

**THE MYTH OF KITTY:  
PARADOXES OF BLOOD, LAW AND SLAVERY IN A GEORGIA COMMUNITY**

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The Emory Center for Myth and Ritual in American Life  
Working Paper No. 1

January 2001

## **The Myth of Kitty: Paradoxes of Blood, Law and Slavery in a Georgia Community**

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As is well known, the landscapes of the American South are intensely memorialized. Even a casual visitor is struck by the profusion of civil war plaques, monuments, battlefields and cemeteries, the careful management and reconstruction of antebellum plantations and mansions, the elaborate performance of civil war battle re-enactments and the continuing semiotic skirmishes over the placement and display of the confederate battle flag on everywhere from state capitol domes to the rear bumpers of pickup trucks. It has often been noted that in nearly all these white-managed geographical sites, the historical reality of slavery and the presence of African-Americans have been actively obscured, effaced, or muted. African American southerners, if signaled at all in these memorial projects, are usually relegated to the background, as anonymous, taken-for-granted features of a primarily agrarian, white-dominated landscape.<sup>1</sup> Idealized narratives and ritualized performances of these antebellum and Civil War scenarios have long played important functions in how white southern families have understood and reproduced themselves over time.

Yet in the town of Oxford, Georgia, birthplace of Emory University and a designated “shrine” of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by far the most elaborated mytho-historical narrative, within white families and the town’s public spaces, specifically concerns slavery and a named enslaved woman. The modern social geography of this carefully designed small city, thirty miles east of

Atlanta, increasingly foregrounds the story of “Kitty,” an enslaved “mulatto” woman who lived in Oxford during the 1840s and 1850s. New residents of the town, including students at Oxford College (the initial Emory campus), are frequently taken on tours of the key landscape points associated with “Miss Kitty,” and her white owner, Methodist Bishop James Osgood Andrew, first president of the board of trustees of Emory College. These sites include the carefully restored house, in which Kitty allegedly once lived, and the city’s long-segregated white cemetery, in which, whites often insist, Kitty is the only person of color buried. Her grave, recently marked with a modest headstone by an all-white private foundation, and her preserved house, recently renovated by a predominantly white local historical society, are often spoken of, by whites, as the most important historical sites in the county. Kitty’s story has been retold in hundreds of local and national publications. Since the 1930s, her “cottage” and grave have come to function as veritable pilgrimage sites for thousands of Georgia’s white residents, including weekly busloads of schoolchildren brought in for “educational visits” from throughout the state.

I have been struck by how often the Kitty story surfaces in conversations with local whites about the contemporary trials and tribulations of “the family.” Many white residents, when bemoaning the current frantic pace of family life and the pervasive air of distrust between neighbors, often bring up the case of Kitty in a nostalgic or elegiac tone, as an illustration of how “things used to be different here.” In white versions of the story, Kitty refused manumission when it was offered to her 1841 and was allowed by her master, Bishop Andrew to reside in her own small cottage behind his mansion in de facto freedom. There, it is said, Kitty “looked after” local children, white and black, and treated them

with warmth and respect. As one white woman noted, “Kitty’s story reminds us how families used to be, and how things still should be.” Since the late 1990s, many local white families have volunteered time, money and effort to help restore Kitty’s former residence (a process that has far, has not included any African American residents of the town.)

In this essay, I consider why the Kitty narrative has been so densely embedded in the white-managed local landscape, and explore the long-term consequences of this peculiar mythologized geography for local white and African-American families. In so doing, I briefly reflect upon how classical anthropological approaches to myth, ritual and place--an intellectual “toolkit” primarily developed for the analysis of small-scale non-western societies – might be relevant to the analysis of modern American conundrum of race.

### **The Kitty Narratives: Context**

Oxford is a small town of about 2,000 persons, adjacent to the Newton County seat, Covington. Sixty percent white, forty percent African American, its citizens dwell in homes ranging from two million dollar restored antebellum mansions to multiple unit low-income housing. Although many families cherish historical links to local farms, there are only a handful of small working farms left in town. Many of those white residents who do not work at Oxford College are employed in the growing financial and biotechnology firms that have relocated to the county, although some commute daily to Atlanta, thirty miles West. About forty percent of white families consider themselves to be “long term” residents of the county. The majority state that they have made a

conscious decision to live in Oxford, to get away from the filth and crime of the city.

Until a decade ago, most African Americans residents of Oxford were employed at Emory's Oxford College, the Porterdale Textile mills, or as servants and farm workers; most now work at semi-skilled labor in local concrete firms, factories or service jobs, or are retired on fixed incomes, although some have managerial positions in local firms. About eighty per cent of Oxford's black residents consider their families to be "long term" resident of the town, and many can trace their ancestry back to persons enslaved by local landowners and Emory College faculty and officials, including Bishop James Andrew himself.

It will come as no surprise, in this social context, that there multiple versions of the Kitty story. For the vast majority of Oxford's white residents, the Kitty legend for generations been understood as a moving tale of loyalty and noble suffering. In the standard white version of the story, Kitty was inherited by an unwilling slaveholder, Methodist Bishop James Osgood Andrew (1794-1871) in the early 1830s, when she was twelve years old. After she voluntarily refused manumission (conditional on transport to Liberia) at age nineteen in 1841 she was allowed by her benevolent owner to reside in a house that he built for her, adjacent to his own house. There, he allegedly told her, "you may live as free I am." In time, the story goes, she married a free African-American man and bore him three children before her death in the 1850s.

Throughout Kitty's short life, it is said, she was intensely loyal to Bishop Andrew and his family. For this reason, she is the only person of color buried in the historically white section of the segregated Oxford City cemetery. Since Andrew's slaveholding was a precipitating cause of the 1845 split between the

northern and southern Methodist churches (which lasted until the two wings of the church were reunited in 1939) the story of Kitty takes on particular poignancy for many white Southerners: Andrew, a reluctant and accidental slave-owner who only sought to preserve Kitty from the sexual depredations of slavery, was unjustly pilloried by his hypocritical northern counterparts. This general version of the story is, so far as I can tell, accepted by nearly all long-term white residents of Oxford. <sup>2</sup>

Not surprisingly, African American families in Oxford have a rather different relationship to the Kitty legend. My oldest African American informants recall hearing from the “old people” of the community that Kitty was Bishop Andrew’s coerced mistress, and that Andrew was the covert father of her children, whom he never acknowledged. Some profess to be bored by the whole business, which they regard as a puzzling (or, at times, offensive) white obsession. Still others critique local white fascination with Kitty and with the restoration of her small house (referred to as “Kitty’s Cottage” by most local whites) as an attempt to paper over the horrors of slavery and to evade full accountability for the city’s antebellum slave-owning history. <sup>3</sup>

Yet for all the manifest contrasts in white and African-American renditions of the narrative, and their strikingly different responses to spaces in which the story is memorialized, are these mythic accounts entirely distinct from one another? To consider this question, let us briefly consider these mythic variants as texts through the lens of classic structural approaches to myth, divorced from the circumstances of their performance and spatial realization.

## Mythic Transformations

In a well known passage from The View from Afar (1985), Claude Levi-Strauss proposes that myths are a culture's "a posteriori (after the fact) attempts to construct a homogeneous system on the basis of disparate rules." Hence, he suggests, "sooner or later, mythical thinking conceives of these rules as so many possible answers to a question. " Levi-Strauss applies this insight to the diverse cultures of Polynesia, arguing that a vast range of mythic narratives found on diverse Polynesian islands can be understood as attempts to answer a basic set of questions throughout the extended Polynesian region about "relations between relations," about how the relationship between brother and sister is opposite between husband and wife, and so forth.

