MAJOR JACKSON'S SABBATH SCHOOL

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(2019)

After his lamented death the home-friends who knew him best and loved him most, felt that no towering marble monument to his memory would be so acceptable a memorial to that knightly spirit as the continuance of the good which he had begun. Consequently, this Sunday-School, still called by the name of its founder, was kept up with earnest and reverent zeal by the labors of the first ladies and gentlemen of Lexington.[2]

Introduction

The Sunday school class for the black people of Lexington Presbyterian Church was the most important work of Thomas ("Stonewall") Jackson's life before the Civil War. He was its founder, superintendent, inspirational leader, and most enthusiastic advocate. With great reluctance he left it to go to war in April 1861, and followed its progress with great interest during the war. His friends kept it going nearly a quarter of a century after his death. Hundreds of people attended, most of them enslaved, all but a few nameless. Some became ministers and church leaders. Nothing would have pleased Major Jackson more.

Called the "Colored Sabbath School" at the time, it is referred to here as "Jackson's School," or simply "the school," in contrast to the segregated Sabbath School at the church. Generally supported by white citizens because of perceived benefits in the behavior of the slaves, Jackson was once accused of violating Virginia law, based upon the belief he was teaching the students to read. Today, Jackson's connection to the school engenders a mixed reaction because of his roles as slaveowner and Confederate general.

The story of Jackson's School has been told in many places, in brief outlines. Context is important and it is a complex story, perplexing, and full of seeming contradictions, a story that is vital to understanding Jackson. The purpose of this paper is to tell an updated and more complete story. Primary sources were used as much as possible, including original church records,[3] Jackson's own words, personal accounts of his family and close friends, and newspaper articles. Some secondary sources were used, most notably the excellent book by Robert F. Hunter on the history of Lexington Presbyterian Church.[4]

Lexington Presbyterian Church – The Early Years

Most settlers of the Shenandoah Valley were Scots-Irish Presbyterians, or "Ulster Scots." After the national restructuring in 1787, the Presbyterian General Assembly had four synods. The Virginia Synod consisted of four presbyteries, including one named for Lexington that covered an extensive territory. Lexington Presbyterian Church was established in April 1789, although it remained a part of New Monmouth Presbyterian Church, located a few miles west of town, until 1819. For many years the

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[2] The Livingston (Alabama) Journal, June 22, 1883 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)

[3] I would like to thank Pastor Bill Klein and Kimberly Kennedy of the Lexington Presbyterian Church for their generosity and assistance in allowing me access to the original church records, and the late Jean Robinson for encouraging me to review them.

[4] Robert F. Hunter, *Lexington Presbyterian Church, 1789-1989* (Lexington: Lexington Presbyterian Church, 1991)

two churches shared the same minister.[5] Blacks attended Lexington Presbyterian from the early years, virtually all of them enslaved. While some "Free Negroes" lived in the area, the numbers were small. All blacks were required to sit in the "gallery" or balcony.

George Addison Baxter (1771-1841) was the minister of Lexington Presbyterian from 1799 until 1829. For most of that time he also served as the minister of New Monmouth and as rector of Washington College.[6] An undated sermon by him captured the position of the Synod of Virginia that "'nothing could be more contrary to the principles of the word of God' than the 'abolition schemes and doctrines' then being propagated by William Lloyd Garrison in Massachusetts."

> As to the evils of slavery we deplore their necessity as much as any other people, and would be willing as any others to aid in the application of suitable remedies, but we are fully persuaded that the word of God itself has placed this delicate subject on its proper ground… We believe that the duty of giving religious instruction to the coloured people, is a most solemn duty, -- a duty which has been too long neglected, -- to which our eyes are just beginning to be opened, -- and which cannot be neglected any longer, without bringing great guilt, both upon the country and the church…. We believe that God has never destroyed a nation in which was found a pious and faithful church.[7]

This statement, that while slavery might be personally offensive, it was sanctioned by God, and should not be questioned, has long been understood as rationalization and justification for the preservation of a political and economic system dependent on slavery. Yet it remains confounding how people of faith could have sincerely held this view.

Rev. George A. Baxter[8]

After the 1831 Nat Turner "rebellion" the Virginia legislature made it illegal for blacks to hold religious services without white supervision. In 1832, the Synod of Virginia urged churches to take on that responsibility. Lexington Presbyterian appointed a committee led by Elder Sidney Smith Baxter (1802-1879) to study the issue.[9] The son of Rev. Baxter, Sidney was Attorney General of Virginia from 1834 to 1852.[10] He said "The engagements of our minister must always be too pressing to permit him to do more than preach to the blacks occasionally," and the only means to provide regular instruction was

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[5] Id., at 2, 9, 18
[6] Lexington Gazette, April 13, 1898 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[7] Hunter, n. 4, at 26, quoting from Miscellaneous Church Papers & Resolutions, Washington and Lee University, Special Collections and Archives, WLU-Coll-0003, Box 2, FF 17, George A. Baxter Papers
[8] (retrieved from https//:www.ancestry.com)
[9] Hunter, n. 4, at 29-30, citing The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1833-1845, pp. 64-66
[10] Richmond Dispatch, February 5, 1880 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)

for the lay members to hold meetings for that purpose. Baxter urged church members to instruct their slaves, along with their own family members, and to promote attendance of their slaves at meetings that the church would hold for them. A committee of seven was appointed to provide oral instruction to both "slaves and other people of colour," for three months, beginning January 1, 1833.[11]

It is difficult to determine when the first true Sunday School class for the black people of the church was established. The church did not have a Sunday school at all in 1832, not even for white members. The regular "Sabbath School" was implemented by Rev. James A. Douglass, who became the minister in January 1833, and served until September 1834.[12] It is likely that the purpose of the committee was to arrange for white leaders of the church to preside at religious meetings for black people in the community.

Remarkable insight into Lexington religious life at that time was provided by Dr. Andrew Reed (1787-1862), a Congregational minister at Wycliffe Chapel in London. A noted philanthropist, Reed founded several orphanages and asylums.[13] In 1834, the Congregational Union of England and Wales sent Reed and Rev. James Matheson to the United States on a "deputation," to promote goodwill with Congregational and Presbyterian churches.[14] They visited major cities, natural wonders, and many churches and conferences. During a visit to Congress they saw Clay, Webster, Calhoun, and Davy Crockett. President Andrew Jackson invited them to a private dinner at the Executive Mansion, and attended Reed's sermon at the Presbyterian church in Washington. Reed visited Lexington in summer 1834, and stayed with a "Mr. Carruthers," whom he had met at a General Assembly, but the reason for his visit was probably because Rev. Douglass had lived with Reed's family in England when he was an "invalid."[15]

Later Reed and Matheson authored a two-volume work about their experiences, arranged by "Letters." Letter XV of the first volume, describing Reed's visit to Lexington,[16] was published in the Lexington Gazette a year later.[17] Reed explained that there were three churches in Lexington. The Presbyterian church had "about 500 attendants and 300 members; the Methodist, about 300 and 200 members; and the African, about 150, and 60 members." Reed declined an invitation to preach at Lexington Presbyterian on Sunday, the day after he arrived, because he wished to hear the local preaching, something "which I always coveted." The church was "at the head of the town, on elevated ground, commanding a pretty view of it, and of the fine blue mountains in the distance." A "paddock" was attached to the building with 40 to 50 horses. The five doors and all of the windows were open due to the heat, and "fans were in motion every where." Kegs of water were used throughout the service by the children. Attendance was good, and the "galleries were mostly occupied by blacks." As for the worshippers, "there were not wanting some instances of negligent and irreverent manners."[18]

Reed learned that the "African church" was to hold a service in the afternoon, and "I resolved to go." He described the setting:

> The building called a church, is without the town, and placed in a hollow, so as to be out of sight; it is in the fullest sense, "without the gate." It is a poor log-house, built by the hands of the negroes, and so placed as to show that they must worship by stealth. It is,

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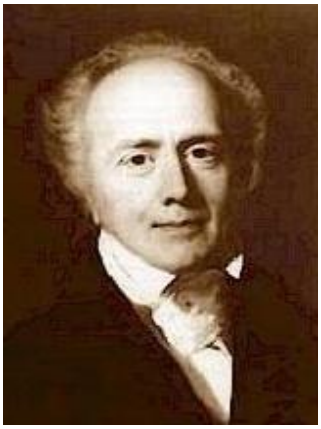
[11] Hunter, n. 4, at 29-30, citing The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1833-1845, pp. 64-66
[12] Hunter, n. 4, at 31-32, 109, citing The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 5, pp. 103-105
[13] http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-no89014907/
[14] Thomas F. Harwood, *British Evangelical Abolitionism and American Churches in the 1830's*, The Journal of Southern History, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Aug. 1962), 287, 297
[15] Andrew Reed, D.D. and James Matheson, D.D., *A Narrative of the Visit to the American Churches By the Deputation From the Congregational Union of England and Wales, Vol. I, Second Edition* (London: Jackson and Walford, St. Paul's Churchyard, 1836) 160-161, 166
(retrieved from https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044024253312&view=1up&seq=11)
[16] Id., at 20-26, 159-160
[17] Id., and Lexington Gazette, October 23, 1835
[18] Reed, n. 15, at 160-161, 166

> perhaps, 20 by 25; with boarding and rails breast-high, run round three sides, so as to form galleries. To this is added a lean to, to take the overplus, when the fine weather should admit of larger numbers. There were three small openings, besides the door, and the chinks in the building, to admit light and air. The place was quite full, the women and men were arranged on opposite sides; and although on a cold or rainy day there might have been much discomfort, the impression was very pleasing. In the presence of a powerful sun, the whole body were in strong shadows, and the light streaming through the warped and broken shingles, on the glistening black faces of the people, filled the spectacle with animation. I had taken my place by the door, and was waiting the commencement.[19]



Dr. Andrew Reed[20]

Under Virginia law, Reed noted, blacks "are not permitted to assemble for worship, unless a white person be present and preside." The elders of Lexington Presbyterian took turns, and on this day, "two whites and two blacks were in the pulpit." One of the black men referred to Reed as their "Strange master," and begged him to lead the service, but he declined. The man then led the congregation with a hymn by Isaac Watts, and though "They had not books, for they could not read;" the words were "printed on their memory, and they sang it off with freedom and feeling." The same man gave the sermon. The elders said prayers and read scripture, and the other black man spoke at the end. At one point Carruthers reminded Reed that if he was to fulfill his intention of returning to the Presbyterian church that afternoon they needed to leave, but "I could not bring myself to do any thing that might seem disrespectful to this band of despised and oppressed Christians."[21]

Reed was a social reformer, and opposed to slavery, but "This was the first time I had worshipped with an assembly of slaves, and I shall never forget it." He was "certainly by sympathy bound with those who were bound; while I rejoiced, on their account, afresh in that divine truth, which makes us free, indeed – which lifts the soul on high, unconscious of a chain."

> Much has been said, and is still said about the essential inequality of the races. That is a question which must be settled by experiment. Here the experiment was undoubtedly in favor of the blacks. In sense and in feeling, both in prayer & address, they were equal to the whites; and in free and pointed expression much superior. Indeed, I know not that while I was in America, I listened to a peroration of an address that was superior.[22]

The most astute observations are often made by outsiders.

