

NUCMC Catalog Record

- Creator: Major, Benjamin, 1796-1852.
- Title: The Major collection of letters from Liberia, 1830-1854 and 1994.
- Date created: 1830-1854 and 1994.
- Extent: 1 box.
- Biographical note: In the late 1820s, possibly as a result of his friendship with Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ Church, Benjamin Major came to the conclusion that slavery was wrong. He freed his eight slaves and paid their passage to Liberia, where they arrived in late summer of 1830. The Major family moved from Christian County, Kentucky, to Woodford County, Ill., in 1834.
- Summary: Collection consists of twelve complete letters, appended notes, and letter fragments written between 1830 and 1854 by emancipated slaves residing in Liberia. Their former master Benjamin Major and his family, of Eureka, Ill., were the recipients. The letters written by four different individuals, Tolbert Major, Austin Major, Wesley Harland, and Tolbert's wife, Selvay, describe the vagaries of life in Africa, family matters, the weather and native vegetation, and the recurring troubles that occurred with the indigenous population. Requests were also made to Benjamin Major for a variety of supplies, such as cotton and paper, which were scarce or needed to replace items lost at various times, and greetings were passed to family members and acquaintances still in this country. Other persons represented include Agnes Harlan, Lucy Majors, George Harland, Edward Watkins, John Majors, Enock Harlands, and Shelvay Bradson. Also includes draft transcriptions of the letters and a short history of Liberia and the American Colonization Society compiled by Kristy Gebhardt in 1994.
- Subjects: Majors family – Correspondence.
African American families – Correspondence.

African American families – Liberia – Social life and customs.
Slaves – Emancipation – United States.
Slaves – Liberia – Biography.
Indigenous peoples – Liberia.
Liberia – Social life and customs.
Ethnology – Liberia.
Freedmen – Liberia – Correspondence.
Gebhardt, Kristy.

OCLC 741523206