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SEVENTY EIGHT YEARS AGO

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BULL RUN BATTLEFIELD

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**THE LAST MEETING OF ROBERT E. LEE
AND "STONEWALL" JACKSON**

Our cover picture is from the original and celebrated painting by Julio, in the Arsenal of the Washington Artillery, New Orleans, size 6x12 feet, valued at \$5,000.00.

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**SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO
BULL RUN BATTLEFIELD**

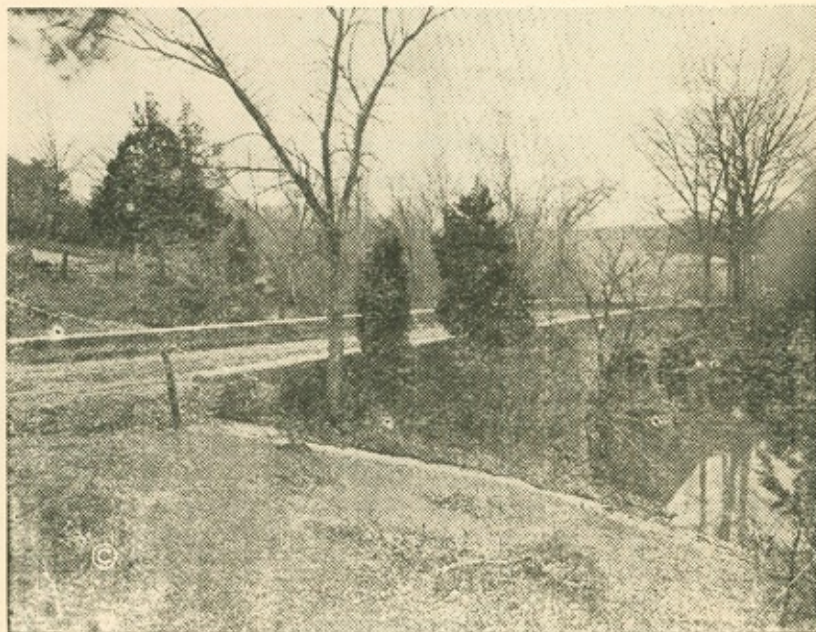
Some Intimate Sketches of the Sites Closely Associated with the Battle of Bull Run, with Sidelights on Places and People, from Original and Authoritative Sources

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THE STONE BRIDGE AT BULL RUN



From an early photograph showing trenches at the left

SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO—BULL RUN BATTLEFIELD

In the peaceful and beautiful country-side to-day, it is hard to realize the picture it presented during the ravages of war. The following incidents are practically all gleaned from old letters and diaries, and from the memory of the remaining few who were participants in the tragic scene.

STONE BRIDGE (1)

STONE BRIDGE was conspicuous at the beginning of the battle, July 21st, '61, and over it Pope's retreating army passed, August 30th '62.

"I laid my gun down across the top rail and ran my eye down the barrel. At this instant Press Cowan, who was standing a step behind me, fired. This was the first musket fired at the Battle of Bull Run. It was fired by Press Cowan, a private of Co. J., of the 4th South Carolina Infantry. It was about 200 yards below Stone Bridge and about 40 feet from the bank of Bull Run on the Centreville side, about 6 o'clock in the morning." —From a letter written June 1, 1912 by B. B. Breazeale to his son at Manassas and published Sept. 24, 1931 in the Manassas Journal.

A little northeast of Stone Bridge, the bridge crossing Cub Run, there was also a scene of wild disorder during McDowell's retreat from the field, July '61.

A shot from a Confederate Battery hit a team of horses, overturning the wagon squarely across the middle of the bridge, stopping all travel across there.

The enemy continued to shell the bridge, and here two entire Batteries of artillery were lost, and several ambulances and artillery wagons ruined.

It was at this point, three miles from the actual Battlefield, that the Confederates made the biggest capture of guns and wagons.

VAN PELT PLACE (2)

Evans' Brigade was stationed here at the start of the battle, July 21st, 1861. It was also used at one time as a Signal Station, and until it was destroyed by fire, some years after the war, bore the mark of battle.

