

# This Kingdom of My Childhood Landscape, Memory, and Meaning at Arlington's Flower Garden

BY KAREN B. KINZEY

*Is it at the touch of memory only that flowers bloom here in such exquisite perfection?*

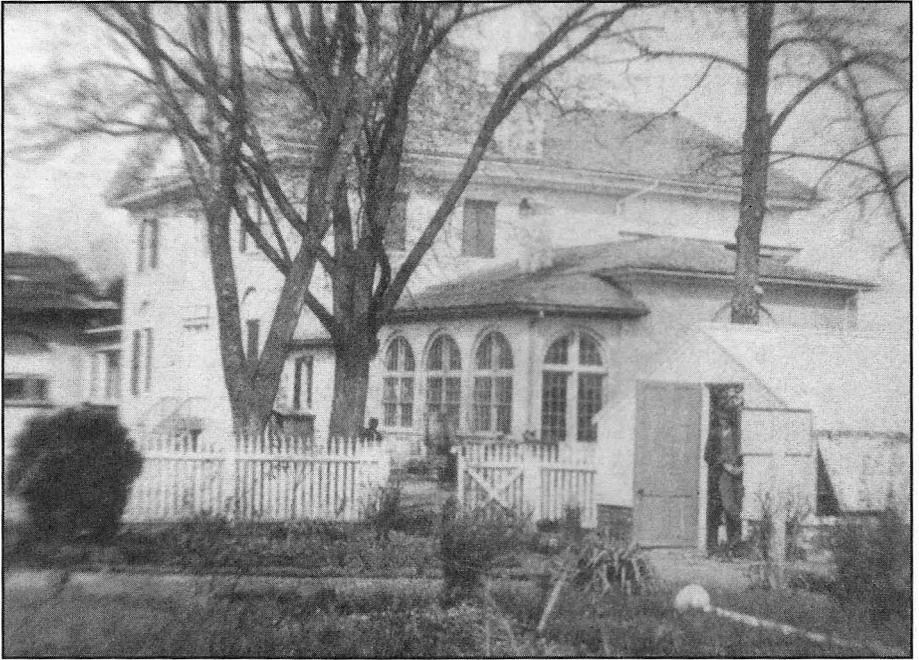
Elizabeth Randolph Calvert, c.1870

On a hot Sunday in July, 1890, Mildred Childe Lee, the youngest daughter of the South's most famous general, sat in a pew in Grace Episcopal Church in Lexington, Virginia, far removed from the scenes of her girlhood home. A lady with "a rich, sweet voice" began to sing "Jesus Saviour of My Soul." The familiar words of the old hymn instantly transported Mildred back to the flower garden at Arlington House. "In those days of long ago . . . there I used to sing that hymn and pray to be good . . . and my heart did glow with a certain fervour, but whether it was hatred of sin or delight in the sweet starry blossoms I cannot tell," she recalled poignantly.<sup>1</sup>

In linking the garden's natural beauty with spiritual associations, Mildred Lee carried on a time-honored Arlington tradition. Her ideals concerning the flower garden could be traced back to her grandmother, Mary Fitzhugh Custis. After her marriage to George Washington Parke Custis in 1804, "Molly" Custis assumed the role of mistress of the plantation at the age of sixteen. While her husband busied himself with agricultural endeavors and a variety of efforts to memorialize President Washington, Mrs. Custis devoted herself to her family, her home, and her faith. In Arlington's flower garden she found an outlet for her endeavors. In time, she passed her ideals on to her daughter and granddaughters.

