

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received DEC 17 1985

date entered

DEC 17 1985

1. Name

historic The Star Garage Building

and/or common Poole-Gable Motors

2. Location

street & number 119 S. E. 1st Avenue

not for publication

city, town Gainesville vicinity of

state FL code J2 county Alachua code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Gainesville

street & number P. O. Box 490

city, town Gainesville vicinity of state FL 32605

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alachua County Clerk of the Circuit Court

street & number Alachua County Courthouse

city, town Gainesville state FL 32605

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of the City of Gainesville has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management

city, town Tallahassee state FL

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/>	excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	good	<input type="checkbox"/>	unaltered
<input type="checkbox"/>	fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	altered
		<input type="checkbox"/>	original site
		<input type="checkbox"/>	moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Star Garage building is a long, one story brick structure with a ridge roof. A large painted, stucco parapet facade is the dominant feature of the building as are the small, windows on the sides which are typical of stable structures.

The Star Garage building is located at the southwest corner of SE 1st Avenue and SE 2nd Street in Gainesville, Florida. To the north of this building is a large, modern County Judicial Complex and plaza, to the east is a vacant parking lot with a 1925 Gulf Filling Station Building on the northwest corner, to the west is a parking lot and a block of several significant old downtown buildings including the Baird Opera House, and to the south is a vacant lot used for parking.

The building is a large, masonry structure the length of the block. The brick walls are 6/1 common bond. The roof is a ridge with step parapets and large skylights.

The main (north) facade is stucco over brick, and at present displays a brightly painted graphic design. A large square doorway is located in the center flanked by two large openings with plate glass windows set in aluminum frames. The parapet on this facade is stepped. There are three windows, which are now covered and located above the entrance.

The east and west facades are composed of exposed brick walls which were sand blasted several years ago. The regular fenestration is composed of segmental arched windows with four light pivot sash. The north two bays and a number of bays on the south end of each facade are larger brick openings with 6/6 double hung sash. These openings were probably expansions of the original smaller windows. There is a large double door set in a square frame located approximately one-third of the way from the north end of the east facade.

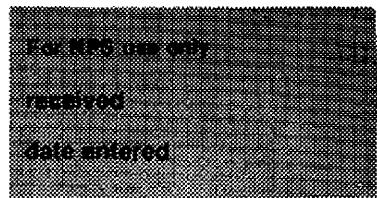
The south facade is a simple, brick structure of 6/1 common bond brick. A double door entry is located at the center with three covered window openings to the east and a door opening cut into what was originally a second window opening on the west.

The interior is a large open space with small rooms on either side of the entrance. W shape metal trusses support the roof which is pierced by skylights. There is a large frame partition across the interior space dividing the building in half.

This building was originally built as a livery stable in 1903, immediately after a fire which destroyed an earlier livery stable building. The facade originally consisted of three round arch openings. Large 6/6 double hung sash windows in segmental frames flanked the doors on each end. The parapet consisted of a semi-circular arch parapet flanked by two chimneys at the center with shaped parapets on either side terminating in chimneys. Above the main entrance were three window openings with segmental arches and 6/6 double hung sash. The east and west facades were nearly exactly as they are today. The interior consisted of a concrete floor with wood posts supporting a partial second floor and wood trusses.

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In 1917 the building became an automobile dealership. A showroom was partitioned off in the northwest corner of the building. The arched opening on the west end of the main facade was removed as were its flanking windows and replaced with a three panel plate glass display window with a multipaned transom. This window was set in a rectangular frame. The door on the east end was enclosed with a fixed window set in the arch.

The Star Garage building continued to change throughout its history. Around 1925, the east doorway was removed and replaced with a rectangular opening as on the west end of the facade. A large copper trimmed canopy was suspended over the central, round arched opening. At this point the building still retained the shaped parapet and the original side wall configuration.

In 1931, a fire which broke out in the south end of the building destroyed the second floor and the roof, and damaged the south wall. The owners renovated the building by installing a new metal truss system and a new, gable roof with skylights. The shaped portion of the main facade was removed and the brickwork was stuccoed and painted. The south wall was reconstructed. The segmental arches on the second floor windows were flattened. The third round arch doorway was removed and replaced with a rectangular opening with transom and suspended canopy. The side wall remain intact and date from 1903 in form and period. The main facade does retain the 1918 rectangular showroom opening as well as the 1925 opening on the east. The triple window arrangement above the central opening is the original 1903 configuration. The shaped parapet is gone and now is of 1931 vintage as is most of the south wall.

