



Figure 132: Looking east into historic district, from Kimbrell's Furniture, at 100 block of South Main Street with 125 South Main at right



Figure 133: Looking northeast into historic district, from Kimbrell's Furniture, at 100 block of South Main Street with 120 South Main at far left and cupola of former Davidson County Courthouse at far right



Figure 134: Looking southwest from within historic district toward recommended addition to district with 106-114 South Main Street at right and Kimbrell's Furniture at center left



Figure 135: Looking north into historic district, from Kimbrell's Furniture, at 200-202 South Main Street



Figure 136: Looking north up East 2nd Avenue with Sink, Taylor & Evans building at left and Kimbrell's Furniture at center right



Figure 137: Looking southwest on South Main Street with Kimbrell's Furniture at left, Redwine's Grocery at center right behind red car, Family Shoe Center at right, and Hedrick Block at far right



Figure 138: Looking southeast on South Main Street with Carolina Theater at far right, Hedrick Block at center right, and Family Shoe Center, Redwine's Grocery, and Kimbrell's Furniture at left



Figure 139: Looking southwest on South Main Street with Hedrick Block at left, Carolina Theater at center, and Verona's Fabrics at far right



Figure 140: Looking south on South Main Street with strip mall at center and right and edge of Verona's Fabrics at far left

**HEDRICK BLOCK (URS survey #18A)
211-215 South Main Street**

History and Significance

The Hedrick Block (DV-584) is located on part of the site of the Lexington Theater Building, which was erected in 1922 following a design by Greensboro architect Harry Barton (*Lexington Dispatch* 1922b and November 6, 1972). That three-story masonry building, which covered multiple lots, burned in 1945 and its front block on Main Street was torn down (*Lexington Dispatch* 1945a and 1945b). (Portions of the concrete and brick walls of its rear theater block still stand along Marble Alley.) Two buildings were erected on the theater's in 1948, the Hedrick Block and the Carolina Theater with which it shares a wall to its west.

An article in the *Lexington Dispatch* of May 17, 1947 calls this building the Carolina Theatre Building, a name that apparently never took hold, for by the compilation of the 1949-1950 city directory it was called the Hedrick Block for the Hedrick family, which built it (Davidson County Deed Book 167/Page 275 (1947)). The *Dispatch* article reported:

The offices and stores in the new Carolina Theatre building, which are being rebuilt by Mrs. Alma Hedrick Crowell for the Hedrick estate, are rapidly nearing completion, and this week the upstairs offices of the building are being occupied. The building, destroyed by fire over two years ago, is to be one of the finest in the Carolinas, and is being rebuilt by R.K. Stewart contracting firm of High Point.

Plate glass windows and structural glass are being installed by the Pittsburgh Plate Glass company, and the exterior finish is in beige glass, while maroon glass outlines the entrance to the offices upstairs.

Composition flooring and modern fluorescent lighting are other features of the building, which is being finished in a most attractive manner. Work on the theatre portion of the building, owned by Danville Enterprises, Inc., is also progressing rapidly, and will house the new Lexington Carolina theatre in several months.

Moving into the upstairs offices are David Kesler, deputy collector of internal revenue, Brown Paving company, Dr. Darrell McWhorter, optometrist, Dr. David Clark Smith, for general medical practice, E. Dana Johnson, insurance representative, and Her Highness Beauty Salon. One of the downstairs stores is to be occupied by the Nance-Jordan company, a second by Lanier's Jewelry, while lease on the other is pending. The Nance-Jordan store will be a new one with the present store continuing on Salisbury Street.

The Hedrick Block in 1949-1950 had six tenants in its two stories of store and office space: Brown Paving, attorney Philip R. Craver, Forest Hill Memorial Park, Inc., Her Highness salon, optometrist McWhorter, and Dr. Smith. The building now holds a second-hand goods store in part of its first story. The remainder of that story and the offices above are vacant above. (The doors to the upstairs are labeled "Turlington Building," but Turlington & Company, a Lexington insurance agency since 1945, is no longer located there (Turlington & Company website).)

The building's Art Moderne-style façade fits neatly with the Art Deco-style Carolina Theater that was built at the same time. That later theater, now unrecognizably altered, was designed by Hendersonville, North Carolina architect Erle Stillwell. The easy conjunction of the Moderne and Art Deco styles in the two adjacent buildings—built at the same time on the same site—suggests that Stillwell penned both designs. However, Stillwell's drawings of the theater do not give any evidence that he designed the neighboring building (DocSouth Going to the Show website; Powers 2012). Further, a check by a librarian of the list of Stillwell drawings on file at the

Henderson County Public Library, which holds many of his papers, uncovered no evidence that he designed the Hedrick Building (Draper 2012). Its architect therefore remains open to question.

Description

The Hedrick Block is a two-story-tall brick building. It is a straightforward functionally designed building but for its façade along Main Street, which is a late example of the Art Moderne style popular in the 1930s. This façade is original and little changed, as evidenced by a comparison of its current appearance with historic photographs from 1948 and 1950 that include views of much of it (Figure 141 and Figure 142).

The façade is marked by three plate-glass store fronts and a central entry, which opens to a stair to the second floor (Figure 143 - Figure 147). Sheathing the façade are distinctive panels of thick, structural, peach-pigmented, mirror-finish glass. Further accenting the elevation are similar panels in maroon that flank the entry, outline one of the second-story windows, and limn the cornice. These are thicker than the beige panels, measuring about one-third of an inch deep. The panels are Carrara Structural Glass, a trade name of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. The building also includes at least a few thinner maroon panels of a plastic or plastic-like material. These are likely later replacements, for as panels have pulled away from the brick walls, chipped, or broken, they have been replaced with jerry-rigged materials, including wooden boards painted beige.

