

Survey and Research Report on the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse



1. Name and location of the property: The property known as the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse is located at 2049 Moore Road, Matthews, North Carolina.

2. Name, address, and telephone number of the current owner of the property:

LIBERTY HEALTHCARE PROPERTIES
OF NORTH CAROLINA LLC
2334 South 41st Street
Wilmington, NC 28403

3. Representative photographs of the property. This report contains representative photographs of the property

4. A map depicting the location of the property.



Mecklenburg County Tax Map

5. **Current Deed Book Reference To The Property.** The most recent deed information for this property is found in Mecklenburg County Deed Book/Page 24162 - 240 and Book/Page 24162 - 236. The tax parcel number for the property is 21510206. [Click here to see Restrictions from October 2012.](#) [Click here to see original Restrictions from May 2012.](#)

6. **A Brief Historical Essay On The Property.** This report contains a brief historical sketch of the property prepared by William Jeffers.

7. A Brief Physical Description Of The Property. This report contains a brief physical description of the property prepared by Stewart Gray.

8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-400.5.

a. Special significance in terms of its history, architecture, and/or cultural importance. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission judges that the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse possesses special significance in terms of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations:

1) The McEwen-Moore Farmhouse is important in understanding the evolution of Matthews from its agricultural genesis to the its present state as part of an urban metropolitan area.

2) The McEwen-Moore Farmhouse well represents the economic development of the area after the Civil War, development that was largely a result of good rail transportation.

3) The McEwen-Moore Farmhouse is a well preserved example of a late nineteenth-century farmhouse with a good degree of integrity. Houses such as the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse are becoming increasingly rare as once rural land in Mecklenburg County is being developed.

4) The McEwen-Moore Farmhouse is an important example of the work of William H. Freeman, a local builder, farmer, and teacher.

b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association: The Commission judges that the physical description included in this report demonstrates that the property known as the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse meets this criterion.

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal: The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes a designated “historic landmark”. The current appraised value of the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse is . The property is zoned .

10. This report finds that the interior, exterior, and approximately 2.5 acres of land associated with the Moore House should be included in any landmark designation of the property.

Date of preparation of this report:

April 1, 2009

Prepared by:

William Jeffers and Stewart Gray

McEwen-Moore Farmhouse: Contextual Essay

The McEwen-Moore Farmhouse at 2049 Moore Rd. in Matthews, N.C. exemplifies the rural history of Mecklenburg County before the urban expansion of Charlotte, a period of time when the majority of the county was rural farmland.

Before the urbanization of Mecklenburg County, farms dotted the landscape and were supported by small towns that kept these yeoman farmers stocked with the provisions necessary to operate a farm. These towns were originally organized in geographically advantageous parts of the county, so as to serve the maximum number of nearby farmers. Over time, these towns evolved and adapted to new technologies, putting them to use for the farming community they served.

The town of Matthews, N.C., located in the southeastern corner of Mecklenburg County, is typical of this phenomenon as its early beginnings were due to the establishment and evolution of the agrarian enterprise of farming. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, farmers began clearing the land in what is now considered the downtown area of Matthews. As a result of this labor, the cleared landscape was dotted with the stumps of all the felled trees. In fact, “so many tree stumps were left standing that the early settlement became known as ‘Stumptown.’”^[1]

By 1820, the “Stumptown” settlement had grown considerably enough that it warranted a post office. Records from the era show that, “... on July 12, 1825, John Miles Fullwood was appointed postmaster in the Stumptown Area.”^[2] Fullwood’s home would serve as the first post office in “Stumptown.” The Fullwood home also served double duty as a small store for the area. The result of this combination made Fullwood’s home the focal point of the settlement. The locals would congregate by his home to get mail, draw provisions, and find out what was going on in the area. Ultimately, the moniker “Fullwood” replaced “Stumptown” and the area would go by this name until the end of Reconstruction.

After the Civil War, “Fullwood” began to take on the appearance of a small town rather than a settlement as construction began on several houses in the area as well as a general store. As a Charlotte News article recounts, “... soon after the Confederate guns quit looming, Wylie Knowles chose this spot for a saw mill and with Arthur and Watson Reid at the headblocks, and ... Dic McCain, driving the ox log cart, he sawed enough lumber to build a half dozen crude houses which formed the nucleus of the town.”^[3] While the small store Fullwood had opened in his home had offered the most basic needs, the newly constructed general store was stocked with, “merchandise covering a variety of needs, with tinwares being a principle (sic.) line of goods. Whiskey and spirits were sold along with agricultural supplies necessary to support the farmers and family life.”^[4]

While Matthews owes its beginnings to farming, its evolution to the present day would not have been possible without the innovations and the expansion of transportation technology, which directly benefited the farming community.

