

# **Survey and Research Report on The Martin-Worth- Henderson House**

**310 Concord Road Davidson, N.C.**



## **1. Name and Location of the Property:**

The property known as the Martin-Worth-Henderson House is located at 310 Concord Road, Davidson, NC.

## **2. Name and Address of the Current Owner**

Mr. James E. Murphy, III  
PO Box 1966  
Davidson, NC 28036

## **3. Representative photographs of the property:**

This report contains representative photographs of the property.

**4. Maps depicting the location of the property:**

This report contains maps of the property. The U.T.M. of the property is 17 513969E, 3928344N.



**5. Current deed book reference to the property:**

The most recent deed for this property is recorded in the Mecklenburg County Deed Book 15229 on page 336. The tax parcel identification number for this property is 007-012-09.

## 6. A brief historical sketch of the property:

This report contains a brief historical sketch of the property.

## 7. A brief architectural description of the property:

This report contains a brief architectural description of the property.

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

The Commission judges that the property known as the Martin-Worth-Henderson House does possess special historic significance. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations:

**a. Special significance in terms of history, architecture, and/ or cultural importance:**

1. The Martin-Worth-Henderson House was the home of the family of two Davidson College presidents and later served as a boarding house for Davidson College students, and thus reflects the symbiotic relationship between the town and Davidson College.
2. The Martin-Worth-Henderson House is a prominent and well-preserved restrained example of the Queen Anne style, with a high degree of integrity. The retention of original interior and exterior architectural features and materials is notable.
3. The Martin-Worth-Henderson House possesses a strong associative history with a North Carolinian of note, Dr. Mary Turpin Martin Sloop, who established the Crossnore School in the North Carolina Mountains. The Crossnore School has sheltered and educated children from North Carolina since 1913.

**b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association:**

The Commission contends that the physical and architectural description which is included in this report demonstrates that the Martin-Worth-Henderson House meets this criterion.

**9. Ad Valorem tax appraisal:** The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for an 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 total appraised value of the Martin-Worth-Henderson House is \$629,600.

**10. Statement of Integrity:** The Martin-Worth-Henderson House has retained a high degree of integrity in terms of the house design and the house's materials. The house has been minimally altered, with both the interior and exterior retaining much of their original architectural features. The intact porch, the original windows, interior and exterior doors, interior and exterior millwork, original siding, and original floors are notable. Changes that have been made have not significantly impacted the historic character of the house and have not caused a significant loss of original material.

**11. Portion of the property recommended, justification of the designation boundary, and justification for local landmarks designation:** This report recommends that the interior and exterior of the house and the approximately .665-acre lot of land associated with the house be included in the designation of the property. Such designation would protect the historic character of the property. Designation of the house and land would recognize the property's historical significance and architectural importance.

**12. Date of Preparation of this report:** December 16, 2005 (updated April 1, 2019)

**13. Prepared by:** Jennifer K. Payne and edited and revised by Dr. Dan L. Morrill  
(updated by Stewart Gray)

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### Summary Statement of Significance

The Martin-Worth-Henderson House was erected circa 1898 to serve as home of the family of two of Davidson College's presidents. This house therefore possesses special historic significance because it illustrates the symbiotic relationship that existed between Davidson College and the town of Davidson. The Martin-Worth-Henderson House was also the home of Dr. Mary Turpin Martin Sloop in her formative years. A North Carolinian of note, Dr. Sloop established the Crossnore School, which for eighty-two years has increased the educational opportunities available to children in the North Carolina mountains and beyond. Finally, the dwelling, like many of the older homes in Davidson, was later used as a boarding house for students at Davidson College.



