

# Slavery at Holly Bend

Designation Report Addendum  
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September 2024

Robert “Robin” Davidson built Holly Bend between 1795 and 1800, in which the census recorded nine enslaved people. In 1810 Davidson enslaved nineteen people.<sup>1</sup> With each subsequent decade, Davidson’s wealth grew along with the number of enslaved people laboring on his plantation.

The 1820 U. S. Census provided expanded demographics for the enslaved population. The household of Robert Davidson enumerated 30 enslaved people:<sup>2</sup>

Male, under 14	Male, under 14	Male, age 14-25	Male, age 14-25
Male, age 14-25	Male, age 14-25	Male, age 26-44	Male, age 26-44
Male, age 26-44	Male, age 26-44	Male, age 26-44	Male, over 45
Male, over 45	Male, over 45	Female, under 14	Female, under 14
Female, under 14	Female, under 14	Female, under 14	Female, under 14
Female, under 14	Female, under 14	Female, under 14	Female, age 14-25
Female, age 14-25	Female, age 26-44	Female, age 26-44	Female, age 26-44
Female, age 26-44	Female, over 45		

In the 1830 U. S. Census, the household of Robert Davidson listed 51 enslaved people:<sup>3</sup>

Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10
Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10
Male, under 10	Male, age 10-23	Male, age 10-23	Male, age 10-23
Male, age 10-23	Male, age 10-23	Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35
Male, age 24-35	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54
Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 55-99	Male, age 55-99
Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10
Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10
Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23
Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23
Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 24-35
Female, age 24-35	Female, age 24-35	Female, age 36-54	Female, age 36-54
Female, age 36-54	Female, age 55-99	Female, age 55-99	

In the 1840 U. S. Census, the household of Robert Davidson listed 66 enslaved people:<sup>4</sup>

Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10
Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10
Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, under 10	Male, age 10-23

<sup>1</sup> 1800 U. S. Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 250; 1810 U. S. Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 52.

<sup>2</sup> 1820 U. S. Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 179.

<sup>3</sup> 1830 U. S. Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 356.

<sup>4</sup> 1840 U. S. Census, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 275.

Male, age 10-23	Male, age 10-23	Male, age 10-23	Male, age 24-35
Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35
Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35	Male, age 24-35	Male, age 36-54
Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54
Male, age 36-54	Male, age 36-54	Male, age 55-99	Male, age 55-99
Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10
Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10	Female, under 10
Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23
Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23	Female, age 10-23
Female, age 10-23	Female, age 24-35	Female, age 24-35	Female, age 24-35
Female, age 36-54	Female, age 36-54	Female, age 36-54	Female, age 55-99
Female, age 55-99			

By 1850 Robin Davidson was one of the wealthiest men in Mecklenburg County, with real estate holdings valued at \$16,800. He hired Sydney Lucky as overseer for his 109 enslaved laborers and may have employed James Johnston as his plantation manager.<sup>5</sup>

Male, age 77	Male, age 61	Male, age 60	Male, age 53
Male, age 50	Male, age 47	Male, age 26	Male, age 24
Male, age 22	Male, age 20	Male, age 18	Male, age 14
Male, age 34	Male, age 43	Male, age 1	Male, age 9
Male, age 10	Male, age 10	Male, age 1	Male, age 3
Male, age 1	Male, age 32	Male, age 30	Male, age 30
Male, age 22	Male, age 19	Male, age 34	Male, age 25
Male, age 29	Male, age 14	Male, age 16	Male, age 13
Male, age 9	Male, age 3	Male, age 7	Male, age 4
Male, age 10	Male, age 7	Male, age 1 month	Male, age 12
Male, age 10	Male, age 7	Male, age 4	Male, age 1 month
Male, age 2 months	Male, age 2	Male, age 6	Male, age 1 month
Male, age 5	Female, age 64	Female, age 60	Female, age 60
Female, age 60	Female, age 55	Female, age 46	Female, age 38
Female, age 28	Female, age 26	Female, age 15	Female, age 13
Female, age 10	Female, age 44	Female, age 39	Female, age 27
Female, age 24	Female, age 18	Female, age 5	Female, age 2
Female, age 7	Female, age 9	Female, age 7	Female, age 1
Female, age 17	Female, age 30	Female, age 23	Female, age 41
Female, age 23	Female, age 33	Female, age 32	Female, age 30
Female, age 35	Female, age 16	Female, age 1	Female, age 9
Female, age 1	Female, age 10	Female, age 8	Female, age 4
Female, age 2	Female, age 3	Female, age 3	Female, age 15
Female, age 11	Female, age 9	Female, age 8	Female, age 7
Female, age 4	Female, age 3	Female, age 5	Female, age 8
Female, age 4	Female, age 2 months	Female, age 10	Female, age 5
Female, age 19	Female, age 7	Female, age 9	Female, age 1 month
Female, age 6 months			

