



**Designation Report on the
E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments**



*Cowan's Ford – Davidson College Monument
Huntersville*



*General Davidson Memorial
Huntersville*



*Rural Hill Direction Marker
Huntersville*



*Battle of McIntyre's Farm Monument
Charlotte*



*Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Marker
Charlotte*



*Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall
Charlotte*

1. Name Of The Properties. The E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments (collectively, the “Markers”) are located at various sites in north Mecklenburg County, within the spheres of influence of Charlotte or Huntersville. The exhibit(s) accompanying this report provide specific information about the structure(s) recommended for historic landmark designation and are incorporated herein by reference.
2. Designation Report Contents. This report contains a brief historical sketch and general physical description (both prepared by Dr. Dan L. Morrill) applicable to all of the Markers, representative photographs of the Markers, and documentation as to why and how the Markers meet the criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S. § 160D-945. More detailed information about the individual structure(s) recommended for historic landmark designation is available in the exhibit(s), including information as to current tax parcel reference and ad valorem tax appraisal, the location and ownership of the associated property, a map of the location, the recommended scope of the designation, additional photographs, and a brief architectural description of the structure(s).
3. Statements of Significance and Integrity.
 - a. *Statement of Significance in Terms of its History, Architecture, and/or Cultural Importance:* The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission judges that the E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments possess special significance in terms of their history, architecture, and cultural importance to Charlotte, Huntersville, and all of Mecklenburg County. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations:
 - i. Erected during the 1920s, the Markers represent locations, institutions, events, and individuals of importance in the early history of Mecklenburg County, including the Revolutionary War Battles of McIntyre’s Farm and Cowan’s Ford (October 3, 1780, and February 1, 1781, respectively), the battlefield death of General William Lee Davidson (February 1, 1781), the homestead of Major John Davidson (Rural Hill, built in 1788), and Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church (founded in 1885).
 - ii. In aggregate, the Markers located throughout Mecklenburg County constitute a uniquely sophisticated and cohesive collection of vernacular public art in terms of material, design, and execution. The use of ordinary native materials and deceptively simplistic traditional structural designs commemorates Mecklenburg County’s history of extraordinary efforts and achievements by ordinary people in an understated but respectful manner that complements, rather than dominates, the local landscape and the region’s customs.
 - iii. The Markers bear lasting witness to the commitment and impact of a single person, E. L. Baxter Davidson, to the importance of making the general public more aware and appreciative of historically important locations, institutions, events, and individuals in the early history of Mecklenburg

County.

- b. *Statement of Integrity of Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association.* The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission judges that the “Physical Description” included in this report and the attached exhibit(s) demonstrates that the E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments meet this criterion as follows:
- i. Location: Except in limited instances – when necessitated to preserve a structure (such as the relocation of the General Davidson Memorial due to construction of the Cowan’s Ford dam, and the repair and relocation of the Rural Hill Directional Marker to a safer distance from a busy thoroughfare) – the Markers remain in their original, highly visible public locations, continuing their decades-old service of memorializing the past for the citizens of Mecklenburg County.
 - ii. Design: The original structural designs of the Markers, embodying within their vernacular styles the traditional folkways of North Carolina’s Piedmont region, remain intact and unchanged since their original installation in the early decades of the twentieth century.
 - iii. Setting: Each Marker stands in or near its original setting. While in some instances their surroundings may have been changed or modernized over the decades (such as, for example, the Markers lining the ever-busy Beatties Ford Road corridor), each Marker remains situated in a highly visible setting, bearing testament to simpler times when those settings were more rural in nature, while continuing to commemorate local historic achievements.
 - iv. Materials: The materials – stone and mortar – are indigenous to the local region and appropriate to the purpose of longstanding remembrance of past times and people. In large part, the constituent elements of the Markers are the original materials used when the structures were first installed.
 - v. Workmanship: Both the durability and absence of significant deterioration of the Markers, as well as the aesthetic symmetry and traditional artisanship reflected in their design and execution, indicate the unique skill and quality of the builders’ workmanship.
 - vi. Feeling: The locations and settings of the Markers, positioned at or near the actual locales of the events, institutions, or individual lives commemorated, convey a sense of the Markers’ historical and cultural significance. That feeling is furthered by the design, execution, and materials comprising the Markers, reflecting Mecklenburg County’s indigenous natural elements, traditions, and artistic skills. The longevity of their presence further invests the Markers with a familiarity that has made them recognizable landmarks skillfully crafted in a manner characteristic of the region.

- vii. Association: As intentionally commemorative structures, the Markers are intimately associated with the persons, institutions, and events they represent, as well as the individual (E. L. Baxter Davidson) whose personal mission to preserve the County's past within the memories of future generations prompted the installation of the Markers in the first place.
4. Recommendation for Designation. The Commission recommends the Marker(s) identified in this report and attached exhibit(s) for historic landmark designation. To maintain the integrity and built environment of each Marker, the Commission further recommends the inclusion within the landmark designation of a portion of the property immediately surrounding each Marker, consisting in each case of a radius measured from the central point of the applicable Marker, as further detailed in the attached exhibit(s).
5. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal. The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner of the property upon which each Marker sits to apply for an automatic deferral of up to 35% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property that becomes a designated "historic landmark." The total appraised value of the entire parcel of land containing the Marker(s) is stated in the attached exhibit(s).

