

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 30 1980  
DATE ENTERED AUG 26 1980

**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 Mitchell Baker Smith Co. Building

AND/OR COMMON  
Phillip Gall & Son Company Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
230-32 West Main Street

CITY, TOWN  
Lexington

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
6th

STATE  
Kentucky

--- VICINITY OF  
CODE  
021

COUNTY  
Fayette  
CODE  
067

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" 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  
Phillip Gall & Son, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER  
230 W. Main St.

CITY, TOWN  
Lexington

--- VICINITY OF

STATE  
Kentucky 40507

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Fayette County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
West Main Street

CITY, TOWN  
Lexington

STATE  
Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory

DATE  
April 1979

--- FEDERAL  STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN  
Frankfort

STATE  
Kentucky 40601

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

Located on the south side of the Courthouse Square facing the main entrance of the Fayette County Courthouse, the Mitchell Baker Smith Building has one of the most conspicuous locations in the downtown area. East of it is a fairly narrow ground-level parking lot (proposed as the site of a city park since the previous structures were demolished by Urban Renewal in the 1970s); beyond that on the southwest corner of Upper Street is the important cast-iron-front Norton's Block (Melodeon Hall; McAdams & Morford Drugstore Building; listed on the National Register; recipient of a Federal grant-in-aid for stabilization in the late 1970s; the western section, including Melodeon Hall, is currently undergoing adaptive rehabilitation). West of the Mitchell Baker Smith Building are two low two-story 20th-century department store buildings, of which the westernmost is now vacant, and beyond that to the corner of Mill St. are a drastically remodelled older structure and a recent one-story restaurant complex. Thus, 230-32 Main St. provides a visual and period keystone to this crucial block at the core of the downtown commercial and governmental center.

230-32 W. Main St. is a long, narrow building extending from Main St. south to Water St. (a recently widened mall-like street that combines the former Water and Vine Streets). The brick sides are plain, although a vivid supergraphic on the east side facing the parking lot features a rainbow and the word "Lexington" (photo 1) and barely visible above the third story on the west side is an old Mitchell Baker Smith sign (photo 2). The facade is framed in a rich yellowish brick with flecks of darker color. The building has three stories plus a full-story attic which is masked on the front by a raised panel under the modillioned and dentillated cornice, which returns on the facade under the flat parapet. Below this attic and between the end-piers, which have stone impost blocks at floor levels, the facade of the second and third stories above the altered ground-floor front consists of windows set within frames with no visible supports or wall-surface; the spandrels between the floors are minimal and have diamond-shaped tiles placed to accent the vertical dividers. On each floor there are three large "picture windows" which originally pivoted horizontally (the glass was also apparently painted black with elaborate gold filigree patterns framing a gilt wreath in the center; this treatment counteracted the severity of the structural and framing elements; see Chinn and 1919 photos 3 and 7). Above each of these almost square windows is a pair of transoms of prismatic glass (see also interior detail, photo 6); these also originally pivoted, vertically. The full-width prismatic transom on the first floor over the entrance and display windows may also survive behind the current large sign, although the position of this entrance has been changed several times.

Somewhat surprisingly, the handsome lion's heads (photo 4)--probably metal or possibly terra-cotta--on the end-piers flanking the second story windows do not appear on the ca. 1920 Chinn photo; they were probably added shortly afterward to support a marquee shown on later views.

The interior remains essentially in its original form, as shown in three photographs of the interior in the 1919 brochure (pp. 80-81; photos 7 and 8). Each floor retains its attractive pressed-metal ceiling, although an "ice-tray" grid ceiling has been hung below that of the first floor, and there are pipes and fluorescent light fixtures suspended below those of the upper floors; patterns of the metal panels are carefully adapted to the surfaces available, including Gothic circular medallions from which the original light fixtures were suspended and handsome shell motives in the corners of the transverse beams, which have meander patterns on their lower surfaces; the

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1905-1907

BUILDER/ARCHITECT attributed to H.L. Rowe

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This plain but handsome three-story commercial building occupies a conspicuous position at the heart of downtown Lexington, directly opposite the main entrance of the Fayette County Courthouse. Its basically intact facade is of attractively glazed yellow brick framing a "Chicago Style" curtain wall of picture windows and prismatic transoms (that originally pivoted to provide ventilation). A rich Neo-Classical cornice and a pair of high-relief lion's-heads flanking the second story provide the chief visual interest, aside from the fine proportions. Since the destruction in December 1979 of the similar but considerably larger Purcell's Department Store Building in the next block to the west, and the loss of some of the chief decorative features of the comparable Harting Building (now Leonard Cox Store) on the block to the east, the Mitchell Baker Smith Building represents most effectively the restraining influence of the "modern" Chicago Style in downtown Lexington at the turn of the century. Moreover, the interior, documented by early photographs, is a remarkably intact ensemble of pressed-metal ceilings and golden-oak staircases.

The building was erected in 1906-1907 on what had been known in the early 19th century as "Silk Stocking Row"; the commercial block with the highest concentration of quality goods. The store for which it was erected maintained that tradition until it closed about a decade ago, having celebrated the centennial of its founding (on another site) in 1865. This dry goods and ladies' furnishings firm had a series of partners--and names--from the Civil War until 1905, when it took the name under which it operated until its demise. Thus, the present building seems to have represented a significant new departure for the firm. The various partners were among the leading dry goods merchants of Lexington.

In an article in the Herald (March 15, 1905), Judge Hunt, acting as the agent for the owner of the property, Mrs. Livingston, announced that the old building was to be demolished and a new structure, "modern in every detail and worthy of being near the building which is being put up by the City National Bank" (nearby at the northwest corner of Main St. and Cheapside), was to be erected soon, although the contract had not yet been let. Construction seems to have been completed fairly rapidly, however, as the present building, which appears on the 1907 Sanborn Insurance map, was being occupied by the first tenants, the Mitchell Baker Smith dry goods firm, when described by the Herald, Feb. 16, 1906, 6-5, as "handsomely equipped with all the most modern conveniences and being situated opposite the courthouse and near the street car center makes it one of the most desirable locations in the city."

Apparently the Hunt family disposed of the property in 1913 to the indirect heirs of grocery magnate Joseph Clark (members of the prominent Graves family), who sold it in turn to S.S. Kresge Co. in 1970; two years later it came into the hands of the present owner-occupants who have slightly modernized and maintained the building well.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. .08 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6	7	1	9	6	2	0	4	2	1	3	7	9	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property consists of a rectangular lot (approximately 30 feet wide and 125 feet deep), comprising that land on which the Mitchell, Baker and Smith Co. Building stands.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Lexington-Fayette Co. Historic Comm.

STREET & NUMBER

253 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN

DATE

February, 1980

TELEPHONE

255-8312

STATE

## 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

*Donna C. Hopkins*

TITLE

*Deputy* State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

*6-20-80*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Kristin O'Connell*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*8/26/80*

DATE

*8/8/80*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 30 1980
DATE ENTERED	AUG 26 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

degree of elaboration is carefully graded from floor to floor and perhaps was originally adjusted to the specific use of each department (see 1919 photos; photos 5-8). There is a plain but well-designed golden oak staircase near the center of the east wall (photo 5), with restrained spindels and square panelled newel posts; this is also basically intact.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 30 1980
DATE ENTERED	AUG 26 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

Illustrated Lexington, Kentucky. Lexington: The Transylvania Printing Co., 1919.

Ranck, George W. Lexington: A Review of Lexington, Ky., As It Is. New York: John A. Lethem, 1887.

Shepherd, R. Marshall, "Clothing Firm Marks Its 100th Anniversary." The Lexington Herald-Leader, October 3, 1965.

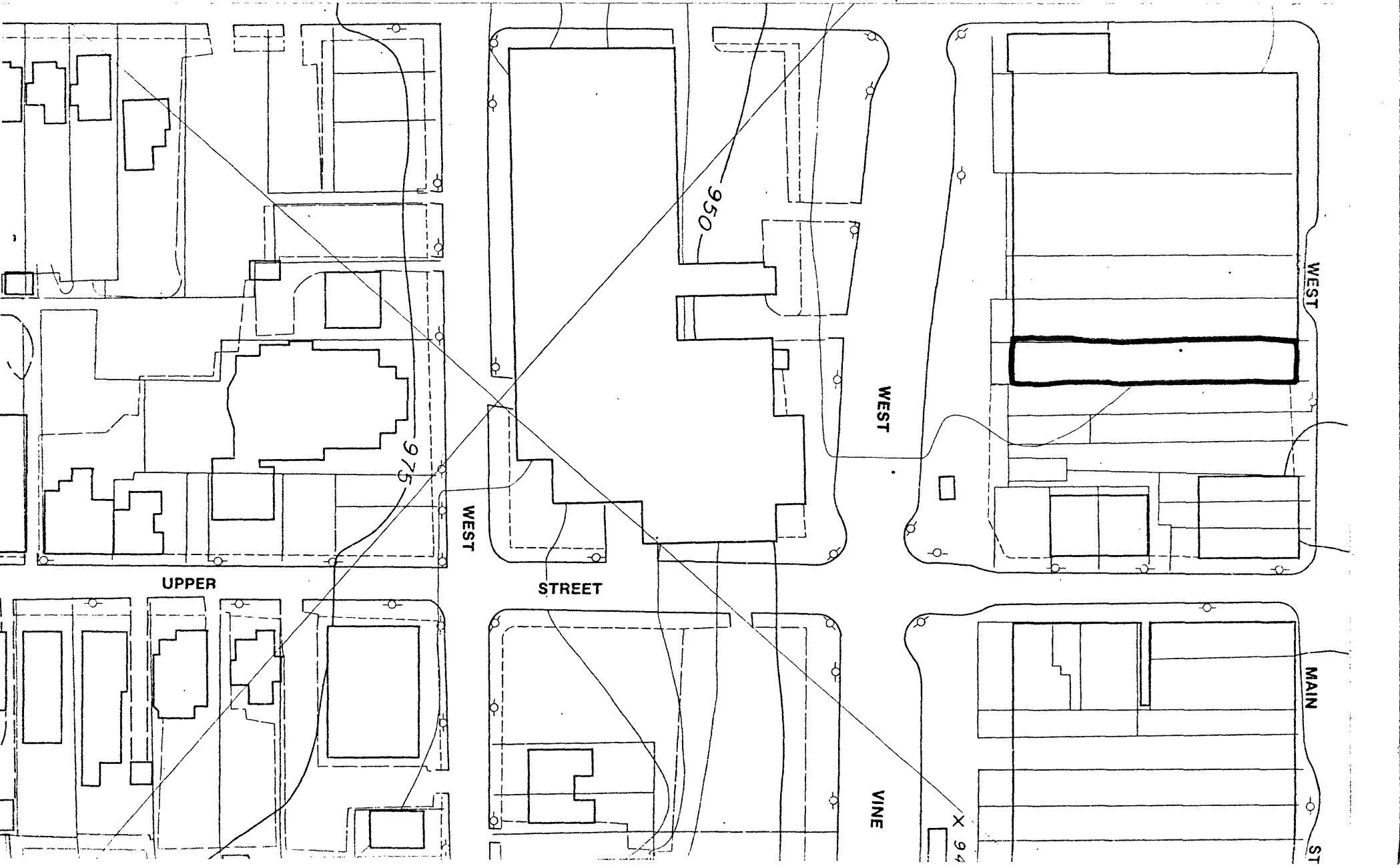
Wallis, Frederick A., and Hambleton Tapp, eds. A Sesqui-Centennial History of Kentucky. 4 vols. Louisville: The Historical Record Association, 1945.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). 1956; reprinted by Hennessey & Ingalls, Los Angeles, 1970.

For other references, see Survey form.

199,000N

1,928,000E



Mitchell Baker Smith & Co. Building

Lexington  
230 W. Main St.  
Fayette  
Kentucky

Urban-County Planning Commission Map

Scale - 1"=400'  
Date - 1976; updated 1980

Map 2

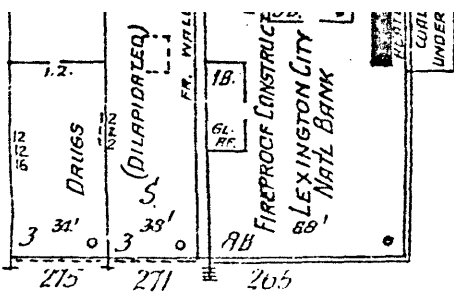
JUN 30 1980

230 W. Main



1907

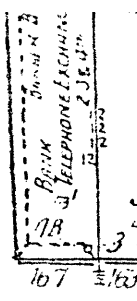
108'



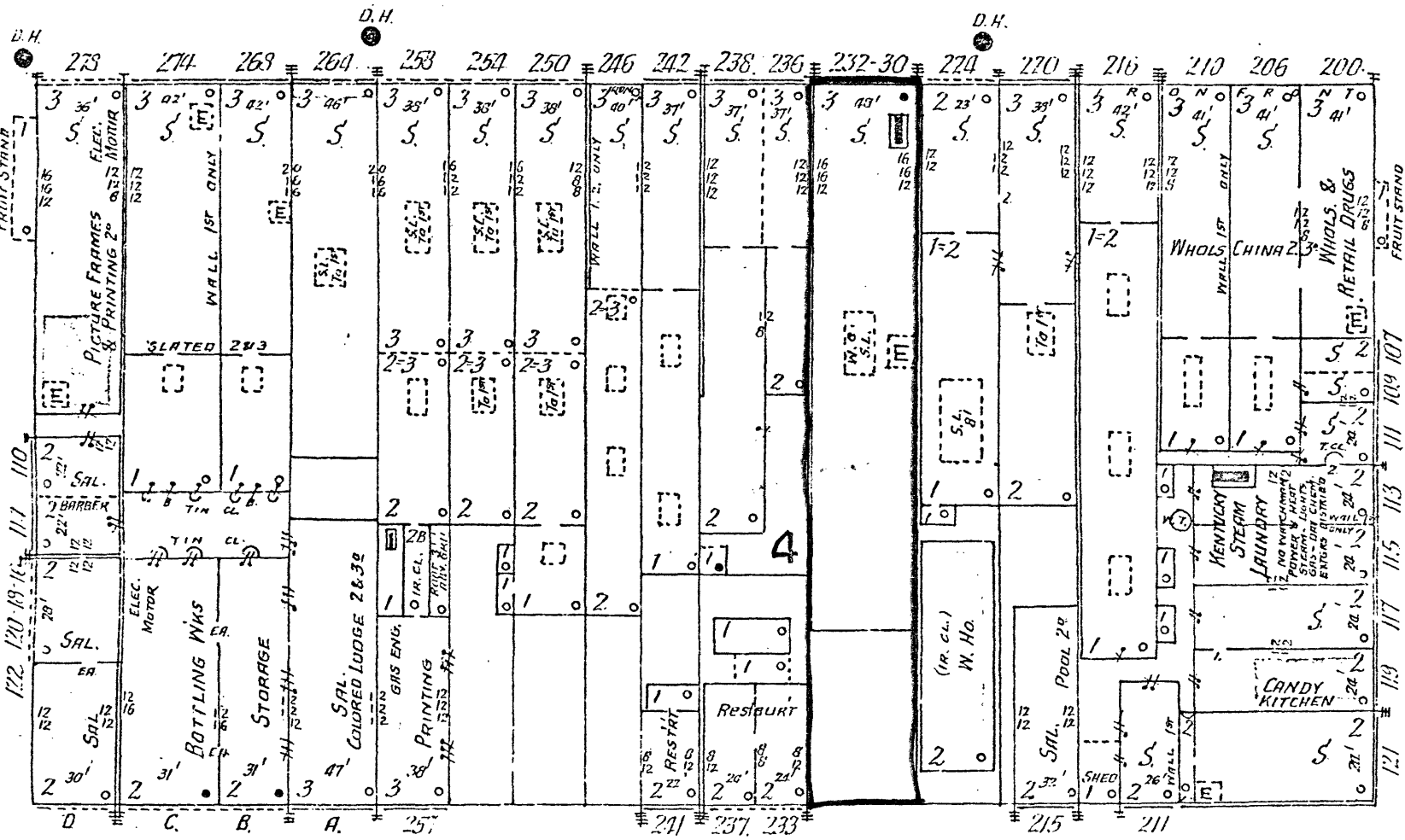
St. R. R.  
[WRITING]  $\circ$   
R.M.

W. MAIN

(FA) 1" W PIPE



1" W PIPE



S. MILL

1" W PIPE

S. UPPER

L & N. R.

WATER

Mitchell Baker Smith & Co. Building

Lexington  
230 W. Main St.  
Fayette  
Kentucky

Sanborn Insurance Map  
University of Kentucky

Scale - 1"=50'  
Date - 1907

**JUN 3 0 1980**

Map 3

*Philip Ball 1907 Sanborn*