A Carrara/Pittsburgh Plate Glass brochure of 1942 described the product:

Carrara Structural Glass is a material which successfully combines beauty, versatility, sanitation, permanence and reasonable cost. It is a glass which is mechanically ground and polished to a true, flat surface. It brings to the architect soft, rich colors that are genuinely distinctive, and designed to harmonize with almost any color scheme... Carrara is strong and durable, made to withstand rigorous use indoors and out. It will not absorb odors of any kind. It is impervious to grease, grime, moisture, chemicals and pencil marks. It can easily be kept clean by an occasional wiping with a damp cloth. It retains its original beauty year after year, never fading or staining. It is easy to install. And it is adaptable to so many different kinds of treatment that it offers the architect unlimited opportunities for design (Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company 1942).

Where not broken, the glass has indeed maintained its appearance. The approximately one-third-inch-thick maroon glass conforms with the company's suggestion to utilize a thickness of 11/32-inch for store fronts. A thinner glass was chosen for the beige panels.

A shallow, original, aluminum canopy extends over the storefronts and projects a bit forward at the entry to the stairs. Above, at the second story, are four metal casement window units. The one above the entry has a boxy projecting frame outlined in maroon glass. There was no access to the upstairs offices, which are vacant, but the purely functional stair and walls visible through the door suggests standard office space. The downstairs stores are quite plainly finished. If they once had any notable adornment, it has been covered or removed.

Recommendation and Boundaries

The Hedrick Block is an unusual, if belated, local example of the Art Moderne style. Some of its Carrara structural glass panels have broken or fallen, but it is otherwise little altered and, in terms of the seven elements of National Register integrity, intact. The building is eligible under Criterion C as a good, local, representative example of the Art Moderne style. The recommended National Register boundary is all of the resource's lot—Parcel Number 11083000A0004B / Pin ID 6725-02-86-0509—which covers less than one-quarter of an acre (Figure 148). As noted above, the building is also recommended as contributing to an expanded Uptown Lexington Historic District.



Figure 141: New Carolina Theater, at right, with portion of Hedrick Block at left in 1948 (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.574B)



Figure 142: Hedrick Block at center with Carolina Theater at right and Family Shoe and Redwine's Grocery at left, July 1950 (source: Davidson County Sesquicentennial Association)



Figure 143: North front (Main Street) elevation of Hedrick Block



Figure 144: North front elevation of Hedrick Block



Figure 145: Hedrick Block, north front elevation detail



Figure 146: Hedrick Block, north front elevation detail



Figure 147: Front elevation detail of Hedrick Block entry; note reflectivity of glass and damage to panels



Figure 148: Proposed National Register boundaries of Hedrick Block, encompassing entire parcel, marked in blue (source: Davidson County with blue lines shifted to correct off-center overlay of parcel lines)

C. Resources Recommended as Not Eligible for National Register Listing

UNITED FURNITURE INDUSTRIES (URS survey #1) 100 United Furniture Drive

History and Significance

The United Furniture Industries complex stands on land that was once part of the Lexington Chair Company grounds. A building associated with that factory had been removed, however, by the drawing of the 1948 Sanborn map. The two principal buildings now associated with this tract were constructed in 1964 and 1974 according to tax records. The resource's current owners, United Furniture Industries of Okolona, Mississippi, purchased it from the Stanley Furniture Company of Stanleytown, Virginia in 2010 (Davidson County Deed book 1968/Page 953).

Description

The United Furniture Industries complex consists of two large principal buildings (Figure 149 - Figure 152). The earliest is a long, relatively low, rectangular building (1964) at the northeast portion of the complex that is constructed of exposed concrete blocks. A later-constructed, metal-clad, long rectangular building is affixed to its east. Attached to the south of these connected buildings is a taller, brick-veneered, masonry building (1974) that is also long and rectangular. The buildings appear to be used exclusively or almost exclusively as warehouses: they are windowless, they have numerous truck loading bays, and scores of tractor trailer bodies stand on the grounds or at the bays at any one time.

Assessment and Recommendation

The United Furniture Industries complex is less than 50 years old and has no known historical or architectural significance. It is therefore not eligible for National Register listing under any of the Register's Criteria.



Figure 149: United Furniture Industries, west and south elevations of concrete-block building (1964) at left and west elevation of brick-veneered masonry building (1974) at right



Figure 150: United Furniture Industries, west elevation of brick-veneered masonry building (1974) with edge of concrete-block building (1964) at far left

