

Survey and Research Report

On The

McElroy House



1. Name and location of the property. The property known as the McElroy House is located at 10915 Beatties Ford Road in the Huntersville vicinity of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.
2. Name, address, and telephone number of the present owner of the property.

The owner is :

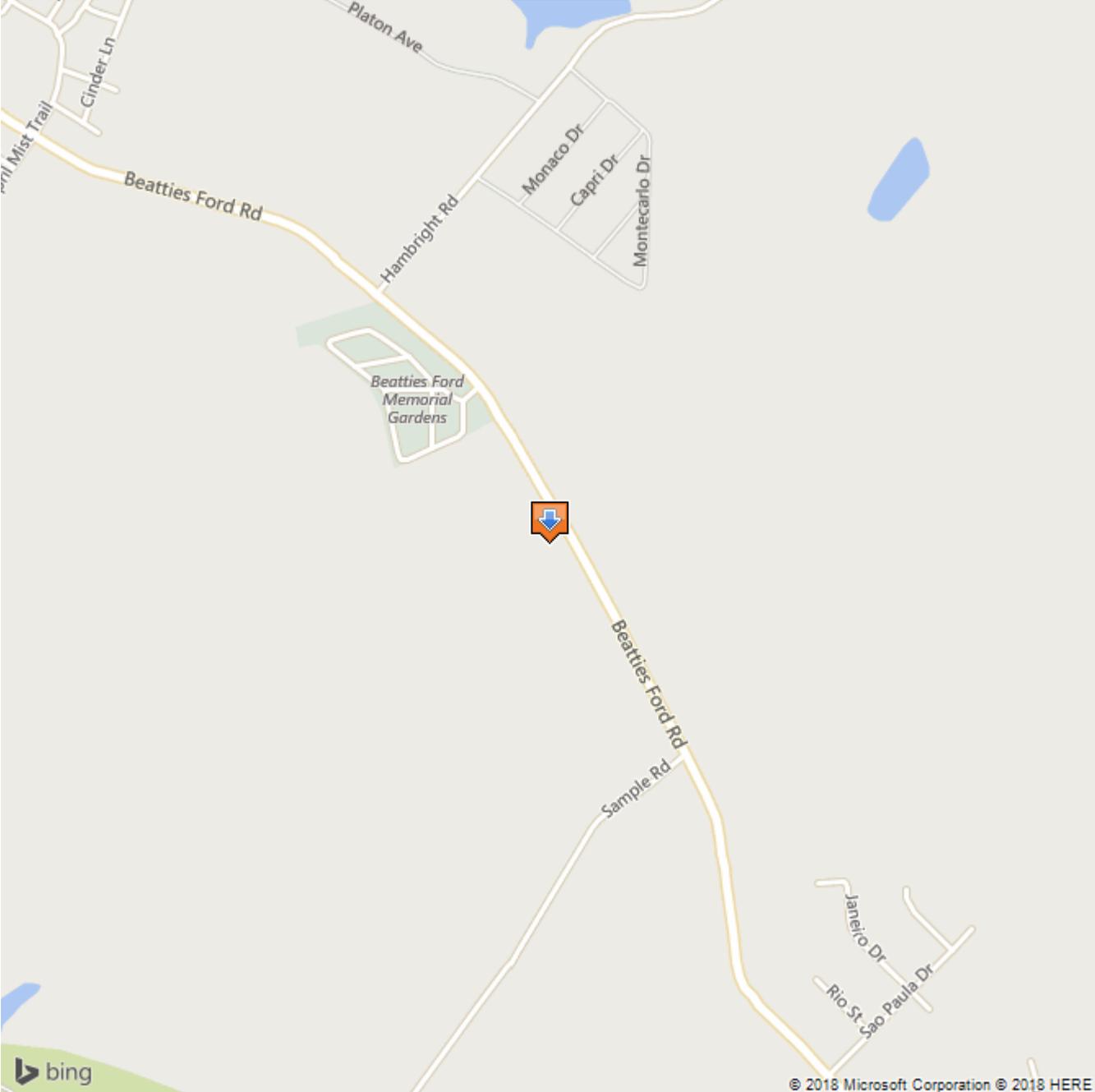
Thomas M. and Mildred D. Snyder

10915 Beatties Ford Road

Huntersville, NC 28078

Telephone Number: (704)875-2831

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



4. Current deed book references to the property. The most recent deed to the McElroy House is listed in Mecklenburg County Deed Book 4537 at Page 964. The Tax Parcel Number of the property is 023-031-09.
5. A brief historical description of the property. This report contains a historical sketch of the property prepared by Dr. William Huffman.
6. A brief architectural description of the property. This report contains an architectural description of the property prepared by Dr. Richard Mattson.
7. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S. 160A-400.5.

a. Special significance in terms of history, architecture, and cultural importance. The Commission judges that the property known as the McElroy House does possess special significance in terms of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations: 1) the McElroy House was constructed ca. 1883 for Samuel Jefferson McElroy, and early Mecklenburg County resident of Scots-Irish ancestry; 2) as a volunteer during the Civil War, McElroy fought at the Battle of Gettysburg; 3) Margaret Janet Sample McElroy, his wife, was a great grand-daughter of a signer of the alleged Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence; 4) the McElroy House is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of the vernacular Victorian farmhouses built in Mecklenburg County following the Civil War; 5) the interior of the McElroy House retains much of the early woodwork including mantels, turned post staircases, board-and-batten ceilings, and original doors with early hardware; 6) the attached smokehouses appears to be a unique feature for Mecklenburg County; and 7) the tack house, with early harness still hanging on the walls, is a well-preserved example of free-standing farm outbuildings.

b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association. The Commission contends that the architectural description by Dr. Richard Mattson included in this report demonstrates that the McElroy House meets this criterion.

9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal. The current Ad Valorem appraised value of the .692 acres of land is \$28,800. The current Ad Valorem appraised value of the house is \$123,300. The total Ad Valorem appraised value is \$152,100. The property is zoned R-3.

Date of Preparation of this Report. November