The Martin-Worth-Henderson House in the 1930's  
Courtesy of the Davidson College Archive



## **Historical Context Statement**

Davidson, North Carolina is anomalous among the small towns of Mecklenburg County because its early development largely resulted from the growth of Davidson College, rather than from the advent of the railroad or textile mills. The special significance of the Martin-Worth-Henderson House can therefore best be understood within the context of the expansion of the historic built or man-made environment of the town. The house stands on the fifth lot east of the intersection of College Road and Concord Road in Davidson, North Carolina, just over one block from the Davidson College Presbyterian Church. It is visible from any location on the extreme southern edge of the campus, and this proximity to Davidson College is a telling feature of its rich history.

Davidson College was founded in 1835 by a group of Presbyterians who “deeply” felt a need to construct an institution which would “[secure] the means of Education to young men within our bounds of hopeful talent and piety, preparatory to the gospel Ministry.”[1] The college was a success, and the increasing size of the student population and faculty was one of the reasons for the growth of the town. The construction of Concord Road during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was indicative of this trend. The Trustees of Davidson College divided the land which bordered Concord Road into lots in 1870.[2] These parcels, which were located along the southern border of the campus, were not for sale in 1870; but by the last years of the nineteenth century the Trustees had begun to market them to private citizens, faculty, and townspeople alike. [3]

### **Martin-Worth-Henderson House**

The Martin-Worth-Henderson House came into being as a direct result of the expansion of the town and the college. As the college population continued to increase in the late nineteenth century, so did the demand for highly qualified professors. It was in this era that Davidson College recruited its seventh faculty member. He was Colonel William J. Martin, who became professor of chemistry in 1869. He was later named as the acting president of the college. Colonel Martin and his wife, Letitia Costin Martin, reared three children, William Joseph Martin, II, Lucy Battle Martin, and Mary Turpin Martin. The family was the first of the faculty families to settle permanently in Davidson.<sup>[4]</sup>



*Portrait of Letitia Costin Martin, wife of Colonel William J. Martin.  
Courtesy of Davidson College Archive*

The formative years of the Martin daughters in Davidson were inextricably linked to the town and to the college, although their later lives would take very different paths. Illustrative of her attitudes about the relationship between the college and the town, Mrs. Lucy Battle Martin Currie would later remark that, “try as we may it is impossible to separate the town’s record from that of the college, as the one grew up around the other.” [5] Both young ladies attended a one-teacher schoolhouse in Davidson, and both would later attend the nearby Statesville Female College for Women (now Mitchell Community College). [6] Their mother vehemently objected to the formal education of her daughters, but Col. Martin insisted that the young ladies “get an education in more than charming manners.” [7]



*Dr. William J. Martin, II, son of Letitia and  
William J. Martin.*

*Courtesy of the Davidson College Archives*



*Mary Turpin Martin and Lucy Battle Martin, daughters of Letitia and William J. Martin. Courtesy of the Davidson College Archives*

After graduating from Statesville Female College in 1891, Mary returned to Davidson to care for her mother, but doggedly pursued her education. The only female student at Davidson College, she chose a course of study that would prepare her for medical school, so that she might become a medical missionary. Her mother Letitia still did not view her daughter's decision as proper. Mary later remembered that "when I suggested that I'd like to take junior math, which included surveying, she [Letitia] nearly fainted, and she flatly refused to allow me to do it. Such a thing was unladylike, even though I promised to study French at the same time."<sup>[8]</sup>

Colonel Martin died in 1898, and his son, the younger William J. Martin II, a professor of chemistry and later president of Davidson College like his father, purchased a lot from the Trustees of Davidson College to build a dwelling for his mother, Letitia. The deed of the Martin-Worth-Henderson House was recorded in her name.<sup>[9]</sup> The census of 1900 shows that Letitia resided in the house with her two daughters, Mary and Lucy, aged twenty-seven and twenty-three, respectively.<sup>[10]</sup> Mary would recall that her mother during this period was "practically an invalid" and needed constant care.<sup>[11]</sup> After Letitia's death in 1901, Mary enrolled at the North Carolina Medical College, a private medical school in Davidson. However, she was not allowed to take anatomy, presumably because of the "unfeminine" nature of the subject. She chose to move to Philadelphia to attend the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, from which she graduated in 1906. She went on to intern at the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston, then served as the first resident physician at Agnes Scott College in Georgia. <sup>[12]</sup>