For all the obvious differences between premodern Polynesia and the contemporary United States, Levi-Strauss' insight has a good deal of relevance to the case at hand. The various narratives of Kitty, including the manifestly opposed "white" and "African American" accounts, can be thought of as varied attempts to answer a common set of questions about the constitution of American society. One aspect of this enduring question is the formulation, E Pluribus Unum, the challenge of unity in diversity. While at a manifest level this formulation has always been formally "color-blind," it has long had at its core a set of conundrums about race and personhood. As many scholars have argued, for much of American history, the promise of democratic inclusiveness, for an ever widening group of persons, rested upon the systematic exclusion of civil liberties to persons of African descent, whether legally enslaved or free. This core cultural paradox, like so many pivotal paradoxical formulations in the

diverse cultures of humanity, is invariably framed in the idiom of kinship. The very system of racial apartheid upon which classic American democratic expansion rested, continuously generated a new set of ambiguous kin and quasi-kin relations. Not only were new biogenetically-related kin continuously reproduced across putative “racial” lines but the emotional configurations of classic family dynamics were continuously recombined and redistributed: as maternal, paternal and filial roles moved back and forth between formally “black” and “white” positions.

One of the most elegant meditations on this core conundrum is Ralph Ellison’s climactic statement in his (posthumously published) novel Juneteenth, a book that Ellison dedicated “To That Vanished Tribe into which I was born: the American Negroes.” The black protagonist contemplates his apparently adoptive son, who physically appears white and whom he had raised as “Negro” in the futile hope that the child would become a latter-day Lincoln, a defender of his oppressed brothers and sisters. Instead the boy has grown to be a virulently racist, white supremacist U.S. Senator. As the Senator lays dying he calls for his lost black “Father,” who ponders what Providence has wrought: “There’s always the mystery, of the one in the many and many in the one, the you in them and the them in you –ha!”

For Ellison, the core American mystery is one of kinship, in all the rich, mutually entailed biogenetic, poetic and spiritual dimensions of this complex term. How are we related, yet unrelated? How can we claim that our society rests on universal “brotherhood” while the very historical process of democratic expansion rested on domination, oppression and racially-based hierarchies? For Ellison the glory of the American dream rests in the quest for the transcendent

Father figure of Abraham Lincoln, yet this very quest seems to simultaneously demand the American Tragedy: the repeated death of the Father as his sons seek to come into their own and turn against their brothers.

These basic kinship-related cultural paradoxes may be fruitfully considered in light of David Schneider's classic study American Kinship. Schneider argues that American Kinship, as an idealized system of shared symbols, is founded upon a fundamental opposition between two structurally opposed cultural categories: Blood and Law. Persons classified as relatives in American culture are either related to one another through "Law" or "Blood," but never both. Law-based relations, typified by marriage, a human made construct, demand that the parties not be related by blood. In contrast, blood relations, typified by the parent-child bond, are never simply matter of Law, which is a mere human-made artifice, but are rather "natural", beyond mere human choice or volition. The opposed cultural realms of Blood and Law are linked (or "mediated") by the core symbol, Sexual Intercourse. Sexual intercourse, which is "natural" can only legitimately occur in the context of the Law-sanctioned relationship of Marriage; and only Sexual Intercourse can produce relations founded on Blood, that is to say, parent-child relations. (see Figure 1)

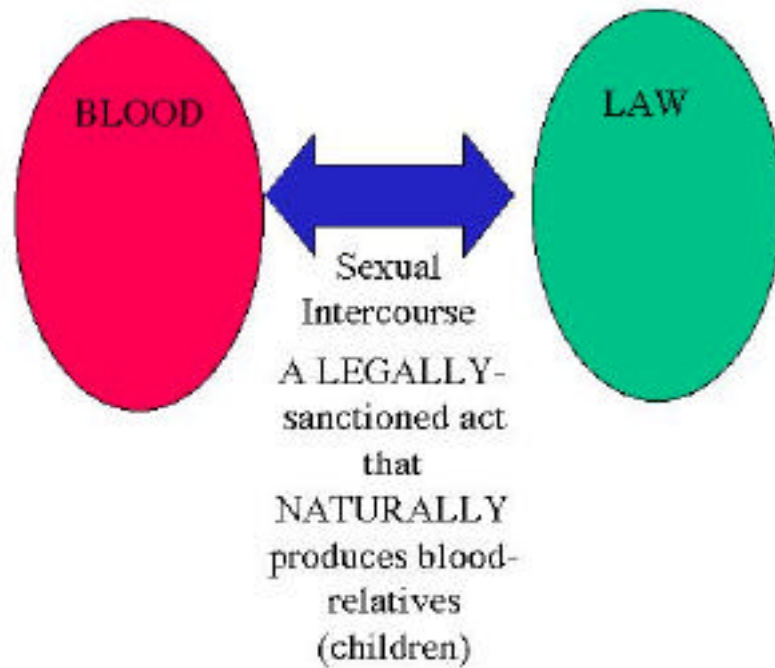


Figure 1. David Schneider's model of American Kinship

Schneider, concentrating on the “ethnographic present” of mid-twentieth century North America, never discussed slavery in his model. Yet, slavery’s historical legacies fundamentally complicate this cultural model of American kinship, challenging the fundamental structural opposition between categories of Blood and Law. At one level, the Master-Slave relationship is legal, founded on the same legal code that legitimates Marriage, a formal, contract-based relationship between non-blood related persons. But slaves also stood in filial (bloodlike) relationships to their white owners, although they were classified as legal minors at best. A few feet away from Kitty’s gravesite, in the otherwise all white Oxford Cemetery, stands a headstone to a white woman:

In memory of Mary wife of Rev. Osborne. Embraced Religion August 12, 1812, Died 15 Feb 1856. The morning before her death she called her family, white and black, around her and bade them farewell. From that time as long as she could be understood she continued to praise God.

In many instances, of course, these metaphorical “blood-like” relations among white and black members of the same “family” also had biogenetic components. The historical record is replete with cases of slaveowners owning or selling their biological progeny and kin. A famous case in Newton County in the 1820s centered on a young white slaveowner going to Court to break his father’s will, which has granted freedom and transport to a free state to a young black male slave. As the case proceeded, it became clear that the young white man was suing to retain his half-brother in bondage. This case, of course, was by no means atypical.

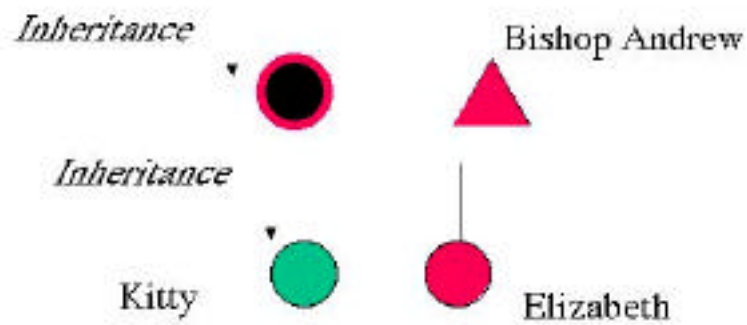
The varied versions of the Kitty myth, I suggest, may be understood as a series of attempts to resolve the fundamentally irresolvable paradoxes of Blood and Law posed by slavery. Take, for example, the common popular assertion in white renditions of the story that Kitty had been inherited by Bishop James Andrew's first wife, Amelia, and that after Amelia's death the Bishop therefore was left as her reluctant legal owner.<sup>4</sup> Various historians over the past century and a half have sought to correct this misconception, noting that according to the historical record Andrew directly inherited Kitty from a non-relative. But for our purposes, the culturally significant fact is that this revised version of the story keeps on re-emerging. For anthropologists, this phenomenon can be thought of as the "mythic imagination" in action.