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[19] Reed, n. 15, at 161-162
[20] https://beyondthename.weebly.com/reed-andrew.html
[21] Reed, n. 15, at 162-165
[22] Id., at 164-165

In 1899, Elder Alexander (Ted) Barclay gave a presentation to the congregation, a "Historical Sketch of the Lexington Presbyterian Church." He said that "Dr. Alfred Leyburn and others instructed blacks in religion in the early 1830s." Dr. Leyburn was appointed an elder in 1832, and so he may have been one of the people who took turns presiding over the services at the black church described by Reed.[23] Some sources credit William Henry Ruffner and Rev. Tucker Lacy as the founders of a black Sunday school in spring 1845, a class lasting through the summer.[24] Ruffner, the son of Henry Ruffner, the president of Washington College, was later the Superintendent for Public Instruction for the state of Virginia.[25] Neither man is named in the Session records as connected to a class, and Robert F. Hunter does not mention them in his history of the church.

Session minutes often refer to the appointment of church leaders to preside over religious meetings for blacks, sometimes at their request. On May 31, 1843, the elders agreed to consider, at the next meeting, "the expediency of appointing an individual or individuals to be present at the religious meetings of the coloured people in accordance with a request from some of them, with a view to legalize said meetings."[26] The Session minutes for July 12, 1843 stated that the "coloured people having made application to Session for some one to be appointed to attend and conduct their meetings," William C. Lewis and William G. White were chosen to form a committee "to make arrangements for the worship and instruction of the coloured members of the Church on Sabbath nights."[27]

William Spotswood White, D. D., became the minister in 1848 and is known as "Jackson's Pastor." He wrote that "From the beginning of my professional life, I have felt a deep interest and made special exertions for the spiritual good of the colored people." During his first year at the church he authored a book about a well-known preacher in Nottaway County, Virginia, called "Uncle Jack," who was born in Africa and said to be one of the last slaves brought to the United States.[28] Dr. White came from a small congregation in Charlottesville, and described his impressions of Lexington Presbyterian:

> The congregation was much larger than I had been accustomed to and far less homogenous. To a body of communicants numbering over two hundred and fifty there was a mixed assembly composed of people of the town and vicinage, members of the academy for young ladies, students of Washington College, cadets of the Virginia Military Institute, and a few colored people. On abandoning the old and erecting a tasteful and commodious house of worship, which was done a year or two before I became their pastor, the pews below were so engrossed by the white congregation, and the galleries so divided between the College students and cadets, that little room was left for the servants. This was soon found to be an evil, and some addition was made to the accommodations for worshippers by erecting a few pews in the open space around the pulpit. But this was very inadequate. In a few years a large addition was made to the building, a full portion of which was allotted to the servants. This additional room was

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[23] Hunter, n. 4, at 108-109, 175, citing The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 5, pp. 103-105

[24] Katharine L. Brown, *Stonewall Jackson in Lexington*, Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Vol. IX, (1975-1979) 200, citing Anne B. Ruffner, *Notes on W.H.R.* (Montreat, North Carolina). Theodore C. DeLaney, Jr., *Aspects of Black Religious and Educational Development in Lexington, Virginia, 1840-1928*, Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Vol. X, (1980-1989) 142, (https://repository.wlu.edu/handle/11021/33941) 141, citing Joseph B. Earnest, Jr., *The Religious Development of the Negro in Virginia* (Charlottesville: Michie Company, Inc., 1914).

[25] See, e.g., Harrington Waddell, *William Henry Ruffner: Virginia's Pioneer Educator,* Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Vol. V, (1954-1960), 42 (https://repository.wlu.edu/handle/11021/33115); and Brown, n. 21, at 197, 200.

[26] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1833-1845, May 31, 1843, p. 248

[27] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1833-1845, July 12, 1843, p. 251

[28] White, Rev. William S., *The African-Preacher: An Authentic Narrative* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Board of Education, 1849) 7

soon filled, every new pew was taken, and the size of the congregation greatly increased.[29]

His "first effort was to preach" to the black people on Sabbath afternoon." That worked for a while, but "their practical exclusion from our house of worship had turned them to the Baptist and Methodist churches." As a result, "Only about a dozen, and these chiefly old and infirm, were communicants in our church. Death and removal soon diminished their number to only two or three, and nothing else was done to supply their places. I record this with no little shame and mortification."[30] Each April an annual statistical report itemized the number of church members by category. A line for "Coloured Communicants" was included, and the number varied from 9 to 14 people in the 1850s.[31]

Dr. White then tried a different approach, to hold a Saturday afternoon service for the black people of the church, but "they had become so enamored with a boisterous sort of meeting that they could not relish our calm and quiet method of proceeding." Recognizing the work was "too arduous" for the pastor, the "church employed a younger minister, admirably fitted for the work, to take the oversight of them as his special charge."[32] William T. Price (1830-1921) was appointed in March 1851 to instruct the blacks "in our Congregation on Sabbath afternoon in the absence of the pastor."[33] Price, then 21, graduated from Washington College in 1854, the recipient of a gold medal as the "first honor graduate." Three years later he graduated from Union Seminary and for more than forty years served as a Presbyterian minister in Virginia and West Virginia.[34] A prolific author, Price wrote a Civil War diary about his experiences as an army chaplain. In a letter to the Staunton Spectator, published July 9, 1861, Price pleaded for donations of materials for a hospital in Beverly,[35] the same hospital where Jackson's sister, Laura Arnold, a fervent Union supporter, was helping as a nurse. Though Price "labored faithfully," Dr. White lamented, there was "no visible sign of success. Thus attempt after attempt has failed."[36]

Price lasted less than a year. In December 1851, John Lyle Campbell was instructed by the elders to take "charge of the meetings of the Black people in the Lecture Room on Sabbath afternoon."[37] Two months later, the elders selected Jacob Fuller "to take charge of the Religious instruction of the Negro Children of the Congregation with the authority to take such measures in the matter as he may think advisable." John H. Myers was chosen to "take charge of the Sabbath Evening meetings for the Black people for the remainder of the present month."[38] On March 6, 1852, Dr. John W. Paine and William C. Lewis were appointed to "conduct the Sabbath Evening meetings for the Black People for the present month."[39] In April the elders "Continued the Committee for conducting the Black people's Sabbath Evening meetings."[40]

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[29] Rev. William S. White, D. D., *"Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor* (Harrisonburg: Sprinkle Publications, 2005, originally printed in Richmond by Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1891) 138

[30] Id., at 157

[31] E.g., The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, April 12, 1853, p. 179; and April 16, 1859, p. 309

[32] White, "*Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor*," n. 29, at 157-158

[33] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, March 29, 1851, 140

[34] Historical Sketches of Pocahontas County, West Virginia (Marlinton, West Virginia: Price Brothers Publishers, 1901) (retrieved from www.google.books). William T. Price, *Civil War Diary of William T. Price: "On to Grafton,"* Published 1901, http://pocahontascofare.blogspot.com/p/civil-war-diary-of-william-t-price-on.html.

[35] Staunton (Virginia) Spectator, July 9, 1861 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)

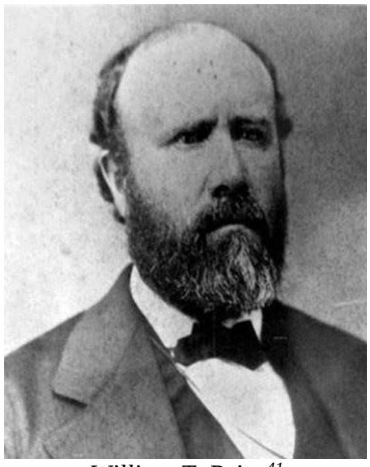
[36] White, "*Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor*, n. 29, at 157-158

[37] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, December 6, 1851, pp. 152-153

[38] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, February 1852, p. 158

[39] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, March 6, 1852, p. 159

[40] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, April 6, 1852, p. 160



William T. Price[41]

John W. Paine (1796-1862), who became an elder in 1824,[42] was a native of Ireland, a physician, and the operator of both a bookstore and a classical school.[43] William C. Lewis (1796-1868), an elder from 1838 until his death,[44] was Commissioner of the Rockbridge County Court Chancery. He owned the slave known as Jim Lewis, who was hired out to Jackson during the Civil War. A significant character in the book and movie "Gods and Generals,"[45] Jim was a "beloved figure around Jackson's headquarters," and led Jackson's rider less horse in the Lexington funeral procession.[46] Jackson's wartime account book includes a payment of $150 to W. C. Lewis for "hire of Jim."[47] Lewis owned several slaves in 1860, including a fifty-year old man.[48] An article in the Lexington Gazette dated December 17, 1875, stated that Jim Lewis died in 1864, and called for contributions to erect a headstone over his grave in the cemetery for black people in Lexington.[49]

Jacob Fuller, Jr. (1816-1890), appointed elder in 1851, was Clerk of the Session from 1853 until his death. He operated the Lexington Classical School and was later the librarian at Washington College. Fuller, Jackson, and two other VMI faculty members, J.T.L. Preston and William Gilham, formed a partnership that owned the Lexington Tannery at the southwest corner of Randolph and Henry streets. Jackson also purchased an 18-acre farm east of town from Fuller.[50] John H. Myers (1806-1869), also appointed elder in 1851,[51] was cashier of the Bank of Rockbridge and ran a hardware store. John L. Campbell (1818-1886), the superintendent of the regular Sabbath School for several years, was a professor of chemistry and geology at Washington College from 1851 until his death in 1886.[52]

All of the men mentioned in the Session minutes were prominent citizens and were no doubt sincere in their willingness to provide religious instruction to the black people of the church. Yet their

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[41] (retrieved from https:www.ancestry.com)
[42] Hunter, n. 4, at 175
[43] *1860 Census, Town of Lexington,* Transcribed, corrected, and annotated by Edwin L. Dooley, Jr. (updated 2014), Edwin L. Dooley, Jr. Collection, Washington and Lee Special Collections and Archives (retrieved from https://www.archivesspace.wlu.edu/repositories/5/resources/121)
[44] Hunter, n. 4, at 175
[45] Jeff Shaara, *Gods and Generals* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996). "Gods and Generals," a movie written and directed by Ron Maxwell, released in 2003, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0279111/fullcredits?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm.
[46] Elizabeth Randolph Preston Allan, *A March Past*, ed. by Janet Allan Bryan (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1938) 152
[47] James I. Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, the Soldier, the Legend* (New York: Macmillan Publishing USA, 1997) 290-91
[48] 1860 U.S. Census, Slave Schedule, Rockbridge County, Virginia, p. 2, John B. Brockenbrough (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)
[49] Megan Haley, Graduate Fellow, The Stonewall Jackson House, Lexington, Virginia, "*The African-American Experience in Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's Lexington* (1994) 38-39
[50] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington,* n. 43
[51] Hunter, n. 4, at 175
[52] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington,* n. 43

efforts were largely in vain, in stark contrast to the sustained success of an introverted and eccentric professor in the years to come.