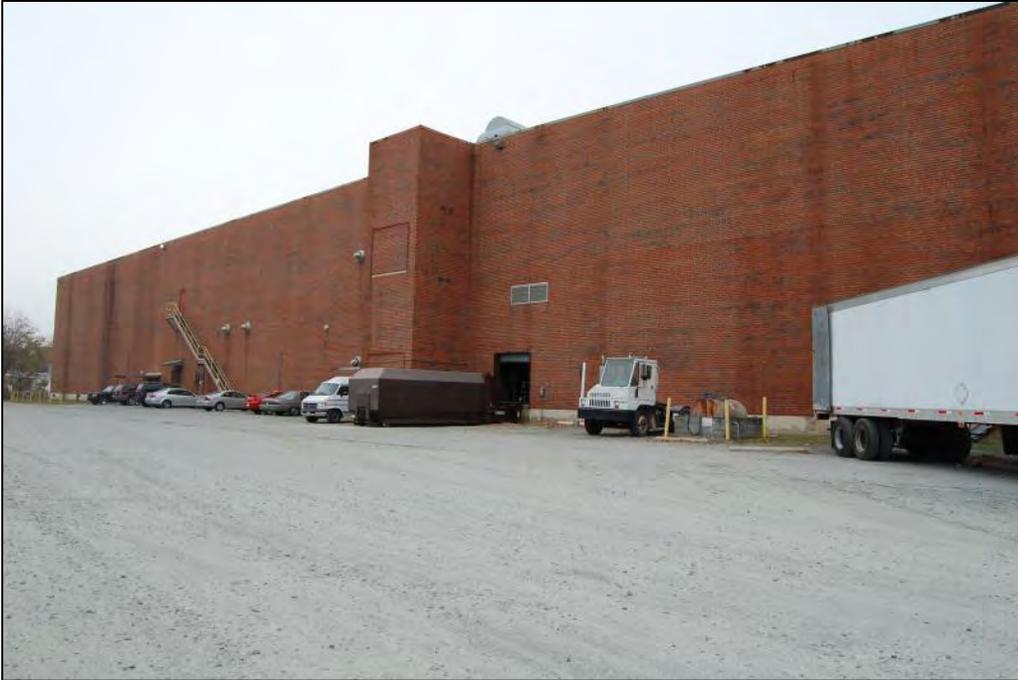


Figure 151: United Furniture Industries, south elevation of brick-veneered masonry building (1974)



Figure 152: United Furniture Industries, west and north elevations of brick-veneered masonry building (1974) at left with metal-clad extension of concrete-block building at right

LEXINGTON CHAIR COMPANY (URS survey #2) 808 Raleigh Road

History and Significance

The Lexington Chair Company began production in the spring of 1911 in the former Oneida Chair Company plant, which had been built by G.W. Mountcastle in 1905. Lexington Chair was founded by George L. Hackney, Mountcastle, and others, but Hackney acquired sole ownership in 1919. In the mid-1920s the factory's 85 to 100 employees produced about 800 round-post chairs and rockers a day (Sink 1925:37; Leonard 1927:324). The plant was sold in 1936 and greatly altered and expanded by the drawing of the 1948 Sanborn map. At its peak, the factory employed as many as 460 people (Sink and Matthews 1972:278). The Lexington Chair Company operated until about 1966, according to the city directory of that year. Subsequent directories track its name changes. By 1968 it was a division of the Kroehler Company, furniture manufacturers. In 1972 it was the central warehouse of Burlington House. By 1988 it had been acquired by its current owner, the North Carolina Moulding Company, manufacturers of wood products. The 1907 Sanborn map depicts the 1905 Oneida facility, which included a frame woodworking plant and dry kilns, located on the site of the current factory building; a connected power plant of brick, which may in part still stand; and a freestanding frame shipping and warehouse building located on the site of the current United Furniture Industries facility. By 1913 a brick steam-drying kiln had been added south of the factory and the frame dry kilns had been removed. A small, brick, freestanding office had also been added behind (east of) the factory. In 1923 and 1929 the facility continued to look much as it had in 1913. By the drawing of the 1948 Sanborn map, however, the factory complex had been much altered. The original factory building had been supplanted by the current one and the building on the current UFI site had also been removed. Three new buildings had been erected on the southern portion of the property, a finishing plant and two storage buildings. The only early buildings that survived were the power plant, the office building, and the steam-drying kiln. Since 1948 the facility has changed greatly again (Figure 153- Figure 163). In the 1950s a three-story factory building, which still stands, was erected and, likely also in that decade, the main factory building was extended to the south and to the rear. Four buildings on the southern half of the site, along with the office building, were also removed. A modern metal-clad storage building now stands on the site of the steam-drying kiln. At present only two resources shown on the 1948 Sanborn survive, the factory on Raleigh Road and the early power plant walls.

Description

The former Lexington Chair Company complex consists of four buildings. Extending along Raleigh Road is a long, functional, brick, **two-story factory building** that is depicted on the 1948 Sanborn map and appears to date from the 1940s [A on Figure 153]. It retains large metal casement windows on its south and west elevations, but these have largely been bricked over at the other two elevations. Projecting to its rear (east) are the walls of a small early power plant that may date to as early as the original complex's construction in 1905. Appended to its south elevation is an extension likely dating to the 1950s that has metal casement windows at its second story. A **three-story factory building** [B] to the east is also functionally designed. Its brick walls are plainly finished and pierced by large metal casement windows. Its rear (east) elevation is metal clad, reflecting the former presence of an earlier factory building it once abutted. It was in all likelihood erected in the early or mid-1950s. Immediately to its east is a low, metal-clad, frame wood-storage **shed** [C] that may date from the 1980s. A large, modern, metal-sided storage or **warehouse building** [D] at the south stands on the site of a former steam-drying kiln.

Assessment and Recommendation

The former Lexington Chair Company complex has no known historical or architectural significance. All of its early buildings but for the walls of a power plant are gone and its two 1940s/1950s-era factories are workmanlike buildings with no notable historical or architectural significance. It is therefore not eligible for National Register listing under any of the Register's Criteria.

