



**BLYTHE HOUSE**  
**LOCAL LANDMARK REPORT**

121 Gilead Road  
Huntersville, North Carolina 28078

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission**  
**Local Landmark Designation Report**  
Prepared by Gate City Preservation L.L.C.

February 2022

# Charlotte-Mecklenburg

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## Historic Landmarks Commission

### **HISTORIC NAME(S) OF PROPERTY**

- Blythe House

### **ADDRESS OF PROPERTY**

- 121 Gilead Road, Huntersville, North Carolina 28078

**PARCEL ID #:** 01711623

**DEED BOOK & PAGE:** 35495, 40-41

**ZONING** R100

Amount of land/acreage to be designated

0.40 acres

Interior to be designated

☒ Yes (partial) ☐ No

**Property Owner's Address:**

HFH Investments LLC

121 Gilead Road

Huntersville, NC 28078

**Applicant's Address:**

Gate City Preservation L.L.C.

211 Tate Street

Greensboro, North Carolina 27403

## I. Abstract

### *Statement of Significance*

The Blythe House is a monumental, early 20th century residence located at 121 Gilead Road in Huntersville, North Carolina. Although the style is vernacular, the massing, porch, and form reflect Neoclassical Revival design trends and styles that were popular from 1895-1955.<sup>1</sup> The prominent, two-story residence, now utilized as a commercial office space, is a touchstone to the late-19th to early-20th century architecture along Gilead Road, a major thoroughfare in the Town of Huntersville. Along with its architectural presence, the house is locally historically significant as the childhood home of William LeGette Blythe (1900-1993) (Appendix 1), prolific novelist and esteemed journalist from Huntersville. Among other influential North Carolinians like novelist Thomas Wolfe and playwright Paul Greene, LeGette Blythe was part of a group of illustrious writers who inspired the Southern literary renaissance of the early 20th century.<sup>2</sup> Built from 1910-1911 by LeGette Blythe's mother, Hattye Bradley Jackson Blythe (1872-1929) (Appendix 2), and father, William Brevard (W. B.) Blythe (1872-1942) (Appendix 3), the Blythe House was a significant place in LeGette's life as his childhood home, the place where he spent his formative years among his three siblings and parents. The period of significance for the house is its 1911 construction date.

### *Archaeological Comments*

No known archaeological features are present at this time.

### *Integrity Statement*

- **Location:** The Blythe House remains in its original location on Gilead Road.
- **Design:** The building retains its original form and some historical materials, but it has been covered in vinyl siding and wood windows have been replaced with vinyl. The front porches of the home were altered c. 1955 by Frances Blythe Dudley (Appendix 4).
- **Setting:** The home stands among other historically significant late-19th to early-20th century residences along the Gilead Road corridor.
- **Workmanship:** The workmanship on the exterior of the building is difficult to assess because of significant alterations to the building, however the interior workmanship, specifically the beautiful heart pine floors, extensive moldings and trims, and decorative mantles throughout signify a high level of workmanship that has been preserved over the last century.
- **Materials:** Like the workmanship, the exterior materials of the building are difficult to determine because of extensive alterations. A 1988 survey with photographs of the house before the installation of vinyl siding reveals that weatherboard siding was still present and in good condition.
- **Feeling:** Although the building has been altered, the feeling remains. In a photograph of LeGette Blythe posing at the front door of the home, decorated for Christmas, it is unmistakable that the houses are the same (Appendix 5).
- **Association:** The building is now used as commercial office space rather than a residence.

### *Proposed Boundary Justification*

The proposed boundary for local landmark designation is the building's .40 acre parcel.

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group: 2013, 435.

<sup>2</sup> "William LeGette Blythe," North Carolina Writers Network Blog, 2022. Accessed on January 5, 2021.



