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The African-American Emigration Movement in Georgia during Reconstruction

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THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION MOVEMENT IN GEORGIA DURING
RECONSTRUCTION

by

FALECHIONDRO KARCHEIK SIMS-ALVARADO

Under the Direction of Hugh Hudson

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a narrative history about nearly 800 newly freed black Georgians who sought freedom beyond the borders of the United States by emigrating to Liberia during the years of

1866 and 1868. This work fulfills three overarching goals. First, I demonstrate that during the wake of Reconstruction, newly freed persons' interest in returning to Africa did not die with the Civil War. Second, I identify and analyze the motivations of blacks seeking autonomy in Africa. Third, I tell the stories and challenges of those black Georgians who chose emigration as the means to civil and political freedom in the face of white opposition. In understanding the motives of black Georgians who emigrated to Liberia, I analyze correspondence from black and white Georgians and the white leaders of the American Colonization Society and letters from Liberia settlers to black friends and families in the United States. These letters can be found within the American Colonization Society Papers correspondence files and some letters reprinted in the ACS's monthly periodical, the *African Repository*.

To date, no single work has been published on the historical significance of black Georgians who emigrated to Liberia during Reconstruction. What my research uncovers is that that 31 percent of the 3,184 passengers transported to West Africa by the American Colonization Society from 1865 to 1877 were Georgians, thereby making Georgia, the leading state to produce the highest numbers of blacks to resettle in Liberia and the logical focal point for the African-American emigration movement during Reconstruction.

INDEX WORDS: American Colonization Society, African Colonization Movement, African-American Emigration Movement, Back-to-Africa Movement, Black migration, Columbus, Macon, Sparta, Georgia, Liberia, Reconstruction.

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FALECHIONDRO KARCHEIK SIMS-ALVARADO

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of the Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2011

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2011

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THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION MOVEMENT IN GEORGIA DURING
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by

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August 2011

DEDICATION

To: Nation Shabazz-Alvarado & Joel Alvarado

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furniture to play, creating science projects, and painting and drawing dinosaurs and dragons every day.

To all my friends and family, I love you all. I thank you for all the encouragement you have shown throughout the past two decades. It has been a long and difficult journey. To my mother, Mildred Lee English-Sims, I live and work every day to be the best representation of a daughter for you. Finally, I thank my grandparents, Myrtice Richburg-English and William L. English, who died prior to my completing the doctoral program. You were my examples of torchbearers. Grandmother Myrtice, thank you for teaching me the importance of self-sufficiency. Grandfather William, thank you for instilling in me the value of education, a love for African-American history, and the pride of being the great, great-granddaughter of formerly enslaved Africans.

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LIST OF TERMS

- Emigrant: An individual(s) who leaves from one country to reside in another.
- Emigration: To leave from one country or region to settle in another.
- Emigrationist: An advocate of the organization efforts of a group of people to leave from one country to resettle in another.
- Migration: The physical movement or relocation to a new location within the country in which he/ she resides.
- Resettle: The relocation or transportation of a group of people to a new settlement.
- Resettlement: The act of settling or taking up residency in a new place.
- Setter: A person who settles in a new country or colony.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

God of high heaven will put a curse should we continue to live with our former masters and ex-slaveholders, who are not enjoying the same right as he has ordained that we shall enjoy in our own native soil; for God says in His Holy Work that he has a place and land for all his people, and our race had better to it.

Henry Adams

In 1866, interest in returning to Africa was ignited in Macon shortly after the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment and Civil Rights Act. Responding to a difficult transition from slavery to freedom and feeling unwelcome in a nation slow to accept freedmen as equals Maconites emigrated to Liberia in November 1866.

In 1867, Georgia's largest cities, particularly where large black population exists, were influxed with influential Radical Republicans. Blacks in Macon formed alliances with white Radicals to work toward seizing full citizenship within the United States. Consequently, emigration advocates in Macon temporarily postponed their mobilization efforts to capitalize on the historic political elections of 1867 and 1868. Blacks voted for the first time in their lives, worked to change the Georgia Constitution, elected black men into office, and struggled to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. By contrast, blacks of Columbus lacked faith in the promises offered by Congress and Radical Republicans. Witnessing blacks throughout Georgia experiencing poverty and facing intimidation from planters and investors, working as cheap farm

laborers, and political and racial intimidation, several hundred Columbusites packed their bags and sailed to Liberia in 1867 and 1868. Blacks in other parts of Georgia shared the same sentiments as those in Columbus and emigrated as well. By May 1868, nearly 800 Georgians had resettled in Liberia.

The post-bellum African-American emigration movement in Georgia has received little attention from historians. Based on the primary documents within the voluminous collection of the African Colonization Society Papers, I recognized that conducting a study on those who chose to leave the United States for Liberia during the nineteenth-century is very ambitious. Narrowing the scope of what is the beginning of future studies of post-bellum black emigration, my primary goal in this dissertation is to examine the motives for freedmen's leaving during four departures: November 1866, May 1867, November 1867, and May 1868.

Each departure occurred, not by coincidence, around heated election dates in Georgia and the passage of historic Congressional legislation in Washington, D.C. The departure of November 1866 coincided with Georgia's first state election after the Civil War and the General Assembly's immediate rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment. The May 1867 departure occurred shortly after Congress passed the First and Second Reconstruction Acts, which established military presence in states not yet admitted into the Union and granted suffrage to black men. In November 1867, blacks emigrated after Georgians elected delegates for the Georgia Constitutional Convention. The May 1868 departure followed the late April 1868 election, which allowed Georgians to elect state officers and vote in favor of a new Georgia Constitution.

The motives of blacks emigrating from the United States were not stimulated exclusively by political push factors, but also by the hostile social environment and unstable southern

economy in which newly freed persons entered into following the Civil War. As blacks pushed to assert themselves as citizens within the United States, they experienced great opposition from resentful whites, who wanted to assert and maintain their social, economic, and political control. The enticements of living in a self-governing nation where education and land were not denied to blacks were major factors that pulled freed families to Liberia. In the minds of many post-bellum African Americans, Liberia was their “Promised Land.” It was free of whites, land was granted to settlers, nation-building was possible, and for some African-born emigrants, they were returning “home.”

Based on the correspondence between Georgia emigrants and ACS leaders from the African Colonization Society Papers and letters from Liberian settlers published in the ACS’s monthly publication, *African Repository*, I identify the motives that powered the nineteenth-century “Back-to-Africa” movement in Georgia and give voice to those emigrants who sought freedom in Africa during the early years of Congressional Reconstruction. As well, I will address the following research questions: Where was emigration sentiment strongest in Georgia? How did grassroots leaders mobilize blacks to emigrate? What were the sentiments of blacks toward emigration? What challenges did black emigrants experience as they prepared to leave the United States? Why were the promises of full citizenship and land not enough to convince some newly freed persons to remain in America?

Contrary to Wilson Jeremiah Moses, who asserts in *Classical Black Nationalism* that “there was not much interest in emigration from the end of the Civil War to World War I,” African emigration interest did not almost fade into oblivion after 1865.¹ Instead, blacks continued to express a high interest in foreign resettlement throughout the late-nineteenth

¹ William Jeremiah Moses, *Classical Black Nationalism: From the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1996), 28-29.

century, especially during the years of Reconstruction (see Table 1.2)² Although, post-bellum emigrants did not surpass the number of passengers who sailed to Liberia during the heyday of the ACS in the 1850s, their numbers immediately following emancipation remained high and were only 7% less than that of their predecessors who emigrated a decade or so earlier. While the ACS provided passage to 3,184 African Americans between 1865 and 1877, the number of individuals who applied for passage to Liberia during Reconstruction ran into the thousands and exceeded the number of applicants who had expressed an interest in foreign migration during the antebellum period. If additional ships and money had been available to transport and sustain applicants who desired to go to Africa, more blacks would almost certainly have left the United States during the late nineteenth-century. The consequence of such actions might have reduced the South's already struggling economy or may have increased the Chinese and European indentured labor trade to the South if its largest and most reliable labor source sought autonomy beyond American shores.

In examining the mobilization efforts to transport blacks to Liberia, it is important to note that high interest in African colonization following the Civil War was not solely the result of the indefatigable efforts of the ACS leaders, Rev. William McLain, Financial Secretary, and William Coppinger, Corresponding Secretary. This enthusiasm reflected a broader and already existing desire among newly freed people, who for multiple reasons doubted that America was their promised land. The individuals who favored foreign migration were pained by America's treatment of African Americans. They lost faith in their lives ever improving as long as they remained in the presence of whites. They desired land ownership, political representation, and

² Liberian Independence Day parades were commonly celebrated in conjunction with the July 4th Independence Day festivities in black populated cities throughout Georgia. See Michelle Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African-Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 5 and 24.

residency in a homogeneous black nation. These key factors contributed greatly toward high black turnout at eastern docks from New York to Georgia on scheduled dates of departure. Emancipation, black male suffrage, full citizenship, and the promises of “40 acres and a mule” through land redistribution were not enough to keep this group in the U.S.

It is also striking that the largest group of African Americans to resettle in Liberia came from Georgia (their numbers comprised 31 percent of the total number of passengers transported to West Africa by the American Colonization Society during Reconstruction).³ Although the number of annual departures of Georgia emigrants oscillated throughout the post-emancipation years, numbers of emigrants remained consistently high when compared to other states where emigration recruitment was present. Consequently, Georgia became the epicenter of the African-American emigration movement throughout Reconstruction (see Table 1.1).

Methodology

In examining the motives of black Georgians leaving the United States during Reconstruction, I rely primarily upon the American Colonization Society Papers. Of the many types of records within the Society’s collections, I use two types of sources: periodicals and correspondence.

In an effort to put black Georgia emigrants center stage and learn of their organizational efforts and motives for leaving the United States between 1866 and 1868, I relied heavily upon the ACS’s monthly periodical, the *African Repository* and specifically, letters written between

³ Claude A. Clegg III, *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 256.

black Georgians and ACS officers, William Coppinger (Corresponding Secretary) and Rev. William McLain (Financial Secretary).

The *African Repository* contains monthly financial reports and the names of financial contributors, officers, and agents. In addition, the periodical served as a successful tool of recruitment and media propaganda. Freed men and women, who ascended to positions of leadership (sometimes by default because they were literate or were a business owner or minister), galvanized support and recruited blacks to sail to Liberia by distributing the *Repository* to members of their immediate community. The *African Repository* informed potential recruits on how best to prepare for the voyage and how best to acclimate to the new country. It also offered maps of Liberia, which assisted blacks in determining where they would most like to resettle.

The most important sections of the *African Repository* for blacks were: (1) The “List of Emigrants,” which contained the numbers, names, dates of departures, and former place of residence of passengers; and (2) “Letters from Liberia,” which included published letters written from emigrants to friends and family in America or to ACS agents. These letters offered inspiring accounts of their arrival and successful resettlement, as well as encouragement to come “home” to the “Fatherland” These letters contained tenets of Black Nationalism and described a world that in the minds of some African Americans was a “utopia,” “Promised Land,” “Star in the East,” or “Black Israel.” At best, the letters and lists of emigrants served as motivating tools that helped ignite and stimulate “Liberian fever,” a term used often in the correspondence of blacks to describe the interest of emigration. At the least, they helped blacks contemplating going to Liberia to look more closely at the possibility of leaving the U.S.

Thousands of letters were written between African Americans and ACS officers and agents. These letters spanned from 1817 to 1935. The collection of letters is massive and may be one of the largest repository of letters written by freeborn and emancipated blacks of the antebellum era and freedmen of the Reconstruction period. Possibly the size of the collection or the mistaken belief that interest in emigration declined following the Civil War, scholars have failed to examine these letters. Scholars may have assumed that blacks simply did not write in large numbers to the ACS because literacy was not high amongst former slaves.

By using the letters in my research, I am able to show that blacks expressed a high interest in returning to Liberia during Reconstruction. Despite their level of literacy, they were able to articulate their desire to leave the U.S. Contained within the letters is evidence of inquiries about going to Liberia; dates of departure; and information on how grassroots emigration companies organized, mobilized, and galvanized support from blacks within their immediate community. Most importantly, these letters tell us, through the voices of black emigrants, their reasons for leaving the United States.

Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and other leading blacks, such as Congressman Jefferson F. Long and James Simms have long been recognized as leading advocates of black emigration during Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction. With the exception of Turner, most of the “Back-to Africa spokesmen” of these eras did not sail to Africa. In fact, it was not until November 1891 that Turner actually boarded a ship to West Africa.⁴ When he arrived in Africa, he did not stay nor did he resettle there.⁵ Lesser known individuals, who were former slaves,

⁴ Edwin S. Redkey, *Respect Black: The Writings and Speeches of Henry McNeal Turner* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1971), 85.

⁵ Turner promoted African emigration, but lived in America. Turner received much enthusiasm from black emigrationists, but lack of financial resources limited the number of persons who could actually resettle in Liberia through the ACS and his organizations, the International Migration Association and the Colored National Emigration Association. *Ibid.*, 135 and 194.

local preachers, and farmers, took on grassroots leadership positions and were more successful in galvanizing and mobilizing support for emigration than Turner and others. These individuals' organizational efforts have gone unrecognized and challenge the notion that a wide interest in African emigration died after the Civil War.

In examining the organizational efforts of black emigration advocates in Georgia, the ACS correspondence offers us an intimate look at the lives of blacks during Reconstruction and a fresh perspective on black emigration sixty years preceding Marcus Garvey's twentieth-century emigration movement. As well, these letters allow us to look closely at what blacks in Georgia were experiencing as they transitioned from slavery to freedom: displacement, poverty, a smallpox epidemic, intimidation, denial of land, unfair wages, and lack of protection from the military law enforcement. As black Georgians prepared for departure in 1866, 1867, and 1868, they described their disappointment with Republicans, the death of the Georgia delegate George Ashburn and the failures to convict his murderers, and Congress's refusal to appropriate funds to assist blacks in emigrating to Africa. All were factors that pushed blacks to emigrate from the United States.

While these letters offer us new ways in looking at freedmen during Reconstruction, they also allows us to reexamine the motives of the white leaders of the ACS, who have historically been accused of wanting to make the United States more racially homogeneous. Correspondence between officers within the ACS organization and emigrants tells us about the organization's commitment to improving the lives of blacks, their frustration with Congress for failing to appropriate funds to resettle blacks in Africa, and their discontent with white Republicans, Freedmen's Bureau officers, and employers who hoped to see blacks remain in the United States in a servile position. Most importantly, we see their disappointment when blacks are deterred

from leaving by the efforts of opponents of emigration. While the ACS served as an ally of blacks, its members also endangered their own lives and personal reputations in the pursuit of helping blacks acquire autonomy.

Historiography

The historiography of the nineteenth-century African colonization movement is not extensive but it is varied. Several books survey the history of Liberia.⁶ Others focus on the country's early history, the leadership and mission of the American Colonization Society, and the emigrants who helped to make Liberia a sovereign nation in 1847.⁷ Most of what has been published on the black repatriation movement reflects the years 1817 to 1865.⁸ What little

⁶ Elwood Dunn and Svend E. Hails, *Historical Dictionary of Liberia: African Historical Dictionaries Series* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1985); Harold D. Nelson, ed., *Liberia: A Country Study* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985); and Abayomi C. Cassill, *Liberia: The History of the First Republic* (New York: Fountainhead Publishers, 1970).

⁷ G.E. Saigbe Boley, *Liberia: The Rise and Fall of the First Republic* (New York: MacMillan Publishers, 1983); Elwood D. J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969); J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia: The Quest for Democracy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); and Richard West, *Back to Africa: A History of Sierra Leone and Liberia* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

⁸ Claude A. Clegg III, *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Floyd J. Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Colonization and Emigration, 1787-1863* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1975); Early Lee Fox, *American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1919); Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Nina Mjagkij, ed. *Organizing Black America: An Encyclopedia of African American Associations* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2001); Clarence Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in the Civil War of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Classical Black Nationalism: from the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Henry Noble Sherwood, "The Formation of the American Colonization Society," *Journal of Negro History* 11 (July 1917): 209-227; P.J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); and Tom W. Shick, *Behold the Promised Land: A History of the Afro-American Settler Society in Nineteenth Century Liberia* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

scholarship that covers the later nineteenth century deals primarily with the post-Reconstruction years 1878 to 1899. This period, which saw black-led domestic and foreign schemes, was the third wave of the nineteenth-century African repatriation movement.⁹ Despite the steady growth of scholarship on the history of Liberia, the American Colonization Society, and regional studies of Back-to-Africa movements, little research has been conducted on the efforts of freed people who either emigrated to or entertained the idea of resettling in Liberia during Reconstruction. What has been written thus far on this period consists primarily of a small collection of theses and dissertations that have gone unpublished. These works focus largely on missionary efforts in Liberia.¹⁰ In the general scholarly literature on Reconstruction, black repatriation to Africa receives cursory treatment when it is mentioned at all. My goal in writing this dissertation is not only to fill this gap, but to contribute to making the subject of black emigration, whether to Africa, Canada, Brazil, the Caribbean, or Mexico, one of the central themes of Georgia's Reconstruction history.

In the historiography of African colonization, one of the earliest scholarly works is Early Lee Fox's *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840*, published in 1919.¹¹ His work

⁹ Kenneth C. Barnes, *The Back to Africa Movement in Arkansas in the Late 1800s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Edwin S. Redkey, *Black Exodus: Black Nationalism and Back to Africa, 1819-1910* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969); and Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas following Reconstruction* (Philadelphia, PA: W.W. Norton, 1992).

¹⁰ Amos Jones Beyon, "The American Colonization Society and the Formation of the Political, Economic, and Religious Institutions in Liberia, 1822-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation: West Virginia University, 1985); Luckson Ewhiekpamare Ejofooi, "The Missionary Career of Alexander Crummell in Liberia: 1853-1873" (Ph.D. dissertation: Boston University Graduate School, 1974); Naomi Hodgson, "The Presbyterian Mission to Liberia, 1832-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation: Columbia University, 1980); Sandy Dwayne Martin, "The Growth of Christian Missionary Interest in West Africa Among Southeastern Black Baptists, 1880-1915" (Ph.D. dissertation: Columbia University, 1981); and Werner Theodor Wickstrom, "The American Colonization Society and Liberia, An Historic Study of Religious Motivation and Achievement, 1817-1867" (Ph.D. dissertation: Hartford Seminary, 1958).

¹¹ Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1919). An earlier article was published by Henry Noble Sherwood, "The Formation of the American Colonization Society," *Journal of Negro History* 11 (July 1917): 209-227.

presents general facts concerning the early decades of the African colonization movement: the mission and leadership of the ACS and the challenges of functioning as an agency and colonizing Liberia. Fox glorifies the leadership of the ACS, and he defends the intentions of the organization, whose initial mission was praised by blacks and sympathetic whites as an attempt to improve the lives of the free black population. He also asserts that, despite the ACS's failure to remove the entire black race from the country, the organization successfully colonized and Christianized Liberia. Through his own admission, Fox's empirical research contains flaws and inconsistencies and, consequently, his work has never been widely accepted by scholars of African colonization.

In 1961, P. J. Staudenraus's *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* surpassed the scholarship of Fox.¹² Derived from his dissertation, Staudenraus relied heavily upon the American Colonization Society Papers to revise or rather correct the initial research conducted by Fox and to better chronicle the genesis of the colonization movement and the first fifty years of the ACS's operation.¹³ What makes Staudenraus's work important to the study of black repatriation movements and the colonization of Liberia is his use of primary sources to reconstruct the organizational history of the ACS, the opinions of key opponents and advocates of African colonization, and the financial and logistical challenges of the colonization mission. Today, Staudenraus's work is the foundation of all scholarship conducted on the nineteenth-century African colonization movement. But like Fox, he too failed to write about the opinions of antebellum blacks on the subject of African repatriation.

¹² P.J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

¹³ Library of Congress. Manuscript Division. and American Colonization Society. *The American Colonization Society : a register of its records in the Library of Congress / Manuscript Division* The Library, Washington : 1979.

Following the modern civil rights movement in the U.S., scholars began to direct their attention away from the white leadership of the colonization movement and focused instead on the black émigrés who colonized Liberia.¹⁴ In 1969, Edwin S. Redkey published *Black Exodus: Black Nationalism and Back-to-Africa Movements, 1890-1910*. Unlike his predecessors, Redkey examined the origins of black-led, grassroots, foreign and domestic migration schemes that served as a prelude to Marcus Garvey's twentieth-century movement. Recognizing the importance of writing a history reflective of African-Americans' participation in the colonization of Liberia, Tom Shick published *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing*, a log containing the names of African-American emigrants who resettled in Liberia under the auspices of the American Colonization Society.¹⁵ This list of emigrants served as the nucleus of his own empirical research. In *Behold the Promised Land*, Shick recorded first generation Americo-Liberians' uneasy migration across the Atlantic Ocean to the shores of West Africa, their arrival to Liberia, and their struggle to cohabitate peacefully amongst the indigenous population.¹⁶ Along with his study of the social environment of the early settlers, Shick also examined early maps of Liberia; population reports; photos of emigrants; and illustrations of Masonic temples, churches, and homes built by settlers.

The primary documents from the American Colonization Society Papers served as a reliable source for Shick and for future scholars who later published additional transcribed logs

¹⁴ See Charles Morrow Wilson, *Liberia: Black Africa in Microcosm* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); Edwin S. Redkey, *Black Exodus: Black Nationalism and Back to Africa Movements, 1819-1910* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969); and Richard West, *Back to Africa: A History of Sierra Leone and Liberia* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

¹⁵ Tom W. Shick, *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1971).

¹⁶ Tom W. Shick, *Behold the Promised Land: A History of the Afro-American Settler Society in Nineteenth Century Liberia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

of nineteenth-century black emigrants, such as *Immigrants to Liberia, 1865 to 1904: An Alphabetical Listing* and *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing*.¹⁷

Following Staudenraus's and Shick's treatment of the American Colonization Society Papers and Redkey's social history of black participation in the colonization of Liberia came the publication of two works based largely on black emigrants' letters to former masters and families (fictive and blood related) in America. In *Dear Master: Letters of a Slave Family*, Randall M. Miller edited the antebellum correspondence of the Skipworths, a family of former slaves from Virginia and Alabama, to their former white owner, John Hartwell Cocke.¹⁸ Inspired by Miller, Bell I. Wiley published his findings in *Slaves No More: Letters from Liberia, 1833-1869*. The letters from emigrants to former masters Wiley selected for his book were unpublished and unedited by the press or the American Colonization Society. These letters revealed much about the relationships between former slaves and the masters who granted them manumission but in Liberia. Both Wiley and Miller identified common themes in the correspondence: hardship, Christian conversion, self-determination, and emigrants' reliance upon former owners to assist in acclimating to a life of freedom in a foreign land.¹⁹

In *Sojourners in Search of Freedom: The Settlement of Liberia by Black Americans*, John Wesley Smith examined the ways in which first and second generation settlers grappled with

¹⁷ Peter J. Murdza, Jr., *Immigrants to Liberia: 1865 to 1904, An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1976) and Robert T. Brown, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute of Liberian Studies, 1980).

¹⁸ Randall M. Miller, *Dear Master: Letters of a Slave Family* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978).

¹⁹ Bell I. Wiley, *Slaves No More: Letters from Liberia, 1833-1869* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1980). Additional works by scholars who rely heavily upon correspondence from antebellum emigrants see Etsuko Taketani, "Postcolonial Liberia: Sarah Josepha Hale's Africa," *American Literary History*, New York: Oxford University Press 14, no. 3 (2002): 479-504.

their new lives in Liberia.²⁰ Relying heavily upon the letters of emigrants as well, Smith discussed the settlers' sentiments of regret mixed with the support for colonization; their changing economic and social conditions in the U.S. and Liberia; and their enterprise in establishing townships, building schools, generating businesses and overcoming adversity in the West African country. Underscoring the desire to resettle in Liberia, Antonio Daniel's *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot: The Mortality Cost of Colonizing Liberia in the Nineteenth Century* offers a statistical analysis of the fatalities amongst early Liberian settlers.²¹ He argued that, in their pursuit of freedom, Liberia settlers may have paid the highest "reliably recorded" mortality cost in the history of human migration.²² While the statement is an exaggeration, the point it well made that resettlement was difficult and fatalities were high among first generation Liberian settlers.

Recent scholarship includes several regional studies of black emigration and the émigrés who emigrated from America over the span of the nineteenth century. Richard Hall's *On Africa's Shore: A History of Maryland in Liberia, 1834-1857* provides a narrative history of the eleven hundred free-born and emancipated blacks who chose to emigrate to Liberia during the antebellum years under the auspices of the Maryland Colonization Society. Claude A. Clegg III's *The Price of Liberty: African-Americans and the Making of Liberia* examines the multifarious tragedies black North Carolinians experienced in their pursuit of self-government, autonomy, Christian conversion, and prosperity in Liberia. The price included physical hardship, premature death, and opposition from the indigenous population. Alan Huffman's *Mississippi in Africa:*

²⁰ James Wesley Smith, *Sojourners in Search of Freedom: The Settlement of Liberia by Black Americans* (New York: University Press of America, 1987).

²¹ Antonio Daniel, *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot: The Mortality Cost of Colonizing Liberia in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).

²² *Ibid.*, 104.

The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and their Legacy in Liberia Today describes the legal challenges endured by a group of enslaved Mississippians following the death of their master who had promised them foreign manumission and the cultural conflict they became embroiled in after their arrival in Africa. In *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia*, Marie Tyler-McGraw explores the concerted efforts of blacks and whites to support the African colonization movement in Virginia and the factors that led more blacks to emigrate from there than any other state prior to the Civil War. Kenneth Barnes's *Journey of Hope: the Back-to-Africa Movement in Arkansas in the Late 1800s* examines the post-Reconstruction surge in emigration from Arkansas and why previously failed attempts and fraudulent schemes made by black or white-led emigration societies did not deter these emigrants.²³

Like Clegg and Huffman, Tyler-McGraw takes a transnational approach to exploring the lives of nineteenth-century emigrants to Liberia. She introduces a trans-Atlantic debate over cultural identity, national identity, and citizenship, while offering a narrative about the persons who came to be known as "Americo-Liberians." She shows that Liberian colonization was not the utopia blacks hoped it would be.²⁴ While hoping to civilize and proselytize native Liberians,

²³ Richard Hall, *On Africa's Shore: A History of Maryland in Liberia, 1834-1857* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2004); Alan Huffman, *Mississippi in Africa: The Saga of the Slaves of Prospect Hill Plantation and their Legacy in Liberia Today* (New York: Penguin, 2004); Claude A. Clegg III, *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Kenneth Barnes, *Journey of Hope: the Back to Africa Movement in Arkansas in the Late 1800s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); and Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginians in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

²⁴ To learn of nineteenth-century blacks' concept of a "black utopia," see Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (New York: Verso, 1999); Francis Abiola Irele, "'What is Africa to Me?': Africa in the Black Diaspora Imagination," *Souls* 7, no 3-4 (2005): 26-46; William H. Pease and Jane H. Pease, *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963); David E. Swift, *Black Prophets of Justice: Activist Clergy Before the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); and Leonard I. Sweet, *Black Images of America, 1784-1870* (Norton, VA: Norton Press 1976).

black American settlers brought with them their own racist view of Africans and a social paradigm they learned from whites in America. Sadly, they exploited the country's natural resources and the original inhabitants. The eventual result was a ruinous civil war that continued up to 2003, when President Charles Taylor, the descendant of an American emigrant, gave up power and went into exile in Nigeria.

In addition to the work of Clegg and Barnes, Steven Hahn's *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South, from Slavery to the Great Migration*, and Nell I. Painter's *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas following Reconstruction* deal with the Back-to-Africa movements after the Civil War. They take the position that blacks' interest in foreign resettlement did not die with their recognition as citizens through post-bellum constitutional amendments. Clegg asserts that Liberian fever remained consistent amongst blacks throughout most of the nineteenth century. Despite financial challenges met by the American Colonization Society, blacks' interest in Liberian resettlement amongst North Carolinians did not temper during Reconstruction and, in fact, their numbers made up the second largest group of emigrants after Georgians to sail to Liberia during this period. In his analysis of black interest in African resettlement, Hahn takes the position that the post-Reconstruction Back-to-Africa movement was a grassroots phenomenon supported primarily by landless farmers and rural workers. Painter has a similar view. Her case study of post-Reconstruction black migration to Kansas in 1879 show that "Exodusters" consisted of black separatists not only in domestic but also in foreign resettlement. She asserts that Kansas, for many blacks, was only a place for temporary settlement. Those who desired African emigration were either waiting for the opportune moment or simply lacked the financial resources to sail to Liberia. And despite negative reports, Liberia consistently remained as a place for resettlement in the minds of blacks throughout the post-

Reconstruction decades. While the Exodus to Kansas caught the attention of many farmers, migration to Arkansas was equally appealing. And like Painter, Barnes highlights the desire of blacks who migrated to Arkansas to resettle in Liberia under the auspices of the International Migration Society led by Bishop Henry McNeal Turner in 1895.²⁵

Scholars of black emigration recognize that Georgians have consistently taken part in the multiple African colonization and Back-to-Africa movements of the nineteenth century. Yet no single work has been published on its relevance to Liberian colonization, particularly during Reconstruction when the largest group of the black emigrants to sail to Liberia came from Georgia.²⁶ Reconstruction scholars, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul A. Cimbala, Donald L. Grant, and particularly Mark V. Wetherington, mention black Georgians' participation in emigration schemes of the post-emancipation era, but this movement has never received the attention it deserves.²⁷ John Hope Franklin, Edmund L. Drago, Kenneth Stampp, and Eric Foner do not

²⁵ Clegg, *Price of Freedom*; Barnes, *Journey of Hope*; Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South, from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); and Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas following Reconstruction* (Philadelphia, PA: W.W. Norton, 1992).

²⁶ What has been written thus far on Georgia's involvement in the nineteenth-century African Colonization Movement consist of a few theses and dissertation. See Edward F. Sweat, "Free Negroes in Antebellum Georgia" (Ph.D. dissertation: Indiana University, 1957); James M. Gifford, "The American Colonization Movement in Georgia, 1817-1860" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1877); F. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado, "The African Colonization Movement in Georgia: 1817-1860" (M.A. thesis: Clark Atlanta University 2001), and Matthew F. McDaniel, "Emigration to Liberia from the Chattahoochee Valley of Georgia and Alabama, 1853-1903" (M.A. thesis: Louisiana State University, 2007). For published works on Georgia's involvement in the American Colonization Movement of the antebellum years, see Clarence Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2001) and Michael Thurmond, *Freedom: Georgia's Antislavery Heritage, 1733-1865* (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet Press, 2003).

²⁷ Authors who briefly discuss black emigration to Liberia from Georgia during the Reconstruction years are Paul A. Cimbala, *Under the Guardianship of the Nation: The Freedmen's Bureau and the Reconstruction of Georgia, 1865-1870* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003); Alan Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967); Avery Craven, *Reconstruction: The Ending of the Civil War* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969); W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999); Donald Lee Grant, *The Way it was in the South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); Clara Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia: Economic, Social, Political, 1865-1872* (Manchester, NH: Ayer Publishing, 1971); and Mark V. Wetherington, *Plain Folk's Fight: The Civil War and Reconstruction in Piney Woods Georgia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

discuss black emigration in their accounts of Reconstruction.²⁸ This neglect gives the impression that domestic migration and foreign emigration were not viable options for blacks seeking autonomy, and that the movement for African repatriation became inactive following the Civil War and remained dormant until the explosion of Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association in the 1920s.²⁹

Organization of Chapters

My dissertation is arranged into five chapters. "Chapter One: Introduction" contains the dissertation's argument, significance, scholarship, and methodology.

"Chapter Two: A Brief History of the African-American Emigration Movement, 1773-1865" offers, first, a historical overview of the organizational efforts and motives of blacks who proposed resettling in Africa from the American Revolution to the close of the Civil War (from its *proto-emigration* phase to the *first wave* of the emigration movement). Second, I highlight the historical connection between Georgia and the ACS's earliest attempt to launch its organization's mission, how freeborn and emancipated black Georgians responded to Liberian fever, as it came to be called, and their motives for seeking resettlement beyond the shores of the

²⁸ See Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York : Harper & Row, 1988); Ibid, *Short History of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990); John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction: After the Civil War* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1961); Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965); Edmund L. Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia: A Splendid Failure* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992); and Elizabeth Studley Nathans, *Losing the Peace: Georgia Republicans and Reconstruction, 1865-1871* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969).

²⁹ For black Georgians' response to African colonization during the first quarter of the twentieth-century, see Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

United States prior to the close of the Civil War. The *second wave*, which covers the years of Reconstruction (1865-1877), is discussed in the succeeding chapters.

“Chapter Three: The African-American Emigration Movement in Macon, and Sparta, Georgia, 1865-1866” examines the economic conditions of blacks in Macon following the Civil War and their motives and organizational efforts to emigrate to Liberia in 1866. I will also examine black Spartans’ response to Liberian resettlement and their efforts to emigrate. This chapter will demonstrate how Maconites and Spartans prepared for departure and the challenges they faced during growing opposition toward blacks’ resistance to field labor and their pursuit to achieve political and economic autonomy.

“Chapter Four: The African-American Emigration Movement in Macon and Columbus, Georgia, 1866-1867” is a continued examination of the African-American emigration movement in Georgia, where mobilization efforts began to wane in Macon but ‘took fire’ in Columbus in 1867. First, I examine how the rise in black support for Republicanism severely curtailed grassroots efforts to emigrate more Maconites after 1867. Second, I will explain how a lack of faith in their quality of life improving in the United States pushed blacks from Columbus to Liberia. Third, I will identify and analyze the motivating factors that stimulated emigration and caused Columbus to become leaders of black emigration in Georgia.

“Chapter Five: At the Crossroad of African-American Emigration in Georgia, 1867-1868” examines the recruitment and mobilization efforts of black Georgians from Columbus, Sparta, Marion, and other surrounding areas during the Georgia Constitutional Convention (December 1867 and March 1868) and the state election of late April 1868. Mobilization efforts and interest in emigration were great amongst blacks following the delegate election of November 1867. As days drew closer to vote in favor of or against the proposed Georgia

Constitution and to elect new state legislators into office in April 1868, political and racial tension escalated between Republicans and Democrats. The events that preceded the election and Congress's decision to stop appropriating money to fund future voyages to transport blacks to Liberia affected emigration numbers. Blacks were ambivalent about their future in America. Some teetered on the subject of emigration and others were staunch supporters. Despite challenges, blacks from Columbus, Sparta, and Marion resettled to Liberia in May 1868.

TABLE 1.1: PERCENTAGE OF ACS-SPONSORED GEORGIA EMIGRANTS TO OVERALL NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS WHO RESETTLED IN LIBERIA, 1865-1877.

Year	Georgia Emigrants	Overall Number of Emigrants	Percentage
1865	0	527	0%
1866	194	621	39%
1867	290	633	46%
1868	283	453	65%
1869	0	160	0%
1870	0	196	0%
1871	63	247	26%
1872	150	150	100 %
1873	0	73	0%
1874	0	27	0%
1875	0	23	0%
1876	0	21	0%
1877	0	53	0%
Total:	980	3,184	31%

Source: Peter Murdza, Jr., “Immigrants to Liberia, 1865 to 1904” (Masters thesis: University of Wisconsin, 1972); and *Ibid.*, *Immigrants to Liberia: 1865 to 1904, An Alphabetical Listing*. Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1976) and ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 62, 63.

TABLE 1.2: NUMBER OF ACS-SPONSORED EMIGRANTS TO LIBERIA, 1817-1885

Year	Number of Emigrants
1817-1864	10,764 (+5722 recaptured Africans)
1865-1877	3,184
1878-1885	600
Total:	20,270

Source: See ACS, “Table of Emigrants sent by the American Colonization Society” in *African Repository* (April 1867): 109-117; *Ibid.*, Vol. 62, 62-65; and Peter Murdza, Jr., *Immigrants to Liberia: 1865 to 1904, An Alphabetical Listing*. Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1976). These numbers do not reflect the number of emigrants transported to Liberia from the independent African colonization societies, the Maryland Colonization Society, Indiana Colonization Society, Liberian Exodus Association, and International Migration Society.

TABLE 1.3: ANNUAL ACS REPORT OF GEORGIA EMIGRANTS, 1865-1877

Year	Number of emigrants	City and county of former residents
1865	0	
1866	194	Macon
1867	290	Macon (47) and Columbus (243)
1868	283	Columbus (204), Marion (37), Sparta (25), Savannah (12), Augusta (5)
1869	0	
1870	0	
1871	63	Sparta (63) and Savannah (3)
1872	150	Valdosta (59), Sparta (24), Milledgeville, (35) and Hawkinsville (32)
1873-77	0	
Total	980	

Source: Numbers were determined based on quantitative data compiled from the American Colonization Society Papers, Subject Files, 1792-1964, Emigrants: List of Applicants for Passage to Liberia, 1850-93 (Container 7, Reel 306) and Applicants for Passage to Liberia, 1856-89 (Container 19, Reel 314).

CHAPTER TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION MOVEMENT, 1773-1865

Since 1619, black Americans fought to achieve two types of freedom: personal and civic. According to author Orlando Patterson, *personal freedom* is that which "gives a person the sense that ... on the one hand, one is not being coerced or restrained by another person in doing something desired and, on the other hand, the conviction that one can do as one pleases within the limits of other person's desire to do the same." *Civic freedom* is "the capacity... to participate in its life and governance. A person feels free...to the degree that he or she belongs to the community of birth, has a recognized place in it and is involved in some way in the way it is governed."³⁰ Believing the United States Government would never grant them these freedoms, African Americans opted to seize them or create them elsewhere by emigrating beyond the shores of the United States. Blacks proposed various locations throughout the Americas, but the most favored place to resettle for emigrationists was West Africa. The desire of blacks to live in a racially homogeneous land as citizens with political, economic, and personal autonomy coupled with the financial resources and organizational efforts of a group of benevolent whites gave birth to the African-American emigration movement, the American Colonization Society (ACS), and the nation-state Liberia.

As early as the eighteenth century, African Americans had articulated their desire to resettle in West Africa. This desire was a response to the denial of civil liberties and land and a way to claim personal autonomy against individual, familial, and community subjugation and

³⁰ Orlando Patterson, *Freedom: Volume I: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 3-4.

control. During the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War, this response occurred in two phases: *proto-emigration* and *first wave*.

The “proto-emigration” phase traces the years 1773 to 1814 when blacks capitalized on the revolutionary thinking of the time and advocated for emigration abroad and the end of slavery. African Americans residing in the U.S. and transient Black Loyalists (American blacks who joined the British Army during the Revolutionary War in exchange for freedom) in London and Nova Scotia sought to emigrate to Africa. The desire for land and independence, and the reality of poverty were the motives that pushed emigration for blacks on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Following the American Revolution, free blacks from Massachusetts and Rhode Island were inspired by the actions of Black Loyalists who emigrated to Sierra Leone in 1787 and 1792 to pursue a more autonomous life. Faced with similar social, economic, and political challenges as blacks in Canada and England, free U.S. blacks formed emigration associations and petitioned legislators to assist in transporting them to West Africa.³¹ Unfortunately, the necessary financial resources of blacks, compassionate whites, or the government did not coalesce to meet the growing demand by blacks to leave the U.S. during this period.

