



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary
Office of Archives and History

Division of Historical Resources
David L. S. Brook, Director

June 24, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Thorpe, Ph.D., Director
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: David Brook *By for David Brook*

SUBJECT: Historic Architectural Survey Report, Improvements to SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) from SR 1616 to NC 43/48, Rocky Mount, U-3621, Nash County, ER02-10887

Thank you for your letter of April 27, 2004, transmitting the survey report by Vanessa E. Patrick for the above project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under the criterion cited:

Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church, south side of SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) 0.3 miles west of intersection with NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road), is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as an example of transitional Baptist church architecture. The Tar River Particular Baptist Church conforms to Primitive Baptist building tradition in form and plan while embracing newfound architectural freedom in materials and simplified ornament.

We concur with the National Register boundaries as described and delineated in the survey report.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following properties are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

Properties 2-8.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

bc: ✓ Southern/McBride
County

cc: Mary Pope Furr

www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us

	Location	Mailing Address	Telephone/Fax
ADMINISTRATION	507 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4617	(919) 733-4763 • 733-8653
RESTORATION	515 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4617	(919) 733-6547 • 715-4801
SURVEY & PLANNING	515 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4617	(919) 733-4763 • 715-4801



RECEIVED
APR 28 2004

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

April 27, 2004

Mr. David L. S. Brook
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
4617 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Ref. # ER02-10887

S

Due 5/24

Re: U-3621, Nash County
Widen SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) between SR 1616 (Country Club Road) and NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road), Rocky Mount
State Project No. 8.2321801, Federal Aid Project No. STP-1604(1)

Dear Mr. Brook:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is planning to widen a section of SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) in Rocky Mount according to the above-referenced project. This letter accompanies two copies of the Historic Architectural Resources Final Identification and Evaluation Report for the project area. The report meets NCDOT and National Park Service guidelines for survey procedures and concludes that one property (Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church) within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Please review the report and provide us with your comments. Should you have any questions, please contact Vanessa Patrick, Historic Architecture Section, 919-715-1617.

Sincerely,

Mary Pope Furr
Supervisor, Historic Architecture Section

RECEIVED

MAY 04 2004

Attachment
copy to: John F. Sullivan III, P.E., FHWA

MAILING ADDRESS:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENT
1583 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH NC 27699-1583

TELEPHONE: 919-715-1500
FAX: 919-715-1522

WEBSITE: WWW.NCDOT.ORG

LOCATION:
PARKER LINCOLN BUILDING
2728 CAPITAL BOULEVARD, SUITE 168
RALEIGH, NC 27604

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES
FINAL IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION**

**SR 1604 (HUNTER HILL ROAD)
from SR 1616 (Country Club Road)
to NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road)**

**ROCKY MOUNT, NASH COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA**

T.I.P. No. U-3621
STATE PROJECT No. 8.2321801
FEDERAL AID PROJECT No. STP-1604(1)



The
**HISTORIC
ARCHITECTURE**
Section

NCDOT
Historic Architecture
Office of Human
Environment
1583 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1583

T 919-715-1332
F 919-715-1501
www.ncdot.org

Report Prepared By:
Vanessa E. Patrick
Architectural Historian

March 2004

T 919-715-1617
F 919-715-1501
vepatrick@dot.state.nc.us

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES FINAL IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

**SR 1604 (HUNTER HILL ROAD)
from SR 1616 (Country Club Road)
to NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road)**

**ROCKY MOUNT, NASH COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA**

T.I.P. NO. U-3621
STATE PROJECT NO. 8.2321801
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. STP-1604(1)

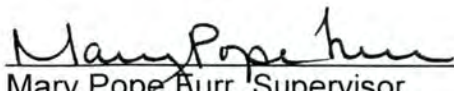
VANESSA E. PATRICK
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARCH 2004



Vanessa E. Patrick, Principal Investigator
Historic Architecture Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

4-13-04

Date



Mary Pope Hurr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

4-13-2004

Date

Table of Contents

Signatory Page	i
Project Description	1
Purpose of Survey and Report	1
Methodology	4
Summary Findings of the Survey	5
Properties Evaluated and Considered Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places	7
Properties Evaluated and Determined Not Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places	44
Principle Sources Consulted	49
Appendix	54
A. Primitive Baptist Meetinghouses – A Sample of Standing Buildings in Eastern North Carolina	
B. Concurrence Form for Ineligible Properties	
C. Memorandum Regarding Architectural Evaluation	
D. North Carolina Highway Historical Markers – Texts Relevant to the Falls of the Tar River Church	

Project Description

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to widen SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) to a multi-lane facility from SR 1616 (Country Club Road) to NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road) in Rocky Mount, Nash County (Figure 1). The purpose of the project is to increase the vehicular capacity and safety of the route. The proposed widening of SR 1604, currently a two-lane, two-way facility with a pavement width of twenty-four feet and soil shoulders on approximately sixty feet of right-of-way, entails construction of one of two alternatives: 1) a four-lane, divided section with two twelve-foot lanes in each direction, a median with ten-foot berms on 100 feet of right-of-way, and partial control of access or 2) a five-lane, curb-and-gutter section with two twelve-foot lanes in each direction and a twelve-foot center turn lane, ten-foot berms on 100 feet of right-of-way, and no control of access. The proposed improvements also include the replacement of a four-span, 195-foot long, steel stringer bridge (No. 181), which carries SR 1604 over the US 301 Bypass. The total length of the project is 1.2 miles. The project (T.I.P. No. U-3621) is both federally (Project No. STP-1604(1)) and state (Project No. 8.2321801) funded.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for historic architectural resources was delineated by an NCDOT staff architectural historian and reviewed in the field on September 11, 2002 (Figure 2). It surrounds the route of the proposed widening to include those areas that may be affected either physically or visually by new construction. Land use in the project area is predominantly commercial (retail) and single-family residential.

Purpose of Survey and Report

NCDOT conducted survey and compiled this report in order to identify historic architectural resources located within the APE as part of the environmental studies performed by NCDOT for the proposed project T.I.P. No. U-3621, SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road), Nash County, and documented by an Environmental Assessment (EA). This report is prepared as a technical addendum to the EA and as part of the documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. Section 106 of the NHPA, as amended, 16 U.S.C. Section 470f, requires Federal agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings on properties included or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. This report is on file at NCDOT and is available for review by the general public.

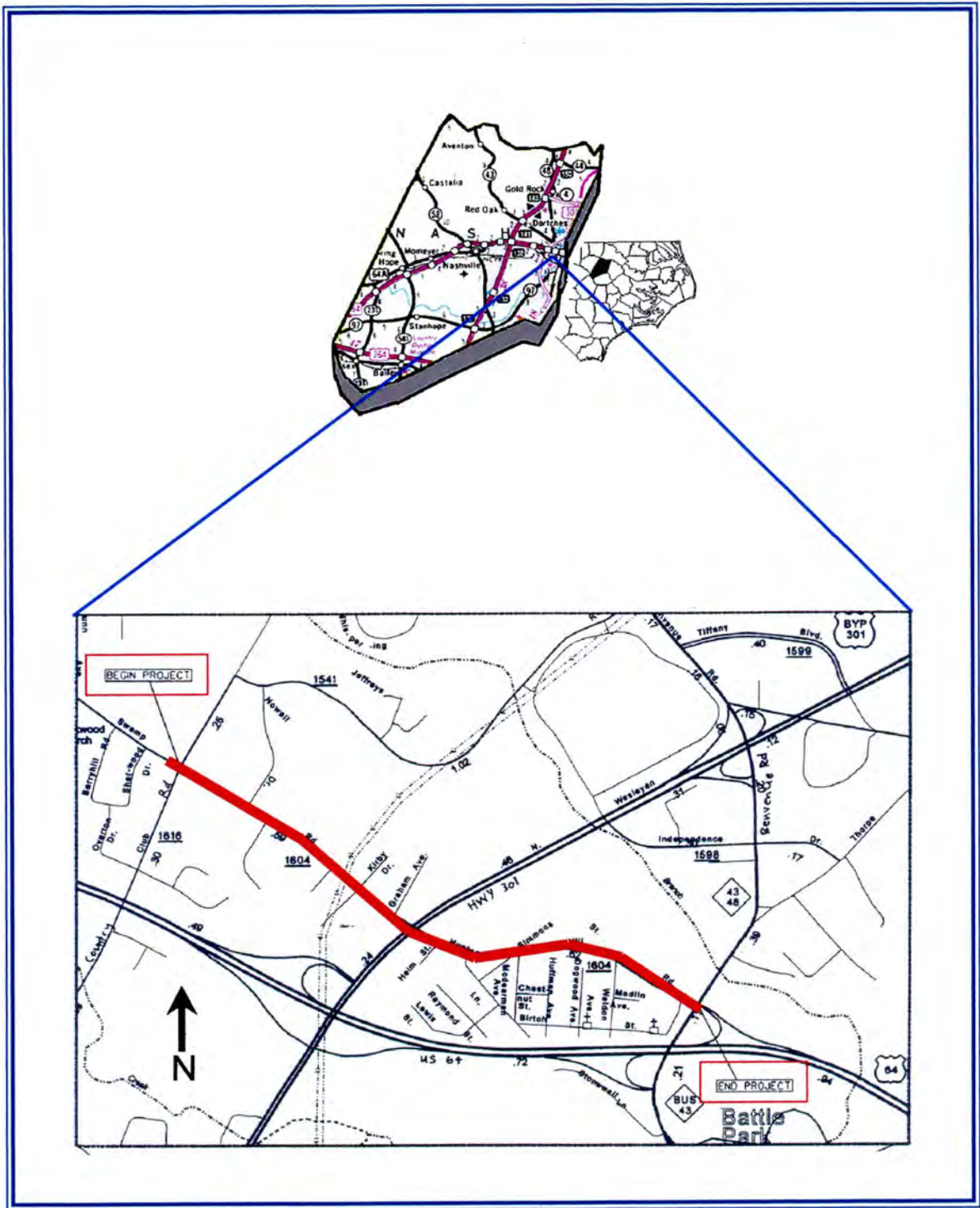


Figure 1. Project Location. Not to Scale.

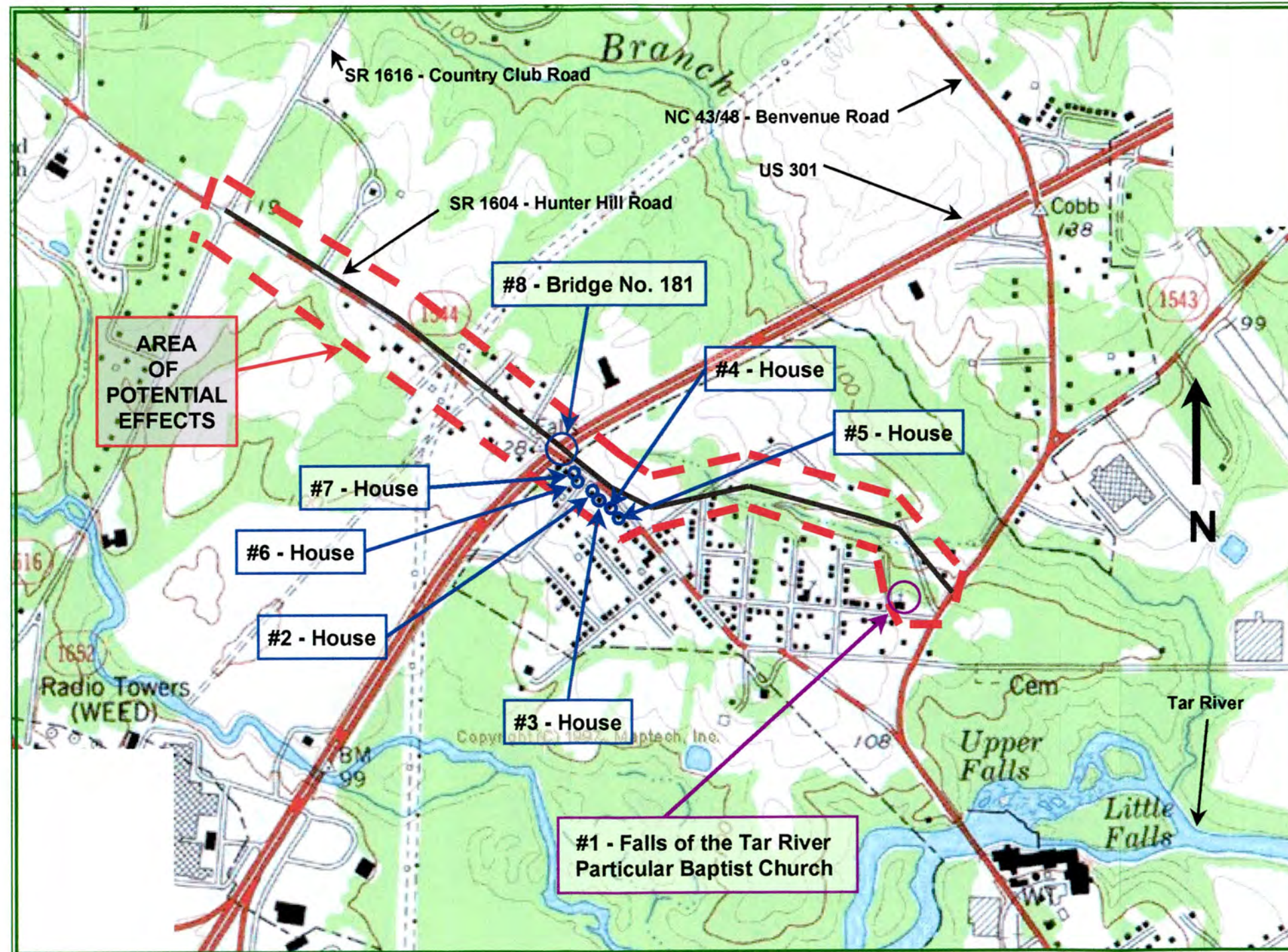


Figure 2. Historic Architectural Resources U-3621 Nash County (Rocky Mount)
 Rocky Mount USGS 7.5' quadrangle (NTS) September 2002

Methodology

NCDOT conducted the survey and prepared this report in accordance with the provisions of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Technical Advisory T6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4 (f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 CFR 44716); 36 CFR Part 60; and Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT. This survey and report meet the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service. In addition, this report conforms to the expanded requirements set forth in "Section 106 Procedures & Report Guidelines" (Historic Architecture Section, NCDOT, 2003).

An intensive survey was undertaken with the following goals: (1) to determine the APE, defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist; (2) to identify and record all significant resources within the APE; and (3) to evaluate these resources according to the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

The APE, as illustrated in Figure 2, was delineated to allow for flexibility in the design of avoidance alternatives.

An NCDOT architectural historian conducted a field survey on September 11, 2002, covering 100% of the APE by automobile and on foot. All structures over fifty years of age in the APE were identified, evaluated, photographed, and recorded on the appropriate United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps (see Figure 2).

An NCDOT architectural historian pursued preliminary documentary research to establish historical and architectural contexts for the project area, as well as the development of individual buildings and structures. The principal resources consulted included survey and National Register files at the HPO and the highway historical marker files of the Research Branch (North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources), all in Raleigh, and public records at the North Carolina State Library and Archives in Raleigh. Both primary and secondary sources held in the North Carolina State Library and Archives and North Carolina State University Libraries in Raleigh, the Wilson Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Braswell Memorial Library in Rocky Mount yielded additional information. Julia Bradford of the North Carolina Baptist Historical Collection, Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem and Robert Webb of the Primitive Baptist Library in Carthage, Illinois consulted the materials in their keeping and offered useful research suggestions. T. E. Ricks of the Nash County Historical Association and

William L. Everett of the Falls of the Tar Particular Baptist Church, both in Rocky Mount, generously shared their knowledge of the church building and surrounds. NCDOT architectural historian Penne Sandbeck provided valuable source references and insights based on her study of Primitive Baptist church buildings in Martin County.

