

PHO 353906

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 25 1977

DATE ENTERED AUG 12 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

* Higgins Block

AND/OR COMMON

Fayette Cigar Store Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

145-151 West Main Street

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

06

STATE

Kentucky

— VICINITY OF

CODE
021

COUNTY

Fayette

CODE

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Richard Schubert

STREET & NUMBER

13 Hampshire Place

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Lexington - Downtown 1974 Preservation Study

DATE

1974

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky (continued)

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Higgins Block was built in 1872 by John McMurtry, a well-known Lexington architect-builder. At that time the stone and cast-iron facade was described as the "handsomest of any building in Lexington." Originally this three-story building had fifteen bays extending from Wrenn Alley on the east front Main Street westward toward Upper Street. It adjoined the Fayette National Bank on the corner of Main and Upper Street which was built at the same time by McMurtry.

In 1916 the Fayette National Bank purchased two units of the adjacent Higgins Block which were demolished to accommodate their new high-rise office building and bank. The center three bays of Higgins Block were later extensively remodelled when purchased by the First National Bank. The easternmost section of six bays survive.

Presently the six-bay structure consists of a cast iron frame with stone and pressed metal architectural details. It has a modern first floor store front with 1950s veneer and commercial windows with recessed doorways (see photos 1 and 2).

The second- and third-floor windows are separated by engaged Corinthian columns and surmounted by Corinthian keystone arches. At intervals of three bays on the upper facade are Corinthian pilasters supporting at the second level an architrave with cornice (see photos 3 and 4). States Clay Lancaster, Kentucky architectural historian, in his forthcoming book "The uniformity of superimposed arches, recalling Roman water conducts in southern France and Spain, has led to the type being called the aqueduct style."¹

At the top of the building is an exaggerated entablature with frieze divided into three-bay segments by elaborate fluted triglyphs. There is a dentillated cornice with scroll modillion blocks, all crowned by a cyma and avcetto at the crest of the facade (see photo 5).

The basic structural system of Higgins Block remains intact. Only one opening has been made in the bearing wall; it is a connecting doorway between the two bays near the front of the building. All of the interior stairs have been removed except for one flight which remains between the second and third floors on the right bay. The interior of this eastern section has the original pressed tin ceiling and the original woodwork survives on the second and third floors (see photos 6, 7 and 8).

¹Lancaster, Clay, "Vestiges of a Venerable City," excerpts from manuscript.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John McMurtry

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Higgins Block is one of the two remaining examples of cast-iron architecture in Lexington, Kentucky, the second largest city in the State. "Architecturally, cast-iron buildings represent one of the most important building innovations of the 19th century and were a giant step toward modern skyscraper constructions. Cast-iron allowed for not only greater economy of building, but ambitious aesthetics as well. Romanesque, Neo-Grec, Queen Anne, and French Second Empire styles are frequently incorporated into the buildings, arched doors, columns, mansard roofs, delicate pilaster and window surrounds."¹ Such features have been incorporated into the design of this building, which was constructed by John McMurtry (1812-1890), a prominent architect-builder of the era. His other work in Kentucky includes Ingelside, Elley Villa, Botherum, Kentucky School for the Deaf, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Lyndhurst, the Lexington and Ohio Railway Station, and many others.

The location of the Fayette Cigar Store near the corner of Upper and Main Streets gives the building the potential to be reused as commercial space on the lower floors taking advantage of the commercial activity along Main Street. The proximity to the Courthouse and to the Lexington Civic Center and other new buildings on Vine Street increases its value in the eyes of the owner who is the great grand-daughter of the original owner, John Allen Higgins. Its restoration will have a synergetic effect on downtown development of other significant buildings.

Architectural historians and persons active in restoration state the building is important visually and a last survivor of its period in downtown Lexington and will enhance the architectural character of the city.

¹Gayle, Margot and Gillion, Edmund, "Cast-Iron Architecture in New York."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gayle, Margot and Gillon, Edmund, Jr. Cast-Iron Architecture in New York. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1974.