Date of the Preparation of this Report: April 16, 2018

Prepared by: Dr. Dan L. Morrill; updated by Tommy Warlick (December 2021)

Brief History of the E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments



Edward Lee Baxter Davidson (1858-1944)

The E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments (collectively, the “Markers”) are the direct result of a concerted effort in the 1920s by a Mecklenburg County resident to memorialize his family’s burial ground, to honor his family’s Scots-Irish heritage, and to celebrate American Revolutionary War happenings that occurred in north Mecklenburg County in 1780-1781. Edward Lee (E. L.) Baxter Davidson (1858-1944) spent his boyhood and young adulthood in an area full of reminders of the American Revolutionary War. He was born at Rural Hill, the 1,300-acre north Mecklenburg County estate established in the late 1700s by Major John Davidson (1735-1832), his great grandfather. Rural Hill, or the Major John Davidson Homestead, was located on Neck Road near the Catawba River.¹ His family worshipped at nearby Hopewell Presbyterian Church, which owed its early success largely to Alexander Craighead (1707-1766), a fiery Presbyterian preacher known for his intense anti-British proclivities.² Among the stories the young Davidson heard was how a band of patriot militia had fired on British troops on October 3, 1780, at the so-called “Battle of the Bees” at McIntyre’s Farm on Beatties Ford Road, a few miles south of Rural Hill.³ A Revolutionary War event of special meaning for Baxter Davidson and his family was the

¹ Chalmers Gaston Davidson, *The Plantation World Around Davidson* (Davidson NC: Mecklenburg Historical Association, 1973), 59-60; *Charlotte Observer*, May 8, 1928; Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, “Survey and Research Report for Rural Hill,” October 5, 1987, <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rural-Hill-Plantation-SR.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2021).

² Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, “Survey and Research Report for Hopewell Presbyterian Church,” January 5, 1977, <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Hopewell-Presbyterian-Church-SR.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2021).

³ Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, “Survey and Research Report for McIntyre Site,” <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/McIntyre-Farm-Site-SR.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2021). For an account of the battle, see David A. Norris, “McIntyre’s Farm, Battle of,” in *Encyclopedia of North*

Battle of Cowan's Ford, an engagement at the Catawba River between patriot troops and the British and Tories on February 1, 1781. The American commander was General William Lee Davidson (1746-1781), a cousin of Baxter Davidson's great grandfather. General Davidson was killed at the Battle of Cowan's Ford, and his corpse was interred at Hopewell Presbyterian Church.⁴ Davidson was told that his great grandfather was a signer of the alleged Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence (May 20, 1775), a document which purportedly was the first outright rejection of Royal authority in Colonial America.⁵ Not surprisingly, Baxter Davidson was a staunch and persistent defender of the authenticity of the so-called "Meck Deck."

Baxter Davidson believed that educating the local citizenry about Mecklenburg County's role in the American Revolutionary War was serious business. "The work we are accomplishing in preserving the history of our country cannot be underestimated," declared Davidson in a speech to the Sons of the American Revolution ("S.A.R."). "The erection of monuments and markers," he continued, "not only does honor to those patriots who established the republic . . . it also impresses the youth of the land and inspires them to emulate the achievements of their illustrious ancestors."⁶ Davidson understood that markers and monuments can be evocative elements in the manmade or built environment. Scholars agree. "In general, we cannot remember something if we were not aware of it in the first place," writes Rupert Sheldrake in his monograph, *The Presence of the Past*.⁷ The purpose of the rock walls, monuments, and markers that Baxter Davidson paid for and caused to be erected in north Mecklenburg County in the 1920s was to keep the past alive. "Monuments are history made visible," says historian Judith Dupre. "The best of them are redemptive, allowing us to understand the past that is meaningful to the present."⁸ A reporter wrote the following about Baxter Davidson in 1941: "He has had more to do with the marking of historic spots in the county than any other individual and wherever he thought one should be, he had it erected and quietly paid for it himself."⁹

A graduate of Davidson College in 1880 and its largest individual benefactor, Baxter Davidson amassed considerable wealth from the acquisition, management, and selling of real estate and eventually became a wealthy man.¹⁰ His father, Alexander Brevard Davidson (1808-1896), moved his family from Rural Hill to Charlotte in 1871, where he established a residence on South Tryon

Carolina, ed. William S. Powell (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 723.

⁴ See Robert Henry, David Vance, and David Schenck, *Narrative of the Battle of Cowan's Ford* (Greensboro NC: Reece & Elam, 1891); Jerry L. Cross, "Cowan's Ford, Battle of," in *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 308.

⁵ See William Henry Hoyt, *The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2006).

⁶ Manuscript in the Davidson College Archives.

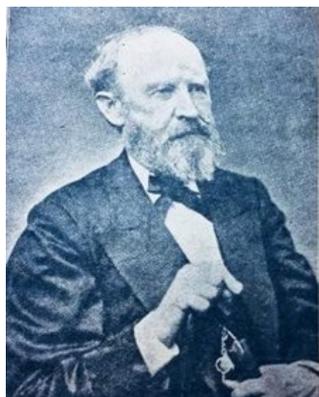
⁷ Rupert Sheldrake, *The Presence of the Past, Morphic Resonance and The Habits of Nature* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 197.

⁸ Judith Dupre, *Monuments, America's History in Art and Memory*, (New York: Random House, 2007), xii.

⁹ *Charlotte Observer*, August 3, 1941.

¹⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, April 30, 1941.