## II. Maps and Floor Plans

### *Mecklenburg County Tax Map*

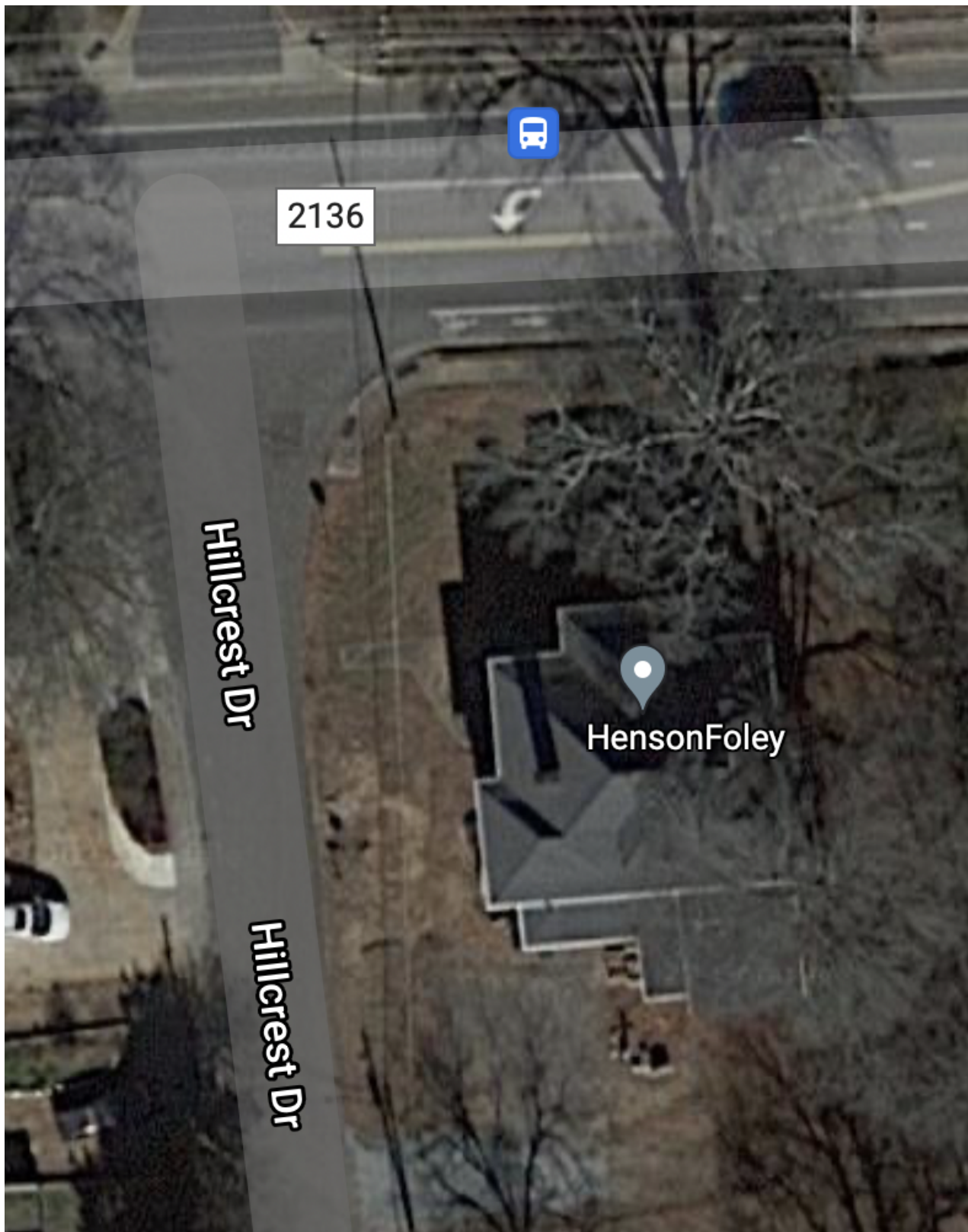


*HPOWeb Map*





*Aerial Map*



**KITCHENETTE**

**BREAK ROOM**

**OFFICE**

**BATH**

**NEW 3-0 OPENING AND DOOR**

**NEW ADA WALL MOUNTED SINK**

**NEW ADA COMPLIANT TOILET & GRAB BARS**

**TRAVEL DISTANCE FROM UPPER FLOOR TO THIS POINT = 70'**

**TRAVEL DISTANCE = 70'**

**OFFICE**

**OFFICE**

**ENTRY**

**EXISTING DOOR = 34" MIN CLEAR OPENING. NEW DOOR HARDWARE TO BE ADA COMPLIANT**

**THRESHOLD AT DOOR TO BE 1/2" MAX.**

**6'-0" CLEAR**

**18" x 10"**

**CUSTOM-BUILT RAMP AND LANDING AT ENTRY DOOR, MAX RAMP SLOPE 1:12**

**NEW WOODEN RAMP AND HANDRAILS, MAX RAMP SLOPE 1:12**

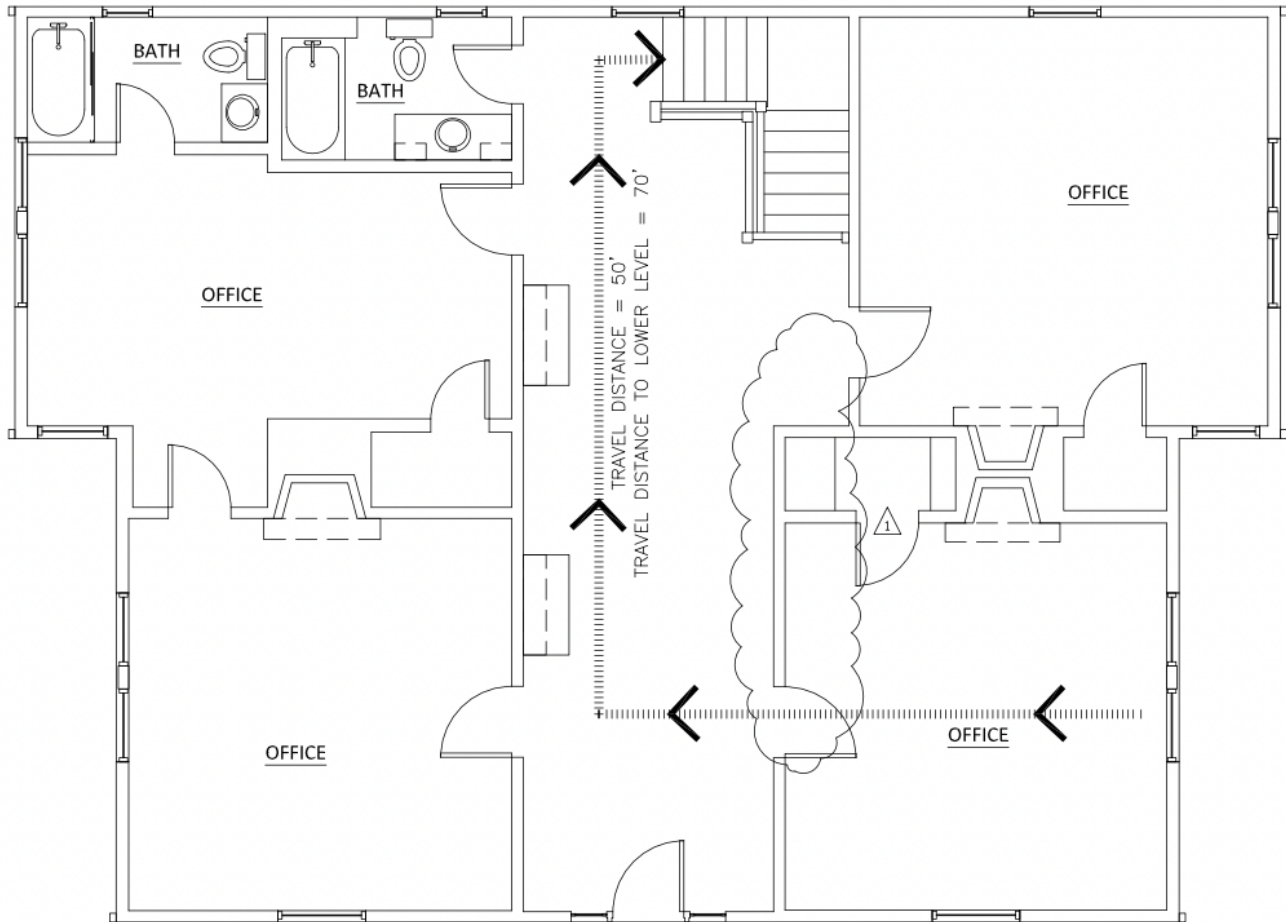
**RAMP DOWN RAMP RISE = 4"**

**COVERED PORCH**

**EXISTING BRICK PORCH - TO HAVE NEW 1" LT. WT. CONCRETE TOPPING POUR**

**TRAVEL DISTANCE = 57'**

1 Proposed Plan & LifeSafety - First Floor  
Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"



2 Proposed Plan & LifeSafety - Second Floor

Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"



### III. Architectural Assessment

#### *Architectural Importance*

The Blythe House is a monumental residence from the early 20th century with stylistic references to Neoclassical Revival. Originally, the house had a full-width porch on the first level (Appendix 6). However, it was altered by Frances Blythe Dudley c. 1955 to accommodate a full-height entry porch (Appendix 4). Although Neoclassical Revival homes usually incorporate classical columns, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals, the Blythe House columns are constructed of simple, slender rectangular blocks. The entry porch has a slight hip roof with an overhanging eave. The house is vernacular in detail, but monumental in massing.