The Star Garage building is a study in progressive use and adaptation as the needs of the occupant changed and were modified. Each change is significant in that it reflects the change uses, primarily from stable to automobile sales and service center. The need for large display windows were a key part in automobile marketing and in this case, the west facade window is a reflection of the early (1918) use. The fire of 1931 severely damaged the building, but it did not damage the interesting arrangement of the east and west walls nor the original showroom windows. The essential character of this building is that it reflects in its architecture the many and varied uses made of it during its lifetime.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
X 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1917-1933

Builder/Architect

Not Known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Star Garage building is significant as one of the few remaining structures associated with the early development of automobile sales and service in Gainesville, which, in the 1920's and 30's, was concentrated in the downtown business district. Incorporating elements of an earlier livery stable structure, the building reflects the commercial architecture of its rehabilitation following a fire in 1931 when it served as one of the city's leading automobile dealerships, and retains its integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, and historical association.

The Star Garage building began as the Crawford and Davis Livery Stable and has walls which date to 1903. The Crawford and Davis Livery Stable was first established on the site in 1889. The company sold horses and mules which were shipped into Gainesville by train from Tennessee and Kentucky farms. In 1903, the company building was expanded to double its original size. The renovated building was reputed to be one of the largest livery stable buildings in Florida. On October 14, 1903 very soon after the expansion of the structure, a fire started in the hayloft. The fire spread so fast that the twenty horses in the stable were burned and the brick walls collapsed, the building was a total loss. At the time of the fire, the second floor was in use as a tailor shop.²

By 1904 after completion of its new building, the stable was back in operation selling horses, mules, buggies, wagons, harnesses, whips, and laprobes.³ The company changed names in 1913, becoming Oliver and Venable Livery Stable, the only one left in the city at the time.⁴

The rapidly growing popularity of the automobile threatened the existence of the horse as a primary means of transportation. The fact that the Oliver and Venable Livery was the only one in Gainesville in 1913 demonstrates the gradual reduction in demand for horses. In 1917, the Oliver and Venable livery stable was replaced by the Star Garage, operated by J. R. Fowler.⁵ Fowler had been a lumber mill operator when he started selling automobiles in 1914. As he expanded, he required more space for selling and servicing the automobile. Fowler soon secured the Studebaker and Cadillac dealerships, and became the central Florida distributor for Studebaker. Shortly after acquiring the Star Garage in the old livery stable building, Fowler constructed a showroom in the northwest corner of the building. He removed one of three arched doorways to install a three panel plate glass window with a large transom above. The east arched opening was changed into a plate glass window at the same time.⁶ The Star Garage had a new car showroom, a parts and repair business, a battery shop, a paint and body shop and a used car operation.⁷ By 1920, Fowler was the dealer for Buick.⁸

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attached Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Gainesville East, FL

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 7	3 7 1	9 0 0	3 2 8 0 6 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
C				
E				
G				

B							
	Zone	Easting	Northing				
D							
F							
H							

Verbal boundary description and justification

This property is located in the east half of the block bounded on the north by SE 1st Avenue, on the east by SE 2nd Street, on the west by SE 1st Street, and on the south by SE 2nd Avenue.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phillip A. Werndl/Diana Primelles

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division

organization of Archives, History and Records Management date 12/13/85

street & number The Capitol telephone (904) 487-2333

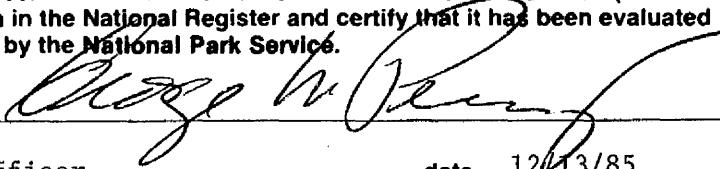
city or town Tallahassee state FL 32301

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

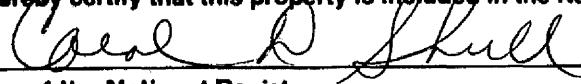
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12/13/85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register



