

PWC - Historic Sites
(Pittsylvania)

Unpublished MS by Stuart G. Vogt
Manassas National Battlefield Park
11 Aug 73

Footnotes by E. R. Conner, III
Manassas Historical Commission
18 June 77

REFERENCE

Prince William Public Library
Manassas, Va.

VA ROOM

PITTSYLVANIA

"Pittsylvania" was erected about 1760-1770 by Landon Carter, son of Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, and grandson of Robert "King" Carter. The land on which Pittsylvania was built was part of a tract of 2823 acres originally patented in 1729 by King Carter to his son Landon of Sabine Hall. Young's Branch, which flows near Pittsylvania, was the southern boundary of this tract (Middle Bull Run Tract), separating it from the Lower Bull Run Tract of Robert (Councillor) Carter of N_omini Hall.

The mansion, measuring thirty by fifty feet around the foundations, was two stories high, with an above ground cellar which made the house appear very tall. The foundations were of native brown sandstone, and the upper portion was frame. A central hallway on each floor connected the four rooms thereon. Two central brick chimneys served the fireplaces, one in each room. The eight rooms had very high ceilings which must have made them hard to heat in winter.

A gravel driveway looped in front of the mansion, and walkways connected the outbuildings, including the kitchen, ice house, meat house, school, weaving house, and servants' quarters. Close by also was the bowling green, formal gardens, and herb gardens, and the family burial ground. The slave quarters and cemetery were located several hundred yards behind the house.

Tobacco, corn, wheat, and rye were raised at Pittsylvania. Tobacco, however, was the major cash crop. From Pittsylvania the tobacco was hauled to the Potomac River port of Dumfries, and from here it went to European markets.

Landon Carter's financial status can be glimpsed through his personal property inventory taken in 1801. At this time he owned 146 slaves and his personal belongings alone were valued at almost \$36,000.¹ Pittsylvania became the hub around which a number of less imposing Carter homes were built, such as Rosefield,² Spring Hill,³ and Aven⁴.

Seven children, four boys and three girls⁵ were born to Landon Carter and his wife Judith (nee Fauntleroy). One daughter, Judith, was destined to die, old and bedridden, during the Battle of First Manassas⁶.

Landon Carter willed his Pittsylvania holdings to one of his sons, Wormeley Carter. However, Wormeley was not the man his father was, and during his ownership much of the land was sold off to pay off family debts.⁷ By the outbreak

of the Civil War in 1861, all of the outbuildings except two had fallen into ruins.

During the Civil War, Pittsylvania was known as the "Brown House" because of the color of its foundations and the color it was painted. The house lay behind the extreme left end of the Confederate line on Bull Run in July of 1861. Several days before First Manassas (21 July 1861), two officers of a Louisiana regiment fought a duel on Pittsylvania's front lawn. One of the duelers, a Lt. McCauslin, was mortally wounded and died in the house.

The building served as a hospital for the wounded of both armies during and after the battle. Several of the dead were buried in the front yard, where they still lie.

Exactly when Pittsylvania was destroyed is open to question. One story has it that the house was deliberately burned by Union troops under General Franz Sigel during Second Manassas (28-29-30 Aug 62). Another story says that Pittsylvania, Portici, and Red House,⁸ the last two also Carter houses⁹, were all burned on the same night sometime after Second Manassas. Supposedly an eyewitness to the burnings said that "it looked as if the fires of hell had broken through the earth's crust." In any case, the Carters sought refuge at relatives' homes in the neighborhood.¹⁰

In 1885, the Carters erected a modest two story frame house next to the site of the old mansion. Also in 1885, Hugh Fauntleroy Henry (son of Judith Carter Henry) and his cousin Edwin Carter, the last male Carter born at Pittsylvania, erected a stone wall around the family cemetery. Among those interred are Landon Carter and Judith Henry's husband, Dr. Isaac Henry. Dr. Henry originally studied medicine in Philadelphia under Dr. Benjamin Rush, was later appointed a Surgeon in the U. S. Navy by President Washington, and served on board the USS Constellation. With one exception, there were never any inscribed tombstones to denote who was buried in the plot. The last burial was in 1903.¹¹

The frame house, known as the "tenant house" and "Pittsylvania II" was lived in until at least the early 1930's. It stood in ruinous condition until several years ago when it was torn down.

The only traces of Pittsylvania mansion left today are the ruins of the wine cellar and brick fragments scattered about the site. However, by the use of a probe rod, the foundations were located under about three inches of soil.

NOTES BY E. R. CONNER, III

1. Landon Carter of Pittsylvania, son of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, died in 1801.
2. Rosefield was the home of Carter in-laws, the Hamiltons, on the north side of the Warrenton turnpike west of Stone House. It was later known as the James Dogan house.
3. The Henry House, built by Isaac Henry, was also known as Spring Hill.
4. Avon was the Van Pelt house north of the turnpike west of the Stone Bridge.
5. Wormeley, John Fauntleroy, Moore Fauntleroy, Charles Landon, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Judith.
6. Killed by artillery fire which entered the Henry House on the afternoon of July 21, 1861.
7. Much was also sold off by Landon Carter, Jr., son of Wormeley, who received the Pittsylvania house proper from his aunts, Ann and Lucy Edwards, in 1833, and who died at Pittsylvania in 1849 leaving his widow, Emily Henry Carter, as mistress of the plantation. She was her husband's double first cousin.
8. Red House was Red Hill in Fairfax County, just across Red House Ford from Pittsylvania.
9. Portici was an old Ball family house in the possession of Francis W. Lewis during the Civil War.
10. Principally they sought refuge at the farm now known as "Honeywood," on Pageland Lane north of the Warrenton turnpike.
11. ~~Emily Henry Carter~~ ^{Virginia Morgan Carter, daughter} of Landon Carter, Jr. and Emily Henry Carter.