<sup>5</sup> 1850 U. S. Census Slave Schedule, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, n.p.

Robin died in 1853. While he and his wife Margaret “Peggy” Osborne Davidson had no children, they had raised many of their nieces and nephews among which his estate was generously divided. His will, written on July 24, 1852, listed the names of many of the enslaved Blacks who had been bound to Holly Bend:<sup>6</sup>

Name	Notes
<b>Old Patt</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy; after he death to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Dilse</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy; after he death to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Stephen</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy
<b>Jim</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy
<b>Polly</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with her child Eliza
<b>Eliza</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with her mother Polly
<b>Phoebe</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with her family Dave, Peggy, Cyrus, and Caldwell
<b>Dave</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Phoebe and family Peggy, Cyrus, and Caldwell
<b>Peggy</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Phoebe and family Dave, Cyrus, and Caldwell
<b>Cyrus</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Phoebe and family Dave, Peggy, and Caldwell
<b>Caldwell</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Phoebe and family Dave, Peggy, and Cyrus
<b>Rachel</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with her family Sophy, Miles, Rachel (the younger), and Minta
<b>Sophy</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Rachel and family Miles, Rachel (the younger), and Minta
<b>Miles</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Rachel and family Sophy, Rachel (the younger), and Minta

<sup>6</sup> Mecklenburg County Will Book T, Page 214.

Name	Notes
<b>Rachel (the younger)</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Rachel and family Sophy, Miles, and Minta
<b>Minta</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Rachel and family Sophy, Miles, and Rachel (the younger)
<b>Peter</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy
<b>Isaac</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Samyra
<b>Samyra</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Isaac
<b>Ann</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Mary and Jenny and her family Violet, Augustus, Maria, and Rosanna
<b>Mary</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann and Jenny her family Violet, Augustus, Maria, and Rosanna
<b>Jenny</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann and Mary and her family Violet, Augustus, Maria, and Rosanna
<b>Violet</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann, Mary, and Jenny and family Augustus, Maria, and Rosanna
<b>Augustus</b>	<p>Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann, Mary, and Jenny and family Violet, Maria, and Rosanna</p> <p>This may be the same Augustus who was identified in a trust agreement between Peggy and her nephew James Walker Osborne in 1863, in which a “negro boy Augustus” was to be bequeathed to her nephew (and James’s first cousin) Rev. Edwin Augustus Young Osborne. In a 1926 interview with Rev. Osborne, he noted that <b>Gus Davidson</b>, “my colored man...given to me by my aunt Peggy Davidson, was my constant companion throughout the war.” He continued,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">There was never a greater example of faithfulness and devotion than this servant. For six weeks, during my severe illness, while we within the Yankee lines, Gus would hide out during the day, returning to watch by my bedside at night.<sup>7</sup></p>

<sup>7</sup> “Col. Osborne, Minister and Soldier, Begins 90th Year,” *Charlotte Observer*, May 7, 1926.

