

Table of Contents

Management Summary	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Introduction	1
Project Setting	2
Historical Background	3
Review of Literature and Maps	5
Description of the 17-acre Project Area	10
Archaeological Survey Methods and Coverage	12
Archaeological Sites and Significance Evaluations	15
Long Farmstead (Site 1)	15
Road Trace A, North of Long House (Site 2)	21
Road Traces B and C, Slopes in North Part of Project Area (Site 3)	24
Road Trace D, or the 1855 Road, South Part of Project Area (Site 4) ...	26
Interpretations of Road Traces	28
Summary and Conclusions	31
References Cited	34

Figures 1 through 33
Attached to End of Report

INTRODUCTION

Rutherford County purchased a 17-acre tract of land in the northern part of the county in 2010 that it plans to develop into a Revolutionary War interpretive center and educational facility (Bradley 2011). The property is believed to be located on or near a place that in the years of the American Revolution was called Biggerstaff's Old Fields, a large farm owned by a prominent Loyalist named Aaron Biggerstaff (Bradley n.d.; Draper 1881; National Park Service 1982). It was on his property where nine Loyalist prisoners were hanged by Patriot forces on October 14, 1780, about a week after the Battle of Kings Mountain. This battle was one the most important battles of the American Revolution, as the Patriot victory marked a turning point in British control over the southern colonies (Buchanan 1999; Edgar 2001). The hanging of Loyalist prisoners in the aftermath of the battle has also captured the attention and imagination of historians because it is one of early documented courts martials in America and it exemplifies the violence, brutality and struggles of people in the Carolina backcountry during the American Revolution, and how personal decisions to support a Royal government or join in a far-reaching revolution often resulted in neighbor fighting neighbor and, sometimes, brother fighting brother (Cox 1972; Dameron 2003; Epley 2011; National Park Service 2000).

In late 2012, the county employed John Horton, Architect, to begin the preparation of a master development plan for the property. As part of the study, John Horton asked that archaeologist Kenneth Robinson (Archaeological & Historical Services) conduct a Phase I archaeological survey of the property to determine if significant archaeological resources might be present on the property and to provide recommendations regarding the interpretation and preservation of any archaeological resources found on the property. Prominent among the objectives of the project was identification of the locations of the tree where the nine Loyalists were hanged in late 1780 and the grave site where most of the Loyalists were buried. While evidence for the hanging tree and grave sites was not found, possible locations of the features based on local oral history and lore were documented. Also documented were old road traces that could date from the time of the American Revolution.

Field investigations were conducted between August and October, 2012, and additional historical research, assessment and evaluation took place in the ensuing months. This report summarizes the activities and results of the survey. The report includes sections that describe the project location, historical background, project objectives, and the techniques and methods used in the archaeological survey, along with descriptions of the archaeological sites and historic landscape features identified during the survey. Recommendations regarding the preservation and protection of archaeological resources are offered in the report, along with general recommendations relating to the development of the interpretive center. Maps and photographs used to illustrate the report are attached at the end of the report.

PROJECT SETTING

The 17-acre county-owned Biggerstaff Hanging Tree Property, as it is sometimes called, is located in the north-central section of Rutherford County, North Carolina (Figures 1 through 5). Rutherford County is situated in south-central North Carolina, on the border of the western Piedmont and Mountain regions of the state (see inset, Figure 1). It is part of a tier of counties bordering South Carolina. To the east of Rutherford County is Cleveland County. To the north the county borders Burke and McDowell counties, and to the west Rutherford shares a border with the mountainous counties of Buncombe, Henderson and Polk counties.

Rutherford County was formed in 1779 by the division of Tryon County, with Rutherford County in the west and Lincoln County in the east. The creation of the county took place less than a year before the battle at Kings Mountain. The boundary of Rutherford County at the time extended westward across the mountains into an area that is now part of Tennessee. In 1784, Rutherford County's western lands were ceded to the Cherokee Indians, and in subsequent decades the mountainous western part of Rutherford became part of Buncombe and Henderson counties. Polk County was carved out of Henderson and Rutherford counties in 1855. Cleveland County was formed from the eastern part of Rutherford County and part of Lincoln County in 1841. Today, Rutherford County encompasses approximately 566 square miles (Figure 1).

The topography of Rutherford County is highly variable, ranging from steep mountains with elevations of almost 4,000 feet in the west to rolling Piedmont hills of about 1,000 feet in the east, as well as wide river bottoms where elevations range from about 650 to 800 feet (Figure 1). In the north part of the county are several prominent hills and the South Mountain range where elevations reach about 2,100 feet. The South Mountains are less than three miles from the county property as the crow flies (Figures 3 and 10). About 1.75 miles north of the county property is Lookadoo Mountain, an isolated prominence with an elevation slightly greater than 1,500 feet. About two miles to the east of the project area is another distinct mountain called Cherry Mountain, formerly called Flint Hill (Figure 3). This mountain is part of a small range of hills that occupies the far eastern part of Rutherford County and extends into the adjacent county.

The county is situated within the upper reaches of the Broad River drainage, with streams flowing generally southeast and south eventually to form the main course of the river before it flows into South Carolina (Figure 2). Major tributaries of the Broad River include the First and Second Broad Rivers, Catheys Creek and Mountain Creek (Figure 4). The 17-acre county-owned property is situated on the southeast side of a large ridge in the north-central part of the county within the Robertson Creek watershed (sometimes referred to as Robinson's Creek). Robertson Creek is a tributary of the Second Broad River (Figure 9). The east side of the county property is formed by a south-flowing tributary of Robertson Creek. The tributary flows into Robertson Creek on the north side of a large loop formed as the river flows around a prominent ridge. Terrain in the vicinity of the project area is hilly, except for level bottomlands within the floodplain of Robertson Creek.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nearly 700 Loyalist fighters were taken prisoner by the Patriot army on October 7, 1780 during the Battle of King's Mountain (Dameron 2003; Draper 1881; Hardin 1848). A few days after the battle, the Patriot army, led by Colonels William Campbell and Isaac Shelby, Benjamin Cleveland and others, began to make their way northward back to their rendezvous area on the Catawba River with the prisoners in tow. On October 12, after arriving at Gilbert Town in Rutherford County, part of the group set up camp and part of the group moved to the northeast to camp at Walker's plantation on the east side of the Second Broad River near the mouth of Cane Creek. Walker's plantation was located about four miles northeast of Gilbert Town (Robertson 2006). The next day the various parts of the force slowly began to move "five or six miles northeast of Walker's to Biggerstaff's, or Biggerstaff's Old Fields, since known as Red Chimneys....This locality is on Roberson's Creek, some nine miles north-east of the present village of Rutherford" (Draper 1881:328). (Note: some sources mistakenly refer to "Biggerstaff" as "Bickerstaff".) The group camped reassembled at Biggerstaff's on October 13 and 14. Biggerstaff's Old Fields included the property of Aaron Biggerstaff, a Loyalist who had been killed at King's Mountain only a few days earlier.

The return trip of the Patriot forces from Kings Mountain to the north appears to have followed a slightly different route than their trip 10 days earlier when the Patriots had traveled south in pursuit of Lt. Colonel Patrick Ferguson's forces (Figure 2) (Jones n.d. 2011). From a rendezvous point at Quaker Meadows on the Catawba River, the Patriots had traveled south through a gap on the west side of the South Mountains, entering Rutherford County on Cane Creek. From there, they travelled due south to the mouth of Cane Creek, near Walker's plantation (Sherman 2011:271). This was only a few miles from Gilbert Town, which at the time served as a county seat. Ferguson had passed through Gilbert Town only a few days before the arrival of the Patriot army (Robertson 2006). From Gilbert Town the rebels continued on into South Carolina where they joined other men from South Carolina and Georgia. They then turned east toward King's Mountain where they caught up with Ferguson and mounted a surprise attack on the afternoon of October 7.

