



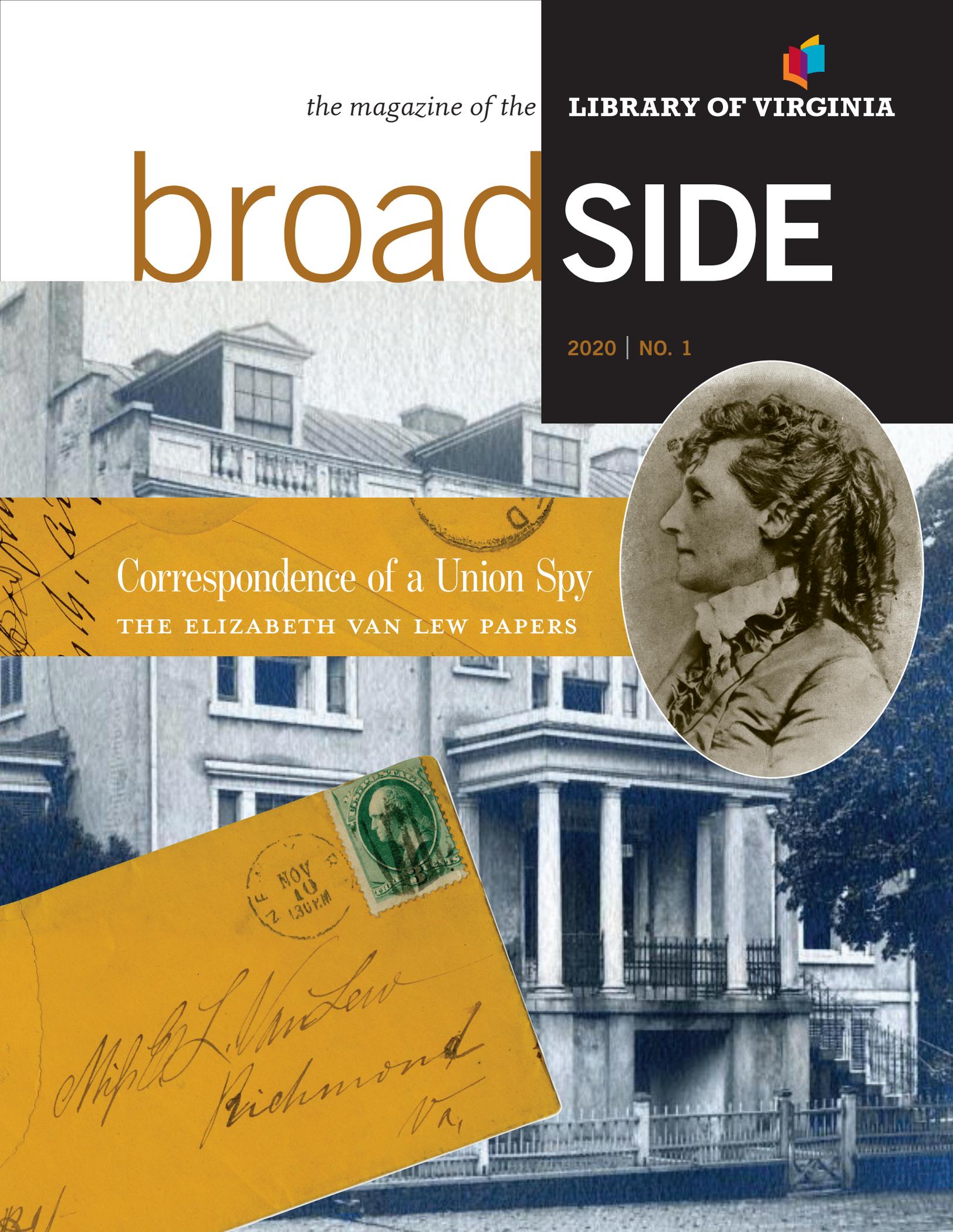
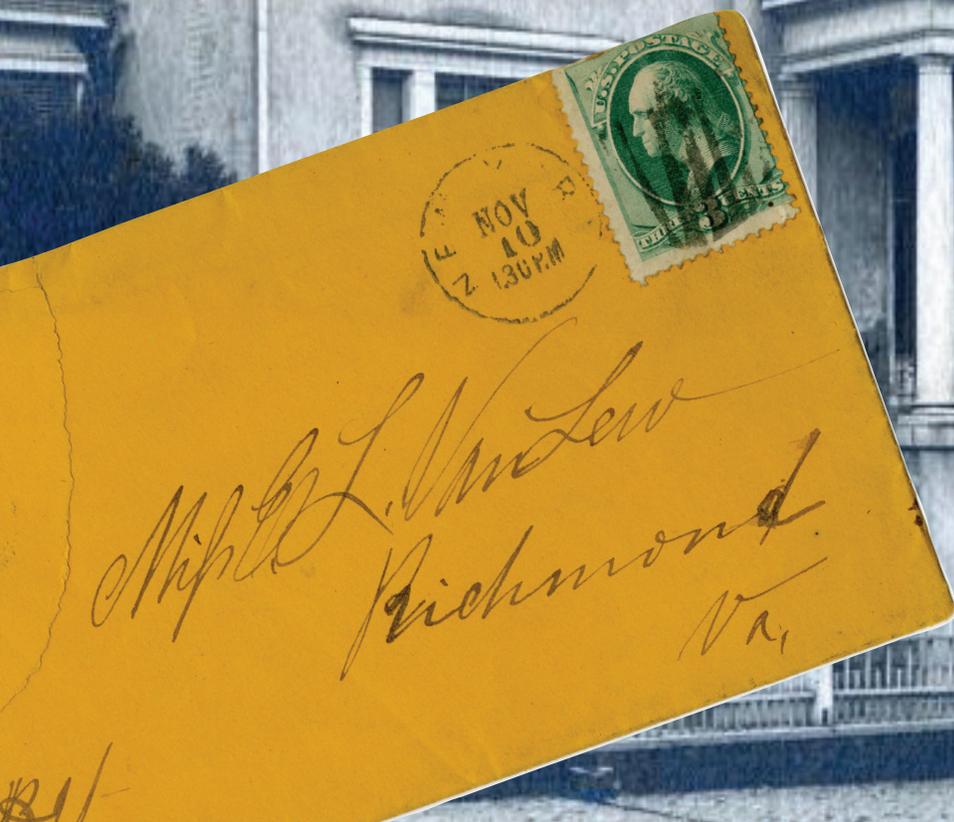
the magazine of the

LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

broadSIDE

2020 | NO. 1

Correspondence of a Union Spy
THE ELIZABETH VAN LEW PAPERS



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LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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broadSIDE is funded by the Library of Virginia Foundation and other special funds.

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THE INSIDE STORY

Keeping Count

The U.S. Census offers a snapshot of who we are as a people

April 1, 2020, was Census Day in the United States. By that date, every household in America with a valid mailing address should have received an invitation to participate in this important count of our nation's population. Census forms may be completed online or returned through the mail, but it is important that everyone respond. The census, which is required by the Constitution, has occurred every ten years since 1790 and is an essential cornerstone of our democratic government. The population figures gathered by the census are used to allocate each state's representation in Congress. They are the basis for drawing district lines for federal, state, and local offices. And they determine the distribution of hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding to states and localities.

