

Book: Prince William The Story of Its People and Its Places

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“Site of Avon – The land here, once part of the Pittsylvania estate, was acquired by Alfred Ball of Portici. In 1851 Ball conveyed to Abraham Van Pelt the 230 acre tract that made up the Avon Farm. Van Pelt owned Avon when it played its conspicuous part during the War Between the States. The original log house – one of the oldest in the county – was then standing. In the First Battle of Manassas shell-fire inflicted considerable damage; but not enough, it seems, to prevent its being used as a Federal hospital immediately after the Second Battle of Manassas. On September 9 the grim task of removing wounded soldiers to 21 field hospitals was completed. At the Van Pelt House surgeons found coffee, sugar, cider, and wine and were able to procure meat. A Confederate private, passing that way somewhat later, indited the following gruesome paragraph:

We... halted at or near the famous stone bridge over Bull Run, and near a house on the hill used by Yankees as a hospital. I went up to see it, and it was full, house and yard. It was indeed a house and yard of the dead, though at first glance it did not appear so. The bodies were sitting and lying in all positions, with their eyes open. It required some investigation to convince one of their actual death. But so it was. We left the battlefield before night and took up our line of march.

Many years after the war the house was destroyed by fire.