

PROGRAM

PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK BIRTHPLACE

DEDICATION

Monday, May 20, 1968

- 2:00 p. m. Concert Independence Senior High
School Band, George W. Hanna, Director
- 2:30 p. m. Dedication Ceremonies
- Presiding John M. Belk, General Chairman
Charlotte/Mecklenburg Bicentennial Committee
- Invocation Bishop Earl G. Hunt
Western North Carolina Conference, Methodist Church
- National Anthem Independence Senior High School Band
- Welcome C. H. McCoy
Mayor, Town of Pineville
- Introduction of Platform Guests John M. Belk
- Introduction of the Honorable Stanford R. Brookshire, Mayor
City of Charlotte. John M. Belk
- Introduction of the Honorable Dan K. Moore, Governor of North
Carolina Mayor Stanford R. Brookshire
- Introduction of Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, First Lady of the
United States Governor Dan K. Moore
- Address Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson
- Introduction of A. Grant Whitney, Program Chairman, Charlotte/
Mecklenburg Bicentennial Committee . . . John M. Belk
- Presentations to Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson . . A. Grant Whitney
- Concert Independence Senior High School Band

PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK

BIRTHPLACE

The eleventh President of the United States, James Knox Polk, was born November 2, 1795, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Although he was born in a log cabin it should not be presumed that Polk was a child of poverty. Indeed, the Knox and Polk families were, and are, among the best in an area noted for its sturdy Scotch-Irish settlers.

Young Polk lived with his family on the Little Sugar Creek farm until 1806, when his father, Samuel Polk, moved his family to Columbia, Tennessee. Tobacco, wheat, corn, hemp, peas, barley, oats, and flax were grown on Samuel Polk's farm which eventually had more than 400 acres. Tobacco, sold in Camden, South Carolina, only sixty miles away, was the main crop.

In Mecklenburg Polk received his early education and the training which caused him in later life to attend church services with great regularity. Jane Knox, his mother, was a devout Presbyterian. Polk was a studious child and he took first honors in mathematics and the classics at his graduation from the University of North Carolina in 1818.

The best description of the Polk cabin (ca. 1790) was recorded by David L. Swain, who saw it in 1849 soon after President Polk's visit to the University of North Carolina. Swain stated that the two-room log house which had never been weatherboarded stood about 200 yards south of Little Sugar Creek. He said the two pens were joined together, one measuring 20 X 16 feet and the other 12 X 16 feet with a brick chimney at the north end. The front of the two pens each contained one door and one window.

A replica of the Samuel Polk log house has been reconstructed near the original cabin site using an early Mecklenburg County house with the addition of one room. A log kitchen and packhouse have been moved to the site and have been restored to ca. 1790 period. Other log dependencies to be added later include a smokehouse, barn, corn crib, springhouse, and a slave cabin with a mud-and-stick chimney.

None of the furnishings used in the houses belonged to the Polk family but are typical of those used by the Polks while they lived in North Carolina.

Polk House Gets Walls In Carthage

SOUTHERN PINES — An old log house near Carthage is being dismantled to provide paneling for the main room of the James K. Polk birthplace memorial in Mecklenburg County.

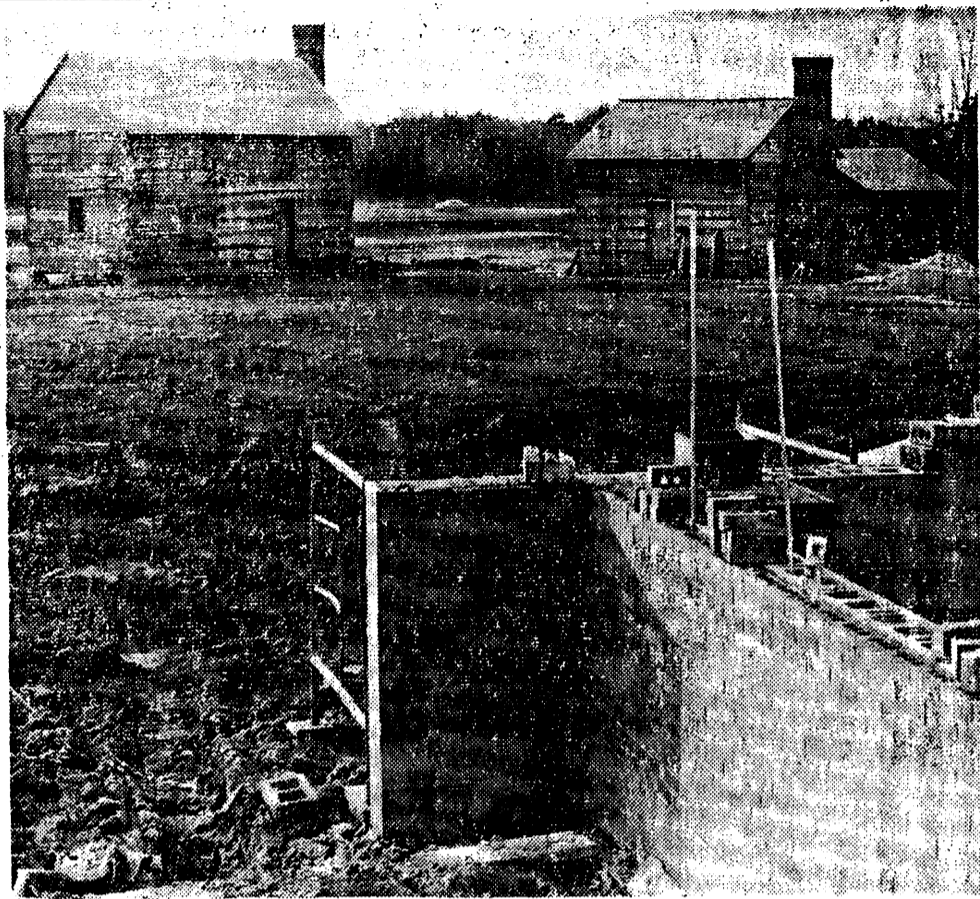
Two rooms of the house—known as the "Moore Cabin"—will be restored and established as a permanent exhibit in the new State Museum of History.

Mr. and Mrs. Bob VonCannon of West End, owners of the cabin, donated it for use in the restoration programs of the State Department of Archives.

It is constructed of logs, pegged together and covered with siding.

The paneling and fireplace are "excellent and highly suitable for early 18th century restoration," according to Richard Sawyer of the department of archives.

10A THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER Mon., February 12, 1968



Observer Photo by Hank Daniel

Log Cabins Were Rebuilt Into A Homestead

... Supposed To Resemble James K. Polk's Birthplace

1st James K. Polk Park Units To Be Dedicated In May

By PORTER MUNN
Observer Staff Writer

The President James K. Polk Park at Pineville will be completed May 1 in time for its dedication on May 20, Mecklenburg Independence Day, as part of the Charlotte bicentennial observance.

Dick Sawyer of the North Carolina Historic Sites division in Raleigh, after inspecting the 20-acre site, awarded landscaping contracts.

Sawyer said, "The museum

will be finished in May. Three of the log buildings, the main house, kitchen and pack house, are ready. The other log structures to complete the replica of the Polk homestead will be erected later."

The historic sites official said the equipment and furnishings could not be installed in time for the May 20 dedication.

"It will take the rest of the

summer and fall to equip the museum and install the early American furnishings in the three log buildings."

Polk, 11th president of the United States, was born on the family farm just south of Pineville in southern Mecklenburg county. He moved with his family to Tennessee as a youth and rose to the presidency from that state.

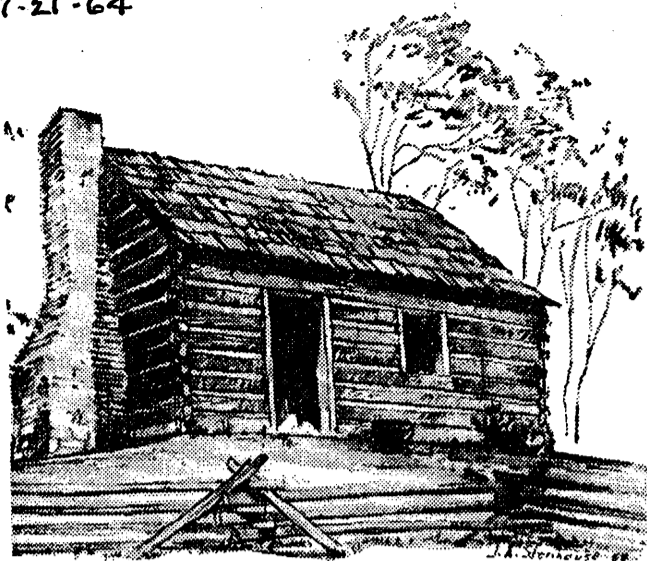
For many years a DAR fieldstone shaft marked his Pineville birthplace. In the 1950s James A. Stenhouse and others launched a movement to create a Polk memorial.

The N.C. General Assembly, the Richardson Foundation and private citizens raised about \$80,000 for the project. The historic sites division bought the site on Little Sugar Creek and the Pineville town commissioners extended the town limits so they could lay a water line to the park.

Plans call for erecting a log homestead as it was when Polk lived there as a boy. Owners of log buildings throughout the area donated the old structures and they were moved onto the site and rebuilt by specialists in restoring old buildings.

Dedicating the site May 20, anniversary of the signing of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence in 1775, will be a highlight of the year-long Charlotte bicentennial celebration.

Mayor Stan R. Brookshire has invited President Lyndon B. Johnson—and Queen Elizabeth of England to take part in the local celebrations.



Architect Stenhouse's Drawing Of
President Polk's Birthplace

STATE MEN COMING

Work Starts Soon On Polk Memorial

By MARIEL CAMP
News Staff Writer

The man Harry Truman calls "America's most neglected President" soon will be neglected no longer.

Work on a new state park commemorating the birthplace of James K. Polk, America's 11th president, will begin Thursday at a 21-acre site off Highway 521 about a mile south of Pineville.

Four representatives of the Department of Archives and History in Raleigh will begin restoration of the site and initial planning for the erection of a visitor center-museum with historical exhibits, restoration of the Polk residence, outbuildings and fences and furnishing and a caretaker's residence.

They are: W. S. Tarlton, superintendent of Historic Sites; Richard Sawyer, operations manager; Stanley A. South, archeologist; and A. L. Honeycutt, restorations specialist.

THE PROJECT will take at least a year and will cost around \$137,000.

Local architect James A. Stenhouse is chairman of the James K. Polk Birthplace Advisory Committee. Committee members are:

Phillip Alexander, vice chairman.

Kenneth Downs, secretary.
Mary Louise Davidson, treasurer.

Irwin Belk, State senator.
Mrs. Martha Evans, Elmer Garinger, Ernest Hicks, James Vogler and Herman Saxon, state representatives.

Mayor Stan R. Brookshire.
Dr. Bruce Whitaker, president of Chowan College.
Dr. D. J. Whitener, dean of Appalachian College.

