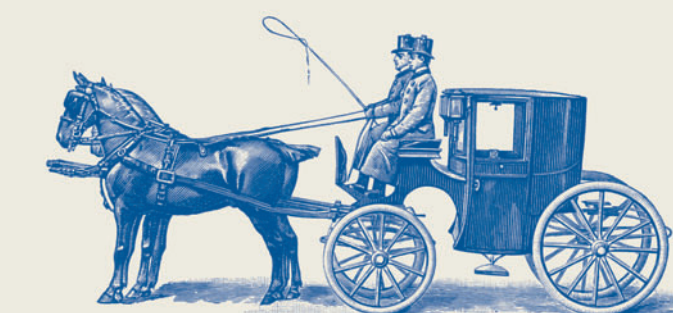


HISTORY OF THE CARMICHAEL INN

Constructed from 1800-1810 by John Hudson Carmichael



Dating back to the first decade of the nineteenth century, the Carmichael Inn played a vital part in Loudon's history. Although the exact date is not known, John Hudson Carmichael, the son of a revolutionary war soldier of Scotch descent, probably started building the structure around 1800, with a good portion being completed by 1810. Over the years, the Carmichaels opened their home to travelers who passed through Loudon.

The two-story log structure originally stood on the opposite side of the Tennessee River on Rock Quarry Road. The Inn was a stopping place for stagecoaches en-route possibly from Nashville to Washington, D. C. and for visitors coming north on the East Tennessee & Georgia railroad from Chattanooga. Even in those early days of East Tennessee history, summer resorts were in vogue and many passengers came through Loudon on their way to fabled healing mineral spring spas in the area.

Travelers from the south would be ferried across the river and after a night at the inn could continue their journey by the next stagecoach. In 1826, John Carmichael was granted a license to operate a ferry from his own land on the north side of the Tennessee River. However, Carmichael and his brother-in-law and fellow Loudon resident, James Blair, got into a legal dispute over ferry rights. Blair didn't like the competition Carmichael brought especially since Carmichael was using Blair's ferry landing on the south side of the river.



No known portraits survive of John H. or Margaret (Gardenhire) Carmichael, the original proprietors of the Carmichael Inn. The couple is interred in the family plot at Steekee Cemetery in Loudon.



Blair eventually worked out a ferry deal with Pathkiller, a Cherokee chief who served as a colonel in the War of 1812. The Carmichael family then focused their energies on running the inn and providing stagecoach service.

Upon the death of John H. Carmichael in 1840, his widow Margaret Gardenhire Carmichael, and sons continued to operate the Inn.

The will of John Carmichael gives insight into its operation as an inn. Listed among the horses, pigs, sheep, other livestock, sacks of grain, tools and farm equipment, were - "12 feather beds, 12 bed stids, 3 clocks, 9 pots, 3 kittles, 7 ovens, 2 scillets and 2 fring pans." Although the Carmichaels raised seven children, the volume of household goods suggests the inn was well equipped for extra residents.

Around 1860, the Barksdale family from Washington, Georgia visited the Inn while traveling through the area. Two Barksdale daughters, Louise and Mary Janet met the two youngest Carmichael brothers Dan and James and they were eventually married.

Although undocumented, a Civil War tale passed down through the generations of Carmichael descendants puts a personal face on the times.

While James was away with the Confederate Army, Union soldiers came through Loudon in the winter of 1863. Local families hid their livestock, food and any valuables, but the soldiers scavenged their way through the area looking for useful items. They made a stop at the Carmichael Inn, where Mary Janet, wife of James, was lying atop a featherbed having just birthed a son.

The soldiers assumed that something was hidden in the bed. So on a cold December day, they lifted mother and child on a quilt and set them outside a window. They then set to ripping up the bed searching for valuables. Not finding anything, they lifted Mary Janet and her baby back through the window and put them on what was left of the bed.

Sadly, Dan was killed in the war. James and Mary Janet eventually left the Inn when they bought a farm in the bottomland along the river about a mile upstream on the south side. They raised five Carmichael children.

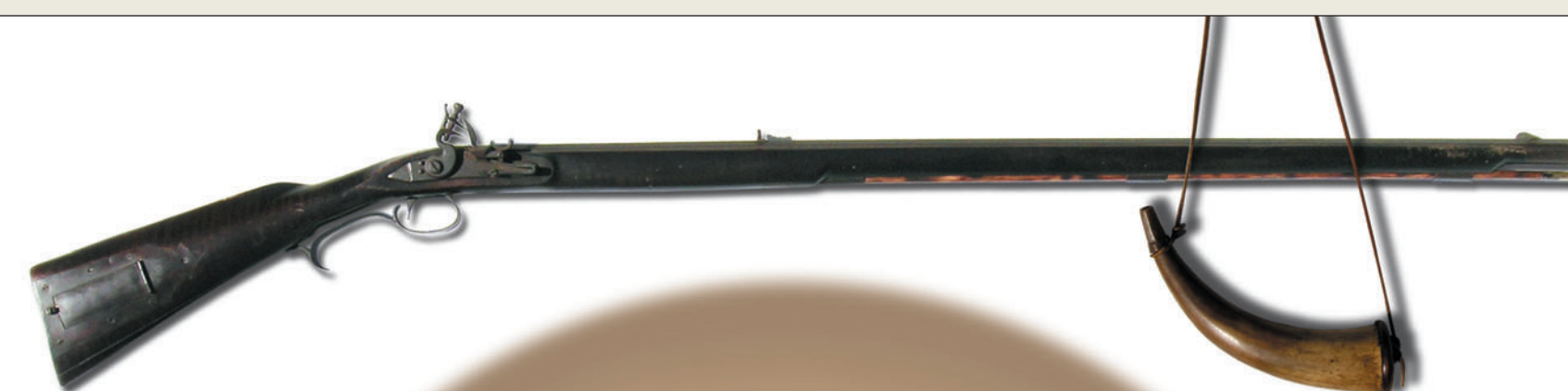
The Inn, which was once on the National Historic Register, ultimately fell into disrepair after decades of use as both an inn and a private residence. Ironically, in 1987, the Loudon County Heritage Association, which included a Carmichael descendant, raised money to buy the crumbling building from the owner, a Blair descendent. The building was about to be sold to an out-of-state buyer interested in purchasing the logs for another project when the Heritage Association stepped in.