Name	Notes
<b>Maria</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann, Mary, and Jenny and family Violet, Augustus, and Rosanna
<b>Rosanna</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Ann, Mary, and Jenny and family Violet, Augustus, and Maria
<b>Alick</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Old Cuff, Caroline and family Mary and Amy
<b>Old Cuff</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Alick, Caroline and family Mary and Amy; after her death, he was to be cared for by nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Caroline</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Alick, Old Cuff, and her family Mary and Amy.
<b>Mary</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Alick, Old Cuff, and Caroline and family Amy
<b>Amy</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Alick, Old Cuff, and Caroline and family Mary
<b>Edwin</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Andy and Ben
<b>Andy</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy along with Edwin and Ben
<b>Ben</b>	<p>Bequeathed to Peggy along with Edwin and Andy.</p> <p>Ben may have been a member of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. He may also be the same Ben owned by “Mrs. M. Davidson” who had two children with Phebe, who was enslaved by “Dr. W. Davidson” (likely Dr. William Speight MacLean Davidson, Peggy’s nephew). <b>Margaret R. Moore</b> was baptized on September 14, 1861, and <b>Stephen Wilson Davidson</b> was baptized on June 21, 1863. Stephen Davidson married Adelaide Withers in 1882 and later married Carrie Harris in 1901; both marriage licenses list his parents as Ben Davidson and Phoebe Davidson, deceased.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>A household headed by widower <b>Benjamin Davidson</b>, age 55, is listed in the 1880 U. S. Census in Lemley Township. Also enumerated are daughter</p>

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Davidson and Adelaide Withers, marriage license, March 1, 1882, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q28R-1RPI>, accessed August 29, 2024; Stephen Davidson and Carrie Harris, marriage license, May 2, 1901, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QP9R-RY9Q>, accessed August 28, 2024.

Name	Notes
	<b>Fannie</b> (23), daughter <b>Eliza</b> (12), son <b>Graham</b> (8), and son <b>Stephen Wilson</b> (18). <sup>9</sup>
<b>Charles</b>	Bequeathed to Peggy
<b>Humphrey</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) with specific language—"I commend the man Humphrey to the <u>special care</u> of my nephew Robert hoping that by kindness and attention to his comfort and happiness he may be in some degree rewarded for his faithfulness to me during many years since." <sup>10</sup>
<b>Martha</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Julius</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Adaline</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>John</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Nicy</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Frank</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after

<sup>9</sup> 1880 U. S. Census, Lemley Township, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 28.

<sup>10</sup> Mecklenburg County Will Book T, Page 217.

Name	Notes
	her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Isabella</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Dave, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Dave</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Jacob, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Jacob</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Horac, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Horac</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, and Emeline; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Emeline</b>	Life estate bequeathed to Peggy along with Humphrey and family Martha, Julius, Adaline, John, Nicy, Frank, Isabella, Dave, Jacob, and Horac; after her death to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson)
<b>Phillip</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Charity</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Wilson</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Rose</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with her children Cely and Darkey
<b>Cely</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with mother Rose and family Darkey

Name	Notes
<b>Darkey</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with mother Rose and family Cely
<b>Clara</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with child Henry
<b>Henry</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with mother Clara
<b>Robert</b>	Son of Old Patt; bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Abraham</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Judy</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with child Catherine
<b>Catherine</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell) along with mother Judy
<b>Ephraim</b>	Bequeathed to nephew David Alexander Caldwell (son of Susan Davidson Caldwell)
<b>Hannah</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with family Linda and child Dovey, Mose, Dinah, Joe, and Roxana  Hannah may have been a member of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. <sup>11</sup>
<b>Linda</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah
<b>Dovey</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah and mother Linda
<b>Mose</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah

<sup>11</sup> Minutes of the Session, Hopewell Presbyterian Church (Huntersville, N.C.) Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections and University Archives, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. <https://findingaids.charlotte.edu/repositories/4/resources/336>.

Name	Notes
<b>Dinah</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah
<b>Joe</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah
<b>Roxana</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Davidson Alexander (son of Violet Davidson Alexander) along with Hannah
<b>Young Cuff</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Liddy and family Sam, Turner, Sarah, and Arthur
<b>Liddy</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Young Cuff and family Sam, Turner, Sarah, and Arthur  Liddy may have been Lydia Graham. She is listed as mother of Turner Graham on his marriage license in 1872. <sup>12</sup>
<b>Sam</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Young Cuff and family Turner, Sarah, and Arthur
<b>Turner</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Young Cuff and family Sam, Sarah, and Arthur  Turner may have been <b>Turner Graham</b> , born about 1835 to Lydia Graham and Adam Hayes. He was married to Susan Turner in 1870, with whom he had <b>Augustus "Gus"</b> (ca. 1861), <b>Lydia</b> (ca. 1863), <b>Rosa</b> (ca. 1864), and Benjamin (ca. 1868). <sup>13</sup> He married Emeline Swann in 1872. <sup>14</sup> They had eleven children who included Caroline (1873), John (ca. 1874), Sarah (ca. 1878), Turner (February 1880), Sophia (1884), Samuel (1886), Osco (1882), and Osma (1893). <sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Turner Graham and Emeline Swann, North Carolina Marriages, 1759-1979, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F8W6-Z6R>, accessed August 28, 2024.