Construction of the house was noted several times in local newspapers. On Wednesday, June 29, 1910, *The Charlotte News* stated, “Mr. W. B. Blythe, Mr. Neal Beard and Mr. George Steal all have new residences going up in the village.”<sup>3</sup> That same date, *The Charlotte Daily Observer* reported, “Mr. W. B. Blythe has begun to lay the foundation for his house.”<sup>4</sup> In “Huntersville Is Forging Ahead,” published on December 18, 1910: “Huntersville’s enterprise and progressiveness is rapidly making Hunsterville one of the most attractive towns...the public spirit of the citizens is marked and the beautifying and expansion of the town is going rapidly.” The article goes on to list W. B. Blythe as one of the citizens who is building a “beautiful residence,” which is among other homes that will make up “a residence district of unusual attractiveness, [which] will mark the expansion of the town in an eloquent manner.”<sup>5</sup> The Blythe House was among the prominent homes that represented this significant time of residential development in Huntersville history.

#### *Architectural Context*

Comparable homes that have been identified in Mecklenburg County include the Harry Arthur Ziem House (c. 1910) (Appendix 7), the Jones-Garibaldi House (1894) (Appendix 8), and the W. H. Belk House (c. 1925) (Appendix 9), all of which have been designated as local landmarks and are located in Charlotte, North Carolina. Comparables in Huntersville could not be located.

