold. However, she succumbed quickly to what was likely another case of consumption. Viana died in September 1871. The kindly John A. Rumsey, sent a carriage for Catherine and Fanny to attend Viana's funeral which was conducted by the Good Templars, a temperance organization, of which Viana was a member.

Surprisingly, at the time of her death Viana had acquired a significant personal estate. According to the U.S. Census of 1870 her personal property was valued at \$2,000. Viana allegedly left a will, which was probated by John A. Rumsey, her executor. She left all her worldly goods to her sister, Fanny.⁶⁰ The location of Viana's grave is unknown.

After Viana's death, Catherine and Fanny returned home brokenhearted. Fanny attended school and grew into a woman. Unfortunately for Fanny, her life too, did not end well.

"The little one that I adopted and educated, married one whom I opposed,

knowing his reckless life rendered him wholly unfit for one like her. When sick and among strangers, he deserted her and an infant daughter and eloped with a woman, who left her husband and two small children.

*My three Southern children are all laid away, for which I thank my heavenly Father."*⁶¹

No reasonable person would ever argue the evil of slavery, but at least in the South a slave was called a slave.

Epilogue

Fanny Ayres Lawrence

(aka Fanny Virginia Casseopia Lawrence)

In the course of researching this article I came across an interesting clue as to what may have happened to Fanny. The estate of Charles R. Ayres, was contested several times before finally being settled in 1895. William H.F. Payne, the original executor, tried to sort out the heirs, to determine where they were, and if they were still alive. The following letter from R.A. Rector to W.H.F. Payne, written in May 1889, provides the clue:

*"Fanny may be the Albany woman but though she was the fairest person that I ever saw with negro blood I think it hardly possible that she could be a blonde, be that as it may, she has no interest in the estate and I have no idea that he ever had a child except the four mentioned in his will and the one born of Mary on his farm after his death. Though Viana wrote one of her friends that it had been said that she and Fannie were not whole sisters she seemed quite indignant and asked her to contradict it, which she, of course, could not do, but they remained under the impression that they all had one father."*⁶²

Mary Fletcher

Although Catherine Lawrence was told the "*family all died,*" she, and Fanny herself, would later state in depositions that Mary Fletcher died in Rectortown Virginia before the slaves escaped. However, there is evidence to

suggest that Mary Fletcher perhaps did not die, when, and where they indicated.

First, there is a Mary Fletcher who died in April 1866 at the Freedmen's Village in Arlington, VA on April 29, 1866 and was buried there. This is now Arlington National Cemetery. She is buried in grave #4168.⁶³

There is also a Freedman's Bureau work contract between an L.A. Scanland, of Fauquier County and a Mary Fletcher, of Alexandria, whereby Mary Fletcher agrees to work for L.A. Scanland as a house servant, in her Fauquier County home, for one year, at \$4.00 a month, beginning January 17, 1867.⁶⁴

Finally, there is also a Mary Fletcher, born in 1845, who is listed on the intake registers of the Freedman's Village, with two children John, age 3, and Mary, born December 1867. In the remarks section is recorded "*Homeless and Destitute.*"⁶⁵ A surviving letter to Horatio N. Howard, Acting Assistant Surgeon, and Superintendent of the Freedman's Village states the following:

"March 11, 1868

H.N. Howard, A.A.S, U.S.A

Supt. Of Freedman's Home, Va.

Doctor,

Will you please admit Mary Fletcher and her two children to the home at Freedman's Village. She states that she is without a home and on account of her having two you children it is impossible for her to get a service place. I have no means for her accommodation.

I am, Sir

Very Respectfully,

Your obt. servt.,

S.C. Lee

Bvt. Lt Col., U.S.A.

*Sub/ Asst., Comr."*⁶⁶

Mary Fletcher was known to have had children other than Viana, Sallie, and Fanny.