From the diary of a soldier who was passing along the Pike (now U. S. 211) two days after the battle, he remarked that he noticed numerous men sitting with their backs to the shell-torn trees, in the yard of the VAN PELT PLACE. They appeared to be sleeping, but as he approached them, found them to be dead, one he noted was holding the picture of a little boy in his hand.

PITTSYLVANIA (3)

PITTSYLVANIA was one of the old Carter mansions that were clustered about the Battlefield, and is said to have been one of the finest of the houses that were owned by the children and grandchildren of Robert Carter, "King" Carter, as he is locally known.

At the time of the war, however, it was in bad repair, but like all the houses adjacent to the battlefield, it was used as a hospital during both

the first and second battles.

The following incident, taken from the diary of a young girl who lived not far from the battlefield, gives a picture of the old house at the time of the battle.

"One of the striking recollections of this time, is just after the first battle of Bull Run, going with my mother to Pittsylvania—burned after the second battle—, but then used as a hospital. A large part of the house was unused and had been for some time, and was in very bad repair. I remember going through those great rooms, with the wonderful paper that had been brought from England, hanging off the walls in strips, and plaster falling all about. Men lying everywhere, on great four-poster beds, on pallets and on the floor, but one that impressed me the most was a strikingly handsome man, a Captain McAusland of the Louisiana Tigers, surely that was a well named regiment."

"A quarrel and a challenge had passed between him and another Officer and the time was set for a duel after the battle, but he was mortally wounded before the time arrived."

"We heard that two other Southern men had quarreled and agreed to fight after the battle, but both were killed. Let us hope they shook hands in Heaven."

This was also the home of Mrs. Judith Henry, the daughter of Landon Carter, owner of Pittsylvania. After her marriage to Dr. Henry, she made her home at the Henry House, about a mile distant, and which in '61 was to become the pivotal point of the battle.

MATTHEWS (4)

This is the spot that marks the first actual fighting, General Burnside being met by six Companies of the 4th Carolina Infantry, and Major Wheat's Louisiana Battalion, the whole under the command of Col. Evans. It was at this spot that the first example of good military tactics were shown.

In what is now a wheat field, not far from the site of the old house, are several stones marking the resting place of some of the soldiers of the Louisiana Tigers. But there are others in unmarked graves all about there.

The house, which was of logs originally, with a frame addition, was used as a refuge for the wounded, and after the battle was ended, the entire yard was strewn with amputated limbs and the dead. Today, the yard and the adjacent field is a veritable carpet of narcissus each Spring.

To the southeast of the home site of the Matthews farm, on what was the part of Pittsylvania, is a trench, now overgrown with trees in which over thirty were buried in one grave.

MOUNTAIN VIEW (5)

Several miles to the northeast, off County road No. 621 (in Fairfax County) is the old Carter home, known as MOUNTAIN VIEW. The late 18th century house is interesting and there was some activity there during the war, as the numerous relics which have been plowed up testify. Perhaps the most interesting thing now is the old cocoonery, one of the few left standing.

Silk worm culture was one of the early industries that the Virginia planters tried, and many of the larger plantations had similar buildings. This one, of stone, with a huge chimney, was used as a place of refuge during the battle, the unusually thick walls making it bulletproof.

SUDLEY CHURCH (6)

Built on the same site as the present one, off County road 234, SUDLEY CHURCH was erected at least a hundred and fifty years ago, on the land given for that purpose by Landon and Courtney Carter. It was of brick structure, and during the battles it sheltered both Blue and Grey, and was so badly damaged that it was later torn down, and a frame one put up in its place.

Immediately after the war it was used as a school house, and there was such a big hole in it, torn by shell fire, that the boys could slip in and out unseen by the teacher.

After the war the impoverished congregation found it very hard to rebuild their place of worship, and it was from funds supplied by the efforts of a Union soldier that made it possible.

The following story taken from a copy of the Springfield, Mass., Republican of November 24th, 1886, tells the tale.