Street. The elder Davidson, like his son, was an astute businessman. He was a leading advocate for the building of railroads and factories in the postbellum years.¹¹ When his father died in 1896, Baxter Davidson inherited considerable property in the heart of Charlotte.¹² Baxter Davidson remained a bachelor until April 1935. He had no children and devoted most of his professional time to his real estate interests.¹³



Alexander Brevard Davidson



Hornet's Nest on the Cowan's Ford – Davidson College Monument. The Hornet's Nest was the historic Revolutionary War symbol of Mecklenburg County.



Hornet's Nest Symbol on the Sons of the American Revolution (S.A.R.) medal worn by E. L. Baxter Davidson at the National S.A.R. Convention in Charlotte in May 1931.

Baxter Davidson exhibited powerful patriotic feelings throughout his adulthood and spent much time and money giving expression to them as an avocation. He was a prominent leader of the S.A.R. organization and a charter member of the Mecklenburg Monument Association, which was organized on May 19, 1890. The latter organization raised the funds to erect a monument honoring

¹¹ *Charlotte Statesman*, July 16, 1993; Chalmers G. Davidson, "Davidson, Adam Brevard," *NCPedia*, January 1, 1986, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/davidson-adam-brevard> (accessed December 13, 2021).

¹² *Charlotte Observer*, July 14, 1896.

¹³ *Charlotte Observer*, October 11, 1944.

the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Dedicated on May 20, 1898, the marker was originally located at the Mecklenburg County Courthouse on South Tryon Street. It now stands in front of the former Courthouse on East Trade Street.¹⁴



Original Location of Signers' Monument



E. Trade St. Location of Signers' Monument

On May 20, 1909, when President William Howard Taft visited Charlotte on the anniversary of the signing of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, Baxter Davidson joined thirteen other descendants of “Meck Deck” signers atop the “float of floats from the historical standpoint” in a reportedly four-mile-long celebratory parade.¹⁵ In March 1925, he appeared before the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners to request that the “old Mecklenburg method of marking roads with iron signs in the form of a hornet’s nest” be revived as an emblem of “historical significance.”¹⁶ Always devoted to his family’s legacy, Davidson had a portrait of his father hung in the Charlotte Public Library in May 1921.¹⁷

In May 1925, Baxter Davidson was a cast member in a historical pageant honoring Mecklenburg County’s heritage that was held in a “mammoth open-air theater” in Charlotte, “out under the stars.”¹⁸ The *Charlotte Observer* described Davidson as a man “known for his philanthropies and for his interest in historic research.”¹⁹ In May 1931, the Daughters of the American Revolution

¹⁴ *Charlotte Observer*, October 15, 1925.

¹⁵ *Charlotte Observer*, May 21, 1909.

¹⁶ *Charlotte Observer*, March 3, 1925.

¹⁷ *Charlotte Observer*, May 22, 1921.

¹⁸ *Charlotte Observer*, April 24, 1925.

¹⁹ *Charlotte Observer*, April 21, 1935.

(“D.A.R.”) unveiled a monument at the site of the Battle of McIntyre’s Farm (also known as the “McIntyre Skirmish”). The brass plaque on the monument was a gift from Baxter Davidson.²⁰ Davidson also partly funded the erection of a grave marker at the General William Lee Davidson’s burial site at Hopewell Presbyterian Church.²¹



D.A.R. Battle of McIntyre’s Farm monument



General Davidson gravestone

The most imposing historic monument Baxter Davidson erected and paid for was the embellished stone wall that still encircles the Davidson family burial ground at Rural Hill in Huntersville.²² In a letter of January 15, 1927, Davidson wrote: “I am proud of my progenitor – Major John Davidson, signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, who is buried at Rural Hill . . . and the wall 150 x 300 that I had built at great expense is in honor of him and his numerous descendants.”²³ Baxter Davidson hired Lee Collier, an English architect, to superintend the job. It took two months to complete the cemetery wall at Rural Hill, and the effort required the participation of a foreman, sixteen laborers, and fifteen wagons. The cost of this impressive stone structure was reportedly \$20,000.²⁴ “To hear Mr. Davidson talk about designs and markers,” said a local journalist, “one rightly concludes that he is a connoisseur of stones, and knows the artistic arrangement of them.”²⁵ Davidson also provided a monument to Major John Davidson at the

²⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, May 17, 1931; University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, “Commemorative Landscapes – Battle of McIntyre’s Farm Monument, Charlotte,” *Documenting the American South*, <https://docsouth.unc.edu/commland/monument/464/> (accessed December 13, 2021).

²¹ Letter of E. L. Baxter Davidson to Chalmers G. Davidson (January 15, 1927) in the Davidson College Archives (hereinafter cited as “Letter”).

²² *Charlotte Observer*, October 11, 1944. As early as 1904, Baxter Davidson was advocating the construction of a wall at the Rural Hill Cemetery. See *Charlotte News*, January 16, 1904.

²³ Letter.

²⁴ *Charlotte Observer*, May 8, 1928.

²⁵ *Charlotte Observer*, December 9, 1928.

