

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitaker's Chapel

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number S side of SR 1003, 0.4 mi. E. of jct. with SR 1100 ^{N/A} not for publication

city or town Enfield vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Halifax code 083 zip code 27823

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stephen A. Crow SHPD 10/30/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Whitaker's Chapel
Name of Property

Halifax County, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious facility

Funerary: cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious facility

Funerary: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Greek Revival

Late Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls wood: weatherboard

roof asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Religion

Period of Significance

1828-1939

Significant Dates

1880

1905

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Whitaker's Chapel
Name of Property

Halifax County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
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2	6	6	7	4	0
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4	0	0	2	3	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Drucilla H. York

organization Local History Associates date August 22, 1997

street & number 2001 E. Fifth Street telephone 919/752-5260

city or town Greenville state NC zip code 27858

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Trustees for Whitaker's Chapel c/o Mrs. Anne Boyd Whitaker Bulloch

street & number Route 1, Box 143 telephone 919/445-3352

city or town Enfield state NC zip code 27823

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Narrative Description:

A centerpiece in the heart of a nineteenth-century agricultural community once known as Whitakertown, Whitaker's Chapel today remains an integral part of the rural landscape in southern Halifax County between Enfield and Scotland Neck. The convergence of Beech Swamp to the north and Fishing Creek to the south gives definition to this agricultural area, and the intersection of two early nineteenth-century roads, the Enfield road (SR 1003) and Scotland Neck road (SR 1100), provide its focal point. The original site of Whitaker's Chapel was to the north, almost directly across the road from its present location and closer to the plantation home of Ferdinand H. Whitaker, Myrtle Lawn. During the winter of 1880-81, the church was moved a short distance across the road to a new site directly in front of the chapel's cemetery. Twenty-five years earlier, in 1856, T. L. Whitaker had established this cemetery for the Whitaker's Chapel. Both sites, the old and new, are similar with the present one having a slightly higher elevation. Currently, the church is oriented perpendicularly to the road; however, it's original orientation is unknown. Today, the modest, gable-front frame church is set back from the road approximately 100 feet on a large, approximately four-acre tract, surrounded by new-growth woodland.

The church property has two distinct areas: open grounds to the front and east, and a large formally designed cemetery directly behind the church. The spacious front lawn is punctuated with young plantings, including oak, poplar, pine, and magnolia. Simple plantings near the church include boxwood lining the side elevations. Directly in front, small camellia bushes flank a low brick-base historical marker. A dirt-lane driveway obliquely approaches the church from the northeast. It first forms a loop near the church, then circles around the building, and passes in front of the cemetery.

1. The Church: second quarter 19th century, contributing

Today, Whitaker's Chapel clearly illustrates two building periods. The initial antebellum simple gable-front frame church had paired entrance bays at the front and three bays along the side elevations. The Chapel's actual construction date remains unconfirmed; however, stylistic features indicate a second-quarter-of-the-nineteenth-century transitional period between the Federal and Greek Revival styles.¹ The church was moved across the road during the winter of 1880-1881 and later enlarged with the addition of a gable-front vestibule at the front and a chancel extension at the rear, flanked by the Sunday school library and minister's room.² The actual construction date for these additions, like that of the original building, also is unconfirmed.³

The earlier church measures approximately twenty-six feet by thirty-six feet and exhibits such notable transitional Federal/Greek Revival features as flush gable ends with molded rakeboards, boxed cornices with beaded edges, molded weatherboards,

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and mitred three-part window surrounds with molded sills. Outlines for two small half-story windows are evident on the rear elevation. Also, two original nine-over-nine double sash windows were repositioned in the rear addition when the church was enlarged.

Exhibiting building patterns characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the additions made to Whitaker's Chapel not only enlarged the church but changed the entrance orientation to each side of the new vestibule area. Six steps lead up to each entrance, which features a simple surround and four-panel door with heavy molding outlining each panel. A large Gothic-arch window provides a late-nineteenth-century focal point for the front facade. Plain weatherboards sheath both the front and rear additions. A deep eave overhang with plain frieze board accents their gable-front roof configuration. In addition, up-to-date two-over-two-double sash windows were installed as well as two interior brick chimney flues, each positioned near the corner of the original rear elevation. A pointed-arch chimney hood caps each tall, simple flue stack.

The exterior form of the church today reflects its original rectilinear plan and subsequent vestibule, classroom, sacristy, and apse additions. The entrance vestibule is a long, narrow room measuring approximately eight feet by fifteen feet. Its walls and ceiling are plaster. Dark stained woodwork accents in the room include plain tall baseboards and simple door and window surrounds with splayed backbands. Here only the backband is mitred. Each door contains four recessed panels lined within by a heavy Victorian molding. Conversely, on the opposing side this molding is applied for greater relief to outline a slightly raised panel. The doors are hung on butt hinges and have white porcelain knobs.

Two vestibule doors lead into the original rectangular body of the church and delineate the two aisles, which converge at the chancel. These aisles divide the congregational seating into three sections: a large central area with eight long pews and two smaller side ones with nine pews. All the pews have the same handmade construction and traditional design details. Notable features include hand-planed, single-board seats, back rests, and top rails. Each single-board pew end has high curvilinear arms, exposed tenon joinery, and inverted V-notched legs.

Today the overall character of the worship space blends elements from both the antebellum period and the late nineteenth century. The interior finish includes plaster walls and barrel-vault ceiling. Two tie bars reinforce the ceiling from side to side, and in all probability were added when the church was moved to its present location in the winter of 1880-81. All the woodwork is stained a dark finish. A balustrade, with a molded hand rail, square-in-section balusters and pegged posts, frames the semi-circular raised chancel area. The continuous curve of the balustrade limits access to the chancel area to each side. During the late nineteenth century, the addition to the rear of the church extended the chancel area. A semi-circular arch defines this apse extension with coved ceiling and single-step raised floor. Two small rooms, a classroom and a sacristy, flank the chancel. Exhibiting the same interior finish, each room contains similar recessed cupboards. The floors are carpeted throughout the church.

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Late-nineteenth-century fixtures light the interior of the sanctuary. An ornate four-branch single-tier brass chandelier hangs from each tie bar. These fixtures have highly decorative foliate designs and a June 7, 1887, patent stamp. An oil lamp with glass shade rests within the cup end of each branch. The chancel arch has similar single-branch sconces. All fixtures are now electrified. A single electrical drop cord with glass plate shade lights each small room.

All the chancel furniture is built of walnut and exhibits late-nineteenth-century Eastlake designs featuring incised carvings and turned drop pendants. A square-top altar table with marble surface is centrally placed in the projecting semi-circular part of the chancel. A brass cross and pair of brass candlesticks are set on this table. To each side is a tall delicate fern stand supporting a brass flower vase. On the higher second level of the chancel directly behind the altar table is a substantial free-standing lectern. This area also includes a grouping of three similar chairs with upholstered seats and backrests. The larger central one has upholstered arms. Complementing this chancel furniture is a contemporary pump organ with similar Eastlake designs, located in the southeast corner of the sanctuary.

The small rooms contain several pieces of original furniture. The classroom is furnished with a set of Windsor chairs and a low table, all for small children. The minister's room contains a free-standing music blackboard plus two small pews.

From the mid 1940s until the early 1960s, Whitaker's Chapel slipped into a declining state of repair. Services were discontinued at the Chapel about 1948 and not re-established until 1964. Concomitant with the resurgence of interest in the Chapel and its contribution to the development of Methodist Protestantism in North Carolina and the United States, J. Waldo Whitaker sponsored its restoration in March and April of 1965. This work included brick underpinning, sill replacement, new shutters, interior and exterior painting, and replastering.⁴ All was done in a respectful manner and reflects the church's architectural development.