The return trip for the Patriots from Kings Mountain followed a similar, though slightly different route through Rutherford County (Figure 6). Traveling slowly, with prisoners, the army made its way back to Gilbert Town, arriving there on October 11. Some of the group then moved to a camp on Colonel Walker's plantation on the Second Broad River, about four miles northeast of Gilbert Town. Within a couple of days, the force moved another four or five miles northeast to Biggerstaff's Old Fields (National Park Service 2006). It is very possible that a shortage of provisions led the army toward Biggerstaff's farm, as this area probably had not been subjected to heavy foraging and plundering by both British and Patriot forces in the preceding months as had the area on the main road north of Gilbert Town. Also, Robertson Creek offered plenty of water for horses and men, and the roads passing through the area led to the upper reaches of Cane Creek and the route northward toward Quaker Meadows on the Catawba River.

Tensions between the Patriot soldiers and the Loyalist prisoners they held were severely strained by the time the group reached Biggerstaff's Old Fields. The diaries of two Loyalist prisoners mention how the prisoners were beaten and mistreated along the trek as they moved north (Allaire 1781, Dunkerly 2007, Rubin 2010). At Biggerstaff's, there were calls from many of the Patriots to exact revenge on the Loyalists in retaliation for the hanging of rebel fighters at Ninety-Six in South Carolina in the months preceding Kings Mountain (Howard 2007:2). Colonel Cleveland, who had a reputation for hunting down and killing Loyalists, was among those most vocal about punishing the Loyalists. Heeding the calls for retaliation, Colonel Isaac Shelby convened a trial as the army camped at Biggerstaff's Old Fields, taking his authorization from N.C. laws that allowed for punishment of those who committed capital crimes (Draper 1881). A jury was assembled from fighters who had served as magistrates in their home counties.

It is unclear exactly how many Loyalists were put on trial, but at least 30 men were tried and the number may have been as many as 40 (Howard 2007:2). The charges against the accused varied. Some were tried for treason or desertion, and one individual was tried for inciting Indians to fight against the Patriots. Most of those put on trial appear to have been convicted and sentenced to die by hanging. In the late evening, nine of the convicted were hanged, three at a time, from a large tree, while the others were apparently spared. The reasons why some were not hanged remain unclear. It could have been that Colonel Shelby felt that those with the most evidence against them had been punished, or that enough justice had been exacted and he wanted to prevent the event from escalating into an uncontrollable mass killing. Some have suggested that a rumor that Tarleton's dragoons were hot in pursuit of the Patriots may have led Shelby to stop the hangings so he could decamp early and push northward to Quaker Meadows (Howard 2007:4). Whatever the case, the remaining convicted Loyalists were spared and many escaped from their captors over the next few days on the trek to the north.

Draper and others report that Aaron Biggerstaff's wife cut down the hanged men and moved eight of the nine bodies to graves. The Loyalists could have been buried in a single mass grave, although the records do not provide details about this. The body of the ninth hanged individual, Captain Chitwood, was apparently taken by family members to a nearby cemetery, possibly a cemetery located near the home of Benjamin Biggerstaff (Bradley 2010; Howard 2007:5).

Over time, the locations of the hanging tree and the burial sites for the eight hanged individuals were largely forgotten. The widow of Aaron Biggerstaff, and other members of her family moved to Kentucky in the years after the war, and in 1803, Aaron's sister Martha sold the Biggerstaff property to another individual (Howard 2007:5). By the late 1870s, when Lymon Draper was collecting evidence about the Battle of Kings Mountain and its aftermath, local memory had faded greatly and there were conflicting reports provided to Draper about where the hanging tree had been located. Most of the reports were very general in nature and many made reference to Red Chimney's, which apparently was considered by some to be a local landmark (discussed in next section of this report).

Draper does report that the Loyalists' graves were rediscovered about 1855 during the construction of a road. He says that the "place of their [Loyalists] burial was well known" (Draper 1881:341). Apparently, only four of the bodies were uncovered. Items found in association with the graves included a butcher knife, a small brass chain, a thumb lancet, a musket flint, a goose quill, and a wooden stopper with brass pins (Draper manuscripts, 12DD84, and Howard 2007:6). The body of Ambrose Mills was reported to have been removed from the grave and taken for reburial in Polk County at that time. Unfortunately, the Draper report does not specifically mention the location of the road where the grave or graves were uncovered. Nonetheless, the report that the graves were discovered by road workers is a piece of information that is important to interpretations offered later in this report.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND MAPS

In order to consider whether the county-owned property subject to the archaeological study is indeed part of Biggerstaff's Old Fields and the place where the hanging tree and loyalist graves were located a considerable amount of effort was spent reviewing existing historical literature and maps of the area. This included an examination of the Draper records in microfilm form. It is useful to review some of these references as they provide context for the archaeological study and interpretations.

Josh Howard, Research Historian with the N.C. Division of Archives and History prepared an excellent report in 2007 that examined the history of the hanging event and considered the possibility that the hanging took place on the Long property that is now owned by the county. Howard reviewed the various reports by historians who over the years had summarized the events leading up to the Loyalist hangings on Biggerstaff's property. He also reviewed other historical records and early maps in an attempt to confirm that the county-owned property was indeed the location where the hanging event took place. For example, Howard examined the road networks shown on the Mouzon map of 1775 and the Price-Strother map of 1808 (Figures 4 and 5). The latter map shows roads that very well could be those traveled in 1780 (Figure 5). Information from the maps was interesting but not precise enough to identify where Biggerstaff's farm might have been located relative to properties of today.

Howard's research included interviews with local historians and consultation with many individuals familiar with the land records of the county. His research showed that there was considerable conflicting evidence about where the hanging tree was once located. He did note that many historians familiar with the county's history consider the county-owned Long property to be part of Biggerstaff's Old Fields, and that it likely is close to the place where the Loyalists were hanged and the hanging tree was located. He concluded, however, that while the Long property does appear to be part of Biggerstaff's property from the late eighteenth century, the evidence to demonstrate the county property includes the hanging site is inconclusive, and the exact location of the hanging tree and the place where the hanged Loyalists were buried could not be pinpointed. Here are his comments on the Long property:

Morrell (Long) property land was indeed owned by the Biggerstaff clan and may have been part of what was known as Biggerstaff Old Fields. Aaron and Mary owned the majority of the land that is now adjacent to both sides of Whitesides Road near the intersection of Whitesides and Depriest Roads. Aaron's brother, Benjamin, owned land along the current Bostic-Sunshine Road (Map A). This [Aaron Biggerstaff's] property later passed into the Long family. Deeds indicate that the property likely was owned by Thomas Long and then was passed on to his son William in the 1840s, and again to his grandson Samuel in the 1880s or 1890s... (Howard: 2007:7).

Later in his report, he states that,

The Longs apparently owned all of the land on the north side of Whitesides Road extending from the Morrell [county-owned] tract to the place where the road intersects Depriest Road (2007:8).

While records suggest that the county property was owned by members of the Long family as early as the 1840s, it may not have been owned by the individuals that constructed the Long house until the 1850s or 1860s.