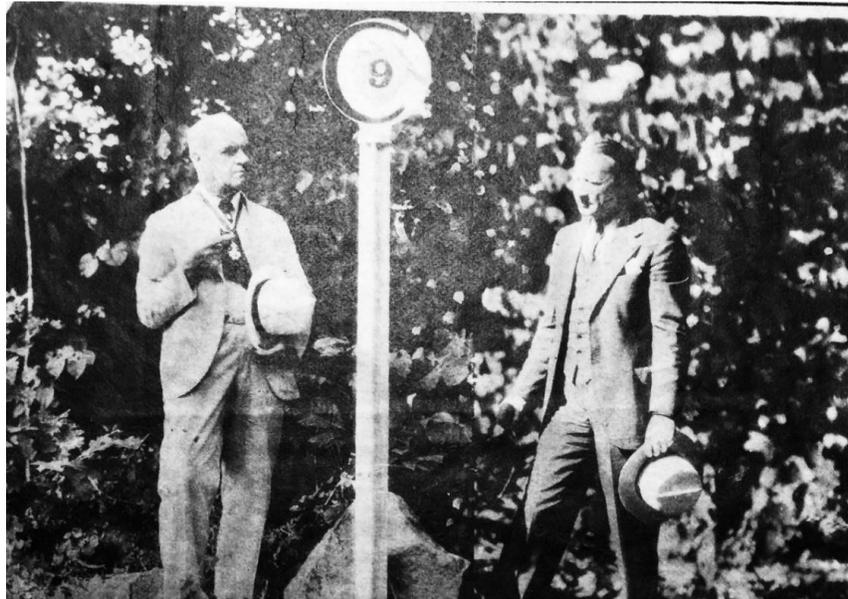
cemetery entrance, consisting of a bronze plaque mounted on a 4.5-foot-tall stone pier of two stacked boulders attached via stonework and mortar to the cemetery wall. Both the wall and the monument are prominent landscape features of the Rural Hill property and are included within a prior designation of Rural Hill as a local historic landmark by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners.²⁶



Northwestern Stem leading to Entry Gate of Rural Hill Cemetery



Major John Davidson Marker



E. L. Baxter Davidson (on left) at Historic Highway Marker at Hopewell Presbyterian Church

²⁶ Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners, "An Ordinance designating a property known as the 'Rural Hill Plantation' (the exterior of all improvements, the interior of all improvements, and the entire 221.04 acres comprising the plantation) as historic property, said property being located on both sides of Neck Road in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and recorded on tax parcel numbers 013-042-18, 013-042-19, 013-042-20, 013-181-01, and 013-181-02 in the Mecklenburg County tax office," Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds, Real Estate Book 5687, Page 582, December 21, 1987.

Baxter Davidson was also responsible for the construction of stone structures at Huntersville's Hopewell Presbyterian Church (10500 Beatties Ford Road), including stone walls lining both sides of Beatties Ford Road (each approximately 500 feet in length), a stone pier marker approximately 6 feet tall identifying the church and its founding date, and a pair of 6-foot-tall stone piers that support an engraved wooden church sign. Those stone structures are prominent landscape features of the Hopewell church property and are already included within a prior designation of the property as a local historic landmark by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners.²⁷



East Wall – Hopewell Presbyterian Church

²⁷ Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners, “An Ordinance designating a property known as the ‘Hopewell Presbyterian Church’ (the entire exterior of the church building, the entire interior of the church building, the entire exterior of the education building, the entire interior of the education building, a tract of land bounded on one side by a straight line running along the eastern exterior wall of the education building and extending to both edges of the tract of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel number 015-171-09, and bounded on the other side by the edge of the public right-of-way of Beatties Ford Road extending to both edges of the tract of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel number 015-171-09, and the rock walls on the tracts of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel numbers 023-052-26 and 023-042-04) as historic property, said property being located on both sides of Beatties Ford Road near its intersection with Sample Road, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and recorded on tax parcel numbers 015-171-09, 023-052-26, 023-042-04 in the Mecklenburg County tax office,” Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Real Estate Book 5733, Page 226, March 21, 1988.



Hopewell Church Marker



Hopewell Presbyterian Church Sign

The historical stone markers and monuments that Baxter Davidson had built in the mid-1920s throughout north Mecklenburg County were almost certainly designed by Lee Collier, because the designs are so similar to the Rural Hill structures that Collier designed for Davidson.²⁸ Like the Rural Hill cemetery wall, they are all composed of three types of native stone: white rock, brown rock, and flint rock. They include: (1) a marker originally located at the spot where General William Lee Davidson was killed at the Battle of Cowan's Ford (relocated in the early 1960s when construction of the Cowan's Ford Dam submerged the marker's original location beneath Lake Norman; the marker was moved to a small park on N.C. Highway 73); (2) a monument at the intersection of Beatties Ford and Brown Mill Roads, which displays a plaque referencing General Davidson's death and offering directional indicators for Davidson College and Cowan's Ford; (3) a directional marker at the intersection of Beatties Ford and Neck Roads incorporating a directional indicator for Rural Hill; (4) a rock wall and pier at Charlotte's Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church; and (5) a stone monument commemorating the Battle of McIntyre's Farm, located on Beatties Ford Road.²⁹

Davidson took an active role in the construction and design of the monuments, markers, and walls he caused to be placed in north Mecklenburg County. He was not a passive observer. "Mr. Davidson is not content to merely plan, design and designate where the walls and markers are to be erected, but he personally supervises them," reported the *Charlotte Observer*. "If they do not suit his fancy, he instructs the workers to tear them down and reconstruct them." There were times

²⁸ E. L. Baxter Davidson had another stone marker erected on Beatties Ford Road at the Mecklenburg County-Iredell County Line. That site is now part of Iredell County, and the marker has been destroyed. This writer remembers seeing it in the early 1980s. There is also mention of a marker having been erected on Highway 115 just north of Davidson. This writer has been unable to locate it if it was constructed or still exists.