2. Cemetery: est. 1850s, contributing site

The cemetery follows a formal square plan, measuring approximately 200 feet along each side. Established on land deeded to the church in 1856 by Theodore Lucien Whitaker [1832-1914], the cemetery's earliest burial was that of Wilson Cary Whitaker in 1851.⁵ Today it contains approximately 200 graves. Although predominately members of the Whitaker family are buried here, other families represented include Lawrence, Dunn, Pittman, and Bellamy. Whitaker family tradition maintains that Louise DeBerry Whitaker [1832-1900], the wife of Ferdinand H. Whitaker, patterned the cemetery design after her garden at Myrtle Lawn. It centers around a giant cedar tree from which four perpendicular paths radiate and define respectively four small quadrants and four larger squares. Paths outline each quadrant arc, forming a large outer circle. Plantings within the cemetery include principally boxwood, cedar, crepe myrtle, and magnolia. A handsome iron fence,

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manufactured by the Cincinnati Iron Fence Company and acquired in 1924-25, defines the cemetery's perimeter.⁶ It features alternating-in-height arrow palings, each of which has a foliate design applied to its shaft. Two gates provide entrance into the cemetery and are supported by robust posts with fleur-de-lis caps. The main entry, located directly behind the church, features a single-swing gate. Placed midway along east fence is a large double-swing gate with similar detailing. A variety of marble and granite monuments, including obelisks, statues, and tablet stones, mark the graves and range in age from about 1851 to the present. Over three-fourths of these monuments date within the period of significance.

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance:

Summary

The over one-hundred year period of significance, from 1828 to 1939, of Whitaker's Chapel embodies a time of disunion for members of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina with the Methodist Episcopal Church. This period of significance extends from the establishment of the North Carolina Annual Conference at Whitaker's Chapel on December 19-20, 1828, to the unification of Methodists in 1939. Whitaker's Chapel was a center in the early development of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina, providing strong leadership throughout the nineteenth century. While theories vary as to the construction date for the present Chapel, in all probability it was built during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, as architectural evidence indicates. Today, the church continues as a community landmark within a little-changed rural landscape and as a designated national landmark within the history of the Methodist Church in the United States.

Nestled in the heart of the rural farm community once known as Whitakertown, Whitaker's Chapel embodies the evolution of the Methodist Protestant movement within the rural areas of North Carolina from the second quarter of the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Important landmark developments in the denomination's early history transpired at Whitaker's Chapel, which was a member of the Roanoke Circuit known as the "old cradle." Many of the state's key Methodist Protestant leaders during the nineteenth century, namely Eli B. Whitaker, John F. Speight, William H. Wills, and John L. Michaux, were associated with Whitaker's Chapel through membership or pastoral service. Architecturally, Whitaker's Chapel illustrates the adaptation, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, of the traditional frame rectilinear church, typically built during the antebellum period into a larger, more complex plan based on developing needs and programmatic changes. In Halifax County, Whitaker's Chapel stands as the earliest and one of the best examples of this statewide trend. Originally located across the road nearer Myrtle Lawn plantation, the church was moved during the winter of 1880-1881 to the present site in front of its cemetery. T. L. Whitaker had deeded the one-acre cemetery to the church trustees earlier in 1856, and Ferdinand H. Whitaker deeded this new three-and-one-fifth acre site to them in 1880. After the church's relocation, it was expanded with a vestibule addition at the front and the addition of two rooms and an expanded chancel at the rear. Throughout the years the descendants of Col. John Whitaker in Halifax County have been associated with Whitaker's Chapel and taken an active role in its development and preservation. Services were discontinued at the church in the mid-1940s; however, in 1964 special services were resumed. The restoration of the chapel in 1965 was sponsored by J. Waldo Whitaker.

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Halifax County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 6Religious Context

The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was formally organized in 1784 as a hierocracy. Governed by the legislative and judicial powers of the General Conference, it operated under the direction of two general superintendents. These general superintendents presided over the elders, who in turn oversaw the work of the ministers and deacons as they ministered to the people. Area divisions defined the annual conferences, which were one step down from the General Conference and were composed of the general superintendents and travelling preachers. On the more local level, the next governing body was the quarterly conference. Here an elder presided over "...all the travelling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and class leaders for that particular circuit or station." These quarterly conferences provided the only representative outlet for local preachers and laymen.⁷

Through the years a democratic spirit began to emerge within the Methodist Episcopal Church, which resulted in the organization of the first union society on May 21, 1824, in Baltimore. Shortly thereafter, on November 6, 1824, the Roanoke Union Society, the first in North Carolina and the second in the United States, was formed at Sampson's Meeting-house in Halifax County. Lay participation was a fundamental part of these reform-oriented union societies. The Roanoke Union Society initially included seven local preachers and four laymen, with Eli B. Whitaker from Whitaker's Chapel elected as president. The Granville Union Society, the second in the state, was not established until the latter part of July, 1826.⁸

In 1828, the seriousness of the reform movement within the Methodist Episcopal Church escalated beyond the point of conciliation. Increasingly, reform advocates were expelled from the church. Early in the year, the Virginia Conference appointed an anti-reform preacher, Rev. William Compton, to take charge of North Carolina's Roanoke Circuit. In October, he suspended seven of the circuit's preachers: the Rev. James Hunter, elder; the Rev. Eli B. Whitaker, deacon; the Rev. William Bellamy, elder; the Rev. Henry Bradford; the Rev. Miles Nash, elder; the Rev. William Price, elder; and the Rev. Albriton Jones, deacon.⁹ The next month, union society delegates gathered in Baltimore for the first Conference of Methodist Reformers. Before the conference's conclusion on November 22, 1828, delegates adopted seventeen "Articles of Association" as guiding principles for church reform.

Six days later in North Carolina, the reform movement mobilized and initiated the formation of the North Carolina Annual Conference, the oldest one within the Methodist Protestant Church.¹⁰ The following call was issued December 5 in the Tarborough Free Press:

At a meeting of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church [sic], held at the Rev. James Hunter's, Nov. 28, 1828, for the purpose of devising ways and means to carry into effect the object of the late convention of Methodist Reformers, held in Baltimore, it was

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determined to hold a Conference at Whitaker's Chapel, six miles east of Enfield, Halifax county [sic], 19th December next; to which we invite particularly all Ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, friendly to a reform in her government, and an equal number at least, of lay delegates, as also all persons friendly to our views.¹¹

Given the short notice for this meeting, only twenty-six ministers, preachers, and laymen from the Roanoke Union Society were present at this Conference of Associated Methodist Churches. It is recognized as the first meeting of the North Carolina Annual Conference. The Articles of Association recommended in Baltimore were unanimously adopted. Those present also unanimously elected the Rev. William W. Hill as president, the Rev. Miles Nash as his assistant and secretary, and Wilson C. Whitaker, treasurer for the up-coming year.

During 1829 three additional North Carolina union societies were organized in Guilford County. Reform had become the dominant spirit in about eight established congregations, which eventually voted to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church. These churches were Sampson's, Eden, and Whitaker's Chapel, in Halifax County; Union in Granville County; Liberty in Randolph County; and Moriah, Bethel, and Flat Rock, in Guilford County.¹² At the second General Convention held in Baltimore in 1830, the name "Methodist Protestant Church" was adopted as was the "Constitution and Discipline of the Methodist Protestant Church." By this time North Carolina had six circuits: four older ones - Roanoke, Liberty, Warrenton, and Oxford - plus two new ones - Hillsborough and Guilford.¹³

The Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina initially drew from the strength of each circuit as it reached out to expand into other areas of the state. Early on the annual conference appointed to each circuit a preacher-in-charge and later a superintendent, who had the power to appoint quarterly meetings and to call quarterly conferences within their respective circuits. In 1830 only nine ministers and preachers were working in North Carolina. This number grew to 25 by 1850. Over these twenty years, the membership within the denomination grew from 1,832 in 1835 to 4,187 in 1850. Membership within the established circuits fluctuated, but on average remained steady. For example, in the Roanoke Circuit the membership figures ranged from 355 in 1833 to 391 in 1843 and 311 in 1845. North Carolina members were active in the General Convention, with directives to voice their opposition to such tests for membership as ones calling for the abolition of slavery or the advocacy of temperance societies and Sunday schools.¹⁴ To extend the work of the conference throughout the state, *The Methodist Protestant Missionary Society of the North Carolina Conference* was formed in 1845.¹⁵