Summary Findings of the Survey

The section of SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) targeted for widening traverses largely flat terrain. Recent retail development occupies most of its northern side and western end. A number of residential structures dating to the 1920s through 1990s cluster near the middle of the project area, just east of a mid-1950s bridge that carries SR 1604 over US 301. An early-twentieth-century church building and a late-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century cemetery occupy an elevated site near the NC 43/48 intersection.

No properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR), the state study list, or otherwise determined NR-eligible are located within the APE. One property, the Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church, is the subject of two state highway historical markers. Eight properties were identified as greater than fifty years of age (see Figure 2). Of the eight, seven were determined not eligible for the National Register and not worthy of further evaluation in a consultation meeting between the HPO and NCDOT held on October 1, 2002 (see Appendix). This report includes photographs and brief statements of their ineligibility. Additional investigation of the remaining property, the Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church and Cemetery, suggests that it should be considered eligible for the National Register and it is treated accordingly in this report. The property is represented in the HPO survey files as Nash County site NS 839.

Criterion Consideration G, for properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years, states that properties less than fifty years of age may be listed on the National Register only if they are of exceptional importance or if they are integral parts of districts eligible for the National Register. There are no properties in the APE that qualify for the National Register under Criterion Consideration G. Bridge No. 181, built in 1955, is typical of the hundreds of such steel stringer bridges built by the state highway commission between the 1910s and 1961 and so is not historically significant.¹

¹ Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc., "North Carolina Department of Transportation Historic Bridge Inventory – Phase I Report" (Raleigh: 2001), Bridge ID Number 630181.

Historic Architectural Resources in the APE

Properties Listed on the National Register:

None

Properties Listed on the North Carolina State Study List:

None

*Properties Evaluated and Determined Not Eligible
for the National Register:*

Properties 2-8

*Properties Evaluated and Considered Eligible
for the National Register:*

Property 1 - Falls of the Tar River

Particular Baptist Church (NS 839)

*(North Carolina highway historical markers
E-88, "Falls of the Tar Church" and E-61, "P. T. Barnum.")*

**PROPERTIES EVALUATED
AND
CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE
FOR THE
NATIONAL REGISTER
OF
HISTORIC PLACES**

Property 1 – The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church

Location: The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church occupies an elevated site on the south side of SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road), just west (approximately 0.3 mile) of the intersection with NC 43/48 (Benvenue Road) (see Figure 2). The property is about a quarter of a mile northwest of the Upper and Little Falls of the Tar River. It lies within the current municipal boundary of Rocky Mount in Nash County.

Setting: The church is approached via a partially paved, single-lane driveway that ascends southwards to a distance of approximately 260 feet from Hunter Hill Road (Figure 3). At a point approximately ninety-five feet east of the main (east) elevation of the church the driveway curves west and joins Birch Street, running about thirty feet from and parallel to the south elevation of the building. Two auxiliary buildings stand approximately thirty-five feet to the rear (west) of the church. A small collection of gravestones lies some ten to fifteen feet beyond, abutting a residential yard. The buildings and presumed church cemetery cluster in the southwest corner of a roughly two-and-one-half-acre property, occupied mostly by an expanse of well-tended lawn and a number of venerable trees, among them sweetgum, sycamore, and oak. The main (east) and south elevations, as well as the lawn immediately to the east of the church are decorated with low, clipped shrubs (Figure 4). A brick-framed sign at the curve of the driveway facing southeast and a board sign near the junction of the drive with Hunter Hill Road announce the identity and founding date of the church. Just uphill from the latter stands North Carolina highway historical marker E-88 commemorating the “Falls of the Tar Church” (Figure 5).

Description: The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is a two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, frame and brick-veneered building resting on a poured concrete foundation (Figure 6). Its three-bay, gable-end façade is graced by an elevated, tetrastyle portico and its five-bay length further extended with a central, one-story, polygonal apse at the opposite (west) end elevation (Figure 7). At each corner of the building and in between the windows of the long (north and south) elevations stand narrow brick buttresses; a single, narrow, brick chimney stack substitutes for a buttress between the third and fourth bay (from the façade) on either side. These vertical elements are laid in stretcher bond, as is all of the veneer, and the buttresses are capped with four-course tumblings. The chimney stacks break through and extend high above the deep overhang of the roof. A simple boxed cornice adorns the main body of the structure, as well as the portico and apse.

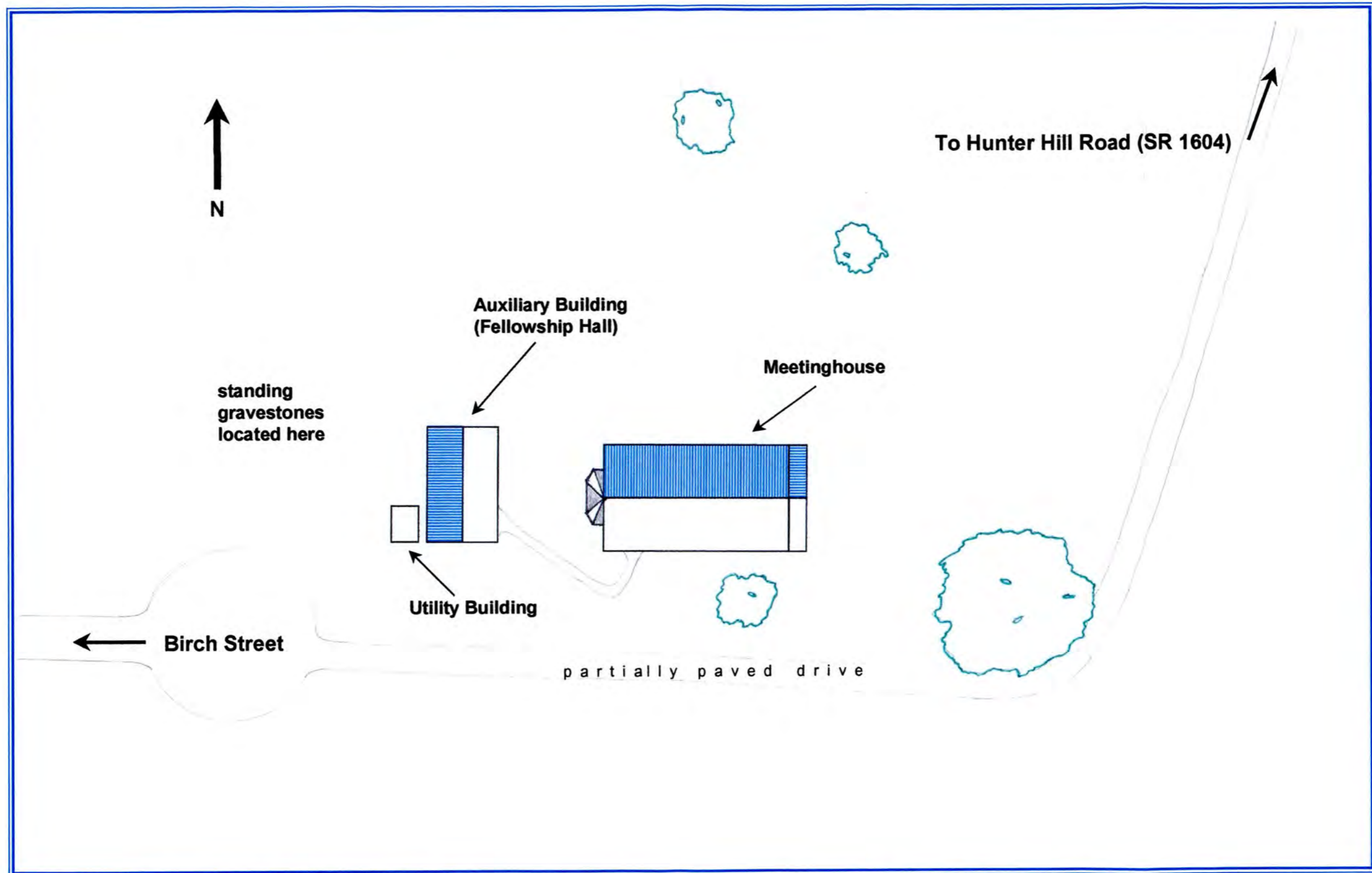


Figure 3. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Site Plan. Above sketch shows southernmost section of property and only largest trees. Path between meetinghouse and fellowship hall is of poured concrete. NTS.



Figure 4. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. General views looking west (above) and north towards SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) (below). Photographed September 11, 2002 and August 7, 2003.





Figure 5. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Contemporary sign southeast of church (above). North Carolina highway historical marker northeast of church (below). Photographed August 7, 2003 and September 11, 2002.





Figure 6. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. East (main) and south elevations. Photographed August 7, 2003.



Figure 7. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. West (rear) and north elevations. Photographed September 11, 2003.

A single soldier course suggests the level of the first floor on all elevations, as well as on the base of the portico. An axial flight of poured concrete steps rises to the portico floor, which is finished with foot-square concrete pavers. The double-leaved central doorway is flanked by eight-over-eight double-hung-sash windows; three eight-over-eight sash appear in the second story. Beneath each window are two row-lock courses. In the first story each window displays a semi-circular row-lock arch and stuccoed tympanum and in the second story soldier-course lintels. Tinted glass lights fill the plainly molded wooden sash. Four Ionic columns support the gable roof of the portico. The pediment is pierced by a central fan, divided into six clear-glazed lights by simple muntins through which shine variously colored, foil-like panels. The cornice returns on both the portico and visible façade wall are sheathed on their upper surfaces with the same seamed sheet metal applied to the rest of the building. The metal columns are replacements, and the cornice frieze and soffit are similarly renewed with aluminum siding (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Detail of cornice, main (east) elevation. Photographed August 7, 2003.

The windows in the long elevations are twelve-over-twelve sash, otherwise configured like those in the façade (Figure 9). The apse is lit by two, narrow, six-over-six sash and a fixed horizontal of six lights; it is flanked by twelve-over-twelve sash windows with soldier-course lintels (see Figure 7). Nearly all the

windows in the building are protected by sheets of plexiglass screwed to their exterior frames. The apse is fairly shallow, five-sided, and hip-roofed. Secondary, single doorways provide entry through the south and north elevations. Most of the door and window hardware is original. The brick veneer bears evidence of sandblasting and repointing. Access to the church interior was not obtained, but it appears to be a single, undivided space and simply detailed.



Figure 9. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Detail of window in north elevation. Photographed August 7, 2003.

A poured concrete path leads from the rear south doorway of the church to a single-story, gable-roofed, brick-veneered building of comparatively recent construction (Figure 10). A small, modern, framed shed stands adjacent to its



Figure 10. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Auxiliary building, looking northwest. Photographed August 7, 2003.



Figure 11. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Cemetery west of church building, looking north. Photographed September 11, 2002.

northeast corner. Ten gravestones, dating mostly to the early twentieth century, suggest a cemetery associated with the church (Figure 11). All are commercial products of conventional design, except the plainly inscribed concrete marker of Mary Ann Hyman (d. 1935) (Figure 12). The building and grounds appear to be actively maintained and in good condition.

History: Not everyone who attended the very first service held in the new “Falls Primitive Baptist Church” found a seat inside the recently completed building. The Rocky Mount *Evening Telegram* reported that “an attendance which overflowed the structure” listened to Elder A. B. Denson deliver “a stirring message” during the afternoon of Sunday, March 27, 1927. The newspaper had anticipated an “unusually large attendance” and also observed that “the handsome new structure ..., a spacious brick building, is a beautiful and modern church plant.” The building was indeed new, but the church it served was already 170 years old and had occupied several earlier structures on the same site. One of the oldest church organizations in North Carolina, the Falls of the Tar predates the founding of Rocky Mount and continues to meet in its 1927 building to this day.²

Until 1727 no organized congregations of Baptists existed in North Carolina. By 1755 sixteen churches and hundreds of members constituted the most prevalent religious denomination in the colony. One of the sixteen was the Falls of the Tar, established around 1744 in what was then Edgecombe County. Originally a General Baptist society, subscribing to the doctrine of a salvation open to all or “general atonement,” it became subject to Calvinist influences and was reconstituted as a Particular Baptist church under Reverend John Moore on December 3, 1757. Most of the other existing Baptist congregations in North Carolina also adopted a belief in predestination, that is, “particular election.” The founding of the Sandy Creek Church in Randolph County in 1755 introduced yet another doctrinal variation, based on the more evangelical, “New Light” teachings of the Separate Baptists.³

² “First Services in New Church,” *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 28 March 1927, p. 5, col. 3; “To Hold Service in New Edifice,” *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 24 March 1927, p. 2, col. 1.

³ “Falls of the Tar Church” (E-88), Highway Historical Markers Files, Division of Archives and History Research Branch, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources (NCDCCR), Raleigh. The complex, early institutional history of the Baptists in North Carolina is summarized in this and the following paragraphs and primarily based upon: Cushing Biggs Hassell, *History of the Church of God* (Middleton, N.Y.: 1886), pp. 662, 697-727, and 855-856; George Washington Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists* (Raleigh: 1930), vol. 1, pp. 176, 180, 211, 234, 237-238, 418, 488-489, and 549; George Washington Paschal, “Morgan Edwards’ Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of North Carolina,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 7 (July 1930), pp. 369-371, 374, 394-395, and 398; Charles B. Williams, *A History of the Baptists in North Carolina* (Raleigh: 1901), Chapter IV – “Rise and Growth of the Kehukee Association;” Guion Griffis Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina – A Social History* (Chapel Hill: 1937), pp. 337-343, and 385-388; Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *The History of a Southern State – North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: 1973), pp. 138-140, and 265; and J. Kelly Turner



Figure 12. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Selected gravestones. Photographed September 11, 2002.



In 1758 Separate Baptist churches in Virginia and the Carolinas affiliated in the Sandy Creek Association. Representatives of Particular, also called Regular or Old School, Baptist churches in eastern North Carolina and southeastern Virginia created a similar coalition in 1769 called the Kehukee Association after the church in Halifax County, North Carolina in which they were convened. At their respective annual association meetings the Separates and the Regulars considered how they might join forces, and in 1787 in Virginia and 1788 in North Carolina they assumed a collective identity as United Baptists. The union was always philosophically imperfect. The Separates' growing interest in mission boards, Bible and tract societies, and seminaries was not shared by the Regulars, who saw no need to change their original or "primitive" principles based upon Biblical authority. Their respective beliefs ultimately proved incompatible. Starting in 1827 with the "Kehukee Declaration," the associations and their component churches officially regrouped into two distinct denominations, roughly equal in membership by the early 1830s: the Missionary Baptists and the Primitive Baptists.

The Falls of the Tar church hosted a number of Kehukee Association meetings, starting in October of 1775. The dramatic proceedings of that year anticipated the uneasy alliance of the Regulars and Separates, as well as their final disassociation some fifty-five years later. Proponents of both doctrines within the Association failed to reconcile their positions and opted for a split session, some remaining in the meetinghouse and the others adjourning to the surrounding woods.⁴ The Kehukee factions reunited two years later, and by 1789 sixty-one churches with approximately five thousand members belonged to the Association. In 1811 another exceptional gathering occurred at the Falls of the Tar. Delegates from Kehukee, Sandy Creek, and five other regional associations met to establish a North Carolina "General Meeting of Correspondence." The new organization survived for only ten years, but heralded the creation of the Baptist State Convention in 1830 by the Missionary associations.