Howard's report also includes a consideration of the references to Red Chimneys, a landmark cited by several individuals as being close to the hanging tree and the Loyalist graves. Howard notes that, "references to Red Chimneys being located on William Long's farm come from the Draper Manuscripts," with Draper receiving the information in 1880 from A. D. K. Wallace (a resident of the county) (Howard 2007:7). Wallace's description places Red Chimneys on William Long's farm on the public road from Rutherford to Duncan's Creek, on a small stream running into 2nd Broad River. The description is non-specific and not much help in pinpointing the location of the hanging tree. A review by Robinson (author of this report) of material from the Draper records (on microfilm) in 2012 showed that there are several mentions of Red Chimneys in correspondence included the Draper files. These documents were contributed by various people and the records are conflicting and, in many instances, appear to be misleading. A confirmed location for Red Chimneys has yet to be found, although some think it was on a hilltop owned by Aaron Biggerstaff east of the county-owned 17-acre tract, near the intersection of Whitesides and Depriest roads.

Red Chimneys may not be as relevant to determining the location of the hanging tree and Loyalist graves as was previously thought by Draper and others. For example, the map referred to as Map A in Howard's report is a map of old land grants and survey records prepared by the genealogist and historian, Miles Philbeck, with "some current names and other locations added by Ralph Biggerstaff" (Howard 2007:14). The land grant for Mary Biggerstaff is clearly shown on the map, encompassing the area where the county-owned property is located. Red Chimneys is shown on the map as being located in the east part of the Mary Biggerstaff tract (marked by an "e" on the map), just west of the intersection of Whitesides Road and Depriest Road and several hundred yards east of the county property. However, the marked location of the hanging tree on the map is on

the Bostic-Sunshine Road a considerable distance to the east. Clearly, Red Chimneys and the hanging tree were not considered by Ralph Biggerstaff to be situated close to each other, although how he arrived at this interpretation is not fully understood. His location of the hanging tree appears to have been placed close to property owned during the American Revolution by Benjamin Biggerstaff (mentioned in the quote above).

So, at least two locations for the hanging tree have been proposed, one on Whitesides Road near its intersection with Depriest Road, which is not far from the county-owned Long/Morrell Family property, and another on the Bostic-Sunshine Road near where Benjamin Biggerstaff once resided. Whether the hanging event took place near a place called Red Chimneys remains unclear and it may not be at all relevant to the location of the hanging tree. Certainly, investigators should remain open-minded about the possibility of identifying Red Chimneys, but given the amount of consideration local historians have already given the subject, it is unlikely that the issue of Red Chimneys can be resolved unless compelling new information is forthcoming in the future.

The possibility that a location on or near the Bostic-Sunshine Road was where the hanging tree or Loyalist graves is located cannot be dismissed. There is considerable information in letters written to Draper about this subject in the 1880s, including a map drawn by J. R. Logan in 1880, that places the hanging site on a main road that he calls the Burke Road or Duncans Fields road, that is well to the east of Robertson Creek (letter and map from J. R. Logan to Lyman Draper, September 24, 1880, microfilm). The information in the letter and on the map is confusing in many regards, however, and the map is not drawn accurately enough to show exactly where the hanging site might have been located. The information is interesting, and it provides an alternative hypothesis about where the hanging tree site and the graves of the Loyalists might have been located, even as we focus our attention to the area around the county property on Whitesides Road.

Josh Howard also presents two other references that reinforce the idea that the hanging tree was in the vicinity of the Whitesides and Depriest roads intersection. The recollections of Merle Umstead Richey, daughter of Governor William B. Umstead, are that:

...when it came time for the historical marker at Biggerstaff's to be placed, the Long sisters disagreed as to where it should be placed. Mrs. Richey says that the tradition has it that the sign was placed on one sister's property and the actual site was on the other sister's property across the street. She said that she long ago had been shown the site of the hanging tree as being on Depriest Road. She had never heard the site described as Red Chimney's but that a single chimney made of red brick had stood on the site all her life (copied from Howard 2007:9).

The importance of this remembrance is that one of the Long sisters places the hanging tree in the vicinity of Depriest Road, which is not too far from the county property, but certainly well outside the tract. The National Park Service also identified the location of Biggerstaff's Old Fields as being near the intersection of

SR 1713 (Whitesides Road) and SR1538 (Depriest Road), although no new information was provided in support of this interpretation (National Park Service 1982; cited in Howard 2007:9).

Using the Howard report as a starting point, many additional maps and records were reviewed during the 2012 investigation. Some of the maps were obtained from online archives and others were provided by local contacts in the county. A few of these were selected for illustration in this report (Figures 11 through 14). Several of these maps from the early twentieth century (1923, 1927, and 1938) clearly show Whitesides Road and the crossing of the tributary stream that is present on the east side of the county property. The 1938 map actually shows what appear to be the Long house and the bridge over the tributary stream (Figure 13).

One early map not previously examined with regard to the Biggerstaff Old Fields property is a Speculation Land Company map from the 1840s (Figure 14). Speculators purchased land patents in the years between 1796 and 1817, and these claims were mapped (Speculation Land Company ca. 1842). One part of the map shows several tracts of land, or patents, in the area along “Robinson’s Creek” (elsewhere called Roberson or Robertson’s Creek) in Rutherford County (Figure 14). The key to the map references Patent 1025 as being located “on Hinton’s Creek beginning at a w.o. [white oak] stand on the road side that leads from the widow Beckenstaff [sic] old place to the head of sd [probably said] creek.” The reference to widow Biggerstaff, unfortunately, does not elaborate on which Biggerstaff widow this might be. If it is Mary, the presumed widow of Aaron Biggerstaff (other references identify Martha as his widow), this could be a reference to the property where the hanging took place. Also, the map does not show the widow’s house, or the road leading from the widow’s house to Hinton Creek, and the streams and creeks are not drawn accurately enough to pinpoint the location of the county property relative to other features on the map.

Based on the location of some of the streams shown on the Speculation Land Company map, we can estimate the location of the county property, but we cannot be sure that it is accurate (Figure 14). The map does show an old road (dotted line) passing through the western side of Patent No. 1025 and the land of an adjacent patent, but the road may be different than the referenced road at the headwaters of Hinton Creek and it is not clear if the road might represent what came to be called Whitesides Road. Robinson’s Creek is also prominently shown on the map, passing along the western side of Patent No. 1025, near its border with Patent 1422, but its course is not drawn accurately or to scale. While this map and the reference to widow Biggerstaff are most intriguing, they unfortunately do not confirm the locations of Biggerstaff’s Old Fields or the hanging tree or Loyalist graves.

This brings us to the most recent interpretations relating to the locations of the hanging tree and Loyalist graves. These interpretations are based on oral history and directly involve the county-owned property on Whitesides Road. The interpretations are based on reports by individuals who were told in the early-twentieth century that the hanging tree was situated on the Long property on Whitesides Road, the same property now owned by the county. Nancy Ferguson, a noted Rutherford County historian,

identified a tree on the county property that was reported to her as the hanging tree (Figures 29 through 32). The location is near Road Trace B, one of the sites described later in this report. She was shown the location by Baxter Hollifield in the 1980s, although it is not clear where he got his information. She has indicated that the tree he identified did not appear to be old enough to be the hanging tree (Howard 2007:10). However, that location is now officially recorded as the hanging tree site by the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service (American Battlefield Protection Program files, July 2001, GPS documentation prepared and shared by Dr. Steven Smith of the South Carolina Institute of Anthropology and Archaeology). Nancy Ferguson also agreed with Ralph Biggerstaff's location for Red Chimneys, believing it to be near the intersection of Whitesides and Depriest Roads several hundred yards east of the county property (Howard 2007:9).