Part of the sale agreement was that the building had to be moved. The current site was chosen and a group was hired to dismantle, transport and reassemble the inn on its present property adjacent to the historic Orme/Wilson warehouse. The Inn was used as a museum for several years until funding sources became scarce.

The building was leased in 2005 by Family Pride Corporation of Knoxville. After extensive renovation, it was reopened as the Carmichael Inn Restaurant in December 2006.



In its early days, the Inn was a stopping place for stage coaches enroute from Nashville to Washington, D.C. and for visitors coming north on the railroad from Chattanooga.



James H. Carmichael

This is a portrait of Confederate soldier, James H. Carmichael, son of John Hudson Carmichael. John was the original builder of the Carmichael Inn circa 1800/1810. Sons James and Dan helped operate the Inn in addition to a ferry and stagecoach. After the Civil War, James and wife, Mary Janet (Barksdale) Carmichael left the Inn and raised their family of five on a nearby farm adjacent to the river.



Tout Jour Prest "Always Ready"
The name Carmichael is rooted in the soil of Scotland's Southern Uplands. The Carmichaels were fine warriors and supported their neighbors, the powerful Douglas clan, in their struggles for Scottish power and in forays across the English border. The traditional hero of the family is Sir John de Carmichael of Meadowflat (later of Carmichael) who became the first chief of the clan. He was the son of the 2nd Baron of Carmichael, William Carmichael, who built the first castle on the estate around 1414. Sir John was first chief of the Carmichael Clan, was a knight in the Scottish army sent to help the French repel the English invasion during the Hundred Years War. The French army was on the verge of collapse when on 22 March 1421, Sir John engaged the Duke of Clarence, brother of King Henry V of England, at the Battle of Baugé. During their charge with lances drawn, Sir John unhinged the Duke, breaking his own spear in the process. At the death of their Commander, the English troops fled in disarray, turning the tide of the war. For this deed, the grateful French awarded Sir John the family crest featuring a broken spear grasped by a gauntlet (an armor-clad hand).



▲ This is the family of John Greenway and Bettie Lee (Carmichael) Greer. Bettie is the grand-daughter of Carmichael Inn builder, John H. Carmichael. John Greenway Greer founded Greer Hardware Company in Loudon in 1890, now Greer's Home Furnishings. It is the longest continuously running family owned and operated business in town. The boys are James Carmichael Greer (standing) and John Barksdale Greer.



◀ John Barksdale Greer and James Carmichael Greer, great-grandsons of John H. Carmichael, builder of the Carmichael Inn. The Carmichael and Barksdale names were liberally passed down through subsequent generations in homage to both patriarchal and matriarchal lines.

This is an excerpt from an article in the Loudon County Record on September 14, 1893 by R. M. Edwards. The article was about the writers' reminiscences of being in Blair's ferry/Loudon in the 1830s and 1840s.

- R. M. Edwards, Sept. 14, 1893

I can at least recall to memory many grand old names of men and women who lived respected and died regretted. Alas, how long the list grows as, with eyes closed, I in fancy look along the backward path over the 60 years of recorded time to childhood's happy hour! And why should I not recall their honored names? No. Then as in thought I stand in front of the Pathkiller House and look across the big river I see the old Carmichael

house that was for so many years a splendid wayside hostelry, where the wary traveler might always find rest, refreshment, and good cheer." The old gentleman **John H. Carmichael** I did not know, but he and his excellent wife, Aunt Peggy, **Margaret Gardenhire Carmichael** were of the old style stalwart race of people, who raised a family of six sons, equally rugged and robust and at a later day (1843) it was a grand sight to see all six,

Jake, Pom, John T., Bill, Dan and Jim stand in a row with Aunt Peggy at the head like a platoon of Wellington's Grenadiers. Though all are dead perhaps but Jim, and though during the intervening years, hundreds of scenes of greater moment have passed across the tables of my memory, yet that scene is not effaced or obscured, and I can say to their spirits, I remember you still, peace be to their ashes and rest to departed spirits."

"I stand in front of the Pathkiller house and look across the big river. I see the old Carmichael house that was for so many years a splendid wayside hostelry, where the weary traveler might always find rest, refreshment, and good cheer."