



HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SURVEY FORM

76-216

File no. 107410
Negative no(s). 5172

Historic name	Brownville	Common name	Broadlawn; Folly Castle
County/Town/City	Prince William County		
Street address or route number	7249 Pageland Lane, Gainesville, Va.		
USGS Quad	Gainesville	Date or period	c1899 (an earlier foundation)
Original owner	George N. Brown, William M. Lewis	Architect/builder/craftsmen	Lewis
Original use	Residence		
Present owner	Marriott Corp.	Source of name	
Present owner address	5161 River Rd., Washington, D. C. 20016	Source of date	Architectural evidence; local histories.
Present use	Residence	Stories	2 stories
Acreage	c86 acres	Foundation and wall const'n	Stone foundation; frame wall construction.
		Roof type	Metal-covered hip roof.

State condition of structure and environs House and grounds are in good condition.

State potential threats to structure
Note any archaeological interest

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes ___ no ___

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

The main house is a hip-roofed, five-bays long frame structure with a giant portico across two-thirds of the front, a two-story screened porch across the rear, and two massive brick end chimneys. The double pent chimney on the southwest end measures 9 feet across and may be part of the earlier, burned Brown house. That chimney allegedly contained bricks imported from England and had pent windows at both the first and second levels. The single chimney at the house's opposite end has two corner fireplaces on each floor. There is a low, gable-roofed, frame-constructed addition on the northeast end containing the kitchen and utility room. The whole exterior is clad with wide wooden siding, painted white. The great portico is supported by large square columns and has a stone floor and steps. There is a moulded cornice and a roof cornice. The 8/8 sliding sash windows are surrounded by wide box trim and are shuttered. The shutters are both the paneled and louvered kind. The eight-panel, moulded-panel front door (a reproduction?) has a heavy brass box lock and is surmounted by an elliptical fan light arch. Sidelights contain four panes each. The open-string single-flight stair rises opposite the front entrance. It has a heavy, turned, walnut newel with a flattened knob finial; a mahogany rail having a flattened circular profile; and slender, turned balusters.* Beneath the stair there is paneling. The hall has a moulded chairrail, baseboards, and crown moulding. There are french doors from the hall to the living room and dining room on either side.

The floors throughout are of medium-width to wide yellow pine. The door and window trim is wide architrave moulding. The interior doors are six-panel reproduction doors with mortice locks and brass knobs. (Continued next page)

*Note: Rail has unused baluster bores and may have been reused.

Interior inspected? Yes

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

Broadlawn is also known as Brownville and Folly Castle. The latter was a nickname applied by a disapproving relative of the mid-19th century owners, the William Lewis family. The present house is reportedly a late 19th or early 20th century dwelling built in part on the foundations, and using at least one of the old stone chimneys, of an earlier house which burned in 1899.

The historic boundaries of the property are part of Mann Page III's share of Robert "King" Carter's Bull Run Tract, and part of a tract of 255 acres granted on Young's Branch (Bull Lick Run) to John Young. According to one source, in 1769, Young sold to George N. Brown 230 acres of his grant, and in 1787 Mann Page III sold to Brown 222 adjoining acres. It is believed that Brown built a 1 1/2-story house on the property. In 1818, Bernard Hooe bought the property from the Browns, and the estate after Hooe's death was included with Hazel Plain to the east. In 1835, William M. Lewis purchased the property from William H. Fowle and enlarged the then-existing house on the property, supposed to have been built by George N. Brown.

The house was located between the lines of the Union and Confederate forces during the Second Battle of Manassas. As were most of the houses in this area, Broadlawn was used as a shelter after both battles of Manassas.