The first advance came with the arrival of the stagecoach. This innovation brought new economic expansion to the area. “Soon businesses and homes began to appear in increasing numbers. With cotton and timber fueling the expansion, ‘Fullwood’ had evolved from a community and emerged as a town.”^[5]

However, it was along the railroads that several of the small county towns were established. As stated by Dr. Richard Mattson in his *Historic Landscapes of Mecklenburg County: The Small Towns*, “Pineville, Matthews, Huntersville, and Cornelius are children of the railroad. These towns share many traits, but their strongest bond is the railroad tracks.”^[6] What farming and the stagecoach had created, rail expanded almost exponentially and its influence was soon evident throughout the community.

The railroad line was constructed by the Carolina Central Railway Company in 1874 and connected Matthews to the coastal port of Wilmington, N.C. The line also connected Matthews to the county’s urban and manufacturing center in Charlotte, with connections for points westward. As Mrs. Watson Morris stated in the *Charlotte Observer*, “the railway officials gave the station the name of Matthews, probably in honor of two directors of the company, Watson Matthews and J. Bronder Matthews, both of New York.”^[7] Local legend however,

disputes this theory and offers instead another story that credits the town name to a local citizen with the name of Matthews who donated land for the construction of the train station and the foreman's house. Regardless of which story is true, "beginning in 1875, incoming mail arriving by train was addressed 'Matthews Station' and the name 'Fullwood' became less popular."^[8]

As Mattson points out, "railways tied the towns not only to each other and Southern seaports but also to Northern Markets and sources of building materials and finished goods."^[9] Cotton was indeed king in this era, and towns like Matthews served as rural marketing and shipping stations for this local cash crop. This infusion of capital was not lost on local businessmen either. Mattson states further that, "the railroads enabled merchants to bypass Southern port cities and market this staple directly to Northern Cities in exchange for goods shipped by rail. Storekeepers stocked their shelves with the latest products from northern stores, and advanced agricultural supplies to farmers who, in turn, cultivated more and more cotton to pay for these provisions."^[10]

With an ever-expanding local economy, these same merchants and business leaders began to think of making their community an official town. By the 1870's the area around the Matthews Depot contained a settlement of approximately two hundred people. By 1879, as chronicled in the Southeast News, "they ('they' being the merchants and businessmen of the area) secured a charter of incorporation from the legislature of North Carolina, creating the town

of Matthews and empowering the citizens thereof to exercise their authority as residents of an incorporated municipality.”^[11]

As the twentieth century dawned, Matthews had grown considerably from its early “Stumptown” roots. By 1901 Matthews downtown boasted cotton gins, general stores, a bank, pharmacy, gristmill, blacksmith and livery services, and a hotel. The railroad had increased traffic so that, “five passenger trains and eight freight trains came through the town each day and the depot did thousands of dollars in business.”^[12]

“By the 1890’s, the regions railroad towns had been integrated into a national network of rail lines. Mecklenburg County, like the rest of the Piedmont, may have continued to be predominately rural, but old patterns of isolation were being challenged by a new mobility and access to far flung marketplaces.”^[13] Matthews serves as a perfect example of this trend. While its downtown underwent radical transformations from a rural meeting place to a municipal center, along the periphery things remained as they had always been, with farms dotting the landscape. These farms continued to use Matthews as their central source for supplies and provisions as well as an outlet to market their goods, yet they still retained their rural character as the world around them began to change. One such extant example of this phenomenon is seen in the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse.

William H. Freeman (October 10, 1869 – January 20, 1947)^[14] built the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse circa 1887. Freeman not only built this house but

several other structures in the Matthews area. Most notably, he helped in the construction of Matthews Presbyterian Church and the teacherage for Matthews School. Family anecdotes also reveal that Freeman was also a schoolteacher, and it was rumored that he taught class in a log structure (no longer extant) at the corner of the McEwen-Moore property^[15]. A jack-of-all-trades, he not only built houses and taught school, he also had several farms in the Matthews area.