Dr. Mary Martin Sloop

*Dr. Mary Martin Sloop in her senior years.*

Having overcome the challenges associated with becoming a formally educated female at the turn of the last century, Mary went on to achieve even greater accomplishments that would touch the lives of many individuals. After marrying Dr. Eustace H. Sloop in 1908, whom she had met while the pair were students at Davidson College, she and her husband moved to Crossnore, North Carolina, where they established a school and clinic in 1913 to care for and educate the children of the North Carolina mountains. The school is still thriving and has students from twenty-seven counties of North Carolina.<sup>[13]</sup> In recognition of her tireless efforts on the behalf of children, Dr. Mary Sloop was named American Mother of the Year in 1951.<sup>[14]</sup> Both Dr. Mary Turpin Martin Sloop and Dr. Eustace Sloop are buried on a hill overlooking Crossnore. Partly as a result of the educational opportunities provided by Davidson College while she was a resident of the town, Dr. Mary Martin Sloop was able to affect change in the lives of children in the North Carolina mountains and beyond.

Although the contributions of Lucy Battle Martin Currie are not as well-known as those of her sister, they do illustrate the degree to which the town and the school were intertwined. As a daughter of one Davidson College president and the sister of another, Lucy Martin was intimately connected to the College even before she began to attend classes. She also benefited from being a resident of Davidson, because the College did allow females who lived in the town to matriculate “by courtesy.”<sup>[15]</sup> But when she graduated from Davidson College in 1899, her name and that of one other female student were not published in the catalogue of the graduating class “according to the custom.”<sup>[16]</sup>

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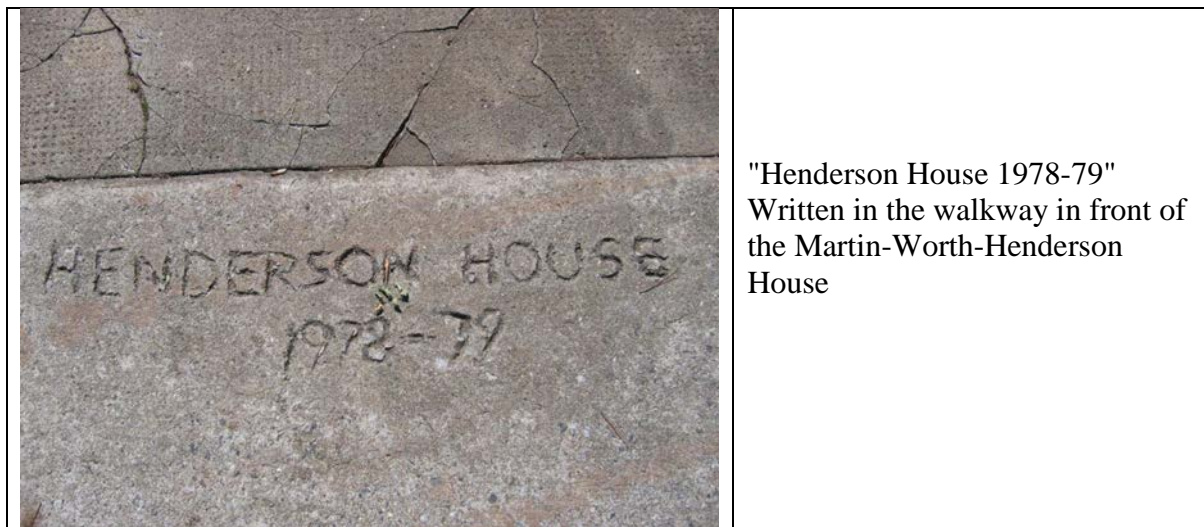
Lucy married Dr. Archibald Currie, a professor and later chair of the Department of Political Science at Davidson College. The education that Lucy received at Davidson allowed her to carve out a name for herself in the professional world as an English teacher at the Presbyterian College for Women in Charlotte (now Queens College). She was especially active in the social life of Davidson: she was a regular member of the Davidson College Presbyterian Church and was also a member of the Thelemite Book Club. Upon her death in 1967, she was remembered as a citizen who “for more than three score and ten years...was identified with [the best interests of the town], and no one contributed more toward giving the village the cultural tone which long distinguished it.”<sup>[17]</sup>