<sup>13</sup> 1870 U. S. Census, Long Creek Township, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 24.

<sup>14</sup> Turner Graham and Emeline Swann, North Carolina Marriages, 1759-1979, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F8W6-Z6R>, accessed August 28, 2024.

<sup>15</sup> 1880 U. S. Census, Lemley Township, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 30; 1900 U. S. Census, Lemley Township, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 14A.

Name	Notes
<b>Sarah</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Young Cuff and family Sam, Turner, and Arthur
<b>Arthur</b>	Bequeathed to great-nephew Robert Davidson Graham (son of William Alexander Graham, grandson of Isabella Davidson Graham) along with Young Cuff and family Sam, Turner, and Sarah  Arthur may have been <b>Arthur Graham</b> , son of <b>Lydia Graham</b> and <b>Andrew Johnston</b> , born ca. 1852. He married Delia (or Julia) Springs in 1890. They lived in Lincoln County in 1900 with children Georgia (February 1896), Augusta (July 1898), and Robert Lee (August 1899). <sup>16</sup>
<b>Henry</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Suzy and family Julia, Will, Perry, Ellen, and Sina
<b>Suzy</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and family Julia, Will, Perry, Ellen, and Sina
<b>Julia</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and Suzy and family Will, Perry, Ellen, and Sina
<b>Will</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and Suzy and family Julia, Perry, Ellen, and Sina
<b>Perry</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and Suzy and family Julia, Will, Ellen, and Sina
<b>Ellen</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and Suzy and family Julia, Will, Perry, and Sina
<b>Sina</b>	Bequeathed to nephew John Ramsey Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Henry and Suzy and family Julia, Will, Perry, and Ellen
<b>Peggy</b>	Daughter of Elsie; bequeathed to Robert Davidson Osborne, son of James W. Osborne
<b>Tom</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean)

<sup>16</sup> 1900 U. S. Census, Catawba Springs Township, Lincoln County, North Carolina, 1B.

Name	Notes
<b>William</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean)
<b>Hampden</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean)
<b>Plum</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean)
<b>Harriet</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with family Laura, Stephen, and Margaret
<b>Laura</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Harriet and family Stephen and Margaret
<b>Stephen</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Harriet and family Laura and Margaret
<b>Margaret</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Dr. William Bain MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Harriet and family Laura and Stephen
<b>Cynthia</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Fanny and family Amanda, Sarah, Minora, Katy, Delia, and Graham
<b>Fanny</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and family Amanda, Sarah, Minora, Katy, Delia, and Graham
<b>Amanda</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Sarah, Minora, Katy, Delia, and Graham
<b>Sarah</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Amanda, Minora, Katy, Delia, and Graham
<b>Minora</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Amanda, Sarah, Katy, Delia, and Graham

Name	Notes
<b>Katy</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Amanda, Sarah, Minora, Delia, and Graham
<b>Delia</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Amanda, Sarah, Minora, Katy, and Graham
<b>Graham</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Alfred Brevard (son of Rebecca Davidson Brevard) along with Cynthia and Fanny and family Amanda, Sarah, Minora, Katy, and Delia  Graham may be <b>Graham Brevard</b> , age 18, living in Lemley Township in 1870. <sup>17</sup>
<b>Virgil</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Edward Constantine Davidson (son of John McKnitt Davidson)
<b>Violet</b>	Bequeathed to Martha D. Davidson (wife of John H. Davidson of Alabama) along with Julia and child Ollie
<b>Julia</b>	Bequeathed to Martha D. Davidson (wife of John H. Davidson of Alabama) along with child Ollie and Violet
<b>Ollie</b>	Bequeathed to Martha D. Davidson (wife of John H. Davidson of Alabama) along with mother Julia and Violet
<b>Sally</b>	Bequeathed to niece Isabella Davidson Moore (daughter of John McKnitt Davidson) along with family Franky, Lise, and Abram, and Old Elsie
<b>Franky</b>	Bequeathed to niece Isabella Davidson Moore (daughter of John McKnitt Davidson) along with family Sally, Lise, and Abram, and Old Elsie
<b>Lise</b>	Bequeathed to niece Isabella Davidson Moore (daughter of John McKnitt Davidson) along with family Sally, Franky, and Abram, and Old Elsie
<b>Abram</b>	Bequeathed to niece Isabella Davidson Moore (daughter of John McKnitt Davidson) along with family Sally, Franky, and Lise, and Old Elsie
<b>Old Elsie</b>	Bequeathed to niece Isabella Davidson Moore (daughter of John McKnitt Davidson) along with Sally and family Franky, Lise, and Abram