The “first wave” reflects the years, 1815 to 1865, which witnessed organized endeavors by blacks and whites to resettle African Americans in a location beyond the U.S. Suggested destinations were Canada, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and various places throughout the Caribbean. The first successful resettlement of blacks from the United States to Africa was led by Paul Cuffe, a wealthy black sailor, who used his personal funds and ship to transport thirty-eight free blacks to Sierra Leone in 1815. Plans for a second voyage by Cuffe were cut short due

³¹ James Sidbury, *Becoming African in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121.

to his death in 1817.³² On January 31, 1820, the American Colonization Society (ACS), a white led benevolent society formed in December 1816, transported nearly ninety free blacks to Liberia. Funded by white northern abolitionists, religious leaders and slave masters, the ACS wanted to resolve racial tension in the United States by assisting free blacks in resettling in Liberia. There, free blacks could exercise personal and civic freedoms and obtain land otherwise denied to them in the U.S. The sentiments of free blacks and whites toward the mission of the ACS were mixed and the debate over black resettlement remained a controversy up to the end of the Civil War. Nearly 10,000 African Americans (50 percent of the emigrants were newly emancipated slaves) and 5,000 illegally captured Africans emigrated to Liberia through the auspices of the ACS from 1820 to 1865. Of the American emigrants, the largest percentages were from Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia (in that order).

This chapter offers a brief overview of the African-American emigration movement from 1773 to 1865. First, I offer a brief historical overview of the organizational efforts and motives of blacks who proposed resettling in Africa from the American Revolution to the close of the Civil War (from the proto-emigration period to the first wave of the emigration movement). Then, I highlight the historical connection between Georgia and the ACS's earliest attempt to launch its organization's mission, analyzing how freeborn and emancipated black Georgians responded to *Liberian fever*, as it came to be called by blacks, and their motives for seeking resettlement beyond the shores of the United States.

³² Benjamin Griffith Brawley, *Early Negro American Writers: Selections with Biographical and Critical Introductions* (Salem, New Hampshire: Ayer Company, 1991), 6 and 101.

Proto-Emigration

During the American Revolution, four changes occurred as a result of white colonists' wanting to break away from the control of Great Britain: (1) the Declaration of Independence was enacted; (2) the United States became an independent nation; (3) the Constitution of the United States became the law of the land; (4) and, most radical of all, the liberation of African slaves in some northern states. As white colonists demanded their independence from King George III, blacks did not sit idly by while white colonists fought for their own autonomy. The dream of liberty and the ideology of revolution aroused their spirit and caused them to want the same civic and personal freedoms cherished by whites advocating for independence. They challenged legislators and slaveholders to grant emancipation. Slaves escaped from their owners. They also sued for their freedom, arguing that their enslavement contradicted the Constitution and their natural rights.³³

The founding of the United States, the subsequent drafting of the Declaration of Independence, and the demand for emancipation by blacks during the American Revolution opened the debate over slavery. With nearly one in five persons in the U.S. being an enslaved person of African descent, the Founding Fathers debated over the continued use of bondspersons as a form of labor (see Table 2.1).³⁴ Men of influence, including Thomas Jefferson, failed to

³³ James Oliver Horton, *Free People of Color: Inside the American Community* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 2; James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Slavery and the Making of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 64-66; Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States 1790-1860* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 11-12; Ira Berlin, *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 10 and 17.

³⁴ United States, *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907).

confront slavery head-on and, consequently, acquiesced by settling for a compromise.³⁵ That compromise resulted in the North, mostly a “society with slaves,” adopting two forms of emancipation: immediate and gradual.³⁶ The South, a “slave society,” pushed forward to build an empire by the muscle and sweat of enslaved men, women, and children.³⁷

The first three states to adopt immediate emancipation were Vermont (1777), New Hampshire (1780), and Massachusetts (1783). The U.S. Census of 1790 shows that blacks never exceeded more than 2 percent of the total population in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts (see Table 12.1). With the three New England states lacking a large black population and an economy dependent upon slave labor, they led the way in granting immediate emancipation.

Northern states favoring gradual emancipation were Pennsylvania (1780), Rhode Island (1784), Connecticut (1784), New York (1799), and New Jersey (1804).³⁸ The black population ranged from 2.3 to 8 percent, relatively higher than the states adopting immediate emancipation (see Table 2.1). Like Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, slave production did not substantially sustain their economy either. Although the North did not possess the number of slaves as the South, the region took a dawdling approach to granting manumission (see Table 2.1). Not all northern states or territories were quick to embrace immediate or gradual

³⁵ To learn more about the attitudes of slavery during the American Revolution see Roger W. Wilkins, *Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).

³⁶ To learn the distinctions between a “society with slaves” and a “slave society,” see Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2000), 8-10.

³⁷ See Leon Litwack, *North of Slavery*, 3. For other works on immediate and gradual emancipation in the North, see Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England, 1780-1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); and David Gellman, *Emancipating New York: The Politics of Slavery and Freedom, 1777-1827* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2006).

³⁸ It must be noted that this is when gradual emancipated became complete.

emancipation. In fact, emancipation in the New England and Middle states occurred over a span of three decades. New York did not grant freedom to all its slaves until July 4, 1827. New Jersey did not completely abolish slavery till 1846 (a mere seventeen years prior to the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation).³⁹

While the American Revolution opened the opportunity for abolishing slavery in the U.S., it inadvertently ignited a transnational migration phenomenon among American blacks. Beginning with the commencement of the Revolutionary War, blacks sought freedom and autonomy with their feet. They migrated within and across three continents on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean: throughout the U.S; to Nova Scotia, the Caribbean, and London; and eventually to Sierra Leone. Testing the limits of their mobility, post-Revolutionary blacks attempted to exercise what I refer to as their *freedom of movement*, the right to migrate and resettle without any legal restrictions.

Beginning first in 1775, Lord Dunmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, asked American blacks belonging to Whig supporters to turn against their masters by running away and joining the British Army in exchange for freedom.⁴⁰ Contrary to Dunmore's proposition, emancipation was not offered to slaves owned by Loyalists. Instead, British masters took with them 30,000 to 50,000 slaves outside of the U.S. during the war, yet further expanding the forced migration of blacks across the Diaspora.⁴¹ The number of black soldiers who accepted Dunmore's proposal is uncertain.⁴² However, James W. Walker notes nearly 2,000 American blacks were recorded in

³⁹ Paul Finkleman, *Slavery and the Law* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 115-116.

⁴⁰ Michael Lee Lanning, *African Americans in the Revolutionary War* (New York: Citadel Press, 2005), 52.

⁴¹ Ibid, 52 and 16; and Phillip Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island Staten Island and the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 73.

⁴² John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783* (Williamsburg, Virginia: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2007), 67.

1783 as enlisted soldiers within the British Army. Of the Black Loyalists, 1,410 were runaways, 409 were free blacks, 83 were enrolled involuntarily, and 49 were recruited as soldiers.⁴³

When the British Army made its presence in the colonies of the Carolinas and Georgia, nearly 100,000 slaves (20 percent of the black population in the American colonies) belonging to Whig supporters ran from their masters and escaped to British lines.⁴⁴ Thomas Jefferson noted Virginia alone lost 30,000 slaves during the War of Independence. However, not all fugitives sought refuge amongst the British.⁴⁵ Many remained in the United States and sought refuge wherever they could. Some migrated to northern cities where there existed a sizable free black presence: Boston and New Bedford, Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Providence, Rhode Island.

According to Michael Lee Lanning, nearly 1,000 blacks from Savannah and Charleston were granted freedom by the British. Many of them migrated to East Florida when territory was ceded to the Spanish in September 1783.⁴⁶ When the British were forced to evacuate the U.S., several hundred blacks emigrated to the West Indies and Bahamas but faced the dangers of re-enslavement. However, the largest group of blacks to emigrate from the U.S. during this period were Black Loyalists and their families (most from Staten Island, Boston, Savannah, Charleston,

⁴³ James W. St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 3-4. Along with Charleston and Savannah, Staten Island served as one of several asylums for escaped slaves. See Phillip Papas, *That Ever Loyal Island Staten Island and the American Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

⁴⁵ Walker, *Black Loyalists*, 3.

⁴⁶ Lanning, *African Americans in the Revolutionary War*, 161.

and St. Augustine), who sought resettlement in England and Canada. Enticed by the promises of land and independence, 200 blacks emigrated to London and 3,000 to Nova Scotia.⁴⁷

As noted, the migration and emigration of blacks during the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary years was vast and wide. It was also unsettling and testing. Upon the arrival of blacks to Nova Scotia and London, the emigrants soon learned there was no land to be granted. In both places, they faced racial discrimination, unemployment, and poverty.⁴⁸ The number of destitute blacks was so high they became known by whites as the “Black Poor.”⁴⁹ Frustrated and exhausted from begging for land, blacks began seeking an alternative location for resettlement: West Africa.

On April 9, 1787, 350 blacks sailed from Portsmouth to Sierra Leone. They were joined by nearly a dozen white officials and artisans and sixty white women, who were described as “chiefly women of the lowest sorts” simply because they married black men. Half or more of the male passengers were identified as seamen who served in the Royal Navy and “Rangers with the Army in the American Woods.”⁵⁰

Championing black emigration was the white British abolitionist, Granville Sharp, who petitioned the Treasury to provide transportation and provisions to Poor Blacks of London

⁴⁷ See Barrington Walker, *The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada: Essential Readings* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2008), 58-59; and Paul R. Magocsi, *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Toronto: Published for the Multicultural History Society of Ontario by the University of Toronto Press, 2006).

⁴⁸ Michael Lee Lanning, *African Americans in the Revolutionary War*, 161-162. To learn more about the land discrimination toward eighteenth-century blacks in Nova Scotia, see James St. G Walker, “Land and Settlement in Nova Scotia” in *The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada: Essential Readings*, edited by Barrington Walker (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2008), 49-67.

⁴⁹ Michael Lee Lanning, *African Americans in the Revolutionary War*, 161; and Walker, “Land and Settlement in Nova Scotia,” 54-59.

⁵⁰ Wallace Brown, “The Black Loyalist in Sierra Leone,” *Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World*, edited by John W. Pulis (New York: Routledge Press:1999), 104.

wanting to return to Africa.⁵¹ Five years later, Sharp joined forces with Thomas Peters (a former American slave residing in Nova Scotia) to advocate on behalf of black Canadians favoring emigration to West Africa.⁵² Recognizing their social, political and economic challenges, Sharp introduced Peters to other white abolitionists, bankers, and politicians of London, who hoped to assist transient blacks in receiving land and improving their quality of life. Through the concerted efforts of blacks and whites, the Sierra Leone Company was formed. In 1792, nearly 2,000 blacks from Nova Scotia embarked upon fifteen vessels bound for Freetown, Sierra Leone.⁵³

The mobilization efforts made by black emigrationists of Canada and London were not the first of its kind. On April 20, 1773, fourteen years prior to the emigration of Black Loyalists from London, four Boston slaves, Peter Bestes, Sambo Freeman, Felix Holbrook, and Chester Joie, addressed the following letter to legislators asking to be allowed to work to pay their own transportation fees to return to Africa:

We are willing to submit to such regulations and laws as may be made relative to us, until we leave the providence, which we determine to do as soon as we can from our joynt labours procure money to transport ourselves to some part of the coast of Africa, where we propose a settlement.⁵⁴

Although their request was not granted, the four men's initiative, did set a precedent for blacks, who would contemplate emigrating to Africa following the American Revolution.

⁵¹ Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada A History* (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 61.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 62.

⁵³ Walker, *Black Loyalists*, 96.

⁵⁴ "Petition of Peter Bestes, Sambo Freeman, Felix Holbrook, and Chester Joe," *Early Negro Writing, 1760 – 1837*, ed. Dorothy Porter (Maryland: Black Classic Press, 1995), 254-255. To see additional petitions drafted by Felix Holbrooks and other black Bostonians, see the "Africans in America" website at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2h22t.html> (accessed January 15, 2010).

In January 1787, free blacks belonging to the African Union Society of Newport, Rhode Island (AUSN) proposed that, “A number of men from among ourselves shall be sent to Africa to see if they can obtain, by gift or purchase lands sufficient to settle upon. And if such land can be contained, then some of these men shall return and bring information back.”⁵⁵ As the organizational efforts of the AUSN gained momentum, benevolent whites began to take notice and hoped to assist in any way possible. Motivations among whites varied, from the desire to acquire personal glory, to the hope of promoting a Christian agenda. Reverend Samuel Hopkins hoped to recruit and train black students within the theology department at Princeton University to serve as missionaries along the Guinea Coast of Africa.⁵⁶ William Thornton, a white emigration advocate, wished to assist free blacks from Newport and Boston in their pursuit of acquiring land in some part of Africa, by serving as their spokesperson. Blacks belonging to the AUSN had their own objectives: to seize land, to be self-reliant, and to be self-represented. While free blacks of Newport hoped to return to Africa without the financial assistance of sympathetic whites, they recognized they would not be able to charter a ship “for want of money” and could not procure land “unless the right of the land is first made over to our heirs.”⁵⁷ Hoping to be completely self-sufficient, blacks made it clear “this is the only reason of our troubling of our superiors for assistance.”⁵⁸ In other words, while prepared to accept the necessity of white financial assistance, blacks were not willing to grant leadership to whites.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Dorothy Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones: Letters and Other Writings by Black Northerners, 1787-1865* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 5.

⁵⁶ Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia* (Pennsylvania: Institution of Contemporary Studies, 1992), 16, 18, and 21.

⁵⁷ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 5

⁵⁸ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 5

⁵⁹ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 4.

Thornton hoped to assist the Newport blacks in procuring land in Africa through purchase or as a gift and reached out to members of the AUSN. Thornton also proposed representing members of the African Company of Boston (ACB), who also hoped to emigrate to Africa. Although the African Union Society and the African Company thought highly of Thornton's willingness to assist free blacks, they respectfully had to decline his invitation. Blacks had no objection to petitioning or receiving from benevolent whites or their state legislature financial assistance in returning to Africa, but they hoped to do so on their own terms and using their own voice, not that of a white representative.

On June 1, 1787, Samuel Stevens of the ACB addressed a letter to the AUSN about their feelings toward Thompson. Stevens wrote:

Dear Brethren, We received your letter by the hand of Mr. Thornton. We have conversed with the gentleman and find him, we think, a friend of the blacks. . . . We do not approve of Mr. Thornton's going [to] settle a place for us.⁶⁰

The AUSN appreciated the efforts of Thornton as well, but the organization supported the decision of the ACB who kindly expressed, "We think it would be better if we could charter a vessel and send some of our blacks" to Africa.⁶¹

During the same month, eighty members of the African Company of Boston petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts to assist them in returning to Africa. With the leading support of Prince Hall (a free black, Barbados-born Methodist preacher and Masonic leader), Bostonian signatories expressed a desire "to return to Africa, our native country . . . where we shall live among our equals, and be more comfortable and happy, than we can be in our present

⁶⁰ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 6.

⁶¹ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 6.

situation."⁶² Dissatisfied with their present conditions and the ill treatment toward all blacks in the United States, Hall and other proponents of emigration believed West Africa offered a more suitable weather for African Americans, would allow them to live freer lives, and would create the opportunity to spread Christianity to their African brethren.⁶³

As interest in black emigration heightened within the New England area, so too did the desire of whites to completely abolish slavery and the trans-African slave trade. In October 1787, white abolitionists took a stance to brusquely end the selling and importation of Africa slaves. The Proceedings of the General Assembly” read:

The trade to Africa for slaves, and the transportation and selling of them into other countries, is inconsistent with justice, and the principle of humanity. . . . or citizens of this state or any other person or owner of any vessel, directly or indirectly, import or transport from their native country, any of the natives or inhabitants of any state or . . . that part of the world called Africa, or slaves, or without their voluntary consent.⁶⁴

After witnessing, continuously, the selling of Africans as they arrived to the United States and the separation of African families as they were sold, ripped from the arms of loved ones, and transported to the South, members of the Providence Society (a white-led association) proposed before the General Assembly a charter for incorporation in 1790.⁶⁵ With nearly 150 signatures,

⁶² For a transcribed copy of the petition, see “Boston Plan.” *Africans in America* website, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2h59t.html> (accessed January 15, 2009). For additional information on Prince Hall, see Charles H. Wesley, *Prince Hall: Life and Legacy* (Washington: United Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction, Prince Hall Affiliation, 1977).

⁶³ William Jeremiah Moses, ed., *Classical Black Nationalism: From the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 8-9; Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia* (Pennsylvania: Institution of Contemporary Studies, 1992), 23; and Floyd J. Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Emigration and Colonization 1787-1863* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1975), viii.

⁶⁴ Rhode Island and John Russell Bartlett, *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England, Printed by Order of the General Assembly* (Providence: A.C. Greene and Bros., 1856), 262.

⁶⁵ The domestic slave trade following the arrival of African in America is referred to as the “second Middle Passage.” Ira Berlin takes the position that nearly 1 million slaves were sold, transported, and dispersed from the North to Upper South and then Upper South to Deep South between 1790 and 1860. For further reading, see Ira

including that of Reverend Samuel Hopkins, attached to the petition, their mission as an organization was direct: to promote “the abolition of slavery, for the relief of persons unlawfully held in bondage, and for improving the condition of the Africans.”⁶⁶

Capitalizing on the spirit of white abolitionists and members of the General Assembly who hoped to abolish the international and domestic slave trade, free blacks of Providence hoped to return to Africa to put an end to the trans-Atlantic slave trade at its source and to find a suitable place to resettle in Sierra Leone. They formed the African Society of Providence, Rhode Island (ASP) in 1789, and in February 1794, the ASP joined forces with officers of the AUSN to draft an “emigration bill” to present before the Rhode Island General Assembly.⁶⁷ Possessing the signatures of free black men and women, both organizations petitioned for the appropriation of funds to send representatives, “ready to embark at a moment’s warning,” on an exploratory trip to Sierra Leone.⁶⁸

The African Union Society of Newport and the African Society of Providence selected three men to travel to West Africa: William Olney and James McKenzie, secretary of the ASP, and Newport Garner, secretary of the AUSN. In 1795, only McKenzie sailed to Sierra Leone. According to Dorothy Sterling, his arrival to the West African company was met with disappointment. The colony was barraged by French naval forces and the governor of Sierra Leone was willing to admit and grant land to less than twelve American families. A precondition to their arrival was the approval of their character by the white president of the Newport

Berlin, *Generation of Captivity: A History of African-American Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2003) and Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking, 2010).

⁶⁶ Rhode Island, and John Russell Bartlett. *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England. Printed by Order of the General Assembly* (Providence: A.C. Greene and Bros., State printers, 1856), 382-386.

⁶⁷ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 10.

⁶⁸ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 10.

Abolition Society, Reverend Samuel Hopkins, who would have to vouch that these individuals were “pious Christians and not infected by ‘the poison of the Age of Reason.’”⁶⁹ This was a nuisance that self-determining blacks were unwilling to accept.

Of the three persons nominated to return to Africa, the most suitable representative was Newport Garner; born Ocreman Marycoo in 1760, kidnapped from Africa, and brought to the United States at the age of fourteen. In 1791, he won a portion of a shared lottery and with his winnings, he purchased his and his family’s freedom; in addition to a singing school in Newport, Rhode Island.⁷⁰ Garner had previously been trained as a singer and composer.⁷¹ According to one white townsman, “Garner used to say that he was very careful to cultivate his recollection of his African tongue so that in case Providence should open a way, he might return to Africa and find a people with whom he might converse intelligently.”⁷² Although Garner did not return to Africa in 1795, he eventually would in 1826.

Due to the U.S. consistently receiving African slaves up to the passing of the 1808 Slave Trade Act, a significant portion of the black population was African born.⁷³ In the post-revolutionary era free blacks embraced their African identity, especially when naming their schools, churches, mutual aid societies, and Masonic lodges. For blacks belonging to the emigration societies of Boston, Newport, and Providence, the “return to Africa” ideology was a natural extension of their desire to maintain a cultural and physical connection to their homeland.

⁶⁹ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 12; and James Oliver Horton, and Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700 – 1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 180-181.

⁷⁰ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 11.

⁷¹ Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 157.

⁷² Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 11.

⁷³ Sidbury, *Becoming African in America*, 77; Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 178; and Winks, *The Blacks of Canada*, 61.

After the exploratory trip of 1795, interest in emigration to Africa did not cease. Lack of money kept blacks from resettling to Sierra Leone.⁷⁴ The desire to return to Africa, nonetheless, stayed with blacks for the next two decades. Unfortunately, twenty-two years passed before American blacks were able to successfully resettle in West Africa. Gardner, as noted earlier, finally returned as well. In 1826, Gardner and his life-long friend, Salmar Nubia (African born and first secretary of the AUSN) embarked upon the ship, *Vine*, from Boston to set sail to Liberia with the white-led, American Colonization Society (ACS). Before his departure, Garner, elderly and described as having white hair, said the following words about his reasons for leaving the United State: “I go to set an example to the youth of my race. I go to encourage the young. They can never be elevated here. I have tried it sixty year – in vain. Could I by my example lead them to set sail, and I die the next day, I should be satisfied.”⁷⁵ A few months after landing in Liberia, eighty year-old Gardner and seventy-two year-old Nubia died in their ancestral homeland of Africa.⁷⁶

First Wave: African-American Emigration, 1815-1865.

The first successful enterprise to transport black Americans to Africa occurred in 1815 when Paul Cuffe, a wealthy ship owner of West African and American Indian ancestry, used \$4,000 of his personal assets to assist thirty-eight free blacks (three of whom paid for their own

⁷⁴ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 12.

⁷⁵ Sterling, *Speak Out in Thunder Tones*, 4, 27, and 28.

⁷⁶ Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 196.

expenses) in resettling in Sierra Leone.⁷⁷ This launched what I refer to as the *first wave* of African-American emigration, which extends from 1815 to the close of the Civil War. Cuffe's effort to return blacks to Africa was more than a romantic quest. The practical potential of establishing a community of formerly enslaved and freeborn blacks in West Africa was apparent, but Cuffe advanced moral, racial, and economic rationales for black emigration. He argued a strong North American black presence in West Africa was vital to bringing Christianity to Africa, eradicating the illegal trading of African captives, and establishing commercial opportunities through land ownership and global trade for Africans on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1816, Cuffe returned to America and reported news of the thirty-eight emigrants' successful resettlement. His voyage made believers out of once ambivalent African Americans who questioned whether returning to Africa was safe and beneficial for the black race. As Cuffe prepared for his second voyage, his emigration mission gained approval from increasing numbers of both free blacks and whites who espoused ideas of African resettlement.⁷⁸

Unfortunately, this black-led and black-funded movement came to a halt in 1816 when Cuffe became ill and died of natural causes. As it was for emigration supporters of the post-

⁷⁷ Some scholars claim Cuffe may have used \$4,000 to resettle blacks in Sierra Leone. See Brawley, *Early Negro American Writers: Selections with Biographical and Critical Introductions*, 6; and Adelaide Cromwell Hill and Martin Kilson, eds., *Apropos of Africa: Sentiments of Negro American Leaders on Africa from the 1800s to the 1950s* (London: Cass, 1969). To learn of Cuffe's earlier interest in African colonization see Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 181-183; Brock N. Cordeiro, "Paul Cuffe: A Study of His Life, and the Status of His Legacy in 'Old Dartmouth'" (M.A. thesis: University of Massachusetts, 2004); and Paul Cuffe and Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, *Captain Paul Cuffe's Logs and Letters, 1808-1817: A Black Quaker's "Voice from Within the Veil"* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1996).

⁷⁸ Cuffe's emigration and colonization plan made no mention of resettling slaves. This is not to say that Cuffe did not envision or hope for an emancipation and emigration plan for enslaved blacks in America. He did, however, believe that a free black presence in West Africa (and using what resources, influence, and freedom this group did possess) could decimate the ongoing illegal trans-Atlantic slave trade West Africans engaged in with Europeans.

Revolutionary era, lack of funds and ships prevented blacks from returning to Africa through their own mobilization efforts and financial resources.

In response to the 1791 Haitian Revolution, Gabrielle Prosser's 1800 slave conspiracy in Virginia, Charles Deslondes's 1811 slave rebellion in Louisiana, and the growing free black population throughout the United States, white philanthropic organizations began to capitalize on free blacks' yearning to return to Africa. Founded in December 1816, the American Colonization Society (ACS), a white-led organization directed by Presbyterian minister and reformer Robert Finley, introduced plans to resolve escalating racial tension in America by assisting free (as opposed to enslaved) blacks in traveling to and resettling in West Africa. Presenting itself as a benevolent organization, the ACS hoped that colonization, together with the Christian conversion and civilization of Africans by African Americans, would win the support of free blacks. The ACS argued that resettlement outside the United States would allow blacks to vote, hold political office, and serve on a jury; obtain land granted by the colonization society; establish autonomous religious, educational, and economic institutions; and enjoy life away from hostile whites. But despite these enticements, the ACS found it difficult to recruit passengers. With the face of the leadership, leading advocates, and financial contributors of black emigration changing from black to white, blacks became less inclined to emigrate to West Africa. The reason was simple. Blacks did not trust whites and for good reasons.

Blacks believed the ACS had a racist agenda and the organization struggled for most of the nineteenth century to convince them otherwise. A majority of the ACS's earliest proponents were former slave owners. They did little to allay many blacks' concerns about emigration. Many did not want to be separated from their own families. Some objected to the abandonment of their enslaved brethren in the South. Last but not least, potential settlers feared recapture and

sale by Europeans and Africans involved in the ongoing illegal trans-Atlantic slave trade. Rejection of emigration efforts became a political declaration for many free blacks during the Abolitionist years. They would not yield to coerced emigration from America, despite the harsh and violent conditions in which many lived. Instead they used the denunciation of African colonization to assert themselves as full citizens.⁷⁹

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, African colonization schemes remained unpopular amongst free blacks. It was not until the late 1820s and early 1830s that migration and resettlement abroad gained momentum and, simultaneously, received its greatest opposition.⁸⁰ While the list of applicants desiring to resettle in Africa remained less than one percent of the total free black population, the ACS refused to concede defeat. Instead, white colonization agents switched their focus from free blacks in the North to a new group of recruits: slaves in the South.

Georgia and several other slaveholding states prohibited domestic manumission.⁸¹ Therefore, ACS agents liaised with what I call *apologetic masters*. Such slave owners believed, privately, that slavery was morally wrong and were desirous of atoning for their enslavement and accompanying mistreatment of human beings. They believed they could be redeemed by legally

⁷⁹ Charles Johnson and Patricia Smith, *Africans in America: America's Journey Through Slavery* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 277-285.

⁸⁰ Opposition toward the American Colonization Society in the 1830s came from abolitionists, William Lloyd Garrison, Maria Stewart and David Walker. To learn the sentiments of black and white emigration opponents see, William Lloyd Garrison, *Thoughts on African Colonization: Or an Impartial Exhibition of the Doctrines, Principles and Purposes of the American Colonization Society Together with the Resolutions, Addresses and Remonstrances of the Free People of Color* (Brighton, MA: Adamant Media, 2005); Maria W. Stewart and Marilyn Richardson, *Maria W. Stewart, America's First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); and David Walker, *David Walker's Appeal, in Four Articles, Together with a Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressly, to Those of the United States of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

⁸¹ Bernie D. Jones, *Fathers of Conscience: Mixed-Race Inheritance in the Antebellum South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 53.

granting manumission to those in bondage in their “last will and testament.” If their request was properly carried out by their executrix they would be forgiven in the eyes of God. As a result, half of the passengers transported from the U.S. to Liberia under the auspices of the ACS were former slaves whose travel arrangements were paid for by their former masters.⁸²

From the onset of its organization to the closing of the Civil War, the ACS transported 16,486 Africans and persons of African descent to Liberia. Of that number, 5,722 were “recaptured” or illegally captured Africans, 346 were from Barbados, and 68 were persons with no place of residence or origin. The remaining 10,350 persons came from the U.S. Of these, one-half were free blacks (either born free or purchased their freedom), and the other half were emancipated by their owner. In addition, the Maryland State Colonization Society (independent from the ACS) transported 1,227 persons to Liberia. Combined, a total of 17,713 passengers were transported from America to Liberia during the first wave.⁸³ The majority of the American emigrants were from Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia (in that order). Each of these states became synonymous with transporting blacks to Liberia during the first wave of the African-American emigration movement.

⁸² I make the point to describe the passengers as Americans because the ACS was responsible for providing transportation to two additional groups: Barbadians and “recaptured” (illegally captured) Africans. The Barbadians and recaptured Africans were never enslaved in America.

⁸³ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 62, 63-65.

Georgia and the First Wave of African-American Emigration, 1817 to 1860

The African-American emigration movement became a meaningful force in Georgia prior to the Civil War. The idea of African colonization was first introduced to Georgia in 1817 when Robert Finley, founder of the American Colonization Society (ACS), was appointed President of the University of Georgia in Athens. When he arrived in Georgia in May 1817, six months following the founding of the ACS, he was reluctant to discuss the subject of African colonization with Southerners who relied heavily on slave labor. Finley was concerned with the consequences of introducing such radical ideas to Georgians. He privately expressed his reservations of taking on such a task. In a letter addressed to Reverend George Woodhull, he wrote:

The thought of going to Georgia have very much filled my mind. . . . After very many thoughts my present impression is that it is right to go. . . . Should anything occur to make it seem right to me not to go it will be most pleasant to remain with my fellow labours. . . . The progress which the colonization scheme has made is to me a plain indication that it is of God, and the deep interest I feel on this subject has furnished at times a weeping objection to the expected removal to Georgia. It may however happen that contrary to fear the subject may be early opened there and forwarded, though they are at present much opposed to everything that looks like improving the condition of the black[s].⁸⁴

For Finley, his greatest challenge in the South would not be defending the proposed plans of the Society. Rather, it was adjusting to the humid and hot Georgia weather. Being from New Jersey, he was “unaccustomed to the climate,” and “the excessive heat of the season added to the fatigue of traveling.” As he was returning to Athens in July 1817, he became severely ill, “suffering from a bilious attack” that soon claimed his life three month later.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Robert Finley to George Woodhull, March 27, 1817, Special Collections, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia, Athens.

It is uncertain as to what level of influence Finley would have made on the southern state prior to his death. However, he successfully won the support of one influential Georgian, U.S. Secretary of Treasury, William H. Crawford, who was a dear friend to Finley and was the first Vice-President of the ACS.

African colonization was officially introduced to Georgians in 1819 when forty illegally captured Africans, referred to as “recaptures,” were apprehended from Spanish kidnappers and left under the jurisdiction of the state. The 1808 Slave Trade Act prohibited slavers from importing additional Africans to the United States. Uncertain about what to do with the recaptured Africans, federal officers decided to deliver them to Georgia where they would be “exposed to public sale, to the highest bidder” on May 4, 1819 “on the capitol steps in Milledgeville.”⁸⁶ The arrival of the recaptures in Georgia and efforts to gain legal possession of them caused a chain reaction. First, it formally introduced the idea of African colonization to Georgians. Second, it provided the Society with the opportunity it needed to approach the federal government about assisting in implementing its mission. Third, it motivated colonization advocates to establish auxiliary societies within the state.

A month prior to this event, Crawford was desperately trying to launch the ACS’s mission to resettle blacks to Africa. Hoping to win favor with the United States cabinet, he proposed the federal government purchase foreign territory where illegally captured Africans could be sent. This plan would have a threefold effect: (1) It relieved America from the burden of caring for future recaptured Africans; (2) It reduced the risk of increasing the free black

⁸⁵ Thomas Walter Reed, *History of the University of Georgia*, Vol. 1, 164-165. Georgia Room, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

⁸⁶ “Sale of African Slaves,” *Augusta Chronicle*, April 14, 1819. Slaves were sold or auctioned in Georgia on the first Tuesday of every month between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM at the courthouse of the county which the proprietor or executrix resided in. See *Savannah Georgian*, July 25, 1826.

population by not having the recaptured Africans remain in the United States, but returned to Africa; (3) The removal of recaptured Africans would launch the process of resettling free North American blacks in Africa.

In opposition to the proposal was United States Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. As an opponent of African colonization, he contested, “the Slave Trade Act contained no provisions for the purchase of land” for rescued Africans and that it was unconstitutional to colonize and purchase foreign territory. Making such a bold and persuasive argument, Adams convinced the majority of the cabinet, including President James Monroe who was highly in favor of colonization, to reject the plans proposed by Crawford.⁸⁷

Disregarding the decision made by Cabinet members, Crawford became even more determined to find a means of procuring territory for transporting blacks. Just weeks after President Monroe rejected the African colonization project, Crawford learned about the sale of the recaptured Africans under the jurisdiction of his home state in an article published in a Georgia newspaper. This was the opportunity his organization needed. After learning of a state law granting the Society the legal rights to claim possession of the captives, Crawford decided again to approach the U.S. Cabinet with his new plan. At the same time, the managers would intervene in stopping or postponing the slave auction. His request to the Cabinet was granted, and Reverend William Meade was sent to Milledgeville, Georgia to procure legal possession of the recaptured Africans.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ P. J. Staudenraus, *History of the American Colonization Society* (New York: Octagon Books, 1980), 52-53. Many of the original documents that are related to Georgia’s involvement with the ACS are scattered and difficult to obtain. Staudenraus integrates the data into his work and provides brief accounts of the challenges Georgia colonization agents experienced. Therefore, the researcher will rely heavily on this source throughout the chapter.

⁸⁸ Ibid. For an account of the event see ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 36, 44-45; and Albany Colonization Society, *Address of the Albany Colonization Society* (Albany: Packard and Van Benthuyzen, 1824) 14, Special Collections, Robert Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Atlanta. It is possible that Crawford might have

When Governor William Rabun learned of Meade's desire to purchase the captives, he was not able to turn the individuals over to the immediate care of the ACS. Fifty thousand dollars needed to be appropriated by the ACS before the company of Africans could be purchased. In an effort to assist the colonization society, the Governor agreed to delay the initial auction date until Meade and his ACS secured the funding. Unfortunately, the short time allotted to secure the money caused the ACS to not gain legal custody of the Africans. They were beat by Spanish claimants who came forth to reclaim their "property."⁸⁹

Because of the attention Georgia received from this dramatic episode, influential statesmen became supporters of the American Colonization Society. Some became faithful financial patrons or agents. Among the new supporters were Congressman Joel H. Crawford, ex-governor William Rabun, Judge J.H. Montgomery, Supreme Court Judge J.B. Strong, and Congressman John A. Cuthbert. In an effort to promote the ideology of the Society, Meade appropriated \$8,000 in 1819 to establish auxiliary societies in Milledgeville, Savannah, Augusta, Fayetteville, Raleigh, Putnam County, and Chapel Hill.⁹⁰

Initially, the colonization concept appeared to be well received by a vast majority of white Georgians. This was possibly attributed to white planters believing the ACS was interested solely in the removal of free blacks and illegally captured Africans. Their removal which would in turn resolve racial tension in the U.S. between free blacks and whites and , in planters' minds, make the slave system all the more secure. However, by the mid-1820s, initial supporters began to have great reservations about the Society. It was alleged Northern agents were coercing

very well learned of the selling of the Africans from any of the following newspapers: *Augusta Chronicle*, *Savannah Republican*, or the *Darien Gazette*. These newspapers carried the same ad that was place in the *Augusta Chronicle*, April 14, 1819.

⁸⁹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 29, 45; Staudenraus, *History of the American Colonization Society* 53-54; and *Albany Colonization Society*, 5.

⁹⁰ Staudenraus, *History of the American Colonization Society*, 71.

masters into emancipating their bondmen, thereby potentially destroying the Southern economy.⁹¹

Free black Georgians rejected African colonization at least until 1832. They feared the possibility of being forced to leave the United States and abandoning their enslaved brethren. According to Early L. Fox, the pioneer historian of the American Colonization Society, no states were more hostile toward agents than South Carolina and Georgia.⁹² Just as whites were uncertain about the true intentions of the Society, free blacks were even more doubtful.

Having little initial success in recruiting free blacks, the ACS began focusing its efforts on slaves. With Georgia banning domestic manumission, the ACS hoped to curry favor with apologetic slave masters who wanted to emancipate their slaves either while alive or after death by sending them to Liberia to live freer lives.

Mr. McDermit, a Georgia slaveholder, went against the norm and emancipated twenty-seven of his bondsmen by giving the American Colonization Society permission to sail them to Millsburg, Liberia aboard the *Randolph* in December 1827. This was the first group of African-American slaves from Georgia to sail to Africa. McDermit was possibly inspired to use this method of manumission when he learned of a group of one hundred fifty-two recaptured Africans who were illegally smuggled into Georgia and were ordered to sail from Savannah to Monrovia, Liberia on July 10, 1827.⁹³

⁹¹ Georgia Legislature, *Report Adopted by the Legislature of Georgia on African Colonization: [Doc. No. 126]* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1828) 5, Special Collections, Robert Woodruff Library Atlanta University Center, Atlanta. The *Report* was from a December 1827 meeting, but was not published until February 8, 1828.

⁹² Early L. Fox, *The American Colonization Society 1817-1840* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press: 1919), 49 and 81.

⁹³ The actual name of the slaveholder who manumitted the slaves who sailed aboard the *Randolph* is uncertain. It is believed to be a Mr. McDermit. The records of the ACS were haphazard; therefore, it is difficult to determine who the slave proprietor was. According to the U.S. Census for the years of 1820 and 1830, not one "McDermit" was listed in Georgia. However, there was an Edward McDermott from Lincoln County listed for the

Taking Georgia by surprise, additional slaveholders used African colonization as a means to grant foreign manumission to their slaves so they might return and live in Liberia. By 1860 nearly 70 percent of the 1,194 black Georgians who emigrated to Liberia were emancipated slaves. The remaining passengers were free blacks whose departures were stimulated by key moments of racial hostility: the rise of the Abolition Movement, the Nat Turner's Rebellion, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and the years preceding the Civil War (see Table 2.2).

As noted above, free blacks of Georgia had mixed feeling about the ACS and black emigration. Of 3,500 registered free black Georgians capable of taking a stance to emigrate or to remain in America before 1860, 90 percent turned a deaf ear toward the ideology of African colonization and rejected the plan to resettle while the remaining 10 percent willingly chose to emigrate to Africa.⁹⁴ Less than 1 percent of the slave population emigrated based on the premise they seek foreign manumission in Liberia. Approximately 25 percent were listed as free blacks and 3 percent were former slaves whose freedom was purchased from slaveholders (see Table 2.2).⁹⁵

Liberian fever was not embraced by black Georgians prior to 1830. ACS agents found difficulty in winning the support of the community. The rejection of emigration by free blacks of Georgia was based on multiple reasons. By 1830, the vast majority of black Georgians were

year of 1820. It is uncertain if he possessed slaves during his lifetime in Georgia; The Africans were seized by federal agents and freed by a ruling of the Supreme Court. They sailed the *Norfolk* from Georgia and arrived at Cape Monteserrado on August 27, 1827. See James Wesley Smith, *Sojourners in Search of Freedom: The Settlement of Liberia by Black Americans* (New York: University Press of America, 1987), 63-64.