Major Jackson

Thomas J. Jackson moved to Lexington in summer 1851 to assume his new position as professor at Virginia Military Institute. After visiting several churches in town he was granted admission to Lexington Presbyterian, by examination, on November 22, 1851.[53] A few weeks later he told Dr. White that he had visited his "native county," and "was grieved to find that infidelity prevailed in a good deal in that section of our state, and that some of my friends and relatives had fallen under its influence." He talked to people there and handed out tracts, but still believed something more was needed.[54]

> "Finally I determined, though painfully conscious of my incapacity – and especially of my want of every quality of an acceptable speaker – I determined on delivering a very brief course of lectures on the Evidences of Christianity. My success greatly exceeded my expectations. And now, if it meets with your approbation, I would like to organize a class of young men in connection with our Sabbath School for the study of the evidences of Christianity."[55]

Dr. White consented and Jackson led the class with "his accustomed correctness and ability. Several of the young men of this class served under, and at least one perished with him in this cruel war."[56] The church's original "Sunday School Record Book" contains detailed attendance records of the regular Sabbath School in the 1850s. The first reference to Jackson was on January 25, 1852.[57] Except for summer breaks from VMI, when he usually traveled, he missed very few Sundays over the next six years.[58]

Lexington had a significant black population in the 1850s. Of the 2,130 people in Lexington, in the 1860 census, there were 43 "Free Negroes" and 601 slaves.[59] Excluding the 250 college students, blacks made up more than one third of the permanent residents. Jackson had lived among and interacted daily with enslaved people all of his life. Born in Clarksburg, Virginia, January 21, 1824, his father Jonathan, a lawyer, owned three slaves in 1820.[60] After his death in 1826, his widow Julia struggled financially and sold them, or they were taken to satisfy Jonathan's debts, because the 1830 census reported her as head of household with no slaves.[61]

Julia married Captain Blake Woodson in November 1830.[62] Woodson had moved to Clarksburg from Cumberland County, Virginia, where he owned a plantation and more than 20 slaves.[63] Blake and Julia moved to Fayette County, Virginia, in 1831. According to family tradition, the children were soon taken to Jackson's Mill in Lewis County, Virginia, to stay with step-grandmother Elizabeth Jackson, because Julia was pregnant and ill. A few weeks later "Uncle Robinson," a slave at Jackson's Mill, took

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[53] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, November 22, 1851, p. 150
[54] White, William S, *Reminiscences of Jackson*, Charles William Dabney Papers, #1412, Southern Historical Collection, Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A copy is in the Stonewall Jackson House collection.
[55] Id.
[56] Id.
[57] Sunday School Record Book, Lexington Presbyterian Church, January 25, 1852
[58] Sunday School Record Book, Lexington Presbyterian Church, July 4, 1858
[59] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington,* n. 43
[60] 1820 U.S. Census, Clarksburg, Harrison County, Virginia, pop. sch., p. 96 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)
[61] 1830 U.S. Census, Clarksburg, Harrison County, Virginia, pop. sch., p. 347 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)
[62] Marriage of Blake B. Woodson to Julia B. Jackson, November 4, 1830, *West Virginia Marriages Index, 1785-1971* (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)
[63] 1810 U.S. Census, Cumberland County, Virginia; and 1820 U.S. Census, Cumberland County, Virginia, pop. sch., p. 322 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com).

the children on a 100-mile journey, on horseback, back to Fayette County as Julia neared death.[64]

Julia died on December 3, 1831, and after Blake's death in early 1833 the two children were taken back to Jackson's Mill.[65] According to the 1830 census, six slaves were owned by Elizabeth Jackson, including one male over 55, perhaps Uncle Robinson.[66] Except for a few trips and short stays with other family members, Thomas lived at Jackson's Mill until he left for West Point in 1842. Jonathan Jackson's half-brother, Cummins E. Jackson, was the dominant force and patriarch at Jackson's Mill, and owned five slaves in 1840, one male and four females.[67]

In August 1841, when Thomas Jackson was 17, Cummins sent him to Parkersburg, Virginia, a journey of 80 miles, to pick up machinery. Thomas asked a friend, Thaddeus Moore, to come along, and Moore wrote an account of the trip titled "Diary of a journey to Parkersburg on the Ohio, by Thomas Jackson and myself." It relates several interesting stories, including a chance encounter with Sam Houston, who was traveling to his native Rockbridge County. Moore described passing a farm where the owner was "burying one of his negroes." "Thom seemed to be sorry for the race and thought they should be free and have a chance, and said that Joe Lightburn said they should be taught to read so they could read the Bible, and he thought so too." Seventeen years later Jackson would stand accused of teaching slaves to read.[68]

Jackson's views about slavery were typical for his time and place. His nephew, Thomas Jackson Arnold, lived with the Jacksons from October 1858 to June 1859, when he was 13, to attend school for a term. Jackson was no abolitionist, Arnold observed to a Jackson biographer in 1931.[69] In his 1916 book about his uncle, Arnold quoted a letter to him from Jackson dated January 26, 1861. It contains one of few statements in Jackson's words about secession and slavery:

> In this county there is a strong Union feeling, and the union party have unanimously nominated Samuel McDowell Moore and Jas. B. Dorman as delegates to the convention, and I expect that they will be elected by a large majority. I am in favor of making a thorough trial for peace, and if we fail in this, and the state is invaded, to defend it with a terrific resistance… I desire to see the state use every influence she possesses in order to procure an honorable adjustment of our troubles, but if after having done so the free states, instead of permitting us to enjoy the rights guaranteed to us by the Constitution of our country, should endeavor to subjugate us, and thus excite our slaves to servile insurrection in which our families will be murdered without quarter or mercy, it becomes us to wage such a war as will bring hostilities to a speedy close. People who are anxious to bring on war don't know what they are bargaining for - they don't see all the horrors that must accompany such an event. For myself I have never as yet been induced to believe that Virginia will even have to leave the Union. I feel pretty well satisfied that the Northern people love the Union more than they do their peculiar notions of slavery, and that they will prove it to us when satisfied that we are in earnest about leaving the Confederacy unless they do us justice.[70]

Jackson was opposed to secession, but as a strong state's rights advocate, he left no doubt where his

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[64] Thomas Jackson Arnold, *Early Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson – "Stonewall" Jackson* (Richmond: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1916) (reprinted, Richmond: The Dietz Press, Inc., 1957) 27-28

[65] Neale, Thomas. Letter to Lewis Maxwell, June 6, 1833, *Colonel Edward Jackson, 1759-1828, Revolutionary Soldier*, Compiled by Nancy Ann Jackson, PhD, and Linda Brake Meyers, (Franklin, NC: Genealogy Publishing Service, 1995) 219-220, citing the Cook Collection at West Virginia University.

[66] 1830 U.S. Census, Lewis County, Virginia, pop. sch., p. 243 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)

[67] 1840 U.S. Census, Lewis County, Virginia, pop. sch., pp. 42-43 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)

[68] Roy Bird Cook, *The Family and Early Life of Stonewall Jackson* (Richmond: Old Dominion Press, Inc., 1925) 73-80

[69] Arnold, Thomas Jackson. Letter to Roy Bird Cook, December 14, 1931, Cook, Roy Bird (1886-1961), Collector, Papers. A & M 1561, Box 21, Folder F10, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University

[70] Arnold, n. 64, at 293-294

loyalty would lie if secession came. His reference to the "peculiar notions of slavery" held by northerners is the most revealing statement by him about it.

Jackson's widow, Mary Anna (Anna) Morrison Jackson, wrote a book about her husband, more than a quarter century after his death. She deemed it necessary to justify her husband's role in the war:

> It has been said that General Jackson "fought for slavery and the Southern Confederacy with the unshaken conviction that both were to endure." This statement is true with regard to the latter, but I am very confident that he would never have fought for the sole object of perpetuating slavery. It was for her *constitutional rights* that the South resisted the North, and slavery was only comprehended among those rights. He found the institution a responsible and troublesome one, and I have heard him say that he would prefer to see the negroes free, but he believed that the Bible taught that slavery was sanctioned by the Creator himself, who maketh men to differ, and instituted laws for the bond and the free. He therefore accepted slavery, as it existed in the Southern States, not as a thing desirable in itself, but as allowed by Providence for ends which it was not his business to determine. At the same time, the negroes had no truer friend, no greater benefactor. Those who were servants in his own house he treated with the greatest kindness, and never was more happy or more devoted to any work than that of teaching the colored children in his Sunday-school.[71]

The "servants in his house" were five of their seven slaves.[72] Three were purchased in Lexington, the first a man named Albert, in about 1855. Albert asked Jackson to "buy him on the condition that he might be permitted to emancipate himself by a return of the purchase-money, as he would be able to pay it in annual instalments." He was hired out to VMI and local hotels for several years. J.T.L. Preston wrote to Jackson on February 2, 1863 that "Albert is of the opinion that he has fully paid you the sum stipulated by you, and that the hire for the past year (that just paid to me by Johnson) is coming to him. I promised that I would examine his papers for him."[73] Jackson's estate inventory, prepared only four months later, did not list Albert.[74]

Amy was purchased about 1856 because she "was about to be sold for debt," and "sought from him a deliverance from her troubles." Jackson "gave her a home in a good Christian family, until he had one of his own."[75] After he and Anna moved into the Washington Street house in 1858, Amy became the family cook.[76] Emma, a four-year-old orphan, was purchased in October 1860 while Anna was at a water cure facility in Northampton, Massachusetts. Though he tried to persuade Anna that Emma would make a good helper, his primary reason for buying her was that an older woman in town was unable to take care of her.[77]

Anna's father, Robert Hall Morrison, of Lincoln County, North Carolina, gave the couple at least four slaves in 1857 as part of a marriage dowry. Three of them, Hetty, Anna's nursemaid as a child, and her teenage sons Cyrus and George, lived with the Jacksons.[78] The fourth, Ann, was hired out by Jackson in January 1859 to Dan B. Jordan of Lexington.[79] Later that year Jackson sold her because she

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[71] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1892) (reprinted, Harrisonburg: Sprinkle Publications, 1995) 142-143

[72] Larry Spurgeon, *Stonewall Jackson's Slaves* (2018)

[73] Preston, J.T.L. Letter to Thomas J. Jackson, February 2, 1863; Cook, Roy Bird (1886-1961), Collector, Papers. A & M 1561, Box 21, Folder F3, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University

[74] Appraisement of the Estate of Gen. Thos. J. Jackson, Made June 5, 1863, Clerk of the Court's office, Rockbridge County Courthouse, Will Book 17, p. 204.

[75] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, at 115

[76] Id., at 115-116

[77] Id., at 119. Larry Spurgeon, *Stonewall Jackson's Slaves* (2018).

