



Historic Perspectives

Preservation of Prince William County's Historic Resources

Summer 2025 Contents

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PRINCE WILLIAM

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The Cemeteries at Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park



David Cuff

Robertson Family Cemetery

Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park has two preserved cemeteries: the 10th Alabama Cemetery dating from 1861 and the post-Civil War Robertson Family Cemetery. There are likely other Civil War burials at the park, but they've been lost to farming and development over the past 160 years.

Following the Battle of First Manassas, Confederate camps sprang up throughout Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun Counties. Bristoe Station was ideal for a camp as it was located along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad near Manassas Junction. The camp at Bristoe Station was established on August 4, 1861, and named Camp Jones

in honor of Colonel Egbert J. Jones of the 4th Alabama. Colonel Jones was mortally wounded at First Manassas and died on September 3, 1861. Thousands of Confederates from Virginia, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee resided at Camp Jones during the fall and winter of 1861.

During the Civil War, more soldiers died of disease than in combat, especially when crowded into camps like Camp Jones. Such camps were dirty and unsanitary, which led to rampant diseases like meningitis, smallpox, yellow fever, typhoid, measles, and pneumonia. At Camp Jones, soldiers began to die soon after they arrived. Colonel William



Confederate Graves in Centreville 1862

Dorsey Pender of the 6th North Carolina wrote “I find the health of the regiment terrible. Only about two hundred and thirty are fit for duty & great many of the sick are desperately ill. I fear we shall have great many deaths before we get through.” Hundreds of Confederate soldiers died at Camp Jones and were buried in cemeteries established by their regiments. By December 1861, most of the regiments had moved to other, more permanent winter camps in the area. Over time, the wooden headboards used to mark the individual graves disappeared and the cemeteries themselves were lost.

The only Camp Jones cemetery positively located is that of the 10th Alabama. The regiment was formed in May 1861 in Alexandria, Alabama, and mustered into Confederate service on June 11, 1861. Most of the soldiers were from the Calhoun County area of Alabama. When the 10th Alabama arrived in Winchester, it became

part of Brigadier General Kirby Smith’s Brigade that included the 9th Alabama, 11th Alabama, 19th Mississippi and 38th Virginia. It did not arrive at Manassas in time for the battle and moved to the newly established Camp Jones on August 4, 1861. The 10th Alabama relocated to Centreville on September 21, 1861, and saw action at the Battle of Dranesville (Fairfax County) on December 20, 1861, where it suffered 24 killed or mortally wounded. Though the regiment was only at Camp Jones for six weeks, it continued to bury its dead at the cemetery through late 1861, including casualties from Dranesville. Based on earlier accounts and recent research, it’s believed 80-90 soldiers from the 10th Alabama are buried there.

One of those Alabama soldiers was likely Private Carter Tatum. Carter was an 18-year-old salesman when he enlisted on June 4, 1861, in Company G in Jacksonville, Alabama. Born in Calhoun County, Alabama, Carter was

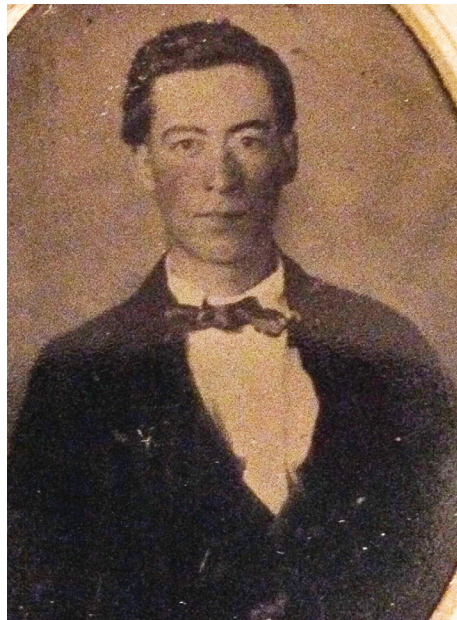
one of seven children of farmer John Wesley Tatum and Eliza Tatum. Carter’s parents were originally from South Carolina and moved to Alabama to acquire land after the Creek Indians were relocated to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Contracting meningitis (also known as “brain fever”) while at Camp Jones, Carter died on August 27, 1861. Carter’s younger sister Nancy “Nannie” White Tatum (1845-1936) kept a photograph of Carter in an album she began in 1867. The album remained in Nancy’s family and now belongs to her Great-Great-Granddaughter Jayna Hobby of Midland, Texas. Carter’s picture is on the new 10th Alabama Cemetery marker installed at the park last year.