"A STORY OF THE WAR, LET US RAISE THE DEBT ON A LITTLE SOUTHERN CHURCH."

An interesting reminiscence told by Col. Rice of this City, and its Postmaster.

"At the first Battle of Bull Run, I was a private in the 2nd New Hampshire Regt. In the final struggle for Henry Hill, just before the stampede

of the Union Army, I went down with a musket ball through my lung."

"My comrades bore me off the field in the wake of our retreating force towards Sudley Church, where our surgeons had established a hospital."

"In a short time, being closely pursued by the enemy, and finding that I was apparently dead, they laid me under a fence and made their escape."

"Some days after the battle I recovered consciousness, but was unable to move. The blood from my wound soon putrified and attracted a swarm of flies, whose larvae in a short time were wriggling under my shirt and into my wound in constantly increasing numbers."

"In this condition I was found by Mr. and Mrs. Benson who lived on the opposite side of Bull Run. They were returning to their home at evening, after having spent the day at Sudley Church assisting in the care of our wounded. The Confederate medical staff at that time was very poorly prepared for the emergency of battle, especially for the care of the wounded of both Armies, and but for the efforts of the Bensons and other living in the vicinity of the battlefield, our wounded would have had little food or attention during the first few days following the battle. The Bensons, discovering life in me, brought an overworked surgeon from the Church, who, however turned away with the remark that he had no time to waste on so hopeless a case."

"Mrs. Benson meanwhile brought me food from her home, while her husband removed my clothing and scraped away the vermin that were preying on me. They continued to care and feed me until at the end of ten days I was so far revived

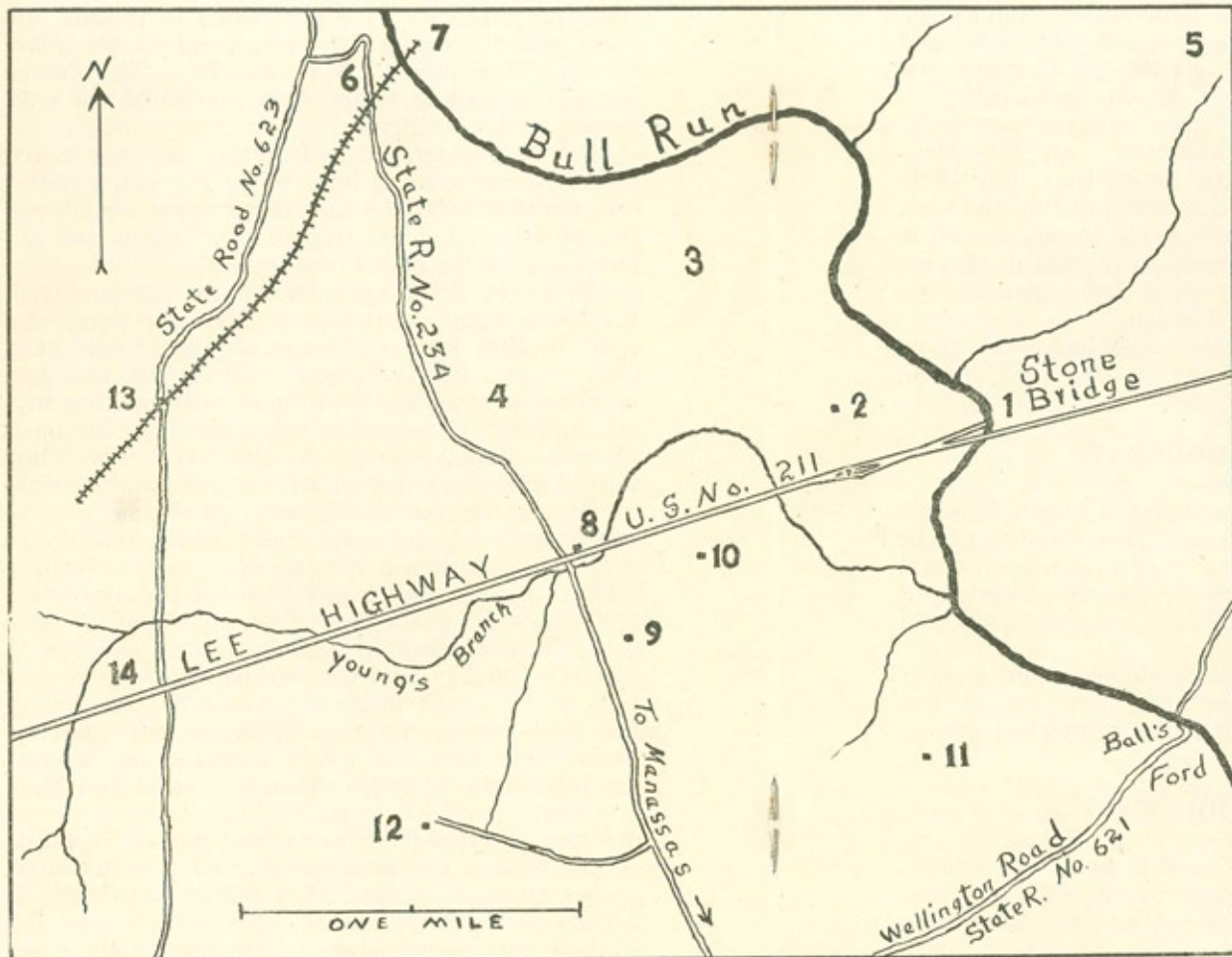
that the surgeons were persuaded to remove me from under the fence to more comfortable quarters in a freight car at Manassas Junction, whence in a few days I was carried to Richmond and consigned to Libby Prison."