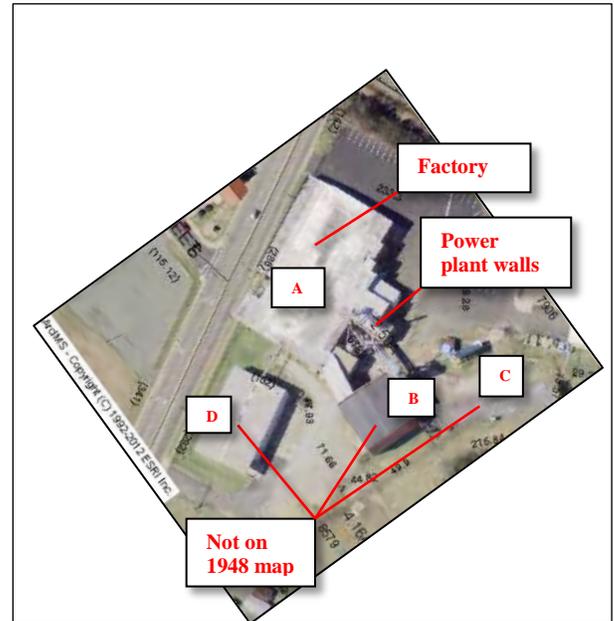
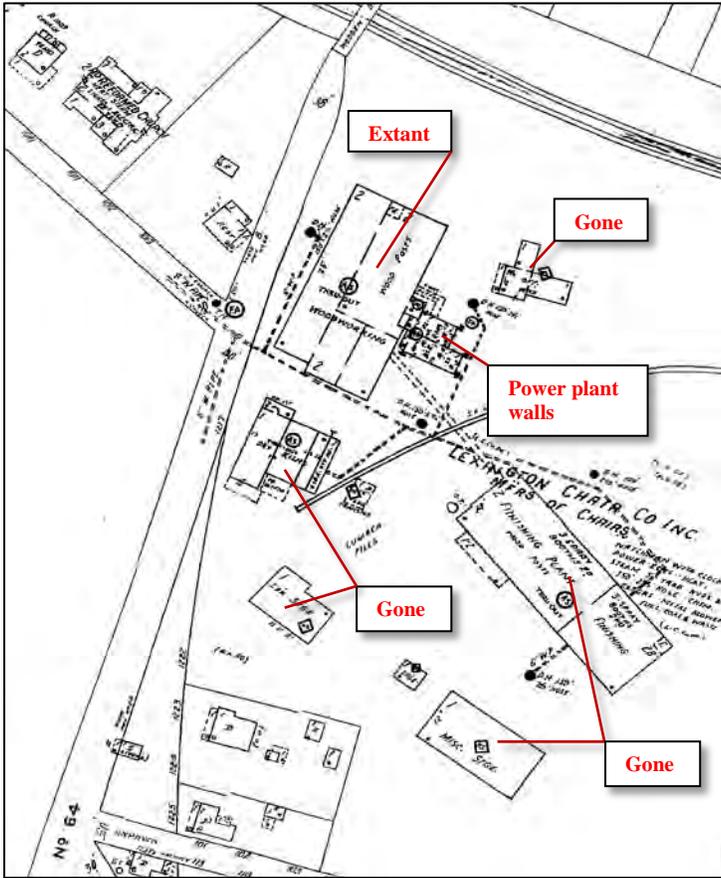


Figure 153: Sanborn map of 1929 updated through 1948 at left; modern aerial photograph at right



Figure 154: Lexington Chair Company, 1950s; only extant buildings are two marked by red dots (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.11569)



Figure 155: Lexington Chair Company, ca.1947; only Raleigh Road factory building [A] at center survives (source: *The State*, February 22, 1947)



Figure 156: Lexington Chair Company, Raleigh Road factory building; note addition of bays and wing at right and later rear extension at left



Figure 157: Lexington Chair Company from Raleigh Road, edge of three-story factory brick building [B] at far right, metal-clad storage building [D] at center, and, at left, later factory wing and, beyond, factory [A]



Figure 158: Lexington Chair Company, later factory wing with signage for North Carolina Moulding Company



Figure 159: Lexington Chair Company factory building [A] on Raleigh Road



Figure 160: Lexington Chair Company, rear of factory building [A] with walls of early power plant at far left



Figure 161: Lexington Chair Company, early power plant walls at rear of factory building [A]



Figure 162: Lexington Chair Company, three-story factory building [B] at left and early power plant wall at far right



Figure 163: Lexington Chair Company, wood shed [C] extended to east of three-story factory building

In the few years since the drawing of the map, however, about half of the factory has burned. The string of buildings along Elk Street beyond Block A, which were centered on the 1923-1929 Block B portion of the factory, have all been leveled. Their former location is now a graded lot.

Description

The only portion of the factory that survives is Block A and the later additions that frame its north and west sides (Figure 165 - Figure 175). Block A, built ca.1923, is a functional, three-story, flat-roofed, brick factory building marked by metal casement windows and a square, flat-roofed stair tower. To its south is a similarly fashioned three-story extension built in two phases between 1929 and 1948, and in ca.1952. A two-story concrete-block addition on the west side of the block, at the corner of Elk Street and West 5th Avenue Extension, was erected between 1948 and 1952. To that addition's rear, along 5th Avenue, are two brick-veneered, masonry, two-story blocks likely added in the 1960s.