<sup>17</sup> 1870 U. S. Census, Lemley Township, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 1.

Name	Notes
<b>John</b>	Son of Old Elsie; bequeathed to Robert D. Whitty of Alabama
<b>Nancy</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Hamilton Graham MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Augustus, May, Charlotte, and Richard  Nancy may have been a member of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. <sup>18</sup>
<b>Augustus</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Hamilton Graham MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Nancy, May, Charlotte, and Richard
<b>May</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Hamilton Graham MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Nancy, Augustus, Charlotte, and Richard
<b>Charlotte</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Hamilton Graham MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Nancy, Augustus, May, and Richard  Charlotte may have been a member of Hopewell Presbyterian Church. <sup>19</sup>
<b>Richard</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Robert Hamilton Graham MacLean (son of Polly Davidson MacLean) along with Nancy, Augustus, May, and Charlotte
<b>Dick</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Benjamin Howard Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Betsey, Peggy, Patsey, and Rossanna
<b>Betsey</b>	Mother of Camilla and Jane; bequeathed to nephew Benjamin Howard Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Dick, Peggy, Patsey, and Rossanna
<b>Peggy</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Benjamin Howard Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Dick, Betsey, Patsey, and Rossanna
<b>Patsey</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Benjamin Howard Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Dick, Betsey, Peggy, and Rossanna
<b>Rossanna</b>	Bequeathed to nephew Benjamin Howard Davidson (son of Benjamin Wilson Davidson) along with Dick, Betsey, Peggy, and Patsey

<sup>18</sup> Minutes of the Session, Hopewell Presbyterian Church (Huntersville, N.C.) Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections and University Archives, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. <https://findingaids.charlotte.edu/repositories/4/resources/336>.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes of the Session, Hopewell Presbyterian Church (Huntersville, N.C.) Records, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections and University Archives, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. <https://findingaids.charlotte.edu/repositories/4/resources/336>.

Name	Notes
<b>Camilla</b>	Daughter of Betsey; bequeathed to Margaret Madeline Osborne (daughter of James W. Osborne)
<b>Jane</b>	Daughter of Betsey; bequeathed to great-nephew Davidson Brevard Caldwell (son of David Alexander Caldwell, grandson of Susan Davidson Caldwell)

Robin's will also specified that ten shares of bank stock to be sold to purchase "a full suit of clothing for each of my negroes to be provided as soon as may be possible."<sup>20</sup>

In the 1860 census 35 enslaved Blacks were enumerated at Holly Bend. While the real estate value of the plantation had shrunk to \$7,000 since Robin had willed most of the land, Peggy held a personal estate of \$29,500. Cousin Jane Price Whitley (granddaughter of Mary Davidson Price, Robin's first cousin) and farmer John F. McCoy, who likely performed the role of overseer as well as operating the farm, were listed in the household along with the following enslaved persons:<sup>21</sup>