"For twenty-five years I neither saw nor heard of the Bensons, but I have never forgotten that I owe my life to them, and have never abandoned the purpose of some day visiting them and acknowledging the debt I owe them."

"Being in Washington a few weeks ago with the Gettysburg excursionists I left the party and went to Bull Run, and upon inquiry, found that both of my deliverers were still living, and lost no time in reaching their house and making myself known. It is hard to tell which was the most pleased. They took me to the spot where they nursed me back to life in '61, showed me the points of interest on the Battlefield, which had greatly faded from my memory, and seemed greatly to regret that other arrangements made it impossible to accept their hospitality for the night."

"I learned for the first time, that shortly after the Battle of Bull Run, Benson had enlisted in Stuart's Cavalry, and that we had literally fought face to face in a dozen desperate battles during the next twelve months, while his wife had remained at home and again succored our wounded, left there by Pope when he was driven from the same bloody field in '62."

"They both talked freely and did not hesitate to say that at our first meeting they looked upon me as an enemy whom they might slay justly in honest combat, but whom as Christians they felt it their duty to minister to in my extremity."



SKETCH OF
THE BULL
RUN
BATTLEFIELD



1. Stone Bridge and National Battlefield Museum
2. Van Pelt Farm
3. Pittsylvania
4. Matthews House
5. Mt. View
6. Sudley Church
7. Sudley House
8. Stone House
9. Henry House
10. Robinson House
11. Portici
12. Chinn House
13. Old Railroad Cut
14. Groveton

"When I attempted to express my thanks for what they had done they seemed surprised, and modestly disclaimed all credit for obeying the dictates of humanity, as they expressed it."

"To insistence that I hoped in some way to be able to reciprocate their kindness to me, Mrs. Benson replied, 'If you want to do that, our little church over yonder was destroyed during the war, and you can help us poor people to pay for it, it has cost us a severe struggle to rebuild it, and we owe two hundred dollars on it yet, which in this poor country is a heavy burden.'"

In response to above letter, sufficient funds were soon forthcoming to discharge the debt on the little church.

SUDLEY HOUSE (7)

Across the Run from Sudley Church is what was once a stately mansion. This was one of the largest plantations in the vicinity, and extended into four counties. There was much skirmishing here during the war and the house was used as a hospital after both battles.

There is one Confederate soldier buried a short distance from the house and there are others, both Union and Confederate, in unmarked graves about the place.