The property was purchased by John T. or [J. Thomas] Leachman, a son-in-law of Leachman's death in 1915, the property was sold to J. E. Coverstone, until 1936-37, though he rented it. (Continued next page)

CONTINUATION SHEET
BROWNSVILLE

Architectural Description (continued)

The mantel in the dining room has a moulded shelf with bed mouldings, and dentils, supported by plain jambs, and having a plain frieze, and a rectangular surround framed with architrave trim. The hearth and firebox are brick. The dining room has moulded chairrail similar to that in the hall and a crown moulding. The living room, which measures 26½ feet by 27 feet, may actually once have been divided into two rooms, as the present tenant claims. The mantel has an ornately shaped and moulded shelf, bed mouldings, a garlanded frieze, fluted jambs, and an architrave surround. This room has a crown moulding but no chairrail. Behind the dining room is a small study having a mantel similar to that in the dining room.

The basement contains remnants of earlier red sandstone foundations, while the more recently-built foundation walls are built of gray stone and cement.

The grounds surrounding the house contain several old trees, including some large magnolias and hollies; an apparently old pear tree; and some boxwoods. The barn beside the house was probably built in the early 20th century. Behind the house is a frame barn converted from a carriage house.

The house rests on a slight rise on the west side of Pageland Lane, overlooking I-66. The property, once the new acreage for the expanded Manassas Battlefield Park is added, will almost abut the Park. This property was proposed for creation of a theme park in about 1975 by its owners, Marriott Corp., but plans were abandoned as a result of local public resistance to the plan. The property is now for sale.

Historical Significance (continued)

In 1885, the French artist Louis [or Leopold] Kowalsky, while painting the renowned "Panorama of the Second Battle of Bull Run," stayed at Brownsville for about 6 months. Kowalsky also painted the picture of Brownsville which appears in R. J. Ratcliffe's This Was Prince William. Engravings exist of the famous panorama; and the original painting was on view for many years in a building located at 15th and Ohio Streets, in Washington, D. C., but the present whereabouts of the painting are unknown.

In 1899, fire destroyed all but the foundation and chimney(s) of the house at Broadlawn, or Brownsville, built by Brown and enlarged by Lewis. The replacement house appears to have been built along the same plan of the earlier Lewis house, which was described as having a high-ceilinged central hall plan with porches both back and front. At the time the house was burned, according to the WPA report, it had 15 rooms, including the basement.

According to the same report, there was 1936 an old pear tree on the property, said to have been imported with several others from England by Mr. Brown. It is not known whether the pear tree in the yard is the same tree.

In 1936, there was a family cemetery on the property containing a number of graves of the Brown family, having no inscribed stones but only fieldstone markers, reportedly in an open field. This cemetery may have been destroyed. In the years after the Civil War it was reportedly surrounded by trees and shrubs.

The present owners purchased the property in about 1973, intending to create there an amusement park, and had the zoning changed to commercial. In 1977, probably as a result of local opposition to Marriott's proposal, the County Board of Supervisors rezoned the property from commercial to agricultural, thus preventing the building of the controversial theme park.

The property is now being offered for sale.

Sources and bibliography

Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.) WPA, Writers Program, Prince William, The Story of Its People and Its Places (c1941), p.165. Hanson, Joseph Mills, Bull Run Remembers, pp. 162-164, 82. Ratcliffe, R.J., This Was Prince William (c1948), p. 121.

