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"Is This Park to Memorialize Confederate Valor and History or Not?": Sectionalist Civil War Memory in the History of Manassas National Battlefield Park, 1861-2011

Michael Burns

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"Is This Park to Memorialize Confederate Valor and History or
Not?": Sectionalist Civil War Memory in the History of
Manassas National Battlefield Park, 1861-2011

by

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2010

THESIS

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Abstract

“Is This Park to Memorialize Confederate Valor and History or Not?”: Sectionalism and Civil War Memory in the History of the Manassas Battlefields, 1861–2011

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In the 150 years since the start of the U.S. Civil War, historians and laypeople alike have debated the causes and conduct of the war. Through the acceptance of the Confederate veterans’ memorial school the Lost Cause that led to reunification in the late nineteenth century, the memory of the Civil War and the actual events became indistinguishable. This blurring carried over into the work of interpretation at national Civil War battlefield and military parks. Although numerous historians have tackled the issues between Civil War memory and the national parks, and the connection to reunification, the majority have examined only the five original Civil War sites—Chickamauga-Chattanooga, Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Shiloh National Parks. By examining the history of Manassas National Battlefield Park in Manassas, Virginia—a National Park Service site created after the turn of the twentieth century and one that preserves two Confederate victories—since the conclusion of the first battle, a more complex story between memory and public interpretation arises. Instead of a story of reconciliation between the North and South, one finds a narrative of sectional tensions that remained even after the country reunified. Although the National Park Service has attempted to fight against Lost Cause interpretation there since its establishment in 1940, the legacy of its use of a shrine to Confederate history and memory shows that the sectionalism of Civil War memory still exists in some facets of Civil War interpretation.

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Introduction

For four days in July 2011, with temperatures over one hundred degrees and humidity to match, thousands of visitors, reenactors, and National Park Service (NPS) rangers suffered through the Sesquicentennial weekend of the First Battle of Manassas. At Manassas National Battlefield Park, a site only twenty-five miles from Washington, D.C., the NPS provided visitors with interpretive talks and walking tours, as well as special talks by respected historians, such as University of Richmond president Edward Ayers and NPS chief historian emeritus Edwin Bearss. These, however, were not the only weekend events. As has happened throughout the park's history, a conflict took place over how to commemorate the first major battle of the Civil War. Outside of the park boundaries, thousands of reenactors and spectators took part in a reenactment of the first battle. The spectacle included concessions and an opportunity to "witness" the battle first hand as well as "experience" the lives of encamped Civil War soldiers.¹

These two opposing forms of commemoration provide an opportunity to ask important questions about how the Civil War has been and is remembered publicly at National Park sites. Has the NPS fought against or embraced Lost Cause mythology? Do the arguments and events from the past 150 years continue to influence Civil War memory at Manassas? Finally, how have people and organizations outside the NPS and the federal government contributed to how the Civil War is remembered at the park?

This thesis explores the construction and institution of Civil War memory at one significant battlefield site, Manassas National Battlefield Park. Manassas provides an interesting example for Civil War memory. Since the park preserves the sites of two

¹ Heidi M. Baumstark, "2011's Top Story: Remembering Manassas 150 years ago," *Bull Run (Manassas, Va.) Observer*, 30 December 2011.

battles (First Manassas in 1861 and Second Manassas in 1862), both of which were Confederate victories, it differs from the majority of Civil War sites that mainly preserve and interpret only one battle.²

An examination of the history of Manassas National Battlefield shows that the park has been part of a continual struggle between Lost Cause memory and truthful interpretation since the end of the war. By the turn of the twentieth century, the federal government had preserved five battlefields from the Civil War—Chickamauga-Chattanooga, Antietam, Gettysburg, Shiloh, and Vicksburg. These five sites were established after Reconstruction in a time of sectional reconciliation throughout the United States. Unlike these five parks, however, Manassas was not a part of reconciliation. Instead, from the last shots fired at Manassas through the modern-day, a sectional conflict has existed through the memory of these two battles, which continually pitted the Lost Cause of the former Confederates against balanced interpretation that would include the role of slavery in the conflict's causes. Although the Lost Cause had taken control of Civil War memory through the Second World War, the Civil War Centennial from 1961 to 1965, combined with the strength of the Civil Rights Movement, initiated changes that resulted in the Lost Cause mythology losing ground in its influence over interpretation both in academia and in the public realm.³ The history of

² Only three NPS Civil War sites preserve two or more battlefields. One is Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park in Northeastern Georgia/Southeastern Tennessee, which preserves the battlefields of Chickamauga (Sept. 1863) and Chattanooga (Nov. 1863). The other is Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park in Central Virginia, which preserves four battlefields (Fredericksburg [Dec. 1862], Chancellorsville [May 1863], the Wilderness [May 1864], and Spotsylvania [May 1864]). Out of these three parks, Manassas National Battlefield is the only one dedicated to two clear-cut Confederate victories.

³ Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in History and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), esp. 264–283.

Manassas National Battlefield further reveals the complications that exist in Civil War memory in the public realm since the end of the war.

Contested memory has been a scholarly subject for many historians.⁴ Although personal memories influence collective memory, the memorials schools of historical interpretation that emerged from the Civil War arose out of collective memory.

Historiography on Civil War memory centers mainly on the creation of the Lost Cause in the war's aftermath. Lost Cause mythology, on which U.S. historians generally based the interpretation of the war through the 1960s, became central to the retelling of events. This myth, developed by many prominent Confederate officials in the war's aftermath of the war, justified the astounding number of deaths and the vast destruction the former Confederate states faced during the four years of war, while it defended Southern secession and ignored slavery as the catalyst of the conflict. Although northerners and southerners at the time of the war recognized slavery as the central issue of secession, both sections eventually embraced this memory in the waning years of Reconstruction. By the end of the nineteenth century, little public conflict existed between the two sections as they reconciled their political differences before the turn of the century.⁵ The

⁴ Although numerous influential studies on collective memory in a broader context have been published since the late 1980s, Civil War memory has dominated the historiography of collective memory in the United States. For general studies of historical memory in the United States, see John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992); Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); and Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁵ For examples of nineteenth century Americans' awareness of slavery's role in the Civil War, see Alexander H. Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech," 21 March 1861, quoted in the National Park Service, *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War* (Washington, D.C.: Eastern National Park and Monuments Association, 2011), inside cover; and Pres. Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, 4 March 1864, quoted in David W. Blight, "The Civil War in American Memory," *The Civil War Remembered: Official National Park Service Handbook*, eds. Robert K. Sutton and John Latschar (Washington, D.C.: Eastern National, 2011), 162. For the general studies on Lost Cause mythology and Civil War memory, see David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press

Lost Cause remains as the central focus when dealing with Civil War memory for, until roughly 1960, it was the most common and influential narrative used to explain the conflict.

Some historians have tackled how popular culture influences Civil War memory. Through popular culture, especially film, these works find fluidity in the way people remember the war. Throughout the early twentieth century, film and novels provided people with a popular perception of what occurred during the conflict. These early works mainly presented the Lost Cause. About midcentury, however, this emphasis started to change as the Civil Rights Movement complicated what white Americans understood about the war. In addition, the disastrous conflict in Vietnam turned many people away from military history and its seeming glorification of combat. Memory through popular culture shifted with the cultural changes that came about during the mid-twentieth century. Yet, the Lost Cause never completely died in popular culture and still influences how people perceive the conflict in some parts of the United States.⁶

of Harvard University Press, 2001); Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865–1900* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973); Carol Reardon, *Pickett's Charge in History and Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999); and Carol Reardon, "William T. Sherman in Postwar Georgia's Collective Memory, 1864–1914" in *Wars within a War: Controversy and Conflict Over the American Civil War*, eds., Joan Waugh and Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 223-48.

⁶ Two of the most influential films in history, D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and David O. Selznick's *Gone with the Wind* (1939), were based on two novels that glorified the Confederacy and the Lost Cause, Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s *The Clansmen* (1905) and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936), respectively. Although some Civil War films opposed the Lost Cause theme, such as Andrew V. McLaglen's *Shenandoah* (1965) and Edward Zwick's *Glory* (1989), the Lost Cause reemerged in the 1990s and 2000s with the release of Ronald Maxwell's two films *Gettysburg* (1993) and *Gods and Generals* (2003). For more on Civil War memory through popular culture, see Gary W. Gallagher, *Causes Won, Lost, and Forgotten: How Hollywood and Popular Art Shape What We Know About the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Neil Longley York, *Fiction as Fact: The Horse Soldiers and Popular Memory* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2001); Will Kaufman, *The Civil*

The historiography of Civil War memory also includes a number of studies that focus on the memory of individual battles and public commemoration. The majority of these works, however, center almost solely on one of the first five preserved battlefields or public actions to commemorate the dead. These monographs tend to emphasize the conciliatory nature of memory that arose in the 1890s. By the final decade of the nineteenth century, white northerners and white southerners had constructed a memory of the war that ignored slavery's role in the cause of the conflict. This construction combined the Lost Cause memorial school with Reconciliation. Interpretation at these parks as well as public commemorations tended to avoid conflict between North and South by embracing this new memory that celebrated southern courage and championed or reinforced reconciliation.⁷

War in American Culture (Edinburgh, Scot.: Edinburgh University Press, 2006); and Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture: A Reusable Past* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).

⁷For the Reconciliationist movement in preservation of the original battlefields, see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, esp. 182, 189, 198–99; Timothy B. Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2008); Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), chap. 3; James A. Kaser, *At the Bivouac of Memory: History Politics and the Battle of Chickamauga*, American University Studies, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1996); Jim Weeks, *Gettysburg: Memory, Market, and an American Shrine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); Timothy B. Smith, *This Great Battlefield of Shiloh: History, Memory, and the Establishment of a Civil War National Military Park* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Christopher Waldrep, *Vicksburg's Long Shadow: The Civil War Legacy of Race and Remembrance* (New York: Rowland and Littlefield, 2005); and Susan Trail, "Remembering Antietam: Commemoration and Preservation of a Civil War Battlefield," (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2005). For more general examinations of the motivations behind the establishment of the original national military and battlefield parks, see Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation*; Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1973); and Carol Reardon, *Soldiers and Scholars: The U.S. Army and the Uses of Military History, 1865–1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), chap. 2.

For examinations of public commemoration, see Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in History and Memory*, 264–283; Robert J. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961–1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Benjamin C. Cloyd, *Haunted by Atrocity: Civil War Prisons in American Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010); Caroline E. Jenney, *Burying the Dead but not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005); Thomas J. Brown, *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration: A Brief History with Documents*, The Bedford Series in History and Culture (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004); Jon Wiener, "Civil War, Cold War,

Little work has been published on how memory influenced the preservation and interpretation of the two battles of Manassas. Some studies attack the NPS for its inability to save and interpret sites that pertained to African American history both inside and outside the park, and have little connection to the two battles.⁸ One administrative history on Manassas focuses mainly on developments in the park's land acquisitions and administrative changes, rather than historical memory constructed or preserved there. Other historians tend to explore Manassas in larger works that examines broader issues in Civil War memory.⁹ Thus, an opening in the historiography remains to bring a fresh perspective to Civil War memory at NPS sites. Battlefields established after the 1890s can provide a new look at Civil War memory that complicates the common conciliatory narrative found in previous studies on public interpretation and preservation by showing that even after the Reconciliationist movement of the 1890s sectionalism remained strong in the United States through the use of collective memory.

This project hopefully fills this void. Unlike previous works on Manassas's history, this thesis examines the connection between Civil War memory and the creation,

Civil Rights: The Civil War Centennial in Context, 1960–1965,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, eds. Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 237–57; Dwight T. Pitcaithley, "A Cosmic Threat: The National Park Service Addresses the Causes of the American Civil War"; and Bruce Levine, "In Search of a Usable Past: Neo-Confederates and Black Confederates" in *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, eds. James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 187–212. For an example of a project that attempts to reverse the trend of Reconciliation in Civil War memory, see Barbara A. Gannon, *The Won Cause: Black and White Comradeship in the Grand Army of the Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

⁸ Erika K. Martin Seibert, "The Third Battle of Manassas: Power, Identity, and the Forgotten African-American Past," in *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape*, Paul Shackel, ed., (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001); and Paul Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape*, (Walnut Creek, Calif.: AltaMira Press, 2003).

⁹ For the park's administrative history, see Joan M. Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998). For an example of an examination of Manassas within a larger work, see Gary W. Gallagher, "Scapegoat in Victory: James Longstreet and the Battle of Second Manassas," in *Lee and His Generals in History and Memory*, 139–57.

development, and interpretation of Manassas National Battlefield Park from the end of the war through modern times. Similar to two recent articles on memory at West Point in the Gilded Age and at Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, an examination of the creation and development of Manassas National Battlefield shows that sectionalism continued to influence how the Civil War was remembered even after reconciliation occurred.¹⁰ Unlike other examples of public memory, the conflict over Manassas's interpretation and memory persists today. Manassas's complex history mainly consists of continual conflict between hard-line Lost Cause enthusiasts looking to protect the Confederacy in memory and a perceived Unionist leaning in the truthful interpretation of the war that breaks down the Lost Cause mythology's perceptions of the Old South and the Confederacy. Developed as a memorial to the Lost Cause, Manassas shows that conciliatory memory did not include all aspects of Civil War memory in the years since Reconstruction.

Each chapter examines one of four main eras that dominated the issues of Civil War memory at Manassas. Chapter one explores the creation of memory in the aftermath of the Manassas battles. Starting in 1861, immediately after the First Battle of Manassas ended, troops wrote about and debated the events that took place there. These veterans' memories greatly influenced future interpretation. Chapter two examines the steps in the creation of Manassas as a National Park site between 1910 and 1940. During this time, the Confederate ancestral groups—the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) and the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC)—both pushed for and fought against the

¹⁰ James Tyrus Seidule, "'Treason is Treason': Civil War Memory at West Point, 1861–1902," *The Journal of Military History*, 76 (April 2012): 427–52; and Caroline E. Janney, "'I Yield to No Man an Iota of My Convictions': Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and the Limits of Reconciliation," *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, 2 (September 2012): 394–420.

federal government's ownership of Manassas Battlefield. Unlike previously established battlefield parks, Manassas was seen specifically as a Confederate memorial that needed protection from Unionist influence. Chapter three explores the thirty years (1940–1970) surrounding the Centennial celebration of the Civil War at Manassas. These years became a turning point for the park's history and for Civil War memory as the Lost Cause lost a great deal of influence over interpretation. Finally, chapter four inspects changes in the park since 1970 and what the NPS has done to address issues or problems connected to Lost Cause interpretation. As the NPS has battled against the Lost Cause, outside influences, such as threats of constructing theme parks on or near the park, also created controversy around Manassas. Although Confederate veterans and, later, the SCV and UDC pushed for Manassas's preservation as a Lost Cause memorial, interpretation and preservation at the park has been a continual battleground over Civil War memory.

Chapter 1 Creating a Justifiable Memory: Veterans' Remembrances after the Battles, 1861–1910

“It is now generally admitted that it was one of the best-planned battles of the war, but one of the worst-fought.”

- Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman on First Manassas, 1891¹

The First Battle of Manassas, fought on 21 July 1861, has long overshadowed the larger, bloodier fight of 28, 29, and 30 August 1862. Each battle, however, possesses its own significance in the larger context of the American Civil War. To understand how the First and Second Battles of Manassas are remembered, it is vital to know the events of the battles themselves and how memory influenced creating accurate interpretations of them. The First Battle of Manassas was the initial major land battle of the conflict and indicated things to come, for more casualties fell during this fight than in any prior American battle.² On the other hand, the second battle holds an important place in a string of events that showed a major shift in the momentum of the war and related directly to both the Battle of Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation.³ Knowing the events according to the officers' reports and objective secondary sources is important to

¹ William Tecumseh Sherman, *Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman*, 2 vols. (1891; repr., Scituate, Mass.: Digital Scanning, 1999), 1:209. Sherman was a Colonel commanding a Union brigade at First Bull Run. In the American Civil War, the Union and Confederates generally gave different names to the same battle. Thus, we have the Battle of Bull Run or Manassas. For the purpose of this thesis, I will be using the name Manassas mainly because the battlefield park is named after the Confederate designation.

² For the most complete studies on the First Manassas campaign, see William C. Davis, *Battle at Bull Run: A History of the First Major Campaign of the Civil War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1977); John J. Hennessey, *The First Battle of Manassas: An End to Innocence, July 18-21, 1861* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, 1989); and Ethan S. Rafuse, *A Single Grand Victory: The First Campaign and Battle of Manassas* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2002).

³ The only truly authoritative work on the Second Manassas campaign and the battle is John J. Hennessey, *Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas* (1993; repr., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999). An older study of the opening fighting, Alan D. Gaff, *Brave Men's Tears: The Iron Brigade at Brawner Farm* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1985) and a new study of the battle's culmination, Scott C. Patchan, *Second Manassas: Longstreet's Attack and the Struggle for Chinn Ridge* (Dulles, Va.: Potomac Books, 2011), examine single aspects of the battle, but overlook the larger context of the entire campaign. In addition, although James M. McPherson's *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam*, Pivotal Moments in American History series (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), mainly focuses on the political, martial, and social ramifications of the approach to and aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, he successfully places Second Manassas within the larger context of the Civil War in 1862.

understanding memory's influence over the conflicting interpretations of the battles. Memory of both battles often diverges from the actual course of the fighting.

First Manassas or Bull Run

After Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency in November 1860, seven southern states seceded from the United States. By April 1861, sectional tensions intensified, and the South Carolina militia bombarded the Union's Fort Sumter starting on 12 April 1861. The following day, the Union garrison surrendered to the Confederates, leading to preparations for all-out war by both sides. Lincoln made a call for seventy-five thousand volunteers. The Confederates surpassed that number with a summons of one hundred thousand volunteers only days later. Four additional states quickly joined the Confederacy.⁴

Both sides assembled their untrained, inexperienced volunteer soldiers in preparation for combat. The Union Army of Northeast Virginia, the main Union force gathering in Washington, consisted of approximately thirty-five thousand soldiers while the Confederate Army of the Potomac, the Confederate force stationed in northern Virginia, had about twenty thousand troops. These two armies were the two largest forces gathered in U.S. history to that time. Neither side possessed an officer with the experience of commanding such large armies. Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott, the commander of U.S. forces in Central Mexico only fifteen years prior and the most experienced officer of either government, was the general in chief for the United States at this time, but his career as a battlefield leader had long ago come to an end. Instead, the Lincoln administration promoted an inexperienced major, named Irvin McDowell, to brigadier

⁴ Jacob D. Cox, "War Preparations in the North," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (hereafter *Battles and Leaders*), eds. Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, 4 vols. (1884–1887; repr., New York: Castle Books, 1991), 1:86.

general to command the Union force in Virginia. For the Confederate government, the problem of finding an overall commander for the Army of the Potomac was just as difficult. The Rebels appointed the commander of the South Carolinians who had bombarded Fort Sumter, Brig. Gen. Pierre Gustav Toutounte Beauregard, to head this force.⁵

In addition, neither side expected this conflict to last long. Both belligerents believed they could swiftly defeat their enemy and conquer the opposition's capital in less than three months, with enlistments for both sides reflecting this sentiment. The lack of experienced soldiers in both armies meant that the majority of the troops did not understand the brutal reality of combat. They believed the fighting would be a romantic, even chivalric, adventure, but the battle on 21 July would quickly teach them otherwise.⁶

McDowell, knowing his men were untested, desired to train the Army of Northeast Virginia as much as possible prior to moving into Virginia to fight Beauregard's force. Yet political pressures placed on and exerted by the Lincoln administration, as well as calls of "On to Richmond" from the northern people, forced McDowell into launching his command earlier than he wanted. The campaign officially began on 16 July 1861, when the Army of Northeast Virginia moved toward the Confederate positions along the banks of Bull Run. With the approach of McDowell's force of thirty-five thousand men, Beauregard realized that he needed reinforcements to hold the area. He sent a message to Brigadier General Joseph E. Johnston and his Confederate force in the Shenandoah Valley to transport his troops to Northern Virginia. The additional ten thousand soldiers under Johnston's command raised the total force of

⁵ Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 1–5, 9–11, 49–53; Hennessy, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 3–6.

⁶ Hennessy, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 128–29.

Confederates near Manassas to approximately thirty thousand men, almost equal in size to McDowell's army.⁷

By 18 July, the two forces came into contact at an area known as Blackburn's Ford. This minor fight resulted in the Union force's defeat and showed McDowell that Beauregard's force held a stronger position than he had initially believed and compelled a change of strategy for this campaign. McDowell decided after the battle at Blackburn's Ford that to defeat the Confederates, he would need to outflank their position.⁸

On 21 July, he ordered his troops to rise at two-thirty a.m. and march toward the Confederate position's extreme left. When they approached the creek at the point where the Warrenton Turnpike crossed over a stone bridge, about eighteen thousand soldiers turned north in order to cross Bull Run farther upstream and come in behind the Confederate soldiers positioned near the bridge, while three brigades held the Confederates in place throughout the morning.⁹ Initially believing the march would be two miles in length, the Union officers were surprised to discover the route was twelve miles. The flanking maneuver delayed McDowell's plans for a dawn assault. In addition, while these Union troops marched to the north, the Confederate signal commander, Captain Edward Porter Alexander, spotted the movement and warned Colonel Nathan

⁷ Brig. Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 26 August 1861, Manassas, Va., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (hereafter cited as *OR*), 70 vols. (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1880-1901), ser. 1, vol. 2, 485; P. G. T. Beauregard, "The First Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 1:198-202.

⁸ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. Thomas Jordan, n.d., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 318, 461-63.

⁹ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 26 August 1861, Manassas, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 318-19, 488; Hennessy, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 31-32.

“Shanks” Evans, commander of the Confederate brigade defending the Confederate’s left, “Look out to your left, you are turned.”¹⁰

With this early warning from Alexander, Evans decided to buy time for the arrival of Confederate reinforcements in his area. With only nine hundred men, Evans took up a position along the slope of a ridge known as Matthew’s Hill directly in front of the Union route of attack. By ten a.m., the first Union troops, the Second Rhode Island Infantry, arrived at the top of the hill and were immediately hit by Confederate musketry. Brigadier General David Hunter, the Union division commander, initially sent forward only the approximately nine hundred men in the Second Rhode Island to fight Evans’s equal number of troops, despite having almost forty-five hundred men already across Bull Run. Evans’s men were able to hold off the Rhode Islanders, but after about fifteen minutes of fighting Hunter received a wound to his neck and relinquished command to his subordinate, General Andrew Porter.¹¹

Once Porter took charge, he pushed forward the remainder of Hunter’s division, as Union troops continued to cross Bull Run. After thirty minutes, Evans’s brigade, overwhelmed by Union numbers and taking heavy casualties, began retreating from Matthew’s Hill. While Evans attempted to keep his command along the slopes of the ridge, he looked south and spotted Confederate reinforcements who had arrived less than a mile from his position. Evans immediately requested that Brigadier General Barnard

¹⁰ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 14 October 1861, Fairfax Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 319, 474; Capt. James B. Ricketts Testimony, U.S. Congress, 3 April 1862, Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, *Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War*, 3 vols. (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1863–1865), 2:243 (hereafter *CCW*, *Report CCW*); Beauregard, “Battle of Bull Run,” *Battles and Leaders*, 1:205–206; Hennessey, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 45–46; Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 166.

¹¹ Beauregard, “Battle of Bull Run,” *Battles and Leaders*, 1:206; Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 14 October 1861, Fairfax Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 319, 474.

Bee and Colonel Francis Bartow push their men forward to reinforce Evans's line. Bee hesitated, believing he held a stronger position, but followed through on Evans's request.

For the next hour, additional Union troops charged into the fight as Bee, Bartow, and Evans continued to hold their line. The Fourth Alabama Infantry Regiment's chaplain, James G. Hudson, described the scene: "It was a critical moment, and a fearful position for a handful of men . . . to occupy with nothing to shelter them from the fearful storm of bullets." Although the regiment held such a precarious position, Hudson noted that "the boys stood it with a courage and coolness that would have done credit to a set of old and experienced veterans."¹² Heavy casualties, the presence of Union artillery on their left flank, and the advance by Colonel William Tecumseh Sherman's brigade against the Confederate's right rear, however, forced them to relinquish the field. Having never before seen combat, many soldiers on both sides were now stunned by the horror of battle. For the majority of the Confederate soldiers, the retreat turned into a panic. Believing he had victory within his grasp, McDowell rode forward with his men, waving his hat in the air and shouting, "Victory! Victory! The day is ours."¹³

Despite the success of the Union force, McDowell knew his men were completely exhausted by the twelve mile march they had just undertaken and decided to bring the advance to a halt to allow the men to rest. McDowell, however, would delay further movements for almost two hours. While McDowell's troops rested along Matthew's Hill,

¹² Hudson, Diary, 21 July 1861, 4th AL, James G. Hudson Diary Folder, Historian's Files, Manassas National Battlefield Park Library, Manassas, Va. (hereafter Historian's Files, MNBPL).

¹³ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 14 October 1861, Fairfax Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 319–20, 474; Capt. Charles Griffin Testimony, 14 January 1862, CCW, *Report CCW*, 2:168; Beauregard, "Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 1:207–209; Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 187.

additional Confederate soldiers arrived on the plateau known as Henry Hill near Bee's original position.¹⁴

The first troops to take up the new Confederate position were the five Virginia regiments of the Confederate Army of the Shenandoah's first brigade under the command of Brigadier General Thomas Jonathan Jackson. Bee, who now retreated with the remnants of his brigade from Matthew's Hill, approached Jackson and exclaimed, "General, they are driving us!" Jackson coolly responded, "Sir, we will give them the bayonet." After this brief conversation, Bee, now rejuvenated and ready for a fight, rode off into the woods behind the new Confederate line to find his command.¹⁵

After his two hour lull, McDowell finally pushed his men towards the top of Henry Hill. Initially, he sent two artillery batteries to confront the Confederates. The two artillery commanders, Captain James B. Ricketts and Captain Charles Griffin, objected to placing their rifled ordnance only about four hundred yards from the enemy's line where their guns would be ineffective, but McDowell ignored their concerns and ordered them to the top of the hill. Ricketts's and Griffin's eleven guns took up positions flanking the small farmhouse owned by eighty-five-year-old Judith Henry and opened fire on the Confederates.¹⁶ Shortly after, Ricketts's men started taking musketry fire from Confederate sharpshooters positioned around the Henry house. To eliminate this threat, Ricketts ordered the two guns nearest the house to fire a round each into the structure,

¹⁴ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 14 October 1861, Fairfax Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 320.