Although Mr. Custis laid out the original garden, he demonstrated little interest in its design or maintenance. Thus Mrs. Custis was free to rely on her own personal taste in the creation of the floral environment. During her lifetime, the garden evolved from its humble beginnings to a cherished landscape renowned for its beauty. The garden consisted of two distinct spaces: a formal landscaped area of approximately one acre and a larger, wilder section known as the grove. The entire area was enclosed by a white picket fence, with a single gate located at the north end.<sup>2</sup>

The eastern portion was cultivated as the formal flower garden. At its center was a circular wooden arbor with latticed roof and walls. A curved bench



In 1870, the cemetery staff constructed a small greenhouse in the northeast corner of the garden. The fence, which dates to the early 1860s, was added by the U. S. Army after the destruction of the old paling fence.

ran along the interior of the structure. In the summer, fragrant yellow jasmine and red and pink honeysuckle covered the roof and trailed down the walls. As a young girl, Mary Anna Randolph Custis, the only one of the Custises' four children to survive infancy, spent long hours in the arbor with her books. The garden's central path, which ran from north to south, passed through the structure. Nearby were two large magnolias. Boxwood and a variety of shrubs grew at the southern end of the formal garden along the carriage drive.<sup>3</sup>

To the west of the landscaped garden lay the grove. Mildred Lee recalled the area as "a place of mystery." There stood a second arbor, covered with grape vines. A large moss-covered stone under the arbor provided "a capital place to crack hickory-nuts." Less cultivated than the formal garden, the grove was shaded by large oak and elm trees and served as "the special resort of squirrels." This wild area functioned as a transitional area between the landscaped section of the garden and the forest that occupied the western portion of the estate.<sup>4</sup>

The Custis and Lee women assumed responsibility for the garden, although much of the day-to-day work fell to their slaves. The wide and changing

variety of plant life reflected the personal tastes of the ladies of the family. Mrs. Custis was especially fond of lily of the valley and Mildred Lee recalled “great fields of them under every evergreen and shady space.” Large snowball bushes and purple and white lilacs provided an excellent venue for games of hide and seek. Showy chrysanthemums grew along the line of the fence. Every spring a mass of crocuses, jonquils, and hyacinths appeared. Each of the four Lee daughters received a small plot of her own. Mildred Lee’s was located at the edge of the grove and contained a white lilac and violets.<sup>5</sup>

Of all of the flowers that grew at Arlington, roses may have been the family’s favorite. A number of varieties were cultivated, including the hundred-leaf and the damask. Annie Lee, the fourth of the seven children, often wore the dark red variety in her hair but favored the yellow, crimson-tipped roses most of all. Mildred loved the single red roses from which her older sisters fashioned a wreath for her to wear in her curly hair. Years later, her memory of the Arlington roses remained as strong as ever. “As for the roses, I can go in spirit to each one, & tell you its name, and *remember* its perfume,” Mildred Lee observed nearly thirty years after leaving her home. Mrs. Custis was known to gather her favorite roses in the early morning hours while the blossoms were still wet with dew. Her son-in-law, Robert E. Lee, often gathered fragrant Safrano roses before breakfast, which he later placed on the plate of each lady present.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding the beauty of its contents, the flower garden represented far more than a means of ornamentation. From the time of her arrival at Arlington, Mrs. Custis viewed the garden as a natural extension of home and family. Her cultivation of heirloom flowers that had grown at relatives’ homes, including Mount Vernon, Shirley, and Chatham, served not only to strengthen familial bonds but also to honor the memory of revered ancestors. “I looked on all the familiar flowers and felt I was greeting a circle of old friends, some of whom had departed,” recalled one of Arlington’s guests. Far-flung relatives and friends often exchanged plantings with the ladies of Arlington and, during the growing season, no visitor left without a fresh bouquet, a symbol of the happy home life and hospitality for which Arlington was so well known. Within their immediate domestic sphere, three generations of Custis and Lee women further strengthened their emotional bonds through a shared love of gardening, which even inspired a playful competitiveness among them.<sup>7</sup>

