

## **A Little History**

The City of Manassas, originally known as Tudor Hall, was possessed by Robert “King” Carter as part of a 1724 land grant from England’s King George I. The Manassas area is located in the Northern Piedmont, or foothill, region of the Blue Ridge Mountains, ninety minutes outside Washington, D.C. This piedmont region was once home to the Monacan, Occaneechi, Powhatan, and Saponi indigenous tribes.

The territory maintained the name “Tudor Hall” throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area between the Manassas Gap and Orange and Alexandria Railroads became known as Manassas Junction after the railroad expanse was completed. Manassas Junction became an important railroad hub for commerce and supplies. In 1861 and 1862, during the Civil War, the Union and Confederacy fought the First and Second Battles of Manassas for strategic control of the railroad.

Manassas Junction officially became the Town of Manassas on April 2, 1873.

## **Pre-Colonial Era**

Indian tribes inhabited the Northern Virginia region for millennia before the first colonies settled. In addition to the Monacan, Occaneechi, Powhatan, Saponi, the region was also home to Blackfeet, Crow, Arapaho, Assinibione, Mandan, Gros Ventre and Arikara tribes. Many of these tribes eventually formed the bands we now call Sioux, Cherokee, or Iroquois.

## **Colonial Virginia**

In 1724, Robert “King” Carter, acting as Lord Fairfax’s land agent under King George I, patented approximately 90,000 acres that encompassed land in present day Prince William, Fauquier, Fairfax, and Loudon Counties.

The lower Bull Run tract of 6,730 acres went to Carter’s son George Carter. The tract included most of today’s Manassas, Manassas Park, Yorkshire, Westgate, and lands adjacent to I-66.

## **The Village of Tudor Hall**

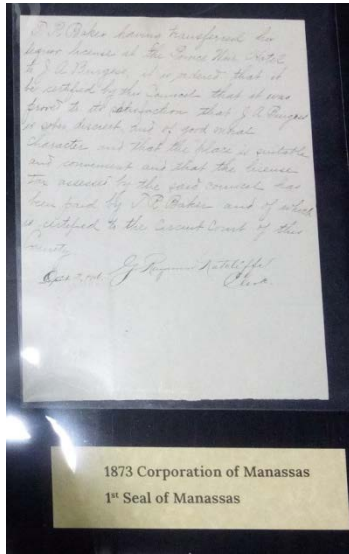
Settled mostly by farmers, the population continued to grow. Passed down through the generations, Harriet Bladen Mitchel inherited 1,660 acres that became the Liberia Plantation when she married William James Weir and they built Liberia House in 1825. With the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the Manassas Gap Railroad and the Orange and Alexandria Railroad joined in the 1850s in the region known as Tudor Hall. Not long after, the village of Tudor Hall became known as Manassas Junction.

## **1861**

When Virginia seceded from the Union, Robert E. Lee was recalled from West Point and appointed General of the Army of Northern Virginia. Recognizing the strategic importance of the junction, Lee built fortifications to protect the intersection of the railroads. One of these fortifications, Fort Beauregard, was located where the recently closed Bowl America on Mathis Avenue is located.

## After 1865

In 1865, William S. Fewell returned from Lynchburg to claim his inherited property at the railroad junction. Between 1867 and 1868, Fewell set out Manassas streets on his land and began to sell plots that generated a variety of businesses that included hotels, stores, and law offices.



City of Manassas incorporation document

## 1873

George Carr Round put down roots to take advantage of the town's opportunities. Round opened his law office in 1869 and soon after became involved in the community. He was made district superintendent of county public schools.

“George Carr Round also helped write the 1873 Town Incorporation Charter, which established a town council. A mayor, sergeant, clerk, and seven council members comprised the local government. Voters chose the first council, which served without compensation, and the council chose the mayor. Round was the first town clerk. The first mayor was Robert C. Weir, son of Liberia's William J. Weir. The first standing committees involved those needed by a growing community: streets, sidewalks, cemetery, fire department, assessments, and police regulations. The public water system began in 1874 with a well dug on East Center Street. Two buckets were purchased with which to draw water. By 1897, the town had six public wells.” (Koman, 2009)