¹⁵ Report of Brig. Gen. Thomas Jonathan Jackson, 23 July 1861, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 481; Beauregard, "Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 1:210; *Charleston Mercury*, 25 July 1861, quoted in Hennessy, "Stonewall Jackson's Nickname: What Did General Bee Really Say at First Manassas? And What Did He Mean?" *Civil War: The Magazine of the Civil War Society* 8, no. 2 (March-April 1990): 13.

¹⁶ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., *OR* ser. 1, vol. 2, 320; Griffin Testimony, 14 January 1862 and Ricketts Testimony, 3 April 1862, *CCW, Report CCW*, 2:168–69, 243–44; Beauregard, "Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 1:211–12.

which “literally riddled it.” The fire pushed the Confederates away, but some of the debris from the cannon fire struck Mrs. Henry, who was still inside the house, mortally wounding her.¹⁷

After firing on the Henry house, Ricketts returned his attention to the Confederate infantry and artillery that had been forming in the tree line across the top of the hill. For the next forty-five minutes, the Union and Confederate artillery dueled across the approximately four hundred yards that separated them while Union troops started to take position behind Ricketts’s and Griffin’s batteries. The line held by the Union men, however, placed its right flank directly in front of Jackson’s Confederate troops hidden in the tree line. The Confederates opened fire with devastating results forcing the Union soldiers off the hill. Ricketts described the sudden intensity of the fight on Henry Hill: “It was the hottest place I ever saw in my life, and I had seen some fighting before.”¹⁸

This successful volley by the Confederates started to reverse the momentum of the battle. The smoothbore Confederate guns were successfully outgunning Ricketts’s and Griffin’s rifled batteries. In order to try gaining an advantage against the Confederates, Griffin made a bold decision to move two of his guns to a position along the left end of the Confederate artillery line. Once he placed his pieces, Griffin reported that he saw a line of blue clad soldiers emerge from the trees and march towards his position. This created a problem for Griffin because, since over two hundred different uniforms were used by the two sides and the flags were indistinguishable, he could not tell whether these troops were Union or Confederate infantry units. He soon discovered

¹⁷ Ricketts Testimony, 3 April 1862, *CCW, Report CCW*, 2:243; Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 204–205; Hennessey, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 78–79.

¹⁸ Brig. Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 26 August 1861, Manassas, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 494; Griffin Testimony, 14 January 1862, and Ricketts Testimony, 3 April 1862, *CCW, Report CCW*, 2:169, 243.

these men were part of Jackson's brigade when they stopped fifty yards from Griffin's guns and fired on his men. As Griffin remembered, "That was the last of us." After all of Griffin's soldiers fell dead or wounded, the Thirty-third Virginia Infantry Regiment charged the pieces and captured the two guns.¹⁹

In response, the Fourteenth Brooklyn Infantry pushed forward, forcing the Thirty-third Virginia back into the trees. The Confederates, however, aggressively counterattacked the Union position. While Jackson's men engaged the enemy, Bee, who had been riding around in the woods for approximately an hour searching for anyone under his command, stumbled onto the men of the Fourth Alabama Infantry, one of the regiments in his brigade. They had reformed in a clearing behind the Confederate lines and were awaiting orders. After realizing who these men were, Bee reoriented himself to the battle and pointed toward where he had met Jackson while ordering his men back into battle. What Bee actually exclaimed is not known for sure, but most likely he shouted, "Yonder stands Jackson like a stonewall! Let us go to his assistance!" Bee then led his men into the fight and received a mortal wound, dying on the night of 21 July. After this battle, Bee's statement gave Thomas Jonathan Jackson his immortal sobriquet, "Stonewall" and his brigade became known as the "Stonewall" Brigade.²⁰

For the next hour, regiments from both armies charged back and forth across the top of Henry Hill, mainly swirling around Ricketts's six cannon. Following the bitter, see-saw fighting, Jackson's five regiments reformed in the trees and charged back across

¹⁹ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Report of Jackson, 23 July 1861, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 320, 481; Griffin Testimony, 14 January 1862, *CCW, Report CCW*, 2:169; Beauregard, "Battle of Bull Run," *Battle and Leaders*, 1:212.

²⁰ Hudson Diary, 21 July 1861, Historian's Files, MNBPL; Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 320; Griffin Testimony, 14 January 1862, *CCW, Report CCW*, 2:169; Hennessy, "Stonewall Jackson's Nickname," 13–15, 17.

the field, finally capturing Ricketts's battery and establishing a defensive line along the hill's western slope. Additional Confederate regiments that had been part of the fighting on Henry Hill also joined Jackson's position. McDowell's force, desperate to win the fight, made multiple piecemeal assaults against the Confederate position, sending only one or two regiments at a time, but the rebels were able to hold off each attack.²¹

With the position on Henry Hill secured, Confederate commanders Beauregard and Johnston sent reinforcements from the line along Bull Run, as well as the troops who arrived at Manassas Junction from the Shenandoah Valley that afternoon, to extend their line's left flank for a mile onto high ground known as Chinn Ridge. The only Union outfit on this ridge, however, was a single brigade of New England troops under the command of Colonel Oliver O. Howard. The additional Confederates on the Union brigade's right quickly forced the vulnerable New Englanders off the high ground. The retreat of Howard's men started a chain reaction in the Union army. As Confederates came in from the rear of the Union line facing Henry Hill, McDowell's force melted away from the field.²²

The Union force at first had a fairly organized retreat from the field. A lucky salvo by one of the Confederate batteries, however, struck an army wagon on a bridge over Cub Run about three miles east of Bull Run, creating panic in the Union troops, and the civilians who had arrived from Washington to witness the battle. With this uproar, the Union soldiers and civilians streamed pell mell back to their capital's defenses to prepare for a Confederate pursuit that never materialized. By the end of the fighting on 21 July,

²¹ Report of Jackson, 23 July 1861, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 482; Ricketts Testimony, 3 April 1862, *CCW*, *Report CCW*, 2:243–44.

²² Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 14 October 1861, Fairfax Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 320, 476.

the nation finally saw the harsh toll of combat. Approximately five thousand soldiers from both armies were counted as casualties of the battle. Out of these losses, almost nine hundred men died on the fields of Manassas. This was the highest number of Americans killed in a single battle in the nation's history to that point.²³

The bloodshed at Bull Run produced a number of changes both in the soldiers' attitudes towards combat and in military organization. Shortly after the disastrous Union defeat, the Lincoln administration replaced McDowell with another upstart General George B. McClellan. He reorganized the Union force into the Army of the Potomac. The Confederates followed suit. Beauregard's successful stand along Bull Run led to Confederate president Jefferson Davis's decision to send him west to assist with commanding the western force, which was defeated at the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862. The elder Johnston became the commander of the Confederate Army of the Potomac and prepared for another Union invasion of Virginia after the battle.²⁴

The inexperience that marked First Manassas, however, would not affect the two armies that returned to the area only thirteen months after the first major battle of the war. The replacement of McDowell and Beauregard with, respectively, McClellan and Johnston allowed for further training of the troops and a higher quality of leadership in the two command structures. Despite high hopes for the new commanders, their promotions to high command produced few positive results. Johnston was wounded and disabled in May 1862. McClellan's massive ego and overly cautious nature led not to a Union victory but to his replacement in late 1862.

²³ Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell to Asst. Adj. Gen. E. D. Townsend, 4 August 1861, Arlington, Va., and Brig. Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 26 August 1861, Manassas, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 2, 320, 494–95; Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 245–46, 253; Hennessy, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 128–29, 131–35.

²⁴ Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 251–52, 260–61; Hennessy, *The First Battle of Manassas*, 127.

Second Manassas or Bull Run

Ten months after the fighting along Bull Run, the Lincoln administration had expected a Union victory with the capture of the Confederate capital of Richmond. By late May 1862, McClellan's one hundred thousand man Army of the Potomac had made its way up the peninsula between the York and James Rivers and sat only five miles from Richmond. In a twist of fate for the Confederates, during an attempt at pushing McClellan away from Richmond in the Battle of Seven Pines (31 May–1 June 1862), Johnston received a grievous wound and relinquished command to General Robert E. Lee, who reorganized the Confederate force into the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee, an extremely aggressive commander, then attacked the Union forces six times in seven days (the Seven Days Battles, 25 June–1 July) and pushed the Army of the Potomac twenty miles away from Richmond to the banks of the James River. Through this successful series of assaults, however, Lee's army became lodged between two Union forces.²⁵

During McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, the Lincoln administration created a new force known as the Army of Virginia—a combination of three former Union armies defeated by Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley in spring 1862—under the command of Major General John Pope.²⁶ Pope's staunch support for the Republican

²⁵ Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, "Report of General George B. McClellan on army of the Potomac" (hereafter "Report on army of the Potomac"), 22 December 1863, U.S. Congress, House, *Letter from the Sec. of War, transmitting the report of Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan upon the organization of the Army of the Potomac, and Its campaigns in Virginia and Maryland from July 26, 1861, to November 7, 1862* (hereafter *Sec. of War*), 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1863–1864, H. Ex. Doc. No. 15 (hereafter HED 15), ser. no. 1187, pp. 95–140; Joseph P. Cullen, *The Peninsula Campaign, 1862: McClellan and Lee Struggle for Richmond* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1973); Stephen W. Sears, *To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsula Campaign* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1992); and Brian K. Burton, *Extraordinary Circumstances: The Seven Days Battles* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

²⁶ Maj. Gen. John Pope, "Report on Operations of Army of Virginia under Major General John Pope" (hereafter "Report on operations"), 2 March 1863, U.S. Congress, House, *Letter from Sec. of War, in Answer to Resolution of the House of 18th Ultimo, Transmitting Copy of Report of Maj. Gen. John Pope* (hereafter *Sec. of War*), 37th Cong., 3d Sess., 1862–1863, H. Ex. Doc. No. 81 (hereafter HED 81), ser. no. 1164, p. 4; Pope, *The Military Memoirs of General John Pope*, ed. Peter Cozzens and Robert I. Girardi

Party, his successes along the Mississippi River in early 1862, and his personal connections to the Lincolns (Pope was related to Mary Todd through marriage) made him a perfect candidate for this new appointment. With McClellan's flight to the James, however, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton ordered Pope to remain in his position along the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers, north of Richmond, so that his force could protect Washington from a Confederate advance.²⁷

The presence of the fifty thousand-man Army of Virginia complicated Lee's strategy. Thus, Lee made the decision to divide his army, a tactic he employed numerous times throughout the war, sending about twenty-five thousand men under Jackson to confront Pope while holding Lieutenant General James Longstreet's thirty thousand man wing in front of McClellan. Lee's situation was made simpler by the Lincoln administration's decision to order McClellan to abandon the peninsula and join Pope's force on 4 August. Without the specter of McClellan's army hovering near Richmond, Lee was now free to unite Longstreet's wing with Jackson's men and confront the Army of Virginia alone.²⁸

After only three weeks of maneuvering between Richmond and the Rappahannock River, Lee's campaign came to a standstill along the Rappahannock's banks. Only a single battle between Major General Nathaniel P. Banks's Second Corps of the Army of

(Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 117–25; Robert K. Krick, *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic* (New York: Morrow, 1996); Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); and Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

²⁷ Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, pp. 4–5; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 3–5.

²⁸ Maj. Gen. Henry H. Halleck to Sec. of War Edwin M. Stanton, 25 November 1862, Washington, D.C., Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan to Maj. Gen. Henry H. Halleck, 4 August 1862, Berkeley, Va., and Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 4–6, 8–9, 551–52.

Virginia and Jackson's wing, the Battle of Cedar Mountain, had taken place since the Seven Days Battles.²⁹ Since that fight on 9 August, Lee had arrived to look for an opportunity to defeat Pope, but the strength of the Union position along the river discouraged him from a direct assault. With his army stalled, Lee understood his force was in trouble since the more time spent along the Rappahannock, the easier it would be for the Army of the Potomac to reinforce Pope.³⁰

In order to get his campaign restarted, Lee devised a plan to strike at Pope's supply and communication lines and have the Army of Northern Virginia get between Pope and Washington. According to Lee's plan, the army would once again split. Jackson, with about twenty-four thousand men, would feint toward the Shenandoah Valley and then move north and east, around Pope's right flank to strike at Pope's supply depot at Manassas Junction. Longstreet's wing would remain along the Rapidan River to prevent Pope from attacking Jackson until after he reached Manassas. By destroying Manassas Junction, Jackson would draw Pope back into Northern Virginia.³¹

On 25 August, Jackson started his men on their march around Pope's flank. In thirty hours, Jackson's men marched fifty-four miles and arrived just south of the junction, where they skirmished with a number of Union regiments. Not until 27 August did Pope realize that Jackson had not marched to the Shenandoah Valley as he expected but had cut his supply line at Manassas Junction. Pope immediately ordered his troops

²⁹ Maj. Gen. John Pope to Maj. Gen. Henry H. Halleck, 27 January 1863, New York, and Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks to Maj. Gen. John Pope, 9 August 1862, Culpepper Courthouse, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 27, 55; Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, pp. 9–11; Pope, *Military Memoirs*, 140–41; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 28–29. For a complete examination of the Battle of Cedar Mountain, see Robert K. Krick, *Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

³⁰ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 552; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 38–50.

³¹ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 554; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 92–95.

back to Manassas to reestablish his communications with Washington and to trap Jackson. By time Pope arrived at the junction on 28 August, Jackson seemed to have disappeared. Pope's only intelligence came from Confederate stragglers who told him that Jackson had moved to the nearby town of Centreville, only five miles east of the field of the first battle. After receiving these reports, Pope revised his orders and told his officers to march their units to Centreville.³²

Jackson, however, had not gone to Centreville as these stragglers claimed. In fact, he moved his wing to a position slightly northwest of the former battlefield, along high ground known as Stony Ridge. The ridge played perfectly into Jackson's plan because he held a position near an unfinished railroad bed, which his men could use as a ready-made trench while holding off Pope's army and awaiting the arrival of Longstreet's wing. Unaware of Jackson's actual position, Pope directed a number of his divisions along the Warrenton Turnpike directly in front of Jackson's wing.

Late in the afternoon of 28 August 1862, Jackson spotted an isolated six thousand man Union division under the command of Brigadier General Rufus King, who had been incapacitated by an epileptic seizure on 23 August, near the Brawner Farmhouse. King's seizure created problems for his division since none of his brigade commanders knew who was his direct subordinate. In addition, these four brigades, commanded by Brigadier Generals John Gibbon, Abner Doubleday, John Hatch, and Marsena Patrick, consisted of mostly inexperienced regiments.³³

³² Maj. Gen. John Pope to Brig. Gen. G. W. Cullum, Chief of Staff and Engrs., Hdqrs. of Army, 27 January 1863, New York, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 36–37; Pope, *Military Memoirs*, 148; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 96–115.

³³ Brig. Gen. John Gibbon to Capt. R. Chandler, Assist. Adj. Gen., King's Division, 3 September 1862, Upton's Hill, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 377; John Gibbon, *Personal Recollections of the Civil War* (1928; repr., Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1978), 51; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 164–72.

The confusion in this Union division created a grand opportunity for Jackson to destroy a chunk of Pope's army. Jackson decided to bring King's division into battle and launched his men forward. At first, Jackson ordered four of his artillery pieces to fire on King's division along the Warrenton Turnpike. After taking fire from Jackson's guns, the Union soldiers of Gibbon's (also known as the Black Hat Brigade) and Doubleday's brigades took cover in the woods near the road, but the confusion in command meant that only these two brigades would fight Jackson's Confederates.

Initially believing they only faced four artillery pieces, Gibbon and Doubleday decided to send a single regiment, the Second Wisconsin Infantry of the Black Hat Brigade, the only veteran regiment in these two brigades, forward against the Confederate guns. Once the Second Wisconsin emerged from the tree line, however, it saw the Confederate cannons fall back from the top of the ridge followed by the arrival of Jackson's "Stonewall" Brigade. These veteran Confederates halted only fifty yards from the Second Wisconsin's position and sent a volley of musketry into the Wisconsin troops. Once the infantry fire opened, Gibbon and Doubleday, as well as Jackson, pushed additional men into the fray. Although outnumbering the Union soldiers four to one, Jackson was unable to bring all twenty-four thousand men under his command into the fight despite the short two-mile distance between the Brawner Farm area and Jackson's left flank. In addition, both of Jackson's division commanders, Major General Richard S. Ewell and Brigadier General William B. Taliaferro, were wounded during the fighting, making management of the battle difficult for him.³⁴

³⁴ Brig. Gen. John Gibbon to Capt. R. Chandler, Assist. Adj. Gen., King's Division, 3 September 1862, Upton Hill, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 377–78; Gibbon, *Personal Recollections*, 51–52; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 164–72.

For two hours, the lines of Union and Confederate troops, which were no farther than eighty yards apart, fired volley after volley at each other. Gibbon described the fighting as a “regular stand up fight during which neither side yielded a foot.” The four inexperienced regiments of the Black Hat Brigade, the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin and the Nineteenth Indiana, and a company each from the Fifty-Sixth Pennsylvania and the Seventy-Sixth New York (Doubleday’s Brigade) were able to hold their ground against the overwhelming force of veteran Confederates. Gibbon praised his men as exhibiting “the highest degree the effects of discipline and drill, officers and men standing up to their work like old soldiers.” Additional Confederate soldiers, however, moved against the left flank of the Union line near the Brawner house, forcing the Union soldiers back toward the trees in which they had initially taken cover during the artillery fire. Darkness ended the fighting that night, with approximately twenty-two hundred combined casualties left on the field.³⁵

Once the fighting came to an end and Pope heard from King’s brigade commanders about the pitched battle, he attempted to send a new order instructing the four brigades of King’s division remain in place. The courier, however, got lost in the darkness and failed to deliver the new orders. King had partially recovered from his seizure, but his brigade commanders were now left to make the decision themselves. Once they heard from Confederate captives that Jackson had fifty thousand to sixty thousand men in the area, King and his subordinates decided to follow their initial orders and continue to Centreville. They did not know that the position they held was

³⁵ Brig. Gen. John Gibbon to Asst. Adj. Gen. for King’s Division, Capt. R. Chandler, 3 September 1862, Upton’s Hill, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 378; Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 555; Pope, “Report on operations,” *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, p. 19; Gibbon, *Personal Recollections*, 54.

advantageous for Pope's command. King's division, after the fighting at Brawner Farm, sat along the right flank of Jackson's line and directly in the path of Longstreet's wing. The rebels had broken through a stiff Union rear-guard action at Thoroughfare Gap at the same time as the fighting at the Brawner Farm on 28 August.³⁶

The fighting at Brawner Farm indicated to Pope where Jackson had positioned his force after he attacked Manassas Junction. The following morning, Pope pushed his men from Centreville to the old battleground of First Bull Run. At first, only his First Corps under Major General Franz Sigel was on the field on the morning of 29 August. Pope had ordered Sigel to scout Jackson's position to find a weak point for the Army of Virginia to assault. But confusion reigned in Sigel's movements. For example, one of his brigades that was ordered to march north to rejoin the rest of the corps actually moved west toward Jackson's position with disastrous results. Throughout the morning, Sigel sent forward a number of piecemeal attacks, with only a single successful assault near an area in the unfinished railroad known as the dump. This breakthrough convinced the Union commands that they could gain an easy victory with a number of vigorous assaults against Jackson's position.³⁷

By noon, however, it became apparent to Pope that these frontal assaults could not work by themselves. He decided to use a corps sent from the Army of the Potomac, the Fifth Corps under Major General Fitz-John Porter, to attack Jackson's right flank as he sent a number of diversionary assaults against Jackson's front. Yet, the Union officers were unaware that Longstreet's thirty thousand troops had arrived on the field and had

³⁶ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 555–56; Charles King, "In Vindication of General Rufus King," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:495; Pope, "The Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:470–71.

³⁷ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 556–57; Pope, "Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:471–72.

taken up a position along Jackson's left. This prevented Porter from carrying out his orders, which would have major ramifications and result in Porter's court martial one year later. Despite Porter's apparent apathy, Pope continued the "diversionary" frontal assaults, which resulted in two successful, but ultimately fruitless, breakthroughs in Jackson's line. The consequence of the fighting on 29 August convinced Pope that he was on the verge of victory.³⁸

The following morning, Pope and his officers scanned the Confederate line to find a weak point in Jackson's position. While scouting Jackson's line, the Union officers saw Confederates apparently retreating. What they actually witnessed, however, was the Confederate division under General Richard H. Anderson, which had arrived on the field late on 29 August and marched past the Confederate line. Anderson's division was attempting to return to its comrade's position. Despite hearing reports of Longstreet's arrival, Pope and his officers believed that this Confederate "retreat" showed a weakening of the Confederate line near an area known as the Deep Cut. With this intelligence, Pope ordered Porter's corps, the men whom he believed were the freshest ones on the field, to prepare for the assault.³⁹

Following Pope's initiative, Porter ordered his corps to an area a mile to the front of Jackson's position to prepare for the attack. Despite having eleven thousand men under his command, Porter made the assault with only six thousand due to his vague orders, which caused five thousand of his men to get lost. Even with his force depleted, Porter's

³⁸ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 556–57; Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, pp. 21–22.

³⁹ Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, p. 22; Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862 and Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 557, 565; Pope, *Military Memoirs*, 170.

men went forward in the largest Union assault of the battle. Covering three to six hundred yards of open ground, the majority of the six thousand men made their way to the front of the railroad embankment, but became trapped there due to Confederate infantry fire from their front and Confederate artillery fire from their left. Eventually, a number of the Confederate troops in the Deep Cut climbed to the top of the embankment and fired at the Union troops lying along its front. One of the Louisiana regiments ultimately ran out of ammunition and started throwing rocks at the Union soldiers. This event would become a part of Confederate lore, but the Louisianans were in this situation for only a few minutes, as they received reinforcements from other sections of Jackson's line. After thirty minutes, Union officers realized the fruitlessness of trying to continue the assault and ordered a retreat.⁴⁰

Out of the six thousand men who went forward, Porter's corps lost two thousand, a number that caused panic in the surviving soldiers. Witnessing the disaster from the area known as Dogan Ridge, Pope erroneously believed, since the two corps on Dogan Ridge shored up the lines and prevented Porter's men from continuing past, that he had to place reinforcements in position to rally Porter's men and to prevent a rout. The only additional troops he had available, due to McClellan's refusal to send forward additional men from the Army of the Potomac, were those along his left flank, directly in front of Longstreet's thirty thousand men. Thus, Pope ordered the majority of his troops from his

⁴⁰ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, and Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 557, 565; Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, pp. 23–24; "The Second Battle of Manassas: Account of it by One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry; Pope's Retreat to the Capitol," *Southern Historical Society Papers* (hereafter *SHSP*), vol. 32 (January–December 1904): 86; Pope, *Military Memoirs*, 170.

left flank to a position near his right leaving only 2,200 men in position facing Longstreet's wing.⁴¹

With the failure of Porter's assault and the movement of Union troops to reinforce their right, Lee and Longstreet decided this was their opportunity to counterattack. Shortly after Jackson's men held off Porter's troops, Longstreet ordered his officers to prepare for the counterstrike. The result was the largest assault of the entire war.

Almost all thirty thousand men in Longstreet's wing prepared to attack the Union left flank. Lee ordered Jackson to watch Longstreet's left to prevent flanking fire against Longstreet's wing. Shortly before 4 p.m., Longstreet's troops launched their assault with the objective of capturing Henry Hill and cutting off the Union retreat route. Initially, they struck the skirmishers of the Tenth New York Infantry. Unable to slow the Confederate advance, the skirmishers fell back toward the rest of the Tenth and the Fifth New York. As these skirmishers bounded out of the woods surrounding their position, the Fifth and Tenth New York attempted to position themselves for a stand against the Confederate onslaught. The Confederates, however, moved to just inside the tree line and opened fire on the two regiments. For the next five minutes the Fifth and Tenth New York held their ground until the two regiments disintegrated and fled to Henry Hill. The result was devastating. For example, the Fifth New York lost 330 men out of 560 as casualties. Out of those 330 men, 123 were killed or mortally wounded, the highest number of men killed in a single regiment in any single battle of the Civil War.⁴²

⁴¹ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, and Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, Winchester, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 557, 565; Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, pp. 23–24; McClellan, "Report on Army of the Potomac," *Sec. of War*, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., HED 15, ser. no. 1187, pp. 175–76; Pope, *Military Memoirs*, 170; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 339–61.

⁴² Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, Winchester, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 565–66; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 362–73.