²⁹ Letter.

when he ordered the walls and monuments destroyed and for the entire process to begin again.³⁰ Davidson ordered the plaques for the monuments and markers from the Newman Manufacturing Company in Cincinnati, Ohio.³¹ The entire project, including the Rural Hill cemetery wall, cost approximately \$30,000.³²

Baxter Davidson's bachelorhood ended on April 20, 1935, when at age 76 he married a 48-year-old widow, Sarah Williams Vosburg (1886-1973), who was a descendant of William A. Williams, a signer of the U.S. Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The newlyweds purchased a home at 1401 Providence Road in July 1935, which in March 2000 was designated a local historic landmark by the Charlotte City Council. Baxter Davidson continued to be active in Davidson College alumni affairs and in patriotic organizations until his demise. He died in his sleep at home on October 10, 1944. His funeral was held at Hopewell Presbyterian Church, and his body was interred in the Rural Hill Cemetery.³³ The extant stone monuments, walls, and markers he caused to be built are his greatest legacy in terms of the built environment of Mecklenburg County. In this writer's opinion, considered aggregately, these rock features constitute the most architecturally significant collection of historic public art in Mecklenburg County.

³⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, December 9, 1928.

³¹ Newman Manufacturing Company invoice in Davidson College Archives.

³² *Charlotte Observer*, December 9, 1928.

³³ Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, "Survey and Research Report for E. L. Baxter Davidson House," March 30, 1998, <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Davidson-House-E.L.-Baxter-SR.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2021); Charlotte City Council, "Ordinance designating as a Historic Landmark a property known as the 'E. L. Baxter Davidson House' (listed under Tax Parcel Number 155-121-02 as of November 15, 1999, and including the entire exterior of the E. L. Baxter Davidson House and the entire parcel of land listed under Tax Parcel Number 155-121-02 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office, Charlotte, North Carolina as of November 15, 1999)," City of Charlotte Ordinance Book 50, Page 95-98, March 20, 2000; *Charlotte Observer*, April 21, 1935, October 11, 1944.

**Physical Description
of the E. L. Baxter Davidson
Historic Markers and Monuments**



E. L. Baxter Davidson laying ceremonial stone at Hopewell Presbyterian Church wall (October 1928)

The E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments are built of stone, the most durable construction material provided by nature. That Baxter Davidson selected stone for his markers, monuments, and walls indicates that he wanted them to endure. His intent was to make these edifices instructive. Davidson hoped that generations of Mecklenburg County residents would learn from them and be inspired by them. Alas, that desire has largely been unrealized. Most people are unaware of the Markers' existence and intended commemorative and instructional purposes.

Human beings have been erecting rock structures, such as castles, forts, and cathedrals, for thousands of years. They have also gathered stones and piled them into dry stone walls, *i.e.*, without mortar. For example, the original stone wall enclosing the Hopewell Presbyterian Church,

constructed long before the Markers, was a dry-stacked wall. The use of stone in that wall may have influenced Davidson's decision to use stone in his walls and monuments. Also, rocks are plentiful in the fields of north Mecklenburg County. Builders have often embedded stones in mortar or plaster and constructed vertical structures (or piers) to provide greater stability for their rock walls. Stone is a superb building material. The best rock is highly resistant to weathering and to water penetration. Rock walls are held in place by gravity. One advantage of using stone is that it can tolerate a variety of soil types, thereby increasing a stone structure's resistance to ground shifting. The foundation or footing is a critical component of a stone structure, as are provisions for drainage. The footing locks the entire system into place and supports the stem, which is the main visible portion of a wall or other vertical structure. Many vertical stone structures have a "toe," an extension at the base of the stem that keeps the structure upright, prevents overturning, and reduces bearing pressures. Masonry walls require proper capping, which can extend the life of the wall, reduce maintenance, and aid sustainability. To be effective, caps must deflect water. If water is allowed to penetrate the top of a rock structure, the entire system will eventually fail.

A specific physical description of the structure(s) recommended for historic landmark designation is detailed in the attached exhibit(s), incorporated herein by reference.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Charlotte City Council. "Ordinance designating as a Historic Landmark a property known as the 'E. L. Baxter Davidson House' (listed under Tax Parcel Number 155-121-02 as of November 15, 1999, and including the entire exterior of the E. L. Baxter Davidson House and the entire parcel of land listed under Tax Parcel Number 155-121-02 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office, Charlotte, North Carolina as of November 15, 1999)." City of Charlotte Ordinance Book 50, Page 95-98, March 20, 2000.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. "Survey and Research Report for E. L. Baxter Davidson House." March 30, 1998. <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Davidson-House-E.L.-Baxter-SR.pdf>. Accessed December 13, 2021.
- _____. "Survey and Research Report for Hopewell Presbyterian Church." January 5, 1977. <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Hopewell-Presbyterian-Church-SR.pdf>. Accessed December 13, 2021.
- _____. "Survey and Research Report for McIntyre Site." n.d. <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/McIntyre-Farm-Site-SR.pdf>. Accessed December 13, 2021.
- _____. "Survey and Research Report for Rural Hill." October 5, 1987. <http://landmarkscommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rural-Hill-Plantation-SR.pdf>. Accessed December 13, 2021.
- Charlotte News.*
- Charlotte Observer.*
- Charlotte Statesman.*
- Davidson, Chalmers Gaston. "Davidson, Adam Brevard." *NCPedia*, January 1, 1986. <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/davidson-adam-brevard>. Accessed December 13, 2021.
- _____. *The Plantation World Around Davidson*. Davidson, NC: Mecklenburg Historical Association, 1973.
- Davidson College Archives. E. L. Baxter Davidson Collection.
- Dupre, Judith. *Monuments, America's History in Art and Memory*. New York: Random House, 2007.
- Henry, Robert, David Vance, and David Schenck. *Narrative of the Battle of Cowan's Ford*. Greensboro, NC: Reece & Elam, 1891.
- Hoyt, William Henry. *The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence*. Boston: Da Capo Press, 2006.

Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners. “An Ordinance designating a property known as the ‘Hopewell Presbyterian Church’ (the entire exterior of the church building, the entire interior of the church building, the entire exterior of the education building, the entire interior of the education building, a tract of land bounded on one side by a straight line running along the eastern exterior wall of the education building and extending to both edges of the tract of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel number 015-171-09, and bounded on the other side by the edge of the public right-of-way of Beatties Ford Road extending to both edges of the tract of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel number 015-171-09, and the rock walls on the tracts of land recorded in the Mecklenburg County tax office under tax parcel numbers 023-052-26 and 023-042-04) as historic property, said property being located on both sides of Beatties Ford Road near its intersection with Sample Road, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and recorded on tax parcel numbers 015-171-09, 023-052-26, 023-042-04 in the Mecklenburg County tax office.” Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds Real Estate Book 5733, Page 226, March 21, 1988.

_____. “An Ordinance designating a property known as the ‘Rural Hill Plantation’ (the exterior of all improvements, the interior of all improvements, and the entire 221.04 acres comprising the plantation) as historic property, said property being located on both sides of Neck Road in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and recorded on tax parcel numbers 013-042-18, 013-042-19, 013-042-20, 013-181-01, and 013-181-02 in the Mecklenburg County tax office.” Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds, Real Estate Book 5687, Page 582, December 21, 1987.

Powell, William S., ed. *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Sheldrake, Rupert. *The Presence of the Past, Morphic Resonance and The Habits of Nature*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

EXHIBIT 1

Designation Report on the E. L. Baxter Davidson Historic Markers and Monuments

Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall and Marker Charlotte, N.C.



West face of Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall



West face of Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Marker

1. Name and Location of the Property. The Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall and Marker are located at 4700 Beatties Ford Road, within Charlotte's sphere of influence. The tax parcel number for the property on which the structures are located is 04117101, and the UTM Coordinates are 17S 513132E 3906225N.
2. Name and Address of Parties to be Notified.
 - a. North Carolina Department of Transportation
Division 10, District 2 Office
7605 District Drive
Charlotte, N.C. 28213
District Engineer: Wendy Taylor; (980) 523-0000; wataylor1@ncdot.gov
 - b. Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church
4700 Beatties Ford Road
Charlotte, N.C. 28216
(704) 392 8816; wmpcsecretary1885@yahoo.com

3. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal. As of January 2021, the total appraised value of the property on which the Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall and Marker stand is \$1,259,400. The property is currently exempt from the payment of property taxes.
4. Recommendation for Designation. The Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall in its entirety, as well as a twenty (20) foot wide strip of land abutting each side of the wall, running for the entire length of each segment of the wall, is recommended for historic landmark designation. The recommended distance is measured in each direction from the external face of each segment of the wall and from the external face of the stone piers located at each wall segment's termination points. The Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Marker in its entirety, as well as a twenty (20) foot radius of the land immediately surrounding the monument, measured in each direction from the central point of the monument, is also recommended for historic landmark designation.

The Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall and Marker

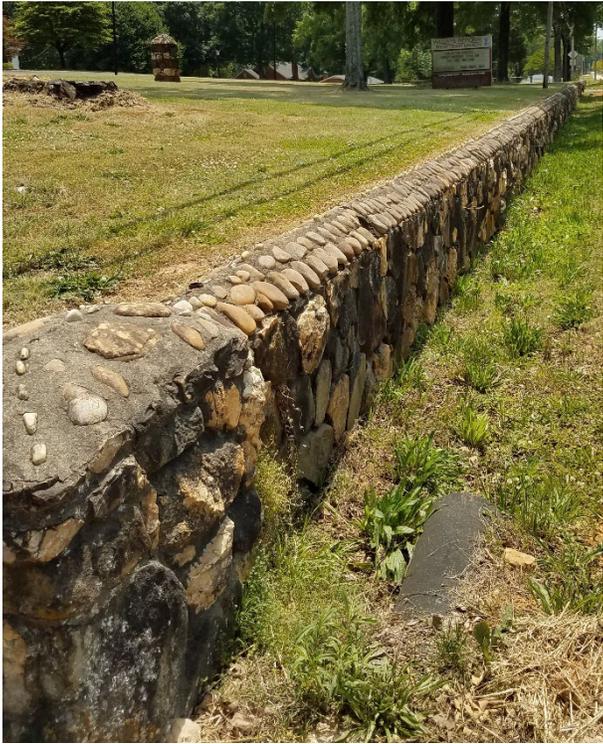
The stone wall and marker at Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church were erected by E. L. Baxter Davidson in 1931. See Charles William Sommerville, *The History of Hopewell Presbyterian Church for 175 Years from the Assigned Date of its Organization 1762* (Huntersville, NC: Hopewell Presbyterian Church, 1939), 81. The wall is located approximately 20 feet from a four-lane stretch of Beatties Ford Road, and extends nearly 525 feet along the property's frontage on the eastern side of that busy thoroughfare. Given its proximity to the rapid development along the Beatties Ford Road corridor and the accompanying increase in vehicular traffic, the wall's continued integrity is at risk.



