

Notes 90N, Copy 2

Mr. R. C. Jordan, Sr.

Columbus, Georgia

June 7, 1962

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Interview with Mr. R. C. Jordan, Sr., at Columbus, Georgia, June 7, 1962 by Forrest C. Pogue (Mrs. Jordan was there briefly).

Recalls meeting Marshall through common interest in saddle horses. Marshall sometimes rode with members of the Buckety-buck Club(?). Invited him to his house and then was invited to Ft. Benning. Knew him before Marshall remarried.

Remembers being with Marshall one evening at the Dismukes at Peacock Wood. Lt. Col. Marshall was there. My wife teased him about getting married again. Not long after that Katherine Tupper Brown came to visit Mrs. Worsley's mother. Colonel Marshall drove her home from the party. Katherine saw it took him a long time. He said that he had to know the town well to take so long.

I was on the town military committee to develop good relations with Ft. Benning. This led me to be with Marshall a good bit. Benning in those days had little housing for officers; the roads were terrible. Officers were quartered in Columbus. Buildings on the post were in mud. Nowadays Benning is pretty much self-contained and we don't know the people there as we did in Marshall's day.

I noticed that three enlisted men from the post are invited to attend each club each week. This was called to my attention at Rotary Club. Also true at Kiwanis). Benning had almost dried up before Marshall came. Later came the rebuilding stage. During the war about 2000 second lieutenants a week graduated.

The first effort to get a post here was near the end of the war. The Army had a post out on the Macon Road--46 acres. After the war Pershing came here for an inspection/Marshall was with his party/. The Upatoie was up and he couldn't cross the bridge; had to come in by way of Cassita. Every town wanted a cantonment. I remember once they sent a committee to meet Secretary Baker's train and ask him for a camp. He said he would promise them one for the next war.

Benning was established around the old Busse Plantation; has swallowed up dozens of other places. Land was about \$6 to \$12 an acre at the time. Understands that the government sold the timber off the land for more than they paid. Part of the land many years ago was owned by a man named Woolfolk. It was in Chattahoochee County (as it is now). He had to cross the Upatoie to get to Chattahoochee. He was closer to Columbus and preferred to transact his legal business here rather than Cassita. He ran for the legislature and managed to get a bill passed putting his plantation into our county. His opponent next time said vote for me and I will put you back--and he did. (Muscogee)

The officers rode a lot at Benning. They would come up and ride with us. I knew the stable keeper and was out there a lot. Rode some with Marshall. Doesn't remember that Marshall ever rode with the Hunt Club.

Says Marshall changed the curriculum tremendously at Benning. Was the main cause for its improvement. He was a dedicated man for his work. He drank it in his coffee in the morning.

Marshall was tough on enforcing prohibition on the post. Recalls that a man named Crawford was teasing a Major Ralph Pearson one morning about his being late for an appointment. Pearson said it was the cocktails he had served the night before. Crawford repeated it to Marshall and he called the major down about it. Marshall usually not unreasonable. They once had a real prohibitionist at Benning named Col. Johnson. When he was getting ready to leave the officers of the regiment gave a party at the Muscogee club and spiked the punch. He ordered the punch bowl emptied. Officers at Benning obeyed the law rather carefully. But they drank in Columbus. Marshall would drink neither at Benning or in Columbus; perhaps he would somewhere away where there was not strong local feeling.

Jordan knew many of the top officers at Benning. Speaks of Gen Edgar Collins. Tough old boy. The DAR had put up a monument to mark a point relating to Oglethorpe. The stone was in the middle of traffic on the post. Collins ran into it one night. Called Major Bootz (he cussed him out every morning) and told him to get the thing moved or blow it up by 9 A. M. Bootz called a Colonel Knight. He was a little frustrated because he didn't want to offend the DAR and he didn't want to go counter to instructions. Knight called Mrs. Gaffney of the DAR and told her that the stone was so placed that many visitors couldn't read it without getting out of their cars. He said that it so happened they had a construction company on the post and they were willing to move it without cost. She agreed with pleasure. Seems to had bucked up Bootz. Later when Collins was bawling him out, he said I am not afraid of some people who were complaining, of Jesus Christ or you. Collins never bothered him again.

Collins was blonde weighed about 170, erratic. Not qualified and unfitted for temperament for the post of commandant. His wife was a sister to Gen Fuqua(?)--the man in charge of air (Foulois?). He wanted an air squadron at Benning. Collins said if it came had to be under him. A family feud developed and the air squadron didn't come.

Campbell King was dignified and sedate. Not very aggressive. Marshall was a good righthand man for both of them.

Jordan said he knew all the men who were there for years. Said he belonged to the Skeet Club. Used to shoot with Collins, Bradley and Hodges. Recalls a man named Sandy McNab who got up the manual of arms--a good pistol and rifle shot. He refused to go to a post where there was no hunting.

Recalls early occasion when Mrs. Marshall and her sister Allene visited the Blanchards back around the turn of the century. Says they tell a story about an old darky who worked for the Blanchards. Their house was just back of where my place is here. The old man--Homer--was mentally deficient. He had a one room house in back. To get back and forth he would walk by the windows of the big house talking to himself. One day they heard him say "Times am hard and visitors am expensive."

Father and Colonel Marshall were very close. Had a very great admiration for General Marshall. Father a great student of cavalry. Had served under Bedford Forrest. Colonel Marshall had him come out to speak about the use of cavalry. Father said that if the Continental Army had had cavalry it could have ended the Revolution sooner. Talked about Civil War use

of cavalry. Marshall had him and other veterans of Civil War to speak to classes. (Mr. Jordan showed me his father's journal in which he had developed his views on cavalry, Forrest and kindred subjects. He said that his father had mentioned Col. Marshall in the Journal; said he would copy out allusions and send me). One item from the Journal was that Forrest was the oldest of 15 children. Of the eight sons, one was a lieutenant general, one a brigadier general, two colonels, one lieutenant colonel, and another the captain of scouts. All were wounded more than once and the brigadier was killed. All were distinguished. Nathan Forrest was the most remarkable man the war produced; a pleasing conversationalist; opposed to liquor.