Equally important was the role the garden played in Mrs. Custis’ desire for the gradual emancipation of Arlington’s enslaved population. Among her primary occupations was the religious as well as secular education of the family’s slaves. According to Mrs. Lee, it was her mother’s influence that led Mr. Custis to provide for the eventual emancipation of his slaves in his will. Prior to his

decision, some slaves received their freedom through colonization. The sale of flowers from Arlington's garden provided revenues for this "object dear to the heart of the mistress." Early in the morning, slaves strung jasmine blossoms on long strings and gathered half-opened blooms for bouquets which they then sold in the city markets. "Each of which is expected to bring a penny . . . the proceeds are added to a colonization fund which Mrs. C. is deeply interested in accumulating," observed one relative. Molly Custis selected a number of slaves as potential candidates for colonization, and at least one family immigrated to Liberia. Thus the garden served as an avenue to personal fulfillment for the women of the house as Mrs. Custis, and later Mrs. Lee, realized this most cherished ambition, if only in limited measure.<sup>8</sup>

With the death of Mrs. Custis in the spring of 1853, the flower garden at Arlington assumed a new significance. Although the women of the family had always associated spirituality with the garden, with the loss of Arlington's matriarch came an increase in the religious reflections it inspired. Agnes Lee, the third of the four daughters, noted that as much as she had always loved the garden, it meant far more to her after the death of her beloved grandmother. "When I look at her favorite flowers they remind me so of her. She has gone to a land where the flowers are far more beautiful. May we all meet her there!" she recorded in her diary. As she gathered flowers from the garden to place on Mrs. Custis' grave, the teenager pledged "to do as I know she would like me to do." The first time Martha "Markie" Custis Williams entered the garden after her great-aunt's death, she was nearly overcome with emotion. "My dear Aunt came so forcibly before my mind her sainted image was so lifelike by the strong power of association, that for a moment I withdrew as though the space were sacred." Mildred Lee often sought refuge there "to pray to be good, like the various saintly characters in Grand Ma's religious Biographies."<sup>9</sup>

The death of Mrs. Custis foreshadowed a period of change for the garden. After her funeral, most of the Lee family returned to West Point where Robert E. Lee was stationed during his tenure as the superintendent of the United States Military Academy. Agnes Lee wondered who would "take away the weeds and sticks" from her beloved flowers. Her mother sent detailed instructions to the slaves concerning the maintenance of the garden. During Mrs. Lee's absence, the wooden arbor located in the formal garden had deteriorated to such an extent as to require significant improvements. Even after her return to Arlington, Mrs. Lee was often unable to work in the garden because of her advanced rheumatoid arthritis. During the latter half of the 1850s, she was frequently away from Arlington for a portion of the summer as she sought relief from her disease at various hot springs. During this period a visitor to Arlington described the gardens as "tangled and neglected." The death of Mr. Custis

in 1857 portended additional complications. Robert E. Lee took a protracted leave of absence from the United States Army to manage the estate and execute the provisions of Mr. Custis' will. To raise the money needed to settle his father-in-law's complicated financial affairs, Lee hired out a number of the Arlington slaves. Fewer slaves were available to maintain the garden even as other long-neglected areas of the estate required greater attention.<sup>10</sup>

The coming of the Civil War brought drastic changes to every part of the Arlington Estate. In April, 1861, Colonel Lee resigned his commission in the United States Army and left Arlington never to return. Mrs. Lee and several of their children reluctantly abandoned the home the following month. As Mary Lee departed from the only place she had ever truly considered home, some of her final thoughts were of her beloved garden. "This is a lovely morning. I never saw the countryside more beautiful, perfectly radiant. The yellow jasmine is in full bloom and perfuming all the air, but a deathlike stillness prevails everywhere," she wrote to her husband. As her carriage traveled down the drive around the garden, Mrs. Lee was unaware of the painful changes that would soon eradicate this most cherished feature of the landscape.<sup>11</sup>

On the night of May 23, 1861, the United States Army occupied Arlington. Almost overnight, the pastoral landscape was transformed into a sprawling military encampment. Soldiers of the 8th New York Regiment pitched their tents just south of the flower garden under the shady canopy of the old trees. For a time the garden remained unchanged. One week after the occupation, a party of sightseers that included Robert Todd Lincoln toured the mansion and grounds. In the garden they found an elderly slave at work, almost as if the Lees were still at home. Even as late as November, the flower garden and its picket fence remained intact. In the early part of the war, when the Army of the Potomac used Arlington as its headquarters, "enforced respect" for the property prevailed. As one Union soldier observed, "Regard for the historical associations with which the house is so connected, and above all the social influence which General Lee possessed had induced the Federal officers to use every precaution in order to protect the house and grounds from injury."<sup>12</sup>