The Martin-Worth-Henderson House is associated with another integral piece of Davidson's history. Boarding houses had begun proliferating in Davidson within ten years following the establishment of the college, because running a boarding house attracted people who wanted to earn a decent living while enabling their sons to attend Davidson College. Boarding houses in Davidson have served an important function not only to the students who relied on these facilities, but they were also important to the culture of the town in two additional ways. First, the necessity for boarding houses caused Davidson to have a far greater number of imposing homes than one would find in the other outlying towns of Mecklenburg County. In addition, boarding houses drew students into the life of the town rather than remaining set apart on campus.<sup>[18]</sup>

Among those who came to town to operate boarding houses was Josephine Worth. Like others before her, Worth arrived in Davidson with her three children, David, age fifteen, Katherine, age eleven, and Frances, age thirteen. Worth was the widow of a missionary, and operating a boarding house provided her with a steady income, a good environment in which to rear her daughters, and the opportunity to attain a quality education for her son. She bought the house in 1905, and the Worths, like the Martins before them, would become deeply involved in the Davidson community. The dwelling became one of twelve boarding houses in operation by the second decade of the twentieth century. <sup>[19]</sup> The house remained in the Worth family until

1960 even though the Worths had moved to different locales by that time. [20]

The Martin-Worth-Henderson House was bought by Florence and Walter Henderson in 1960, who also had students as boarders. The Hendersons were leading citizens of the Davidson community and are well remembered. Walter Henderson, a 1912 graduate of Davidson College, operated a watch repair shop for fifty-two years after his return to Davidson around 1920. Mary Beaty remembers the business as “a quiet world of exacting craftsmanship.” Students of Davidson College have fond memories of the meals that Florence Henderson would cook for her boarders. To this day the house is commonly known around Davidson as the Henderson House.[21]



The Martin-Worth-Henderson House has special significance within the town of Davidson. This significance rests on its prominence as a boarding house for Davidson College students, as a prominent and well preserved restrained example of the Queen Anne style, and most importantly, in its role as the home of Dr. Mary Turpin Martin Sloop, an exemplary citizen of the town.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Mary D. Beaty, *Davidson, A History of the Town from 1835 until 1937* (Davidson, NC: Briarpatch Press, 1979), 48.

<sup>[2]</sup> Mary D. Beaty, *A History of Davidson College* (Davidson, NC: Briarpatch Press, 1988), 48.

<sup>[3]</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>[4]</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-37.

[5] Lucy Martin Currie, manuscript possibly written for the Tuesday Club, Lucy Martin Currie Collection, Davidson College Archives.

[6] Mary Martin Sloop, *Miracle in the Hills* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1953), 13; *The Mecklenburg Gazette* (Davidson, NC) August, 17, 1967.

[7] Sloop, 13.

[8] Ibid. 13-16.

[9] Malcolm Lester, *A Census of the Davidson College Cemetery* (Davidson, NC: Davidson College, 1996), 51; Beaty, 109; Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Register of Deeds, Deed reference number 129-455; Minutes of the Davidson College Board of Trustees, Finance Committee Report, 1898 (Courtesy of the Davidson College Archives).

[10] US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*. \_

[11] Sloop, 14.

[12] Lester, 25; Sloop, 19-20.

