

GREEN RIVER PLANTATION



Unwelcome Guests



STONEMAN'S RAID

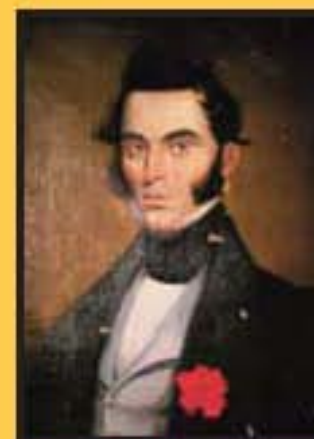
On March 24, 1865, Union Gen. George Stoneman led 6,000 cavalrymen from Tennessee into southwestern Virginia and western North Carolina to disrupt the Confederate supply line by destroying sections of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, the Norfolk Carolina Railroad, and the Piedmont Railroad. He struck at Boone on March 28, headed into Virginia on April 2, and returned to North Carolina a week later. Stoneman's Raid ended at Asheville on April 26, the day that Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to Union Gen. William T. Sherman near Durham.

Late in April 1865, Green River Plantation received uninvited guests: a detachment of U.S. cavalrymen, likely part of Col. William J. Palmer's brigade of Stoneman's raiders. Hungry men and horses in need of forage filled the yard. According to family tradition, horses quartered in the house left hoofprints in the parlor floor.

Union Gen. Alvan C. Gillem's brigade of Stoneman's command entered Polk County from Rutherford County and rode through Columbus on April 22, after Confederate forces blocked Gillem's path to Asheville at Swannanoa Gap. He ordered Col. William J. Palmer, who was taking another route, to establish his headquarters in Rutherfordton, then follow Gillem's force. Palmer remained in Rutherfordton until April 26 (the day Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrendered near Durham), then marched about ten miles west, to this vicinity, and bivouacked. The next day, Stoneman ordered Palmer to join in the pursuit of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, who had fled south from Virginia. Palmer turned around and took up the chase into South Carolina.

Another Union foraging party arrived at Green River Plantation in November 1863. Margaret Carson Weaver, who owned the property, wrote to her niece on November 14,

We have had at our door the devil himself. The [Federals] took what food we had stored in the house and demanded that our chickens be killed for their supper. After no more than an hour they left this place, but they said they would come back. We no longer feel as safe as we once did.



John M. Carson.
Courtesy Dr. William I. Forbes III

Joseph McDowell Carson, born at the Carson House in McDowell County, built this house early in the 19th century. It reflects Federal-style architecture remodeled about mid-century in the Greek Revival style. Carson died in 1860. His son John Montazuma Carson enlisted in Co. B (Butler Guards), 2nd South Carolina Infantry, in May 1861 and was wounded in the First Battle of Manassas on July 21, 1861. Within hours of the battle, trains carried many of the casualties to the general hospital in Charlottesville, Virginia. John M. Carson died of wounds there about a week later; his body was brought home for burial in the family cemetery.



Green River Plantation, ca. 1870
Courtesy Green River Plantation.



Margaret Carson Weaver
Courtesy Green River Plantation.