⁹⁴ In 1860, 3,500 free blacks and 462,195 slaves resided in Georgia. See Thomas Nelson Page, *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1904), 169.

⁹⁵ By 1860, the ACS sailed 334 free black Georgians (295 were freeborn blacks and 40 purchased their freedom), and the remaining emigrants were slaves ordered by masters or judges to seek foreign manumission. Robert T. Brown, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute of Liberian Studies, 1980); and Tom W. Shick, *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1971).

American born. They were two and three generation removed (physically, spiritually, and culturally) from their ancestral homeland in Africa. They had assimilated to America's customs and traditions. Regardless of their citizenship status, they, for the most part, desired to enjoy all the civil liberties white men so cherished.⁹⁶ Out of protest, free blacks embraced the position later articulated by Frederick Douglass, who believed that the removal of free blacks would make the slave system more secure and that blacks had a moral and racial obligation to stay in the U.S. to abolish slavery on behalf of their enslaved brethren and to demand full citizenship.⁹⁷

As the abolition movement gained momentum and racial tension escalated, free black Georgians began to revisit the Liberian question. The racial hostility free and enslaved blacks confronted daily became difficult to endure. After harboring many years of discontentment with the existing injustices, hundreds of black Georgians refused to endure the hardship of remaining a second-class citizen and chattel in the United States. Living with the challenges of racial discrimination, racial hostility, and limited opportunities for political, social and economic advancement, black emigrants chose to make provisions to make a new life for themselves and their children in Liberia, West Africa.

Along with the above mentioned factors that pushed blacks to consider emigrating to Africa, Liberian fever also increased amongst blacks in Georgia as a direct result of the potential for political inclusion, religious autonomy, institution building, racial pride, land, and economic and educational opportunities in Africa. These pull factors enticed blacks to cross the Atlantic Ocean to resettle in Liberia.

⁹⁶ William Dillon Pierson. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 18.

⁹⁷ John T. McCartney. *Black Power Ideologies: An Essay in African-American Political Thought*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 19-21.

After Liberia became a self-governing nation in 1847, Georgia emigrationists strengthened their position to colonize Liberia. Black Americans could now participate in its governance, vote, own land, and attend public school. They could enjoy all the benefits of being a citizen regardless of their race or legal status. Its government, comprised of black American settlers, agreed that the country would “be regarded as a miniature representation of the Government of the United States; and the citizens of that Republic enjoy equal privileges of white citizens.” In an effort to maintain Liberia as a self-governing country, whites were not allowed to become citizens, hold any office, or have the privilege of voting in Liberia. Because of these factors, black Georgians began to flow into Liberia.⁹⁸

Political freedom thus attracted blacks to Liberia. Taking advantage of such freedoms were freeborn and emancipated men from Georgia. In 1847, Samuel Benedict served as President of the Constitutional Convention and was a candidate of the first Liberian presidential election. During the same year, Henry B. Whitefield, a carpenter, served as a member of the House of Representatives. Seaborn Evans, a former slave of Josiah Sibley from Richmond County, served a two-year term as senator of Sinoe County from 1861 to 1863.⁹⁹

Georgians saw that the opportunity existed to own land in Liberia. Officers of the American Colonization Society promised that,

Each emigrant on his arrival receives *five acres* of good land, or if he prefers it, a town lot. If he is the head of the family, the quantity of land is increased according to the number of his family, not exceeding ten acres.

. . . Any person who desires a greater quantity, can purchase it . . . from one to five dollars an acre, according to the location.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ ACS, “Appendix: Information about going to Liberia,” Vol. 39, 41.

⁹⁹ James Wesley Smith, *Sojourners in Search of Freedom: The Settlement of Liberty by Black Americans* (New York; University Press of America, 1987), 200-201; and Bell I Wiley, ed., *Slaves No More: Letter from Liberia, 1833-1869* (Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky), 309.

¹⁰⁰ ACS, “Appendix: Information about going to Liberia,” Vol. 39, 39.

With land, economic opportunities existed. Future agriculturists saw Liberia as a place to produce exportable goods: coffee, rice, and ginger. For those desiring to just simply farm, Liberia offered such produce as sweet potatoes, lima and butter beans, snap peas, cucumbers, and melons. In February 1847, a citizen from Monrovia wrote an account of the agricultural success of the colony and provided a list of items that were good for exportation: lumber, coffee, palm oil, and ivory. Planning to cultivate coffee for the purpose of export, he wrote, “I have now growing on my farm more than 5000 trees. . . . It is thought our trees at full maturity will yield from 3 to 3 ½ lbs. . . . there are trees in this place which have yielded from 5 to 7 pounds; besides this, a coffee tree will bear well from 10 to 12 years.”¹⁰¹

Georgians who travelled to Liberia after 1848 were highly skilled and hoped their talents could be of greater use in a new and developing country. The majority of the free female emigrants were educated and skilled seamstresses, spinners, weavers, and dressmakers. Many of the occupations of enslaved women went unrecorded, with the exception of a few washers and seamstresses. However, listed by agents of the American Colonization Society were the occupations of Sally Lark, an elderly midwife, and Mary Cuthbert, a nurse of Albert Cuthbert of Jasper.¹⁰² A significant portion of the male, both freeborn and emancipated, were carpenters, brick masons, blacksmiths, coopers, and farmers. There were also those who pursued unconventional careers normally denied to those of color, such as Moses Dent, an elderly steamboat captain, and Jack Harris, a former slave who earned a career as a druggist.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 23, 216-217.

¹⁰² The Cuthbert slaves were emancipated by Albert Cuthbert of Jasper, Georgia. See ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 37, 148.

¹⁰³ Robert T. Brown, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute of Liberian Studies, 1980); and Tom W. Shick, *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1971).

Taking advantage of the economic possibilities that existed in Liberia was Edward Hall, a millwright of Savannah. Eager to become economically independent, the insightful former slave managed to purchase his freedom and later earned enough money to purchase his own steam mill. After learning of the abundance of timber available in Liberia, he made provision to resettle in Greenville so he could take advantage of the opportunity to export such goods to America. In 1851, he sailed the *Baltimore* with his wife, Rebecca, and sister and brother, Susan and Cyrus Garret (whose freedom was all purchased by Hall, himself). A year after he and his family settled in Greenville, Liberia, Hall built his steam saw mill that he transported with him from Georgia. He would later use the vessels belonging to the ACS as a means to export his timber to America. Also taking advantage of economic opportunities in Liberia was Jesse Ramsey, a former female slave from Augusta. In Farmersville, she was the owner of one of two looms in the small town. The presence of the loom and saw mill provided by both Georgians contributed toward the economic independence and to the development of Liberia.¹⁰⁴

Religious autonomy, however, motivated several Georgians to embrace the idea of resettling in Liberia. The American Colonization Society noted, “perhaps in no other country in the world are the ordinances of Christianity and the ceremonies of divine worship observed with more strictness and regularity. . . . And several of the pulpits are stately [stately] filled by men brought up and educated in Liberia.”¹⁰⁵ As early as 1831, a highly skilled artisan from Savannah wrote,

¹⁰⁴ ACS, “List of Emigrants,” *African Repository*, Vol. 27 (May 1851), 156; Edward Hall to Ned Hall, December 23, 1852, American Colonization Manuscripts, Indiana University, Bloomington, (microfilm: reel 155, screen no. 00498); Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 286; Willie Allen Poe, “Georgia in the Development of Liberia” in *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. LVII (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1973), 9.

¹⁰⁵ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 28, 40.

I have always reviewed the principle on which the Society was grounded, as one of much policy, though I saw it was aided by a great deal of benevolence. . . I have often wondered what prevented [free Negroes] from rising and with one voice, saying, we will accept the offer made us at the risk of sacrificing all the comforts that our present situation can afford us. . . . According to the accounts from Liberia it wants help, and such as I trust I could give, though ever so little I would add one to the advocates for Religion.”¹⁰⁶

Also from Savannah was a twenty-nine year old bachelor, Adam Anderson. Like agents of the American Colonization Society, he perceived colonization as a means to introduce Christianity to the indigenous Africans. Four years after settling in Monrovia, he assisted in organizing and formulating a Baptist church among the Vai people of Liberia and Sierra Leone.¹⁰⁷

In 1848 and 1849, four black ministers sailed to Liberia to serve as missionaries: Reverend A. J. Battice, Isaac Mason, Isaac Roberts, and Joseph Clay, an emancipated slave.¹⁰⁸ Mr. Roberts, shortly after his arrival, addressed a letter to Reverend William McClain, acting secretary for the American Colonization Society, which gave an account of his success with introducing Christianity to the indigenous people of the region. He wrote,

With regard to spiritual affairs, we have one Presbyterian Church, one Baptist, and one Methodist. On the 14th we had preaching for the first time among the natives: I had the pleasure of opening the meeting: it was a very interesting meeting. On the 20th, I went up the river to the first settlement — preached up there to a goodly number, some of them seem to be concerned about their soul’s salvation.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Edward F. Sweat, “Free Negroes in Antebellum Georgia” (Ph.D. dissertation: Indiana University, 1957), 221.

¹⁰⁷ Poe, “Georgia in the Development of Liberia,” 7.

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix C: *Brig Col. Howard and Barque Huma* in Karcheik Sims-Alvarado, “The African Colonization Movement in Georgia, 1817-1860” (M.A. thesis: Clark Atlanta University, 2001).

¹⁰⁹ ACS, *Repository*, Vol. 26, 61.

Other Georgia emigrants were so spiritually and emotionally moved by their religious freedom in Liberia that they, too, felt the need to become preachers. In 1849, Henry Stewart from Savannah articulated his feelings with regard to his newly found freedom by lamenting, “I can inJoy Equal Rights and Woship my god without fear.”¹¹⁰

Like political freedom, educational freedom was of importance to settlers. In Liberia, black settlers, freeborn or formally emancipated, were most concerned with the educational advancement of children in their colony. Motivated to assist in educating those within the colony were four black female teachers that sailed the *Brig Col. Howard* in 1848. Among the women were Catherine Jones, Rose Mann, Elizabeth Simpson, and Arabella Morell. All were registered free persons of color, with the exception of Arabella who was an emancipated slave. Assisting also in educating others was Seaborn Evans. In a letter written to his former master, Josiah Sibley, he humbled himself to ask “if it is not saying too much” to “send Some old School books to the children for in the new country such things are thankfully received for Some times they can not be had for money nor love.” Throughout his life in Liberia, Henry Stewart of Savannah wrote numerous letters to agents of the ACS espousing the promotion of educational advancement of emigrants, the blind, and natives. Believing strongly in the pursuit of higher education, he later returned his eldest son, Thomas, to the United States to attend Oberlin College in Ohio. By 1852, the educational success in Liberia had increased tremendously. As noted by the *African Repository*, public schools were in nearly every Liberian settlement and there was the hope of establishing a university.¹¹¹ Trying to motivate her siblings to settle in

¹¹⁰ Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 282.

¹¹¹ Transcribed by Charles S. Davis, ed. “Notes and Documents: Liberian Letters from a Former Georgia Slave” in *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 24. no. 3 (September 1940): 253-256; Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 281, 283-287, and 291; and ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 28, 40-41.

Liberia because of the promise of free education, Elizabeth Clark from Augusta wrote to her family in Burke County,

We can Safely Recommend our friend to Come to Africa for we Can Enjoy as much Liberty here as heart can wish. We have fine Schools here for the Educating of Children. Sister Eliza.... Come also for this [is] the place to Raise your Children. I Would like to See them here now going to School. Bro. [name undecipherable] is going to School and are Learning very fast.¹¹²

Of the pull factors mentioned previously, black Georgians were also motivated by the writings of its black leaders and first-hand accounts of emigrants who espoused expatriation. Present in their letters and speeches were the themes of freedom for Black Americans and the advancement of Africa, which assisted in encouraging dithering proponents to reassert their position to migrate to Africa.

By the 1850s, black emigration had reached an apex. Based on the number of those who resettled in Africa during this period it appears as though black Georgians heeded the words of its black colonization proponents during the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. Cautioning his brethren of the consequences of remaining in America was Martin Delany, the leading black proponent of African colonization of the decade, who bellowed the words, “This bill had but one object in its provisions.... That is, the reduction of every colored person in the United States.... placing each and every one of us at the *disposal of any and every white* who might choose to *claim* us.” The consequences for remaining in America meant that blacks were “liable to be *claimed, seized and taken* into custody by the whites as his or property – to be *enslaved for life* – and there is no remedy, because it is the *law of the land!*” Motivated by his words or the premonition of being illegally captured as a run-away slave, eighty-four Georgians agreed to

¹¹² Elizabeth Clark to William Clark, February 23, 1853, ACS Papers, “Letters from Liberia, 1833-1917,” Reel 155.

embark the *Baltimore* in April 1850, making it the largest number of free blacks to emigrate from the state to Liberia during a single voyage.¹¹³

In 1860, Alexander Crummell, educator and clergyman, hoped his letter addressed to the “Free Colored Men of America” would encourage others to assist in the advancement of Africa. He implored, “We need immigration. We are poor in men and women. We do not need over 14,000 emigrant citizens... we need, I say, not less than 50,000 *civilized* men.... *As a race*, we have work to do.... Let us therefore call our skillful and energetic brethren to come to us and share the suffering and the glory of saving Africa.”¹¹⁴ Although the numbers of black emigrants were waning, 1,194 black Georgians sailed to Liberia before the beginning of the American Civil War.

While the eloquent words of their leaders might have moved the spirit of black proponents of colonization, letters from Liberian colonists were more effective in motivating blacks, primarily Georgians, to resettle in Africa. Enclosed in the writings of an emigrant were sentiments of freedom and liberation for the black race. Isaac Roberts of Savannah wrote in 1850, “Liberia is the home of the colored man.” Seaborn Evans of Augusta wrote to Josiah Sibley, his former master in 1856, “Liberia is the Star in East for the free black man. Do rely upon what your Servant Says about Liberia.” The greatest black advocate from Georgia to espouse emigration during the antebellum years was, unquestionably, Henry Stewart of Savannah. Over a course of twenty years in Liberia, he repeatedly wrote to agents of the

¹¹³ Martin Delaney, “Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent” in *Pamphlets of Protest: An Anthology of Early African American Protest Literature, 1790-1860* edited by and quoted in Richard Newman, Patrick Rael, and Phillip Lapsansky (New York: Routledge, 2001) 237-238.

¹¹⁴ Quoted by Hill and Kilson, 93.

American Colonization Society, hoping his accounts of Liberia would encourage other Georgians to “come to this land of Liberty.”¹¹⁵

For some Georgia slaves, resettling in Liberia had long been a desire. Eager to escape from bondage and to enjoy all the privileges Liberia promised, they managed to persuade sympathetic masters to free them from bondage. This act of manumission commonly occurred after the death of a slaveholder. However, ambitious slaves could not wait so patiently for death to claim the life of his/her master before receiving freedom. Instead, some slaves managed to convince masters to allow them to purchase their freedom as well as the freedom of family members in an effort to settle in Africa. Successfully managing to do so were thirty-nine Georgia slaves who emigrated to Liberia between the years of 1849 to 1856. One person was Jesse Ramsey, a sixty-year-old farmer from Augusta who convinced his master to allow him to purchase his freedom as well as the freedom of his wife, Jinsey. She, later, did the same for her son, Jesse. In 1851, the family sailed to Liberia by embarking the *Barque Baltimore* to Africa with ninety-five additional Georgians.¹¹⁶ Silas Pope of Greene County, described by the *African Repository* as “a negro man of dark-complexion . . . forty-seven years old, active, vigorous and healthy,” also dreamed of expatriating. He purchased his freedom from his master, John Dawson, Esq. (brother William C. Dawson, U.S. Senator of Georgia) for \$1,072. Refusing to resettle without his family, he purchased his wife and daughter’s freedom for a total of \$667 before embarking the vessel, *M.C. Stevens*, in May 1860.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Transcribed and quoted by Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 231, 264, and 282.

¹¹⁶ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 27, 155.

¹¹⁷ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 36, 148.

Possibly the most poignant demonstration of black Georgians' desire to obtain freedom in Liberia was the action of slaves who chose a life of liberty without their children or spouses over a life of servitude in America. In 1856, Landon Williams sailed to Monrovia, Liberia with his wife, but due to adverse circumstances, he left behind his three children who were to remain enslaved in Savannah. Incapable of remaining in the state as a freed slave and incapable of purchasing the freedom of his children, he was left with the only alternative of emigrating immediately. Like many slaves, he too hoped his family would join him in Africa someday. Eleven years later, he continued to harbor feelings of guilt for leaving behind his two daughters and son and asked William McLain of the ACS to assist him in relocating them:

Sir, I have three children in the state of Georgia, viz: Nancy McClow, Falla McClow and David McClow, formerly owned by Francis McClow, a Georgian-owned a place on Ageeche road, fourteen miles from Savannah, turn out at the eleven mile stone and the first plantation you come to known as Wildhorn, a cotton plantation- He owned the next place on Ageeche river known as "frog camp," a rice plantation is the place where I left my two daughters. The boy I left in Savannah, Georgia, but I leant since he was in Athey [Athens], Georgia, near Macon.¹¹⁸

Mr. Williams asked if his children were located to send them to Monrovia where he resided. However, it appears he never saw his children again considering their names were not listed in the rosters compiled by the ACS even years later.¹¹⁹

In 1860, Mary King and her four children (William H: 13 years old; Alfred: 8; Charles: 7; and Cora: 3) were emancipated by her mistress, Mrs. Martha Moderwell of Augusta. Hoping to have her husband, Alfred B. King, accompany her, she was not so fortunate as to have her desire granted. Mary's mistress attempted to purchase Alfred's freedom for \$3000, but unfortunately, Mrs. Moderwell was able to raise only \$2,000 after the amount was reduced to \$2,500. She died

¹¹⁸ Transcribed and quoted by Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 249.

¹¹⁹ Peter J. Murdza Jr., *Immigrants to Liberia, 1865 to 1904: An Alphabetical Listing* (Delaware: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1975), 45.

and Alfred was not purchased. Like Mr. Williams of Savannah, Mary made the decision to emigrate hoping Liberia could offer her and her children a more promising life.¹²⁰ Based on a letter she wrote to an agent of the ACS in March 1864, it seems Alfred could not bear being apart from or never seeing his wife and children ever again. After the close of the Civil War, Mr. King was found living safely in Macon. Free from bondage and still eager to leave America, he sailed the *Golconda* in November 1866 to reunite with his wife and children who were residing in Sinoe, Liberia.¹²¹

During the Civil War the ACS transported 171 passengers to Liberia between the months of April 1861 to February 1865. The organization was extremely active in the North with the majority of emigrants originating from the region. Overall, the ACS did not transport blacks to Liberia from seceded states during the war, except one passenger from South Carolina. This was an intentional act made by the Society. Departures from southern ports were dangerous.¹²² The actions of the ACS were probably also influenced by the proposed emigration plan of President Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln, for his part, was supportive of black emigration. Yet, as the ACS was probably fully aware of, any emigration scheme could only occur within the states under the authority and protection of the President.

Before signing the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln supported colonization efforts, but primarily in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1862, he influenced Congress to appropriate \$600,000 for colonization. Scholars debate whether Lincoln remained a colonization

¹²⁰ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 36, 147 and 148.

¹²¹ Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 249; and Clarence L. Mohr, *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2001), 19 and 38.

¹²² To learn the dates of departures of emigrants for the period, April 1861-February 1865, see ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 116.

supporter following his signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Many take the position he did not espouse ideas of blacks emigration between 1863 and 1865. Some argue James Mitchell, the emigration commissioner during Lincoln's presidency, exaggerated when he spoke about Lincoln's commitment to colonization after signing the Emancipation Proclamation. If he espoused colonization, he did not favor mass black emigration. Until recently, a few revisionists have taken the position that Lincoln's support of the British Honduras and the infamous Il'e a Vach'e (island off of Haiti) labor projects in 1863 is enough evidence to support the notion that Lincoln supported colonization after emancipation. Black laborers sent to the Caribbean in 1863 returned to the United States after suffering starvation. They were found bounded by chains and living in unstable shanties. Regardless of whether Lincoln was a colonizationist or not, 1864 marked the end of government-funded black emigration labor projects during the antebellum period. It would also mark the end of the first wave of the African-American Emigration Movement.¹²³

¹²³ To see scholars position on the Lincoln-Colonization debate, refer to Eric Foner. *Our Lincoln: New Perspectives on Lincoln and His World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2008); Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 2010); Eric Foner and Joshua Brown. *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction* (New York: Vintage, 2006); James M. McPherson, *James M. Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Phillip W. Magness and Sebastian N. Page, *Colonization After Emancipation: Lincoln and the Movement for Black Resettlement* (Columbia Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011). To learn more about Lincoln's colonization efforts, see Magness and Page, *Colonization After Emancipation*, 4; Bernard Magubane, *The Ties that Bond: African –American Consciousness of Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1987), 73; Benjamin Quarles, *Lincoln and the Negro* (New York, N.Y.: Da Capo Press, 1991), 121; Thomas F. Schwartz, *For a Vast Future Also: Essays from the Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 40; Thomas J. DiLorenzo, *The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003), 18; and Harold Holzer and Sara Vaughn Gabbard, *Lincoln and Freedom: Slavery, Emancipation, and the Thirteenth Amendment* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 219.

Conclusion

Since the eighteenth century, blacks living in the American colonies and the eventual United States viewed the continent of Africa as a place of solace and opportunity in the face of exploitation and oppression. As everyone else who crossed the Atlantic Ocean, voluntarily or otherwise, blacks wanted to exercise their personal and civic freedom. Unfortunately, even in the midst of social upheaval and political change, African Americans were consistently denied the right to experience the American belief of life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. The African-American emigration movement comprised an ideology and acts that challenged the notion of blacks meekly accepting their condition. On the contrary, the movement was an affirmation of their willingness to organize communities, mobilize people to action, strategize to form a viable plan, rationalize their reason for leaving, and exercise their freedom of movement to the shores of Liberia.

The proto-emigration phase of the emigration movement occurred during the height of the American Revolution, when blacks articulated their rights as free people based on the philosophical notions of liberty and the inalienable rights of man. Some blacks willingly fought alongside the British in order to secure their freedom. The difficulties black communities in Nova Scotia and London faced led to their advocating for emigration to Sierra Leone. Their actions triggered an emigration movement in the United States with the establishment of black led organizations whose sole purpose was leading an exodus to Liberia. Their resources, however, were not equal to their passion, and the movement soon dissipated.

The first wave witnessed the emergence of the American Colonization Society, a white led benevolent organization funded by philanthropists, plantation owners, and the U.S. Congress.

During the antebellum period, the ACS, unable to convince free blacks to emigrate, assisted many manumitted slaves with passage and provision to Liberia. Emigration was considered by whites as a logical option preventing the free black population from growing and possibly undermining the institution of slavery. Georgia was not only a catalyst for the establishment of the ACS, but also sent the third most African Americans to West Africa.

Eventually, a second wave emerged. It was an African-American led movement in response to the harsh economic conditions, political exploitation, and racial violence of the Reconstruction period. Unable to fully capitalize on their newfound freedom and federal statutes codifying their citizenship, blacks again looked to Liberia as the only viable solution to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Georgia would again emerge as the epicenter of the movement producing key emigration leaders, as well as sending the most blacks to Liberia. As the following chapters well demonstrate, white officers of the ACS would play a less visible role, offering transport and provisions, lobbying for federal funding, and delivering mail to and from Liberia. But this movement would confront a wave of Republicanism. That conflict, traced in Chapters Three and Four would lead to the decline of the American Colonization Society and the largest source of financial support for African Americans who desperately wanted to enjoy a new life.

TABLE 2.1: FREE AND ENSLAVED BLACK POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1790.

State or territory	Free blacks	Slaves	Total black population	Percentage of black population to total population	Total population
Vermont (territory)	255	16	271	(0.32%)	
New Hampshire	690	158	788	(1.8%)	
Maine (territory)	538	0	538	(0.6%)	
Massachusetts	5,463	0	5,463	(1.5 %)	
Rhode Island	3,407	948	4,355	(6 %)	
Connecticut	2,808	2,764	5,572	(2.3%)	
<i>New England States</i>	13,101	3,886	16,987	(1.7 %)	1,009,522
New York	4,654	21,324	25,978	(7.6%)	
New Jersey	2,762	11,423	14,185	(8%)	
Pennsylvania	6,537	3,737	10,274	(3%)	
Delaware	3,899	8,887	12,786	(22 %)	
<i>Middle States</i>	17,852	45,371	63,228	(6.2 %)	1,017,087
Maryland	8,043	103,036	111,079	(35%)	
Virginia	12,866	292,627	305,493	(41 %)	
Kentucky	114	12,430	12,544	(17%)	
<i>Upper South</i>	21,023	408,093	429,116	(37%)	1,140,015
North Carolina	4,975	100,572	105,547	(27%)	
South Carolina	1,801	107,094	108,895	(44%)	
Georgia	398	29,264	29,662	(36%)	
Southwest Territory	361	3,417	3778	(11%)	
<i>Lower South</i>	7,535	240,347	247,882	(33%)	761,063
Total	59,511	697,697	757,208	(19.3%)	3,929,326

Source: Michael R. Haines, A population history of North America (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 220; Data results vary from source to source, see also “University of Virginia Library: Historical Census Browser” <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu> (Retrieved: April 19, 2011).

TABLE 2.2: NUMBER OF GEORGIA EMIGRANTS WHO SAILED TO LIBERIA DURING THE YEARS, 1827-1860.

Name of vessel	Date of sailing	No. of passengers	No. of free born black	No. of slaves whose freedom was purchased.	No. of emancipated slaves	No. of Emigrants whose status was unknown.
1. Randolph	Dec..	27			27	
2. Montgomery	April.	30	2		28	
3. Carolina	Nov..	9	9			
4. Criterion	July, 1831	18			18	
5. Jupiter	May..	63			63	
6. Hercules	Dec..	22	12			10
7. Roanoke	Dec..	2				2
8. Indiana	June, 1835	61	33		27	1
9. Luna	July, 1836	14	13		1	
10. Saluda	Feb., 1839	2				2
11. Brig Amazon	Feb., 1848	6	6			
12. Brig Col.	May, 1848	54	7		21	26
13. Barque Huma	May, 1849	131	70	8	36	17
14. Barque	Feb., 1850	156			156	
15. Baltimore	April.	98	70	14	14	
16. Liberia Packet	Dec..	67	2	3	62	
17. Ralph Cross	Dec..	11			11	
18. Jos. Maxwell	Nov..	7			3	
19. Adeline	June, 1853	37	7	7	13	10
20. Gen'l Pierce	Dec..	56	3	1	48	
21. Sophia	May, 1854	5	5			
22. Harp	June, 1854	3	2		2	1
23. Gen. Pierce	Dec..	54	7	5	41	1
24. Cora	Nov..	1			1	
25. Elvira Owen	May, 1856	85	8	2	73	2
26. M.C. Stevens	Dec..	56	1		55	
27. M.C. Stevens	May, 1858	7	7			
28. M.C. Stevens	May, 1859	25	25			
29. M.C. Stevens	May, 1860	81	4		77	
30. M.C. Stevens	Nov..	5	5			
Total		1,194	295	40	787	72

Source: Robert T. Brown, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute of Liberian Studies, 1980); and Tom W. Shick, *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1971).

**CHAPTER THREE: THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION MOVEMENT
IN MACON AND SPARTA, GEORGIA, 1865-1866**

SONG FOR THE EMIGRANT

Almost as soon I'd be a slave,
As struggling with a treacherous wave,
A friend is but a foe;
Then fearless let us spread our sail,
To meet the unmolested gale,

Come, Brother, let us go!

Let us desert this friendless place.
To stay is nothing but disgrace;
Few our friends we know;
LIBERIA! break from every mouth;
To leave the North and travel South,
Come, sister, let us go!

George Moses Horton¹²⁴

With the end of the Civil War, over 460,000 black men, women, and children in Georgia found themselves displaced, destitute, at times disillusioned, and without any clear plan of how to exercise their newly earned freedom. Eager to become self-sufficient, freed people migrated from the countryside to try their fortune in new cities. Upon their arrival, poor and nomadic blacks were viewed by whites as undesirables, largely because they were destitute and homeless.

¹²⁴ George Moses Horton was a former slave and the first African-American poet to publish in the South. See Henry Louis Gates, *African American Lives* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004), 415. Horton's "Song for the Emigrant" was published by the ACS in January 1867. See *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 28.

In an attempt to address poverty amongst freedmen in Georgia, as well as address their own pressing labor needs, white planters and investors pressured blacks to return to the fields as farm laborers. Refusing to remain in a servile position and perform the work that once enslaved a race of people, thousands of blacks rejected agricultural labor altogether. As a result, Georgia's severe labor shortage remained unresolved.¹²⁵

By 1866, blacks were keenly aware that the United States was operating in uncharted waters with how to integrate millions of freedmen into American society. Repairing a fractured nation required more sacrifice and called for more trust in Republican leaders and others who were charged with reconstructing the South. Many blacks believed that suffrage, land ownership, and access to education were forthcoming. However, blacks in Macon and Sparta grew frustrated with the limitations their freedom included.

Foreseeing that their present condition was not going to improve and feeling unwanted in a country in which they were born, blacks reexamined the possibilities of Africa emigration. In July 1866, less than eight months following the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, blacks in Sparta and Macon partnered with the American Colonization Society to plan their return to their ancestral homeland. In November 1866, 194 Maconites embarked upon the *Golconda* to resettle in Liberia. Spartans emigrated two years later. Their grassroots mobilization efforts renewed interest in African emigration amongst freed people throughout Georgia during Reconstruction.

¹²⁵ Edmund L. Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia: A Splendid Failure* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 135.

In this chapter, I examine the economic conditions of blacks in Macon following the Civil War and their motives for and organizational efforts to emigrate to Liberia in 1866. I also examine black Spartans' response to Liberian resettlement and their efforts to emigrate. This chapter traces how Maconites and Spartans prepared for departure and the challenges they faced from growing opposition toward blacks' resistance to field labor and their pursuit of political and economic autonomy.

Life after Emancipation for Freedmen in Macon, Georgia

In April 1865, Georgia witnessed a pivotal moment in human history when nearly half a million formerly enslaved blacks became free at the close of the American Civil War. In the midst of chaos, fear, and tragedy, freedmen found strength in their dreams and aspirations to become part of the American experience. Although many were penniless and destitute, black families abandoned the countryside to test their newfound freedom of movement by resettling and seeking solace in towns throughout Middle Georgia. Blacks trekked across the state by wagon and by foot taking up shelter in dense pine forests, charred plantation homes, and makeshift shanties until they reached their desired destination. For thousands of black families, Macon, Georgia became that place.

With an occupying military force and a sizable African-American population in place, thousands of black families flocked to Macon with virtually nothing but the clothes on their backs. Banking on Union protection and existing black social networks and institutions to assist in their resettlement, incoming families were unprepared for the opposition they received from the Freedmen's Bureau and military officials, as well as facing an onset of economic and public health crises upon their arrival. For those black Maconites residing within the city prior to the war, they too were equally as poor as the incoming population. Compounding the situation, federal authorities were simply ill prepared to address the needs and the traffic of freedmen that poured into the city.¹²⁶

Just weeks following Macon's surrender to the Union, blacks were found roaming the city streets without sufficient food, shelter, or clothing. The destitution and the perceived "idleness" were too much for many white residents to bear. After receiving multiple complaints, the *Macon Telegraph* on May 12, 1865, caused quite a stir and by suggesting that military and civil authorities remove the "the great crowd of lazy Negroes who wander our streets."¹²⁷

With the city experiencing bankruptcy and a labor shortage as a result of the war, planters and city residents demanded the creation of local vagrancy laws to put the indigent population to work or run them out of town. Despite the threats of vagrancy and loitering laws, poor yet self-determining blacks simply refused to work for whites. Out of protest, rather than alleged laziness, most blacks in the city and throughout the state were refusing work to avoid subjecting

¹²⁶ The *Macon Telegraph* reported on May 16, 1865 that in 1860, blacks made up 25 percent of Macon's population: 2,852 blacks among 8,247 whites.

¹²⁷ *Macon Telegraph*, May 12, 1865.

themselves to the servile positions once associated with slavery and certainly not for abashedly low wages.¹²⁸ On January 18, 1865, Special Order No. 15, issued by General William Tecumseh Sherman, provided for the Confiscation of 400,000 acres of land to be distributed among freedmen residing along the Atlantic coast of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.¹²⁹ With the widespread belief that land would eventually be distributed to freedmen throughout the South by Christmas or following the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865, blacks saw no incentive to return to the countryside or work for others within the city when their day of land ownership seemed so close. Instead, they held firm to their position, made do with the resources available to them, worked when they wanted to work, and sought temporary shelter in squalidly and crowded camps amongst other blacks.¹³⁰

In June 2, 1866, Provost Marshall Colonel Frank White, Seventeenth Indiana Volunteers, ordered freedmen not residing in Macon prior to April 20, 1865 to be transported out of the city.¹³¹ While attempts were made to remove migrant blacks, more simply continued flocking to the city. The “shanty towns” they created became so congested that it was only a matter of time before their overcrowded conditions worsened into a public health crisis. Traveler Sidney Andrews described one Macon family as “an old man, a middle-aged man, three women and six

¹²⁸ *Macon Telegraph*, May 19, 24, and 26, 1865; and *Ibid.*, June 1, 1865.

¹²⁹ Edward Magdol, *A Right to the Land: Essays on Freedmen's Community* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 139-173.

¹³⁰ Alan Conway, *Reconstruction in Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), 64; and Charles L. Flynn Jr., *Black Labor: Caste and Class in Nineteenth-Century Georgia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983).

¹³¹ *Macon Telegraph*, June 1, 1866; James Pickett Jones, *Yankee blitzkrieg: Wilson's raid through Alabama and Georgia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 166-167; and Theo T. Scribner, *Indiana's Roll of Honor*, Vol. II (Indianapolis, Indiana: A. D. Streight Publisher, 1866), 474, 479, and 480.

children,” taking shelter in what he described as “a hut.” They used “a couple of bundle of old rags, which answered for beds.”¹³² Martha Ayers, matron of the American Missionary Association teacher’s home stationed in Macon, offered a description of the deplorable economic conditions facing one freed family:

Sally Franklin, she is starving. . . . she is without covering, in an open building, without windows. A baby is wailing at her side, and the mother’s bosom is bare . . . Lot, the sick husband had several hours before he weakly tottered forth to beg for food Sally fears he will perish by the way – I wait for a time, hoping he will come, but he does not, and I leave the mother and her child alone.¹³³

Like Col. White, General Davis Tilson, head of the Freedmen’s Bureau for the state of Georgia, was assigned to address the escalating tension stemming from the wretched living conditions of transient blacks. But, instead of aiding freedmen, Tilson was more concerned with putting blacks to work rather than feeding them. In fact, reports from the Freedmen’s Bureau show Tilson failing to provide full rations to black Georgians who refused to accept work that paid a mere one-tenth of the respectable wage of white farm laborers.¹³⁴

¹³² Sidney Andrews, *The South Since the War: As Shown by Fourteen Weeks of Travel and Observation in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1866), 350-351.

¹³³ Martha Ayers to George Whipple, October 31, 1866. Fisk University, American Missionary Association Archives, Georgia Section, 1865-1870. Microfilm Publication in the University of Georgia Library. Athens, Georgia.

¹³⁴ The Freedmen’s Bureau was slow in providing aid to freedmen following the war. In July 1865, it was reported that only two bureau agents were assigned to Georgia. See George R. Bentley, *A History of the Freedmen’s Bureau* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1955), 68. It was ordered in 1865 to provide the following rations for freedmen: 16 oz. of flour or bread two times a week, 10 oz. of bacon per week, 16 oz. of corn four times a week, and 10 lbs. of sugar, 10 lbs. of peas, and 2 lbs. of soap per 100 rations. Instead, Georgians received 3 lbs. of bacon, a bag of meal and a pint of molasses per week. See Andrews, *The South Since the War*, 351; C. Mildred Thompson, “The Freedmen’s Bureau in Georgia, 1865-1866,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* V (March, 1921): 30-31; Donald H. Henderson, *The Negro Freedman: Life Conditions of the American Negro in the Early years After Emancipation* (New York: Henry Schuman Press, 1852), 48; Lee W. Formwalt, “The Origins of African-American Politics in Southwest Georgia: A Case Study of Black Political Organization During Presidential Reconstruction, 1865-1867,” *Journal of Negro History* 77, no. 4 (1992): 1; U.S. Congress, House. *Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, House Report 30, 39th Cong., First Sess., 1865*, 44-45; U.S. Congress, House. *Circulars Issued by the Commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Land, Exec. Doc. 70, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1865*, 57-58; *Ibid., House Report 30, 39th Congress, 1st Sess., 1865*, 44-45; and *Ibid., Report of the Commissioner of the United States Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned lands to the President, Exec. Doc. 11, 39th Congress, First Sess., 1865*, 47.

As early as December 1865, Macon had witnessed an estimated 10,000 blacks living in the city.¹³⁵ Their numbers were quickly reduced by nearly fifty percent by July 1866, not as a result of the actions of Col. White and Gen. Tillson alone but rather by a pervasive smallpox epidemic that claimed the lives of nearly 5,000 blacks over the course of ten months.¹³⁶ Macon Mayor Stephen Collins reported that as early as October 1865, blacks were beginning to die at alarming rates. He claimed, “the city had buried thirty negroes in a week period, and of that number nine or ten were picked up dead in the street and alleys of the city.” By spring 1866, the Federal Hospital and city authorities were burying fifteen to twenty bodies per day in addition to the number blacks were burying. One black carpenter found it difficult to match the demands for coffins and consequently was forced to hire four additional assistants.¹³⁷

The *Macon Journal and Messenger* blamed indigent blacks for the spread of smallpox, claiming “. . . the disease mingles with their clothing, and they taint the very air.” Members of the Board of Trade fired back by lamenting that black fatalities were a result of poverty and substandard or limited housing provided to the nomadic population when they entered into the city. The neglect of Macon’s government and federal authorities forced families to “huddle together” and take temporary shelter in what the Board described as “cells of death.” “The acres of graves,” they argued, were a “silent testimony to the dreadful mortality,” which quickly

¹³⁵ Macon consisted of 5,946 blacks by the close of 1866; however, the Board of Trade reported that the black population of Macon had reached 10,000 and was reduced by less than 5,000 by July 1866. See *Macon Telegraph*, August 13, 1866; *Macon Telegraph*, January 7, 1867; and *Ibid.*, October 15, 1865.

¹³⁶ *Macon Telegraph*, Aug. 13, 1866.