In March of 1862, most of the Army of the Potomac moved south to take part in the Peninsula Campaign. Its commanding officers had been well ac-

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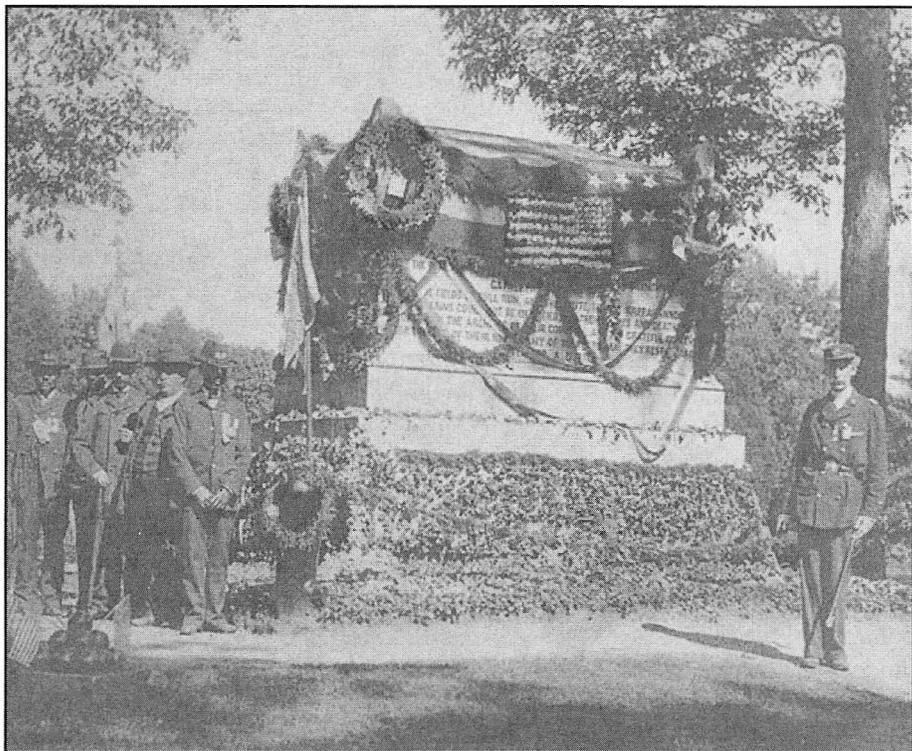
**“Regard for the historical associations with which the house is so connected...induced the Federal officers to use every precaution in order to protect the house and grounds from injury.” -Union Soldier**

quainted with the Lees prior to the war. With their departure came many changes to the property. When Markie Williams visited that summer, she found the estate “so changed and yet so like itself.” The flower garden remained, but the old white picket fence had been removed. In its place stood a whitewashed paling fence which surrounded the formal area of the garden on all four sides. The following year witnessed the destruction of the garden. Almost overnight, this long-cherished feature of the Arlington landscape disappeared. “All the boundaries, garden plats, and smooth reaches of green turf that in times of peace were preserved inviolate by a natural respect for beauty and order were swept away,” according to one writer. An English visitor observed, “The whole place was then one camp. The gardens were trodden into mud. . . . new tracks were made everywhere through the grounds.”<sup>13</sup>