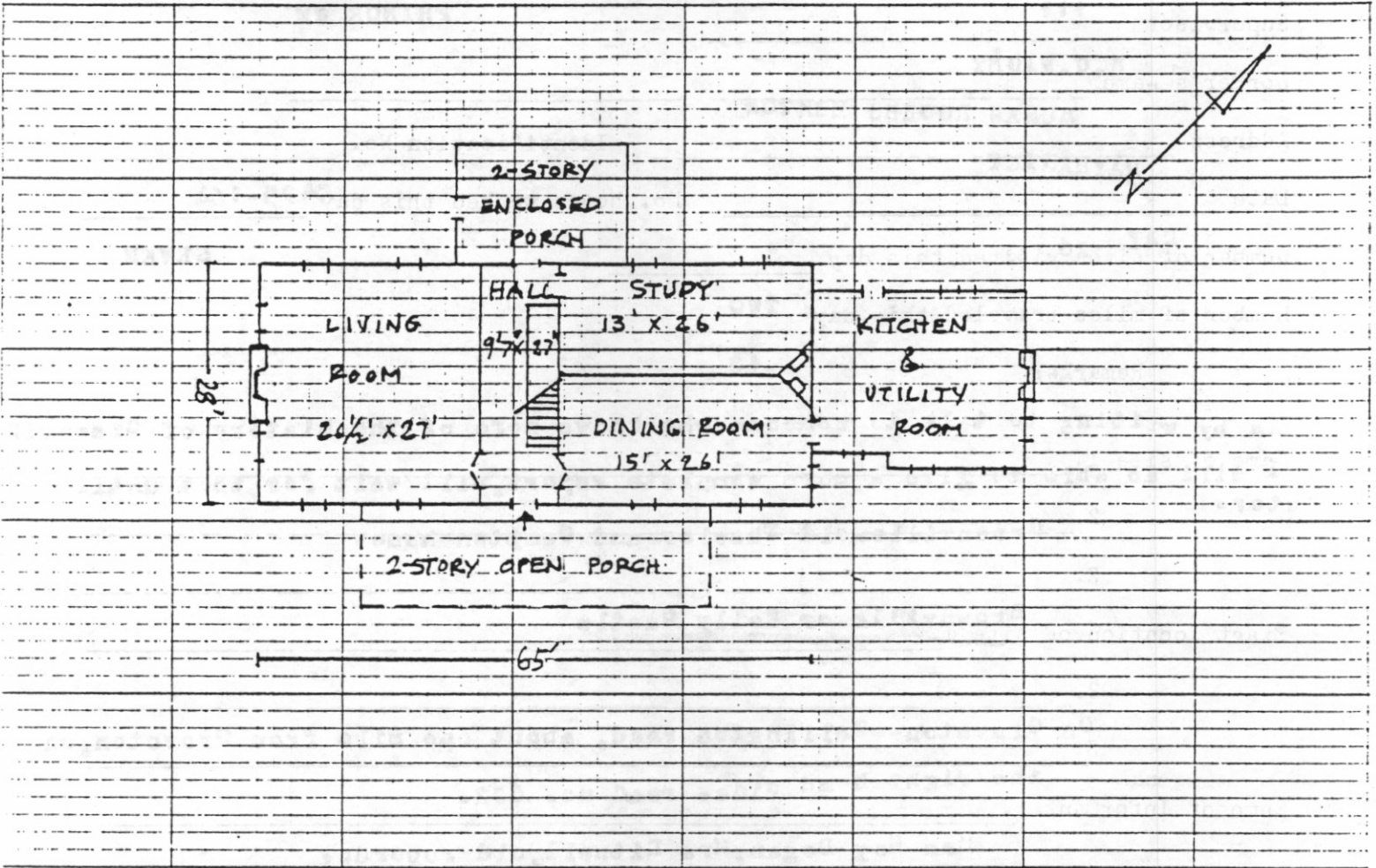
Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

See Map of the Battlefield of Manassas, plate III, map 2, in Official Civil War Atlas. See engraving of panorama in Battlefield Park Museum.