The Falls of the Tar emerged from the doctrinal struggles of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a Primitive Baptist church of some distinction. Already close to one hundred years old and a founding member of the Kehukee Association, it was served by a number of locally prominent individuals, as well as a steadily growing congregation.

Elisha Battle (1723-1799), of nearby Cool Spring Plantation, joined the Falls of the Tar church in 1764. Battle represented Edgecombe County in both the colonial and state legislatures, at the Halifax Convention in 1776, and at the 1788 federal constitutional convention in Hillsborough for which he acted as chairman.

and John L. Bridgers, Jr., *History of Edgecombe County North Carolina* (Raleigh: 1920), pp. 387-419. According to Hassell (pp. 552-553), Falls of the Tar is the fourth oldest Primitive Baptist church in North Carolina (based on the 1757 date); Kehukee is the oldest (1742).

⁴ For clarity, as well as in deference to the traditional practice of the dissenting denominations, the terms "church" and "meetinghouse" will refer respectively to the organization and its building throughout this history except where otherwise noted.

He served as a county justice for nearly forty years, as chairman of its committee of safety in 1774-1775, and was one of the five founding commissioners of the town of Tarboro. He assumed similar positions in his church as deacon, clerk, and founding representative of the Falls of the Tar to the Kehukee Association, often moderating subsequent association meetings. Recognized in his own time as an able and dedicated leader, Elisha Battle was characterized in a later account as “the first prominent laymen [sic] in the Baptist churches” of North Carolina.⁵

A number of exceptional ministers also served the Falls of the Tar church, perhaps none more notably than Joshua Lawrence (1778-1843). An eloquent preacher and zealous defender of the Regular Baptist philosophy, Lawrence took up his duties at the Falls in 1808. He became the undisputed, aggressive leader of the opposition to the missionary doctrine in the Kehukee Association and in North Carolina. So powerful was his advocacy, the Missionary Baptists called members of the Primitive churches “Lawrenceons,” as well as other more derogatory names like “Hardshells” and “Ignoramuses.” Lawrence also expressed his moral and religious views – and political opinions – through his published articles and pamphlets. During his ministry at the Falls of the Tar, church membership increased dramatically; within one two-year period over one hundred people received baptism. Lawrence resigned his position in 1830, but occasionally returned to preach until 1846 when a permanent minister once again was in place at the Falls of the Tar. In 1841 a published response to one of his political essays summed up Joshua Lawrence as “a gentleman, a Baptist preacher of considerable celebrity, ... the undeviating [foe] of all chartered monopolies, the firm friend of equality and the rights of man.”⁶

It may have been Joshua Lawrence who permitted a young P. T. Barnum to address members of his congregation outside the Falls of the Tar meetinghouse in 1836. Barnum’s six-month partnership with Aaron Turner and his Old Columbian Circus had just expired. Barnum left Turner in Warrenton, North Carolina and launched his first independent travelling exhibition with several performers, “horses, wagons, and a small canvas tent,” eventually extending a tour begun in Connecticut into Alabama and Kentucky. The first recorded stop of the new troupe was in “a settlement known as Rocky Mount Falls” on Saturday, November 12, 1836. Apparently they did not perform, but Barnum, as was his custom, attended church the next day. Walking from his tavern on Sunday morning, he “noticed a rostrum and benches in a grove near by” his destination, the Falls of the Tar meetinghouse. Having obtained the minister’s consent, Barnum announced to those assembled that he wished to speak in the grove

⁵ John W. Moore, “Memoir One – Elisha Battle,” in an undated scrapbook of newspaper columns from the *Biblical Recorder* entitled “Early Baptist Laymen in North Carolina,” North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; A. R. Newsome, ed., “Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810-1811,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 6 (January 1929), p. 92; William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* (Chapel Hill: 1979), vol. 1, pp. 109-110.

⁶ Hassell, pp. 736-777 and 855-856; Turner and Bridgers, pp. 402 and 408-415; and Powell, vol. 4, pp. 31-32.

following the service. By his reckoning about 300 people listened for nearly an hour as he confessed to “a deep interest in the subject of religion and morality” and “set before them the duties and privileges of man.” Barnum’s remarks were well received, and he later recalled his pleasure “in believing that I possibly had done some good in that charming grove on that beautiful Sabbath.”⁷

The church building discovered by P. T. Barnum at Rocky Mount Falls probably was not the first to occupy the site. An account of the “Tar-River-Falls” church compiled in 1772 noted that it possessed “a place of worship, 30 feet by 20, built in 1764, on land given by Wm Horn” and derived its name “from the part of the river near the meeting house.”⁸ Like most such structures of its time and place regardless of denomination, the building was almost certainly of log or frame construction and provided unadorned, practical shelter for those who gathered therein. The meeting house stood on a one-acre parcel carved out of William Horn’s larger holding and transferred by him to “the society of protestant Dunkers known by the name of Regullar or Particullar babtists inhabiting on tar River....”⁹ Several grist and saw mills appeared at the Falls beginning in the late 1740s, and the first bridge across the Tar at that point opened in 1811.¹⁰ Gradually the village of Rocky Mount Falls developed, becoming an official post office in 1816. Two years later Joel Battle, Peter Evans, and Henry Donaldson established Rocky Mount Mills, the second cotton mill in the state, just south of the Falls.

⁷ P. T. Barnum, *The Life of P. T. Barnum Written by Himself* (New York: 1855), pp. 187-189; “P. T. Barnum -- Prince of Humbug -- in Rocky Mount,” *The Connector* 3 (Spring 1999), pp. 3 and 20. “P. T. Barnum” (E-61), Highway Historical Markers Files, Division of Archives and History Research Branch, NCDHR, Raleigh.

⁸ Reverend Morgan Edwards of Philadelphia traveled in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas during 1771 and 1772 collecting information for a history of the Baptist church. In addition to his observations about the meeting house at the Falls, he mentioned a “branch” of the Falls of the Tar “about 15 miles off, near the mouth of Swifts creek,” which became a Separate Baptist church in 1777. Hassell, in his 1886 *History of the Church or God...*, identified Swift Creek as the original location of the Falls of the Tar church at the time of its reconstitution in 1757. Paschal, “Morgan Edwards’ Materials...”, p. 374 and Hassell, p. 855.

⁹ Edgecombe County Deed Book 1, C, pp. 136-137 (January 14, 1764). Horn sold one acre of his two-hundred-acre property to the church for five shillings proclamation money. He was a militia colonel and, like Elisha Battle (see pp. 18-19 this report), a member of the Halifax Convention and representative of the Falls of the Tar church at the founding of the Kehukee Association (Paschal, “Morgan Edwards’ Materials...”, p. 374, n. 23 and Turner and Bridgers, p. 398). The Dunkers were members of a Baptist sect founded in Germany (tunken = to dip), who emigrated to America in the early eighteenth century. Similar to the Regular Baptists in belief and practice, their independent presence in North Carolina was brief (Paschal, “Morgan Edwards’ Materials...”, p. 371, n. 10).

¹⁰ In “A Statistical and Historical Account of Edgecombe County,” compiled in 1811, Jeremiah Battle (grandson of Elisha Battle) described the “Great Falls,” which “affords seats for three grist mills and a saw mill, some of which have been running 60 or 70 years....” (A. R. Newsome, ed., “Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810-1811,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 6 (January 1929), pp. 74-75). The brief account of the evolution of the Rocky Mount area presented in this paragraph is derived principally from Helen R. Watson, “The First Rocky Mount and How it Died,” *Rocky Mount Telegram* 26 May 1974, pp. 1B and 3B; T. E. Ricks, “The Falls, Falls of the Tar, Rocky Mount Falls, Rocky Mount,” [Raleigh] *News and Observer* 4 July 1976, pp. 6A and 7A; and T. E. Ricks, ed., *Nash County Historical Notes – A Bicentennial Tribute* (Rocky Mount: 1976).

Also starting in 1818, Joel Battle served on a series of committees appointed by members of the Falls of the Tar church to plan for replacing their old meeting house.¹¹ By the summer of 1820 the committee had raised the necessary funds and was ready to let the construction of a new, 36-by-60-foot building. Though illegible and missing entries in the church minutes preclude a conclusive statement, it seems likely that a new meeting house was built sometime in the early 1820s, and this second Falls of the Tar witnessed Barnum's memorable visit.

Nothing at present is known about the design of the early structures undertaken or planned by the Falls of the Tar church beyond their overall dimensions. In the absence of written or visual representations, a number of surviving, early-nineteenth-century buildings in eastern North Carolina illustrate the architectural aesthetic developed and practiced by the Primitive Baptists and suggest the general form of the meetinghouse(s) at the Falls. In 1804 twenty-six members of the Falls of the Tar founded the Sappony (Primitive) Baptist church south of Nashville.¹² Their original meetinghouse, still standing but altered, probably resembles that of the parent church in its basic features. A rectangular, single-story building of frame construction and domestic in scale and appearance, it is gable-roofed, sheathed with weatherboards painted white, and otherwise very simply finished. The Sappony meetinghouse perfectly expresses the rejection of elaborate ritual and material trappings of worship characteristic of the dissenting Protestant denominations, including the Quakers, Presbyterians, and Methodists. It also reflects the Regular/Primitive Baptist infusion of this basic design with an austere functionality, better observed, however, in several additional examples.

One of the oldest surviving Primitive Baptist meetinghouses in North Carolina has served the Hannah's Creek church in Johnston County since the 1830s. A plainly appointed, framed, and gable-roofed building, Hannah's Creek is distinguished by its virtually unchanged interior configuration. The prominent feature in the unpartitioned space is the preacher's raised platform or dais at the midpoint of the long north wall. Parallel and perpendicular rows of benches are arrayed around the platform in a squared U. The main entrance is positioned in the long south wall directly opposite the platform. This arrangement, now often called "the meetinghouse plan," was favored by all dissenting groups from the seventeenth century on. The early building(s) of the Falls of the Tar church may have been designed accordingly.¹³

The construction of the Hannah's Creek meetinghouse occurred at a time when American church architecture underwent several conceptual changes. Perhaps

¹¹ Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes and Roll, 1757-1974 (entries for July 4, 1818, August 1, 1818, November 1, 1818, January 2, 1819 (including building dimensions), February 6, 1819, February 7, 1820, and July 8, 1820), North Carolina State Library and Archives, Raleigh.

¹² "Spreading their Wings," *The Connector* 3 (Winter 1999), p. 2; Hassell, p. 869.

¹³ "Hannah's Creek Primitive Baptist Church," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (listed 1991), HPO, Raleigh. Carl R. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (New York: 1994), pp. 229-230.

inspired by the dissenters' emphasis on preaching and fellowship, the box pews of the Anglican tradition gave way to slip seats oriented towards a pulpit that joined the altar at one short end of a building. The growing appeal of the Greek Revival style seems to have reinforced the logic of a main entry in the opposite short wall, a gable-end with distinctly temple-front qualities. Growing in membership and influence, the dissenting denominations adjusted their buildings in turn, decisions that were probably as much expressions of recently gained – or at least desired – respectability as of more practical concerns. Some existing Primitive Baptist meetinghouses were reoriented; for example, an extension of one gable-end and the cutting of two new doors in the other helped modernize the meetinghouse plan interior of Southwest in Onslow County. New structures were conceived and built with the increasingly conventional gable-end entrance and linear plan.¹⁴

Beginning in the 1830s the one-story, framed, white-washed or –painted church with gable-end doorway became a common sight in the North Carolina landscape. The presence and, even more significantly, absence of certain design elements specifically identified such a building as the home of a Primitive Baptist congregation. A distinctive architectural aesthetic is immediately evident in the treatment of entrances and interior space (Figure 13). Paired main entries, like those at the Bear Grass meetinghouse in Martin County and Bethlehem meetinghouse in Tyrrell County, corresponded to a gender-based seating arrangement inside the buildings. Men passed through one doorway and women the other and found their places on either side of the single, unpartitioned room, facing the minister or elder at the opposite end. To his right and left were several rows of benches set at right angles to those of the congregation. Occupied on one side by deacons, clerks, and visiting elders and on the other by their wives, the two seating areas were called the “Amen corners,” sources of visual and often vocal support for the elder’s preaching. The paired entry generally is considered a definitive feature of Primitive Baptist meetinghouses, yet a small sample of twelve surviving, linear plan examples built in North Carolina between the 1830s and 1860s yields seven with paired and five with single main doorways (see Appendix-A). The centered entrances of the Williams and Old Sparta meetinghouses, for example, both in Edgecombe County, simply led into one longitudinal aisle instead of two; the interiors were otherwise configured and used like those of the double-entry buildings. Several of the early meetinghouses also included doorways in their long walls near the Amen corners. The presence of such secondary doorways does not appear to correlate with either main entry type.¹⁵

¹⁴ Lounsbury, pp. 78-80. Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill: 1990), pp. 177 and 180-184. J. Daniel Pezzoni, *The Architectural History of Onslow, County, North Carolina* (Richlands, NC: 1998), p. 88.

¹⁵ The architectural profile presented in this and the following paragraphs is informed by a sample of forty-six extant Primitive Baptist meetinghouses in eastern North Carolina, drawn from the survey and National Register files of the HPO, Raleigh, and summarized in Appendix-A. The seven early buildings with paired main entries are: Bear Grass (Martin County, 1830s-1840s); Tarboro (Edgecombe County, ca. 1830); Bethlehem (Tyrrell County, 1849); Skewarkey (Martin

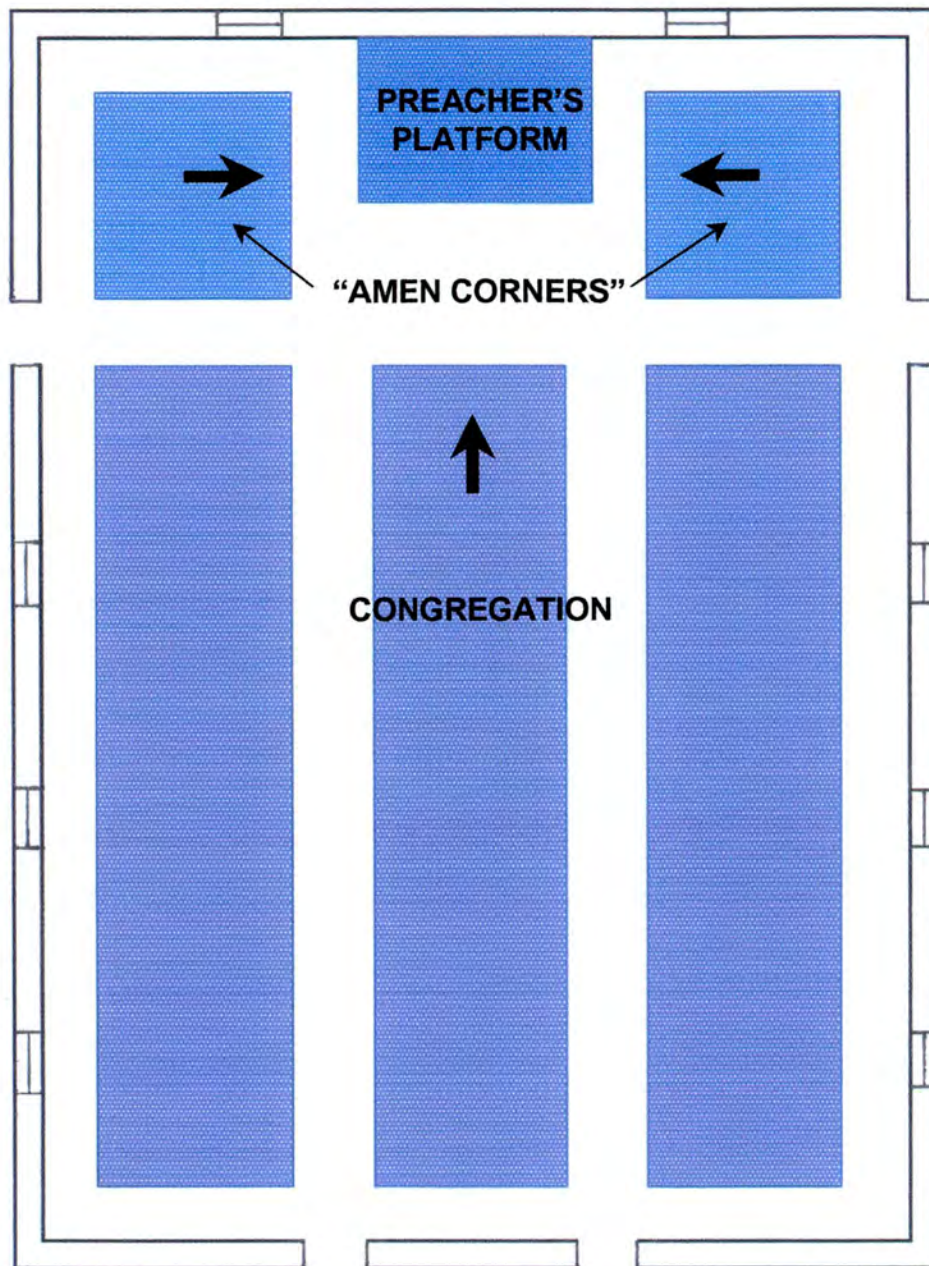


Figure 13. Traditional interior configuration of a Primitive Baptist meetinghouse. Window and door placement shown are also typical. Bold arrows indicate orientation of seating towards the preacher's platform - benches in "Amen corners" are set at right angles to those of the congregation.