Another source of information about the hanging tree location is Robert Ramsay, who says he actually cut down the hanging tree about 1955. Mr. Ramsay, a timber man, cut the tree for Rob (Robert) Long, who lived on the Long property along Whitesides Road. Mr. Ramsay estimated the tree to be about 300 years old, according to a version of this story mentioned in the Howard report (2007:10). Mr. Buster Long said the location of the tree was pointed out to him by his father, Rob Long, and he places the tree on or near the county property (Bradley n.d.). The location of the tree was described to Mr. Chivous Bradley by Mr. Ramsay, and the location may be northeast of the Long house in the wooded area near the bottom of a long slope or possibly on the steep slope east of the Long house (Bradley, personal communication 2007, 2012). Bradley's best estimate is that it is near Road Trace C, described later in this report (for location, see Figures 29 through 32). Mr. Buster Long was also told by his father where the Loyalist graves were located, but this location remained fuzzy in the memories of both Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Long, and they could not specify exactly where the graves were located.

Another important bit of historical information has recently been reconsidered in light of what is known about the 17-acre county property. As noted in an earlier section of this report, Lyman Draper reported in his book that the "place of their [Loyalists] burial was well known" and road workers encountered the graves of the hanged Loyalists sometime around 1855 (Draper 1881:341). Some of the graves were actually opened and the remains of at least one individual was disinterred and reburied elsewhere. Old bridge abutments are present along the creek on the east side of the county property, indicating a bridge once spanned the tributary stream that forms the east border of the county property. A trace of the roadway leading west from the bridge crosses the south end of the county property. The construction date of the old bridge has not been confirmed, but perhaps this bridge and the associated roadway were constructed as early as 1855. Despite considerable effort to locate records that might indicate when the road was constructed, the date of the road and associated bridge has not been ascertained. However, several early maps from the early-twentieth century appear to show this roadway and a 1939 aerial photograph of the area clearly shows the old roadway leading to the bridge (Figure 13 and Figures 26, 28, 30 and 32). It appears the roadway was used until the 1940s, when Whitesides Road was straightened to its current alignment.

Together, the oral history relating to the location of the hanging tree and the possibility that the bridge and associated roadway are parts of the 1855 roadway close to where Loyalists graves were located make a compelling, but clearly circumstantial, case for the hanging tree and grave sites being located on or near the county property. The possibility that the old roadway and bridge was near the Loyalist graves was one impetus for implementing the archaeological investigation in 2012, and the earlier investigation in 2007-2008.

Following in this report is a description of the county-owned property, followed by descriptions of the archaeological survey and descriptions of the archaeological resources documented during the survey. Old road traces figure prominently in the documentation effort, and interpretations of these road traces consider the very real possibility that the bridge and associated road trace on the county property date from about 1855.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 17-ACRE PROJECT AREA

The 17-acre county-owned property is situated on the north side of Whitesides Road (State Road 1538) in the north-central part of Rutherford County (Figures 1, and 3 through 10). This tract was the focus of the 2012 archaeological investigation. The project area is located within the Logan Store Township in an area known as Sunshine (Figure 11).

Whitesides Road runs in a general southwest-northeast direction through this area, crossing Depriest Road (State Road 1713) about three-quarters of a mile northeast of the project area. From there, Whitesides Road then extends another half mile to the northeast and terminates at the Sunshine-Bostic Road (State Road 1006), a major north-south road extending through the eastern part of the county (Figure 9). Whitesides Road extends west-southwest from the project area for several miles to connect with the modern-day Ruth community, near the town of Rutherford. Whitesides Road takes its name from the Whitesides settlement, a community in the northern part of the county with origins in the early nineteenth century. Depriest Road generally runs in a southeast-northwest direction through the northern part of Rutherford County, eventually extending to the northwest to Cane Creek (and modern US 64) (Figures 9 and 10). The road also extends to the south into southeast Rutherford County.

About 0.4 mile west of the project area Whitesides Road intersects with Brooks Road (also named Engineer Road to the south of Whitesides Road), a north-south road that follows a ridge top through the area (Figures 7, 8 and 9). Farther north this road eventually ties into Depriest Road (Figure 8). Extending northwest from the Whitesides-Brooks Road intersection is Murray Road, which joins Mt. Lebanon Church Road and Sandy Level Church Road, making connections with a number of other roads leading west and northwest to the Second Broad River (Figures 7 and 9).

The 17-acre county-owned project area is roughly rectangular in plan, with its long axis extending north-south (Figures 15, and 25 through 31). The southern end of the

property is considerably wider than the north end. The tract occupies the eastern and southern slopes of a large north-south trending ridge (Figures 9 and 24). The south end of the tract borders on Whitesides Road and the eastern side of the property is bordered by a south-flowing stream that is a tributary of Robertson Creek (Figure 9).

Situated near the center of the county-owned property is a small farmstead comprised of two house structures, two small outbuildings, and two large farm structures (Figure 15). Most prominent among these is a large two-story house with a wide, wraparound porch that is called the Long House, named after the family who owned the property and the house through much of the nineteenth century and on through the twentieth century (Figure 17). The two farm structures, a large barn and a small square-cut-timber shed, are located about 300 feet west and southwest of the large house, respectively (Figures 19 and 20). These two structures are actually located on a 5.5-acre property that was split off of a larger 22.5-acre property a few years prior to acquisition of the 17 acres by the county (Figure 15). At least since the 1860s, and possibly as early as the 1840s, this property was owned by members of the Long family, and the property is generally called the Long property, although in 1999 it also came to be referred to as the Morrell Family Trust property.

Except for the ridge top where the farmstead is situated, most of the project area is steeply sloped (Figures 15 and 24). The north end of the county-owned property includes a steep, east-facing slope that descends to a small, narrow floodplain bordering a tributary stream that extends along the east side of the property. The north part of the project area is today largely wooded although it was agricultural land in the first three quarters of the twentieth century. Trees in this area generally appear to be 30 to 50 years old, and plow scars and agricultural terraces are still visible on the upper slopes of the hillside.

The southeastern part of the project area, including the east-facing slope east of the large house, is also wooded. The slopes in this area are steep and there is no evidence of this area having been previously plowed. The slopes contain a number of large trees that are several decades old. There are also several very large stumps present on the slope, indicating that this area was wooded for most of the twentieth century. The trees were logged at some time in the last few decades, probably in the 1960s or 1970s. This area is crossed by an old road trace that leads to remnants of a rock bridge that used to span the tributary stream running along the east side of the project area (see Road Trace D, described below). This tributary feeds into Robertson Creek. The bridge and road are part of a road system that is believed to have been built in 1855 (discussed later in this report). The road trace is currently grown over with small saplings less than 20 years old.

The high ridge top that forms the southern end of the county-owned property where the house and other buildings are located is covered with grass or pasture, although a few large trees are present. An unpaved driveway extends north from Whitesides Road up the slope and across the ridge top toward the house. The driveway crosses the 1855 road trace mentioned above.

Soils within the property are mapped as the Pacolet-Cecil Association, which are described as gently sloping to steep, well-drained soils of the piedmont uplands (Kenan

2005). Soils in this association are described as dark reddish brown, sandy clay loams. The description is consistent with the soil that observed in the field. Surface soils are underlain by yellowish red clay loam and saprolite. Underlying the soils are weathered metamorphic rocks such as biotite gneiss.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY METHODS AND COVERAGE

Archaeological investigation of the 17-acre county-owned property was undertaken between August and November 2012 and was conducted for John Horton, Architect, as part of his efforts to prepare a preservation plan for development of the historic property. The 2012 investigation was confined to the 17-acre county-owned property. Another brief investigation of the property was conducted over four days in December 2007 and January 2008, prior to the county acquiring the property. That investigation was conducted for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (a unit of the National Park Service) and Rutherford County in an attempt to identify the locations of the hanging tree and Loyalist graves. While a general survey of the property was undertaken at that time, the earlier investigation was focused on the slope east of the Long House and an area east of the creek on an adjacent property. Some of the results of the earlier investigation are summarized in this report.