1, 1998

Prepared by:

Dr. Richard S. Mattson & Dr. William H. Huffman Historic Landmarks
Commission 2100 Randolph Road Charlotte, N.C. 28207



Architectural Description

The Samuel J. McElroy House is among the finest and most intact of a collection of vernacular Victorian, two-story, T-shaped farmhouses to appear in Mecklenburg County (including five along Beatties Ford Road) after the Civil War. The house is situated in a rural setting just north of , the historic Hopewell Presbyterian Church and the ca. 1800 Latta Plantation. An operating farm stands to the southeast of the property and an open field is located northeast across the

road. The dwelling's asymmetrical form stands in contrast to the typically balanced facades of I-houses, which predominated in rural Mecklenburg during the 19th century. Built in the late 1880s, the McElroy House is a picturesque mix of vernacular Victorian influences. Although the original weatherboards were covered with aluminum siding about 1980, the exterior retains much of its original decorative woodwork, including the late Victorian sawnwork on the front porch. The house's gable-front section features a front-facing bay window on the first floor and a sash window with six panes in each sash on the gable-front facade of the second story. Original sash windows with six-over-six panes survive throughout the residence. The two-bay, one-room-deep, side-gable portion features the largely intact front porch. This porch includes pairs of slender wooden, chamfered supports with decorative sawn brackets. These posts are connected by a sawnwork balustrade. The main entrance, positioned at the corner of the two sections of the house and leading into the central hall, features a crosssetted surround and double doors with four panels in each. The paired screen doors are highlighted by ornate jig-sawed woodwork. The rear of the house includes a one-story, one-story bedroom wing on the north side that is probably original. Its original gable roof replaced by a shed roof in the early 1980s. At the south end of the rear facade is a one-story kitchen wing topped by a gable roof that extends to incorporate an original smokehouse. The two units are separated by a narrow breezeway. This configuration is unique in Mecklenburg County. An engaged porch extends along the north and south elevations of the attached smokehouse and originally covered how partially remodeled south-elevation of the kitchen ell. A presumably original back porch with chamfered, supports and foundation of stone piers wraps around the rear of the smokehouse. The porch's irregularly-shaped low-pitched roof is a later modification, and the porch has been partially rebuilt, with several of the original posts replaced with square wood supports, and a simple wood railing erected. All of the roofs on the McElroy House are covered with standing-seam metal sheathing.



