



THE DAVIDSON

When pioneers first saw the Sylvan Valley, they were amazed by the beauty and invitingness of the area along the Davidson River. Many were so impressed that they decided to build their homes along the banks of the crystal-clear stream.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, Benjamin Davidson liked this area so well that he built his home where our warehouses are now located. He had fought in the war, and was paid off in Continental script, which was valueless except for purchasing land. After living at the location for a few years, Davidson purchased the land from the State of North Carolina.

On an old map of North Carolina the area was titled "Ben Davidson's Grant", and the stream was known as "Ben Davidson's River", later shortened to "Davidson River." The Ben Davidson's Grant described the land as "land on both sides of Ben Davidson Creek." The grant included the land from about the present Osborne Dairy to a big oak tree on the banks of the river at the entrance to Pisgah National Forest, then easterly to about the Wolfe farm, then southerly to where the Davidson joins the French Broad, and then westerly to the starting point on the Osborne farm.

Noted in the History of Western North Carolina, by J. P. Arthur, is the following: "on 25th of July, 1788, Charles McDowell entered 500 acres in Rutherford County on Ben Davidson's River,

including the Great Caney Cone two or three miles above the Indian Path, though the grant was not issued till December 5, 1798, and in November, 1790, Ben Davidson got a grant for 640 acres in Rutherford County on both sides of the French Broad River, above James Davidson's tract, including the mouth of the Fork on the north side and adjoining Joseph McDowell's line, since transferred to Charles McDowell."

Transylvania County, formed in 1861, was a part of Rutherford County at the time of the grant. The area was Indian Territory until 1783. Buncombe County was formed out of Rutherford County in 1792, Henderson was formed out of Buncombe in 1830, and Transylvania was formed out of parts of Buncombe and Henderson Counties by an act of the State Legislature in January, 1861.

Bishop Asbury, the great missionary of the Methodist Church, visited this area many times between 1790 and 1814. One of his favorite stopping places was the home of Ben Davidson, where he held several church meetings.

Every inch of rainfall on the watershed of the Davidson represents 700 million gallons of water. The average daily flow from 1929 to 1948 was around 80 million gallons. The highest daily flow recorded on this river was on August 15, 1928, when the water rose to a height of 11.8 feet—5,420,000,000 gallons.