After witnessing this fiasco, corps commander Irvin McDowell, the former commander of the Army of Northeast Virginia, sent a brigade and two artillery pieces to slow the momentum of Longstreet's assault. Longstreet's men, however, quickly overran this new Union position, destroying two more regiments and capturing the two guns. The only troops who stood in Longstreet's path were the Seventy-fifth, Seventy-third, Twenty-fifth, and Fifty-fifth Ohio Infantry positioned on Chinn Ridge. These twelve hundred Ohioans had just witnessed all the devastation in front of them and prepared to take the brunt of Longstreet's attack. Once the Confederates arrived only yards from their line, the Ohioans opened fire and forced the Confederates to fall back and regroup.⁴³

By this point, Lee had sent a second order to Jackson telling him to push forward against the Union artillery on Dogan Ridge just north of Chinn Ridge. Jackson, however, failed to maneuver his men and the Union batteries opened fire on the left flank of Longstreet's wing. This forced the Confederates, who had come to a halt after their success, to take cover in a small grove of trees to the front left of the Ohioans line. Although the Union artillery tried to help the Ohioans, the movement of the Confederates to the trees created problems for these troops. Once the Confederates regrouped, they attempted to strike the Ohioans' left flank, but the Seventy-third and Twenty-fifth Ohio held off the initial assaults. After fending off the first attack, the Ohioans spotted a larger unit of Confederate troops farther to their left. This division had lost its way, but upon hearing the musketry, it turned north toward the Union position. By adjusting their line, the Seventy-third and Twenty-fifth Ohio attempted once again to push back this new threat. After fifteen minutes, however, the presence of these fresh Confederate troops

⁴³ Pope, "Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battle and Leaders*, 2:487; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 375-79.

forced the two regiments back toward the Seventy-fifth and Fifty-fifth Ohio, who joined the two battered regiments and set up a new defensive line against the Confederates, forcing them back to regroup once again.⁴⁴

Fresh Confederate troops joined in the attack, striking both flanks of the Ohioans. Only fifteen minutes later, the Ohioans, who had taken over four hundred casualties in the first thirty minutes, started to melt away from the top of the ridge. McDowell had finally convinced Pope of the disaster in progress and had taken control of stemming the tide of Longstreet's assault along Chinn Ridge. Thus, he started sending reinforcements from the right of the Union position to the top of the ridge. But he was only able to send a single brigade at a time. Yet, each time a fresh brigade arrived, the Confederates were forced to regroup before breaking through the new position. For the next hour, the remnants of the Ohio regiments and each fresh brigade held Longstreet's men along the top of the ridge, only giving a few yards of ground at a time.⁴⁵

This was the opportunity that Pope needed to save his army from complete destruction. Once Pope saw the new threat, he repositioned his force along the high ground of Matthew's Hill and Henry Hill to keep his retreat route open. After the hour-and-a-half of fighting along Chinn Ridge the Union troops finally fell back to the new position. The Chinn Ridge stand prevented Longstreet's men from completely destroying

⁴⁴ Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Asst. Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, Winchester, Va., *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 566; Pope, "Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:487; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 379–91.

⁴⁵ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 557; Pope, "Report on operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, p. 24; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 391–405.

the Union line and bloodied Longstreet's wing enough to prevent a direct pursuit of the retreating Union soldiers.⁴⁶

The stall of Longstreet's assault created problems for the Confederates. By the end of the fighting on Chinn Ridge, it was nearing 6 p.m. and the sun was setting. Knowing darkness would bring a close to the battle, Longstreet pushed his men forward as quickly as possible. In addition, Jackson's wing finally charged out of the unfinished railroad cut to assault the new Union line. But the new position allowed Pope's force to bring the Confederate onslaught to a close as darkness fell over the fields. Union cavalry kept their retreat route open by stopping one final, desperate Confederate cavalry charge towards the Union rear. His army badly beaten and now exhausted, Pope ordered a general retreat the night of 30 August, bringing the Second Battle of Manassas to a close as a Confederate victory.⁴⁷

The following day, Lee sent Jackson on a pursuit of the Army of Virginia while he prepared Longstreet's wing to follow. The Second Battle of Manassas resulted in 23,000 casualties, a much larger number than those in the initial fight only thirteen months prior. Although Lee was unable to completely destroy Pope's force, he used this victory as a jumping-off point for his first invasion of Union-held territory, culminating in the Battle of Antietam on 17 September 1862. The defeat of Pope's Army of Virginia

⁴⁶ Pope, "Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:487–89; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 405–406.

⁴⁷ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862 and Lt. Gen. James Longstreet to Adj. Gen. R. H. Chilton, 10 October 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 557–58, 566; Pope, "Report on Operations," *Sec. of War*, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., HED 81, ser. no. 1164, p. 24; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 407–38.

also delayed the release of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which was already written. Lincoln had to wait for a Union victory to release the document.⁴⁸

The Second Battle of Manassas is often overlooked in Civil War historiography but fits a larger contextual importance. Fought between the heavily studied Seven Days Battles and the Battle of Antietam, the Second Battle of Manassas acts much like a microcosm of the larger issues of Union command in the Virginia Theater throughout the conflict. During the battle, the political infighting between Democratic and Republican generals—specifically between McClellan and his protégé Porter, and Pope—as well as egotistical and inept commanders cost the Union forces a major victory at a critical point of the war. This defeat resulted in Pope's removal from command and subsequent transfer to Minnesota during the Dakota Wars in 1862. In addition, the Union defeat shifted the momentum of the war and allowed Robert E. Lee to cross the Potomac and launch his initial invasion of Union territory in September 1862.

Memory in the Immediate Aftermath, 1861-1910

Immediately after the fighting ended on 21 July 1861, as reports of the fight started to pour into the War Departments and newspaper offices, the memory of the Battle at Manassas started to form. Union officers and reporters provided explanations for the disastrous defeat, while Confederate officers and reporters promoted the prowess of Confederate forces.⁴⁹ Only months after the fighting ended in July 1861, Confederate soldiers built a monument to one of their fallen officers, Colonel Francis Bartow. Erected

⁴⁸ Gen. Robert E. Lee to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, 3 September 1862, *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 12, pt. 2, 558; Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run*, 17, 439–41, 456–57.

⁴⁹ For examples of exaggerated and confused newspaper reports, see “Editor’s Cable,” *The Southern Literary (Richmond, Va.) Messenger*, 1 August 1861, vol. 88, no. 2, 153; “The Battle of Manassas,” *Saturday Evening (Philadelphia, Penn.) Post*, 3 August 1861; “The Security of the Capital,” *New York Times*, 5 August 1861; and “A Southern Account of the Late Battle,” *Saturday Evening Post*, 10 August 1861;

by the Eighth Georgia Infantry Regiment, the Bartow monument consisted of a “plain, round marble column, about five feet in height, and one foot in diameter . . . designed to mark the spot where [the Eighth Georgia’s] chivalric commander” fell during the battle. The monument disappeared after the Confederates abandoned the area in early 1862.⁵⁰ Even as the two armies continued the conflict, memory became an important part of the narrative of the First Battle of Manassas, and continued after the Confederate victory thirteen months later as well.

After the Civil War bloodletting concluded in spring 1865, memory became the key aspect of how the country reunited. The men and women of North and South initially used memory as a sectionally devisive tool. With approximately 750,000 men killed in the fighting, both Northerners and Southerners attempted to deal with the devastating casualties.⁵¹ The Northern states, having defeated the Confederacy, easily justified their role in the conflict and the necessary cost of life in the four years. Immediately after the war ended, Union soldiers created monuments to their fallen comrades at Manassas. In July 1865, while the Army of the Potomac returned to Washington, D.C., from Appomattox, the Fifth Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery constructed two sandstone monuments, one on Henry Hill near the position held by Captain Ricketts’s battery during the first battle, and the other on the unfinished railroad near the deep cut, the site of the Fifth Corps’s unsuccessful assault during the second battle. Both were engraved

⁵⁰ “Special Correspondence of the Constitutionalist. Letters for the Army,” 5 September 1861, Bartow Monument Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and George Grenville Benedict, *Army Life in Virginia: Letters from the Twelfth Vermont Regiment and Personal Experiences of Volunteer Service in the War for the Union, 1862–63* (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Association, 1895), 154.

⁵¹ Although 620,000 men killed in the war has been the accepted figure used by historians since the early twentieth century, a new study estimates that somewhere between 750,000 and 850,000 men killed is more accurate according to census data between 1860 and 1870. See J. David Hacker, “A Census-Based Count of the Civil War Dead,” *Civil War History* 57 (December 2011): 307–48.

with the sentiment, “In memory of the patriots who fell.”⁵² The Union triumph allowed Northerners to memorialize the patriotic duty of their comrades. In addition, the overall victory by Union forces made it easier for Northerners to come to terms with the death toll on the battlefields.

White southerners, however, had to find a way to cope with their defeat and justify the lives lost in battle. White southern women initially took the lead in creating a justifiable memory. At Manassas, the Ladies’ Memorial Association of Manassas reinterred five hundred Confederate dead in a cemetery on the grounds that had witnessed part of Longstreet’s assault on 30 August 1862. The Groveton Confederate Cemetery acted as a monument to the devastating losses the former Confederate states suffered at Manassas. Similar to the deaths the majority of Southern families faced during the conflict, only two soldiers buried at Groveton were identified. The rest were unknown and buried in a mass grave. This common circumstance of the war, the inability to identify the dead, led to greater grief for the people residing in the former Confederacy. Yet the actions of groups like the Ladies’ Association were a first step in the Southerners ability to cope with their defeat.⁵³

In the years between 1864 and 1866, *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley and *Richmond (Va.) Examiner* editor Edward A. Pollard, wrote overall histories of the

⁵² “In Memoriam! The First of Our Hundred Battle Monuments,” *New York Times*, 13 June 1865; “Relic of Bull Run. A Small Monument Erected on the Spot at the Time of the Battle,” 1865 Bull Run Monuments Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and Joan M. Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 2.

⁵³ Groveton and Bull Run Memorial Association, 27 April 1867, and E. May Dogan to Hon. C. A. Sinclair, n.d., Manassas, Va., Groveton Cemetery Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies’ Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1–2. For more on the connection between the Lost Cause and Confederate dead, see John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), esp. 142–78. For the social issues caused by the high death rate and high number of unknown dead, see Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

conflict that showed sectional divisiveness. In their two books, *The American Conflict* and *The Lost Cause* respectively, Greeley and Pollard emphasized the action of individual officers at the battles in order to explain the outcome of the fighting, a common theme in the memory of individual battles that veteran officers continued through the early twentieth century. In addition, Pollard believed that the victory at First Manassas deluded Southerners and cost them the war. He argued that the celebratory feeling in the South after First Manassas eventually played into the hands of the industrialized and populous North, which used the lull between July 1861 and March 1862 to “repair [the North’s] fortunes.”⁵⁴ Similarly, Greeley placed the blame for the defeat in the two battles mainly on the actions of officers he disliked during the war, men such as Generals Patterson, Scott, McClellan and Porter. Yet, his discussions of how the battles influenced the conflict continually returned to the connection between the battles and the conflict’s central cause, slavery.⁵⁵ These initial forms of memory continued the trend of sectional divisiveness that led to the Civil War.

While former soldiers and civilians battled over control of collective memory by memorializing their section’s cause, former officers fought over responsibility for victory and defeat. The most prominent battles were between former Confederate General Jubal A. Early and his followers and Lieutenant General James Longstreet, and Union generals John Pope and Fitz John Porter. Although a beloved general at the time of the conflict, by the end of the nineteenth century, Longstreet had become a Southern pariah. Mainly due to his reconciliationist stance, his acceptance of a position within the federal government,

⁵⁴ Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E. B. Treat and Co., 1866), 154.

⁵⁵ Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict: A History of the Great Rebellion in the United States of America, 1860-1864*, 2 vols. (Hartford, Conn.: O. D. Case, 1864-1867), 1:547–52, 2:188–90.

and his conversion to Catholicism after the war, a number of former Southern officers attacked every decision Longstreet made during the conflict, even his successful artillery barrage and assault on 30 August during the Second Battle of Manassas. Despite the high quality of his leadership during the conflict, Longstreet became one of the most hated men in the South after the conflict ended.⁵⁶

On the other hand, Porter became a Union pariah in the immediate aftermath of the Second Battle of Manassas. His apparent lack of action on 29 August and the failure of his corps's assault the following day convinced Pope that Porter intentionally sabotaged his efforts to defeat the Confederates during the second battle. After an extremely politicized court-martial proceeding, Porter was cashiered for insubordination and removed from the army in January 1863, and he became the Republicans's scapegoat for the defeat at Second Manassas.⁵⁷ Twenty-four years later, however, Congress reopened the court-martial proceedings and reversed the decision from 1863. With new testimony from former Confederate soldiers, the new court-martial decided Porter did not disobey orders, he simply could not follow through due to the presence of Longstreet's men along Jackson's right flank. After the initial decision's reversal, Porter no longer received sole responsibility for the federal defeat at Second Manassas.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ For examples of the debate between Confederate officers, see S. D. Lee, "The Second Battle of Manassas-A Reply to General Longstreet," *SHSP*, vol. 6, no. 2 (August 1878): 59–70; "The Artillery at Second Manassas – General Longstreet's Reply to General S. D. Lee," *SHSP*, vol. 6, no. 5 (November 1878): 215–17; and "The Artillery at Second Manassas – Rejoinder of General S. D. Lee to General Longstreet," *SHSP*, vol. 6, no. 6, (December 1878): 250–54.

⁵⁷ "Proceedings of Court-Martial for Trial of Major General Fitz John Porter," 18 February 1863, U.S. Congress, House, *Letter from the Secretary of War, in Answer to Resolution of the House of 3d Instant, Transmitting Copy of Proceedings of the Court-Martial in the Trial of General Fitz Joh Porter*, 37th Cong., 3d Sess., 1862–1863, H. Ex. Doc. No. 71, ser. no. 1163.

⁵⁸ House Committee on Military Affairs, *Relief of Fitz John Porter, Late Major General, United States Volunteers, with Minority Report*, 48th Cong., 1st Sess., 1884, H. Rep. 1, ser. no. 2253. For additional examples of the debate over Porter's actions, see Richard Robins, "The Battles of Groveton and Second Bull Run," *Military Essays and Recollections: Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*, (1899; repr., Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1992) (hereafter *MOLLUS*

These examples show the genuine power memory played in the postwar years. One of the most beloved and highest ranking Confederate officers during the war had his reputation ruined by the way memory portrayed his actions, and a Union officer considered the main cause for defeat at Second Manassas had his image reversed almost twenty-five years later.

During Reconstruction, white Southerners created the school of memory that justified their actions in the years prior to and during the Civil War. That construction became the accepted narrative of the conflict. Known as the Lost Cause, taken from Pollard's title and promoted by former Confederate president Jefferson Davis, vice president Alexander Stephens, and general Early, this school claimed that Southern states seceded to protect their "States' rights" from an over reaching and a tyrannically powerful federal government. In addition, the Lost Cause promoted the idea that Union manpower and industry alone were responsible for the Confederate defeat. Southern manhood would defeat Union troops in a fair fight on any day. Similarly, this memorial school projected negative stereotypes of Union officers, for instance portraying Union Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant as a drunk, and promoted the virtues of Confederate leaders, picturing Lee as the ultimate chivalric gentleman soldier. Initially, these sentiments received little support in the North. Yet, as white Northerners became disillusioned with the Reconstruction efforts of the Radical Republicans, this memorial school enjoyed greater acceptance throughout the nation rather than solely in the former Confederacy.⁵⁹

Papers), vol. 12, 82–84; Pope, "Second Battle of Bull Run," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:449–94; and King, "In Vindication of General Rufus Kins," *Battles and Leaders*, 2:495.

⁵⁹ David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), 258–64; Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost*

By the end of Reconstruction and well into the twentieth century, the Lost Cause became the dominant narrative of the conflict. This included how the veterans remembered the two battles of Manassas. Entering into an era of Reconciliationist sentiments after 1877, some veterans from both sections started to reverse the sectional dimension of Civil War memory. By the post-Reconstruction years, the majority of Union veterans started a movement of reconciliation by praising the fighting prowess of Confederate as well as Union soldiers and by accepting the Lost Cause's erasure of slavery's role in causing the Civil War. Union veteran John D. Stevenson believed the second battle exemplified the combat skills of both forces. He called Pope's Army of Virginia the "security of Washington," and although it was a scantily supplied and outnumbered force, it met "face to face the best general of the Confederates, with their best troops," and the army "earned the laurel[s]" despite losing the battle. He disregarded the battle's influence on the Emancipation Proclamation.⁶⁰

Many Confederate veterans, however, clung to sectional deviousness into the first decade of the twentieth century. For example, one Confederate veteran claimed in his postwar writing that the Union Army of Virginia lost 20,000 men out of a total force of 80,000 men despite the Confederates only having 50,000 men available to fight during the second battle. Also, one editor for the *Confederate Veteran* praised the citizens of Alexandria, Virginia, for erecting a monument to their Confederate dead with an inscription reading: "They died in the consciousness of duty faithfully performed."⁶¹

Cause, 1865–1900 (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973), 3–15; and Alan T. Nolan, "The Anatomy of the Myth," in *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 11–34.

⁶⁰ Brevet Maj. Gen. John D. Stevenson, "Pope's Virginia Campaign," *MOLLUS Papers* (1892; repr., Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1992), 352–53.

⁶¹ "The Second Battle of Manassas – Account of It by One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry," *SHSP*, 87; *Confederate Veteran*, 1, no. 4 (April 1893): 104.

Although Confederate veterans, most likely still angry about their defeat in the Civil War, perpetuated a memory of sectional divisiveness, many white Union veterans accepted the Lost Cause, a choice that led to a reversal of sectional sentiments. By eliminating the issue of slavery from the conflict, white Union veterans found more commonalities than differences with their former adversaries. Instead of the bitter fight over whose cause was more righteous, the veterans of both forces agreed that the valor of common soldiers should act as the central piece of their memories, not the divisive issue that caused the conflict.

The most prominent step towards reconciliation was the first battlefield preservation efforts in the 1890s. The initial idea for battlefield preservation came about during the national centennial in 1876. During this period, Congress attempted to take action by assisting monumental organizations in funding their efforts at Revolutionary battlefields. Congress members, however, could not agree on how to proceed in their assistance. This idea blossomed after the national centennial in the Civil War veteran community and led the veterans to promote Civil War sites for preservation.⁶² Many soldiers who fought in the conflict believed it necessary for the federal government to take control of the grounds over which the two forces fought. The veterans hoped that, by preserving the grounds, future generations could learn of the soldiers' deeds of bravery during the heat of battle. In addition, these veterans wanted to mark the fields with monuments and memorials to their fallen comrades and their units. These early monuments incorporated the new Reconciliationist themes by ignoring the connection between slavery and the conflict and by promoting the valor of both the Confederates and

⁶² Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1973), 7–13.

Unionists who fought the battles. These early efforts solely promoted the fighting prowess of all American soldiers during the conflict. By emphasizing their heroism on the battlefields, the veterans attempted to lead the way in reconciliation between the two sections.⁶³

Although veterans felt the government should preserve all the battlefields, Congress agreed only to the preservation of five battlefields between 1890 and 1900. Mainly because of pressure from politically powerful veterans, such as former Union general Daniel Sickles and former Confederate general John Gordon, Congress preserved these five battlefields, one to represent each “region” of the war. Chickamauga–Chattanooga became the first federally preserved military park in 1890. In the next nine years, Antietam, Gettysburg, Shiloh, and Vicksburg also received this new designation and federal protection. Under the control of the War Department until 1933, these parks served dual purposes. First, the grounds represented the initial steps toward reconciliation in the waning years of the Civil War generation. Second, the War Department used the preserved grounds as open-air classrooms for learning American Military History. The decade between 1890 and 1900 represented a great leap forward in the Reconciliationist movement started by the conflict’s veterans and the golden era of battlefield preservation.⁶⁴

⁶³ For the Reconciliationist movement in preservation of the original battlefields, see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 182, 189, 198–99; Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), chap. 3; and James A. Kaser, *At the Bivouac of Memory: History Politics and the Battle of Chickamauga*, American University Studies, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1996). For an examination of the motivations for the establishment of the original national military and battlefield parks, see Timothy B. Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America’s First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008); and Carol Reardon, *Soldiers and Scholars: The U.S. Army and the Uses of Military History, 1865–1920* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), chap. 2.

⁶⁴ For studies of the individual parks, see Jim Weeks, *Gettysburg: Memory, Market, and an American Shrine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); Timothy B. Smith, *This Great*

Despite Congressional willingness to preserve battlefields and the significance of the two battles of Manassas to the greater story of the Civil War, Manassas became a neglected battleground by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, despite the best efforts of Manassas' veterans who tried to push Congress into preserving the grounds. Leading these efforts was Union veteran Lieutenant George Carr Round, a native of Pennsylvania who received his law degree from Columbia College in New York City after the war ended and returned to Manassas to open a firm in 1868. Having lived in the Manassas area since 1868, Round felt a strong connection to the preservation of these battlefields. In addition, Round was a major proponent of the Reconciliationist movement that emerged within the ranks of Union veterans after Reconstruction. During his quest for the preservation of the Manassas battlefields, he hoped the significance of the two battles—First Manassas being the first major battle of the war and Second Manassas being a major turning point in Lee's first year as commander—would easily convince Congress to preserve the grounds. Initially, Round was unable to gain enough support from the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the main Union veterans society, to convince Congress of the necessity of Manassas' preservation as a national battlefield or military park. Eventually, in 1906, the GAR backed Round's campaign, which led to Congressional hearings on the possibility of Manassas' preservation by 1912. Despite setbacks stemming from lack of support, Round continued to fight for the preservation of the two battlefields at Manassas in order to keep the memory of the battles alive for

Battlefield of Shiloh: History, Memory, and the Establishment of a Civil War National Military Park (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Christopher Waldrep, *Vicksburg's Long Shadow: The Civil War Legacy of Race and Remembrance* (New York: Rowland and Littlefield, 2005); Susan Trail, "Remembering Antietam: Commemoration and Preservation of a Civil War Battlefield," (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 2005); Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, chap. 3; and Kaser, *At the Bivouac of Memory*.

future generations. His efforts would go a long way in the establishment of Manassas National Battlefield.⁶⁵

Although it was not part of the initial preservation efforts of Civil War veterans, Manassas continued to hold a place in the debate over Civil War memory during the years between the conclusion of the Civil War and the start of the twentieth century. As a result of the “fog of war,” confusion and myth first created the narrative of the two battles of Manassas in the post-war years. Initially, both sides continued to emphasize sectional distinctions. In the years following Reconstruction, however, reconciliation became the central theme of Civil War memory for many Union veterans, while Confederates reinforced the sectionalism of the Lost Cause. Eventually, soldiers from both sections attempted to overlook the central cause of the conflict, slavery, in order to facilitate national reunification. By the 1890s, white veterans pushed for federal protection of battlefields to preserve the history for future generations and to keep the war’s memory alive. Yet even these efforts held Reconciliationist overtones as these men erected monuments that promoted the fighting spirit of soldiers in both forces and ignored the role slavery played in the conflict. This was especially true of the two battles of Manassas. As veterans wrote about the battles, they changed their tone from one of purely sectional sentimentalities to one of reconciliation. Although Congress did not include Manassas as part of the first wave of national battlefields and military parks, veterans of the two battles continued to push for its preservation in the early decades of the twentieth century. With the conciliatory stance of white veterans and the growth of

⁶⁵ Rita G. Koman, “George Carr Round, 1839–1918,” George Carr Round Papers (hereafter Round Papers), Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and Clint Schemmer, “Documents Reveal Background of Illustrious Manassas Leader,” *Potomac News (Manassas, Va.)*, 10 August 1988.; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 4–12.

ancestral groups, such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Sons of Union Veterans, the Lost Cause mythology of Confederate apologists, especially once it was accepted by white Northerners, would deeply influence the creation of Manassas National Battlefield and the future conflicts over interpretation of these two battles.

Chapter 2

A Confederate Memorial the “Equal of Gettysburg”: Memory in the Creation of Manassas National Battlefield, 1910–1940

“[H]aving the basic fact that here was fought the first great battle of the war, wherein, . . . equal honors were won by both sides, it seems to many of us of the North that nothing could be more fitting than the creation of the Bull Run or Manassas National Park.”
- Union veteran Alfred S. Roe, Congressional Testimony on Manassas Preservation, 1912¹

During a Congressional hearing on the need to preserve the grounds of Henry Hill in 1913, Alfred S. Roe, a Union veteran who had searched the fields of Bull Run for the shallow graves of Union troops in 1865, expressed his desire for sectional reconciliation. “The time is coming . . . when visitors [to Manassas] will care less about who won on the field commemorated than that they are privileged to stand where their fathers fought, bled, and . . . died for what they deemed duty,” he declared, “irrespective of who won the fight.”² The former Civil War combatants were now able to forget the hatred they possessed for each other at the time of the conflict. Yet, the establishment of Manassas National Battlefield also provides evidence of the complexities of Civil War memory during the early-twentieth century. Although the creation of the original five national battlefield and military parks in the 1890s represented the conciliatory attitudes of white Northerners and white Southerners, Manassas remained a part of sectionalist conflict.³

¹ House Committee on Military Affairs, *Protection of Monuments on Battle Fields of Bull Run: Hearings on H.R. 1330*, 62d Cong., 1st Sess., 1912, p. 4 (hereafter *Protection of Monuments*, 62d Cong., 1st Sess.).

² *Protection of Monuments*, 62d Cong., 1st Sess., 4.

³ These five battlefields were Chickamauga–Chattanooga, Gettysburg, Antietam, Shiloh, and Vicksburg. For studies of these parks, see Jim Weeks, *Gettysburg: Memory, Market, and an American Shrine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); Timothy B. Smith, *This Great Battlefield of Shiloh: History, Memory, and the Establishment of a Civil War National Military Park* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), especially chap. 3; and James A. Kaser, *At the Bivouac of Memory: History, Politics, and the Battle of Chickamauga*, American University Studies (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1996).

As historian Joan M. Zenzen has argued, the reason for the protracted process of Manassas National Battlefield's establishment could have been due to the results of the battles themselves. The battlefields represent two Confederate victories, whereas the established parks—except for Chickamauga—represented Union victories, and many members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) and United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) believed the federal government purposefully overlooked Manassas for preservation in order to eliminate Confederate memory.⁴ But the most influential years in the park's creation—1910 to 1940—generated a history that elevated and celebrated Confederate memory.