[13] Sloop, 20; Crossnore School Bulletin Vol. XXXVII, No. 2 (Crossnore, NC: Crossnore, School, Inc.); "Crossnore History," accessed on 16 October, 2005 at <http://www.crossnoreschool.org/aboutus.html>.

[14] "Mountain Doctor is 'Mother of 1951,'" unidentified newspaper and date, Colonel William J. Martin Biographical Family Collection, Davidson College Archives.

[15] *The Mecklenburg Gazette* (Davidson, NC), August 17, 1967.

[16] Beaty, *A History*, 189, 197; *The Narrative of the Nines* 2 (May, 1949), Lucy M. Currie Collection, Davidson College Archives

[17] *The Mecklenburg Gazette* (Davidson, NC), August 17, 1967.

[18] Beaty, *A History*, 11.

[19] Ibid. 109, 161, US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*. \_

[20] Thomas Wilson Lingle, William Joseph Martin, and Fredrick von Hengeveld, *Alumni Catalogue of Davidson College, 1837-1924* (Charlotte: The Presbyterian Standard Publishing Company, 1924), 220; Cornelia Rebekah Shaw, *War Record of Davidson College: 1917-1918* (Charlotte: Presbyterian Standard Publishing Company, 1923), 3; "Town Items," *Davidsonian*, February 19, 1919; "Town Items," *Davidsonian*, October 7,



1926; “News and Happenings,” *Davidsonian*, September 20, 1916; “News and Happenings,” *Davidsonian*, February 22, 1928; “Red Cross News,” *Davidsonian*, February 6, 1918; “Town News,” *Davidsonian*, March 13, 1924.

<sup>[21]</sup> Beaty, *A History*, 11, 138; Mr. Walter Henderson Oral History, June 30, 1976, Davidson College Archives, Davidson, NC

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### Site Description:

The Martin-Worth-Henderson House faces north on a rectangular lot that contains approximately seven-tenths of an acre. Directly across the street from the dwelling is the southern boundary of Davidson College. The parcel slopes gently downward from Concord Road and exhibits significant foliage on the eastern and the southern sides of the lot. A shared driveway marks the western edge of property and circles to the eastern portion of the rear of the tract to provide entry to a free-standing garage.

### Architectural Description:



The Martin-Worth-Henderson House, located at 310 Concord Road in Davidson, North Carolina, is a two-story, two-bay-wide, restrained example of the Queen Anne style. The house is extremely well preserved and has a high degree of integrity having retained most of its original siding and millwork. The house is sided in wooden clapboard and faces north on Concord Road. The house was originally built on brick piers, but the foundation has since been in-filled with brick. The massed house is topped with a hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles. The façade features a projecting, gabled bay containing paired two-over-two windows on each story. The

gable features prominent eave returns and is pierced by a two-light window. The gable is sheathed with flat boards decorated with applied sawn floral elements and rosettes. A one-story hipped porch, supported by turned posts, wraps the east side of the front elevation. Above the porch the second story is pierced by an oval window with curved trim. The porch shelters a panel door with a single elliptical light, topped with a single-light transom.







The front porch adjoins a two-story hipped wing that projects from the east elevation. The front elevation of the wing contains a paneled door sheltered by the porch, and a two-over-two window on the second story. The east elevation of the bay contains paired windows on each story.



East Elevation



The west elevation is four bays wide. On this elevation the design of the brick pier foundation, now in-filled with brick curtain walls, is most evident. The foundation is topped with a wide wooden water table. The second bay from the front projects and contains paired windows on the first and second stories. The bay is topped with a hipped roof. The frontmost bay contains a double-hung window on each story. In contrast to the symmetry found on the front two bays of the elevation, to the rear of the projecting bay the west elevation contains a variety of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century double-hung windows reflecting changes made when a rear porch was enclosed, and a second-story addition was added. The first story is pierced by two windows. A single set of paired windows pierce the second story.