¹³⁷ See *Macon Telegraph*, August 13, 1866; *Macon Telegraph*, January 7, 1867; and *Ibid.*, October 15, 1865. To learn more about Macon’s smallpox epidemic, see C. Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia, Economic, Social, and Political, 1865-1872* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915), 350; Titus Brown, *Faithful, Firm, and True: African–American Education in the South* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2002), 11; and Alan Conway, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 67-68.

resulted in the burial and medical expenses reaching over \$7,000.¹³⁸ The Board of Health convened in May 1866 to evaluate the status of the smallpox epidemic. In the attempt to stop the spread of the disease, the City Marshall stated that “the nuisances reported as existing in different parts of the city” had been abated by the use of “lime and copper as disinfectants.”¹³⁹ One doctor argued that smallpox was most prevalent within the black community and that “no provisions had been made for the sick and the indigent refugees.”¹⁴⁰

As poverty and smallpox claimed the lives of many blacks in Macon, planters across Georgia witnessed a significant reduction in the labor population as well. Monroe County reported, “There is about 40 percent less labor employed upon the present crop than was worked in this country in 1860 under the most favorable circumstances.”¹⁴¹ Augusta claimed that the overall number of black field laborers available between seven southern states was approximately 400,000.¹⁴² The city leaders further bewailed, “Thus we have for the production of the present crop but a little over one-half of the labor employed in 1860. . . there cannot be more than one-half of the land planted,” and “we do not believe that a crop of more than eighteen hundred thousand bales can be possibly raised this year.”¹⁴³ In Macon, employers noticed the labor and crop shortage, too. Fearing what could possibly become of Georgia’s economy, planters began to question who would till their soil and tend to their crops during the subsequent

¹³⁸ *Macon Telegraph*, August 13, 1866; *Macon Journal and Messenger*, February 20, 1866; Conway, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, pp. 67-68; and *Macon Telegraph*, August 13, 1866.

¹³⁹ *The Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, Georgia) May 30, 1866.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Macon Telegraph*, May 7, 1866.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

months. With the *New York Herald* making claims that the South produced merely 1/6 to 1/7 of the agricultural goods reported in 1860, Georgia was certain to experience an even further blow to its economy if farm labor was not soon stabilized.¹⁴⁴

As was true in Macon, disease and poverty claimed the lives of thousands of blacks throughout the South. Newspapers queried the actual number of the black population in America.¹⁴⁵ General O. O. Howard, Chief of the Freedmen's Bureau, compiled a census of the freedmen's population in eleven former slaveholding states: Virginia: 500,000; North Carolina: 360,000; South Carolina: 375,000; Georgia: 400,000; Florida: 62,000; Mississippi: 320,000; Louisiana: 350,000; Texas: 200,000; Missouri: 100,000; Arkansas: 100,000; and Tennessee: 300,000.¹⁴⁶ In a report to the Secretary of War, Howard argued that the black population of 1866 consisted of 3,067,000 persons, and according to the U.S. Census of 1860, their numbers were 3,335,000 but "should have been in June, 1866, 4,375,000 . . . according to all statistical rules."¹⁴⁷ Investors and planters claimed that the deficit of 1,308,000 persons derived from the higher than normal death rates of African Americans, which they believed was a direct result of the Freedmen's Bureau failure to provide adequate aid, as well as freedmen's inability to sufficiently care for themselves, and their objection to contractual labor.¹⁴⁸ It must be taken into consideration that during this period, black migration was so expansive that many families went

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ *Southern Enterprise*, February 28, 1866; and Ibid., June 21, 1867; Wayne Dasher and July Dasher, *The Negro and the Southern Press*, (Nashville, Georgia: self-published, 2004), 3 and 33; and *Christian Recorder*, "Letter from Rev. James Lynch," July 1, 1865.

¹⁴⁶ *Southern Enterprise*, February 1, 1867. See also Dasher and Dasher, *The Negro and the Southern Press*, 18, 19, and 33.

¹⁴⁷ *Southern Enterprise*, February 1, 1867.

¹⁴⁸ *Christian Recorder*, "Letter from Rev. James Lynch," July 1, 1865.

unaccounted for. All southern states witnessed a labor shortage and, like Georgia, feared that poverty, disease, and displacement would significantly reduce the black population.¹⁴⁹

With the labor question in place, Macon investors wondered what incentives could keep blacks in the city to work the fields. Competition from Mississippi and western states resulted in a further reduction of the state's black labor population. Left with few alternatives, the Freedmen's Bureau ordered Georgia employers to offer blacks higher wages than proposed by competing neighboring states. With Georgia's total property value reduced by \$786,300,378 since 1860, employers found it difficult to meet such high demands. The wages for freedmen were costly, but the effort to sustain black labor proved to be even costlier.¹⁵⁰

"Liberia Fever" in Macon, Georgia

By June 1866, an organizational spirit, motivated by poverty and the desire for full citizenship and suffrage rights, seized the attention of black Maconites. Disturbed by the unwelcoming reception from the City of Macon, the factors which caused smallpox to claim the lives of community members, and the Freedmen's Bureau's replacing of black teachers in its newly established public schools with northern white teachers, the removal of the 137th United States Colored Troops and 103rd United States Colored Infantry, blacks in the city decided that

¹⁴⁹ *Southern Enterprise*, February 1, 1867; *Georgia Weekly Telegraph*, May 14, 1866; *Ibid.*, August 13, 1866; *Ibid.*, May 7, 1866; *Ibid.*, May 19, 1866; and *Ibid.*, November 5, 1866.

¹⁵⁰ *Macon Telegraph*, November 5, 1866.

they could not sit idly by. Instead, they formed organizations and attended conventions to determine the best political strategy for achieving autonomy.¹⁵¹

Realizing how vital their labor was to the southern economy, one camp of black Maconites hoped to become a part of the political process and use black labor to negotiate for suffrage, land, and education for its people. A second camp, more nationalistic than its counterpart, was not so willing to compromise. They were convinced that the Presidential Reconstruction plan was doomed for failure. As well, the establishment of the Black Codes, which varied in degrees of racial discrimination from state to state, and barriers preventing migration to the North or West solidified their position. As a result, the black community of Macon met on Independence Day 1866 to reexamine the question of African colonization posed exactly one year earlier before 1,000 attendees at a Union League meeting.¹⁵²

This independent-minded class of black Maconites recognized the importance of self-sufficiency and self-determination, which they knew could not be achieved in a white-ruled, agriculturally-based economy that denied blacks equitable access to education, land, suffrage, and equal protection under the law. They reasoned that if African Americans were to ever be equal to their white counterparts then they must be able to educate *their own* children, build *their own* institutions, purchase and reside upon *their own* land, and elect *their own* into office. For blacks in Macon and beyond, the most logical place to achieve the sort of autonomy needed to be a truly free people was their “Fatherland,” Africa. Hence, the Emigration Association of Macon

¹⁵¹ Paul Michael Johnson, “The Negro in Macon, Georgia, 1865-1871” (Master thesis: University of Georgia, 1972), 6.

¹⁵² To learn more about the various political strategies of black Georgians during Reconstruction, see Joseph P. Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation South: Central Georgia, 1800-1880* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 178-190.

Georgia (EAMG) was formed informally on July 4, 1866 and became the city's first black-led "Back-to-Africa" association.

On July 5, 1866, Wyatt Moore, a former slave and deacon of the Second Baptist Church, and Moses Pollock, a black watchmaker, wrote to the American Colonization Society stating they were "authorized by the majority of the colored citizens" of Macon to compose a letter asking the Society to furnish transportation for those seeking resettlement in Liberia.¹⁵³

Expressing the sentiments of the black community, Moore and Pollock wrote:

For we are hastily sick of affairs since tis in our power to better our condition We are a majority of the citizens (Cold) are tired of the unprovoked scorn and prejudice we daily and heavily suffer And will not continue to kiss the chains that binds us from being what other men are [Dear] Sir you will also send such information as you think we need in our contemplated move.¹⁵⁴

As witnessed by this letter, following the war, the South experienced an attitude shift toward the ACS from blacks. Suspicious and critical of the Society's true intentions during the antebellum era, blacks began to seek out the organization's assistance by asking for aid to return to Africa. This is clearly demonstrated by the number of blacks in attendance at the first meetings organized by the EAMG. As Pollock and Moore pointed out, 500 to 1,000 could be recruited, which would have resulted in the association removing 10 to 20 percent of the city's desperately needed black population.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ From Wyatt Moore, Moses Pollock, and J. M. C. Logan to Agents of the American Colonization Society, Macon, GA, July 5, 1866, American Colonization Society Papers, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 18.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Wyatt Moore, Moses Pollock, and J. M.C. Logan to Agents of the American Colonization Society, Macon, GA July 5, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 18.

During the week of July 13, black clergymen, mechanics, teachers, domestics, and farmers met to officially elect officers to the EAMG. Moses Pollock emerged as the Association's first President and Wyatt Moore as its Secretary. In a letter addressed to Rev. William McLain, Corresponding Secretary of the ACS, the officers wrote, "We Are now forming ourselves into An association and I think we can get five hundred or A thousand at the time to go to our Fatherland as the spirit of Emigration seem to be Rising."¹⁵⁶ Frustrated with their current conditions and feeling limited in where they could reside peacefully in America, they lamented, "We the citizens of Macon have come to the conclusion that we can never be What we Desire to be in this Country and we Determine to leave this continent for the republic of Liberia."¹⁵⁷

Besides the desire for political and economic autonomy, Black Maconites were inspired by, and gained the confidence to sail to Africa from, the 1,194 freeborn and emancipated Georgians who emigrated to Africa during the antebellum years.¹⁵⁸ Now as freed people with larger social networks and resources (which sometimes included benevolent and sympathetic whites), the desire of blacks to return to their ancestral land of Africa was no longer a dream for romantics, but rather a reality. The ACS and the monthly reports of the *African Repository* contained accounts of five departures to Liberia in 1865: the *Grey Hound*, *M.A Benson*, *Cora*, *Thomas Pope*, and *H.P. Russell* (see Table 3.1).

¹⁵⁶ From Wyatt Moore and Moses Pollock to Rev. William McLain, July 13, 1866, Macon, Georgia. ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 43.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Robert T. Browning, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1844-1865: An Alphabetical Listing* (Philadelphia, PA: Institute of Liberian Studies, 1980); and Tom W. Shick, *Emigrants to Liberia, 1820-1843: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, DE: Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc., 1971). See also "Appendix A" in F. Karcheik-Sims-Alvarado, "The African Colonization Movement in Georgia, 1817-1860" (Master thesis: Clark Atlanta University, 2000).

For freedmen throughout America, the most inspiring departure following the American Civil War consisted of 172 members of the Lynchburg Emigration Society of Virginia (LESV), who sailed on November 4, 1865 upon the *H.P. Russell*. Led by John McNuckles, a master plasterer and bricklayer, freedmen became empowered in their actions and desire to learn more about the organization's mobilization efforts. The LESV was seen as an example of a successful grassroots effort to self-organize blacks in the pursuit of resettlement abroad. As 300 additional blacks from Lynchburg and Abingdon, Virginia planned for a second voyage scheduled for departure in May 1866, blacks throughout the Black Belt penned letters of interest to the ACS expressing their desire to emigrate to Africa, and subsequently began organizing local black-led emigration societies throughout the southeast United States.¹⁵⁹

Testimonies published in the *Repository* from Liberian settlers served as sources of inspiration for black Maconites. Henry W. Johnson, a barber turned lawyer from Canandaigua, New York, sailed to Liberia in June 1865. Upon his arrival, he composed letters encouraging African Americans to return to Africa and declared that blacks living in a self-governing nation were not "a myth existing only in the brain of the enthusiast." He wrote, "It is a sober reality – a solemn fact." Johnson spoke of the potential of Liberia if blacks brought with them their talents and resources. "The only question is," he asked, "shall it . . . remain for some time weak and feeble, or shall it speedily become great and powerful?" Suggesting that blacks had a racial obligation to return to the birthplace of their forefathers, Johnson called on African-American

¹⁵⁹ To learn more about Virginia's LESV's departure in 1865, see Marie Tyler-McGraw, *An African Republic: Black and White Virginia in the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2007), 290; and see ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 2, February 1866, 35-41.

men to aid in the colonization pursuit of Liberia, exclaiming, “*Blackmen of America!* What a shame that you do not come here and *aid the young Republic.*”¹⁶⁰

With the conditions of freedmen being dire and their future appearing bleak, the ACS warned whites in 1865 that it was inevitable that blacks would look to Africa as a legitimate place to resettle. In an article titled, “They Will Wish to Emigrate” the Society wrote,

The equality of the colored with the white before the law must follow ultimately, if not immediately. They must ultimately be allowed to vote on the same terms as white men, and must be equally eligible to office. Equal means of common and professional education must be open to them. Some of them will enter the learned professions, and become respectable in them; perhaps eminent in them. Some of them will obtain offices, and fill them respectably. Many of them will acquire wealth, and mingle with white men in the various pursuits by which wealth is acquired . . . whatever maybe their relations to white men, they are still *a people*, and need *a country*; that, without “a nationality of their own,” they cannot be what they are capable of being with one. They will wish to emigrate.¹⁶¹

As expressed by the ACS, blacks needed to be self-reliant if they were to achieve political and economic autonomy. To be independent and to improve their quality of life, the ACS believed blacks must be a self-governing people with their own nation beyond the presence of whites.

General Jacob D. Cox recognized the importance of self-government to African Americans, but lobbied for blacks to reside in Native American styled reservations throughout South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. The ACS criticized the suggestion of a Negro reservation and warned that the fate of blacks would be the same as it was for Native Americans. “To settle the negroes permanently in the South,” the Society wrote, “you must make them

¹⁶⁰ See ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 2, February 1866, 39-41.

¹⁶¹ ACS, “They Will Want to Emigrate” in *African Repository*, Vol. 41, 301.

strong enough to protect themselves against you General Cox's idea is to save the negro from the white man To do this, however, he must be placed where the white man cannot follow him.”¹⁶²

As members of the EAMG were organizing themselves in July 1866, Macon planters and investors were further feeling the impact of the labor shortage which had worsened since spring. Also, planters found further difficulty in meeting the required minimum wage ordered by the Freedmen’s Bureau. And when laborers were found and paid, planters complained about the workers’ inconsistency, their breeching of contracts, their leaving farms sometimes with crops ruined, or their simple refusal to work altogether. Fearing what was to come during the upcoming harvest season, Macon planters proposed a solution: white immigrant labor.¹⁶³

As planters contemplated a response to possible black emigration, Liberian fever caught the interest of more blacks in Macon, including that of a future Georgia legislator and post-Reconstruction “Back-to-Africa” advocate, the Reverend Henry McNeal Turner. Turner’s first contact with Macon occurred before the Civil War when he was assigned as a minister to the city’s only African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). After serving as Chaplain during the Civil War, an appointment made by President Abraham Lincoln, he received a commission in the U.S. Army and was assigned to work with the Freedmen’s Bureau in Macon. But after his arrival to the city, he gave up his commission, and regained his position as a minister of the AME Church to work feverishly in establishing new churches across the state.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Ibid., 297-300.

¹⁶³ German immigrant labor was courted by southern states. Chinese labor was considered if German labor proved to be unsuccessful. See *Macon Telegraph*, April 16, 1866; May 14, 1866, May 19, 1866, and September 19, 1866.

¹⁶⁴ Johnson, “The Negro in Macon, Georgia,” 36.

Upon returning to Macon, Turner became recognized as one of the most influential black leaders in the city. His oratorical gift, coupled with his passion for racial equality and political participation, caught the attention of blacks and whites in the city and beyond. In need of repaying a debt to the ACS, Turner propositioned the Society to hire him as a spokesperson for African colonization. Scheduled to speak at the Liberian Independence Day parade on July 26 in Macon, Turner wrote,

I am going to deliver a speech at a large Barbeque in favor of Liberia. The colored people are waking up on the subject in every part of the State. I am taking the ground that we will never get Justice here, that god is, and will, withhold political rights from us for the purpose of turning our attention to our fatherland, that we all are destined to be missionaries to the millions of Africa.¹⁶⁵

During June 1866, Turner became a supporter of the African colonization movement. His position on the subject was that the enslavement of blacks and their denial of political freedom in America were for the divine purpose of introducing Christianity to Africa through African-American missionaries. In his letter to Rev. McLain, he did not specify, particularly, what caused him to take this position, but he did profess, “I became a convert five weeks ago, while riding in the [railroad] cars,” and “I expect to advocate it, hereafter as much as I can, with my other duties.”¹⁶⁶

Turner hoped to assist in the recruiting process by serving as the leading black emigration spokesman. He proposed to Rev. McLain that the ACS change its organizational title “from

¹⁶⁵ Letter from Rev. Henry McNeal Turner to Rev. William McLain, July 18, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letters 61.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

colonization to emigration” to make it more appealing to blacks. He wrote, “the term colonization has been somewhat odious among our people, and a new dress would be more attractive now, especially under the free regime.”¹⁶⁷ What Turner was implying is that many African-American emigration advocates did not want to be identified as colonists. Regardless of what actually occurred when African Americans arrived to Liberia and their interaction with and perception of the indigenous population, from their perspective they were not foreigners taking up settlement and maintaining their cultural identity in a new land. They were returning “home.”

As Turner was coming into his own as a minister for the African Methodist Church, he recognized his emerging influence over black Maconites. Hoping to reap the benefits of his dedication to an emerging movement, he asked Rev. McLain if the ACS would offer him monetary compensation for his role as a “as a lecturer on the subject.” Turner declared that he planned to introduce the concept before “thousands of our people south who can’t read, and know nothing of it.” Turner welcomed the challenge of arguing against the position of whites who discourage blacks from entertaining ideas of self-sufficiency in an all-black, self-governing nation. Turner informed McLain how whites “tells the colored people, they would die, or the Africans will kill them and eat them up.” Boasting and reminding the ACS of his level of influence on black Maconites, he offered the proposition again: “Now if you will offer me some inducement, I will both speak and write on the subject and I know I have as much influence as any man South of color. He closed, “I have been offered a position in behalf of Hayti, but I refused because I hate Hayti.”¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Letter from Rev. Henry McNeal Turner to Rev. William McLain, July 18, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letters 61.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Rev. McLain began inquiring about the talent and character of Turner (possibly for a position with the ACS or as an attempt to retrieve the debt the young minister owed to the organization). Feigning ignorance about his relationship with Turner, Moore wrote, “Reverend H.M. Turner I have some little acquaintance with him, I know nothing wrong of him he is look upon as Big potatoes in our city.” Moore did inform McLain about Turner’s speech given at the Liberian Day parade celebrated on July 26. He wrote, “he Tells us that his Father in Law went there and he said that he had Six men From there and gives a good account of the Country. He gives us an interesting Speech on the 26 in his address he said that he was acquainted with you and that you was the right Sort of man that what ever you said you would do it.”¹⁶⁹

It is doubtful that Turner was ever hired by or received pay from the ACS for his advocacy work in 1866. It is possible he received remuneration during his tenure as Vice-President of the ACS with 1876 but not before. Correspondence with Rev. McLain reveals that blacks and whites alike looked to the ACS as a means to generate a wage, acquire land, receive a promotion in the church, or publish their book on their advocacy work with the ACS. Unlike the antebellum period, the ACS simply lacked the financial resources to hire large numbers of agents, recruiters, or administrators following the war. What funds were available were used primarily in the transporting of emigrants to Liberia and providing the provisions to assist in their resettlement once in the West African country.

Turner may have played a powerful and charismatic role in attracting large groups of blacks to hear him speak on the subject of emigration. However, it was Wyatt Moore, despite

¹⁶⁹ From Wyatt Moore to Rev. William McLain, 31 July 1866, Macon, Georgia, ACS Records, Reel 98, Letter 95.

Turner's proposition to the ACS, who was the most influential officer of the EAMG and chief advocate of African emigration in Macon during Reconstruction. Hoping Turner did not overshadow his efforts in mobilizing and recruiting potential emigrants or become the spokesperson of the movement he had commenced, Moore wrote to McLain, "So much for Turner. My Dear Sir I have one request to make of you and that is this Whether I could get a situation in this colonization Business." He continued, "There are so many that wants to go and are faint hearted they want to See a man Go and Come and I . . . would go with my crew and this fall and then return and go again next Spring I think that in this way I could do good I have to make a living."¹⁷⁰

Following the Liberian Day parade of July 26, interest in emigration, especially amongst the more skilled and literate members of the black community, gained momentum and caught whites completely off guard. As blacks came to realize that Liberian resettlement was indeed a viable option for those seeking personal and civic freedom, it caught the attention of two groups of whites: those who wanted to see freedmen remain in a servile position as laborers and those who wanted to see freedmen excel in Africa through colonization efforts. Moore wrote, "The white is very much opposed to us leaving the place we celebrated the 26 the independence of Liberia and there is a considerable excitement among the white people" and "I believe am fearful that there will be some Hinderance throwed in our way to keep us Back."¹⁷¹ G. W. Samson, an ACS supporter, was one of the more benevolent whites of Macon who hoped to see the freedmen excel in their African colonization pursuit. Although he urged that "all classes of white men

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, 27 July 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letters 87 and 95.

[should] lead off in African Colonization,” he recognized the difficulty of getting white planters to support black colonization efforts including “those who wished to retain laborers.”¹⁷²

Obviously, whites within the city underestimated the organizational efforts of the freed community and were late to learn about the plans of the EAMG to recruit passengers to Liberia. Unaware that the group had been contemplating the Liberian question since 1865, Samson expressed in a letter to McLain that “the movement is entirely spontaneous” and that “the head of the Freedman’s Bureau and the [General] commanding the District had yesterday no information except rumors about it.” Samson, however, did take note of the personality and character of the leaders of the EAMC and wrote, “. . . the leaders in it are that independent class who fret at their old condition & don’t seem disposed to acknowledge dependence on any class of white men.”¹⁷³

Hoping to assist the freedmen in their departure from America was Reverend W. H. Robert, “a Charleston man of Huguenot descent” appointed as a missionary for the American Baptist Home Missionary Society of New York.¹⁷⁴ On August 1, 1866, Robert wrote to Rev. McLain about the growing opposition against the EAMG and the black population’s desire to return to Africa. He concluded, “I regret very much that evil persons probably for wicked and selfish purposes are making a bad use of this idea now.”¹⁷⁵ Samson, who believed that Rev. Robert could assist the EAMG in their endeavors, asked Rev. McLain how the Society could

¹⁷² G.W. Samson to Rev. McLain, Aug. 3, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 107.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ G.W. Samson to Rev. McLain, August 3, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 107.

¹⁷⁵ W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, August 1, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 97.

best utilize him. But the decision to have Rev. Robert assist in emigration endeavors was not entirely up to the ACS, but rather the EAMG.

Unlike the first wave of the African colonization movement, recruitment was no longer dominated by white agents of the ACS. Instead, the emigration had evolved into a grassroots movement led predominately by black males. Although the phrase had not been coined as of yet, emigration to Africa during Reconstruction had become a “Back-to-Africa” Movement espousing ideals of self-sufficiency, self-determination, Divine Providence, manhood, and family reunification in a homogenous black nation. Recognizing the second wave of the movement as an opportunity for free black men to become the voice and leaders of their own people, the ACS encouraged benevolent whites to take on a less visible role by offering instead funding, protection, transportation, and provisions for Liberia-bound emigrants. For Rev. Robert, the EAMG had the power to determine for itself whether whites should advocate on behalf of blacks or not. Luckily, the EAMG had the foresight to work in concert with benevolent and philanthropic whites as opposed to organizing and funding their resettlement in Liberia alone.

As African emigration gained momentum in 1866, white opposition grew toward the EAMG and other emigration associations in Georgia.¹⁷⁶ From Macon, Moore informed McLain how whites were using fear tactics as a way to deter blacks from going to Africa. He wrote, “if it were possible the whites would Discourage the Blacks by Telling them that they are going to

¹⁷⁶ In 1866, interest in African colonization was also present in LaGrange, Sparta, Columbus, and Covington, Georgia. See Letters from Oliver Sanders to Rev. William McLain, May 9 and 11, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letters 111 and 113.; E. M. Pendleton to Rev. William McLain, July 11, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 36; Robert Logan to Rev. McLain, July 18, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 59; and Harrison Berry to Rev. McLain, August 22, 1866, Reel 98, Letter 146.

Cuba but it has no impression upon the Enlighting patron of our Race . . . I tell them cubians would not have any use for us . . . Free Negrose among their negrose in Bondage”¹⁷⁷

Rumors of blacks being sold into slavery emerged from negative newspapers articles, such as the “The Alleged Kidnapping of Negroes,” which claimed that blacks were being shipped and sold into slavery in Cuba. Moore and others believed that articles such as these were not only “an unwarranted fabrication,” but more significantly a ploy to simply keep blacks in the South.¹⁷⁸ Nevertheless, rumors about the failure of Liberia and blacks being transported to Cuba and resold into slavery were enough to cause some blacks to develop anxieties about boarding any ship crossing the Atlantic Ocean bound for Africa. The first Middle Passage (the forced migration of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade) and second Middle Passage (the selling, trading, and transporting of enslaved Africans within the Americas) were relatively familiar to freed people in the Unites States.¹⁷⁹ The fear of experiencing a possible third Middle Passage, one in which blacks would have to relive the trauma (either their own or that of their ancestors) of traveling in reverse across the Atlantic Ocean, was enough to cause some blacks to reject ideas of emigration.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, July 27, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 87.

¹⁷⁸ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 13, 1866; *Savannah Daily Herald*, February 17 and 20, 1866; and *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, March 12, 1866.

¹⁷⁹ Ira Berlin, *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2010). Berlin examines the forced and voluntary migration of person of African descent in the United States from the periods of the Trans-Atlanta Slave Trade to the election years of President Baraka Obama.

¹⁸⁰ James T. Campbell, *Middle Passages: African-American Journeys to Africa, 1787-2005* (New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books, 2007). Campbell examines the efforts of African Americans to return to Africa over a course of two and half centuries. He defines these experiences as “Middle Passages,” unlike the middle passage associated with Trans-Atlantic Slave-Trade.

During July and August 1866, blacks continued to reject agricultural labor and planters struggled to obtain their service. Fearing another year of economic decline, planters seriously considered replacing black labor with white immigrant labor. As white opposition increased toward those blacks making plans to emigrate or simply refusing to work out of protest, equally did Moses Pollock's reservations about leading blacks out of America in November 1866. He brought before the ACS his concerns associated with transportation expenses and medical resources for passengers. Certainly, these were all legitimate, but what Pollock feared mostly was the consequences of black emigration upon those left behind in America.¹⁸¹ He wondered, how would whites respond following the group's departure? In a letter to McLain, Pollock wrote:

I write to you for advice for the whites here have a meeting and formed a resolution to have white laborers if you fail to carry us all [off] what are we to do if you cannot send us away and we will have to do the best we can And sir if you fail to send all of us away and you have to call on the government of the United States we understand that President will oppose the Scheme for as certain as we make a move the rest will be throwed out of employment and then what we going to do . . . I do not want to do something that will cause those who stay behind to suffer Sir please to give us your views what you think is best for us to do whether you think it is best to emigrate to Liberia or to stay here as the clouds are very dark and lowering.¹⁸²

Pollock brought his concern before the body of the EAMG, but only to receive opposition from his friend, Moore, who interpreted his trepidations as a ploy to interrupt plans for emigration. Outraged to say the least, Moore wrote to McLain, "I fear that there are men in

¹⁸¹ Moses Pollock to Rev. McLain, August 12, 1866. ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 129.

¹⁸² Ibid.

this Body that are Dispose to do us harm and to [frustrate] our purpose” and “he [Pollock] has many excuses that are not fit to Listen at and we do not want such men.”¹⁸³

During the same or following meeting, Rev. Robert was introduced to members of the EAMG. He was no stranger to the black community of Macon. Since the end of the war, he had served as “a missionary to the Freedmen.”¹⁸⁴ Despite his relationship with black religious leaders, “some of the company was afraid of him.” Hoping to comfort EAMG members, Moore said “he will do all he can for us . . . he will do Right.”¹⁸⁵

Throughout August and September 1866, Pollock took on a less visible role with the association and instead, Moore and Robert procured the lead in recruiting and organizing emigrants. Regular meetings were held by the association, sometimes three times a week to distribute literature, register families, and agree upon a suitable place to reside in Liberia. By August 14, Moore had successfully registered 120 persons.¹⁸⁶ Capitalizing on the spirit of Maconites to become an independent people and whites’ desire to see them return to the field, the EAMG was certain they could recruit over 300 passengers by the anticipated departure date of November 1866 and close to the same number for the succeeding voyage scheduled for departure on March 1867.

By the end of August, Moore and Pollock had not reconciled their differences. Letters from Moore to McLain asked to “please do not Give any attention to any Communication you

¹⁸³ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, August 16, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 118.

¹⁸⁴ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, 14 August 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 111.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

may receive from this association except it be from Rev. H. Roberts or myself.” He claimed that “Mr. Pollock our former President has no notion of going to Liberia and we do not want him mix up in our affairs.”¹⁸⁷ Despite Moore’s protest, Pollock continued to attend and provide reports of EAMG meetings to Rev. McLain’s and by September 6, Pollock “had Gotten in the notion again to go to Liberia.” For the next two months Moore remained doubtful about Pollock’s intentions with the association and his plans to truly leave with those registered for departure.¹⁸⁸

“Liberia Fever” in Sparta, Georgia

As the Macon group was preparing for the fall voyage, so too was a small company of thirty-two freedpersons from Sparta, Georgia. During the summer of 1866, “Liberia fever” caught the attention of Richard Shaw and his family. Following Independence Day 1866, blacks from the small town began to organize themselves in an effort to emigrate to Africa. Shaw, described by E. M. Pendleton, a white medical doctor and chemist, as a literate painter and “the best informed colored man in the county,” began to reassess his life as well as the future of his wife and their four children as free people in America. In July, he and his wife formed an emigration association and recruited four additional families to set sail to Liberia in November:

¹⁸⁷ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, August 16, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 118; and Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, August 29, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 163.

¹⁸⁸ Moses Pollock to Rev. McLain, September 5, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 180; and Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, September 6, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 186.

Maria Thomson (possibly Shaw's sister-in-law), a seamstress, and her four children; Augustus Kelsey, a wheelwright, his wife and three children; Alfred Rogers, a farmer, his wife and five children; Wesley Hurburt, a shoemaker; and a family of eight, whose names went unrecorded.¹⁸⁹

As word began to spread about the small company's interest in African emigration and their desire for self-determination, opposition began to brew. On August 24, 1866, Pendleton, who was writing and advocating on behalf of black Spartans, informed Rev. McLain that Shaw was being discouraged by his white landlord from going to Liberia. Shaw informed Pendleton that he was presented with a negative news article "written by an old sea Captain to a German clergyman about Liberia."¹⁹⁰ But for Shaw, according to Pendleton, "it only made him more anxious to go."¹⁹¹

As it was in Macon, whites in Sparta had their own agenda for wanting blacks to stay put and in their place. The spring of 1866 was the first time since the war's end that blacks had returned to work in the fields. With blacks contemplating leaving in November, planters in Sparta questioned, too, who was going to harvest and gin *their* cotton. As the harvest season drew closer, opposition from landowners was to be expected. But what Pendleton was unprepared for were the organized efforts of African Americans and the Radical Republican party to keep blacks in the U.S.

¹⁸⁹ E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, July 16, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 36. Pendleton thought it was necessary to state each head of household's complexion. He identified Shaw as a "mulatto," Thompson as a "quadroon," and Kelsey as a "full blooded negro." He failed to list the skin complexions of the other applicants.

¹⁹⁰ E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, August 24, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter number was unrecorded.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

While the Liberian company was preparing for the November 1866 voyage, Pendleton feared the Republican's new Homestead bill was going to "demoralize" or rather discourage blacks from resettling in Africa.¹⁹² During the following two months, Pendleton warned blacks to be wary of the legislative promises offered by Republicans and explained how it would be in their best interest to seek freedom abroad.

Black resistance toward Liberian emigration came unexpectedly to Pendleton. He wrote to McLain, "A majority belong to what is called the anti-Liberia party and will have nothing to do with it in any sense of the word."¹⁹³ Republican promises of full American citizenship, along with land, suffrage, and education certainly served as primary motives for blacks to reject plans of African emigration. But the fears of death, re-enslavement, and separation from family trumped all reasons to reject ideas of resettlement abroad. Pendleton wrote to McLain about the sentiments of black Spartans:

These negroes themselves get up many bugbears – such as the dangers of the ocean, the mermaids, the diseases of the climate, & etc. The most serious difficulty & the one hardest to convince them of is the fear of landing in Cuba to be sold into slavery.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² Ibid.. The Homestead Bill that Pendleton referenced was the Southern Homestead Act passed by Congress on July 21, 1866. Ultimately, the Act was a failure. Approximately 1,000 African Americans received titles to the 46 million acres of public domain land reserved by the federal government. The number of blacks who were able to acquire land through the Homestead Act did not come close to meeting black expectations. Much smaller was the number of whites, who were able to acquire land through the Act. To learn more about the failures of Southern Homestead Act of 1866, see Derron Davis, "Hope versus Reality: The Emancipation Era Labor Struggles of Memphis Area Freedmen, 1863-1870" in *Race, Class, and Community in Southern Labor History*, edited by Gary Fink and Merl E. Reed (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 119.

¹⁹³ E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, September 10, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 207.

¹⁹⁴ E. M. Pendleton to Rec. McLain, July 11, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 36.

Their qualms caused Pendleton to have his own reservations about the group's commitment to leave America. Nevertheless, he continued to advocate on their behalf, regardless of the growing opposition toward the anticipated departure.¹⁹⁵

Emigrants Prepare for Departure

Back in Macon, the Liberian movement gained significant momentum. By mid-September, 288 persons from the city had applied for passage and according to Rev. Robert, were most eager “to emigrate to Liberia in the first vessel which will leave our Shores for Africa.”¹⁹⁶ After weeks of convening, members of the EAMG selected Sinou, Greenville as the place to resettle in Liberia, and it was determined that a company of 30 to 40 persons would organize a Baptist church with Rev. Jack Robinson, a freedman, upon their arrival.¹⁹⁷

While the ACS was elated to learn of the black Maconites' receptivity toward African emigration, the Society had to deliver the unfortunate news to the EAMG that only 200 of its 288 applicants would be eligible to embark upon the *Golconda* in November. In 1866, hundreds of African Americans made inquiries about resettling in Liberia, but limited financial resources and

¹⁹⁵ E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, September 17, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 240.

¹⁹⁶ W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, September 12, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 217.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

ships caused the ACS to become selective for whom they could provide free transportation and six months of provisions upon arrival to Liberia. Serious consideration was given to those groups that had formed themselves into emigration associations and individuals who were deemed industrious, literate, Christian, and resolute in their decision to resettle in Liberia. Black resettlement was an expensive enterprise. Resources could not be wasted on those considered inept or unlikely to survive independently in a developing nation or those ambiguous about leaving America. Besides, returnees and unfavorable testimonies of life in Liberia worked against proponents of African colonization, and strengthened the position of opponents who deemed African emigration an inevitable failure. Even worse, returnees reinforced the racist notion that blacks becoming a self-governing people were a preposterous fallacy.

In the year following the Civil War, inquiries came from across the U.S regarding emigration, but blacks from Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina and Ohio demonstrated the greatest interest in returning to Africa. By October 1866, the ACS was courting 998 applicants registered for the November 1866 departure. These numbers do not reflect the number of inquiries made by those pondering the emigration question. Unfortunately, the lack of provision and space available aboard the *Golconda* caused the ACS to limit transportation to only 660 persons, the extent of her capacity. Of the applicants, the Society agreed to grant passage to 250 Georgians and 400 South Carolinians, whom they described as “the better class of freedmen” (see Table 3.2)¹⁹⁸

When EAMG officers received confirmation of the number of persons allowed to travel to Liberia, it created quite a ruckus amongst blacks in Macon. Moore expressed to McLain, “the

¹⁹⁸ See *Daily News and Herald* (Savannah, GA), October 19, 1866; S.W. Partridge, *Christian Work on the News of the Church*. Vol.1 (London: Paternoster Row, 1867), 40; and ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 42, 348.

People seem to be mighty beset because you say you cannot take But the 200 the Spirit of Emigration is Still Rising.”¹⁹⁹ It was decided that the first 200 applicants or those most committed to leaving America would be granted first priority in receiving transportation. All others would have to wait for the subsequent voyage.²⁰⁰

News about the EAMG’s successful recruitment soon reached the Freedmen’s Bureau. Days following the registration of 288 passengers, Brent. Brig General Ely, Agent of the F.M.B. of Columbia, South Carolina, approached Moore with an enticing proposition.²⁰¹ Making reference to the Southern Homestead Act, Ely made claims “that there was a Large portion of government Land to be disposed of in Florida and other places and that he Thought We would do well to change our notion.”²⁰² The *Loyal Georgian* of Augusta, Georgia supported Ely’s claim by reporting:

We are happy to say that there is land in the South which will be given away . . . to all loyal settlers, whether white or black. Our readers may not all know that the Government owns million acres of land in the unsettled portions of the country. Some of the land lies in the Southern States; in Arkansas, there are nine million acres; in Alabama, six millions; in Florida, nineteen millions; in Louisiana, six million; in Mississippi, four Millions.²⁰³

Hoping to discourage blacks from emigrating out of the country, the newspaper warned:

According to a recent law of Congress, no more public lands in the South will be sold until next January; but they will be given away to loyal men who will go and

¹⁹⁹ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, September 14, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 226.

²⁰⁰ W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, September 12, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 217.

²⁰¹ “Freedmen’s Bureau Online,” <http://freedmensbureau.com/southcarolina/scoperations1.htm> (accessed June 17, 2011).

²⁰² Wyatt Moore to Rev McLain, September 14, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 226; and Ibid., September 19, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 255.

²⁰³ *Loyal Georgian*, October 13, 1866.

settle on them. . . We hope that the freedmen will have their share. But let nothing be done rashly. Those who are well supplied with work, and fairly paid, should not wander off without a very definite plan, and prospect of success.²⁰⁴

Acutely aware of the motives of the Freedmen's Bureau to keep blacks in the U.S. and having the foresight to know that the Government would fail in granting freedmen land, Moore fired back at Ely with the following statement:

I told him There was nearly 4 million of our race in the united states and a Great many of us without land and that we had to seek an asylum some Where . . . some of them can go to these Government lands as for us here in macon many of us has made up our minds to go to Liberia . . . I [know] We must act Like men We have made our arrangements to go to Liberia We must go or Loose our Life in the attempt the Lord being our helper . . . believe that it is a good thing.²⁰⁵

While Moore was hastily recruiting and mobilizing emigrants, privately he was troubled by \$50 of personal debts he wished to pay prior to his departure. With four weeks remaining until embarkation, Moore asked Rev. Robert to assist in approaching the ACS for a loan, which he promised to pay once he had settled in Liberia. Robert approached the ACS about the matter, but insisted that the society simply “give him this as a payment for services.”²⁰⁶ After three weeks of requesting the loan and not receiving a reply regarding the matter, Moore took the initiative to write to McLain. Without mentioning his efforts of recruiting nearly 300 passengers for the upcoming departure, Moore implored the ACS for the loan. By now, it was well understood by the ACS that Moore was the main impetus behind the emigration movement in Macon and that his followers would not leave the country if its leader failed to accompany them. Recognizing this, Moore used his influence as leverage for a loan by stating to the Society, “I do

²⁰⁴ Ibid.. To learn more about the *Loyal Georgian*, see Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Wiley and Co., 1891), 219.

²⁰⁵ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, September 19, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 255.