Freeman had three children. They were William (Bill) Reid Freeman (May 20, 1895 – June 10, 1974), Lillian (June) Augusta Freeman (December 17, 1897 - January 1970), and Margaret Katherine Freeman (April 23, 1901 – June 6, 1989).^[16]

The house Freeman built was constructed of wood, but it also had two brick chimneys that were made with brick formed on the farm^[17] (some of the unused bricks still sit beside the house today). The house and property included 64.84 acres total and gave plenty of room for the cattle and horses to graze.^[18]

Originally, the house was built for Carl McEwen. Around 1920, Freeman decided that he wanted to purchase the property from McEwen so as to put his own livestock there. So Freeman traded him a property he owned on 7th Street in Charlotte for the farm in Matthews. After the transaction, Freeman put his livestock there and arranged for a relative to oversee the property. Unfortunately, this arrangement did not work out, and he was forced to come to another arrangement. Freeman was then able to get his son Bill to move in with his wife Nell. This seemed like a desirable solution at the time; but Sue Moore recounts that, “Nell was not a farm girl, though, and had a tough time. She burned a hole

in the kitchen floor under the wood burning stove, and never ‘took’ to life with livestock.”^[19] Consequently, Bill, Nell and their family eventually moved out of the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse and into Matthews proper where that side of the Freeman family still resides today.

Still, William Freeman had no one to run the farm in his stead. However, his daughter Katherine soon rectified this dilemma. Katherine and her husband, William (Floyd) Moore (February 3, 1901 – July 15, 1979),^[20] were both more inclined to the labors farm work entailed. Freeman had given the couple a choice of the three farms he owned in and around Matthews. The Moore’s chose the McEwen-Moore property and on December 31, 1931 officially purchased the house and land from Freeman.^[21] “The floors of the downstairs were awful,” recalls Sue Moore. “There was a ridge down the middle of the hall, that was just impossible to deal with.”^[22] The house was not painted either. Originally, the kitchen was a separate building from the house. However, by the time the Moore’s moved in, that building had been demolished and replaced with an addition to the house that contained a kitchen. There was no indoor plumbing either, but a “two-holer” outhouse provided bathroom facilities.^[23]

Floyd Moore kept himself busy after moving in and set about making the house suitable for a family to live in. He replaced the floors in the downstairs (they are still extant) and installed French doors, per the request of Katherine, from the dining room to the front downstairs room (also still extant).^[24] When they first moved in, the house was only insulated on the ground floor. “There

were wood stoves in the . . . downstairs rooms” which Sue Moore states was obviously not the desired arrangement because the entire family wound up sleeping in the same room. Katherine and Floyd had one bed, and the three children (at the time) had one bed as well.” ^[25]

The Moore’s would ultimately have five children: Ellyn Tye (April 13, 1925 – present), William Floyd Jr. (October, 26, 1926 – present), Thomas Henry (August 17, 1929 – present), Ashlyn Katherine (September 5, 1931 – October 2002), and SueVon (August 19, 1938 – present).^[26] While the first four children were born in the Four Mile Creek area, Sue was actually born in the house. The children, when not performing chores, were able to keep themselves busy on the farm. “There were corncob fights on Sunday afternoon,”^[27] Sue fondly recalls. The children kept themselves entertained further by swinging in the big tree, located in the front yard. They also used to climb that tree where they were afforded a view of the nascent Charlotte skyline to the northwest. A fishing pond on the property stocked with brim and bass was another recreational alternative for the children. To this day, family legend has it that “Floyd’s ‘big one’ is still in there!”^[28]

In 1937, the upstairs portion of the house was insulated and new bedrooms became available for the children. The girls had one room, and the boys had the other. “There were many pillow fights,” Sue recalls, “with knocked out light bulbs, talks back and forth across the hall, and much mischief upstairs.”^[29] In 1943 an enclosed back porch was added with a new kitchen. The

old kitchen addition was transformed into Katherine and Floyd's bedroom, and their old bedroom became a sitting room/den. Also around this time the house was finally fitted with indoor plumbing. While it was only one bathroom, it was still a major improvement over the "two-holer" outhouse.

Floyd Moore kept the usual assortment of pigs, horses and cattle on the farm, but he also raised crops to support his family. "We grew a lot of corn, wheat and oats for the horses and cows," Sue remembered. During the Great Depression, Floyd also sold buttermilk and eggs to customers as far away as Charlotte to make extra income, and the business was brisk.^[30]

However, like many farmers in the South, the number one cash crop that was grown was cotton. A cotton house was erected on the property in 1913, indicating that cotton farming had been going on almost twenty years prior to the Moore's taking over. Circa 1931, this barn was further expanded to handle even more cotton. As Sue Moore remembers, "When the top level (of the barn) was full you knew it was time to take it to the gin."^[31] Then, either with mules or horses, Floyd would take the cotton into Matthews to be ginned. The children always wanted to go with him, because going to Matthews proper, while only a few miles from the farm, was an all day event and a special occasion because they could go into town. "It was a special treat when we got to go to the gin." Sue recalled. "Daddy would let us get a piece of candy from Renfrow's (Renfrow Hardware and General Store)."^[32] The children attended Matthews school in town and were able to catch up with friends on the days when Floyd would let

them accompany him to the cotton gin. The Moore's would also stock up on groceries either at Renfrow's or at Funderburk's General Store, both of which were located on Trade Street in the center of town.