[78] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, at 116-117

[79] Promissory Note dated January 29, 1859, Shaffner Collection (copy in the Stonewall Jackson House museum collection)

was "incorrigible."[80] She was about 14 at the time.[81]

The image of Jackson as the "black man's friend," was fostered by his first biographer, Robert L. Dabney, a chaplain in Jackson's army,[82] and burnished by Anna and others. The notion that he accepted the institution of slavery, without question, yet took a particular interest in, and even risked prosecution, for work devoted to slaves, was explained by Margaret (Maggie) Junkin Preston, the older sister of his first wife Elinor (Ellie): "Jackson's interest in the negro race was very great, not because they were slaves, but because they were human beings with souls to be saved. He accepted slavery as it existed in the Southern States, not as a thing desirable in itself, but as allowed by Providence for ends which it was not his business to determine."[83]

The Genesis of Jackson's School

Ellie and Maggie were the daughters of George Junkin, president of Washington College. Jackson and Ellie lived on campus with the Junkins after their marriage in August 1853. After Ellie's death in October 1854, Rev. Junkin invited Jackson to stay, and he did not move out until his engagement to Anna in spring 1857.[84] Maggie lived with her father until her marriage to widower J.T.L. Preston in August 1857, and she became very close to Jackson during those years.[85] She was a well-known poet and novelist, called the "poetess of the south,"[86] and her account of Jackson's School was published in the Sunday School Times in 1887.[87] Anna included it in her book, "Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson," without attribution, but the publishers attached it as an appendix to the second printing, giving full credit to Maggie.[88]

Maggie recalled that the idea for the school came from a conversation she had with Jackson:

> [t]wo persons were conversing together as to what could be done for the better religious instruction of the Negroes around them. They lived in the heart of Virginia, where there was no carrying out of the stringent laws against any instruction of the slaves which their white owners were willing to give them. Portions of all the churches, in the town of which I speak, were set apart for their use, and large numbers of them belonged to the different denominations.[89]

Maggie said "I have a great notion to announce among the servants of our neighbors that I will have a Bible class for them in my father's study every Sunday afternoon."[90] Jackson suggested a program for the "servants at large." When Maggie reminded him that earlier attempts had failed, he replied:

> "But it shall succeed if I undertake it, because I make it a point to weigh all circumstances before I act; and if the thing is feasible, and I am right, then I make it succeed, if that is possible. Now this is the plan I would adopt: So that no fault could be

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[80] Arnold, Thomas Jackson. Letter to Roy Bird Cook, December 14, 1931, Cook, Roy Bird (1886-1961), Collector, Papers. A & M 1561, Box 21, Folder F10, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University

[81] Excerpt from the Graham/Morrison book, copy in the Stonewall Jackson House, Folder on Jackson's Slaves. Original in Collection of North Caroliniana presented by Mr. and Mrs. James O. Moore. VC097, G74a, 1782. The Library of North Carolina, Rare Books. [Cp 326.9 G74].

[82] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson* (Reprinted, Harrisonburg: Sprinkle Publications, 1983) 59-60 (originally printed, Boston: Scrymgrour, Whitcomb & Co., 1865) 94-95

[83] Margaret J. Preston, *Personal Reminiscences of Stonewall Jackson,* The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, Vol. 10, No. 32, October 1886, 935-936

[84] Jackson, Thomas J. Letter to Laura Arnold, February 26, 1857: "I am still at Dr. Junkin's." Arnold, n. 60, at 252.

[85] Randolph P. Shaffner, *The Father of Virginia Military Institute: A Biography of Colonel J.T.L. Presong, CSA* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2014) 111, 116-117

[86] Mary Price Coulling, *Margaret Junkin Preston: A Biography* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1993) xiii-xiv

[87] Preston, *Personal Reminiscences*, n. 83

[88] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix

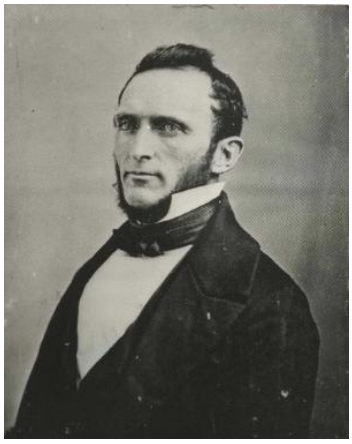
[89] Id., Appendix, at 1

[90] Id.

found with my action, I will go around to the principal householders in the town, and ask their permission to gather their servants into an afternoon Sunday school. Then, after I have so gathered them, for two or three Sundays, I will undertake them myself."[91]

When she offered to help, Jackson answered that he would welcome it, but "let me try my own powers of organization first, and let me test the manageability of the Negroes." He continued that if "they are docile, and willing to receive instruction, then I'll open the lecture-room doors to you, and to as many other teachers as are willing to assist."[92]

Margaret Junkin Preston (1820-1897)[93]



Thomas J. Jackson (1855)[94]

Jackson visited churches and slave-owners and "There was not a single objection made to the plan proposed." The slaveowners "universally hailed it with pleasure."[95] The school began in fall 1855,[96] and Jackson "soon gathered a large school with an adequate supply of teachers both male and female."[97] He told the assembled group at the first meeting that he needed them to make a commitment

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[91] Id., Appendix, at 2-3
[92] Id.
[93] https://civilwar.vt.edu/margaret-junkin-preston-poetess-of-the-south/
[94] VMI Archives Photographs Collection (digitalcollections.vmi.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15821coll7/id/407/rec/4). Thomas Jackson Arnold informed Roy Bird Cook that this photograph was taken in Parkersburg, shortly after Ellie's death. Arnold, Thomas Jackson. Letter to Roy Bird Cook, December 9, 1924, Cook, Roy Bird (1886-1961), Collector, Papers, A & M 1561, Box 21, Folder F3, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University. Jackson visited Parkersburg in summer 1855. Arnold, n. 64, at 228.
[95] Id.
[96] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, at 77-78
[97] White, *Reminiscences of Jackson*, n. 54

to attend regularly, and assured them "'there are plenty of young white men and young white women who would be glad to teach, and who will come every Sunday to do it.'" When he asked them to come forward, to give their names, fifty people did so. After a few weeks he asked several "ladies and gentlemen of the town" to assist and he "divided off the school into regular classes."[98]

Jackson expressed his feelings about the new school to his Aunt Clementine Neale. "My Heavenly Father has condescended to use me as an instrument in getting up a large Sabbath-school for the negroes here. He has greatly blessed it, and, I trust, all who are connected with it."[99] Maggie recalled "the young superintendent's interest grew with his work; the organization became systematic, even to a rigid degree, but the attendance only increased." The method of teaching was "almost wholly oral, as only a few of the older servants had been taught to read." Brown's Child's Catechism was used, and "in a surprisingly short period many of the larger pupils learned it by heart. The mistresses at home often taught the lesson to their servants, and thus they would come prepared to answer the questions."[100]

Dr. White recalled that Jackson was just as systematic and faithful "in the management of this school as he was in that of his class of educated young men." He made a monthly report to "each family to whom the servants belonged; with the utmost regularity," calling at each home.[101] If necessary, he "conferred with the family about all matters connected with the behavior or misbehavior of the pupils."[102] He "had slips printed with the name of every pupil, on which he made out monthly reports, carrying them himself, every fourth Saturday, to the owners of the pupils, that they might know the truth in regard to their attendance."[103] Jackson's records did not survive,[104] probably because they were never considered part of the official church records, and he kept them at home.

Descriptions of the School

The original church building was located in what is now the northwest corner of the Stonewall Jackson Cemetery on Main Street. A lot on the southeast corner of Main and Nelson streets was purchased in 1835 to construct a "lecture room" to hold Sunday school classes and other church meetings. A Greek-styled building with four columns and a single room was built on the 33-foot facing along Main Street. The new church building was built adjacent to the lecture room in the 1840s.[105]

Jackson's School met in the lecture room,[106] and the schedule was regimented. A bell rang at 2:45 p.m. calling the "scholars" - a term also used for those who attended the regular Sabbath School.[107] At exactly 3:00 p.m. the doors closed – late arrivers were not allowed in – and Jackson began with a hymn, often Amazing Grace.[108] Though "wholly ignorant of the science of music, having neither ear nor voice for singing," he learned to sing it so that the "school would recognize it and carry it along." [109] He followed with a prayer and provided a lesson from the catechism to the entire group. The scholars were then divided into smaller groups led by the other teachers.[110]

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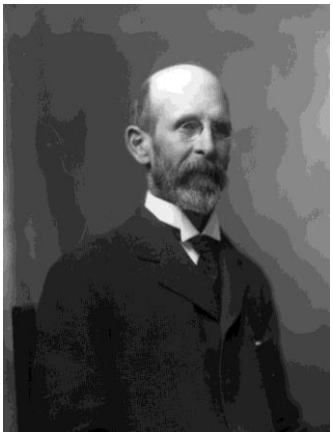
[98] Id., Appendix, at 4
[99] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, at 60
[100] Id., Appendix, at 4
[101] White, William S, *Reminiscences of Jackson*, n. 54
[102] White, *"Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor*, n. 29, at 158
[103] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at 4-5
[104] Brown, n. 21, at 197, 200
[105] Hunter, n. 4, at 20, 32. James G. Leyburn, *Lexington Presbyterians, 1819-1882: Personalities, Problems, Peculiarities,* Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Vol. VIII, (1970-1974), 33, (https://repository.wlu.edu/handle/11021/33777).
[106] The Greensboro (North Carolina) Patriot, April 14, 1880 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[107] Jackson, Thomas. Letter to J. L. Campbell, June 7. 1858, Virginia Military Institute, VMI Online Archives Digital Collections (retrieved from http://digitalcollections.vmi.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15821coll4). The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, pp. 260-262.
[108] Hunter, n. 4, at 68
[109] White, *"Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor*, n. 29, at 158
[110] Hunter, n. 4, at 68



John Lyle Campbell[111]

Jackson described the class in a June 7, 1858 letter to John L. Campbell, superintendent of the regular Sabbath School. Campbell requested the report because he planned to attend a Sunday school convention.[112] Jackson began, "In compliance with your request I proceed to give you a statement respecting the condition of the Lexington Colored Sabbath School. But in doing so, I feel it unnecessary to say more than a few words, as you are already acquainted with its leading features."[113]

> The school is usually opened by singing part of a hymn, which should be announced the previous Sabbath. This is followed by reading one or more verses from the Bible, with explanations & applications; this is succeeded by prayer. After this each class is instructed by its teacher from the Bible, catechism and hymn book. At the close of the school which is near forty five minutes from the opening, there is a public examination on two verses of the child catechism, published by our Board. These verses should be announced the previous Sabbath. After the close of the examination, the school is dismissed, the remaining part of the opening hymn having been sung immediately after the examination.
>
> The system of reward you are acquainted with, and the premiums so far have been near a dozen Testaments and one Bible. The day of their presentation is the first Sabbath of each month. Several scholars are studying the shorter catechism at the present time. Each teacher keeps a class book in which is noted each scholar's department in school. The lesson should be taught one Sabbath, with a view to examination & mark on the next. Each teacher at the close of the month gives me a circular (blanks having been furnished) exhibiting for each scholar the manner in which the lesson has been prepared, the conduct in school, no. of lates, absences, &c. from these circulars, I make a monthly entry in the record book, which contains not only the no. of lates & absences, but also the names of the teachers, scholars, owners, persons with whom the scholars are living, the lates & absences of teachers, and a weekly record of the proceedings of the school. By reference to the record book, I find 91 to be the no. of scholars there reported.[114]

Five days after he wrote this letter, Jackson gave a quarterly report to the elders, "of the Condition of that school, which report was received and warmly approved by Session." Both Anna Jackson and

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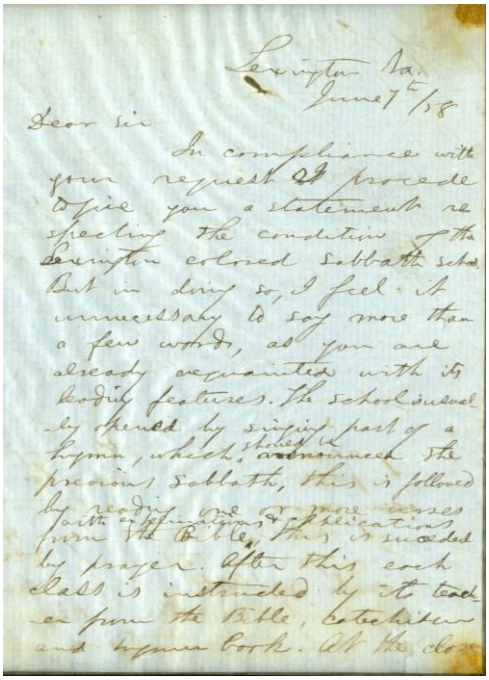
[111] Washington & Lee Special Collections and Archives, Digital Collections, PP0006, Michael Miley Photographic Collection (http://hdl.handle.net/11021/33291)

[112] Jackson, Thomas. Letter to J. L. Campbell, June 7. 1858, n. 108. Jackson closed the letter with the statement, "Praying that the S. school convention may be a great blessing to the cause & to yourself I remain your attached friend."