These years show the complex steps to the creation of Manassas National Battlefield Park and its connection to Lost Cause mythology. After the fiftieth anniversary commemoration in 1911, Americans became aware of the issues of preservation and interpretation at Manassas. A number of Congressional inquiries followed that looked into the federal government's capabilities for Manassas' preservation. These initial steps toward the creation of Manassas National Battlefield Park took place during the strongest point of the reconciliationist movement. Once the SCV and the UDC gained control of Henry Hill in 1921, however, the groups attempted to use the grounds as part of their battle over control of Civil War memory. Although

⁴ For the perceived ignorance toward Confederate memory, see E. W. R. Ewing, "The Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park (Incorporated) Prince William County, Virginia . . . The South's Proposed Memorial to Valor and in the Interest of American History," (1921), 3–5, Virginiana Room, Bull Run Regional Library, Manassas Va. (hereafter, Ewing, "Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park," [pg. no.], Virginiana Room, Bull Run Library); "The Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park: On the Battlefield of Manassas (Bull Run), a Fitting Federal Tribute, an Unsurpassed Confederate Symbol, an Endowed Educational Center, a National Asset," 3, 16–19 (hereafter "On the Battlefield of Manassas," [pg. no.]), Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park (1921) Folder, Historian's Files, Manassas National Battlefield Park Library, Manassas, Va. (hereafter MBCP Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL); and Joan M. Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 1–2, 18.

white Northerners had accepted the Lost Cause by the early twentieth century, SCV and UDC suspicion of a Unionist slant to memory at the original national battlefield and military parks caused the SCV and UDC to battle against the grounds' incorporation as a national battlefield. The reconciliationist legacy and the SCV's and UDC's ownership of Manassas guaranteed that the Lost Cause memory of the Confederate victories at the First and Second Battles of Manassas would survive even after the National Park Service (NPS) took control of the grounds in 1940. Thus, the battle over memory created Manassas National Battlefield and shows the victory of the Lost Cause mythology in national memory.

The Manassas Peace Jubilee and Renewed Interest in Preservation, 1910–1920

In the early twentieth century, memory became the central arena for reconciliation of North and South. By the 1910s, as the enthusiasm for preservation efforts by the federal government waned and veterans aged and died, veterans' groups, such as the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the United Confederate Veterans (UCV), pushed for further preservation of Civil War battlefields.

For Manassas, Union veteran Lieutenant George Carr Round kept up the battle for the creation of Manassas National Battlefield in the 1910s.⁵ Similar to other Confederate and Union veterans, Round became part of the larger reconciliationist movement in the early twentieth century. For example, he believed that the status of General Robert E. Lee in the national memory showed the quality of soldiers produced in both the North and the South. He argued, "Every inch General Lee is raised on the pedestal of fame raises Grant

⁵ George Carr Round, "Union Soldier Concerning the Lee Statue," *Confederate Veteran*, 18, no. 11 (November 1910): 529; Rita G. Koman, "George Carr Round, 1839–1918," George Carr Round Papers (hereafter Round Papers), Historian's Files, Manassas National Battlefield Park Library, Manassas, Va. (hereafter Historian's Files, MNBPL); and Clint Schemmer, "Documents reveal background of illustrious Manassas leader," *Potomac News (Manassas, Va.)*, 10 August 1988.

and the Army of the Potomac, which overcame him in honorable battle,” and “The Grand Army [of the Republic] cannot afford to judge Robert E. Lee as it would the ringleader of a street riot.” In addition, he wrote that had Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant been alive in 1910, “they would rejoice with me in such a restoration of the Union as is indicated by the presence of the statue of that illustrious leader [Lee] of men in the Capitol of the nation.”⁶ He saw the praise of Lee not as an insult to his commanders and comrades in the Army of the Potomac, but as a testament to the quality of soldiers the Union possessed during the war. His openness to judging Lee as a worthy adversary rather than a traitorous rebel expressed his desire to heal the wounds between the two sections.

Round was prepared to use the conflict’s memory to accomplish his reconciliationist desire and he took advantage of the fiftieth anniversary of the First Battle of Manassas to bring together former enemies for the first time during the Manassas National Peace Jubilee. Although veterans had met to scour the battlefields before, as a number of participants in the two battles had done in 1883, it had never occurred on as large a scale as on 21 July 1911, the fiftieth anniversary. Round had a two-fold purpose for this event: he wanted to bring former combatants together to reconcile, and he hoped to promote Manassas for preservation by the federal government.⁷ In addition to Round’s efforts, a number of Union veterans from the Midwest supported the idea for this event in the hopes of developing “a national

⁶ Round, “Union Soldier Concerning the Lee Statue,” 529.

⁷ For a reference to the visit by veterans in 1883, see *National Republican (D.C.)*, 16 October 1883; “Bull Run Revisited,” *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, 27 October 1883, 154; and “Veterans of Bull Run,” *Washington Post*, 16 October 1883. For Round’s motivations for the Peace Jubilee, see “George Carr Round: Father of the Public School System of Prince William County” (hereafter “George Carr Round: Father of the Public School System”), Round Papers, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

organization” of Union and Confederate veterans in place of sectional organizations such as the GAR and UCV. This action also gained attention from Confederate veterans, one of whom believed that “the men who favor such measures are of the better class of Union veterans.”⁸ Even before the Peace Jubilee officially took place, aspects of reconciliation emerged between Union and Confederate veterans of the battle.

In only seven months, Round, along with a committee composed of a Confederate veteran and two Manassas residents, pieced together the logistics for the Peace Jubilee and brought veterans from all the states involved in the fighting, as well as Virginia governor William Hodges Mann and President William Howard Taft, to Manassas for the commemoration. His hopes for a reconciliationist event became a reality during the Peace Jubilee. Manassas resident Ralph Larson, who witnessed the event as a child, wrote: “On the battlefield were two lines, Gray and Blue. They marched toward each other, shook hands and then formed mixed twosomes, threesomes or other small groups.” He also remembered, “There would be conversation, then pointings hither and yon, laughter and smiles, and backslapping.”⁹ Confederate veteran J. T. Frazier recalled similar events. “The gray and the blue met at the Henry House,” he wrote, “and after mingling together for several hours formed in line facing each other, not with guns, but extended hands and brotherly greetings. It was an inspiring scene.”¹⁰ These mock attacks between former enemies, which became a staple for these types of reunions, displayed the ability of these

⁸ “Meeting of Blue and Gray at Manassas,” *Confederate Veteran*, 19, no. 4 (April 1911): 156.

⁹ Ralph K. T. Larson, “The New Battle of Manassas,” *Washington Post*, 12 May 1979, Round Papers, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

¹⁰ “Fiftieth Anniversary Battle of Manassas,” *Confederate Veteran*, 19, no. 9 (September 1911): 414.

men to reconcile the complicated differences that led to the Civil War in order to reunite the two sections.¹¹

For its reconciliationist purpose, the Peace Jubilee was a resounding success. All involved saw the reunion of the two sections in the events that occurred during the gathering at Manassas. One *Confederate Veteran* reporter wrote, “President Taft arrived,” at the Manassas Courthouse around 5 o’clock, “and addressed a united people of a united country.” He continued, “As to the meaning of all of this, there can be but one answer: two thousand years ago the hills of Judea resounded with the angels’ song, ‘Peace on earth and good will to men,’ and this peace jubilee is but its echo.”¹² Frazier wrote that the exhibition of reconciliation made his “heart grow tender and I thanked God for the kindly feeling that prevailed among those men who fifty years ago met in deadly conflict on this bloody field.” Round shared similar sentiments. He believed that the Peace Jubilee “demonstrated to the world that finally and definitely not only the war, but the hatred, resentment, misunderstandings and injustices which had provoked that mighty struggle, were buried, forgotten and forever settled.”¹³

Despite the apparent success of the Peace Jubilee, Round’s second purpose, federal government preservation, did not come to fruition. Throughout the process of creating the Peace Jubilee, Round hoped that the display of goodwill between the former combatants would show Congress and the War Department the need to preserve the two battlefields. The event garnered national attention and Congress took immediate action to

¹¹ For a discussion of the Gettysburg semi-centennial, which included a reenactment of Pickett’s Charge, see Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 95–97; and Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 4, 7–15, 383–91.

¹² “A Remarkable Gathering at Manassas Battle Field,” *Confederate Veteran*, 19, no. 9 (September 1911): 415; “Taft at Bull Run Tells Peace Plans,” *New York Times*, 22 July 1911.

¹³ “Fiftieth Anniversary Battle of Manassas,” 414; and George Carr Round, letter sent, recipient unknown, 7 August 1911, Manassas, Va., Round Papers, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

decide if Manassas should join the ranks of the other national battlefield and military parks. As a result, the House Committee on Military Affairs put together a commission to report on the need to protect the monuments that existed on the site as well as future efforts to commemorate the fight with further monumentation to Union and Confederate soldiers. This commission continued the reconciliationist attitudes of the veterans who participated in the Peace Jubilee. For example, Congress agreed that any actions to build monuments on the fields would be determined by a committee of three people. The Congressional commission required that one Union veteran and one Confederate veteran take part in these decisions.¹⁴

Many veterans supported Manassas' preservation and continued to promote reconciliation. Union veterans hoped to preserve the grounds mainly for the protection of monuments erected on the field shortly after Lee's surrender at Appomattox when a regiment of Pennsylvanian's placed sandstone obelisks on two key areas of the battlefields. By 1911, these monuments had fallen into disrepair. Union veterans of the battles believed federal intervention could reverse the problem. One veteran, General E. W. Whitaker, believed the peace jubilee "fully awoke the attention of the whole country" to the "neglected conditions of the monuments." He thought that this exposure would assure the success of placing Manassas under the War Department's control.¹⁵ Even veterans who had not participated in either of the two battles supported the inclusion of Manassas as a national battlefield. Roe, a veteran who had missed the two Manassas battles, expressed this by seeing the results of the battles as "equal honors won by both sides" and this meant "nothing could be more fitting than the creation of the Bull Run or

¹⁴ *Protection of Monuments*, 62d Cong., 1st Sess., 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 3.

Manassas National Park.”¹⁶ This testimony shows the reconciliationist mind of white Americans at the time. Despite the fierce fighting that had taken place during the two battles, the participants and other veterans felt the plains of Manassas deserved federal protection to provide a place for people to visit and remember the historic actions of their ancestors, both Union and Confederate.

Following these testimonies on the bill, H.R. 1330, the Committee on Military Affairs returned to the House of Representatives with a decision on 8 February 1913. The committee members recommended that H.R. 1330 pass but that a piece of the legislation should change beforehand. They suggested that the proposal include a clause that stated, “[T]he Secretary of War is hereby directed to inquire into the practicability of purchasing the land upon which . . . [the] monuments stand.” The members believed that “some steps should be taken to protect the monuments” but that “full information should be had” before purchasing the grounds.¹⁷

In response, a board of officers from the War Department visited the battlefields to gather information and make a report on the status of the monuments. The officers agreed that the federal government should take control of the grounds along Henry Hill and the unfinished railroad grade where the two monuments sat. They also supposed that in order to purchase the monument on Henry Hill it was necessary to acquire the entire farm. They argued this was warranted since the grounds included the monument and “many points of historic interest in connection with both the first and second battles of

¹⁶ Ibid, 4.

¹⁷ House Committee on Military Affairs, *Protection of Monuments on Battlefields of Bull Run, Va.*, 62d Cong., 3d Sess., 1913, H. Rep. 1479, ser. no. 6334.

Bull Run.”¹⁸ This report, however, arrived in the House of Representatives at the worst possible moment. Submitted to the House in December 1913, it arrived just as tensions in Europe between the great powers increased and the federal government turned its attention to the foreign crisis. Once the First World War erupted, the recommendations made by the board of officers became an afterthought and Manassas was once again neglected.

While the United States turned its eye to Europe, Congress relegated the preservation of battlefields to the immaterial. Congress created only five national battlefield or military parks in the years between 1900 and 1925, as opposed to five in the ten years between 1890 and 1900.¹⁹ The hopes for the creation of Manassas National Battlefield, however, did not die despite the start of the First World War.

Round continued his unwavering advocacy for the battlefields’ preservation. He wrote *Confederate Veteran* in 1917 to request that the readers’ petition their Congressmen to support the bill for the establishment of a national battlefield at Manassas. Including the need to preserve the grounds around the Henry and Dogan farms, he approved of the preservation of the Groveton Confederate Cemetery, which also supported his reconciliationism. Despite the events in Europe taking precedence over domestic issues in the years after the Peace Jubilee, veterans, especially Round, continued to push for the preservation of the grounds fought over in 1861 and 1862.²⁰

¹⁸ House, *Protection of Monuments on Battle Field of Bull Run*, 63d Cong., 2d Sess., 1913, H. Doc. 481, ser. no. 6754, pp. 2–3.

¹⁹ Timothy B. Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America’s First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008), 4.

²⁰ George Carr Round, “Manassas Battle Field Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 25, no. 2 (February 1917): 98; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 9.

Support for a new battlefield at Manassas dwindled in the final years of the First World War. By the late 1910s, an increasing number of veterans died, which resulted in the political weakening of groups such as the GAR and the UCV. The Manassas preservation effort lost its biggest supporter when Round died on 5 November 1918.²¹ Thus heritage groups, such as the SCV, UDC, and the Sons of Union Veterans (SUV), became the backers for battlefield preservation. In Manassas's case, this resulted in the reemergence of sectionalist tensions in memory once the SCV and UDC took control of the grounds.

Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park and the Lost Cause, 1920–1930

In the 1920s, Manassas became a symbol for the SCV's and UDC's battles over Civil War memory. Although the majority of Union veterans wanted the grounds preserved to protect the monuments that existed and honor both Union and Confederate soldiers, the SCV and UDC wished to turn the Manassas battlefields into a solely Confederate monument. As one member wrote, "It is hoped the enterprise will interest the entire South." He also believed that it could act as "one great monumental memorial park" to the South that "is within easy reach of Washington and when known will be seen by thousands each year."²² By October 1920, the Manassas chapter of the UDC had the opportunity to buy the lands known as Henry Hill and a "battle museum"—the rebuilt Henry House—for twenty-five thousand dollars. Many of the SCV and UDC members supported the purchase of the grounds. They believed that if action was not taken immediately "some of the most thrilling and inspiring incidents of that battle will pass

²¹ "George Carr Round: Father of the Public School System," Round Papers, Historian's Files, MNBPL.

²² "Confederate News," *Confederate Veteran*, 28, no. 10 (October 1920): 397.

into oblivion,” including the spot on Henry Hill where Jackson received his sobriquet.²³ The grounds represented to the Confederate heritage groups a key component of their battle for supremacy in Civil War memory.

One year after it received the opportunity, the Manassas chapter of the UDC moved on its option to purchase the grounds around the Henry House. During a meeting held on 5 March 1921 in Washington, D.C., the SCV and UDC created the corporation that purchased and took control of the park’s operations. Known as the Manassas Battle Field Association and headed by Maj. E. W. R. Ewing, a former historian-in-chief of the SCV, the group was charged with purchasing Henry Hill, the central area of fighting during First Manassas, for twenty-five thousand dollars. Also, it would raise money for “monuments and suitable markers” to pay tribute to areas it felt were “historic and sacred to the South.” The board’s final purpose was to “accept markers or monuments offered by any State or organization, thus making it possible for Northern States or Union army units to mark spots of peculiar interest to the North.”²⁴ The corporation’s board consisted of one member from the depleting ranks of the UCV, one member each from the SCV, UDC, the Confederated Southern Memorial Association, and “each Southern State, including Missouri, Maryland, and Kentucky.”²⁵ The possibility for the boards’ acceptance of Union monuments hinted at an apparent reconciliationist attitude of the Manassas Battle Field Association. The exclusion of Union groups such as the GAR and SUV, however, indicated that the SCV and UDC, as the main ancestral organizations behind the creation and running of Manassas Battle Field Association, intended the park to be a monument solely to the Confederates and the Lost Cause.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ewing, “Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park,” 9, *Virginiana Room*, Bull Run Library.

²⁵ “Manassas Battle Field Association,” *Confederate Veteran*, 29, no. 4 (April 1921): 156.

Other members of the SCV and UDC continued to view Manassas as a purposefully neglected symbol of Confederate triumphs. One *Confederate Veteran* editor believed the efforts by the SCV and UDC to purchase the Henry Hill tract was “turning the eyes of the South toward that historic and now sadly neglected spot.” The writer, similar to other members of the SCV and UDC, saw a lack of action by the federal government as a slight against Confederate memory. He noticed similar insults through the existing monuments on the grounds when he wrote, “There is not a substantial marker indicating a single spot dear to the South.” “On the other hand,” the author continued, “several splendid and towering granite shafts have been here and there erected by Federal units in honor of their dead, particularly on the main field of Second Manassas,” referring to the monuments to the Fifth and Tenth New York Infantry Regiments. The writer finished by asking, “Is the Southern cause less worthy or the Southern dead less precious to our memories?”²⁶ It was apparent to the members of the SCV and UDC that the U.S. government would answer this question with a resounding yes. Yet at the time of these sentiments, the Manassas Battle Field Association acted to secure the property of Henry Hill and eventually fought against federal control of the grounds.

By June 1921, the Manassas Battle Field Association leased and incorporated Henry Hill into the Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park. The group intended the use of the park for “charitable and educational purposes,” such as maintaining “monument[s] or otherwise mark said land . . . in memory of the brave dead and wounded of both armies.”²⁷ Presenting the park as a monument to both forces seemed to indicate a reconciliationist stance by the Manassas Battle Field Association. Additional clauses in

²⁶ “Confederation News and Notes,” *Confederate Veteran*, 29, no. 7 (July 1921): 277.

²⁷ “Certificate of Incorporation of Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park” (hereafter “Certificate of Incorporation”), MBCP Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

the incorporation document, however, suggest other aims behind the corporation's desire for ownership of the grounds. In addition to their hopes of using the park as a memorial to the "dead and wounded of both armies," the association included as part of the charitable and educational uses for the land that "said land m[a]y stand as a perpetual park as the South's memorial to all Confederate soldiers of that war and as an expression of Southern love and veneration of the glorious and devoted women of the South during that dreaded era."²⁸

Major Ewing, as head of the Manassas Battle Field Association, outlined a similar purpose in his prospectus for interpretation at the park. He argued that at parks such as Gettysburg and Chickamauga "there [was] nowhere shaft or marker, the gift of a great and devoted South, to remind the future that the South of the era of secession was *always and to the last more truly and sanely anti-slavery than the North*."²⁹ Thus, he believed the "sacred" battlefields at Manassas would act in the "interest of historical truth," as well as be a monument that stood as a representation of the "inalienable right of revolution, a right comprehended by the secession for which the South fought." Interpretation at the park would especially ensure that "particularly the children of the South may the better understand such important results of the war between the Confederacy and the Federal Government" according to SCV and UDC teachings. According to the SCV's catechism, similar to the UDC's view, the narrative of the war they presented, which included interpretation at Manassas, did not include slavery as a main cause of secession. In addition, the group placed all the blame for the start of the war on the Lincoln administration and the Northern states, and continued the tradition of explaining

²⁸ Ibid; and "Confederate News and Notes," *Confederate Veteran*, 29, no. 6 (June 1921): 237.

²⁹ Ewing, "Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park," 3–5, Virginia Room, Bull Run Library (emphasis added).

Confederate motivation for secession as the violation of the South's "states rights."³⁰

Despite the initial references to reconciliationist ideals, the creators of Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park wished to use Manassas as a bulwark of Lost Cause memory. Although men like Round desired the preservation of the battlefields to honor the veterans of both sections, the declarations in the documents that greatly influenced the creation of Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park guaranteed that the Lost Cause rhetoric would trump the reconciliationist attitudes of the veterans in the early twentieth century.

Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park opened to the public with the rebuilt Henry House used as the park's headquarters and museum in the summer of 1921. The Manassas Battlefield Association, however, had a number of issues that the members of the SCV and UDC wanted them to immediately address. Most importantly was the erection of a marker at the spot where, many believed, General Jackson had received his sobriquet, Stonewall, on the crest of Henry Hill. As one of the martyrs of the Lost Cause, Jackson was a central icon to the majority of Confederate descendants, especially because of his services at Manassas. His apparent position—at the top of Henry Hill—had been marked with a cedar tree in the years after the war. By the time of Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park's creation, however, the cedar had started to die and members of the SCV and UDC asked, "Is not the spot worthy of a more creditable marker and memorial tablet?" The result these members feared was that "Jackson's terrible bayonet charge will, if something is not done quickly, soon be little appreciated." Reflecting on this possibility in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, the author of this editorial

³⁰ Ibid, 3–5, 7; Lyon Gardiner Tyler, "A Confederate Catechism: The War of 1861-1865," November 1929, 3d edition, accessed from the official website of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, 26 November 2011, <http://www.scv.org/pdf/ConfederateCatechism.pdf>.

added that “Jackson and his men then and there taught the world a lesson in the art of war that did much to help America win on the bloody fields of distant France.”³¹ Financial troubles, however, prevented the association from erecting a new monument to Jackson during the SCV’s and UDC’s ownership of the land.

By the end of 1921, the SCV and UDC finalized the purchase of Henry Hill and even looked to add twenty acres to Manassas Battlefield while building a new museum for the park. Similar to the hopes Major Ewing wrote into his prospectus, Manassas became a shrine to the Lost Cause and the Confederacy. The members of the SCV and UDC promoted Manassas as a Southern answer to already established national parks, which they believed advocated the “Unionist” narrative of the Civil War. They hoped that Manassas would be a “memorial the equal of Gettysburg and Chickamauga,” but a champion for the Confederacy. The supporters of Manassas Confederate Battlefield asked for donations to build a museum, walking trails, roads, and monuments to the Confederate victory at First Manassas. Most importantly, the author of the article soliciting donations included the fact that the park was “under the direction and control of Southern men.”³² This article from the *Confederate Veteran* showed a major issue that the SCV and UDC had with their preservation of the Manassas battlefields. The price for the groups to preserve the grounds proved problematic. The SCV and UDC, however, were both determined to keep the grounds under their control to promote the Lost Cause mythology.

The SCV’s and UDC’s financial problems did not stop the groups from applying the Lost Cause interpretation. In the years between the park’s initial establishment and

³¹ “Confederation News and Notes,” *Confederate Veteran*, 29, no. 8 (August 1921): 315.

³² “Manassas Battle Field Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 30, no. 7 (July 1922): 276.

1930, when the federal government renewed its interest in preserving the grounds, the Manassas Battle Field Association received multiple donations, usually for about ten thousand dollars, from the state of Virginia in order to retain the park. For the members of the SCV and UDC, the preservation of Lost Cause mythology equaled the solicitation of financial aid to preserve Manassas Confederate Battlefield. One editorial argued that it was “up to us of the South to make [the park] a memorial field worthy of the great deeds our ancestors performed there.”³³ Major Ewing redeployed his Lost Cause rhetoric at Manassas in a pamphlet written to secure donations from Southerners. He believed Manassas would fulfill the debt that “*Descendants of Confederate soldiers*” owed their ancestors. He argued that they owed their ancestors “*at least one fitting battlefield memorial*” that was “*emphatically Confederate in perpetual emphasis; and teaching without bitterness or prejudice, of that for which the Confederacy fought.*”³⁴

“Descendants of Confederate soldiers” were not the only ones to promote the Lost Cause mythology by the mid-1920s. Many white Northerners had accepted the Lost Cause as the main interpretation of the Civil War as well. Indeed, a lawyer from Chicago supported the SCV’s and UDC’s work in preserving the memory of the Confederacy, which included the ownership of Manassas battlefield. When referencing a memorial to a Southern judge, the lawyer wrote:

This fine tribute to one of our greatest American jurists [Chief Justice Edward Douglass White], a distinguished son of the South, ought to remind particularly all Southerners that we too little appreciate the value of conserving the inspiration that the future should have from memorials

³³ “Sons Department,” *Confederate Veteran*, 31, no. 5 (July 1923): 197; and “Manassas Battle Field Confederate Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 34, no. 10 (October 1926): 364.

³⁴ “The Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park: On the Battlefield of Manassas (Bull Run), A Fitting Federal Tribute, An Unsurpassed Confederate Symbol, An Endowed Educational Center, A National Asset,” 3 (hereafter “On the Battlefield of Manassas,” [pg. no.]), MBCP Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL (emphasis in original).

of Confederate *purpose* and *principle* quite as much as of unsurpassed heroism. . . . I have long been impressed with the need of some permanently endowed source of funds to be used to further more general appreciation of that purpose and principle.³⁵

With the general acceptance of the Confederate narrative, Northerners promoted the use of this story at Manassas Confederate Battlefield Park in addition to the established tradition by the SCV and UDC.³⁶

Throughout the SCV and UDC ownership of Henry Hill, the Manassas Battlefield Association endorsed Lost Cause mythology that influenced the future interpretation of the park. Major Ewing believed that Manassas needed to encompass a “symbol of Confederate purpose and valor,” and that it, in the “interest of broader Americanism,” served a “fuller story of the South’s contribution to government and history.” Additionally, Ewing admitted that Manassas pushed a Confederate interpretation to counter the perceived “wonderful story” that “[T]he federals have told in marble and bronze” at other battlefield sites. In reference to the second battle, “Nothing [at Manassas] recalls to the visitor that fine Southern courage which thus triumphed over numbers and resources, nor of the brilliant strategy by which Lee brought on that battle.” Manassas provided, in Ewing’s mind, an opportunity to speak of Confederate valor, such as the stand by Evans’s troops along Matthew’s Hill and General Johnston’s rallying of troops along Henry Hill. The key to interpretation at Manassas, for Ewing, was to present “correctly the causes and right” of their ancestors’ “brilliant fight.”³⁷ Although previously established parks contained Lost Cause leanings in their memorialization of the battles,

³⁵ “Endowment Possibilities of the Manassas Battle Field Adjunct,” *Confederate Veteran*, 34, no. 10 (October 1926): 316, (emphasis in original).

³⁶ *Ibid*; and Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 272, 284.

