

## A "Track-mas" Carol by Gary J. Carr

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12-12-09

As I was laying in bed the other night, I thought "Why am I so worried about these running tracks? It really doesn't make a difference. You can't fight City Hall. Besides the kids will be O.K., the kids will be..., and I drifted off to sleep. I was awakened with at start when I felt a presence in my room. "Gary, Gar-y-y-y-", I heard a voice saying. "Don't be afraid", said the voice, "I am the Ghost of Track-mas Past." "Say what? Track-Mas Past?", I replied. He said "come with me, I want to show you something", and we levitated out of my room, and into Alexandria's past.

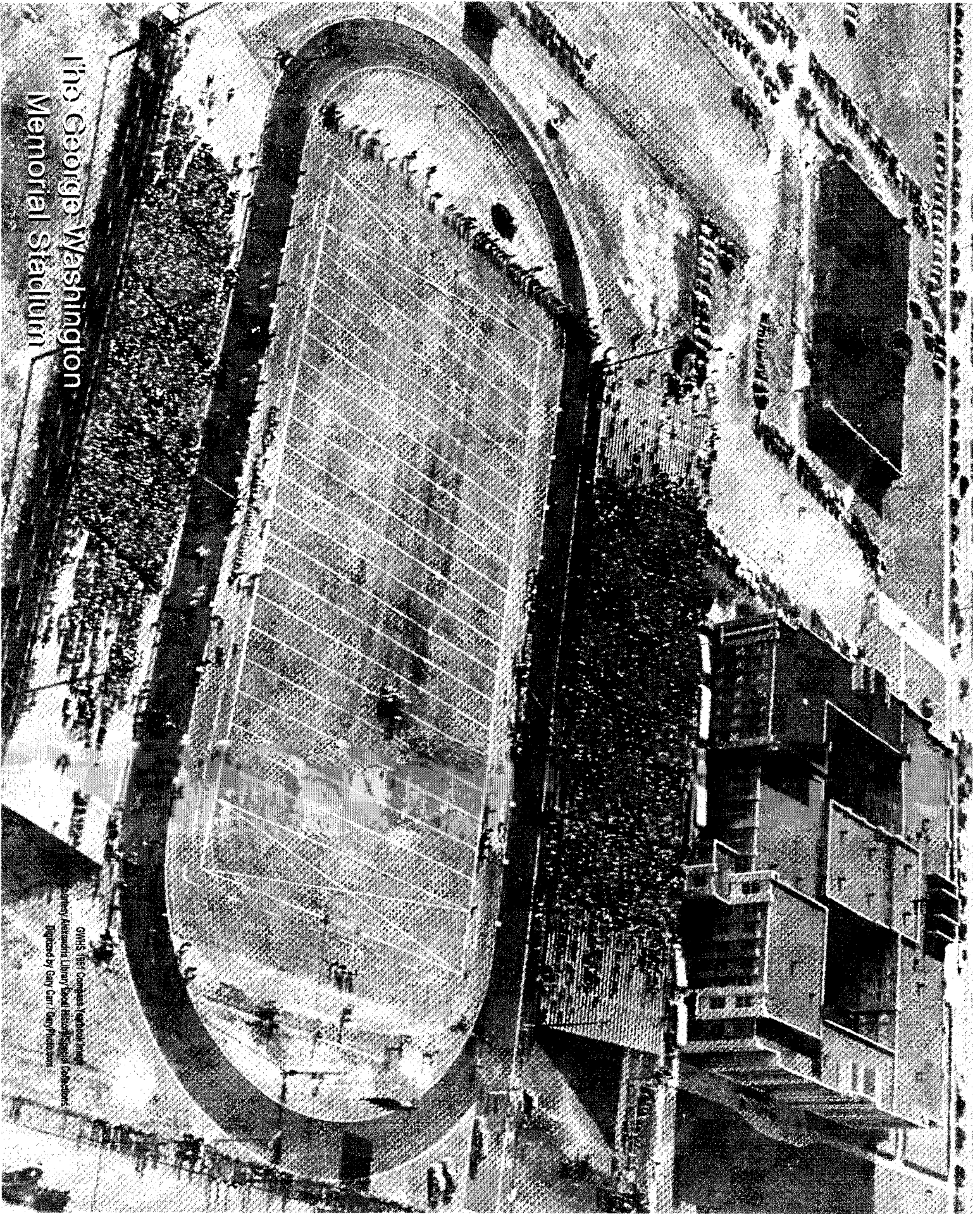
"Look there", he said pointing to a new school with a track. "That is the new Parker-Gray High School. Thousands of people struggled for decades to get that built. It's one of the nicest segregated high schools in the whole country. Look, it even has track. "Nice", I said. We went to another part of the city. "There is Hammond High School, it's segregated too. But check out the running track." "Even nicer", I replied. We then wisked to another part of the city. "There is the granddaddy of them all." the ghost proclaimed. Before us was one of the grandest track and fields ever seen at a high school. "That is George Washington High School Memorial Stadium", said the Ghost, "the largest facility of its kind on the East coast." "Wow", was all I could say. The ghost then showed me the many Track and Field State Championships, indoor and out, and individual titles that had been won by the City's athletes. "This city has a long and rich history in track and field. Just thought you'd like to know."