Primitive Baptist beliefs received their most eloquent material expression in the meetinghouse interior. Just as the straightforward plan confirmed the liturgical importance of preaching, praying, and singing, the plain finish and fittings reflected a fundamental spiritual simplicity. Walls and ceilings were sheathed with flush, unpainted boards as at Bear Grass and Bethlehem or plastered as at the Skewarkey meetinghouse in Martin County. Exposed structural members like posts and braces remained undisguised and undecorated. A key fixture was the elder's raised platform and lectern, sometimes provided with a soberly paneled front as at Skewarkey. The Hadnot Creek meetinghouse in Carteret County contains a less common, built-in feature, a three-sided gallery with a flat-paneled front rail. Moveable furnishings included the chair(s) and "book board" (when it lacked a fixed lectern) standing on the elder's platform and the table positioned in front of it, the latter employed for the ritual of foot-washing, as well as Communion. The slat-backed benches surviving at Bear Grass and Hadnot Creek, devoid of carving, upholstery, or accessories like kneeling boards, illustrate how unnecessary were ornament and amenity to Primitive Baptist worship. Indeed, a cross or other religious symbols, sculpture or painting, hymn and readings boards were irrelevant to those who considered their church complete and perfect, requiring nothing not already detailed or anticipated in the New Testament. Flags, banners, and other insignia were seen as representing "the inventions of men, and not warranted from the Word of God" and thus inadmissible, much like the missions and other church auxiliaries the Primitive Baptists opposed. Their central sacrament, adult baptism by total immersion, took place outside the meetinghouse entirely, in the natural and timeless environment of a nearby stream, river, or pond.¹⁶

The limited financial and technical resources of most churches, compounded by their predominantly rural locations, certainly influenced many of the architectural choices made by the Primitive Baptists, choices they shared with members of other denominations. But if practicalities dictated a basic, unpretentious building, Primitive Baptist doctrine embraced it, enhanced its austerity, and imbued it with an unequivocal purity. This theologically based aesthetic of simplicity shaped the meetinghouse interior, as discussed above, and was applied to the exterior of the building as well (Figure 14). The Bethlehem meetinghouse displays several of

1858); Jamesville (Martin County, 1866-1870, NR); Meadow (Green County, mid-19th c.); and Kehukee (Halifax County, original configuration ca. 1870, NR). The five with single entries are: Old Sparta (Edgecombe County, 1856); Lower Black Creek (Wilson County, ½ 19th c.); Hadnot Creek (Carteret County, early-mid-19th c.); Williams (Edgecombe County, mid-19th c.); and Chappell (Wayne County, ca. 1870). Additional information about the design and use of Primitive Baptist meetinghouses was consulted in James L. Peacock and Ruel W. Tyson, Jr., *Pilgrims of Paradox: Calvinism and Experience Among the Primitive Baptists of the Blue Ridge* (Washington, D.C.: 1989), pp. 16, 24, and 106-109 and the National Register nomination for the "Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church" (listed 1994) by Drucilla H. York, HPO, Raleigh.

¹⁶ The relationship of the Primitive Baptists' world view and their meetinghouses is the subject of Melanie Sovine Reid's "Neither Adding nor Taking Away": The Care and Keeping of Primitive Baptist Church Houses" in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* [vol. 1], Camille Wells, ed. (Annapolis: 1982), pp. 169-176. The quotation originates in the Kehukee Declaration of 1827, cited in Hassell, p. 737.



Figure 14. Traditional Primitive Baptist Church Exterior. The Red Banks meetinghouse in Pitt County, built in 1893, perfectly exemplifies the architectural conventions of the denomination. The one-story, frame structure displays characteristic features like the paired entry, boxed cornice with returns, and simplicity of ornament and finish. From Scott Power, *The Historic Architecture of Pitt County*, North Carolina (1991), p. 361.

the most typical design elements. Large, rectangular, plainly glazed and framed double-hung-sash windows are evenly placed in each long wall and the short wall opposite the main entry. The cornice is boxed with returns at both gable ends, and doors are simply paneled. As illustrated by other surviving examples, the number of windows in each elevation varied, and some buildings were provided with open cornices or board-and-batten doors. These and other additional features – like the gable vents at Bear Grass and the Jamesville meetinghouse (also in Martin County), the windows above the main doorways at Skewarkey and Hadnot Creek (which lit their galleries), and the corner boards at all but the latter – were primarily functional and crafted with characteristic restraint. Even the extension of the cornice returns across the front of the Williams meetinghouse, an unusually overt allusion to a classical temple pediment, was achieved without ostentation and in harmony with the overall modesty of the building.

The Primitive Baptists in North Carolina sustained their collective growth and vitality into the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1851 their eleven associations contained 186 churches and 6,150 members, and by 1885 the numbers had increased to 253 churches with 9,680 members constituting nineteen associations. With forty-one churches and nearly 2,000 members in the latter year, Kehukee continued as the largest of the associations. The average number of members for a Kehukee church was then forty-five. Only five of the forty-one claimed a membership exceeding one hundred, and the Falls of the Tar church headed the list at 183. By the early 1870s the Falls of the Tar had been joined in Nash County by two new Primitive Baptist congregations (Sappony and Sandy Grove), as well as eighteen other churches (largely Methodist and Missionary Baptist). Now at the northwestern edge of the recently incorporated town of Rocky Mount, the meetinghouse still occupied its elevated, one-acre site, surrounded by mostly small farms (Figure 15). Like many Primitive Baptist properties it probably included well-kept grounds perhaps supplied with benches (had Barnum's "grove" endured?) and some kind of shelter for the communal meals that traditionally followed services and meetings. Almost certainly the church had established a graveyard adjacent to the meetinghouse. The building, whether the 1764 structure or that planned and possibly realized around 1820, survived the burning of the nearby Rocky Mount Mills by the Union Army in 1863, but fell victim to arson some eleven years later.¹⁷

¹⁷ Membership statistics are derived from Hassell, pp. 848-879 and Johnson, p. 341. Nash County churches are listed in *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory* (Raleigh) for 1872 (p. 162) and 1877-1878 (p. 210). The nature of land holding in the vicinity of the Falls of the Tar meetinghouse is observed most readily in deeds for the church and adjacent properties, Nash County Register of Deeds, Nashville. For the emergence of Rocky Mount and the burning of Rocky Mount Mills see Ricks, p. 7A; Turner and Bridgers, p. 345; and David A. Norris, "'The Yankees Have Been Here!': The Story of Brigadier General Edward E. Potter's Raid on Greenville, Tarboro, and Rocky Mount, July 19-23, 1863," *North Carolina Historical Review* 73 (January 1966), pp. 1-27.

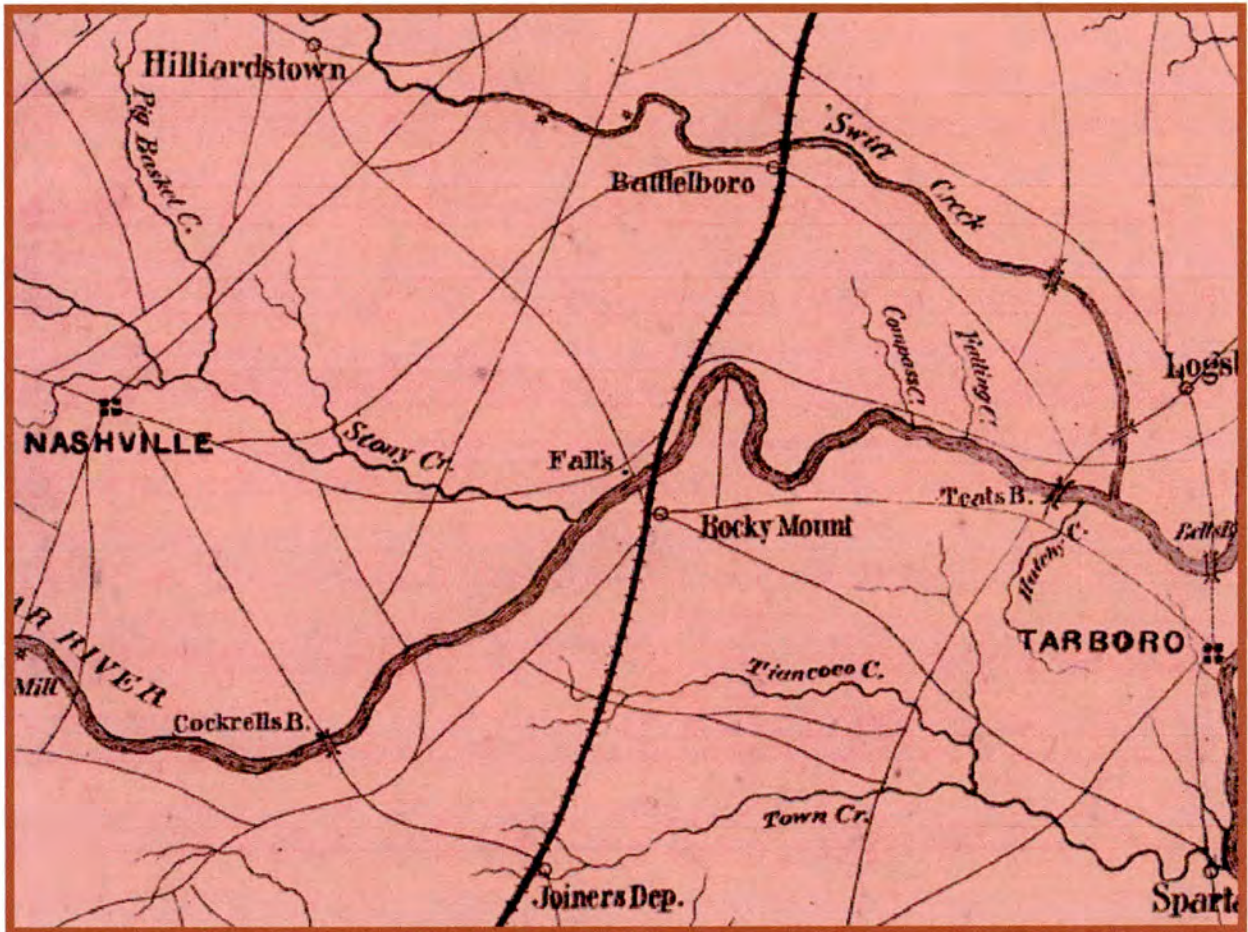


Figure 15. Rocky Mount vicinity in 1862. Detail of “Eastern Portion of the Military Department of North Carolina ...” 1:350,000 (Washington, D.C.: Engineer Bureau, War Department, May 1862). Not to scale. From Civil War Maps, American Memory, Library of Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov>.

On May 8, 1874 the *Tarboro Southerner* reported that “some fiend set fire to the Baptist church at the Falls of Tar River on the 25th ult. The Church was saved.” Within days the arsonist returned and burned the building to the ground. The crime may have originated in a bill prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages near churches passed by the North Carolina legislature in 1873; the Falls of the Tar meetinghouse was among the locations specifically listed in the new law. Presumably the arsonist either operated or aspired to open a business that included liquor sales close to the meetinghouse and decided to remove the obstacle to his trade. The two men arrested and charged, Charles Bloomer and David Wells, never appeared for their various trial dates. The State dismissed the case against Wells in 1875 and in 1876 chose to end its pursuit of Bloomer, who seems to have disappeared from the subsequent historical record. Hassell, writing in 1885 about the Falls of the Tar, noted that “an incendiary set fire to their house of worship some years ago and it was utterly consumed. But the zeal and public spirit of the church and her friends soon erected another in its stead, of a much larger capacity. It is thought to be larger by far than any other house of worship belonging to the churches of the Kehukee Association.”¹⁸

The general appearance of the new meetinghouse may be deduced from a number of sources. A Sanborn map indicates that it was a rectangular, one-story building of frame construction, approximately fifty-five feet wide and seventy feet long, provided with metal roofing, a heating stove, and oil lights (Figure 16). An entry in the Falls of the Tar church minutes reveals that it was painted. Like twenty-one of the thirty-two post-1870 meetinghouses in the sample gathered for this study, the circa-1874 Falls of the Tar appears to have conformed to the Primitive Baptist model established in the first half of the century (see Appendix-A). Just as Primitive Baptist doctrine and practice were grounded in scriptural precedent, the perpetuation of the unadorned, gable-end meetinghouse appears to have been inspired by the same belief in historical continuity. The building constituted a tangible connection with the past, a forthright and reassuring expression of allegiance to original spiritual principles. As the century progressed, some churches introduced technological innovations like stoves or matchboard wall sheathing to their buildings, both old and new. In their view, such amenities merely assisted worship without compromising its content or form. Scripture, they concluded, offered a certain latitude for such choices – “and there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they [the apostles] were gathered together” (*Acts* 20:8). Not every church had the means or the inclination to adopt any kind of change. The lights and stove at the Falls of the Tar suggest the relative wealth of its congregation, but, more importantly,

¹⁸ “Church Burns – Suspect Skips Bond,” *The Connector* 3 (Summer 1999), pp. 7, 15, and 20. This article reviews and cites the documentary evidence currently available. See also Ricks, ed., p. 168 and Hassell, p. 856. The increased size of the new building is consistent with Hassell’s report of 183 members at the Falls of the Tar (also p. 856). Clinton Andrews’ “Falls Tar River Primitive Baptist Church Celebrating 200th Birthday Thanksgiving” in the November 24, 1957 issue of the Rocky Mount *Evening Telegram* states that “fire destroyed the first church and a second, much larger church was constructed.”