STONE HOUSE (8)

The STONE HOUSE, as it is generally known, was built in the early part of the 19th century, and was in direct line of battle, one end having been destroyed by a shell in '61. It was also used

as a hospital after both battles, and for many years afterwards, the blood stains could be seen on the floor—until the old boards were removed. This is also the scene of John Estlin Cooke's novel, SURRY OF THE EAGLE'S NEST.

HENRY HOUSE (9)

The original Henry House was of logs, frame and plaster being added later. The house contained six rooms, and was a typical small farm house. After the war the present house was built on the same site. Dr. Isaac Henry was a surgeon in the U. S. Navy, on the Frigate Constellation, under command of Commodore Truxton, one of the six Captains appointed by Washington at the organization of the Navy in 1795.

Mrs. Henry had been a widow for many years at the time of the first Battle, at which time she was eighty-five years old and bedridden.

She was killed by a shell that exploded in the room in which she lay. As Henry Hill was the decisive point of the battle in '61, it is perhaps better known in history than any of the other homes that were on the battlefield.

ROBINSON HOUSE (10)

While there is no interesting history connected with this house before the war, it then became quickly famous, and it was not far from here, on a part of the Henry farm, that General Jackson won his immortal sobriquet of STONEWALL.

As the repeated Federal attacks threatened to break the lines of Gen. Bee and Gen. Bartow,

southeast of the Henry House, Gen. Bee shouted to his soldiers, "Don't desert me, boys, don't disgrace me, look at Jackson's Brigade, it is standing like a stonewall." A few moments later the gallant Bee was dead.

A private in Rockbridge's Artillery at the first Battle of Bull Run, with Jackson's command, wrote later.

"When the troops were broken and falling back, General Bee cried, 'See, there stands Jackson like a stonewall, rally behind the Virginians.'"

"I have always thought that the appearance of Jackson's Regt—a long grey line standing firm over the grassy slope, suggested the word 'Stonewall'—they looked like a stonewall."

As there are three Robinson houses in the vicinity, the following explains them—James Robinson, a negro, the original owner of the house that was to play such a conspicuous part during the first Battle, was a waiter at the old Warrenton Springs Hotel and had accumulated a little money, so that he bought his wife from slavery, and then opened a hostelry for the drivers of the cattle that were constantly being driven along the Warrenton-Alexandria Pike (U.S.211), a good part of his land being converted into cattle pens where the droves could be fastened at night, and his wife being a good cook, their venture prospered, so much so that he was able to buy two of his sons' freedom, not having enough to buy the third, who had been sold south, he, after the war, returned and the place was once more divided to give him his share.

PORTICI (11)

PORTICI is another of the old Carter places, one that has never been out of the family.

It was an impressive brick house on a commanding site, and used as a signal station during the war, also as a hospital until it was burned during the second Battle. This was the scene of some very bitter fighting.

Before the war Portici had been visited by several destructive fires, and the name "Portici" given it by the owner, Mr. Ball, after a Town in Italy that he had recently seen, and which had been nearly destroyed by a series of fires.

There was a terraced garden to the south of the ten room-house.

HAZEL PLAIN OR CHINN HOUSE (12)

HAZEL PLAIN or the CHINN HOUSE as it is perhaps better known, was built by Bernard Hooe in the 18th century, and has passed through many successive hands since then. Perhaps its greatest distinction is that it was one of the most important of the hospitals that were located directly on the field of battle, and was the scene of some of the bitterest fighting both in '61 and '62.

One of the rooms which is said to have once been the library, was used as an operating room, and the amputated limbs of those who died on the operating table, were thrown out the window until the pile reached a level with the window sill, they were then dumped into a nearby well, it being necessary to dispose of them quickly on that

hot July day. The old well, filled with stones at the top, can still be seen.

OLD R. R. CUT (13)

A Railroad had been started as an outlet for the produce of the large farms lying in the upper country, and was uncompleted at the beginning of the war, but from Centreville to Sudley Ford, the bed was partly laid.

Not far from Groveton a quantity of broken stone had been hauled for the making of the R. R. bed, and it was here that some of the bitterest hand to hand fighting took place, the men using the broken stone as ammunition after their own had given out, making a unique instance of stones being used as ammunition in modern warfare.