What, then, is accomplished by this frequent white version of the myth? As illustrated in diagrams 2-4, the disturbing violations of the blood/law opposition are resolved, or at least muted, within the comforting framework of the domestic familial unit. This version emphasizes that while all the players remain within the all-embracing penumbra of the Andrew family, under the pater familias James, a strong distinction is preserved between relations by law and relations by blood. In many respects, Kitty and Elizabeth (Andrew's white daughter) are treated as parallel in this myth version. On the left of Figures 2 and 3, Kitty is inherited by law, as a consequence of the Bishop's marriage, a legal relationship. In contrast, Elizabeth is distinctly a blood relative of the Bishop.

Kitty and Elizabeth can thus safely be stated, in the white variant, to have been "like sisters." Indeed, when leaders of Oxford white community placed a new headstone for Kitty in the mid-1990s in the Andrew plot, they were careful

to locate it just beside Elizabeth's daughter's headstone, all under the spire of the Bishop Andrew monument, ritually reproducing the myth's model of idealized family relations.

The next stage of this myth variant further restores the blood/law distinction: Kitty is married legally to a legally "free" black man (Figure 4), and within the context of this legal relationship, has children by him. As in conventional American kinship, a relationship of law produces blood relatives. (Figure 5)

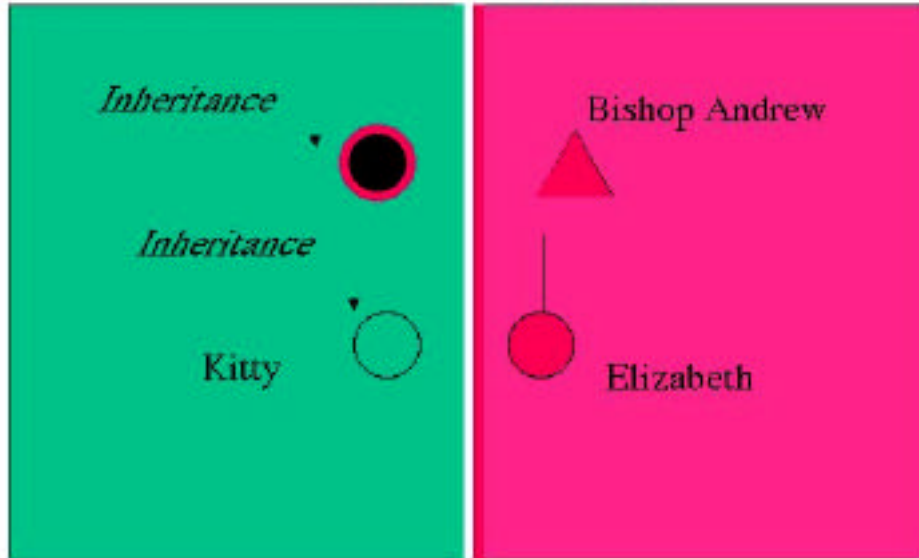


**Version 1b** (“White”) Andrew Inherits Kitty from his (deceased) wife Amelia, who in turn had inherited her.

NOTE: No documentary basis for this variant.

Figure 2. Standard “white” popular version of the Kitty story.

LAW vs. BLOOD



Kitty inherited via Law,  
within the Legal  
relationship of Marriage

No biological or sexual  
(Natural) relationship  
between Andrew and Kitty

Figure 3. The white version (1b) in terms of Schneider's categorical distinction. Kitty and Elizabeth said to be "like sisters,"

## 1b.2. Kitty's Marriage

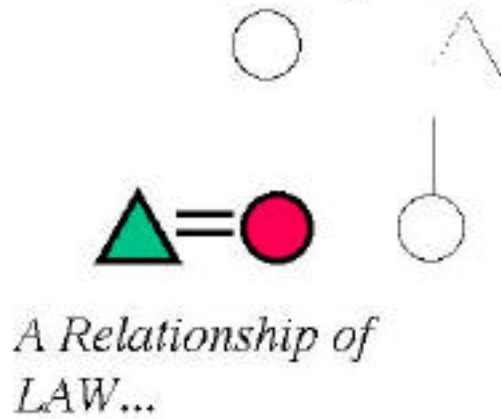
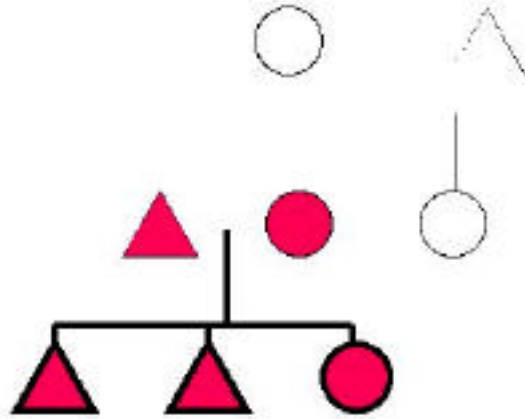


Figure 4. In white tellings, Kitty's marriage to Nathan Shell ("legally free") is represented as a relationship of law.

## 1b.2. Kitty's Marriage



*...that produces "natural" products - her BLOOD children.*

Figure 5. In the white version, Kitty's legal marriage properly produces her blood or "natural" children.

Conversely, African American versions foreground the violation of the Law/Blood distinction. Kitty was sexually violated by Andrew and forced to bear his children. (Figures 6 and 7) These children, in turn, were unacknowledged by their white father, who sought to remove them from the community. (Figure 8) In this version of the myth, it becomes impossible to say whether or not Andrew and Kitty are related through Law or Blood. (In this light, it may be noteworthy that some African American informants in reconstructing the story emphasize the inevitably violent, bloody nature of master-slave relations that they believe to have characterized these coerced liaisons.) Even less clear is the blood/law distinction in the relations between Kitty, Andrew and the products of their union: the children were the legal property of Andrew and his blood progeny, the normally “natural” bonds of blood ties were violated by his refusal to acknowledge “own flesh and blood.”

## Myth Variant 2b.part 1. (African American)

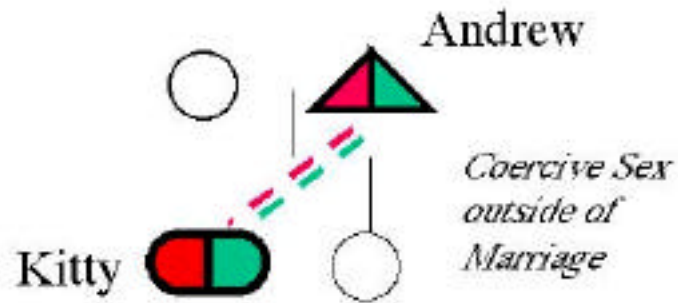
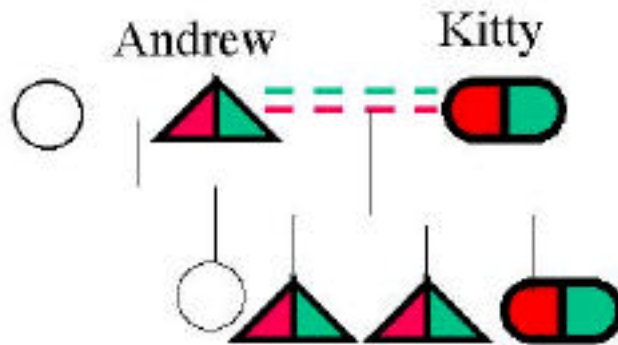


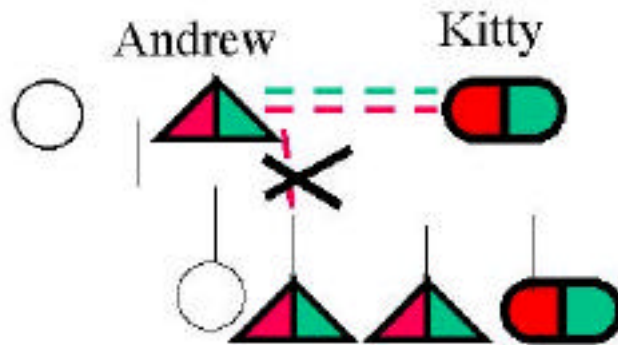
Figure 6. In the most common African American version, the relationship between Kitty and Andrew specifically violates the standard blood/law opposition. Kitty and Andrew are neither in a pure “law” nor “blood” relationship to each other.