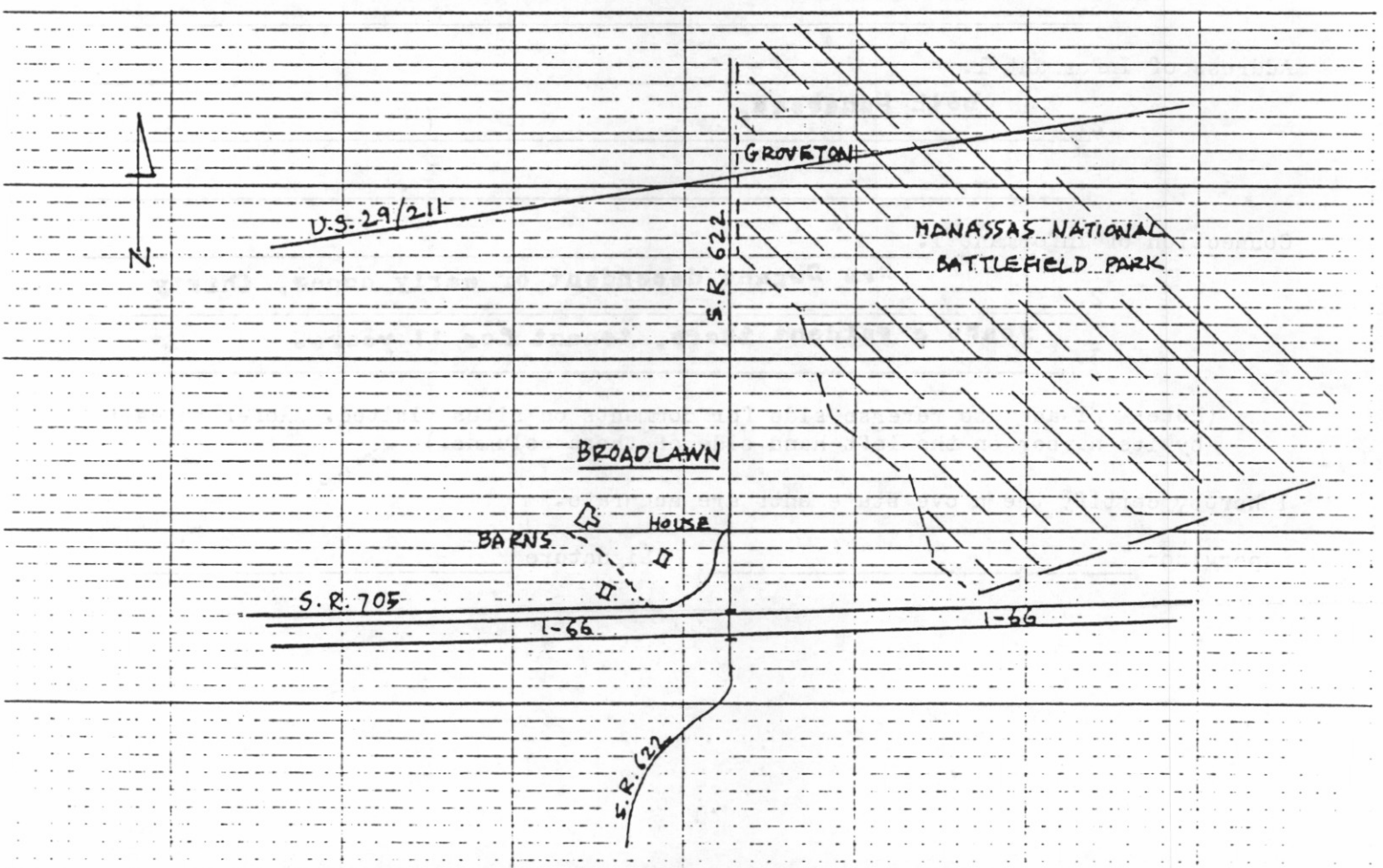
Names and addresses of persons interviewed

Mrs. Joan Jones, tenant.

Plan (Indicate locations of rooms, doorways, windows, alterations, etc.)



Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)



WORK PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
11 South Twelfth Street
Richmond, Virginia

W. P. A. State-wide Project, Historical Inventory

FIELD WORKER'S DAILY REPORT

District No. _____ County _____

Supervisor 111 PRINCE WM

Worker's Name R.O. WIGHT

Address BUSAN ROBERT MORTON

Date MAYHART Identification No. _____

No. hours worked this day 7:45-1:15

Number of sites visited this day 26 SEVEN

Number of miles traveled this day TWO

Remarks: 10

As by writing to talk to someone who knows more of the history of Greenville
Name of site 1. ~~I will be able to give a more complete report, will wait for that until later.~~

