

Historic McDowell, Virginia Walking Tour

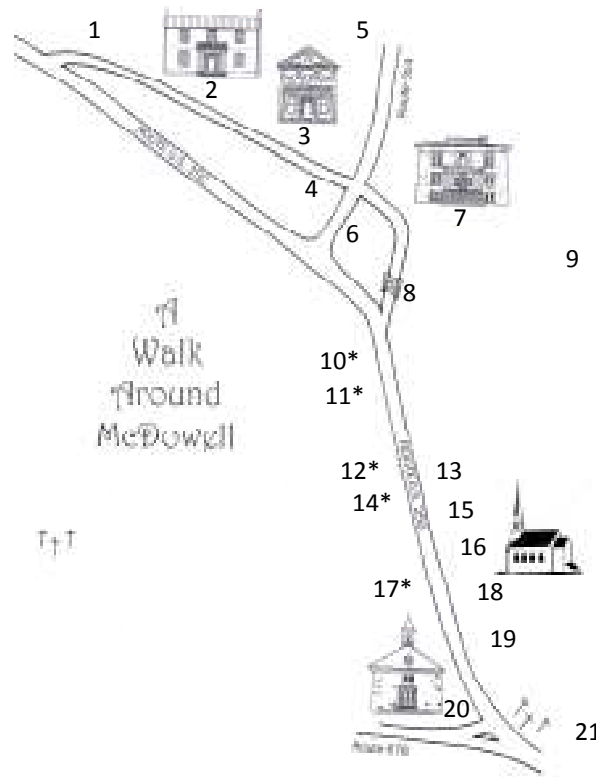


The Mansion House

When Highland County was formed in 1847, the village of McDowell (originally called Sugar Tree Grove) was justifiably the only true population center in the eastern half of the county. The Staunton-to-Parkersburg Turnpike (US250) connected the town to the Shenandoah Valley in the east and the Ohio River Valley to the west.

At the time of the Civil War, McDowell had a church, schoolhouse, sawmill, blacksmith, general store, and a few dwellings. The town grew and prospered during the latter half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

As the population increased, additional shops, a larger school, a second church, a mill, a hotel, and other businesses opened in the town.



* Most houses listed on the west side of US250 are dated 1882 based on a subdivision of Sitlington lands; however, some buildings may have been on these tracts prior to the division of property.

Visit the
Highland History Museum
161 Mansion House Road
McDowell VA 24458



For more information
Highland Historical Society
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16. McDowell United Methodist Church—The church was built in 1875; however, as early as 1840 families gathered in homes and schools to hold Methodist services. The original church building was rock, covered in an adobe material, but in 1956 when an educational addition was completed, three sides of the church were covered in a brick veneer.

17. McDowell Presbyterian Manse—(cc 1883) The current house was built on land purchased from the Sitlingtons around 1882.

18. Bradshaw House—This property was deeded by Edward P. Hull to the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal South Church and parsonage property in 1883. The first parsonage was a 4-room log house. In the early 1900's a larger, frame house was built around the original log house for a larger parsonage, and sold to R. Byron and Minnie Bradshaw.

19. W.H. Henderson House—Records indicate this house was built for Mr. Henderson in 1892.

20. McDowell Presbyterian Church—Built in 1856 on land donated by the Sitlingtons, the church served as a hospital during the Battle of McDowell. Its pews were broken up and used as firewood. If you look closely, you will see initials and other marks left on the bricks by soldiers.

21. The McDowell Mill—(Fleisher's Mill) Completed in 1911 by E. Ashby Hammer. His obituary in *The Recorder* included the lines: "He gave employment to more people than any other man in this county. His last effort was building a flour mill at McDowell which he had completed about the time he took sick." The mill was used until 1940, even after a flood washed out the dam and a tractor was used to power it. The 3-story mill building has served as a general store and, at one time, a movie theater, before it was renovated as a private residence.



1. Hull House—Hull heirs sold the lot to J.S. McNulty in 1873; however, a log portion of the house probably predates the brick Hull houses and the Civil War.