The old line of the R. R. can still be traced.

August 29th, '62, was one of the bloodiest days of battle.

At noon of the 26th, Manassas Junction was the great base of supplies for Pope's Army in Virginia. Thousands of pounds of pork and hard-tack and supplies of all kinds packed the platforms and storehouses, ready to be sent to the Federal troops.

At 6 p.m. advance troops of Jackson's Corp found several empty cars at Bristow Station, some four miles to the southwest of the Junction, and before 9 p.m. the 21st North Carolina and the 21st Georgia had attacked, and most of the supplies at the Junction destroyed or confiscated.

This was the prelude to the bitter fighting at the R. R. cut on the 29th. A short distance from the road, (in the woods,) leading from U.S. 211 to

Sudley, is the old Battle Monument erected in memory of the fallen Federal soldiers, and it is said that there was some criticism of the Union Officer who wrote the inscription on it, saying that he did not designate who were the patriots mentioned, to which he replied.

"The time will come when they are ALL patriots." This is the inscription.

"In memory of the patriots who fell at Groveton, August 28th, 29th and 30th, 1862."

GROVETON (14)

The old Groveton house, which was built in the 18th century as the overseer's house on the plantation of that name, the "big house" having been destroyed by fire. This one was used by the family at the time of the war.

Generals Lee and Longstreet took breakfast there the morning before the second Battle commenced, and feeling quite sure that the house would be in danger, warned the family that they had better flee. Later in the day, a shell came through the dining room and blew off the back of the chair in which General Lee had been sitting just a few hours before.

The following letters are written to an unknown person, by a Confederate soldier at the time following the first Battle of Bull Run, and give a picture of conditions at that time.

"Stone Bridge, July 24th, 1861.

My dear: As before stated, I cannot give you an idea of the horrors of the battle. I believe it was the hardest fought battle that was ever

fought on the American Continent. For ten hours it almost seemed as if Heaven and earth were coming together, for ten long hours it literally rained bullets, shells and other missiles of destruction. The firing did not cease for a moment. Try to picture to yourself at least one hundred thousand men all loading and firing at once as fast as they could. It was truly terrible. The cannons, as loud as they were, were nothing but pop-guns compared with the tremendous noise of the thousands of muskets, the sight of the dead, the cries of the wounded, the thundering noise of battle can never be put on paper. It must be seen or heard to be comprehended.

The dead, the dying, the wounded, friend and foe, all mixed up together, friend and foe embraced in death, some crying for water, some praying their last prayers, some trying to whisper to a friend the last farewell message to their loved ones at home—it is heart rending. I cannot write any further, my eyes are damp with tears. I will now close this letter. Perhaps next time I will say something more about the Waterloo of America. I should have stated that Jefferson Davis, General Johnson and General Beauregard, all came amongst us. We gave them a yell.

Although the fight is over, the field is yet quite red with blood.

Yours as ever,

John."

"Germantown, Va., Sept. 29th.

Dear—Just as I was closing my last letter to you I found that I had a chance to get a wagon to

go for clothing that I had left at Gainesville, just after the Battle.

We had all sent clothing there, so I started, and was sorry for it, for riding over a road paved with nigger head (a round smooth rock found in this vicinity) in a springless wagon is enough to jolt the ambition out of most any soldier.

John Manning and myself and the driver left for Gainesville which is about fifteen miles from here and we were gone two days. The next morning Manning and I walked over a part of the battle field where we had fought. It was an awful sight, what dirt had been thrown over the bodies was washed away and their bones were only held together by their clothing. There were hundreds in that condition. It was a ghastly sight and I hope never to have to see the like again, and to make matters a little bit worse, it was raining and the stench was unendurable.

We camped at STONE BRIDGE, and then started back, leaving the field of skulls, feeling very sad. We found all of our clothing.

In speaking of the Battlefield, I forgot to say that the trees were literally torn to pieces, among them a walnut about three feet through that actually was in splinters. Always yours,

John."

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