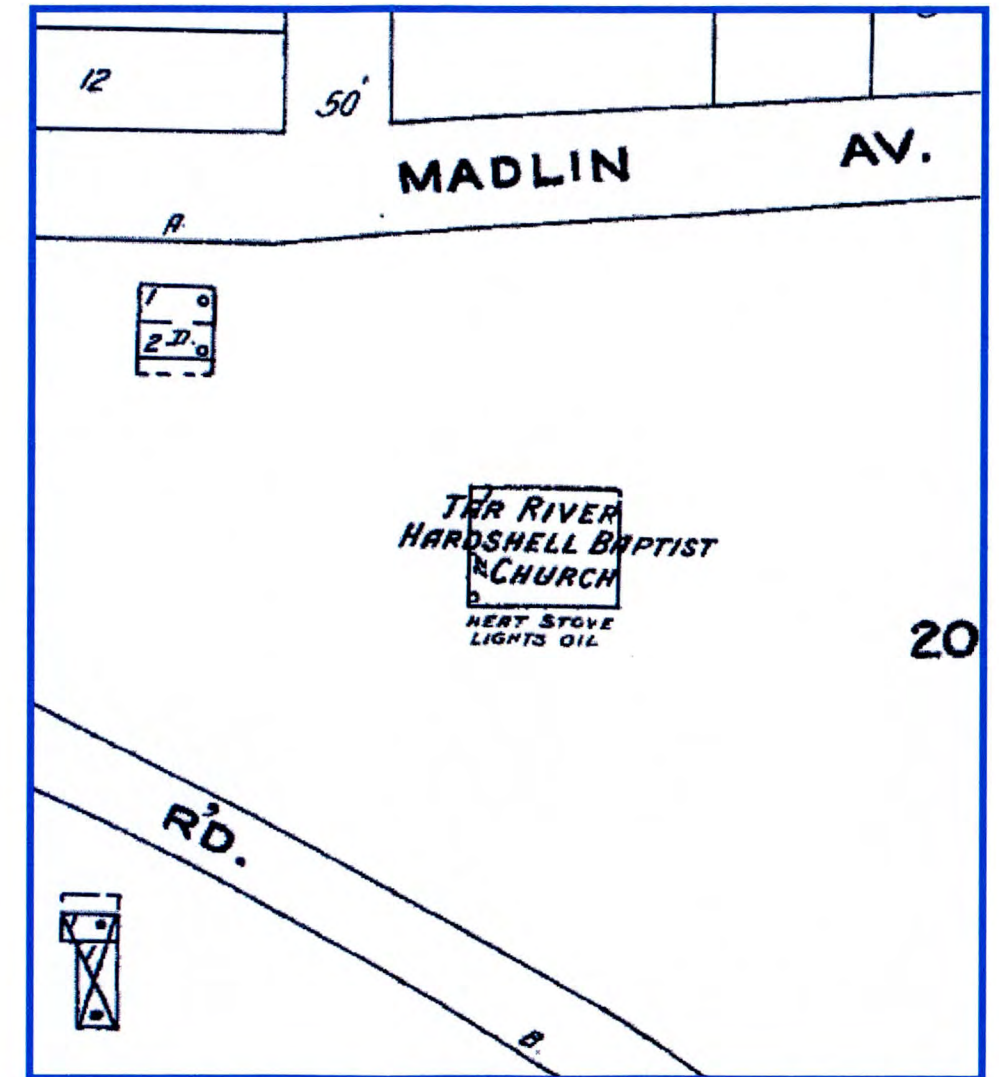
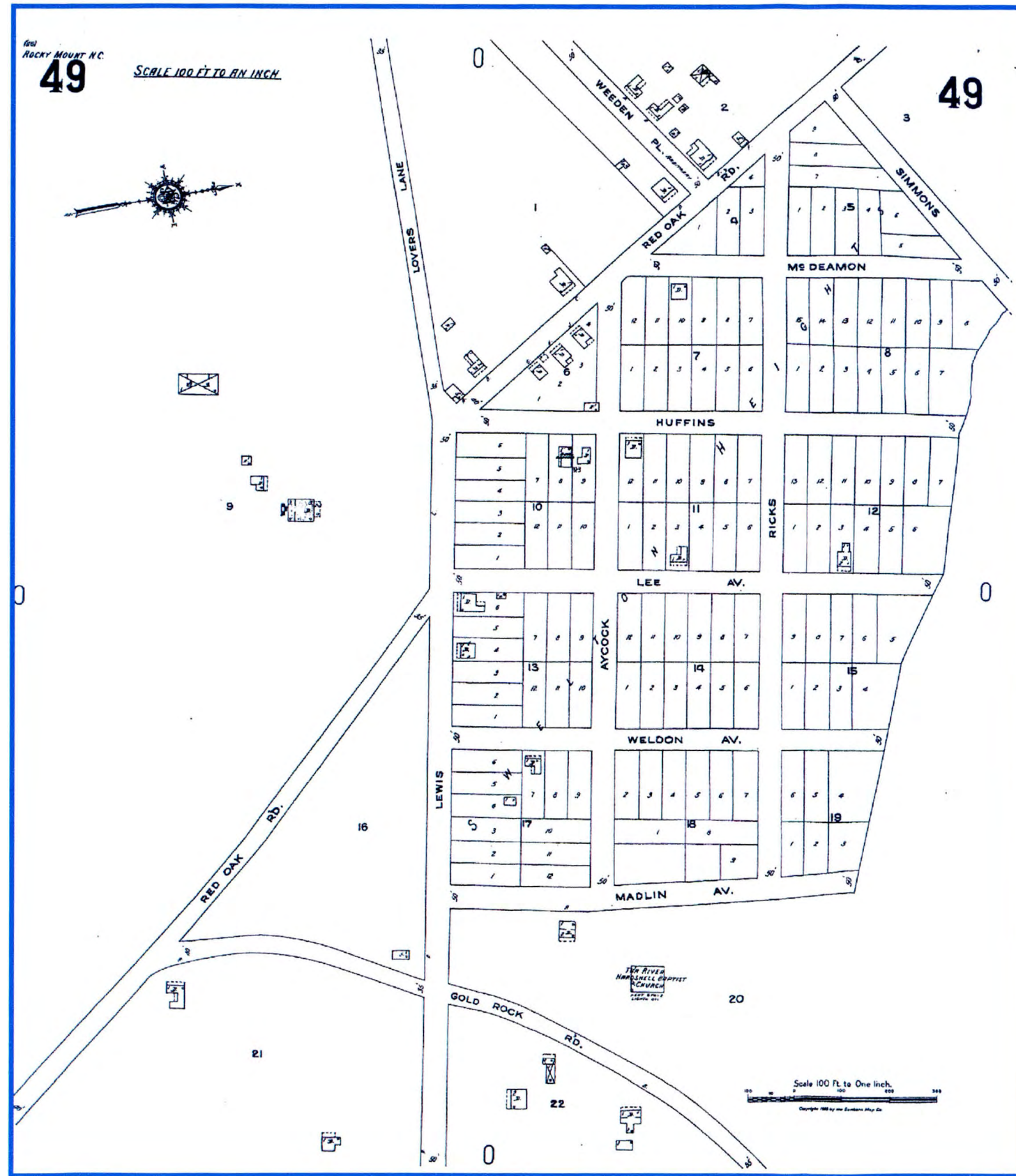


Figure 16. Falls of the Tar Circa-1874 Meetinghouse. From Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, North Carolina ...* (New York: 1923). Page 49 and detail (original 1"=100'), not to scale.

illustrate the independence enjoyed by every Primitive Baptist church in its own governance.¹⁹

According to a mid-twentieth-century account of the Falls of the Tar church, the circa-1874 meetinghouse “had a tall belfry and a fine bell.” If so, the church was a participant in the acceptance of more popular and varied architectural elements and details increasingly evident in Primitive Baptist building starting in the 1880s. Of the twenty-one traditionally designed examples included in the study sample, constructed between 1874 and 1924, ten incorporated features unknown or unused in earlier years (see Appendix-A). A somewhat greater freedom in window placement is illustrated by the Stump Sound (Onslow County, 1915) and Flat Swamp (Pitt County, 1924) meetinghouses, where one or two double-hung sash appear between the two main entrances. Newport River (Carteret County, ca. 1885) also displays a door-level window in its façade, as well as a triangular- or peak-headed gable vent. Peak-headed side windows light the aptly named God’s Holy Chosen Few in Number (Edgecombe County, ca. 1890), and the front doorways of the Yopps meetinghouse (Onslow County, ca. 1900) are similarly treated. Yopps is also supplied with a diamond-shaped gable vent, as is Rocky Swamp (Halifax County, ca. 1900), and another variation is seen in the round-headed vent of the Smithwick’s Creek meetinghouse (Martin County, 1897).

In addition to its façade window and peak-headed vent, Newport River possesses a feature demanding further investigation in the Primitive Baptist context. The small, rectangular bay or apse projecting from the center of the rear elevation is occupied inside the meetinghouse by the preacher’s platform and its furnishings. A similar arrangement is found at Spring Hope (Nash County, 1890s), while polygonal apses serve the meetinghouses at Healthy Plains (Wilson County, $\frac{3}{4}$ 19th c.), Mt. Zion (Halifax County, ca. 1893), and Rocky Swamp (Halifax County, ca. 1900). The presence of an apse does not appear to correlate with any particular design element, size of congregation, or geographic location. Always pierced with windows, the apse offered a solution to the practical problems of illuminating the platform and emphasizing it as the focus of worship.²⁰

Just as some churches incorporated an apse in their new meetinghouses, others added the feature to existing buildings. Tarboro (Edgecombe County, ca. 1830)

¹⁹ Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, North Carolina* (New York: 1923), p. 49. As discussed on page 32 of this report, the circa-1874 meetinghouse was demolished in 1926, and thus it is reasonable to assume that it is the structure represented on the 1923 Sanborn map. Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes (undated entry at front of the 1876-1921 volume, again presumed to refer to the circa-1874 meetinghouse). Sample of forty-six extant Primitive Baptist meetinghouses in eastern North Carolina, summarized in Appendix-A. Reid, pp. 170-171, and 173. Justification of modern amenities is presented in the “FAQ” section of the Primitive Baptist Webstation (www.pb.org). The individual judgement of each church is detailed in the Kehukee Association Articles of Faith (1777), cited in Hassell, p. 700.

²⁰ Ricks, ed., p. 168. “Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church,” National Register nomination, pp. 14-15. Sample of forty-six extant Primitive Baptist meetinghouses in eastern North Carolina, summarized in Appendix-A.

and Old Sparta (Edgecombe County, 1856) acquired apses around 1880 and 1900 respectively. Interestingly, the renovation of the Kehukee meetinghouse (Halifax County, ca. 1870) in 1901 did not include an apse, but an even more transforming central entry tower with a belfry and steeple. Tarboro received a similar addition, which, as at Kehukee, necessitated the closing of the original paired entries. Churches that chose to adopt towers, steeples, and belfries for their buildings created meetinghouses of unprecedented boldness. The three-stage central entry tower at Robersonville (Martin County, 1910-1912) and the ridge-set belfry at Singleton (Beaufort County, ca. 1895) are original to their buildings and represent the greater breadth of architectural expression attempted by some Primitive Baptist congregations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A most unusual instance of this aesthetic daring may be seen at Tyson's meetinghouse (Pitt County, $\frac{3}{4}$ 19th c.). Instead of the conventional flush or planar gable-end façade, the building displays a full-width, three-bay porch or, more precisely, an open pronaos. Formed by the extension of the gable roof beyond the façade and supported by four square columns, it is an unmistakable exercise in the Greek Revival style, yet achieved in the direct and unaffected manner typical of the denomination.²¹

From the 1830s the self-governing Primitive Baptist churches routinely differed on points of doctrine and practice. Even today three distinct factions may be recognized. Most conservative are the "absolute predestinarians," while the "moderates" subscribe to a pragmatic traditionalism. The "progressives" are most inclined to innovation, often adding instrumental music or Sunday schools to their worship programs. Such interpretive variation clearly influenced architectural undertaking. When requisite funds, expertise, and materials coincided with certain design objectives, the result might be quite extraordinary indeed, as meetinghouses like Tyson's and Singleton indicate. Several survey examples dating to the early decades of the twentieth century depart even more dramatically from the traditional form. Fremont (Wayne County, ca. 1900) is a one-story, framed structure with a gable roof, but its imposing corner entry tower and gothic-arched windows – complete with tracery, stained glass, and hood moldings – effectively camouflage any resemblance to more conventional buildings like its contemporaries Rocky Swamp and Yopps. In 1920 the Wilson Primitive Baptist Church opted for a fully realized essay in the Gothic Revival style. The stepped-gable façade, multiple entry porches, traceried lancet windows set with stained glass, and rose window of the brick- and stone-trimmed

²¹ Sample summarized in Appendix-A. Though the separate use of doorways by men and women seems to have declined generally, many of the later meetinghouses retained the arrangement. Of the twenty-one post-1870 examples of traditional appearance in the study sample, twelve were built with paired main entrances, including Flat Swamp in Pitt County, dating as late as 1924. The façade treatment at Tyson's may have been an early addition to the building, rather than an original feature; see Scott Power, *The Historic Architecture of Pitt County, North Carolina* (Pitt County: 1991), p. 148.

structure clearly express its ecclesiastical purpose, but offer no reliable clues to its denominational identity.²²

By the early twentieth century steadily declining membership characterized many Primitive Baptist churches and their associations. The Kehukee Association alone lost approximately 500 members between 1885 and 1905. Analyzing the undoubtedly multifaceted cause of this trend, which continues to this day, is beyond the scope of this report. It may be observed, however, that its architectural effects ranged from both a dogged allegiance to traditional design and the adoption of contemporary, sometimes academic, elements and forms to neglect and even abandonment of standing structures. The traditionalists no less than the modernists strove to satisfy existing (and perhaps attract new) members through the appeal of their buildings. The decision of the Falls of the Tar church to replace its circa-1874 meetinghouse may have originated, at least in part, in just such a concern. An undated entry in the 1876-1921 volume of church minutes records the collection of money "for the purpose of paying for repairs much needed and for painting Primitive Baptist Church at the Falls of Tar River." By August of 1926 the church "agreed to appoint three deacons to consider building a new meeting house or repair the old one," and just a month later resolved "to make a sketch of the proposed new building" and raise funds for its construction. In November of the same year a building committee prepared to let the contract. At a February 1927 meeting, the finance committee reported that \$8,049.77 had been pledged and \$4494.06 collected to pay for the work, and it was "moved and carried that the church become responsible for the borrowing of the balance of the money necessary to complete the church." Within weeks the congregation of the Falls of the Tar successfully completed this task and held the first services in their new meetinghouse, "a handsome brick structure and modern in every respect ..." (Figure 17).²³

The Falls of the Tar church chose to demolish the circa-1874 meetinghouse and construct the new building on its site. Acquisition of an additional half-acre from Rocky Mount Mills (to the south), adjacent development of Hunter's Hill Road Place subdivision (to the west and southwest), and improvement of the closest major road (to the east) may have contributed to a change in orientation – the earlier meetinghouse faced south, while the new one faced east (Figure 18). The

²² Peacock and Tyson, p. 266. The often contentious debate within associations and churches is addressed by Elder William L. Everett of the Falls of the Tar in his "Reflections on the Kehukee Association," posted on Primitive Baptist Online (www.primitivebaptist.org). Thanks to Penne Sandbeck for sharing this reference with the author. Sample summarized in Appendix-A.

²³ "Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church," National Register nomination, p. 16. In this nomination Dru York observes that the location of Primitive Baptist churches in towns corresponded with increasing architectural diversity and that the movement of preachers among the churches contributed to the introduction of new design concepts (pp. 14-15). She also suggests that the decline in membership inspired a renewed dedication to spiritual concerns and a related disinterest in its material expression in the traditional manner (pp. 16-17). Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes (see also n. 19). The entries for December 1926 and January 1927 are unreadable in the microfilm. "First Services in New Church," *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 28 March 1927, p. 5, col. 3.