Another Alabama soldier buried in the cemetery was 2nd Sergeant Sidney Coleman. Sidney was a 30-year-old farmer when he enlisted on June 4, 1861, in Company F in Cropwell (St. Clair County), Alabama. He was born in 1831 in St. Clair and married Elizabeth Truss in 1850. By the time of the Civil War, Sidney and Elizabeth had two daughters. Sidney’s younger brother James (aged 17) also enlisted in Company F. By December 1861, Sidney had been promoted to 2nd Sergeant of Company F. He was killed at Dranesville on December 20, 1861. His brother James survived the Civil War and married Elizabeth (Lizzie) Idona Dill in 1867. The couple had two daughters and a son.

In 1909, James returned to Virginia to visit the battlefields of the 10th Alabama as well as Bristoe Station. While at Bristoe Station, he stopped at the 10th Alabama Cemetery where his brother Sidney was buried. According to James, “the cedar posts that were placed there as a directory of each grave were so badly obliterated



Nancy Tatum



Private Carter Tatum

that I was unable to make out the names. A number of cedar trees have grown up over the graves, the largest being about the size of a man's thigh." James talked to the current landowner, who turned out to be the daughter of a Union veteran. James said that he pleaded with her to sell him the small space, but she refused. Instead, she promised James "that the soil over which our loved ones lie shall never be tilled so long as she is spared upon the earth." James passed away in 1911 and is buried in St. Clair County, Alabama.

Fortunately, the landowner kept her word and the 10th Alabama Cemetery still exists today. Attempts to locate other Camp Jones cemeteries, including a nearby Mississippi cemetery, have been unsuccessful.

In addition to the 10th Alabama Cemetery, the post-Civil War Robertson Family Cemetery can be found within the boundaries of the park, though it remains privately owned. At the start of the Civil War, Thomas K. Davis, former Sheriff of Prince William County and a Union supporter,

owned 171 acres of land that included much of today's park. Davis purchased the land in 1858 from John Caldwell. During the war, Davis and his family fled to Washington and by 1865, his property was in ruins. Though he rebuilt his store near the railroad by 1870, Davis was in financial trouble due to two court cases. As a result, he began selling parcels of his 171 acres. John Brawner purchased 27 acres in 1870 in the northeast corner of the property. Today you can see the foundation of John Brawner's house near the park office at the top of the hill.

In 1883, Davis sold the majority of his remaining land to Basil Snowden Robertson, a long-time area resident and prominent merchant and farmer. As was common, a family cemetery for the extended Robertson family was established. Robertson may have rented the property before 1883 since the first recorded burial in the cemetery dates from January 1878. The burial was of Irving Robertson, Basil's infant son. The Robertson family continued to own the property until 1922, when Basil's children sold a

106-acre parcel to Joseph Rollins. Only the Robertson Family Cemetery remained with the family. In 2000, Centex purchased the entire 341-acre Rollins property and reached an agreement with the Civil War Trust and Prince William County to preserve 130 acres for the park.

The Robertson Family Cemetery contains 27 marked and 11 unmarked graves. The last recorded burial in the cemetery was either 1934 or 1948/1949 (depending on the records). Though still the property of the Robertson Family, volunteers from Historic Prince William maintain the cemetery grounds.