The 2012 archaeological survey began with a thorough walkover of the 17-acre project area, augmented with the excavation of selectively placed shovel tests in an attempt to identify places with potential for the preservation of archaeological artifacts or other archaeological evidence. Special attention was given to the slopes north of the house and the southeastern part of the property along the creek. These were areas where the hanging tree and Loyalist graves were most likely to be located.

The 2007-2008 investigation also included a walkover of the property and limited shovel testing of selected areas within or near the county-owned property, as well as a close examination of the remains of the bridge on the creek. The investigation also included an examination of property east of the creek. The owner of the property gave permission for the archaeologists to examine the area at that time, but it was not revisited during the 2012 survey as it is privately owned and not part of the tract that the county plans to develop into a visitor's center.

The surveys resulted in the identification of four archaeological sites within the 17-acre property. All of these sites have major "above-ground" components or are visible on the ground surface.

- The largest site was the Long farmstead which includes all of the 17-acre project area. At the center of the 17-acre tract are two house structures, associated outbuildings and wells, and a driveway (Figures 16 through 20, and 33). This farmstead is designated Site 1.
- Just north of the Long House is a deeply entrenched road trace (Road Trace A) that can be followed from the creek westward across the ridge top north of the house (Figures 24 through 32). The road trace continues on to the west-southwest

and extends between the barn and crib shed outbuildings on the adjacent property. This road trace was designated Site 2.

- Two major road traces (Road Traces B and C) and a few minor traces are also present north of the Long House, extending from the creek westward up the wooded slope and on to the west and northwest (Figures 24 through 32). These road traces, probably variations on a single road, mark another major archaeological resource and are designed as Site 3.
- The bridge remains at the east side of the property and an associated road trace extending across the southern half of the property (Road Trace D, also referred to as the 1855 road) are designated as Site 4 (Figures 21 and 24 through 32).

Despite a very intensive survey, augmented by selective shovel testing, other archaeological sites were not identified within the 17-acre property. Surprisingly, no evidence of prehistoric Native American occupation was identified. Most importantly, no evidence of Biggerstaff's hanging tree, Loyalist graves or the 1780 Patriot campsite was identified, even though historical records and oral history suggest that the county property was associated with these places.

During the 2007-2008 survey, an additional site was identified east of the 17-acre county-owned property (Figure 31, red rectangle on east side of creek). This site consisted of a scatter of metal artifacts located immediately east of the creek along the driveway that parallels the tributary stream. The site is not well defined, but it is located only a few feet south of the road trace that is an extension of one of the roads (Site 2, Road Trace A) identified on the 17-acre tract.

Accordingly, much of the 2012 survey focused on the identification of road traces and a more intensive shovel testing of areas where accumulations of artifacts associated with the Long house or farmstead might be present, or evidence of the Loyalist graves might be found. Mapping of the road traces was accomplished by using GIS devices and overlaying aerial photographs on maps available through Google Earth and other sources.

Focused Shovel Testing: Three areas were selected for intensive shovel testing during the 2012 investigation (Figure 31). The goal of these investigations was to determine the potential of each area to contain preserved subsurface archaeological deposits. Excavated soil from each of the shovel tests was screened through ¼-inch mesh hardware cloth in order to recover artifacts. The location of each test location was also mapped with GPS equipment.

One area intensively shovel tested was the yard around the Long house (Figure 31). An attempt was made to recover a sample of artifacts that might be informative about early occupation of the main house and occupation of a smaller residence behind the main house. These investigations were not especially productive. Out of 20 shovel tests excavated in the vicinity of the Long house, only six tests yielded artifacts. These included nails and pieces of modern glass, none of which are particularly informative. All of the recovered items, except perhaps a few square cut nails, are items from the last half of the twentieth century.

A second area intensively shovel tested was part of a field about 300 feet south of the Long House, and east of the timber log crib structure (Figure 31). There had been talk about putting a parking lot in this area, and the shovel testing was designed to determine whether there was potential for preserved archaeological contexts in this area. Forty shovel tests were excavated in several evenly spaced rows across the field but none of the shovel tests yielded a single artifact. Soil observed in the tests showed that the area had been previously plowed, but the plow zone was very shallow, only 8 to 10 inches in depth. It is easy to conclude that construction of a parking lot in this area will not affect significant archaeological remains.

A third area subjected to more intensive shovel testing was the lower slope and stream bottom along the east and southeast side of the 17-acre property, south of the remains of a bridge that used to extend over the creek (Figure 31). The goal here was to look for evidence of the Loyalist graves. The area north of the bridge had been intensively investigated in the 2007-2008 study, and a cursory survey of the area south of the bridge was also conducted at that time, but a more intensive examination of the area was undertaken to see if evidence of graves might be found. The south area is wooded and heavily grown over with undergrowth. Ground visibility was very low. Fifteen shovel tests were excavated in a north-south line about 20 feet back from the creek, and another ten shovel tests were excavated on the lower slopes above the floodplain. Unfortunately, none of the shovel tests yielded any early artifacts, evidence of a grave, or other archaeological evidence.

Metal Detecting: The eastern slopes of the 17-acre tract were examined with a metal detector in an attempt to find artifacts possibly related to the period of the Revolutionary War and to potentially recover evidence related to the Loyalist graves. In 2012, the wooded slopes in the far northern part of the 17-acre tract were examined. Coverage was systematic, but, given the amount of area to be covered, it was a quick, non-intensive survey. A few modern pieces of metal (tin cans, modern nails, and car or truck parts) were identified, but these are probably remains left from agricultural activities of the mid-twentieth century or from logging activities of the last half of the century.

The eastern slopes of the southern part of the 17-acre tract were intensively metal detected in the 2007-2008 investigation in an attempt to find evidence of the Loyalist graves (Figure 23). The focus of this investigation was the hill top and steep slope immediately east of the main house, an area extending down slope to the creek and including the road trace associated with the bridge remains and a connector road leading north from the bridge (Site 3). A few iron items were found along the edge of the road traces, but all of the items were of twentieth-century manufacture without historical value.

Cursory metal detecting was also conducted around the main house and the large barn associated with the Long farmstead. A number of items were found around the house, including several nails, but nothing dating from the colonial period was found. Undoubtedly, there are many more metal items in the ground around the house, but a more systematic and carefully controlled metal detector survey is needed to recover the

full range of artifacts in this area. Shovel testing shows that most artifacts in this area are related to use of the house during the latter decades of the twentieth century.

A cursory metal detector survey undertaken around the large barn yielded several major responses from the machine, but these are likely pieces of agricultural equipment or items from the barn itself (tin roof pieces). These were not excavated as the county does not own the property where the barn is located. Still, it might be possible to recover informative agricultural artifacts from this area in the future.

During the 2007-2008 investigation, an area east of the county's 17-acre tract was metal detected in an attempt to identify the location of Loyalist graves, the assumption being that there might be metal items such as buttons, buckles, and other personal hardware left behind in some of the graves, even though, according to Draper, several of the bodies had been disinterred and possibly moved (Figure 31). Draper reports that several items were recovered from the graves that were found during road construction activities in 1855. The area investigated is outside the county-owned property, situated east of the creek and driveway paralleling the creek. The area is situated only a few feet south of a major road trace, an extension of the road trace that passes by the north side of the Long house (Site 2, Road Trace A). With permission and participation of the property owner, an area measuring approximately 40 by 40 feet was metal detected.