date 12-17-85

Keeper of the National Register

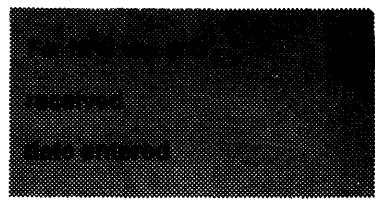
date

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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Several garages and automobile dealers had opened showrooms in the area south of the courthouse and around the post office by 1918. Old maps indicate the location of several such operations.⁹ In 1920, in addition to the Star Garage, there were at least two other dealers in Gainesville the Ogeltree Motor Company and the Chandler Motor Car Company.¹⁰ Both were located within two blocks of the Star Garage. In 1925, the Star was acknowledged locally as the largest automotive facility in the county.¹¹ By that year, Fowler had again changed the building by replacing the east archway with a new three panel display window as on the west side. A suspended canopy was also installed.

In 1925, the Star Garage was still a major automotive dealership and repair operation. Competition had increased from Gainesville Buick Company, Mark Taylor Company and the Swartz Motor Company.¹² The automotive sales rooms continued to be concentrated around the southeast quadrant of downtown near the post office. The Star Garage held its own in the face of the new and old competitors. The operation dealt in Buicks as well as used cars. Automobile maintenance and repair was also a major activity at the Star Garage including major work, gas, oil, and Everready Batteries.¹³

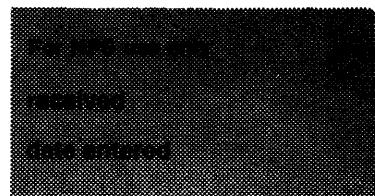
The operation of the garage changed in 1931 when Fower incorporated his car dealership as the Fowler Buick Company with his son William Fowler. The new company still faced competition from Drummond and Willman, Gainesville Chevrolet Company, Handley Motor Company, Brooking and Turnipseed, and Ogletree Motor Company.¹⁴

The Star Garage also had a paint spraying operation located on the second floor. Automobiles were given the "Duco" finish, reputed to be the best automobile finish available at the time. This paint shop was also used to paint airplanes, another of the rapidly growing transportation activities in the 1920s. On April 9, 1931 a new airplane was being painted and a spark ignited the banana oil which was being applied to the wings. The fire reached a can of banana oil causing an explosion which destroyed the airplane. Flames spread through the wood rafters and joists in the ceiling. Within four minutes the entire roof was engulfed in fire, attracting thousands of spectators. All of the available city fire fighting equipment was called to the fire. Within an hour of the call the fire was under control, but it had destroyed the roof and the interior wooden structure, The south wall was threatened with collapse, but withstood the fire.¹⁵

Fowler was back in business within several weeks. He had managed to save seven new Buick Automobiles while he lost three used cars and a large amount of material on the second floor. In May, Fowler Buick was in temporary operation in the 1000 Block of W. University Avenue. The repair and reconstruction of the fire damaged building began immediately. On August 15, 1931 Fowler Buick reopened in its newly repaired building amid great expectations from the city's residents and local businesses. Local merchants and contractors filled a page of advertisements which congratulated the opening of the newly renovated building. The company advertised that it had the latest Buick designs on display. The advertisement also

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offered Car Storage facilities in which it advertised as practically fireproof building. 16

It is possible that the fire heavily damaged the financial position of the Fowler Company and that the increasing financial instability of the area due to the depression hurt business. Most likely for these reasons, in early 1933, Fowler Buick ceased operations after fifteen years in the same location. 17

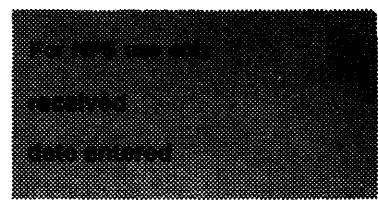
The connection of the Star Garage building with the transportation history of Gainesville did not stop in 1933. Following the demise of the Fowler Company, the building was taken over by the Florida Motor Lines who operated a union bus station to serve several buslines including Greyhound. This development was the result of the growing bus operations which had started in Gainesville in 1925 with the Florida Motor Lines. Improved roads and ever expanding rural areas fostered the development of bus transportation, particularly into areas which did not have railroad passenger service. Thus, in 1933, the Star Garage became the hub of busline service in and out of Gainesville. The building functioned as a terminal until 1939 when the new terminal was built. 18