Figure 165 depicts the many changes to the factory after the early 1950s. The most notable of these was the loss of buildings, covered by red cross-hatching, between the taking of the photo and 2007; the loss of buildings to the fire of 2009, shown beneath diagonal red lines; and the addition of the 1960s blocks along 5th Avenue. The following historic, 2007, and 2012 images depict the factory complex before and after the fire of December 2009.

Assessment

The former Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company complex does not retain sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship, or feeling to support integrity under either Criterion A for its role in the local history of furniture making or Criterion C for its industrial architecture. It has suffered too many losses through fire and other removal of buildings to well-represent the local furniture industry or industrial design. Other more intact furniture factories with less altered buildings continue to stand in Davidson County that retain their integrity and are better representatives of the industry in the county. These include multiple plants in Thomasville of Thomasville Furniture, a company that historically was the giant of Davidson County's furniture manufacturers.

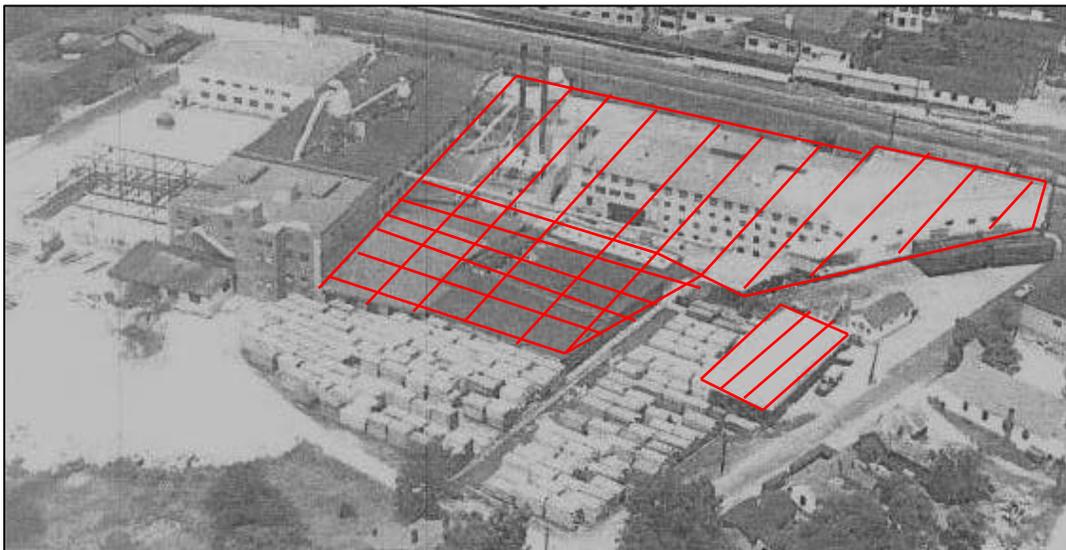


Figure 165: Early 1950s photograph of factory complex, included in Study List application, with buildings destroyed by fire in December 2009 marked by added red diagonal lines; buildings marked by added red cross-hatched lines were removed after the taking of the photograph and before the drafting of the 2007 application



Elk Furniture, Lexington, NC Davidson Co. Nort...

Figure 166: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, image of Block A at left and Block B at right, from 2007 Study List Application (Susannah V. Franklin)



Figure 167: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, 2012 photograph from same location as Figure 166 showing damage to Block A and removal of Block B (Dixie Furniture Company across tracks in background)

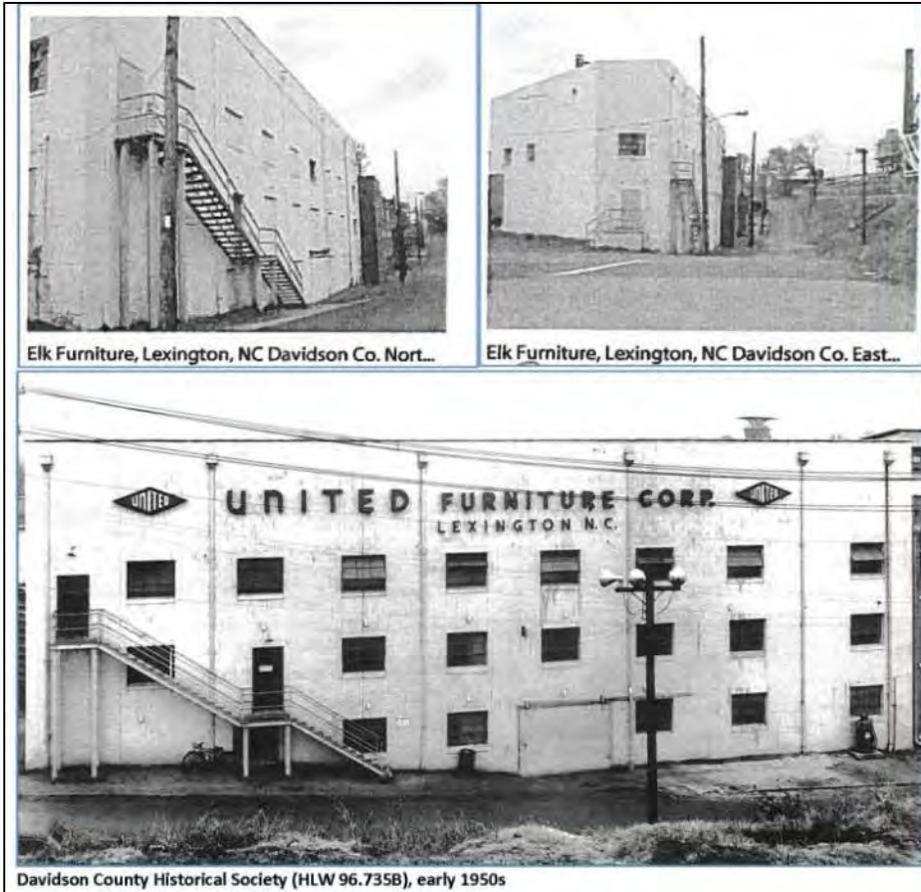


Figure 168: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, top images from 2007 Study List Application (Susannah V. Franklin); bottom image taken in 1950s (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.735B)