³⁷ “On the Battlefield of Manassas,” 4, 16, 18; and E. W. R. Ewing to Dear Friend, n.d., Washington, D.C., MBCP Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

the SCV and UDC hoped that Manassas Confederate Battlefield would act as a purely Southern park for all posterity.³⁸

By the mid-1920s, the federal government renewed its efforts to preserve new national military parks under the control of the War Department, especially the neglected battlefields of Virginia. With a petition from a number of Manassas residents, including B. Lynn Robertson, a member of the local SCV chapter, and backed by Virginia congressman R. Walter Moore, Congress reconsidered the acceptance of Manassas as a national battlefield. A number of SCV and UDC members, however, fought against transferring Manassas to the control of the War Department, fearing that the federal government would interpret the battles with the Unionist favor that they saw in previously established parks. But in response to the petition, the House Committee on Military Affairs once again permitted the Secretary of War to put together a commission to inspect the battlefields and present a report on the viability of the purchase of the grounds by the federal government.³⁹

The news of the commission received conflicting responses from members of the SCV and UDC. Robertson supported the desire to turn Manassas into a national military park. He believed that the majority of SCV and UDC members would “concur in the bill [to create Bull Run National Military Park] and support it.” In addition, he hoped to assist the Committee on Military Affairs in their efforts to bring Manassas under the control of the War Department.⁴⁰ Other SCV and UDC members, however, did not envision this

³⁸ For an example of the incumbent Lost Cause interpretation at Gettysburg, see, Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, chap. 3.

³⁹ House Committee on Military Affairs, *Hearings on National Military Park at Battle Field of Bull Run*, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 1926, pp. 1, 6 (hereafter Committee on Military Affairs, *National Military Park*, [pg. no.]); and House Committee on Military Affairs, *Inspection of Bull Run Battlefields, Virginia*, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 1926, H. Rep. 1076, ser. no. 8533.

⁴⁰ Committee on Military Affairs, *National Military Park*, 6.

exchange of control as positively as Robertson supposed. One member responded with the question, “Is this park to memorialize Confederate valor and history or not?”⁴¹ Ewing believed that the SCV and UDC needed to turn Manassas into “the Gettysburg of the South.” Since the “Confederate South ha[d] not memorialized a single battlefield,” the groups “must not leave to the Federal Government all such memorials! We MUST build at least one on the famous fields of Manassas – historical, beautiful, symbolic of all for which the Confederacy stood!”⁴²

A private letter from Ewing to Congressman Moore in February 1927, shortly prior to Ewing’s death, further demonstrates the backlash from members of the SCV and UDC to the proposed Bull Run National Military Park. He wrote the congressman to “register” his “most ardent protest against this movement.” Ewing continued that “the fewer ‘Damnedyankee’ monuments I see in Virginia the better I am pleased.” In addition, he argued, the inscriptions on these monuments to Union soldiers were “decidedly objectionable to Southerners who know any thing about the history of the period of the war between the States.” Ewing feared that government intervention at Manassas would lead to the Unionist leanings he perceived existed in previous monuments at other battlefields. His alarm stemmed from an event at Manassas, most likely the Peace Jubilee, where he heard George Carr Round speak. According to Ewing, by listening to the speeches, especially Round’s, the crowd “might easily have thought that the Northern armies had thoroughly beaten the south in both battles.” Ewing felt, “This is wat [*sic*]

⁴¹ “Manassas Battle Field Confederate Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 34, no. 10 (October 1926): 364.

⁴² E. W. R. Ewing to Dear Friend, n.d., Washington, D.C., MBCP Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL (emphasis in original).

may be expected, if your movement succeeds.”⁴³ Although Robertson believed that members of the SCV and UDC would support the incorporation of Manassas Confederate Battlefield into the War Department’s system of parks, the majority of members felt the transfer of ownership would ruin the work they had done in order to present the Lost Cause mythology at Manassas.

By the end of the decade, the SCV and UDC finally gained full ownership of the 128 acres of land around the Henry House. Financial issues, however, still plagued the SCV and UDC ownership throughout the 1930s. But mistrust of the federal government, especially after the key player in preservation of Manassas at this point—Major Ewing—died in 1927, prevented immediate action by the federal government to preserve the Manassas battlefields and derailed the park’s creation in the following decade.⁴⁴

The Establishment of Manassas National Battlefield Park, 1930–1940

The SCV’s and UDC’s financial troubles led some of the members of the park’s Board of Trustees to question the effort, and they started to consider seriously relinquishing control to the War Department. In the years between 1926 and 1933, when the NPS became the agency to administer the national military and battlefield parks, Congress designated fourteen new areas as national parks. This included Petersburg National Military Park (1926) and Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields

⁴³ E. W. R. Ewing to R. Walton [*sic*] Moore, 28 February 1927, Ballston, Va., MBCP Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

⁴⁴ For the finalization of the purchase of Henry Hill by the SCV and UDC, see “Donation from Stonewall Chapter, U. D. C.,” *Confederate Veteran*, 37, no. 2 (February 1929): 77; “Manassas Battle Field Confederate Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 37, no. 6 (June 1929): 236; “Funds to Clear Manassas Battle Field,” *Confederate Veteran*, 37, no. 7 (July 1929): 276–77; “Pledges to Liquidate Indebtedness of Manassas Battle Field Park,” *Confederate Veteran*, 37, no. 9 (September 1929): 356–57; “Manassas Battlefield Celebration,” *Confederate Veteran*, 38, no. 8 (August 1930): 324; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 16. For the issues that prevented the transfer of control to the NPS after Ewing’s death, see Edmond R. Wiles to Park Service Director Horace M. Albright, 23 June 1933, Little Rock, Ark., Manassas Battlefield Military Park Papers, Box 2596a, Entry 7, National Park Service Classified Files, 1933–1949, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II).

Memorial National Military Park (1927), both in Virginia. Manassas continued to gain recognition from Congress in terms of preservation under federal authority, but it also remained neglected even with the renewed interest in the memorialization of Civil War battlefields. In 1931, the War Department commissioned a committee of engineers to examine the conditions of the Manassas battlefields. Dealing with Great Depression economic issues, however, became the major concern of Congress, and plans for the park to become federally protected were once again deserted.⁴⁵

By 1933 once the NPS became administrators of the national military and battlefield parks, Branch Spalding, the regional director of the Park Service in Virginia, began discussing the project of Manassas National Battlefield with his colleagues as well as the SCV and UDC. Even with their financial troubles, the members of the SCV and UDC focused their efforts on marking the fields and erecting monuments. Edmond R. Wiles, the man placed in charge of “beautifying” Manassas by the Manassas Battle Field Association in 1933, wrote that the groups wanted the monuments and markers to pay “tribute to both the leaders of the Confederacy and those from the North – but to be predominantly a Confederate park.”⁴⁶ But in a follow up letter, he promoted the ignorance of Union contributions to the battle. He explained that the SCV and UDC hoped to erect new monuments at the site of Stonewall Jackson’s nicknaming, to each of the Confederate generals who commanded troops, and to each of the units in the Confederate forces during the two battles.⁴⁷ Despite the financial trouble that came with

⁴⁵ Senate Committee on Military Affairs, *Bull Run and Second Manassas Battlefields, Va.*, 71st Cong., 3d sess., 1931, S. Rep. 1498, ser. no. 9323; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 18.

⁴⁶ Wiles to Director Horace M. Albright, 23 June 1933, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴⁷ Wiles to Director Horace M. Albright, 11 July 1933, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

the preservation of the lands on Henry Hill, the SCV and UDC consistently promoted the memory and preservation of the battles with a Lost Cause leaning. Clearly, although the members claimed on a number of occasions they supported reconciliationist ideas about preservation, they actually ignored the Union actions at the battles.

Regardless of the obvious Lost Cause emphasis supported by the SCV and UDC and their mistrust of the NPS's interpretation of the war, the SCV, which had taken control of the negotiations with the federal government, did consider donating the lands to the NPS. In an attempt to retain control of Manassas's preservation, the SCV tried to obtain funds from the "Public Works bill," but it was refused. This resulted in the SCV entering into more serious dialogues about the transfer of power over the grounds. In September 1933, the SCV gathered for its annual meeting. Wiles hoped that the group would agree to give Manassas battlefield to the NPS. But the SCV rejected this measure at the meeting as a result of the groups' mistrust of the NPS, and, by 1935, the discussions over the possibility of donating the park had stalled. SCV and UDC members still perceived or feared Unionist bias in the NPS when the discussions took place.⁴⁸ The consequence of this suspicion was a resolution from the SCV and the UCV in 1935 that declared the groups "unalterably opposed" the "transfer of all or any part . . . of the Manassas Battlefield . . . to either a state or to the National Government."⁴⁹ By the mid-1930s, it seemed that the mistrust the Confederate heritage groups held for the NPS would prevent the creation of a national park at Manassas.

⁴⁸ John W. Rust to Horace Albright, 19 July 1933, Fairfax, Va., and Edmond Wiles to Director Arno B. Cammerer, 23 August 1933, Little Rock, Ark.; and John W. Rust to Thomas H. Lion, 13 May 1935, Richmond, Va., MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴⁹ "Manassas Battlefield Resolution No. 'D': Resolution Unanimously Adopted by the Sons of Confederate Veterans at its Fortieth Annual Convention which was Held at Amarillo, Texas, September 3–6, 1935"; and "Copy of Resolution unanimously adopted by the United Confederate Veterans, Virginia Division at its Forty-Fifth Annual Reunion which was held at Roanoke, Virginia, Oct. 15–17, 1935," MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

While battling with the NPS for the right to ownership of the property along Henry Hill, the SCV and UDC maintained the original objective as spelled out by Major Ewing in the early 1920s. The Manassas Battle Field Association hoped to make Manassas into the “most beautiful Memorial Park in all the South,” one that would be “emphatically Confederate in perpetual emphasis; and teaching without bitterness or prejudice that for which the Confederacy fought.”⁵⁰ In other federally administered memorial parks, the SCV saw a very different interpretation dedicated to “American battle genius,” but not including “the name of a single Southern hero” and lacking “proper Confederate recognition and emphasis.”⁵¹ These perceived insults against and deliberate omissions of Confederate history and heroes caused the SCV’s and UDC’s distrust of the NPS and its role in the promotion of Civil War memory.

A year after the SCV unanimously refused to donate the grounds to the NPS, however, the group renewed debating the issue. Regional Director Spalding attended this meeting to present the NPS’s argument for the establishment of Manassas as a national park. But, according to Spalding, the opposition to the NPS was “astonishingly violent.” “If I could have foreseen what an under taking it was,” he continued, “I should hardly have had the courage to attempt the swinging of this thing.” Yet after three days of bitter debate, the SCV passed a new resolution that approved the property’s donation to the NPS. Although Spalding accomplished the objective of bringing the grounds of Manassas under the control of the NPS, he also noticed the distrust members of the group held for the agency. He wrote, “It is truly surprising how the old feeling lingers in the hearts of

⁵⁰ Pamphlet, “The Sons of Confederate Veterans, History, Definition, Principles, and Program,” 1935, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁵¹ “Resolution No. 4, Unanimously Adopted by the Virginia Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans at it Fortieth Annual Convention which was Held at Roanoke, Virginia, Oct. 15–17, 1935,” MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

our Southern people.”⁵² Not only were the members of the SCV suspicious of the NPS, they still held a grudge against the federal government originating in the Civil War.

Even after the SCV agreed to donate the lands to the NPS, the process of creating Manassas National Battlefield still had a ways to go. After the NPS and SCV agreed to the donation, the two sides debated the inclusion and exclusion of certain clauses in the deed of transferal. Specifically, they argued over passages that supported the existing Lost Cause interpretation of the two battles. Clear throughout the deed is that the SCV required that the park remain as “Manassas Battlefield,” the name used by Confederates after the battles. The NPS and SCV debated most over the twenty-five thousand dollar requirement for a new memorial to Stonewall Jackson near the spot where he “received his immortal title.” To finalize Jackson’s importance to the Lost Cause at Manassas, the deed included a clause about the monument, which required that it “be in keeping with the greatness of the man honored.” In addition, the document mandated that monuments to Colonel Francis S. Bartow and General Barnard E. Bee of the Confederate army be placed near the spots where they were mortally wounded during the first battle. Each monument had to cost at least ten-thousand dollars. Additionally, the deed’s initial draft compelled the agency to set up a commission to review and approve any future monuments. Consisting of four Virginians and one additional Southerner approved by the commander in chief of the SCV, the commission’s job was to make sure that no “markers, monuments or inscriptions” on the property would “detract in any way from the glory due the Confederate heroes.”⁵³ Of course the NPS could not fulfill all the

⁵² Branch Spaulding to Director Horace M. Albright, 11 June 1936, Shreveport, La., MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁵³ Preliminary Draft of Deed between the SCV and NPS entitled “This Deed,” 1936, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

clauses that the SCV required. The main sticking issue in this initial draft, however, was the purchase of the monuments to Jackson, Bartow, and Bee. The NPS removed the clause that required them to pay for these monuments and the clause that created the commission of four Virginians and one Southerner to approve new monuments. Yet the NPS allowed the requirement of inscriptions that would not “detract . . . from the glory due the Confederate heroes.”⁵⁴ Even after the SCV approved the federal control of the lands at Manassas, the fight over the battles’ memory went on through the process of transferal.

The steps to the creation of Manassas National Battlefield Park in the years between 1936 and 1940 became more cohesive, but the SCV and UDC persisted in their efforts to keep the Lost Cause mythology alive at Manassas. During the seventy-fifth anniversary, 21 July 1936, the SCV, UDC, and NPS teamed up to reenact the battle for the people of Virginia. This reenactment provides evidence of the depth to which the Lost Cause had become the common narrative of the battles. In a speech given during the event, an unknown speaker refused to acknowledge the reason the two armies met at Manassas on 21 July 1861. This speaker also focused on the work of the NPS to preserve battle sites purely for lessons in military history. Most tellingly in the speech, the speaker states, “In commemorating the event which took place here seventy-five years ago today, we have no desire to recall a victory or excuse a defeat.”⁵⁵ Instead they were there to celebrate the glory of both Northern and Southern soldiers. In addition, the pamphlet from the event ignores the causes of the war and focuses only on the military situation

⁵⁴ Sen. John W. Rust to Regional Director Branch Spaulding, 20 November 1936, Fairfax, Va.; and Revised Deed entitled “This Deed,” 27 August 1936, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁵⁵ “The Battle of Manassas,” author unknown, 21 July 1936, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

and actions while emphasizing the perceived difference in numerical strength between the Union and Confederate forces, a strong aspect of the Lost Cause mythology.⁵⁶ A newspaper reporter at the event noted the Lost Cause sympathies of the crowd as well. He wrote that one young boy “was heard above the din of battle to yell . . . ‘The Yankees are cheating! The dead ones are getting up and fighting again.’” Also, he reported that: “There was no display of animosity during the battle but it was easy to observe where the sympathies of the spectators lay. Some of the audience twisted and fidgeted when the Federals seemed to be gaining the advantage and there were cheers, hurrahs and applause when the Confederates turned back the persistent charges and swept the ‘enemy’ from the field with a bristling bayonet charge.”⁵⁷ Not only did the work of the SCV and UDC influence the Lost Cause interpretation at Manassas, but the public embracement of the Lost Cause in general also caused this support of the Southern interpretation of the two battles and the conflict at Manassas.

Although the NPS and the SCV had agreed to a preliminary deed, distrust from members of the SCV and UDC and restrictions on the deed, specifically the requirement that the NPS have the funds to build a museum on the site prior to receiving the donation, prevented the full transfer of control for almost three years. Additionally, a new faction of opponents within the SCV rose to work against the donation. This group, according to Spalding, was “well organized for an effort to have the resolution [of 11 July 1936] rescinded.” He wrote, “Their reason seems to be an impression that the National Park

⁵⁶ Ibid; and Pamphlet, “First Battle of Manassas,” 21 July 1936, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁵⁷ *Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg, Va.)*, 22 July 1936, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

Service . . . would show favoritism to the Union forces.”⁵⁸ This debate over the way the Park Service would interpret the battles and the SCV’s desire for the construction of a museum prior to the park’s transfer held up the execution of the deed through 1937 and 1938. Yet, the NPS prepared to take control of Manassas Battlefield and in 1939 created its first master plan, which supported the Lost Cause tradition of the battlefield. Although the plan claimed that it was “more important” to present the “meaning and significance of the historic events than to explain them as a military study,” the author believed that the NPS also should “interpret the area and the battles for the benefit and the inspiration of the American people.” Nowhere in this master plan did the author specifically include the need to present the true cause of secession and the war to the visitor. Instead it focused mainly on the “Historical narrative of the two battles.”⁵⁹ The Unionist favoritism perceived by the SCV and UDC in NPS interpretation at other battlefields would not affect the narrative of the battles of Manassas for the NPS specifically instituted aspects of the Lost Cause in its master plan for the park.

By the end of 1939, Congress had approved fifty-six thousand dollars for the construction of a museum on the grounds at Manassas Battlefield. Simultaneously, the State of Virginia had appropriated twenty-five thousand dollars for the erection of a new monument to Stonewall Jackson near the spot of his nicknaming. Thus, by the end of April 1940, the NPS prepared to execute the deed for transfer and to interpret the battles

⁵⁸ Branch Spalding to Mayor Marshall King, 1 June 1937, Washington, D.C., MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files RG 79, NARA II; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 24.

⁵⁹ Assistant Research Technician to Branch Spalding, “Bull Run Master Plan 1939,” Master Plan Files, Box 2596b, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

at Manassas. On 10 May 1940, the NPS officially announced the establishment of Manassas National Battlefield Park.⁶⁰

Three months after the official establishment of Manassas National Battlefield, the SCV and UDC finally received their wish for a new marker to Stonewall Jackson and their Lost Cause legacy. Since the SCV and UDC took control of the grounds in 1921, the two groups wanted to erect a monument to Jackson to replace the existing cedar tree. With the twenty-five thousand dollars appropriated by the State of Virginia, their dream became a reality. In 1939, the state's Fine Arts Commission sponsored a competition to decide who would design this monument to one of the South's greatest heroes. Joseph Pollia, the sculptor of multiple military figures including Union general Philip Sheridan, won the contest with an equestrian statue of Jackson on his horse, "Little Sorrell." Although he initially received criticism for Little Sorrell's size (many people believed Sorrell looked too weak) and the statue's face in the initial mold (many claimed it resembled Ulysses S. Grant not Jackson), Pollia created a massive statue to this Lost Cause martyr.⁶¹

The Park Service unveiled the statue on 31 August 1940 to a crowd of two thousand. Positioned along the top of the ridge to the front of Jackson's actual position on Henry Hill facing the Union lines, the monument consists of an eight- to ten-foot-tall bronze statue of Jackson straddling Little Sorrell atop an eight-foot black granite base, in

⁶⁰ Memorandum for the Director from Branch Spalding, 11 May 1939, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II; "Order Designating the Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia," 10 May 1940, National Military Parks Correspondence File, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 24.

⁶¹ Douglas S. Freeman, "Prospectus: The Stonewall Jackson Monument Sculpture Competition and Exhibition," 29 October 1939, Stonewall Jackson Monument Folder (hereafter Jackson Monument Folder), Historian's Files, MNBPL; Memorandum for the Director from Supervisor of Historic Sites Ronald F. Lee, 16 March 1939, MBMP, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II; Joseph P. Pollia obituary, *Norwalk Regional*, 23 July 1993, Jackson Monument Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 27.

which is etched Bee’s immortal—possibly aprocryphal—words, “There stands Jackson like a stone wall! Rally around the Virginians!” The ceremony consisted of speeches from Virginia governor J. Roy Price and, most prominently, Douglas Southall Freeman, the preeminent Confederate historian at that time. In addition, the ceremony included the draping of Confederate flags on the monument, which sparked much debate in the NPS prior to the ceremony.⁶²

The erection of the Stonewall Jackson monument permanently instituted the Lost Cause mythology at Manassas National Battlefield. As one spectator observed, a “large crowd assembled” to “pay honor to one of the greatest soldiers of any age – a military leader . . . recognized by emulation in every war college in the world,” and a man, he believed, who “[s]urely . . . is important enough to have a memorial in granite and bronze all to himself.”⁶³ In his speech, Governor Price declared that Jackson was “one of the greatest soldiers of the Anglo-Saxon race.” In addition, with the United States on the brink of entering the Second World War, Dr. Freeman believed that the citizens of the U.S. had to “rededicate and reconsecrate ourselves to the *principles and ideals so beautifully exemplified in the life and service of Stonewall Jackson.*”⁶⁴ The monument itself also contains not-so-subtle messages about the Lost Cause. The representation of Jackson presents him as a large, muscular figure on a large steed, which represents Little Sorrell, although Jackson was of a slight build and Little Sorrell was slightly larger than a

⁶² Memorandum for the Superintendent of Petersburg National Military Park from Regional Director M. R. Tillotson, 13 April 1940, Manassas Conferences Folder, Box 2596a, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II; Memorandum for the Files from Associate Landscape Architect Walter A. J. Ewald, 27 April 1940, Jackson Monument Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; “2,000 See Jackson Statue Unveiled at Manassas Park,” *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 1 September 1940, Jackson Monument Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 29.

⁶³ Letter to the Editor from V. C. H., *Manassas (Va.) Journal*, n.d., Newspaper Clippings File, Box 2596b, Entry 7, NPS Classified Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁶⁴ “2,000 See Jackson Statue Unveiled at Manassas Park,” *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 1 September 1940, Jackson Monument Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL (emphasis added).

plow horse. Additionally, the statue consists of Jackson wearing a “raincoat,” which looks more like a cape worn by a noble musketeer. Following along the same lines, Jackson’s stance has a striking resemblance to one that can be found in many Superman comics or cartoons.⁶⁵ The statements made by Price and Freeman, as well as the monument itself, show that the Lost Cause mythology, which had infiltrated the nationwide interpretation of the Civil War, would be perpetually represented by the Jackson statue at Manassas National Battlefield.

The Stonewall Jackson statue epitomizes the complicated struggle and the Lost Cause legacy of Manassas National Battlefield’s creation. This large monument dominates Henry Hill, guaranteeing that this Lost Cause martyr remains the focal point of the site memorializing the First Battle of Manassas. Yet it was never guaranteed that Manassas would become a part of the NPS system. The SCV’s and UDC’s suspicion of federal interpretation that “eliminated” Confederate memory prevented the park from joining the ranks of other national parks for decades. Despite the perceived Unionist slant at other battlefields, the popularity of Lost Cause mythology by the 1920s and 1930s, which is demonstrated by the success of Freeman’s works on Robert E. Lee and his subordinates as well as the movie *Gone With the Wind* (1939), guaranteed that the Lost Cause would remain the primary framework for interpretation at Manassas. The Jackson monument stands as a reminder of this battle over Civil War memory in Manassas’s establishment as a national battlefield and throughout the nation.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Analysis of the statue comes from a workday at Manassas National Battlefield, 18 July 2010.

⁶⁶ For examples of Freeman’s work, see Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee’s Lieutenants: A Study in Command*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1942-1944) and *R. E. Lee: A Biography*, 4 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1934-1942). For Civil War memory through films, see Gary W. Gallagher, *Causes Won, Lost, and Forgotten: How Hollywood and Popular Art Shape What We Know About the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008). For the general acceptance of the Lost Cause in the early twentieth century, see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 255–99.

Chapter 3
**“So the Centennial Observance Must Be a New Study of American Patriotism”:
Memory in Manassas Battlefield’s Initial Development and the Centennial, 1941-
1970**

“It goes without saying that where fables and legends have obscured the real truth, the truth must be made clear. We are not preparing to commemorate a romantic myth; we are making ready to look closer at a chapter of our own history, and the chapter must be accurate.”

- Civil War Centennial Commission, *Statement of Objectives and Suggestion for Civil War Centennial Commemorations, 1958*¹

On a hot summer day, the Union artillery rode to the top of Henry Hill unlimbered and began firing on their Confederate opposition. A line of Confederate cannons returned fire as the Union infantry attempted to establish a position along the hill’s crest. After only a couple of hours, the seemingly victorious Union army fled toward the safety of Washington, D.C. Suddenly, a cheer went up through the crowd witnessing the struggle. This scene seems to come directly out of the fighting that took place on 21 July 1861. These events, however, describe the exhilaration of thousands of visitors and reenactors at Manassas National Battlefield on 22 and 23 July 1961, the weekend of the first battle’s one-hundredth anniversary. What started as the epitome of centennial commemoration, Manassas’ celebration of the 1861 battle, the first major reenactment during the Civil War Centennial, became a turning point in the nationwide celebration and the park’s history.

Although the Civil War’s popularity waned in the aftermath of World War II, the Civil War Centennial reversed this trend as the work of popular historians, especially

¹ These quotations are found in “Why They Fought, Remarks of Beverly M. Coleman at the Annual Exercise in Commemoration of the First Battle of Manassas, Manassas Battlefield, July 16, 1960,” Reenactments – Manassas (Lexington, Mo. – Manassas, Va.) Folder, Box 97, Entry 404, Civil War Centennial Commission Subject Files, 1957–1966 – Reenactments, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter, Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II).

Bruce Catton and Shelby Foote, brought renewed attention to the conflict.² The majority of white Americans initially embraced the coming celebration of the war, especially since the conflict's memory had become less divisive since the late nineteenth century. As the 1960s approached, however, the increased power of the Civil Rights Movement created a more complicated commemoration than initially expected, which once again turned the Civil War's memory into a divisive cultural and political battleground.

The celebration of First Manassas' centennial garnered major attention throughout the nation as the Civil Rights Movement continued to grow in the South. As the epicenter of the first major events commemorating the Civil War Centennial, the Manassas centennial reenactment started a firestorm of debates over how the conflict should be remembered and what the Civil War truly meant to the United States. The tumultuous decades of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s would reverse the common narrative of Civil War history. The Civil Rights Movement, a resurgence in scholarship on slavery, and the emergence of a far more "liberal" academy focused on the racial aspects of the antebellum years and the connection to the Civil War, complicated public presentation of the conflict's story after the 1960s.³

As seen through the unveiling of the Stonewall Jackson statue at Manassas in 1940, few Americans continued to fight over Civil War memory on sectional terms. The

² I use the term popular historians to reflect the training of Bruce Catton and Shelby Foote. Neither man was professionally trained as a historian. Bruce Catton was a journalist, and Shelby Foote, a novelist.