Sue Moore recalled that even though they lived on the edge of Matthews, they were still tied closely to the community. Besides attending Matthews School, they were also members of Matthews Presbyterian Church, the church her grandfather had helped to build. "You knew your neighbors,"^[33] she said. That sense of community was something she remembers most about Matthews. It was a symbiotic relationship. The farms needed Matthews for provisions and access to markets via the railroad, and Matthews needed the farms because that is what drove the town's early economic engine and allowed it the opportunity to grow via the railroad.

This kind of relationship was a common one in rural Mecklenburg County through the mid-twentieth century. However, urbanization in Charlotte and its eventual expansion have changed the built environment of the Matthews area substantially. Today, Highway 74 (Independence Boulevard), Interstate 485, and heavy commercial development virtually surround the McEwen-Moore Farm. However, it still retains a sense of that provinciality that defined the area prior to the mid-twentieth century. Even amongst all the change surrounding it, the McEwen-Moore Farmhouse stoically carries on as a tribute to an almost forgotten way of life in Mecklenburg County.

- ^[1] Paula H. Lester, Discover Matthews: From Cotton to Corporate (Matthews, N.C.: The Town of Matthews Tourism Council, 2000), p.5.
- ^[2] Ibid.
- ^[3] Reverend S.J. Hood, "Many Had Part in the Founding and Growth of Matthews," Charlotte News, December 18, 1937, p.1.
- ^[4] Lester, p. 6.
- ^[5] Lester, p. 6-7.
- ^[6] Richard L. Mattson, Historic Landscapes of Mecklenburg County: The Small Towns, (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission), p. 3.
- ^[7] Mrs. Watson Morris, "Matthews' Life Includes Days of the Stagecoach," Charlotte Observer, February 28, 1950, p. 4-l.
- ^[8] Lester, p. 8.
- ^[9] Mattson, p. 4.
- ^[10] Mattson, p. 5.
- ^[11] Southeast News, November 10, 1975, p. 1-24.
- ^[12] History, The Town of Matthews, (http://www.matthewsnc.com/html/history_maps.html, (Accessed March 11, 2009).
- ^[13] Mattson, p. 4.
- ^[14] Interview with Sue Moore, March 31, 2009.
- ^[15] Ibid.
- ^[16] Ibid.
- ^[17] Sue Moore, Notes on the Moore House, n.d.
- ^[18] Mecklenburg County Deed Book 817, p. 9, 12 December 1931.
- ^[19] Sue Moore, Notes.
- ^[20] Interview with Sue Moore.
- ^[21] Mecklenburg County Deed Book 817, p. 9.
- ^[22] Sue Moore, Notes.
- ^[23] Ibid.
- ^[24] Ibid.
- ^[25] Ibid.
- ^[26] Interview with Sue Moore.
- ^[27] Ibid.
- ^[28] Sue Moore, Notes.
- ^[29] Ibid.
- ^[30] Interview with Sue Moore.
- ^[31] Ibid.
- ^[32] Ibid.
- ^[33] Ibid.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Architectural Description</u></p>
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The Moore House is a two-story frame I-house. The I-house form is a vernacular American house type. Typical for an I-house, the Moore House is a side-gabled two-story house, and the principal section of the house is one room deep. The house is three bays wide and faces west, sitting within 100 feet of a two-lane paved road. The two-story house dominates its setting, and is located on the edge of a tract of largely open farmland.



While the immediate setting of the Moore house has retained its historic rural character, much of the surrounding land has been developed with wide roads, and commercial and residential buildings. The house is surrounded by mature hardwood trees and sits on a relatively flat site that slopes gently to the rear.



*Moore House
from the rear,
viewed across
pasture.*

Several agricultural buildings are located to the rear of the house. A ca. 1960 brick house shares the property and neighbors the Moore House to the north.



The symmetrical façade of the Moore House features a nearly full-width shed-roof porch. The porch is supported by four sets of paired wooden posts with deep chamfered edges. The posts are set on low brick piers, topped with concrete caps. A boxed beam with a beaded base and moulded trim rests on the posts. Masonry steps with low cheek walls lead to the porch. The porch features a wooden tongue-and-groove floor. The porch's beaded-board ceiling features a recessed area in front of the doorway, which allows for a transom. The partial-height piers, cheek walls, and the porch's exposed rafter ends may indicate that the porch was replaced or altered sometime in the early 20th century. In Mecklenburg County it is unusual to find a nineteenth-century house with its original porch.