²⁰⁶ Rev. W. H. Robert to rev. McLain, September 5, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 183.

not want to be left behind as I commence it I have spent the Rest of my time in it and feel Willing to loose my life in it in order to carry it out . . . if I land safe on the shore of africa I Will try to pay it back.”²⁰⁷ One week later, Moore received the funds from the ACS to pay off his debts and began making the necessary provisions to mobilize Maconites for the historic voyage to Africa.

Opposition to Black Emigrants' Departure

With two weeks remaining till embarkation, a crisis occurred among the black Spartans bound for Liberia. Richard Shaw suddenly fell ill to fever. Making matters worse, he was grieving from the recent death of one daughter and waiting faithfully for a second daughter to recover from illness. With the Shaw family postponing departure in November, the Sparta group was now reduced to merely twenty-five applicants. As a result of the unanticipated setback, Dr. Pendleton questioned whether the remaining group would emigrate without its leader, Shaw.²⁰⁸

Also during the week of Shaw's illness, Rev. Robert of Macon suddenly fell ill too. Arrangements were made by the ACS to have the Georgia emigrants board trains from their city and to arrive at Charleston, South Carolina as one group. To ensure that the emigrants arrived in

²⁰⁷ Wyatt Moore to Rev. McLain, September 27, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 98, Letter 302.

²⁰⁸ Dr. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, October 15, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 93.

Charleston safely, Rev. Robert and Dr. Pendleton encouraged the ACS to have the Freedmen's Bureau offer transportation and protection from black and white opponents in Georgia. Hoping to demonstrate that the dream of returning to Africa was achievable for this new generation of freedmen, Rev. Roberts made one last proposal to the ACS to take the entire group of 288 applicants. Once again, his request was denied. As the days of departure brought about excitement amongst African Americans, last minute inquiries came into the office of the ACS, including that of Ben Thornton and a host of twenty-five blacks from LaGrange, Georgia.²⁰⁹ With the Society claiming that its number of serious applicants could reach as high as 1,065 persons by November 1866, the LaGrange emigration company was denied transportation as well.²¹⁰

On October 29, just two days prior to boarding a train to join the Liberia-bound Maconites, Dr. Pendleton drafted a painful letter informing the ACS that the "Sparta company has caved in." Angered and disappointed, Pendleton lamented, "I cannot now rely on a single man. It is what I feared since Dick Shaw backed out." Pendleton explained the events that led to the group suddenly altering their plans of resettlement, but their decision to back out went beyond Shaw's illness. Pendleton wrote, "three families, 18 in number, had packed up and made their division of crops etc., & came to town ready to start today for Macon." And with "nearly all the negroes as well as the whites in the community being opposed to it, they could not

²⁰⁹ Rev. Roberts to Rev. McLain, October 15, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 100. Robert Logan wrote on behalf of Ben Thorton and other blacks from LaGrange, Georgia hoping to receive passage to Liberia. Logan first proposes to the ACS if the society could take from 50 to 100 passengers, and reduces the number to 25 hopeful passengers two weeks prior to the November 1866 departure. See Robert Logan to Rev. McLain, September 29, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 312; and *Ibid.*, October 11, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, 112.

²¹⁰ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 42, 348.

resist.” Pendleton carried on to say, “Reports were circulated that I got \$2000 for every ship load I sent and that I trade ship in mid ocean . . . and take them to Cuba and sell them.”²¹¹

Although hurt by the efforts of blacks and whites to deter the group from emigrating to Liberia, Pendleton did not give up on the African emigration scheme. Examining the motives of black and white conspirators, he expressed to the ACS, “The planters are afraid of a scarcity of labor and the negroes (poor fools) since the radical success hope to get land and suffrage in this country.”²¹² With the Fourteenth Amendment scheduled to be voted on and with blacks believing full citizenship, land, and suffrage were in arms reach, Pendleton worried about future anti-Liberia tactics deterring blacks from leaving the United States.²¹³

Hoping to see at least one group of blacks successfully sail to Africa, Pendleton forewarned the Society about a statewide Georgia Equal Rights and Education Association (GERA) convention scheduled to meet in Macon on October 29, 1866 (two days prior to the EAMG’s scheduled departure to Liberia). Recalling the intimidation by blacks and whites in Sparta, Pendleton feared the GERA would conspire to discourage the Macon company from leaving for Africa. Pendleton portended, “I fear out of all the applicants you will fail to get a ship load.”²¹⁴ It is uncertain if the convention’s date was a ploy to deter Macon blacks from emigrating or not. Nevertheless, it had little to no impact on EAMG members.

²¹¹ Dr. E. M. Pendleton to William Coppinger, October 29, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 192. The rumors of freedmen being sold into slavery originated from a series of newspapers that reported alleged stories of the ACS selling blacks as slavery in Cuba. See *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 13, 1866; *Savannah Daily Herald*, February 17 and 20, 1866; and *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, March 12, 1866.

²¹² *Ibid.*, and E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, October 26, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 184.

²¹³ *Christian Recorder*, August 4, 1866.

²¹⁴ E. M. Pendleton to Rev. McLain, October 26, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 184; and Proceedings of the Convention of the Equal Rights and Educational Association of Georgia, Assembled at Macon, October 29th, 1866.

On October 31, 1866, Wyatt Moore and his company of nearly 200 applicants walked in procession from the Second Baptist Church to the home of Jefferson Long, the soon-to-be first African-American Congressman of Georgia. There, they prayed, received the blessings of the community and were presented with the Liberian colors of red, white, and blue.²¹⁵ During this celebratory moment, twenty-nine emigrants convened and agreed to form a Baptist church in Liberia with Rev. Jackson Robinson ordained as their pastor.²¹⁶ The crowd then made its way to the railroad depot where families said their goodbyes. Rev. Robert, due to his sudden illness in October, instructed Lieutenant J. J. Smith to accompany the group to Charleston, South Carolina.²¹⁷ One by one, Smith called the names of those registered for departure, and as quickly as the train arrived, blacks hurried onto cars. Not present amongst the passengers was the EAMG's president, Moses Pollock.²¹⁸ He remained behind and later joined Bishop Henry McNeal Turner in organizing blacks support for the Republican Party in 1867 and 1868.

Describing the Maconites' departure, Rev. Robert wrote to Rev. McLain, "The Emigrants 184 left in quite a fine hurry about an hour since. Only one or two from Sparta- Others from that [party] may join them in Gordon tonight and then others in Augusta. . . They were somewhat crowded, but there was such a great crowd around the cars I could not tell how they fixed."²¹⁹ Feeling confident about the group's departure, Robert bid them adieu and

²¹⁵ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain, November 2, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 224.

²¹⁶ Rev. W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 211.

²¹⁷ Rev. W. H. Robert to Rev. Coppinger, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 214.

²¹⁸ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain, November 3, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 226.

²¹⁹ W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 211.

expressed to McLain, “I trust that God’s blessing will attend them, and make them an instrument of great blessing to Africa.”²²⁰

Hoping to deter blacks from leaving Macon, Freedmen’s Bureau agents and officers worked to place hurdles in their way. At the request of Gen. O. O. Howard, a month’s worth of rations was to be transported to Charleston, South Carolina for the Georgia emigrants. Gen. Tilson, who was unabashedly against emigration, wittingly ignored the order. Refusing to allow Tilson’s scheme to prevent the Georgians from having a sufficient supply of food and other provisions aboard the *Golconda*, William Coppinger of the ACS ordered the requests be made instantly.²²¹ After he received a complaint from Gen. O. O. Howard, Gen. Tilson fired back at Coppinger with the following words:

Instructions were forwarded to Capt. Hill, Macon, GA to draw the rations It was therefore impossible to comply with your telegraphic request to order the issue of rations at Charleston. I am unconscious of having failed to obey the orders of General Howard in letter or spirit, and suggest that the next time you presume to [criticize] the acts of an officer, in no way responsible to you, it might be well to inform yourself of the facts, and to make use of the respectful language.²²²

Whether negligent or not, Gen. Tilson could not believe the audacity of Coppinger in accusing him of intentionally denying the emigrants rations and the audacity in reporting a high ranking military official, such as himself, to the executive of the Freedmen’s Bureau.

Nevertheless, the Georgia emigrants soon received their rations, but the Bureau was now well

²²⁰ Rev. W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 211; *Ibid.*, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 214; and *Ibid.*, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 214.

²²¹ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 29, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 200; Rev. W. H. Robert to Rev. McLain, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 211; and Rev. W. H. Robert to W. Coppinger, October 31, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 214.

²²² Gen. Davis Tilson to W. Coppinger, November 5, 1866. ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 238.

aware that their interactions with future emigrants were being watched closely by members of the ACS.

After experiencing some travel difficulties, the group arrived in Charleston and was soon joined by other blacks from South Carolina and Tennessee (see Table 3.3). Like the Georgians, emigrants from neighboring states experienced opposition as well. Although Gen. O. O. Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau was gracious and sympathetic to grant emigrants defrayed transportation, bureau agents and railroad officers stopped at nothing to make blacks' departure difficult by limiting luggage or comfort as they traveled by train to Charleston for embarkation. Coppinger wrote how one railroad official, whom he described as "a more unaccommodating and offensive official I never met," unabashedly yelled, "Your Government took our niggers and want the Rail Roads to carry them for almost nothing. The niggers must come by the freight trains."²²³ Despite challenges Coppinger was successful in getting 621 passengers safely to Charleston for embarkation.²²⁴

Upon the emigrants' arrival, they learned the *Golconda* was delayed. It remained so for three weeks. Although Coppinger feared he would lose passengers as they awaited the arrival of the ship, there was little protest amongst them. Besides, Georgians anticipated hearing the results of the legislature's decision to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, which unfortunately was rejected almost unanimously by the House and Senate on November 9.²²⁵ Consequently, Georgia was disqualified from being readmitted into the Union. The legislature's position against granting African Americans full citizenship reaffirmed for black emigrants that their

²²³ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, Oct 30, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 207.

²²⁴ ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 11 and 38.

²²⁵ Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 138.

future was in Liberia. On November 21, 1866, 194 Maconites embarked upon the *Golconda* and sailed to West Africa, thereby making this historic voyage the first departure of freed families from the southern Black Belt to return to their ancestral homeland since the commencement of the American Civil War. Joining the Georgians were 167 passengers from Newberry, South Carolina; 144 from Knoxville, Tennessee; and 52 from Charleston, South Carolina. Despite the educational limitation of blacks prior to and after emancipation, ninety-nine passengers were literate. Seventy-seven could read; twenty could read and write; and two possessed a college education. The group was also highly skilled. Their occupation ranged from farming to professional dentistry. Among the emigrants were seventy-eight farmers; thirty-three laborers; fifteen carpenters; three coopers; three tailors; two millers; two cooks; one iron-moulder; one silversmith; one gin maker; one waterman; one gunsmith; one engineer; one goldsmith; one goldsmith; one dentist; and one goldsmith.²²⁶

On January 15, 1867, Wyatt Moore penned a letter to his friend Lewis Sherman of Macon about his experience in Liberia. Although near his death, Moore described a world governed by blacks and free of whites. Two months following his departure, he wrote:

Greenville, Liberia

Mr. Louis Sherman—Dear Sir:

I suppose you would like to hear from us. I therefore take my seat to-day to write you a few lines to inform you of the facts. You are apprized that we left Macon on the 31st October last, and remained in Charleston until the 21st November, when our flag was hoisted for the Republic of Liberia. About sunset we crossed the bar and entered the broad waters of the Atlantic. You may imagine the scene was grand to those who never had seen the ocean. The Psalmist says: "They that go down to the sea in ships behold the wonderful works of God."

²²⁶ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 38.

God's infinite goodness has brought us safe to the land of our fathers. On the 27th December, we came in sight of Cape Mount. It is beautiful to behold. Of all countries in the world I have never seen one to exceed Africa. We remained at that place a week, and set sail for Monrovia, where we arrived after a pleasant day's sail. We spent a week there. Brother J. Robinson preached in Monrovia on the Sabbath we were there Myself and Brother Flagg accompanied him, and we had a nice time of it. Monrovia is a fine place, beautifully situated on the Cape, with Mesurado Bay and the ocean in full view. We arrived at Greenville on the 15th January.

Greenville, Sinou County, is the finest place on the coast that I have seen. We are all as well pleased as a people could be. I am filled with admiration and gladness. January is our hottest month here. It is like May in America. I have long heard talk of Liberia, but if you will believe me, the half has not been told. I have one thing to regret, and that is I have so few days to live, as all the best of my days are gone. Talk about freedom; when a man comes to this country he is free sure enough It is a land blest of the Almighty. The white man has no part or lot here. It is the black man's home. We have our negro President, Vice President, and Congressmen. Everything belongs to negroes, that is one thing that excites my curiosity—to behold a negro nationality.

We have in the country all kinds of fruits; the lemon, orange, pine-apple, peach, sour-sop, and the mango-plums. We have often read in the Bible of the palm tree. I have the pleasure to see plenty of them every day. From this tree is gotten butter, oil, and cabbage. It is a beautiful tree to behold. We have coffee; it grows in the woods in abundance. There is everything like fruit here and vegetables; hogs, sheep, goats, and cows—with turkeys, chickens, &c. It is too tedious to mention everything.

Yours, respectfully,

Wyatt Moore ²²⁷

For Moore and other emigrants, Liberia was their promised land; an independent African nation governed by former slaves and their descendants taken from their ancestral land. As returnees to Africa, they hoped to live in world free of racial violence and discrimination, where their civil liberties were protected, and where landownership was not denied to freed persons.

²²⁷ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 171-174.

Inspired by Moore's letter, Sherman registered a second emigration company of Maconites for the May 1867 voyage to Liberia. The dream of returning to Africa was real and possible. With the social, political, and economic condition of African Americans remaining bleak, "Liberia fever" continued to spread across Georgia. African emigration became a viable option for those blacks who desired immediate civic and personal freedom. These emigrants exercised their freedom of movement and set sail to Liberia, where they could live free lives.

Conclusion

Less than one year following the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, African Americans across the nation began to examine their prospects in the United States. The aftermath of the Civil War brought about poverty, fatality, and racial hostility for freedmen as they pushed to acquire land, American citizenship, and suffrage. In Georgia, blacks exercised their freedom of movement by migrating to cities where they hoped to improve their lives through education and economic opportunities. In places where these opportunities did not exist

or were denied, blacks came together in concerted efforts (sometimes through the assistance of whites) to create a world of their own, one in which they controlled their own institutions, self-advancement, and destiny within small townships and small black communities. But as blacks pushed for autonomy and to exercise the type of freedom they envisioned for themselves, some whites, both Union and former Confederate supporters, had other plans for freedmen. Union supporters (who presented themselves as more liberal and compassionate than their Confederate counterparts) wished to have the type of paternal relationships where they determined what was best for blacks. Former Confederates wanted freedmen to remain in a servile position with limited rights and little room for social advancement. Regardless of how each group presented themselves, freedmen understood the need of the country to exploit blacks as cheap labor. And as Radical Republicanism was on the rise in the South, blacks were learning, too, the need of the party to exploit the freedmen as voters. On the one hand, many blacks understood the motives of “Radical” and sympathetic whites and worked in concert with them to negotiate ways in which blacks could secure education and full citizenship for their race. This decision would come with a price and blacks unfortunately received the shorter end of their negotiation. On the other hand, a rising number of self-determining blacks were less accommodating. They were too impatient to wait on whites to accept blacks as equals and for legislation to pass, which would secure their rights as citizens. Instead, they looked to the black independent nation, Liberia, as a means to live as full citizens. Blacks who embraced African emigration wanted to create and exercise for themselves their own definition of freedom, which was comprised of living within a self-governing black nation void of whites.

TABLE 3.1: VESSELS TO LIBERIA, 1865.

Vessels	Place of Departure	Date of Departure	Number of Emigrants
<i>Barque Greyhound</i>	New York	January 16, 1865	1
<i>Brig M.A. Benson</i>	Boston	February 9, 1865	1
<i>Brig Cora</i>	Barbados	April 16, 1865	346
<i>Barque Thomas Pope</i>	New York	June 3, 1865	7
<i>Schooner H.P. Russell</i>	Baltimore	November 4, 1865	172
Total			527

Source: ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 42, 35.

TABLE 3.2: NUMBER OF PERSONS REGISTERED BY OCTOBER 1866 FOR THE NOVEMBER 1866 DEPARTURE TO LIBERIA ON THE *GOLCONDA*.

CITY AND STATE OF LIBERIA BOUND EMIGRANTS	NUMBER OF REGISTERED APPLICANTS
Macon, Georgia	288
Columbia, South Carolina	205
Newberry, South Carolina	200
Knoxville, Tennessee	200
Sparta, Georgia	46
Berty County, North Carolina	25
Abingdon, Virginia	16
Albemarle County, Virginia	12
Chillicothe, Ohio	6
Total	998

Source: S.W. Partridge, *Christian Work on the News of the Church*. Volume 1 (London: Paternoster Row, 1867), 40. See also the *Savannah Daily News and Herald*, October 19, 1866. The ACS made claims that their numbers reached as high as 1,065 by November 1866. See ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 42, 348.

TABLE 3.3: NUMBER OF PASSENGERS ABOARD THE *GOLCONDA*, NOVEMBER 1866.

City and State of Emigrants	Number	Percentage
Macon, Georgia	194	32%
Newberry, South Carolina	167	28%
Knoxville, Tennessee	144	26%
Columbia, South Carolina	52	7%
Charleston, South Carolina	41	7%
Total	621	100%

Source: ACS, "List of Emigrants for Liberia," *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 11 and 38.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION MOVEMENT IN MACON AND COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, 1866-1867.

Africa is the place for all of the colored race.
This is not the African home.
We must all go before we can be a people.

Frank Simpson

While efforts in Macon began to wane, the African-American emigration movement took fire in Columbus. In 1866, the rise of black support for Republicanism severely undermined grassroots emigration efforts in Macon and Savannah. As well, the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and black male participation in the Georgia constitutional convention convinced many African Americans that the United States was changing for the better. In Columbus, increased racial tension due to passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the existence of a nationalist spirit within the black community, strong pro-emigration leadership, lack of faith in Republicans and their policies, and the pull of personal testimonies from individuals who emigrated from Columbus combined to propel the city to the forefront of emigration in Georgia. Within a year, the city of Columbus organized two emigration groups which left on May 1867 and then in November 1867, totaling over 240 people.

As a testament to the belief in the American democratic process and its ideals, the U.S. Congress adopted its first Civil Rights Act in April 1866. The Act granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and guaranteed equal rights under the law. Passage of this landmark legislation made the possibility of full citizenship and equality appear as a reality for black Americans. Subsequently, blacks attempted to exercise those freedoms articulated in the Civil Rights Act. The result led to a series of race riots throughout the South.

On May 1, 1866, what began as a minor brawl between black Union soldiers and Irish policemen in Memphis, Tennessee escalated into a three-day race riot. Forty-six persons were killed and over seventy were wounded. Reported also were five cases of rape and one hundred robberies as well as the arson of ninety-one homes, four churches, and a dozen schools. With the exception of one or two whites, all the victims were black.²²⁸

Motives and Initial Interest in Emigration, 1866

The politically and racially motivated Memphis riot caused blacks from Georgia to seriously consider Africa as a place of refuge.²²⁹ Recognizing the growing discontentment amongst blacks in Columbus, Oliver Sanders, a black agent of the ACS, wrote a letter to William Coppinger about his plan to encourage families in Columbus to look towards Africa as a place of

²²⁸ Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 96.

²²⁹ Michelle Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African-Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 24-26.

solace.²³⁰ Hoping to reignite interest in African emigration beyond Columbus, Sanders planned to place an ad of the *Golconda's* upcoming departure from Charleston, South Carolina in the *Loyal Georgian*.²³¹ While “most of the People of this section are afraid of the [Liberia] fever,” stated Sanders, he hoped the ad would strengthen the courage of blacks to emigrate and serve as a warning to whites; if the conditions of freedmen are not quickly improved, blacks would leave Georgia or even the United States.²³²

Like blacks in Macon, black Columbusites pondered their next move, whether to remain in America or leave the United States in pursuit of self-determination. For Frank Simpson, a 24 year-old farmer, the exigency to leave the U.S. was crystallized when yet another bloody race riot ignited between blacks and whites in New Orleans, Louisiana on July 30, 1866.²³³ As a result, Simpson took the lead in organizing an emigration company in Columbus.

Inspired by efforts of the Emigration Association of Macon Georgia (EAMG) to successfully mobilize nearly 200 blacks for the upcoming November voyage to Liberia, Simpson wrote to Coppinger on October 22, 1866 stating that Liberia fever was present in the city and that the spirit of emigration was rising. Capitalizing on black displeasure with the social, political, and economic conditions of the United States, Simpson informed Coppinger, “There is a large

²³⁰ Oliver Sanders was a 33 year-old mulatto residing temporarily in Columbus, Georgia. Correspondence between Sanders and the ACS ceased after May 1866. An Oliver Sanders is found residing in Macon, Georgia as a teacher in the 1870 Bibb County Census.

²³¹ Oliver Sanders to William Coppinger, May 9, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 111.

²³² Oliver Sanders to William Coppinger, May 11, 1866, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 113.

²³³ To learn more about the riot, see Gilles Vandal, *The New Orleans Riot of 1866: Anatomy of a Tragedy* (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1983).

number of people here who are anxious to emigrate to Liberia.”²³⁴ The actions of Simpson led to 81 persons being registered for the November 1866 voyage:

Frank Simpson, wife, and 1 child;
Mary Bell;
Nora Bell;
Stewart Bell;
Bob Robert, wife, and 3 children;
Frank Simpson and one daughter;
Joe Riley, wife, and 8 children;
Jim Vinson, wife, and 4 children;
Jim Monroe, wife and children;
Bill King, wife, and 5 children;
William McManis, wife, and 6 children;
Warrick Curvington, wife, and child;
Gerry Cob, wife, and 6 children;
George Word, wife, and 5 children;
Albert Howard;
Ed Howard;
Isaac White;
Gary Carns, wife, and child;
Sam Carns, wife, and 3 children;
Riley Banks.²³⁵

The emigration group of Columbus was unprepared to sail out with members of the EAMG in November 1866. With the majority of the applicants being farmers, Simpson expressed to Coppinger, “we cannot get [off] before Christmas on account of our business on hand But we will be ready to go Aboard of the first vessel.”²³⁶

On November 21, 1866, the *Golconda* sailed to Africa carrying 621 passengers.²³⁷ News of the departure reached thousands across the United States. According to the *African*

²³⁴ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, October 22, 1866, ACS Papers. Reel 99, Letter 153.

²³⁵ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, October 22, 1866, ACS Papers. Reel 99, Letter 153.

²³⁶ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, October 22, 1866, ACS Papers. Reel 99, Letter 153.

²³⁷ On November 21, 1866, 621 blacks leave out from Charleston. See ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43,

Repository, this voyage made up “the largest number sent in any one year since 1854.”²³⁸ For the ACS and its black supporters, the black emigration movement was officially reignited in the South. Interest in Liberia resettlement spread across the Black Belt like a heat wave. Over a course of three months, from December 1866 to February 1867, the ACS received nearly 800 applications from persons who desired to emigrate from the United States to Liberia. The Society noted that, “applications have been received from 78 persons at Winnsboro, S.C.; 25 at LaGrange, Georgia; 78 at Columbus, Georgia; 178 at Newberry, S.C.; and 291 at Mullins Depot, S.C; in all 642, for passage to Liberia;” along with a minimum of “150 from Macon, Georgia, Florence, SC, Apalachicola, FL, and Newborn, NC” determined to sail in May 1867.²³⁹

Regardless of the position held by Georgians on African emigration, news of the first state voyage to return blacks to Africa since 1860 was inspiring. However, with Republican political success, the African emigration movement was at risk of becoming obsolete. For the next two years, the ACS would remain in a tug-of-war with the Republican Party to recruit blacks, receive funding, and justify its relevance now that slavery was abolished.

Republican Influence in Georgia, 1867

With Republicans gaining control of the U.S. House and Senate in 1867, the promises offered to freedmen took center stage. Talk of Congress granting suffrage, citizenship rights, and land was enticing to some blacks or a distraction to those seeking autonomy in Africa. The

²³⁸ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 39.

²³⁹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 39.

proposed Reconstruction plan caused some to vacillate on the subject of emigration and staking their future in America. With full citizenship, universal suffrage, and full inclusion within the political process seeming a realistic possibility, many black proponents for emigration decided to at least provide Republicans a chance to prove themselves before making the decision to leave the United States altogether.

By spring 1867, Republican influence on blacks in Georgia had increased significantly. On March 2, Congress passed the First Reconstruction Act, thereby placing Georgia under the military control of General J. Pope. Federal troops were assigned to seven military posts in Georgia (Dahlonega, Macon, Savannah, Augusta, Rome, Athens, and Columbus) to maintain the peace and enforce the law.²⁴⁰

Support of the ACS and the Republican Party varied. Frank Simpson wrote that his number of initial recruits dwindled from eighty-one to eighteen members.²⁴¹ Those numbers reduced further by the day of his departure to Africa. Obviously disappointed, Simpson offered that “The greater part of them have given up the idea of going to Liberia they think congress will yet pass a Bill that will enable them to come [equal] with the white people But I think they are badley mistaken they never can get their rights in this country.”²⁴²

On March 23, the Second Reconstruction Act was adopted by Congress requiring the military to register eligible male voters and ordered southern states to hold conventions to draft and enact new state constitutions.²⁴³ After General Pope’s arrival in Georgia on April 1, he ordered an October election to determine whether to hold a constitutional convention in

²⁴⁰ Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 142.

²⁴¹ ACS, Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, March 16, 1867 (Letter 264 Reel 100, vol. 186).

²⁴² ACS, Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, March 16, 1867 (Letter 264 Reel 100, vol. 186).

²⁴³ Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia* 142.

December.²⁴⁴ For the first time, black males were allowed to vote for and become delegates to the state convention. At the same time, a group led by Lewis Sherman (a painter and friend of Wyatt Moore, leader of the first contingent of freedmen to emigrate to Africa from Macon) was scheduled to leave for Liberia in May 1867. To his dismay, the group's numbers fell to forty five.²⁴⁵ In fact, some of the earliest and most visible supporters of the emigration movement from Macon and Savannah, Jefferson Long, Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, Moses Pollock, Charles L. Delamotta, and Rev. James E. Simms, quickly fell under the influence of Republicans and forged strong political alliances with white members of the Republican Party.²⁴⁶ These supporters did not denounce emigration or discourage blacks from returning to Africa. Rather, they saw the upcoming elections as an opportune moment to pressure Congress to adopt legislation allowing African-Americans full citizenship rights and universal male suffrage. As Turner and others recognized, blacks had to seize the moment by demonstrating to the U.S. the power of their voting numbers, to organize and elect blacks into office.

In May 1867, Rev. Henry McNeal Turner believed that black support of the Republican Party could assist in creating a state constitution free of Black Codes and secure the Fourteenth Amendment, which would readmit Georgia back into the Union. To that end, Turner formed the Republican Party of Georgia with black adult males comprising 90 percent of the Party voters in 1867. Turner and other black leaders, primarily from the Macon and Savannah regions, campaigned to galvanize black support for the Party. Thinking an alliance with white

²⁴⁴ Edmond J. Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia: Splendid Failure* (Athens: University of Georgia: 1992) 30.

²⁴⁵ ACS, *African Repository*, Volume 43 (1867), 33, 210, and 211.

²⁴⁶ See Drago, "Appendix: Black Legislators and Convention Delegates, 1867-1872" and Appendix B: Local Black officeholders elected or Appointed, 1868-1871," in *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia*," 165-181.

Republicans would increase the number of blacks elected into office, they publicly announced they were “ready to unite with their white brethren.”²⁴⁷

With Republicans successfully securing black support, the ACS’s anxiety grew, not only for the sake of the Society but also for the future of African-Americans. As early as March 1867, Coppinger began reaching out to blacks in Sparta and LaGrange who expressed prior interest in returning to Africa.²⁴⁸ He hoped to recruit passengers and began to mobilize support for the upcoming May 1867 departure. Coppinger addressed Dr. E.M. Pendleton about assisting him with recruitment in Sparta. In response to the request, the doctor wrote,

I rendered myself unpopular last year with both white and blacks in my support for your Society. The whites said I was injuring the labor interests of the country. The blacks said I was paid by Yankees to get all the negroes out of the country. Now they think that they will have all their own way as [if] Congress has put them in power over the whites.²⁴⁹

Pendleton articulated his contempt for Congress and his position that the condition of blacks would not improve even with the passage of the Reconstruction bills. He warned Coppinger, “all will suffer alike. Gloom and despair now hangs over the land and God only knows what will be the result I suppose however this is all some of them want in order that they might have a pretext to finish up the work in their own way.”²⁵⁰

The sentiment of Robert Logan from LaGrange about the actions of Republicans towards blacks within his city was similar to those of Pendleton. Both men were concerned about the political motives of Republicans and the socio-economic conditions of blacks which had not

²⁴⁷ Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia*, 30 and 35.

²⁴⁸ Robert Logan to William Coppinger, March 18, 1867 Letter 268 and Dr. E.M. Pendleton to William Coppinger, March 18, 1867. ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 271.

²⁴⁹ Dr. E.M. Pendleton to William Coppinger, March 18, 1867, ACS Papers, Letter 271.

²⁵⁰ Dr. E.M. Pendleton to William Coppinger, March 18, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 99, Letter 271.

improved since gaining freedom. Logan, in a letter dated April 9, 1867, brought his concerns to Coppinger's attention, stating:

The negro is now more off balance as he was when he first [became] free. Political demagogues are already at work and there are those among them who are seeking office. The plans of God will be developed after a time and in their development he will see much wicked instrumentally. Such has been the case in the history of the world. Especially it been the care in the regard to the African race in being brought here. . . . But God reigns and he will reign.²⁵¹

Like Logan and Pendleton, Coppinger saw the writing on the wall. Although he favored Congress's support of the Fourteenth Amendment, he feared blacks might find less incentive to resettle in Africa if they believed these legislative acts would bring land, educational opportunities, black political representation, and an end to racial hostility for Africans Americans in the United States. Realizing the attitudes of whites toward blacks would not change overnight, Coppinger also feared Congress would discontinue funding the ACS by making claims that blacks no longer needed to look to Africa once the Fourteenth Amendment was passed. Such drastic action would end the transporting of African Americans to Liberia altogether.

As black leaders rallied across the state in support of the Republican Party, blacks from Macon and Columbus prepared for departure to Liberia.²⁵² As some blacks pushed for political rights during Reconstruction, others decided to leave and enjoy full citizenship in Africa. Many Macon supporters of emigration fell under the influence of black Republican leaders and postponed leaving with Lewis Sherman's company scheduled to depart within a couple of weeks.

²⁵¹ Robert Logan to William Coppinger. April 9, 1867, Reel 100.

²⁵² Richard L. Hume and Jerry B. Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags: The Constitutional Conventions of Radical Reconstruction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008) 117; and Steven Hahn, *A Nation under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Press, 2003), 182.

Although Rev. Turner had publically articulated his support for blacks to return to Africa in 1866 and continued to do so sporadically in 1867, his zealous pursuit to galvanize blacks on behalf of the Republican Party was detrimental to Macon's emigration association, the EAMG, and the organization efforts of Lewis Sherman.

Unlike in Macon, the influence of Radical Republicanism over blacks in Columbus fizzled after the first half of 1867. Throughout the period, Frank Simpson remained unwavering in his decision to return to Africa. Emboldened with feelings of Black Nationalism, Simpson informed black Columbusites and members of the ACS that, "Africa is the place for All of the coloured race to go. We never will be of any importance in this country. this is Not the Africans home. I believe that Every race must go home and we must All go to Liberia before We Can be a people. I hope that the god of Justice may Bless your Society in Sending this last of our race to Liberia."²⁵³ Just weeks before his scheduled departure in May 1867, he sent a warning to the ACS about racial tensions teetering on explosion: "many of the colard friends Seme too think that this is the country for them but I think it will make them see trubble before thay gey through with it. . . . I do not Belive that this is the country for the Black man. I Don't care what the Extent of the law may be of the white man because this is his country."²⁵⁴ Simpson's political thinking resonated amongst blacks in Columbus, and for the next twelve months, his departure encouraged over 500 of his friends and family to follow him. Their numbers made up the largest group of blacks from a single city in the U.S. to emigrate to Liberia during Reconstruction. Although their numbers were small compared to the four million blacks residing in the U.S., Georgia became the leader and center of the "Back-to-Africa" movement of this period

²⁵³ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, January 20, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 81.

²⁵⁴ Frank Simpson to William Coppinger, April 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 13.

Departure May 1867 and a Difficult Challenge

On May 13, 1867, blacks from Columbus and Macon boarded trains bound to Charleston, South Carolina. Family and friends gathered in Macon to say their farewells. Blacks, advocates of African emigration as well as supporters of staying and obtaining full citizenship in the U.S., wished the best for each other. Present was Jefferson Long, proponent member of the ACS, tailor, leader of the Union League, and future Congressman of Georgia, who penned a letter to his Liberian bound friends, “ I hope that I will hear from you all when you arrive to your home. I hope that the lord may be with you all.”²⁵⁵

On May 15, 1867, fifty-three Georgians (Macon: 45 and Columbus: 8) arrived in Charleston, South Carolina for embarkation. Their numbers were a significant decline from the 206 who left Georgia in November 1866. Coppinger wrote to William McLain of the ACS about the lack of passengers anticipated to emigrate. He lamented, “the falling off have been great and I fear we shall not get off 300 this ship.”²⁵⁶ Hoping to prevent their departure, local bureau agents attempted to limit how much luggage the group could carry to Africa. Although General O. O. Howard of the Freedmen’s Bureau made arrangements to defray the transportation fees of Georgians to Charleston, Coppinger learned of the disruption created by local bureau agents who enforced an 80 pound luggage limit on each passenger scheduled to leave the country. Without tools, farming equipment, sewing machines, and other personal possessions, passengers were sure to turn around. Lewis Sherman responded lividly, “Something must be done or they will

²⁵⁵ Jefferson Long to William Coppinger, May 19, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 236.

²⁵⁶ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain , May 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 200.

not go. . . . you see the condition we are in if we cannot carry our tools we are in a bad fix for making a living.”²⁵⁷

Expressing his displeasure with the actions of the agents, Coppinger wrote to Rev. McLain,

The Bureau officers are, almost without exception, violently opposed to our world. Many of them would not scruple to descend to any meanness to thwart our movements. They are all politicians and are counting the negro vote for the “grand Republican party.” The old citizens . . . want the blacks as the laboring . . . population. They both approach the colored people in the same set speech- “You have all your rights guaranteed to you here: why go to Africa!” And though four-fifths of them may be cheated this year as Gen. Scott told me they were last season of their wages, yet they prefer to remain the menials of the white man-as they always will be while they are in this new world.”²⁵⁸

Opposition to emigration was not limited to white politicians. Prior to the Georgians’ departure, a man identified as “one of the Cuthbert slaves,” affected the turnout of the Maconites’ numbers to Charleston by making false claims that Liberia was unsuitable for resettlement. Macon’s numbers were reduced by 50 percent. Coppinger lamented about the distractions created by the black emigration opponent, the influence of the “Military Bill (the First Reconstruction Act),” and the influence of the Republican Party, which he believed severely affected the smaller than anticipated number of arrivals. While waiting impatiently for the *Golconda* (two weeks behind schedule), Coppinger expressed the following words to Rev. McLain:

One of the Cuthbert slaves took the trouble to go to Macon, and by the most absurd, lying reports about Liberia [caused] some fifty persons to decline going. I judge this is the same fellow that did us harm a year ago. . . . The effects of the

²⁵⁷ Lewis Sherman to William Coppinger, May 8, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 178.

²⁵⁸ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain, May 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 200.

'Military Bill,' and the political contest now opening, have been the preventing cause.²⁵⁹

Upon the Georgians' arrival in Charleston, they were joined by other blacks from South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland. Collectively, their number made up 321 passengers, half of what the ACS anticipated.²⁶⁰ Like the Georgia emigrants, blacks from other states experienced similar distractions. Feeling defeated, Coppinger expressed to Rev. McClain, "A month later we would not get 150."²⁶¹

Despite difficult period of recruitment, the *Golconda* sailed from the shores of America on May 30, 1867 to Sinoe, Liberia.²⁶² Following the Georgians' departure, Maconites failed to organize an additional emigration company. However, Columbusites quickly made plans to organize a second emigration company. Farmers did not renew laboring contracts, families rid themselves of personal possessions, and the few black landowners capable of doing so made provisions to sell their properties.²⁶³ Heading the upcoming November 1867 departure was Chapman Abercrombie, Mary A. Bell, and Araminta C. Brooks

Emigration Mobilization Efforts from Columbus, November 1867

²⁵⁹ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain, May 17, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 23.

²⁶⁰ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 204-211.

²⁶¹ William Coppinger to Rev. McLain, May 17, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 231.

²⁶² ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 210-211.

²⁶³ To learn about the writings and organizational efforts of the black Republican Party in Macon during the summer of 1867, see Richard Abbott, "Black Ministers and the Organization of the Republican Party in the South in 1867: Letters from the Field"

http://www.rbhayes.org/hayes/content/files/Hayes_Historical_Journal/blackministersrepublican_party.html.

Downloaded: January 31, 2011.

Less than one week following the departure of Frank Simpson and his family, his sister Araminta Brooks, and his friends, Mary Bell and Chapman Abercrombie, took on the leadership role of recruiting a mass emigration movement in Columbus. Although a bridge builder, Abercrombie was not literate.²⁶⁴ The literacy level of Bell was equally limited.²⁶⁵ But like her brother Simpson, Mrs. Brooks was very capable of reading and writing and therefore was appointed as a correspondent for the group.²⁶⁶ She handled all communication with the ACS, registered all emigrants, and informed the community how best to prepare for the upcoming voyage. Because of her familial relationship to Simpson, she was, by default, recognized by the community as the natural leader of the movement and would have more influence recruiting passengers than anyone in the city.

On May 19, 1867, Brooks forwarded to Coppinger the names of 129 persons and said that she and the group's leaders could get as many as 300 to 400 by November. Liberia fever was so high in Columbus that the excitement spilled over into Pike County, Alabama, where she hoped to secure up to fifty additional names to join her party.²⁶⁷

Weekly, Brooks provided Coppinger with names of additional recruits. By July 1, she was expanding her movement to Atlanta. While in the city, during the same week as Republican Party's first state convention since the war, she attempted to recruit blacks with the support of John H. McGee, family friend residing in Atlanta.²⁶⁸ She reported to Coppinger "the colard people are geten more incline for Liberia Evy day."²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ Peter J. Murdza, *Immigrants to Liberia, 1865 to 1904: An Alphabetical Listing* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware by the Liberian Studies Association in America, Inc, 1975), 1.

²⁶⁵ Murdza, *Immigrants to Liberia*, 6.

²⁶⁶ Murdza, *Immigrants to Liberia*, 9.

²⁶⁷ A.B. Brooks to William Coppinger, May 19, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 100, Letter 224.