Children of Mary Fletcher and Charles Rufus Ayres and an unknown slave:

- Viana Fletcher Ayres b. 1850; d. c. 1871.
 - o Viana A. Fletcher? m. _____ Liston
- Sarah Ann Sally Fletcher Ayres b. c. 1852; d. October 21, 1867, Lexington, MA.⁶⁷
- Fanny Ayres b. 1859; d. unknown
- John Fletcher b. 1865; d. unknown
- Mary Flether b. December 1867; d. unknown

Jane Payne

There is a Freedman's Bureau work contract between a Charles Green, of Prince William County and a Jane Payne and her daughters Ellen and Rachel. In the contract. Jane Payne agreed to work for Charles Green, along with her daughters, as servants in his Prince William County home for one year, at \$8.00 a month, beginning February 8, 1866. The contract further specified that Green would provide "*all the necessary clothing for the child Rachel.*"⁶⁸

Jane Payne apparently returned to Fauquier County after the war.

A surviving letter to Lt. W.W. McNulty, Asst. Supt. states the following:

"Bureau of R.F. & A.L.

Office of the Asst. Supt.

Sub. Dist. Of Fauquier, Va.

Warrenton, Va., May 11, 1866

Bvt. Brig. Genl. O. Borwn

Asst. Coms &c.

Richmond, Va.

General

I have the honor to report that there is a colored woman living by the name of Jane Payne with three small children. She states that her husband, Sydney Payne (cold.), by who she had said children, is now and has been in Richmond, Va. since the surrender of Lee and has never during that time furnished her with anything toward the support of herself & children. This woman is now in a very delicate state of health.

She says that Payne left her without any just cause and that if he (Payne) will not live with her she wants him to assist her in supporting his children. She states that she learned that Payne is now living with a woman (cold.) by the name of Martha Page. She says that they live above the old wharf near the "old market" & about 100 yards from a soap factory.

I am satisfied from this woman's statement that this man Payne has treated her badly. He should, in my opinion, be made to assist her in the support of his children.

He also has parents here who are supported at government expense. Their names are George & Rachael Payne. They are 100 years old each and would like to see their only son Sydney.

I respectfully request that steps be taken to ascertain if this man Payne is still in Richmond & is so that he be required to assist his wife Janes in support of his children.

I am, Sir

Very Respectfully

Your Obt. Servt.

W. Augs. MacNulty

2nd Lieut. V.R.C & Asst. Supt.

Freedmen's &c."⁶⁹

The Freedmen's Bureau provided Jane Payne with transportation to Warrenton, Virginia in July 1866.⁷⁰

Jane Payne was the daughter of Betty Payne and Henry Payne. She married a Sydney Payne. The known children of Jane Payne were:

- Nellie B. Payne (aka Mary Elizabeth Payne; aka Bettie Payne) b. December 1859; d. 1932; m. Charles Frederick Slocum (1855-1923) both bur. Moshassuck Cem. Central Falls, R.I.; Nellie was "carried to Fort Williams, near Alex., Va. The next year Mrs. Lucretia Francis [Lucretia A. Francis, wife of John C. Francis] of Providence, RI

offered to adopt and educate them which she did; res. Pawtucket, RI in 1887.

- o Stillborn Daughter (1880-1880)
- o Herbert Frances Slocum (1881-1881)
- o Harold Slocum (1882-1882)
- o Ambrosio Slocum (1884-1885)
- o Carlford Slocum (1890-1891)
- Ellen Payne b. 1857; d. unknown; was arrested in 1867 for stealing clothes in Fauquier Co. and confined in Fauquier Co. Jail.
- Rachael Payne b. unknown; d. unknown

Ann Gleaves

Ann Gleaves (May 1845-????) m. William H. Gillison (Aug. 1835-????) res. Bloomfield, Loudoun Co., VA in 1870; Census of 1900 res. Loudoun Co., VA also states they had been married for 35 years (1865) and had nine children, five of whom are living. In 1910, Ann Gillison was living in the home of Amelia Wilkins, her daughter. Ann Gillison, was then 65 years old. She was a widow and employed as a Laundress. In 1920, Anne Gillison, "*Mother-in-law*," was living in the household of John Wilkins who was married to Arminta Wilkins age 32.