2. ~~Greenville-old Wheeler and Compton home.~~

3. _____

Exact location of site Brownville or Folly Castle

2. _____

3. On Groveton--Wellington road, about one mile from Groveton, on the right hand side, road no. 622.

Name of Informant 1. _____

2. Mrs May Degan, Mrs Ritnell, old records.

3. _____

Address of Informant 1. _____

2. both Manassas,

3. _____

Connection of Informant 1. _____

2. Mrs Degan descendant of early owner, thirty years a resident there, tenant for 11 years.

3. _____

(Note: Please use reverse side for comments on sites visited. Refer to each by its number on the left-hand side of these columns.)

I hereby certify the above statements are accurate.

Supervisor _____ Signature _____

3. The first of Brownville, is found in in one of the deed books, from which I took the following extract, it is the usual long document, with details of the terms --- so many acres which are not to be planted in Indian corn after so many years, the number of fruit trees that are to be planted etc. (1721)

* Mann Page, and George N. Brown, 2 2 acres, at west end of old patent line--- during the life time of the longest liver of his three sons, Henry, John, Wm. --- yearly rent of two thousand, seventy pounds of crop tobacco, etc.

The first thing that strikes one as they see the place, from even a distance is the chimney, or chimneys, rather, which are remarkable, it is said that Mr Brown had the brick brought from England, and while one usually takes such stories with some question of doubt, these bricks are undoubtedly made in the English mould, and they are very different in color and composition, there are twin chimneys at the north end of the house, but at the other end is a single chimney with a base of at least sixteen feet and in which is set two windows, one on the first one on the second floor, the masonry surrounding these windows is very beautiful, and the whole chimney is quite remarkable.

The old house was destroyed by fire in 1890, and the chimneys were so well built that it was possible to place the present house on the same foundation using the chimneys without any change.

The Browns went to another part of the state about 1830 and the place was bought by Mr W. H. Lewis, at that time it was a story and a half house with dormer windows, the ceiling all ten ft high on the first floor, a large hall going through the middle and long drawing room taking up one side of the house, there was hand carved moulding along the hall and drawing room, a Grecian border six inches deep, there was a double door in front and porches both back and front. Mr Lewis added more rooms and at the time that the house was burned it is said to have contained fifteen rooms, including the basement.

In 1884 it was bought by John T. Leachman, a cousin of Mr Lewis, and remained in the family until his death in 1913, when it was bought by J. E. Coverstone of Kansas, who owns it at the present time, but who has rented it for a number of years.