## 2b.part 2. The Blood/Law contrast further eroded

Fig. 7. The birth of the children further violates the blood/law contrast, as the children stand to Andrew both as his property (law in one sense) and his progeny "blood", yet without the legal sanction of matrimony.

*The Bishop denies  
his Fatherhood;  
sends the children  
off unacknowledged*



### 2b.part 3. The Blood/Law contrast eroded further still

Fig. 8. Andrew's alleged denial of paternity further violates the normal categorical distinctions.

As even this admittedly simple analysis shows, the myths may be regarded, in structuralist terms, as “transformations” of one another, playing with common elements, problems and questions. One is reminded of Franz Boas’ observation about Northwest Coast native American mythology, a line quoted by Levi Strauss in his seminal essay, ‘The Structural Study of Myth’: “It would seem that mythological worlds have been built up only to be shattered again, and that new worlds were built from the fragments.”

For all their significant differences, these diverse variants of the Myth of Kitty are built up out of the common fragments of American culture.

### **The Social Life of the Kitty Myth: Silence and the Problem of Place**

Although, in an abstract sense these various myth variants may be understood as co-equivalent transformations of one another, in practice there is a striking disparity in the relative prevalence of the various myth versions. White recountings of the story, in print or by word of mouth, are nearly ubiquitous in Oxford, around Emory University and in the broader white Georgia Methodist community. In contrast, African American renditions of the story are infrequent, often reluctant or halting, and hardly every delivered in a public or quasi-public context. In practice not all mythemes are created equal.

Why has the dominant “white” narrative for so long remained publicly unchallenged? In part, many African Americans are struck by the absence of legitimating texts in support of oral understandings of the story. Other than Rev. George G. Smith’s 1882 published hagiography of Andrew, no written account of

Kitty's own words survives. The associated documentary evidence, including census and tax records, is fragmentary and has not been easily accessible or decipherable, especially for African Americans in semi-rural Georgia. (I briefly review the available documentary evidence in Appendix I.)

In addition, many African American women and men with whom I have discussed the matter express a desire to see the matter closed, once and for all. A middle aged African American woman sighed, when the Kitty question came up, "Isn't it time we all talked about something else? We have to get beyond all that." One elderly woman recently told me that she recalls her mother often telling her about Kitty, when she was a girl,

Miss Kitty this, Miss Kitty that. I just couldn't take it no more. Well, I was more interested in boys and such. It went in one ear and out the other. But still after all years, I still hear that Kitty story hammering away in my head. I just want that story to stop!

An older African American man grew very quiet when the conversation briefly turned to Kitty. A long paused, he noted softly, "Sometimes, you know, the dead just need to stay good and buried."

Hearing such comments, one is reminded of the closing refrain of Toni Morrison's novel, Beloved: "This is not a story to pass on." The narrative, of the horrific legacies of slavery and infanticide at one level needs to be told, but retelling ultimately is in the interest of exorcising the spirit and the story, so that they will not be "passed on." Certain tales need to run their course and then new life needs to take hold.

Even those in the African American community who are intensely interested in researching, uncovering and broadcasting the "true facts" of the

Kitty case, find themselves facing fundamental challenges of space and geography. Many note that whites have, in effect, colonized the only places where Kitty's story could be retold, especially the cottage and her supposed gravesite. As one African American woman remarked, "OK, let's say we really could prove everything about Kitty and Bishop Andrew, with DNA or whatever. Where in Oxford would we ever get to tell the truth? Put on a display? Where is there? You tell me."

In the remainder of this paper, I consider this problem of space and place with particular attention to two sites: (A) Kitty's restored "Cottage," moved in 1939 from Oxford to an important white ritual space, Salem Campground, about 20 miles away, and returned to Oxford in 1994; and (B) Kitty's purported gravesite in the segregated Oxford City Cemetery. These elaborated spatial sites have helped to reproduce and extend the dominant white narrative of Kitty. In many respects they have indeed made it difficult for alternate, African-American tellings of the story to circulate publicly. Yet in other important respects, these same mythologized geographical sites have also put the dominant narrative at risk, opening it up to questioning and critique by those who have long felt excluded from the mainstream story.

### **Old Church and Kitty's Cottage**

The unsolved dynamics of kinship, blood and law that we have considered in the narratives loom large in the composite architecture of the Old Church/Kitty's Cottage, assemblage in the center of Oxford. For half a century, Kitty's Cottage stood twenty miles away, at the entrance of the historically

whites-only Salem Methodist Campground. For the past six years, the “cottage” has been intimately paired to another historically white house of worship, “Old Church,” where Bishop Andrew once preached and where his portrait hung for many decades.

Over the last few years, the nearly all-white Oxford Historical Shrine Society has undertaken a large scale fundraising campaign to restore Old Church and the cottage, which are now both open to the public for guided tours.

(Significantly, no African American interpreters or docents have been involved in these tours.) I have been struck by the deep affection felt by many local whites for “Kitty’s Cottage.” Many have told me they find it a comforting place to enter. The society plans to turn it into a “living museum” with period implements of the sort that would have been used by Kitty. Most of these plans center on restoring the kitchen area around the large fireplace to make it seem as realistic as possible. It was at this fireplace, I have often been told, Kitty kindly fed “treats” to the Andrew children and to her own children, and comforted them.

In contrast to the warm and nurturing domesticity of the Cottage, the restored Old Church is characterized by formality. Many people mention the stern nature of the Methodist sermons preached there since the 1840s, and mention rather approvingly the hardness of the benches, the simplicity of the décor, and the lack of modern conveniences such as a public address system. While Kitty’s cottage is envisioned as a “living museum”, with costumed interpreters serving as guides, the side room of Old Church is envisioned as a “real museum,” with important historical artifacts in cases with captions.

Without the conscious intention of local white actors, the Church/Cottage assemblage has emerged as a ritualized “compromise formation,” attempting to

give tangible form to two largely incompatible images of the American family. In Old Church, one sees the principle of the stern Law of the Father; in Kitty's Cottage, the principle of Unconditional Acceptance associated with the Maternal principle, detached from the Oedipal scenario. Taken together, then, Old Church and Kitty's Cottage can be seen as a ritual attempt to resolve, if only momentarily, an irresolvable tension in American models of the family.