West Elevation





The rear is dominated by a two-story gabled addition added late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that features a full-width screened porch. To the east of the addition, the original rear porch has been enclosed with a second story added under a shallow hipped roof. A late-20<sup>th</sup> - century detached garage is located approximately 30 feet to the southeast of the house.



The good condition and high degree of integrity found on the exterior is reflected in the interior. Especially notable is the hall. The space is open to the second story ceiling and contains a turning staircase with two landings. The staircase features newel posts topped with large round finials, turned balusters, and wainscoting.



Hall





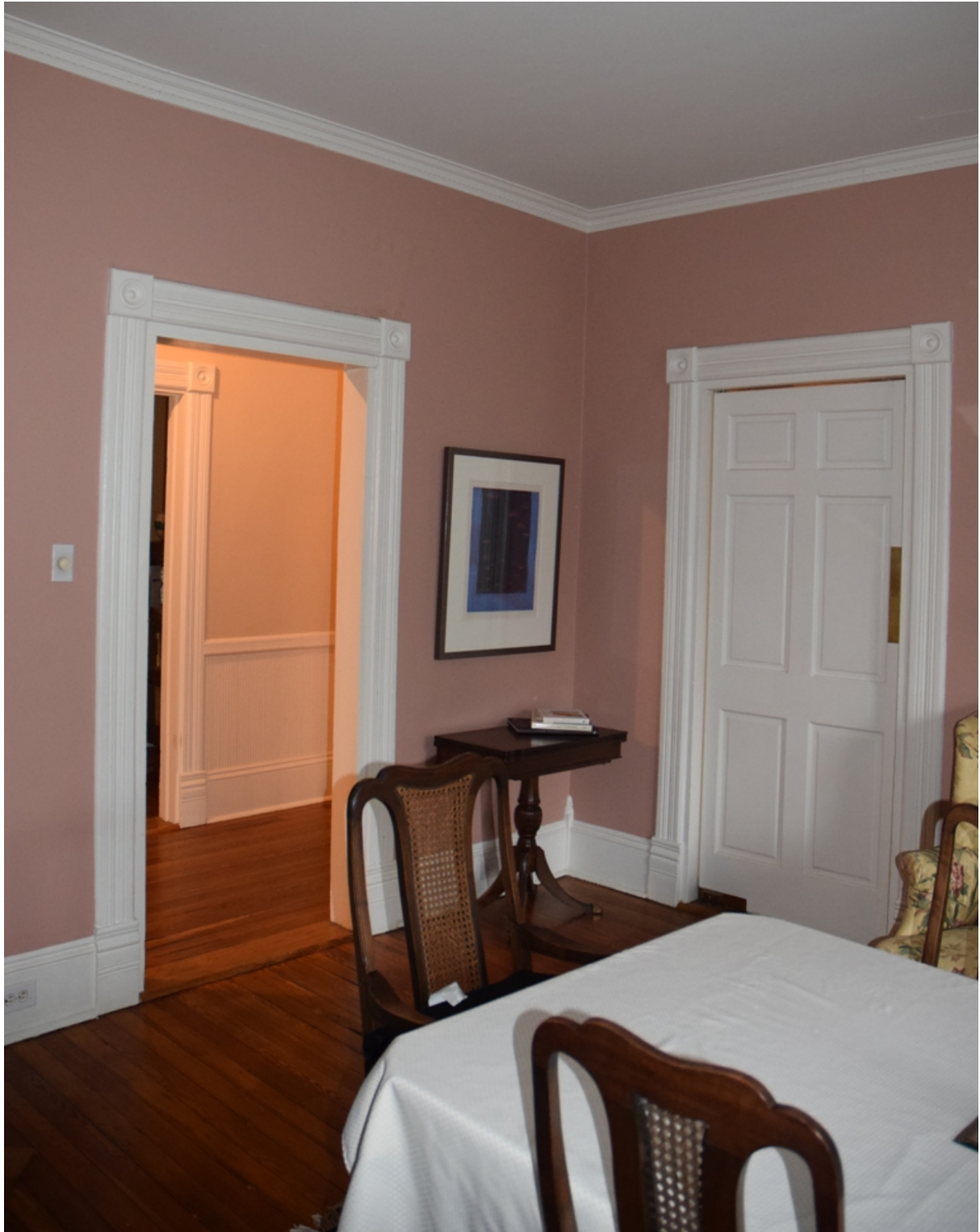
Hall

The hall features a tall, arched-opening mantelpiece that originally contained a coal grate and has now been converted to an arched niche. Other features found throughout the interior include original pine flooring, tall baseboards topped with a moulded cap, and original five and six panel doors. Doors feature moulded starter blocks, and doors, windows and other openings are trimmed with wide beaded trim and rosette corner blocks. A high degree of architectural integrity is found in the stair-hall, parlor, and dining room.



