

Beloved Landmarks of Loudon County, Tennessee published by the Hiwassee C



HOSPITAL DURING THE CIVIL WAR

LOCATION: On Highway 11 halfway between Lenoir City and Loudon.

Pictured here is the country home built by the widow of Wiley Blair in 1857. Mr. Blair was the son of James Blair, who owned 640 acres on the present site of Loudon, as well as several hundred acres on the opposite side of the river. James Blair and his family operated a ferry for several generations and gave the town its first name of Blairsville. He gave to his son, Wiley, a considerable amount of land on both sides of the river. Wiley had both a town house and a country house - the town house, which burned shortly after the Civil War, being at the present site of 800 Atlanta Avenue, occupied now by Mrs. O. V. Harrison. In addition, Wiley Blair planned the country home picture here, but before construction began he died during a cholera epidemic in 1854. His wife, Mary Johnston Blair, had the house completed in 1857.

Alexander McInturff was the contractor of this spacious home, and he gave great attention to details. All bricks for the foundation and chimneys were hand-

built of heart-of-pine brought from Georgia. The front of the house originally faced the river, for the highway was on that side of the house. However, the highway was changed, so the present owners re-modeled extensively in 1935, adding the high porch and columns to face the new road.

During the Civil War, because it was unsafe for Mrs. Blair and her children to stay in their country house, they moved to their town house. Union troops invaded the country home and used it for both headquarters and a hospital. it is evident that some skirmishes took place around the grounds. Cannon balls and Mini'e balls have been found there, and parts of three earthen fortresses remain today. Since the house faced the river, a beautiful grove of trees extended in that direction. During the war Longstreet crossed nearby with his Southern Army, and Union forces cut the grove to fall like matchsticks in disarray to slow his progress.

The house and land have never been owned outside the Blair Family. Its present occupants are Mrs. Laura Blair Vance, Miss Kate Blair, and Mr. Albert Blair.