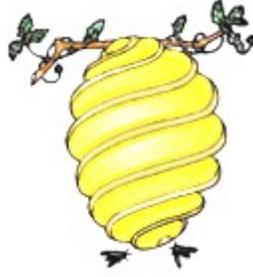
Male, age 84	Male, age 64	Male, age 48	Male, age 38
Male, age 22	Male, age 21	Male, age 20	Male, age 18
Male, age 16	Male, age 15	Male, age 13	Male, age 12
Male, age 9	Male, age 5	Male, age 3	Male, age 2
Female, age 70	Female, age 70	Female, age 22	Female, age 35
Female, age 25	Female, age 57	Female, age 25	Female, age 20
Female, age 12	Female, age 12	Female, age 10	Female, age 9
Female, age 9	Female, age 9	Female, age 8	Female, age 8
Female, age 8	Female, age 7	Female, age 1	

Peggy Davidson died in 1864. She had been granted a life estate in Holly Bend, with control of the property going to nephew Robert Franklin Davidson, son of Robin's brother Benjamin Wilson Davidson. In 1863 the younger Robert had sold the property to James Walker Osborne, the son of Peggy's brother Edwin Jay Osborne, who she raised after his mother's death. The trust agreement between Peggy and Osborne outlined the distribution of her assets, including enslaved people, to family members. The "negro boy Augustus" (**Gus Davidson**) was bequeathed to nephew Rev. Edwin Augustus Young Osborne, and another unnamed enslaved person was to be given to her grand-niece Mary Young (granddaughter of her sister Mary Lloyd Osborne Young). Osborne was to receive the remainder of the people she enslaved but "subject...to the provision that the bequest of sd. Negroes to my nephew...should be chargeable with the payment of the following pecuniary legacies" to various family members.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Mecklenburg County Deed Book T, Page 222.

<sup>21</sup> 1860 U. S. Census, Charlotte, Western Division, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 91; 1860 U. S. Census Slave Schedule, Western Division, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 190.

<sup>22</sup> Mecklenburg County Old Deed Book 5, Page 168.



**Survey and Research Report**  
**on**  
**Holly Bend**





### *Architectural Essay*

Holly Bend is a large frame plantation house set in a grove of holly trees on a neck of land jutting into the Catawba River. The two-story gable-roof structure, five bays wide and two bays deep, is finished quite plainly on the exterior with molded weatherboards. The interior contains, however, a great deal of remarkable vernacular trim.

The two exterior end brick chimneys, laid in Flemish bond, have stepped bases, single shoulders and molded caps. The west chimney has a stone base, a continuation of the random stone foundation of the house. The original wooden roof shakes are covered by new composition shingles. A molded cornice and frieze adorned with triglyphs occurs beneath the overhanging eaves on both the front and rear. Flanking the central entrance of the main (south) facade are fluted pilasters with distinctive console caps accented by gouge work and applied ornament. A heavy molded architrave enframes the flat-paneled door and four-light transom. The lintel features a band of incised lozenges. In the rear is a similar but less elaborate central entrance.

The windows at the first level have molded architraves and sills and flat-paneled shutters. In most of these windows the upper sash has nine panes; the lower, a single

replacement glass pane. Some of the windows, however, still have the original nine-over-nine sash. The second level repeats this arrangement except for the diminution of fenestration and the use of louvered shutters. Flanking each chimney in the gables are small four-over-four sash windows with solid shutters.

Across the first story of the main facade is a hip-roof porch, a later addition, supported on plain square posts. Flush boards cover the sheltered wall, indicating the existence of a much earlier porch. Rear ells have been added in several stages; that on the northeast, formerly two stories high but later lowered to a single story, contains the kitchen. The earlier kitchen, now demolished, was in a separate structure in the west side yard.

The plan of the first floor features a large parlor on either side of the central hall. The walls throughout the house are finished with wide horizontal sheathing accented by delicate molded cornices, chair rails, and baseboards. Both the front and rear entrance doors, hung on strap hinges, are flat-paneled on one side and nearly flush-paneled on the other. An open-string stair, which rises in two flights with an intervening quarter turn, is located at the rear of the hall against the right wall and is distinctly Georgian in feeling. It features a heavy molded handrail, well-turned balusters terminating in a square newel with a molded cap, and interesting curvilinear brackets below each tread.