*Aerial Image of Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall
(red arrow indicates wall's location; blue arrow indicates marker's location) (source: Polaris 3G)*

The Williams Memorial wall stands about 3.5 feet tall and 18 inches deep. It is a low rock rubble wall with a stem or visible face comprised of randomly arranged white and dark brown rock. The stem rises into a domed

cap decorated with smaller, smooth stones (also in a random arrangement of white and dark brown), which in turn is topped by an intermittent line of even smaller white stones. All stones are embedded in mortar.



*Looking Toward Southern Terminus
of Williams Memorial Wall*



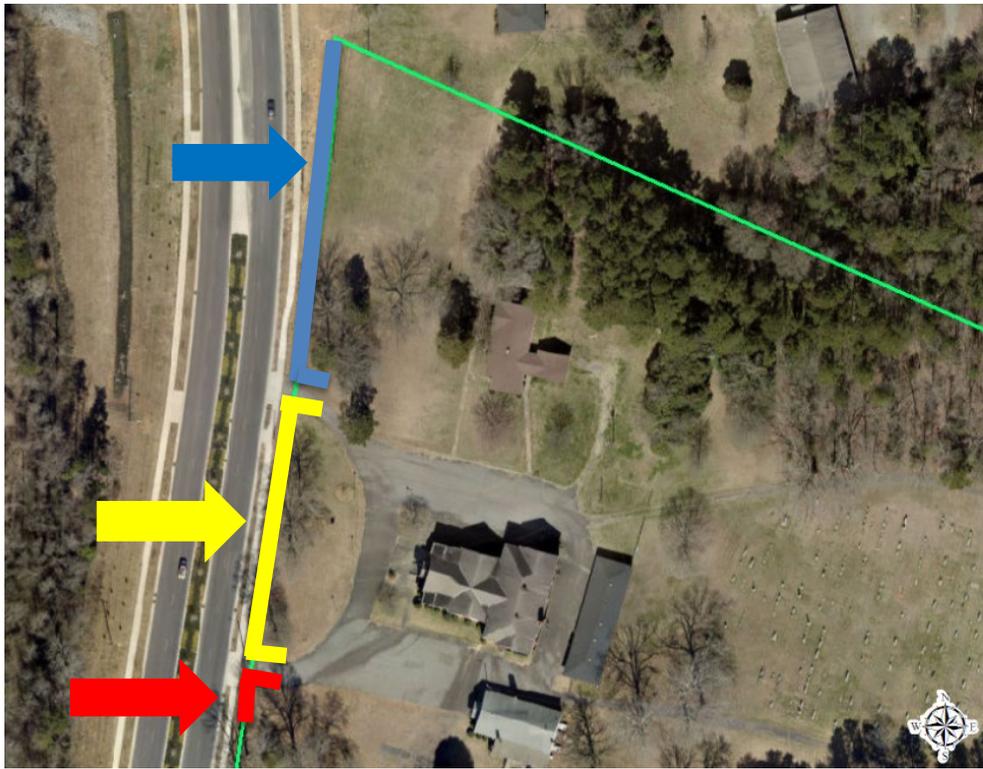
*Detail of Domed Cap
of Williams Memorial Wall*



*Northern Entrance to Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Property
Looking Toward Northern Terminus of Wall*

In form and execution, the Williams Memorial wall is the least refined of the stone structures erected by E. L. Baxter Davidson in north Mecklenburg County. In comparison, the walls he provided for Huntersville's Hopewell Presbyterian Church span both sides of Beatties Ford Road and are longer (approximately 1,000 feet long on the eastern side of Beatties Ford Road and approximately 830 feet long on the western side), taller (ranging from 5 to 6 feet tall on the eastern side and from 3 to 4 feet tall on the western side), and deeper (both Hopewell walls are approximately 2 feet deep). The Hopewell walls are also more elaborate, featuring alternating symmetrical bands of white and dark brown rocks, as well as stairways, entrance openings for

driveways, and more piers. The Williams Memorial wall features only two entrance openings providing access for a semicircular driveway into the church grounds. As a result of the openings, the wall is constructed in three segments, as indicated on the map below: (1) an “L” shaped segment located immediately north of the property’s northern-most driveway entrance, which consists of a vertical line running north from that entrance and parallel with Beatties Ford Road for approximately 270 feet, and a horizontal line running east parallel with the exterior side of that northern-most driveway entrance for approximately 30 feet; (2) a second “L” shaped segment located immediately south of the property’s southern-most driveway entrance, which consists of a vertical line running south from that entrance and parallel with Beatties Ford Road for approximately 35 feet, and a horizontal line running east parallel with the exterior side of that southern-most driveway entrance for approximately 18 feet; and (3) a central “C” shaped segment located between the two other segments, which consists of a vertical line running parallel with Beatties Ford Road between the two driveway entrances for approximately 217 feet, a horizontal line running east parallel with the interior side of the northern-most driveway entrance for approximately 17 feet, and a horizontal line running east parallel with the interior side of the southern-most driveway entrance for approximately 18 feet.