Every ten years a new census supersedes the one that went before, but the information collected by the U.S. Census Bureau is kept permanently as an important part of our nation's documentary record. Each census offers a snapshot of who we are as a people. Together they invite us to study how we have changed over time. Past censuses are gold mines for historical and genealogical research. The first censuses counted the population, by state and county, and provided a count of white males by age (either under 16 or older than 16). Over the years, Congress has authorized additional questions, enabling us to better understand the nation's inhabitants and their activities and needs. The 1810 census, for example, collected economic data on the quantity and value of manufactured goods. In 1850, the census began collecting social statistics (information about taxes, education, crime, value of estates, and mortality). In 1940, additional questions were asked of a sample of the population, including questions on internal migration, veteran status, and the number of children ever born to women. This information helped policy makers gauge the impact of the Great Depression on the population. A list of questions asked in each census can be found on the bureau's website at www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/index_of_questions.

For privacy reasons, there is a delay of 72 years in the release of census information that pertains to individuals. The 1940 census is the most recent one available, with 1950 data set to be released in April 2022. If you are interested in looking for family members in past censuses, you can do so by visiting the Library of Virginia, where you will find microfilm copies of censuses for Virginia and neighboring states. Researchers in the building can also access Ancestry.com to search for family members no matter where they may have lived.

As you complete your census return this year, you can take pride in the important role that Virginia has played in census history. The earliest census in what is today the United States took place in the Virginia colony early in 1620. And it was a Virginian, Edmund Randolph, who introduced the motion in the Philadelphia Convention in 1787 that led to the provision requiring a federal census that was included in the U.S. Constitution.

Sincerely,

Sandy Treadway
Sandra G. Treadway, Librarian of Virginia



As you complete your census return this year, you can take pride in the important role that Virginia has played in census history.

ON THE COVER

The Library of Virginia has acquired correspondence of Elizabeth Van Lew, a Richmond Unionist who operated a spy ring in during the Civil War. She lived in this Grace Street mansion in the Church Hill neighborhood. Van Lew portrait from the book *On Hazardous Service*, 1912. Mansion photograph from the Visual Studies Collection. Envelope from the Personal Papers Collection.



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

800 East Broad Street | Richmond, Virginia 23219-8000 | 804.692.3500 | www.lva.virginia.gov

COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Library Virginia is closed until further notice. See the back cover for details—and visit lva.virginia.gov for updates. We hope you will plan a visit in the future!

Welcome to the Library of Virginia, the state's oldest institution dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's history and culture. Our resources, exhibitions, and events attract more than 100,000 visitors each year. Our collections, containing more than 129 million items, document and illustrate the lives of both famous Virginians and ordinary citizens.

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ADMISSION IS FREE

Some special programs may have fees. Check calendar listings for details.

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Limited parking for Library visitors is available in the underground parking deck, accessible from either Eighth or Ninth Streets.

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We Demand: Women's Suffrage in Virginia

Through December 5, 2020

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Through November 21, 2020

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The Library provides relevant and useful educational material on Virginia's history, culture, and people to educators, students, and lifelong learners of any age.

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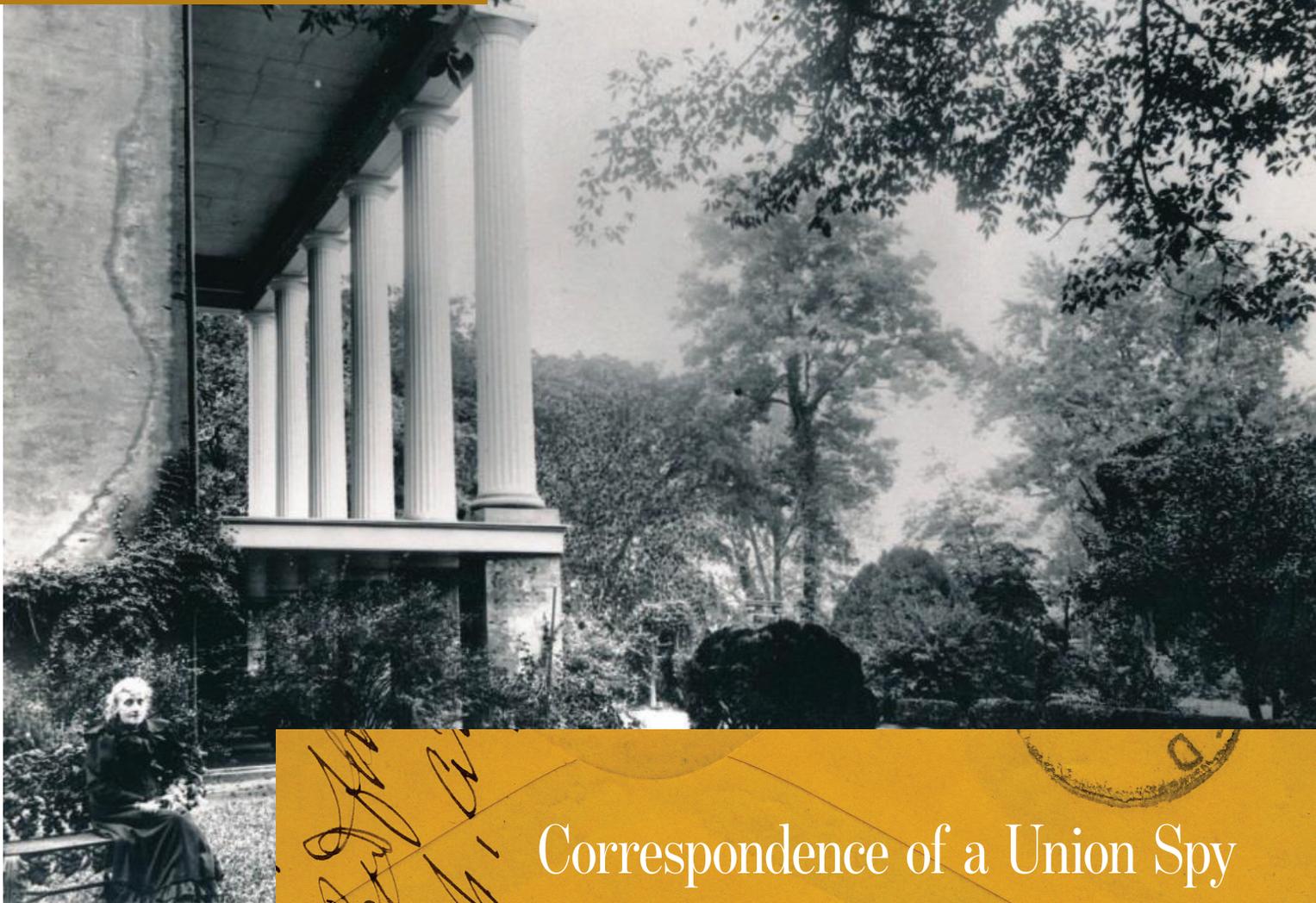


Photograph © Ansel Olsen



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Correspondence of a Union Spy

THE ELIZABETH VAN LEW PAPERS

The Elizabeth Van Lew Papers offer new information about her life and thoughts BY TRENTON HIZER

Known as the famed Richmond Unionist who operated an intricate spy ring in the heart of the Confederate capital during the Civil War, Elizabeth Van Lew worked with associates to aid escaping Union prisoners and provide invaluable military information to the Union army. Two collections recently acquired by the Library of Virginia provide new information about this fascinating historic figure.

Much of what is known about Van Lew's exploits is found in her journal, which is housed at the New York Public Library, along with some correspondence and other papers (available on microfilm at the Library of Virginia). During the war, Van Lew kept the most recent pages of the journal by her bed in case she needed to destroy them quickly, while she buried finished portions of it in the yard of her Church Hill neighborhood home. After the war, she supplemented the journal with articles and some postwar correspondence. After her death in 1900, these papers passed to her friend John Phillip Reynolds, who had coordinated an annuity for Van Lew among wealthy Boston admirers in the early 1880s. Reynolds was the nephew of Colonel Paul Revere, who had received some assistance from Van Lew while he had been imprisoned in Richmond in the early days of the war.