[113] Id.

[114] Id.

George Junkin were accepted as members by the elders at the same meeting.[115]



Thomas J. Jackson to John L. Campbell, June 7, 1858 (1st page)[116]

The attendance ranged from 80 to 100.[117] Most of them were children, recalled Maggie, though when the school was founded Jackson "addressed himself to some of the most influential men and women among the slave population whom he knew, and found them willing to send their children or come themselves to the school."[118] Ten to twelve teachers assisted, including Anna, who wrote that when she moved to Lexington after their marriage in July 1857, she proposed to teach a Sunday School class to white children. Her husband "preferred that my labors should be given to the colored children, believing it was more important and useful to put the strong hand of the Gospel under the ignorant African race, to lift them up." Like Maggie, Anna believed that "His interest in that race was simply because they had souls to save."[119]

Both Prestons taught in the school, as did Thomas L. Preston (1831-1895), the eldest son of J.T.L. Preston by his first wife, Sally Carothers Preston, who died in 1856.[120] Thomas pastored a church in Beverly, Virginia before the war – the same town where Jackson's sister Laura lived - and served as the minister of Lexington Presbyterian Church from 1883 until his death.[121] His sister, Elizabeth ("Libbie") Preston Allan (1848-1933), taught in the school after the war.[122]

George H. Moffett was a 16-year old Washington College student in 1860, when a friend asked him to substitute as a teacher in the school. He was a newspaperman after the war in several cities, including Portland, Oregon, where he was interviewed in 1893. The interview was published in Century

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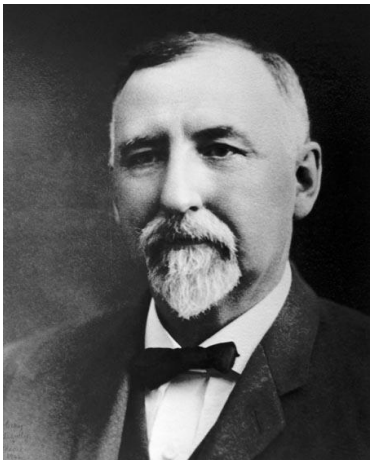
[115] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1845-1859, June 12, 1858, p. 299 (Lexington Presbyterian Church records)
[116] Jackson, Thomas. Letter to J. L. Campbell, June 7. 1858, n. 108
[117] Hunter, n. 4, at 68
[118] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at 2-3
[119] Id., at 77-78
[120] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, April 1856, p. 229
[121] Hunter, n. 4, at 96-103. An 1895 newspaper article mentioned that Thomas L. Preston had taught in Jackson's School; see Richmond Dispatch, January 1, 1875 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com).
[122] Shaffner, n. 85, at 96. The Livingston (Alabama) Journal, June 22, 1883 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com).

Magazine,[123] and versions of it printed in newspapers, including one in the Chicago Tribune titled "Stonewall Jackson's Sunday-School." Moffett recalled a speech given by Jackson at a political meeting during the 1860 presidential election, stating that he deplored the institution of slavery, "Yet he was firmly convinced that its existence was not only guaranteed by the national constitution, but sanctioned by a divinely inspired scripture." Jackson was a "frequent visitor in the house where, as a college student, I boarded, and I had more than once heard him express in private conversation the same convictions which he, on that one occasion only, declared in public." Their "only point of intimate contact lay in the fact I taught a class in the now famous colored Sunday-school," a room filled with children age 6 to 15. Moffett believed the school, for which Jackson was the superintendent, "lay closer to his heart that any other object on earth except his home and family."[124]

Moffett also related two encounters with Jackson during the war. Though "much under legal age," he served as a private in the cavalry. In August 1862, the day before Jackson "drove back Pope's army in the battle of Cedar Run," Moffett was riding north from Orange Court-House to join his regiment on the Rapidan. He overtook infantry on the road to Culpepper, and at the head of the column, "I found General Jackson, his cap drawn down over his forehead, riding along and apparently buried in deep meditation of his strategic plans." Moffett rode by in "silent salute, but he recognized me," and riding up alongside, began to talk about the school. "It was a great gratification to him, he said, that the school was being kept up in his absence." On the first day of the Second Battle of Manassas, August 28, 1862, Jackson rode up to Major Patrick, the commander of Moffett's cavalry unit, turned to Moffett, and gave him an order to ride forward to call in some soldiers who were needlessly exposed. Jackson then recognized him and said "Oh! I had a letter from Dr. White, and he tells me that our Sunday-school is still kept up."[125]



George H. Moffett (1845-1912)[126]

An anonymous article about Jackson was published in a Greensboro, North Carolina, newspaper in 1880, written by an unnamed correspondent of the Wheeling (West Virginia) Register. The author was in fact Moffett, because some details overlap with the 1893 interview, and he was at the Wheeling Register in the early 1880s. In that piece Moffett stressed that Jackson was viewed differently by the "cadets" as compared to the "students" of Washington College. To the latter Jackson was a war hero, and they had no reason to fear the "austerity of his manner" in the classroom. Moffett described his first Sunday as a teacher in the lecture room:

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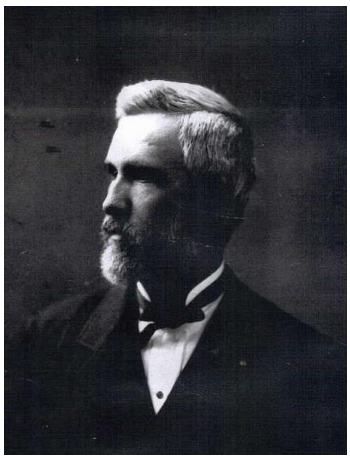
[123] George W. Cable, *The Gentler Side of Two Great Southerners*, The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, Vol. 25, December 1893, 292-294 (retrieved from https://books.google.com)
[124] Chicago Tribune, December 12, 1893 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[125] Id.
[126] (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com, public member tree)

> I found the room well filled with colored children, whose clean clothes and shining ebony faces evinced their appreciation of the interest taken in them by the white folks. I found present a dozen or more young white ladies and gentlemen who acted as teachers, and standing by a table on the inside of the railing surrounding the pulpit was the Superintendent of the school.[127]

The school began at 3:00 p.m., and the ever-punctual Jackson began with "Let us pray." In the style of Presbyterians, Jackson stood as he prayed, and the prayer "was striking for its beautiful simplicity," no "superfluous ornamentation," no "rhetorical flourishes." It was the "simple pleading of an earnest soul," by a man "conscious of his own weakness and praying for strength."[128]

Deacon Jackson

By the mid-1850s the office of deacon had fallen into "disuse" and the Synod of Virginia called upon churches to re-establish the office. The congregation at Lexington Presbyterian voted on December 26, 1856 to elect three deacons - Jackson, Alexander L. Nelson, and John W. Barclay.[129] Alexander Lockhart Nelson (1827-1910), a native of Augusta County, Virginia, was a professor of mathematics at Washington College for more than fifty years – from 1854 until 1906.[130] John W. Barclay (1823-1907) owned a store across from the court house that sold groceries and hardware, and was superintendent of Lexington Schools in 1860.[131]



Alexander L. Nelson[132]

On December 30 the new deacons "met with session to consult and determine what should be regarded as the appropriate sphere of labor & duty for the Deacons & Elders respectively."[133] On Sunday, January 3, 1857, they were "solemnly ordained in the presence of the congregation by the laying on of the hands of the Pastor, the Ruling Elders meanwhile standing by after the ordinations, each member of the Session gave to the Deacons the right hand of fellowship."[134] Jackson was soon elected chairman, and the deacons divided the congregation into districts, to personally visit homes to solicit funds for charity. Jackson was assigned the first district, "which should coincide with the plank road leading from Staunton & should run with the plank road & Main Street to the old boat yard road at the

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[127] The Greensboro (North Carolina) Patriot, April 14, 1880 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[128] Id.
[129] Hunter, n. 4, at 69, 72
[130] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington*, n. 43
[131] Id.
[132] (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com)
[133] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, December 30, 1857, p. 283
[134] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, p. 1

upper end of town, & thence along said road to the limits of the Congregation."[135]

The deacons were responsible for overseeing pew rentals, church maintenance, and raising funds for the poor. On June 2, 1858, the deacons noted there were no vacant pews, and approved resolutions to recommend increased accommodation, stating that "we believe there is a strong disposition among the colored population to worship with us & that we earnestly solicit the Session to consider the necessity of affording them accommodations."[136]

Accused of a Crime

Anna gave birth to the couple's first child, Mary Graham Jackson, on April 30, 1858. The very next day Jackson was accused by three leaders of the legal community of violating Virginia law. Col. Samuel McDowell Reid (1790-1869), a veteran of the War of 1812, was the Clerk of the Court, and served as trustee of Ann Smith Academy and Washington College for fifty years. He owned Mulberry Hill plantation near Lexington, with more than sixty slaves.[137] Jackson knew him well – Reid was an elder of Lexington Presbyterian and had helped organized the Franklin Society, a debate club that included Jackson as a member.[138] James Dorman Davidson (1808-1882), also a member of the church,[139] was a successful lawyer.[140] William McLaughlin (1828-1898), was a member of the VMI Board of Visitors from 1858-1861. Later he served as a captain in the Rockbridge Artillery, a lieutenant colonel of artillery for the Confederate Army, and as a judge.[141]

James Dorman Davidson[142]

Davidson described the incident in a letter to the Lexington Gazette published August 16, 1876. He recalled that he left his office on Saturday evening, May 1, 1858, and walking home "met Maj. Jackson on the pavement in front of the Court House in company with" Reid and McLaughlin. "They were conversing on the subject of his Sunday School."