Approximate locations of segments 1 (blue line & arrow), 2 (red line & arrow), and 3 (yellow line & arrow) of the Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Wall



*Southern Entrance to Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Property
Looking Toward Southern Terminus of Wall*

A stone pier provided by Baxter Davidson stands in front of the main church building, nearly 50 feet behind the stone wall. The pier resembles a similar marker on the grounds of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. Both markers feature a stem composed of alternating strings of rough-faced dark brown stones and strings of rough-faced white stones, all embedded in mortar. Each marker rises perpendicularly from a toeless foundation to a pyramidal cap decorated with small, smooth, lighter-colored stones, and features a metal plaque displaying the name and founding date of the relevant church. Both markers stand approximately 6 feet tall and 2.5 feet in both length and width, but the Hopewell marker has a flint-rock finial fixed atop its cap that adds approximately 12 inches to its overall height. The Williams Memorial marker has no finial, but the slightly flattened top of its cap suggests that a stone finial may have originally topped the pier.



West face of Williams Memorial Church Marker

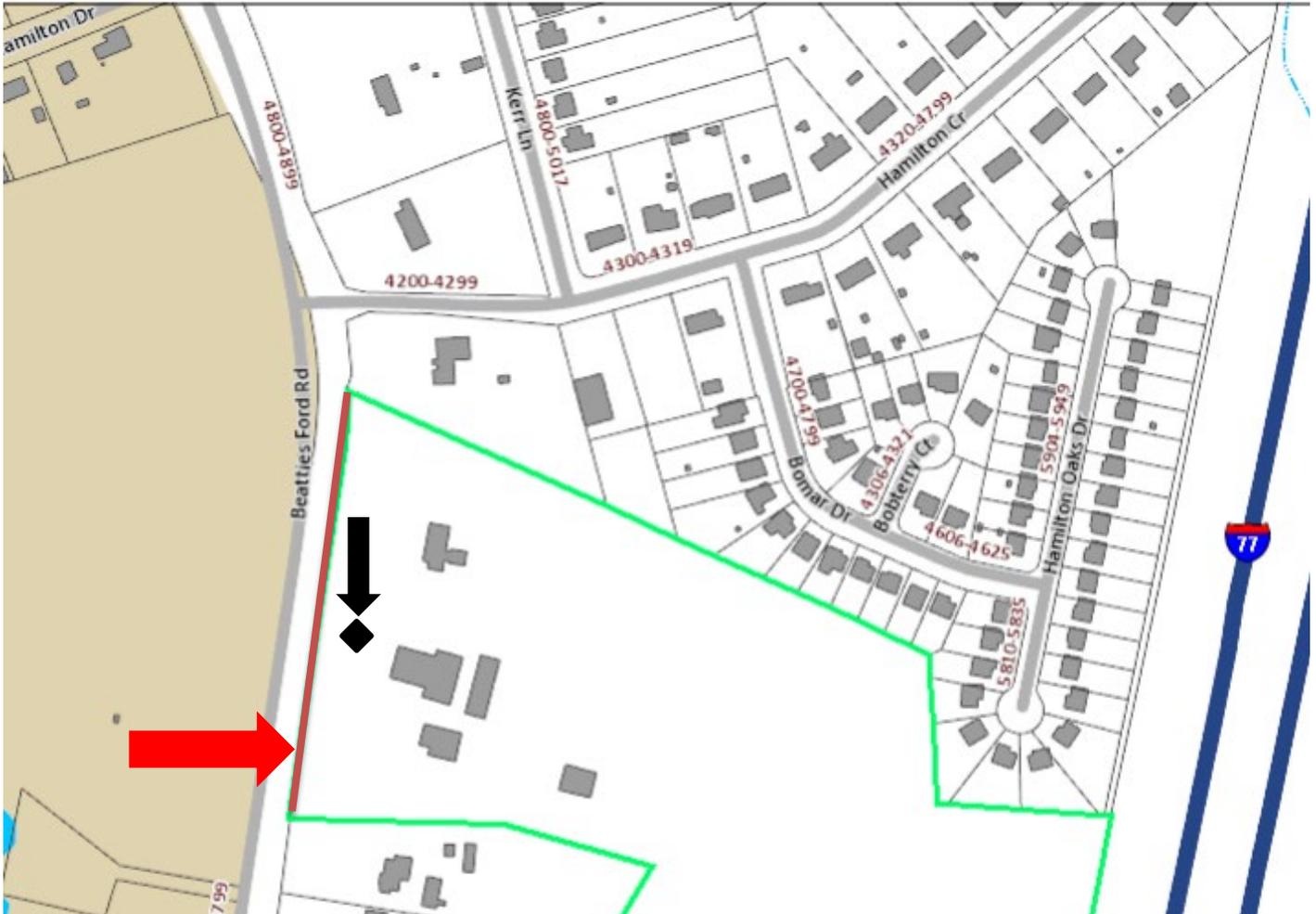


*Southern Entrance to Williams Memorial Presbyterian Church Property
Looking Toward Northern Terminus of Wall*

Polaris 3G Map – Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Williams Memorial Presbyterian Wall & Marker

Date Printed: 9/24/2021 5:19:03 PM



*Red line (indicated by red arrow) shows location of wall;
black diamond (indicated by black arrow) shows approximate location of marker*