Figure 17. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church.
East (main) and south elevations of the 1928 meetinghouse.
Photographed August 7, 2003

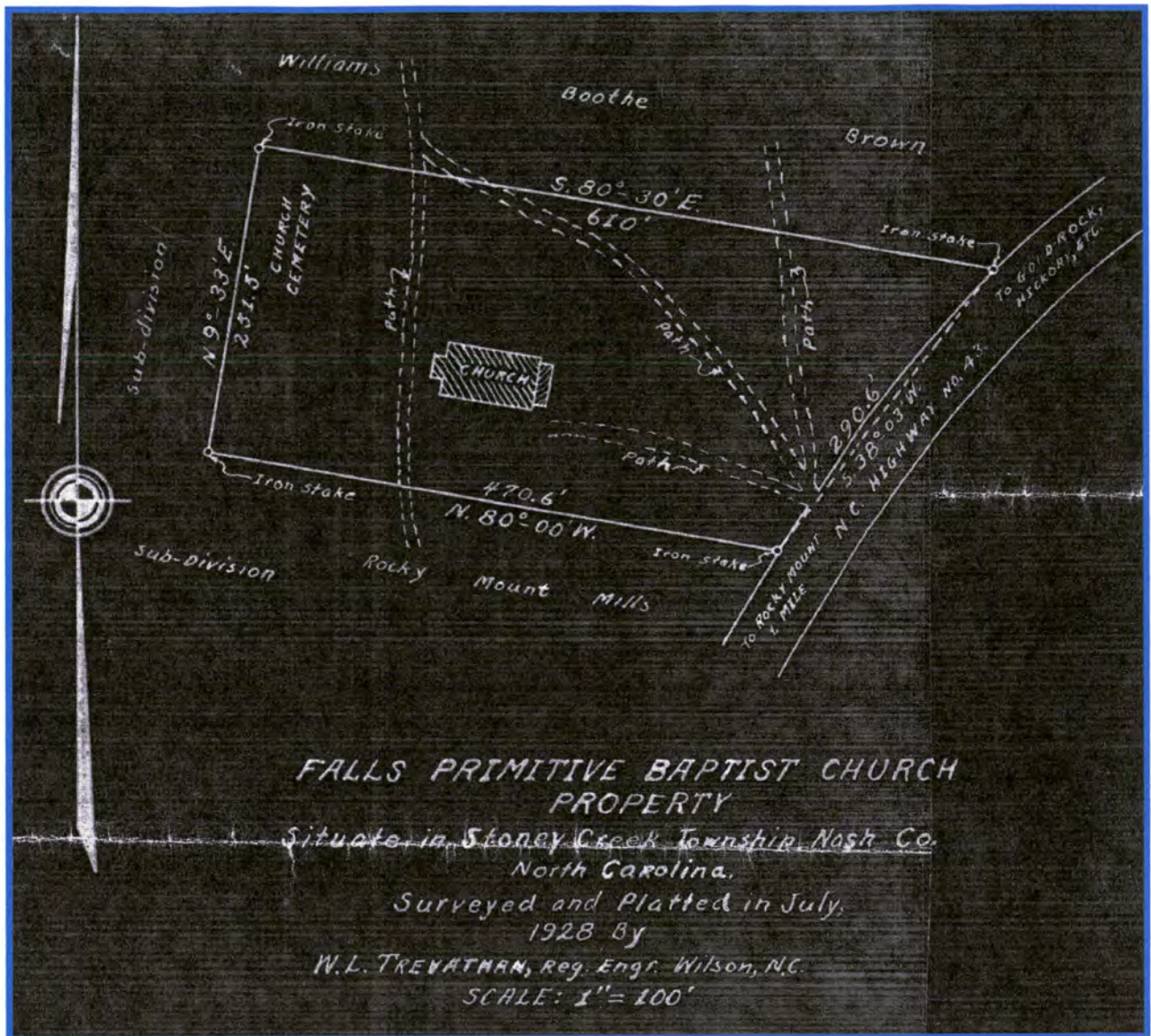


Figure 18. Plat accompanying transfer of one-half acre by Rocky Mount Mills to the “Trustees of the Falls Baptist Church,” on January 25, 1889 (recorded August 3, 1928), Nash County Deed Book 330 (pp. 383-384). Image is not to original scale.

1927 building stands today, essentially the same brick-veneered frame structure with metal roofing shown in the 1949 Sanborn map of Rocky Mount (Figure 19). The church, as it was called with increasing frequency, is slightly larger than its predecessor, as well as more formally composed. Its classically inspired features reflect the congregation's appreciation of both church and local history. William L. Everett, an elder associated with the Falls of Tar, learned from older members that the design of the new building was influenced by Stonewall, a Federal-style house less than a mile to the west, built for the wealthy planter and businessman Bennett Bunn around 1830 (Figure 20). Interestingly, it is the tetrastyle portico added to Stonewall around 1916 that is most directly quoted at the Falls of the Tar. Nevertheless, the church clearly considered Stonewall a model of genuine antiquity, even if not quite as venerable as its first meetinghouse, and derived from it a sense of connection to an earlier time. In 1927 the Rocky Mount *Evening Telegram* noted that the circa-1874 meetinghouse was "probably the oldest church in this section [and] regarded as one of the landmarks of the community." The members of the Falls of the Tar consciously shaped their new church into an elegant and evocative successor.²⁴

The historical sensibility of the Falls of the Tar congregation is perhaps most conspicuous in the small marble plaque set into the brickwork to the right of the main doorway in the new church (Figure 21). Inscribed simply "Organized 1757-1927," it resembles signage still often seen on or near Primitive Baptist meetinghouses bearing similarly terse, but no less valued statements. To the other side of the entry another marble panel records the name of the Rocky Mount contractor, "J. P. Daughtridge & Bros.," hired to build the church (Figure 21).²⁵ The engagement of professional builders, who possibly assisted with

²⁴ Andrews dates the demolition to 1926. The church met in the nearby Benvenue School until the new building was completed. Nash County Deed Book 330, pp. 383-384 (January 25, 1889, recorded August 3, 1928). Sanborn Map Company, 1923 and 1949. The gradual equation of "church" with the building is evident in the Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes. William L. Everett, interview with author, September 2003. T. E. Ricks of the Nash County Historical Association (the Association owns Stonewall) also believes the house inspired the design of the new church (interview with author, September 2003). Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: 1996), pp. 336-337 and National Register Files (NS 7), HPO, Raleigh. "First Services in New Church," *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 28 March 1927, p. 5, col. 3.

²⁵ The Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes (September 1926) record the wish of the church to "get [the sketch] referred [?] elsewhere to help us." The Rocky Mount city directory for 1925 lists the building contractor J. Pleasant Daughtridge among both many carpenters and one other construction company of the same name. Presumably members of the same family, various Daughtridges pursued the building trades in Nashville and Rocky Mount as early as the 1880s, and the current telephone book for the area includes "David Daughtridge, Builder Inc." The activities of these numerous and locally well-represented builders deserve closer study. *Rocky Mount, N.C. Directory* (Rocky Mount and Richmond, Va.: 1908-1909, 1912-1913, 1914-1915, 1925); *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory* (Raleigh: 1884, 1890); *Chataigne's North Carolina State Directory and Gazetteer* (Raleigh: 1883-1884); *The North Carolina Yearbook and Business Directory* (Raleigh: 1902, 1905-1910, 1912, 1916); Kate Mearns, *Central City Historic Buildings Inventory – Rocky Mount, North Carolina* (Rocky Mount: 1979), Appendix.

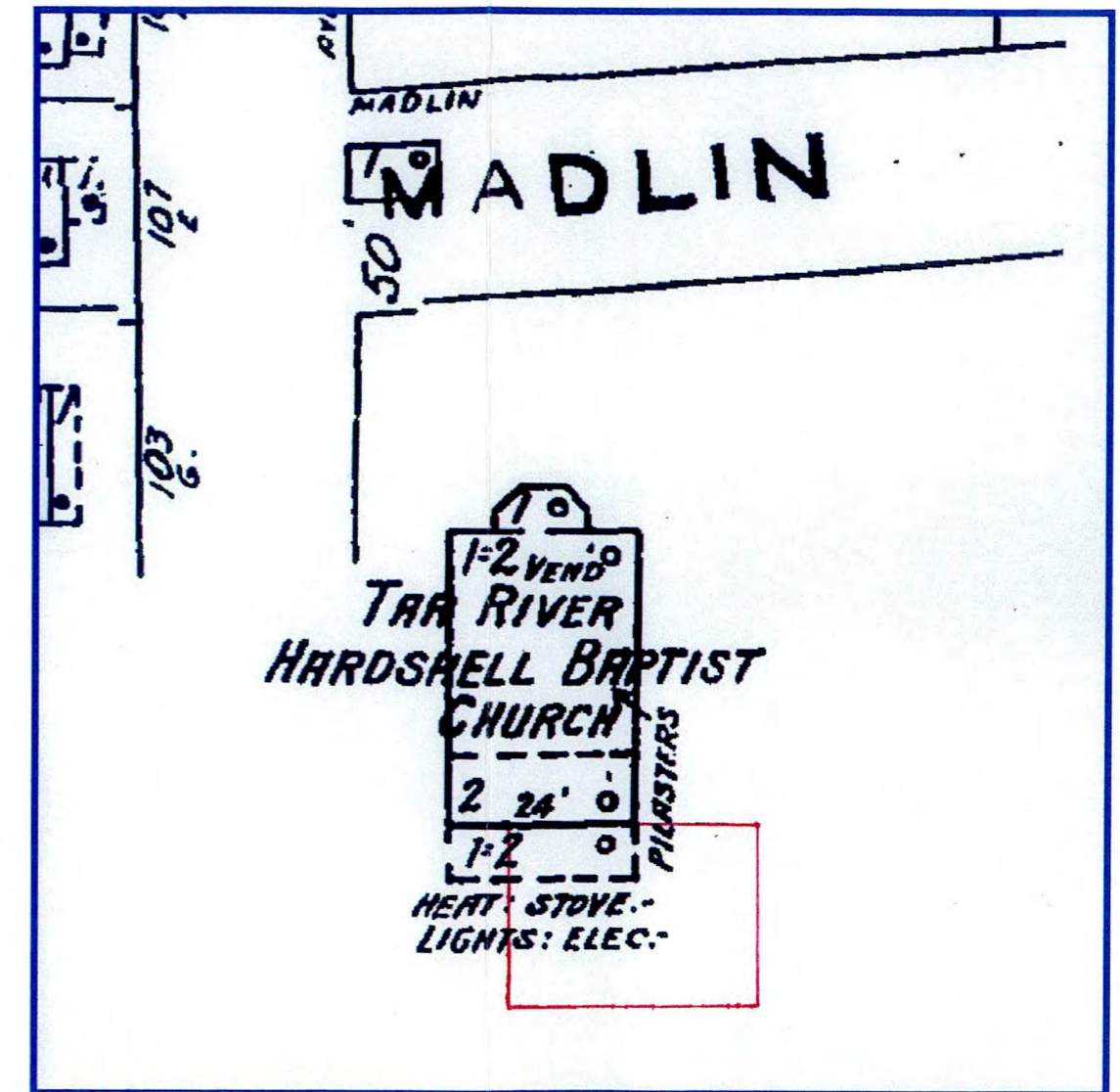
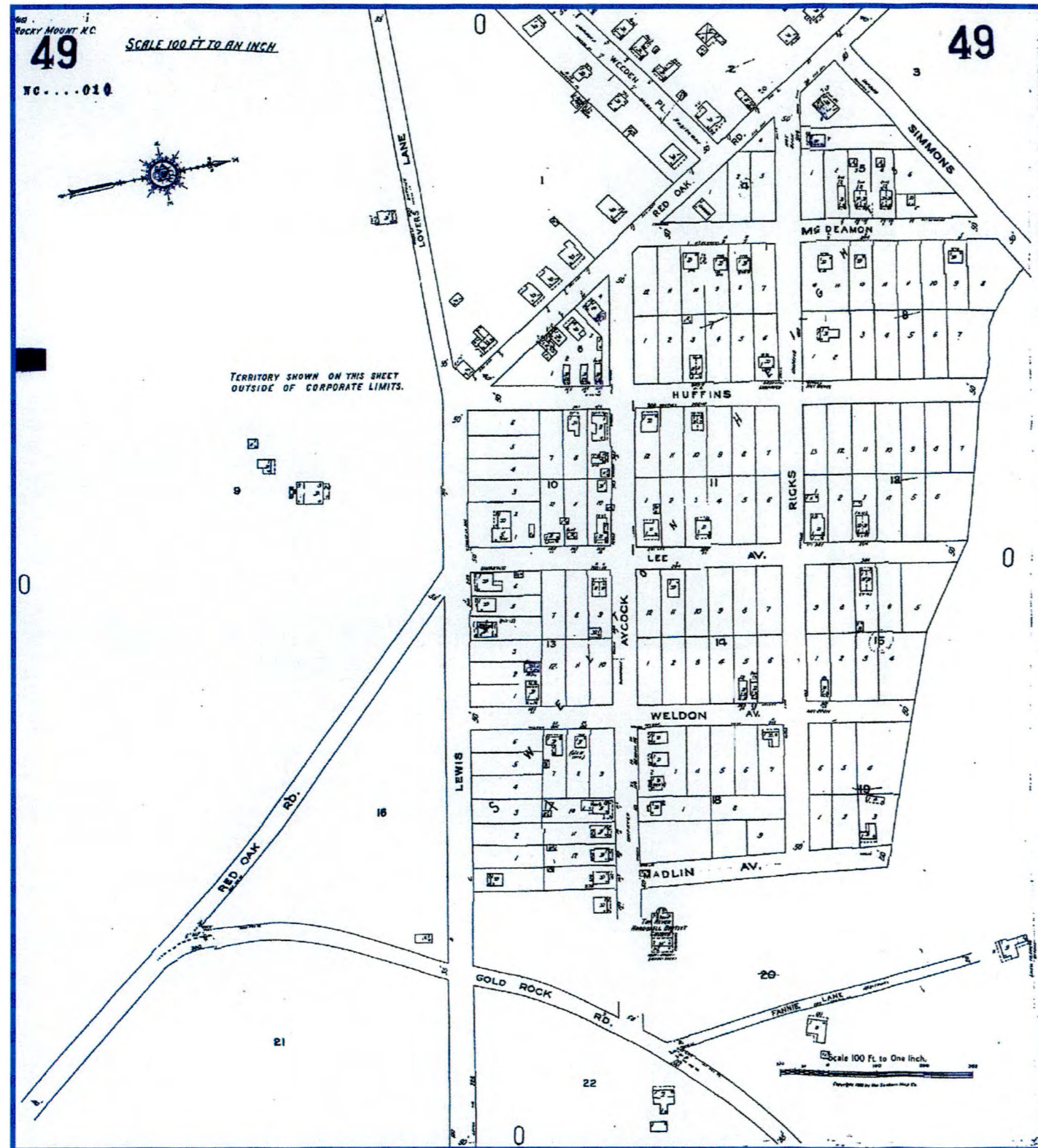


Figure 19. Falls of the Tar 1928 Meetinghouse. From Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, North Carolina ...* (New York: 1923, rev. 1949). Page 49 and detail (original 1"=100'), not to scale. Footprint of circa-1874 meetinghouse added in redline.



Figure 20. Stonewall (the Lewis House). North (main) and east elevations. The house is represented in the HPO survey files as site NS 7 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970. Photographed August 7, 2003.

