

S N A P S H O T S



of Lexington's Past

Sources: Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office, LFUCG Division of Historic Preservation and the AsaChinn Photographs, University of Kentucky Archives



134 North Limestone



130-132 North Limestone



124-128 North Limestone



In the 19th century...

the buildings on this block were mostly livery stables, carriage factories, and saloons. The fire on May 25, 1875 caused extensive damage to these buildings, but because of the desirable location, the buildings were quickly rebuilt. Until the demolition of the block for the new courthouse, various businesses were located here. Those businesses included a "Shooting Gallery and Billiards," printing services for the *Morning Democrat*, the Berlin Café, offices for the Girl Scouts, the First Federal Savings and Loan Co., WLEX Radio Station, the Lexington Beauty College, apartments, and stores that sold furniture, sporting goods, clothing, rugs, and gifts.

"A city without old buildings is like a man without a memory."

- Anonymous

The structures that were located at 136-150 North Limestone

were associated with the thriving livery industry in this area in the 19th century. Used originally for a carriage factory, harness maker, blacksmith, and other similar functions, these buildings were later altered to house businesses such as a successful paint firm, a drugstore, a shoemaker, tailor, and a furniture store.

The four-story building on the end of the block (148-150) was closely tied to the African American community. It was built in 1904 for the United Brethren of Friendship, an African American male fraternal order, which met in the upper floors. The first floor was the drugstore of Dr. W.H. Ballard, the first registered African American pharmacist in Kentucky.

136-138 North Limestone



New Fayette Co. Courthouse



148-150 North Limestone



146 North Limestone



142-144 North Limestone



*The building once located
at 183 North Limestone*

was constructed in 1892 for Simon Weil's Third Ward Meat Market. In 1920, the building was modified and became the Emery Hotel. Hay, grain, coal, lime and cement were sold at the structure located at 185-191 until it was remodeled in 1917. The warehouses and offices were converted into shops and upper story apartments. These buildings are representative of a transitional trend in architecture along North Limestone that included the conversion of warehouses and offices to storefronts and residences. Now, a parking lot exists where these structures once stood.

183 North Limestone



185 North Limestone



187-191 North Limestone



101-109 East Main Street



111 East Main Street



113-117 East Main Street



Known as the Lyons Block, this prime location

was mostly residential during the 19th century, but by the 20th century the area was mostly commercial. The corner building housed The Postal Telegraph-Cable Company and later belonged to Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Carrick. The building that was located at 111 East Main was constructed around 1923 and was the site of a cleaning establishment. The Ben Snyder's Department Store, originally the Denton-Ross-Todd Company Department Store when it was built in 1922, was used as a department store for over 45 years. These buildings were demolished for construction of the courthouse complex.

In the 19th century,

this block was known as “Silk Stocking Row,” the most exclusive shopping area in town. Throughout the 19th century, this prime mercantile location was owned by members of the Hunt family, one of the wealthiest families in Lexington. This block was demolished for a parking garage.

236-246 West Main Street



250-260 West Main Street



230-232 West Main Street



“Recent calculations indicate that it takes about 65 years for an energy efficient new building to save the amount of energy lost in demolishing an existing building.”

– National Trust for Historic Preservation





359-361 North Limestone



347-351 West Main Street



317-319 West Main Street



309-315 West Main Street



These post Civil War buildings...

were located at the corner of Main Cross Street, one of the most prominent sites in Lexington. The corner building was constructed in 1892 and housed clothing stores for almost 100 years before its demolition in 1983. The other buildings contained photography studios on the upper floors, a wallpaper and carpet business, the Racket Store which later become Purcell's, John B. Wilgus' private bank, the Singer Sewing Machine Company, and the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company.



157-161 South Limestone



147-151 South Limestone



139-143 South Limestone

“Rehabilitating historic properties conserves taxpayers’ dollars, conserves our local heritage, and conserves the natural environment. Rehabilitating historic buildings and using the infrastructure that is already in place to serve them is the height of fiscal and environmental responsibility.”

– Donovan Rypkema, Place Economics

Originally the site of a saloon,

livery stable, stove repair shop and a tailor shop, these structures were updated in the 1920s and were converted into a variety of specialized small businesses. They were updated again with Art Deco and Arts and Crafts features. Later occupants included the Pastime Inn, a tattoo studio, a record shop, a beauty shop, and apartments. This portion of the block is now a parking lot.

153-155 South Limestone



145-145.5-151 South Limestone



1099 South Broadway



Ingleside was designed by

local architect John McMurtry for Henry Boone Ingles in 1852. It was once a 300 acre estate, but the land was gradually sold off. In 1964, the structure was demolished to make room for an expanding mobile home park, which is now being dismantled.

Corner of East Main and
Martin Luther King



Union Station was built

between 1904 and 1907 by New York architect Sanford White. The building was demolished for a parking garage in 1960 by the adjacent Stewart's Dry Goods, a prosperous local business.

North Martin Luther King Blvd



The Lexington City Hall

was constructed in the Beaux Arts Style between 1924 and 1928. A large insensitive addition was built onto the front of the building in the 1960s encapsulating its stately portico. Eventually, the entire structure was demolished.





259 East High Street



This house, built in 1839,

was the home of many influential Lexington citizens including Admiral Lucien Young, Pastor Mark Collis, and Superintendent John Hodges, Jr. The building was demolished on July 4, 1984 for the YMCA parking lot.



The Southern Railway

Passenger Depot was the last major railroad station in Central Kentucky. Completed in 1877, it was the only one of four lines whose main line came through Lexington. Abandoned in the early 1970s, the depot was vacant when an arsonist set fire to the building in 1991. It was demolished the following year.



499 East High Street



Immanuel Baptist Church

was built in 1921, with the Sunday School wing added in 1929. The founding congregation left the building in 1961. Although it was consistently occupied, the structure was demolished for a condo development in 2006.





322-330 West Main Street

Purcell's Department Store

(circa 1905) was located on what was one of the most historic blocks in Lexington. This was the site of the 1779 stockade, the first Market House (1791), and the first State House. Purcell's Department Store was one of the largest and finest department stores in the city's business history.



100-120 East Main Street

The site of the Phoenix Hotel

was used continuously as a hotel since 1797. It was the oldest surviving hotel in Kentucky, and probably west of the Alleghenies. The Phoenix Hotel got its name after recovering from a fire in 1820. Guests of the hotel included at least six U.S. presidents, theatre and movie stars, and innumerable historical figures. This structure was integral to the social atmosphere in Lexington.



121 East Main Street

The Ben Ali Theatre

opened in 1913 and was known as "the most up-to-date theatre in the south." Built by Berryman Realty Company, the interior was designed by Tiffany Studios of New York City. The theatre was demolished in 1965 for the construction of a parking garage.





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