"Yo, G", said a voice, "I be the ghost of Track-mas present." There was a pretty cool looking ghost, pants a little baggy, but he was still cool looking. "Nice kicks", I said. "I'll make it short and sweet. Parker-Gray High and its track- gone. Hammond's Track- nada, G.W.'s facility- forget 'bout it. For five years nothing they had no tracks in this City- till they built a track at the new TC. But it's 6 lanes when it shoulda been 8- and no lights! Ha! Oh well, later potato, gotta Run."

"But wait", I protested, but the ghost dashed away.

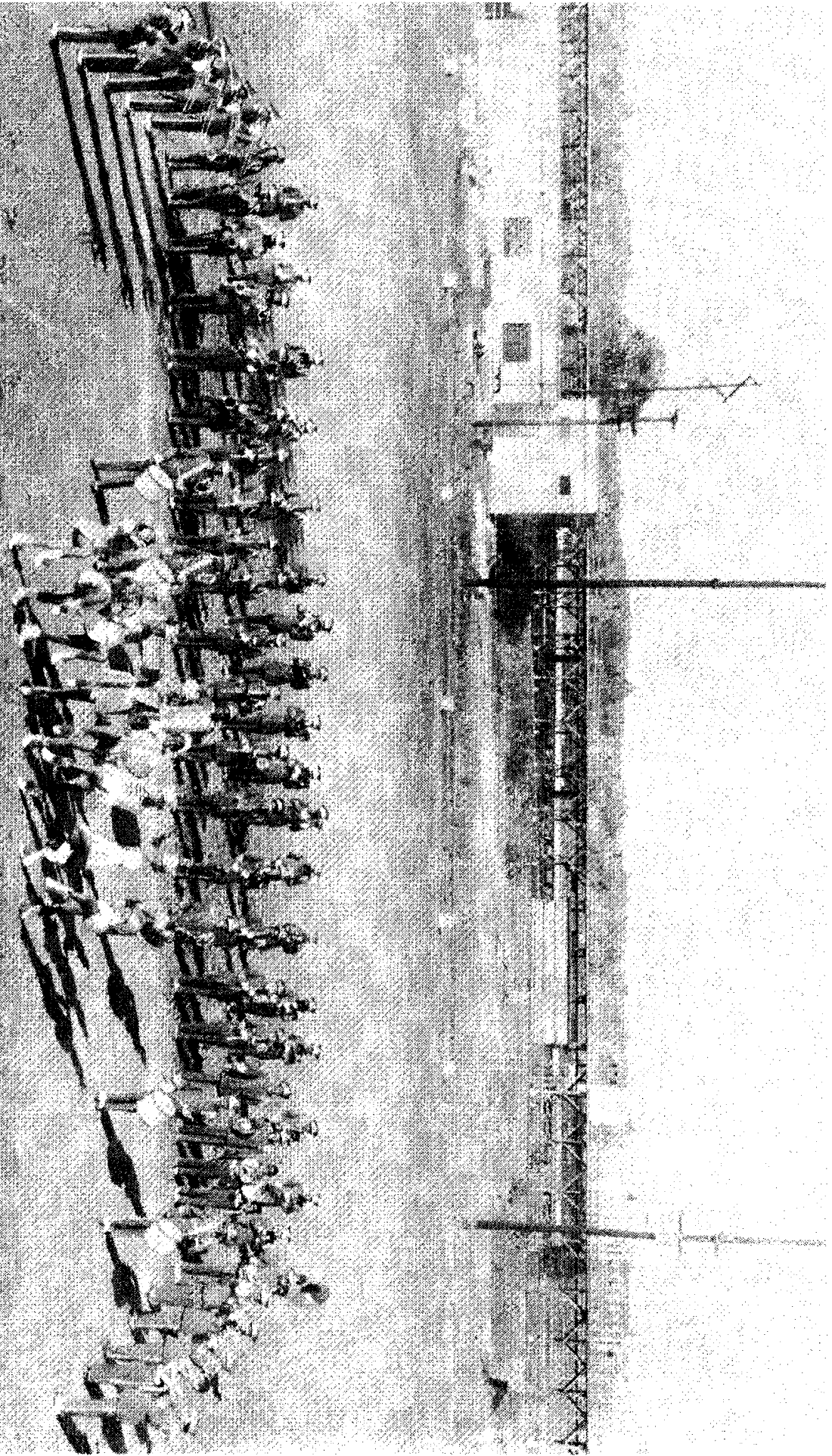
Left with my thoughts, I said "what the heck, it doesn't matter anyway.- can I wake up now?", I asked no one in particular. "Not yet, Homie", said a voice. "I am the Ghost of Track-mas future." said a fit looking ghost in a athletic suit. "Let me lay it on you. Alexandria has two paths it can take. One way is that we stay the current course. Our children will become fatter and fatter. This city to continue without its tracks. At some point the Thanksgiving race won't be called the "Turkey Trot" anymore, it we'll be called the "Butterball Trot". The other way is to fix the track and field at Hammond Middle School and restore G.W. High School's facility. The GW stadium will provide a steady stream of revenue to both the athletic and academic programs at the schools. I know, I'm from the future. The site is perfect with metro rail and bus, and parking. All of the infrastructure needed is already there. You have to convince them, Gary, of this better future. "If you build, it they will run."

"Hey, Ghostie, I like that. Mind if I use it?" I turned toward his voice. "Not at all", said the Ghost fading in the distance. "Get it done, and they will run", I heard him say, as he jogged off into the night. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to one and all.



The George Washington  
Memorial Stadium

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**Parker-Gray High School**  
**Alexandria, Virginia**

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