The local landmark report for The Harry Arthur Ziem House describes the exterior as “largely devoid of ornamentation, possibly a reaction against the fussiness of late nineteenth century Victorian and Queen Anne architecture. The Ionic porch columns and oval glass entrance door allude to the Neoclassical style; the remainder of the exterior is devoid of any historical detail.”<sup>6</sup> Although the lack of ornamentation, nod to the Neoclassical style, and construction date are similar, the homes differ significantly in construction material used, as the Ziem House was built with concrete block.

The Jones-Garibaldi House (1894), is a high style example of Classical Revival. The house was likely designed by architect Charles Christian Hook.<sup>7</sup> Although both houses utilize Neoclassical features, they differ greatly. The Jones-Garibaldi House is 17 years older than the Blythe House and is far more detailed

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<sup>3</sup> “Huntersville Items,” *The Charlotte News*, Wednesday, June 29, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> “Huntersville,” *The Charlotte Daily Observer*, Wednesday, June 29, 1910.

<sup>5</sup> “Huntersville Is Forging Ahead,” *The Charlotte News*, Sunday, December 18, 1910.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. William H. Huffman and Dr. Dan Morrill, “Survey and Research Report on the Harry Arthur Ziem House,” Local Landmark Report, Mecklenburg County, October 7, 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. William H. Huffman and Frances M. Gay, “Survey and Research Report on the Jones-Garibaldi House,” Local Landmark Report, Mecklenburg County, February 5, 1986.

and high-style. Similarly, the W. H. Belk House, a two-story, beige brick Classical Revival house, is far more high-style than the Blythe House.<sup>8</sup> Designed by Charles Christian Hook, the features and ornamental details of the W. H. Belk House are closer to the Colonial Revival tradition rather than the Neoclassical. Today, the house has been absorbed onto the campus of Presbyterian Hospital.

## ***Architectural Description***

### ***Setting***

Facing north on Gilead Road in Huntersville, a main thoroughfare in the town, the Blythe House stands tall as a monumental example of the early 20th century residential boom in Huntersville (Fig. 1). Across the street is Huntersville Elementary School and the Agriculture Education Building for Huntersville High School (1938), added to the Study List in 2001. Down the street are the Professor Hugh Grey House, a two-story frame house constructed in the late 19th century, and the Hunter-Mayberry House (c. 1910), a two-story hip roof frame house. Next door to the Blythe House is the Rogers-McConnell House, also built in the early 1900s. The Blythe House is located on a corner lot, bounded by Gilead Road and Hillcrest Drive. Two substantial, old growth trees, one in the front yard and one in the backyard, shade the house with massive canopies, otherwise the grassy lot has sparse vegetation. The tree in the front yard is seen in the very early photograph of the Blythe House (Appendix 6). A brick walkway leads from the sidewalk to the front porch steps. Today, the house is being utilized for commercial offices and there is a sign in the front yard listing the businesses within.

### ***Front (North) Elevation***

The Blythe House is a three-bay-wide frame building with two levels and a painted brick foundation (Fig. 2). In the mid-1950s, W. B. and Hattye's daughter, Frances Blythe Dudley, removed the lower level porch to accommodate a full-height entry porch (Appendix 4). Overall, the style is simple and far from ornate, but although the house is vernacular, the massing, form, and front porch configuration all point to Neoclassical themes. The layout, said to be designed by Hattye Blythe, has an irregular plan, and is comprised of two main blocks and a rear wing. Part of the rear wing included an apartment for their maid, which had its own separate entrance, living area, dining area, kitchenette, and bedroom.

The front (north) elevation's prominent, full-height porch has four slender rectangular columns and a slight hipped roof with a deep overhanging eave. Above the roof, two corbelled brick chimneys rise from the center of the house's main block and are visible from the facade, contributing to its symmetry. The house was covered in vinyl siding by the previous owner, but weatherboard siding remains beneath. One-over-one vinyl replacement windows are installed throughout. Historic photographs show that the original window configuration was also one-over-one single light. The first level entrance door is paneled with a large, single-light window. Below the window is a decorative dentil molding. The stylish door surround includes four circular rosettes with intricate carvings. The two sidelights that surround the door have large, vertical, single-pane lights with two panels on the bottom. A transom with three window openings spans the entire entrance, including the sidelights. This lovely symmetry is enhanced by a second-level porch with identical

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<sup>8</sup> Huffman, Dr. William H. and Frances M. Gay, "Survey and Research Report on the Jones-Garibaldi House," Local Landmark Report, Mecklenburg County, February 5, 1986.

entrance configuration, which significantly contributes to the symmetrical, Neoclassical aesthetic of the facade. The second level porch is comprised of a simple, low, rectangular balustrade and is supported by two iron brackets. The front porch floor is painted brick, laid in a basketweave pattern.

### *Side (West) Elevation*

The side (west) elevation is three bays wide. On the first level, from north to south, there is a set of two one-over-one windows. The central block, slightly wider than the main block, is wide enough to accommodate a side door on the northern elevation. The paneled side door with glass screen is surrounded by a small porch with slender rectangular columns that match the front porch, a hipped roof, and a painted brick porch floor with two steps. On the west elevation of this block is another set of one-over-one windows. The second level, from north to south, consists of a set of windows symmetrically installed directly above the identical set on the first level. Above the side door on the north elevation of the central block is a single one-over-one window. The second level of the west elevation of this block is identical to the first level. The western corbeled chimney is visible from this elevation.