A number of artifacts were recovered, including modern nails and a horseshoe fragment (Figure 22). The most interesting item recovered was a pointed iron object. The piece has a stem that is squared and the piece is obviously a piece of wrought iron. The exact function of this item has yet to be determined, although it has been speculated that it might represent a military spike. However, the item does not resemble known military weapons. The squared stem of the piece resembles an iron piece used in conjunction with a swage block or anvil, but we cannot be sure of this. Whatever its function, one end of the item clearly has been reshaped to a point by forge hammering. While the results of this metal detecting survey were interesting, none of the items recovered are indicative of the Loyalist graves or use of the area as a Patriot camp. The area east of the creek does warrant a more comprehensive survey to better understand why artifacts are strewn across the area. However, any investigation would require permission of the land owner who has indicated that access to the property is restricted and available only with permission.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATIONS

Long Farmstead (Site Number 1)

The 17-acre tract owned by the county is part of a farm that was owned by members of the Long family for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Figure 15). Ownership passed to the Morrell Family Trust in 1999 (the Morrell family includes descendants of the Long family). Following legal proceedings relating to resolution of the Trust ownership, the 17-acre property was purchased in 2010 by the Historic Preservation

Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., and in the same year the property was transferred to Rutherford County. The property is most often referred to as the Long property.

The county property includes a large house (referred to in this report alternately as the “big house” or “main” house) and a smaller house structure situated about 100 feet northeast of the main house (referred to sometimes as the “tenant house”) (Figures 17 and 18). Two small shed structures and several wells are present behind the big house. West of the house is a large barn, and to the southwest is a double-pile log farm building (Figures 19 and 20). The latter two structures are actually situated just outside the county-owned property, but the structures are historically integral to the Long farm, so they are considered as part of the Long farmstead site.

The entire 17-acre county-owned property is considered to be an archaeological site. Technically, the adjacent 5.5-acre property to the west and other surrounding property should also be considered part of the site, as they contain buildings and agricultural fields associated with the farm. However, because the 5.5-acre tract is privately owned, it has not been included in the designated site area, although the buildings on the smaller tract are described here to complete documentation of the property. Together, the 22-acre property includes the following site components: (1) main house, smaller tenant house, most recently used for storage, and two associated shed outbuildings and several wells (Figures 17 and 18); (2) two farm buildings—a frame barn and a log shed (Figures 19 and 20); (3) a driveway leading to the house from Whitesides Road (Figures 15, 16 and 33); and, (4) former agricultural fields to the west and north of the main house that show evidence of agricultural terracing. There are also several minor road traces extending through the woods east of the house, some of which run close to the main house, but these are minor traces that are related to use of the property in the twentieth century. More prominent road traces on the property are of historical interest, and these are considered as separate archaeological resources and are described separately below.

The age of the large house on the property is not precisely known, but it is believed to have been constructed sometime in the 1870s or early 1880s. The age of the smaller house to the rear of the large house is also not precisely known but preliminary indications are that it was constructed in the 1860s. It is a frame structure, and it may have been built before the main house, but this has yet to be confirmed. Brief descriptions of the farmstead structures are provided here.

Main House or the Long House: The core of this structure is a two-story, T-plan house with a one-story ell (Figure 17). The front of the house faces to the south (toward Whitesides Road). It has been modified with the addition of a large wrap-around porch that extends along three sides of the structure. The porch roof is supported with wood columns on squared brick column bases, giving the structure a bungalow style appearance. The porch is probably an early-twentieth-century addition to the house structure. The roof of the house is tin. The porch roof has fallen in places, which at the time of the investigation made access to the house difficult.

The house was filled with trash and debris at the time of the investigation, and the porches were piled high with derelict appliances and other pieces of trash. A large hornet nest was present in one wall of the structure. A cursory walk-through of the house with the project architect showed that it has intact fireplace surrounds and that some of the room doors, closet doors and fireplace surrounds have been finished (painted) with a faux wood-grain. Interior doors retain original hardware and some light fixtures may also be quite old. The central staircase leading to the second floor is in very good condition. Attached to the roof of the structure are several lightning rods, including one that incorporates a glass globe.

It has been suggested by some that the front façade of this house used to face to the north, toward the old road traces that possibly have origins back in colonial times. However, this is unlikely and has yet to be substantiated by architectural evidence. Behind the house are several wells, but these have been covered with concrete pads or capped surrounds and the well interiors could not be examined. Most have pipes installed in them for pumps and appear to still be functional. Two small rectangular or square sheds are present behind the structure. These appear to be twentieth-century constructions. A smaller house structure is also located about 75 feet northeast of the house (described below).

A series of shovel tests were excavated along the east and west sides of the big house, but these did not yield any eighteenth-century artifacts or any artifacts of the early-mid nineteenth century. A few modern artifacts of the last 40 years or so were recovered (bottle or jar glass, and nails) but these provide little information about the occupants of the house. It is very likely that many additional artifacts are present in the yards and areas close to the sides of the house, although these artifacts would be expected to be mostly from the last 50 years or so.

Tenant House: This wood-frame residence is located about 75 feet northeast of the large Long house (Figure 18). The house very likely predates the Long house and it was likely used as a tenant cabin after the larger house was constructed. The smaller structure measures about 23 by 20 feet, with the long axis of the structure extending east-west. The exterior is currently covered with asphalt shingles and tar paper, making it difficult to observe and assess the structure. However, a small porch on the south side of the structure is visible and the wall boards in this part of the house are considerably wider than what can be found in most late-nineteenth or twentieth-century structures, which suggests this is a mid to late-nineteenth-century structure. Unfortunately, this porch and much of the interior of the house is filled with trash and debris, so it could not be examined closely during the archaeological investigation.

Directly to the north of this structure, not more than 80 feet away, is the edge of a large ravine that is a trace of an old road, with origins possibly in the late-eighteenth century (see Road Trace A, Site 2, described below). It has been suggested that the front of the small house once faced to the north toward the road. But because the house exterior is currently covered, and the house is piled high with trash and debris, it was not possible to confirm this.

A series of shovel tests was excavated around the smaller structure, and none of these tests yielded artifacts that could be attributed to the eighteenth or early-to-mid nineteenth centuries. Topsoil around the house is quite shallow, and the likelihood of there being a dense concentration of archaeological artifacts in close association with the house is not high. However, it should be noted that areas beneath or directly against the structure could be places where accumulations of archaeological artifacts might be preserved, and these areas were not investigated. Regardless, the quantity of archaeological materials present around this structure is probably low. The apparent lack of associated early artifacts is likely attributable to erosion, as the hill top where the farmstead is located would have been subjected to considerable runoff and erosion over the many decades it was occupied. It is also likely that trash and discards left by the residents of the house, if present in a large quantity, would have been periodically swept up and discarded on the slope to the east, or in the ravine to the north of the house.

Large Barn: This is a very large, two to three-story barn structure, located about 300 feet due west of the main house (Figure 20). The structure is actually located outside the 17-acre county-owned property. It is densely covered with vegetation and it was very difficult to access, so a detailed inspection of the structure was not attempted. The structure is oriented with the long axis north-south, with entrances on both of these sides. The eastern wall is built of board slats in a manner that allows the interior of the barn to be ventilated. This was clearly a multi-function barn, probably used for tobacco curing and storing feed, and it possibly had other uses as well.

Double Crib, Squared-timber Shed: This structure is located 260 feet southwest of the main house (Figure 19). It is situated outside the boundary of the 17-acre county-owned property. Vegetation has grown up around the structure, but it was still accessible from the west side. The structure consists of two squared-timber (log) cribs with an open area between the cribs. The open space between the cribs is currently filled with firewood and used to store several pieces of farm equipment. A tin roof extends across both cribs and the intervening open area. Logs used in the construction are faced on two sides, with the top and bottom sides left in natural form with bark intact. Adz or axe marks show the logs were squared by hand. The logs are square notched, with a few joins slightly angled in the manner of a half-dovetail. Some of the logs on the east side of the structure are deteriorated, but most of the structure is in fair to good condition. This structure very well could have been constructed in the nineteenth century, although the form is typical of outbuildings of both the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The precise age of the structure remains unknown.