On January 11, 1864, the Federal Government purchased Arlington Estate at a public auction. During the second year of the war, Congress had passed a law that allowed for the “collection of direct taxes in insurrectionary districts of the United States.” Mary Lee, as the owner of Arlington, owed \$92.07 in taxes. The property was forfeited when she failed to appear in person to pay the taxes. After the Federal Government purchased the property, the most radical change of all occurred at Arlington. In May, 1864, the estate was put to use as a cemetery for war dead. At first, the majority of burials took place in the northeast section of the estate far away from the mansion. Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, whose responsibilities included the oversight of military cemeteries, insisted that graves be located in close proximity to the mansion. He ordered the placement of graves along two sides of Mrs. Lee’s flower garden. The “rose garden” burials began in May, 1864, and continued for thirteen years.<sup>14</sup>

In time, the garden proved an ideal setting for additional memorials built to honor the dead. At the end of the war, flowers were planted once more in the old beds of the formal garden. The Lees’ arbor still stood in its center. While at least some evidence of the formal garden remained, the grove was unrecognizable. No efforts were made to restore it. Instead, the area was put to new use as the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Dead. The tomb served as the final resting place for the unidentified remains of thousands of soldiers gathered from the nearby battlefields. Although the monument was meant to pay honor to those who had made the ultimate sacrifice, there were some, including a journalist for the *National Intelligencer*, who found its creation macabre:

A more terrible spectacle can hardly be conceived than is to be seen within a dozen rods of the Arlington mansion. A circular pit twenty feet deep has been sunk by the side of the flower garden . . . divided into compartments. . . .into this gloomy



**Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Dead, c. 1892** Veterans' groups frequently held ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Civil War Dead. The Tomb, located just yards from Arlington House, contains the remains of 2,111 Civil War soldiers.

receptacle are cast the bones of such soldiers as perished on the field. . . At the time we looked into this gloomy cavern, a literal Golgotha, there were piled together . . . the bones of two thousand individuals.<sup>15</sup>

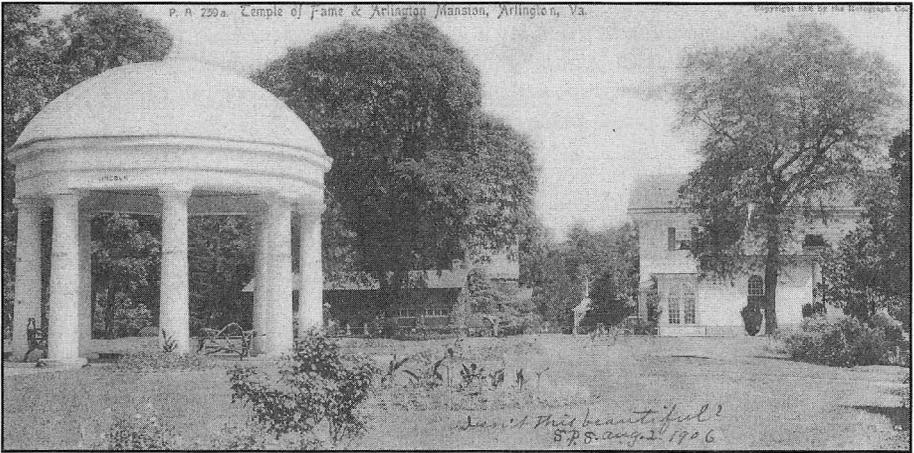
Throughout the 1870s, more changes were visited upon the garden. The cemetery staff constructed a brick and glass greenhouse in which to grow flowers for the beautification of the house and grounds. Many of the flowers grown there were transferred to the new planting beds in the garden. As the numbers of visitors to Arlington continued to rise, a suitable venue for religious and memorial services became necessary. In 1874, a Memorial Amphitheatre with "raised seats of earth covered with grass for five thousand" was built in the old grove where Mildred Lee had once taken such pride in her little patch of violets. An early cemetery guidebook rhapsodized:

Undoubtedly the most beautiful feature on the grounds is the Druidical Amphitheatre. Here nature and art have joined hands to form one of those delightful combinations which never fail to touch the heart, and upon the hallowed velvet turf the thousands who come here upon Memorial Days have their patriotism quickened and their souls uplifted by the recital of valorous deeds of those who sleep about them.<sup>16</sup>