Figure 169: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, buildings depicted in Figure 168 above stood in cleared field adjacent to surviving section of factory



Davidson County Historical Society (HLW96.747a), early 1950s

Figure 170: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, historic view showing Block A at left and Block B at right (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.747a)



Figure 171: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, view similar to Figure 170 above showing Block A; Block B would have extended to right



Figure 172: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, south and west elevations of Block A



Figure 173: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, west elevation of block A along West 5th Street Extension



Figure 174: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, north elevation of Block A along Elk Street



Figure 175: Elk Furniture Company/United Furniture Company, east elevation of Block A showing ghost marks of burned and demolished buildings

SOUTH SALISBURY STREET HOUSES (URS survey # 6)
700, 701, 715, 720, 724, and 726 South Salisbury Street and 23 East 2nd Avenue

History and Description

The deed record for these houses as well as the Sanborn maps indicate that they were not erected as part of any mill village, but were always private dwellings. They are first briefly described with thumbnail histories and then the group is addressed. Below are a modern aerial photograph (Figure 176) and historic Sanborn maps (Figure 177).



Figure 176: Modern aerial photograph with addresses of resources identified in yellow (source: Davidson County)



Figure 177: 1913 Sanborn map at left and updated 1948 Sanborn at right with addresses of extant houses identified in red and lost houses and industrial buildings marked over with red crosses

700 South Salisbury Street

This one-story, single-pile, frame dwelling has a gable-end roof and façade gable (Figure 178). Three asymmetrically placed bays shaded by a hip-roofed porch cross its front (south) elevation. An original ell extends to its rear. The ell affixed to its west gable end postdates the 1948 Sanborn map. The house's weatherboards have been replaced, as has its sash and the posts and floor of its porch. The house appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. It is depicted on the 1913 Sanborn map, the first to cover this block of Salisbury Street. Its parcel was private property in 1941 according to a transaction between members of the Swink family that year (Davidson County Deed Book 149/Page 210). Earlier deeds were not identified.



Figure 178: 700 South Salisbury Street—south front and west side elevations at left and south front and east side elevations at right

701 South Salisbury Street

This parcel was private property in 1917, when it was tract 3 of a three-parcel property transferred by Caroline Sink to Thomas M. Swink (Book 110/Page 123). A house was on this lot by 1913 according to the Sanborn map of that year. However, the estate of Thomas M. Swink sold the property to the Hoover Chair Company in 1936 (Davidson County Deed Book 126/Page 21), which by the drawing of the updated 1948 map had erected the current building as its offices in place of that dwelling. (Tax records date the building to 1939.) The boxy, one-story, frame, wood-shingled building rests on a brick foundation and is topped by a hipped roof (Figure 179). A porch extends from part of its front (west) elevation and an ell from its east rear. Snap-in faux muntins give the sash windows a six-over-six appearance.



Figure 179: 701 South Salisbury Street—west front and north side elevations at left and east rear and south side elevations at right

715 South Salisbury Street

According to a transaction between members of the Robbins family, this parcel was private property in 1900 (Davidson County Deed Book 52/Page 175). The house, which appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, is depicted on the 1913 Sanborn map. It is a boxy, frame, one-and-a-half-story dwelling that is larger and more ornately finished than the other houses on the street (Figure 180). Its three-bay, gable-end, front (north) block is extended to the sides by bay windows, at the top by a gabled wall dormer, and to the rear by a large gabled ell that essentially gives the house a square footprint. A smaller ell extends further to the rear. The house retains the front portion of a porch, with altered columns and roof, that once wrapped around its east gable. A rear porch has been removed. The dwelling retains much of its original three-over-one and two-over-two sash. Asbestos siding, however, appears to be a later addition.



Figure 180: 715 South Salisbury Street—east side and north front elevations at left and west side and south rear elevations at right

720 South Salisbury Street

This parcel was private property in 1901 when J.L. Bowers acquired it from F.C. Robbins (Davidson County Deed Book 53/Page 440). In 1903 Bowers, who also owned the parcel at 724 Salisbury, sold it to Flora A. Gallimore (Davidson County Deed Book 149/Page 595). Later deeds associated with property state that Salisbury Street here was once known as Bowers Row or Road. The dwelling, which appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, may have been erected by Bowers between 1901 and 1903. It is depicted on the 1913 Sanborn map. It is a one-story, single-pile, frame, gable-end house with a porch with turned posts across its three-bay front (south) elevation and an original ell to its rear (Figure 181). Its four-over-four sash may be original. Its vinyl siding is not.



