

Jackson Rock

The Event

On May 2, 1863, General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson executed a flanking movement at Chancellorsville, crushed the Union right flank, and drove the enemy back for a distance of over two miles. The attack commenced soon after 5 p.m. and had not yet reached completion by nightfall. Wishing to hold the initiative he had gained, Jackson temporarily halted the attack, his lines being then about one mile west of the Chancellor House. As his officers reformed their lines in preparation for continued assaults that night Jackson, with members of his staff, rode out in front along the Orange Plank Road to reconnoiter the Federal position. Upon returning to Confederate lines the horsemen were mistaken for Union cavalry and fired upon by men of the 18th North Carolina Volunteer Regiment. Jackson was mortally wounded in this volley, receiving two bullets in his left arm and one in his right hand. He was carried to the rear by members of his staff where his left arm was amputated. On May 4th, he was transported to Guiney Station, 27 miles away, where on May 10th he was to die of pneumonia.

The Monument

The erection of the Jackson Rock dates back at least as far as 1883 and may well have been in place before 1876, which might make it the oldest monument in the park. The exact year of the monument's erection is unknown, several sources claiming different dates. A chronological listing of these sources is as follows:

1876: Photograph bearing this date shows two men standing next to the rock. The photograph, of which the park has a copy, belongs to the Massachusetts MOLLUS Collection.

- 1880-81: Testimony of James P. Dempsey, Rudolph I. Jones, Jeter Talley, Joseph Hawkins, and James Hawkins, witnesses to the event.
- 1883: Painting of this date contains an image of the rock.
- 1885: First written documentation of the rock's existence (Fredericksburg *Free Lance*, October 23, 1885).
- 1886: Second written account of the rock (Fredericksburg *Free Lance*, February 12, 1886).
- 1887: Testimony of Miss Sallie M. Lacy (Fredericksburg *Free Lance-Star*, May 16, 1938).

Tradition states that the rock came from the bed of a small stream near the Lockett Farm from whence it was removed when the Orange Turnpike was widened in 1880. This, taken with the testimony of Messrs. Dempsey, Jones, Talley, and Hawkins, makes a strong case for the 1880-81 dating. If, however, the dating of the 1876 photograph can be verified, all later dates must necessarily be considered invalid.

Placement of the rock is credited to J. Horace Lacy, owner of Ellwood; Beverly Tucker Lacy, his brother; and James Power Smith, J. Horace Lacy's son-in-law. Smith and Beverly Lacy both served with Jackson in the war, the former as an aide on the general's staff and the latter as a chaplain in the Second Corps. One day as the three men were riding over the Chancellorsville Battlefield reviving memories of the war, they spoke of Jackson's wounding and decided that it would be appropriate to somehow mark the location of his demise. For the marker, a large quartz boulder was chosen which had been recently unearthed by road crews improving the Orange Turnpike. Employing the teams of Lacy's neighbors, Messrs. Hawkins, Talley, and Jones, the men transported the monolith from its old location at the Lockett Farm along Wilderness Run, to its new location near the intersection of the Orange Turnpike and the Bullock Road.¹³ One source of unknown

¹³Another tradition states that the rock came directly from J. Horace Lacy's

veracity states that the rock was dedicated in 1887, one year prior to the dedication of the Jackson Monument. Though possible, the long interim between erection and dedication casts suspicion on this statement. Other than this, no other mention of a dedication ceremony exists.

Location

The Jackson Rock stands 50 feet north of the Orange Plank Road (Route 3), approximately 75 yards east of the Bullock Road intersection, just behind the Chancellorsville Visitor Center.

Description

The Jackson Rock is a quartz boulder, white in color though heavily tinged with orange and black. It stands 3'4" tall and is 8'6" in circumference, reputedly weighing three tons. The rock, which is in excellent condition, is entirely unhewn and without inscription.

Bibliography

Ballard, "The Jackson Rock". Painting, 1883.
 The Fredericksburg *Free Lance*: 10/23/1885, 2/12/1886.
 The Fredericksburg *Free Lance-Star*: 5/16/1938.
 Fredericksburg NMP Correspondence: Ralph Happel to Dr. Marshall Pagne (3/2/1938); Ralph Happel to Dr. H. J. Eckenrode (1/31/1936).
 Historic Base Map Narrative, Chancellorsville Battlefield.
 Historic Photograph File, FRSP.

Maps: 6, 7

Photographs: 19

plantation, Ellwood. A stone similar in appearance, though diminutive in size, still may be seen along the path which leads from the house to the old cemetery.