- Selina A[nn?] Gleaves Ayres b. Aug. 1859; m/1 Robert Neville, Carriage Driver;⁷¹ m/2 Moses J. Peters (1855-????) Dec. 27, 1879, Loudoun Co., VA; res. of Montclair, NJ in 1887 and 1900. In the Census of 1910, they owned their own home and had 5 children three of whom were living. In 1920 Moses Peters, age 67 (1853), "widowed," is living in Loudoun Co., VA.
 - o Bessie P. Peters b. VA, Jan. 1881
 - o Wilton M. Peters b. Jan. 25, 1888, Montclair, Essex Co., NJ.
 - o Infant Peters, age "0", d. Sept. 26, 1890, Montclair, Essex Co., NJ.
 - o Eugene Peters b. Oct. 14, 1892; draft registration card states res. 28 Orange Rd., Montclair, NJ. This same address as brother Otis Peters; employed as a Mechanic for Herman Albers, 565 Bloomfield Way, Montclair, NJ; has wife and 4 yr. old child.

- o Otis Lawrence Peters b. May 31, 1899; m. Georgia H. _____ in 1928; enl. U.S. Naval Reserve, August 5, 1918 as 1st Class Mess Attendant; draft registration card states res. 28 Orange Rd., Montclair, NJ, "father (Moses J. Peters, P.O. Box 47, Middleburg, Loudoun, Va.;" res. Montclair, Essex Co., NJ in 1930, occ. Chauffeur, veteran of WWI. Georgia Peters, wid Otis L. Peters res. Montclair, NJ in 1937; Georgia Peters, wid of Otis L. Peters, res. Monclair, NJ, m. to David Edwards.

Ann Gleaves and William H. Gillison issue:

- William Gillison (1865-????)
- Jennie Gillison (1867-????)
- Edward Gillison (1870-????)
- Isabella Gillison (1871-????) m. Samuel McQuay, 1887 in Wash., DC.
- Fannie Gillison (1873-????)
- John Gillison (1875-????)
- Annette Gillison (Feb. 1886-????)
- Amelia Gillison (1887-????) m. John William

Wilkins b. Aug. 22, 1886, Linden, VA; draft reg. card of June 1917 indicates he was a Butler employed by Mrs. S. Lennon, Unison, VA and had a wife and four children.

- o Lovell Poles Wilkins (1903-????)
- o John Westwood Wilkins (1906-1965) m. Sadie Grant (1915-1997) USN WWII; died in a car accident, Rt. 50, Middleburg, VA; bur. Arl. Cem.
- o Chub Poles Wilkins (1908-????)
- o Rebecca Wilkins (1908-????)
- o Marian Wilkins (1911-????)
- o Paul Wilkins (1915-????)

Catherine S. Lawrence

Catherine Lawrence was born in January 1819 in Schoharie, New York. She was the daughter, and youngest child, of Stephen Lawrence and Maria Mann of Schoharie County, New York.⁷² Stephen Lawrence, who was the Sheriff of Schoharie County, New York from 1805-1810, died in 1832, when Catherine was just twelve years old.⁷³

She volunteered as a nurse for the Union army in 1861. She was sent to Washington, DC and from there to the Convalescent Hospital on Seminary Hill, Alexandria, Virginia. It was here, in late 1863 that she first encountered Viana, Sallie, and Fanny Ayres.

In 1873, Catherine Lawrence lost her home for non-payment of a debt.

"Catherine Lawrence's place in the village of Mexico, was sold at sheriff's sale this morning by Sheriff Lyman, on a small execution, and was bought by S.R. Spooner (or the amount of the execution, about \$90. "74

In 1875, Catherine, now destitute, applied for and received a pension for her service as a Nurse during the Civil War. She also relied on the charity of friends.

Catherine S. Lawrence published her autobiography titled *Autobiography. Sketch of the Life and Labors of Miss Catherine S. Lawrence, who In Early Life Distinguished Herself as a Bitter Opponent of Slavery and Intemperance* in 1893. The primary focus of the book is her life as a Union army nurse and the adoption of Viana, Sallie, and Fanny.

In 1900, Catherine S. Lawrence "writer" was boarding in the home of James R. Main, Ballston, Saratoga County, New York.⁷⁵

She died in Albany, New York in 1904 and is interred in the Old Stone Fort Cemetery, Schoharie, NY.