Loop Driveway Leading to the Main House: A driveway leads north from Whitesides Road to the main house on the county-owned property (Figures 15 and 16). The lower part of the drive near Whitesides Road has been cut into the lower part of the south-facing slope, leaving a steep bank on the west side of the road that is as much as three to four feet high. The higher part of the drive where one nears the house appears to be slightly elevated due to the addition of some gravel surfacing and possibly the addition of some earthen fill. Much of the upper part of the drive near the house is covered with grass. The drive currently appears to terminate in front of the main house, although very

slight impressions can be observed on the landscape around the house, indicating that it used to extend to the west side of the house and also branch to the west toward the barn.

The driveway leading to the main house appears on the 1938 aerial photograph of the property (Figures 29 through 33). The photograph shows that at this time the south end of the driveway connected with a road that extended roughly east-west across the southern part of the property and passed close to the double-crib farm structure that remains preserved just outside the boundary of the county-owned tract. This is interpreted to be an 1855 road. From this we can infer that when Whitesides Road was straightened in the early 1940s or 1950s, the new alignment was relocated 50 feet or so south of the 1855 alignment. This is likely the time when the lower part of the slope was graded out to accommodate lengthening of the driveway, resulting in the steep side bank that exists today.

The 1938 aerial photograph also shows that the portion of the driveway on the upper part of the slope followed the same approximate alignment of the modern driveway as it approached the house. The old drive then extended along the west side of the main house where it then turned west toward the barn, more or less following the route of the old road tract (Road Trace #1, see description below) and then back to the south to loop back to the drive (Figure 33). It is suspected that this loop driveway was put in place when the big house was constructed. In the nineteenth century, loop drives were a necessity for horse-drawn wagon or carriage teams because horse-drawn vehicles cannot easily be backed up. The loop allowed teams to turn around with little effort. Many nineteenth-century homesteads had loop driveways that passed close to the main house.

Agricultural Fields and Terraces: The higher land in the northern half of the county-owned property was historically used for agriculture (Figure 24). These fields are considered to be part of the farmstead site. Open or partially open fields are still present to the northwest of the main house, although these have not been used in the past couple of decades and they are starting to be grown over with small pines, weeds, briars and other undergrowth. The northern part of the county-owned property is today largely wooded, but the higher ridge and upper ridge slopes of this area also used to be agricultural fields.

The wooded slope north and northwest of the main house is highly terraced (Figure 24). The agricultural terraces were constructed prior to the 1960s or early 1970s, as the area now is covered with a stand of trees that is at least 50 years old. The terraces are very much evident on the ground as one walks through the woods. They extend laterally across the slope, not up and down the slope, and some of the terraces are so pronounced that at first glance they resemble farm roads. Aerial photography provides a comprehensive view of the terraces in the area (as seen in Figure 25) and terracing is widespread throughout this part of Rutherford County. A LIDAR map of the project area, which is capable of displaying a view of the actual land surface (LIDAR is able to record the landscape by penetrating through vegetation), shows an enhanced view of the terracing in and near the project area (Figure 24). The 1938 aerial photograph—the earliest aerial photograph for the region—shows that terracing was already common across this part of Rutherford County by the late 1930s (Figure 28).

Terracing is a method used to retard and prevent soil erosion (Ireland et al. 1939). The clayey soils of the southern Piedmont of North Carolina are especially susceptible to erosion when the land has been cleared and prepared for planting. By some estimates, the southern Piedmont landscape has lost as much as one or two feet of surface soil since the region began to be occupied by settlers of European origin in the mid-eighteenth century. The erosion problem became especially severe in the 1870s when agricultural activities were expanded in Rutherford County and surrounding counties to emphasize cotton. The terracing of agricultural fields accompanied this shift in crops and by the 1880s the practice of land terracing was widespread in the region. Terracing, combined with practices of contour plowing, strip planting of row crops, crop rotation and the use of cover crops, prevents soil erosion and enhances agricultural productivity (Henry 1937:3)

Early terraces were created by horse or mule-drawn plows, with plowed rows aligned with the slope rather than up and down the slope. Over-plowing selected rows resulted in deeper plowed rows at select intervals, and over time the landscape would actually become terraced, with stepped terraces retaining rain runoff and slowing the downslope movement of water. Ideally, the water would mostly be absorbed into the ground and excess was funneled laterally across the slopes (gradient) to prepared drainage basins, ditches or streams. Over time, a stepped gradient terrace system was created.

In the early twentieth century, tractor-pulled mechanical terracing machines came into use. These created terraces that were much wider with deeper rows. Within the county-owned property, some of the larger terraces were cut as much as two feet into the land surface, laterally displacing a line of soil as much as four to five feet in width. The larger terraces that can be seen within the county-owned property are probably examples of more recent, mechanical terracing (Figure 24).

One common problem with terracing is inadequate drainage. This has obviously been a problem with the terracing on the county-owned property, although it is not clear if this is due to inadequate terrace construction or deterioration of the terrace drainage after the property ceased to be used for agriculture and reverted to woods. Regardless, the terraces have been funneling water into old road traces on the property, creating severe erosion within the road traces. The concentration of water in these roadbeds and other low areas has resulted over time in severe scouring, producing deep gulleys and washouts. The deteriorated road traces are now very evident, and many of these ditches have nearly vertical sides. Parts of some eroded road traces are 15 feet deep. Improper gradient terracing explains why the old road traces through the project area have become extremely eroded.

Long Farmstead Archaeological Significance Evaluation: The boundaries of this farmstead site have been defined as the entire 17-acre country-owned property. In actuality, the farmstead was much larger, incorporating not only a 5.5-acre tract recently split off from the west side of the property (where the barn and crib shed are located) but also large agricultural fields northwest and west of the house.

As described in a previous section of the report, shovel testing around the houses on the property yielded only a few artifacts, and most of the items recovered were very recent in age. No colonial era artifacts were recovered. The shovel testing also showed that the area close to the house and the yards around the house are comprised of shallow top soils. Based on the soil conditions observed in the shovel tests, it is unlikely that large accumulations of archaeological artifacts would be present around the house, and there appears to be a low probability that subsurface features being preserved in this area.

In summary, the archaeological potential for the farmstead appears to be low. The site is not considered to be a significant archaeological site. While archaeological investigations could yield some information about activities associated with the farmstead, the site is not likely to yield important information about the past that rises to the level of making it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion d as an archaeological resource. The Long house and some of the associated farm structures may be historically or architecturally important, as they are very good examples of a rural farm of the late-nineteenth century and twentieth century. A comprehensive architectural evaluation of the property should be considered to consider the site's eligibility for the National Register under criteria b and c. Of course, if it were to be demonstrated that the property was part of Biggerstaff's Old Fields, the property might qualify for listing on the National Register under criterion a for its association with events related to the Battle of Kings Mountain and the Revolutionary War, although the Long farmstead site would not likely be a contributing resource for this designation.

Even though the site is not considered a significant archaeological site, additional archaeological excavation in and around the main house and some of the outbuildings would likely yield an assortment of historic era artifacts dating from the time the houses on the property were initially occupied—probably the 1860s or 1870s—to the time it was most recently lived in, which was in the first decade of the 2000s. Data derived from these artifacts would be informative about the activities of the previous occupants of the house, and possibly provide an understanding of rural life and farming and agriculture practices of the region. Such an excavation, if supervised by a professional archaeologist, could be undertaken as a public archaeology program, involving students and the interested public. This would be a way for county residents to learn more about the history of nineteenth and twentieth-century Rutherford County, in addition to learning about the Revolutionary War period and the hanging event through the exhibits of an educational center.