The Federal ornament of the (main) west parlor is unusually lavish. Dominating the room is the large mantel which is distinguished by an abundance of extremely vernacular Adamesque ornament. The rectangular opening is bordered by a molded architrave edged with a tiny reeded band flanked by unacademic pilasters surmounted by fluted consoles. Below each console on the pilaster is an incised U-shaped design. The consoles support a heavy cornice shelf which breaks above the consoles and over a central tablet adorned with a quarter rosette in each corner. The cornice features bands of pierced horizontal lozenges and vertical reeding. Above the shelf are two large rectangular panels formed by applied bands of rope molding and reeding. These are surmounted at each end by delicately fluted end blocks with reeded caps. Molded bands extend from each cap to form a broken ogee scroll pediment ending in crude rosettes. Rising between the rosettes, above the inner corners of the panels, is a fluted console topped by a rosette and terminating in a molded cap. This central console is connected to the rosettes of the ogee pediment by swag-like rope moldings.

Facing the overmantel in the opposite wall is an overdoor consisting of a similar broken ogee pediment, but the central focus is a bas-relief urn with incised fluting and foliate designs. Each window, including those flanking the mantel, is topped by a full

entablature with end blocks and consoles similar to those on the exterior of the main entrance. The entablatures that formerly crowned the two rear windows have been pieced together and serve as a lintel above the French doors which now connect the west room with its rear additions.

The east room ornamentation is much simpler. The tall Federal mantel has a plain frieze; the pilaster caps and end blocks contain fan, scroll and rosette motifs. The overmantel, applied directly to the wall surface, as in the west room, consists of two thin moldings which form a single large square crosssetted panel. The second story is now divided into four rooms, although the partition separating the two west rooms is perhaps a later addition. The only mantel at this level is the small Federal mantel in the larger front west room. The right rooms have no fireplace openings. Several changes at this level have occurred, for several types of molded window architraves are present. The passage to the no longer existing second story of the east rear ell was formerly through the east rear bedroom, and the flat paneled double door still covers this opening.

Robert Davidson built Holly Bend (called Hollywood in the twentieth century) between 1795 and 1800 on 420 acres which his father, John Davidson (early settler and revolutionary war figure of Mecklenburg County), gave him in 1795. The house, which was built in a bend of the Catawba River and is reputed to have been named for the holly trees which grow in great abundance in that area, was completed before Robert married Margaret Osborne on January 1, 1801. Robert Davidson, who is said to have been the wealthiest planter in Mecklenburg County, was listed in the 1850 census as having 2,803 acres (1,000 acres of which was improved land) and 109 slaves. Robert and Margaret lived in the house until they died, he in 1853 and she in 1864.

Her husband had provided Margaret a life estate in the home tract of 430 acres, after which Robert F. Davidson, a nephew, was to receive Holly Bend since the couple had no children. In 1863, a year before his aunt's death, Robert F. Davidson sold James N.

Osborne several tracts of land including Holly Bend, "after the expiration [of Mrs. Davidson's] life estate." In 1871 the James W. Osborne estate, with Thomas Moore as executor, completed a contract with John L. Parks for 942 acres "formerly owned by Robert Davidson." John Parks died in 1905, and his homeplace was divided equally between Mrs. Mary Allison, Mrs. Jennie Eddleman, Mrs. Alice Parks, and Sallie K. Dixson. Mrs. Alice Parks, who was the owner of the 221 acres of the John L. Parks estate containing Holly Bend, sold the property in 1920 to J. Lindsey Parks. Parks lost the property through a foreclosure in 1930. Holly Bend returned to private ownership

in 1941 when Wachovia Bank and Trust Company sold the 221-acre tract to A. C. Newson and his wife. In 1970, Newson sold the property to its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. L. Gardner Eakes.

The significance of Holly Bend lies not in its exterior appearance, but in the treatment of the interior. Equally elaborate interior finish may be found in a number of elegant houses built in North Carolina during the Federal period, but the use of such lavish interior trim in an outwardly unexceptional house, together with the exuberantly vernacular handling of forms, makes Holly Bend unique. Although the Adamesque elements are certainly derivative, the lively creativity of the carpenter-interpreter transformed the standard compositions into a purely local expression of Federal Neo-Classicism.