Dallas Herring, chairman of the State Board of Education.
Dr. Fletcher Green, University of North Carolina.
Dr. Robert Woody, Duke University.

Jessie Rankin, Charlotte.
Glee Edwin Bridges, Kings Mountain.

Mr. Stenhouse also is chairman of the James K. Polk Committee of the Mecklenburg Historical Association and chairman of the State Advisory Committee on Historic Sites.

FOR ALMOST 15 years, sporadic efforts, led mainly by Mr. Stenhouse and the Mecklenburg Historical Association, have been made to restore the birthplace of President Polk.

The birthplace at one time was covered with weeds and beer cans. A hogpen was nearby. A stone marker signifying

See WORK on page 4B

RESTORATION PROJECT

Work Starts On Polk Birthplace

Continued From Second Front
that Polk was born on the property in 1795 was erected there about 60 years ago, shortly after the original two-room log cabin was destroyed.

President Polk acquired for the U. S. the western third of the nation and was indirectly responsible for the annexation of Texas.

Beginning in 1957, the General Assembly has passed three bills appropriating funds for the development of the historic site. The Richardson Foundation of New York gave \$10,000 on a matching basis.

The biggest problem, according to Mr. Stenhouse, has been acquisition of the land. In May, the Council of State agreed to

pay \$28,775 for the 21-acre site to its owner, Mrs. Lillian Crow Miller.

Polk of Mecklenburg, Andrew Johnson of Wake and Andrew Jackson of Union, County North Carolina has given three presidents to the nation: (South Carolina also claims Jackson).

PROGRAM

DEDICATION OF THE PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK BIRTHPLACE

**Visitor Center-Museum
Pineville, North Carolina**

December 6, 1968

10:30 A. M.	Band Concert	South Mecklenburg High School Band, Ray Neel, Director
11:00 A. M.	Presiding	James A. Stenhouse, Chairman President James K. Polk Birthplace Advisory Committee
	The National Anthem	
	Invocation	Reverend J. Grady Faulk, Pastor Stough Memorial Baptist Church Pineville
	Welcome	C. H. McCoy, Mayor Pineville
	Greetings from the State Department of Archives and History	Dr. H. G. Jones, Director
	Recognition of Special Guests	Mr. Stenhouse
	Introduction of Speaker	Dr. Christopher Crittenden Assistant Director State Department of Archives and History
	Address	Dr. Hugh T. Lefler, Kenan Professor of History University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
	Daughters of the American Revolution Monument Unveiling	Mrs. J. Carter Goldsborough State Regent, North Carolina Daughters of the American Revolution
	Presentation of Key to Visitor Center-Museum	Jack Alston, Project Inspector Representing Malcolm and Higgins, Architects
	Acceptance of Building	W. S. Tarlton, Superintendent Historic Sites Division State Department of Archives and History

1904

POLK MONUMENT UNVEILED.

Interesting Exercises Near Pineville Yesterday Afternoon.

PATRIOTIC WORK OF DAUGHTERS

Birthplace of One of Mecklenburg's Presidents of the United States. Marked by Enduring Stone—Remarks of the Regent in Presenting the Monument—Addresses by Dr. Alexander, Capt. Ardrey and Dr. Mack—Probability of a Monument to Andrew Jackson.

The monument erected by the Mecklenburg Chapter of the Daughters of American Revolution to the memory of President James Knox Polk was unveiled yesterday afternoon, on the site occupied by the house in which he was born, a short distance south of Pineville, in Mecklenburg county. Appropriate ceremony was observed and an interesting programme was carried out, which began at 4 o'clock and lasted an hour.

Miss Elizabeth Webb Long, regent of the Daughters of the Revolution, presided at the unveiling and in presenting the monument said:

"Daughters of the American Revolution, Ladies, and Gentlemen: The one hundred and twenty-fourth anniversary of the battle of Charlotte, our chapter day, has been chosen as an appropriate time to review the early days of Mecklenburg's history, and to mark by this simple monument, which it has been our happy privilege to erect, the site of the birthplace of James Knox Polk, the eleventh President of the United States. It seems eminently fitting that the citizens of Pineville and the surrounding country should assist in the ceremonies of the day. In the name of the Mecklenburg Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, I bid them welcome. Welcome all."

Miss Long also expressed thanks to those who had taken an interest and had rendered assistance in the marking of historic spots in this part of the county. "Special thanks," said Miss Long, "are due to Mr. Durham for his gift of this marble tablet, to Mr. D. A. Tompkins and to the commissioners for their valuable assistance."

A party of Pineville musicians then sang "America." Among the singers were Prof. J. A. Boyd, Rev. J. R. McAlpine, Messrs. E. W. Russell, and W. C. Barnett, Mrs. Anna S. Hoffman, Misses Clara Harris and Helen Boyd.

Dr. J. E. Alexander then delivered the following address:

DR. ALEXANDER'S ADDRESS.

was stalking through the land, we would not be surprised at any kind of assemblage at any place near a Southern home.

These patriotic ladies have assembled to unveil a monument to the memory of the birth place of James Knox Polk, the eleventh President of the United States. Here upon this spot, according to history, in Mecklenburg county, was born one of the great men of earth. He came of a great race of people. They were diamonds unpolished but diamonds of the first water. Robert Pollok, or Polk, settled in Pennsylvania—of him we know but little; his sons, Thomas and Ezekiel, came about 1750, they lived near Charlotte. Ezekiel Polk married Mary Wilson, a daughter of Samuel Wilson, who came from England many years before Mecklenburg county was laid off. . . . He had for his brother-in-law, Maj. John Davidson, who also married a sister, and they were both active in their support of the American cause. Among Col. Ezekiel Polk's sons, Sam Polk married Jane Kox, near Hopewell church, in this county, and moved to this spot with his wife, and here was born on Nov. 2nd, 1795 James Knox Polk. In memory of which event we are assembled to unveil the monument that has been erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Sam Polk, with his family, moved to Tennessee in 1806, when he, whose birth place is here marked, was but eleven years old. As Mecklenburg has been the birth place of many who have moved to other parts of our grand heritage, let us not forget their origin or fail to cherish their memories. For twenty-five years of his life, he was either in state or national politics. While a member of Congress, he was a firm supporter of Gen. Jackson's administration. Early in 1833, as a member of the ways and means committee, he made a minority report unfavorable to the bank of the United States. During the entire contest between the bank and President Jackson, caused by the removal of the deposits in October, 1833, Mr. Polk, as chairman of the ways and means committee, supported the executive. We can say that his warm support of the Jackson administration arose from the fact that Mecklenburg was the common mother of both. Polk's administration of the affairs of government were eminently satisfactory. Having defeated one of the greatest patriots and orators that America ever produced, Henry Clay, of Kentucky, he was inaugurated President, March 4, 1845.

Among the most important events of his administration were the establishment of the United States Naval Academy; the consummation of the annexation of Texas; the admission of Texas, Iowa, and Wisconsin as States; the war with Mexico, resulting in a treaty of peace, by which the United States acquired New Mexico and upper California; the treaty with Great Britain settling the Oregon boundary; the

partment of the Interior. He died June 15th, 1849; he was buried at Polk Place, in Nashville. In September, 1893, the remains were removed by the State to Capitol Square. Yes, it is well to have erected this monument, so that generations yet to come, may learn that one of the great men of the South, yes I

can say of the nation, was born here, and we will preserve his nativity from being lost or forgotten.

We thank the Daughters of the American Revolution for what you have done; you not only erected one six miles northwest of the city, to mark the battle ground of McIntyre's branch, where on the first day of October, 1780, twelve Americans routed four hundred British soldiers, that they returned to Charlotte and reported that there was "a rebel behind every bush." But to-day you have presented your country and State, one equally as handsome and enduring, to mark the birthplace of a statesman who loved his country.

Mecklenburg of late years is coming to the front. The monument in front of the court house, to the signers of the Declaration of Independence of Mecklenburg, May 20th, 1775, is a handsome structure; but from the time the first money was paid in, in 1844, a more magnificent and much larger monument might have been erected if placed in the hands of the D. A. R.'s.

I leave it to your judgment whether you, alone, will place one to the memory of General Andrew Jackson, who was also born in Mecklenburg county, and like President Polk, also moved to Tennessee. We are glad that the iron slab markers have been placed on the streets of Charlotte, commemorating important events of historic value. It is appropriate that you should this day unveil the Polk monument, it being the 124th anniversary of Cornwallis' passage through this section, and the battle of Charlotte.

Allow me to repeat a legend as to the birth of President Polk in three separate places, but all in Mecklenburg county.

The entire audience then sang "The Old North State."

Owing to a throat affection, Capt. W. E. Ardrey was unable to deliver his address on President Polk, and it was read clearly and with good enunciation by Mr. Walter Stacy, the principal of the Carolina Academy, in Providence. The text of Capt. Ardrey's sketch follows:

CAPT. ARDREY'S ADDRESS.

Daughters of the Revolution—Ladies and Gentlemen: A few days ago I received your very complimentary invitation to read a paper upon the life of President James Knox Polk on the occasion of the unveiling of this monument to mark the place of his birth, the subject being of profound interest to me, it is with great pride that I undertake to discharge the responsible

Carolina, would claim son. Like a devoted father, the hand of her daughter, mature years, feeling his noble manhood as a father, feeling truly honored that he has her true motherly will ever go back to fondly pressed to him planted her affectionate cheeks and called him child, so Mecklenburg and own him as her no doubt in my own born on this spot. House that stood up yet in the memory of citizens of Pineville Esq., and Stephen who are present here testify to that fact years when passing father, Dr. Wm. A. cuted in this community knew its history point to this place President Polk, and and occupied by W. Orr and the late J. President James J. Mecklenburg, North waters of little S notice the spelling, an Indian name, a raw, etc., eleven miles to the south side of east side of the put lotte to Lancaster, day of November, tenth year of our was the oldest of t

His father was was the son of E. mother was Jane K. James Knox Polk. of noble ancestry, grandfather, Robert of Scotland, and Tusken, the heiress and his son, Robert met and immigrated 1735, first settling Pennsylvania and Mecklenburg county were the parents of el Polk, the great father of James K.

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Carolina, would claim him as her own
son. Like a devoted mother that grasps
the hand of her distinguished son in
mature years, feeling a special pride in

his noble manhood and his true char-
acter, feeling truly grateful for the
honors that he has faithfully won, but
her true motherly love and devotion

will ever go back to the child that she
fondly pressed to her bosom and im-
planted her affectionate kisses on his
cheeks and called him her own darling

child, so Mecklenburg will ever honor
and own him as her own son. There is
no doubt in my own mind but he was
born on this spot, and in the old log
house that stood upon this hill, and is
yet in the memory of two of the oldest
citizens of Pineville, John W. Morrow,

Esq., and Stephenson Blankenship,
who are present here to-day and will
testify to that fact. More than fifty
years when passing this place with my

father, Dr. Wm. Ardrey, who had lo-
cated in this community about 1825 and
knew its history well, would always
point to this place as the birthplace of

President Polk, and afterwards owned
and occupied by Wm. Manson, Nathan
Gerr and the late James Henegan, Esq.

