

"Early Kimmey House Residents"

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By Jay A. Graybeal

On January 19th the Historical Society will observe the 159th Anniversary of the founding of Carroll County. The event will take place from 4:00 to 6:00 p. m. in the Shriver-Weybright Auditorium, 210 E. Main St. in Westminster. The focus of this year's event will be the rededication of the Society's administrative building, the Kimmey House at 210 E. Main St. in Westminster. The former residence has been owned by the Society since 1966 and houses an auditorium, kitchen, research library, offices and collections storage rooms. The public is invited to attend the event and see the newly restored facility.

The Kimmey House was a private residence for nearly 175 years and was home to a number of prominent Westminster families. William Winchester, the founder of Westminster, sold Lots 44 and 45 to Andrew Reese on October 22, 1788. The two lots, now 210 and 206 E. Main St., respectively, were the two western most lots in Winchester's original plan of Westminster. The Kimmey House was built on Lot 44; Lot 45 remained unimproved until 1806. The price for the two unimproved lots was £20 plus a ground rent of 15 shillings per year. By requiring the annual ground rent payment, Winchester could sell the lots fairly cheaply and then collect a steady yearly income. In the sale to Reese, the ground rent represented almost 4% of the purchase price.

Andrew Reese probably built a small brick residence, which was later enlarged into the present structure, shortly after he acquired the property. The brick house was standing in 1806 when the adjacent Lot 45 was sold to Jacob Sherman for the construction of his home, now the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House also owned by the Historical Society. There is some evidence that Andrew Reese may not have lived in the house. His name appears as a landlord with two properties in 1798 and he also owned a nearby farm on a tract known as "Hollow Rock".

Andrew Reese sold the property to Dr. George (1783-1822) and Mary Colegate for \$1,600 on November 10, 1810. Dr. Colegate was a local physician who practiced in Westminster until his untimely death at age 39. The inventory of personal property recorded after his death shows that the Colegates owned stylish furnishings including a "Piana Forte" valued at \$35, a "Side Board" at \$25, a "Sofa & furnishings" at \$20 and silver spoons valued at \$46. Dr. Colegate also owned five male slaves valued at \$585; these men probably worked as laborers on a nearby 300-acre farm owned by Colegate.

Mary Colegate moved to Baltimore shortly after her husband's death in 1822. The house was rented to John Stevenson when the house was assessed in 1825. Little is known of Stevenson except that he is believed to have died in California in 1850.

Dr. Elisha (1796-1855) and Sarah Payne purchased the property from Mrs. Colegate for \$1,000 on April 9, 1846. Dr. Payne was born in Connecticut had began practicing medicine in c.1825; a newspaper advertisement reveals that he had an earlier office in George Trumbo's house opposite the Washington Road. His wife Sarah was born in Ireland.

Dr. Payne sold the house to William and Joseph Stansbury for \$1,200 on September 7, 1850. Joseph sold his share in the property to William on March 12, 1853. William owned the property until March 31, 1864 when he sold it to Nathan I. Gorsuch for \$2,000. The house was owned by the Gorsuch family and

their descendants until the 1960s; the history of these residents will be the subject of next week's column.

Photo Caption: The Kimmey House at 210 E. Main St. in Westminster at the time it was acquired by the Historical Society of Carroll County in 1966. The original house was three-bay, story structure with a front door at the east end of the front facade. Later residents added a third story, a two-story addition on the east end and additions to the ell. The newly-restored property will be rededicated on January 19th as part of the Society's observance of the 159th anniversary of the founding of Carroll County. Historical Society of Carroll County collection.