The interior of the main body of the house is essentially intact. The interior follows a central-hall plan, with a parlor on the northwest side (side-gable portion) and a living room and dining room on the southeast side (gable-front portion). The dining room leads into the kitchen wing, which has been remodelled and enlarged to include a section of the engaged porch on the northwest side. The original bedroom wing on the north side of the rear elevation has been remodelled as a family room and now also incorporates a portion of this porch. However, in the main T-shaped block of the McElroy House original vernacular Victorian elements survive intact. The central hall features an open-string stair ascending in two runs from the main entrance to three bedrooms in the second floor. The stairway has turned balusters anchored by a sturdy turned newel. Original mantels, four-panel doors, and delicately moulded door surrounds survive throughout the interior of the main block. The mantel in the south front room--the living room--is particularly elaborate. The frieze has a curvilinear motif with raised curved panels, and three heavy wooden corbels supporting the shelf. The pilasters also have raised panels topped by moulded caps. Flanking this mantel are two original closets with doors having two vertical panels, a lingering vernacular Greek Revival trait. The other mantels--in the parlor, dining room, and three upstairs bedrooms--are simpler, but all reflect the vernacular Victorian style exemplified by the living room mantel. The original ceiling in the living room is covered by a modern rough-finished plaster coating; but all of the other rooms in the main block of the house have original board-and-batten ceilings. The walls of the house have original plaster, and original hardware, porcelain door knobs, and wood flooring survive throughout.

The McElroy yard, shaded by mature oak trees, comprises a mix of historical and modern elements. The remains of a fieldstone chimney (perhaps once a summer kitchen, but more research is needed to confirm its original function) stands behind the house to the south. It is not classified in this nomination as either contributing or noncontributing. Other contributing and non-contributing resources are listed below:

Tack house Contributing ca. 1885

This frame gable-front building stands on granite slabs. It was built to store bridles, harnesses, and saddlery for horses and mules. Measures about eight by twelve feet. Present wood-shingled roof put on in 1988.



The Samuel J. McElroy House is architecturally significant under Criterion C as an outstanding example of the T-shaped, two-story, vernacular Victorian farmhouses that were built in the county after the Civil War (see Associated Property Type 1--Houses--Postbellum Farmhouses). Erected in the 1880s for Samuel J. McElroy, a farmer, the dwelling features one of the more ornate post-Civil War front porches remaining in rural Mecklenburg. The interior, though not exceptionally decorative, retains mantels with curvilinear friezes and raised decorative panels, a turned-post staircase, **board-and-batten** ceilings, and intact doors and simply moulded door surrounds that exemplify the interior finishes of middle-class farmhouses across the county in the late 19th century. The house's asymmetrical form reflects the emerging preference among well-to-do farmers in the area for up-to-date picturesque domestic architecture, over the more conservative I-house. Yet, the basic design remains restrained both inside and out compared to the picturesque styles appearing in Charlotte and other substantial North Carolina cities in this period. The focus of stylistic attention is placed on the front porch and bay window. The attached smokehouse, which is unique in Mecklenburg County, reflects McElroy's concern for function as well as style in the overall design of his farmhouse. The tack house, which is the only surviving free-standing farm outbuilding on the tract, contributes to the architectural significance of the McElroy property (see Associated Property Type 2--Outbuildings).

Historical Essay

The Samuel J. McElroy House was built sometime after November, 1883, when Samuel Jefferson McElroy (1840-1927) purchased a ninety-one acre parcel on what is now Beatties Ford Road.¹ McElroy was descended from Scotch-Irish ancestry who came to America in 1729 and settled in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Sometime later they moved on to Virginia, then to Kentucky. One of the descendents, Samuel Jefferson McElroy, Sr., moved to Waihaw in Union County, N.C., where he was engaged in mining and farming. One of his sons, Samuel Jefferson McElroy, Jr., moved to Mecklenburg County as a young man (he appears as a resident of the county in 1860).² A volunteer during the Civil War, McElroy was wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg, where he lost a finger, and was taken prisoner. After the war, on January 16, 1866, he married Margaret Janet Sample (1846-1928) of Hopewell, who was a great-granddaughter of Richard Barry, Sr., a signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. They started their married life on the Dr. George Dunlap farm near Hopewell Presbyterian Church, which was part of her father's estate.