Figure 181: 720 South Salisbury Street—south front and west side elevations at left and south front and east side elevations at right

724 South Salisbury Street

This parcel was private property in 1901 when J.L. Bowers acquired it with the lot for 720 Salisbury from F.C. Robbins (Davidson County Deed Book 53/Page 440). In 1903 Bowers sold it to James Adderton (Davidson County Deed Book 55/Page 594). The house, which appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, may have been erected by Bowers between 1901 and 1903. It is depicted on the 1913 Sanborn map. The house is essentially identical to 720 Salisbury: it is one-story-tall, one-room-deep, frame, and gable-ended with an altered porch shading its three-bay front (south) elevation and an original ell to its rear (Figure 182). Its one-over-one sash and vinyl siding are not original.



Figure 182: 724 South Salisbury Street—south front and west side elevations at left and south front and east side elevations at right

726 South Salisbury Street

This parcel was private property in 1920 when local developers J.E. Foy and Dermot Shemwell sold it to Nanie and Bettie Crouse for \$950.00 (Davidson County Deed Book 86/Page 509; for information on Foy and Shemwell see Fearnbach 2006). The house, which appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, is pictured on the 1913 Sanborn map. It is one-story tall, three bays wide, and one-room deep with a seam-metal gabled roof (Figure 183). An engaged porch crossing its three-bay front (south) elevation is supported by tapered posts on brick piers. Its front bays and sash have been altered and it is sided in vinyl. A one-story ell to its rear is likely original.



Figure 183: 726 South Salisbury Street—south front and west side elevations at left and south front and east side elevations at right

23 East 7th Avenue

This property was acquired through a quitclaim deed by a financial company from a bank in 2012 (Davidson County Deed Book 2048/Page 1759) and its deed history could not be determined. It appears to date from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century and is included on the 1913 Sanborn map, the first to cover its section of 7th Avenue. It is one-story tall, one-room deep, and frame with a metal-seam gable-end roof supplemented at its front (east) elevation by a façade gable (Figure 184). An altered porch shields its three-bay front façade and an original ell extends to its rear. It retains what appears to be original six-over-six sash and shallow exterior-end chimneys. It is now clad in vinyl siding.



Figure 184: 23 East 7th Avenue—east front and south side elevations at left and north side and west rear elevations at right

These houses are what remain on (and just off) a block of South Salisbury Street that was once full of houses (Figure 185 - Figure 188). Only one of the six houses depicted on the 1913 Sanborn map on the south side of the street—715 Salisbury—survives. (About 1939, 701 Salisbury was replaced by the current building, which was erected as an office.) This side of the street is now defined by its empty lots, where houses and the former Dixie Furniture Company No. 2 mill and its successor, the Hoover Chair Company, once stood. The north side of the street retains four houses, but a gaping space that once held an additional four houses now extends between 700 Salisbury and 720 Salisbury. Houses to the north on East 7th and East 8th Avenue have also been demolished, although 23 East 7th Avenue still survives.

Assessment

These houses were never part of a mill village and have no known historical significance. They are also not architecturally significant individually or as part of larger group. Their forms are commonly found throughout Lexington and better and more intact examples, individually and grouped, survive in the town. (For example, see the two National Register nominations that cover large groups of residences in Lexington, the Lexington Residential Historic District (Fearnbach 2006) and the Erlanger Mill Village Historic District (Fearnbach 2008).) They therefore do not possess sufficient significance, either individually or as a historic district, to merit National Register listing.



Figure 185: Looking southwest from empty lot at 23 East 7th Avenue at center and 700 South Salisbury Street at left; note empty lots and 720 South Salisbury Street in distance at right



Figure 186: Looking northwest with corner of 701 South Salisbury Street at far left, 700 South Salisbury Street at right, and 720 South Salisbury Street at center left in distance



Figure 187: Looking west with 715 South Salisbury Street at left and 720 South Salisbury Street at right; note empty lots in foreground at right and Wenonah Mills complex at end of street at center



Figure 188: Looking east with 726 South Salisbury Street at left and 715 South Salisbury Street at center right; note empty lots at right

DIXIE FURNITURE COMPANY (URS survey #7)
205 East 3rd Avenue

History

The Dixie Furniture Company was organized by Dr. E.J. Buchanan in January 1901 in Lexington and began operating in its newly built plant in April. Its first-year output was worth about \$150,000. By 1925 the company's yearly product, which by then consisted exclusively of walnut bedroom furniture, had tripled in value. That \$450,000/year worth of furniture put it in the middle of the ten furniture factories operating in Davidson County in the mid-1920s. The largest company, Thomasville Furniture in Thomasville, employed about 700 workers who produced \$2,140,000 worth of furniture. By comparison, in the mid-1920s Dixie Furniture employed between 100 and 125 men on a fulltime basis. During its first quarter century, the company operated without break except for four months in 1904, when it had to erect a new plant to replace its original one, which had burned down in April (Sink 1925:38, 45; Leonard 1927:328-331).

It appears that if any of the factory complex pictured on the 1907 and 1913 Sanborn maps survives, it is limited to small portions of buildings buried within later additions (Figure 189). The many expansions and additions make it difficult to precisely determine which buildings were built when, even through a careful study of the Sanborn record. The Sanborn maps of 1923, 1929, and 1948, however, definitely include portions of or entire buildings that continue to stand (Figure 190 - Figure 192).

