

"HAYNES-TIPTON HOUSE"
(Home of Col. John Tipton & Landon C. Haynes)
About 3 mi. E. of Johnson City on U.S. Hwy. 19
Washington County, Tennessee.

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Tennessee

Historic American Buildings Survey
J. Frazer Smith-District Officer
W. Jeter Eason-Deputy District Officer
404 Goodwyn Institute Building
Memphis, Tennessee.

"HAYNES-TIPTON HOUSE"
(Home of Col. John Tipton and Landon C. Haynes)
About 2 mi. east of Johnson City on U.S. Highway 19
Washington County, Tennessee.

Owner. S. W. Simerly, Route #2 - Johnson City, Tenn.

Date of Erection. Prior to 1788.

Architect. Unknown, if any.

Builder. Col. John Tipton.

Present Condition. The house has been allowed to fall in a rather state of disrepair. It is owned by a man who appears to be interested only in keeping it habitable. It is also probably due to lack of finances that the house has not been very well preserved. It appears, however, that without any acts of violence the house would remain a long time in its present condition. There are many contradictory opinions as to the state of its present condition as related to its original condition. The History of Homes and Gardens of Tennessee states that "the house is a two story log house (weather boarded before it was purchased by the Haynes family) of ample dimensions with a kitchen and dining room connected by a covered porch-way extending the full width of the main building". Other sources of information, however, tend to indicate that the major two story rectangular section was the only part built by Col. John Tipton. This was an adzed log house with dove tailed joints and mud chinking. The same sources of information also state that the long "L" to the left rear of the house and the clap-board siding on the original structure plus the Law Office (a small separate building to the left) and the columned porch were added by Landon Carter Haynes when he purchased the property from the grandchildren of Col. Tipton. It is further said in the above publication that the house is "clearly patterned after the contemporary houses of Williamsburg where Col. John Tipton had so lately sat as a Burgess in the Councils of the State of Virginia". There does not seem to be any resemblance between anything associated with the house to any building as restored in Williamsburg.

Number of Stories. The main rectangular section of the house is two stories with one story enclosed porch running the entire width of the house at the rear, off of which extends backward and to the left end, a long one story "L". The Law Office to the left is

one story as is the front porch of the main structure. The architectural detail of the front porch of the main house and the entrance to the Law Office are identical with the exception that there is a wood ballustrade on the porch to the house where there is none on the porch entering the Law Office.

Materials of Construction. Foundations for the house and the Law Office are of native stone, the same type being used for the main chimney on the right end and the base of the chimney at the end of the "L" to the rear. The chimneys at the left end of the house and inside chimney in the "L" and the upper section of the end chimney of the "L" are of brick. The exterior walls of the main section are logs covered with clap-board siding. All other parts of the house are weather-board but do not have as their main construction logs. This is further evidence that the "L" and the Law Office were later additions. The interior walls are of wood stud with wood finish. Roof was originally of hand split shingles but now replaced with galvanized iron. Floors were built of hand hewn joists covered with pine board flooring.

The stone chimney to the right is said to be, and probably is, the largest stone chimney in the State of Tennessee and it is unique in that there is a fire-place opening in the chimney in the cellar at the right end of the building and this fire-place opening is spanned with an oak lintel, but being so high from the blaze has escaped being burned and causing the chimney to collapse. This fire-place has in the last few years been filled in by the present owner.

Other Existing Records. As referred to under the title "Present Condition" The History of Homes and Gardens of Tennessee published by the Parthenon Press of Nashville 1936 for the Garden Study Club of Nashville gives an account of the history and a somewhat questionable architectural precedent. There is also in the possession of Judge Sam Williams of Johnson City considerable information relative to the house, and in his book "The Lost State of Franklin" he gives in graphic detail the history associated with this house. Certain facts associated with the house have been recorded by Haywood and Ramsey and later by Theodore Roosevelt in his "Winning of the West".

Additional Data. During the unsettled period which preceded the definite boundaries of the State of Tennessee this house played an important part. It was

here that the only battle fought during the short existence of "The Lost State of Franklin" was engaged in. It seems that there were two schools of thought relative to the destinies of the State of Franklin. These two schools of thought were headed by Col. John Tipton and General John Sevier. The political views and sides taken by these two leaders are well related in Judge Williams' book "The Lost State of Franklin, so we shall only say here that after the one brief battle fought between these two leaders on the site of this house, Col. Tipton repulsed General Sevier.

The house came into the possession of Landon C. Haynes, one of Tennessee's most brilliant orators through purchase from the grandchildren of Col. Tipton, and it was at this time that he built his Law Office and when, we are told, he made the other additions described above. It remained in the hands of the descendents of Landon C. Haynes for several generations but was finally sold to others and since the last two or three transactions has lost its connection in any way with either the Tipton or the Haynes families.

It might be added as a point of interest that Col. Tipton is buried in the little graveyard near the house. It might also be said that Col. Tipton was a breeder and racer of fine horses having owned during his lifetime a race track where many famous horses were bred and raced, among them being Diomed sired by the Diomed which won the first English Derby.

It is interesting to note that in giving the histories of the owners of this and certain other old houses in the State, we find that while the builders of these houses were pioneers of the culture and of the politics and the development of the country and leaders in the fighting of its battles, there seemed to be enough time for them to also pioneer in the pleasures and luxuries; some of which the State is still known for. One would have to use a great deal of imagination to look at this old neglected house and picture its owner making political decisions, fighting territorial battles and at the same time racing fine horses.

by W. Peter Eason
Received by T.C.W.
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