Rapid growth within the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina over the next fifty years necessitated the creation of new circuits and the construction of many churches. Known as the "old cradle," the Roanoke Circuit was first divided in 1850 to produce the Halifax Circuit, and by 1880 it had spawned three additional circuits.¹⁶ By 1875, membership had risen to 9,000 among twenty-four circuits. The forty churches within the annual conference in 1850 had now more than tripled, to 126. During the same period, the number of ministers and preachers rose to forty-

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six.¹⁷ This rapid growth led to discussions concerning the creation of four sub-districts that would include three or more circuits.¹⁸

Growth in the Methodist Protestant church in North Carolina was stimulated by the evangelistic leadership of its circuit riding ministers who established missions in both the eastern and western areas of the state. Many of these early ministers became leaders in the annual conference. They included John F. Speight [1804-1860], C. F. Harris, William H. Wills [1809-1889], A. W. Lineberry, T. H. Pegram, John L. Michaux [1824-1898], and R. H. Wills [1836-1891]. W. H. Wills also served on the national level in 1866 as president of the General Conference of the Methodist Church.¹⁹ Their traveling ministry spawned growth principally in rural areas. An 1880 report describing the Tar River circuit notes that R. H. Wills' ministry had "...gone into the 'Highways and Hedges' and brought out new places for preaching...."²⁰

Even though the rural character of the Methodist Protestant church in North Carolina remained dominant throughout the nineteenth century, beginning in 1873 church leaders began to consider seriously the establishment of city churches. Earlier struggles to establish churches in Wilmington, Fayetteville, Edenton, and Rocky Mount were unsuccessful and, in the end, each was discontinued. The church in Enfield, however, grew along with the town, which was incorporated in 1861. It hosted the Annual Conference in 1859, 1874, and 1886.²¹ By 1873, the Winston mission was the denomination's only city church in the state and Greensboro as a mission field was a topic of discussion. The Annual Conference's Committee on Missions that year made this recommendation "...under all the circumstances, the time has come when we should turn our attention to the towns, more particularly than we have done heretofore."²² By the mid-1870s the proposal was out of committee and being accepted by the circuits as noted by the following resolution presented at the Annual Conference on December 3, 1875:

The quarterly Conference of the Halifax Ct, makes its request to the [sic] An. Conference that "its Missionary efforts be directed more toward the towns and cities of the State."

W. H. Wills chm. J. E. Hunter sec.²³

Although the inclusion of this shift in focus was slow in coming, the conference did contribute to the Winston church in 1880. City churches were organized in Henderson in 1881 and Greensboro in 1891.²⁴

Growth necessitated the construction of new churches across North Carolina, and the North Carolina Missionary Society provided seed money in many cases for these construction projects. In 1882 the society's name was changed to the Board of Church Extension.²⁵ R. H. Wills wrote in his 1883 president's report, "Churches have been built, begun or completed and old ones repaired, but to what extent I do not know."²⁶ The following year he had taken note of their condition and progress within the conference and shared his observations and opinions within his president's report.

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Many of the structures, called churches, are a shame to us. Poor, unsightly buildings, costing and worth but a few dollars, sometimes in out-of-the-way places, constitute our church property and places of worship in some localities, forming sometimes a striking contrast to those of other denominations near by. These things ought not so to be, and it may be hoped will not long exist.

He went on to say:

"A good church at every appointment might be an appropriate motto for the next year. These should be on our own ground, with a bona fide title to the Methodist Protestant Church.... Let the good work go on.²⁷

Two years later, W. H. Wills, chairman of the Church Extension Committee, submitted a recommendation, which was approved, calling for the establishment of the Church Extension Fund of the N. C. Conference, "the exclusive object of which shall be to assist in the building of churches in weak or destitute places."²⁸ By 1891, there were 191 Methodist Protestant churches within the annual conference, an increase of sixty-five churches in fifteen years. The Board of Church Extension, however, began focusing primarily on the development of city churches about 1890.²⁹

The twentieth century for the Methodist Protestant denomination in North Carolina marked a shift from rapid expansion to a time of maturity and then reconciliation. While membership rose significantly from 19,772 in 1905 to 30,735 in 1935, the total number of churches rose by only sixteen to 232 in 1935.³⁰ As plans were presented proposing unification within the Methodist Church, the Methodist Protestant Church became the first church to approve the plan at its General Conference in High Point in 1936.³¹ With unification nearing, North Carolina's Annual Conference made arrangements in 1938 to have a history of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina written. History of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church by J. Elwood Carroll was published in 1939, the same year of the Methodist unification.³²

Architectural Context

The architectural character of Whitaker's Chapel is rooted within regional building traditions and the spatial needs of this Methodist Protestant church. One of the oldest Methodist Protestant churches in the state, Whitaker's Chapel embodies the form of a typical, gable-front, frame church, characteristic of many denominations in North Carolina throughout the nineteenth century. The simple rectilinear plan originally had two front entrances, a feature commonly associated with Quaker, Primitive Baptist, and Methodist churches. During the late nineteenth century, changing spatial needs and modernization interests oftentimes prompted interior alterations and additions to both the front and rear of many churches.

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An architectural survey of the rural areas of Halifax County, conducted by Henry Taves in 1989, documented numerous churches, most of which date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Baptist and Methodist denominations established an early presence in the county and account for the majority of the county's churches today. Along with Whitaker's Chapel, three other rural churches - Connoconnara Baptist, ca. 1849; Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church, ca. 1853 (SL 1988); and Trinity Episcopal Church, 1855 (NR 1980)- appear to date from the antebellum period. Each follows a rectilinear form with gable-front orientation. Unlike the others, Trinity Church was an impressive brick structure designed by New York architect Frank Wills and built with a central bell tower at the front. A fire in 1884 destroyed much of the church, but portions of the exterior walls survived. The church was rebuilt late in 1884.³³

Similarities between the "Colonial Church," ca. 1793, in Halifax and the three antebellum rural churches in Halifax County illustrate an evolution of church building patterns within the region. Following the traditional gable-front form of the Old Church, ca. 1793, in Halifax, Whitaker's Chapel, Conoconnara, and Bethesda are all simple rectilinear frame structures. The most recent, Bethesda, however, includes a rear apse. Fenestration plans vary in size and entry. Like the earlier church, Conoconnara has a central entrance with double-leaf doors. Both Whitaker's Chapel and Bethesda, on the other hand, have paired entrances. For each church, the delineation of the gable end conveys a sense of style and building period. Whereas the Colonial Chapel and Whitaker's Chapel have flush, gable ends characteristic of the Federal period and earlier, Conoconnara and Bethesda have Greek Revival treatments featuring, respectively, a boxed cornice with returns and a pedimented gable. The fenestration patterns and details of both churches also convey their building periods. At Whitaker's Chapel, the original windows included nine-over-nine sash with a three-part Federal surround; Conoconnara's windows originally had six-over-six sash with square-cut surround profiles and cornerblocks; and Bethesda retains six-over-six sash with plain surrounds. The use of windows in the gable ends is another feature exhibited at both the Old Church and Whitaker's Chapel. Although the weatherboard of the Old Church is unknown, Whitaker's Chapel is sheathed with double-molded weatherboards characteristic of the Federal period. The other two churches have plain weatherboards.³⁴

Vernacular church traditions within Halifax County are more evident during the late nineteenth century, with the majority continuing to be built of frame construction in a rectilinear gable-front form. Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, ca. 1893 and Union Methodist Church illustrate the evolution of this form that now includes a polygonal rear apse. In contrast, Nahalah Presbyterian Church, ca. 1882 (SL 1988), incorporates a gable-front entrance vestibule. Initially, churches - like Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church ca. 1870 (NR 1994) and Roseneath Methodist Protestant, ca. 1870 - continued to utilize a simple rectilinear form but were subject later to expansions or remodelling. The later addition of vestibules, classrooms, and chancel extensions was typical. Whitaker's Chapel was enlarged in the 1880s by the addition of a vestibule and rear extension, including an extended chancel flanked by a classroom and minister's room. On occasion, bell towers were constructed. A combination vestibule and bell tower was added to the facade of