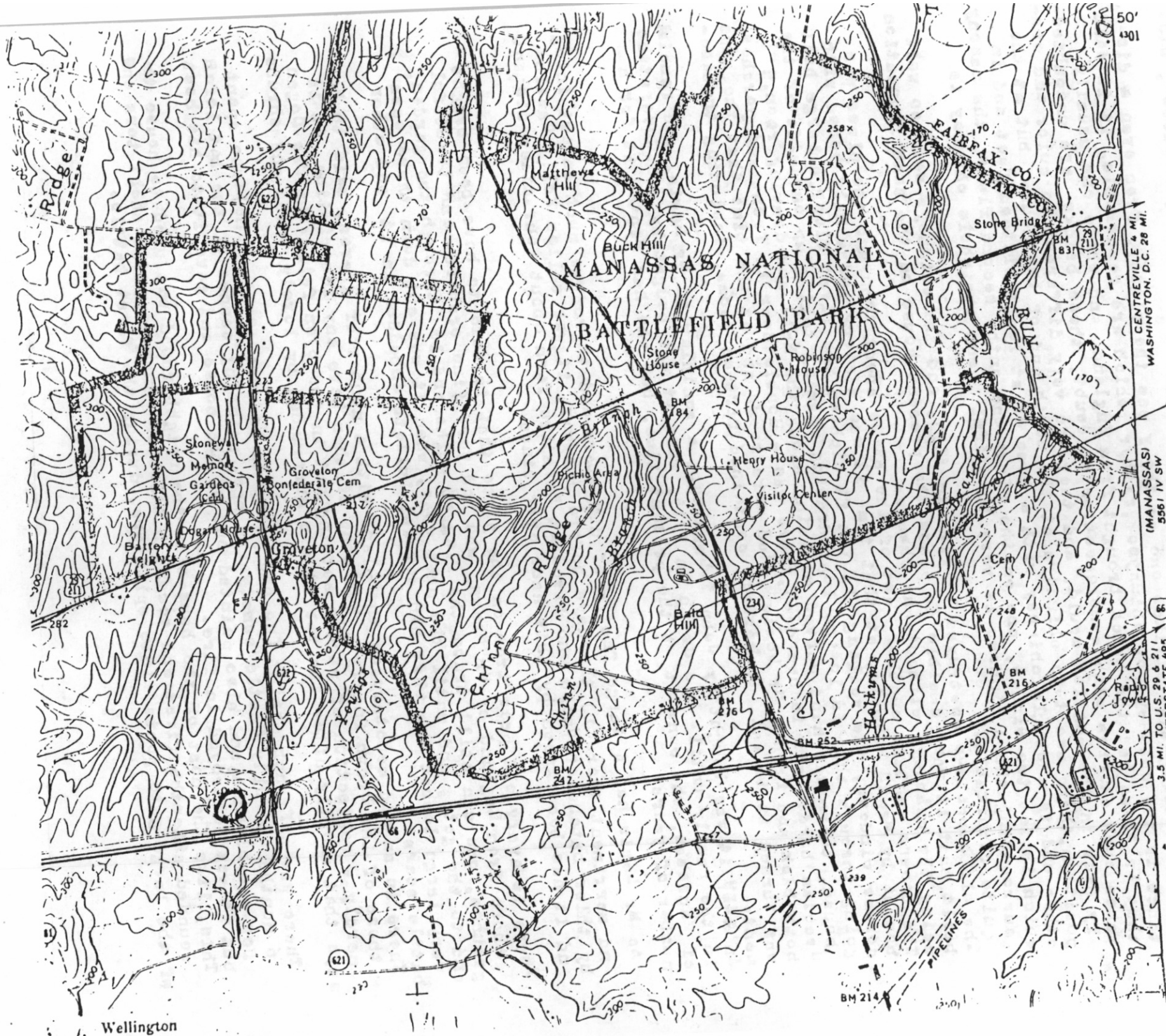
As Mr Lewis had a large family of daughters and there was much entertaining and merriment there in the days before the war, it was called Polly Castle by their batchelor Uncle who lived at Paradise farm about four miles distant and it has been known by this name ever since.

There is a very old pear tree on the place that is said to have been brought there from England by Mr Brown, who had very fine orchards and beautiful grounds, one can still trace the flagged walks and led through the garden, and to the gate, and until the past year, when it was cut down there was a very large locust tree that had several bullets embedded in it and other battle scars.

There is an old cemetery on the place with a number of graves, said to be those of the Brown family, but none of them have any inscription, it is merely a collection of stones setting out in the open field. But Mrs Dogan says that shortly after the war it was surrounded by lovely trees and shrubs

There was a French artist (no one seems to be sure of his name) who spent 6 months at Polly Castle some years ago, painting scenes of the battle for a cyclorama, and also painted one of the house and gave it to his host but it was destroyed in fire.

This, like the most of the houses in the neighborhood was used to house the wounded after the first and second battles of Kansas, and a shell tore one of the large gate posts into splinters, during the first battle.