But after being in Atlanta for six continuous weeks, Brooks did not have much success with recruiting large numbers of blacks from the city. She returned to Columbus where the movement was alive and well. By October, 1867, the registered Columbusites had decided to settle along the St. Johns River, Grand Bassa. Hoping to maintain the energy and interest of blacks desiring to return to Africa, Brooks, Abercrombie, and Bell arranged for the Rev. Robert F. Hill, a former Virginia slave and Liberian minister, to speak at Temperance Hall.²⁷⁰ On October 7, Rev. Hill delivered a prodigious speech to the people of Columbus encouraging blacks to return to their “Fatherland.”²⁷¹ Brooks described the enthusiasm experienced by those present at the meeting, “I just [heard] Amost Elequent address from Mr. Hill of Liberia. We all [are] very much please with him. I wish you would Ask Mr. Hill what the fair from New York to Liberia as my party will go this fall.”²⁷² Brooks informed Coppinger that 200 persons were prepared to leave and if necessary, she could register up to 200 more by November. She assured Coppinger, “Tha will all go.”²⁷³

Meanwhile, Coppinger was in Georgia hoping to make one last attempt to recruit blacks from Macon and Savannah. He visited both cities, but left disappointed. He learned that many of his former black supporters, Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, Jefferson F. Long, Moses Pollock,

²⁶⁸ Baggett, James Alex. *The Scalawags: Southern Dissenters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 200), 209. See also A.C. Brooks to William Coppinger, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 1.

²⁶⁹ A.C. Brooks to William Coppinger, July 1, 1867, ACS Papers , Reel 101, Letter 1; Ibid, September 4, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 163.

²⁷⁰ To learn more about the life of Rev. Robert Hill, see ACS, African Repository , Vol. 44, 278-280.

²⁷¹ ACS, A.C. Brook to William Coppinger, October 9, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 48; Ibid, October 12, 1867, Reel 101, Letter 63; and William Coppinger to Rev McLain, October 11, 1867, Reel 101, Letter 58. Rev. Hill spoke before blacks in Macon. Present at the meeting and scheduled to speak following Hill was Rev. Henry McNeal Turner. Hill was critical of the Loyal League and denounces the organization.

²⁷² A.C. Brooks to William Coppinger. October 9, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 48.

²⁷³ A.C. Brooks to William Coppinger, October 9, 1867, Reel 101 Letter 48, reel 101.

Charles DelaMotta, Rev. James Simms and others, were not recruiting passengers for the upcoming departure to Liberia. While in Savannah attending a State Education Association meeting he informed Rev. McLain about

. . . . a fine company of colored young men from Savannah, engrossing the attention of the people of color of this City. The former was attended by perhaps 100 representatives from different parts of Georgia, some 20 of them white persons-mostly Northern men- and they holding all the offices and Chairmanship of all the Standing Committees, and directing and controlling the proceeding. Gen. Lewis, Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in the state, is President of the Association, and it seemed very plain to me that he and his white colleagues are using the organization and the negroes, for their own political advancement hereafter.²⁷⁴

He had an opportunity to speak with the black men attending the convention, and said there was "Scarcely any opposition to emigration to Liberia manifested itself among the blacks, while several stated their conviction that it was but a question of time as to the return of the race to its own home."²⁷⁵ But regardless of what the men expressed to Coppinger, blacks from Macon and Savannah were focusing their efforts, for the moment, on the upcoming state constitutional convention and future state elections scheduled for October 29 - November 2, 1867. With 95,214 whites and 93,457 blacks registered as voters, Georgia freedmen were certain that their turn out at the polls would bring victory for the Representatives.²⁷⁶

Coppinger left Savannah for Macon hoping to recruit passengers for the upcoming November 1867 departure. Writing from the National Hotel in Macon on October 11, 1867, Coppinger informed Rev. McLain, "Numbers" from the city "are talking about it" and "a few are ready to go," but "I regret to compel to say that the prospect of any considerable number of

²⁷⁴ William Coppinger to William McLain, October 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 2.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ To learn about white response to the delegate election see Donald L. Grant and Jonathan Grant. *The Way It Was in the South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 103.

emigrants from Macon is very poor” and “the hindering causes are legion.”²⁷⁷ Nevertheless, Coppinger diligently pushed forward to recruit passengers. He arranged to meet with remaining members of the EAMG and others making inquiry about leaving to Africa, but would not have much success.

Later that evening, Coppinger attended a “meeting of intending emigrants” but returned to his hotel disappointed after learning “that only eleven names were enrolled.” With less than four weeks remaining till departure and hoping to galvanize additional support, he arranged for a second meeting to be held at the “Colored Methodist Church” within a few days. Letters from emigrants had recently arrived to friends and family in Macon, “all speaking favorably of the country.”²⁷⁸ One of the letters address to Coppinger came from Lewis Sherman, who wrote:

Greenville, Liberia

Dear Sir:

I am pleased with the country and find everything just as represented by the Colonization Society. I believe Liberia to be the home—the only home for the black man. It is his own country. He is second to none here. I find more happiness among the Liberians than I ever did in the United States. Many thanks to the Society for kindness shown.

I remain your humble servant,

Lewis Sherman²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 58.

²⁷⁸ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 58.

²⁷⁹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 348.

Recognizing the powerful influence that correspondence from emigrants had in recruiting passengers, Coppinger planned for the letters to be read aloud with the hope of recruiting between forty to fifty passengers for the November 1867 departure.²⁸⁰

Despite Coppinger's tireless efforts to rally support for emigration in Macon, he was unsuccessful in recruiting passengers from the city. The challenge was not that Maconites had given up black emigration entirely. The reasons for blacks failing to leave for Liberia varied. The most charismatic leaders of the EAMG and staunchest separatists had already left to resettle in Africa; the EAMG either failed to appoint a successor after the last departure or the appointed leader failed to take on his role to recruit applicants. As well, with the ACS being reduced to a shoe-string operation following the war, Coppinger could not match the political influence of Republican leaders or the desire of black men to vote for the first time in their lives. Like blacks in Savannah, Maconites were postponing emigration efforts in hopes of securing a victory with the delegate election. Outnumbering whites, they wanted to participate in electing black men as delegates and to witness the outcome of the election.

In 1867, it became crystal clear that black leaders of Macon, such as Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, Jefferson F. Long, and James M.C. Logan, favored remaining in the United States, but only if the social, political, and economic conditions of blacks improved. For these men, African emigration had become a bargaining chip to secure full citizenship and autonomy for blacks in America. If blacks were not successful in making significant improvements in achieving equality in America, then they were prepared to leave. Describing the sentiments of black Maconites, James M. C. Logan addressed an op-ed to Rev. E. Weaver, editor of the *Christian Recorder*,

²⁸⁰ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 58.

about their willingness to leave the United States if the results of the upcoming elections and Congress's Reconstruction plan proved to be unsatisfactory. He wrote:

Several mass meetings have been held through Georgia this week and resolutions adopted favoring a removal from this country. Our people declare they will not remain here in a disfranchised condition, in other words they will go out of the country unless even handed justice is extended to them.

For us in the South to be deprived of our vote, would be to make our condition worse than when we were in Slavery. . . . But now the conservative element combined with the negro-hating Democrats, have been so much encouraged and are boasting so strongly about Northern reaction, that it will be a miracle if we carry the State, . . . We intend to fight it out on this line till the battle's lost or gained. And, if we find there is no hope for civil liberty here, we intend to go to Liberia and trust to fate.

Why, Mr. Editor, we had better be dead than to remain in the South with no rights which white men are bound to respect, for that would surely bring on a war of races.²⁸¹

While Coppinger, on one hand, was not having much success with recruitment in Macon and Savannah, he was nonetheless full of excitement after learning that a letter from Frank Simpson had arrived in Columbus and that blacks were eager to join him in Africa.²⁸² This was just what the ACS needed to mobilize blacks from Columbus for the upcoming departure. Coppinger left Macon and headed for Columbus.²⁸³

Hoping to encourage blacks to come to Liberia, Simpson asked his sister to read his letter before their friends and family. Mrs. Brooks carried out her brother's request and on October 13, 1867 read the follow words before members of the community at local black Baptist and Methodist churches:

²⁸¹ "Accessible Archives: 'Letter from Macon, Georgia' in the *Christian Recorder*," November 2, 1867. <http://www.accessible.com.ezproxy.gsu.edu/accessible/print?AADocList=5&AADocStyle=STYLED&AAStyleFile=&AABeanName=toc1&AANextPage=/printFullDocFromXML.jsp&ACheck=1.8.5.0.5> (Accessed January 20, 2010).

²⁸² A.C. Brooks to W. Coppinger, October 12, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 63

²⁸³ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, letter 69.

Greenville, Liberia

My Dear Sister:

I write to inform you that we have arrived safely in Liberia, after a voyage of thirty-nine days. We sailed from Charleston May 30, and touched at Monrovia July 8, with all the passengers in good health. We staid at Monrovia ten days. I visited it, and found it mostly built of brick.

We brought three hundred and twenty emigrants. They all seemed to be very much pleased with the country. The whole country, from Monrovia to Greenville, is a rich and beautiful country. Greenville, is a small village at the mouth of Sinou river. We are now located about two miles up this river, in houses given to the emigrants to stay in for six months period. We have six months provision given to us by the Colonization Society. The people here are very kind to us. Maria and Lottie are very well. Albert is well and sends his love to all. Pa and all are very well period. I have a fine daughter, born at sea, June nineteen. We have named her Araminta Caroline. I hope that I may see you again. Give my love to the people at the plantation, and tell them if they can get to Liberia, they must come, for Liberia is a country where a man can make a support by working half of his time. Everything grows here wild in the woods. Coffee grows all over the woods. Cotton grows here into a tree. The sugar cane grows larger than any I have ever seen. Potatoes grow all the time. Pine apples, cocoa nuts, oranges, lemons, and everything else grows wild in the woods.

I have long heard of Liberia, but now I see it, and I will say positively that Liberia is one of the best countries in the world. I wish that every colored person in America would come here. If a man cannot make a support here he will not make it anywhere. I expect to draw my land about nine miles up the river. Give my respects to Chapman, and let them all read this letter.

Your brother,
Frank Simpson²⁸⁴

Coppinger was moved by the grassroots efforts of the black Columbusites. Describing the energy around black emigration in the city, he was happy to report to Rev. McLain, “I am gratified to be able to state that Liberia stands high in the affection of the colored people of the region. Indeed there is a considerable excitement in the subject & parties are forming to remove to that Republic next month and in the spring of 1868.”²⁸⁵ He also stated, “Much of this feeling has been created by the lecture last Monday night of Rev. Mr. Hill and by a letter received from

²⁸⁴ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 347.

²⁸⁵ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 69.

Frank Simpson, an emigrant to Liberia, from this place, last Spring.”²⁸⁶ Coppinger arranged for blacks to assemble at the home of Lucious M. Monroe, described as “one of the most respectable and wealthy colored men in this place.”²⁸⁷ There, the names of applicants, “old and young,” were registered. Just two days prior, Mrs. Brooks offered to Coppinger a list of 161 applicants committed to leaving the following month.²⁸⁸ The list, composed by Coppinger and Brooks, soon grew to 235.²⁸⁹

Liberia fever was so intense in Columbus that an additional emigration group formed simultaneously to prepare applicants for the May and November 1868 voyages. Judge Cook, pastor of the Colored Baptist Church wished “to be ‘booked’ with 300 of his Congregation for the spring 1868 expedition” and Mr. Monroe, prepared to sell his estate valued at \$10,000, proposed to sail in the fall of 1868 “with 100 of his friends.”²⁹⁰ Cook and Monroe’s son, Phillip, agreed to register the names of all for the succeeding voyages.

Departure

On November 3, 1867, after four days of campaigning and voting, blacks across Georgia learned the results of the delegate election. Of the 169 delegates elected, thirty-seven were black,

²⁸⁶ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 69.

²⁸⁷ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 69.

²⁸⁸ A.C. Brooks to W. Coppinger, October 12, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 62.

²⁸⁹ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 69; and ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 366.

²⁹⁰ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 14, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 69; and L. M. Monroe to W. Coppinger, November 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 244.

including Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, Aaron Bradley, and Tunis Campbell. Of the white delegates, twelve were Democrats; nine were white northern Republicans (“carpetbaggers”) and the remaining 111 were white Georgia converts to the Republican Party (“scalawags”).

Blacks made up nearly 44 percent of the state population, and 49 percent of registered voters. With the exception of Atlanta, political participation was higher amongst blacks than whites in Georgia’s largest cities: Savannah: 3,091 blacks, 2,240 whites; Macon: 1,851 blacks, 1,353 whites; Augusta: 1,777 blacks, 1,574 whites; Columbus: 653 blacks, 635 whites; and Atlanta: 1,653 blacks; 1,829 whites. Of the 106,410 persons who cast a ballot, 102,283 favored holding a state constitutional convention, while 4,127 voted against it. White conservatives boycotted the election with little to no voter turnout in counties with large black populations and high black voter participation. For example, in Baldwin County, only seven whites voted from the 1,700 voters registered; in McIntosh County, three whites voted compared to 524 blacks; and in Liberty County only seven out of the 575 people who voted were white.²⁹¹

Despite the election results and the success of black male voter turnout, some black Georgians continued to prepare for departure to Liberia. On November 11, 1867, 235 blacks from Columbus, along with two passengers from Macon, boarded trains bound for Charleston, South Carolina.²⁹² Their departure sent a strong political message to Georgia delegates and the federal government. Despite promises made by Congress, Republicans and local leaders, blacks in Columbus were convinced that suffrage, protection from racial violence, land, or equality

²⁹¹ Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia*: 34; and C. Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 187-189.

²⁹² The election of delegates occurred from October 29-November 2, 1867. The Columbus, Georgia emigrants may have left their city on November 11, 1867. Their departure date from Charleston was November 18, 1867. See L. M. Monroe to W. Coppinger, ACS Papers, November 11, 1867, Letter 244, Reel 101 and ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 366.

could not be guaranteed by a new state constitution or the ratification of Fourteenth Amendment. Therefore, their future rested in Liberia.

Lucious M. Monroe described the attitude of whites and blacks from Columbus about the group's departure. He wrote to Coppinger, "My dear sir, you will please excuse these few lines as Every boddy almost is in a [stink] this morning about the Emigrants leaving all the Emigrant seem to be very cheerful and in good spirits and I wish them a successful voyage and pleasant time."²⁹³

Upon their arrival in Charleston, the Georgians were joined by seventy-seven emigrants from Mars Bluff, South Carolina and Philadelphia and Dover C.H., Tennessee. Georgians made up 75 percent of the 312 passengers bound for Liberia.²⁹⁴ On November 18, 1867, the group, making up 50 percent of the anticipated number of passengers the ACS wished to send to Liberia, embarked upon the *Golconda*. The Georgians made up an impressive group. Of the 235 passengers from Columbus, forty were literate. Among them were forty-four farmers, three ministers, two carpenters, two bricklayers, two laborers, and one bridge builder, brick maker, cook, blacksmith, gardener, miller, and shoemaker. Unfortunately, the skills and profession of adult females were unrecorded by the ACS. Collectively, these individuals possessed the character, skills, and intellect the ACS and Liberian settlers hoped to attract to the West African country to build a black nation.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ L.M. Monroe to W. Coppinger, November 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Letter 244.

²⁹⁴ ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 366-372.

²⁹⁵ ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 366-372.

Conclusion

The years of 1866-1867 were pivotal for African-Americans in Georgia and the United States as a whole. The concentration of power within the hands of the Republican Party allowed for the passage of Reconstruction laws that changed the political landscape of Georgia and the South. Black men were given the chance to represent the interests of their community and help shape public policy as delegates to the state constitutional convention. More importantly, African Americans were allowed to participate in the electoral process. This political shift witnessed black leaders working to support Republican efforts and emboldened blacks to become active voters. Such change produced challenges. Passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1866 led to a series of violent riots in Memphis and New Orleans. Still, the majority of blacks were excited about their future in the United States.

The political shift resulted in Macon no longer being the center of the emigration movement. Leaders such as Rev. Turner persuaded black Maconites to capitalize on their newfound political power in order to obtain the rights and resources they deserved. In the place of Macon, the city of Columbus emerged as the nexus of the emigration movement. With strong leadership such as that of Frank Simpson and his sister Araminta Brooks, distrust for Republicans and their policies, and a nationalist fervor to be independent and free, blacks in Columbus were able to organize themselves to emigrate to Liberia twice in 1867.

CHAPTER FIVE: AT THE CROSSROADS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMIGRATION IN GEORGIA, 1867-1868

This chapter examines the recruitment and mobilization efforts of black Georgians from Columbus, Sparta, Marion, and other surrounding areas during the Georgia Constitutional Convention (December 1867 and March 1868) and the state election of late April 1868. The changes occurring within Georgia politics resulted in a severe backlash from whites who used violence and intimidation to mitigate the potential impact of blacks voting in large numbers. Recognizing the importance of the black vote, both Republicans and Democrats sought to influence blacks in order to achieve their political agendas and dictate the future of the state.

This changing political environment pushed some blacks to emigrate and altered the plans of others. It also lessened the relevance and necessity of the ACS as it struggled to fund future trips. Overall, the emigration movement in Georgia reached a crescendo, but plummeted

quickly by May 1868 when only half of the registrants who signed to leave were actually at the port in Savannah ready to board the *Golconda*.

On November 3, 1867, one day following the delegate election, blacks across Georgia celebrated the results of the election for the state Constitution Convention. Also on this day, a small but significant group of blacks from Columbus decided to demonstrate their political and economic frustration by registering to obtain passage to Liberia. With 235 passengers prepared to leave the United States in eight days, Philip Monroe, a painter and son of the wealthy black landowner, Lucious M. Monroe, penned a letter to William Coppinger in which he promised that he and Reverend Judge Cook “will have 600 [passengers] by spring” 1868.²⁹⁶

The fear of conservative opposition during and immediately following the election caused many black emigration advocates to have little faith in the Georgia delegates who were elected to draft a new state constitution. They also had little faith in a Congress responsible to work in the best interest of African Americans to protect their families and civil rights. As an example of the sentiment existing among those blacks who prepared to leave for Liberia if white opposition continued and if their social, political, and economic conditions failed to improve in Georgia was a letter from J. Dick, who wrote to the editor of the *Christian Recorder* on December 5, 1867:

A thought upon the future destiny of the colored man, after hearing and seeing so much that is against him from those of our pretended Southern friends, makes my heart burn within me to think of what awaits my race. . . . Their object, I suppose you are aware, is to defeat the ratification of the Constitution that will be framed in the Convention at Atlanta. . . . They have declared that if the Constitution is ratified, they will live under it only by bayonets and a standing army. Now, under these circumstances, what is a colored man to do? I think it would be better, far better, if it would come to this, that every colored man would emigrate at once to the Republic of Liberia, though I am in favor of staying here in this country, with

²⁹⁶ Phillip L. Monroe to William Coppinger, Letter 149, ACS Papers Reel, 101. To learn the events of the Georgia Constitutional Convention, see William P. Brandon, “Calling the Georgia Constitutional Convention of 1867,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 17 (September 1933): 189-203.

my rights before the law in every respect; for without that, we cannot live in this country, nor have we any protection. . . . Therefore the colored man must have a law for a protection, equal in all respects.²⁹⁷

Black resistance to remaining in the U.S. existed among others in Columbus, Sparta, and Marion. Despite promises made by Radical Republicans, black emigrationists were not convinced that suffrage, protection from racial violence, land, or equality could be guaranteed by a new state constitution or the ratification of Fourteenth Amendment. Therefore, they were prepared to leave the United States.

As 1867 came to a close, white opposition towards black emigration in Georgia grew considerably compared to November 1866 when the first group of Macon emigrants departed. With Georgia steadily experiencing a labor shortage since 1865, planters continued to harbor resentment towards blacks for abandoning the countryside, migrating to urban areas in Georgia, other states that offered higher wages, or emigrating to Africa. Still grappling over who would best serve as labor in the United States (European immigrants, white Americans, or black Americans) Whitelaw Reid wrote in *After the War* about the unwillingness of whites to perform the backbreaking labor once performed by slaves. He exclaimed, “Work is for niggers – not for white men.”²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ “Accessible Archives: “Letter from Macon, GA; Date: January 11, 1868” in the *Christian Recorder*,” <http://www.accessible.com.ezproxy.gsu.edu/accessible/printerFriendlyDoc.jsp> (Accessed January 15, 2011). For a similar example, see “Accessible Archives: “Letter from Macon, GA, Date: November 2, 1867” in the *Christian Recorder*,” <http://www.accessible.com.ezproxy.gsu.edu/accessible/print?AADocList=10&AADocStyle=STYLED&AAStyleFile=&AABeanName=toc1&AANextPage=/printFullDocFromXML.jsp&AACheck=2.131.10.0.10> (Accessed January 15, 2011).

²⁹⁸ Whitelaw Reid, *After the War: A Southern Tour, May 1, 1866* (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach and Baldwin, 1866), 151. Companies seeking to hire European labor were the American Emigration Company, the American Aid, and the Georgia Joint Stock, Land, and Emigration Company. See Alan Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), 112 and 226.

Radical Republicans were no different than their conservative political counterparts or planters. With political tension brewing in the state and hoping to render Democrats powerless, Republicans needed black voters to assist the Party in approving the new Georgia Constitution and in acquiring additional seats in the Georgia General Assembly during the April 1868 election. With the number of black and white registered voters almost equal in Georgia, Republicans needed every black voter and his family to remain in the U.S.

As Liberia fever intensified, organizers of emigration companies continued to update the ACS with news of recruitment. Phillip Monroe informed Coppinger, “The Spirit of the people in the city and its Vicinity is very [good] . . . and we will make up a lively party . . . if there is no providential occurrences to prevent us from going.”²⁹⁹ From Sparta, Dr. E. Pendleton wrote that despite rumors that he and the ACS were conspiring to sell emigrants into slavery in Cuba and Sparta applicants reneging on leaving the U.S. a year prior, “There seems to be another Liberia excitement in this county originating among the negroes themselves, which I think will [leave] the country this time.”³⁰⁰

On December 3, Seaborn Ashley, a former slave and blacksmith residing in Marion, Twiggs County (located 19 miles south of Macon, Georgia), informed the ACS that he and forty members of his immediate family, the Kings, refused to reenter into labor contracts. After struggling with poverty for two years since passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, the group chose “living a camp life” as opposed to remaining as tenants upon the land of their former employer. They were thus preparing to leave in May 1868 with other Georgia emigrants.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ P. L. Monroe to W. Coppinger, November 26, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 244.

³⁰⁰ E.M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, November 28, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 265.

³⁰¹ Seaborn Evans to W. Coppinger, December 3, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 27; and *Ibid.*, January 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 31.

Residing without proper shelter, Ashley reminded Coppinger of their eagerness to leave when he wrote, “we will be very disappointed if we cannot go.”³⁰²

Ashley had attempted to form an emigration company with blacks from Macon earlier in the year. However, Macon blacks were well under the influence of Rev. Henry McNeal Turner and Jefferson F. Long, both eager for blacks to participate in the election of delegates to the Georgia Constitutional Convention. Unable to gain support from former members of the Emigration Association of Macon Georgia, which had become inactive due to the changes within the political environment and from other emigration advocates, Ashby decided to postpone his recruitment and resettlement efforts. Coppinger, who was in Georgia prior to the delegate election, hoped to rally support from ACS advocates in Savannah and Macon, but was unsuccessful. It was then in October 1867 that Coppinger learned of Ashley’s organizational efforts. He hoped to meet with Ashley to convince his company to leave in November. With less than six weeks to prepare for departure, Ashley disappointed Coppinger with the news that he and his family could not “get through [their] crops in time to go” but would be better prepared for the spring 1868 departure.³⁰³

News of Ashley’s and other blacks’ inability to emigrate to Liberia was but part of new challenges facing the ACS as it sought to expand emigration to Liberia. As delegates prepared for the Georgia Constitutional Convention, it was only a matter of time before Republican supporters experienced a backlash from Democrats hoping to regain political, economic, and social control in Georgia. Caught between the crossfire of two rivaling political parties were black male voters and their families. Whether being seduced or antagonized, blacks experienced

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Seaborn Evans to W. Coppinger, December 3, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 278; and W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, October 11, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 58.

the impact of the political tug-of-war between Republicans and Democrats hoping to exploit the race for two purposes: as voters or as laborers.

Although blacks were not politically experienced, they were astute enough to identify the weaknesses and motives of the Republican Party, which, they realized, could not sustain political power without their support.³⁰⁴ More importantly, the party could not combat white conservative opposition without the full political participation of blacks. Hoping to seize this political moment by negotiating and establishing relationships with white Republicans, some ambitious blacks wanted to acquire political office to secure the Fourteenth Amendment as a Constitutional Act, protect the life and political rights of blacks, and ensure that social mobility was possible through equal educational and economic opportunities. Certainly, some black Republicans had personal agendas like their white counterparts, but most engaged in politics with the hope of representing the interest of blacks and moving the race closer to being an autonomous people respected as equal citizens in America.

As blacks examined their future in America, the two political ideologies that had been at odds since the end of the war remained in conflict: to reside in the United States and be recognized as full citizens or to leave and enjoy full citizenship in Africa. As one group of blacks pushed for their rightful place in America, a second group was not so optimistic. Both groups shared a concerted goal of achieving civil and personal freedoms and embraced ideals of what scholars have termed Black Nationalism. The historical and political debate during the early years of Reconstruction amongst African Americans had centered on the question of how

³⁰⁴ To learn about rise and fall of the Republican power in Georgia, see Elizabeth Studley Nathan, *Losing the Peace: Georgia Republicans and Reconstruction, 1865-1871* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968); *Ibid.*, the Politics of Georgia Reconstruction, 1865-1872 (Ph.D. John Hopkins University, 1966); Oliver Hall Shadgett, *The Republican Party in Georgia from Reconstruction through 1900* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1964); and Judson C. Ward, Jr., "The Reconstruction Party in Bourbon Georgia, 1872-1890" *Journal of Southern History* 9 (May 1943): 196-209.

best to achieve autonomy and where best to exercise freedom. For blacks who favored emigration during Reconstruction, they believed their rights would not be protected or enforced as long as they remained governed by whites. Despite the achievements made by Radical Republicans to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865 and toward ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment, these laws were not enough to make those who looked to Africa as a promised land and a place of refuge to remain in the United States.

Motives for Emigration in Georgia, November 1867-May 1868

In examining Columbus, Sparta, and Marion where black mobilization efforts to emigrate were most prevalent in Georgia between late 1867 to mid-1868, the motives for leaving the United States were at least one of the following: escape from poverty, acquisition of land, freedom from racial hostility and violence, establishment of and control over black institutions (religious, political, economic, and educational), and black political power to define, protect, and enforce their rights.

Letters published by the *African Repository* from Liberian settlers became another motive for blacks in the United States wanting to leave. Hearing first-hand the stories of safe journeys, access to healthy food, ability to obtain land, and life in a welcoming environment free of racial hostility and tension influenced black emigration. These letters answered many of the questions that African Americans had about Liberia and dispelled myths that evoked fear within the minds of freedmen. These letters clearly expressed the desires of blacks in Georgia who wanted more than what the United States was willing to offer or had available.

Following the delegate election of 1867, freedmen and their families hoped to see immediate improvement in their socioeconomic condition that did not occur. Impatient, starving, and languishing in poverty, blacks in Sparta inquired about leaving the United States. On November 28, 1867, Pendleton lucidly noted:

The negroes have tried freedom this time & starvation long enough. They find out that they are much worse off as to provisions & clothing & money than when they were slaves, and the more intelligent are convinced that if they remain here, they are doomed They have voted & see that it won't pay, [if] the "40 acres of land and mule" don't come.³⁰⁵

Correspondence from Seaborn Ashley contains accounts of the Marion blacks experiencing extreme forms of economic hardship. Recognizing the ACS was experiencing financial difficulty in transporting black emigrants from the United States to Africa, Ashley forwarded a letter to John Sherman, Commissioner of Finance and brother of Gen. William T. Sherman. He begged the federal government to continue supporting blacks' desire to emigrate. He described the economic condition of blacks in Marion as follows:

Mr. Hon. John Sherman,

I write with sorrow in my heart to Congress to let them know my case. I have been corresponding with the colonization society to go to Liberia. They have two thousand applications. I now ask you as a Ban of Christians to help us as they have not the means to carry one-fourth. I would want to go to Liberia to help my condition. I see nothing more nor less than starvation here. We feel like that it is our duty to go where we can be of use to our people but we have and cannot move unless you will help us. We are poor. We can help one another and in still [position]. We are going back. Help us. God will help you I hope in the days to come. Please give us the same passage as the last settlement in Liberia.³⁰⁶

As with many sharecroppers, Ashley and his company of emigrants experienced poverty due to low wages and the unfair labor contracts they entered into with a landowner and the denial of land to be self-sufficient. Recognizing that sharecropping forced blacks to remain in a servile

³⁰⁵ E.M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, November 28, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 265.

³⁰⁶ Seaborn Ashley to William Coppinger, February 3, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 123. For clarity, this letter was edited by the author.

position similar to slavery, Ashley and the King family, a company of blood-related farmers, experienced difficulty in securing their settlement from their landholding employer, whom Ashley referred to as their “enyemes.” In a letter to Coppinger, Ashley lamented, “We so afraid. We find it a hard matter to git [sic] our money”³⁰⁷

These unfair labor practices were not uncommon to sharecroppers. Blacks refusing to reenter into labor contracts, particularly those who were contemplating leaving the U.S. altogether, caused planters to protest by not granting them their rightfully earned money. Despite the susceptibility associated with their wretched living conditions and labor contracts, Marion blacks, like many newly freed families of the Reconstruction period, recognized they could avoid poverty, the vulnerability of being exploited, and the threat of arrest or death, if they were self-sufficient. Yet, to be self-sufficient, blacks understood they needed land. The acquisition of land would not only address the issue of poverty, but also other push factors leading to emigration.

Poverty and lack of aid following the war caused a can-do attitude to manifest itself amongst freed people. Marion blacks recognized that even with suffrage, financial assistance from government agencies and benevolent societies, such as the Freedmen’s Bureau, and the American Missionary Association (AMA), they would never be equal to whites in America as long as they remained powerless to build, fund, and govern their own institutions. To be respected as citizens, they needed to be self-reliant. All that they could receive from outside

³⁰⁷ Seaborn Ashley to William Coppinger, March (date was unrecognizable), 1868, ACS Papers, Letter 283.

sources, they needed to create for themselves. This included black-controlled schools, churches, and other institutions.³⁰⁸

As it was in Savannah, Macon, Augusta, and soon to be in Columbus and Atlanta, whites belonging to the Republican Party, the Freedmen's Bureau, and American Missionary Association had a vested interest in blacks. The number of blacks in these cities was numerous. They were politically astute with a strong organizational history. Thus were able to establish relationships with and negotiated with whites in securing suffrage and to obtain aid to build schools and churches.

Ashley who resided nineteen miles outside Macon's city limit witnessed five schools emerged in Macon by 1866.³⁰⁹ But schools initially led by black teachers were soon controlled and replaced by northern whites. The same was true for schools, colleges, and universities that received aid from the Freedmen's Bureau and American Missionary Association. Even amongst religious institutions, some of the earliest buildings where blacks worshipped were given to them by whites. For example, by 1868, Columbus had established two African-American churches, the First African Baptist Church and the Girard Colored Mission and one school for blacks, the Chaplan School which later became known as St. James African Methodist Episcopal School.³¹⁰ The building in which members of the First African Baptist Church worshipped belonged to a

³⁰⁸ Atlanta University, Clark Atlanta University, *Phylon* (Atlanta, GA: Clark Atlanta University, 1940), 106; Richard Drake, "The American Missionary Association and the Southern Negro" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1957); George A Rogers and R. Frank Saunders, Jr., "The American Missionary Association in Liberty County, Georgia: A Mission of Light and Love," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 62 (Winter 1978), 304-15.

³⁰⁹ Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African-American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 105.

³¹⁰ Judith Grant, *Columbus, Georgia*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Pub, 2000), 13, 17, and 20.

white congregation.³¹¹ Its first public school was funded by the Freedmen's Bureau rather than by blacks alone.

Ashley recognized that self-sufficiency and self-representation was important to black institution building. If blacks were ever going to be truly autonomous, they would have to discontinue relying on the largesse of whites. As an example of Ashley's independent spirit, he used \$550 of his personal money to build a church "thinking tha and the government pay me." After two years of attempting to build a school, the community, "so poor they cannot pay anything more," managed to pull their resources together "to cover a school for 20 days" for twenty-five children, which "tha have not had a dollar from the government."³¹²

As assistance from the federal government and missionary associations was either slow to reach or never reached blacks in the countryside during Reconstruction, rural blacks, like those in Marion, had to rely on themselves to offer their children the type of education they believed they deserved. Consequently, a spirit of self-sufficiency manifested amongst them. Lack of outside resources was not enough to deprive them of educating their children. With what collective resources they did possess, rural blacks made do with what they had to educate their own community and establish educational, religious, and business institutions.³¹³

³¹¹ To learn more about the role of the Freedmen's Bureau and the American Missionary Association in establish schools for freedmen in Georgia, see Titus Brown, *Faithful, Firm, and True: African-American Education in the South* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2002); Paul A. Cimbala and Randall M. Miller, *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999); Allen Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966); John C. Inscoe, *Georgia in Black and White: Explorations in Race Relations of a Southern* (Athens: University Of Georgia Press, 2010); Jacqueline Jones, *Soldiers of Light and Love* (Athens: University Of Georgia Press, 1992); Daniel W. Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Clara Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia, Economic, Social, Political, 1865-1872* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915); Daniel W. Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863-1877* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African-American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

³¹² Seaborn Ashley to William Coppinger, March (date was unrecognizable), 1868, ACS Papers, Letter 283.

Ashley and his family concluded that their skills, resources, and collective effort could be of better use amongst other blacks who shared the same political ideology and creed as they did. Therefore, they decided to set sail to Liberia and take their desire for black institution building with them. In Liberia, they dreamed that they could live in a racially homogenous land where social mobility was achievable, escape the daily reminders of slavery, and not have children see their parents face the humiliation that came with racial hostility and the acceptance of low and exploitative wages.

Like blacks in Marion, Macon, and Sparta, Columbus blacks were by no means living in a utopia. In fact, a significant number of blacks in Columbus embraced African emigration as a result of experiencing poverty, casualties from the small pox epidemic of 1865 and 1866, their desire for landownership, their refusal to be exploited as cheap laborers, and intimidation from Democrats.³¹⁴ As delegates from Muscogee County were convening in Atlanta (December 1867 to March 1868) blacks and white scalawags in Columbus were experiencing racial political agitation from an aggressive Democratic Club, which became known in April 1868 in Georgia as the Ku Klux Klan.³¹⁵

³¹³ To learn more about black institution building and organization efforts during Reconstruction, see Andrew Billingsley, *Mighty Like a River: The Black Church and Social Reform* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Edward Franklin Frazier and C. Eric Lincoln, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974); Eric. Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990); Cynthia L. Jackson, and Eleanor F. Nunn; *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003); and Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Pub, 2004).

³¹⁴ Rita Folse, Elliott, Allen Vegotsky, Barnett Pavao-Zuckerman, Linda Scott Cummings, Kathryn Puseman, and Sarah Cowie, *Living in Columbus, Georgia 1828-1869: The Lives of Creeks, Traders, Enslaved African-Americans, Mill Operatives and Others As Told to Archaeologists* (Columbus, Georgia: City of Columbus, Georgia Department of Community and Economic Development, 2005).

³¹⁵ Oliver Hall Shadgett, *The Republican Party in Georgia: From Reconstruction Through 1900* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2010), 6-12. *Radical Rule Military Outrage in Georgia: Arrest of Columbus Prisoners : with Facts Connected with Their Imprisonment and Release* (Louisville, KY: Printed by John P. Morton and Company, 1868), 89-90.; and Wynne, Lewis Nicholas. *The Continuity of Cotton: Planter Politics in Georgia, 1865-1892* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1986), 51-52.

While external forces, such as low wages, mortality, racial hostility and political intimidation were obvious motivating factors that pushed blacks to resettle in Africa, black Georgians were also being pulled by the internal forces of family and community reunification. The desire to return to their ancestors' homeland was influenced by Georgia emigrants living in Liberia. Black settlers wrote zealously to friends and family in Georgia encouraging them to come to Liberia. Examples of influential letters were published monthly in *The African Repository*.

In a letter from Mrs. Eliza Sullivan, a 23 year old female from Columbus, who left the United States on the *Golconda* on November 1867, to Mrs. Nellie Ferguson and Mrs. Sallie Davis, she offered insight as to her journey, accessible to various foods, the welcoming environment created by Americo-Liberians, and the positive transition towards permanent settlement. Mrs. Sullivan dispelled rumors of emigrants being sold into slavery in Cuba, which was a legitimate fear of many blacks. She also highlighted the array of fruits and vegetables she enjoyed on a daily basis recognizing that in the United States such items would be a luxury. Last, the idea of her family building a home must have resonated with her friends since that was the desire of all blacks residing in the United States—a place of their own. On January 13, 1868, Mrs. Sullivan wrote from Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Liberia:

My Dear Friends:

It is with pleasure that I can say I have a joyful opportunity of penning you these few lines, to let you know I and my husband, mother, and father, are all well. We arrived safe on Africa shores, and are enjoying good health. I write to you all, according to promise. I am much pleased with the place. We are all in Africa. We did not go to Cuba, as you all said we were going. If you were to come to Africa, I think you all would be much pleased with the place. We were joyfully received by the friends, and they seemed to make us welcome home. I see any quantity of coffee every day, and there is a great many fruits here. Pineapples, oranges, bananas, plantains, and many others. I can eat some fruit every day if I chose to do so. I passed over the sea very well; I was not sick one day; all the

others were sick a little. Mr. Sullivan and the rest of the boys are going to put up their own house. It will be a log house for the present. I will certainly look for you all next spring. I hope you will not disappoint me. I think you will be much pleased with the place.

I remain, truly, your friend,
Eliza Sullivan³¹⁶

In a letter from Rev. Alexander Herron, a 45 year-old Methodist minister from Columbus, who also left the United States on the *Golconda* on November 1867, to Rev. Judge Cook he wrote about his safe journey across the Atlantic, the temperate weather, friendliness of the indigenous population, and the opportunities to become self-sufficient. He did not conceal any of the challenges of the journey or health complications associated with traveling or resettlement. Whatever shortcomings he might have experienced in Liberia Rev. Herron was adamant that “I have nothing to discourage me, but everything says come.” His message was simple; there was nothing for him in the United States. All he wanted and needed existed in Africa. The ACS published Rev. Herron’s letter in the *African Repository*, hoping to encourage other African Americans to come to Liberia:

January 9, 1868.

Dear Brother:

I seat myself to drop you a few lines, to let you know that I have not forgotten my promise to you. I will first state that we had a safe journey across the Atlantic, with the loss of but one, and that was Patsey Johnson. She got hurt on the cars, and died on the way; but the rest all landed safe, and are doing well at this time. We expect to have the fever, which is no more than the chills and fever that we have in America. We do not find it as warm as in America in summer. We sleep under cover every night since we have been here; and, as for what you have heard about the country, it is all true; all kinds of fruit, but we are not permitted to eat of them yet; only a few of them. It is a good country, I assure you. You may

³¹⁶ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 360; and *Ibid.*, Vol. 44, 220.

know that I think so, for there is nothing to induce me to come back to America. All the natives that I have seen are as friendly as can be. Grand Cape Mount was the first place that I landed at, on the 29th December, on Sunday, and I preached there, and found the people very kind indeed. I have nothing to discourage me, but everything says come. All that is necessary is to go to work. Our money is in the earth, and all that is required is to go to work. No person that expects to make a living by labor will fall out with the place. I want you to see some of the people of the Woolfolk family, and tell them that this is the place for them. Remember me to all the churches, and inquiring friends.