> Col. Reid said to him, "I have examined the Statute and conferred with the Commonwealth's attorney. Your Sunday School is an 'unlawful assembly.'" This seemed to fret him much. Mr. McLaughlin then said to him that he had also examined the question, and that his school was against the letter of the law. This fretted him still

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[135] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, January 24, 1858, p. 5. Dabney, n 83, at 97.
[136] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, June 2, 1858, pp. 8-9
[137] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington*, n. 43
[138] Hunter, n. 4, at 92
[139] Id., at 42
[140] Dooley, *1860 Census, Town of Lexington*, n. 43
[141] Id.
[142] (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com -public member tree)

> more. I then said to him "Major, whilst I lament that we have such a statute in our Code, I am satisfied that your Sunday School is an 'unlawful assembly,' and probably the Grand Jury will take it up and test it." This threw him off his guard, and he replied with warmth: "Sir, if you were, as you should be, a Christian man, you would not think or say so." Thus also thrown off my guard, I replied tartly, in words not now rememberd (sic); when he turned upon his heel and walked to his house on the opposite side of the street.[143]

Davidson soon began to rebuke himself for "my rudeness to Maj. Jackson." After dinner, as he wrote a letter of apology, Jackson knocked on his door, and said, "Major Davidson, I am afraid I wounded your feelings this evening. I have called to apologize to you." Davidson replied "no apology from you to me. I am now writing my apology to you." They talked for more than thirty minutes, and as he left Jackson said "Mr. Davidson, these are the things that bring men together and make them know each other the better."[144]

The phrase "unlawful assembly," was used in two related statutes in Virginia's revised code of 1849. Though Davidson did not explain why they believed the school constituted an "unlawful assembly," a review of the statutes makes plain they believed the scholars were being taught to read. The first statute outlawed three types of assembly:

> Every assemblage of negroes for the purpose of religious worship, when such worship is conducted by a negro, and every assemblage of negroes for the purpose of instruction in reading or writing, or in the night time for any purpose, shall be an unlawful assembly.[145]

This statute targeted black offenders, and the local justice of the peace "may order such negro to be punished with stripes," meaning, typically, 39 lashes of a whip.[146] The second statute was more problematic for Jackson:

> If a white person assemble with negroes for the purpose of instructing them to read or write, or if he associate with them in an unlawful assembly, he shall be confined in jail not exceeding six months and fined not exceeding one hundred dollars…[147]

Jackson's primary purpose was religious instruction, but since the concern of the Virginia legislature was that literate slaves were more likely to foment rebellion, any literacy training, even as a byproduct, would have been considered a violation of law.

The issue was whether scholars were actually being taught to read. Jackson did not directly admit or deny it, though his comeback to Davidson could be construed as a tacit admission. Maggie's statement that the instruction was "almost wholly oral, as only a few of the older servants had been taught to read,"[148] has been interpreted by some writers to mean that reading was taught.[149] A more plausible construction is that because some older scholars could read, they were provided written materials, but, because most could not read, oral instruction was necessary for them. Written materials were being distributed, including Bibles and "testaments," as Jackson described to Campbell, and so the

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[143] J. D. Davison, "Stonewall Jackson and his Negro. Sund. School," Lexington Gazette, August 16, 1876
[144] Id.
[145] The Code of Virginia, 1849, Title 54, Chapter 198, Section 31 (retrieved from https://ia802607.us.archive.org/21/items/codevirginia00unkngoog/codevirginia00unkngoog.pdf)
[146] Id.
[147] Id., Section 32
[148] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at 5-7
[149] E.g., DeLaney, Jr., n. 24, at 142. Richard G. Williams, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson: The Black Man's Friend* (Nashville: Cumberland House, 2006) 108-109.

three men may have simply assumed that reading was being taught.

Davidson's account did not mention if legal action was pursued. Jackson's granddaughter, Julia Christian Preston, wrote more than a century later that "There was so much opposition in the little town to this venture, that Rockbridge county issued a warrant against Major Jackson and Col. Preston, which was never served and mysteriously disappeared after the Major become 'Stonewall.'"[150] She may have heard that story from her grandmother, but the court records for 1858 have no reference to a grand jury action against Jackson or Preston,[151] and Jackson became "Stonewall" more than three years after the encounter.

Mystery will always surround the incident, but if anything, its significance has been understated. Three community leaders, including the Clerk of the Court, accused Jackson of a crime that could lead to six months in jail. Reid had consulted with the Commonwealth's attorney about it, and Davidson predicted that the grand jury would take it up. With Jackson's respect for figures of authority, the accusations must have stunned and unsettled him. Curiously, Reid, as an elder of the church, could have taken direct, and discreet, measures within the church Session against Jackson, raising the question whether he had discussed his concerns with the other elders. The three men may have intended only to frighten Jackson into making changes, but whether their motives were sincere or sinister, the only certainty is that the school continued.

A Matter of Health

Jackson was well known for his obsessions over health, but several factors indicate that when he returned to VMI in September 1858, after his summer break, he was suffering from a significant health problem. His name does not appear as either present or absent in the regular Sabbath School records after July 1858, so he had stepped down by September.[152] On September 11, he asked the elders to appoint an assistant superintendent for the school, and James Thaddeus McCrum (1834-1897) was chosen.[153] A native of Pennsylvania, the 24-year-old McCrum operated a pharmacy and later married Dr. White's daughter Harriet.[154]

Then, on October 2, Jackson informed the elders "that he believed that his impaired health made it his duty to resign the offices of both Deacon & Super/t of the Col/d Sabbath School." His resignation as superintendent was accepted, and the "election of a successor was postponed till next meeting."[155] The elders had no power to "release him from an office conferred by the congregation," so the resignation request for the position of deacon was slated for a congregation meeting on October 11. A resolution approved on October 11 read:

> The following minute was submitted by JTL Preston and unanimously passed. "Maj TJ Jackson having presented thro. the Session of the Church his resignation as Deacon because of infirm health, on motion it was resolved – 1st That it is with sorrow that the Congregation learn that in the Providence of God the labors of this Brother are for the present suspended in a field where he was serving the Church to edification. 2nd That the Congregation decline to receive the resignation thus conscientiously presented, but do hereby relieve the Brother from the discharge of the duties of the same with the hope that in due time Gods good providence will enable him to resume the functions of the office

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[150] Julia Jackson Christian Preston, *A Patchwork Quilt of Memories* (1969) 20

[151] The Law Order book for 1858 was reviewed in the Rockbridge County Circuit Court Clerk's office on June 19, 2019.

[152] Sunday School Record Book, Lexington Presbyterian Church

[153] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, 1845-1859, September 11, 1858, p. 300 (Lexington Presbyterian Church records)

[154] 1860 U.S. Census, Rockbridge County, Virginia, pop. sch., p. 141, dwell. 1047, fam. 1047, John B. Brockenbrough (retrieved from www.Ancestry.com). Virginia, Select Marriages, 1785-1940 (retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com).[154] White, *"Stonewall" Jackson's Pastor*, n. 29, at 221.

[155] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, October 2, 1858, p. 301

of Deacon. Moved by Prof. JL Campbell and carried…[156]

On October 30, the elders expressed "their great satisfaction that Maj. Jackson did not press his resignation as Deacon of this Church, & that he was temporarily released from the duties of his Office by the Congregation until he should regain his health."[157]

The minutes for the deacons' meeting on December 27, 1858, mention two newly elected deacons, J.G. Pole and McCrum, and state that "Major Jackson having been relieved from all the duties of Deacon on account of ill health by a vote of the congregation, was not present."[158] That same month the elders agreed "the teachers in the Col. S. School should select their own Superintendent."[159] McCrum was their choice, because he made a report to the Session in June 1859 as "superintendent of the coloured Sabbath School." In receiving the report, the elders "expressed gratification at the success that seemed to be attending the school."[160] Church records do not reflect if Jackson was ever reinstated as superintendent, though Moffett referred to him as "superintendent" and leading the class in fall 1860.[161]

Jackson's leave of absence lasted one year. The deacon's minutes for October 5, 1859, state that "Since Major Jackson has resumed the duties of Deacon it is deemed advisable to divide the congregation into <u>five</u> districts."[162] On November 7, the deacons, expressed their pleasure in his return:

> Whereas in the mercy of God our friend & brother Major T. J. Jackson, who was hindered for a time by ill health from the discharge of the duties of Deacon, has been restored to such a measure of health & strength as to enable him to enter upon those duties again: Resolved That we express our deep gratitude to God for the blessing to our friend, to ourselves, & to the church.[163]

Given his devotion to the church, and the school, a formal request to resign must have been a difficult decision, presumably triggered by something beyond his normal afflictions. The author of an article on Lexington Presbyterians believed the cause was dyspepsia.[164] Yet, the very fact that he had long struggled but coped with that stomach condition, suggests the culprit may have been something else.

He wrote to Laura the previous June that he would not be visiting her family that summer because he needed to go "North," for medical treatment. "My disease is not understood by my physicians here and I have nearly if not entirely lost my hearing in the right ear & my left ear is diseased, and my nose is internally affected." In July he explained to her that he was being treated by Dr. Carnochan, with a medical college in New York City. A month later he wrote that the doctor said his inflammation went from his tonsil down to his lungs, and he was to have part of the tonsil removed the next day."[165] As late as summer 1859 he complained of "inflammation or irritation of my throat," which had passed down low. He was at White Sulphur Springs, Virginia to "try & get my liver right; as I was disposed to think that the state of the throat depended on that of the liver." He told Laura that his

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[156] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, p. 283. This resolution was found with the Session minutes for December 30, 1857, which is the date the deacons were elected.
[157] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, October 30, 1858, p. 302
[158] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, December 27, 1858, pp. 10-11
[159] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, 1845-1859, December 4, 1858, p. 303
[160] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 3, 1859-1881, June 1859, p. 2
[161] The Greensboro (North Carolina) Patriot, April 14, 1880 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[162] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, October 5, 1859, p. 13
[163] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, November 7, 1859, p. 14
[164] Leyburn, n. 105, at 29, 39
[165] Jackson, Thomas J. Letters to Laura Arnold, June 19, 1858, and July 21, 1858, VMI Archives Digital Collection (http://digitalcollections.vmi.edu/cdm/search/collection/p15821coll4)

liver had been "deranged.[166] By late August 1859, he was pleased to let Laura know that his health was much improved.[167]

Veritas

On November 8, 1860, the Lexington Gazette published a letter about Jackson's School, signed "VERITAS." The tone is authoritative and earnest, and the writer pleaded with citizens and churches to help the church provide religious education to the slaves in town, while scolding them for not doing more to help in the past. The quality of the writing is inelegant and rambling, as evidenced by the first incomplete and almost incoherent sentence:

> Perhaps, all the citizens of Lexington do not know, that there are those in town, who are willing to teach their servants on Sunday evenings; for the benefit of such and also of those who are careless on the subject of having their depedents [sic] instructed we write the following.[168]

The author must have been either Jackson or McCrum. Even if Jackson had not been formally reinstated as superintendent, he was deeply invested in the work, and his leave of absence had ended more than a year before. Though the composition is below his standard work, the timing of the letter fits Jackson's known schedule. It was dated "October 1860,"[169] and he left Lexington in the latter part of October, in his Rockaway carriage, to pick up Anna, who had been in Massachusetts receiving hydrotherapy treatment.[170] Based upon dates in his bankbook, he did not return until the latter part of November.[171] Perhaps he timed it so that he would not be around to face community reaction. Even if McCrum was the author, it is difficult to imagine that he, or anyone else, would have submitted the letter without Jackson's blessing.

