

Church of St. John-in-the-Wilderness
Flat Rock, Henderson County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-12-A1

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of North Carolina

Historic American Buildings Survey
Prepared at Headquarters Office for
M. R. Marsh, District Officer
509 Builders Building, Charlotte, N.C.

Church of St. John in the Wilderness
North Carolina Highway # 69
Flat Rock, Henderson County
North Carolina

Owner: Episcopal Church
Date of Erection: 1834
Architect: Not given
Builder: Not given
Present Condition: Good
Number of Stories: One
Materials of Construction: Brick
Other Exhibits Kept: See text
Additional Data: See following pages.

St. John in the Wilderness, at Flat Rock, ~~said to be the oldest Episcopal Church in the State of North Carolina,~~ was built in 1834 by Charles Baring and his wife, who had come to Flat Rock in 1820 from Charleston. Baring, a native of Exeter, England, and a member of the banking firm of Baring Brothers, London, built, among other things in Flat Rock, what is now the summer home of George J. Baldwin, of Savannah, and also the Farmer Hotel. Both of the Barings are buried under the floor of the church, and tablets have been erected to their memory in the church. (Ref. - Arthur, John P. - History of Western North Carolina, 1914, pages 493 - 494.)

On August 28, 1836, the Church was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. L. S. Ives, Bishop of North Carolina. About 1852 it was destroyed by fire and rebuilt. The present structure stands as it was built at that time with the minor addition of a small organ wing in recent years. (Reference - Tablet on gate and cornerstone above doorway. Mr. J. S. Jones, of Flat Rock, who cares for the church, was the source of much of this information).

The church is not heated and is used only in the summer season by the residents of Flat Rock, who are made up mostly of Charleston and South Carolina people.

On the west and south sides of the church are burial grounds where many prominent Charleston families have buried their deceased. Here may be seen the names of Rutledges, Lowndeses, Ravenals, Pinckneys, Hegers, and many others.

The structure itself is of brick - the tower walls being covered with stucco. Wood shingles cover the roof. The church is in excellent condition and contains some very interesting wood trusses.

Author *Stewart Rogers*

Approved - *M. R. Marsh*

Reviewed 1936, H.C.F.