## Historical Background

### Holly Bend Historical Background

- 1794 Major John Davidson deeded this land to his oldest son, Robert. Deed called for land and improvements thereon. At one time Robert owned this whole neck. As nearly as we can figure, Holly Bend was completed around 1800.
- Robert, called Robin, married Peggy Osborne in 1801. They never had any children of their own but are said to have helped raise a number of nieces and nephews.
- 1850 Robin Davidson was listed as having 109 slaves and also plantations in Alabama. When he died in
- 1853 at the age of 84 he is thought to have been one of the richest men in the county.
- 1864 Peggy Davidson died at the age of 88.
- 1868 Peggy's family sold her portion of the estate to J. L. Parks from Cabarrus County. He had been a sutler, sold salt to the Confederate Army. Survey and map dated 1872 showed that the estate consisted of about 900 acres. In 1873 he bought and additional 300 acres from the Robert Davidson estate which means that he owned the whole neck.
- 1908 J. L. Parks died, left estate to son, W. B. Parks and two daughters.
- 1921 W. B. Parks left the title to the place to son J. L.
- 1930 Charlotte National Bank acquired title when J. L. Parks defaulted on a loan.
- 1936 This bank went bankrupt and was acquired by Wachovia.
- 1942 Amos Newson bought the place from the bank.
- 1970 Purchased by L. Garner Eakes.

### Ownership

- 1794-1868 - Robert Davidson and his estate  
1868-1930 - Parks family (three generations)  
1930-1942 - belonged to two banks  
1942-1970 - Amos Newson  
1970- - L. Garner Eakes

Holly Bend - Architect Abraham Highsmith  
Points of Interest

Front - carving around the front door.

Downstairs hall

1. Doors
  - a. Herringbone design
  - b. Locks shipped from England
  - c. Handwrought iron straps
2. Worn spots on floor
3. Staircase
  - a. Fine example of early North Carolina architecture
  - b. Carving said to have been done by Hessian soldiers who stayed in the vicinity after the Battle of Kings Mountain.
  - c. Typical of Georgian Colonial, built for sturdiness rather than grace.
4. Living room
  - a. Overmantel and cornices handcarved .
  - b. Fireplace
    1. Very efficient
    2. Trap door that could be raised. Has a chute running to basement that provides air to fan the fire.
    3. Pine wall boards were hand planed.
5. Moose room
  - a. Overmantel less ornate than living room
  - b. Random width boards in the floor (which are throughout the house) each of which had to be saved where it crossed each hand-hewn joist, evidence of painstaking workmanship.
6. Kitchen
  - A. This wing of the house was added in 1868. It originally was two stories. The second story was taken off in 1921.
  - b. Kitchen and bedroom behind have been remodeled in recent years. Bedroom was once a kitchen. Fireplace (now covered) has a hook in it to hold cooking pots.
  - c. There was a fireplace in the present kitchen but it was bricked up in years past.

Points of Interest  
upstairs

Big bedroom

- a. Said to be original dining room
- b. Stained walls could be what the whole house originally looked like. Walls are amazingly smooth to have been finished without the benefit of modern machinery.
- c. Rear wall could have been added later
  1. Boards run perpendicular
  2. " are beaded where the other walls are not.

Front blue bedroom

1. Original lock and key. Lock has a dolly to shield the keyhole.
2. Rear wall like the one in the big bedroom could have been added.
3. Windows have old glass

Back yellow bedroom

1. Original lock and key.
2. Original windows with nine panes
3. Window on rear wall has been moved to make way for second story that was there at one time.
4. Door to former second story which still has old fireplace. Door was made from blinds like the ones on the front of the house.

Bathroom

1. Said to have been butler's pantry
2. Cabinet made from unusually wide boards.

#### History of House and Construction

Original house faced north with the kitchen in the yard.

After 1868, J. L. Parks added two story addition consisting of four rooms, changed the rear door, making it the front door. Kitchen was downstairs in the rear.

1921, John Lindsey Parks added two rooms to the northwest corner, the rear room the kitchen the other the dining room. He cut down top story of the addition, made it one story, removed original front porch and put it on his sister's house in the Hopewell community. He put on the present porch.

He also put in Delco wiring system. The well house was for this system. He put in a plumbing system. He had a water tower in the back for this system.

The log corn crib in the back yard was built from a log cotton gin across the road.

1942 Amos Newson removed the kitchen and made the present kitchen. He had the slate roof put on the house. He tore down the water tower and made some changes to the front porch.

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