Trenton Hizer is senior manuscripts acquisition and digital archivist at the Library.

Ashland Virginia
February 1911

Mr W G Beymer.

At your interview
to years ago I told you I
know nothing of Miss Ransaw's
war record, early during
the war two incidents came
to my knowledge through
her mother both of which
we used for her protection
I was away from Richmond
more than a year before the
fall of Richmond. I am
to day reading your article
I find stated "she clerks in the
Confederate ~~and~~ navy and
war department were in her
confidence. If she said so she
believed it but no! they fought
her with her own weapon
"you think you fool us now
we will fool you"

Reynolds first propounded the "Crazy Bet" character—as Van Lew would come to be nicknamed—in an article he wrote for a Boston newspaper shortly after her death. He described her as pretending to be so eccentric that Richmonders ignored or dismissed her actions. His Crazy Bet depiction secured a national audience when William Gilmore Beymer, an artist-turned-writer for *Harper's Magazine*, convinced Reynolds to let him use the papers as a source for an article he was researching on Van Lew. Beymer continued the depiction of Crazy Bet in his article published in *Harper's* June 1911 issue. Southern white citizens, especially in Richmond, latched on to this caricature. Surely Van Lew actually was crazy, they thought; why else would she have opposed the Confederate cause? Beymer supplemented the papers Reynolds held with interviews with Van Lew's niece, the surviving daughter of her brother John Van Lew, and with Van Lew's oldest friend, Elizabeth Griffin Carrington Nowland. At the time of the interview, Beymer promised to provide Nowland with an advance copy of the article.

Van Lew's friend took strong exception to the depiction of "Crazy Bet," countering that Richmonders never used that nickname; they called her "Miss Van Lew."

collection documents Nowland's disagreements with significant parts of Beymer's article, disputing the version of Van Lew he presented. Other items in the collection show her close relationship with Van Lew, including a letter from Van Lew dated November 8, 1866, asking her to arrange the return of Van Lew's nephews to their parents in Philadelphia.

THE SPY ON THE HILL

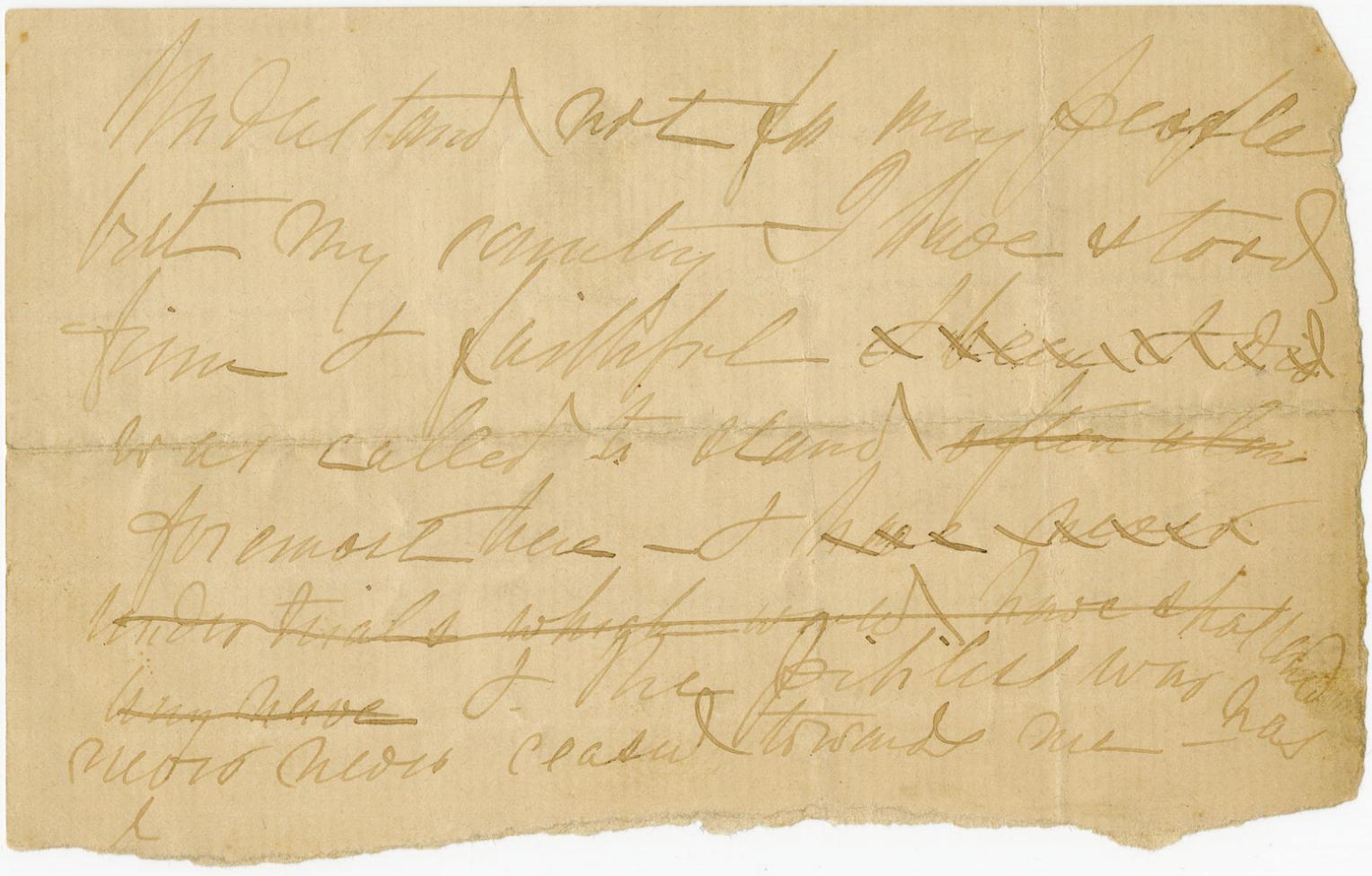
OPPOSITE PAGE: Elizabeth Van Lew poses next to her family's Grace Street mansion late in the 1800s. During her days as a Union spy, she temporarily buried her journal in the yard for safekeeping. Photograph courtesy of The Valentine.

LEFT: Van Lew's close friend Elizabeth Griffin Carrington Nowland wrote this 1911 letter to journalist William Gilmore Beymer to dispute his characterization of Van Lew as pretending to be crazy in order to disguise her Unionist activities.

Nowland's response to Beymer's article makes up a significant portion of a collection donated to the Library of Virginia in 2019 by Elizabeth Carrington Shuff of Richmond, a descendant of Nowland. Born Elizabeth Griffin Carrington in October 1826 (according to her death certificate), Nowland grew up in the family home across Grace Street from the Van Lew mansion, which John Van Lew purchased in 1836. When the Civil War came, she sometimes accompanied Van Lew around town, but how much she knew about her friend's espionage is unclear, since she left Richmond about a year before the war ended. She was aware, however, of her friend's Unionist sympathies, and may have shared them herself. When President Ulysses S. Grant appointed Van Lew postmaster of Richmond in 1869, Van Lew gave her a job. She married Thomas Nowland on October 17, 1872, but after his death the following February, she returned to the home across the street from Van Lew.

If anyone could claim to know Van Lew, it was Nowland. When she read Beymer's article, she took strong exception to his depiction of Crazy Bet, countering that Richmonders never used that nickname; they called her "Miss Van Lew." She also asserted that the locals were well aware of Van Lew's Unionist sympathies, because she never misled anyone regarding her true feelings. The

continues next page



The second collection, purchased at auction last year, contains personal papers of Elizabeth Van Lew and her family, including letters to her mother, Eliza Louise Baker Van Lew, and papers regarding details of her father's estate and business after his death in 1843. A letter from her mother, dated November 19, 1870, informed Van Lew of happenings in Richmond and in their household. Letters to Van Lew include two from her brother John N. Van Lew, dated January 19 and November 22, 1870, providing news of his family and happenings at the Richmond Post Office that occurred while she was out of town and away from her duties there.