President James K. Polk was born in
Mecklenburg, North Carolina, on the
waters of little Sugaw creek, please

notice the spelling, and must have been
an Indian name, as Waxhaw, Chuck-
taw, etc., eleven miles south of Char-
lotte and one mile south of Pineville

on the south side of the creek and the
east side of the public road from Char-
lotte to Lancaster, S. C., on the second
day of November, 1795, in the nine-

teenth year of our Independence. He
was the oldest of ten children.

His father was Samuel Polk, who
was the son of Ezekiel Polk and his
mother was Jane Knox, hence the name

James Knox Polk. He was truly a son
of noble ancestry, for his great, great
grandfather, Robert Polk, was a native

of Scotland, and married Magdalen
Tusken, the heiress of a large estate,
and his son, Robert, married Miss Gul-
let and immigrated to this country in

1735, first settling in Maryland and
Pennsylvania and in 1750 moved to
Mecklenburg county, N. C., and they
were the parents of Thomas and Ezek-

iel Polk, the great uncle and grand-
father of James K. Polk.

Polk was an Irish corruption for
Pollock. The Polks were leading men
in the county at that time and figured
prominently in the Mecklenburg Decla-

ration of Independence. Thomas
Polk issued the call for the convention
to meet at the court house on May the
19th, 1775, and he read the resolutions
that were adopted on the 20th.

It is said that an old Scotchman in
the county was asked if he knew any-
thing about the Declaration of Inde-
pendence and he replied: "Och; yea,
Tam Polk declared independence lang
before anybody else."

After the revolutionary war, follow-
ing the tide of emigration, Samuel Polk
removed to Tennessee in the autumn

times they were away from home for
weeks at a time. In early life James
evinced the desire for an education, but
being delicate, his father put him in a

store to clerk, but he did not like that,
and was sent to a good school, and in
1815 he entered the University of North
Carolina. His kinsman, Col. Wm. Polk,

of Raleigh, was then a trustee of the
University. After three years he gradu-
ated with the first honor. During his
entire term he never missed a recita-

tion nor any of the college or chapel ex-
ercises, and it was proverbial among
the students that Polk would always
rise at the first call and always be on

time, and one of the witty students
was in the habit of confirming his
statements by saying it is just as true
as that Polk will be there. He gradu-

ated in 1818 at the age of 23.
The following year he decided upon
the profession of law and entered i-

mediately upon his studies and at the
end of two years after passing a credit-
able examination he was admitted to
the bar and rose rapidly in his profes-

sion and soon gained prominence and
won distinction.

In politics he was a Jeffersonian Re-
publican as the party was thus called,
until 1834, it was changed to Demo-
cratic. In 1823, after a hotly contested

campaign, he was elected to the State
Legislature. He was a fine stump
speaker, always modest, but forcible in
argument, so much so that he was

called the Napoleon of the Stump in
Tennessee.

The first of January, 1824, he was
married to Miss Sarah Childress, of
Rutherford county, Tenn. She was well

accomplished. It has been said that
sweetness of character, gracefulness of
manners and beauty of mind, were

beautifully blended in her character.
She was a kind mistress, a faithful
friend, and devoted wife. It is said of
her that at one of the dinings at the

White House during his administra-
tion, when the arrangements were per-
fect and the feast as elegant as could
be, that Henry Clay, the distinguished

orator and statesman, was the guest of
honor, and was seated by Mrs. Polk,
animated by the joy of the occasion,
and her delightful companionship, while

the viands were choice and the wine
old and sparkling and the best of feel-
ing prevailed, he said to her: "Madam,
in all my travels over the country, I

have only heard one opinion of you,
and all commend your excellent ad-
ministration of the domestic affairs of
the White House, but directing her at-

tention to her husband on the opposite
side of the table, I cannot say as much
for that young man." "Indeed," said
Mrs. Polk, "I am glad to hear that my
administration is so popular. And in
return will say, I know of no one,
whose elevation would please me more
than that of Henry Clay, and if you do
have occasion to occupy the White

Full Schedule Didn't Faze First Lady

Continued From Page 1A
Miss Ann Emery of Charlotte, this year's Child of Hope for the Arthritis Foundation.

—Taken private lunch at Carmel Country Club with a group of about 27 local and state dignitaries and supped punch with several hundred well dressed and jostling women on the lawn of Hezekiah Alexander House.

—Granted a private interview of chit-chat with one press group and a private audience with 13-year-old reporter Paul Stophel of the student newspaper at the Charlotte Learning Academy.

—Managed somehow to hold up wondrously throughout the whole proceedings and even to give the illusion of having changed clothing without having done so.

Mrs. Johnson spent the first part of the afternoon in a dress-

coat thing that was some shade of red.

Between the Polk birthplace in Pineville and the Alexander House in Charlotte she dropped out of the caravan for a brief rest stop at Irwin Belk's East-over Road home.

She emerged at the Alexander house in a white dress.

"That," explained Mrs. Johnson's secretary Liz Carpenter, "is one of the little tricks you have to learn on this kind of schedule."

In Pineville and again at the Alexander house Mrs. Johnson toured the historic buildings, discussing building materials, furnishings and historic data about the two sites.

At the Alexander house her hostess, Mrs. Hugh Houser, related the story of George Washington's visit to Charlotte in Colonial days and his subsequent description of the town as "a trifling place."

"Let's attribute that to his being so tired," reminded the First Lady, who said she was born and spent the early years of her life in a house that was heated only by six fireplaces.

At Carmel Country Club Mrs. Johnson was wide open to reporter Stophel of the Learning Academy.

Asked later what he and the First Lady had talked about, young Stophel replied somewhat in awe.

"I didn't get to ask her a question," he said. "She asked me. She wanted to know whether President Polk was a four-year or an eight-year president. I said I thought he was a four-year president."

Anything else? he was asked. "Well, I noticed one thing. She wasn't wearing any make-up except for lipstick. Gollee. She looks like she's not over 40."



Observer Photo by Hank Daniel

She Unveils A Plaque At The Polk House

THE AMERICAN'S CREED

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I, therefore, believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against its enemies.

William Tyler Page

Mecklenburg Chapter DAR

Re-dedication of the Polk Birthplace Monument

May 14, 1998

THE EVENING CRONICLE, SEPTEMBER 27, 1904



**EVENT YESTERDAY AT PINEVILLE,
UNVEILING OF THE POLK MONUMENT**

**James K. Polk Memorial
North Carolina Historic Site
Division of Archives & History
Department of Cultural Resources**

**Mecklenburg Chapter
DAR
"Re-dedication of the Polk Birthplace Monument"
James K. Polk Memorial
May 14, 1998**

9:30 a.m. Band Concert	South Mecklenburg High School Band Director, David Ragsdale
10:00 a.m. Presentation of the Colors	South Mecklenburg High School Naval JROTC Commander French Harvey, Naval Science Instructor Senior Chief Carl Posey, Associate Naval Science Instructor
Pledge of Allegiance	Betty Terwilliger Vice-Regent
National Anthem	South Mecklenburg High School Band

DAR Ritual

Welcome

Introduction of Speaker

Address

"The Old North State"

Retrieve the Colors

Please join us down at the monument for the re-dedication.

Kathlee Hicks, Regent

**Joyce White, Manager
James K. Polk Memorial**

Joyce White

**Dr. James Sasser,
Historian**

Charlotte Lutheran School

Naval JROTC

3328 Selwyn Avenue
Charlotte, N. C. 28209

March 16, 1968

Mr. A. L. Honeycutt, Jr.
Restoration Supervisor
N. C. Department of Archives and History
P. O. Box 1881
Raleigh, N. C. 27602

Dear Mr. Honeycutt,

At the regular Chapter meeting of Mecklenburg Chapter NSDAR on March 14th the plans of the Charlotte Bicentennial Committee for May 22nd were announced. The events of the day include an unveiling of a DAR plaque at Rezekiah Alexander House and a visit to the Polk birthplace site.

As it is very probable that President and/or Mrs. L. B. Johnson will be here on that day, our Regent and the Chapter members are most anxious that our monument at the Polk birthplace be restored and that a rededication can be planned.

It is necessary that I make some sort of progress report at our next meeting, April 11. Please let me know as soon as possible the plans of your department in regards to the monument.

Sincerely yours,

Roberta B. Morris

Mrs. Harold A. Morris

State of North Carolina
Department of Archives and History
Post Office Box 1881
Raleigh 27602

March 20, 1968

Mrs. Harold A. Morris
3828 Selwyn Avenue
Charlotte, North Carolina 28209

Dear Mrs. Morris:

I have delayed answering your letters concerning the reconstruction of the Mecklenburg Chapter DAR monument at the Polk Birthplace until our plans for the May 20 program had been finalized. We did not know definitely until March 6 that Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson would dedicate the three log buildings at the Polk Birthplace on May 20. We had originally planned to dedicate this site on November 2 (President Polk's birth date) at which time the visitor center-museum and exhibits would have been completed.

After it was decided that Culture Week will be held in Charlotte this year and since November 2 was too close to the November General Election day, we had strongly considered dedicating the buildings on December 6 during the Culture Week meetings in Charlotte. We plan to have your DAR monument reconstructed by the fall dedication program. The funds for the reconstruction will not be available until after July 1 of this year. We do plan to reconstruct the monument and have your DAR chapter dedicate it as a part of the dedication program for the visitor center-museum which will be officially opened during Culture Week on December 6.

After July 1 our design staff will complete plans for the reconstruction of your monument. We plan to have a monument area which will be landscaped and will possibly include flag poles and stone benches. This plan is the one that I have referred to before in correspondence with you and once we have preliminary drawings we do want to discuss these plans with you.

January 10, 1966

Mr. A. L. Honeycutt, Jr.
Restoration Specialist
N. C. State Department of Archives and History
Box 1881
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Honeycutt,

In confirmation of our telephone conversation this afternoon, the Executive Board of the Mecklenburg Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution voted permission to you to remove our monument marking the site of the James K. Polk birthplace, to rebuild it and to relocate it on the actual site of the James K. Polk cabin.

We wish you much success in this restoration project and feel that it will be of great interest and inspiration to the residents of this area, to those of the State of North Carolina at large and to all visitors to our State.

If we can be of assistance, please call on us.

Yours truly,

Roberta B. Morris

Mrs. Harold A. Morris
Regent



Owner Takes Feed To Pigs, Just Behind Polk Monument
News Staff Photo — Jeep Hunter

Park At Pineville Will Honor Polk

BY JOHN KILGO
News Staff Writer

A 20-acre state park — complete with a museum, caretaker's quarters and a replica of a log cabin — will be developed off Highway 521 near Pineville at the birthplace of James K. Polk, the 11th President of the United States.