The Church/Cottage assemblage may also be understood as an ongoing attempt by white families to manage the enduring blood/law conundrum. Once again, these categories, so complexly conflated and intertwined by the historical dynamics of slavery, are seemingly disambiguated. The church, at least for the purpose of elementary school tours, embodies the masculine realms of Law and Positive History. When the lead tour guide speaks in the church, he emphasizes the legal particulars of the case and the large historical picture, details which he insists Kitty was ignorant of. In his words, "Meanwhile, back in Oxford in her little cottage, Kitty was just as innocent as she could be. She had no idea that events of national importance were swirling around her, that she was actually being talked about way up in New York City. " In turn, the white women in period dress who then lead the visitors through Kitty's Cottage talk not of the legal case or of the approaching national crisis but of the great love that Kitty had for her children, a love that she shared with the white Andrew family members. One female tour guide observed to a group of schoolchildren,

You know, Miss Kitty was loved by Mrs. Andrew as if she were her own flesh and blood. And Kitty felt the same way about the Andrew children. That's the way it was in those days, people just took care of children your age, they could just go in and out of people's houses like they were in their own, and be fed, and loved,

and looked after. That's the way things are supposed to be. But is that we live now?

In a similar vein, another white woman explained why she freely gave of her time and effort to help restore Kitty's Cottage, "I really feel this a place of love, where we can really do something for the community, for everybody, to bring us all together. These days, we need some place like that."

In contrast, African American reactions to the "cottage" emphasize the violation of the blood/law distinction. Many African Americans refuse to enter Kitty's restored house, to the disappointment or bafflement of their white neighbors, many who have worked long and hard to restore the structure. "Why should I go to see a place where a sister was raped and nobody will even talk about it" one young African American woman asked me rhetorically. "I can't believe that in the year 2000 that place is still standing!"

A middle aged black woman recently remarked that the cottage has been "making me think long and hard on a lot of things in this town. " She privately questions the motives of white neighbors who have worked to renovate the cottage. "It almost seems like they want to 'know' us, without talking to us," she commented. She is troubled by a tendency by many whites to try to enter into a sanitized version of slavery and the black experience on white-governed terms. In one conversation she attributed her recent interest in "getting more active in local concerns," including a voter registration drive that aims to increase local African American political participation, to this growing disquiet over the cottage. " I don't know, but like I say, the cottage just got me thinking about the way things are here."

One older African American man told me that he'd "never really thought much about the Kitty thing," before the placement and restoration of the cottage in the mid-1990s. But after the Cottage rose to prominence, and was exhibited weekly to Georgia schoolchildren, including African American children, he began to ask older relatives about the "true facts of the case." Now, he ponders more and more the injustices of the story:

...You know, every time I drive by that place, I can feel my blood pressure rising. A lawfully married man owned a grown woman, he owned her, and every law in this state supported that fact. So what did that law let him do? Have his way with her, outside of marriage, have children by her, children that he legally owns, and then leave those kids to fend on their own. Lord knows where. His own flesh and blood, and he's a pillar of virtue? And our own children are getting marched through every Friday, to learn about the proud traditions of the great state of Georgia. I don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Blood and law are impossibly, painfully confounded. A legal institution enables rape and the abandonment of one's natural offspring. Note, as well, that the spatial realization of the white myth variant has inspired the speaker to come to this formulation: only once he started seeing the restored cottage everyday did he begin to inquire into the historical story critically.

### **The Cemetery**

The memorials to Kitty in the city's segregated cemetery also illustrate the ambiguous consequences of spatially concretized narratives. Over the past year, I have often observed white and African American tours and sojourns, led by local leaders and activists through the City Cemetery. For all their many differences, these tours nearly always conclude at the same spot, a historical

marker to Kitty, erected in the late 1930s by W.H. McCord, the man who organized the relocation of the cottage to Salem. They then move on to the adjacent headstone to Kitty in the Andrew family plot.

This parallel strikes me as deeply appropriate: since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the American cemetery has functioned as the primary site of the ritual reconstruction of the image of family continuity. In various ways, often manifestly at odds with one another, white and African American Oxford residents seem to be searching for a common assertion of the bonds of kinship.

To be sure, the terms in which common kinship is asserted vary dramatically. White memorial practices, once again, have tended towards explicit disambiguation of the blood/law distinction, and towards marked emphasis on enduring racial separateness. McCord was careful in 1939 to plant the detailed stone marker at the base of a vigorous young oak tree; one of his descendants recently told me that McCord hoped that as the tree grew to provide shade over this oldest part of the cemetery, it would demonstrate the “deep roots” of Oxford’s families, and remind everyone of the valued position of Kitty in the city’s proud history. Kitty, in effect, was grafted onto the collective white family tree. Significantly, this grafting accomplished through a marker that explicitly named her supposed “free negro” husband, and provided legal details making the case (complete with citations to published texts) that Kitty chose to remain in slavery of her own free will. Simultaneously, McCord moved Kitty’s Cottage to the all-white segregated Salem Campground, where (as several contemporaries recall) the “Yankees couldn’t get ahold of it.”

Meanwhile, the oak tree, stone marker and the more recent headstone to Kitty are enclosed within a section of the city cemetery that remains segregated,

and that has become more markedly segregated in recent years in the face of the periodic campaigns for the ceremony's reunification. A paved street, named for Methodist Bishop Asbury, has even been constructed by the city between the "white" and "black" sections of the cemetery. The virtually all-white private foundation that cares for the white section (largely with funds obtained from the city treasury) had refused to extend care to any African American grave but Kitty's. Kitty's inclusion into the white family tree functions markedly to exclude the rest of the African American citizenry from that family.

Yet among local African Americans the cemetery and Kitty's gravesite have not so much reinforced the dominant narrative, as opened up fissures in it. Tending family graves or walking through the cemetery, a number of African American women have rolled their eyes at the city father's repeated insistence that Kitty is the only person of color buried in the "white" half of the cemetery. "Why, she's in good company, that's all I'll say," one woman remarked with a quick smile. One of my elderly African American informants joked to me as she led me through the ostensibly "white" section that stretches south from the Andrew plot, "What you white folks never get is that when we're over on this side of the cemetery, we're just visiting our kin."<sup>5</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The Kitty case thus suggests that the social organization of landscape is never simply the externalized projection of a pre-established narrative script or mythic text. Rather, ritualized spaces, like myths, are generated by cultural paradox, by conceptual tension and social contradiction. Spatial realizations or

enactments of mythic scenarios at one level may suppress these contradictions, rendering certain orientations to the world seemingly self-evident, automatic, or natural. Yet these spatial or architectural forms, by virtue of their tangible presence, may also place dominant mythic narratives at risk, or at least open to interrogation and debate. Having to see the cottage “every day” as they drive by it inspires some African American woman and men to articulate a wide range of long-term injustices. Encountering the Kitty memorials within the cemetery triggers mildly subversive commentaries on the fictive nature of the color bar.

It has often been remarked that systems of racial apartheid, in South Africa, North America, or elsewhere, depend on the structural invisibility of oppressed persons and communities. Patterns of residential and commercial development, in Johannesburg or Atlanta, tend to obscure most underclass neighborhoods inhabited by persons of color, while providing occasional glimpses of impoverishment that reinforce dominant assumptions about the underclass.

In one sense, the Kitty memorials may be understood as components of this larger spatial and ideological apparatus. In foregrounding a deeply nostalgic narrative of tranquil antebellum race relations, they tend to deflect attention away from contemporary dynamics of race and class. White meditations on the cottage, as we have seen, are so often delivered with an elegiac sense, accompanied by observations about how “we don’t live that way anymore,” bemoaning the fact that neighbors don’t look after each other anymore, that people don’t trust one another, that crime is rampant in America’s cities. These not-so-coded embedded racial commentaries seem to flow quite naturally from white conversations about the Kitty story, just as “modern day”

conversations about contemporary families seem to turn quite naturally to retellings of the Kitty narrative. As I have suggested, these dynamics have partly motivated and structured white well-meaning efforts to restore the cottage and memorialize Kitty in the graveyard. The cottage offers white residents a way of entering into a sanitized version of the African American experience, solving the moral and cultural conundrums about family and community historically generated by slavery, without directly encountering most of their working class and underclass black neighbors.