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Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church in 1901, and a corner bell tower at Roseneath Methodist Church in 1912.³⁵

As technological improvements increased the availability of building materials and decorative details, plain rural churches were transformed to incorporate embellishments characteristic of the late Victorian period. Lancet windows, peaked lintels, bargeboards, and tongue-and-groove sheathing all became readily available and oftentimes were incorporated into exterior and/or interior church designs. Although a preference for double-sash windows appears to have extended into the twentieth century in the rural churches, the Gothic pointed arch was integrated into church design. Roseneath and Nahalah churches achieved this by incorporating a peaked lintel into each window surround. Illustrating the early use of a Gothic-pointed arch during the 1880s, Whitaker's Chapel features a lancet window as the focal point for its new facade vestibule addition. Interiors were finished with either plaster walls or narrow tongue-and-groove sheathing. The primary interior finish for Whitaker's Chapel and Nahalah Church is plaster, for both their walls and barrel vaulted ceilings. On the other hand, Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church and Union Methodist Church are totally clad in narrow tongue-and-groove sheathing. Roseneath, however, has plaster walls and an arched ceiling with tongue-and-groove boards.³⁶

Arriving at a more specific construction date than the second quarter of the nineteenth century for Whitaker's Chapel is problematic. To date, research efforts have not uncovered any primary evidence to confirm a date. Within North Carolina, the development of stylistic details generally conforms to a documented construction pattern within a regional area of the state. Building patterns within the Whitakertown community between 1825 and 1855, however, do not. Here stylistic developments represent simultaneously both the fashionable and retardataire as illustrated by the building projects within the neighborhood undertaken by the Whitaker family during the period of 1830 to 1855. Four Whitaker plantation homes - Strawberry Hill (NR 1980), Rose Hill, Myrtle Lawn (NR 1985), and Delphi - remain today and provide an insight to local construction during this period. All except Delphi were older plantation houses that were significantly enlarged during this period.

An understanding of family connections helps to establish the importance of the building relationships that developed in Whitakertown. Four brothers - James Whitaker [1773-1825], Dr. Cary Whitaker [1782-1858], Absalom Benton Whitaker [1787-1845?], and Wilson Cary Whitaker [1789-1851] - were associated with these houses, as were the two oldest sons of Wilson Cary Whitaker - Montgomery T. Whitaker [1825-1889] and Ferdinand H. Whitaker [1828-1896]. Strawberry Hill was initially built, according to family tradition, in 1792 by Cary Whitaker. It was the home of Dr. Cary Whitaker from 1818 until his death. He enlarged Strawberry Hill in 1836 with a two-story rear addition. Rose Hill, the home of James Whitaker, was probably built ca. 1800 and was significantly enlarged by James Henry Parker [?-1899], shortly after he purchased the plantation in 1859. Myrtle Lawn was initially built by Absalom Benton Whitaker just after he inherited the property in 1816, and it, too, was significantly enlarged by Ferdinand H. Whitaker [1828-1896] about the time of

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his marriage to Louise DeBerry November 20, 1850.³⁷ A letter from Wilson Cary Whitaker to his son Thaddeus E. Whitaker dated May 16, 1850, reports the following about Myrtle Lawn:

You dont know how Ferd is fixing up, had new sils put to his back porch, raised his kitchen higher from the ground, thrown down the chimney & puting it up again, when that is done he is going to have his house pillow'd plastered & white washed - do you guess he's going to be married? if he is I dont know who its to for he stays at home & dont go to see any one, he speaks of going to bloomfield next Saturday & Sunday to preaching, he may have more in his head than I know of.³⁸

In 1851 Ferdinand officially inherited Myrtle Lawn from his father, Wilson Cary Whitaker. Delphi was erected in 1849 for Montgomery T. Whitaker by William P. Burgess [1810-1887], a local builder and member of Whitaker's Chapel. Little is known about Burgess. He is, however, the attributed builder of the staircase at Rose Hill, which bears a striking similarity to the one at Delphi. In 1848, John Simmons Whitaker [1829-1911], the son of Dr. Cary Whitaker, may also have worked with William Burgess "...at the carpenter's trade."³⁹

A comparison of exterior stylistic details between Whitaker's Chapel and these plantation houses illustrates the range of building patterns present in Whitakertown during this period [Exhibit 1]. At Rose Hill, Strawberry Hill, and Myrtle Lawn, the molded siding and three-part mitred surrounds are characteristics shared with Whitaker's Chapel. Window sill details vary, but each has a similar rounded sill. Myrtle Lawn and the Chapel also have flush gable ends. When Rose Hill and Myrtle Lawn were both enlarged in 1836 and ca. 1850 respectively, elements such as the earlier molded weatherboard and three-part surrounds were replicated. In the case of Myrtle Lawn, this retardetaire use of Federal details confuses the architectural dating for Whitaker's Chapel. In comparison, Delphi, constructed at least two years earlier in 1849, exemplifies a classic Greek Revival house with sophisticated pattern book detailing. Usually stylistic change within a region or area is rapidly embraced by influential families, such as the Whitakers, as a reflection of their progressive attitudes and prosperity. The simultaneous use of both Greek Revival and Federal details for Whitaker family building projects within the immediate proximity of Whitaker's Chapel, however, makes the architectural dating of the Chapel problematic without primary documentation.

Historical Background

The over one-hundred year period of significance, from 1828 to 1939, of Whitaker's Chapel embodies a time of disunion of members of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina with the Methodist Episcopal Church. This period of significance extends from the establishment of the North Carolina Annual Conference

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at Whitaker's Chapel on December 19-20, 1828, to the unification of Methodists in 1939.⁴⁰ Whitaker's Chapel was a center in the early development of the Methodist Protestant Church in North Carolina, providing strong leadership throughout the nineteenth century. While theories vary as to the construction date for the present Chapel, in all probability it was built during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, as architectural evidence indicates. Today, the church continues as a community landmark within a little-changed rural landscape and as a designated national landmark within the history of the Methodist Church in the United States.

First formed as an Anglican congregation sometime after 1740, Whitaker's Chapel was built as a log structure on land belonging to Richard Whitaker, patriarch of the prominent Whitaker family of Halifax and Edgecombe counties. Following the Revolutionary War, it evolved into a gathering place for Methodist evangelism and received visitations from such notable evangelists as Bishop Francis Asbury in 1786, 1789, and 1804.⁴¹

By the 1820s, the congregation at Whitaker's Chapel had become increasingly supportive of democratic reform within the Methodist Episcopal Church. Its leaders were active in the creation of the Roanoke Union Society; one of them, Eli B. Whitaker, became its first elected president in 1824.⁴² These democratic sentiments culminated in the formation of the North Carolina Annual Conference at Whitaker's Chapel on December 19-20, 1828. The nine ministers, five local preachers, and twelve laymen in attendance chose Eli B. Whitaker to serve as president pro tempore. Six other members of the Whitaker family participated as laymen at this meeting: Absalom B. Whitaker, L. H. B. Whitaker, Eli B. Whitaker, Jr., James C. Whitaker, Wilson C. Whitaker, and Richard H. Whitaker.⁴³ Whitaker's Chapel became one of several churches in which practically the whole congregation converted to the Methodist Protestant Church, enabling the congregation to continue utilizing the same church building.⁴⁴

Over the next twenty years, Whitaker's Chapel played a key role in the early development of the Methodist Protestant denomination in the state. The North Carolina Annual Conference met at Whitaker's Chapel in 1830, 1833, 1842, 1845, and 1849.⁴⁵ Such church leaders, as James Hunter, William Bellamy, William H. Wills, and Albriton Jones had strong ties with the Chapel, and their families married within the community. Referred to as early as 1845 as Whitakertown, this close-knit agricultural community was made up of a network of plantations, including Strawberry Hill, Rose Hill, and Myrtle Lawn, all of which belonged to members of the Whitaker family.⁴⁶ Writing from Whiteoak Bluff, Tennessee, A. B. Whitaker states, in a letter dated January 30, 1846 to his uncle, Dr. Cary Whitaker: "I find no place to compare with Whitaker T. no community where they confide in each other as they do there."⁴⁷

Although the exact construction date for Whitaker's Chapel is uncertain, Whitaker family tradition provides a sketchy insight into the building evolution of the structure. In identical narratives, Miss Jewel Whitaker and Katie Whitaker Riddick state:

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The second building occupied by Whitaker's Chapel was a frame one with no ceiling, replacing the old log one. This second building, after many year's use, was moved away and used as a farm store room.