The final chapter in the building's history as an automotive dealership began in 1936. In that year the Brookings Motor Company, which had started business in the 1920s as a competitor of the Star Garage, moved into the building.¹⁹ They shared the building with the bus terminal until 1939. The Brookings Motor Company was the Plymouth and Dodge dealer. They operated in the building until 1952 when the franchise was transferred to Poole-Gable Motors.²⁰ This company operated in the building until 1977 when it was acquired by the City of Gainesville.

As Gainesville grew, the automobile dealers gradually abandoned their operations in downtown in favor of locations several blocks to the north on Main Street and later even farther out on Main Street and the buildings that housed them were subsequently demolished. All, that is, except the old Star Garage building, which remains today in its 1931 configuration, reflecting the period in which the automobile became firmly established in the transportation economy of Gainesville.

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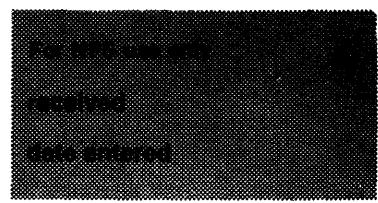
Page 3

FOOTNOTES

1. Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Gainesville, Florida. 1897 (Pelham, New York: Sanborn Map Publishing Company), 1897; "Alachua County, Florida, Edition", Southern Industry (August 1, 1903, Vol. 3, No. 32, p.14).
2. Gainesville Daily Sun, October 16, 1903; Florida Times Union, October 16, 1903.
3. Gainesville Daily Sun, April 1, 1904; June 12, 1904.
4. Polk's Gainesville City Directory (New York: Polk Publishing Company, 1913)
5. Ibid., 1917.
6. Early photograph of the building circa 1918.
7. Alachua County News, "Agricultural, Industrial, and Educational Edition", 1924; Gainesville Daily Sun. March 3, 1920
8. Gainesville Daily Sun, March 3, 1920.
9. Sanborn Maps, 1909, 1818, 1923.
10. Gainesville Daily Sun, May 16, 1920; May 22, 1920.
11. Gainesville, Florida in Picture and Prose (np. 1925), p.16
12. Gainesville Daily Sun, January 4, 1925; January 5, 1925; January 7, 1925.
13. Ibid., May 22, 1920
14. Ibid., April 11, 1931; May 2, 1931; May 10, 1931.
15. Ibid., April 10, 1931.
16. Ibid., May 2, 1931; August 15, 1931.
17. Ibid., March 4, 1933.
18. Ibid., June 17, 1936; September 17, 1939.
19. Ibid., October 19, 1936
20. Gainesville City Directory, 1952.

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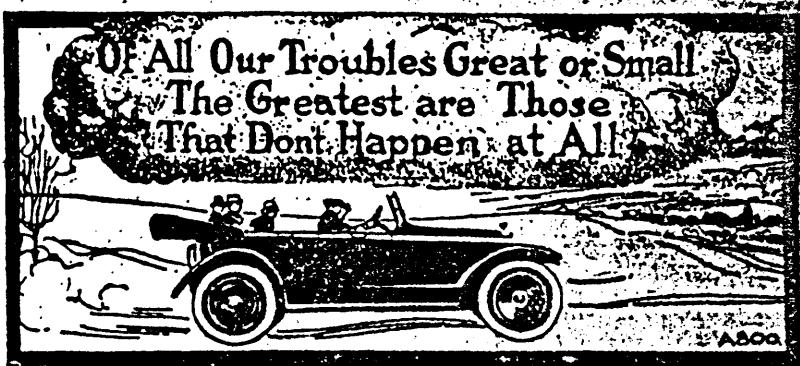
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REGULAR PERIODICAL INSPECTION

and the comparatively slight adjustment of your car, owing to the regular care thus bestowed, will eliminate trouble from your experience. It will keep your car in uniformly good condition, and your speedometer will indicate more miles of enjoyment than by any other method.