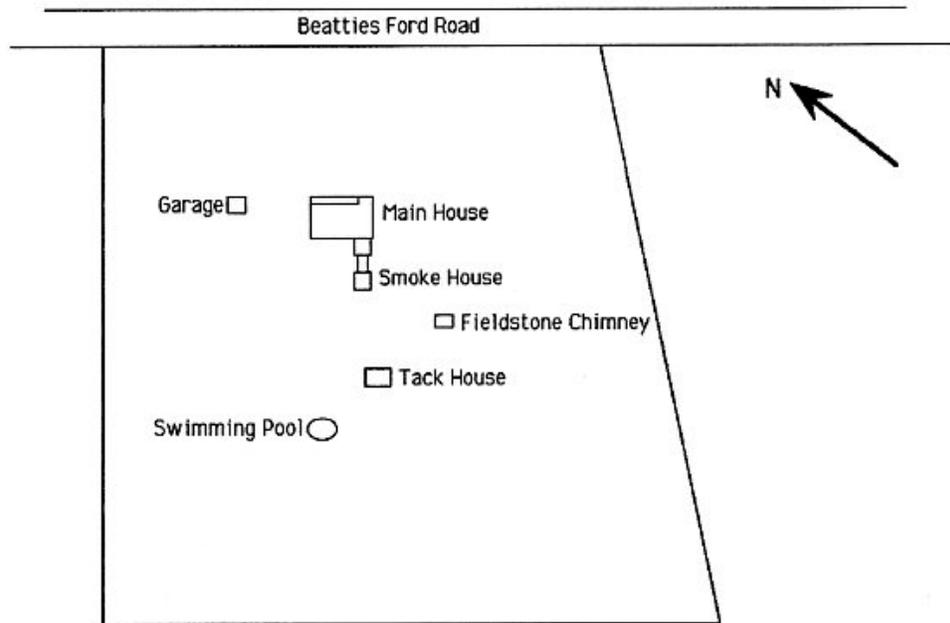
Samuel and Margaret McElroy had eight children: William Edward; Henry Lynn; John Grier; Carrie Jane (Mrs. John Underwood); Flora May (Mrs. William E. Luckey); Una Dunbar (Mrs. Frank Patterson); Margaret Eugenia; and Martha Ellen. All were active members of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. John Grier McElroy (1878-1958) became an elder of the church in 1907. He also inherited the homestead from his father in 1928, where he lived and farmed.⁵

Just a few months before his death in 1958, John Grier McElroy sold off fifty acres of the ninety-three he had inherited from his father, and his children, John Grier Jr., Robert Sidney and Samuel Jefferson divided the remainder into three 5-1/2-acre lots. The S. J. McElroy House was acquired by John Grier McElroy, Jr. in the division.⁶ In 1976, J. G. McElroy, Jr. sold a 1.88-acre parcel fronting on Beansies Ford Road that contains the house to Donald C. and Timola B. Moore, who in turn sold it to the present owners, Thomas M. and Mildred D. Snyder, in 1982.

Samuel J. McElroy House

10915 Beatties Ford Road
Huntersville, N.C.

Rough scale: 1" = 75'



***Footnotes:**

¹ Mecklenburg County Deed Book 36, p. 102.

² 1850 U. S. Census. Mecklenburg County, N.C.

³ Charles William Sommerville, The History of Hopewell Presbyterian Church (Charlotte: Hopewell Presbyterian Church, 1939; reprint, 1987), p. 163; Mecklenburg County Will Book U, p. 318.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 163-164.

⁵ Ibid., p. 164; Mecklenburg County Will Book U, p. 318

⁶ Mecklenburg County Deed Books 2001, p. 469; 2640, p. 365; 2640, p.368

⁷ Ibid., 3860. p. 243; 4537. p. 964.