I remain your affectionate brother,
Alexander Herron³¹⁷

Black Petitions for Funding to Emigrate and Political Tension in Georgia

Since November 1867, Columbus, Sparta, and Marion emigration organizations had been busy registering the names of applicants and preparing to leave America in May 1868. Meanwhile, the ACS was pondering the future of its organization. As Congress was aggressively pushing for and awaiting the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment in former Confederate states, the ACS recognized their days of receiving funds from Congress were coming to a close. During the antebellum years, the ACS's funding came primarily from religious institutions, Congress, and apologetic slaveholders. Religious institutions desired to see blacks spread Christianity in Liberia through missionary efforts. Congress appropriated money for the society as a means to transport free blacks and "recaptured" or rather illegally captured Africans to the Continent.³¹⁸ In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln, along with Congress, actually appropriated \$600,000 to transport emancipated blacks beyond the shores of Africa (\$100,000 of

³¹⁷ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 368; and *Ibid.*, Vol. 44, 220.

³¹⁸ The 1808 Slave Trade Act banned the further importation of African slaves to the United States. Individuals seized and brought to the U.S. for the purpose of slavery was defined by as illegal and "recaptured."

which were to be use specifically for black emigration from Washington, D.C.).³¹⁹ Lincoln proposed resettlement of blacks to Panama, the Republic of Columbia, Central America, and Haiti.³²⁰ The plan was rebuffed as a result of signing the Emancipation Proclamation. Masters desiring to free their slaves in states where domestic manumission was banned paid for transportation fees associated with the resettlement of blacks to Liberia as an alternative to offering emancipation. Now that slavery was abolished, funding to the Society was significantly reduced with Congress becoming less inclined to support the mission of the ACS, arguing that resources were limited and “The day of that idea has passed away forever.”³²¹

A year prior, in March 1867, the ACS proposed before the Thirty-Ninth Congress the appropriation of \$50,000 to fund a future voyage after receiving 1,815 applications for the May 1867 voyage.³²² For the applicants, the Society had become less able to fund multiple voyages a year and was only capable of accommodating 600 passengers per ship. With Thaddeus Stevens serving as Chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, the ACS hoped to have some success in appropriating funds for the Society. While the ACS received some support, opposition came from Representatives who believed they were advocating in the best interest of freedmen. They argued expatriation to Africa would no longer appeal to African Americans once Congress’ proposed Reconstruction Acts were passed. Members of the Thirty-

³¹⁹ Phillip W. Magness and Sebastian N. Page, *Colonization after Emancipation: Lincoln and the Movement for Black Resettlement* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), 4; Bernard Magubane, *The ties that bind: African –American Consciousness of Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1987), 73. Benjamin Quarles, *Lincoln and the Negro* (New York, N.Y.: Da Capo Press, 1991), 121; Thomas F. Schwartz, *For a Vast Future Also: Essays from the Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 40.

³²⁰ Thomas J. DiLorenzo, *The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003), 18; and Harold Holzer and Sara Vaughn Gabbard, *Lincoln and Freedom: Slavery, Emancipation, and the Thirteenth Amendment* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 219.

³²¹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43: 148.

³²² ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 157 and 156.

Ninth Congress attempted to redefine for blacks the definition of freedom. They believed suffrage and full citizenship were enough for the formerly enslaved population and once the Fourteenth Amendment became law, it would be the responsibility of African Americans to exercise their rights as citizens. While some African Americans believed they had a rightful place in the United States as citizens, Congress failed to acknowledge that other blacks desired to expatriate to Africa, which was a result of freedmen's lack of faith in Congress to protect their rights and grant them respect and resources equal to that of whites.

Congressman Josiah Bushnell Grinnell of Iowa was the loudest opponent of appropriating funds for the ACS. Addressing the fifty year effort of the Society, Bushnell told Chairman Stevens and members of the House of Representatives:

I give them credit for their motives, and for such good accomplished. But sir, the times have changed; we are living in a new era. We now have no money to spend in this direction for such good accomplished. I am opposed to the appropriation of \$50,000 for this purpose, in the first place, because we have no money to spare; and secondly, because I believe that those who have heretofore desired to leave our country will desire now to remain with us. . . . the colored people who have migrated to Liberia would not desire to go there now, in this year 1867, if they wiped out the institution of slavery. Ay sir, when they have learned in Liberia of the passage of the reconstruction bill, which places the negro, from a slave and the servant of a master for fifty year, upon an equality with the proud oppressor, they will rather throw up their hands and thank God, and wait for the vessel that shall bring them back to their native land.³²³

Opposition towards the relevance of the ACS in a post-slavery America was growing from some of its former white supporters and so-called Radicals. The Boston *Herald* printed an op-ed from a "special correspondent" at Washington," stating the following about the ACS:

There is an antiquated concern in Washington called the American Colonization Society. Its ostensible object is to carry all the colored people in this county to Africa to colonize them, but its real object is to support a lot of old fossilized office-holders, who get together once in a year and talk about their own humanity as illustrated in the sending off, once in twelve months, of a cargo of colored men

³²³ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 151.

to Liberia. They go begging around the lobbies of Congress once a year for an appropriation of fifty thousand dollars, and seem to have influence to get it.³²⁴

The ACS fired back at the position of the anonymous correspondent with the following words:

Congress spends millions a year for the “freedmen,” paying large sums for their transportation to Florida, and whenever they wish to go to Florida, and whatever they wish to go to better their condition, it was thought that a trifle out of those millions might as well be expended in aiding those who wish to go to Liberia
“One of the fossils”³²⁵

The ACS would not receive the requested funds from Congress, forcing it to use its remaining resources within its treasury to send as many applicants possible to Liberia over the next two years.³²⁶

The months of January to April 1868 brought further political excitement to Georgia. Many blacks in Columbus, Sparta, and Marion were becoming less enchanted by the leadership of Republicans, especially as delegates negotiated over whether to forgive former Confederates of their debts and to specify the eligibility of blacks to hold office – a decision blacks attending the convention would later regret.³²⁷ As Georgians anticipated the result of the convention, Liberia fever emerged again. From December 26-30, 1867, Isaac Yancey of Sparta assisted 94 persons in applying for passage to Liberia.³²⁸ By February 11, 1868, his numbers had expanded to 125. Dr. Pendleton described the sentiment of blacks in his city as unbending in their refusal to accept only suffrage without land or the resources to eradicate poverty. He wrote, “A number more are getting anxious on the subject, but they are waiting to see what the convention will do

³²⁴ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 154.

³²⁵ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 157.

³²⁶ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 156.

³²⁷ Drago, *Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia*, 41 and 45.

³²⁸ E. M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, December 26, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 35; and Ibid., December 30, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 369.

for them. As to the right of voting without land or something to eat, they would not give much for it.³²⁹ In Marion, Ashley maintained the support of his company of forty emigrants. Philip Monroe and Reverend Judge Cook of Columbus managed to register the names of 520 persons by January 19, 1868.³³⁰ Of that number, one hundred belonged to an emigration company led by Willis Fort, A.W. Williams, and William Rhodes of Eufaula, Alabama.³³¹ James M.C. Logan, former EAMG founder turned Freedmen's Bureau agent, informed the ACS that Liberia fever was now present in Atlanta. Despite the convening of delegates in the city and unprepared to leave in spring, black Atlantans were expressing a growing interest in emigrating to Africa as well.³³²

Hoping to capitalize on the political frustration of freedmen, Coppinger asked leaders of emigration companies from North Carolina to Mississippi to draft a petition asking their Representatives to continue financial support for Liberian resettlement.³³³ Collectively, the ACS received over 2,000 signatures from black applicants.³³⁴ Of that number, 164 were from Sparta and Marion.³³⁵ Receiving over 620 combined signatures were leaders of the Columbus and

³²⁹ E.M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, February 11, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 16; and A.E. Williams to William Coppinger, April 1, 1868, ACS papers, Reel 102, Letter 1.

³³⁰ Phillip Monroe to W. Coppinger, January 19, 1868, letter 72; and Rev. Judge Cook to W. Coppinger, December 10, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 302.

³³¹ Philip Monroe to W. Coppinger, January 7, 1868, Letter 18; and Ibid, January 19, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 72.

³³² James M.C. Logan to W. Coppinger, December 30, 1867, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 362.

³³³ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 71, 237-240, 252

³³⁴ To see a list of authors of the petitions, see ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 119-122.

³³⁵ To see the original petitions from Sparta and Marian, see Pendleton to W. Coppinger, February 11, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 168; and Seaborn Ashley to W. Coppinger, February 3, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 101, Letter 123.

Eufaula Emigration Company, which drafted the following appeals to the Senate of the United States:

We, the undersigned, colored -citizens of Georgia and Alabama, have the honor to present to your honorable body the following petition:
Having been set free from slavery by the blessing of Almighty God and an act of Congress, we are desirous on account of the animosity evinced towards us as a people, and the injustice and oppression to which we are obliged to submit, and which wrongs are likely to continue so long as we remain here, to return to Africa, that we may better our own condition, help to mitigate the wrongs of the suffering millions of that great continent, and enjoy political, social, and civil equality in the genial clime of our fathers. We have applied to the Colonization Society, but it has not the means to assist us. We are poor. Many of us are without employment or the means of obtaining any. Many of us have been cheated out of a part, and some of us out of the whole of our last year's wages, and are quite unable to meet the expense of going to another country.
We therefore petition your honorable *body* that an appropriation of one hundred dollars (\$100) be made for each person who shall embark under the auspices of the American Colonization Society for Liberia. And we will ever pray.³³⁶

Blacks from neighboring southern states petitioned federal and state legislators for aid to return to Africa. Attempting to ensure that their Representatives read their petitions before Congress and understood the depths of their desire to leave America, multiple petitions circulated throughout black communities resulting in the ACS receiving 7,500 signatures.³³⁷ The ACS learned the signatures were unintentional duplicates of mostly the original 2,000 supporters. Nevertheless, the number of signatures was an indication of blacks' obvious displeasure with their current condition in America and how life in Africa was a viable and attractive alternative to secure the types of freedom and opportunities they so desired.

At the same time, tension between conservatives and radicals increased in Georgia following a series of political events on the federal and state level. In January, 1868, General Pope was replaced by General Meade as commander of the Third Military District, a decision

³³⁶ ACS, *African Repository*, 238-239. To see a copy of the original draft of the petition, see Phillip Monroe to the ACS, Letter 256.

³³⁷ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 252.

celebrated by Democrats.³³⁸ As constitutional convention delegates convened in Atlanta, Governor Charles J. Jenkins, out of protest, failed to appropriate \$40,000 from the state treasury to pay for costs associated with the constitutional convention.³³⁹ Consequently, Meade ordered the abrupt removal of the Governor and Treasurer. On January 15, both officers were replaced by Brigadier General Thomas H. Ruger as Provisional Governor and Captain Charles F. Rockwell as Provisional Treasurer.³⁴⁰ Protesting Meade's decision, Governor Jenkins took the state seal to Washington (and eventually to Halifax, Nova Scotia) and deposited \$400,000 in New York to pay off the Georgia's debt.³⁴¹ On February 24, Georgia learned of the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson by the House of Representative for his failure to support a series of Reconstruction Acts proposed by Congress.³⁴² Before the Georgia convention delegates adjourned in March, Meade called for a special four day election for voters to ratify the state constitution and elect a Governor and members of the General Assembly on April 20, 1868.³⁴³

In preparation for the upcoming election, delegates returned to their districts to rally support for Republican candidates, many of whom were placed on the Republican ticket (including Rufus B. Bullock, nominee for Governor). At the same time, Democrats, who heavily opposed the constitutional convention and its delegates, mobilized to regain political power in the state. With almost an equal number of registered voters being black, Democrats believed

³³⁸ C. Mildred Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia: Economic, Social, Political, 1865-1872* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 178-179.

³³⁹ Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 179. See also, Kenneth Coleman, *History of Georgia* (Athens, University of Georgia, 1991), 212. Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 156.

³⁴⁰ Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 156.

³⁴¹ Thompson, *Reconstruct in Georgia*, 180; and Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 156.

³⁴² Andrew Johnson, *The Papers of Andrew Johnson: May 1869-July 1875*, Vol. 16 (University of Tennessee, 2000), xxxi.

³⁴³ Conway, *Reconstruction of Georgia*, 156.

they could secure political seats if blacks were deterred from going to the polls. One tactic for Democrats was voter intimidation through acts of racial violence.

On the night of March 31, 1868, the Ku Klux Klan made its first appearance in Georgia. At the stroke of midnight, thirty to forty masked white men invaded the dwelling of Republican George W. Ashburn of Columbus, Georgia, where Ashburn was shot and killed by twelve to fifteen bullets.³⁴⁴ Ashburn was white, poor, and a former overseer of slaves, who ironically, was elected as a delegate by black Columbusites in December 1867 to represent their interest at the state and Republican Constitutional Convention. C. Mildred Thompson described Ashburn as the type of Radical leader murdered by Democrats: “a leader of the negro” and “lowest sort of white man,” living as a tenant within a boarding house owned by a black woman, Hanna Flourney.³⁴⁵

Following his return from the convention in Atlanta in March, Ashburn had become a target for white Democrats in Columbus. The political motive and main conspirators responsible for his murder have remained unsolved to this date. While the *Democratic Speaker* accused black and white Radicals of the murder the *Radical Rule*, reported that Democrats, both black and white, may have been responsible for Ashburn’s murder.³⁴⁶ Several historians posit various motives for Ashburn’s murder: miscegenation, voter intimidation, attempt to combat Loyal Leaguers’ influence over black voters, and an appearance by Nathan Bedford Forrest, founder of

³⁴⁴ For a transcribed account of the accused associated with the Ashburn murder see *Radical Rule: Military Outrage in Georgia Arrest of Columbus Prisoners* (Louisville, KY: J. P. Morton, 1868). See also Lee Formwalt, “The Ashburn Murder Case in Georgia Reconstruction,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 59 (3): 296-312; and Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Post-Emancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009) The number of individuals involved in the Ashburn murder varies by source. The accused puts the number at twenty to thirty persons. The accused may have lessened the number to protect those associated with the murder or to purposely create inconsistencies to prevent all individuals accused from being charged with the murder.

³⁴⁵ *Radical Rule*, 24, 43, and 44; and Thompson, *Reconstruction in Georgia*, 286.

³⁴⁶ A. R. Cazauran, *The Democratic Speaker's Hand-Book* (Cincinnati: Miami Print and Pub. Company, 1868), 155.

the Ku Klux Klan, in Columbus.³⁴⁷ However the *Radical Rule*, which offered a transcription of the persons taken in for questioning and detained at the Fort McPherson Barracks in Atlanta, provides some clues: One, Ashburn's influence over black voters; two, the likelihood of becoming elected to the Senate of the United States; and three, in the words of one of the accused, "He was highly opposed to the majority of the people, sir."³⁴⁸

From April to July, 1868, Ashburn's murder investigation became less about the political motives of the accused Democrats and more so about the alleged relationship between Ashburn and Flourney. Because Flourney was present the night of Ashburn's murder, conservatives hoped to defame and intimidate the star witness by circulating rumors the landowner-tenant relationship was a sexual interracial affair. Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, who shared the stage at a rally with Ashburn on the night of his murder, defended the character of both individuals by saying that Ashburn "was above such acts" and Flourney "too religious a woman to be guilty of it."³⁴⁹ Flourney, after suffering much humiliation and intimidation from conservatives, abandoned her Columbus property altogether and resettled in Atlanta.³⁵⁰

Enraged, blacks hoped to avenge Ashburn's death and to defend the honor of Ms. Flourney by conspiring to burn the city.³⁵¹ On April 1, 1868, within hours of learning of the murder, A.E. Williams of the Columbus-Eufaula emigration company hastily penned a letter to

³⁴⁷ Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Post-Emancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); and Eddy W. Davison and Daniel Foxx, *Nathan Bedford Forrest: In Search of the Enigma* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing, 2006).

³⁴⁸ *Radical Rule*. 4, 5, 18-20, 23, and 44

³⁴⁹ Quoted in Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom*, 197.

³⁵⁰ Tera W. Hunter, *To 'joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 33.

³⁵¹ *Radical Rule*, 44. To learn of other racial outrages in Georgia, particularly in areas where black emigration was present see the Ku Klux Klan Reports, Georgia; and United States, *Report on the Alleged Outrages in the Southern States* (Washington: G.P.O., 1871).

Coppinger about “this Secret Society the K.K.K. . . . going on outrageous.”³⁵² Incensed by the political and racial drama unfolding, Williams wrote, “Everybody wants to Leave This country.” He vented how he “sent three different petitions to Congress,” expressing the desire of blacks to leave the U.S. Disappointed – to say the least about Congress’ failure to financially support the efforts of the Society and to assist in black resettlement – Williams exclaimed how the ostensible – champions of freedmen, “Pretended friend Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner Did Not appreciate to Read them [the petition] in Congress.” Obviously hurt and disenchanted, Williams forewarned Coppinger, “I have Not any idea that they Will assist you in this Enterprise because they want us to keep them in office. . . . please send me word how we will get our transportation.”³⁵³

Williams was correct in his assessment of Congress. Despite blacks petitioning Congress from January to March 1868, the annual support of \$50,000 was denied to the ACS and discontinued from this point forward. Nevertheless, the emigrants prepared to leave for Africa.³⁵⁴ Unbeknownst to blacks from Columbus and Eufaula, the departure of the *Golconda* in May 1868 would be the last voyage to transport blacks from this region to Liberia through the auspices of the ACS.

Black Georgians Prepare for Departure to Liberia

³⁵² A.E. Williams to W. Coppinger, ACS Papers, April 1, 1866, Reel 102, Letter 1.

³⁵³ A.E. Williams to W. Coppinger, ACS Papers, April 1, 1866, Reel 102, Letter 1.

³⁵⁴ A.E. Williams to W. Coppinger, April 1, 1868, Reel 102, Letter 1, To see the various drafted petitioned by emigration advocates, see ACS African Repository, Vol. 44, 237, 240, and 252. In 1869, the ACS stated that the list of blacks in support of African emigration was 4,000 (The numbers, according to the ACS in various periodicals range from 2,000 to 7,500). See ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 45, 229.

While the accused men associated with Ashburn's murder were detained in Atlanta awaiting trial, blacks in Columbus prepared for emigration and the upcoming April election of 1868. With less than two weeks remaining before the state election, free transportation was offered by General O. O. Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau to all preparing to leave for Liberia.³⁵⁵ William Coppinger and Rev. McLain anticipated the arrival of over 600 passengers from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. Possibly because of the number of persons registered for passage from Georgia and to make it convenient for those from Mississippi and Alabama to sail out, transportation was arranged to leave from Savannah.

From April 12 to April 28, 1868, the ACS witnessed a decrease in the number of blacks Georgians who registered for the May 1868 departure. The reasons for this decrease included internal conflicts within local emigration companies, leaders rescinding their decision to leave for personal reasons, political drama on the federal, state, and local level, and the possibility of their lives improving following the state election.

Beginning first with the Columbus-Eufaula company, half of the 100 blacks registered to emigrate from Alabama reneged on their decision to leave on April 26 with their Columbus cohorts for Savannah, where they were scheduled to embark upon the *Golconda*. A.E. Williams, after expressing his displeasure with the death of Ashburn, the arrival of the KKK, and his disappointment with Congress not reading the petition to fund the ACS, informed Coppinger that the group's leader, Fort, had switched to the Democratic Party and was accused of conspiring with Coppinger to sell the passengers into slavery for \$1000.³⁵⁶ Williams, the second leader of the company, decided that he and his family would not leave as anticipated due to his wife's

³⁵⁵ War Department, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands to ACS, April 8, 1868. ACS Papers, Reel 102.

³⁵⁶ A.E. Williams, April 27, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 186.

pregnancy.³⁵⁷ Although Williams was unable to leave the United States as planned in May 1868, he promised to organize another company because blacks in Eufaula were still eager to emigrate with their Columbus allies. Williams penned to Coppinger on April 27, 1868, the following words:

My Dear Sir,

I am very sorry that you think that I have not sufficient character and a determination to go to Liberia. But my dear sir I written you my entire circumstances and also told you that I would raise a 50 nest [sic] fall and if you request me to raise another company write me how many I may raise and I will get as many as you desire. As everybody are anxious to go since Sunday morning and you must send me some more papers for information of those nest [sic] fall Mr. Fort had changed as he is what you call a Democrat and the colored peoples don't appreciate him.³⁵⁸

The concerns articulated by William, especially the murder of Ashburn, also influenced the number of applicants who left from Columbus. Initially, more than 400 black Columbusites registered for the May 1868 departure, but following the April election, the number was reduced to only 204.³⁵⁹ The emigration company in Sparta also became a victim of the changing political and social climate in Georgia. Pennington wrote "I fear we will not be able to send more than 40 old and young. Four days of elections this week has demoralized the negro, & made him hope for better things than Liberia."³⁶⁰ Although confident that all forty applicants were committed to leaving for Liberia, at the day of departure only twenty-five actually made the trip to

³⁵⁷Ibid., April 27, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 186 and 188.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., April 27, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 188.

³⁵⁹ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 173-177.

³⁶⁰ E. M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, April 24, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 179.

Savannah.³⁶¹ Despite the low turnout from Sparta, Pennington still believed he could muster up a second group for an anticipated November 1868 departure. Marion's numbers were reduced by only three passengers (total of thirty-seven passengers committed to leaving), and remained relatively consistent from recruitment to the day of departure, despite the challenges of being displaced and lacking adequate shelter during the winter months. Seventeen additional blacks from Augusta (5) and Savannah (12) joined the Georgia emigrants from Columbus, Sparta, and Marion right before departure, but their numbers were slightly higher a month prior.³⁶²

On May 1, 1868, a total of 451 emigrants from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and South Carolina arrived in Savannah to embark upon the Liberia-bound *Golconda* (see Table 5.1).³⁶³ Coppinger and Williams were upset with the low passenger turnout, especially after receiving over 2,000 signatures from blacks who supported emigrating to Africa. In a letter to Rev. McClain, Coppinger stated "you will perceive that there has been a large falling off and the indications are that our expected 650 will dwindle to 450!"³⁶⁴ He said he would "be glad if we now get off 500 all total. The recent election in this State has operated to produce this [result] among those pledged to go from Georgia."³⁶⁵ In response to the letter from Coppinger, Rev. McClain exclaimed that "I suppose there is no use writing to you after this date!"³⁶⁶ He continued by indicating "I received your telegram yesterday. I have been sad and disheartened ever since. . . . to the effect that while 2,000 were waiting to start we only had four

³⁶¹ E. M. Pendleton to W. Coppinger, April 29, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 179 and Letter 211. See also ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 180-181.

³⁶² ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 176-178, and 188.

³⁶³ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 173-183.

³⁶⁴ W. Coppinger to Rev. McLain, April 30, 1868, ACS Papers, Reel 102, Letter 216.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Rev. W. McClain to William Coppinger, May 2, 1868, Letter 226, Reel 102.

hundred fifty!”³⁶⁷ His anger more than likely was a result of his confronting the inevitable: the ACS could no longer compete with the policies being implemented by the Republican Party.

On May 14, 1868, the *Golconda* successfully sailed from Savannah to Liberia. Despite the disappointment in the low number of blacks who made the journey, the ACS was impressed by the character of those who left. Of the passengers, sixty-eight could read and forty could read and write. Of their occupations, sixty-five were farmers, eleven were carpenters, seven were blacksmiths, four were shoemakers, four were barbers, two were house painters, and two were confectioners. Also among the passengers were one plasterer, one brick-layer, one butcher, one coppersmith, and one engineer. Of the church communicants, sixty-two were Baptists and forty-four were Methodists. One of the five ministers aboard the *Golconda* was Rev. Judge Cook of the colored Baptist Church of Columbus, who encouraged thirty of his members to join him in Africa. The *African Repository* reported that the emigrants arrived prepared with tools to build Liberia. They came with “turning lathes and requisite machinery for grist and saw mills. . . . were taken by some of the well-to-do of them.” Women also came with their sewing machines.³⁶⁸

Their departure was bitter-sweet. While one group of African Americans remained to work toward acquiring full citizenship in the United States, a second group said their farewells and sailed to Liberia, where full citizenship was granted upon arrival. For Rev. Cook, his departure was indeed a special one. Before the ship sailed into the Atlantic Ocean, he offered a brief address before the emigrants left the wharf at Savannah. He stated that “his parents were torn from Africa and brought to the United States as slaves.” Believing in Divine Providence, he told a story of how his freedom and that of others leaving were “wrought out by the war,” and

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ ACS, *African Repository*, 188.

how he was going forth bearing a high civilization and the blessed religion to his brethren in Africa.³⁶⁹ For many emigrants like Rev. Cook, Africa was their Promised Land.

Conclusion

As seen in previous chapters, African Americans in Georgia proactively identified new ways to capitalize on political and economic opportunities during the early years of Reconstruction — supportive federal policy, inclusion within the political process, and full utilization of their freedom of movement. Although suffering from poverty, exploitative working conditions, and hostile southerners who vehemently objected to change in the social and political order, their actions exuded hope and at times yielded some semblance of success.

With passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the First and Second Reconstruction Acts in 1867, blacks finally had a voice in matters of politics and policy. Leaders in the African-American community encouraged black males to champion the Republican cause with the hope of obtaining a new state constitution, passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, access to land, and the right to hold public office. Still, some blacks in Columbus, Sparta, and Marion remained wary of Republican efforts to improve the lives of African Americans and continued to push for emigration.

³⁶⁹ ACS, *African Repository* 188-189.

In the minds of Rev. Judge Cook, Philip Monroe, and Seaborn Ashley, the political gains enjoyed by blacks during Reconstruction could not trump the lack of resources and opportunities undermining the ability of African Americans to be independent and self-sufficient. ACS members were also unimpressed by the actions of local and federal officials. They continued to aggressively push for blacks to consider emigration as the only viable means of obtaining the freedom they desperately wanted. Equally important, the ACS fully recognized the proverbial “writing on the wall” about the continued efficacy of their organization. With little to no support from Congress and the lack of private donors, it became apparent that the ACS was becoming a part of history as opposed to making history.

By May 1868, only half of the people who applied for transport actually left for Liberia. As the second wave came to a close, the spirit of emigration still lingered in the hearts and minds of blacks in Georgia and throughout the United States.

TABLE 5.1: NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS ABOARD THE *GOLCONDA*, MAY 1868

City, State of Emigrants	Number of Emigrants	Percentage
Columbus, GA	204	
Marion, GA	37	
Sparta, GA	25	
Savannah, GA	12	
Augusta, GA	5	
Georgia Total:	283	63%
Eufaula, AL	39	
Mobile, AL	12	
Alabama Total:	41	10%
Ridge, SC	65	15%
Columbus, MP	42	10%
Nashville, TN	9	2%
Washington, D.C.	1	-1%
TOTAL	451	100%

Source: ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 178-183, and 188.

EPILOGUE

Eric Foner notes that “the passage of the Reconstruction Act inspired blacks with a millennial sense of living at the dawn of a new era. Former slaves now stood on an equal footing with whites.”³⁷⁰ By 1867, Foner indicates, “politics emerged as the principal focus of black aspirations.”³⁷¹ This is definitely true in Georgia where black leaders rallied behind the Republican flag to persuade black male voters to support party efforts to rewrite the State Constitution, ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, and champion federal legislation that would improve the lives of African Americans. Through tireless campaigning and organizing, especially from the black church which was “the focal point of black political life during Reconstruction,” by April of the same year twenty nine African American males were elected to serve in the Georgia General Assembly.³⁷² Among those who were voted into office were Tunis Campbell, Aaron Campbell, and Rev. Henry McNeal Turner. Unfortunately, the sweetness of

³⁷⁰ Eric Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction: 1863-1867*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 124.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Edmund L. Drago, *Black Politicians & Reconstruction in Georgia: A Splendid Failure*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 20.

victory was short lived for both the new members of the state legislature and blacks who sought inroads within the political process.

In July 1868, the men accused of murdering George Ashburn were released by Columbus authorities. The entire handling of the murder was dubious at best, orchestrated at worst. Edmund L. Drago recounts that “despite the testimony of eyewitnesses to the killing, a local jury ruled that he had died by shots fired by persons unknown. The military intervened and arrested a number of suspects but when Georgia was readmitted into the Union, the defendants were turned over to civilian authorities in Columbus who dropped the matter.”³⁷³ Drago further points out that “the black politician was the special object of the conservatives’ campaign of violence and intimidation.” To his knowledge, “at least one-fourth of Georgia’s black legislators were threatened, bribed, beaten, jailed, or killed during the period.”³⁷⁴

September 19, 1868, witnessed a horrific race riot in Camilla, Georgia where seven blacks were killed. African Americans in Camilla were attending a political rally when whites began to open fire on them. A reason for the attack was “the anti-Negro rhetoric of the conservative politicians and press [which] fostered a climate hostile to blacks.”³⁷⁵

In the same month, the twenty nine black state legislators were removed from office by Democratic opposition despite there being a Republican majority in both chambers. Democrats were able to easily destroy the weak alliance between black and white Republicans, especially with the assistance of a Democratic leaning newspapers launching “a vitriolic attack on the evils of “negro government.”³⁷⁶ The pressure mounted by the minority party and their public

³⁷³ Ibid., 145.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 146.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 51.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 48.

supporters led to Republicans voting to oust their own party members from office. The “final vote in the house was eighty-three to twenty-three in favor of expulsion, with thirty Republicans supporting the measure or declining to vote.”³⁷⁷

As the challenges to black political inclusion and representation mounted, so too did the difficulties of continuing the emigration movement. In 1868, the ACS again tried to lobby for federal funding to supplement the \$55,000 estimated annual cost for transporting blacks to Liberia. Specifically the requested funds would assist the organization in carrying the mail monthly to and from Liberia, sailing vessels, and \$100 for each emigrant. Their request fell on deaf ears as the focus for Congress was Reconstruction and maintaining political power through black enfranchisement. In an act of desperation, the ACS sold their Illinois property of 330 acres for \$8,000.³⁷⁸

The commitment of Republicans in Congress to protect their political interests was evident with passage of the Congressional Reorganization Act of 1869. Under this law, “the Georgia Legislature of 1868 was reconvened, the expelled blacks reseated, and a number of Democrats purged under the terms of the Fourteenth Amendment.”³⁷⁹ Again, victory was short lived. Drago states that “the Congressional Reorganization Act of 1869 only delayed Bullock’s ultimate defeat. The Democrats, with the support of the Ku Klux Klan, had reduced the Republican vote to the point where a Democratic victory in the December 1870 elections as a foregone conclusion.”³⁸⁰

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 49.

³⁷⁸ ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 43, 80-81, 237-240, and 252-254.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 55-56.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 57.

By January 1871, Democrats regained political power in Georgia through an alliance of politics, propaganda, and terror. Just five years earlier, the political environment in Georgia, at least to blacks, had become more inclusive and full of opportunity. In the new decade, political tension, violence, and exclusion became the new norm.

During this period of political setbacks, blacks in Georgia continued to express an interest to emigrate from the United States. In 1871, sixty six Georgians from Sparta and Savannah emigrated to Liberia. In 1872, 150 from Valdosta, Sparta, Milledgeville, and Hawkinsville left for the West African nation as well. Unbeknownst to them, they would be the last group of emigrants to leave Georgia during Reconstruction.³⁸¹

With economic, social, and political conditions worsening for African Americans in Georgia, emigration again became a popular alternative. But by the 1870s, the ACS was incapable of providing financial support to emigrants thereby requiring blacks to rely upon themselves to organize and fund their own emigration movement. In 1878, Martin Delany became a staunch supporter of the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Exchange Company comprised of black investors who purchased a ship called the *Azor* to transport blacks to Liberia. As with any new endeavor there were challenges to overcome. The leaders of the company were unable to surmount them. First, they were unprepared to deal with the great demand from blacks throughout the South. Over 200 blacks embarked upon the ship, but approximately 300 potential passengers were stranded on the port with no chance of sailing on the *Azor* since it made only one trip. Second, the company was inexperienced in transporting passengers to Liberia resulting in several individuals dying, becoming ill, or returning back to the United States. Nell Irvin Painter offers a telling account of the failed *Azor* sailing in her work *Exodusters: Black*

³⁸¹ ACS, African Repository, Vol. 47, 355-357; and Ibid., Vol. 48, 355-358.

Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction:

The apparent success of the *Azor's* departure soon faded in delays, deaths, and unexpected expenses incurred in Sierra Leone. After a passage of forty-two days, the emigrants arrived in Liberia, short of money and supplies. The disastrous crossing devastated the hundreds still waiting to leave for Liberia, for the debt-ridden *Azor* made just one trip.³⁸²

Yet, despite the failures incurred by Delany and the company, blacks continued to express an interest in emigration.

Considering the limited opportunities for transatlantic emigration, many blacks chose to migrate to Arkansas and Kansas. In the 1870s, Benjamin “Pap” Singleton launched a Kansas emigration movement where thousands of blacks chose to leave the South for opportunities to own land and be self-sufficient. While black southerners focused on Liberia, “blacks in Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee established small colonies on the western prairies or in Kansas cities and towns.”³⁸³ By 1879, “the Kansas Fever Exodus – the most remarkable migration in the United States after the Civil War – took some six thousand Blacks from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to Kansas in the space of a few months.”³⁸⁴

In the late nineteenth century there was another attempt by blacks to organize and fund an emigration movement to Liberia. Rev. Henry McNeal Turner, who thirty years earlier had advocated for African Americans to leave the United States, was again at the forefront of this third wave. For Turner, his “dream came to fruition in January 1894 with the chartering of the International Migration Society, which was owned and led by four white businessmen of Birmingham, Alabama.”³⁸⁵ To fund the movement, “applicants for emigration could join the

³⁸² Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 139.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 146.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 185.

IMS for a one dollar membership fee and then make monthly payments of a dollar or more until they accumulated forty dollars. For that amount the IMS promised to transport the emigrant and provide three months of support in Liberia.”³⁸⁶ His society sponsored two voyages in 1895 and 1896 to Liberia carrying a total of 500 passengers. Like the Liberian Exodus, this emigration company was also ill prepared to transport blacks to Africa. Many of the passengers suffered from disease and a number of them returned. Specifically, “upon arrival on the shores of Africa, the emigrants endured another round of confusion and disorganization on the part of the IMS.”³⁸⁷

The African American Emigration Movement in Georgia endured for almost two centuries under the auspices of various organizations, supporters, and leaders. It is a clear and resounding example of black discontentment with their political and socioeconomic condition in American society and willingness to act in their own self-interest. For a movement to sustain itself as long as the African American Emigration Movement did, there must have been the continued existence of strong motivational factors that drove blacks towards fully embracing emigration as the only pathway towards freedom.

A major factor pushing African Americans to emigrate was the harsh and limiting economic conditions of post-Civil War Georgia that forced many blacks into abject poverty. White landowners used the law and terror to coerce freedmen back into fields as paid laborers while Republican leaders in Congress ignored pleas for blacks to acquire homesteads as a means of securing their independence and preserving their freedom. Another reason was the lack of confidence some blacks had in whites to support them as they transitioned to becoming citizens of the United States. Their wariness was mostly directed to two groups, white landowners and

³⁸⁵ Kenneth C. Barnes, *Journey of Hope: The Back to Africa Movement in Arkansas in the Late 1800s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 137.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 140.

white politicians. Both had a vested interest in determining the scope and depth of African American autonomy. Last, the constant presence of racial violence and hostility dulled the luster of emancipation and eventual citizenship. Any action taken to improve the political, social, economic, and educational condition of blacks was countered with swift and unrelenting brutality.

The difficult and challenging transition from “slavery to freedom” did bear positive fruit for African Americans. During Reconstruction, the building blocks towards developing strong communities emerged—churches, schools, newspapers, skilled professionals, advocacy organizations—all playing a major role in the transition and transformation process. Yet, there was a significant segment of the population, especially in Georgia, who wanted more than the United States was willing to offer. They were tired of waiting, tired of hoping, tired of preparing for a tomorrow reflective of the dreams they desired today. In Liberia, blacks would not be regulated to second class citizenship nor be at the mercy of white landowners and politicians. In Liberia, they could live as free people who were the masters of their own destiny. This is the story of the thousands of black Georgians who, during Reconstruction, looked eastward to find home.