James Stenhouse, past president of the Mecklenburg Historical Association, said today the park is assured and work will begin on it soon.

The park eventually will involve an investment of over \$50,000 — and it will serve as a shrine to Polk, replacing a pig pen which now stands in the middle of the property.

The County Commission refused to vote \$2,500 for it, so the park was reduced from 25 to 20 acres.

Mr. Stenhouse said the Richardson Foundation of New York — an agency which donates money to help establish

and preserve historic sites — will give \$7,500 for land and restoration.

* * *
THE STATE government has another \$7,500 already appropriated to help with the land purchase, Mr. Stenhouse said. And the state also will give \$35,000 to build a museum and caretaker's quarters in the park.

"A replica of the log cabin in which President Polk was born will be put in the park" Mr. Stenhouse said. "I think this park will be one of the finest things our county has ever had."

The Richardson Foundation had agreed earlier to donate \$10,000 to the project if the state and local government would match this amount.

The state had the \$7,500, but Mr. Stenhouse wasn't able to convince county commissioners that they should come up with \$2,500.

Commissioner Henry Wilmer led the argument against appropriating money for the park, saying he didn't think this was a project for which tax funds or ABC money should be spent.

Mr. Stenhouse said, "There will be absolutely no problem in acquiring the 20 acres for the park. We have the ball rolling now, and we'll have a park out there before too long."

The park will be off Highway 521 about two miles from downtown Pineville. A monument stands on the property now, and it will remain as part of the state park.

The State Department of Archives and History will consider the project within the next month.

"This is strictly a formality," Mr. Stenhouse said. "The state government already has appropriated the money for the park."

After this step is taken, the State Department of Administration will take the proper steps to acquire the property in the name of the state, Mr. Stenhouse said.

"Grass will be planted on the land," he said, "and the old road which led to the Polk cabin will be restored. The museum will consist of one or two big rooms, and all things

of historical value in connection with President Polk's life will be placed there.

* * *
"THE PARK should be one of the real beautiful spots in our county, and should attract many visitors," Mr. Stenhouse said.

He first approached the Richardson Foundation about this project eight years ago.

Polk was born in a log cabin on the land on Nov. 2, 1795. During his administration, from 1845 through 1849, President Polk saw several states added to the union and the transcontinental railroad completed.

He is generally considered a

See PARK on Page 2A

Funds Assured

Park In Pineville Will Honor Polk

Continued From Front Page

"good" President by historians — and this will be the first time he has been memorialized in the county of his birth.

There isn't much there now

Seals Enjoy Merry Season

The 1962 Christmas Seals had a merry holiday season, thank you, although a number of friends failed to write.

Flay W. Sellers, executive director of the Mecklenburg Tuberculosis and Health Association, reported today that nearly 12,000 of the 55,000 families which were mailed Christmas Seals have not been heard from.

"We're ahead of the same time last year and ahead of our best year," he said, "but we're about \$5,200 behind our goal for the year."

Seal sales to date total \$49,794, he said. The goal is \$55,000.

"It's not too late to make your contributions," Mr. Sellers said.

to remind people that this was the site of our 11th President's birth. The monument — erected by the Mecklenburg chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution — stands about 18 feet high and is surrounded by weeds, beer cans and broken liquor bottles.

* * *
TO THE SOUTH of the monument is a cotton patch, to the north a garbage dump which has accumulated hundreds of beer cans and a few old stoves and refrigerators.

Behind the monument — in President Polk's old backyard — is a pig pen. A sow and seven piglets live there, and seem downright happy about the attention they get when visitors come up to look at the ex-President's home site.

Battle Williams, a Negro who lives in a house right off Highway 521, made the trip up the road yesterday afternoon with a bucket of slop to give the pigs their supper.

"A lot of people come up this old road to look at that monument," Williams said.

Almanac

Sunset today 5:26 p.m.
sunrise tomorrow 7:30 a.m.

consumer boycotts of imports aren't as new as we think. Twenty-five years ago, a Charlotte News urged people to "boycott Japanese goods." She said women would take not buying silks of everybody would fall the ball is rolling boycott all stores selling Japanese

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News Staff Photo—Don Martin

Stanley South (Left), A. L. Honeycutt Confer On New Park

Park Experts Start Poking For Historic Polk Cabin

By MARIEL CAMP
News Staff Writer

All the scene lacked was a blazing sun beating down on safari hats, and it would have looked like an archeological expedition into the desert.

But it took place this morning right here in Mecklenburg County off Highway 521 about a mile southeast of Pineville.

It was the first stage of a new state park commemorating the birthplace of James K. Polk, 11th President of the U. S., born in a log cabin on the site on Nov. 2, 1795.

On hand for the groundbreaking were W. S. Tarlton, superintendent of Historic Sites, Richard Sawyer, operations manager, Stanley A. South, archeologist, A. L. Honeycutt, restorations specialist, all of the Department of Archives and History in Raleigh; local architect James A. Stenhouse, chairman of the James K. Polk Birthplace Advisory Committee, and several committee members.

THEIR FIRST problem: find the exact location of a two-room log cabin which was destroyed more than 60 years ago.

Their answer: start digging. Laborers already had dug out about a foot of topsoil in a roped-off area by early this morning, and bearded archeologist South was still poking the ground with a "probe," (a long sharp-pointed stick).

"Our problem," said Mr. South, mopping his brow with a shirt sleeve, "is that historical information on the Polk homeplace is scarce. We just

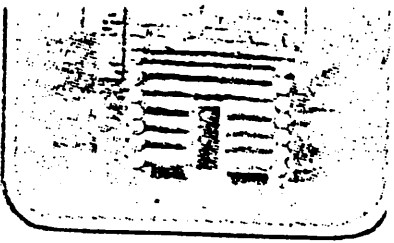
don't know exactly where the house was located.

"But archeologically," he continued, "we ought to be able to find exactly where it was. One help will be the pyramid-shaped monument which was placed on the site around 1900 by the Mecklenburg DAR. It is known that when the monument was plac-

ed some logs from the original house were still visible on the site, indicating that the monument is pretty accurately placed."

Eventually the new \$130,000 park will include the restored Polk birthplace as well as historic buildings, a visitor-center museum, exhibits and equipment and a caretaker's residence.

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Cabin near Pineville, Mecklenburg county, in which James Knoc Polk, eleventh President of the United States, was born, November 2, 1795.

THE EVENING CHRONICLE, SEPTEMBER 27,



Carnegie Library,
CHARLOTTE, N. C.

ENT YESTERDAY AT PINEVILLE. UNVEILING OF THE POLK MONUMENT

Polk Dedication: July 4th In Cold

'Look How Long His Hair Was,' Kids Say Of Portrait

By WOODY MITCHELL
Observer Staff Writer

It could have been a Fourth of July celebration at the South Pole.

All the ingredients were there — flags, a band, excited kids, pinstriped dignitaries, and high spirits — at the dedication of the museum at the James K. Polk birthplace in Pineville Friday morning.

A crowd of 400 housewives, schoolchildren, businessmen, and just folks waited for the ceremony to begin. The South Mecklenburg band played and a cold wind blew.

Mrs. Hartsell's 7th grade history classes from McClintock Junior High and Mrs. Willis' 4th grade class from Eastover had special permission to attend the dedication.

"This is education at their level," one Eastover grade-mother explained. "I'm so glad they (school officials) let the children out for this."

The kids punched each other and asked, "When's it gonna start?"

At 11:10 the buses from the White House Inn pulled up with the Culture Week participants: little old ladies in furs, dignified gentlemen with cigars, tweedy collegians.

The ceremony began.

James A. Stenhouse, chairman of the Polk Birthplace Advisory Committee, presided.

After necessary formalities, Dr. Hugh T. Lefler, author of several N.C. history textbooks and professor of history at the University of North Carolina at

Chapel Hill, spoke briefly about Polk and his times.

Those expecting a dull, dry speech were disappointed. Lefler, a notably bush-browed man, spoke candidly and amusingly. (He was interrupted twice by wheezing air brakes on the buses.)

"Polk attributed his success to his education (at UNC-CH) . . . he became a pretty good country lawyer without going to law school. Today you have to get ahead by degrees.

"When I was in school Polk was considered a bad president; but the thing to go by is the record. I'd put Polk's record up against any other president's.

"He was a good president if not a great president."

Then the Daughters of the

American Revolution presented their monument to the birthplace, the N. C. Department of Archives and History accepted the key to the museum, and everybody flocked inside.

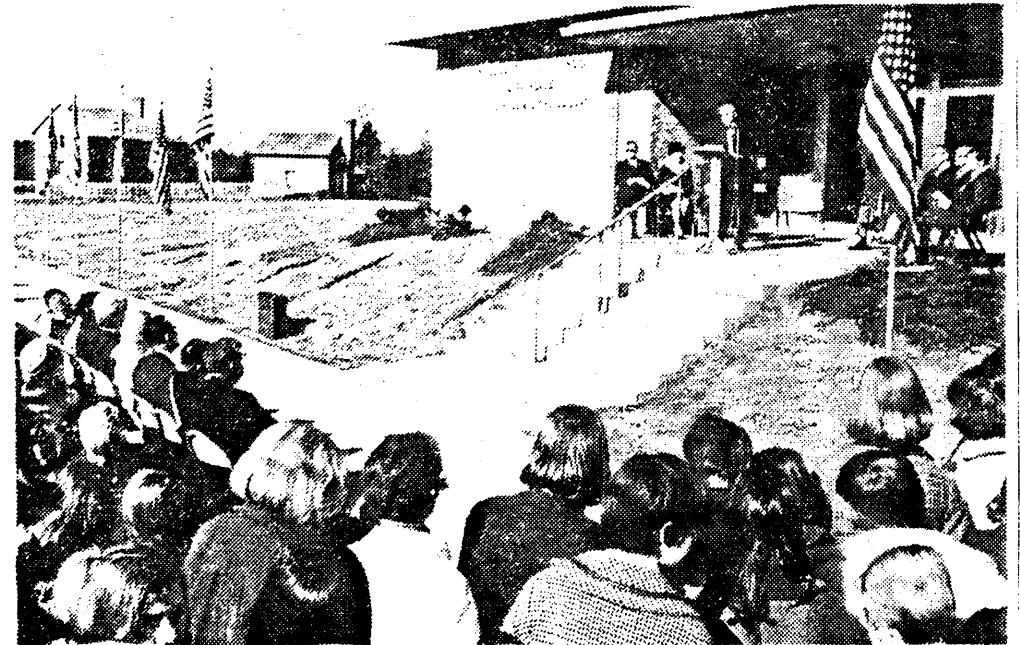
"This is something to be so proud of," exclaimed one member of the DAR.

"We're never gonna get in!" moaned a fourth grader, lost in the crowd clogging the museum doorway.