2. George Washington Hull House—Built in 1851 for G.W. Hull, it was commonly known as the Mansion House due to the fact that it was the first large brick house built in McDowell. It is a fine example of a central passage, two-over-two dwelling. Much of the original character of this house remains, making it one of only a few Greek Revival brick houses in the county. It was used as a hospital after the 1862 Civil War Battle of McDowell. Following the Civil War, the property was conveyed to Mary Bradshaw, wife of J. B. Bradshaw. From 1886-1930 it was the Bradshaw Hotel. Purchased by the Highland Historical Society in 2001, today it is the Highland History Museum.

3. G.W. Hull's Store—(aka Sugar Tree Country Store) George Washington Hull is believed to have built his store on this site prior to 1847. Under a number of owners and tenant merchants, this shop operated as a general store and post office for many years. In 1986 it reopened as Sugar Tree Country Store in honor of the town's original name.

4. Peter Hull House—Built as early as 1820, this classic antebellum house is constructed of rock and finished in stucco. Originally the entrance faced onto the old Staunton-to-Parkersburg Turnpike. The portico facing US250 was added later, presumably to provide a grand entrance with access to the new road.

5. Swoope Hull White House—This house was built on the Doe Hill Road around 1886.

6. Samuel Wilson House—Built in 1869, Samuel Wilson purchased the property from Felix Hull, who subsequently died without conveying a title. Mr. Hull's widow, seeing the house being built in her front yard, contested the purchase; however, a commissioner of the court ruled in favor of Samuel Wilson.

7. Felix Hull House—(cc 1855) Italianate in architecture, this brick house was a very up-to-date style for its time. It featured a mirrored staircase (front and back staircases sharing the same hall). The rear half of the house could be closed off to allow slaves to work without being seen by visitors. The house was commandeered by the Union Army in April 1862, to be used as officers' quarters. Following the Battle of McDowell in May, 1862, General Jackson moved his headquarters into the house.

8. Crab Run Bridge—(cc 1896) One of the shortest spans in the area, this single truss bridge has the unusual feature of having been constructed from bent railroad rails. While under construction, a large quantity of Union Civil War ammunition was found in the water below.

9. A. J. Jones House—The building on this property is a

log house, probably built by George Hull. In subsequent years, the log home was completely enclosed by the Victorian additions. Chimneys on both ends of the houses were removed and replaced with bow windows. It has been speculated that the original log structure predates the brick mansions built by the Hull brothers.

10. J.W. Kelly House—(cc 1882) Built on land formerly belonging to the Sitlingtons, the house was built of rock, with a stucco finish. Whereas land exchange took place in 1882, there is the possibility that another dwelling stood on this land prior to the Kelly purchase.

11. Dick Evick House—(cc 1882) The land was purchased from the Sitlingtons in 1882 by Mr. Evick; however, the rear portion of the house possibly predates the Civil War. The front of the house, with its Victorian features, was added around 1890. The house served as a parsonage for the Church of the Brethren from 1942-1964.

12. L.L. Quidore House—(cc 1882) It is possible a log structure was already on the property when it was purchased from the Sitlingtons in 1882, and the subsequent frame house was built around the log house. The house was the home of the well-known physician, Dr. Leroy Quidore. When Dr. Quidore died in 1885, he left his wife to raise five children on her own. She opened a millinery shop to support her family, and two of her daughters, Mame and Ida, subsequently taught school in the McDowell area.

13. J. Vawter & E. Carichoff House—This house was built in 1888 for Vawter and Carichoff, who opened the McDowell Boot and Shoe Factory. In 1914 the lot became the property of the McDowell Milling Company, presumably for the mill-owner to live in.

14. James Hiner House—(cc 1882) The house is on property purchased by Mr. Hiner from the Sitlingtons.

15. John Hiner House—This Queen Anne Victorian house was built in 1899 for Mr. & Mrs. John Hiner.