### *Rear (South) Elevation*

A ramp and parking lot were installed on this elevation for accessibility. On the first level of the rear (south) elevation from west to east is a rectangular bump out with a very slight hip roof. The bump out, constructed to accommodate bathrooms, has two small one-over-one windows. A hip roofed porch with new wooden columns, identical to the columns on the front and west porches, connects to the central block and a one-story front-gable addition. The porch covers a single-light rear door on the central block and a six-light, paneled wood door on the one-story addition. The porch floor is wood. On the south elevation of the one-story addition is a set of two small one-over-one windows.

The second level of this elevation, from west to east, is comprised of a single one-over-one window. The symmetry is lost here as the new windows on the first floor in the bathroom addition no longer line up with the window on the second level. Similarly, the next one-over-one window is located slightly west of the door below, followed by two smaller one-over-one windows. The tops of both corbeled chimneys are visible from this elevation.

### *Side (East) Elevation*

The first level of the side (east) elevation from south to north starts with the east elevation of the one-level addition, which is comprised of two sets of two one-over-one windows. The central block east elevation is comprised of a set of two one-over-one windows as is the east elevation of the main block. The second level of the central block and main block are identical to the first level.

### *Interior Features to be Designated*

The property owners of the Blythe House do not wish to include the entire interior of the building in this designation, but do wish to include the stairs and the first and second-story halls.



## IV. Historical

### *The Blythe Family*

Hattye Jackson was born in Lilesville, North Carolina in 1872. In 1881, her father, Dr. Anderson LeGette Jackson, died in a cotton-gin accident.<sup>9</sup> Hattye's widowed mother and widowed grandmother moved to Statesville in 1882 with all their children.<sup>10</sup> In nearby Mecklenburg County, William Brevard Blythe was born and raised. The two met when Hattye moved to Huntersville after graduating from Statesville Female College to teach at Huntersville Academy.<sup>11</sup> They were married in Iredell County on October 12, 1898, both at the age of 26. Their first known residence in Huntersville was a one-story house located on the east side of South Old Statesville Road (Highway 115) and south of present-day Mullen Street.<sup>12</sup> A year after the birth of their first son, William LeGette Blythe, named after Hattye's father, the family rented a home on the southwest corner of what is now Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road. During their early days of married life, Hattye and the children often traveled back and forth to Statesville to visit her relatives.<sup>13</sup>

Hattye and W. B. had four children: William LeGette Blythe (April 24, 1900-October 31, 1993), Charles Edgar Blythe (April 24, 1904-June 1, 1963), Frances Lee Blythe (June 22, 1907-January 2, 1971), and Rachel Jackson Blythe (August 21, 1911-October 19, 1981). The headstones of LeGette and Charles confirm that they were indeed born on the same day, four years apart (Appendix 10).

W. B. Blythe was a mover and shaker in the early days of Huntersville, an entrepreneur who also worked as a registrar and judge of election for the growing town. W.B.'s sister, Harriet Blythe, married Lee Choate, co-owner of J. L. Choate and Company, a firm that ran one of the first stores in Huntersville (Appendix 11). W. B. and his brother Richard (Dick) Blythe often helped their brother-in-law with store operations. Located on the railroad tracks, the store, later known as Ranson Store, burned in 1971.<sup>14</sup> At W. B.'s funeral, a friend of W.B. told the family that they would not have made it through the Great Depression without W. B.'s generosity and the long line of credit he accommodated at the store.<sup>15</sup>

An active civic leader, Hattye Blythe was the first woman appointed to serve on the Mecklenburg County School Board in 1913 and was elected as the founding president of the Huntersville Civic Club in 1917.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *The Anson Times*, Wadesboro, North Carolina, Thursday, September 22, 1881.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (1880). United States Census. Retrieved from [www.ancestry.com].

Interview with John Blythe on Monday, February 14, 2022.

<sup>11</sup> "Old Blythe House Attracts Newcomers," *The Mecklenburg Gazette*, February 14, 1980.

<sup>12</sup> John Blythe research based on a 1975 interview with LeGette Blythe.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (1910). United States Census. Retrieved from [www.ancestry.com].

Travel documented significantly in the papers. Some examples include *Statesville Record And Landmark* (Statesville, North Carolina) on Tue, Oct 3, 1899 and *The Charlotte News* on Tuesday, Sep 13, 1904.

<sup>14</sup> "Store Once Fronted Railroad," *The Mecklenburg Gazette*, November 1971.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with William Jackson, son of Rachel Blythe Jackson, Friday, February 18, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> "Woman Appointed to Serve on Board: School Board Takes Advanced Step In County By Unique Appointment," *The Evening Chronicle* (Charlotte, North Carolina), Monday, June 2, 1913 and "Huntersville," *The Charlotte Observer*, Sunday, February 11, 1917.