Of note is that the 10th Alabama Cemetery was not part of the Thomas Davis property. Until 1877, a 233-acre parcel, which included the 10th Alabama Cemetery, remained with the Commonwealth of Virginia. It was then sold to James Snook. The Park has 20 acres of Snook's 233-acre property, which includes the 10th Alabama Cemetery.

Jeff Joyce

Volunteer Tour Guide, Bristoe Station
Battlefield Heritage Park

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Image Spotlight

Albert A. May

This is the identification card of Albert A. May of Nokesville. A WWI veteran regularly employed as a teller at First National Bank in Alexandria, he was also active as an officer of the VFW post and in the Lutheran Church. Somewhere in all these activities, Albert found time to work briefly as a prohibition agent in 1921. The Treasury Department had a hard time keeping agents, as they were poorly trained, poorly paid, corruption was rife, and morale was low. When he quit, Albert returned his ID to the agency and it was eventually deposited in the National Archives.

John Nathan McDonald
Historic Interpreter, Brentsville
Courthouse Historic Centre



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History Corner

William Fitzhugh Lee

Young William Fitzhugh Lee, though not the top ranked cadet at Virginia Military Institute academically, was selected by his classmates based on his character to address his graduating class at the 1853 commencement on the campus of VMI on July 4, 1853. Every cadet pondered the volatile political situation that threatened to tear the country in two. Lee began his speech by saying “When I look around the happy faces of the motley throng assembled here tonight and reflect that those bright eyes now beaming with merriment and love may on tomorrow’s dawn grow dim with tears, when I meet the smiles of youthful manhood, the thoughtful glance of matured intellect or the searching gaze of venerated names as, and even then, we seek to trace the course of future tears and as the last hoary age turns to scan the path on which the course of life is run, bowed beneath the weight of years we seek not then to serve amid the rich promises of earthly hopes or to build the fairy fabric of ambition’s dreams.”

Issues of slavery, states’ rights, and even secession were in the forefront of conversation and had been for many years. Even so, no one in attendance that evening could have known how prescient these words would be. Within eight years, they all woke up to “the dawn grown dim with tears.” Willie, as he was known by friends and family, would experience this



Lee Family

on the plains of Manassas.

William was the son of Reverend William Fitzhugh Lee of Richmond and Mary Catherine Syme Chilton Lee, of Fairfax, born April 27, 1832, in Richmond. Rev. Lee, a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, was a first cousin to Robert E. Lee. He was described by peers as “light as a feather, but possessed a strong mind and will, and lived under the pressure of a heart and soul devoted to the love of God and man.” Despite a ministry of only

twelve years, he contributed to the Episcopal Church serving as Rector at St. John’s Church, where Patrick Henry had given the famous speech “Give me Liberty or give me Death!” in the early years of the Revolutionary War. St. John’s thrived under Rev. Lee’s leadership, crowded with parishioners, Sunday school children, and a zealous missionary society. Controversy surrounding the desire to expand led to Lee’s resignation. His founding and serving as Rector of Christ

Church, Richmond. Due to failing health, he resigned. He founded and edited "The Southern Churchman," an evangelical journal he continued to edit until his death at age 33. His son William was only 5 years old.

Although devoted to his mother who returned to Alexandria with him, Willie spent considerable time with his paternal uncle, Edmund Jennings Lee, of Shepherdstown, Virginia (now West Virginia), who served as a surrogate father. Willie was especially close to his cousin, Edwin Gray Lee, who was with Willie on the battlefield at Manassas and evacuated him to the Pringle House General Hospital on July 21, 1861. Willie was enrolled at Episcopal High School in Alexandria beginning with the fall quarter of 1842. He was ten years old. He fell under the tutelage of Rev. William N Pendleton, headmaster of the school, and later Brigadier General and Chief of Artillery in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Pendleton, a West Point Graduate, was a gifted teacher, engineer, and athlete who served as a powerful Christian role model for the boys he taught, including Willie.