Porch Details

The exterior of most of the Moore House is covered with simple wooden siding. Typical for a 19th century house, the siding sheltered by the porch is not overlapped, but is instead tongue-and-groove siding, which results in a flat wall surface. The junction between the two siding types is marked with a vertical board. Sheltered by the porch and centered on the façade is a single three-panel six-light door. The doorway features three-light single-panel sidelights and a three-light transom. The lights in the sidelights do not match the glazing in the door, and it is likely that the current door dates to the early part of the 20th century. The doorway features a moulded enframenet that flares out at the bottom of the door and around the transom in reference to the hooded trim typical for the Italianate Style. Similar enframenets surround the two first-story six-over-six windows. The door and window trim found on the first story of the façade is the only element of the Italianate Style found on the house.



Details: windows and door on the facade

The symmetrical fenestration found on the first story is reflected on the second story of the façade. The window openings on the second floor lack the shaped enfamements found below the porch roof, instead, simple moulded trim defines each opening. All of the windows on the principal section of the house are six-over-six double-hungs.



Bordering the tops of the second-story windows is a wide simple frieze-board. Moulded cavetto trim covers the transition from the frieze to the relatively deep soffit. A substantial crown moulding decorates the fascia.



The north elevation features a brick chimney centered on the gable of the principal section of the house. The chimney was replaced late in the 20th century, when the original masonry failed. Two windows on each story closely border the chimney. The side elevations feature deep soffit returns and wide raking frieze boards. The same moulded trim found on the fascia is used on the rake boards. A one-story two-bay wide gabled rear ell addition was built flush with the north elevation. The wing's simple siding butts against the principal section's corner board. The siding reveal is slightly different on the two sections. The bay closest to the principal section contains paired six-over-six windows with simple trim. The rearmost bay contains two short six-over-six windows. The rear ell features exposed rafters, which contrast with the frieze boards and moulded trim found on the deep soffits of the principal section. The exposed rafter ends and the short windows indicate that the rear ell dates from the 20th century, and is consistent with a construction date of 1943. A brick flue pierced the roof at the ridge.



The south elevation of the principal section features an original external shouldered chimney. The date "1887" is painted on the brick. Fenestration and trim is like that found on the north elevation.



A one-bay shed-roof wing is setback slightly from the south elevation of the principal section. Trim around the window and along the rake match that found on the principal section. A small external brick flue is located to the rear of the window. Setback slightly from the shed wing is an engaged shed-roof enclosed porch. The south elevation of the porch features a screen door and a short six-over-six window.



The frieze found on the other elevations is continued on the rear of the principal section of the house. The rear elevation of the rear ell is pierced by a single short six-over-six window. The rear porch is covered by a combination of siding and screen.

The interior of the Moore House possesses a good degree of integrity. The principal section features a center hallway. Original four-panel doors open into the front rooms. An early brick mantle is located in the south front room, while a recent brick mantle was constructed in the north front room. Moulded trim around the doors and original baseboard survive. Wallboard appears to have been added over most of the original interior walls on the first story, and the original pine plank floors were covered with narrower pine flooring during the first half of the 20th century.

The rear rooms on the first story have been updated over the years and possess few significant features.



A fine staircase dominates the center hallway. Sawn scrollwork brackets and cavetto trim decorate each tread. Three simple square balusters rise from each tread and support a moulded handrail. The handrail terminates in a large turned pine newel post at the bottom of the stairs. The wide pine treads are unpainted. The stairs turn ninety degrees before they reach the second story, with two more turned pine newels. The balusters change on the second story, with turned balusters supporting the handrail.



On the second story the original wide plank floor is exposed. Two bedrooms open off of the center hallway. These rooms exhibit the original tongue-and-groove board ceilings and walls. The mantles in each of the second-story feature wide sawn boards under the shelves with simple jambs. Closets in the south bedroom were added during the 20th century.



Details of second-story
bedrooms



The property includes several historic agricultural building.



A frame building which may have served as a cotton house or a corn crib sits close to the house. A tall gabled single-bay is flanked by two shed additions.



Further to the south is located a Ca.1910 milking barn. The front-gabled block-construction building faces west. The three-bay-wide building is narrow and is

topped by a low-pitched roof. The blocks may have been formed on the site. The masonry walls are in good condition, but the wooden millwork has decayed.