A larger and better constructed frame building replaced the second one which had been removed. This building was nicely plastered and painted upon construction which took place after the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church.⁴⁸

To date, investigations into primary sources have not confirmed this tradition; however, architectural evidence does complement this early date.

Another undocumented family tradition states that L. H. B. Whitaker [1796-1865] and Wilson Cary Whitaker [1789-1851] bore most of the expense of this third building project.⁴⁹

Another account by Miss Jewel Whitaker states that her grandfather, Wilson Cary Whitaker, built the present church in 1846.⁵⁰ This date, however, is unlikely, considering the fact that work was undertaken the previous year to spruce up the church for the Annual Conference that opened at Whitaker's Chapel on October 24, 1845. This activity is verified in a letter written by George Whitaker on September 1, 1845, from Charleston, South Carolina, to his father, Dr. Cary Whitaker, in Enfield: "I learned by a letter from the neighborhood that the Chapel had been painted, I expect it has improved its looks very [*sic*]." ⁵¹ Another Whitaker family oral tradition reports that the third church was actually built in 1850, a belief which also remains undocumented.⁵²

Whitaker's Chapel, also, provided a spiritual training ground for the Methodist Protestant leaders in North Carolina throughout the antebellum period and was the scene for several significant changes adopted by the Annual Conference. As a part of the Roanoke Circuit, Whitaker's Chapel continued under the able leadership of such men as John F. Speight, Samuel J. Harris, Eli B. Whitaker, William Lineberry, C. F. Harris, William H. Wills, G. A. T. Whitaker, and John Paris, who served as circuit superintendents and/or ministers.⁵³ During the 1845 annual conference held at Whitaker's Chapel, it was L. H. B. Whitaker who called for the organization of the Methodist Protestant Missionary Society of the North Carolina Conference as a vehicle for extending the church's work throughout the state.⁵⁴ Although the Conference ordered in 1847 the submission of an annual report by the president at the beginning of each Conference, William H. Wills, during the 1849 conference at Whitaker's Chapel, was the first president to comply. His report on the state of the church detailed the condition of each circuit and called for the preservation of Annual Conference papers and notes.⁵⁵

As the Methodist Protestant Church grew throughout North Carolina during the second half of the nineteenth century, the role of Whitaker's Chapel shifted from one of providing leadership within the denomination to one of maintaining a status quo. The Annual Conference did not meet again at Whitaker's Chapel during this period. The Chapel, however, did regularly host the Roanoke Circuit Quarterly Meeting each year, sometimes as many as three times in a given year.⁵⁶ John L. Michaux [1824-1898], Thomas J. Ogburn, and William H. Wills [1809-1889] continued to

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intermittently minister to the Chapel's needs even as their responsibilities increased on a state level and, in the case of the Rev. Wills, on a national level. While serving the Roanoke Circuit, the Rev. Michaux made his headquarters in Whitakertown at the Oaks, the home of Wilson Cary Whitaker [1789-1851] and later his grandson, Wilson Cary Whitaker II, [1853-1906].⁵⁷ [Exhibit 2]

Several years later, in 1856, Theodore Lucien Whitaker [1832-1914] deeded one acre of land located across the road from Whitaker's Chapel to the church's trustees explicitly for the use of a burial ground by its membership.⁵⁸ In all probability, this gift included a small Whitaker family cemetery, since nine graves including that of Whitaker's father, Wilson Cary Whitaker (d. 1851) pre-date 1856. By 1875, the cemetery included twenty-seven additional burials.⁵⁹ Family tradition maintains that Louisa DeBerry [1831-1900], who married Ferdinand H. Whitaker on November 20, 1850, provided the landscape design for the cemetery, patterning it after the gardens at Myrtle Lawn, their home.⁶⁰

T. L. Whitaker's gift also laid the groundwork for the relocation of the church during the winter of 1880-1881. It was moved from a one-acre site near Myrtle Lawn a short distance across the Enfield road to an area between the cemetery and road. This new site, conveyed by Ferdinand H. Whitaker to the Trustees for Whitaker's Chapel, was officially recorded on January 25, 1881, and it included three-and-one-fifth acres of additional land adjacent to the cemetery.⁶¹ The Roanoke News, in its February 17, 1881 issue, documented this move:

The people in the "Whitaker town" section, below Enfield, are on the improve -- in a building sense. They have recently moved the church (Whitakers chapel) from its old site to a more prominent one just across the road, and contemplate remodelling, and enlarging it. When completed it will be a more imposing edifice, and one that will reflect credit on the industry and enterprise of the good people of that neighborhood.⁶²

On several occasions during the spring and summer of 1881, fund raising projects were undertaken to benefit the church. On April 14, the young people of Whitaker's Chapel performed "...a charade and tableaux in the Academy building at that place..., the proceeds to be for the benefit of the church."⁶³ In early June, another benefit dinner or "feast" was also held at the Chapel.⁶⁴ By the next summer in time for the annual protracted meeting in August, the Chapel was "newly painted" and had "a very neat appearance."⁶⁵

Although the Trustees' intent to remodel and enlarge the Chapel is documented, little is known about when this work was undertaken. Most assume the changes took place shortly after the move.⁶⁶ In their brief history of Whitaker's Chapel, Jewel Whitaker and Katie Riddick describe these changes:

At the rear there is a recess for pulpit, and on either side of this there are doors - one leading into the ministers room, the other into the Sunday School Library. The front end of the church consists of a

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vestibule with east and west doors. The old style high pulpit, enclosed with curtains and steps on either side and gates leading to the pulpit was changed to the modern one.⁶⁷

Unfortunately, primary documentation recording the addition of the vestibule and rear extension to Whitaker's Chapel remains to be found. A documentary photograph thought to be taken ca. 1895, however, clearly illustrates both additions. [Exhibit 3]

Three marriage accounts from 1889-1891 provide a little insight into the church's interior plan. The marriage account of Alice Holliday and E. W. McKay on January 6, 1889, gives the following description:

The church was beautifully decorated with an arch of evergreens, marriage bell in centre and beautiful folding gates of evergreens across the aisle....

The ushers entering the right and left doors met in the center, filed down the aisle, opened the gates for the attendants who followed by twos, separating at the altar and taking their places around.⁶⁸

At the November 20, 1889 wedding of J. W. Phillips to Sarah Pringle, decorations completely covered the chancel rail, an arch with the words "whom God hath joined" was placed just within the rail, and an altar of evergreen was outside this rail.⁶⁹ Two years later, the marriage account for Walter Dunn and Willie Stallings provides the following description of the interior:

An arch of evergreen hung near the centre of the church beneath which they passed. The chancel rail was covered by same material and on either side the altar was an evergreen column between which the contracting parties stood.... Another arch surmounting the pulpit completed the decorations.⁷⁰

Later in November, an account of Children's Day at Whitaker's Chapel confirms the repeated use of an arch over the pulpit. On this occasion, letters of bright chrysanthemums, forming the words "Thy kingdom come," were hung on an arch over the pulpit.⁷¹ Aspects of each of these different accounts appear to be compatible with the present-day interior plan of the church; however, the aisle and chancel rail descriptions vary and call into question when the interior alterations took place. Also, the present four-branch brass chandeliers bear a June 7, 1887 patent date.