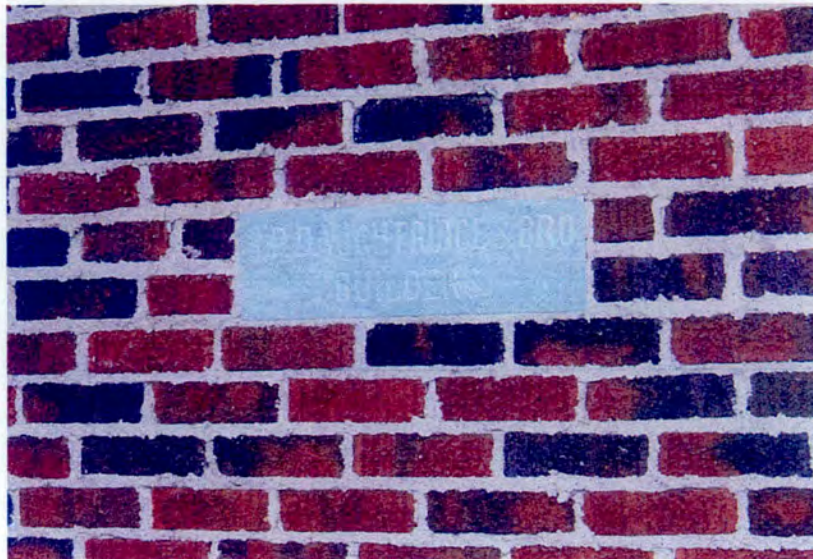


Figure 21. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Inscribed panels to left (above) and right (below) of main entry. Photographed August 7, 2003.



design as well as structural issues, places the 1928 meetinghouse among the most ambitious church projects undertaken in Nash County during the early twentieth century. Like the gothic-revival Gibson Memorial United Methodist Church (Spring Hope, 1910) and neo-classical-revival First Baptist Church (Rocky Mount, 1907-1912), the new Falls of the Tar incorporated elements of a nationally popular architectural style and figured as one of only nine brick buildings (out of fifty-three) in a 1929 church survey of the county.²⁶ Of the forty-six Primitive Baptist meetinghouses in the study sample only three – Wilson, Lower Black Creek (Wilson County, 2/2 19th c.), and Falls of the Tar – employed brick. Lower Black Creek closely resembles Falls of the Tar in its round-headed windows, pedimented portico, and overall neo-classical appearance. Despite their unusual materials and academic elements, however, both buildings are essentially traditional, arguably less radical in conception than certainly Wilson or Fremont, and even Singleton and Kehukee. Within Nash County the Falls of the Tar, for all its comparative sophistication, equates less precisely with Hopeland (1881) and its belfry, bracketed gable hoods, and lancet transoms, than with the simple, gable-roofed buildings at Mill Branch (4/4 19th c.) and Spring Hope (1890s).²⁷ By effectively blending a time-honored form and popular stylistic features the creators of the 1928 church reconciled the aesthetic of simplicity with contemporary requirements and achieved an uncommon expression of the historical continuity fundamental to the Primitive Baptist faith.

In 1957 the seventy members of the Falls of the Tar celebrated the 200th anniversary of the establishment of their church. The *Evening Telegram* published an article recounting the history of “the oldest known church in Rocky Mount.” Accompanying the article is a photograph of the present meetinghouse revealing relatively little change to the building in subsequent years. Window sash is now white instead of (presumably) black, and modillion blocks have vanished from the cornices of both portico and main structure. The doorways at the western ends of the side elevations are newer features, perhaps added at the same time as the baptismal tank beneath the existing apse. Around 1990 Elder William L. Everett and the congregation carried out extensive repairs, including the installation of metal replacements for decayed wooden columns (complete with Ionic capitals like the originals), cornice frieze, and soffits; plexiglass window panels; and new pews. In the years since 1957 the church has acquired a “fellowship hall” and storage building, as well as its highway historical marker. Signage just southeast of the church and also near the Hunter Hill Road entrance proclaims a recent return to the historical identity of “Particular Baptist” (see

²⁶ Richard L. Mattson, *The History and Architecture of Nash County, North Carolina* (Nashville, N.C.: 1987), pp. 121 and 302. Jesse Marvin Ormond, *The Country Church in North Carolina* (Durham, N.C.: 1931), pp. 223-224. Of fifty-three churches recorded in Nash County in 1929, thirty belonged to Missionary Baptist and sixteen to Methodist congregations; the remaining seven were divided among Methodist Protestant, Free Will Baptist, Episcopal, Universalist, and Primitive Baptist congregations. *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory* for 1896 identifies six Primitive Baptist churches in Nash County – Sappony, Sandy Grove, Castalia, Whitaker's or Hopeland, Mill Branch, and Falls of Tar River (the only one located in Rocky Mount).

²⁷ Sample summarized in Appendix-A.

p. 16). The Falls of the Tar is an active church to this day, one of only about six such viable congregations in the eastern section of the state. Its meetinghouse remains one of the most assured and monumental examples of Primitive Baptist architecture in North Carolina.²⁸

Evaluation: For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The building qualifies for eligibility under Criterion C as significant both locally and regionally in the areas of architecture and religion. It also meets the special requirements stipulated for religious properties in Criteria Consideration A by deriving its primary significance from architectural distinction.²⁹

The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is **not eligible** for the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A (event)**. *To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American pre-history or history or a pattern of events or historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or the nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.*³⁰ The Falls of the Tar property is the *site* of several events significant in both Primitive Baptist and local social history. Since at least 1764 it has been occupied by the fourth oldest Primitive Baptist church organization in North Carolina, a founding and influential member of the equally venerable Kehukee Association. The Falls of the Tar hosted the momentous Kehukee meetings of 1775 and 1811, which formulated policies affecting the denomination throughout the colony and state. It remained a vital presence into the twentieth century, viewed locally as "largely the pioneer in a religious way, both at Rocky Mount and in the country around it. The Falls Church ... links its history with that of the birth

²⁸ Andrews, "Falls Tar River ..." Mr. Everett has stored the decayed modillion blocks in the attic of the church and placed his map of the graveyard in the "pulpit area." He recalls finding shards of colored window glass when excavating around the building. He has attempted to locate the original construction drawings, but believes they no longer exist. Mr. Everett explained that African-American members of the congregation had been buried in an area just north of the church, specifically behind the circa-1874 meetinghouse. Supposedly all the remains were moved during the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, but the 1990s repair campaign discovered an unmarked and occupied grave and promptly refilled it. Mr. Everett stated that the Falls of the Tar church generally used the river for baptisms and later added the tank beneath the floor of the apse. He observed that not only has the church recently changed its name, it has introduced instrumental music to its worship service. William L. Everett, interview with author, September 2003. Shirlyan Beacham Phelps, "A Dying Breed ...," *The State* 60 (November 1992), p. 20.

²⁹ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1998), pp. 26-28 (Criteria Consideration A).

³⁰ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, p. 12. All subsequent definitions of the criteria are drawn from this source.

of Rocky Mount itself.”³¹ Despite its historical associations the *site* is not eligible under Criterion A as it has lost its defining feature, the building in and near which the most notable eighteenth- and nineteenth-century events occurred.³² Its sustained use as a religious property alone also does not qualify either the *site* or the current *building* as eligible under the provisions of Criteria Consideration A.

The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is **not eligible** for the National Register under **Criterion B (person)**. *For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e. individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.* Several individuals associated with the Falls of the Tar church achieved importance in various local and national contexts. To name but two, Joshua Lawrence's preaching and writing greatly influenced Primitive Baptist theology, and P. T. Barnum's path to fame certainly crossed the meetinghouse grounds. Nevertheless, the property does not physically reflect the presence of such persons, as the buildings known to them no longer exist, and in most cases the individuals are better represented by other surviving sites and buildings.

The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is **eligible** for the National Register under **Criterion C (design/construction)**. *For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.* A recent study of the Primitive Baptist faith identifies “the immediate sensory forms through which the Primitive Baptist experience is communicated: music, architecture, and the verbal aspects of preaching.”³³ In the Falls of the Tar church the Primitive Baptist aesthetic of simplicity and a congregation's wish for a modern, yet historically evocative building were synthesized with great success. Unusual in its use of brick veneer and classically derived elements like its stately entrance portico, the building otherwise conforms to Primitive Baptist tradition in form and plan. Its placement and associated landscape follows typical denominational patterns. Most significantly, the Falls of the Tar exemplifies the

³¹ *Rocky Mount – One of the Best, Most Progressive and Fastest Growing Cities in N. Carolina* (Rocky Mount: ca. 1907), pp. 17-18.

³² “A site need not be marked by physical remains if it is the location of a prehistoric or historic event or pattern of events and if no buildings, structures, or objects marked it at the time of the events.” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, p. 5.

³³ Peacock and Tyson, p. 127.

newfound architectural freedom embraced by certain North Carolina Primitive Baptist churches in the late nineteenth and, especially, early twentieth centuries.

The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church is **not eligible** for the National Register under **Criterion D (potential to yield information)**. *For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history or pre-history, and 2) the information must be considered important.* The Falls of the Tar church is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to either the history and practices of the Primitive Baptists or building design and technology.

The Falls of the Tar church retains the elements of location, setting, and design that constitute its historical identity. Standing on its original site, a site shared by at least one of its predecessors, the building maintains a time-honored relationship to the surrounding landscape, which itself preserves the vegetation and open space well established on the property. Recent repairs have removed some historic fabric – most noticeably the modillion blocks of the main and portico cornices – but the building still expresses its original style and configuration through its massing, window and door placement, materials, and ornamentation. The majority of features that have defined the building from its inception are present and clearly convey its historical (and current) purpose and character. The Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church thus possesses sufficient integrity to be judged a notable representative of Primitive Baptist architecture in North Carolina.

Boundary: The National Register boundary for the Falls of the Tar Particular Baptist Church is determined by the present-day parcels containing the historic features that directly contribute to its significance. The use of existing legal boundaries is appropriate because they are consistent with the historical partition and ownership of the property, as well as its remaining integrity. The boundary is more precisely defined in Figure 22. The legal boundaries are recorded as current tax parcel numbers 3362 (1328 Benvenue Road (property line follows existing right-of-way), 1.87 acres) on which the church is located and 1305 (off Birch Street, .32 acres) and 1223 (1228 Birch Street, .15 acres) including part of the graveyard and sections of the auxiliary buildings. Ownership map number 3850.06, dated January 30, 2003, is held at the Nash County Office of the Tax Assessor. The tax map also shows the “unopened” Modlin Avenue behind the church and where the fellowship hall now stands. Presumably planned as part of the adjacent Hunter’s Hill Road Place subdivision (see *Madlin Avenue* on the Sanborn maps, Figures 16 and 19), the land (about .2 acres) is effectively incorporated into the church property. Similarly the northern end of the unpaved approach to the church from Hunter Hill Road (about .17 acres reckoned from edge of pavement), while not assigned to any owner in the tax records, has become integral to the site. The area proposed as eligible for the National Register thus contains a total of approximately 2.7 acres.

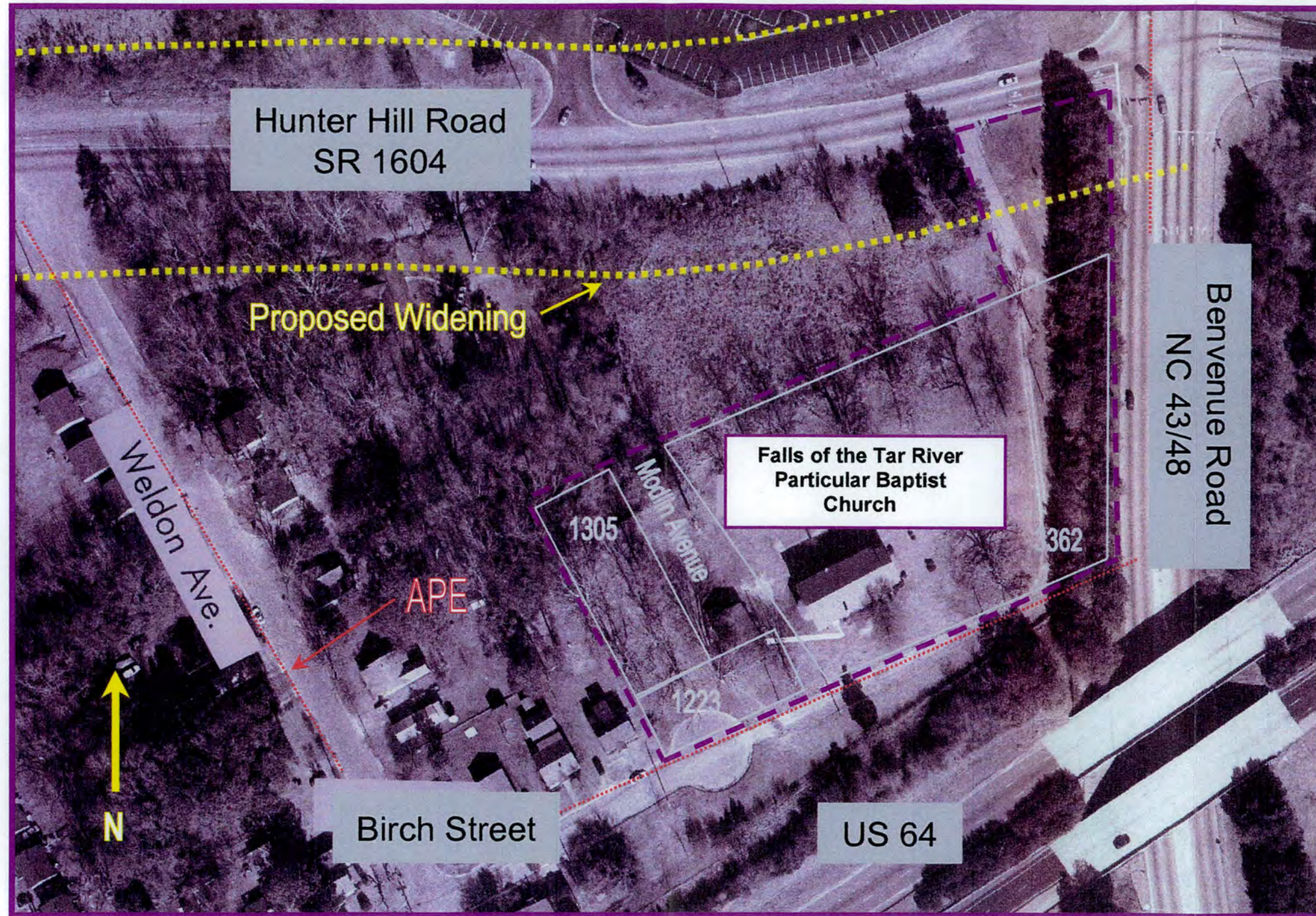


Figure 22. Falls of the Tar River Particular Baptist Church. Proposed National Register boundaries for the church conform to those indicated on the current Nash County tax map (2003) and include the unopened Modlin (Madlin) Avenue and the approach path from SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road), which by use over time are incorporated into the property. Tax parcels are delineated in grayline, NR boundary in purpleline. NCDOT aerial, 2002 - not to scale.

**PROPERTIES EVALUATED
AND
DETERMINED NOT ELIGIBLE
FOR THE
NATIONAL REGISTER
OF
HISTORIC PLACES**



Figure 23. Property 2 - House. The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.

Photographed September 11, 2002



Figure 24. Property 3 - House (at right; Property 4 at left). The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.



Figure 25. Property 4 - House (at left; Property 3 at right). The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.



Figure 26. Property 5 - House. The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.



Figure 27. Property 6 - House. The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.



Figure 28. Property 7 - House. The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002



Figure 29. Property 8 - Bridge # 181. The property has been determined not eligible for the National Register because it is neither historically nor architecturally significant. Photographed September 11, 2002.