Inside the museum, adults traced Polk's lineage on the Polk family tree. The kids ogled Mexican General Santa Anna's hat and Colonel William Polk's sword.

On the walls old newspaper reproductions and portraits of Polk's family.

"Look how long his hair was," remarked one eighth



Observer Photo by Philip Morgan

Restored Homeplace Forms Backdrop For New Polk Museum

grader.

A movie on Polk's life started in the projection room and

everyone shuffled inside to take a look.

Finally the buses loaded;

people began to trickle out to their cars. President Polk had had his day.

Shrine For Polk?

Bond Approval Makes Restoration Possible

By DONALD MACDONALD
News Staff Writer

"America's most forgotten President" will no longer be forgotten in his native Mecklenburg, now that \$250,000 in bonds for historic sites has apparently been approved by North Carolina voters.

Tuesday's bond vote will mean \$15,000 toward restoration plans for the Pineville birthplace of James Knox Polk, 11th President of the U. S. In the works are a 30-acre state park, a replica of the pioneer cabin in which Polk was born and a museum of relics associated with his life and his administration.

Sponsor of the restoration project is the Mecklenburg Historical Association, whose members must now try to raise additional funds for purchase of the birthplace site. In addition to \$15,000 earmarked by the bond issue, there is \$7,500 appropriated for the project by the N. C. Legislature of two years ago and since reappropriated. This provides \$22,500 toward the purchase price of \$30,000.

James A. Stenhouse, chairman of a restoration committee from the county's historical group, said he will go before the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners on Monday to request an additional \$7,500 from ABC funds to the land purchase may be made.

ASKING PRICE

John Miller, superintendent of the Mecklenburg County Home, is owner of the Polk property. His asking price for the land — situated just east of the Lancaster, S. C., highway south of Pineville — is \$1,000 an acre.

"Once we have the land we can begin worrying about getting the money to develop it," said Mr. Stenhouse.

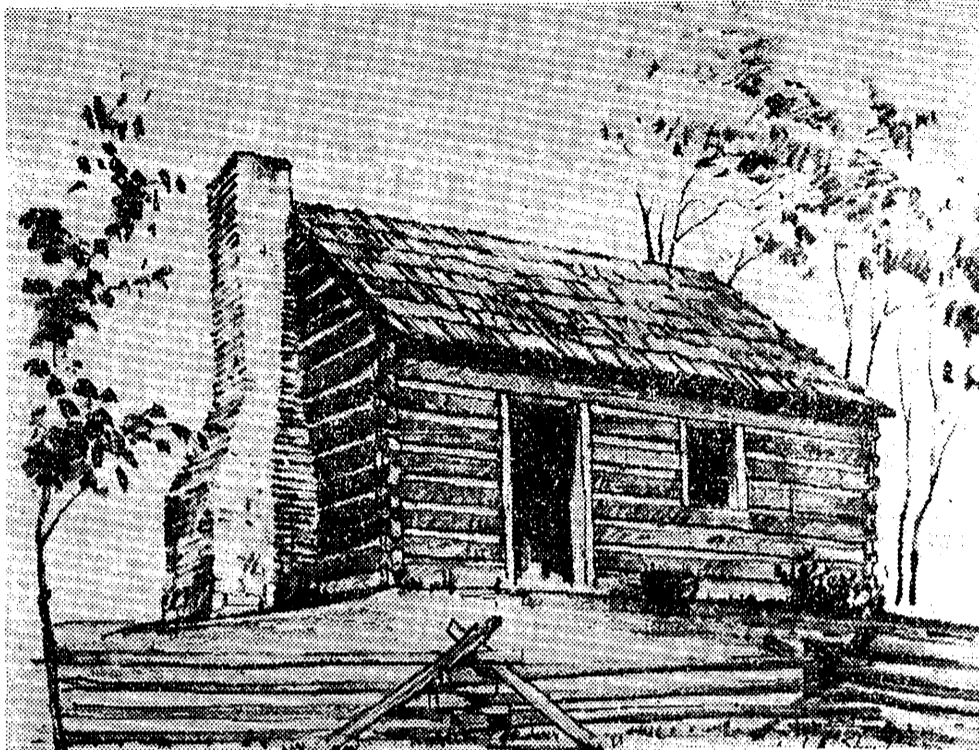
Already Mr. Stenhouse has prepared an architect's drawing of the cabin in which President Polk was born in 1795.

CABIN DESCRIBED

A description of the cabin is on record from an address delivered by North Carolina Gov. David L. Swain in 1867. Gov. Swain visited the cabin before it tumbled in ruins and gave this account:

"The place where President Polk was born was, in 1849, the property of Nathan Orr. The house pointed out to me was of logs, had never been weather-boarded, and was much dilapidated. It was formed of two pens, one about 20 x 16, and the other about 12 x 16, making a structure 32 x 16, with a single roof and brick chimney at the north end, and stood about 200 yards south of Little Sugar Creek."

Currently the cabin site is marked by a rock and mortar shaft and by a highway marker along Highway 521. A driveway encircles the monument,



Architect Jim Stenhouse's Drawing of President Polk's Birthplace.

reached by a dirt road leading off the paved road just south of the highway marker.

WHAT SOCIETY WANTS

For restoration purposes, the historical society wants property fronting approximately 1,400 feet along the highway with a depth of 1,400 feet. The state highway department will then be asked to build access roads into the tract.

What is known of President Polk's life in early Mecklenburg?

There are no direct descendants of James Knox Polk, since he and his wife, Sarah Childress of Tennessee, died childless. But there are several Charlotteans who are distant cousins of the President or who are related through collateral lines, including Dr. Lawrence Stell, pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church; Mrs. George H. Petteway, 708 Central Ave.; and Mrs. Eben Nye Hutchison, who lives at the Marshall Polk homestead, 138 S. Caswell Rd.

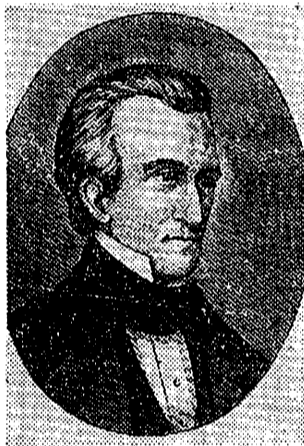
(Marshall Polk was the grandson of Col. Thomas Polk, grand uncle of the President.)

SCOTS-IRISH STOCK

The man former President Harry Truman calls "America's most neglected President" was descended from Scots and Scots-Irish through the Pollock (or Pollok) family, which later shortened the name to Polk.

The President's ancestor Robert Bruce Polk, came to America from Northern Ireland about 1680 with his wife, six sons and two daughters and settled in Maryland. Later the future President's great-grandfather, William Polk II, came to Mecklenburg.

Among William Polk II's sons were Col. (later Gen.) Thomas Polk, who read the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence from the Charlotte Courthouse steps on May 20, 1775; Capt. Charles Polk, who distinguished himself in the Revolutionary War and from whom Mrs. Petteway is descended; John Polk, from whom Dr. Stell is descended; and Ezekiel Polk, from whom the President is descended.



JAMES K. POLK

Ezekiel Polk married Mary or Maria Wilson, and they were the President's grandparents. Her grave was recently found near Pineville in a little-known "wilderness cemetery" which also contains the remains of Ezra Alexander, one of the Declaration signers.

Samuel Polk, son of Ezekiel and Maria Wilson Polk, was the President's father. He was married to Jane Knox of Iredell County, a devout Presbyterian and kinswoman of many of the Knoxes in Mecklenburg.

The President-to-be was the oldest of 10 children. He was a lad of 11 when his father moved to Tennessee. He came back to North Carolina, however, to enter the University at Chapel Hill in 1815 and was graduated in 1818 with honors.

President Truman calls Polk America's "first dark-horse candidate."

"Polk said plainly that he would not run for a second term. He promised to fulfill all his commitments within his first four years," President Truman said.

He was never given a moment's peace by a hostile Congress. Yet despite this he completed the annexation of Texas,

solved the touchy Oregon-California problem, founded the present postal system and issued the first postage stamps, added one million square miles of new territory including New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Oregon, Arizona and California.

U.S. 'CAME OF AGE'

It was during Polk's administration that America "came of age" as a major nation.

In the city of Charlotte, as indeed in North Carolina, Polk is practically forgotten. There is one short street in Charlotte called Polk St. There is Polk County in the Western part of the state, and there is the town of Polkton in Anson County, named not for the President but for a later relative, Leor das L. Polk, founder of "The Progressive Farmer" magazine.

The Mecklenburg Historical Association has pledged itself to make James Knox Polk better remembered.

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ALBEMARLE DRIVE

James K. Polk
Was Born In
Mecklenburg

POLK BIRTHPLACE.—This marker stands at the birthplace of President James K. Polk. It is located nine miles from Charlotte in the Pineville area. The monument was made from stones taken from the chimney of the Polk home.

President Polk Studied At UNC, Gained An Early Start In Politics

3 Knox Polk this country's
"dark horse" presidential nomi-
nee was born in Mecklenburg
November 2, 1795.

catch and Scotch-Irish An-
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born, the son of an enter-
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of old sectional and party prejudices, and for research, have enabled correct the injustice of them. Polk's career was from first to last that of an honest, conscientious and limited man. It may be claimed for Polk that his policy of expansion added more than 500,000 square miles to the territory of the United States, an acquisition second only to Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory; that his tariff of 1846 was this country's boldest approach to a free-trade policy; that his independent treasury system adequately served the national government until the Civil war; and that his antagonism to internal improvements at the expense of the federal government was a wise policy.