Typical Trim Detail





Dining Room



Parlor





Library





Second Story Front Bedroom



Second Story Rear Bedroom – East





Second Story Rear Bedroom – West



Second Story Hall

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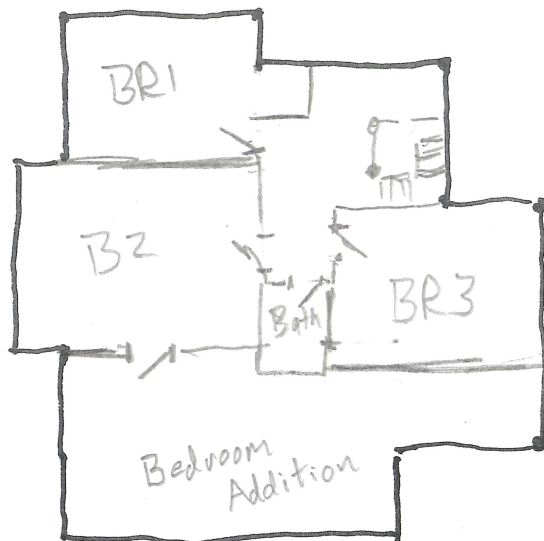
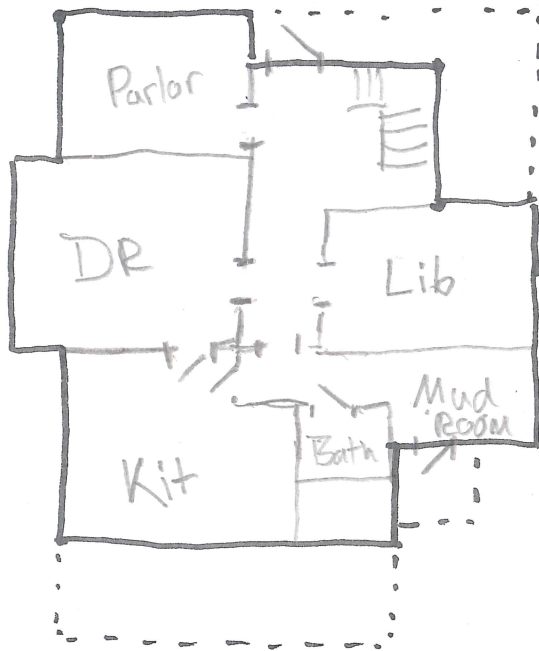
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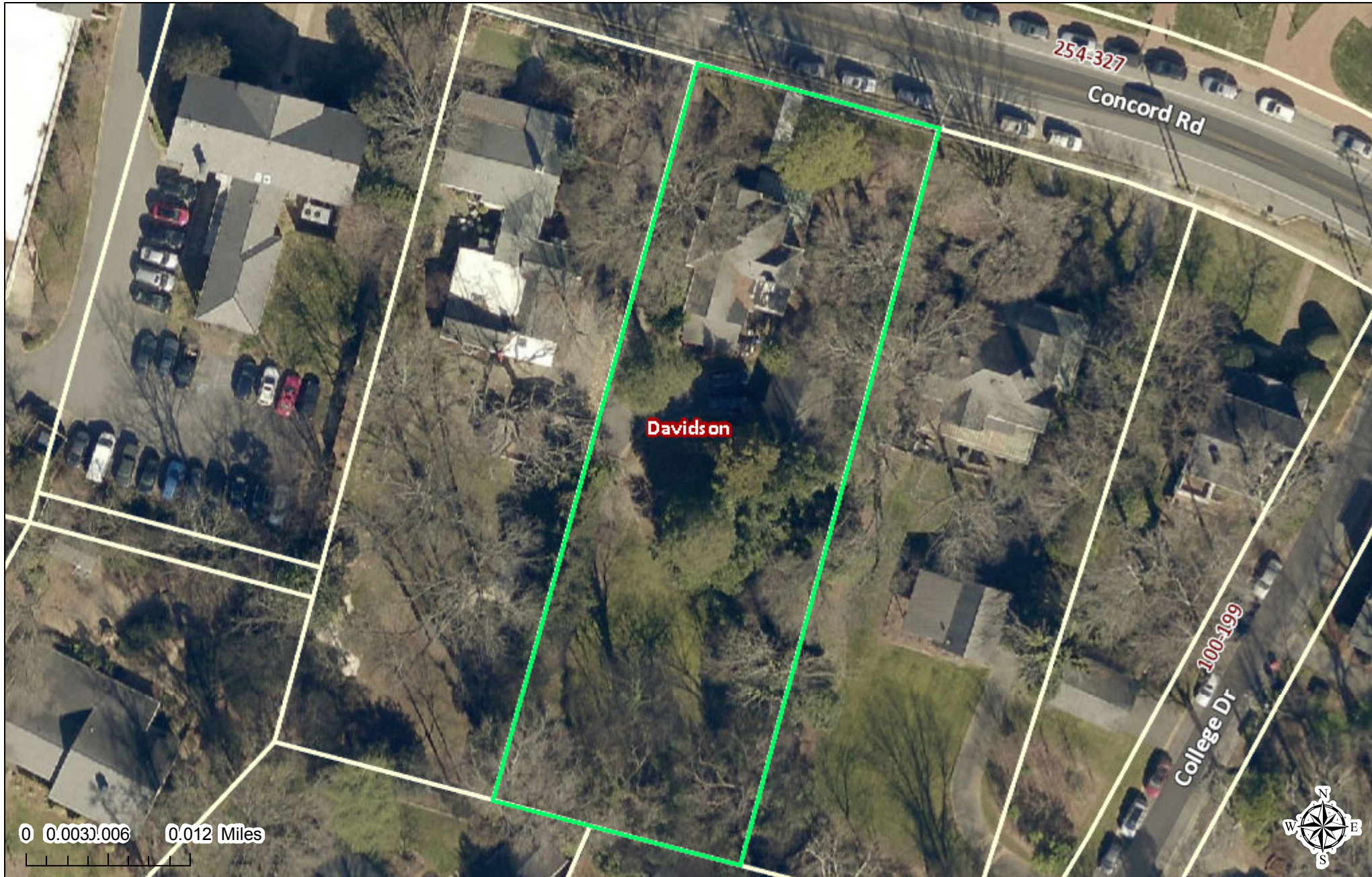




# Polaris 3G Map – Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

## Martin-Worth-Henderson Hse Boundary

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This map or report is prepared for the inventory of real property within Mecklenburg County and is compiled from recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys, planimetric maps, and other public records and data. Users of this map or report are hereby notified that the aforementioned public primary information sources should be consulted for verification. Mecklenburg County and its mapping contractors assume no legal responsibility for the information contained herein.