One fascinating letter in this collection was written to Van Lew by M. J. (or Mary Jane) Denman of New York City, one of the African Americans who participated with Van Lew in the espionage ring. Posing "in the guise of a slave," as she later expressed it, Denman infiltrated both the Confederate White House and the household of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, providing Van Lew with key information to pass to Union military leaders. The letter, dated October 31, 1870, has been examined by author Lois Leveen, who has researched Denman (who is also known as Mary Bowser). Leveen's article on the authenticity of the letter (published in the June 19, 2019, edition of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*) explains that Denman was asserting her independence from Van Lew, yet valued her friendship: "I hope you will not loose [sic] sight of me, as I cannot bear the thought that no one is interested in my weal or woe."

The two most interesting pieces in this collection are a letter and a letter fragment, both in Van Lew's hand. The letter, dated July 2, 1867, was written to her mother while Van Lew was staying with her sister and brother-in-law Anna and Joseph Klapp in Philadelphia. The letter conveys the heavy weight that must have rested on Van Lew after the war. She writes that, although her sister and brother-in-law have been kind, she wishes to be home with her mother. More so, she was unsure of her future. The text on the letter fragment sums up what Nowland told Beymer about Van Lew, and what Van Lew herself felt about her actions before, during, and after the Civil War: "Understand not for my people but my country I have stood firm & faithful."

The Elizabeth Van Lew Papers, 1842-1911 (Accession 52783, 52880), have been processed and are now available for research use in the Library. For more information, contact Archives Reference Services at 804.692.3888 or archdesk@lva.virginia.gov. ■

The letter conveys the heavy weight that must have rested on Van Lew after the war. She writes that, although her sister and brother-in-law have been kind, she wishes to be home with her mother.

New York Oct 31st
 30. Bedford #870
 My Dear Miss B. F.

I suppose
 you are somewhat displea-
 sed with me, but I hope you
 will withdraw your displea-
 sure, when I give you my
 reasons for not accepting
 of your kind offer but I was
 much better when I receiv-
 ed your letter, and being in
 need of a dress and also
 owing some money, so I took
 the money for that purpose,
 but if I could have a room
 to myself and been able of
 sewing enough to help sup-
 port myself I should have
 come to Richmond. I am a
 woman now of thirty
 years of age and very quiet

LIFE AFTER THE WAR

OPPOSITE PAGE: In this letter fragment, Van Lew describes her views on her actions as a Union spy: "Understand not for my people but my country I have stood firm & faithful."

LEFT: M. J. Denman (also known as Mary Bowser), an African American woman who participated in the Union espionage ring by posing as an enslaved person in the Confederate White House, wrote this letter to Van Lew in 1870.

BOTTOM LEFT: This illustration of the Van Lew mansion appeared in the July 14, 1866, issue of Harper's Weekly.

BELOW RIGHT: Van Lew is nearly hidden behind a bush in front of her family's mansion. Photograph courtesy of The Valentine.



30
YEARS

Groundbreaking African Americans Honored

In observance of Black History Month in February, the Library of Virginia and Dominion Energy honored five distinguished Virginians as the 2020 Strong Men & Women in Virginia History for their contributions to the commonwealth and the nation. Each generation of African Americans has built on the achievements of those who came before to lead the way to the future. The men and women featured here offer powerful examples of individuals who refused to be defined by their circumstances. Through education and advocacy, they demonstrate how African Americans have actively campaigned for better lives for themselves and their people. Biographies of honorees are displayed in an exhibition at the Library each February; featured on materials sent to schools, libraries, and museums across Virginia; and included on an educational website for teachers and students. Further information about distinguished African Americans from Virginia can be found in the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* (Library of Virginia, 1998–2006).

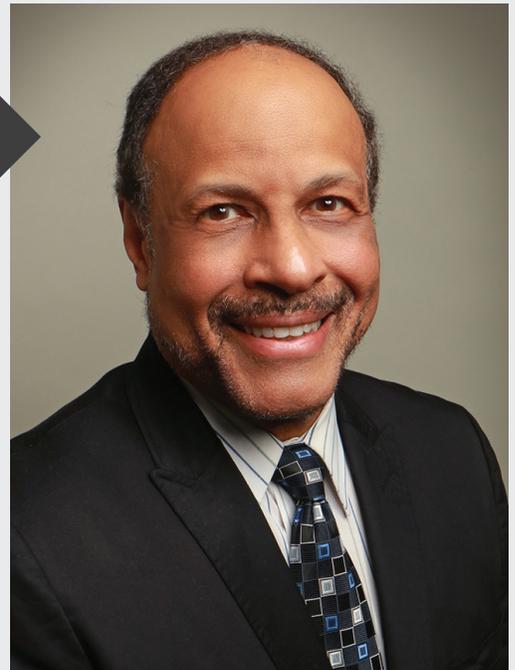
NOMINATIONS SOUGHT!

Is there an African American man or woman in your community who has made a positive difference in your region, the state, or the nation? If you're an educator, encourage your students to research and nominate someone for the 2021 slate of honorees for **Strong Men & Women in Virginia History**. Schools with winning nominations are eligible for cash prizes, free teacher workshops, and student programming. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit nominations but are not eligible for prizes. The deadline for submissions is May 1, 2021. Nominees can be either living or dead. Go to edu.lva.virginia.gov/strong-men-women-in-virginia-history to learn more about the process and to see a list of previous honorees.

Marcus D. Williams

1952–
Fairfax County
JUDGE & MUSICIAN

An attorney, educator, and musician, the Honorable Marcus Williams served more than 20 years as a circuit court judge in Fairfax County.



Torrey Smith

1989–
Westmoreland
County
FOOTBALL
PLAYER &
PHILANTHROPIST

Super Bowl champion Torrey Smith has used his academic and athletic success to establish community programs that inspire and assist youth in achieving their educational goals.



2020

Strong Men & Women in Virginia History

ny J.
nkin

omery County
MUNITY
IST

community activist
e than 30 years,
Franklin has been
cate for the fair
spectful treatment
eople.



Joycelyn S.
Harrison

1964–
Hampton
CHEMICAL
ENGINEER &
INVENTOR

Research scientist,
mentor, and STEM
(science, technology,
engineering, and math)
champion Joycelyn
Harrison is an award-
winning chemical
engineer and prolific
inventor.



Kaci M.
Easley

1988–
Charles City County
GOVERNMENT
OFFICIAL

Inspired by examples
of public service in her
family, Kaci Easley was
the first African American
to serve as director of
Virginia's Executive
Mansion.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 Strong Men & Women Student Essay Contest Winners

CENTRAL REGION

REBEKAH BAUTISTA

Massaponax High School/
Commonwealth Governor's
School, Spotsylvania County

NORTHERN REGION

ILARIA CABELL

Forest Park High School
Manassas

EASTERN REGION

JY'MIR STARKS

Great Bridge High School
Chesapeake

WESTERN REGION

AVA SEAGLE

Gate City High School
Gate City

PRESENTED BY



Winners receive a MacBook Air, \$1,000 for their schools, and the opportunity to read their essays at the Strong Men & Women awards program. Each year, high school students throughout Virginia are eligible to participate in the essay contest presented by Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia as part of the program recognizing the achievements of African Americans in the commonwealth. Entrants submit an essay on a subject related to one of the program's honorees. One winner is selected from each of Dominion's Energy's four regions. To read the winning essays and learn more about the contest, go to edu.lva.virginia.gov/strong-men-women-in-virginia-history.

