



# BECOMING *Lottie Moon*

## FAQS

### **WERE THE ENSLAVED CHARACTERS AT VIEWMONT REAL PEOPLE?**

Lottie Moon grew up served by enslaved people, but George, Fannie, and Peggy in this novel are entirely fictional. While I do not know the names or the stories of the enslaved people at Viewmont in Lottie's day, God in heaven who made them in his image knows them and loves them.

### **DID LOTTIE REALLY TAKE AN ENSLAVED GIRL TO SERVE HER AT HOLLINS?**

I found no record of Lottie bringing an enslaved person with her to school. However, my research revealed that the practice was common, especially among wealthy families like the Moons. Hollins itself did not own enslaved people but hired slaves from their masters to work at the school as cooks, laundresses, and groundskeepers. Students also brought enslaved people from their homes to attend to them personally.

### **DID ENSLAVED PEOPLE REALLY TAKE PART IN WORSHIP SERVICES WITH LOTTIE'S FAMILY?**

Yes. A group of enslaved people at Viewmont attended Scottsville Baptist Church and then Pine Grove Baptist Church, later called Hardware Baptist Church (HBC). Church records show that when the Moons joined HBC in 1863, enslaved people from Viewmont were baptized and also joined the church. At Scottsville Baptist, enslaved people were recorded as church members. "In 1849 there were 249 members, of whom 119 were white and 130 black." (Scottsville Baptist Church website).

### **DID UNCLE JAMES REALLY GO TO JERUSALEM AS A MISSIONARY?**

Yes! Lottie's Uncle James had first wanted to join Presbyterian missionaries in China. When he converted to the Disciples of Christ church, Uncle James became more influenced by Joseph Campbel's pre-millenium end times theories about Israel. Uncle James went to Jerusalem with his wife and three children in 1850, published a book about the city in 1858, and was joined by his niece, Orie, for a short time.



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### **DID ORIE REALLY QUESTION SLAVERY?**

Yes, I believe so. Orie likely learned about abolition from her friends and teachers when she went to Troy Female Seminary in upstate New York in 1854. The fictional conversation between Orie and her father in the carriage about slavery was based on arguments that were popular among Christians during that time for and against slavery. Edward Moon articulated some of the arguments and perspectives I studied in *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* by Mark Noll and *Reconstructing the Gospel: Finding Freedom from Slaveholder Religion* by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. Orie referenced Deuteronomy 23:15-16. She also referenced a real group of Baptist ministers from “most of the free states” in the North who gathered in Providence Rhode Island in 1850 and agreed on resolutions against the “oppressive, tyrannical, and odious” Fugitive Slave Bill, calling it “a reproach to humanity, and insulting to the religion, conscience and intelligence of Christians and Freemen of the Free States,” (*The Liberator*, October 18, 1850, page 2). They said the bill directly opposed Deuteronomy 23:15, and they were acting in obedience to God’s law rather than man’s, citing Acts 5:29. Orie was greatly influenced by her northern school. But given the fact that she served in Confederate hospitals during the Civil War, I imagine that she wasn’t influenced to take great action against slavery.

### **DID ORIE REALLY TAKE PART IN A SEANCE?**

Orie’s seance with her friends at Troy Female Seminary was entirely fictional. I based it on historical research about the Fox sisters, Kate and Maggie, and the spiritualist movement, which was particularly popular among women in Lottie’s era.

### **WERE ANNE AND CLAIBORNE SCOTT REAL PEOPLE?**

Yes. Anne Scott was a real enslaved woman who worked at Hollins with her husband, Claiborne, and daughter, Bettie, until Bettie was taken to Missouri. Hollins students helped Anne write letters to and read letters from her daughter, but there’s no record of Lottie being one of the students who helped Anne with these letters. During the Civil War, Anne and Claiborne escaped slavery and went to Missouri.



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### **DID LOTTIE REALLY CLIMB A BELLTOWER AT HOLLINS?**

Yes! Many articles and nearly every book that I read about Lottie Moon included the infamous story of her prank to get the whole school out of morning devotions on April 1, 1855. Peggy's involvement in the prank is fictional.

### **WAS NICHOLAS REAL? DID HE REALLY FALL IN LOVE WITH ORIE AND INFLUENCE MOLLIE AND SALLIE TO BECOME CATHOLIC?**

Nicholas Couch was a popular music tutor who taught the Moon girls and seemed to have influenced them towards Catholicism. Church minutes record Mollie Moon being removed from membership at Hardware Baptist Church because she became Catholic. Orie had a romantic relationship before going away to school, but her beau was unspecified. Their romance in this book is fictional.

### **DID CRAWFORD TOY REALLY PROPOSE TO LOTTIE?**

Maybe. Una Roberts Lawrence's 1927 book, *Lottie Moon*, described it, but I couldn't confirm the facts with primary sources. Crawford Toy did teach at Albemarle Female Academy, and Lottie was close friends with his sister, Julie. Julie's family writings said Lottie was engaged to Crawford at some point. While it's uncertain if Crawford proposed marriage to Lottie, a romance seemed plausible.

What questions do you have?

Email me at [emily@emilyhallbooks.com](mailto:emily@emilyhallbooks.com), and I may add them to this list!