REMEMBER WE ARE

ALWAYS AT YOUR SERVICE FOR

EXPERT REPAIRING
RELIABLE SUPPLIES—DEPENDABLE ACCESSORIES
— GASOLINE — OILS — BATTERIES —
EVEREADY
BATTERY SERVICE STATION

STAR ★ GARAGE
J. R. FOWLER, PROP.
PHONE 300 GAINESVILLE, FLA.

WHEN BETTER CARS ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

1920

12/9/85



HERE is a big seven passenger touring car of exceptional character—the Buick Model K Forty-Nine.

It is an individual car—one that meets a more exacting requirement than the ordinary types in which larger carrying capacity is demanded.

For city or country driving this big, roomy Buick fulfills the demands of each owner, particularly those who desire a family car of beauty, comfort and economy.

Its popularity in demand and selection conclusively proves the choice of the majority of all such buyers—and each day finds additional purchasers placing orders for future delivery.

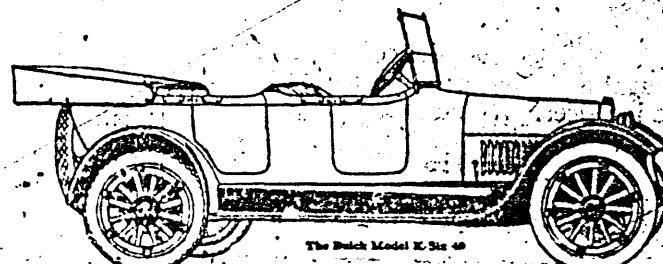
Prices f. o. b. Flint, Michigan

Model K-44 - \$1595.00
Model K-45 - \$1595.00

Model K-46 - \$2235.00
Model K-47 - \$2465.00

Model K-48 - \$1985.00
Model K-49 - \$2305.00

Prices Reworked April 1, 1920



When Better Automobiles Are Built, Buick Will Build Them

K-6-44, \$1775.00 DELIVERED
K-6-45, \$1775.00 DELIVERED
K-6-46, \$2095.00 DELIVERED

J. R. FOWLER, Proprietor
STAR GARAGE

Gainesville,

Florida.

124/85

Special Sale of Used CARS

Today & Tomorrow

We now have on display in our show room some exceptionally worthwhile bargains in used cars. You will find them in the best of condition, both as to mechanism and appearance, and well worth a serious thought.

The makes of cars we are showing:

CADILLACS
CHRYSLERS
STUDEBAKERS
CHEVROLETS
FORDS

Our large stock of used cars will be pushed to the fore on July First and Second. Special rates will prevail during these two days.

Star Garage

PHONE 300

1927

12/9/85

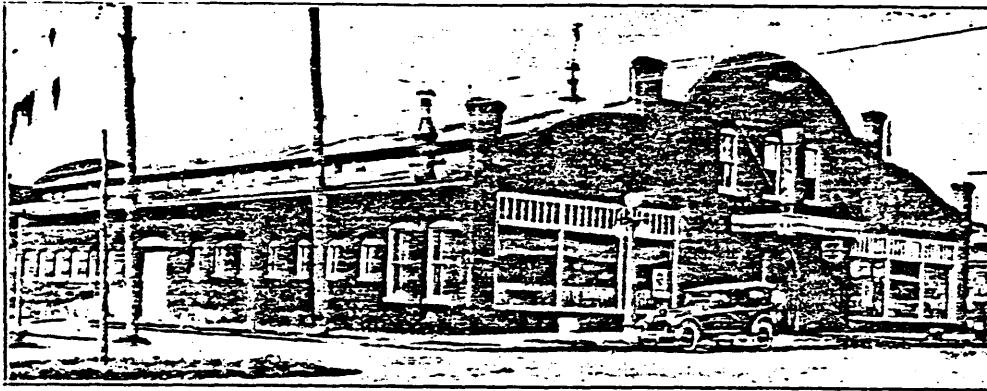
Gainesville, Florida

ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, IN PICTURES AND PROSE

1925

STAR GARAGE

The rapid development of the automobile and the excellent means of transit it affords, together with the diversified ways in which it is used, makes it incumbent upon any community whose desire is to keep pace with the strides of time to have within its confines one or more garages of suitable capacity and equipment to properly care for this important branch of modern business. A recognized leader in this line in Central Florida is the Star Garage of Gainesville, owned by J. R. Fowler. He has been engaged in the automobile business here since 1914 and at his present location for the past eight years. He is a dealer in Cadillac and Studebaker Automobiles, carries a full line of repair parts, accessories, tires, tubes, batteries, etc., and does a general repair and storage business.