Yet once concretized in material form, ideological projects have a way of escaping the control of their architects and builders. The myth of Kitty and its architectural dramatizations, which have so long been associated with the silencing of African American histories and memories, may, unexpectedly, be proving good to think with, generating new local insights and initiatives by those who have long felt themselves excluded from the dominant historical narrative. The mysterious figure of Kitty, so long held up as an exemplary guest within an idealized white family, may inspire creative re-examination of the bonds of history and obligation that link all American families.

## Appendix I. Assessing the Documentary Record.

The principal published source on the Kitty-Andrew story is G.G. Smith's Life and Letters of Bishop Andrew (1883) who builds upon A.H. Redford's earlier account in Organization of the Methodist Church South (1871). Both writers are committed to demonstrating Andrew's blameless conduct in the events leading up to the schism of the northern and southern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1845, and both insist that Andrew was an "unwilling slave-holder." To my knowledge, all subsequent published accounts have followed Smith and Redford on these points, and none have alluded to the widespread local African American presumption that Kitty and Andrew were lovers.<sup>6</sup>

The available unpublished documentary evidence on Kitty and her children is ambiguous, and has been cited in support of both the mainstream "white" version of the story and African-American counter-narratives. Aiming neither to "prove" or "disprove" any particular version of the story, I review the existing textual evidence as impartially as possible.

To begin with, I have found no record of Kitty's birth. There is a record of a slave named Kitty and her daughter, also named Kitty (two years old) being sold on April 1, 1823 for \$450 from R.T. Williams (Hannah Hills serving as Administrator) to B. King. The sale took place in Chatham County (Savannah). (Slave Bills of Sale Project, Vol. I, 1986:73)<sup>7</sup> The younger Kitty in this sale would have been born in 1821, the year before Bishop Andrew's slave Kitty is usually thought to have been born.

The only Mrs. Powers to write a will in Augusta during the nineteenth century was a Lovey Powers, whose will was written April 11, 1832 and who died October 23, 1832. The will, copied in the 1832 Richmond County will book, makes no mention of Kitty or of James Andrews; the deceased simply leaves her estate to be held in trust for her daughter and grand-daughter, with a modest provision for her own mother. (Richmond County, Georgia Ordinary Court Estate Records 1708-1839; p. 356) Mrs. Powers is invariably described in accounts of the published Kitty case as a "wealthy woman" but according to the County's evaluation her estate at the time of her death amounted only to \$1161.62, a respectable figure but hardly a fortune by the standards of the day. The majority of her estate lies in five slaves, "Lucy and her three children, viz. [Liam?], Zelda and Dennis," valued at \$800, and "Fanny," valued at \$352. (Richmond County, Georgia Ordinary Court Estate Records; Book A, p. 125), The 1830 Federal Census, taken two years earlier, records a total of eight slaves in the Powers household: three black women slaves between the age of twenty-four and thirty six, two black female females between the age of ten and twenty-four, one black female under ten years old, and two black males under the age of two. (U.S. Census, Richmond County, Georgia 1830, p. 264)<sup>8</sup> It is possible that one of the unaccounted-for enslaved girls was Kitty, and that there is a missing codicil to the will. Alternately, it may be that Andrew's claim that he inherited Kitty from Mrs. Powers is false.

Smith asserts that in 1832, when Andrew was elected a Bishop, he was not a slave-holder. (Smith 1882:229-233) Indeed, Smith insists that Andrew, "never became possessed of a slave by purchase nor held one by preference." (Smith

1883:231) However the 1830 census (in Athens, Clark County) lists James Osgood Andrew as owning two slaves, one male between the ages of ten and twenty-four and one female between the ages of thirty six and fifty five. ( Federal Census 1830. Georgia, Clarke County, City of Athens. p. 325).<sup>9</sup> The male may have been Jacob, whom Andrew described in an 1833 letter as, “Jacob, a little negro boy who lived with me.” ( Smith 1882:273)

By 1840, Bishop Andrew had moved his household to Newton County and acquired thirteen slaves, including one female between the ages of “ten and twenty-four.” This enslaved woman may have been Kitty, who would have been around eighteen years old at the time. (Federal Census 1840. Georgia, Newton County, City of Oxford, p. 20)

In the famous New York conference Andrew insisted in May 1844 to the northern bishops that he was only in the narrowest legal sense a slave-holder. However, the historical record suggests that the Bishop was not being entirely forthcoming with his northern colleagues. Shortly before leaving for the New York conference, in April 1844, James Osgood Andrew legally transferred to President Longstreet--for the token price of ten dollars in total-- ownership of the fourteen enslaved persons: “Nick, George, Tom, Orlando, Elleck, Edward, Addison, James, Jefferson, Peggy, Susan, Lillah and her two children Laura and Allen.” Andrew added to this a stipulation that “the said Augustus B. hold the said negroes to and for the joint use of myself and my wife Leonora during our natural lives, and upon the death of either, to the use of the Survivor.” In other words, James and Leonora Andrew retained full use of these fourteen slaves’ labor, who continued to reside in their household. The 1850 census, taken six years later, indicates that Andrew owned twenty four slaves, which presumably included these fourteen slaves, plus Kitty and Jacob, plus the children that had been borne to them between 1844 and 1850 (six of the slaves listed in 1850 were children under the age of seven).

This transfer was presumably a legal maneuver, designed to allow Andrew and his defenders to assert that Andrew did not, in the strict legal sense, own any of the slaves that he gained by his second marriage, while ensuring that he would retain full use of these slaves’ services. Andrew’s assertion in his letter to the Bishops that he had “secured” the slaves to his second wife “by deed of trust” can only be regarded as a shading of the truth, for he neglected to mention that he had simultaneously secured the slaves to himself, by virtue of that same “deed of trust.”<sup>10</sup>

The 1850 census record concludes with reference to four enslaved persons: a 26 year old female mulatto, a six year old black male, a four year old black male and a two year old black female. Since the twenty-six year old woman is the only mulatto listed among the slaves, it seems fair to conclude that this woman is Kitty herself. (If Kitty were 19 years old in 1841 then she would have been 28 years old in 1850, not 26 as listed in the census.) It was often (although not always) the practice to list slave children immediately after their mothers, so it may be that these three children were all Kitty’s offspring. Smith, as we have seen, reports that Kitty’s final earthly act was to ask the Bishop’s daughter, presumably Elizabeth, to care for her little girl, who might be the two year old girl listed in the 1850 census, or the one year old, eight-year old, or eleven year old girls mentioned in the census lines above. The “colored” son of Kitty observed in Washington D.C. in 1877, discussed below, might be the four year

old or six year old boy listed below the mulatto woman, or might be the five year old boy listed three lines above her.

Reviewing this data, several of my African American interlocutors have suggested that if the six year old boy listed immediately after the mulatto woman is Kitty's eldest son, Kitty would have conceived her first child a year or so after the death of James Andrew's first wife, and about a year before his second marriage. For them, this suggests a likely interpretation: deprived of the companionship of his first wife, Andrew almost immediately sought the sexual companionship of Kitty. This liaison, they believe, continued for some years.