The *Catherine S. Lawrence Tent 107 of the Capital District Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War*, in Albany County, New York is named in her honor.

Stephen Lawrence (1773-1832) and Maria Mann (1775-1883). Children of Stephen and Maria Lawrence:

- Matthew Lawrence, infant son; Old Stone Fort Cem. Schoharie, NY.
- Maria Lawrence b. 1794
- Henry Lawrence (1798-1886); m. Catherine Rinehart (1799-1844); bur. Old Stone Fort Cem. Schoharie, NY.

- Elisabeth Lawrence (1802-1829); bur. Old Stone Fort Cem. Schoharie, NY.

- Margareth Lawrence (1804-1870); bur. Old Stone Fort Cem. Schoharie, NY.

- Annatchen Lawrence b. 1803

- Stephen Lawrence (1806-1807); bur. Old Stone Fort Cem. Schoharie, NY.

- Catherine S. Lawrence b. 1820

Endnotes-

- ¹ *Daily National Intelligencer*, November 22, 1859, p. 3, c. 4.
- ² *Daily National Intelligencer*, November 22, 1859, p. 3, c. 4.
- ³ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 17, 1859, p. 3, c. 3.
- ⁴ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 30, 1860, p. 2, c. 7.
- ⁵ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 17, 1859, p. 3, c. 3.
- ⁶ *Alexandria Gazette*, December 6, 1859, p. 2, c. 7.
- ⁷ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 17, 1859, p. 3, c. 3.
- ⁸ *Alexandria Gazette*, November 17, 1859, p. 3, c. 3.
- ⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, April 30, 1860, p. 2, c. 7.
- ¹⁰ William H. Payne v. Susan E. Green, Chancery Suit 1871-045, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk.
- ¹¹ *Alexandria Gazette*, October 13, 1860, p. 3, c. 7.
- ¹² Will of Charles R. Ayres, July 28, 1857, Probated December 3, 1859, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk.
- ¹³ Harriet Elizabeth Rector (1834-1922) was the daughter of Alfred and Sallie (Grigsby) Rector. She m. George A. Kenner in 1859. She is buried in Woodward Family Cem., Rectortown, VA.
- ¹⁴ Will of C.R. Ayres
- ¹⁵ William H. Payne v. Susan E. Green.
- ¹⁶ *Raise a Rukus* is an African American slave tune that originated in the mid-Atlantic states. It was later sung by freed African American folk musicians and performed in minstrel shows throughout the United States. There were many verses and variations.
- ¹⁷ Will of C.R. Ayres.
- ¹⁸ Will of C.R. Ayres.
- ¹⁹ A Collection of All Such Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia of a Public and Permanent Nature as Have Passed Since the Session of 1801, © 1808, Samuel Pleasants, Jr., Printer, Richmond, VA.
- ²⁰ Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia Passed in 1855-6, in the Eightieth Year of the Commonwealth, © 1856, W.F. Ritchie, Printer, Richmond, VA.
- ²¹ Petition of Mary Fletcher for Voluntary Enslavement, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk, Warrenton, VA See also Virginia Chancery Records Index, No. 1861-043, Petition of Mary Fletcher, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.²¹ Petition of Anna Gleaves Peters for Voluntary Enslavement, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk, Warrenton, VA. See also Virginia Chancery Records Index, No. 1861-042, Petition of Anna Gleaves Peters, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
- ²² Petition of Ann Gleaves for Voluntary Enslavement, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk, Warrenton, VA. See also Virginia Chancery Records Index, No. 1861-044, Petition of Jane Payne, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
- ²³ Petition of Jane Payne for Voluntary Enslavement, Fauquier County Circuit Court Clerk, Warrenton, VA. See also Virginia Chancery Records Index, No. 1861-044, Petition of Jane Payne, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
- ²⁴ William Henry Fitzhugh Payne (1830-1904) was b. in Fauquier Co. the son of Arthur Alexander Morson Payne and Mary Conway Fitzhugh. He attended Virginia Military Institute 1846-47, but left school after a year. He attended the University of Virginia and studied law. He established a law practice in Warrenton in 1851. He married Mary Elizabeth Winston. During the civil war he served as a Capt. in the Black Horse Cavalry. He rose to the rank of Brig. Gen. After the war he returned to Fauquier and his law practice. He later served as a mbr. of the Virginia General Assembly. He is bur. in the Warrenton Cem., Warrenton, VA.
- ²⁵ "Chap. 167. An act providing for the voluntary enslavement of Jane Payne, Mary Fletcher, and Glives," Acts passing at a General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1861, © 1861, Richmond, Va.
- ²⁶ Ann Marshall Rector (1842-????) was the daughter of Alfred Rector and Catherine A.M. Ayres. She was the half-sister of Charles Rufus Ayres. She married Dr. Samuel Hampton Halley.
- ²⁷ A Collection of All Such Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia of a Public and Permanent Nature as Have Passed Since the Session of 1801, © 1808, Samuel Pleasants, Jr., Printer, Richmond, VA
- ²⁸ William H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. Kemp Floweree, et al., Chancery Suit #1897-002, Fauquier County Circuit Court.