Photos courtesy of the honorees.

find your history

Demystifying Research

Library tours empower Virginia Commonwealth University history students

BY CAROLYN EASTMAN

When my students first walk into the Library of Virginia, they look intimidated. At least once a year I teach a research class for senior history majors or graduate students at Virginia Commonwealth University in which they are expected to conduct original research and write an article-length essay. I've found that the best possible way to start the semester is to bring them to the Library—not only because it introduces them to potential resources that can fuel their research, but also because it demystifies the research process and introduces them to staff members who can help.

Most students have never been here before, and have never conducted original research. Even if they have ideas about what they want to work on—the history of divorce in 19th-century Virginia, Revolutionary-era militias, Prohibition in Virginia—they don't know exactly how to do it when they walk in the door. Imagine yourself standing at the base of the stairs in the Library's lobby, and you can sympathize with how intimidating it might seem to a newcomer.

Last time I scheduled a visit, Ashley Ramey, community outreach specialist, and Emma Ito, education and programs specialist, met us for a tour. They talked us through the simple process of getting library cards, and walked us through the areas of the building where students could access materials on microfilm, historic maps, and archival documents. They talked about some of the many research gems offered by the Library. As they chatted with the students, their enthusiasm was infectious, and I could see some of my students begin to imagine themselves sitting at the desks and combing through archival sources.

Finally, they led us to a conference room, where they had displayed a wide range of sources related to my students' interests. Errol Somay, Kelley Ewing, and Henry Morse of the Library's Virginia Newspaper Project had found newspapers for my students to examine, including copies of the *Richmond Planet*, high school newspapers, and alternative papers from the 1970s. Senior reference archivist Kevin Shupe provided examples of archival collections that discussed everything from arrests in nightclubs in 1912 to a governor's letter about the problem of lynching. Along the way, these staff members

showed students how to navigate the Library's rich online archival resources, finding aids, and the catalog. Each staff member spoke with individual students, encouraging them to stay in touch as they developed their projects. They talked about how research into one group of manuscripts might be supplemented with newspaper research (or vice versa) and sources in printed books, pamphlets, or broadsides from the era. As they talked through these ideas, the students begin to envision how their research might proceed.



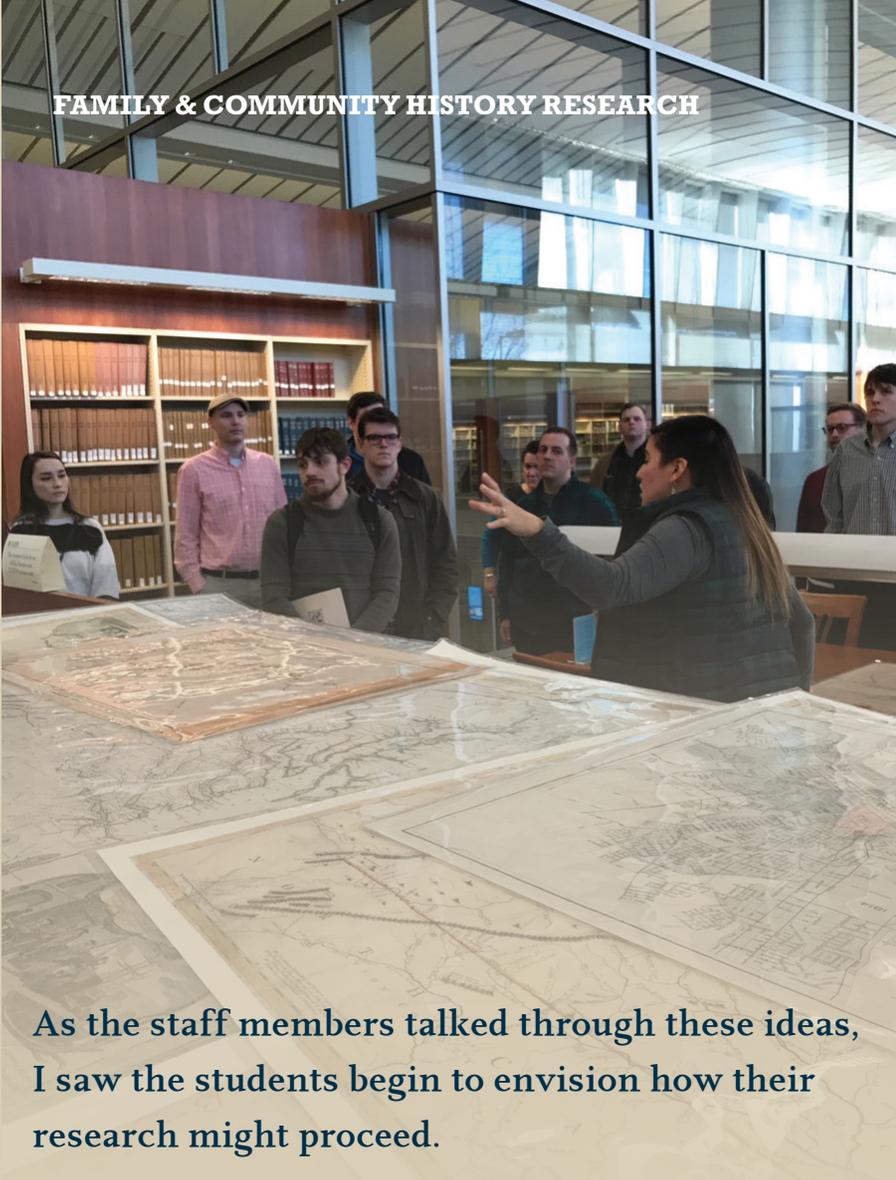
DAY OF DISCOVERY

ABOVE: Graduate students from Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of History visited the Library of Virginia with their teacher, associate professor Carolyn Eastman, on January 27, 2020. Shown left to right are: (FRONT ROW) **Jennifer Tennison, Ben Smith, Kris Gordon, Henry Schofield, Joshua Dow, Andrew Levin, and Alex Zukas**; (BACK ROW) **Mason Little, Zach Pittard, Carolyn Eastman, David Hayter, Will Tharp, Allison Bell, and Kyle Rogers**. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The students toured the Library with education and programs specialist **Emma Ito**, and learned about resources to help with their research projects from Virginia Newspaper Project director **Errol Somay** and senior reference archivist **Kevin Shupe**.

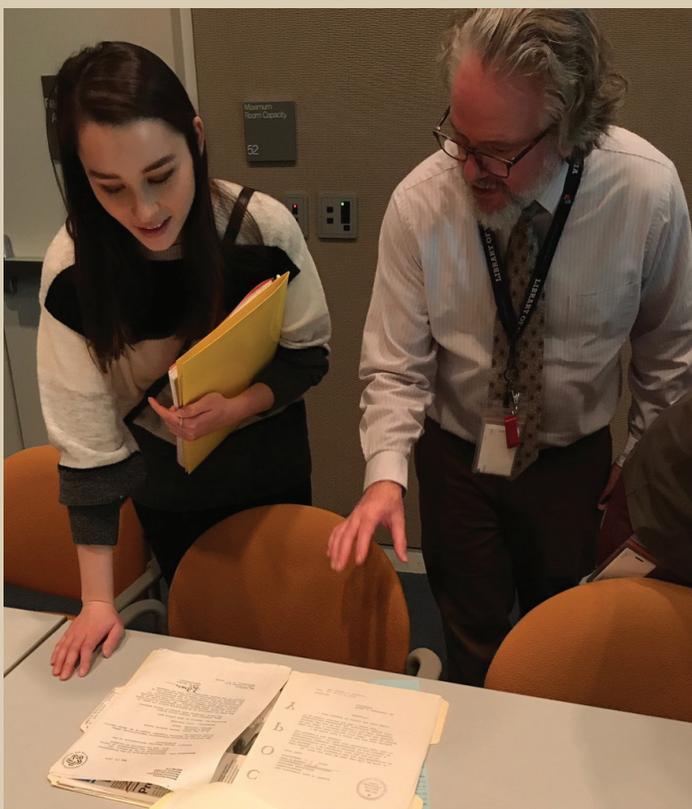
Invariably, when I next meet with the class after a tour, they bubble over with excitement about the Library and its resources. Most of all, they tell me they now know what to do when they come to find materials for their research papers. The Library of Virginia offers incredible resources for the public. And for students lucky enough to be able to walk through the doors on a regular basis, it also feeds their curiosity, shares pragmatic research advice, and provides access to real people who can answer questions and guide ideas. ■