During that time Willie lived with his aunt, uncle, and cousins at Leeland, in Shepherdstown. He grew up knowing their friends and neighbors. Among these acquaintances were the five daughters of the town physician, Dr. Richard Parran, and his wife, Laura Morgan Parran. Eliza Morgan Parran, listed in the family bible as Lillie, was the second eldest daughter. Lillie participated in the annual joust held at Morgan's Grove, where knights on horseback would run at the rings encouraged by beautiful young women of Shepherdstown, one of whom was crowned Queen of Beauty



Reverend Andrews

among Maids of Honor. Lillie held both roles at different times. She caught Williams's eye not only for her charm and beauty, but also her intelligence. At his commencement address, William spoke of Lillie, saying women should be granted the extension of literacy making marriage a partnership of intellectual equals.

William entered VMI in 1850, the third class since its founding. According to correspondence between his mother, Mary Lee and Superintendent Col. Francis H. Smith, there were worries about William's maturity and moral behavior, as well as questions about his tuition, paid by Edmund Jennings Lee. Graduates of VMI at that time were required to teach for a period in Virginia. William ultimately did so in Fauquier County. William tried to bypass this responsibility because of a need for greater income to support his mother. Before fulfilling his obligation to the institute, he worked for a short time as a civil engineer.

In June 1855, William entered the United States Army as a 2nd Lieutenant of the 2nd Regiment of Infantry stationed at Fort

Ridgely, Minnesota. Before arriving, the 2nd Regiment was routed to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Lee would also be stationed at Fort Randall, South Dakota, Fort Riley, Kansas, and several other remote frontier posts that helped to manage Indian affairs. Lee came to know, and befriend, J.E.B. Stuart who was making a name for himself in the US Army. When admirers gifted Stuart with a pair of silver spurs, he gave them to William in acknowledgment of his promise as a soldier.

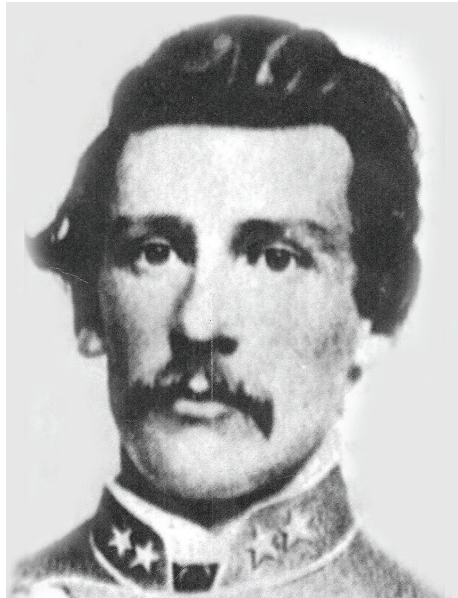
On September 15, 1859, William married Lillie Parran while on leave from Jefferson Barracks. The wedding was performed at 8:00 am at Trinity Church by Reverend Charles Wesley Andrews, an influential clergyman and member of the American Colonization Society. Andrews would continue being an influence in the lives of the Parran and Lee family members performing many baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

After William and Lillie were married, the Lees and Stuarts bonded as couples, at Fort Riley and later at Jefferson Barracks. This special relationship lasted as long as each of the four lived.

On New Year's Day, 1861, Laura Morgan Lee was born while William was stationed at Jefferson Barracks. Through the winter, the southern states voted for secession as Abraham Lincoln took office and the divide between north and south widened. After Fort Sumter, William became an outspoken critic of the course being taken by the Federal Government toward the south. Lee was arrested by Captain Nathaniel Lyon, a staunch abolitionist who had taken command of the St. Louis arsenal. William was court-martialed and placed under house arrest for a time. When released, he resigned

from the army on April 30, 1861. With the help of his second cousin Robert E. Lee, William was appointed Captain in the Confederate Army and ordered to duty at Harper's Ferry where he was to train raw recruits of the newly formed army as drill master and recruiting officer. Lee was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of the 33rd Virginia Infantry shortly before the arrival of Thomas J. Jackson, a former professor of William's at VMI. Jackson taught Natural and Experimental Philosophy and Artillery. Jackson instilled discipline in the fresh recruits. During this time Lillie and six-month-old Laura remained in Missouri. Fearing for their safety, William wrote to Lillie on June 21st giving her directions on how to travel back to Virginia acquiring chaperones along the way for her and young Laura's protection to Shepherdstown.