BROADLAWN
76-216
(AKA Brownsville)

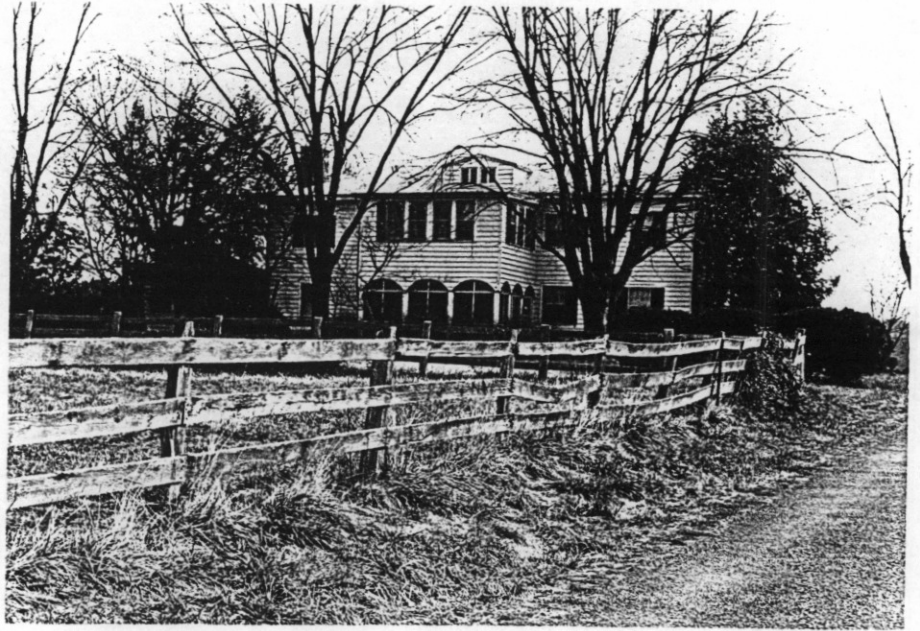
Gainerville
Quad.

CENTREVILLE 4 MI.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 28 MI.
(MANASSAS)
5561 IV SW

3.5 MI. TO U.S. 29 & 211
16 MI. TO INTERSTATE 495

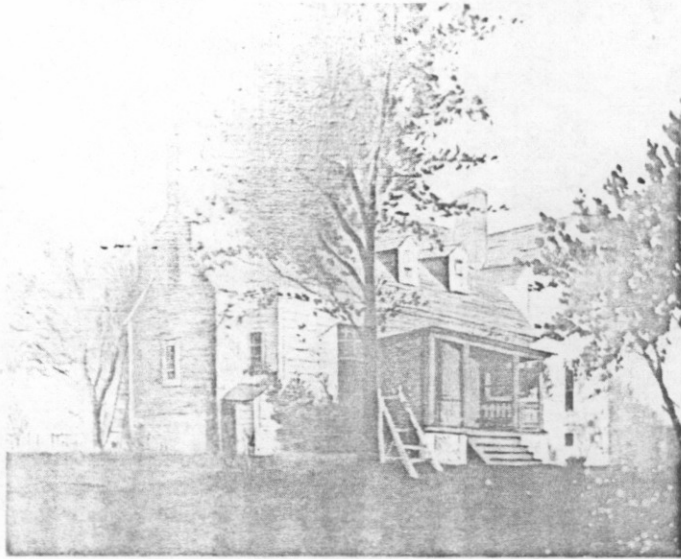
Wellington

47'30"



BROWNSVILLE

REAR (NORTHWEST FACADE)



BROWNSVILLE, the home of the late Mr. Thomas Leachman, was burned in 1899 and later rebuilt into a modern frame house still using the old massive chimney. Here, too, is a part of the property patented by Robert "King" Carter in the names of his sons and grandsons, this portion going finally to a great grandson, Mann Page III. It was later acquired by George N. Brown who sold it through several transactions to William M. Lewis. It was nicknamed "Folly Castle" by an uncle of Lewis, who disapproved of the frivolity of the youngsters who gathered here for frolics.

In 1885 the French artist, Louis Kowalsky, boarded at Brownsville while painting the "Panorama of the Second Battle of Bull Run," and he also painted the picture of the home.

This house is near the intersection of Pageland Lane and Groveton Road and can be seen from Rt. 66.