Carolyn Eastman is an associate professor of history at Virginia Commonwealth University.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY HISTORY RESEARCH



As the staff members talked through these ideas, I saw the students begin to envision how their research might proceed.

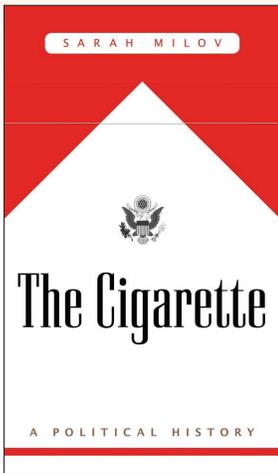


Resources for Students & Educators

edu.lva.virginia.gov

Although the Library of Virginia is currently closed to the public because of the health crisis, we encourage you to take advantage of our online resources and to visit in person when we reopen.

The Library provides educational materials on Virginia's history, culture, and people for educators, students, and lifelong learners of any age. Our educational outreach programs include tours, workshops, and online resources. Tours of our public facilities and exhibition gallery offer visitors the opportunity to learn about the Library's rich history and mission, as well as to explore documents in our collection that can be used for teaching history, geography, social studies, civics, and government. We encourage visits by groups of older students who may be interested in using the Library's collections for research projects. For more information, visit edu.lva.virginia.gov or contact us at education@lva.virginia.gov.



Featured book from the Virginia Shop **The Cigarette: A Political History**

By Sarah Milov

Tobacco is the quintessential American product. From Jamestown to the Marlboro Man, the plant occupied the heart of the nation's economy and expressed its enduring myths. But today smoking rates have declined and smokers are exiled from many public spaces. The story of tobacco's fortunes may seem straightforward: science triumphed over our addictive habits and the cynical machinations of tobacco executives. Yet the reality is more complicated. Both the cigarette's popularity and its eventual decline reflect a parallel course of shifting political priorities. *The Cigarette: A Political History* reveals the surprisingly vital role that tobacco played in the political economy of the United States over the course of the 20th century. In this engaging and meticulously argued work, Milov shows that the story of the tobacco industry reflects the nature of our political system and the development and transformation of corporatism. By looking at tobacco's place in public life, we can better understand who governs. Milov is an assistant professor of history at the University of Virginia and a former fellow of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

Harvard University Press, December 2019, \$35.00

Although the Library is currently closed, this book is available from the Virginia Shop online at bit.ly/2TF2QfR. Or check with your local public library for an eBook or eAudiobook.



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WHAT ARE YOU READING?

GHAZALA HASHMI

Virginia State Senator

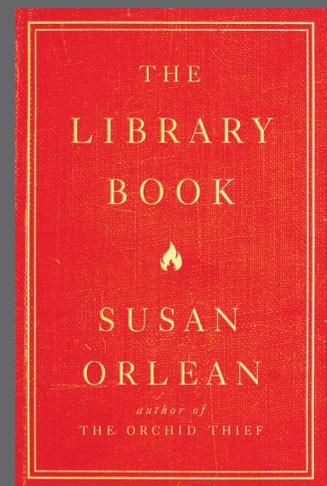
Former College Educator & Director of the Center for Excellence In Teaching & Learning

The Library Book

By Susan Orlean

Susan Orlean's work *The Library Book* (2018) was an unexpected find for me. Orlean begins with an account of a mystery that has existed for well over three decades: the fire that burned for seven hours

and that destroyed or damaged more than one million volumes in the Los Angeles Public Library. Her investigation becomes, however, a lyrical and profound tribute to libraries themselves and an homage to the individuals who dedicate their lives to preserving our histories, cultures, and collective wisdom in these invaluable institutions. Orlean's statement early in the narrative that "the library might have been the first place I was ever given autonomy" registered keenly with my childhood experiences. Many of my first memories are situated within libraries and the freedom that my parents gave to me and my siblings as we spent long summer days by ourselves in the small public library of the Georgia town where I grew up. Uncensored and unsupervised, I was able to roam the stacks; explore literature, history, and poetry at my own pleasure; and identify my emerging passions in books and through the written word.



**PRIZE-WINNING POET**

Henry Hart received the Carole Weinstein Prize in Poetry from the Library of Virginia in 2010.

Henry Hart

Poet Laureate of Virginia

Poet, author, and professor Henry Hart was appointed to a two-year term as Poet Laureate of Virginia by Governor Ralph Northam in July 2018 and serves as the ambassador and chief promoter of poetry in the commonwealth. Virginia's General Assembly established the position of poet laureate in 1936. Since 1998, poet laureates have been selected from a list of nominees submitted by the Poetry Society of Virginia. Previous honorees have included Pulitzer Prize winners Claudia Emerson and Rita Dove.

"I began to study and write poetry as a student at Dartmouth College in 1972, and continued to write poetry as a graduate student at Oxford University, where I received my doctorate in 1983. While in England, two Scottish friends and I started the international poetry journal *VERSE*, which we edited together for a decade. After the Scottish editors retired, I worked on the journal with two former College of William and Mary students. Over the past three decades, I have published four books of poetry; scholarly books on the poets Robert Lowell, Seamus Heaney, and Geoffrey Hill; a biography of James Dickey, which was a runner-up for a Southern Book Critics' Circle Award in 2000; and a biography of Robert Frost. Since 1986, I have taught English at the College of William and Mary, where I am currently the Mildred and J. B. Hickman Professor of Humanities."

—Henry Hart

A Gift of Warblers

All summer the brown box radio stammered
news of circling storms. Heat popped the water
jug's cap, warped barn windows shut,
drew odors of cows from the original chestnut.

On cool nights I penciled warblers
around knots on plywood slabs. The hand
jig saw raised a burr along the lines.
Sawdust clung to hair like dampened fur.

With a camel hair brush dipped in paint
I stroked the wood to olive crests,
Black face-masks, yellow breasts,
white wing stripes and dust-blue backs.

Glued to strings on a lilac branch
they were Calder cut-outs, liling as I puffed
their feathers into flight. For years they hung
in my grandfather's ice house studio,

his typewriter below, clicking through summers
like ice picks on blocks once stacked
in sawdust where he sat. Today, mold drifts
like snow under the ice house beams.

Ragweed scatters seeds across tilting steps.
Cedar shingles, split by lichen,
powder at the touch. The gift still hangs
over the black skeleton of his Royal type.