The First Brigade, under the command of Brigadier General T. J. Jackson, moved from Harper's Ferry to Winchester as Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, commander of the Army of the Shenandoah's movement to reinforce Gen. Beauregard at Manassas Junction on June 24, 1861. The roads were filled with brass bands, drums beating, flags flying and ladies waiving their white handkerchiefs and cheering the soldiers on to victory or death. The soldiers moved from Winchester to Shawnee Springs then back to Romney. Between late June and early July, the army moved between Darksville, Shawnee Springs, and Martinsburg, fighting minor skirmishes along the way with Federal soldiers. An anticipated July 4th battle never materialized, and they moved back to Winchester. It was here that William saw his young



William Lee

daughter Laura for the last time.

The army left the Winchester area on July 18th and were informed of a Federal threat by Gen. Beauregard at Manassas Junction. The men were formed in ranks in a forced march all day and all night, crossing the Shenandoah at midnight and spending two hours to rest in Paris, VA, before resuming their march to Piedmont Station where they were moved by rail to the area of Manassas Junction. They camped on July 20th in a grove of pines and in the morning marched toward Blackburn's Ford when Jackson received word that Henry Hill, the left anchor of the confederate line, was under attack. The First Brigade then marched 7 miles to the sound of the guns but would not fight until mid-afternoon.

Jackson positioned his Infantrymen in a grove of trees and ordered them to hold fire until the enemy was close. The 33rd VA, which William belonged to, was on the far left. A charge was made contrary to orders. Federals dressed in red had started firing on the left flank of the brigade. Discipline broke down,



Lillie Lee

and when Col. Arthur Cummings, Commander of the 33rd received orders to charge, which were contrary to Jackson's order to wait, they charged.

When Gen. Jackson directed Col. Cummings to look out for the enemy artillery, Captain William Lee, who was acting as Lt. Col. and Cummings, walked out on the plateau and saw enemy artillery moving rapidly up the Sudley Road to the front and left, and large bodies of enemy infantry moving along the crest of the hill in the direction of the 33rd VA. Cummings and Lee returned to the Regiment. They would prepare to assault the guns of Captain Charles Griffin. During the charge, Captain William Lee, acting as Lt. Col., was seriously wounded when a piece of artillery shrapnel pressed the third button down from the neck of his frock coat into his sternum.

If you want to hear the rest of the story, come visit Ben Lomond Historic Site located at 10321 Sudley Manor Drive in Manassas to learn the fate of William and Lillie.

Dave Born

Historic Interpreter,
Ben Lomond Historic Site

Preservation Corner

Rooted in the Past, Yet Built to Last: The Cabins at Rippon Lodge

In 1923, Wade Hampton Ellis and his wife, Dessie, bought Rippon Lodge from the Marron Brothers roughly 176 years after its initial completion in 1747 by Richard Blackburn. Under their ownership, Wade Ellis extensively renovated Rippon Lodge and its grounds, flipping the house and installing new rooms and porches. 19th century outbuildings left behind by the Blackburns and Atkinsons were demolished and replaced with newer structures. Two small cabins were among the additions, one of which was built directly behind the home, and the second one established across the yard. What were these cabins used for and did anyone significant stay in them?