²⁹ *Follow The Drinking Gourd* was an African American slave song used by conductors on the Underground Railroad to transmit encoded instructions, in song, to slaves escaping North to freedom. At face value, the "drinking gourd" simply refers to a hollowed out gourd used by slaves as a water dipper. But in this song it is used as a code name for the *Little Dipper* constellation which is visible in the night sky year round. The last star in the "handle" of the Little Dipper is Polaris, the North Star. All escaping slaves would easily be able to recognize this constellation and by travelling at night could follow it North to freedom.

³⁰ Lawrence, Catherine S., Autobiography. Sketch of the Life and Labors of Miss Catherine S. Lawrence, who In Early Life Distinguished Herself as a Bitter Opponent of Slavery and Intemperance..., © 1896, J.B. Lyon, Albany, NY.

³¹ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 163.

³² Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 163.

³³ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 148.

³⁴ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 149.

³⁵ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 149.

³⁶ William H. Payne v. Susan E. Green.

³⁷ William H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. K. Floweree, et al.

³⁸ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 141.

³⁹ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 140.

⁴⁰ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 141.

⁴¹ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴² *The Liberator*, May, 29, 1863, p. 1, c. 6.

⁴³ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴⁴ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴⁵ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴⁶ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴⁷ *New York Times*, May 11, 1863, p. 5, c. 1.

⁴⁸ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 166.

⁴⁹ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 166.

⁵⁰ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 166.

⁵¹ *Mexico Independent*, December 27, 1866, p. 3, c. 3.

⁵² *Mexico Independent*, April 18, 1867, p. 3, c. 1.

⁵³ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 169.

⁵⁴ Wm. H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. K. Floweree, et al..

⁵⁵ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 190.

⁵⁶ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 186.

⁵⁷ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 190.

⁵⁸ Boyd's Auburn City Directory, 1871-1872, © 1872, William H. Boyd, Publisher, New York.

⁵⁹ Boyd's Auburn City Directory, 1871-1872, © 1872, William H. Boyd, Publisher, New York.

⁶⁰ William H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. K. Floweree, et al.

⁶¹ Lawrence, *Autobiography*, 195.

⁶² William H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. K. Floweree, et al.

⁶³ Record of deceased Colored Soldiers and Contrabands interred at the National Cemetery, Arlington Va. under the direction of Brevet Col. A.P. Blunt, A.Q.M., U.S. Army at Washington, D.C." [circa 1867-1868], Arlington National Cemetery Records.

⁶⁴ National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, Entry 3870, Alexandria Office, Labor Contracts, September 1865-March 1867.

⁶⁵ N.A.R.A., Freedmen's Bureau, Entry 578, Wash. DC Ofc., Register of People Arriving at Freedmen's Village, January 1867-June 1868.

⁶⁶ N.A.R.A., Freedmen's Bureau, Entry 3848, Alex., VA Of., Press Copies of Letters Sent, March 1867-April 1869.

⁶⁷ "Date of Death: Oct. 21st [1867]. Name and Surname of the Deceased: Annie Sarah Ayres, Age: 16 yrs. 6 mos., Place of Death, Charlestown, MA, Sex and Condition, F. Single, Place of Birth, Rectortown, Va., Names of Parents: Chas. R. & Mary F., Disease or Cause of Death: Consumption, Place of Interment: Lexington; Informant or Undertaker: C.W. Rendall; Register of Deaths, Lexington, Middlesex Co., MA 1854-1897, v. A, p. 35," Town Clerk, Lexington, MA.