The Blythes were an influential family in early 20th century Huntersville society, often referenced in the paper attending parties and other important events.

### *W. B. and Hattye Blythe Construct a Family Home*

On October 7, 1909, the Blythes registered a deed to purchase a plot from H. J. Walker on Academy Street, later known as College Road and now known as Gilead Road.<sup>17</sup> After renting homes in Huntersville for several years with school-aged children, the Blythes were finally building a home of their own, directly across the street from the elementary school. Construction began on the home in June of 1910. In December, the house was still under construction and was likely completed in 1911.<sup>18</sup> The home was among several others built along Academy Street, known as the Gilead Community, in the early 20th century. The house cost \$3,700 and was designed by Hattye Blythe.<sup>19</sup> The first Boy Scout troop in north Mecklenburg organized c. 1912, under the guidance of Hattye, held its meetings in the large southwestern corner room upstairs.<sup>20</sup>

The Blythe House was a significant place for LeGette Blythe, famous author, as his childhood home and the place where he spent his formative years. LeGette was living here when he won his first essay contest at his elementary school, Huntersville Elementary, located directly across the street from the house. When his essay on the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence won first prize, he was awarded a new pair of shoes, which his grandson, William Blythe, recalled, “I always thought it was his first pair of shoes, but I’m not told that it wasn’t; it wouldn’t have been unlike my grandfather, honest though he was, to embellish a story ever so slightly.”<sup>21</sup> Later, in 1983, the Arts Department at Huntersville Elementary School sponsored The LeGette Blythe Essay Award in honor of his 83rd birthday, which they celebrated as a school. LeGette attended the celebration and presented the award to the winning student (Appendix 12).

In both his personal life and his writing, Mecklenburg County was an inspirational and significant part of LeGette Blythe’s life, specifically the Gilead Community where he grew up and then later built his own family home down the street (demolished in 2021). In his book, *The Hornest Nest*, LeGette Blythe writes, “And now the rolling gentle hills of northeastern Mecklenburg, the warm red clay of his native county. Home again, and good to be home.” In his obituary, LeGette is remembered as “the Squire of Huntersville,” known for his passion for Mecklenburg history.<sup>22</sup> It was during his time at the Blythe House that LeGette developed a love for Mecklenburg and a love of writing. His novel, *Alexandriana: The Revolution in the South 1768-1781*, which came out in 1940, was based on his fourth grade award-winning essay on the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. After writing for the *Charlotte Observer*, LeGette transitioned

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<sup>17</sup> “Real Estate Deals: Three Deeds Are Recorded With the Clerk of Court,” *The Charlotte News*, Thursday, October 7, 1909.

<sup>18</sup> “Huntersville,” *The Charlotte News*, Wednesday, June 29, 1910 and “Huntersville Is Forging Ahead,” *The Charlotte News*, Sunday, December 18, 1910.

<sup>19</sup> “Old Blythe House Attracts Newcomers,” *The Mecklenburg Gazette*, February 14, 1980. Also referenced in Eudora Garrison, “Frances Dudley Begins Christmas Baking Early,” *The Charlotte Observer*, November 27, 1960.

<sup>20</sup> “Blythe-Dudley Home Gift To North Carolina Boys Home,” *Mecklenburg Gazette*, Thursday, March 11, 1971.

<sup>21</sup> “William Blythe,” *The Charlotte Mecklenburg Story*. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Virtual Exhibit, accessed January 5, 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Tom Bradbury, “Keeper of the flame: LeGette Blythe—author and journalist—lived and chronicled Mecklenburg’s history,” *The Charlotte Observer*, November 6, 1993.

full time to writing novels, biographies, and dramas, and by the end of his life in 1993, he had produced over 30 novels and twice won the Mayflower Award for the best nonfiction by a North Carolinian.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Next Generation*

Hattye Blythe died of influenza in 1929. In 1936, towards the end of W. B.'s life, his daughter Frances and her husband Charles Dudley became primary owners of the Blythe House.<sup>24</sup> It is unclear if W. B. was living with the Dudleys at the end of his life or with his son LeGette and his family down the street.<sup>25</sup> Frances Dudley, like her mother, was prominent in community life. She worked as a case worker for the Mecklenburg County Welfare Department and her appeals to the community to help those in need are well documented in newspapers. As a welfare worker, Frances Dudley helped people of all ages, backgrounds, races, and ethnicities, to ensure safe and secure environments and opportunities to flourish.<sup>26</sup> Charles Dudley was head of the Charlotte Merchant's Association and worked for the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce. After his death, a Merchants Association and College of Business scholarship at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte was established in honor of his steadfast dedication to education and retailing.<sup>27</sup>