APPENDIX: LIST OF EMIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA TO LIBERIA, 1866-1868

November 21, 1866, *Golconda*, From Macon, Georgia; Destination: Sinoa, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Family	Occupation	Education	Religion
Aikens, Albert	9	M	Son			Baptist
Aikens, Albert	45	M	Father	wheelwright	Reads	Baptist
Aikens, Amzi Neely	1	M	Son			Baptist
Aikens, Barbelia	6	M	Son			Baptist
Aikens, Mary Jane	14	F	daughter		Reads	Baptist
Aikens, Susan	42	F	mother			Baptist
Allen, Dennis	50	M	father	male laborer		Baptist
Allen, Jane	40	F	mother			Baptist
Barner, Aba	99	M	father			Baptist
Barner, Anika	50	F	daughter			Methodist
Barner, David	15	M	grandson			Methodist
Barner, Frederick	59	M	Son	miller	Reads	Methodist
Barner, George	1	M	g.g.grand- son			Methodist
Barner, Georgiana	20	F	grand- daughter			Methodist
Barner, Joseph	21	M	grandson	shoemaker		Methodist
Barner, Tarah	50	M	Son			Baptist
Bigham, Elizabeth	20	F	mother			Presbyterian
Bigham, Richard	28	M	father	shoemaker	Writes	Presbyterian
Bigham, Tarah	11	F	son		Reads	Presbyterian
Bowyer, Catharine	9	F	daughter			Presbyterian
Bowyer, Cornelia	30	F	mother		Reads	Presbyterian

Bowyer, Jane	50	F	mother			
Bowyer, Julius	15	M	Son			
Bowyer, Louis	35	M	father	wheelwright	Reads	Presbyterian
Bowyer, Sarah	13	F	daughter			Presbyterian
Bowyer, Susan	11	F	daughter			Presbyterian
Bradford, Chas	1	M	son			Baptist
Bradford, Delphi	28	F	mother			Baptist
Bradford, Franklin	9	M	son			Baptist
Bradford, George	39	M	father			Baptist
Bradford, Thomas	2	M	son			Baptist
Brookins, Merida	15	M				
Brown, Abraham	54	M	son	farmer		
Brown, Charlotte	44	F	mother			
Brown, Charlotte	22	F	grand-daughter			
Brown, Flora	17	F	grand-daughter		Reads	
Brown, Hester	40	F				Baptist
Brown, Jane	23	F	grand-daughter			
Brown, Jane	9	F	grand-daughter			
Brown, Joseph	13	M	grandson			
Brown, Leonidas	18	M				Baptist
Brown, Lewis	19	M	grandson			
Brown, Mary	54	F	daughter			
Brown, Mary	20	F	grand-daughter			
Brown, Rebecca	23	F	grand-daughter			Baptist
Brown, Richard	9	M	grandson			
Brown, Rynear	40	F	daughter			
Brown, Vandery	11	M	grandson			
Brown, William	25	M		male laborer		Baptist
Butler, Agnes	47	F	mother		Reads	Baptist
Butler, Agnes	1	F	grand-daughter			Baptist
Butler, Andrew	23	M	son	farmer	Writes	Baptist
Butler, Benjamin	50	M	father	Male laborer		Baptist
Butler, Clarissa	12	F	daughter		Reads	Baptist
Butler, Maria	23	F	daughter		Reads	Baptist
Butler, Martha	14	F	daughter			Baptist
Butler, Patsy	27	F	daughter			Baptist
Butler, Perry	27	M	son	farmer		Baptist
Butler, Susan	18	F	daughter		Reads	

Cain, Abraham	30	M		Male laborer		Methodist
Cato, Emma	15	F				
Crawford, Eliza	25	F	mother		Reads	Baptist
Crawford, Pleasant	38	M	father	cook		Baptist
Crutchfield, Henry	19	M		Male laborer		
Demours, Betty*****	10 0	F				Baptist
Denis, Harriet	32	F	mother			Baptist
Denis, Robert	35	M	father	farmer		
Denis, William	10	M	son			
Ellen, Charlotte	30	F	mother			Methodist
Ellen, Daniel	9	M	son			Baptist
Ellen, Elizabeth	1	F	daughter			Baptist
Ellen, Emma	6	F	daughter			Baptist
Ellen, Harriet	12	F	daughter			Baptist
Ellen, Henry	38	M	father	male laborer	reads	Baptist
Ellen, Julia	9	F	daughter			Baptist
Flagg, Chloe	55	F	mother			Baptist
Flagg, Elizabeth	8	F	daughter			Baptist
Flagg, Franklin	15	M	son		writes	Baptist
Ford, Elizabeth	45	F	Mother			
Ford, Franklin	21	M	Son	Farmer		
Ford, George B	18	M	Son			
Ford, James	50	M	Father	Male laborer		
Ford, Mary Ann	20	F	Daughter			
Giles, Sophia	30	F	mother			Baptist
Giles, William	40	M	father	Male laborer	Reads	Baptist
Grant, Berrian	19	M		Male laborer		
Green, Anna	18	F	mother			Baptist
Green, Joshua	21	M	father	farmer		Baptist
Harman, Amanda	7	F	daughter			Baptist
Harman, Elmira	30	F	mother			Baptist
Harman, Green	39	M	father	carpenter		Baptist
Harman, Mary Eliza	8	F	daughter			Baptist
Harman, Simeon	13	M	son			Baptist
Harrison, Matilda	30	F				Baptist
Haynes, Robert	10	M				
Higgins, Henry	26	M		blacksmith		Baptist
Hill, Merida	39	M	father	farmer	reads	Baptist
Hill, Priscilla	35	F	mother			Baptist
Hill, Robert	11	M	son			Baptist
Hill, Rosetta	12	F	daughter			Baptist
Hubbard, Wesley	24	M		shoemaker	reads	Methodist
Hughes, Abraham L	0	M	son			
Hughes, Alexander	28	M	father	farmer		

Hughes, David	40	M	father	farmer	reads	Methodist
Hughes, Diana	20	F	daughter			Methodist
Hughes, Doctor	13	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, Eliza	19	F	mother			
Hughes, Ellen	4	F	daughter			Methodist
Hughes, Emily	8	F	daughter			Methodist
Hughes, Henry	15	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, James	12	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, John	6	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, Julia	7	F	daughter			Methodist
Hughes, Richard	24	M		farmer		Methodist
Hughes, Sarah	14	F	Daughter			Methodist
Hughes, Sarah	38	F	mother			Methodist
Hughes, Sweet	2	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, Wallace	4	M	son			Methodist
Hughes, William	18	M	son			Methodist
Hutchins, Annie	1	F	daughter			Methodist
Hutchins, Ellen	20	F	mother		writes	Methodist
Hutchins, William	25	M	father	wheelwright	reads	Methodist
Jacobs, Catharine	3	F	daughter			
Jacobs, Olive	26	F	mother			
James, John	45	M	father	carpenter	reads	Baptist
James, Lettie	28	F	mother		reads	Baptist
Jenkins, Ceaser	34	M		Male laborer		
Johnson, Andre	2	M	son			
Johnson, Andrea	19	M	son			
Johnson, Anna	19	F	daughter			
Johnson, Archer	15	M	son			
Johnson, Cornelia	1	F	daughter			
Johnson, Emma	19	F	mother			
Johnson, Frances	27	F	mother		reads	Baptist
Johnson, Jesse	43	M	father	waterman		Baptist
Johnson, Jesse	21	M	father	Male laborer		
Johnson, John	40	M	father			Methodist
Johnson, John Henry	17	M	son			
Johnson, Maria	38	F	mother			Baptist
Johnson, Robert	2	M	son			
Johnson, William	19	M	son			
King, Albert	35	M	father	male laborer		
King, Jane	23	F	mother			
King, Sarah	3	F	daughter			
Leary, Wesley	20	M		male laborer		
Lewis, Elizabeth	40	F				Baptist
Mitchell, Doctor	30	M	son	Male laborer	reads	Episcopal
Mitchell, Elizabeth	18	F	mother			Baptist

Mitchell, Fanny	19	F	daughter			
Mitchell, John	20	M	son			Baptist
Mitchell, Louisa	0	F	daughter			
Mitchell, Nathan	30	M	father	carpenter		Methodist
Mitchell, Samuel	56	M	father	carpenter		Baptist
Moore, Eliza	50	F	mother			Baptist
Moore, Franklin	17	M	son			Baptist
Moore, Wyatt	45	M	father	farmer	writes	Baptist
Muscard, Cornelia	30	F			reads	Baptist
Osgood, Sidney	29	M		shoemaker		
Owens, Robert	38	M		Male laborer		Methodist
Peppers, William	25	M		Carpenter	Writes	Presbyterian
Peters, George	2	M	son			Baptist
Peters, Henry	27	M	father	Male laborer		Baptist
Peters, Susan	25	F	mother			Baptist
Rawls, Alice	42	F	mother			Baptist
Rawls, Elmira	7	F	daughter			Baptist
Rawls, Harriet	9	F	daughter			Baptist
Rawls, Isaac	14	M	son			Baptist
Rawls, John	44	M	father	carpenter	reads	Baptist
Rawls, Peter	5	M	son			Baptist
Rawls, Rasbury	16	M	son			Baptist
Rawls, Susan	15	F	daughter			Baptist
Richards, Eliza	50	F	mother			Baptist
Richards, Harriet	14	F	daughter		reads	Baptist
Richards, Nellie	19	F	daughter		reads	Baptist
Richards, Rynear	18	F	daughter			Baptist
Richards, Scipio	17	M	Son		reads	Baptist
Richards, Stephen	60	M	father	brickworker		Baptist
Robertson, Celia	20	F	mother			Baptist
Robertson, Emma	1	F	daughter			Baptist
Robertson, Frederick	24	M	Father	brickworker		Baptist
Robins, Edward	6	M	Son			Methodist
Robins, George	23	M	Father	wheelwright		Methodist
Robins, Mary Ann	20	F	mother			Methodist
Robins, William	3	M	Son			Methodist
Robinson, Jack	49	M	Father	preacher	reads	Baptist
Robinson, Julia	35	F	mother			Baptist
Rogers, Jesse	59	M		preacher		Baptist
Smith, Fanny	30	F				
Wells, Howard J.	19	M		male laborer	Writes	
Wiley, Robert	35	M				
Williams, Henry	21	M		Farmer		
Williams, Roberts	13	M				
Unknown						

Unknown						
Total: 194						

ACS, African Repository, Vol. 42, 11-14.

May 30, 1867, *Golconda*, From Columbus, Georgia; Destination: Sinoa, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relationship	Occupation	Education	Religion
Howard, Alfred	21	M		farmer		
Jackson, Frances	40	F	Mother			Baptist
Simpson, Elizabeth	5	F	Granddaughter			
Simpson, Francis	25	M	Son	farmer	writes	
Simpson, Gabriel D.	2	M	grandson			
Simpson, John F.	52	M	Father	farmer	reads	
Simpson, Joseph D.	5	M	Grandson			
Simpson, Maria	24	F	Daughter			
Simpson, Sarah D.	25	F	Daughter		reads	
Simpson, Thomas	15	M			writes	
Total: 8						

Source: ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 210.

May 30, 1867, *Golconda*, From Macon, Georgia; Destination: Sinoa, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relationship	Occupation	Education	Religion
Beal, Daniel	9	M	Son			
Beal, Julia	4	F	Daughter			
Beal, Mary	30	F	Mother			
Bigham, Eliza	24	F	Mother			
Bigham, John William	1	M	Son			
Bigham, John	38	M	Father	painter		
Bookter, Emma	12	F	Daughter		writes	
Bookter, Jackson	48	M	Father	carpenter	writes	Baptist
Bookter, Martha	35	F	Mother			Presbyterian
Cuthbert, Margaret	18	F	Mother			
Cuthbert, Walter Marson	1	M	Son			
Davis, Mary C.	9	F	Daughter		reads	
Davis, Sarah J.	27	F	Mother			Methodist
Davis, Henry	36	M		blacksmith		Methodist
Davis, Henry	22	M		engineer		
Driver, Lucinda	48	F				Methodist
Jackson, Andrew	38	M	Father	engineer		Baptist
Jackson, Frances	40	F	Mother			Baptist
Locket, Decatur	10	M	Son			Baptist
Locket, Martina	35	F	Mother			Baptist
Locket, Wilfred	40	M	Father	laborer		Baptist
Mills, Chelson	41	M	Father	farmer		Baptist
Mills, Maria	40	F	Mother			Baptist
Mills, Wiley	16	M	Son		reads	Baptist

Rivers, Elmira	25	F	Mother			
Rivers, Monroe	40	M	Father	farmer		
Sherman, Charles A.	2	M	Son			Presbyterian
Sherman, Hosea	10	M	Son		reads	Presbyterian
Sherman, Ida	12	F	Daughter		reads	Presbyterian
Sherman, John M.	4	M	Son			Baptist
Sherman, Letice	34	F	Mother			Baptist
Sherman, Lewis	37	M	Father	painter	reads	Presbyterian
Sherman, Lewis Jr.	18	M	Son		writes	Presbyterian
Sherman, Lizzie	1	F	Daughter			Baptist
Sherman, Maria S.	8	F	Daughter		reads	Presbyterian
Sherman, Sarah	15	F	Daughter			Baptist
Sherman, Uzeil	33	M	Father	carpenter	reads	Baptist
Spicer, Eder	36	M		barber	reads	
Spicer, Rebecca	18	F			reads	
Williams, Adeline	15	F				Presbyterian
Williams, Charles	23	M		Cook		Presbyterian
Williams, Mary J.	1	F				Presbyterian
Williams, Nancy	7	F				Presbyterian
Wingfield, Henry	31	M	Father	cabinetmaker		Presbyterian
Wingfield, Mary	30	F	Mother			Presbyterian
Total: 45						

ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 210-211

November 18, 1867; *Golconda*, From Columbus, Georgia to Bexley, Grand Bassa County, Liberia .

Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Education	Literacy	Religion
Abercrombie, Caroline	13	F	daughter		writes	Methodist
Abercrombie, Chapman	47	M	Father	Bridgebuilder		Methodist
Abercrombie, Elizabeth	34	F	mother			Methodist
Abercrombie, Lula	11	F	daughter		writes	Methodist
Abercrombie, Rebecca	1	F	daughter			Methodist
Abercrombie, Sarah	7	F	daughter			Methodist
Abercrombie, Sophia	5	F	daughter			Methodist
Abraham, Fanny	32	F				Methodist
Alexander, Calvin	17	M			writes	
Andrews, Ann	13	F	daughter			Methodist
Andrews, Caswell	35	M	Father	farmer		Methodist
Andrews, Martha	35	F	mother			
Bell, Henry	25	M	Father	Farmer		
Bell, Mary A.	42	F	mother		reads	Methodist
Bell, Nora	22	F	daughter		writes	Methodist
Bell, Rosetta	19	F	mother			
Bell, Stewart	16	M	son		writes	Methodist
Berry, Albert	58	M		farmer	reads	Methodist
Blakely, Clarissa	60	F				Methodist
Borders, Harriet	16	F	daughter			Baptist
Borders, Ida	11	F	daughter			Baptist
Borders, Lavinia	21	F	Daughter			Baptist
Borders, Priscilla	48	F	mother			Baptist
Borders, Shadrack	30	M	son	farmer		Baptist

Breedlove, Edom	24	M		Male laborer		
Brooks, Ariminta C.	32	F	mother		writes	Baptist
Brooks, William J.	42	M	father	cook	writes	Baptist
Carns, Anderson	8	M	son			Baptist
Carns, Benjamin	17	M	son			Baptist
Carns, Caroline	11	F	daughter			Baptist
Carns, Flora	16	F	daughter			Baptist
Carns, Lucy	48	F	mother			Baptist
Carns, Samuel	3	M	son			Baptist
Carns, Viry	13	M	son			Baptist
Carns, William B	1	M	son			Baptist
Carter, Randall	20	M		shoemakers	reads	
Covington, Dinah	19	F	mother			
Covington, Ella	2	F	daughter			
Covington, Warrick	31	M	father	farmer	reads	
Covington, William	0	M	son			
David, Nathan	21	M		farmer		
Dunwoody, Frances	16	F	mother		writes	
Dunwoody, Peter	19	M	father	farmer	writes	
Green, Alexander	22	M		farmer		
Green, David	45	M	son	brickworker		Methodist
Green, Eliza	60	F	mother			Methodist
Green, Emily	15	F	granddaughter			Methodist
Green, Ester	23	F	daughter			Methodist
Green, Isaac	40	M	son	farmer		Methodist
Harris, Adeline	30	F	mother			Baptist
Harris, George	8	M	son			Baptist
Harris, John	21	M		farmer		
Harris, Robert	5	M	son			Baptist
Harris, Sarah	10	F	daughter			Baptist
Herron, Abraham	16	M	Son			Methodists
Herron, Alexander	45	M	father	preacher	Writes	Methodists
Herron, Catherine	35	F	mother			Methodists
Herron, Charles	1	M	son			Methodists
Herron, Cornelia	22	F	daughter		Writes	Methodists
Herron, David M.C. J.	19	M	son		Reads	Methodists
Herron, Delia S.	12	F	Daughter		Reads	Methodists
Herron, Emma	13	M	daughter		Reads	Methodists
Herron, Henry T.	7	M	Son			Methodists
Herron, John W.	19	M	Son		Reads	Methodists
Herron, Joseph	17	M	son			Methodists
Herron, Matthew	5	M	Son			Methodists
Herron, Robert	8	M	Son			Methodists
Herron, Charles	1	M	Son			Methodists

Howard, Celia	60	F	Sister			Methodist
Howard, Frank	1	M	Son			
Howard, Henry	6	M	Son			
Howard, Jacob	26	M	Father	farmer		Baptist
Howard, Kitty	70	F	Sister			Baptist
Howard, Mary	21	F	Mother			
Howard, Thomas	8	M	Son			
Irvy, David	13	M	Son			Baptist
Irvy, Elijah	9	M	Son			Baptist
Irvy, John	54	M	Father	farmer	Reads	B
Irvy, Martha	40	F	Mother			
Irvy, Simon	17	M	Father			
Jackson, Andrew	29	M	Father	farmer		
Jackson, Emily	23	F	Mother			
Jackson, George	5	M	Son			
Johnson, Benjamin	25	M		carpenter	writes	Baptist
Johnson, Cudgel	35	M		farmer	reads	Methodist
Johnson, Cudgel, Jr.	16	M			reads	Methodist
Johnson, David	8	M				Methodist
Johnson, George	13	M				Methodist
Johnson, Hannah	30	F				
Johnson, Patsy	27	F				Methodist
Johnson, William	12	M				Methodist
Jones, Amy	27	F	mother			Methodist
Jones, Cary	29	M	father	farmer	reads	
Jones, David	41	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Jones, Frances	2	F	daughter			
Jones, Franklin	1	M	son			Methodist
Jones, Jesse	10	M	son			Baptist
Jones, Leathy	65	F	mother			Baptist
Jones, Martha	23	F	mother			
Jones, Nicy	16	M	son			Baptist
Jones, Peter	3	M	son			Methodist
Jones, Rebecca	5	F	daughter			Methodist
Jones, Samuel	70	M	father			Baptist
Jones, Smith	17	M	son			Baptist
Jones, Susan	11	F	daughter			Methodist
Jones, William	24	M		farmer		Baptist
King, Cephas	4	M				Baptist
King, Charles	12	M				Baptist
King, Frank	16	M				Baptist
King, George	18	M				Baptist
King, Jefferson	6	M				Baptist
King, Teresa	2	F				Baptist
King, Violet	34	F				Baptist

King, William	25	M		farmer		Baptist
Lamar, Anna	26	F	sister		reads	Methodist
Lamar, Chesley	15	M	brother		writes	Methodist
Lewis, Chancy	53	F	mother			Baptist
Lewis, Henry	30	M	father	gardener		Methodist
Lewis, Henry	4	M	son			Methodist
Lewis, Mary	11	F	daughter			Methodist
Lewis, Octavia	9	F	daughter			Methodist
Lewis, Sarah	28	F	mother		reads	Methodist
Lewis, William	47	M	father	preacher	reads	Baptist
Marks, Charles	7	M	grandson			Methodist
Marks, James	13	M	grandson			Methodist
Marks, Jeremiah	56	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Marks, Laura	2	F	granddaughter			Methodist
Marks, Lewis	8	M	grandson			Methodist
Marks, Margaret	29	F	daughter			Methodist
Marks, Morris	6	M	grandson			Methodist
Marks, Rayford	10	M	grandson			Methodist
Marks, Victoria	4	F	granddaughter			Methodist
McAllister, Louisa	62	F	mother		reads	Methodist
McAllister, Mingo	57	M	father	miller	reads	Presbyterian
McDaniel, James	29	M		farmer		Baptist
McDaniel, Jane	16	F				Baptist
McDaniel, January	23	M		farmer		Baptist
McDaniel, Martha	5	F	daughter			Baptist
McDaniel, Mary	36	F				Baptist
McDaniel, Milly	12	F				Baptist
McDaniel, Washington	22	M		farmer		Baptist
Miles, James	22	M		brickworker	reads	Methodist
Moore, Eugene	24	M	father	farmer		Baptist
Moore, Harriet	29	F	mother			Baptist
Moore, Walter	10	M				Baptist
Moore, Jeanet	8	F				Baptist
Perry, Edmond	21	M		farmer		
Perry, Emma	5	F	daughter			
Perry, Green	28	M	father	farmer		
Perry, Henrietta	0	F	daughter			
Perry, Henry E.	8	M	son			
Perry, Jane	11	F	daughter			
Perry, Mahala	25	F	mother			
Pierce, Emma	19	F	daughter			Methodist
Pierce, Fanny	27	F	daughter			Methodist
Pierce, Mary	4	F	granddaughter			Methodist
Pierce, Nelson	68	M	father	farmer		Methodist

Pierce, Richard	32	M	son	farmer		Methodist
Potter, Frances	45	M	mother			Methodist
Potter, James	51	F	father	farmer	reads	Methodist
Potter, Richard	22	M	Son	farmer		Methodist
Raglan, Aquilla	13	M	son	farmer	reads	Methodist
Raglan, Daniel	20	M	son		reads	Methodist
Raglan, Eliza	16	F	daughter	farmer	reads	Methodist
Raglan, Eliza	48	F	mother			Methodist
Raglan, Mary	48	F	Mother			Methodist
Raglan, William Henry	½	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Albertius	12	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Alice	4	F	daughter			Methodist
Riley, David	8	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Floyd	17	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Frances	22	F	daughter			Methodist
Riley, Howard	2	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Joseph	39	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Riley, Maria	40	F	mother			Methodist
Riley, Nelson	15	M	son			Methodist
Riley, Seaborn	19	M	son	farmer		Methodist
Roberts, Amanda	39	F	mother			
Roberts, Jefferson	7	M	son			
Roberts, Levi	19	M	son			
Roberts, Mary	2	F	daughter			
Roberts, Nancy	5	F	daughter			
Roberts, Robert	43	M	father	farmer		
Roberts, Robert Jr.	½	M	son			
Shelton, Abraham	31	M		brickworker	reads	Methodist
Shelton, Alfred	25	M	father	farmer		
Shelton, Bertha	2	F	daughter			
Shelton, Frances	40	F				Methodist
Shelton, Hannah	5	F	daughter			
Shelton, Priscilla	24	F	mother			
Shelton, Rosa	18	F			reads	Methodist
Shivers, Arthur	72	M	father	preacher	writes	Baptist
Shivers, Celia	71	F	mother			Baptist
Simpson, Elizabeth	5	F	granddaughter			
Simpson, Francis	25	M	son	farmer	writes	
Simpson, Gabriel D.	2	M	grandson			
Simpson, Maria	24	F	daughter		reads	
Simpson, Sarah D.	25	F	daughter		writes	
Smith, William	20	M		farmer		
Smith, William	19	M		farmer	reads	

Snell, James	19	M		male laborer		
Snow Adaline	24	F	daughter			Baptist
Snow, Cyrus	7	M	grandson			Baptist
Snow, Lerick	51	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Snow, Mahalia	4	F	granddaughter			Baptist
Sullivan, Eliza	23	F	mother			Methodist
Sullivan, Richard	28	M	father	blacksmith		Methodist
Tate, Charles	9	M				
Tate, Fanny	7	F				
Tate, Harriet	11	F				
Tate, Ida	5	F				
Tate, Major	45	M		farmer		
Tate, Major F.	3	M				
Tate, Mary	25	F				
Tate, Wiley	0	M				
Teasdale, Katy	60	F				
Tomlin, Charity	42	F	mother			Methodist
Tomlin, Jeremiah	58	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Trawick, Jane	22	F	mother			Methodist
Trawick, Jeremiah	27	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Watson, Amanda	38	F	mother			Baptist
Watson, Emanuel	40	M	father	farmer	reads	Baptist
Watson, Frances	17	F	daughter			Baptist
Watson, James	8	M	Son			Baptist
Watson, Watt	13	M	Son			Baptist
Whittaker, Hannah A.	30	F	Mother			Methodist
Whittaker, Joseph G.	26	M	Father	carpenter	reads	Methodist
Williams, Violet	58	F				
Wilson, Chaney	60	F				Baptist
Winston, Edmond	1	M	Son			Baptist
Winston, Frances	11	F	daughter			Baptist
Winston, Georgia	8	F	daughter			Baptist
Winston, James	51	M	Father	farmer		Baptist
Winston, James	6	M	Son			Baptist
Winston, Lydia	35	F	Mother			Baptist
Winston, Sarah	4	F	daughter			Baptist
Wright, Antoinette	1	F	daughter			Methodist
Wright, Emma	3	F	daughter			Methodist
Wright, James	35	M	Father	Farmer		Methodist
Wright, Lavinia	13	F	daughter			Methodist
Wright, Martha	5	F	daughter			Methodist
Wright, Mary	32	F	Mother			Methodist
Total: 235						

Source: ACS, African Repository, Vol. 43, 366-370.

November 20, 1867, *Golconda*, From Macon, Georgia; Destination: Bexley, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relationship	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Irwin, Dorcas	40	F	Mother		Reads	Methodists
Irwin, Sampson	45	M	Father	Carpenter		Methodists
Total: 2						

May 14, 1868, Golconda, From Augusta, Georgia; Destination: Monrovia, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relation	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Davis, John L.	35	M	Father	Shoemaker	Writes	Baptist
Davis, Rachel	19	F	Mother		Writes	Methodist
Grant, John L.	35	M		Shoemaker	Writes	Methodist
Hammond, James B.	28	M		Farmer		Methodist
Summerville, Joseph	21	M		Bricklayer		
Total: 5						

Source, African Repository, Vol . 44, 180.

May 14, 1868, *Golconda*, From Columbus, Georgia; Destination: Bexley, Grand Bassa County, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relationship	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Adams, Martha	70	F				Baptist
Avery, Cornelius	20	M		farmer		Methodist
Avery, Frances	16	F				Methodist
Avery, Henrietta	10	F				Methodist
Avery, Lankin	2	M				Methodist
Avery, Laura	12	F				Methodist
Avery, Rebecca	30	F				Methodist
Avery, Sanders	18	M		farmer		Methodist
Avery, Sarah	14	F				Methodist
Avery, Tony	40	M		farmer		Methodist
Banks, Eliza	45	F	Mother			Methodist
Banks, Richard	4.9	M	Father	carpenter		Methodist
Barfield, Louisa	23	F	Mother			Baptist
Barfield, Wesley	7	M	Son			Baptist
Bell, Dora	34	F			writes	Methodist
Clark, James	45	M		farmer	reads	Baptist
Clark, Margaret	8	F	Daughter			Baptist
Clark, Margaret	38	F	Mother			Baptist
Clark, William	38	M	Father	carpenter	writes	Baptist
Cook, Charity	24	F	Daughter			Baptist
Cook, Chloe	14	F	Daughter		reads	Baptist
Cook, David	1	M	Grandson			Baptist
Cook, Frank	18	M	Son		reads	Baptist
Cook, Harriet	49	F	Mother			Baptist
Cook, Joseph	13	M	Son		reads	Baptist
Cook, Judge	53	M	Father	minister	writes	Baptist
Cook, Judge Jr.	20	M	Son		reads	Baptist
Cook, Laura	22	F	Daughter			Baptist
Cook, Louisa	10	M	Daughter		reads	Baptist

Crawford, Elizabeth	25	F	Mother			Baptist
Crawford, John	23	4	Father	farmer		Methodist
Creighton, Mollie	25	F	Mother			Baptist
Creighton, Robert	2	M	Son			Baptist
Dade, Elizabeth	35	F	Mother			Baptist
Dade, Nancy	9	F	Daughter			Baptist
Dade, Sallie	7	F	Daughter			Baptist
Dade, Stephen	16	M	Son		reads	Baptist
Dade, Stephen	47	M	Father	Farmer	Writes	Baptist
Davenport, Camilla	7	F	Daughter			Baptist
Davenport, Joseph	27	M	Father	laborer	reads	
Davenport, Lucinda	25	F	Mother		reads	
Dawson, William	23	M		farmer		
Donald, David	44	M	Son	farmer		Baptist
Donald, James Henry	3	M	grandson			Baptist
Donald, Joseph	13	M	grandson		reads	Baptist
Donald, Judy	40	F	daughter			Baptist
Donald, Mary	60	F	mother			Baptist
Donald, Robert	11	M	grandson			Baptist
Donald, Silvira	13	M	grandson			Baptist
Donald, Susan Jane	16	F	granddaughter			Baptist
Donald, Thomas	12	M	grandson			Baptist
Ficklin, Armstead	14	M	son			
Ficklin, Charity	10	F	daughter			
Ficklin, Charles	42	M	father	farmer		
Ficklin, Gabriel	8	M	son			
Ficklin, Mary	12	F	daughter			
Ficklin, Octavia	16	F	daughter			
Ficklin, Rhoda	35	F	mother			
Fleming, Emma	19	F	daughter			
Fleming, Henry	1	M	son			
Fleming, Henry	10	M	son			
Fleming, James	4	M	son			
Fleming, Levi	13	M	son			
Fleming, Riley	45	M	father	blacksmith		
Fleming, Rosa	7	F	daughter			
Fontaine, Daniel	17	M	son		reads	Baptist
Fontaine, Josiah	12	M	son			Baptist
Fontaine, Mary	14	F	daughter		reads	Baptist
Fontaine, Nancy	40	F	mother			Baptist
Frazier, Henderson	18	M	grandson	farmer	reads	Baptist
Frazier, Micajah	87	M	father	farmer		Baptist
Gaston, Benjamin	45	M	father	farmer	reads	Baptist
Gaston, Emma	17	F	daughter		writes	Baptist
Gaston, Martha	39	F	mother		reads	Baptist

Giddings, Augustus	48	M	father	carpenter	reads	
Giddings, Augustus	9	M	son			
Giddings, Catherine	17	F	daughter		reads	
Giddings, Emmet D.	7	M	son			
Giddings, Francis	21	M	son			
Giddings, Julia Ann	6	F	daughter			
Giddings, Mary	26	F	daughter		reads	
Giddings, Sherman	4	M	son			
Giddings, William	2	M	son			
Grant, Anthony	23	M	father	farmer		
Grant, Cherry	22	F	mother			
Grant, Viney	1	F	daughter			
Gray, Edmund	18	M	brother	farmer	reads	
Gray, Primers	16	M	brother			
Green, Anna	22	M	mother			Baptist
Green, Charles	23	M	father	farmer	writes	Baptist
Green, Fanny	1	F	daughter			Baptist
Green, Jellah	8	F	daughter			Baptist
Green, Joseph	7	M	grandson			Baptist
Green, Lawson	70	M	father	farmer	reads	Baptist
Green, Millie	60	F	mother			Baptist
Green, Robert	31	M	son	farmer		Baptist
Green, Rose	21	F	mother			Baptist
Harris, Caroline	33	F	mother			
Harris, George	8	M	son			Baptist
Harris, Henry	34	M	father	engineer		
Harris, Henry	9	M	son			
Harris, James	17	M	son			
Harris, Jinnie	8	F	daughter			
Harris, Liberia	0	M	son			
Harris, Phoebe	6	F	daughter			
Harris, Sallie	4	F	daughter			
Hill, Henry	24	M		farmer	writes	
Holmes, Abraham	37	M	father	farmer		Methodist
Holmes, Clarissa	32	F	mother		Reads	Methodist
Holmes, Lena	17	F	Daughter			Methodist
Holmes, Wiley	12	M	Son			Methodist
Hudson, Juno	23	F	Daughter		Writes	Baptist
Hudson, Richard	49	M	Father	Farmer	Writes	Baptist
Hunter, Moses	14	M	son		writes	
Jackson, James	41	M		Blacksmith		Baptist
Jackson, Mimi	62	F			Reads	Baptist
Lewis, Albert	5	M	Grandson			Methodist
Lewis, Aleck	7	M	Grandson			Methodist
Lewis, Anthony	35	M	Father	Farmer		Methodist

Lewis, Floyd	37	M		Gardener		
Lewis, George	9	M	Grandson			
Lewis, Georgiana	1	F				
Lewis, Harriet	48	M	Mother			Methodist
Lewis, Jay	20	M				
Lewis, Mary	3	F	granddaughter			Methodist
Lewis, Nathan	39	M	Carpenter			Methodist
Lewis, Nelly	55	F	Mother			Methodist
Lewis, Nicholas	11	M	Grandson			Methodist
Lewis, Sarah	38	F	Daughter			Methodist
Lewis, Sarah	16	F				
Lewis, Silla	21	F	Granddaughter			Methodist
Lowe, Marion	19	F	Sister		writes	Methodist
Lowe, Missouri	16	M	Brother		writes	Methodist
Magee, Amy	38	F	Mother			Baptist
Magee, George	13	M	Son		Reads	Baptist
Magee, James	46	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Magee, John	15	M	Son		Reads	Baptist
Magee, Lucinda	56	F				
Magee, Maria	3	F	Daughter			Baptist
Magee, Mary	5	F	Daughter			Baptist
Magee, Sallie	19	F	Daughter		Reads	Baptist
Magee, Sinah	2	?	Son			Baptist
Magee, Willis	8	M	Son		Reads	Baptist
Markham, Frank	20	M		Carpenter		
Miller, Arthur	32	M	Father	Blacksmith	Reads	Baptist
Miller, Emily	21	F	Mother			Baptist
Miller, Mary Ann	2	F	Daughter			Baptist
Mitchell, Burrell	27	M		Blacksmith	Writes	Baptist
Mitchell, Crecy	11	?	Child			Baptist
Mitchell, Jinnie	16	F			Reads	Baptist
Mitchell, Laura	15	F	Daughter		Writes	Baptist
Mitchell, Louisa	4	F				Baptist
Mitchell, Mitchell	6	M				Baptist
Mitchell, Richard	4	M				Baptist
Mitchell, Sarah	50	F	Mother			Baptist
Monroe, Mary Frances	½	F	daughter			
Monroe, Philip L.	27	M	father	painter	writes	Baptist
Monroe, Philip L. Jr.	2	M	Son			
Monroe, Victoria	26	F	Mother		reads	Methodist
Moore, Jeanet	8	F	Daughter			Baptist
Moore, Phoebe	54	F				Baptist
Munroe, Abraham L.	2	M	Son			Baptist
Munroe, Alexander	28	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Munroe, James	3	M	Son			Baptist

Munroe, Jane	1	F	Daughter			Baptist
Munroe, Phoebe	19	F	Mother		Writes	Baptist
Murphy, Willis	62	M		Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Parker, Isaac	4	M				
Parker, Jinnie	28	F	Mother			
Parker, Louisa	7	F	Daughter			
Parker, Spencer	29	M	Father	Farmer		
Parker, Wilson	5	M	Son			
Parker, Winter	3	M	Son			
Payne, Augustus	11	M	Son	Reads		
Payne, Franklin	2	M	Son			
Payne, Fredrick	15	M	Son			Baptist
Payne, George	3	M	Son			
Payne, Harry	13	M	Son	Reads		
Payne, Joseph	7	M	Son			
Payne, Louisa	32	F	Mother			Methodist
Payne, Sandy	9	M	Son			
Payne, Sandy	37	m	father	Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Porter, Enolds	17	M	Son		Writes	Methodist
Porter, Esther	58	F	Mother			Methodist
Porter, Stephen	55	M	Father	Carpenter	Reads	Methodist
Randall, George	12	M				
Sample, Aleck	23	M		Barber		Baptist
Staples, James	3	M	Grandson			Baptist
Staples, Hattie	12	F	Granddaughter			Baptist
Staples, Robert	8	M	Grandson			Baptist
Staples, Sarah	28	F	Daughter			Baptist
Tharp, Anderson	29	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	
Tharp, Belle	11	F	Daughter			
Tharp, Frank	6	M	Son			
Tharp, George	20	M	Brother	Farmer		
Tharp, James	13	M	Son			
Tharp, Jane	30	F	Mother			
Tharp, Lizzie	3	F	Daughter			
Tharp, Mary	4	F	Daughter			
Tharp, Nora	8	F	Daughter			
Tharp, Nora	16	F	Sister			
Tharp, Susan	½	F	Daughter			
Washington, Frank	19	M		Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Wright, Jacob	12	M	Son			Baptist
Wright, Julia	15	F	Daughter		Reads	Baptist
Wright, Madison	38	M	Father	Blacksmith		Baptist
Wright, Rosa	32	F	Mother			Baptist

Total: 204						
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Source, *African Repository*, Vol . 44. `1868, 173-177.

May 14, 1868, *Golconda*, From Marion, Twigg County, Georgia; Destination: Bexley, Grand Bassa County, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relationship	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Ashley, Eliza N.	38	F	Mother		Writes	Baptist
Ashley, Seaborn N.	42	M	Father	Blacksmith	Writes	Baptist
King, Alfred	60	M	Father	Farmer		Baptist
King, Atha	24	F	Mother			Baptist
King, Benjamin	39	M	Father	Farmer		
King, Cherry Ann	13	F	Daughter			
King, Cora	17	F	Mother			Baptist
King, David	42	M	Father	Farmer		Baptist
King, Ellen	32	F	Mother			
King, Emelina	25	F	Mother			
King, Floyd	34	M		Farmer		
King, George	18	M	Son	Farmer	Writes	Baptist
King, Gilbert	29	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	Baptist
King, Jackson	2	M	Son			Baptist
King, James	37	M	Father	Farmer		
King, Jane	1	F	Daughter			Baptist
King, John	1	M	Son			
King, John	4	M	Son			Baptist
King, Julia	15	F	Daughter			Baptist
King, Laura	11	F	Daughter			
King, Lila Ann	4	F	Daughter			Baptist
King, Lincoln	7	M	Son			
King, Martha	3	F	Daughter			
King, Mary	3	F	Daughter			Baptist
King, Millie	7	M	Daughter			Baptist
King, Nancy	31	F	Daughter			Baptist
King, Perry	23	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	Baptist

King, Perry	5	M	Son			Baptist
King, Pinckney	16	M	Son		Writes	Baptist
King, Rittie	19	F	Sister			Baptist
King, Sarah	25	F	Mother			Baptist
King, Sarah	12	F	Daughter			
King, Seaborn	36	M	Father	Farmer	Writes	Baptist
King, Thomas	6	M	Son			
King, Thomas	20	M	Son	Farmer	Writes	Baptist
King, Vinney	33	F	Mother			Baptist
King, William	9	M	Son		Reads	
Total: 37						

Source: ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 177.

May 14, 1868, *Golconda*, From Savannah, Georgia; Destination: Bexley, Grand Bassa County, Liberia

Name	Age	Sex	Relation	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Brown, George	20	M		Farmer	Reads	
Culbatt, John	12	M				
Franklin, John	7	M				
Germany, Rachel	25	F	Mother			
Germany, Thomas	27	M	Father	Farmer		
Holbert, George	22	M		Farmer	Reads	
Larker, Edward	22	M		Farmer	Reads	
Robinson, George	22	M		Farmer		
Wall, Edward	30	M		Confectioner		
Williams, Isaac	38	M		Farmer	Reads	Baptist
Williams, Richard	19	M		Confectioner		
Total: 12						

Source: ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 177-178.

May 14, 1868, *Golconda*, From Sparta, Georgia; Destination: Cape Palmas, Liberia

Names	Age	Sex	Relation	Occupation	Literacy	Religion
Bush, Abraham	1	M	Son			Methodist
Bush, Harry	7	M	Son			Methodist
Bush, Louis	4	M	Son			Methodist
Bush, Mary Jane	38	F	Mother			Methodist
Bush, Moses	1	M	Son			Methodist
Bush, Richard	12	M	Son			Methodist
Bush, Sampson	40	M	Father	Farmer		Methodist
Bush, Willehima	3	F	Daughter			Methodist
Bush, William	11	M	Son			Methodist
Pearson, Bucanan	10	M	Son			Methodist
Pearson, Crawford	14	M	Son			Methodist
Pearson, Elizabeth	45	F	Mother			Methodist
Pearson, Henry	50	M	Father	Carpenter	Reads	Methodist
Pearson, Henry	10	M	Son			Methodist
Pearson, Martha	1	F	Daughter			Methodist
Pearson, Sarah Ann	18	F	Daughter		Writes	Methodist
Pearson, Julia	15	F	Daughter			Methodist
Tucker, Elisha	62	M		Farmer	Writes	Methodist
Yancy, Emily	7	F	Daughter			Methodist
Yancy, Isaac	31	M	Father	Farmer	Reads	Methodist
Yancy, Isaac B.	1	M	Son			Methodist
Yancy, Leathy	25	F	Mother			Methodist
Yancy, Mason	4	M	Son			Methodist
Yancy, Sandy	9	M	Son			Methodist
Yancy, William H.	3	M	Son			Methodist
Total: 25						

Source: ACS, *African Repository*, Vol. 44, 181.

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