

## James K. Polk Memorial <sup>[1]</sup>

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## James K. Polk Memorial

by Joyce White, 2006

See also: [Polk, James Knox](#) <sup>[2]</sup>



"Reconstructed log cabin similar to one young James K. Polk lived in at the Pres. James K. Polk State Historic Site near Pineville." Image courtesy of the James Polk NC Historic Site.

<sup>[3]</sup>The [James K. Polk Memorial](#) <sup>[3]</sup> at Pineville in [Mecklenburg County](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, the probable birthplace of the nation's eleventh president, consists of a reconstructed house, kitchen, and barn as well as the relocated Polk family cemetery. Polk was born at the family farm on 2 Nov. 1795, but the family moved to Tennessee when Polk was 11 years old. Although he returned to the state to attend the [University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, Polk achieved fame in Tennessee, and no thought was given to the significance of his birthplace. By 1900 the family's log house at Pineville had fallen to the ground, but four years later the local chapter of the [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) <sup>[6]</sup> erected a stone pyramid and plaque at the site.

Historians in the mid-twentieth century began to conclude that Polk had been one of the most successful American presidents, and thought was given to preserving his birthplace. Under the leadership of James A. Stenhouse, a [Charlotte](#) <sup>[7]</sup> architect and historian, funds were raised locally, grants secured, and legislative support enlisted. In 1964 Polk's birthplace became a [North Carolina State Historic Site](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. A donated log house and other building materials, dating from the time the young Polk lived at the site, were used to reconstruct buildings such as would have been familiar to him. A visitors center at the 21-acre site features a theater and exhibits depicting the life and times of Polk.

### References:

James J. Horn, "Trends in Historical Interpretation: James K. Polk," *NCHR* 42 (October 1965).

Richard F. Knapp, ed., *North Carolina's State Historic Sites: A Brief History and Status Report* (1995).

Charles Grier Sellars, "Early Career of James K. Polk, 1795-1839" (Ph.D. diss., UNC-Chapel Hill, 1950).

### Additional Resources:

Polk NC Historical Site: <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/polk/main.htm> <sup>[3]</sup>

### Image Credit:

"Reconstructed log cabin similar to one young James K. Polk lived in at the Pres. James K. Polk State Historic Site near Pineville." Image courtesy of the James Polk NC Historic Site. Available from <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/polk/main.htm> <sup>[3]</sup> (accessed June 28, 2012).

### Subjects:

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[21st Century \(2001-present\)](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

[Places](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

[Presidents](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

[UNC Press](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

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**Origin - location:**

Mecklenburg County <sup>[14]</sup>

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Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.<sup>[15]</sup>

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