³ As historian David W. Blight notes, at the beginning of the Civil War Centennial, "The centrality of slavery and emancipation, bound up with the preservation of the Union, emerged as a consensus in the new scholarship on the subject. But," he continues, "that story was yet to find consensus in public memory. . . . For the majority, especially of white Americans . . . to claim the centrality of slavery and emancipation in Civil War memory was still an awkward kind of impoliteness at best and heresy at worst." Blight, *American Oracle: The Civil War in the Civil Rights Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 3. For the National Park Service, this was especially important as the Civil War sites would become part of this larger debate over Civil War memory during the Civil Rights Movement and the Centennial.

majority of white Americans accepted the Lost Cause as the central narrative for the conflict. By the time of the Second World War preservation and interpretation at Manassas reflected this shared perception of the war. The National Park Service (NPS) presented an interpretation of the Civil War in strictly military terms and continued to ignore the influence of slavery in the war's outbreak. Although NPS resources had been reduced during the Second World War, they continued the construction of the new visitor center on Henry Hill and completed it in 1942.

After the completion of the Visitor Center in 1942, expansion and changes in interpretation remained dormant throughout the 1940s at Manassas. Reduced interest in the conflict led to smaller visitation at battlefield sites and less motivation for improvements. Using the original narrative texts set up by the Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, Manassas installed permanent interpretive markers in 1948; these pieces remained in place for almost twenty years. In addition, the museum inside the Visitor Center emphasized Lost Cause mythology throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s. Lack of funding for new projects was the main culprit for this stasis, but a lack of scholarly questioning of the Lost Cause also played a role throughout the 1940s. The emergence of African American historians led by John Hope Franklin and white "revisionist" historians such as Bell I. Wiley and C. Vann Woodward, started to reverse this situation.⁴

⁴ Joan M. Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 73. For examples of initial changes in interpretation in academic writing, see Bell I. Wiley, *Southern Negroes, 1861–1865* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1938); John Hope Franklin, *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943); and C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955).

James B. Myers, the Manassas superintendent until 1955, realized that an increase in visitation between 1948 and 1952 required changes in the park. The 1950s saw a number of proposals for and the realization of land expansion at Manassas. In 1950, the NPS possessed 1,670 acres within Manassas' boundaries. These, however, were disconnected plots of land that left much of the battlefield, especially for Second Manassas, unprotected. Superintendent Myers hoped to take in lands that would connect these disjointed pieces of property to provide for greater interpretation of both battles. His first project was an attempt to purchase grounds surrounding monuments outside the NPS boundaries. The New York Monuments that were erected in 1906 in honor of the Fifth and Tenth New York, and the Fourteenth Brooklyn Infantry Regiments, and the sandstone monument erected in 1865 on the unfinished railroad grade all remained on private property. By 1950, the four monuments, as well as the Henry Hill sandstone monument, had fallen into disrepair. Myers hoped to purchase the grounds to protect the monuments and to restore them.⁵ This initial step in park expansion suggested a changing attitude in emphasis at Manassas. First, the hope to include grounds that were part of the Second Battle of Manassas showed that the NPS wanted to raise awareness of both fights. The emphasis on First Manassas meant the connection to Stonewall Jackson was central to Manassas, but the inclusion of Second Manassas would broaden interpretation and bring the good work of James Longstreet back into the narrative.

⁵ James B. Myers to Regional Director, Memorandum on The National Park Service and the Schools, 18 November 1952, K3823 MANA Correspondences 1949-53 Folder, box 1559, Entry 11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; James B. Myers, "Report on Lands Surrounding the New York Monuments Near Manassas National Battlefield Park, June – September 1950," D66 Part 1 MANA 1-13-1950 to 10-27-1953 Monuments and Markers Folder (hereafter D66 MANA Monuments and Markers Folder), box 1262, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 37–52.

Second, by pushing for the inclusion of Union monuments at Manassas, Superintendent Myers was starting to break the Lost Cause stranglehold on the site. In April 1950, the State Legislature of New York agreed to purchase the lands around the three New York monuments for transfer to the NPS. Two years later, that body purchased those lands for almost fifty thousand dollars. It then planned to sell the land to the NPS for the same price. These lands included the area where the Fifth and Tenth New York made their gallant stand against Longstreet's assault on 30 August 1862.⁶ The Confederate narrative would not be the sole interpretation at Manassas. The state of Union monuments at Manassas, however, partly shows the grip of Confederate history on the park. The twin sandstone monuments and the New York monuments had fallen into a state of disrepair since they were first erected. Any commemoration of the Union forces lacked high values and standards given to the Confederates after the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) and United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) had owned the grounds. But the inclusion of these Union grounds and monuments displayed a new step toward a balanced interpretation of the battle. It would now elevate awareness of the Union participation at Manassas.

As early as 1954, Superintendent Myers began approving changes in the permanent interpretive exhibits, but it would take almost a decade until new exhibits became a part of the park. The implementation of NPS director Conrad L. Wirth's initiative, Mission 66, would play a role in these changes. Mission 66 provided Manassas with funding that went into improving interpretation and the condition of the Union monuments in the park. Motivated by increased visitation and the approaching centennial

⁶ Agreement between Joint Legislative Committee on Historic Sites and the National Park Service, 21 May 1952, D66 MANA Monuments and Markers Folder, box 1262, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

for Civil War sites, Wirth hoped this program would improve visitors' experiences with the Park Service. Although Myers would not remain as the park's superintendent for the implementation of Mission 66, his ideas on interpretation became the basis for future improvements at the site.⁷

In 1956, as part of Mission 66, the NPS performed a study at Manassas to find areas for improvement. During this study, the park's leaders discovered the extent of Lost Cause mythology that existed in the interpretation at Manassas. The newly appointed superintendent, Francis F. Wilshin, was a Virginian who received his master's degree in history from Columbia University and had previously helped historian Joseph Mills Hanson develop interpretation at Manassas Battlefield. He immediately went to work improving historical interpretation. Although Wilshin had a deep interest in the First Battle of Manassas and leaned toward a Lost Cause interpretation of the conflict (one of Wilshin's great-grandfathers served under J. E. B. Stuart), he understood the problems inherent in the Confederate victories at Manassas.⁸ The majority of the report drafted by Wilshin and Manassas park historian Robert G. Sanner emphasized visitor accommodations. One section in the report, however, noted a "lack of interpretive balance in the Union and Confederate markers in the Henry Hill area." Wilshin and Sanner argued, "[D]eliberate care has to be exercised to ensure a balanced treatment of the interpretive story." In addition, both men noted that this was especially true when it was taken into consideration that "approximately 128 acres" of land had been owned by

⁷ James B. Myers to Regional Director, Memorandum on Texts for Proposed Narrative Markers, Manassas, 23 December 1954, D66 Part 1 MANA Feb. 9, 1954 to Jul. 21, 1958 Monuments and Markers Folder, box 1262, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II. Mission 66 was a funding initiative to improve infrastructure at NPS sites between 1956 and 1966. House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Mission 66: National Parks Improvement*, 86th Cong., 1st Sess., 1959, p. 4-5; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 54-57.

⁸ Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 52.

the SCV and Manassas Battlefield Confederate Park, Inc. By 1956, the Confederate lines along Henry Hill had been marked with “attractive metal markers,” but there were none for the Union line. Also, plaques of different quality marked places where officers were wounded or killed. On the one hand, for example, the spot where Union colonel Orlando B. Wilcox was wounded at First Manassas was marked with a “small weathered masonite marker . . . framed in wood and nailed to a tree.” On the other hand, an “attractive aluminum marker . . . indicates the spot where fell [Confederate] Brig. Gen. E. Kirby-Smith.” Correcting this imbalance became a main priority for Wilshin’s and Sanner’s first projects in the Mission 66 era.⁹

Some of the findings in the “Study on Visitor Needs and Interpretive Services,” however, took time to implement. Wilshin understood that the centennial would increase attendance and that he needed to focus more on infrastructural necessities rather than on interpretive improvements at that time. Instead of placing new interpretive markers, Wilshin finalized the purchase of lands important to the two battles outside the park boundaries, such as the land around the Stone Bridge. The known imbalance in interpretation at Manassas had to remain in place until after the centennial celebration while the park prepared for the increased number of visitors.¹⁰

The NPS at Manassas suddenly found itself in the middle of national attention as the centennial approached. As Wilshin took control of Manassas as the superintendent and looked for ways to improve the park, President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the U.S.

⁹ Wilshin and Sanner, “Study of Visitor Needs and Interpretive Services: Manassas National Battlefield Park,” 22 March 1956, K1815 Interpretive Services Folder (hereafter Interpretive Services Folder), box 1500, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II

¹⁰ The Stone Bridge was the one directly in front of the Confederates’ left flank prior to the First Battle of Manassas. This was where the first shots of First Manassas were fired. In addition, the Union forces used a makeshift bridge over the remaining structure that had been destroyed by Confederates in 1862 in their retreat to Washington, D.C., after Second Manassas. For more specifics on the land purchases at Manassas in the years before the centennial, see Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 60–64.

Congress approved the creation of the Civil War Centennial Commission (CWCC) in August 1957. This commission had a mix of members from governmental positions as well as the public sector. Congress gave the commission the duty of making the centennial “as meaningful as possible” to all Americans. But a number of issues arose almost immediately, for the commission was instructed to “cooperate with State, civil, patriotic, hereditary and historic groups and with institutions of learning” to create a meaningful commemoration.¹¹

Running parallel to the centennial, the Civil Rights Movement factored into how the Civil War would be commemorated. Segregationists immediately attempted to hijack the centennial to fulfill their racist agenda. Black Americans would eventually use the centennial to create a counter-memory. They received support from a number of white historians. Caught in the middle, the CWCC would eventually fracture under the cultural clash as the centennial evolved. Most importantly for Manassas, the centennial celebration, which featured a full-scale reenactment of the first battle, marked a turning point for both the park and the CWCC’s commemoration.¹²

First Manassas Centennial Celebration, 1957-1962

The Civil War Centennial reinvigorated the sectional debate over Civil War memory, which had receded in the early twentieth century. Through teaching Lost Cause mythology, Southerners hoped to prevent the powerful Civil Rights Movement from changing their Jim Crow society. Enthusiasm for the Civil War in the North increased in

¹¹ Senate Committee on the Judiciary, *Civil War Centennial Commission Established*, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., 1957, S. Rep. 1076, 2.

¹² For a full examination of the bitter struggle throughout the U.S. over Civil War memory and the centennial outside Manassas, see Robert J. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961–1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); and Blight, *American Oracle*.

the period of the Centennial, but the region would never equal the South's enthusiastic displays of Civil War nostalgia. Also, events in the North did not contain the same level of politicization as seen in the South. Mainly due to the embrace of reconciliation since the end of the Civil War, northerners took part in the Centennial through tourism at Civil War sites.¹³ Black Americans used the Civil Rights Movement as a tool to produce a counter-memory during the centennial. By promoting their rights as citizens, they attempted to battle the domination of Lost Cause memory in the South, as well as at NPS Civil War sites. The Civil Rights Movement complicated the byproducts of Civil War memory, for black leaders used the centennial as an opportunity to teach great moments in the history of African Americans.¹⁴

Many white Americans, however, hoped to celebrate the war while ignoring southern slavery's role in the cause of the conflict. They anticipated retaining a unified memory of the war based on the Lost Cause doctrine. CWCC executive director Karl S. Betts, a Kansas-born businessman, founding member of the Washington, D.C., Civil War Round Table and the CWCC, and World War I veteran, claimed the commission would not be "emphasizing Emancipation" during the commemorations. In addition, he stated, "You see, there's a bigger theme – the beginning of a new America." He also promoted the Lost Cause ideal of the "contented slave" in his statements. He asserted, "A lot of colored people 'loved life as it was in the old South' . . . 'There's a wonderful story here – a story of great devotion that is inspiring to all people, white, black or yellow.'" During

¹³ Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 122–23.

¹⁴ "DuBois Urges Negroes to Study Achievements," *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 12 December 1956; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 185–88, 190–92.

the planning phase, Betts suggested to black organizations that if they planned to commemorate the centennial, they should “have ‘their own’ celebration[s].”¹⁵

The majority of white Americans hoped to follow Betts’s vision. They wanted to celebrate the war and avoid further conflict by commemorating American unity since that conflict. Major General Ulysses S. Grant III, chairman of the CWCC and grandson of the victorious Union general, stated the Commission members hoped to commemorate and celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the conflict to “arouse national pride rather than stir regional animosities.” In addition, he found it disturbing that “people think of the centennial as only a giant refighting of the war.” He noted, however, “This isn’t the case at all.”¹⁶ The Centennial would follow a similar pattern to that of the Reconciliationist Movement of the 1890s. By overlooking the true causes of the Civil War, the Commission could commemorate the actions of soldiers from both armies without any acrimony.

This display of unity would act as, what historian Robert J. Cook termed, a “Cold War pageant.” Many in the government supported this desire since there would be demonstrations to further strengthen American unity at the height of the Cold War. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former resident of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, believed that twentieth-century Americans could apply lessons from the Civil War to their own lives. He urged Americans to look on the Civil War “not merely as a set of military operations, but as a period in our history in which the times called for extraordinary

¹⁵ Betts quoted in Louis Lautier, “South’s Looming Victory: The South May Have Lost the Civil War, but It Is Sure Going to Win the Centennial,” *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 23 February 1960; and Victor Gondos Jr., “Karl S. Betts and the Civil War Centennial Commission,” *Military Affairs* 27 (summer 1963): 51–53.

¹⁶ Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant III, quoted in “No Intention to Refight Civil War Included in Centennial Plans,” *The Washington (D.C.) Post and Times Herald*, 22 February 1959.

degrees of patriotism and heroism on the part of the men and women of both the North and the South.” To him Americans could derive “inspiration from their deeds,” which would reinvigorate their “dedication to the task which yet confronts us—the furtherance, together with other free nations of the world, of the freedom and dignity of man and the building of a just and lasting peace.”¹⁷ State officials also saw the Centennial as a way to strengthen the bond between Americans by remembering the “noble deeds” of the “brave men and women on both sides,” instead of the “hate and discord of the Civil War.” Major General Grant III expressed similar sentiments in the prelude to the centennial. He noted the members of the CWCC acknowledged the “war was a great tragedy.” The Commission members also believed, however, that the “war served to draw us closer together rather than to tear us apart.”¹⁸ One group went as far as promoting the construction of a “Civil War Hall of Fame” that would “truly belong to the American people . . . to stand as a monument to our national unity.”¹⁹ By emphasizing American unity, the CWCC and other government officials hoped Centennial events would help in the battle against Communism.

The NPS followed a similar line of reasoning when planning for the Centennial events in the late 1950s. Manassas was slated as the first major event reenacting one of

¹⁷ Eisenhower to The Civil War Centennial Commission, 6 July 1959, in Wilbur W. Nusbaum, prepared for the Committee for First Manassas, “First Manassas (A Prospectus); A Commemorative Reenactment of a Great Moment in History; a Ceremony Officially Opening the Civil War Centennial Years 1961–1965,” 7 April 1960, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, Manassas National Battlefield Park Library, Manassas, Va. (hereafter Nusbaum, “First Manassas (A Prospectus),” 7 April 1960, p. [no.], 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL).

¹⁸ Georgia Governor Ernest Vandiver quoted in “Gov. Vandiver Says Georgia to Stress Unity in Centennial,” *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 7 October 1959; and Grant III quoted in “No Intention to Refight Civil War included in Centennial Plans,” *The Washington (D.C.) Post and Times Herald*, 22 February 1959. For more on the connection between the Cold War and the earliest planning stages of the Civil War Centennial, see Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 15–30.

¹⁹ This planned “Civil War Hall of Fame” was to be erected at Manassas. However, it was never constructed. National Chairman of the Civil War Hall of Fame William S. Stuhr, “Special Memorial Opportunities,” Manassas Corporation (est. 6/1960) Folder (hereafter Manassas Corporation Folder), box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II.

the key battles in the American Civil War. The germination of the project came during a meeting between members of the NPS, the CWCC, and the Manassas Chamber of Commerce in September 1958. The groups involved with the initial planning phases made it clear from the start that they desired a reenactment promoting the bravery of the common soldiers and ignoring the larger, controversial context of this first battle. They hoped to raise about one hundred thousand dollars to hold the event in the park and proposed an event that would bring one hundred men from each state that participated in the first battle—2,300 in all—to Manassas to reenact the fighting. They also anticipated one hundred thousand visitors to witness the event.²⁰

The federal government was hesitant to commit to the event. It cited previous reenactments that had a number of problems and the NPS monetary policy stating that the service did not finance such plans. Wilshin, however, put his support behind the proposed reenactment, noting that a “reenactment could be held [at Manassas] employing about 2,300 men without any material damage whatever to the park.” Elbert Cox, the NPS regional director of Region One, held similar concerns, but stated he would support the event “provided there be consistent understanding that the activities are to be guided by the technical and historical advice of our people and that no National Park Service funds

²⁰ Nusbaum, “First Manassas (A Prospectus),” 7 April 1960, p. 12, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL. The key members of this initial meeting were Manassas Superintendent Francis Wilshin; Karl S. Betts, Executive Director of the Federal Civil War Centennial Commission; Virgil C. Jones, Director of Publicity of the Centennial Commission; Dr. J. Walter Coleman, Historian Director’s Office, NPS; G. P. Oakley, Secretary Greater Manassas Chamber of Commerce; and R. Jackson Ratcliffe, Chairman of the Manassas Chamber of Commerce’s Centennial Commission. Manassas National Battlefield Park Superintendent Francis F. Wilshin to Regional Director of Region One Elbert Cox, Memorandum on Proposed Centennial Observance at Manassas, 12 January 1959, Manassas, Va., A8227 MANA Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records; and Karl S. Betts to Pat Jones, Memorandum, 9 June 1959, Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II.

whatever will be available for either direct or incidental costs” from the reenactment.²¹ By February 1959, NPS director E. T. Scoyen approved the proposal; provided that the outside groups created a sound plan for the event and that the NPS avoided using any of the agency’s funds for staging the reenactment. Three months later, after the Virginia Civil War Centennial Commission agreed to take an active role in the planning and funding of the event, the federal CWCC officially announced approval of the First Manassas reenactment for July 1961.²²

In addition to the Cold War pageantry that many American leaders imagined, officials at Manassas, especially Superintendent Wilshin, saw a grand opportunity to develop a strong interpretive tool in the reenactment’s aftermath. While planning for the reenactment, Wilshin pushed for the professional videotaping of the event for use in the visitor center in subsequent years. Wilshin believed, “Filmed in color and stereophonic sound the event will provide a medium of unparalleled value in Museum battle interpretation.” Others in the NPS thought the film would “allow [for] a fine interpretive program, since a motion picture can provide more interest and drama than a slide program.”²³ The NPS had greater plans for the Centennial outside of further solidifying

²¹ Wilshin to Cox, Memorandum on Proposed Centennial Observance at Manassas, 12 January 1959, Manassas, Va.; and Cox to NPS Director E. T. Scoyen, Memorandum on Proposed Centennial Observance at Manassas, 16 January 1959, Richmond, Va., A8227 MANA Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

²² Scoyen to Cox, Memorandum on Proposed Centennial Observance at Manassas, 29 January 1959, Washington, D.C., A8227 MANA Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; and Everard Munsey, “1st Battle of Manassas Reenactment Will Start Civil War Centennial Fete,” *The Washington (D.C.) Post and Times Herald*, 31 May 1959; and Karl S. Betts to James J. Geary, 14 July 1959, Manassas Corporation Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II.

²³ Wilshin to Virginia Civil War Commission Executive Director James J. Geary, 27 March 1960, in Nusbaum, “First Manassas (A Prospectus),” 7 April 1960, p. 15, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and Daniel D. Feaser, Alan E. Kent, and Francis F. Wilshin, “Exhibit Plan: Manassas National Battlefield Park Visitor Center,” (July 1960), Notes on These Exhibits, Exhibit Plan of MNBPL-1960 Folder (hereafter, Feaser, Kent, and Wilshin, “Exhibit Plan,” Ex. [no.], Exhibit Plan 1960 Folder), Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

American unity. It remained to be seen, however, how effective of an interpretive tool this event could become.

While the majority of white Americans, especially the CWCC members, tended to ignore the racial issues of the Civil War to emphasize national unity, many white Southerners saw the upcoming Centennial as a way to defend segregationist policies. Segregationists felt a strong connection between the federal government's attempts to desegregate the region and the Lost Cause their ancestors had fought for one hundred years prior. They used Civil War memory as a way to perpetuate segregation of the region, highlighting the Lost Cause mythology of the Old South as a place of racial harmony populated by happy, contented black slaves.²⁴ Consequently, racism became a central part of the debate over Civil War memory during the Centennial commemorations.

During the planning for the Manassas reenactment, it remained clear that the focus would be on American unity at the expense of the Civil War's causes. In the year after the formal acceptance of the proposed reenactment, the NPS set about revising exhibits in the Visitor Center's museum in preparation for the Centennial. From the outset, the exhibit authors sought to sidestep the sensitive issue of slavery's cause of the Civil War. For example, the connection between slavery and the start of the Civil War in the first battle and the association between the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union defeat in the second battle remained conspicuously absent in a panel meant to "state the significance of the battles fought here." In another panel discussing the "South Vs. North, 1860-1861," which compared "the resources of the two sections on the eve of the Civil War," one of the South's greatest resources, slaves, remained conspicuously absent. In

²⁴ Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 51–52.

addition, the authors of the exhibit followed the Lost Cause argument that emphasized the superior industry of the Northern states in its victory over the South. Slavery was mentioned in only one panel. Although the proposed exhibits in 1960 were never installed, the planning outline shows the mindset of the NPS leaders at Manassas. Led by Wilshin, the Manassas historians leaned toward a Lost Cause emphasis in their interpretation, which would filter into their work during the Centennial.²⁵

Similarly, the Manassas Chamber of Commerce, which had a hand in the Committee for First Manassas organization and later the First Manassas Corporation, and the CWCC hoped to create an event that would avoid the Civil War's racial issues and continue the central theme of Cold War pageantry. The majority of groups involved in planning the reenactment desired a shining example of American unity to kick off the centennial. "It should be our aim," wrote Committee for First Manassas member Wilbur W. Nusbaum, "to present First Manassas authentically or not at all."²⁶ In their event prospectus, the Committee for First Manassas ignored any and all racial issues that could possibly overshadow the centennial commemoration. The CWCC also became deeply involved in the event. Grant III and Betts wrote that the Commission was "wholeheartedly behind you [the Committee for First Manassas] in your plans to reenact the first battle of Manassas." In addition, they believed, "This first major land battle of the war *must* be restaged – and restaged successfully and impressively – to set the pattern for the four years of commemorative programs which will follow."²⁷ Overall the planners

²⁵ Feaser, Kent, and Wilshin, "Exhibit Plan," Exs. 1 and 3, Exhibit Plan 1960 Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 68.

²⁶ Nusbaum, "First Manassas (A Prospectus)," 7 April 1960, p. 5, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL.

²⁷ Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant II and Karl S. Betts to R. Jackson Ratcliffe, 24 March 1960, in Nusbaum, "First Manassas (A Prospectus)," 7 April 1960, p. 13, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL (emphasis in original).

for the reenactment hoped that “the event can be staged with such colorful and dramatic realism as to provide an arresting stimulus to a better evaluation and appreciation of the principles of freedom and democracy on which this Nation was founded – principles which today hold the hope of the Free World.”²⁸

President Eisenhower promoted a similar idea. He believed the Manassas reenactment would remind Americans that the “bonds which now unite us are as precious as the blood of young men. Such bonds are a continuing cause for gratitude, a continuing source of strength.”²⁹ These groups hoped the First Manassas reenactment would set the standard for the Cold War pageantry so that other events could promote American unity and avoid emerging racial issues.

Although the Centennial Commission, the Manassas Chamber of Commerce, and the NPS envisioned a pageantry of American unity, many Americans exposed the contradictions that haunted the proposed celebration of the Civil War. For some, the contradiction was found in the conflict over racism in the United States and its connection to the Old South. Reverend John Papandrew, a white Unitarian minister from New Hampshire, compared the segregation of the twentieth century with the Old South’s institution of slavery. He believed segregation was the “‘new slavery’ in contrast to the ‘old slavery’ practiced before the Civil War. . . . The fight for slavery did not begin in

²⁸ Wilshin to Virginia Civil War Commission Executive Director James J. Geary, 27 March 1960, in Nusbaum, “First Manassas (A Prospectus),” 7 April 1960, p. 14, 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

²⁹ Eisenhower to Maj. Gen. James C. Fry, First Manassas Corporation, 10 August 1960, Washington, D.C., A8227 Pt. MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II (hereafter MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11,).

1861 and it did not end in 1865.” He declared, “[The] centennial is absurd—it merely re-creates the greatest period of schizophrenia this country ever had.”³⁰

During the fourth national assembly of the CWCC in Charleston, South Carolina, in early 1961, this contradiction became apparent to the public. Due to the segregationist policies of South Carolina, one member of the New Jersey Committee, Madeline A. Williams, a black woman, was denied accommodations at the hotel where the committee was staying. As a result, New Jersey senator Clifford P. Chase decided to boycott the meeting unless it was moved to a desegregated area. Both New York and Illinois joined the New Jersey boycott.³¹ The firestorm created a platform for criticism of the historical amnesia of the Civil War centennial. One reporter found it ironic that the racial issue, “which was one of the sparks that set off the Civil War[,] comes up again 100 years later as one of the issues of controversy at a celebration of the start of the war.” Even Senator Chase believed that subjecting “Negro members of the commission to segregation would be irony of a most sort” since the war was “fought to defend freedom and dignity of the individual.”³² For another author, the fact that Major General Grant III was “reportedly going on ahead with the Charleston setting” despite South Carolina’s segregation was the epitome of incongruity for this event since his grandfather had “contributed in a large measure in the making of black men free.”³³ Although the boycott ended once the meeting had been moved to a desegregated U.S. naval base near Charleston, the damage

³⁰ “Civil War Centenary Deprecated Because of Racial Segregation,” *New York Times*, 15 May 1961.

