

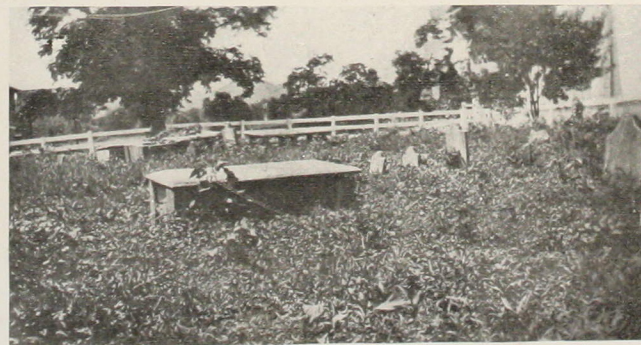


THE E. T. NOEL HOME



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THE E. T. Noel home is situated on the Granny White Pike. This house stands on land granted to Andrew Ewing, one of the pioneers of Nashville, February 8, 1792, four years before the entry of Tennessee into the Union. He conveyed to his son, Nathan Ewing, who was the father of the late Hon. Andrew Ewing, member of Congress from the Hermitage District and a well remembered member of the Nashville bar. The graves of Andrew Ewing, Sr., and Nathan Ewing, with appropriate inscriptions on their tombs, are located in the old garden. The original mansion occupied by them burned. The present structure was erected by G. M. D. Cantrell, who owned the place prior and subsequent to the Civil War. The venerable O. F. Noel purchased the property from him many years ago and occupied it as his home until he gave it to his son, the late Edwin T. Noel, whose heirs are now the owners. The surroundings are extremely beautiful.



*"And where the roses thickest grew
And bloomed the deepest red,
A group of lonely headstones marked
Some long-forgotten dead."*



"IDLEWILD"



Driveway Through Lawn

“Idlewild”

THE residence of Dr. and Mrs. L. G. Noel represents one of the historic old homes of Davidson County, for many years known as the Benton place. It became the property of Mrs. Jesse Benton by purchase, in the early fifties, from a family named Adams.

Jesse Benton was a brother of Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, whose greatest achievement perhaps was causing the purchase of California from Mexico in 1848.

It will be remembered that the Bentons had a quarrel with Andrew Jackson in 1812 which culminated in an encounter between them, in which Jackson received a wound from which he never entirely recovered. Jackson and Thomas H. Benton had always been friends, but this difficulty was brought about by meddlesome go-betweens. It is pleasing to know that the breach was healed before Jackson's death, for he sent for Benton during his last illness and expressed for him undying friendship.

At the time of Mrs. Benton's purchase the house was a small one of cedar logs, one of the oldest in the county and doubtless contemporaneous with the old Hermitage. Mrs. Benton built the more modern front, remodelling the whole structure, adding porches to front and rear. The original log structure was retained, but obscured by siding and plaster. The old cedar servants' quarters remain to this day.

Mrs. Benton was a first cousin of Mrs. James K. Polk, the widow of President Polk, and between the two there was a strong tie of love and friendship.

During the Civil War this property was purchased by Mr. John Armstrong Shute, who presented it to his daughter, Mrs. Stephen W. Childress, for a home. Judge Stephen W. Childress was a nephew of Mrs. Benton's. The old place was very pleasing and home-like until Nashville fell into the hands of the Federals. By the time the fight was over it was but a sad wreck. Shot



*"Still slopes the lawn in beautiful gradation,
Like a soft carpet of the richest green."*



Part of the Old Negro Quarters, Built of Red Cedar Logs.

and shell had so riddled the structure that sunshine and rain found easy access to its rooms.

When, after the war, the Childress family took possession of their home, months were required to repair the damages to the property. This, fortunately, was done in such a way as to preserve many of the battle scars to this day. These are evidenced by blocks of wood neatly fitted, but showing visible repairs, and by floors still plowed with bullet marks.

During Mrs. Benton's life and residence here the place had become famous for its hospitality, and Mrs. Childress was so famous a hostess her house was seldom without guests and they never could forget the charms of her home after once entering it. She, being an admirer of Robert E. Lee, called the place "Lee Monte." Sometime in the seventies the place was sold to Mr. Joseph Spence, who moved to Texas, leaving his brother, Wm. Spence, formerly of Murfreesboro, in possession. Mr. Spence, having several daughters, the old house kept up its reputation for gaiety and hospitality under their regime. In 1881 the property was purchased by its present owner, Dr. L. G. Noel, and has been occupied by him ever since. He changed the name of the place to "Idlewild."