The writer explained that "We have been teaching in that school for some time," and stressed the benefits from regular attendance:

> It has pained us often, to see servants of all ages lounging on the street corners, on Sunday evening, rather than attending the School. And, in as much as, we know the complete ignorance of these, the question has forced itself upon us, Who is responsible for the moral state of these persons? - Only one answer can present itself. Manifestly it is not those who teach in the school, for these servants do not attend. Then it can only be their masters and mistresses, who are to answer for them.[172]

Veritas believed that "it seems natural that every one should wish their young servants to attend this school; if not for reason of their welfare, at least it prevents their being in mischief." The masters may have thought their servants were attending, but many did not. Veritas lamented the small attendance of scholars, and the shortage of teachers. Seven or eight scholars were too many for one teacher, and some scholars stayed away because there were not enough teachers. Some did not care to attend, so the masters must compel them to do so.

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[166] Jackson, Thomas J. Letter to Laura Arnold, August 13, 1859, VMI Archives Digital Collection (http://digitalcollections.vmi.edu/cdm/search/collection/p15821coll4)
[167] Jackson, Thomas J. Letter to Laura Arnold, August 27, 1859, VMI Archives Digital Collection (http://digitalcollections.vmi.edu/cdm/search/collection/p15821coll4)
[168] Lexington Gazette, November 8, 1860. The letter was transcribed from the original set of Lexington Gazette papers in the Special Collections and Archives at Washington & Lee University. I wish to thank Seth McCormick-Goodhart with Special Collections.
[169] Id.
[170] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, at 135-136
[171] Mark A. Snell, Graduate Fellow, The Stonewall Jackson House, *Bankers, Businessmen, and Benevolence: An Analysis of the Antebellum Finances of Thomas J. Jackson* (1989), Exhibit C
[172] Lexington Gazette, November 8, 1860, n. 169

Then came a scolding of the other churches in town: "We fear that many of other denominations, take no interest in this work, because they consider it as a Presbyterian school. To such we would say, that they should bear in mind, that this is a monopoly among the Presbyterians, only because they, 'faithful among the faithless found,' receive no help from other churches." The writer asked whether the masters "suppose all the servants about Lexington are in a state of much greater moral development, than their kindred race in Africa? We fear, and with great reason, that this is not the case with many." The letter closed with a request for families to send one member to teach in the school, asserting that the attendance, which averaged between 70 and 80, may then increase.[173]

After Jackson

In April 1861, after more than five years of devoted attention to his school, Jackson, "with much regret, relinquished it to enter the army," in the words of Dr. White.[174] Maggie believed "There was nothing except his home from which the Major tore himself away with such keen regret and reluctance as from his beloved colored Sunday school; and his pupils parted with him we cannot say with how many tears."[175] His concern for it never wavered. After the First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run) on July 21, 1861, Dr. White received a letter from Jackson. As people in the post office gathered round to hear details of the battle, Dr. White read the opening lines:

> My dear pastor, in my tent last night, after a fatiguing day's service, I remembered that I had failed to send you my contribution for our colored Sunday-school. Enclosed you will find my check for that object, which please acknowledge at your earliest convenience, and oblige yours faithfully.[176]

When friends visited him during the war, "One of his first inquiries" was "'How is the coloured S. S. prospering.' And if the reports were favorable he never failed to respond with a strong expression of gratitude."[177]

Church records are silent about the status of the school until John L. Campbell was appointed superintendent in March 1863, and Jacob Fuller and John H. Myers were requested to "co-operate with him in efforts to further the interests of Said School."[178] Two months later, on May 10, 1863, Jackson died from pneumonia, following his wounding at Chancellorsville. On May 14 "the following minute was unanimously adopted" by the deacons:

> We meet tonight in sorrow and sadness. A burden of grief is on our hearts. We mourn the death of our dear friend and fellow laborer Lieutenant General Thomas J. Jackson. More than five years ago, when the office of Deacon was established in our church, he was ordained to that office being found like the proto-Christian & deacon martyr 'full of faith & of the Holy Ghost.' He entered upon the discharge of his duties with his characteristic zeal and energy. In his care for the church he was ever vigilant and anxious, in his labors, faithful active & untiring, in his judgment clear & unhesitating, and in his sympathies, kind and affectionate. While thus devotedly engaged in the discharge of his professional & Christian duties, in a life of quiet & retirement which he loved so well; at the call of his country, he buckled on his armor, forsaking the endearments of family and home, and rushed forward in her defence. Rising from rank to rank he pursued his steady way, honored by his country, loved & admired by his troops, and feared by his enemies, and laid down his life at last a martyr in this country's service.

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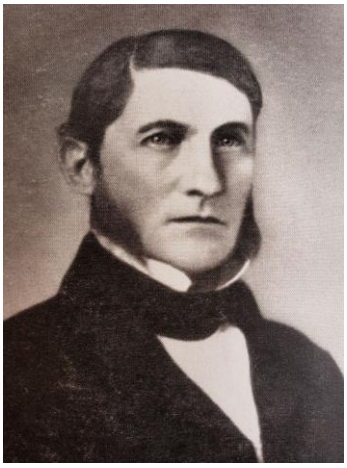
[173] Id.
[174] White, *Reminiscences of Jackson*, n. 54
[175] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at 6
[176] Id., at 181-182
[177] White, *Reminiscences of Jackson*, n. 54
[178] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 3, 1859-1881, March 1863, p. 55

> The nation mourns a hero fallen, & we a friend and Christian co-laborer, ever active in the discharge of his own duty- & prompting us to the performance of ours. His fame is world-wide, and his life and deeds are now a part of his country's history. His chief characteristics were Christian devotion, firmness, promptness, faithfulness & energy. We sympathize with his bereaved family, & mourn with this afflicted church, but submit with patience and humility to the decree of an all-wise God, to who be all the praise and glory, for his useful Christian life & for his triumphant death. Resolved, that we attend his funeral tomorrow as a body.[179]

Few people understood so well the contrast between the quiet deacon and the legend of Stonewall Jackson.

According to Maggie, her husband took over the school, and only he and Jackson served as superintendents over the three decades of its existence.[180] Maggie was mistaken on both counts. McCrum and Campbell served as superintendent, and it was not until Campbell resigned in summer 1864 that J.T.L. Preston was appointed to that position.[181] After the slaves were legally freed, Preston wondered whether the black people in Lexington would still be willing to attend the school. As it happened, "there was no diminution in the attendance upon the school; indeed, it became larger, until it attained to three times its original number." "Every effort was made to teach the children to read." An organ was procured for the school, and "one of the most brilliant musicians in the town conducted the music every Sunday."[182]



J.T.L. Preston (1811-1890)[183]

References to Jackson's School began to surface in newspapers after the war. In 1866, a Richmond newspaper reported on a meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. Reverend J. W. Jones told the association there was a "colored Sabbath School" at Lexington organized by Jackson. It was "now presided over by Colonel Preston, and several of the Professors at the College and Institute, as well as some of the first ladies and gentlemen in the town, are acting as teachers." 200 to 300 scholars attended, and "strangers" who had come to Lexington, saying the "negroes must not be taught by former 'slave-drivers,'" established an opposition school.

[179] Deacons Book, 1857-1902, Lexington Presbyterian Church, May 14, 1863, p. 27
[180] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at 8
[181] The Sessional Records, Lexington Presbyterian Church, Vol. 3, 1859-1881, July 9, 1864, p. 75
[182] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix, at7-8
[183] Richard A. Cheatam, https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/honoring-j-t-l-preston-at-vmi

> The strangers had failed, while Stonewall Jackson's school had steadily increased in numbers; and surely one of the noblest monuments which Stonewall Jackson has left to his people is the foundation of a school which has for its object the spiritual instruction and elevation of those who at its commencement were in a condition of slavery, and which will live for years to come, always bearing the stamp of its founder in the zeal and energy which shall characterize the work and labors of its teachers.[184]

An anonymous letter entitled "Stonewall Jackson's Sunday School" appeared in newspapers in 1871, describing a visit to the school:

> A visitor will be struck on Sunday afternoon, at the crowd of Negro boys and girls who may be seen wending their way to the Presbyterian Church, the largest and the most influential in the town. If he will go in, he will see superintending a colored Sunday school, Colonel J.T.L. Preston, Professor in the Virginia Military Institute, and one of our most prominent citizens, and will find teaching in the school others of the professors in the Institute and College, a number of the students and some of the most accomplished ladies of the town. If he asks about the school he will be told "This is Stonewall Jackson's old school." The facts are, that this colored Sunday school was organized by Stonewall Jackson when he was a quiet professor in the Virginia Military Institute, that he took the deepest interest in its success (never going to or from it without earnest, secret prayer) and that when called into the army he expressed himself more loth to leave his colored Sunday school than any of his other public duties. His deep interest continued to the day of his death, and he was never known to write a letter to Lexington without making special inquiry after his colored Sunday school.[185]

In 1883, a letter signed "Alabamian," and using some of the same phrases as the 1871 piece, was published. The writer recalled the winter of 1870-1871, after Lee's death. The church was filled "from end to end" with black people – both adults and children.

> After his lamented death the home-friends who knew him best and loved him most, felt that no towering marble monument to his memory would be so acceptable a memorial to that knightly spirit as the continuance of the good which he had begun. Consequently, this Sunday-School, still called by the name of its founder, was kept up with earnest and reverent zeal by the labors of the first ladies and gentlemen of Lexington. The hero's brother-in-law, General Preston of the Virginia Military Institute was the Superintendent; his wife, Mrs. Margaret Preston, the foremost living poetess of America, and the beautiful Miss Lizzie Preston, his daughter, were among the zealous teachers.[186]

Preston, "in his white locks," was teaching the students a hymn, from a poem written by Maggie, to the tune of a popular song.[187]

By the late 1880s, the black people of Lexington had increasingly disfavored "religious instruction by the whites," according to J.T.L. Preston.[188] Other schools in town taught by blacks absorbed the scholars of Lexington Presbyterian and, in 1887, Jackson's School, which "had been in

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[184] Richmond Dispatch, June 11, 1866 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[185] The Southern Home (Charlotte, North Carolina) October 3, 1871 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com). This article was printed in several other newspapers, including The Idaho World, September 14, 1871 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com).
[186] The Livingston (Alabama) Journal, June 22, 1883 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[187] Id.
[188] Hunter, n. 4, at 99

operation over thirty years," and "had done an inestimable work in its day," ceased to exist. Maggie, always dubious about the legend of Stonewall, because she understood the man wrapped inside of the mythical figure better than anyone else, provided the most insightful perspective:

> "That day for which all other days were made" can only reveal the good that this school has done; and we have sometimes wondered if the Major was not doing a grander work, in the eyes of God, in leading his little battalion of colored people into the paths of peace, than when, at the head of his enthusiastic army, he was making a name which has since echoed over the world.[189]

Jackson's School spanned 32 years. Preston deserves the credit for tripling the attendance and keeping the school going long after Jackson. McCrum and the other teachers should be credited for their contributions. Dr. White and the elders provided support and encouragement. But it was the shy, awkward professor who succeeded where eminent church leaders before him had failed, not due to oratorical skills - he was at best a poor classroom teacher. Devoid of charisma, lacking social graces, he succeeded for the same reasons he succeeded at war. Devotion to duty, superior organizational skills, unshakable focus, determination, and something more intangible. Jackson was incapable of guile. He could not be disingenuous. His dedication was straightforward and sincere, and that authenticity made a profound impression on the enslaved people of Lexington who attended the school.