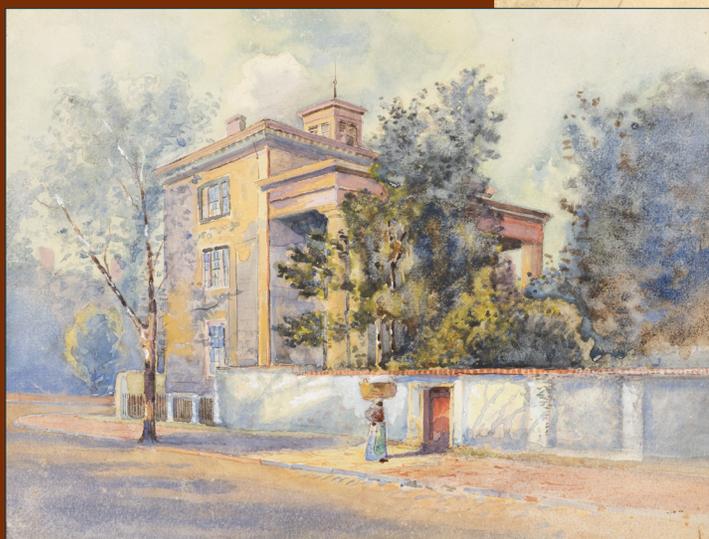
I brush the gray wings and salt white tails.
They turn towards me as once they turned towards him
as he hummed the names: Blackburnian, Magnolia, Myrtle,
Cape May, Cerulean, Black and White.

—Henry Hart



Male black-throated green warbler, plate 17, volume 2 of *American Ornithology* by Alexander Wilson (Philadelphia, 1810). 1828 Library, Rare Book Collection.

*Jefferson
Davis House,
Richmond, Va.*
by Dwight L.
Williams



a closer look

STATE ART COLLECTION

Donated to the Library of Virginia's Visual Studies Collection in 2019, this piece has a secret. On the reverse side of a watercolor depiction of the White House of the Confederacy is a hidden sketch. The painting and sketch are the work of artist Dwight Lane Williams (1856–1932), a native New Yorker who taught art in Norfolk and Washington, D.C., in the 1890s. Williams is best-known for his landscapes and depictions of colonial-era buildings.

Painted in 1892, the watercolor shows the White House as viewed from North

12th Street in downtown Richmond. Its distinctive portico is hidden behind trees, and there are long shadows on the road and wall in front of it. The solitary figure of an African American woman carrying a basket in the foreground may be a touch of artistic license; her depiction reflects popular images of the Old South that became increasingly prevalent late in the 19th century.

When Library staff members removed the watercolor from its frame for photography, they discovered a lightly sketched pencil drawing on the back of the

paper. While the sketch is unfinished, it shows a fenced yard with chickens pecking at the ground underneath clotheslines, and a wagon wheel visible just beyond a gate. Williams dated the sketch "Jan. 9," but did not specify a year or location; maybe it dates from a visit to Richmond or was an earlier drawing of Norfolk that was turned over and reused. What do you think?

—Meghan Townes,
Visual Studies Collection Registrar

Mining the Manuscripts

Library hosts Virginia Humanities Research Fellow

A partnership between the Library of Virginia and Virginia Humanities allows researchers to examine in-depth the Library's vast manuscript resources during their stay as scholars in residence. The Fellows present their findings and experiences with public talks at the Library, write blog posts, and engage with social media.



KAREN A. CHASE

An independent scholar and the author of *Carrying Independence*, Karen A. Chase has focused her Virginia Humanities Fellowship research at the Library on Eliza House Trist—a woman who traveled westward two decades before the Lewis and Clark expedition. Trist kept a journal at the request of her friend Thomas Jefferson. Her story is part of Chase's narrative nonfiction project, *Eliza! Eliza!*, about the contributions of Eliza House Trist and Eliza Lucas Pinckney to the founding and expansion of America.

What is one of the most notable things you've found in your research here at the Library?

KC: Aside from a multitude of books in the Library's collection, there were two unique items I enjoyed exploring the most. The first was a full-size copy of a 1721 map by William Law of the "Louisiana and River Mississippi." It may have been a map like this that Eliza House Trist reviewed before she ventured west. Old maps have less detail, but that clarity helps strip away modern roads and cities to place me back in time. The second item, an 1832 travel guide by Robert Baird, was entitled *A View of the Valley of the Mississippi: or the Emigrant's and Traveller's Guide to the West*. By comparing

this guide to the 1721 map, I could see what the cartographers knew from the time period before Eliza's journey, and what was generally accepted about the Mississippi region 50 years after her trip. Having traveled in a motor home with my family every summer while I was growing up, I know that maps, travel guides, and journals are significant tools. Maps and guides help humans navigate forward into a more certain future, and journals document our past. Reviewing the map and guide—especially when compared to Eliza's own journal, which is in the archives at the University of Virginia—allowed me to place Eliza into the narrative of her time period while also understanding the relevance of her life to mine.

What will you remember about your time here?

KC: Until 2019, I had been writing and researching projects part-time, and often through a history I was struggling to navigate on my own. Suddenly, in one semester, I've had access to the minds of the amazing staff, archivists, and librarians at the Library of Virginia and Virginia Humanities.



WESTWARD-JOURNEYING WOMEN

Virginia Humanities Research Fellow **Karen A. Chase** made use of 16th- and 17th-century maps and travel guides in the Library's collections to shed light on the westward journey of her subject, the little-known Eliza House Trist, who kept a travel journal at the request of Thomas Jefferson.

Their willingness to share ideas, collections, and connections with me means my own work here has multiplied tenfold. More minds, many hands. I'm leaving with a long list of research suggestions, and the feeling that my own research will contribute to the well-tread path of knowledge these folks have made about Virginia's history. It's always more joyous to travel with friends, especially when that journey is back in time.

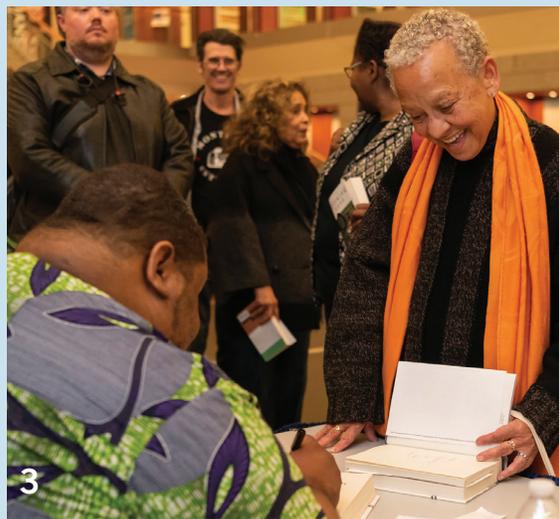
in circulation **WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE LIBRARY**

Find more event images at www.flickr.com/photos/lvaevents



1. This year's Strong Men & Women in Virginia History were honored at an awards ceremony in downtown Richmond by the Library of Virginia and Dominion Energy on February 6, 2020. LEFT TO RIGHT: Football star and philanthropist **Torrey Smith**, judge and musician **Marcus D. Williams**, community activist **Penny J. Franklin**, government official **Kaci M. Easley**, and chemical engineer and inventor **Joycelyn S. Harrison** were selected for their important contributions to the state, the nation, or their professions in this program that celebrates Black History Month.

2. **Dr. Janice Underwood** (LEFT), Virginia's director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and First Lady of Virginia **Pamela Northam** (RIGHT) visit the Library's exhibition *We Demand: Women's Suffrage in Virginia* during a reception for legislators and special guests on January 15, 2020.



3. Author **Michael W. Twitty** (LEFT) signs a copy of his book, *The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South*, for poet **Nikki Giovanni** (RIGHT) after his talk at the Library on November 14, 2019, as part of the Carole Weinstein Author Series.

4. Photographic and Digital Imaging manager **Mark Fagerburg** (RIGHT) shows oversized prints of digitized items in our collections to members of the Genealogical Research Institute of Virginia during a tour of the Library on December 3, 2019.