Married in May of 1929, Frances and Charles were highly active in Huntersville social circles and civic organizations. They had two children, Margaret Blythe Dudley, who tragically died in an accident at a young age, and Charles Council Dudley, Jr., who was born and raised in the house until he graduated from medical school and started his own practice in Elkin, North Carolina. A home renovation by Frances Dudley in the mid-1950s removed the first level porch to accommodate the iconic prominent full-height porch on the facade. The renovation also converted a set of side doors on each side of the lower porch into windows.<sup>28</sup> After Frances and Charles died in their early 60s, Council Dudley, Jr., gifted the house in honor of his parents and his grandparents, W. B. and Hattye Blythe, to the North Carolina Boys Home.<sup>29</sup>

After serving stateside as a public health doctor during World War II, McIver Jackson got a job in Charlotte working for Veterans Affairs as a medical examiner. It was there that he met and married Rachel Blythe. The couple and their young son, William Jackson, named after W. B., moved in with Frances and Charles Dudley for a year or two while they waited to build their own house in the backyard of the big house. In an interview about his remembrances, William Jackson fondly recalled his family's time in the Blythe House living with the Dudleys while they waited for their own home to be built. When they moved in, the lot behind the house, where they were to build their new home, was a wheat field. After the house was built, the short street that went from Gilead Road to the house was called Jackson Street since they were the only family that lived there. Mr. Jackson recalls that the big house originally had a detached garage, which caught fire while they were living there. He remembers his father running out to the car and driving to the town crossroads where he called the volunteer firemen who came and saved the big house. He recalls the house having the large wrap-around porch on the first story, which places the renovation after 1955.<sup>30</sup> John Blythe, a cousin of

<sup>23</sup> "William LeGette Blythe," North Carolina Writers Network Blog, 2022. Accessed on January 5, 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Deed Book 887 Page 260, Recorded on May 13, 1936.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with John Blythe on Monday, February 14, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> "Seeks Bed, Linen for Very Ill Child," *The Charlotte News*, Thursday, August 25, 1938; "Boys Are Better Protected In Fresh Air Camp Than At Home," *The Charlotte News*, Tuesday, July 4, 1944; "County Enumerators For Census Begin Week's Classes In How To Count Noses," *The Charlotte News*, March 27, 1950; and Dorothy Knox, "I Believe Everything," *Charlotte News*, Wednesday, October 31, 1934.

<sup>27</sup> "Scholarship Honors Dudley," *The Charlotte Observer*, February 26, 1971.

<sup>28</sup> "Old Blythe House Attracts Newcomers," *Mecklenburg Gazette*, February 14, 1980.

<sup>29</sup> "Blythe-Dudley Home Gift To North Carolina Boys Home," *Mecklenburg Gazette*, Thursday, March 11, 1971.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with William Jackson, son of Rachel Blythe Jackson, Friday, February 18, 2022.



the Blythes who was also interviewed, recalls the house with the full story front porch as early as 1960 when he attended school across the street at Huntersville Elementary.<sup>31</sup>

From the 1950s to the 1960s, all four grown siblings lived within a block of each other, Frances in the big house, Rachel in the house right behind it, LeGette a few houses down the street, and Charles living next door.<sup>32</sup> A newspaper article from November 1960, highlighting Frances Dudley's Christmas baking, shares the closeness of the Blythe family and how they would all return to the Blythe House for Christmas. The article reports, "'We all grew up here,' says Frances Dudley as we walked through high-ceiling, huge rooms in the white clapboard house... 'my mother drew the plans,' says Mrs. Dudley, 'and when Charles and I moved back here in 1935, we didn't change a thing, except to take out hall walls to make one big room out of two. Even the plastering is the original.' The Blythes are a close-knit family. Each Christmas brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren get together to celebrate the holiday... It has been traditional for years to have breakfast at the LeGette Blythes' table and Christmas dinner in the Charles Dudleys' big dining room."

<sup>33</sup> William Jackson corroborated this family practice of breakfast at LeGette Blythe's and dinner at the Dudleys', a tradition they maintained for decades (Appendix 13).

In 1971, the Blythe Home was gifted to the North Carolina Boys Home, who utilized the building for their administrative offices. Even after the home left Blythe ownership, the family continued to get together. A newspaper clipping from January 3, 1980 in the *Mecklenburg Gazette*, "Blythe Family Has Christmas Gathering," records "The Blythe Family has a remarkable record of its members being together in the Blythe home in Huntersville during the Christmas season." It goes on to share that LeGette and his brother Charles never missed a Christmas breakfast together before Charles' death in 1963 and that Frances and Rachel had only missed one or two.<sup>34</sup> Although the home is now utilized as commercial office space, it still holds a special place for many Blythe descendants today as the family homestead.

## V. Chain of Title

### 1. Book 35495 Page 40

- a. Recorded on December 29, 2020
- b. Grantor: Ann P. Berrier
- c. Grantee: HFH Investments, LLC

### 2. Book 11475 Page 254

- a. Recorded on July 27, 2000
- b. Grantor: Floyd L. and Ann P. Berrier
- c. Grantee: Ann P. Berrier

### 3. Book 3266 Page 66

- a. Recorded on January 23, 1971
- b. Grantor: Dr. Charles Council Dudley, Jr. and Margaret Y. Dudley
- c. Grantee: Boys Home of North Carolina, Inc.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with John Blythe on Monday, February 14, 2022.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with John Blythe on Monday, February 14, 2022 and Interview with William Jackson, son of Rachel Blythe Jackson, Friday, February 18, 2022.