Those who argue that Kitty's children were fathered by a black man point to the fact that these three children are listed by the 1850 census taker as "black," not "mulatto." My African American commentators respond that a white enumerator may have been careless in noting skin color, or may have had a vested interest in not calling direct attention to the presence of light-skinned slave children in the home of one of the county's leading white residents.

As of this writing I have been unable to find any documentary evidence of a free man of color named "Nathan" or "Nathan Shell" in Newton County during the 1840s or 1850s. He is not listed in surviving County tax digest records (all free black men and woman had to pay a five dollar annual tax) for the 1840s or 1850s. No living African American informant in Oxford recalls a Shell family in the region, and no Shell is listed in Bishop Jarrel's "List of Negroes who have lived in Oxford," composed in the 1870s.<sup>11</sup>

I have been unable to locate any record of the precise date of Kitty's death. In an unpublished chapter of his biography of Andrew, Smith makes the following reference to Bishop Andrew's daughter Elizabeth: "She was at the bedside of poor dear Kitty when the faithful servant died." (Chapter 14, p. 869, unpublished addendum to Life and Letters of James Osgood Andrew). Since Elizabeth died in 1856, and since as we have seen, "a mulatto woman" is recorded among Andrew's slaves in the 1850 census, Kitty presumably died at some point between 1850 and 1856. Soon after this, Bishop Andrew moved his household and his slaves, presumably including Kitty's children, to Summerfield in Dallas County, Alabama.

It is unclear why Andrew moved to Alabama. Smith states simply that there were "family reasons." Some African Americans in Oxford have suggested that local approbation over Andrew's liaison with Kitty pressured him to move out of Oxford, but I have found no documentary evidence of this.

The 1860 Slave Schedule of the U.S. Census for Summerfield precinct, Dallas County, Alabama indicates that Bishop Andrew owned eleven slaves, including a fifteen year old male mulatto, a fourteen year old black male, and a twelve year old black female. It seems likely that these are the same persons as the six year old boy, a four year old boy and two year old girl listed ten years earlier in the 1850 slave schedule.

At the close of his account of Kitty, Smith inserts the following footnote:

In 1877 I went to Washington, and in company with Judge McCallister visited the Department of State. The Judge conversed for a moment with an intelligent, well-dressed colored man, who was the messenger. Calling to me he said, "Mr. Smith, here is a Georgian." Giving the young man my hand cordially, I said, "You

are a Georgian?" "Yes, sir," "Where from?" "Oxford, sir" "Why, Oxford, my old home. Who was your master?" "Bishop Andrew" "Is it possible? You were one of his second wife's slaves?" "Oh, no, sir, I was Kitty's son." He spoke very lovingly of the Bishop and his care for him. (Smith 1883:314)

Curiously, Smith makes no mention of the black man's first name or family name, nor does he indicate who the man's father was. (Smith, normally obsessed with genealogical detail, presumably inquired as to these particulars.) Is Smith negotiating here an issue that he (consciously or unconsciously) recognizes as difficult? Since he grew up as a neighbor of the Andrews in Oxford, he might well have heard rumors of a sexual liaison between Kitty and the Bishop. Does the absence of detail imply that he knew, but found it expedient not to mention names or the question of paternity?<sup>12</sup>

The chief messenger for the U.S. Department of State during this period was a William Gwin, appointed in 1871 by Secretary of State Hamilton Fish, after having worked as a waiter and servant for several years in Washington<sup>13</sup>. Gwin served for thirty years in his State Department post until his death in 1901, earning an annual salary of \$840.00. In the 1900 Census, William Gwin (of 1112 18<sup>th</sup> st, NW) gives his date of birth as May 1846.<sup>14</sup> This is the same year of birth as the child who appears to be Kitty's second son in the 1850 census.<sup>15</sup>

An important local African American newspaper reported Gwin's death on with a front page obituary:

Mr. William Gwin, messenger to the Secretary of State, and one of the oldest employees in the department, was found dead in his bed last night...Mr. Gwin has been messenger to the Secretary of State since 1871, when Hamilton Fish appointed him. He affixed the great seal of the United States to all important treaties and conventions negotiated over the last 30 years. His last action of this character was in the case of the new Hay-Panncefote treaty. His death is deeply regretted by all officials of the department, who always implicitly trusted him with secrets of State. Mr. Gwin was an ex-slave. (Afro-American Ledger (Baltimore), November 20, 1901. P.1)

I explore the case of William Gwin and his descendants in a forthcoming paper. I also discuss the belief among some Georgia African American families, that they are descended from Kitty.

## **Appendix II. Tentative Chronology of the Kitty Narrative**

1821-22 Possible years of Kitty's birth.

1823. (April 1) . Bill of Sale (of a Kitty and her 2 year old daughter Kitty sold by R.T. Williams to Barrington King. (Liberty County, Georgia)

1832. October 23. Death of Mrs. Lovey Powers, Augusta. (Bishop Andrew claims he inherits Kitty from Mrs. Powers, but her will contains no mention of this)

1840. James Andrew's family, with Kitty and at least one another slave, move to Oxford Georgia. Census lists Andrew as owning thirteen slaves.

1841. (December 4) Kitty interviewed by A.B. Longstreet and George Lane, and allegedly refuses manumission and transport to Liberia

1842. Death of Amelia Andrew, first wife of Bishop Andrew, nursed by Kitty, among others.

1844 Apparent birth date of one of Kitty's sons

1844. Bishop James Andrew marries his second wife (Leonora Greenwood) in the process acquiring at least fourteen slaves.

1844. On 12 April, In advance of the New York conference, A.B. Longstreet "purchases" 14 slaves from Bishop Andrew and immediately deeds them back to Andrew (22 April).

1844. May-June. New York conference of the Methodist Church, at which Bishop Andrew attempts to resign because of the slavery controversy.

1845. Methodist Episcopal South convention at Louisville ratifies the separation of the southern church from the northern church

1846. Apparent birth date of one of Kitty's sons

1848. Apparent birth date of Kitty's daughter.

1850. U.S. Census lists, in Bishop Andrew's household, a "mulatto" woman, age 26, followed by a six year old black boy, a four year old black boy, and a two year old black girl. (A total of twenty-four slaves are listed.)

1854. Bishop Andrew's second wife (Leonora) dies. (Smith states that Andrew turned over all her property, including slaves, to her children)

1850-1856. Kitty evidently dies during this period.

- 1855 James Andrew marries his third wife, Emily W. [Sims] Childers
1856. Death of Elizabeth Lovett, daughter of James Andrew. (Elizabeth said to have tended to Kitty on her deathbed.)
1857. Bishop Andrew moves from Oxford to Summerfield (Dallas County) Alabama. Kitty's children presumably are taken from Oxford to Summerfield.
1860. Slave schedule, U.S. Census, for Summerfield, Dallas County, Alabama, lists eleven slaves owned by Bishop Andrew. The Free Schedule lists the following whites in the household of Bishop Andrew (age 66): Emily Andrew (55) and Sally Andrew (35).
1870. U.S. Census, Summerfield Dallas County, Alabama. In the household of James O. Andrew (age 75) are listed: Emily Andrew (70), Sarah, Andrew (42). James O Andrew (28), Woolsey S (illegible), age 14.
1871. March 1. Death of Bishop James Osgood Andrew. Franklin Street Parsonage, Mobile, Alabama.
1871. March (first Sunday). Remains of James Andrew buried in Oxford Cemetery, Oxford, Georgia.
1877. G.G. Smith meets "Kitty's son" employed as messenger at the U.S. Department of State, Washington D.C.
1939. "Kitty's Cottage" moved from Oxford to Salem Campground, by McCord. Stone memorial erected by McCord in white Oxford cemetery to Kitty.
1966. Dedication of plaque to Bishop Andrew in the Oxford Cemetery.
1994. Kitty's Cottage moved back to Oxford; placed on the grounds of Old Church
1999. Tours begin in restored Kitty's Cottage

Acknowledgements. Field and archival research on the Kitty story has been funded by a research grant from the Emory Center for Myth and Ritual in American Life: A Sloan Center for Working Families (The MARIAL Center). Previous versions of this paper were presented at the MARIAL Center and at Haverford College. I am grateful to participants in these seminars for their helpful comments. The paper has also benefited from thoughtful readings by Laurie Hart, Rajiswari Mohan, Fath Davis Ruffins, Ellen Schattschneider and Bradd Shore.

