

THE STONEWALL JACKSON HOUSE
8 E. Washington Street
Lexington, Virginia 24450
Telephone 703-463-2552

October 27, 1977

Mrs. C. M. Wood
Blandome
Lexington, Virginia 24450

Dear Mrs. Wood:

Thank you for calling about the Jackson Memorial Window in the Presbyterian Church at Roanoke. I have been looking forward to seeing it myself, and you have strengthened my determination. We should have pictures of it in color for our Jackson House collection.

I'm sorry the window is in poor condition. When I visit I'll suggest that the pastor and congregation invite the Lee-Jackson Memorial to help with repair expense.

Enclosed is a copy of the newspaper article on the window which Mrs. Dooley found in the Jackson House files. I'm sure you will find it interesting.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,


Richard R. Fletcher

Encl: Copy of clipping

THE STONEWALL JACKSON HOUSE
8 E. Washington Street
Lexington, Virginia 24301
Telephone 703-483-2222

October 27, 1977

Mrs. G. M. Wood
Blairmont
Lexington, Virginia 24301

Dear Mrs. Wood:

Thank you for calling about the Jackson Memorial Window in the
Presbyterian Church at Honoke. I have been looking forward to
seeing it again, and you have arranged for restoration. We
should have pictures of it in color for our Jackson House collection.

I'm sorry the window is in poor condition. When I visit I'll sug-
gest that the pastor and congregation invite the Lee-Jackson Memorial
to help with repair expense.

Enclosed is a copy of the newspaper article on the window which the
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Best wishes.

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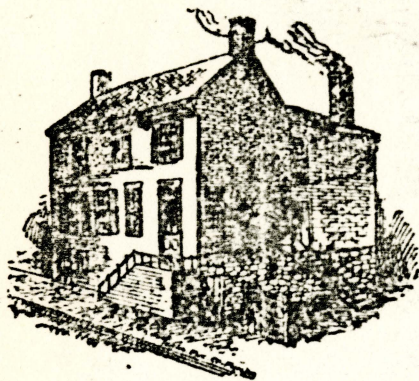
Richard E. Jackson
Richard E. Jackson

Encl.: Copy of clipping

Dr. L. L. Downing, Colored Pastor Honors Stonewall Jackson

DR. L. L. DOWNING BORN HERE

Places Memorial Window in Roanoke First Presbyterian Church For Colored.



JACKSON'S HOME.

Above cut shows the home as it was when occupied by Stonewall Jackson.

The following story by Kathleen Shelor in the Roanoke World-News, will be of interest to many Lexington people. Dr. Downing has been a generous supporter of the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital, having sent \$25 some time ago for the hospital, and very recently sent another donation.

The World-News says:

Many local contributors to Confederate memorials in other places in the South are unaware that Roanoke has one of unique significance in the "Stonewall" Jackson memorial window in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church colored. It was placed there in 1906 through the efforts of the Rev. L. L. Downing, who has served as pastor of the church for more than thirty years.

Some of the older residents of Roanoke recall the widespread interest that was awakened and the newspaper comment that resulted when the window was installed and unveiled after years of effort on the part of the colored minister.

"Uncle" Jeff Shields, Jackson's bodyguard during the War between the states, made the chief address on that occasion. Other speakers were the late Col. S. S. Brooks, the late Henry Trout, E. W. Speed and several other prominent citizens of the city. The local organization of Confederate veterans attended the exercises in a body.

The Associated Press carried a story of the event and as a result Dr. Downing received letters from many parts of America and several from England commending him for his appropriate and beautiful tribute to the gallant Confederate general.

Was Designer.

The window is the central and largest of a group of three in the front of the building. Dr. Downing himself was the designer, having drawn a pen sketch from which the artist worked out the picture. The scene on the glass is based on the last words of Jackson: "Let us cross over the river and rest in the shade of the trees," which are inscribed on a scroll beneath the picture.

It is a view of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia with the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance. There is a meandering stream, widening as it courses its way toward the sea. On the left bank is seen a typical Virginia log cabin, in the door of which stands a farmer's wife with milk and delicacies for the sick, suggesting the hospitality for which Virginia is known. Near the cabin are tents before which guns are stacked and soldiers are engaged in various camp occupations.

In the foreground is an officer's tent with the flaps closed, and the famous "white signal" hanging on the outside. Platoons appear to be vigilantly scanning the roads, fields and hillsides. Across the river is a grove of shade trees whose foliage invite the weary-worn traveler and soldier to refreshing repose, emblematic of that "blissful rest to the people of God."

Other Memorials.

The "Stonewall" Jackson window is supported by two smaller windows, each of which is also a memorial. Looking from the pulpit, the one on the right is a memorial to Col. J. T. L. Preston, for years the pastor's Sunday School superintendent at Lexington, Va. The window on the left is in memory of Dr. and Mrs. James I. Brownson, of Washington, Pa., by whose prayers, counsel and financial aid the minister was assisted through college.

Dr. Downing was born only a

few months before the emancipation proclamation, in Lexington, Va., where he spent his childhood. His parents had been pupils in the Sunday School for colored people which Jackson taught in the Lexington Presbyterian Church during the years he served as professor at the Virginia Military Institute. As a boy Dr. Downing heard the praises of the great general from the lips of the people, both white and colored, throughout the community. The little colored boy was much impressed with the accounts of the life and work of the great soldier and teacher, and as he grew older he came to regard "Stonewall" Jackson not only as one of the greatest men in history but also as one of the best friends the colored race ever had.

Frequent Visitor.

He frequently visited Jackson's grave in the Lexington cemetery and continually lamented the fact that a hero's resting place was marked only by a simple stone. Early in his life he became filled with a desire to erect a monument more worthy of the illustrious benefactor of the colored people of his town.

The desire never left him and the determination to express in some way his personal appreciation and gratitude was rekindled when, as a student at Lincoln University, one day he read in a book on Jackson's life the following incident:

During the same week that Jackson was given the name of "Stonewall" by Gen. Bee at the first battle of Manassas, it became known in Lexington that Dr. William S. White, then pastor of the Lexington Presbyterian Church, had received a letter from the general whose praises were being sung by the whole countryside. Expecting to hear some new details of the great battle and something of how Jackson and his men had managed to make the stand which won them imperishable fame, the people of the town crowded in to learn the letter's contents.

They were disappointed, for he did not even mention the battle. The most important matter referred to was a check for the expenses of his Sunday School for colored children, which the writer had enclosed with an expression of deep regret that he had so long neglected sending it.

Dream Realized.

After completing his university course and receiving his ordination as a Presbyterian minister, Dr. Downing again

visited the Lexington cemetery and grave. However, his desire to make some personal expression of his approval at the time which had been inspiration for the noble Southerner was in no way dampened and when he became pastor of the Roanoke church he conceived the idea of a "Stonewall" Jackson memorial win-

L. C. DOWNING, M. D.
31 CENTRE AVE., N. W.
ROANOKE, VA.

*John from our father's "Seven Years" May we hear of more of you
at your
convention
Sept. 1911*