"POLK DOCTRINE"

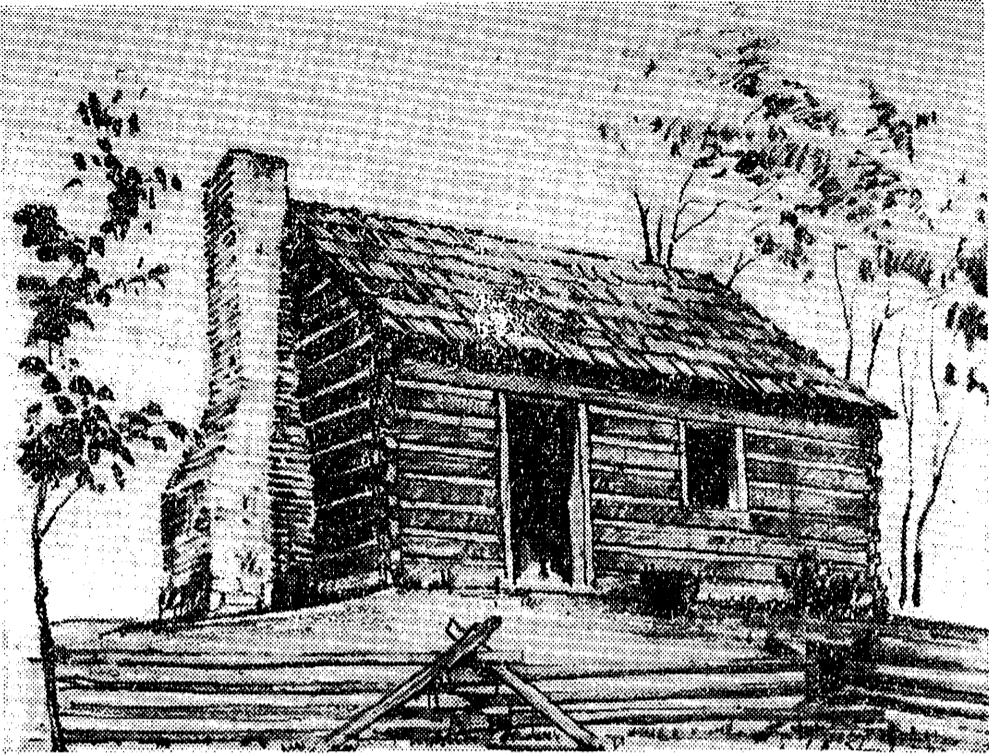
"POLK DOCTRINE"
The name of the "Polk Doctrine" has been given to his utterances in opposition to European interference in American affairs—as when in his message of December 2, 1845, he told Congress that the United States "can not in silence permit any European interference on the North American continent, and

proved by the American people.

a spare of middle-height, angular in his movements, with a small head, long grizzled hair brushed stiffly back behind his ears, penetrating and rather chilly grey eyes, and stern mouth. His countenance was usually sad, but sometimes lightened by a genial smile. His long training as Congressman and Governor had taught him to deal expeditiously with public business; but he never learned to share his burdens with others.

AWARE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

AWARE OF RESPONSIBILITIES
He was intense, laborious, humorless, pedestrian, immensely aware at all times of the responsibilities which he bore, and inclined to make everyone with whom he came in contact aware of them. He was methodical to a degree, and of a patience which enabled him to listen at length to the petitions of all who came to him for patronage or other favors. Their confidence he seldom repaid, and even his closest official associates were often unaware of his real thoughts or intentions.



Architect Jim Stenhouse's Impression Of The Polk Birthplace

\$54,000 Asked Of Assembly To Restore Polk Birthplace

By JULIAN SCHEER
News Staff Writer

RALEIGH—A bill asking \$54,000 for construction of a museum-visitors center on the birthplace of President James K. Polk near Pineville was introduced by the Mecklenburg delegation today.

A caretaker's residence would be included in the construction project.

Restoration of President Polk's birthplace has long been discussed by historical societies and in appropriation hearings.

THE 1955 GENERAL Assembly appropriated \$7,500 to purchase the site of the birthplace and early home of President Polk to be developed as a major North Carolina historical shrine. But this amount has proved insufficient to purchase the property.

The Richardson Foundation of New York City and Greensboro has made a challenge grant of \$10,000 to assist in the acquisition and reconstruction of the birthplace.

The grant, however, stipulated that the State Department of Archives and History shall take steps to provide a visitors center-museum and other facilities at an estimated cost of \$54,000.

Rep. Irwin Belk said \$25,000 is expected to be raised from local sources and from other donations to augment the Richardson Funds and thereby insure the purchase and restoration of the birthplace.

He now asks that the \$54,000 appropriation be used in this manner: \$42,000 for the museum-visitors center and \$12,000 for a caretaker's residence.

* * *

REP. BELK GOT a number of signatures and has support for the measure.

The site is two miles south of Pineville on Highway 51, very close to the South Carolina line, which has been a reason for controversy over whether the old state line had Polk's birthplace in North or South Carolina.

A statue on Capitol Square here flatly states that Polk was born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

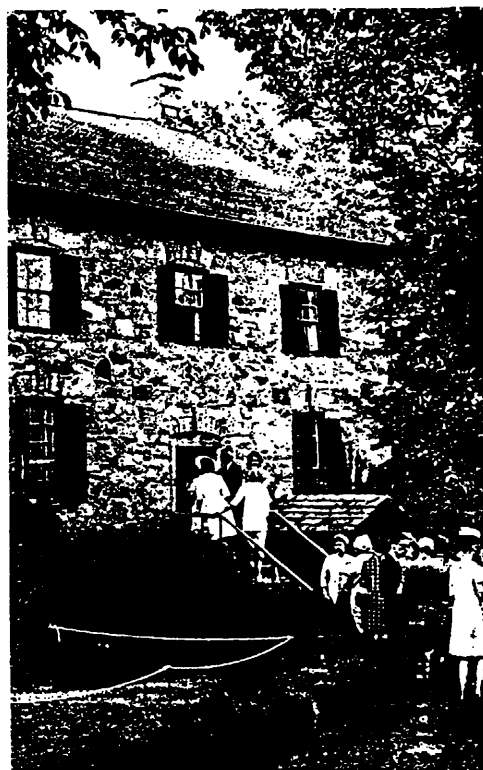
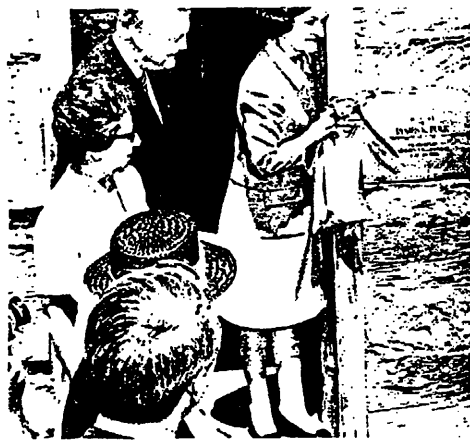
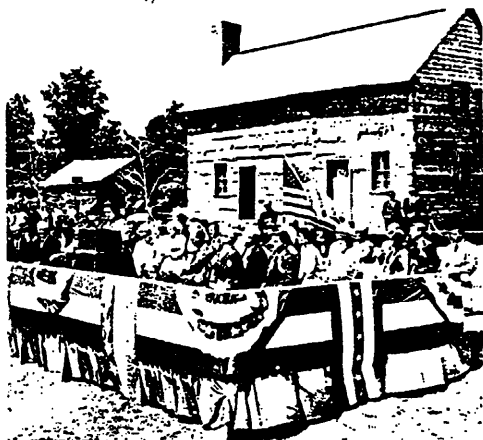
At the present time, a highway marker inconspicuously points to a modest stone monument about 100 yards from the highway.

The old Polk residence on Caswell Rd., Charlotte, built by the President's grandfather, is also the subject of controversy. The city's thoroughfare plan shows a street on the site and there is a movement to save the old building by moving it.



POLK MEMORIAL—This marker, near Pineville, is on the spot where President James K. Polk was born. The North Carolina General Assembly has appropriated money to turn the site into a park, but trouble has arisen as efforts have started to purchase necessary land. A story on the subject is on page 2C. (Observer Photo by James Denning)

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from folder on J. K. Stolt
clippings 1968



Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson made the dedicatory address at the Polk Birthplace restoration (top left), after which she toured the dwelling and unveiled a plaque commemorating the occasion (top right) as Governor and Mrs. Dan K. Moore looked on. During the afternoon Mrs. Johnson attended a reception in her honor at the ca. 1774 Hezekiah Alexander House (bottom left). Accompanying her (bottom right) were Governor and Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Hugh B. Houser of Charlotte, chairman of the Hezekiah Alexander House Restoration Committee. (Department of Archives and History photographs)

Charlotte Observer
Jan. 12, 1966

Polk, James Knox

Work Begins On Polk Homestead In Pineville



Observer Photo by Don Sturkey

Workman Will Jackson Chips At Monument

... It'll Have New Site In Polk Park

By PORTER MUNN
Observer Staff Writer

In a winter-browned field just east of Pineville, workmen began chipping away Tuesday at the fieldstone shaft that for 62 years has marked the birthplace of President James K. Polk.

The sound of their hammers marked the first step in construction of a state historic park which ultimately will include a full-scale reproduction of the Polk homestead as it was Nov. 2, 1795, when the president was born.

The workmen chipped carefully Tuesday, for the stone shaft — erected in 1904 by the Mecklenburg Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution — will be put back together again in a new location, near the front of the site.

The Historic Sites Division of the N.C. Department of Archives and History obtained permission to move the shaft at a Monday executive board meeting of the Mecklenburg DAR chapter, headed by Mrs. H. A. Morris.

The N.C. Highway Depart-

ment also moved into the act Tuesday with graders that will begin work on the 21-acre site today, molding it to the plans of landscape architects.

A. L. Honeycutt Jr., restoration specialist for the Historic Sites Division, said his co-workers had found three log structures to be used in rebuilding the Polk homestead, and added he hoped additional log buildings would be donated by owners in Mecklenburg and

adjoining counties.

The reconstructed homestead will include stables, a smokehouse, slave quarters, and a spring house.

Also included will be a combination museum and visitor center, director's residence, parking area and other facilities.

The site already has been annexed by the town of Pineville so the town commissioners can extend utilities to it.

More than \$100,000 was made available to finance the project by the N.C. General Assembly and private foundations. Additional funds will be obtained to

further develop the park in keeping with the plans of Charlotte architect James A. Stenhouse, who has promoted the project for years.

Or

Ville Yesterday Afternoon.

PATRIOTIC WORK OF DAUGHTERS

Birthplace of One of Mecklenburg's Presidents of the United States Marked by Enduring Stone—Remarks of the Regent in Presenting the Monument—Addresses by Dr. Alexander, Capt. Ardrey and Dr. Mack—Probability of a Monument to Andrew Jackson.

The monument erected by the Mecklenburg Chapter of the Daughters of American Revolution to the memory of President James Knox Polk was unveiled yesterday afternoon, on the site occupied by the house in which he was born, a short distance south of Pineville, in Mecklenburg county. Appropriate ceremony was observed and an interesting programme was carried out, which began at 4 o'clock and lasted an hour.

Miss Elizabeth Webb Long, regent of the Daughters of the Revolution, presided at the unveiling and in presenting the monument said:

"Daughters of the American Revolution, Ladies and Gentlemen: The one hundred and twenty-fourth anniversary of the battle of Charlotte, our chapter day, has been chosen as an appropriate time to review the early days of Mecklenburg's history, and to mark by this simple monument, which it has been our happy privilege to erect, the site of the birthplace of James Knox Polk, the eleventh President of the United States. It seems eminently fitting that the citizens of Pineville and the surrounding country should assist in the ceremonies of the day. In the name of the Mecklenburg Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, I bid them welcome. Welcome all."

Miss Long also expressed thanks to those who had taken an interest and had rendered assistance in the marking of historic spots in this part of the county. "Especially thanks," said Miss Long, "are due to Mr. Durham for his gift of this marble tablet, to Mr. D. A. Tompkins and to the commissioners for their valuable assistance."