SHOP LOCAL FROM VIRGINIA ARTISANS

Studio Two Three products now available at the Virginia Shop

A new partnership between the Virginia Shop and Studio Two Three brings a selection of the arts organization's unique products to the shop's Library of Virginia location. Items are available online and in-store and include Studio Two Three screen prints, clothing, and household items in exclusive colors, styles, and designs created just for the Library. In addition, Studio Two Three will work with the Library's staff to create special items that reflect Virginia's amazing history in interpretations of pieces within Library's vast collection of items.

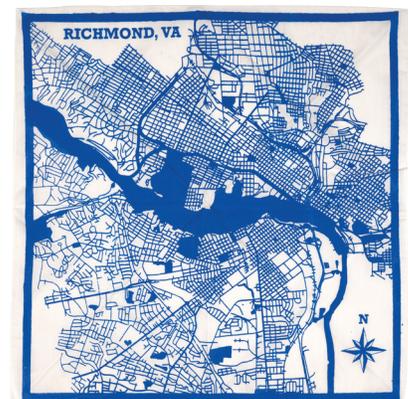
The Virginia Shop (thevirginiashop.org) operates under the umbrella of the Library of Virginia Foundation, with retail spaces within the Library and the Virginia State Capitol that offer books, gifts, souvenirs, and other items related to Virginia's history and culture. "We are thrilled to offer Studio Two Three's wonderful and unique products in the Virginia Shop," said Scott Dodson, executive director of the Library of Virginia Foundation. "We see this is as a first and important step in offering more of Virginia's amazing artists and artisans an outlet for their work."

Founded in 2009, Studio Two Three empowers artists and supports art-making for personal and social change. The Richmond-based arts organization features artist studios, classes and workshops, artist residencies, and open doors—with 24/7 access to studios, printing presses, a darkroom, a digital lab, and a communal work space.

"At Studio Two Three, we believe in the critical role that public spaces for culture and arts play in the health of our society," said executive director Ashley Hawkins. "So we are truly delighted to share the work of talented Virginia artists with thousands of visitors through our partnership with the Library of Virginia Foundation. Our Studio Two Three outpost at the Virginia Shop will share the stories of Virginia and Virginians through the power of art—the democratic and storied medium of printmaking, in particular."

If you are a Virginia artisan who makes products that reflect the unique history and people of the commonwealth and are interested in placing your products in the Virginia Shop, contact the staff at thevirginiashop.org/contact_us.aspx.

"We see this is as a first and important step in offering more of Virginia's amazing artists and artisans an outlet for their work."



Membership Has Its Privileges

Though millions of people from across the country and around the world use the Library's collections for research, the Library is only partially funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Did you know that the Library has a membership program that supplements its programs, events, and exhibitions? Our corps of members provides the support needed to share and enrich the Library's collections. Membership is tax-deductible and offers many benefits:

- A subscription to *Broadside*, the quarterly magazine of the Library of Virginia
- A one-time, 30% discount at the Virginia Shops each year you renew
- A 10% discount for the remainder of your membership at the Virginia Shop
- Discounted tickets for special trips
- Invitations to exclusive members-only programs and events
- Discounted tickets for fee programming

The best benefit of all? Ensuring the continued legacy of Virginia's history and culture.

To learn more about the Semper Virginia Society and benefits of membership, contact Dawn Greggs at 804.692.3813.

Special Giving Opportunities

Do you have a particular passion within the Library? If so, one of these special giving opportunities may be for you.

Virginia Authors Circle

Want to learn more about and help promote Virginia's amazing authors and those who write about the commonwealth? Become a member and receive invitations to author appearances, book talks, and literary panel discussions. Virginia Authors Circle members play an important role as advocates for the Library's literary collections and programs.

Fry-Jefferson Map Society

Do you love maps? Are you interested in promoting and experiencing the cartographic collections of the Library of Virginia? Become a Fry-Jefferson Map Society member and enjoy invitations to special events, admission to the annual Voorhees Lecture, and advance notice of lectures and other Library programs.

Adopt Virginia's History

Each year the Library of Virginia conserves hundreds of books, documents, and other artifacts. By "adopting" an item for conservation you help to keep it safe and available for future generations. Visit lva.virginia.gov/adopt to learn more and see items available for adoption.

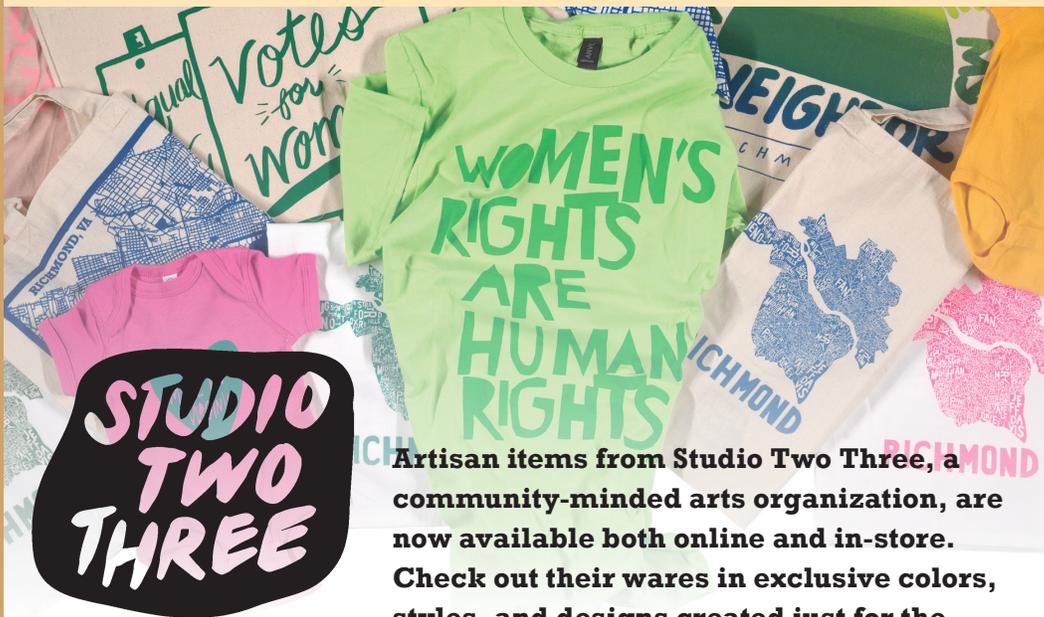
The Hening Society: Planned Giving

Bequests can help the Library in many ways, always based on your wishes, and are best made with the assistance of an attorney.

For more information, please call Dawn Greggs at 804.692.3813.

Donate Your Books and Papers

Do you have books, family papers, or business records that you would like to see preserved for future generations to study? They might belong at the Library of Virginia! Contact Audrey McElhinney at 804.692.0166 or audrey.mcelhinney@lva.virginia.gov.



Artisan items from Studio Two Three, a community-minded arts organization, are now available both online and in-store. Check out their wares in exclusive colors, styles, and designs created just for the Virginia Shop and the Library of Virginia.

THE
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Shop our online store 24 hours a day at WWW.THEVIRGINIASHOP.ORG. Or visit the shop and take advantage of the (limited) free and secure parking below the Library.

Library of Virginia Online
Donation Page
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COVID-19 RESPONSE

LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE



The health and safety of our visitors, employees, volunteers, and community are top priorities at the Library of Virginia. To help contain the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the Library will be closed to the public until further notice. Please check our website at lva.virginia.gov for updates. Library staff members are currently working and responding to telephone and email requests. While our building is closed, please consult our online resources for researchers, teachers, students, and library and information professionals. Thank you for your continued patience as we navigate this unprecedented situation together.