⁶⁸ N.A.R.A., Freedmen's Bureau, Entry 3870, Alex., VA Ofc., Labor Contracts, September 1865-March 1867.

⁶⁹ N.A.R.A., Freedmen's Bureau, Roll 178, Registers of letters received and endorsements sent and received, vol 1-2, Jan 1867-Apr 1868.

⁷⁰ N.A.R.A., Freedmen's Bureau, Roll 48, Alexandria Office, Unregistered Letters Received, May 1866-April 1869.

⁷¹ William H. Payne, exr. of C. R. Ayres vs. W. K. Floweree, et al.

⁷² Baptismal record of "Henry Lowranse," b. November 8, 1798, christened December 23, 1798, Reformed Dutch Church, Middleburg, Schoharie, NY.

⁷³ Andrews, Frank DeWitte, Burials in the Old Stone Fort Cemetery at Schoharie, New York, Copied from the Gravestones June, 1916, © 1917, Privately Printed, Vineland, NJ.

⁷⁴ *Oswego Daily Palladium*, June 21, 1873, p. 4, c. 2.

⁷⁵ U.S. Census of 1900, Saratoga County, New York.

Fairfax Court House News of 150 Years Ago

ESCAPE OF A FRIEND FROM MOSEBY.

FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA, }
January 2, 1865.

My dear Sister—Ere this time you will have learned that I was captured by Moseby's men on the 27th of December, the ninth day of our raid. One more day would have found me back in camp with my regiment, 4th New York Cavalry; but fate said the word, "the arrow sped." I was taken by surprise by a guerilla, named Captain Chapman. He came up to me as one of our own officers would, dressed alike. There was a thick, heavy fog in the mountain pass. Had I known that he was a guerilla I would have shot him twice over; but I was dismounted, leading my horse by the bridle rein, my horse being stripped and the road being sharp, which caused me to take him along on the grass. A short way up the mountain there were six more of the same gang. They took me into the woods, stripped and robbed me of everything, even my coffee and sugar, and notes carefully copied from official record for publication in the *IRISH-AMERICAN*. When the column had moved on they took me away in company with another soldier from the 1st Rhode Island Cavalry. He was taken under similar circumstances, and in his company I managed to make my escape. It being late when we were captured, we were marched about five or six miles, when we were halted at another bushwhacker's house. Next morning we started to Culpepper, 32 miles, and reached there before dark. The citizens begged of the guard to hang us as we passed. They refused to let us stop in Culpepper for the night, and started for Orange Courthouse, 21 miles further. At a point between Culpepper and Orange Courthouse, we made our escape in the night, and marching all night, struck the Rappahannock about noon next day. The river had overflowed its banks at the time; but, notwithstanding, we effected a crossing, and in less than one hour we reached the other side in perfect safety. Before starting we formed our plans so as to strike the Potomac; but necessity caused us to alter that part of the programme, and strike the Orange and Alexandria railroads, until we reached our pickets at Fairfax Station on the last night of the old year. Our legs and feet were frostbitten, and our old, worn-out boots were torn from our feet by the thick network of underbrush, which the snow com-

pletely covered from view. On our arrival, the officers treated us with much kindness and hospitality. We are now, thank God, under the protecting folds of the starry banner, and though yet unable to move, we hope to be all right soon.

The weather was extremely cold, and being stripped of our best clothes, we suffered much. Our determination was to escape, or die in the attempt. Trusting in God, who did not forsake us, I and my comrade in battle and suffering are friends for life.

Your fond brother,

CHARLES MAGUIRE,
Co. E, 4th N. Y. Cavalry.

Irish American Weekly, January 14, 1865, p. 2, c. 7.

THE PRESIDENTIAL BALL.

A Train Fired on by Guerillas.

Washington, 17th. The large room in the north wing of the Patent Office is to be used for the Presidential inauguration ball.

The train bound to Fairfax was fired into by a party of guerillas between Springfield and Accotink bridge. The conductor was informed by the captain commanding at Springfield that there were guerillas in the vicinity, so he was on his guard. When first seen, the guerillas were piling timber on the track. The engineer at once reversed the engine and saved the train. Some shot struck the smoke stack. No other damage was sustained.

Boston Evening Transcript, January 17, 1865, p. 3, c. 3.

Information was received here of a raid from Fairfax Court House, consisting of some sixty or seventy Yankees, into Prince William county on Saturday night last. Wm. Smith, Thomas Lynn, James Lynn, Wm. Davie, and one or two other citizens, together with some eight or ten soldiers at home on furlough, were captured by them and carried off. The raiders returned on Sunday.

Raids in this section are constantly expected, and the authorities are on the qui vive.

Richmond Enquirer, February 23, 1865, p. 3, c. 3.

TAXES—In consequence of the unsettled condition of Fairfax and the adjoining counties in Virginia, and the absence of most of the loyal citizens in the Northern States, the sale of property for the non-payment of taxes, has been postponed until next fall.

Evening Star, March 7, 1865, p. 2, c. 5.

Volunteers and docents are sought for the city's historic buildings: Ratcliffe-Allison House, Historic Blenheim and the Civil War Interpretive Center and Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center. Additionally, volunteers may be interested in assisting with walking tours and special events. For information e-mail or call **703-385-8415**.

The city has published a free self-guided walking tour brochure that provides a brief history of the city and noteworthy buildings in the Old Town Fairfax Historic District. This brochure is available from the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main Street, or call **703-385-8414**.

Select historic buildings are open during city special events, including the Chocolate Lovers Festival, Civil War Weekend, Independence Day Celebration, Fall Festival and Festival of Lights and Carols. To arrange group tours of city-owned historic buildings email or call **703-385-8414**.

The Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987. It includes a variety of building and monument types and styles, including:

Fairfax Courthouse (1800)
 Ratcliffe-Allison House (1812)
 Joshua Gunnell House (c.1830)
 William Gunnell House (c.1835)
 Ford House (c.1835)
 Fairfax Elementary School (1873)*
 Old Fairfax Jail (1885)
 Old Town Hall (1900)
 Marr Monument (1904)

*Fairfax Elementary School was converted into the Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center in 1992.

Location of Union Field Hospital Discovered in the City of Fairfax

*"I rejoined the division on the 1st of September, near Fairfax Court-house, on the Aldie road, where it was engaged with the enemy. I established a field hospital under a large willow tree near a spring of water, at the junction of the Little River and Warrenton turnpikes, and directed the wounded to be brought to this place. I was soon, however, obliged to remove my hospital to a church building near Fairfax Court-house, owing to the precipitate retreat of the army. During the night, I was engaged in dressing the wounded. The men were mostly wounded in the upper extremity and head, and came to the hospital on foot. They were sent on foot to the rear, after their wounds were dressed."*¹

The author of the above report is Union Surgeon Nathan Richards Mosely, Medical Director, 2nd Division, First Corps, U.S.A. His description is of a field hospital he established following the Battle of Chantilly. The location he describes is s.e. of the intersection of Main Street (Rt. 236) and Fairfax Boulevard (Rt. 29), in the City of Fairfax, known locally as *Kamp Washington*. The "*spring*" he refers to still exists and are the headwaters of Accotink Creek which originates and flows s.e. through the Westmore subdivision near Main Street. The "*church*" he refers to is likely Truro Episcopal Church, located on Main Street in Fairfax.

¹ Barnes, Joseph K., *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, © 1870, Extract of Report of Surgeon N.R. (Nathaniel Richards) Mosely, Medical Director, 2nd Division, First Corps, U.S.A., p. 124, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Wash., D.C.

In the Next Issue...

Going Home From Appomattox. Will retell the story of the surrender at Appomattox and the long journey home for Lieutenant Thomas J. Murray, of Fairfax Court House, in his own words.

Mottrom Dulany Ball: of Fairfax County, Fairfax Court House, and Alexandria, Virginia, was a musician, poet, teacher, lawyer, soldier, and *A Founding Father of Alaska*.

"Preserving the Past. Protecting the Future."

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