In the late 1890s, Whitaker's Chapel, again, benefitted from community fund-raising activities and repairs were undertaken for the cemetery enclosure. Between August and December 1897, discussions were ongoing about repairing the "walling" to the cemetery. First, members pledged contributions of money and materials to the project, but by November the undertaking was stymied. At their November 15, 1897 meeting, the Trustees asked Cary Whitaker to complete the project by Christmas and supplied him with the specifications for a picket fence. They also designated any excess funds to be used for the Chapel.⁷² The following summer the Whitaker Town

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Dramatic Club performed the play "Irish Lenin Peddler-Too Much of a Good Thing" in both Enfield and Scotland Neck with proceeds to benefit Whitaker's Chapel. The Scotland Neck performance earned between fifteen and twenty dollars.⁷³

The twentieth century for Whitaker's Chapel mirrored a shift in focus from the rural to the urban within the Methodist Protestant Church of North Carolina. Activities within the Roanoke Circuit now centered around the church and parsonage at Enfield. Quarterly meetings or district gatherings rarely took place at Whitaker's Chapel after 1905. Regular services, however, were held there until around 1947. Whitaker's Chapel had evolved into a local community oriented church and a place of commemoration.

Strong community interest and support continued to stimulate regular maintenance and improvements of the property. Between 1902 and 1905, repair work at the Chapel was repeatedly discussed. In 1902 some repairs were made, but more were needed. A comprehensive initiative was undertaken the next year.⁷⁴ On November 6, 1903, the Board of Trustees approved the sale of the Academy building to W. C. Whitaker for \$100, and the following motion by Cary Whitaker:

...the ch roof is to be covered with good drawn heart shingles & the entire building painted including the roof. The Cemetery fence is also ordered painted.

Waldo Whitaker was appointed the superintendent for the project. R. B. Parker volunteered to donate 1,000 shingles and deliver them to the church property.⁷⁵

Repairs to the grounds continued in 1904, but in 1905 significant alterations to the church windows were seriously considered. At the April 12 meeting of the Board, C. H. Whitaker made a motion to replace the sash windows along the side elevations of the church with two-over-two lights. W. C. Whitaker, however, proposed an amendment, which was approved, to explore costs of different styles of windows. The matter was resolved at the next Board meeting on May 11, when C. H. and W. C. Whitaker reported that the carpenter noted very little difference in cost of "...pointed Gothic windows and the Square joint Style." Total cost for the project would be \$27.50. The Board decided in favor of maintaining the rectangular window form. C. H. Whitaker made the approved motion and Jewel Whitaker seconded it; however, W. C. Whitaker continued to express his preference for Gothic or pointed style windows. At this meeting, the Board also paid W. C. Whitaker \$25.04 for putting on the new roof and authorized that the old and remaining new shingles, the six old windows, and the old carpet be sold.⁷⁶ Work on the building continued into the fall.⁷⁷

As major changes were occurring within the Roanoke Circuit over the next fifteen years, few changes took place at Whitaker's Chapel. Within the circuit, the old Bradford's Church was sold in 1911, and new churches were constructed at Enfield and Whitakers in 1917. Five churches now comprised the Roanoke Circuit: Roseneath, Whitaker's Chapel, Enfield, Whitaker's Temple, and Speight's Chapel. By October 13,

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1922, the discontinuation of services at Roseneath was openly discussed and unanimously endorsed at the fall quarterly meeting. Between 1905 and 1929, only four quarterly meetings of the Roanoke Circuit were held at the Whitaker's Chapel. Formerly, the Chapel had provided the circuit's largest financial apportionment, but now Enfield had begun to take the lead.⁷⁸

The Board of Trustees made few physical changes at Whitaker's Chapel during the 1910s and 1920s. One simple modification, recorded on May 28, 1910, involved the installation of music racks to the backs of the benches.⁷⁹ Fifteen years later, a new iron fence was placed around the cemetery.⁸⁰ During the 1928 centennial year, the Whitaker family reunion held at Whitaker's Chapel on July 4 included the unveiling of the monument honoring Col. John Whitaker, III [1747-1816] at the front of the church⁸¹. Serious maintenance work for the Chapel was undertaken again in 1930. The \$395 cost estimate included a new roof, painting, and replastering.⁸²

Services continued at Whitaker's Chapel until about 1948, when a dwindling membership precipitated its closure. After falling into disrepair, it was not until the early 1960s that local interest in the Chapel was renewed. Through the efforts of Dr. Ralph Hardee Rives, the Chapel began to receive appropriate historical recognition for its significant role in the development of the Methodist Protestant Church. First, on December 20, 1964 the Historical Society for the North Carolina Annual Conference held a commemorative service at the church marking the 136th anniversary of the conference's formation at Whitaker's Chapel. Shortly thereafter, in the spring of 1965, J. Waldo Whitaker, a descendant of Richard Whitaker who resided at Strawberry Hill plantation, sponsored the restoration of the church to its late-nineteenth-century character. Regular monthly services were also resumed. The Homecoming Service on June 20, 1965, celebrated the renewal of Whitaker's Chapel and the unveiling of a North Carolina highway historical marker in recognition of the church's historical significance.⁸³ The United Methodist Church followed suit in 1970 at the special session of General Conference by designating Whitaker's Chapel as an historic shrine and recognizing it as "...the forerunner of the Methodist Protestant Church."⁸⁴

Endnotes

1. Through the years, various construction dates have been attributed to Whitaker's Chapel in the following publications: Roanoke Rapids Herald (Roanoke Rapids, N. C.), Sunday May 11, 1958, hereinafter cited as Roanoke Herald and date; typed copies of Jewel Whitaker, "A Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel" and Katie W. Riddick, "A Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel," n.d., Whitaker's Chapel Collection, CR 3, Special Collection, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University,

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Greenville, hereinafter cited as Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU; Miss Katie W. Riddick, "A Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel," newspaper clipping, c. 1940, in possession of Mrs. Anne Boyd Whitaker Bulloch, Enfield, hereinafter cited as Riddick, Bulloch Papers; Louise L. Queen, "Whitaker's Chapel," Nolan B. Harmon (ed.), The Encyclopedia of World Methodism (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 2 volumes, c. 1974), 2549-2550, hereinafter cited as Queen, Encyclopedia Methodism.

2. Roanoke Herald, May 11, 1958; The Roanoke News (Weldon, N. C.), February 17, 1881 hereinafter cited as the Roanoke News; Riddick, Bulloch Papers.

3. Extensive newspaper research was completed and included all available issues for The Roanoke News (Weldon, N. C.) from September 1879-December 1886 and The Democrat [its name changed to The Commonwealth on June 18, 1896] (Scotland Neck, N. C.) from January 1887 through May 1906.

4. Rocky Mount Telegram (Rocky Mount, N. C.), June 20, 1965.

5. T. L. Whitaker to Cary Whitaker, L. H. B. Whitaker, G. A. T. Whitaker, L. B. Whitaker, M. T. Whitaker, Wm W. Taylor and F. H. Whitaker, June 19, 1856, Halifax County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Halifax County Courthouse, Book 43, 331-332, hereinafter cited as Halifax Deeds. Jewel Whitaker and Katie W. Riddick both state in "Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel" that Wilson Cary Whitaker conveyed the land for the cemetery to the church in 1851. A handwritten undated note entitled "W C Whitaker Will" between Wilson Cary Whitaker [1789-1851] and his brother, Cary Whitaker; sons, Montgomery T. Whitaker & Ferdinand H. Whitaker; nephews, S. H. B. Whitaker, G. A. T. Whitaker, W. W. Taylor, & [sic] B. Whitaker conveys in trust one acre of land for the Chapel and one acre for the Academy. This note is included within the Bulloch Papers and refers in all likelihood to the original site of the Chapel. No record of this gift was found within the Halifax County deed books.

6. Minutes of the Roanoke Circuit Quarterly Conference, February 15, 1924, 217 and June 29, 1925, 223, Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU.

7. J. Elwood Carroll, History of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church (Greensboro: McCulloch & Swain, 1939), 11-12, hereinafter cited as Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant.

8. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 13-14.