Early in 1885, the officer in charge of the cemetery, in conjunction with the landscape gardener, decided to “reorganize the flower garden.” So complete was the transformation that every remaining trace of the old family garden was obliterated. They destroyed the “rotted and disreputable-looking arbor.” After having survived so many changes, “several poor trees” that dated back to the Custis era were cut down. Finally, the “whole site was plowed and graded.” New walks complete with steps and new entrances on the east, south, and west sides of the garden were installed. Cemetery staff planted rosebushes along the east and south sides to provide a backdrop for the officers’ headstones. Where the arbor had stood for so many years, the Temple of Fame was constructed. The Temple was a small pavilion fashioned from the old stone columns of the U. S. Patent Office. According to D.H. Rhodes, the cemetery’s landscape gardener for over thirty years, the structure was originally intended to serve solely as a new arbor. In 1884, officers of the Quartermaster’s Corps decided to “convert it to a memorial or Temple of Fame by having the names of distinguished men inscribed thereon.” All but one of the “distinguished men” were the leading Union generals of the Civil War.<sup>17</sup>

These modifications of the landscape were not meant to be merely aesthetically pleasing. Just as the Custises and Lees had associated a variety of meanings and values with the land, so, too, did those who shaped, or were shaped by, Arlington National Cemetery. Soon after the creation of the cemetery, an editorial in the *Washington Morning Chronicle* addressed the conflicting tones of malice and transcendence in the new use of the estate. “The grounds are undulating, handsomely adorned, and in every respect admirably fitted for the sacred purpose to which they now have been dedicated. This is a righteous use of the estate of the rebel General Lee and will never dishonor the spot made venerable by the occupation of Washington,” the author noted.<sup>18</sup>

Others commented on the spiritual quality of this final resting place of those who had fought to save the Union. In 1868, during the first official observance of Decoration or Memorial Day, Major General James Garfield stood on Arlington’s portico just steps from the garden and reminded his listeners of the sublimity of the surrounding land:



Temple of Fame, c. 1900 After its construction in 1883-1884, the “Temple of Fame” was the dominant feature of the flower garden. When Mildred Lee visited Arlington in 1890, she resented the “hidious white pavilion” inscribed with the names of well-known Federal officers of the Civil War.

This will be forever the sacred mountain of our Capital. Here is our temple; its sacrament is the sarcophagus of the heroic hearts; its dome the bending of heavens; its altar candles the watching stars. Hither our children’s children shall come to pay their tribute of grateful homage. . . They summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For the love of country they accepted death . . . and their patriotism and virtue made immortal. What other spot so fitting for their last resting place as this, under the shadow of the Capitol saved by their valor. . .<sup>19</sup>

To Garfield and thousands of others who shared his feelings, the great changes at Arlington rendered the landscape hallowed ground, a fitting memorial to those who had sacrificed their lives to preserve the nation. For others, the memorials and structures located near the house and garden proved a painful reminder of the bitterness of war and thus represented a desecration of the memory of the dead. An article in *Appleton’s Journal of Literature, Science and Art* observed:

It is quite impossible not to imagine that a spirit of pure vengefulness had much to do with the selection of this place for the holy purpose to which it is put. . . Grief has been calculated to inflict a sting upon those who once called this place their

own. The association of the last rite of solemn burial with a passionate intent to satisfy a vengeance was something almost sublimely cruel. A garden south of the house is surrounded with the graves of officers, and the dwelling place is the central object in that vast burial-place.<sup>20</sup>

The author's theme of vengeance resonated deeply with Lee. In the summer of 1873, she made her first and last visit to her old home. Completely unprepared for the vast changes to the once-familiar landscape, particularly those that so altered the old garden, Mary Lee was devastated by the visit and stayed but a few minutes. "I rode to my dear home but so changed it seemed but as a dream from the past. I could not have realized it was Arlington but for the few old oaks they had spared. . . " she grieved to a friend. The officers' graves that lined her cherished flower garden were particularly disturbing. "They are planted up to the door without any regard to common decency," she railed in her memoirs. Overcome with grief, Mrs. Lee died several months after her visit.<sup>21</sup>