PRINCIPAL SOURCES CONSULTED

- Andrews, Clinton. "Falls Tar River Primitive Baptist Church Celebrating 200th Birthday Thanksgiving." *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 24 November 1957.
- "Baptist Beginnings - 'The Falls of the Tar'." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 2 (Summer 1998): 5, 18.
- Barnum, P. T. *The Life of P. T. Barnum - Written by Himself*. New York: Redfield, 1855.
- Bishir, Catherine W. *North Carolina Architecture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
- Bishir, Catherine W. and Michael T. Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Branson's North Carolina Business Directory*. Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1866-1867, 1867-1868, 1869, 1872, 1877-1878, 1884, 1890, 1896.
- Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina. Wilson Library. North Carolina Collection.
- Chataigne's North Carolina State Directory and Gazetteer*. Raleigh: J. H. Chataigne, 1883-1884.
- "Church Burns - Suspect Skips Bond." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 3 (Summer 1999): 7, 15, 20.
- "Church Sets Standards of Morality - Falls of the Tar River Primitive Baptist Church." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 2 (Fall 1998): 10, 19.
- Everett, William L. Interview with author. September, 2003.
- Everett, William L. "Reflections on the Kehukee Association." Primitive Baptist Online (www.primitivebaptist.org).

- "Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church [lists of members 1757-1777; 1778-1799; 1800-1805; 1806-1836; 1837-1875]." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 2 (Summer 1998): 5; 2 (Fall 1998): 18; 3 (Winter 1999): 5; 3 (Spring 1999): 6; and 3 (Summer 1999): 6.
- Falls of the Tar Primitive Baptist Church Minutes and Roll, 1757-1974. 7 vols. Microfilm R.069.01014. North Carolina State Library and Archives, Raleigh.
- "First Service in New Church." *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 28 March 1927, p. 5, col. 3.
- Hassell, Cushing Biggs. *History of the Church of God, from the Creation to A.D. 1885; Including Especially the History of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association*. Middletown, NY: Gilbert Beebe's Sons Publishers, 1886.
- Johnson, Guion Griffis. *Ante-Bellum North Carolina - A Social History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937.
- Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. *The History of a Southern State North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.
- Library of Congress. American Memory. <http://memory.loc.gov>.
- Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. "North Carolina Department of Transportation Historic Bridge Inventory - Phase I Report." Raleigh: for the North Carolina Department of Transportation, 2001.
- Lounsbury, Carl R. *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Mattson, Richard L. *The History and Architecture of Nash County, North Carolina*. Nashville, N.C.: Nash County Planning Department, 1987.
- Mearns, Kate. *Central City Historic Buildings Inventory - Rocky Mount, North Carolina*. Rocky Mount: Central City Revitalization Corporation, 1979.
- Moore, John W. "Early Baptist Laymen in North Carolina." Scrapbook of newspaper columns from the *Biblical Recorder*, n.d. North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

- Moore, John W. "Sketches of Pioneer Baptist Churches in North Carolina." Scrapbook of newspaper columns [from the *Biblical Recorder*], n.d. North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Morgan, David T. "The Great Awakening in North Carolina, 1740-1775: the Baptist Phase." *North Carolina Historical Review* 45 (1968): 264-283.
- Nashville, N.C. Nash County Assessor's Office. Real Property Tax Records.
- Nashville, N.C. Nash County Register of Deeds. Nash County Land Records.
- Newsome, A. R. "Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810-1811." *North Carolina Historical Review* 6 (January 1929): 67-99.
- Norris, David A. "'The Yankees Have Been Here!': The Story of Brigadier General Edward E. Potter's Raid on Greenville, Tarboro, and Rocky Mount, July 19-23, 1863." *North Carolina Historical Review* 73 (January 1966): 1-27.
- The North Carolina Year Book and Business Directory*. Raleigh: [News and Observer], 1902, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1912, 1916.
- Ormond, Jesse Marvin. *The Country Church in North Carolina*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1931.
- "P. T. Barnum - Prince of Humbug - In Rocky Mount." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 3 (Spring 1999): 3, 20.
- Paschal, George Washington. *History of North Carolina Baptists*. Raleigh: The General Board, North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1930.
- Paschal, George Washington. "Morgan Edwards' Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of North Carolina." *North Carolina Historical Review* 7 (July 1930): 365-399.
- Peacock, James L. and Ruel W. Tyson, Jr. *Pilgrims of Paradox – Calvinism and Experience Among the Primitive Baptists of the Blue Ridge*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.
- Pezzoni, J. Daniel. *The Architectural History of Onslow County, North Carolina*. Richlands, N.C.: Onslow County Museum, 1998.
- Phelps, Shirleyan Beacham. "A Dying Breed – Like Old Soldiers, Primitive Baptists are Slowly Fading Away." *The State* 60 (November 1992): 20-22.

- Powell, William S., ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.
- Power, Scott. *The Historic Architecture of Pitt County, North Carolina*. Pitt County, N.C.: Pitt County Historical Society, 1991.
- Primitive Baptist Online*. www.primitivebaptist.org.
- The Primitive Baptist Page*. www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/4078/.
- The Primitive Baptist Webstation*. www.pb.org.
- Rackley, Timothy W., ed. *Cemeteries of Nash County North Carolina*. Kernersville, N.C.: author, 1997.
- Raleigh. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History Research Branch. Highway Historical Markers Files.
- Raleigh. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office. National Register of Historic Places and Architectural Survey Files.
- Raleigh. North Carolina State Library and Archives. Edgecombe County Records. Nash County Records. Reference Vertical Files.
- Reid, Melanie Sovine. "Neither Adding Nor Taking Away': The Care and Keeping of Primitive Baptist Church Houses." In *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* [I], edited by Camille Wells, 169-176. Annapolis, Md.: Vernacular Architecture Forum, 1982.
- "Reverend Morgan Edwards Visits Tar River Falls in 1772-3." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 2 (Summer 1998): 4.
- Ricks, T. E. "The Falls, Falls of the Tar, Rocky Mount Falls, Rocky Mount." *News and Observer* [Raleigh] 4 July 1976, pp. 6A-7A.
- Ricks, T. E. Interview with author. September 2003.
- Ricks, T. E., ed. *Nash County Historical Notes – A Bicentennial Tribute*. Rocky Mount: the Nash County Bicentennial Commission/ Dixie Printing and Publishing Company, 1976.
- Rocky Mount. Braswell Memorial Library. Local History Vertical Files. Newspaper Collection.

- Rocky Mount, N.C. Directory.* Rocky Mount, N.C. and Richmond, Va.: Hill Directory Company, 1908, 1912, 1914, 1925.
- Rocky Mount - One of the Best, Most Progressive and Fastest Growing Cities in N. Carolina.* [Rocky Mount]: The Rocky Mount Record, ca. 1907.
- Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, including Battleboro, Englewood, Leggett, Sharpsburg and Whitakers.* New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1923 and November 1949 rev. ed.
- "Spreading Their Wings." *The Connector - Newsletter of the Tar River Connections Genealogical Society* 3 (Winter 1999): 2.
- "To Hold Service in New Edifice." *The Evening Telegram* [Rocky Mount] 24 March 1927, p. 2, col. 1.
- Turner, J. Kelly and John L. Bridgers, Jr. *History of Edgecombe County North Carolina.* Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1920.
- United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.* Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1998.
- Watson, Helen R. "The First Rocky Mount and How it Died." *Rocky Mount, NC Telegram* 26 May 1974, pp. 1B, 3B.
- Williams, Charles B. *A History of the Baptists in North Carolina.* Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1901.

APPENDIX

A. Primitive Baptist Meetinghouses

A Sample of Standing Buildings in Eastern North Carolina

NAME	COUNTY	DATE	ENTRY	APSE	FORM	OTHER
Bear Grass	Martin	1830s-1840s	paired	no	traditional	
Tarboro	Edgecombe	ca. 1830/ ca. 1880	originally paired	yes	modified	added apse, belfry, and single entry
Bethlehem	Tyrrell	1849	paired	no	traditional	
Old Sparta	Edgecombe	1856/ ca. 1900	single	yes (polygonal)	traditional	added apse
Skewarkey	Martin	1858	paired	no	traditional	
Lower Black Creek (I)	Wilson	½ 19 th c.	single	no	traditional	
Hadnot Creek	Carteret	early-mid 19 th c.	single	no	traditional	
Southwest	Onslow	early-mid 19 th c./ ca. 1900	originally side	no	meeting- house plan	added bay and paired main entry at gable ends
Jamesville	Martin	1866-70	paired	no	traditional	NR
Williams	Edgecombe	mid19 th c.	single	no	traditional	
Meadow	Greene	mid19 th c.	paired	no	traditional	
Hannah's Creek	Johnston	mid19 th c./ 1980	side	no	meeting- house plan	NR; added entry bay
Kehukee	Halifax	ca. 1870/ 1901	originally paired	no	modified	NR; added central entry tower w/steeple
Chappell	Wayne	ca. 1870	single	no	traditional	
Moore's	Wilson	1874	single	no	traditional	
Memorial	Wayne	ca. 1875	paired	no	traditional	
Spring Green	Martin	1879	paired	no	traditional	

Middle Creek	Wake	ca. 1880	single	no	traditional	
Hopeland	Nash	1881	paired	no	modified	belfry, bracketed gable hoods, gothic-arched transoms
Newport River	Carteret	ca. 1885	paired	yes (rectangular)	traditional	
Oak Grove	Wake	mid-late 19 th c.	single	no	traditional	
Old Union	Johnston	mid-late 19 th c.	paired	no	traditional	
Lower Black Creek (II)	Wilson	2/2 19 th c.	single	yes (rectangular)	modified	brick; round-headed windows; entrance portico
Tyson's	Pitt	¾ 19 th c.	single	no	semi-traditional	open pronaos
Healthy Plains	Wilson	¾ 19 th c.	single	yes (polygonal)	traditional	
Mill Branch	Nash	4/4 19 th c.	single	no	traditional	
Few in Number	Edgecombe	ca. 1890	single	no	traditional	peak-headed windows
Spring Hope	Nash	1890s	paired	yes (rectangular)	traditional	
Red Banks	Pitt	1893	paired	no	traditional	NR
Mt. Zion	Halifax	ca. 1893	single	yes (polygonal)	traditional	
Singleton	Beaufort	ca. 1895	single	no	modified	central belfry; round-headed windows and entry door w/ moldings
Smithwicks Creek	Martin	1897	paired	no	traditional	
Hickory Grove	Martin	ca. 1898	paired	no	traditional	

White Oak	Wilson	late 19 th c.	paired	no	traditional	
Aycock's	Wayne	ca. 1900/ 1960s	single	yes (rectangular)	semi-traditional	added gothic-arched windows; entry bay
Piney Grove	Wayne	ca. 1900	single	no	traditional	
Fremont	Wayne	ca. 1900	off-center	no	modified	corner entry tower w/ steeple; gothic-arched, stained-glass windows w/ tracery and moldings
Rocky Swamp	Halifax	ca. 1900	single	yes (polygonal)	traditional	
Yopps	Onslow	ca. 1900	paired	no	traditional	NR; peak-headed entry doors
Robersonville	Martin	1910-1912	single	yes (rectangular)	modified	central entry tower w/ steeple
Turner Swamp	Wayne	ca. 1911/ 1980s	single	no	semi-traditional	window tracery; stained glass; added entry bay
Stump Sound	Onslow	1915	paired	no	traditional	
Wilson	Wilson	1920-1921	single	no	modified	brick; Gothic Revival
Flat Swamp	Pitt	1924	paired	no	traditional	
Falls of the Tar	Nash	1927	single	yes (polygonal)	modified	brick; entry portico; buttresses
Davis Memorial	Wilson	1920s-1930s	single	no	modified	gothic-arched windows

Each example designated as **“traditional”** in form is a one-story, framed, weatherboarded, and plainly finished building with a gable-end entrance façade, square-headed, double-hung-sash windows, and sometimes an apse (31 or 67.4% of sample).

“Semi-traditional” and **“modified”** examples possess exterior elements, like belfries and gothic-arched windows, that deviate from Primitive Baptist design conventions in relative degrees (4 or 8.7% and 9 or 19.6% respectively).

“Meetinghouse plan” examples resemble “traditional” buildings in exterior appearance, except for main entry placement (2 or 4.3%).

The sample (N=46) was assembled from information in the survey and National Register files, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh.

B.

Federal Aid # STP-1604(1)

TIP # U-3621

County: Nash

CONCURRENCE FORM FOR PROPERTIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Project Description: Widen SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Rd.) between SR 161 (Country Club Rd.) and NC 43-48 (Benvenue Rd.)

On **October 1, 2002** representatives of the

- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)
- Other

Reviewed the subject project at

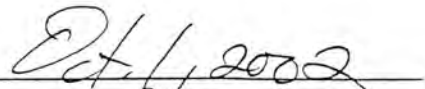
- Scoping meeting
- Historic architectural resources photograph review session/consultation
- Other


All parties present agreed

- There are no properties over fifty years old within the project's area of potential effects.
- There are no properties less than fifty years old which are considered to meet Criteria Consideration G within the project's area of potential effects.
- There are properties over fifty years old within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE), but based on the historical information available and the photographs of each property, the property identified as (List Attached) is considered not eligible for the National Register and no further evaluation of it is necessary. *Properties # 2-8.*
- There are no National Register-listed or Study Listed properties within the project's area of potential effects.
- All properties greater than 50 years of age located in the APE have been considered at this consultation, and based upon the above concurrence, all compliance for historic architecture with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and GS 121-12(a) has been completed for this project.
- There are no historic properties affected by this project. (Attach any notes or documents as needed)

Signed:


 Representative, NCDOT

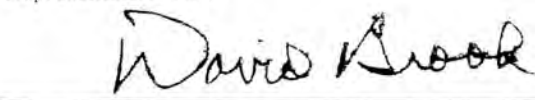

 Date


 FHWA, for the Division Administrator, or other Federal Agency

10/1/02
 Date


 Representative, HPO

10-1-02
 Date


 State Historic Preservation Officer

10/7/02
 Date

C.



**North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

David L. S. Brook, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Division of Historical Resources
David J. Olson, Director

December 19, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Thorpe, Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: David Brook *David Brook*

SUBJECT: Improvements to SR 1604 (Hunter Hill Road) from SR 1616 to NC 43/48,
Rocky Mount, U-3621, Nash County, ER02-10887

On October 1, 2002, the State Historic Preservation staff met with North Carolina Department of Transportation staff to review the eligibility of historic properties in the area of potential effect for the above project.

Based on our review of the photographs, we concluded that the Falls of the Tar Baptist Church required further evaluation. This review predated an October 25, 2002 memorandum sent to your office stating that no architectural survey would be required. Please disregard the memorandum and continue with your evaluation of the church.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

DB:doc

cc: Mary Pope Furr

	Location	Mailing Address	Telephone/Fax
Administration	507 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh 27699-4617	(919) 733-4763 • 733-8653
Restoration	515 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4613 Mail Service Center, Raleigh 27699-4613	(919) 733-6547 • 715-4801
Survey & Planning	515 N. Blount St, Raleigh, NC	4618 Mail Service Center, Raleigh 27699-4618	(919) 733-4763 • 715-4801

D - North Carolina Highway Historical Markers
Texts Relevant to
the Falls of the Tar River Church

E-88 Falls of the Tar Church

Constituted as Particular Baptist, 1757;
Rev. John Moore & Joshua Lawrence among early ministers.
Now Primitive Baptist.

E-61 P. T. Barnum

First stop of record with own circus troupe
was ½ mile S.E., November 12-13, 1836.
No show is recorded, but Barnum preached a sermon.

From Highway Historical Markers Files, Division of Archives and History Research Branch,
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh.