

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 6 1978
DATE ENTERED	JUL 21 1978

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Victorian Commercial Block

## 2 LOCATION

*bounded by Broadway, Main, Short, & Spring Sts.*

STREET & NUMBER 101-131 North Broadway 408-434 West Short  
409-431 West Main

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

06

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Fayette

CODE

067 ✓

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> 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 See attached sheet

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 215 W. Main

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE See attached sheet

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Victorian Commercial Block, bounded by West Main, Spring, West Short and North Broadway Streets, is located on the western edge of Lexington's downtown business district. South of it is the newly constructed Lexington Civic Center, and to its north, the restored Opera House. West of the Block is the Western Suburb Historic District (listed on the National Register June 18, 1976).

The block contains 16 buildings. The exterior appearance of all but three indicates they were constructed in the late 19th or early 20th centuries as commercial structures (Photos #1, 2, 3, 4). A paved parking area is to the west of L.L. Roberts on the corner of Spring and West Main. Clockwise from the corner of North Broadway and West Main, the buildings are as follows:

1. At the corner of North Broadway and West Main is H.H. Leet Furniture Center, No. 101-103 North Broadway, a 3-story brick building painted white which has five bays on both North Broadway and West Main as well as a corner bay (Photo #5). It was built in the 1870's, although the corner entrance appears for the first time on the Sanborn Insurance Map of 1896. The Broadway and corner facades have a horizontal belt of purpose-molded bricks and a line of dentils between the second and third stories. Hood molds over windows at the corner and on South Broadway have terra cotta keystones and purpose-molded brick forming arches which spring from pilasters of brick and are earlier than the 1896 date for the corner entrance (Photo #6).

The West Main side is simpler in detail. Brick quoins define its ends and also frame a central 2-bay subsidiary entrance. Hood molds with keystones are over windows on this side (Photo #7).

All windows on the second and third floors have been boarded. They have wooden sills. There is a modern store front at the first floor level. The overhang of the roof is supported by heavy consoles of a type common in this block. Beneath the consoles is a row of dentils.

2. The Wooden Door at 409-413 West Main is a 3-story brick building built before 1883 (Photo #8). Its second and third floor windows have brick hood molds articulated to simulate battlements (Photo #9). The central 3-bay section is separated from a new 2-bay addition on the west and the other 3-bay section on the east by flat pilasters. The three sections have a modern cornice. The second and third floor windows are boarded except in the new section on the west. There is a modern store front at the first floor level.

3. H.H. Leet Furniture Center, 415-419 West Main, is in the middle of the block separated from the H.H. Leet corner store by the Wooden Door (Photo #10). On the 1886 Sanborn Map it was marked "unfinished" but it was occupied by the next year, according to the 1887 City Directory. The facade of this 7-bay, 3-story brick building is divided into three sections by flat pilasters. The pilasters on either

(continued)

# 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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Victorian Commercial Block is a very important block visually and commercially in downtown Lexington. Its buildings were constructed for use as commercial structures, mostly in the 1870's and 80's at a time when citizens of Lexington were prospering and trade was lively. The Block reflects those times. It has the same profile and charm as it did then as well as having many of the same kinds of businesses it had in earlier years. Time has passed it by; many of its Victorian embellishments such as bracketed storefronts, ornate hood molds, pressed tin ceilings and tile stoops survive.

Its strategic location between the main business district to the east and the Western Suburb District to the west, the newly opened Civic Center to the south and the restored Opera House, performing arts center and part of the Civic Center operations, to the north makes it of prime concern to preservationists and developers alike. (Both the Western Suburb and Opera House are already on the National Register of Historic Places.)

The Block is on the northwest corner of Main and Broadway, two streets that are as important today as they were when Lexington was laid out in 1780. Main and Main Cross (now Broadway) were both five poles (82½ ft.) wide, the widest streets in town, and on the northwest corner of the two streets stood the first Fayette County courthouse, with a hut for a jail alongside. Main Cross was the principal north-south axis bisecting the original 18 blocks of inlots and meant to extend indefinitely in both directions; its name was changed to Broadway in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Main Street shared with Water (now Vine) prominence as an east-west artery.

H. H. Leet Furniture Company at 101-03 North Broadway was divided into two commercial establishments for many years. 101 (formerly No. 1 before street numbers were changed ca. 1900) was a grocery store for fifteen years under the proprietorship of Thomas J. Cassell. Cassell had learned his trade well, having been employed respectively by Shropshire, Berkeley & Cassell and Cassell and Lancaster, wholesale groceries, from 1872-78. He opened his own retail store at No. 1 North Broadway in 1880 but a fire in August of 1881 forced him to close his doors until November of that year when he reopened with a fresh stock and prospered.<sup>2</sup> The

1 Clay Lancaster, "Vestiges of a Venerable City," Section III, p. 2, soon to be published by the Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission.

2 William Henry Perrin, ed. History of Fayette County, Kentucky (Chicago:1882), p. 592.

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA 1.75 acres

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	7,1,9	4,3,0	4,2,1,4	0,5,0	B	1,6	7,1,9	3,7,0	4,2,1,4	0,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C	1,6	7,1,9	3,0,5	4,2,1,4	0,8,0	D	1,6	7,1,9	3,7,0	4,2,1,4	1,3,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Bounded by West Main Street on south, Spring Street on west, West Short Street on north and North Broadway on east.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. James Park, Jr.

ORGANIZATION

Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission

DATE

December 20, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

253 Market Street

TELEPHONE

255-8312 or 252-2504

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

*Edward W. Mellon*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5/25/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Charles A. Herring*  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7-21-78

ATTEST

*John B. ...*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7/21/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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West Main

- 409-413 West Main - Leet Brothers Furniture Co., Inc.  
415-419 West Main - Hanson H. Leet  
101 S. Hanover Ave.  
✓ Lexington, Ky. 40502
- Warren Randall Leet  
✓ 432 Queensway Dr.  
Lexington, Kentucky 40502
- Dorothy D. Leet  
✓ 809 Westchester Drive  
Lexington, Ky. 40502
- 421-429 West Main - Lydia F. Fischer and Neolia F. Lamb (Residence)  
431 West Main - William Lee Lamb  
811 Overbrook Circle  
Lexington, Ky. 40502

West Short

- 408 West Short - Joint Realty Association, Inc.  
358 West Main  
Lexington, Ky. 40507
- 410-414 West Short - Joint Realty Association, Inc.  
418 W. Short - Joint Realty Association, Inc.  
424-428 West Short - Hanson H. Leet  
101 S. Hanover Avenue  
Lexington, Kentucky 40502
- Warren Randall Leet  
432 Queensway Drive  
Lexington, Kentucky
- ✓ Dorothy D. Leet  
809 Westchester Drive  
Lexington, Kentucky 40502
- 430-434 West Short - Charles D. and Mary Mitchell  
250 Holiday Road  
Lexington, Kentucky 40502

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North Broadway

- 101-103 North Broadway - H.H. Leet Furniture Co.  
105-107 North Broadway - H.H. Leet Furniture Co.  
109 North Broadway - Katherine P. Turner and Howard Turner  
✓ 240 Kingsway Drive  
Lexington, Kentucky 40502  
111 North Broadway - ✓ George Payne (Residence)  
115 North Broadway - Robert K. Wood  
✓ 3006 Bryan Station  
Lexington, Kentucky 40505  
119 North Broadway - Haldon R. Pinkston, Sr. and Jr.  
✓ 422 South Ridge Drive  
Lexington, Kentucky 40505  
125-129 North Broadway - Haldon R. Pinkston, Sr. and Jr.  
131 North Broadway - Haldon R. Pinkston, Sr. and Jr.

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101-131 North Broadway

Historic Survey and Plan for Lexington and Fayette County.

Date: 1970 County  
Depository: Lexington-Fayette Co. Planning Commission  
Lexington, Kentucky

Entire Block

Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory

Date: 1976 State  
Depository: Kentucky Heritage Commission  
Frankfort, Ky.

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side of the central bay flank an arch over a third floor triple window. The pediment above is the central element of a massive bracketed and denticulated cornice (Photo #11). Fan-like sunbursts and prone consoles ornament the pediment and terminate the cornice at either end of the building. There is a modern store front at the first floor level. The windows on the second and third floors have been boarded.

4. L.L. Roberts, 421-429 West Main, was built 1901-1907 for a furniture store and is a large 3-story building organized into four sections of three bays each divided by pilasters (Photo #12). Those in the westernmost nine bays are of stone at the first floor level. The three-bay section on the east has cast-iron pilasters at the first floor level that terminate in flat-relief stylized floral motifs. Modern plate-glass windows have intact above them decorative panels, painted over, but probably a combination of pressed tin and glass, with floral designs, geometric in style and Art Nouveau in period.

Three arched windows at the third floor level in the middle of the 9-bay section define the main entrance of the store. There is a stone arch with stone keystone over the middle windows and brick arches with stone keystones over the side windows. Stone lintels top other windows. There are small garret windows above all but the arched windows. All windows have been boarded.

5. At 431 W. Main is a paved parking area for L.L. Roberts.

6. 430-434 West Short dates to at least 1919.<sup>1</sup> It is a 2-story 5-bay brick building with bays separated by brick pilasters (Photo #3). Pedimented parapets crown the center and end bays. There is a triple window in each bay of the second story. It is now Magna-Graphic, Inc.

7. 424-428 West Short, built in the 1920's, is a 2-story, 6-bay brick building with a modern store front on the first level, used for storage by H.H. Leet.

8. 418 West Short, built in the 1920's, is a 2-story, 8-bay brick building with garage entrance and store front on first level. It is used by Southern Bedding Co.

9. 410-412 West Short, used for storage by Southern Bedding Company, has a date of 1882 on its ornate cast iron facade (Photo #13). The 2-story, 3-bay structure is divided into three sections by channeled pilasters topped with elaborate floral design capitals. There are elongated double windows framed by pilasters in each bay on the second floor level; a Palladian-style window in the central bay is

<sup>1</sup>A 1919 photograph shows the exterior of the building to be basically as it appears today. The 1907 Sanborn Insurance Map reveals that part of the building (430-432) had an iron-clad front and rear.

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crowned by an arch within which is a carved crosswork design and "1882" (Photo #14). The finials and decorative free-standing pediment atop the roof have been removed since 1888 when the building was illustrated in the City Directory of that year (Photo #15). It has a modern store front which is boarded.

10. 408 West Short Street, also owned by Southern Bedding, was built before 1886 when it appeared on the Sanborn Insurance Map (Photo #16). It is a 2-story, 3-bay brick building and has arched moldings with keystones over its second floor windows. The garret has elliptical openings with iron grill work intact. The first floor store front is boarded.

11. 131 North Broadway on the corner of Short and Broadway is occupied by Pinkston's Hardware & Service and appears to be a modern 3-bay, 3-story structure; a pressed tin roof within, however, indicates a late 19th century building incorporated into the later one (Photo #17). The Sanborn Insurance Maps of 1901 and 1907 indicate the change took place between the two dates as the 2½-story building becomes three by the later date. There is a modern store front at the first floor level.

12. 125-129 North Broadway dates from the 1870's (Photo #18). It is a 3-story 5-bay structure with a bracketed roof and 5 elliptical openings fitted with lacy ironwork grills (one survives). Pinkston's Turf and Leather Goods is on the first floor, which has a modern store front, with Cox's Hotel on the top floors. (Photo #19).

13. 119 North Broadway is used for storage by Pinkston's (Photo #19). Built at the same time, it is a twin to 125-129 in appearance and size and also has hotel rooms on its upper floors. It has more elaborate hood molds, however, with a motif of anthemions in the arches above the second floor windows (Photo #20). Over the third floor windows are arches with keystones. The first floor has a pressed tin ceiling and a modern store front.

14. 115 North Broadway was built in the 1870's and known as Jacob Stahel's Saloon (Photo #21). The facade of this 3-story, 4-bay brick building is decorated with hood molds of metal over second and third floor windows. The garret has oval openings with ironwork grills. There is a bracketed roof; the bracketed cornices over the modern store front and of the apartment entrance to the north, as well as the tile stoop inscribed BAKERY, are intact. There is an original stairway in the small entrance hall leading to the second and third floor apartments. A pressed tin ceiling can be seen in the store on the first floor.

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15. 111 North Broadway, home of George Payne's Stoves, built before 1883, is a 3-story, 3-bay brick building whose facade is enhanced by arched hood molds over second and third floor windows and oval garret windows (Photos 22 and 23). A modern store front is under a bracketed cornice; the roof is also bracketed.

16. 109 North Broadway is almost identical in size and style to 111 except it has heavier hood molds which are segmental (Photo #24). It has a pressed tin ceiling; remnants of a bracketed cornice frame the modern store front. Listed in the 1873 City Directory as a saloon, it currently is vacant.

17. 105-107 North Broadway is exactly like 109 North Broadway with matching decorative hood molds and oval grills (Photo #25). It has a modern store front. It must have been built at the same time as 109 and is part of The Wooden Door store whose entrance is on West Main.

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location continued to serve as a grocery store until after the turn of the century. In 1921, 101 was the first home of Meyers Brothers, the general store of Emanuel and Edward J.; Meyers flourishes today on Main Street, nationally known for innovative riding apparel.

103 (formerly No. 3) was the establishment of George Koonz, manufacturer of baskets and willow ware, from 1877 until at least 1906. He resided at the same address until 1888, having moved his business and home from around the corner at 53 West Main. When he died in 1917, his obituary claimed he had made baskets in Lexington for 38 years.

The firm of Leet Brothers was founded by H.H. Leet and Walter Leet in 1914 at 415-421 West Main. By the 1948-49 City Directory the firm had split into Leet Brothers at 401 West Main, run by Walter Leet and his son, Walter Jr., and H.H. Leet Furniture Co., Inc., at 415 West Main, with H.H. Leet as President. H.H. Leet remained President of this company until he died in 1975 at the age of 87, having been in business in Lexington since 1907; his firm is still a family-owned business with his son, Warren R., as President. Leet Brothers evolved into Walter & Son in 1960 which last year became The Wooden Door. Both firms have enlarged their stores and now also front on Broadway, H.H. Leet at 101-103 and The Wooden Door at 105-107.

The building at 409-413 West Main (formerly No. 43-47), home of The Wooden Door, was built before 1883. In 1883-84, 43-45 housed Curry, Howard & Murray Co., Wholesale Grocers, which became Curry, Howard & Co. in 1887 and was there the following year. Other tenants have included R.D. Wilson & Co. Implements and Lexington Cigar Store in 1890 and Stoll, Vannatta & Co., wholesale liquor dealers, 1893-1917. The earliest tenant found for 47 West Main was Vance & Feeney, Stoves and Tinware. Started in 1885, it boasted a wide range of related goods and 10-12 workmen; in G.W. Ranck's Review of Lexington, Kentucky As She Is, the firm and the history of the modern stove were discussed ending with "Upon him (the stove dealer) and his knowledge of his business rests in a great measure the happiness or comfort of his fellows....Among those engaged in the business in this city, the firm of Vance & Feeney fill the bill in a concise manner." By 1890 it had become Harting & Cruickshank, Stoves, which became H.A. White, Hardware, in 1898.

3 George Washington Ranck, A Review of Lexington, Kentucky, As She Is (New York: 1886), p. 80.

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The H.H. Leet Furniture Center at 415-419 West Main (formerly No. 49-53) was completed by 1887 and called the Feeney Building on 1890, 1896 and 1901 Sanborn Insurance Maps. It housed J. Ely, carriage manufacturer, and Knoxville Furniture Co. in 1887; Lexington Buggy Co. and Martin & Naven Laundry in 1888; Rodes Furniture in 1890 and M & N Laundry from 1890 to 1907 as well as Bosworth & Richardson, coalyard, in 1893 and P.H. Feeney, furniture and undertaker, in 1895. By 1902, 415 (No. 49) was the Rhodes-Burford Furniture Company.

Between 1901 and 1907 earlier buildings were replaced by the current one at 421-429 West Main. By the 1902 City Directory the Rhodes-Burford Furniture Company was operating at 415 West Main (as mentioned earlier) and 425-429 West Main. In 1910 it changed its name to L. L. Roberts; partners that year were L.F. Hurt, H.C. Rodes and L.L. Roberts. It is owned and managed today by descendants of L.L. Roberts.

The Magna-Graphic, Inc. building at 430 West Short, dating to the turn of the century, has been the home of printing and engraving businesses, advertising agencies and commercial artists. It was the Centralia Creamery in 1918, becoming Lexington Creamery in 1919 and Swift & Company in the 1920's. From 1942-1956 it housed Holland Furnace Company. The two buildings next door at 418 and 424-428 date from the 1920's and have had assorted uses. H.H. Leet has used 424 for a warehouse or used furniture store since the 50's while the occupant of 418 has been Southern Bedding since 1935, having previously been the V.G. Garner Furniture Store (later Baugh & Garner).

Lell's Opera House, 410-412 West Short (formerly No. 38-40), was called "The Prettiest Building in Lexington" shortly after it was built in 1882 by John William Lell, who emigrated from Wurtemberg, Germany in 1854. Mr. Lell was an enterprising businessman, "another feature in that phalanx of self-made men who have made America what she is."<sup>5</sup> Coming to Lexington in the early 1870's, he opened a confectionery on Main Street; destroyed by fire he started over and was soon running as many as seven different stores at a time besides managing the St. Nicholas Hotel from 1876-83. Confining his interests to the area at the corner of Broadway and Short, he continued to prosper; in 1882 his business amounted to \$100,000 a year.<sup>6</sup> Ranck listed his other interests in a glowing account in A Review of Lexington, As She Is: "Mr. Lell has been prominently identified with all the large undertakings which have benefitted the city. His capital introduced the electric light; he was President of the company... He has held various positions of trust; is at present a Director in the Lexington City Bank; is President of the Brick Company and member of three Building Associations besides, and Director of two of them. He is also a prominent

4 Lexington Herald, Aug. 26, 1910, p. 10.

5 Ranck, Lexington, As She Is, p. 89.

6 Perrin, History of Fayette Co., p. 647.

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figure in turf circles; is a member of the Louisville Jockey Club and of the Lexington Fair Association. He for three years owned 'Caneland,' one of the best farms in the Blue Grass...He belongs to the Confectioners' Union of the United States. He is an active Mason, 32d Scottish Rite, and delegate to every national convention since he joined. He was some years Treasurer of the Lex. Chapter. He was Chief Patriarch of the Odd Fellows' encampment in 1873, and Treasurer of I.O.O.F. Hall 5 years. There are few names as well known or as generally popular here."<sup>7</sup>

Ranck goes on to describe Lell's Opera House in his book as having on its street floor "one of the largest restaurants in Kentucky, the elegant bar being appointed with the best wines, beers and liquors of every variety and similar performances are conducted every evening. It has a seating capacity for 600 people."<sup>8</sup> The shows during the mid-1880's were mostly patronized by male audiences, according to J.Winston Coleman, local historian. It was also known, probably more realistically, as Lell's Beer Hall. The local Chamber of Commerce, formed in 1882, had its headquarters here the next year when G.W. Ranck was a Vice President and Lell on the Board of Directors. According to City Directories Lell had a bakery and confectionery in this building from 1895-99. The Sanborn Maps show there was a wholesale grocery here in 1901 and Stoll & Co. Wholesale Liquors in 1907.

The second floor of Lell's Opera House was used as the Lexington Athletic Club's headquarters in 1888, the Lexington Gymnasium in 1890, and the Red Men's Hall in 1895 and 1898-99. J.W. Coleman says that "during the early years of this century, the building gained fame as the starting point for Ed "Strangler" Lewis' climb to the world's wrestling championship. Lewis used the second floor as his training quarters when the old theatre was converted into a gymnasium."<sup>9</sup>

408 West Short (formerly No. 36), built before 1886, was also a part of the Lell complex, having been the barber shop from 1887-1895. In 1901 it was a bakery and in 1907, a hardware warehouse.

On the corner of Short and Broadway is Pinkston's Hardware & Service (formerly No. 25 North Broadway). The location has been the site of a saloon for many years. In 1864 Sunny Side Exchange was here: City Directories show Pat Farrell operating a saloon off and on here between 1873 and 1884. The name Sunny Side Saloon

7 Ranck, Lexington, As She Is, p. 90.

8 Ibid., pp. 89-90.

9 J. Winston Coleman, Jr., The Squire's Sketches of Lexington (Lexington: 1972) p. 62.

(continued)

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appeared again in 1887. By 1890 D.E. Benckart was the saloon's proprietor, then W.C. Rogers in 1893, John Ryan in 1895 and A.J. Hagan in 1898-99. The building was remodeled to conform to the height of its neighbors between 1901 and 1907.

119-129 North Broadway (formerly 15-21), housing Pinkston's Turf & Leather Goods and storage area on the first floor and Cox's Hotel on the floors above, was used by John W. Lell as early as 1875 for a confectionery and restaurant. The hotel was known as Lell's European Hotel by 1888. In the 1895 City Directory it was called the Hotel Faust but was Lell's European Hotel again in 1898-99. It was known as the Fayette Hotel in 1904 when it was sold to Mrs. Farrell for \$23,700.<sup>10</sup> Before moving his bakery and confectionery around the corner to the first floor of his Opera House, they were located here. Mr. Ranck in A Review of Lexington, As She Is, published in 1886, says: "Here he has his confectionery store stocked with all the delicacies included under this head. In this respect it is considered one of the first in the State, carrying a line as full and complete as any house in the West. He supplies the store of Central Kentucky with the bulk of their candies, and does a heavy business in Missouri, Tennessee, West Virginia and across the Ohio River. Adjoining the confectionery store is the ladies' dining room, where choice oysters, ice-cream and nice meals are served at reasonable rates. A well stocked dry goods store, superintended by competent lady clerks, also enjoys a good patronage. Up-stairs is the hotel, recently fitted up with twenty-six of the nicest rooms in the city. The premises are completed by a private office, where Mr. Lell, when not in some other part of his premises, may be found transacting and checking his numerous business operations. In the rear of the building are three stories fitted with every convenience for making confectionery, bread and cakes with expedition."<sup>11</sup>

115 North Broadway (formerly No. 13) is now Jacob Stahl's Restaurant. It thrived as a saloon for a number of years in the late 19th century as did its neighbors. J. Stahel's Saloon, dealer in "Pure Copper Whiskey, Beer, Cigars, Tobacco, etc.,"<sup>12</sup> was there from 1875-1884. H. Krouse operated a saloon at this location from 1887-1893; W.J. Smith (1895) and Druming & Weitzel (1898-99) carried on the tradition.

George Payne's Stoves at 111 (formerly No. 11) was the Martin & Naven Saloon in 1883-84; Crawford Bros. Grocer, 1888-1890; McElhon & Moloney, plumbers, 1893-95.

- 10 Coleman, Squire's Sketches, p. 62.  
11 Ranck, Lexington, As She Is, p. 89.  
12 Lexington City Directory, 1875-76.

(continued)

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The building at 109 (formerly No. 9), currently vacant, was the Jacob Fred Goebel Saloon from 1873-1882; Mr. M. Lavin, dry goods and notions, 1887-1890; various paint stores from 1893 to 1899.

105-107 North Broadway (formerly No. 507), part of The Wooden Door, most likely built at the same time as its twin, 109, was also a part of Mrs. Lavin's establishment from 1887-1893, becoming J.M. Donahue, dry goods, in 1895. Donahue was still here in 1898-99, joined by Michael Grady, dry goods.

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Lexington Herald. August 26, 1910 , 10.

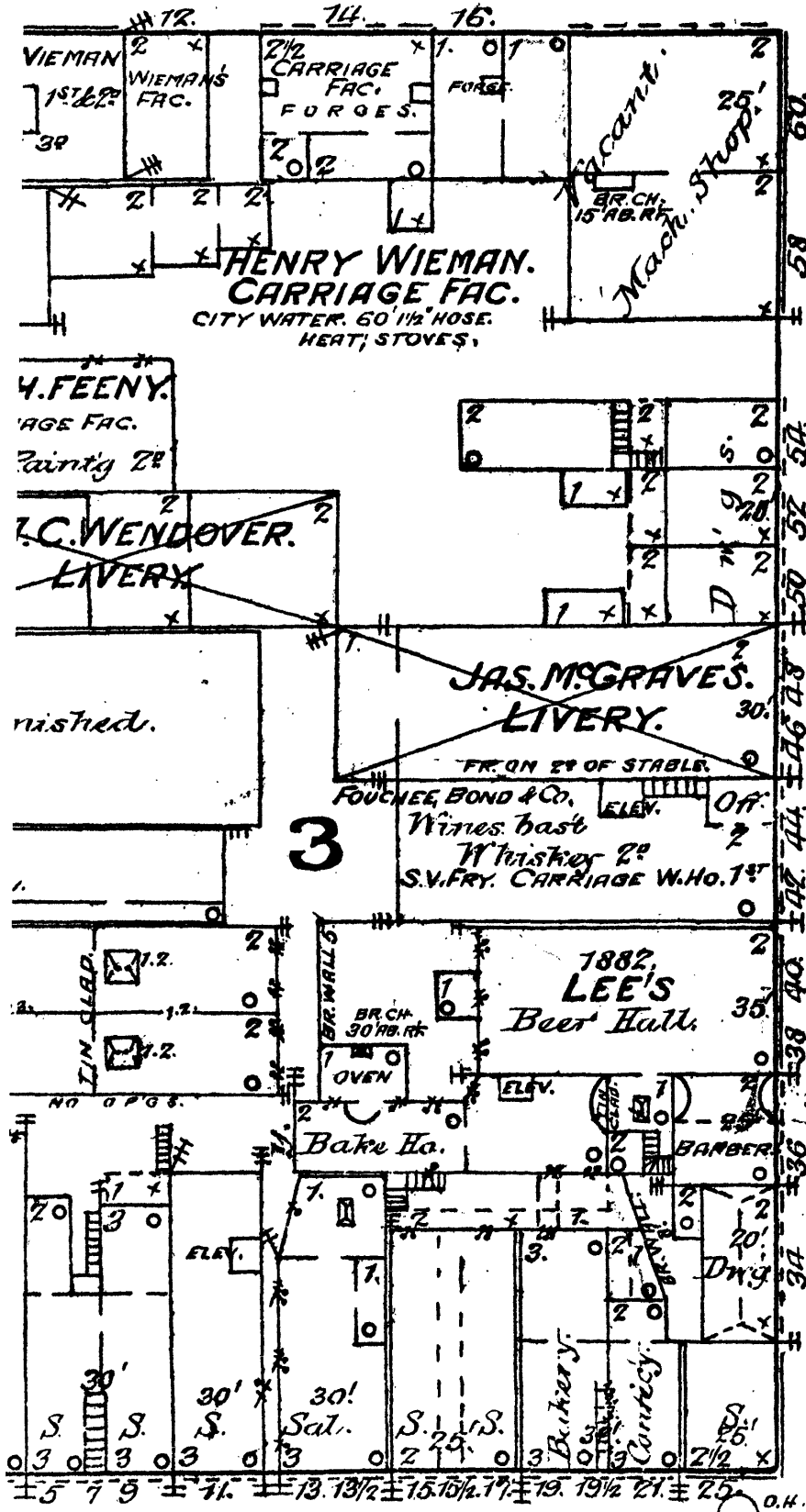
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**N. SPRING**

1886



**N. BROADWAY**

66'

12'

J.E.D.  
578.6

Commercial District

ty

1978

nce Map  
Kentucky Library  
50'

JUN 6 1978

W. SHORT

1907



D.H. 46' 6" W. PIPE

N. SPRING

6" W. PIPE

D.H.

82'

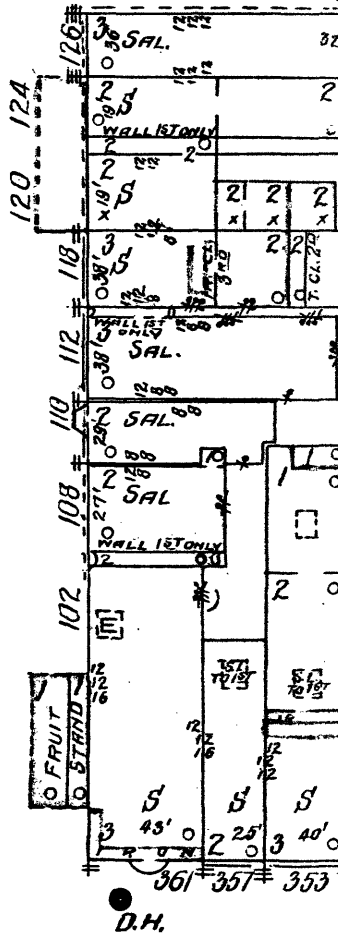
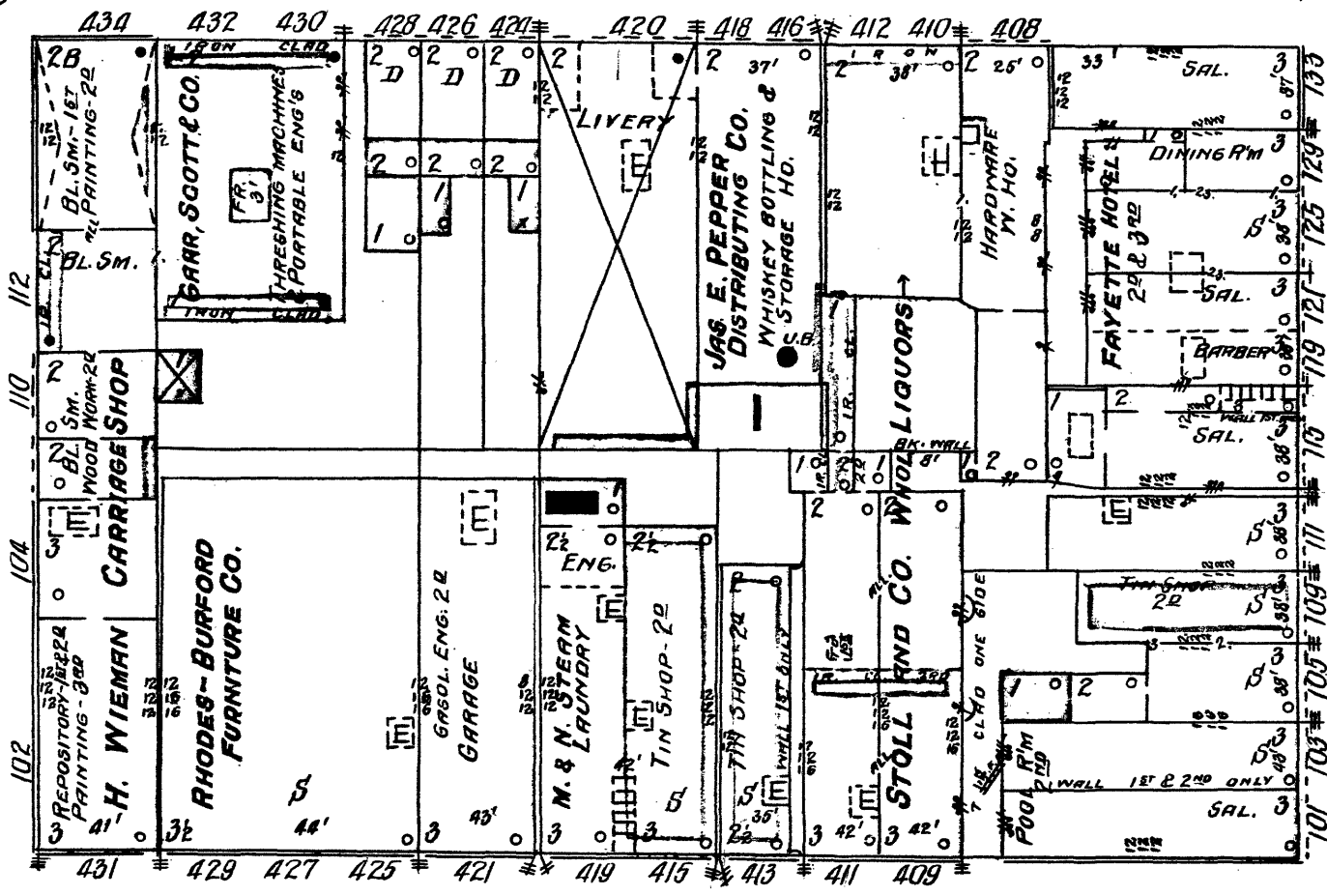
N. BROADWAY