9. John Paris, History of the Methodist Protestant Church... (Baltimore: Sherwood & Company, 1849), 182-183, 288, hereinafter cited as Paris, History Methodist Protestant; Journal of the North Carolina Conference, Associated, Methodist Protestant Church, December 19, 1828, 1, Perkins News-Micro Microfilm, Duke

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University, Durham, hereinafter cited as Journal N. C. Conference.

10. Free Press (Tarboro, N. C.), December 26, 1828; Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 23-24.
11. Paris, History of Methodist Protestant, 287; Free Press (Tarboro, N. C.), December 5 & 12, 1828.
12. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 14-15; Elmer T. Clark, Methodism in Western North Carolina (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1966), 69, hereinafter cited as Clark, Methodism Western N. C.
13. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 16-17 & 24.
14. Journal N. C. Conference, February 19, 1842, 127.
15. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 26.
16. Journal N. C. Conference, November 1850, 300; November 12, 1852, 4; December 1880, 512.
17. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 106.
18. Journal N. C. Conference, November 1877, 465-466.
19. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, Appendix C, n.p.; Ancel H. Bassett, A Concise History of the Methodist Protestant Church, From Its Origin... (Pittsburg: Wm. McCracken, Jr., 1887), 206.
20. Journal of N. C. Conference, December 1880, 508.
21. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, Appendix C, n.p.
22. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 29.
23. Journal N. C. Conference, December 3, 1875, 508.
24. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 29-30.
25. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 26.
26. Journal N. C. Conference, November-December 1883, 174.
27. Journal N. C. Conference, November-December 1884, 223.

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28. Journal N. C. Conference, December 1886, 314.
29. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 26.
30. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 106.
31. Clark, Methodism Western N. C., 70.
32. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, x.
33. Henry V. Taves, "The Rural Architectural Heritage of Halifax County, North Carolina" (unpublished manuscript, Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1889), 37-39, hereinafter cited as Taves, "Rural Architecture of Halifax Co."
34. Henry V. Taves, [Halifax County architectural survey files] (Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh) hereinafter cited as Taves, Halifax Co. survey files.; Jerry L. Cross, "First House of Worship in the Town of Halifax 1793-1911" (unpublished report, Research Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1987), 9-10.
35. Taves, "Rural Architecture of Halifax Co.," 62-63; Taves, Halifax Co. survey files; Drucilla H. York, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Kehukee Primitive Baptist Church, Halifax County," (Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1993).
36. Taves, Halifax Co. survey files.
37. "Tombstone Records for Whitaker's Chapel, Enfield, North Carolina" (Whitaker's Chapel vertical file, Halifax County Public Library, Halifax, n.d.), 114-121, hereinafter cited as "Tombstone Records" Halifax Library vertical file; Taves, Halifax Co. survey files; Catherine W. Bishir and Jerry L. Cross, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Strawberry Hill, Halifax County" and "National Register Nomination of Historic Places Nomination for Myrtle Lawn, Halifax County" (Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1979 and 1985 respectively). Hereinafter Whitaker's Chapel, Halifax Library vertical file will be cited as HL vertical file.
38. Copy of letter from W. C. Whitaker to Thaddeus E. Whitaker dated May 16, 1850, Bulloch Papers.
39. Copy of letter from W. C. Whitaker to Thaddeus E. Whitaker dated November 17, 1848, Bulloch Papers.
40. Clark, Methodism Western N. C., 69-70.

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41. "A Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel," Whitaker's Chapel Homecoming Service Bulletin, June 20, 1965, HL vertical file.
42. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 13-14.
43. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 23.
44. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 15; Clark, Methodism Western N. C., 69.
45. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, Appendix C.
46. Journal N. C. Conference, October 1845, 185.
47. Letter from A. B. Whitaker to Dr. Cary Whitaker (uncle) dated January 30, 1846, W. H. Wills Papers #792, Subseries 1.2, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Wills Papers.
48. "Brief History Whitaker's Chapel," Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU; "Brief History" clipping, Bulloch Papers.
49. "Brief History Whitaker's Chapel," Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU.
50. Roanoke Rapids Herald (Roanoke Rapids), May 11, 1958.
51. Letter from George Whitaker to Cary Whitaker (father) dated September 1, 1845 from Charleston, S. C., Wills Papers.
52. Whitaker's Chapel Records, ECU; Queen, Encyclopedia of Methodism, 2550; this oral tradition is frequently repeated during the mid-twentieth century in articles like the ones in the Rocky Mount Telegram, June 20, 1965 and the Whitaker's Chapel "Homecoming Service Bulletin, June 20, 1965.
53. Journal of N. C. Conference, 29, 148, 166; Minutes of the Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church (Tarboro, N. C.: Geo. Howard Press, 1883), 6-7. *
54. Journal N. C. Conference, October 24, 1845, 184. Note: Carroll states otherwise on page 26 that G. A. T. Whitaker introduced the proposal.
55. Journal N. C. Conference, October 1849, 254 & 263; Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, 26.
56. Carroll, N. C. Methodist Protestant, Appendix C; typed copy of Minutes of Roanoke Circuit Meeting of Quarterly Conference: January 18, 1902; May 2 and November 16, 1903, Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU, hereinafter cited as Minutes

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57. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, ECU; J. F. McCulloch, "John Lafayette Michaux, 1824-1898," Founders and Builders of Greensboro 1808-1908 (Greensboro: Jos. J. Stone & Company, 1925), 213; Journal N. C. Conference, 1889, 448.
58. Halifax Deeds, Book 34, 331.
59. "Tombstone Records" HL vertical file.
60. Author's interview with Anne Boyd Whitaker Bulloch, August 15, 1996.
61. Halifax Deeds, Book 61, 591; This deed reference and one for the conveyance of the former church site to Ferdinand H. Whitaker on June 3, 1882, [Halifax Deeds, Book 71-A, 153] were supplied by the Commission on Archives and History of the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, Raleigh, NC.
62. Roanoke News, February 17, 1881.
63. Roanoke News, April 14, 1881.
64. Roanoke News, June 2, 1881.
65. The Commonwealth (Scotland Neck, N.C.), August 16, 1882, hereinafter cited as Commonwealth.
66. Newspaper research was conducted for the years 1879-1906 using first Scotland Neck's The Commonwealth, later known as The Democrat, and then to fill in the time gaps Weldon's The Roanoke News. No references to the remodeling were identified.
67. "Brief History of Whitaker's Chapel," Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU.
68. The Democrat (Scotland Neck, N. C.), January 17, 1889, hereinafter cited as Democrat.
69. Democrat, November 28, 1889.
70. Democrat, March 31, 1891.
71. Democrat, November 19, 1891.
72. Agreement dated August 10, 1897 includes itemization of materials and contributions made to fence project; also handwritten copy of minutes for November 15, 1897 meeting of Board of Trustees for Whitaker's Chapel, Bulloch Papers. Hereinafter minutes cited as Chapel Minutes, Bulloch Papers. Only a few fragmentary

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handwritten pages of these minutes are known to exist.

73. The Commonwealth (Scotland Neck, N. C.), August 11 & 18, 1898.
74. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, January 18, 1902; May 2 and November 16, 1903, ECU.
- 75.. Chapel Minutes, November 6, 1903, Bulloch Papers.
76. Chapel Minutes, April 12 and May 11, 1905, Bulloch Papers.
77. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, November 10, 1905, ECU.
78. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, January 21, 1904 and January 5, 1917, ECU.
79. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, May 28, 1910, ECU.
80. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, February 15, 1924 and June 29, 1925, ECU.
81. "Whitaker Family Reunion, July 4, 1928," Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU.
82. Minutes Roanoke Circuit, May 5 and August 8, 1930, ECU.
83. "Homecoming Service Bulletin," June 20, 1965 and June 19, 1966, Whitaker's Chapel Collection, ECU.
84. "United Methodism's Historic Shrines and Landmarks" brochure, General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, 1984, Bulloch Papers.