For Mildred Lee, the memorialization of Union war dead on the grounds of her family's flower garden proved equally painful. Even as the words of a familiar childhood hymn transported her back to "this kingdom of my childhood," the memory of a recent visit to Arlington still stung. The Temple of Fame and the Memorial Amphitheatre proved most devastating of all as she contrasted the landscapes of the present and the past:

I stood once more in the garden at Arlington. In place of the Jessamine arbour, was a hideous white pavilion, with the names Lincoln, Grant, Sheridan emblazoned in staring black letters. Every thing was gone – the dim shady alleys, the flowering shrubs, the rose beds replaced by stiff little beds, cut in ginger-cake patterns! And in the sweet wild grove, where the birds and squirrels once disputed me possession, arose a circus-like structure, where the glories of Union and perfidy of traitors (like my father) are shouted forth to a dirty mob on any National Fete day. Everywhere as far as my aching eyes could see – graves-graves-graves in memory of the men who had robbed me of my beautiful home.<sup>22</sup>

Arlington's flower garden would remain a place of contested meaning and contradictory symbolism for many years. Those elements which conveyed honor, reverence, and sanctity to some represented desecration and cruel vengeance to others. When the restoration of Arlington House was authorized in 1925, the garden would be subject to new political battles that would result in further changes to its design. Eighty years later, efforts to restore the garden to its pre-Civil War appearance, as specified in the enabling legislation, continue

in the hopes of recreating the “Kingdom” of Mildred Lee’s childhood where “all ‘the beauties of sisterhood’ bloom in unconstrained delight.”<sup>23</sup>

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Karen Kinzey is the Historian at Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial. The staff of Arlington House is interested in learning about the more recent history of the flower garden. If you have personal stories about the garden or photographs to share, please contact Ms. Kinzey at 703-235-1530.

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### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Mary Custis Lee deButts, ed., *Growing Up in the 1850s: The Journal of Agnes Lee* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1984), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of Martha Custis Williams*, passim., Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Archives; deButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Jennifer Hanna, *Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Cultural Landscape Report, Vol. I* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of The Interior, 2001), p. 56; “Recollections of Emma Syphax, Sarah Wilson, Annie Baker, and Ada Thompson” Transcript, 1929, Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Archives. The four women were the daughters of Selina Gray, the enslaved housekeeper at Arlington House. The women, who had grown up at Arlington prior to the Civil War, returned to the property in the 1920s to assist The War Department with the restoration of the mansion. Their memories provided the War Department with essential information about the appearance of the flower garden, mansion, and slave quarters during the Custis and Lee era.

<sup>4</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 118; Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 118; Elizabeth Randolph Calvert, “Childhood Days at Arlington Mixed with after memories,” undated manuscript, Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Archives, p. 13; *Journal of Martha Custis Williams*, November 1, 1853. Mrs. Calvert was a cousin of the Custis and Lee family who had visited Arlington House as a child in the 1840s. Around 1870 she recorded her memories of her youthful adventures at Arlington.

<sup>6</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 116; Rose Mortimer Ellzey MacDonald, *Mrs. Robert E. Lee* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1939), pp. 81-82; Murray H. Nelligan, *Arlington House: The Story of the Robert E. Lee Memorial* (Burke, VA: Chatelaine Press, 2001), p. 373.

<sup>7</sup> MacDonald, *Mrs. Robert E. Lee*, pp. 81-82; *Journal of Martha Custis Williams*, November 1, 1853. In her journal, Agnes Lee recalled the pride she felt when her flowers bloomed before any others, and a relative once teased Mrs. Custis that she intended to plant a flower garden that would rival the one at Arlington.