6" W. PIPE

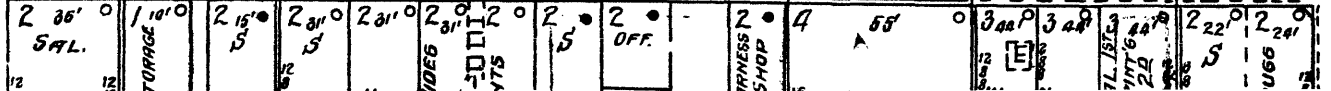
8" W. PIPE

10" W. PIPE

W. MAIN



402 438 436 434 430 428 424 422 420 418 416 414 412 410 406 402 400



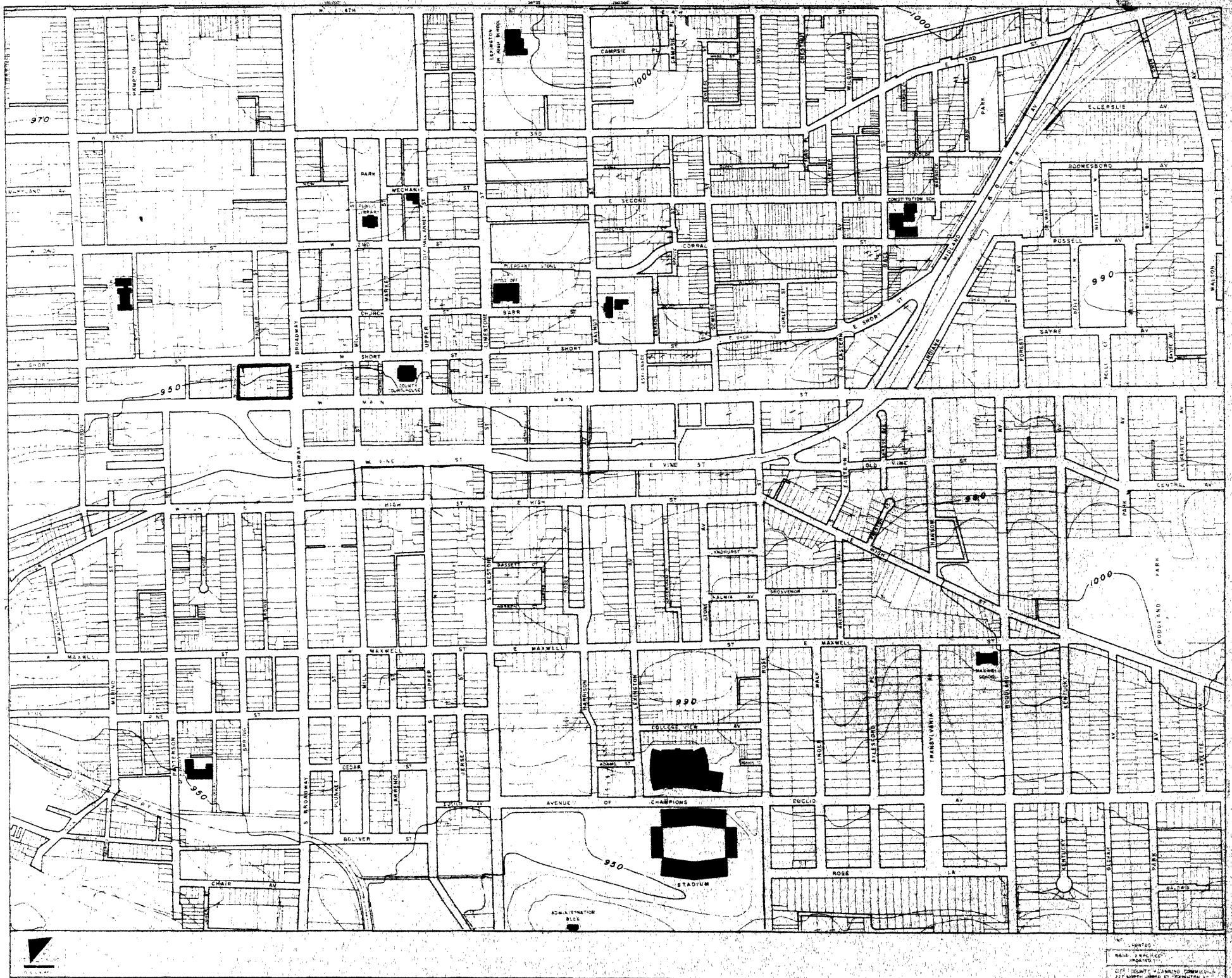
D.H.

Victorian Commercial District  
Lexington  
Fayette County  
Kentucky

JUN 21 1978

Sanborn Insurance Map  
University of Kentucky Library  
1907 1" = 50'  
Map 4.

JUN 6 1978



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Victorian Commercial District  
Lexington  
Fayette County  
Kentucky

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**JUL 21 1978**

Lexington-Fayette County Planning  
Commission, 227 North Upper  
1/4" = 200' 1970  
Map 5. District outlined in red.