Road Trace A, North of the Long House (Site Number 2)

The archaeological survey resulted in the identification of four major road traces extending across the county-owned property as well as a few short road segments that connect the major traces. Road Trace A is one of the major roads visible on the landscape within the project area. The location of this trace and the connections with other road segments can be seen in Figure 15 and Figures 24 through 32.

Road Trace A extends east-west across the ridge top where the farmstead is situated, passing along the north of the big house and south of the large barn located west of the house. The segment of road trace located directly north of the main house (referenced in notes as Segment A1) is deeply entrenched into the east-facing hill slope. In some places the entrenched road trace is as much as 10 to 15 feet deep, and the depth of the road trace has been enhanced by erosion that has taken place over the years. What may have started out as a lightly worn road trace in the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century has become a deeply eroded trench after several decades of erosion. The eastern end of the entrenched section of road extends into the floodplain next to the creek that borders the east side of the county property. The entrenched segment is densely covered with vegetation, including many briars. It could not be easily traversed, but it was possible to walk along the sides of the trace through this woods.

The segment of this road between the house and barn is covered with grass and is only slightly worn into the ground surface, but it is clearly visible upon close inspection. This segment of road also seems to merge into a loop driveway that used to run past the west side of the main house (Figure 33, described separately above).

Road Trace A continues west of the barn down the west-facing slope (Segment A2), descending gently through a wooded area that is densely covered with undergrowth, and then through a cleared field and past a modern house on to Whitesides Road. The upper portion of this segment of the trace is sunken into the landscape and clearly visible, even though it is wooded (young trees, 30 to 40 years in age) and covered with undergrowth. The road trace is about 25 feet wide in this area. Toward the western, lower part of the slope, where the trace (western part of Segment A2) passes through the yards and fields associated an abandoned house (yards around the house are currently used as animal enclosures), the road is less distinct, but it is clear the road extended on to merge with modern Whiteside Road.

There is also a major segment of connecting road trace (Segment A3) on the east side of the tributary stream that runs along the east side of the county-owned property. This road trace leads east from the creek, across the modern driveway next to the creek, and it then ascends the long hillside east of the creek for more than 1,500 feet. The trace is sunken into the land surface and clearly visible, even though it is eroded and gullied in areas. Several older trees (50+ years) are situated alongside the road trace, and some younger trees (20+ years) are beginning to establish themselves within the road trace. The road trace then continues on to the east along the top of the hill where it appears to bend to north-northwest (Segment A4), more or less in alignment with modern Depriest Road, although the original trace seems to coincide with a driveway or farm access road that parallels Depriest Road. The trace does not tie into the modern paved road. Perhaps Depriest Road is one of the roads shown on the 1808 Strother map (Figure 5).

Trace A can clearly be seen on a LIDAR map of the area (Figure 24). LIDAR mapping used lasers to penetrate vegetation and the reflected laser beam is used to map the land surface without the obstructions of trees and other ground vegetation. The road runs east-west as described above across the county property and across properties to the

east and west of the county property. There is no doubt this is one of the most prominent road traces on the local landscape.

The place where Road Trace A appears to have crossed the tributary stream on the east side of the county property is a convergence point for Road Trace A, Road Trace B and Road Trace C (other traces described individually below). All of these roads converge in the narrow bottom along the west side of the creek. The road appears to continue into the creek, but the creek banks are presently two to three feet high. Forging the creek with horse-drawn vehicles with the banks in their present condition would be very difficult. However, the creek here is probably considerably deeper and wider today than it was through much of late-eighteenth century and nineteenth century, due to increased erosion of the streambed during the twentieth century. It is possible that this was a shallow stream with low banks during the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that could easily be crossed by horses and wagons. It is also possible that the actual ford was located farther upstream where the stream channel would have been less deep and less wide. There is a trace of a trail leading north along the edge of the creek, and horses and wagons could have simply been routed farther upstream a short distance to ford the creek.

Another possibility is that the creek was bridged where the roads converge at the creek, although there is no evidence of bridge abutments or a bridge structure here. However, the remnants of a bridge, believed to have been constructed in 1855, are present about 230 feet farther downstream (to the south, described below) from the convergence of the roads. A connecting road trace extends alongside the creek to this bridge. If a bridge were ever present in alignment with Road Trace A, it probably would not have been built until the first few decades of the nineteenth century. During colonial times and during the decades just before the turn of the nineteenth century it is unlikely that the quantity of wagon or carriage traffic would have been sufficient to warrant the construction of a bridge.

Road Trace A is believed to be one of the oldest roads in the vicinity of the project area. Certainly it is one of the oldest roads crossing the county property. It is interesting to note how straight the road is, relative to a later road that crosses through the area (the 1855 road is described later in this section of the report). Road Trace A crosses over the ridge top where the county property is situated, curving only slightly across the ridge, with the alignment requiring relatively long, steep ascents and descents of nearby slopes to the east and west beyond the county property. This contrasts greatly with the 1855 road through the area, which winds back and forth with the contours of hillsides to minimize the grade and minimize the ascent and descent of hill slopes.

The differences in road alignments mentioned above may reflect differences in the way people traveled at different points in time through history. If Road Trace A began as a road primarily for pedestrian and horseback use, which is how most roads functioned in Revolutionary War times, a straighter, more direct, route would make sense, since people and horses can more easily traverse the ups and downs of long steep slopes than can heavily laden wagons or carriages. The winding route of the 1855 road, avoiding steep ascents and descents as much as possible, would have been more suitable for wagon

or carriage traffic, which by the mid-nineteenth century was a much more common form of transportation. Of course, once gasoline-powered vehicles were in use, straight roads with long ascents were no longer a problem, and straighter roads are entirely suited to faster, modern traffic, with modern Whitesides Road being a good example.

How old is Road Trace A? At this point in time, the precise age of the road trace cannot be specified with certainty. There is no definitive marker or evidence to indicate when the road was first used. But I think it is safe to conclude that this trace represents an early road, probably one of the earliest roads in the region, as it connects with other early roads segments leading east and west from the county-owned property.

The reasoning for assuming this is a very early road is based on these observations. This road seems to predate the 1855 road (described below) that runs across the county-owned property. So that would indicate that the road was in use at least by the early decades of the nineteenth century. Any road in use in the early nineteenth century probably had its origin in the late eighteenth century, and because this road seems to mark a major thoroughfare through the area, it likely it was first established prior to the Revolutionary War era when road networks were just beginning to be established in the region. So while it is possible this road was first used in the nineteenth century, the stronger inference is that it dates from before the American Revolution, and, if this is the case, it is very possible it was in use when the Patriot army camped at Biggerstaff's farm after the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Road Traces B and C, North Part of County Property (Site Number 3)

For documentation purposes, two of the major road traces on the north side of the property are considered as a single archaeological site because of proximity, the fact that these are interconnected by short segments of road and the fact they lead to the same place (Figures 15 and 24 through 32). These roads extend from the creek at the east side of the county-owned property west or northwest up the hill slope. Even though they are separated by as much as a hundred feet at the bottom of the slope, the two traces appear to merge into a single road on top of the ridge northwest of the project area. From there, the road trace merges into a paved road named Dead End Road, and this paved road connects with Brooks Road, a paved road that extends on to the northwest and north. Descriptions of the two individual road traces on the county property are provided here, and a variety of maps are used to illustrate the alignments of the traces (Figures 24 through 32). A discussion of connections with possible historic roads beyond the project area is also included at the end of this section.

Road Trace B: Road Trace B extends in an east-west direction along the wooded slope north of the main house (Figures 24 through 32). It extends west from the tributary stream on the east side of the county property, and then bends to the northwest through the wide part of the county-owned property. It seems to tie into road traces farther along the ridge top to the northwest.