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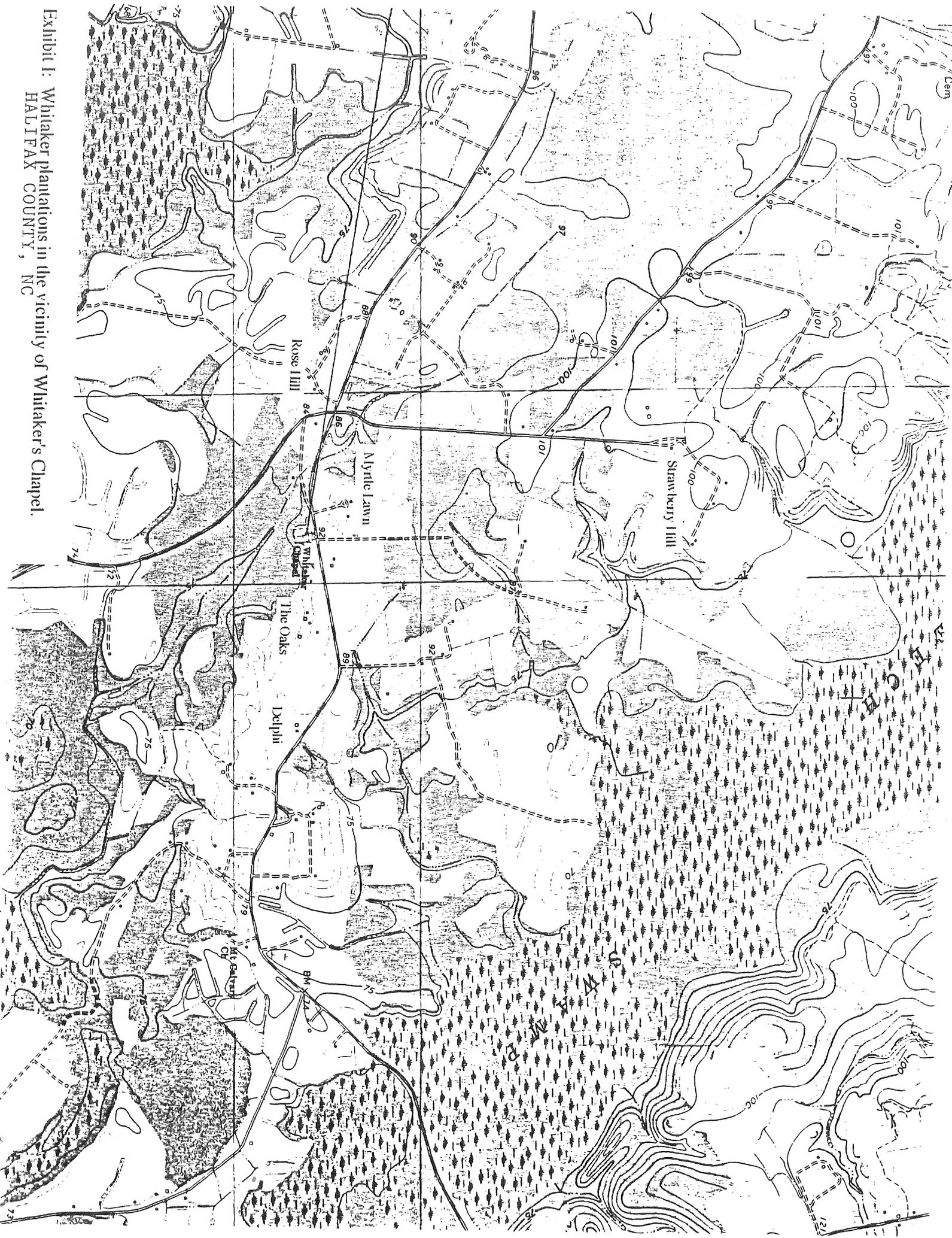
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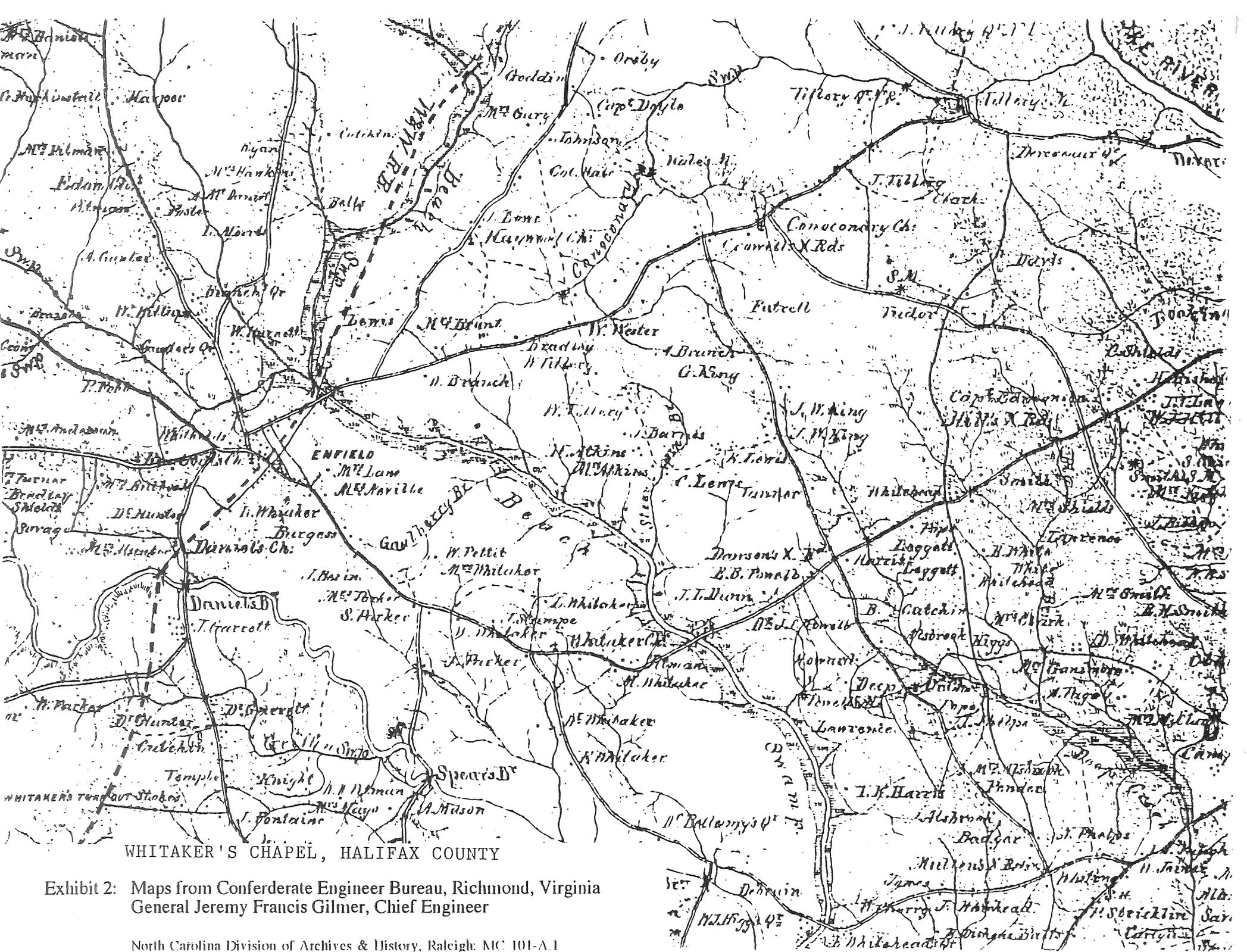
10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description: The approximately four acre property identified as Whitaker's Chapel on Halifax County tax map #98 with a scale of one inch equals 400 feet

Boundary Justification: The nominated property includes the approximately four-acre parcel historically associated with the church and cemetery since the winter of 1880-1881.

Exhibit I: Whittaker plantations in the vicinity of Whittaker's Chapel, HALIFAX COUNTY, NC





WHITAKER'S CHAPEL, HALIFAX COUNTY

Exhibit 2: Maps from Confederate Engineer Bureau, Richmond, Virginia
 General Jeremy Francis Gilmer, Chief Engineer