Legacy

The most important legacy of Jackson's School was the role it played in the lives of the scholars. Most of them are nameless and long forgotten. A few became ministers. John Alexander Holmes (1848-1922) was a Methodist Episcopal minister and pastored churches in New York and Washington, D. C. His son, Dr. Dwight Oliver Wendell Holmes (1877-1863), was president of Morgan State College in Baltimore from 1937 to 1948.[190]

Lylburn Downing, Jr., was born in Lexington on May 3, 1862, to Lylburn Downing, Sr., and Ellen Harvey Downing. Lylburn Sr., a slave of former Virginia governor James McDowell, was a nurse or hospital steward at VMI. Both he and Ellen attended Jackson's School,[191] and Lylburn Jr. attended it when Preston was superintendent. He was pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Roanoke, Virginia for 42 years.[192] In 1895, he proposed to erect a stained glass window, in the church building then under construction, to be dedicated to Jackson and Preston.[193]

Ten years later, the Lexington Gazette reported that:

> The pastor said that from his boyhood, when he attended the colored Sunday school in Lexington established by Jackson, it had been his ambition to erect a memorial to the great man who had done so much for him and the colored race. It is proposed to erect a memorial window representing a tent shaded by trees with a stream of water running by it with the bare and rugged rock like a stonewall.[194]

In 1925 the city of Lexington constructed the Lylburn Downing School, a school that was segregated

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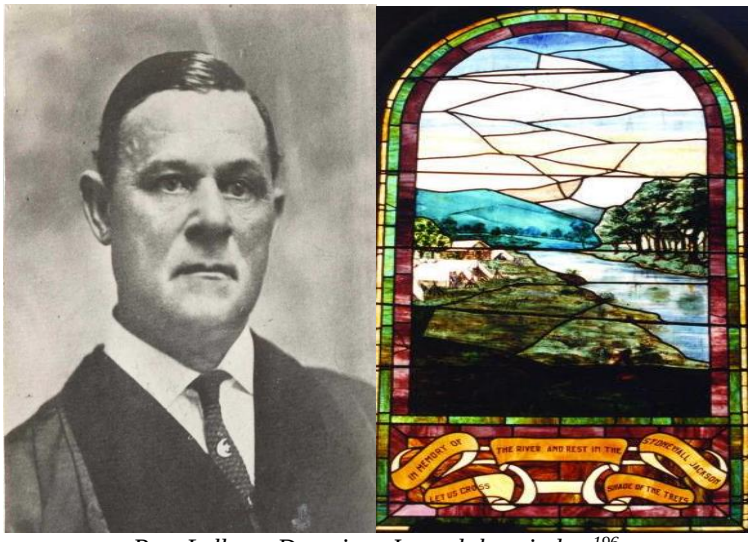
[189] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 71, Appendix at 9
[190] DeLaney, Jr., n. 24, at 139, 141
[191] Dictionary of Virginia Biography, Library of Virginia (https://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvg/bio.asp?b=Downing_Lylburn_Liggins)
[192] Morgan Magazine 2017, Vol. 1, 14 (https://issuu.com/morganstateu/docs/00_morgan_mag_2017_vol_i_12-14-17_4). See also DeLaney, Jr., n. 24, at 139, 143
[193] Baltimore Sun, March 19, 1895 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[194] Lexington Gazette, July 26, 1905 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)

until 1965.[195] Today it is known as the Lylburn Downing Middle School, standing but a few blocks from the small church built by slaves that Dr. Reed visited in 1834.



Rev. Lylburn Downing, Jr. and the window[196]

Robert Steele was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia, near the Augusta County line, on September 24, 1830. His owner, James McNutt, gave Steele to his daughter, whose husband, Andrew Withrow, owned a tannery at the corner of Henry and Randolph Streets in Lexington, just behind Jackson's house.[197] Steele was trained to be a tanner and, according to his obituary, "While in slavery he passed into the ownership of General Stonewall Jackson."[198] Steele was not owned by Jackson personally, but with three partners Jackson purchased the Lexington Tannery from the estate of Andrew Withrow in 1860.[199]

Steele claimed "that he frequently conducted prayer meetings and religious exercises in the famous Confederate General's household, and, a newspaper added, "in all probability taught that brave general to pray."[200] Jackson did occasionally host "evening domestic worship" meetings at his house. Dabney claimed that Jackson was "extremely popular among all the more serious servants by these labors for their good," and was "indeed the black man's friend," a phrase that has endured. Jackson's "prayers were so attractive" to the slaves, "that a number of those living in his quarter of the town, petitioned to be admitted on Sabbath nights, along with his own servants, to his evening domestic worship." Jackson sought Dr. White's "sanction, and declaring that the assent of the masters of those servants must, of course, be also a necessary condition of his gratifying them. The appreciation of the pastor and the masters was gladly given."[201]

After gaining his freedom Steele moved to Clarksburg, West Virginia, and in 1867, became a minister in the Methodist Episcopal church. He continued to work as a tanner and married Frances, a former slave of William G. McDowell of Lexington. Steele said that McDowell taught him reading,

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[195] Suzanne Barksdale Rice, *Education First*, Rockbridge Epilogues, Number Seventeen, Winter 2018-2019, 1, 8-9 (http://www.historicrockbridge.com/spreads/17_rice_education.pdf)
[196] Downing photograph retrieved from https://www.ancestry.com, public member tree. The image of the window is from The Roanoke Times, February 15, 2015.
[197] Richmond Dispatch, April 5, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com). Clarksburg Telegram, March 29, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com).
[198] Clarksburg Telegram, March 29, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[199] Shaffner, n. 85, at 165
[200] Clarksburg Telegram, March 29, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[201] Dabney, n. 82, at 94-95

writing, and arithmetic as a child.[202] He pastored churches in Washington, D. C., and Baltimore; Winchester, Staunton, and Lynchburg in Virginia; and Huntington, Grafton, Fairmount, and Clarksburg in West Virginia. He founded the first African-American church in Clarksburg, Jackson's hometown, and was the presiding elder of the Wheeling district of the Washington M. E. church. After Steele's death on March 23, 1901, the Clarksburg Telegram provided a moving tribute:

> His power and influence as a minister of the gospel and as an honorable, upright citizen were great not only with his own race but among white people as well. Though not college bred, he was eloquent of speech and cultured in mind. He possessed an intellect almost superhuman, liberal on all subjects and practical beyond degree. As a pulpit orator he had no superior. As a leader of his race he was unexcelled. A truly great man.[203]

The accomplishments of Holmes, Downing, and Steele, from the humblest of beginnings, are impressive, and the public acclaim they received richly deserved. But a recently discovered story of another man, unknown outside of his rural community, would gratify Jackson even more. Shortly after the war began, Anna left Lexington to stay with her parents in Lincoln County, North Carolina, and made arrangements for their slaves in the Lexington area. Excerpts from several letters Jackson wrote to Samuel J. Campbell were published in newspapers in 1883, including the New York Times. Campbell owned a farm southwest of Lexington. The first letter, dated December 3, 1861, reveals that both Cyrus and George, ages 18 and 16 respectively, had been hired out to Campbell that year.

> You can retain Cy another year on the same terms as at present. And should you desire George you can also have him on your own terms. Please let me know whether you desire him, and what he is worth in the event you keep him. Should you not need him, please hire him to some suitable person, with the condition that, if near or in town, he be required to attend the Sabbath-School, and wherever he may be, let him be required to attend church at suitable times, as I am very desirous that the spiritual interests of my servants be attended to.[204]

Campbell must have responded that he did wish to hire them for the next year, because on December 12, 1861, Jackson wrote him that he was "much obliged for your kindness. Keep George at the price named." He was "glad to hear that both boys are well, and I trust that through the blessing of an overruling Providence they will serve you faithfully. It is gratifying to know that they are in such good hands as yours."[205]

One year later, in December 1862, Jackson asked Campbell to hire the boys out to a good place, adding:

> I desire them, if practicable, to have an opportunity of attending the colored Sabbath-school in Lexington if it is still in operation. Please pay the hire of the present year to the R.I. White, Treasurer Building Fund Association, as part of my contribution for the coming year. By attending to the above you will confer a special favor on your friend, T.J. Jackson.[206]

For more than 150 years almost nothing was known about the post-war lives of Jackson's slaves. My research uncovered information about three of them – Hetty, George, and Emma. All three lived in

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[202] Richmond Dispatch, April 5, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[203] Clarksburg Telegram, March 29, 1901 (retrieved from https://www.newspapers.com)
[204] "Stonewall Jackson and His Slaves, New York Times, December 24, 1883
[205] Id.
[206] Id.

Lincoln County, North Carolina after the war, near the home of Anna's father, and all three took the name Jackson.

George Washington Jackson, Sr. married twice and had eight children. He reported in the 1880 census that he could read and write, a result of being taught by Anna Jackson at her husband's request.[207] He was an early leader of the Gold Hill Baptist Church near Lowesville, and a member of the school committee for the Lowesville District in 1889.[208] George died in 1920 and is buried in the church cemetery. Some of his direct descendants are members of the church today.

Coda

Major Thomas J. Jackson of Lexington remains an enigma. He was made of flesh, not stone, never claiming to be anything else. In raising him to a mythic status that he did not seek, his essential humanity has been obscured. In many ways he was a walking contradiction - a lethal warrior who hated war, an inept professor who became one of the most revered American military leaders, a man devoted to a religious class for enslaved people who accepted their enslaved status as the will of God, a simple man riddled with complexities. He cannot be pinned down. Maggie described him simply as "*sui generis*,"[209] one of a kind.

Guests at the Stonewall Jackson House Museum sometimes ask what he might have done after the war, had he lived, since many Civil War generals used their fame to become politicians and corporate leaders. We will never know for sure, but less than a month before his wounding at Chancellorsville, Maggie wrote in her journal: "Brother Willy here to dinner today. Has just been on a little visit to General Jackson's army; preached there; says Jackson is longing to be out of the field, and at home once more."[210]

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[207] 1880 U.S. Census, Lincoln County, North Carolina, pop. sch., p. 42, dwell. 402, fam. 402, D. Matt Thompson (retrieved from www. Ancestry.com). Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters*, n. 69, at 118.

[208] Rudolph Young et al, "*Our Own Story: An African-American History of Lincoln County, North Carolina*," Volume Two, p. 43, found in the Genealogy section of the Lincoln County library in Lincolnton, North Carolina.

[209] Margaret J. Preston, *Personal Reminiscences of Stonewall Jackson,* The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, Vol. 10, No. 32, October 1886, 927

[210] Mary Anna Jackson, *Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1892) (reprinted, Harrisonburg: Sprinkle Publications, 1995) Appendix, 9