I am especially grateful for the many residents of the cities of Oxford and Covington who have shared with me their diverse understandings of the story of Kitty. Although I realize that some will be troubled by the interpretations I have advanced, I hope that this essay adequately conveys their common love of this region's history, and will serve as a catalyst for further conversation about our unfolding past.

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<sup>1</sup> In some instances, neo-confederate memorials have been erected to enslaved African Americans who served (allegedly as volunteers) in Confederate military units.

<sup>2</sup> Several members of long-established white Oxford families have recently confided to me privately that they have long suspected that Kitty was Bishop Andrew's mistress.

<sup>3</sup> Several white interlocutors, upon learning from me (or from an exhibition that I recently curated at Oxford College) that many local African Americans assume a sexual relationship between Andrew and Kitty have expressed strong surprise, even outrage at this "libel." They argue that no Methodist Bishop ever would have behaved in such a manner, and that the northern Methodist bishops that opposed Andrew's slave-holding would surely have used the affair, had it existed, as ammunition against Andrew. In turn, several African American informants respond that small southern towns such as Oxford were locked in a "conspiracy of silence" and the offspring of such liaisons were routinely sent North. "How would the Northern Bishops have ever learned what Andrew was up?" one African American man chuckled ruefully.

<sup>4</sup> For example, an Emory Magazine article on the College's history asserts of Andrew, "Legally the bishop did hold slaves, but he did not consider himself morally accountable for their status, since they were his by inheritance. Moreover, he had all but freed them -- to actually free them was illegal under Georgia law -- and they did not live under servitude." (Basset 1987). The erroneous assertion that Bishop Andrew owned slaves only through his wife's inheritance is even made in the on line finding aid of Emory University's Special Collections. (<http://www.nunnforum.emory.edu/Special/guides-aa-all.html>) The incorrect assertion that Kitty was the property of Andrew's first wife is also made in Gary Hauk's 1999 official history of Emory University

<sup>5</sup> These graveyard allusions to the legacies of interracial liaisons are hardly unique to Oxford;. The philosopher Lucius Outlaw recalls that driving by a "white" cemetery elsewhere in the South, an elderly relative used to wryly comment, "Well, there a lot of good white people buried in there!" (L. Outlaw: personal communication)

<sup>6</sup> In a forthcoming paper I explore the ideological history of the Kitty story, which appears to have served different political and cultural functions at

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different historical junctures. In the 1880s, Smith and his colleagues saw in the history a charter for the moral legitimacy of the M.E. Church, South and as a demonstration of the errors of Reconstruction. In the 1930s, Haygood, McCord and others retold the story in order to argue against the coming reunification of the two branches of the church. In the 1950s and 1960s, the story was recirculated by whites in a rather nostalgic vein, pointedly in contrast to the “confusion” of the Civil Rights era. The resurgence of the story in the 1990s, was partly triggered by the return of the Cottage to Oxford in 1994. But the renewed salience of the story must also be understood in light of local political struggles over racial gerrymandering and the segregated city cemetery.

<sup>7</sup> The 1823 bill of sale is found in the Papers of the King-Barrington-Baker-Family of Georgia. (University of Virginia Special Collections, M1870. Box 63.) By 1830, Barrington King, residing in Liberty County, Georgia, owned seventy slaves. (Federal Census, Georgia, 1830, Liberty County, p. 48) If the two year old child is in fact the Kitty later acquired by James Andrew, I am unsure how she found her way to Augusta by the early 1830s. It should be noted that other branches of the Andrew family owned considerable amounts of land and slaves in Liberty County.

<sup>8</sup> Also listed as a head of household in the 1830 Census of Augusta (Richmond County) is a Mrs. Ann Powers, owner of five female slaves (including three under ten years of age.) However, there is no record of a will from this woman during this period.

<sup>9</sup> During this period, Andrew, assigned as a minister in Greensborough and Athens, resided in Athens (Smith 1882:200, 213). By 1832, Andrew was stationed in Augusta, where he evidently came to know Mrs. Powers and to acquire Kitty around 1834.

<sup>10</sup> In private correspondence, Andrew notes that he had toyed with entering openly into this own defense. In an unpublished letter, to a fellow southern minister, he writes,

Now there is one curious fact in connexion [sic] with my slavery relations and the Episcopate. The last eight years have been decidedly the most prosperous the church has ever know and yet during all that time I have been a slave holder...The blessing came from God who knew all about it. Now what's the inference from this? I have been strongly tempted to enter the lists and give a shot at some passing game-but think on the whole it may possibly be best for me not to take any prominent position in the battle. (James Osgood Andrew, Oxford, to Rev. William M. Wightman, Charleston, South Carolina. July 6, 1844)

<sup>11</sup> The 1860 census lists only one Shell in Newton county, a wealthy white man, Stephen Shell, fifty five years old, clerk of the Covington City Council, worth \$6,336 and born in South Carolina. The same man is listed in the 1850 census as an executor, in possession of one slave, a forty-five year black men, who is not identified by name.

<sup>12</sup> My working assumption is that Smith, a conscientious Methodist historian, would not knowingly publish an outright falsehood, but that he would find it

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entirely appropriate to leave out awkward details and direct the reader's attention away from any hint of Andrew's possible impropriety.

<sup>13</sup> I am unsure as to how Kitty's second son might have acquired the surname Gwin. Gwin, along with Gwynne, Gwinn, and Guin, is a fairly common southern white and black family name. Kitty's enslaved children presumably were taken by Bishop Andrew to Dallas County, Alabama when he moved his household there in 1857. Smith records that in 1862 Andrew struck his sixteen year old male "Dining Room boy" across the jaw (Smith 1882: 474) Since this would have been William Gwin's age at the time, and since in 1869 William was employed as a waiter, I speculate that the beaten youth may have been William himself. As it happens, there were several slave-owning Gwins in Dallas County during this period, including a white farmer and Methodist named William Gwin (1820-1889). Perhaps during the 1860s the enslaved William was owned by this man or took his name for some reason.

Another William Gwin was a famed union naval hero during the Civil War. Still another William (McKendrick) Gwin, the first U.S. Senator from California, lived in Washington D.C. through the 1850s. Senator Gwin, a slaveowner originally from Tennessee, was one of the Senate's most dedicated defenders of slavery.

<sup>14</sup> The 1870 census lists William Gwin's age as twenty-four, which would also fix his year of birth as 1846, the apparent birth year of Kitty's second son. By this reckoning, Gwin was fifty-five when he died. Gwin's death certificate records his age at time of death as fifty-two; the Washington Post recorded his age at fifty.

<sup>15</sup> Curiously, William Gwin is listed in the State Department records and in the 1880 and 1900 U.S. Census as born in Virginia, not Georgia. (see Biographical Register for 1878. U.S. Department of State).