Lancaster, Clay. "Vestiges of a Venerable City." Unpublished manuscript.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .62 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	7,1,9	580	790			
	7,9,0	4,2,1,3	58,0				
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C							

B							
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
D							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. Richard Schubert

GM: CW

ORGANIZATION

DATE

November 28, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

13 Hampshire Place

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Edna W. Yelton

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/18/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Wm J. Mitchell
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *Charles W. ...*
 WEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 8/12/77
 WEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 8-11-77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Higgins Block

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 2

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (Supplement)
1975 State
Kentucky Heritage Commission
Frankfort, Kentucky

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

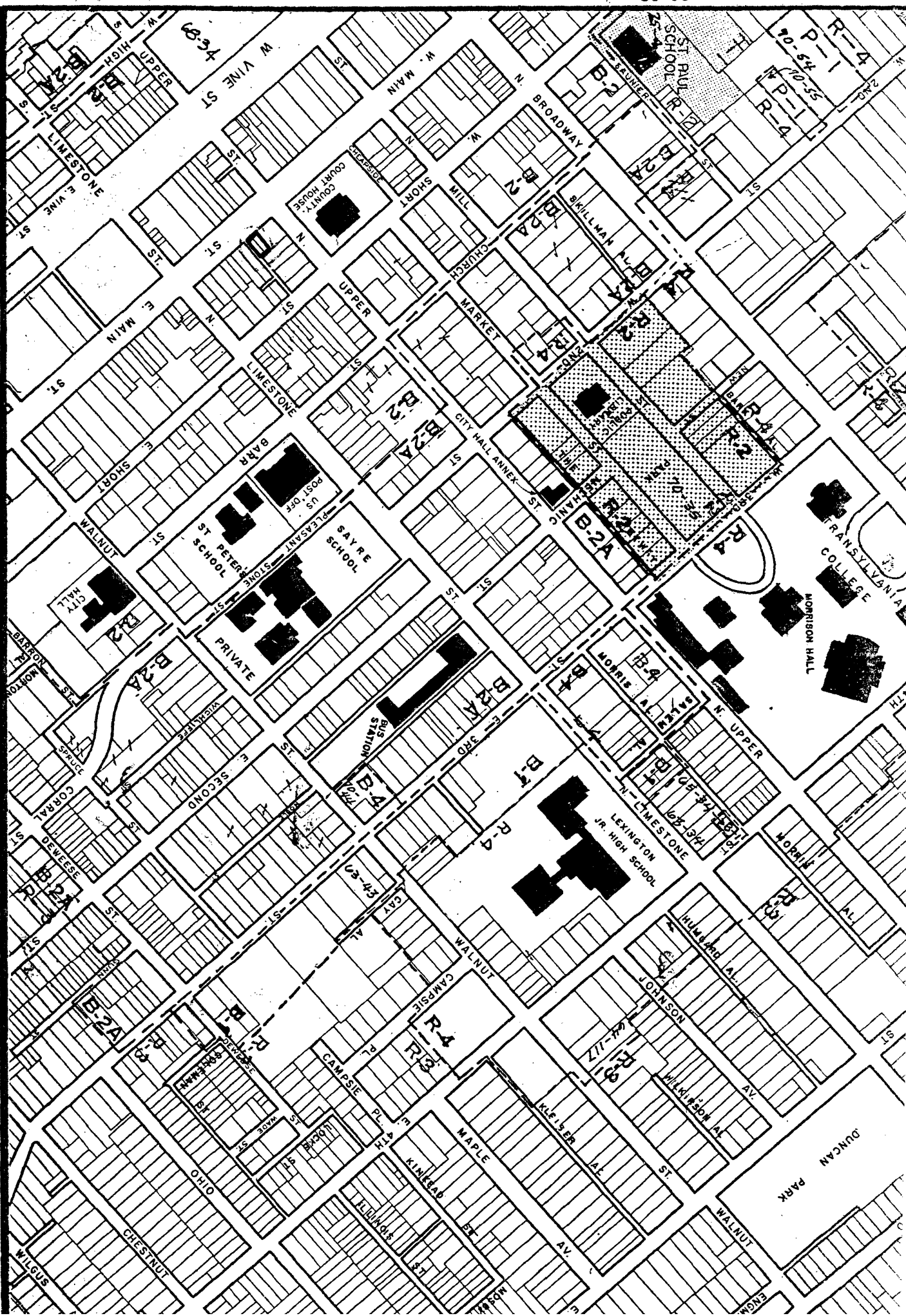
_____. "Works of John McMurtry." Unpublished thesis, University of
Kentucky, 1939.

Lexington City Directories (pre-1900).

Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission. Lexington: Downtown, 1974,
Preservation Study, pp. 8, 19, 20.



- LEGEND**
-  A-R AGRICULTURAL ZONE, RURAL
 -  A-U AGRICULTURAL ZONE, URBAN
 -  R-1A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONE
 -  R-1B SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONE
 -  R-1C SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONE



Higgins Block
Lexington
Fayette County
Kentucky

Lexington-Fayette County Planning
Commission, 227 N. Upper Street,
Lexington, Kentucky.
1" = 400' 5-1-73

Map 2. Higgins Block is
indicated in red.

AUG 12 1977 MAR 25 1977