A party of Pineville musicians then sang "America." Among the singers were Prof. J. A. Boyd, Rev. J. R. McAlpine, Messrs. E. W. Russell, and W. C. Barnett, Mrs. Anna S. Hoffman, Misses Clara Harris and Helen Boyd.

Dr. J. B. Alexander then delivered the following address:

DR. ALEXANDER'S ADDRESS.

For what purpose are we gathered about this common looking place, in these piping times of peace? There appears to be nothing in the air that calls for the assemblage of learned and refined ladies and gentlemen in this uninviting place. Forty years ago when war with grim visage countenance

the eleventh President of the United States. Here upon this spot, according to history, in Mecklenburg county, was born one of the great men of earth. He came of a great race of people. They were diamonds unpolished but diamonds of the first water. Robert Pollok, or Polk, settled in Pennsylvania—of him we know but little; his sons, Thomas and Ezekiel, came about 1750, they lived near Charlotte. Ezekiel Polk married Mary Wilson, a daughter of Samuel Wilson, who came from England many years before Mecklenburg county was laid off. . . . He had for his brother-in-law, Maj. John Davidson, who also married a sister, and they were both active in their support of the American cause. Among Col. Ezekiel Polk's sons, Sam Polk married Jane Kox, near Hopewell church, in this county, and moved to this spot with his wife, and here was born on Nov. 2nd, 1795 James Knox Polk, in memory of which event we are assembled to unveil the monument that has been erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Sam Polk, with his family, moved to Tennessee in 1806, when he, whose birth place is here marked, was but eleven years old. As Mecklenburg has been the birth place of many who have moved to other parts of our grand heritage, let us not forget their origin or fail to cherish their memories. For twenty-five years of his life, he was either in state or national politics. While a member of Congress, he was a firm supporter of Gen. Jackson's administration. Early in 1833, as a member of the ways and means committee, he made a minority report unfavorable to the bank of the United States. During the entire contest between the bank and President Jackson, caused by the removal of the deposits in October, 1833, Mr. Polk, as chairman of the ways and means committee, supported the executive. We say that his warm support of the Jackson administration arose from the fact that Mecklenburg was the common mother of both. Polk's administration of the affairs of government were eminently satisfactory. Having defeated one of the greatest patriots and orators that America ever produced, Henry Clay, of Kentucky, he was inaugurated President, March 4, 1845.

Amongst the most important events of his administration were the establishment of the United States Naval Academy; the consummation of the annexation of Texas; the admission of Texas, Iowa, and Wisconsin as States; the war with Mexico, resulting in a treaty of peace, by which the United States acquired New Mexico and upper California; the treaty with Great Britain settling the Oregon boundary; the establishing of the "warehouse system;" the re-enactment of the independent treasury system; the passage of the act establishing the Smithsonian Institution; the treaty with New Granada, the 25th article of which secured for citizens of the United States the right of way across the Isthmus of Panama; and the creation of the De-

the great men of the South, yes I

can say of the nation, was born here and we will preserve his nativity from being lost or forgotten.

We thank the Daughters of the American Revolution for what you have done; you not only erected one six miles northwest of the city, to mark the battle ground of McIntyre's branch, where on the first day of October, 1780, twelve Americans routed four hundred British soldiers, that they returned to Charlotte and reported that there was "a rebel behind every bush." But to-day you have presented your county and State, one equally as handsome and enduring, to mark the birthplace of a statesman who loved his country.

Mecklenburg of late years is coming to the front. The monument in front of the court house, to the signers of the Declaration of Independence of Mecklenburg, May 20th, 1775, is a handsome structure; but from the time the first money was paid in, in 1844, a more magnificent and much larger monument might have been erected if placed in the hands of the D. A. R.'s.

I leave it to your judgment whether you, alone, will place one to the memory of General Andrew Jackson, who was also born in Mecklenburg county and like President Polk, also moved to Tennessee. We are glad that the iron slab markers have been placed on the streets of Charlotte, commemorating important events of historic value. It is appropriate that you should this day unveil the Polk monument, it being the 124th anniversary of Cornwallis' passage through this section, and the battle of Charlotte.

Allow me to repeat a legend as to the birth of President Polk in three separate places, but all in Mecklenburg county.

The entire audience then sang "The Old North State."

Owing to a throat affection, Capt. W. E. Ardrey was unable to deliver his address on President Polk, and it was read clearly and with good enunciation by Mr. Walter Stacy, the principal of the Carolina Academy, in Providence. The text of Capt. Ardrey's sketch follows:

CAPT. ARDREY'S ADDRESS.

Daughters of the Revolution—Ladies and Gentlemen: A few days ago I received your very complimentary invitation to read a paper upon the life of President James Knox Polk on the occasion of the unveiling of this monument to mark the place of his birth, the subject being of profound interest to me, it is with great pride that I undertake to discharge the responsible duty. A few years ago, when I stood in front of the grand monument erected to his memory in the Capital Square at Nashville, Tennessee, I thought that his adopted State might honor him as her distinguished citizen, legislator, Congressman and Governor, and the United States might honor him as her President.

her true mother will ever go back fondly pressed to planted her affections and called child, so Mecklenburg and own him as no doubt in my born on this spot house that stood yet in the memory citizens of Pineville, Esq., and Stephen who are present testify to that years when passing father, Dr. Wm. cated in this com knew its history point to this place President Polk, and occupied by Orr and the late

President James Mecklenburg, N. waters of little notice the spelling an Indian name, law, etc., eleven lotte and one m on the south side east side of the p lotte to Lancaster day of November tenth year of c was the oldest of

His father was was the son of mother was Jane James Knox Polk of noble ancestry grandfather, Robert of Scotland, and Tusken, the heir and his son, Robert and immigrated 1753, first settling Pennsylvania and Mecklenburg county were the parents of Polk, the grandfather of James

Polk was an Pollock. The Pol in the county at prominently in the laration of in Polk issued the c to meet at the co 19th, 1775, and h hat were adopted It is said that he county was a thing about the pendence and he Tam Polk declar before anybody el After the revol ing the tide of en removed to Tenn of 1806, when Jar old and settled c Maury county, o he farmed. He v and spent much o cupation, assisted who was a good m lighted in that k

resident of the United States on this spot, according to Mecklenburg county, was great men of earth. He was a man of people. They were polished but diamonds. Mr. Robert Pollock, of Pennsylvania—of him I have heard; his sons, Thomas and Ezekiel Polk married, a daughter of who came from England before Mecklenburg was settled. He had for his father, John Davidson, a sister, and they were in their support of the cause. Among the sons, Sam Polk married in Hopewell church, in moved to this spot and here was born on James Knox Polk, in event we are assembling a monument that has the Daughters of the Revolution. Sam Polk, with to Tennessee in 1806, birth place is here eleven years old. As been the birth place moved to other parts of the county, let us not forget to cherish their memory. Fifty years of his life in state or national member of Congress, supporter of Gen. Jackson. Early in 1823, as ways and means committee minority report on the bank of the United States, the entire contest between President Jackson and the removal of the deposits, 1833, Mr. Polk, as ways and means committee executive. We warm support of the nation arose from the Mecklenburg was the combat. Polk's administration was satisfactory. Having the greatest patriots of America ever produced, of Kentucky, he was President, March

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her true motherly love and devotion will ever go back to the child that she fondly pressed to her bosom and imprinted her affectionate kisses on his cheeks and called him her own darling child, so Mecklenburg will ever honor and own him as her own son. There is no doubt in my own mind but he was born on this spot, and in the old log house that stood upon this hill, and is yet in the memory of two of the oldest citizens of Pineville, John W. Morrow, Esq., and Stephenson Blankenship, who are present here to-day and will testify to that fact. More than fifty years when passing this place with my father, Dr. Wm. Ardrey, who had located in this community about 1825 and knew its history well, would always point to this place as the birthplace of President Polk, and afterwards owned and occupied by Wm. Manson, Nathan Orr and the late James Henegan, Esq.

President James K. Polk was born in Mecklenburg, North Carolina, on the waters of little Sugaw creek, please notice the spelling, and must have been an Indian name, as Waxhaw, Chuckaw, etc., eleven miles south of Charlotte and one mile south of Pineville on the south side of the creek and the east side of the public road from Charlotte to Lancaster, S. C., on the second day of November, 1795, in the nineteenth year of our Independence. He was the oldest of ten children.

His father was Samuel Polk, who was the son of Ezekiel Polk and his mother was Jane Knox, hence the name James Knox Polk. He was truly a son of noble ancestry, for his great, great grandfather, Robert Polk, was a native of Scotland, and married Magdalen Tusken, the heiress of a large estate, and his son, Robert, married Miss Guilford and immigrated to this country in 1735, first settling in Maryland and Pennsylvania and in 1750 moved to Mecklenburg county, N. C., and they were the parents of Thomas and Ezekiel Polk, the great uncle and grandfather of James K. Polk.

Polk was an Irish corruption for Pollock. The Polks were leading men in the county at that time and figured prominently in the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Thomas Polk issued the call for the convention to meet at the court house on May the 19th, 1775, and he read the resolutions that were adopted on the 20th.

It is said that an old Scotchman in the county was asked if he knew anything about the Declaration of Independence and he replied: "Och; yea, Tam Polk declared independence lang before anybody else."

After the revolutionary war, following the tide of emigration, Samuel Polk removed to Tennessee in the autumn of 1806, when James was eleven years old and settled on a fertile farm in Maury county, on Duck river, where he farmed. He was a good surveyor and spent much of his time in that occupation, assisted by his son James K., who was a good mathematician and delighted in that kind of work and at

Carolina. His kinsman, Col. Wm. Polk, of Raleigh, was then a trustee of the University. After three years he graduated with the first honor. During his entire term he never missed a recitation nor any of the college or chapel exercises, and it was proverbial among the students that Polk would always rise at the first call and always be on time, and one of the witty students was in the habit of confirming his statements by saying it is just as true as that Polk will be there. He graduated in 1818 at the age of 23.