The cabin behind the home was finished in the late 1920s, serving as the guest quarters for the Ellises' personal chauffeur, Randy Hubbard, who occasionally stayed at Rippon Lodge. The interior was furnished with a stove and a table used by Mr. Hubbard to prepare his meals. Since the cabin was large enough, two beds were also placed inside the building. After Dessie Ellis sold Rippon Lodge to Admiral Richard Black in 1952, the Admiral allowed the family's cook and grandchildren to use the cabin as a living space. The structure underwent several renovations after Rippon Lodge's purchase by Prince William County in the early 2000s and currently, it serves as the site's public restrooms.

The second cabin across the yard was also constructed in the late 1920s, serving as both an office and a sleeping space for the Ellis family. Comprised of a single room with a fireplace and an attic, the Ellises likely slept in the cabin during the Great Depression to reduce heating expenditures in the winter. Admiral Black retrofitted the cabin into a space for his personal activities. An oil lamp and a ship wheel representing the Admiral's service in the U.S. Navy is attached to the base of the ceiling. There are draft plans of transforming Admiral Black's cabin into a public exhibit for visitors to Rippon Lodge.

Matthew Schuller
Historic Interpreter



Rippon Lodge Admiral Cabin Front



Rippon Lodge Admiral Cabin Interior



Rippon Lodge Restroom Cabin



HPD News

Staff News

This summer the Office of Historic Preservation will have several interns helping out with special projects across all the sites.



Mahak Qazi, is a Global Affairs major with a minor in International Development at George Mason University. She has always had a strong interest in Virginia history and enjoys exploring how local stories connect to broader global themes. She is excited to

be interning at the Ben Lomond Historic Site this summer and looks forward to learning through hands-on projects, connecting with the community, and gaining a deeper understanding of the site's historical significance in the county.

Morgan Peterson is a Prince William County native, growing up in Manassas before going off to college at James Madison University. She has always been interested in history, specifically in the day-to-day life of people in the past and present, which led her to choose Anthropology as a major. She is also very interested in environmental science and studying how people move across the world, which has influenced a second major in Geography. She previously took a role as an interpretive ranger at Sky Meadows State Park through an AmeriCorps program and is excited to continue her work with interpretation through the Office of Historic Preservation



this summer!

Brentsville has two interns this summer. Kortnei Morris, a student at Northern Virginia Community College, and Matthew Brown, a student at James Madison University will be interning at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre to gain experience working in public history and research.

Dan Goldstein

Historic Site Interpreter, Rippon Lodge Historic Site



Register Today For Our Upcoming Programs

Advanced tickets may be purchased online at: www.pwcparks.org/hptickets
www.pwcparks.org/HistoricPrograms

Walking Tours of Historic Prince William Towns: Haymarket

7/18 | 6 - 7 p.m.

Civil War Hospital Lantern Tours

10+ | Ben Lomond Historic Site
7/19 | 8:00p-8:45p | Sat | \$10
7/19 | 8:30p-9:15p | Sat | \$10
7/19 | 9:00p-9:45p | Sat | \$10

Museum Family Monday- Rippon Lodge Game Day

Ages 6 Months+ | Rippon Lodge Historic Site
7/21 | 10-11a | Mon | \$5 |
280001 | HP01

Prince William Lecture Series: "Atrocities At Bull Run" by Harry Smeltzer

Ages 10+ | Pat White Center at Ben Lomond
7/24 | 7:00p-8:30p | Th | FREE

163rd Anniversary Tour of the Battle of Kettle Run

10+ | Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park
8/27 | 5:00-6:30p | Wed | FREE

Battle Of Kettle Run Anniversary Tours

6 Months+ | Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park
8/23 8/24 | 11:00a-3:00p | Sun, Sat | FREE

Museum Family Day at Ben Lomond: Make Your Own Cornhusk Doll

Ages 4-9 | Ben Lomond Historic Site
8/11 | 10:00a-11:00a | Mon | \$5

Rippon Lodge Bug and Bird Day

Ages 6 Months+ | Rippon Lodge Historic Site
8/23 | 10:00a-1:00p | Sat | \$5