³¹ “‘State Should By-pass Civil War Fete’—Irvis: New Jersey Woman Denied Hotel Accommodations,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, 25 March 1961; and George F. Brown, “3 Northern States Quit Biased Civil War Fete,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, 1 April 1961.

³² “Race Issue in Centennial Celebration,” *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 16 March 1961; William S. Stuhr to Karl S. Betts, 20 March 1961, Washington, D.C., Manassas Corporation Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II.

³³ “General U. S. Grant, III, Marches On – Maybe His Grandfather Wouldn’t,” *Atlanta Daily World*, 18 March 1961.

had been done. Eventually, the CWCC would implement massive changes partly as a result of the troubles in Charleston. But Betts's and Grant's vision for a Cold War pageant remained in place through the Manassas reenactment. Still the Charleston crisis showed the CWCC and other agencies, including the NPS, had to recognize the connection between the racial issues of the time and Civil War memory.³⁴

For others, the recreation of battles showed another contradiction, especially when discussing First Manassas. They believed the reenactment did not fully honor the sacrifice of the soldiers. As one newspaper reporter noted, the reenactment could recreate much of the action, but one important aspect would be missing, "the heroic illusions with which it was begun and the cold realism which was its aftermath."³⁵ A concerned citizen, Mr. L. O. Stryker, believed that the reenactment of the first battle would be premature, arguing that the first battle had not covered "either the North or South with any glory." He suggested that the commission should reenact a later battle—"one of the good battles of the Civil War."³⁶ Another unknown author expressed similar sentiments, stating that many people understood the desire to commemorate the events of 1861 but that they had "reservations on re-enactment of the tragic happenings at Bull Run—or for that matter, any other battle where starry eyed young Americans were killing each other for things they hardly understood." The author also believed, "[T]o restage the bloody muddle of Bull Run as a tourist attraction is to miscalculate Americans' veneration of those who

³⁴ "Civil War Centennial Capitulates; To Meet at Desegregated Base," *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 26 March 1961; "Vows Action on Bias in Civil War Centennial," *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 25 March 1961; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 120. For an extensive examination of the Charleston Crisis in 1961, see Cook, 88–119.

³⁵ Everard Munsay, "1st Battle of Manassas Reenactment Will Start Civil War Centennial Fete," *The Washington (D.C.) Post and Times Herald*, 31 May 1959.

³⁶ L. O. Stryker to Karl S. Betts, 1 June 1959, Baltimore, Md., Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subjects Files, RG 79, NARA II.

gave their lives on that battlefield.”³⁷ Even as the majority of Americans geared up for the centennial commemorations, others continued to hammer away at the contradictory nature of the Centennial Commission’s actions and decisions.

Others questioned whether the Centennial simply perpetuated Lost Cause mythology and what influence that would have over the four years of commemoration. Frank Sullivan, a writer from Saratoga, New York, took a satirical approach to the coming anniversary in 1960. “If every citizen puts his shoulder to the wheel in the four years and celebrates for all he is worth,” Sullivan wrote, “the forthcoming Civil War revival may turn [Confederate] defeat into victory.” The Centennial Commission would take the necessary steps to prevent this reversal, but Sullivan inquired: “But suppose the boys get carried away by their parts . . . Suppose the Confederate boys re-enacting Atlanta decide they would like to win this time, for a change. You might have an ugly situation on your hands. . . . there would always be the risk that some unreconstructed ‘method’ actor from Alabama might stash live cartridges on his person—and bang! the masquerade would take a sinister turn.”³⁸ Sullivan pointed out the problem with Civil War memory and interpretation to that time: the South had been winning the fight over historical memory.

Others expressed similar but more serious concerns about the Centennial. L. O. Stryker believed that the “South is in the majority in placing this event,” which would emphasize Southern glory. He suggested, however, if the commission should reenact a later battle, honor and credit would be given to “both North and South for the type of men

³⁷ “Guest Editorial: Miscalculating at Bull Run,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 14 June 1960.

³⁸ Frank Sullivan, “Uncivil Thoughts on the Civil War: A Northerner Dares to Point Out Some of the Difficulties He Sees Looming Up on the Eve of the One-hundredth Anniversary of You Know What,” *New York Times*, 13 November 1960.

who fought all battles of the Civil War.”³⁹ Lawrence D. Reddick, a college professor who specialized in African American history and the author of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. biography *Crusader without Violence*, believed the Centennial events only accomplished the perpetuation of the “‘Confederacy myth’ and set up harmful emotional barriers.” In an acceptance speech for the “Union’s Silver Jubilee Award,” Reddick “urged that the truth be told about the Civil War and that ‘we expose the Confederate myth for the unhistorical romance much of it is.’” In addition, he recognized the “Confederacy myth” was “part of the psychological and political resistance to the program of social welfare legislation” during Reconstruction.⁴⁰ Clearly, some feared the centennial celebration would only emphasize the Lost Cause narrative and overlook the Emancipationist and Unionist narratives in the hoopla.

Some concerns over the Lost Cause myth had already appeared before the Centennial even started. As seen earlier, the NPS embraced a number of aspects of the Lost Cause simply through its interpretation at Manassas. The CWCC and other groups outside the NPS also supported this Lost Cause interpretation through their promotion of reconciliation while overlooking the racial issues that existed in the nineteenth century and that arose during the Centennial itself, such as the crisis in Charleston.⁴¹ Confederate heritage groups continued to promote a Lost Cause tone in the upcoming Centennial events. During the UDC’s annual commemoration of the first battle, their keynote speaker, retired rear admiral Beverly M. Coleman, whose grandfather was John S.

³⁹ L. O. Stryker to Karl S. Betts, 1 June 1959, Baltimore, Md., Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subjects Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴⁰ “Reddick Says Centennial Fetes Perpetuate Confederate ‘Myth’,” *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 4 May 1961.

⁴¹ Feaser, Kent, and Wilshin, “Exhibit Plan,” Exs. 1 and 3, Exhibit Plan 1960 Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; “Race Issue in Centennial Celebration,” *Atlanta (Ga.) Daily World*, 16 March 1961; William S. Stuhr to Karl S. Betts, 20 March 1961, Washington, D.C., Manassas Corporation Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 88–119.

Mosby, spoke on why soldiers fought in the conflict. In his speech, Coleman argued that Northerners fought for their country while the Confederates fought for their “state” with “equal belief in the justice of [their] cause.” For Southerners, however, he believed there were “two things that particularly aroused the ire of the people of the South: the overbearing attitude of many too-zealous crusaders and the falsely pious air of a number of the hypocrites in the North.”⁴² Similar to the arguments presented by prominent Confederate veterans during Reconstruction, Coleman blamed the war on Northerners who pushed the Southerners into secession. Unlike the debate of the 1870s and 1880s, however, Northerners and Southerners in the 1960s accepted this line of reasoning with little argument. L. O. Stryker claimed that the soldiers of both armies fought because they “thought their cause was the right one.”⁴³ It initially seemed that the NPS and the other groups involved in the Centennial would follow Lost Cause mythology during the commemorations.

Through all the controversy and debates prior to the reenactment, the Centennial’s popularity remained high, especially with white southerners. After the Charleston crisis, the spotlight was on Manassas, as the first major event in the summer of 1961. Although the NPS agreed to allow the event to take place on the park grounds and assisted in the planning, the First Manassas Corporation was the main organization placed in charge of raising funds and providing services for what it called a “historical pageant” of First Manassas for “the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States.”⁴⁴ After over

⁴² “Why They Fought, Remarks of Beverly M. Coleman at the Annual Exercise in Commemoration of the First Battle of Manassas, Manassas Battlefield, July 16, 1960,” p. 7, Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴³ Stryker to Betts, 1 June 1959, Baltimore, Md., Reenactments – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subjects Files, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴⁴ “Cooperative Agreement Between the Superintendent, Manassas National Battlefield Park and the First Manassas Corporation, Incorporated, Relating to the Staging of a Re-Enactment of the First Battle

a year of discussion, the logistics were set for the reenactment. On 22 and 23 July 1961, over two thousand men would represent the almost thirty thousand who fought in 1861. Major General James C. Fry, a retired World War II army officer and executive director of the First Manassas Corporation, directed the event, and Virgil “Pat” Carrington Jones, the author of numerous books on the Civil War and CWCC liaison officer, acted as the narrator for the fighting.⁴⁵

The popularity of the event was apparent even before the main event that weekend. On 21 July, the First Manassas Corporation ran a dress rehearsal of the reenactment in front of twenty thousand people. Over the following two days, approximately one hundred thousand total spectators arrived at Manassas to witness the recreation of the war’s first major battle.⁴⁶ As part of the spectacle, the First Manassas Corporation set up concessions where the spectators could purchase a commemorative program for twenty-five cents. This program explained part of the motivation for the reenactment as well as the reason men fought in the war. Following the pattern of American unity and reconciliation, the program stated, “Today’s commemorative spectacle has the objective of reminding you of our common heritage—and indeed of reminding the world—that our people have always been willing to fight and to die if need be for their beliefs—and their principles.” According to the program, the troops in 1861, “Whether they wore the blue or the gray . . . were all deeply in love with their country. *And the country they loved was America, though they saw America in segments then.*” In

of Manassas at Manassas National Battlefield Park (Rough Draft),” 1961 Reenactment Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL.

⁴⁵ Jean M. White, “Manassas Battle to Live Again: They’re Massing again at Manassas for Centennial,” *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 16 July 1961; Jean M. White, “50,000 at Manassas Brave 101-Degree Heat,” *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 23 July 1961; and Condos, “Karl S. Betts and the Civil War Centennial Commission,” 57.

⁴⁶ McCandlish Phillips, “Confederates Carry Day again at Bull Run: A Southern Throng Cheers Centennial Victory of Rebels,” *New York Times*, 23 July 1961

addition, from the “misery of their differences came the magic and miracle of Union, Union cemented and accepted and cherished. When the smoke cleared away and the passions withered in the heat of war the America they all loved spread out before them, and before us, their children, as one wide, majestic land of infinite opportunity for all.”⁴⁷

Starting at one p.m., the commemoration began with the arrival of Virginia governor Lindsay Almond and other special guests. This was followed by the playing of the national anthem and a prologue delivered by a U.S. Army captain also emphasizing Cold War unity. The captain noted the spectators had “within the deepest sense of sentiment traveled back in time 100 years to a place where the long shadows of duty and patriotism reach out into our very lives today.” A “parade of units” and a “Pageant of American Unity” ended the displays prior to the reenactment.⁴⁸

After these festivities, for two and a half hours, the approximately two thousand reenactors played out the maneuvers and fighting that took place in July 1861. The spectators watched as reenactors fired reproduction muskets at each other with some feigning death or wounding. Some of the reenactors were so enthusiastic about their participation that a number of them jumped back to their feet after acting shot and rejoined the fight. The spectators were also treated to pre-recorded “Rebel yells” over loudspeakers near the stands along the hill. Jones narrated the events through these same loudspeakers. Focusing on the Cold War emphasis for the centennial, the narration emphasized the glorification of the conflict. When placing the battle in the context of

⁴⁷ McCandlish Phillips, “Confederates Carry Day again at Bull Run: A Southern Throng Cheers Centennial Victory of Rebels,” *New York Times*, 23 July 1961; “Centennial Commemoration: July 22-23, 1961 the First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run),” A8227 MANA 1/1/62 to 12-31-63 Folder (hereafter MANA 62 to 63 Folder), box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

⁴⁸ “Introductory Prologue,” MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 128.

U.S. history during the narration, the story started with the bombardment of Fort Sumter and ignored the reasons for Southern secession. The centerpiece of the production was the mock artillery duel that took place along the top of Henry Hill. Just as it happened during the battle in 1861, after the two and a half hours of mock fighting, the Union men abandoned their guns on Henry Hill to the cheers of the mainly Southern audience.⁴⁹

Many people in attendance and others who read of the event were impressed with the spectacle. One spectator, Millard E. Crane from Fonda, New York, wrote his local newspaper: "We have never witnessed anything like it. It had been so well rehearsed . . . that one had a distinct sense of immediacy. The pop-pop of musketry; the booming of cannon belching fire and smoke; the sound of a bugle faintly heard in a lull in the sound and fury; the falling bodies; the flags unfurled in the breeze; all seemed to catch one up into a sense of living history and one could almost feel it was 1861." He continued: "Our forebears were dedicated men with a cause, no matter which color uniform they wore." According to Crane's observances, the reenactment successfully supported the Cold War pageantry the CWCC hoped to present. As his family drove home from Manassas through Washington, D.C., he realized what he learned from the reenactment: "The great Union was preserved and reunited by stronger bonds than ever. We have suffered together through four great wars and today present a united front to the foes of our way of life. With God's help, let's be about it."⁵⁰ Chairman Steven R. Saunders of the Long Island Civil War Centennial Association believed that the First Manassas reenactment, as

⁴⁹ Scott Hart, Francis F. Wilshin, and David Thompson, "Narrator's Script for Reenactment of First Manassas (Bull Run)," MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; Phillips, "Confederates Carry Day again at Bull Run: A Southern Throng Cheers Centennial Victory of Rebels," *New York Times*, 23 July 1961; White, "50,000 at Manassas Brave 101-Degree Heat," *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 23 July 1961; Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 128; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 68–70.

⁵⁰ Millard E. Crane quoted in Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 128–29.

well as the reenactments of the firing on Fort Sumter and Lincoln's First Inauguration, were "most typical of how the observance should be effected. All of these very fine, very high-plane events were planned and executed in the spirit of unity and cooperation, the lack of which is a loss of purpose in the centenary anniversary."⁵¹ From the perspective of Crane and Saunders, the reenactment was a stirring success of Cold War unity, exactly as the CWCC had planned.

Americans North and South had already exposed the contradictions that accompanied the centennial prior to the Manassas reenactment. Similar to these early critics, the reenactment came under fire in the days afterward. As Cook notes, many northerners were "frustrated by the damaging impact of segregationist violence on internal peace and the country's image abroad," and, they excoriated "white southerners for their apparent preference for silly games over racial equality." Shortly after the reenactment, an editorialist found in the *Jamestown Sun* impugned the reenactment a "ludicrous restaging" in which southerners tried to "obscure their proslavery cause 'with pageantry and chivalric legend.'"⁵² Others expressed similar sentiments. An editorial published the day of the reenactment suggested, "[T]he issues [the Civil War] was fought for are still scars across our body as a nation."⁵³ One northerner, Richard O. Hathaway from Brunswick, Maine, articulated his displeasure at the reenactment in a letter to the *New York Times*: the reenactment of First Manassas "underlines most clearly the misplaced sense of enthusiasm that has too often pervaded these occasions." In addition, he emphasized that his "chagrin at such spectacles" resided in his belief that "such week-

⁵¹ Steven R. Saunders, "A New Years Wish," December 1961, A20 Civil War Centennial Commission From 1-1-62 to Dec. 31, 1965 Folder (hereafter A20 CWCC Folder), box 18, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

⁵² Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 130; and *Jamestown Sun*, 29 July 1961, quoted in *Ibid.*

⁵³ *New York Herald-Tribune*, 22 July 1961 quoted in Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 130.

end rehearsals of violence cause Americans to overlook those grievous imbalances and necessities” that, “one hundred years ago, made the outbreak of violence a tragic but necessary preliminary to the arduous reconstitution of our society.” He believed that “rather than engage in such pathetic displays as the re-enactment of battles,” the nation may gain a far greater profit by devoting “our attentions to the more painful and yet more rewarding task of exploring those elements and tendencies in our society which allowed the national calamity of the Civil War to break forth in the first place.” Finally, Hathaway argued that the spectacles like First Manassas constituted a “grotesque evasion of the more challenging task before us at this juncture in history, when we can no longer refuse to be fully human and truly humane.”⁵⁴

These sentiments were not confined to the North. Some Southern newspapers also criticized the event. Only two days after the reenactment, an editor for the *Richmond News Leader* answered an inquiry as to why there was not greater promotion of the reenactment. The author wrote, “These sham battles threaten to make a farce of the greatest tragedy of American history.” In addition, the editor believed, “The gaudy show at Bull Run was a noisy piece of amateur theatrics, carried on by overgrown boys who get a thrill out of hearing guns go off,” and the author hoped that “someone in authority” would “announce that the re-enactment of First Manassas would be the last such charivari to be staged.”⁵⁵ Despite the apparent success of the event, by the end of the year many

⁵⁴ “Civil War Games Assailed: Writer Comments on Implications of Re-Enacting Bull Run,” *New York Times*, 29 July 1961.

⁵⁵ “An Appomattox at Manassas,” *Richmond (Va.) News Leader*, 25 July 1961, MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

historians believed the centennial was, in the words of historian Paul Angle, “an irresponsible and commercialized flop.”⁵⁶

The embarrassment that came along with these criticisms led to a number of changes for the final centennial years in both the CWCC and the NPS. Both Betts and Grant III considered the event a major success and believed reactions such as the ones given by Crane and Saunders justified it. The negative responses in the days after the reenactment, however, created greater pressure from professional historians, including the prominent Civil War historian Bell I. Wiley, for change. This resulted in Betts’s dismissal in August 1961 both due to his support of the reenactment and the crisis that unfolded in Charleston earlier that year. With Betts’s removal, Grant resigned his position as chairman of the CWCC. The departure of both men outraged a number of white southerners and consensus historians who saw their ouster as an attack on their patriotic and Lost Cause rhetoric. To replace Grant, President Kennedy appointed the distinguished American historian Allan Nevins, who immediately selected James I. (“Bud”) Robertson for Betts’s former position. This move brought greater legitimacy to the CWCC, for Nevins hoped to bring “attention to [the war’s] darker aspects” and to provide a “more critical examination of the romantic brothers’ war trope.”⁵⁷ Once Nevins and Robertson took control, the CWCC attempted to reform their approach to the centennial by presenting an accurate interpretation of the war rather than

⁵⁶ Paul Angle quoted in Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 143.

⁵⁷ Steven E. Saunders, “A New Years Wish,” December 1961, A20 CWCC Folder, box 18, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II. Quotations found in Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 141. Although Nevins specialized in general American history, he wrote a highly acclaimed multi-volume work on the Civil War between 1947 and 1971. Unfortunately Nevins died before finishing this series and could not finish a volume addressing Reconstruction. See Allan Nevins, *Ordeal of the Union*, 8 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1947–1971).

commercializing the centennial events and overlooking the ugly reality of why the war was fought.⁵⁸

The NPS reacted in a similar fashion. Although the majority of NPS employees in attendance believed the reenactment was a “stirring spectacle” that allowed the spectators to gain a “clearer understanding of Civil War battles in general and the Battle of First Manassas in particular,” the agency changed its policies in the aftermath.⁵⁹ NPS director Conrad L. Wirth refused to authorize any further reenactments on Park Service property citing the cost and dangers of reenactments both to participants and park property. Wirth, however, continued to support the commemoration of the Civil War at NPS sites. “In lieu of re-enactments,” Wirth suggested holding “reasonable and acceptable substitutes.” He continued, “People generally want and expect some sort of pageantry, and we feel that such a presentation can be made impressive, interesting, and educationally valuable.”⁶⁰ Despite the apparent success of the first reenactment, a number of problems caused the NPS to refuse additional events in the future. The damage to the land was one of the major factors for this policy change. The negative responses to the reenactments, however, likely influenced this decision as well. Since the NPS changed course in the month after the reenactment, the agency’s timing was likely a reaction to the condemnation of the reenactment in some quarters. Nevertheless, the First Manassas

⁵⁸ Lyon G. Tyler, Jr. to Wilbur W. Nusbaum, 25 July 1961; and Wilbur W. Nusbaum to Karl S. Betts, n.d., Oakton, Va., Reenactment – Manassas Folder, box 97, Entry 404, CWCC Subject Files, RG 79, NARA II; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 120, 142.

⁵⁹ Regional Director of Region One Elbert Cox to Superintendent Francis F. Wilshin, Memorandum on Reenactment of First Manassas, 26 July 1961; and NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth to Regional Director Elbert Cox, Memorandum on Re-enactments of Civil War and Other Battles, 14 August 1961, MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

⁶⁰ Wirth to Regional Director of Region One Elbert Cox, Memorandum on Re-enactments of Civil War and Other Battles, 14 August 1961, MANA 1-1-60 Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

reenactment became a turning point in the centennial years as professional historians took control of the CWCC and the NPS reversed its policies on commemorative events.

Manassas in the Aftermath of the Centennial, 1962-1970

After the First Manassas reenactment, U.S. citizens became less enthralled with the war's centennial. Fewer commercial events took place, making it less publicized between 1962 and 1965. The most telling reason behind this change was the success of the Civil Rights Movement. In addition to the appointment of Nevins and Robertson to the CWCC, the traditional Civil War narrative guided by the Lost Cause doctrine started to lose ground as African Americans became more involved in national politics, and many historians began emphasizing the agency of African Americans in their studies. As a result of seminal works in the 1950s, a number of young historians, such as Leon F. Litwack, James M. McPherson, Eric Foner, Ira Berlin, John W. Blassingame, and Eugene D. Genovese, who emerged out of the centennial years helped revise the common Civil War narrative through inclusion of African Americans in the story.⁶¹ These changes would have a major impact on how interpretation developed between the First Manassas reenactment and the 1970s.

While changes were being made in the CWCC's work, which included a greater presence of African Americans in both Centennial Commissions and in the CWCC's interpretation, Manassas's visitation remained on par with those seen in 1961. The only

⁶¹ For examples of the New Social History that influenced changes in Civil War interpretation, see James M. McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); Eric Foner, *America's Black Past: A Reader in Afro-American History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974); John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); and James M. McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to the NAACP* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

major change was that July saw a massive decline mainly due to the difference in crowd size for the centennial reenactment. Despite the drop in visitation in 1962, the park still held a UDC commemoration of the first battle that July and planned a commemoration for the second battle that August.⁶² Although opposition to the new leadership in the CWCC delayed the implementation of Nevins's and Robertson's new vision, Manassas and the rest of the NPS worked closely with the CWCC for the rest of the centennial.⁶³

Just as it had been throughout Manassas's history, the commemoration of Second Manassas received little attention in the year after the First Manassas reenactment. The second battle's commemoration fell in line with the revised policy of the NPS. Instead of the large-scale commercialized event that occurred the summer before, the Second Manassas commemoration consisted of a small one-day event. As part of the commemoration, the Wisconsin Civil War Centennial Commission donated two six-pound bronze cannons, two gun carriages, and a limber in honor of the Iron Brigade. In addition, the Marine Corps Band and Color Guard from Quantico, Virginia, participated. The local National Guard fired a salute, and a gun crew from the North-South Skirmish Association, the organization that had provided the majority of reenactors in the First Manassas reenactment, fired one of the guns.⁶⁴ The smaller NPS ceremony showed the effect of changing attitudes toward the centennial. With less commercialization, the

⁶² "Manassas National Battlefield Park Narrative Report for Visitor Services 1962," Interpretive Services Folder, box 1500, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

⁶³ "Minutes of the Twelfth Meeting of Executive Committee of the Civil War Centennial Commission," 30 January 1962; Staff Historian to Acting Chief Historian, Memorandum on Sixth National Assembly conducted by U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission, 5 June 1963; and Steven E. Saunders, "A New Years Wish," December 1961, A20 CWCC Folder, box 18; "Manassas National Battlefield Park Narrative Report for Visitor Services 1962," Interpretive Services Folder, box 1500, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II; and Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 143–54.

⁶⁴ "Manassas National Battlefield Park Narrative Report for Visitor Services 1962," Interpretive Services Folder, box 1500, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II. Only one article pertaining to the Second Manassas anniversary appeared in the *New York Times* prior to the commemoration, unlike the First Manassas Commemoration, which had coverage for months in advance. "Civil War Battle Will be Observed: Tuesday Marks Anniversary of Second Bull Run," *New York Times*, 26 August 1962.

centennial became about honoring the troops through ceremonies more appropriate and solemn than the one seen in July 1961. Additionally, the lack of awareness for Second Manassas demonstrated another issue in terms of the two battles' memory. Throughout the development of Manassas National Battlefield, the involved organizations had overlooked the second battle. Instead, all concentration had been placed on preserving and remembering the first battle. The strong connection between Second Manassas and the Battle of Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation—Second Manassas's entire importance in the Civil War narrative—had fallen to the wayside since the turn of the twentieth century.

Throughout the final three years of the centennial commemoration, the war's interpretation underwent additional change under the pressure of the Civil Rights Movement, and the NPS interpretation followed suit. The presence of African American historians in northern state centennial commissions provided extra fuel for the presence of a black counter-memory in the Civil War Centennial.⁶⁵ With the changes in the CWCC and the more prominent role of African Americans in the centennial, as well as the strength of the Civil Rights Movement, Manassas Battlefield also implemented narrative changes that would follow this pattern. Interpretive exhibits within the park had changed little since the original permanent signs placed in the park in 1948. The reenactment prevented Superintendent Wilshin from implementing the changes he planned in 1960. After the centennial celebrations, however, NPS officials at Manassas attempted to execute alterations to keep up with new interpretation.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ John Hope Franklin in New York and Madaline A. Williams, who was the New Jersey member that was refused accommodations in Charleston, are two examples of the African-American presence in state centennial commissions. Cook, *Troubled Commemoration*, 163.

⁶⁶ Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 72–74.