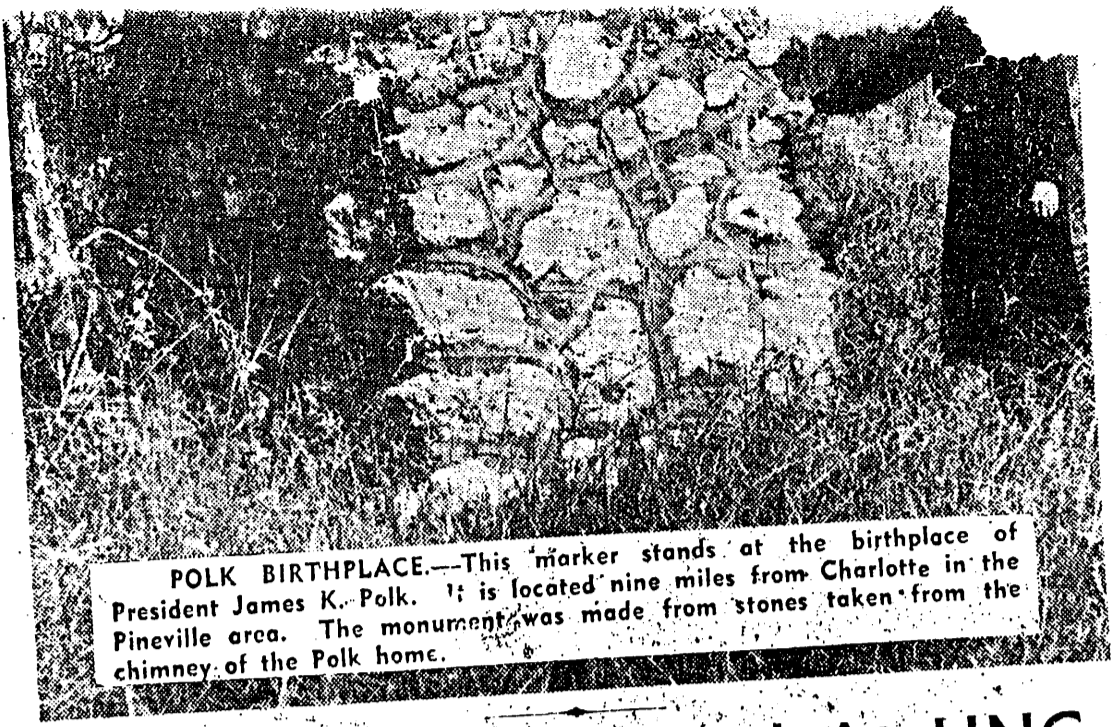
The following year he decided upon

the profession of law and entered immediately upon his studies and at the end of two years after passing a creditable examination he was admitted to the bar and rose rapidly in his profession and soon gained prominence and won distinction.

In politics he was a Jeffersonian Republican as the party was thus called until 1824, it was changed to Democratic. In 1823, after a hotly contested campaign, he was elected to the State Legislature. He was a fine stump speaker, always modest, but forcible in argument, so much so that he was called the Napoleon of the Stump in Tennessee.

The first of January, 1824, he was married to Miss Sarah Childress, of Rutherford county, Tenn. She was well accomplished. It has been said that sweetness of character, gracefulness of manners and beauty of mind, were beautifully blended in her character. She was a kind mistress, a faithful friend, and devoted wife. It is said of her that at one of the dinners at the White House during his administration, when the arrangements were perfect and the feast as elegant as could be, that Henry Clay, the distinguished orator and statesman, was the guest of honor, and was seated by Mrs. Polk, animated by the joy of the occasion and her delightful companionship, while the viands were choice and the wine old and sparkling and the best of feeling prevailed, he said to her: "Madam, in all my travels over the country, I have only heard one opinion of you, and all commend your excellent administration of the domestic affairs of the White House, but directing her attention to her husband on the opposite side of the table, I cannot say as much for that young man." "Indeed," said Mrs. Polk, "I am glad to hear that my administration is so popular. And I return will say, I know of no one whose elevation would please me more than that of Henry Clay, and if you do have occasion to occupy the White House, it will be surrendered to you in perfect order from garret to cellar. Then the laughing of the occasion interrupted the conversation.

In 1825 he was elected to Congress and served until 1829, and was honored with the Speakership for two terms. He occupied the chair for five sessions, and



POLK BIRTHPLACE.—This marker stands at the birthplace of President James K. Polk. It is located nine miles from Charlotte in the Pineville area. The monument was made from stones taken from the chimney of the Polk home.

President Polk Studied At UNC, Gained An Early Start In Politics

James Knox Polk this country's first "dark horse" presidential nominee, was born in Mecklenburg county November 2, 1795.

His Scotch and Scotch-Irish ancestry form the foundation of Polk's determined, conscientious and taciturn actions in the White House. He was born the son of an enterprising farmer who moved west to become one of the pioneers of the fertile Piedmont Valley. Most of his early life was spent in Tennessee. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was a good classical scholar and a first class graduate. He pushed his way to the office of Justice of the Peace. From law he went to the Whig convention.

He was quite 30 years old, he entered Congress as a disciple of Jefferson and the University of North Carolina. He was a good classical scholar and a first class graduate. He pushed his way to the office of Justice of the Peace. From law he went to the Whig convention.

He had been a member of the House of Representatives for seven successive terms, from 1825 to 1839, and Governor of Tennessee after that; he had been Speaker for two years and was known as an earnest and skilful leader of the Jacksonian democracy in Jackson's own state.

NOT BINGLED OUT

He had never been bingled out of his mind. He was a good classical scholar and a first class graduate. He pushed his way to the office of Justice of the Peace. From law he went to the Whig convention.

of old sectional and party prejudices, and the research have enabled to correct the injustice of his career was that of an honest and limited man. It may be claimed for Polk that his policy of expansion added more than 500,000 square miles to the territory of the United States, an acquisition second only to Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory; that his tariff of 1846 was this country's boldest approach to a free-trade policy; that his independent treasury system adequately served the national government until the Civil war; and that his antagonism to internal improvements at the expense of the federal government was a wise policy.

"POLK DOCTRINE"

The name of the "Polk Doctrine" has been given to his utterances in opposition to European interference in American affairs—as when in his message of December 2, 1845, he told Congress that the United States "can not in silence permit any European interference on the North American continent, and should any such interference be attempted will be ready to resist it at any and all hazards."

The doctrine has been criticized, but there can be no question that it has been maintained and applied.

proved by the American people. Historians have not that Polk was a spare

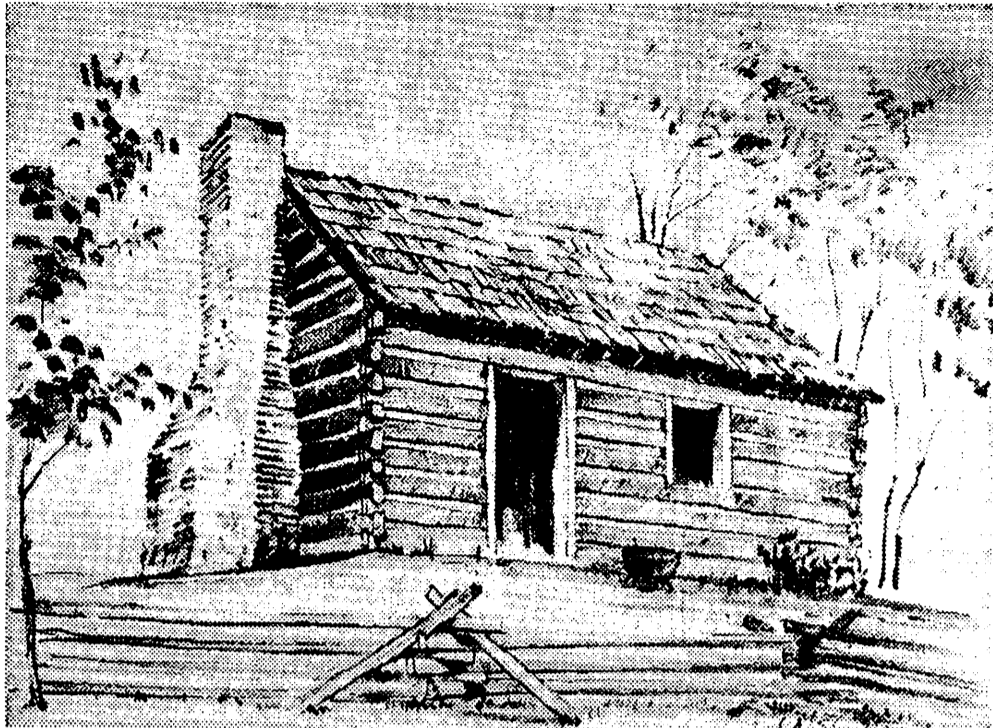
of middle height, angular in his movements, with a small head, long grizzled hair, brushed stiffly back behind his ears, penetrating and rather chilly grey eyes, and stern mouth. His countenance was usually sad, but sometimes lightened by a genial smile. His long training as Congressman and Governor had taught him to deal expeditiously with public business; but he never learned to share his burdens with others.

AWARE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

He was intense, laborious, humorless, pedestrian, immensely aware at all times of the responsibilities which he bore, and inclined to make everyone with whom he came in contact aware of them. He was methodical to a degree, and of a patience which enabled him to listen at length to the petitions of all who came to him for patronage or other favors. Their confidence he seldom repaid, and even his closest official associates were often unaware of his real thoughts or intentions.

Reports say that Mrs. Polk, an attractive woman of great dignity and a strict Presbyterian—Polk himself belonged to no church and preferred the Methodist denomination—shunned what she looked upon as the "canities of the world." She permitted no dancing in the White House.

Twice during his term of office Polk took time to enjoy what might be called a brief vacation, going the first time to visit his Chapel Hill alma mater, and the second to make a tour of New England. He survived his presidency by only a few months, dying June 16, 1849. His birthplace, nine miles from Charlotte near Pineville, is marked with a monument made from the stones from the chimney of his house.



Sketch Of Proposed Polk Birthplace Replica

Polk Park Awaits N.C. House Action

By PORTER MUNN
Observer Staff Writer

A move to establish a James K. Polk Memorial Park near Pineville is awaiting passage of a bill in the General Assembly.

The bill, introduced by Mecklenburg Rep. Irwin Belk, would provide \$15,000 to buy land for the park. The bill has passed the Senate and is on the House calendar, caught in the jam of last-minute legislation.

Polk, President of the United States from 1845 to 1849 was born in a log cabin just east of the Lancaster highway near the southern limits of Pineville.

A field stone shaft marks the spot now. The Mecklenburg Historical Society wants to establish a state park on the site.

The local legislative delegation took up the project and in April Belk introduced the bill calling for \$30,000 to be appropriated.

The joint appropriations committee reduced the request to \$15,000. But they agreed that \$7,500 appropriated for the project by the legislature two years ago should be re-appropriated.

This would provide \$22,500 to get the Polk park under way.

James A. Stenhouse, former president of the Historical Society, holds an option on 30 acres of land where the Polk shaft stands.

He obtained it at the behest of state authorities interested in seeing the park established here. Once funds for purchase of the site become available Stenhouse will exercise his option on behalf of the state.

The property will then become a part of the state system of memorial parks.

Even though the legislature comes through with the \$22,500 it won't be quite enough to buy the tract needed, Stenhouse said. The price is \$30,000.

He expressed the hope, however, that once the state money is available some means will be found to swing the deal for the land.

He indicated that the County Commissioners may be asked to

appropriate funds to help with the project.

Tentative plans for developing the park call for construction of a replica of the cabin where President Polk was born.

The state highway department will be asked to build access roads into the tract.

There are many details to be worked out, Stenhouse said, but the first step is to get title to the land.

"Once we have the land we can begin worrying about getting the money to develop it," he remarked.

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