



CRADLE OF METHODISM IN LOUDON COUNTY

LOCATION: Martel Road near the railroad underpass.

One cannot separate this home of John and Arabella Cunningham Winton from the establishment of the Methodist Church in Loudon County. The Wintons came from Virginia where Mrs. Winton had embraced this "new" religious faith, and they first settled near Dandridge, Tennessee. Colonel Winton, too, became a Methodist and was ordained a local preacher. In those days there were traveling ministers called "circuit riders," and "local" preachers who had other occupations and preached without being subject to the orders of the bishop. John Winton was a very devout man, and he gave a part of his land to establish the Muddy Creek Methodist Episcopal Church, now called Martel Methodist. (History of Martel Methodist Church, 1795-1962, available from the editors, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Duff, Martel).

When John Winton first came to Martel in 1795 he built a small frame building just west of the home pictured here. As his family increased he added wings to his house. It was in this house that Bishop Asbury of the Methodist Church often visited and preached,

and he frequently mentioned it in Bishop Asbury's Journal. ^{Beloved Landmarks of Loudon County, Tennessee published by the Hiwassee Chapter} It is noteworthy, too, that history even records the size of Colonel Winton. He weighed nearly 500 pounds!

Colonel Winton began construction of his home in 1812 but it was interrupted by war. Then, a nephew named John Cunningham Turnley stopped here on his way home from the war of 1812, and he completed construction in 1815. Bricks were made by the slaves who lived on the farm in log cabins. Many alterations have taken place through the years: a double porch was added on the front, and the free-hanging circular stairway was altered to make a platform entrance into the hall in the "L". Most of the woodwork, doors, mantles, and floor plan remain the same as originally built.

After Colonel Winton's death the house was occupied by a relative, Colonel Easley, and still later by the Mann and Armstrong Families. It was purchased in the 1940's by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Carson, and is in possession of their daughter, Mrs. Samuel G. Johnson of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Much time and effort have already gone into the restoration of the original frame home, and Mrs. Johnson plans future remodeling of the present stately brick. Although Mrs. Johnson is not a Winton descendant, she has undertaken the restoration of this home with great personal interest.