

# Andrew Jackson's Hermitage



THE restoration of the historic home of Andrew Jackson, twice president of the United States and hero of the battle of New Orleans, is of more than passing interest, awakening as it does memories of the troublous times of the British-American war of 1812.

Home of the Hero of New Orleans Completely Restored. To Be Reproduced at the St. Louis World's Fair - - -

It is entirely through the efforts of the Ladies' Hermitage association of Nashville that The Hermitage has been restored to the condition in which it was at the death of the general in 1845. The beautiful grounds, with



GENERAL JACKSON'S TOMB IN THE GARDEN OF THE HERMITAGE.

their velvet lawns and big trees; the wide driveways along which coaches rolled to the door of the mansion, all are unchanged, and, in addition, the furniture, mementos and trophies that were collected by the great Tennesseean during his eventful life are once more installed in their accustomed places. Everything is just as it was when "Old Hickory" lived and moved amid the scenes from which he so long ago departed.

While The Hermitage and its surrounding grounds have long been the property of the state of Tennessee, it is only recently that the furniture and other relics which were associated with the old soldier have been returned in their entirety to their former abode. The state's first object in buying the house from Andrew Jackson, Jr., the adopted son of "Old Hickory," was to present it to the United States government for a branch of the Military academy at West Point. The breaking out of the civil war prevented the consummation of this plan.

Until recently little had been done in regard to the collection of relics of General Jackson until a rumor got abroad that Colonel Andrew Jackson III had decided to sell the furniture and other mementos of his grandfathers to a New Englander. Then the state rose up in opposition, and under the leadership of the Ladies' Hermitage association \$25,000 was raised and the whole collection purchased and placed in the old homestead.

The original Hermitage, built in 1804, was a log house, a part of which is still standing. To this Jackson removed from Hunter's Hill. The structure was a two story block house, not celled, and contained three rooms, one on the ground floor, two above. To this building was added a smaller one about twenty feet from the main structure.



THE OLD HERMITAGE, WHERE JACKSON LIVED FROM 1804 TO 1815.

to which it was connected by a covered passage. Aaron Burr was entertained there in 1805.

General Jackson lived in the log house at the time the battle of New Orleans was fought, returning to his humble home a "conquering hero" and the ideal of the nation. He was entirely satisfied with his log residence and built the new mansion in 1819 solely out of regard for his wife. It was a grand mansion for its day, by far the most imposing residence in the vicinity, and was constructed of brick made on the place. The general refused to have the log house torn down.

At that time The Hermitage farm comprised 1,000 acres, 400 acres cleared and under cultivation and the remainder principally covered with forest.

The new home was spaciouly built in the colonial style, and when it was finished many distinguished persons of the land went in and out of the wide doorways. The Marquis de Lafayette found a warm welcome there and tasted the sweetness of southern hospitality. "Old Hickory," whose character for honesty was no less-renowned than that of Washington, had the same warm friendship for his foreign guest and felt that The Hermitage was honored by the presence of the great Frenchman.

The Jacksons had no children of their own, so they adopted the infant son of Mrs. Jackson's brother, and as Andrew Jackson, Jr., he became the son and heir of The Hermitage and its possessions.

In 1856 the state of Tennessee bought the Hermitage farm of 500 acres from Andrew Jackson, Jr., for \$48,000. This adopted son and his family, who left The Hermitage after the sale, returned in 1858 on request of Governor Isham G. Harris and became the custodians of the property. The family of Andrew Jackson, Jr., remained at The Hermitage during the civil war, and Jackson died there in 1865. Mrs. Jackson was permitted to remain on the place a tenant at will, and she died there in 1888. Colonel Andrew Jackson III, son of Andrew Jackson, Jr., was a colonel of artillery in the Confederate army. He inherited the household furniture, mementos and relics of President Andrew Jackson, which have recently been acquired by the Ladies' Hermitage association.

Just as Andrew Jackson was completing his second term as president The Hermitage was burned to the ground. When he returned to Tennessee to take up his life as a private citizen after eight years of stirring political life he rebuilt the house on the same site, and as it was erected almost seventy years ago it stands today. The architectural style is colonial, with large verandas both front and back.

In 1889 the Tennessee legislature chartered the Ladies' Hermitage asso-



THE JACKSON STATUE AT NASHVILLE.

ciation and conveyed to it, through a board of trustees, the house, tomb, all outhouses and twenty-five surrounding acres to "preserve, beautify and adorn, throughout all coming years, in a manner most fitting the memory of that great man and commensurate with the gratitude of his countrymen." To this association the gathering of the relics in The Hermitage is due.

The Hermitage is filled from top to bottom with the general's treasures. One of the most curious is a stage-coach used by Jackson when he lived at the White House. There is also the skeleton of a phaeton, all that is left of the beautiful vehicle presented to General Jackson by the Democratic-Republican citizens of Philadelphia. The phaeton was made from timber taken from the old frigate Constitution.

Jackson's room is almost exactly as it was the day he died. The furniture he used is all there. It consists of a bedstead, bureau, wardrobe, washstand with six china pieces, table, chairs, sofa, carpets, curtains, irons and fender, mirror, brass candlestick and pictures on the walls. One of the most highly prized of the Jackson mementos is the Decatur-Jackson silver, purchased by the general from the widow of Commodore Decatur and constantly used at The Hermitage.

Visitors to the St. Louis world's fair will have an opportunity to see a facsimile of The Hermitage, as it will be exactly reproduced in Tennessee's state building on the plateau of states at the exposition. All of the furniture and treasured relics will be removed from the original Hermitage to its counterpart at St. Louis.

In the garden surrounding The Hermitage stands the simple marble tomb that guards the remains of General Jackson and his wife. This has been restored to its original beauty by the Ladies' Hermitage association. In his will General Jackson gave his tomb to the state of Tennessee. It consists of a simple shaft surmounted by a canopy.

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