By the waning years of the centennial, visitors to Manassas pointed out the outdated interpretation and pushed for new exhibits. In a letter to Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, tourist William Hauser called the exhibits “one of the ‘shoddiest collections of mementos’ he had ever seen.”⁶⁷ Although Wilshin had initiated interpretive revisions, his insistence on taking on the role of park historian as well as superintendent delayed the installation of new interpretive exhibits. Wilshin’s Southern heritage and his obsession with the first battle played a role in his focusing the narrative mainly on the first battle. Although he showed his desire for new exhibits in the park’s master plan in 1965, Wilshin’s battle with continually changing park historians prevented further progress.⁶⁸

The struggles over new interpretation were not the only hurdle for Manassas Battlefield in the post-reenactment years. Throughout the rest of the decade, Manassas continued to deal with Lost Cause advocates. As they had traditionally done since the 1920s, the UDC held annual commemorations for the first battle that emphasized the Lost Cause and mainly memorialized Stonewall Jackson.⁶⁹ Other groups bent on fighting against the Civil Rights Movement also attempted to use the Confederate victories at Manassas to push their agenda. In 1964, George Lincoln Rockwell, the founder of the American Nazi Party, requested the right to hold a rally at Manassas for “dissident groups composed of the Ku-Klux Klan, States Righters, White Supremacists and others” over that Fourth of July. Wilshin cited a lack of facilities and expected fire hazards that would

⁶⁷ Ibid., 74.

⁶⁸ James W. Coleman and Francis F. Wilshin, Master Plan of Manassas National Battlefield Park 1965, Master Plan of Manassas National Battlefield Park-1965 Folder, Historian’s Files, MNBPL; and Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 74–76.

⁶⁹ “Manassas National Battlefield Park Narrative Report for Visitor Services 1962,” Interpretive Services Folder, box 1500, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

come with the anticipated three thousand spectators to push Rockwell toward a different location near Washington, D.C. Rockwell eventually secured an area near the Washington Monument for his rally, which meant the NPS did not have to deal with these groups. But Wilshin noted either way he was prepared to refuse “him the permit” for such a rally at Manassas.⁷⁰ Despite the NPS’s willingness to follow new paths of interpretation in the wake of the centennial, old themes of Civil War memory played a role in the park’s development into the 1970s. Heritage groups, such as the UDC, and white supremacist organizations attempted to use the Confederate victories at Manassas to push their agendas.

The work of the NPS at Manassas continued to reverse this trend by implementing new lines of interpretation in the decades after the turbulent centennial years. By 1968, the NPS exhibit planning team completed a new design for the Visitor Center that started to follow the interpretive trend of Civil War academics. As expected for Civil War battle sites, the exhibits still centered on the tactical and strategic importance of First Manassas and the roles of politicians and generals. Instead of centering solely on these two aspects, however, the planning team also focused on the experiences of the common soldiers of both armies as well as civilian experiences during and after the battles. As usual, the exhibits overlooked the connection between slavery and the Civil War, but the inclusion of common soldiers and civilians showed the NPS’s willingness to embrace new lines of interpretation especially in social history. Despite these efforts by the exhibit planning team, Second Manassas was still mainly left out of

⁷⁰ Superintendent Francis F. Wilshin to Regional Director, Memorandum on Request of Lincoln Rockwell to Hold Rally in Park July 4, 7 July 1964, A8227 MANA Folder, box 700, Entry P-11, General Records, RG 79, NARA II.

the narrative.⁷¹ Although the NPS had done work that went against the established narrative, the connection to the Lost Cause remained in the park's interpretation.

Despite the prevailing omission of the contextual importance of the battles of Manassas to slavery and the Civil War, the development of new interpretation that emerged in the aftermath of the centennial was a sign of changes to come. More historians, both black and white, were producing works that attacked the Lost Cause narrative. Following in the footsteps of "liberal white historians," such as C. Vann Woodward and Bell I. Wiley, new names in Civil War studies, such as Woodward student James McPherson and Wiley student "Bud" Robertson, advanced their mentors' work. As the 1960s came to a close, the leaders of Manassas Battlefield started to realize they could not overcome these new lines of interpretation coming out of universities. The centennial was an important point in Civil War memory throughout the nation. For Manassas, the centennial marked the point of no return where interpretation became more than just stories of tactics, politicians, and generals.

⁷¹ "Final Draft Manassas National Battlefield Park Visitor Center," August 1968, Manassas National Battlefield Park-Visitor Center Plan-1968 Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL. Although studies on common soldiers and civilians' experiences during combat are now a popular subject for Civil War historians, in the 1960s the subject was still relatively new to the field. By 1968, the only two well-received studies on Civil War soldiers were Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943); and Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1952).

Conclusions Memory and Development at Manassas since 1970

“[The Disney Corporation] want[s] to move in and destroy real history in order to create a facsimile, something synthetic, plastic.”
- Historian David McCullough, Congressional Testimony on Disney’s America, 1994¹

In 1993, the Walt Disney Corporation unveiled plans to construct a third theme park in the United States. Hoping to prevent economic competition between either Disney Land or Disney World and this new park, the Disney Corporation looked for locations outside California and Florida. Recognizing the Washington, D.C., area’s popularity as a tourist destination, Disney intended to find a site near the nation’s capital. Since Disney’s new project—Disney’s America—was planned as an history-themed park, one Disney chairman Michael Eisner hoped would “bring our American experience to life,” the project looked perfect for this historic region. Maryland’s history of opposition to new business opportunities near the Washington, D.C., area, however, forced Disney to scour Virginia for a location. After less than a year of searching, it found a perfect site. Haymarket, Virginia, provided 3,006 acres for purchase, easy access to Interstate 66, and proximity to the nation’s capital—thirty-five miles away. Initially, many people in Prince William County supported this new venture, hoping it would bring increased revenue and employment. Opposition, however, grew throughout 1993 and into 1994 as Disney got closer to finalizing its plans. This opposition came from numerous sources, including local citizens, environmentalists, and prominent historians, such as David McCullough and James McPherson. The reason for the historians’ protests: this

¹ Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, *Hearings on Potential Impact of Disney’s America Project on Manassas National Battlefield Park*, 103d Cong., 2d sess., 1994, p. 71 (hereafter, *Disney’s America Project*, 103d Cong., 2d sess.).

proposed park would sit on land only four miles from the western boundary of Manassas National Battlefield Park.²

Historians had numerous concerns about the park's location. Although the members of the newly formed Protect Historic America organization—which included some of the biggest names in the historical field such as C. Vann Woodward, John Hope Franklin, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Barbara J. Fields, Shelby Foote, McCullough, and McPherson—believed they had no right to question how Disney would present history, they thought the placement of a park near so many important historic sites would ruin the historical value of the Virginia Piedmont. McCullough believed the project was ironic since Disney intended to “destroy real history” in the “name of history.” He also argued that although Michael Eisner claimed the citizens of Prince William County “should be so lucky as to have Orlando come to Virginia,” this in fact would “be a national tragedy.”³ McPherson likewise stated that if Disney's America went ahead in Haymarket, a number of threatened battlefields, including Manassas, “would be doomed to extinction.”⁴ Eventually, the questions over the appropriateness of the location as well as fears of the “Disneyfication” of history, caused the Disney corporation to cancel its plans in Haymarket and look for a different site to construct the theme park. The Disney Corporation would ultimately abandon the project.⁵ This debate over the presence of a historically themed park near such important historical sites and the resulting reversal of

² Michael D. Eisner, “Disney's Virginia Park Will Bring American Experience to Life,” *New York Times*, 23 June 1994; Linda Feldmann, “Planned Disney Park Near Civil War Sites Sparks Ironic Battle Over States' Rights,” and “Disney Theme Park Sparks New Civil War in Virginia,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 June and 28 June 1994.

³ *Disney's America Project*, 103d Cong., 2d sess., 71.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵ David Stout, “Packaging America's Killing Fields,” *New York Times*, 22 May 1994; Lawrence W. Lee, “Let Disney Teach History Someplace Else,” *New York Times*, 4 August 1994; and Richard Perez-Pena, “Disney Drops Plans for Virginia Park,” *New York Times*, 29 September 1994.

Disney's initial plans provides insight into the modern-day struggles with Civil War memory.

How Americans remember the Civil War depends upon a number of intertwined factors. Ancestry plays a major role. Popular culture may be the most important factor as movies present different visions of what happened during the conflict. NPS sites are a similarly, perhaps more, significant source of Civil War memory. Hundreds of thousands of Americans visit Civil War sites protected by the NPS every year. By examining the history of Manassas National Battlefield, one gains a better understanding of how divisive Civil War memory has been and continues to be in the United States. This complex relationship between public memory and the NPS's role in its creation and promotion comes to the fore throughout Manassas's history. As collective memory has undergone transformations since the end of the war, interpretation at Manassas has followed similar patterns. Yet, even to this day, the Lost Cause legacy of Manassas and interpretation at the park remains in constant conflict with the NPS attempts to present a balanced narrative of the war.

After the 1960s, Manassas followed the trends in the new social history. In the late 1970s and into the 1980s, historians at the park prosecuted the battle against the Lost Cause legacy that started during the Centennial, but were faced with a new struggle about preservation issues. Similar to the initial movements by Civil War veterans, since the 1970s preservation has once again become part of Civil War memory in the NPS, especially at Manassas. Twenty years prior to Disney's plan for Haymarket, the Marriott Corporation, with support from the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, proposed a complex that included a theme park in a location even closer to the park than

Haymarket. Most importantly to preservationists, the new complex included high-rise buildings that would have been viewable from Henry Hill, similar to the Gettysburg Tower that created debate in the early 1970s and remained on the Pennsylvania battlefield until 2000.⁶ After local and preservationist backlash against the plan and Congressional intervention, Marriot backed out of its proposal in 1977, ending the threat to the battlefield. By 1980, the NPS acquired the Brawner Farm, now owning all the land where fighting had occurred.⁷

Preservation issues, however, did not end with the purchase of the Brawner Farm. In 1988 two local corporations, the Hazel/Peterson Companies, attempted to construct a mall on the area known as Stuart's Hill—the location of Robert E. Lee's headquarters during Second Manassas, only about a mile south of Brawner Farm. In addition, the location of the mall, according to Park Service officials, would have made it visible to most sections of the battlefield. They also believed the new mall would cause increased traffic, leading to the widening of Route 234 and Route 29—the two main roads through the park. Before locals could rally support against the proposed mall, however, the two companies broke ground and started construction. After months of debate, Congress passed bill H.R. 4526, which extended Manassas's boundaries to include Stuart's Hill, finally encompassing the majority of important areas to the two battles.⁸ Although destructive to the NPS's efforts to protect the physical landscape of the battlegrounds,

⁶ Ben A. Franklin, "Tower Plan Stirs Battle at Gettysburg," *New York Times*, 20 December 1970; and "Much-Derided Gettysburg Observation Tower is Felled," *New York Times*, 4 July 2000.

⁷ Ron Shaffer, "Buildings for Park Approved: 'America' High-Rise Buildings Approved," *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, 9 March 1973; James T. Wooten, "Amusement Park Adjacent to Civil War Battlefields Is Approved: Pledge by Marriott," *New York Times*, 8 April 1973; Helen Dewar, "1,500-Acre Expansion Urged for Manassas Battlefield," *The Washington Post*, 25 June 1975; Wilson Morris, "Judge Invalidates '73 Rezoning of Va. Tract for Theme Park," *The Washington Post*, 12 April 1977; and Joan M. Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 86–116.

⁸ Zenzen, *Battling for Manassas*, 132–61.

these fights over preservation increased public awareness of the threats to battlefield preservation that came along with suburban growth.

In response to the continued urban sprawl, Congress approved the creation of the Civil War Sites Advisory Committee (CWSAC) in 1990. This group, consisting of prominent historians as well as politicians, was formed to report on the status of interpretation and preservation at Civil War sites. The committee promoted stronger preservation efforts at both the state and federal level that, they believed, would create jobs and educational opportunities for young students of the conflict. Unlike many local politicians around Manassas, the members of the CWSAC saw the benefits of preserving as much ground as possible for battlefield and military parks. As the committee noted, only by walking the grounds of a battlefield can a person fully understand what occurred there. They also believed that without comprehending the military actions that led to Confederate or Union victories, one cannot entirely recognize the implications individual battles had on the United States economy, politics, and society during the mid-nineteenth century. Although some historians argued against battlefield preservation due to the idea that military interpretations were inherently Lost Cause oriented, many historians outside the CWSAC agreed with this findings and the promotion of battlefield preservation.⁹

Battlefield preservation remains a major part of Civil War memory through the NPS. The reaction of local and historical groups to threats against Manassas shows that Americans generally follow this tradition started by the Civil War veterans. For many, the possibility

⁹ Civil War Sites Advisory Committee, *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*, 13, 29, Civil War Sites Advisory Committee Folder (hereafter CWSAC, *Report*, [p. no.], CWSAC Folder), Historian's Files, MNBPL. For an example of a non-CWSAC member's opinion agreeing with the organization, see Gary W. Gallagher, *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 278–83

of keeping battlefields in pristine condition allows the greatest possibility to keep the war's memory alive.

While the federal government dealt with issues of preservation in the 1980s and 1990s, historians at Manassas continued efforts to reverse the Lost Cause mythology that existed in interpretation. NPS chief historian Edwin C. Bearss and Manassas superintendent Rolland Swain wanted to increase the attention given to Second Manassas and the contextual importance of the two battles. In 1983, Bearss and Swain approved the erection of new interpretive signs at Manassas. Many of the wayside and interpretive exhibits to that point had been erected during the Mission 66 era. Bearss described these signs as “a hodge-podge of styles and concepts . . . There is considerable duplication in the texts and some misinformation.”¹⁰ Despite the increased NPS awareness to the Lost Cause presence, interpretation at Manassas stood on the same grounds as it had prior to the Civil Rights Movement. New historians, such as Bearss and Swain, however, assailed the Lost Cause by changing interpretation.

Yet the Lost Cause remained even after the alterations approved by Bearss and Swain. In 1983, in the attempt to update the wayside exhibits for the first battle, the park prepared to place new audio stations along the Henry Hill walking trail at important points on the rise. The NPS planned to include the voices of one Confederate and one Union soldier to present the narrative, but only the final stop, which explained the final stages of the battle and the Union “skedaddle” back to Washington, D.C., included the Union perspective. In addition, the Sons of Confederate Veterans had a part in one of the

¹⁰ Bearss to Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Memorandum on Field Trip to Manassas National Battlefield Park, 12 October 1983; and Chief, Division of Interpretive Planning, HFC to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, Memorandum on Trip Report – Manassas (August 26), 30 August 1982, MNBPL Interpretation 1980s Folder, Historian's Files, Manassas National Battlefield Park Library, Manassas, Virginia (hereafter MNBPL Interpretation Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL).

new interpretive tools, an audio-visual exhibit for the museum. The organization donated seven thousand dollars for the new program. Following the SCV's desire for interpretation laid out in the early twentieth century when the group partly owned the Manassas battlefields, the NPS designed a display that explained only the military situation during the First Manassas campaign. This show returned to the idea of examining solely the military tactics and strategy that were connected to the two battles.¹¹ Despite improvements in interpretation by the 1980s, the Lost Cause persistently manipulated how the war would be remembered at Manassas.

Increasingly, however, the NPS looked for opportunities to expand the interpretive context at the park, which also reversed the park's Lost Cause legacy. The NPS allowed for a number of archeological digs at Manassas between 1986 and September 1992. These digs yielded a large cache of artifacts that provided a "whole new insight into antebellum slave life . . . in Piedmont Northern Virginia."¹² In 1993, as a result of the archeologists' work, Manassas's museum specialist James Burgess decided to display these objects in the Visitor Center's museum. Burgess explained that he hoped the exhibit would echo the "continuity of cultural tradition" in the slave community. He explained, "Even though slavery was a dehumanizing experience, these people tried to hold onto their cultural identity somewhat, and I hope the exhibit reflects this."¹³ This shows that the influence of the new social history extended beyond the academy and

¹¹ Revised Audiostation Script for Manassas National Battlefield Park, 17 August 1983, MNBP Interpretation Folder; and Superintendent Rolland Swain to Regional Director, National Capital Region, Memorandum on Manassas Audiovisual Concept Proposal (Revised), 26 July 1987, MNBP Museum and Exhibits 1980s Folder (hereafter MNBP Museum Folder), Historian's Files, MNBPL.

¹² Richard Leigh, "Dig Unearths Slave-Made Artifacts," *The Manassas Journal Messenger*, 1 September 1988, in MNBP Interpretation Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL.

¹³ Bonnie Hobbs, "Black History on Display at Battlefield; Lost, Tossed and Found: Clues to African-American Life at Manassas," *The Manassas Weekly Gazette*, 24 February 1993, in MNBP Museum Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL.

influenced how Manassas historians would incorporate interpretation that included non-military themes.

Manassas followed a larger academic trend against the established interpretation of the Lost Cause in Civil War history. Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s with historians taking an increased interest in slavery studies, the 1980s saw a steady increase in studies on the connection between the Civil War and slavery as the 125th anniversary of the war approached. New social historians, such as Eric Foner and George C. Rable, continued their work on the legacy of the Civil War and a new group of historians, such as Barbara J. Fields and David W. Blight, followed in these historians' footsteps.¹⁴ In addition, McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for history in 1989, directly connected the institution of slavery and the conflict. His study examined the Civil War era from the 1830s through the end of the war. Similar to his previous monographs, McPherson's book argued the institution of slavery played a prominent role in the cause of the Civil War.¹⁵ The 1980s saw the solidification of the connection between slavery and the Civil War in interpretation. This academic turn became a part of NPS

¹⁴ Martha L. Molnar, "Reliving the Civil War, With Fervor," *New York Times*, 9 November 1986; and Robert P. Hey, "Why 20th-Century Men Play at 19th-Century Battles," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 22 July 1986. For examples of the increased interest in studies on slavery, see Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974); and Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: Norton, 1975). For examples of studies on the legacy of race and the Civil War, see David W. Blight, *Fredrick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); Barbara J. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985); Eric Foner, *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983); and George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984).

¹⁵ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, The Oxford History of the United States series (New York: Oxford University Press), 47–144. Another strongly influential program in the popularity of learning about the Civil War was the broadcast of Ken Burns's documentary *The Civil War* on PBS in 1990. Although this documentary followed many of the Lost Cause traditions, this film caused an increase in visitation at Civil War sites in the years following. Ken Burns, director, *The Civil War*, 680 mins., PBS Films, 1990.

interpretation by this point as well. The NPS at Manassas, however, still struggled with the park's legacy as a monument to the Confederacy.

The CWSAC also influenced how interpretation would evolve at NPS sites. In addition to examining further needs of battlefield preservation, the CWSAC responded to questions about interpretation. The committee believed that interpretation needed improvement at many Civil War sites by including issues outside the military actions. The members noted: "The programs at many . . . battlefields are confined to the military combat that took place there, or to the military life. Related themes such as the military and support roles played by African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, and women; unequal pay for African-American soldiers, passage of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, cavalry and partisan warfare; and naval activities of the war are seldom presented except peripherally." They also argued, "Well-interpreted battlefield parks . . . do not restrict their interpretation solely to the battle but present an array of themes such as the impacts of the battle and the War on the community's social, economic, and political affairs."¹⁶ These findings had a meaningful impact on interpretation at Manassas National Battlefield beginning in the early 1990s.

The NPS started addressing these issues brought to light by the CWSAC in the 1990s. But the agency, as NPS chief historian Robert K. Sutton wrote, "has not sufficiently used its sites to convey the true significance and breadth of America's Civil War experience" as the Sesquicentennial approached. Traditionally, battlefield preservation resulted from a desire for reconciliation between the North and South, which causes many Americans to "use our battlefields to define the nation's Civil War experience in largely military terms—through the eyes of the participants of battle." The

¹⁶ CWSAC, *Report*, 35, 48, CWSAC Folder, Historian's Files, MNBPL.

main body of interpretation continues to center on the specific military events “with little discussion of the relationship of those military events to social, economic, and political evolution of the nation. As a result, large segments of the population fail to see the war’s relevance.”¹⁷ But Sutton made this report so the Civil War sites in the NPS could respond by reversing these issues for the war’s 150th anniversary.

Since the end of Disney’s bid for a park in Haymarket, however, Manassas’s historians have taken steps to fulfill Sutton’s call by further interpreting the greater impact of the two battles and the war. Although larger steps could be taken regarding the impact African Americans had on the campaigns and battles outside of directly fighting in them, contextualizing Civil War battles allows the NPS to fight against the Lost Cause mythology that has prevented balanced interpretation since the end of the conflict.¹⁸ The contextualization of the two Manassas battles provides increased knowledge of the connection between the military, society, and politics in a time of conflict for the park’s visitors. This includes two exhibits in the visitor center museum that directly address slavery’s influence on antebellum politics that caused the Civil War. Park historians are now required to place the battles into the larger narrative of the conflict in their interpretive programs. Also, for the 150th anniversary of the first battle, the park created

¹⁷ Robert K. Sutton, “Holding the High Ground: Interpreting the Civil War through the Sites of the National Park System,” Presented at the Conference of Battlefield Managers, Nashville, Tenn., 24–27 August 1998, 1–2.

¹⁸ In his study on the role of African Americans during the Peninsula Campaign, Glenn David Brasher mentions that the NPS lacks a comprehensive overview of how both freed African Americans and slaves impacted campaigns and battles outside of fighting in the Union army. See, Glenn David Brasher, *The Peninsula Campaign and the Necessity of Emancipation: African Americans and the Fight for Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 1–3.

specialized weekly tours, as well as specifically for the Sesquicentennial weekend, that examined nonmilitary topics.¹⁹

Along the same lines, the NPS published two booklets that address the causes of the Civil War for the conflict's Sesquicentennial. One entitled *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War* states that although a number of issues “ignited the Civil War . . . all were inextricably bound to the institution of slavery.” The second, entitled *The Civil War Remembered*, includes six articles written by prominent Civil War historians—such as David W. Blight, Allen C. Guelzo, and Ira Berlin—and directly addressing slavery, emancipation, or the Civil War's legacy.²⁰ By presenting the battles and the war in this way and making these booklets available to the public, the NPS explores more than just the military results of the two Manassas battles and attempts to create a “relevance” for all Americans.

Even though the NPS still fights against Lost Cause mythology, Civil War memory continually evolves across generations, which complicates alterations to interpretation at these highly public places. As one reporter noted in 1990, “Each generation views the eternal yet changing history of the conflict between the states through its own prism.” Noticeably, interest in the Civil War goes through cycles according to what is happening in the United States. As McPherson notes: “When we're [the United States] at war, or just getting over a war, nobody pays attention to the Civil

¹⁹ The Unresolved Question of Slavery, and The Institution of Slavery, wall panels, Visitor Center Museum, Manassas National Battlefield Park. For an example of these special tours, I helped create and present, with another ranger, one of the “History at Sunset” tours at Manassas shortly after the Sesquicentennial weekend that explored the effects of the battles aftermath on the local community. “The Scars of War: The Aftermath of the First Battle of Manassas,” presented on 30 July 2011.

²⁰ National Park Service, *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War* (Washington, D.C.: Eastern National Park and Monuments Association, 2011); and Robert K. Sutton and John Latschar, eds., *The Civil War Remembered: The Official National Park Service Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Eastern National Park and Monuments Association, 2011).

War. . . . But we get interested again as our irritation about recent wars fades away.”²¹

Additionally, Americans attempt to connect the Civil War to modern politics as seen during the Centennial when Segregationists and African Americans used the celebration to further their causes. Perhaps just as important as generational changes, ancestral ties prevent fully balanced interpretation. As the SCV’s actions have shown throughout Manassas’s history, the descendents of Confederates, especially those who are members of Confederate heritage groups, tend to react negatively to interpretation that implies any connection between the Confederacy’s motivations for secession and the institution of slavery.²² Since NPS sites are part of the federal government, the officials that approve changes in the parks must carefully implement new interpretation that could create controversy. This makes the process of adjusting analysis at NPS sites occur more slowly than in the universities. Despite the work of NPS historians, the influence of collective memory on Civil War history evolves from generation to generation, which makes it difficult to keep up with the societal implications. In addition, ancestral ties prevent quick improvements as the agency has to take into consideration how groups may react to new lines of interpretation.

For Manassas, the legacy of the Lost Cause persistently affects the memory of the Civil War through historical interpretation there. Throughout the history of Manassas National Battlefield, the Lost Cause primarily created the battle narratives for interpretation. The influence of the SCV and UDC still exists as the two groups hold special presentations near the anniversary of the first battle to honor “Stonewall” Jackson.

²¹ Leonard Bushkoff, “The Civil War in American Memory,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 19 September 1990.

²² For an example of SCV members’ defensive attitudes toward Civil War interpretation, see Matt Roush and Andrew Burgess, dirs., “Lost Cause Clip #1: Bowling and Potok on Slavery,” video clip, <http://vimeo.com/30910268> (accessed 21 June 2012).

Also, unlike other battlefield and military parks that contain a National Cemetery originally designated solely for the Union dead, the presence of Groveton Confederate Cemetery perpetually stands as a reminder of the park's Lost Cause legacy and its strong connection to Confederate heritage groups. Increased interpretation of Second Manassas and the following of interpretive trends that challenge the Lost Cause, however, have led to and continue to emphasize a more balanced interpretation of the two battles since the Civil War Centennial.

Although the Reconciliationist movement of the 1890s led to reunification by the early twentieth century, Manassas National Battlefield Park is an example of the lingering sectionalism in Civil War memory since that era. The establishment of NPS Civil War sites, especially at Manassas, show that reconciliation did not end the sectional debates over Civil War memory. As seen through the history of Manassas National Battlefield, sectionalism remained into the mid-twentieth century and has influenced interpretation even today. Yet by placing greater emphasis on the relationship between the military events and its influence on politics, economics, and society in the nineteenth century, rangers at Manassas National Battlefield Park continue to complicate the Lost Cause mythology's presence in interpretation and therefore deconstruct the existing sectionalism in interpretation. Eventually, as a result of increased inclusion of these connections and further breaking down of sectionalism in Civil War memory, the Lost Cause myth might become a cultural artifact instead of providing an analysis of the war itself at NPS sites.

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