<sup>33</sup> Eudora Garrison, "Frances Dudley Begins Christmas Baking Early," *The Charlotte Observer*, November 27, 1960.

<sup>34</sup> "Blythe Family Has Christmas Gathering," *The Mecklenburg Gazette*, January 3, 1980.

**4. Book 887 Page 260**

- a. Recorded on May 13, 1936
- b. Grantor: W. B. Blythe
- c. Grantee: Frances Blythe Dudley

**5. Book 256 Page 292**

- a. Recorded on April 9, 1910
- b. Grantor: J. Mc. Holbrook and Pennie G. Holbrook
- c. Grantee: W. B. Blythe

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- a. Recorded on September 23, 1909
- b. Grantor: H. J. Walker and Catherine G. Walker
- c. Grantee: W. B. Blythe

**V1. Finding Aid for Photographs**

- Fig. 1: Setting
- Fig. 2: Front (North) Elevation
- Fig. 3: Side (West) Elevation
- Fig. 4: Rear (South) Elevation
- Fig. 5: Side (East) Elevation
- Fig. 6: Windows
- Fig. 7: Doors
- Fig. 8: Siding
- Fig. 9: Columns
- Fig. 10: First Level Porch
- Fig. 11: Second Level Porch
- Fig. 12: First Level Interior Hall
- Fig. 13: Newel Post
- Fig. 14: Mantles
- Fig. 15: Second Level Interior Hall

## Figures

Fig. 1: Setting





Fig. 2: Front (North) Elevation





Fig. 3: Side (West) Elevation





Fig. 4: Rear (South) Elevation





Fig. 5: Side (East) Elevation



Fig. 6: Windows





Fig. 7: Door



Fig. 8: Siding





Fig. 10: Columns



Fig. 11: Second Level Porch



Fig. 12: First Level Interior Hall





Fig. 13: Newel Post





Fig. 14: Mantles



Fig. 15: Second Level Interior Hall



## Appendix

### Appendix 1: William LeGette Blythe





Appendix 2: Hattye Jackson Blythe (Courtesy of John Blythe)





Appendix 3: William Brevard Blythe





Appendix 4: Frances and Charles Dudley, The Blythe House Renovation c. 1955









Appendix 5: LeGette Blythe outside the front door of 121 Gilead Road.



Appendix 6: Historic photograph of the Blythe House reveals the original porch configuration.





Appendix 7: Harry Arthur Ziem House (c. 1910)





Appendix 8: Jones-Garibaldi House (1894)



Appendix 9: W. H. Belk House (c. 1925)





Appendix 10: Headstones for William LeGette Blythe and Charles Edgar Blythe





## Appendix 11: Choate Store

**STORE ONCE FRONTED RAILROAD**

Here is an old picture of Ranson's Store that burned Monday night. Mecklenburg County author Legette Blythe identifies in the picture as follows: L. R.—unidentified Negro man, perhaps the handy man around the store; J. M. Holbrook whose home was immediately behind the store, large farmer and landholder; J. L. Choate; T. Neal Kerns, clerk and bookkeeper; Miss Mattie C. Hunter, the store's milliner; W. B. Blythe, with Mr. Choate co-owner of the firm of J. L. Choate and Company; Will Alexander, clerk. The small boy on the sidewalk at the steps is the late Charles E. Blythe, son of W. B. Blythe. All those on the porch are deceased. The picture was made about 1917-1918. The large boxes at right end of porch were coffin boxes. The firm did a large general merchandise business in northern Mecklenburg and adjoining counties of Iredell, Lincoln, Cabarrus, and Gaston.

In the picture at right—Don Ranson, store owner (R) and Frank Henderson (L), a man who recalls names and dates in history, stand before the burned out old store.





Appendix 12: LeGette Blythe presents The LeGette Blythe Essay Award at Huntersville Elementary School



**LeGette Blythe presents essay award created in his honor to Chad Entrekin. (News photo/Don Hunter)**



Appendix 13: Interior of Blythe House, Date Unknown



Appendix 13: Blythe House c. 1970



Appendix 14: Blythe House c. 1980





Appendix 16: Blythe House, c. 1990





Appendix 18: Blythe House in 2020, before the restoration work. Photos courtesy of Ken Bumgarner Photography.

























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**I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF; AND SUPPORT LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE PROPERTY DEFINED HEREIN.**

I also acknowledge that the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission may require additional information.

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Signature of Owner

Date

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Signature of Owner

Date

I also acknowledge that the designation includes the interior, interior features and details; exterior, exterior features and details of all structures; and land, unless otherwise noted in the report. Any alterations of the property and/or features designated, requires an approved *Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)* issued by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission.

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Signature of Owner

Date

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Signature of Owner

Date