

This is the Masonic Lodge in Washington (Wilkes County) It was not built as a lodge. In the late 1870s Washington First United Methodist church owned the property and had a frame sanctuary on the site. There was a debate between modernizing the old church or building a new one. It was decided to build a new church on the same lot. The old church was sold and moved across the street to become an opera house and this sanctuary was built and dedicated in 1882 and served the congregation well. On October 29th 1884, an aging General Robert Toombs was baptized and received into the church by his lifelong friend Bishop George Pierce and on December 15, 1885 an asterisk was placed next to his name and "Died in peace" was written. The Methodists moved into their current structure in 1910 and the building was sold to Boyce Ficklin Sr. and Jr. who sold it to the Masons in 1913. I have no idea if the building is still used by them.

Andy Sarge

I remember this Forgotten Georgia piece, too. Yes, Toombs was baptized there a little over a year before his death. It was an emotional moment. The two people closest to Toombs had died in the spring (Alexander H. Stephens) and fall (Toombs' wife Julia) of 1883. The General became more and more despondent, drinking too much, health deteriorating, eye-sight diminishing. For decades, he had been close to Bishop George Foster Pierce and he called for his friend to counsel. Pierce journeyed to Washington several times to visit with the General, culminating in the baptism and reception into the Methodist Church in October 1884. It brought Toombs comfort and rejoicing to folks in town... Robert M Willingham