THE STAR GARAGE, GAINESVILLE FLA.

Other departments are Battery Department where batteries are sold, rebuilt, recharged and repaired; Paint, Upholstery and Top Shop and used car department. In the painting department they make a specialty of applying the famous "Duco" finish, the most durable as well as the most beautiful automobile finish known to modern science.

The Star Garage is located at the corner of Union Street and Virginia Avenue and contains about ten thousand square feet of floor space. It is without doubt the largest establishment of its kind in the county and one of the best equipped in this section.

Mr. Fowler, the proprietor, is one of the representative financial citizens of the county and has always been commendably active in undertakings for the betterment of the community. In addition to his other large interests, he is a stockholder and a director in The First National Bank the oldest and strongest financial institution in Alachua county.

E. K. FAGAN, GROCERIES

The grocery store is the housekeeper's first thought in the morning and her distress all day if the groceries are delivered too late for dinner. E. K. Fagan has been engaged in the grocery business in Gainesville since October 7, 1909, keeps on hand the best groceries that money and experience can command, delivers all orders promptly and enjoys a premium trade among the best families in the community. He is located at 113 W. University Avenue. His stock has been selected with great care and good judgment and comprises all that is standard in pure food groceries, fancy table delicacies, fruits and produce.

Mr. Fagan is one of the best known and most highly respected citizens of the community and has always assisted in movements that have been launched for the material advancement of Gainesville and Alachua county.

BURNETT. THE CLOTHIER

The wide-awake and progressive little city of Gainesville owes its strong vitality and great popularity to the enterprise and active spirit of its business men and citizens who are putting forth practical effort to aid its growth in every line of industry. Prominent among the number thus employed is J. F. Burnett, better known as Burnett, The Clothier, located at 113 E. University Avenue.

Entering the local field about eleven years ago and carrying a complete stock of men's clothing, furnishings, hats, caps, etc., and adhering to a policy of fair dealing with all mankind, the Burnett establishment is known as a leader in the sale of clothing and furnishings in Alachua county.

This store is filled to overflowing with everything in the line of stylish clothing and furnishings for men and is

especially popular among those who demand the best goods in the above line at economical prices. Mr. Burnett carries some of the highest grade lines on the American market today, among them being the famous Hart, Schaffner & Marx; Curlee and Kirschbaum clothing and the Globe line of tailoring. In point of physical equipment as well as high quality of stock and efficient service to patrons, this store has no superior in Central Florida. The career of the house has been progressive and it has steadily increased in popular favor from the very outset. Mr. Burnett is a gentleman of the highest integrity and business ability and has always given freely of his time and substance in helping in the onward march of progress of the county.

THE BLOODWORTH CO.

An instance of what fair dealing and progressive business spirit can achieve is shown in the business that has been built up by The Bloodworth Company, located at 113 East Main Street South. They are dealers in typewriters, typewriter ribbons, office supplies, stationery, etc., also rebuild, repair and rent typewriters at reasonable rates and print form letters, letter heads, business cards, envelopes and statements at lower rates than the average printing establishment. This business was founded about three years ago and has since developed into the foremost concern of its kind in Central Florida. This is the only house of its kind in the city and is under the capable management of D. U. Bloodworth. He is a young man of good business qualifications, one of the real live wires in the town's commercial circles and has many friends in this community.

One of the community an Gainesville to Company, wh sonville and business was e now the man under the pre Court, Gaine between Gain tember, 1924, on March 1st Luxe International passengers an being operated in a few we International

more for ser division. T coaches whi The tempi anville, per Gainesville Gainesville A. M. and 6:30 P. M. Union Dep. It A. M. a

The busi 12:30 P. Gainesville Leave Gai Ocala for

Four ye the future Florida Co a native o county and section. H men in th the public

The trav Alachua C ed eating C up-to-date and occup North. T