<sup>8</sup> Laura C. Holloway, *The Ladies of the White House* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1886), p. 58; Calvert, “Childhood Days”, p. 14. Ironically, although the flower garden provided the women of the Custis-Lee family with a means of raising revenue for the emancipation of their slaves, it was the Arlington slaves who carried out much of the daily maintenance of the garden that made the endeavor possible. Colonization, the relocation of emancipated slaves to Africa, did not appear to be popular with the Arlington slaves. Mrs. Calvert indicated that a few Arlington slaves relocated to Liberia during Mrs. Custis’ lifetime. Although William Burke and his family emigrated there in the 1850s, other slaves whom the family had selected as candidates for colonization chose not to leave. For details of the Burkes’ experiences in Liberia, see Bell I. Wiley, ed., *Slaves No More: Letters From Liberia 1833-1869* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, pp. 14-15, 116; *Journal of Martha Custis Williams*, March 7, 1854. Ironically, just two days before she suffered a fatal stroke, Molly Custis was at work in her flower garden.

<sup>10</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 22; *Journal of Martha Custis Williams*, March 10, 1854; M.E.W. Sherwood, "Washington Before the War," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, August, 1894, p. 261. In 1854, "Markie" Williams reported that Mr. Custis had installed a new arbor in the garden to replace the original, dilapidated structure. During Lee's tenure as manager of the Arlington Estate, several of the slaves ran away from the plantation and others refused to work. George Washington Parke Custis' will had specified that the slaves were to receive their freedom within five years of his death after the settlement of several financial obligations. Many of the Arlington slaves mistakenly believed that Custis' will had provided for their immediate emancipation; consequently Lee's efforts to raise revenue by hiring out some of the enslaved people generated resentment and opposition among the Arlington slaves.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Lee to Robert E. Lee, May 9, 1861, copy in Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Archives.

<sup>12</sup> Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 76; Edward Dicey, *Six Months in the Federal States* (Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1863), Vol. II, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Mary P. Coulling, *The Lee Girls* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1987), p. 105; David H. Rhodes, "Notes Pertaining to the Old Flower Garden south of the Arlington Mansion by D.H. Rhodes, Landscape Gardener at Arlington, Where He has been employed since 1873," n.d., p. 1, copy in Arlington House The Robert E. Lee Memorial Archives; Karl Decker and Angus McSween, *Historic Arlington: A History of the National Cemetery From Its Establishment to the Present Time* (Washington: Decker and McSween Publishing Co., 1892), p. 60; Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 79.

<sup>14</sup> Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 81. Although Mrs. Lee attempted to pay her taxes through a cousin, the tax commissioners refused to accept payment from him on the grounds that he was not the owner of the property. There is conflicting evidence concerning the "rose garden burials." Meigs' assistant claimed that the Quartermaster General ordered the garden burials so as to more firmly secure the property for the Federal government after Smith Lee, Robert's brother, observed that Arlington House might still be used as the Lee family's residence if the graves in the eastern section were fenced off. Meigs' writings merely indicate that he wanted graves to be located as close to the house as possible. The burial of amputated limbs along the garden boundary would suggest that vengeance was at least in part a motivating factor.

<sup>15</sup> Philip Bigler, *In Honored Glory: Arlington National Cemetery The Final Post* (Arlington: Vandamere Press, 1996), p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 108; J. Howard Avil, *United States National Military Cemetery Arlington Virginia* (Washington: Levin C. Handy, 1903), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> Rhodes, "Notes," p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Washington Morning Chronicle*, June 17, 1864.

<sup>19</sup> Hanna, *Cultural Landscape Report*, p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> *Appleton's Journal of Literature, Science, and Art*, November 14, 1874. The article concluded that the best course of action to restore honor to Arlington's dead "is to take the house down, and thus deprive the spirit of the cemetery of that sinister side that all men see and regret."

<sup>21</sup> MacDonald, *Mrs. Robert E. Lee*, p. 295.

<sup>22</sup> DeButts, *Growing Up in the 1850s*, p. 120. The sentence that begins "And in the sweet wild grove . . ." appears in the original manuscript but was not included in the published version of the journal.

<sup>23</sup> Calvert, "Childhood Days," p. 13.