Dixie's growth and sales had stagnated by the early 1930s, which prompted a brief merger with the Elk Furniture Company located opposite Dixie on the south side of the railroad tracks. Dixie corporate secretary Henry Talmadge Link was named vice president of the new Elk-Dixie operation. In 1936 the merger was dissolved. Elk reemerged as the United Furniture Company and Dixie became the Dixie Furniture Company once again with Link as president. Link greatly expanded the company in the next four-plus decades, at the site under discussion and at new plants elsewhere in Lexington and in Asheboro and Linwood in North Carolina (Figure 193). Link was to become an important figure in the North Carolina and American furniture industry. Under his guidance, Dixie and three other affiliated companies—Link-Taylor (1949-1950), Young Hinkle (1962), and Dixie-Linwood (1972)—“became one of the largest and most successful furniture manufacturers in the world” (*Lexington Dispatch*, October 16, 1998). According to a 1982 magazine article, published six months before Link's death, the re-formed Dixie Furniture “started with eighty-six people, five salesmen, and three hundred customers. Today, the company has eight plants with five million-square-feet of floor space, 4,000 employees, 100 salesmen and over 10,000 customers at home and abroad” (*We the People of North Carolina*, November 1982). Link died in Lexington in 1983 (*Lexington Dispatch*, April 4, 1983).

In 1998 Henry Link was added to the American Furniture Hall of Fame (*Furniture World* 1998; American Furniture Hall of Fame website). His biographical sketch at the Hall's website states:

Henry Talmadge Link (b1889-d1983) had been a banker in Lexington, North Carolina, and New York before he organized Dixie Furniture Company in 1936 with 90 employees. In 1940, after visits to automobile factories in Detroit, he equipped Dixie Furniture Company with motorized conveyors. This introduced the industry to mass production, which changed the way furniture assembly lines moved the product through the plant. His first introduction was a five-piece mahogany suite which, with a few minor changes and additions, was still in the product line as late as 1986. One million pieces had been manufactured by 1960.

The introduction of assembly-line methods to furniture manufacturing was much more complicated, and involved many more individuals and entities, than the entry suggests. An academic paper by Jeremy Kinney (1999:84) on mass production in the furniture industry in the 1920s notes that:

One of the industries that attempted to emulate [Henry] Ford's model was the wooden furniture industry. According to historian David Hounshell, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) played a "central, missionary role" in attempting to implement Fordist mass production principles into the furniture industry. Besides moving line assembly, standardized part, division of labor, and low-priced products, they envisioned an industry based on standardized designs, automated woodworking machinery, and uniform finishing processes.

Modernization and the introduction of assembly line techniques was not just a question of seeing how automobile assembly lines operated, but "relied upon the increased mechanization of furniture manufacturing." This was promoted by ASME through its creation of a Forest Products Section and the formal recognition of wood-working engineering in 1920. The foundation of successful mass production also relied on "manufacturers' acute awareness of constantly changing product style and market." Kinney notes that "Voices in the southern furniture industry centered on High Point echoed this emphasis" (Kinney 1999:84, 88). The intimate connection of successful mass production with product lines and tastes frustrated the engineers working on automating the industry. According to *Furniture World* editor Russell Bienenstock and Melody Doering, during the Great Depression the "industry looked to Henry Ford for inspiration, not realizing that mass production was a whole different business model, for which the furniture industry was not yet prepared. Mass production required standardization and planned obsolescence..." (Bienenstock and Doering 2010).

The furniture industry had already embraced many mass production methods, short of automobile-style assembly lines, prior to the 1930s. According to history of technology historian Carroll Purcell (2005:60):

Probably no two [furniture] plants worked to the same plan, but overall the industry gave evidence of something very like what, in the late twentieth century, was called "lean" production. A list of innovations made use of included power hand tools, lines of rollers along which pieces moved as they were worked on, including at some point turntables so workers could easily get at all sides, sloping floors and overhead cranes to move materials, machine tools grouped by function. Strict inventory control, worker "quality" discussion groups, and improved packaging for rail shipment were all introduced. It did not look quite like [Ford's] River Rouge, but neither was the industry in any way primitive or backward.

The groundwork had therefore been well laid when the furniture industry was revived by defense department contracts and then pent-up consumer demand in the 1940s, and a number of different furniture manufacturers introduced assembly-line production during the decade. They included Link and fellow Hall of Fame member Morris Futorian, who introduced the concept at his Stratford Company plant in New Albany, Mississippi. A contemporary 1940s' account of his efforts, reproduced in the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* (September 21, 2012), could have been written about Henry Link: "His "crazy" is this: After spending some time in Detroit, watching how automakers assembled their cars down an assembly line, Futorian feels furniture manufactures can do the same thing—make furniture on an assembly line." Another account of Futorian states that he was known as the "Henry Ford of Furniture" (*Tuscaloosa News*, August 16, 1987). He was not the only one to receive this appellation. J. Edgar Broyhill II has stated that his grandfather, J. Edgar Broyhill, another member of the American Furniture Hall of Fame, "was often called 'the Henry Ford of the furniture industry'" (*Albany Times Union*, June 4, 1987). Germany also had its Ford of furniture, Georg Nolte. Nolte took over the Westfälische Möbelfabrik furniture factory in Delbrück in 1932 and "As the 'Henry Ford of the furniture industry,' he introduced assembly-line production in the late 1940s, thus revolutionising the industry" (Nolte Möbel website). In spite of these varied claims, historian David Hounshell (1984:151) in his history of the American system of mass production, states pointblank that "There was no Henry Ford of the furniture industry." It appears, in short, that Henry Link was part of a generalized mechanization movement in the industry from the 1920s through the 1940s.

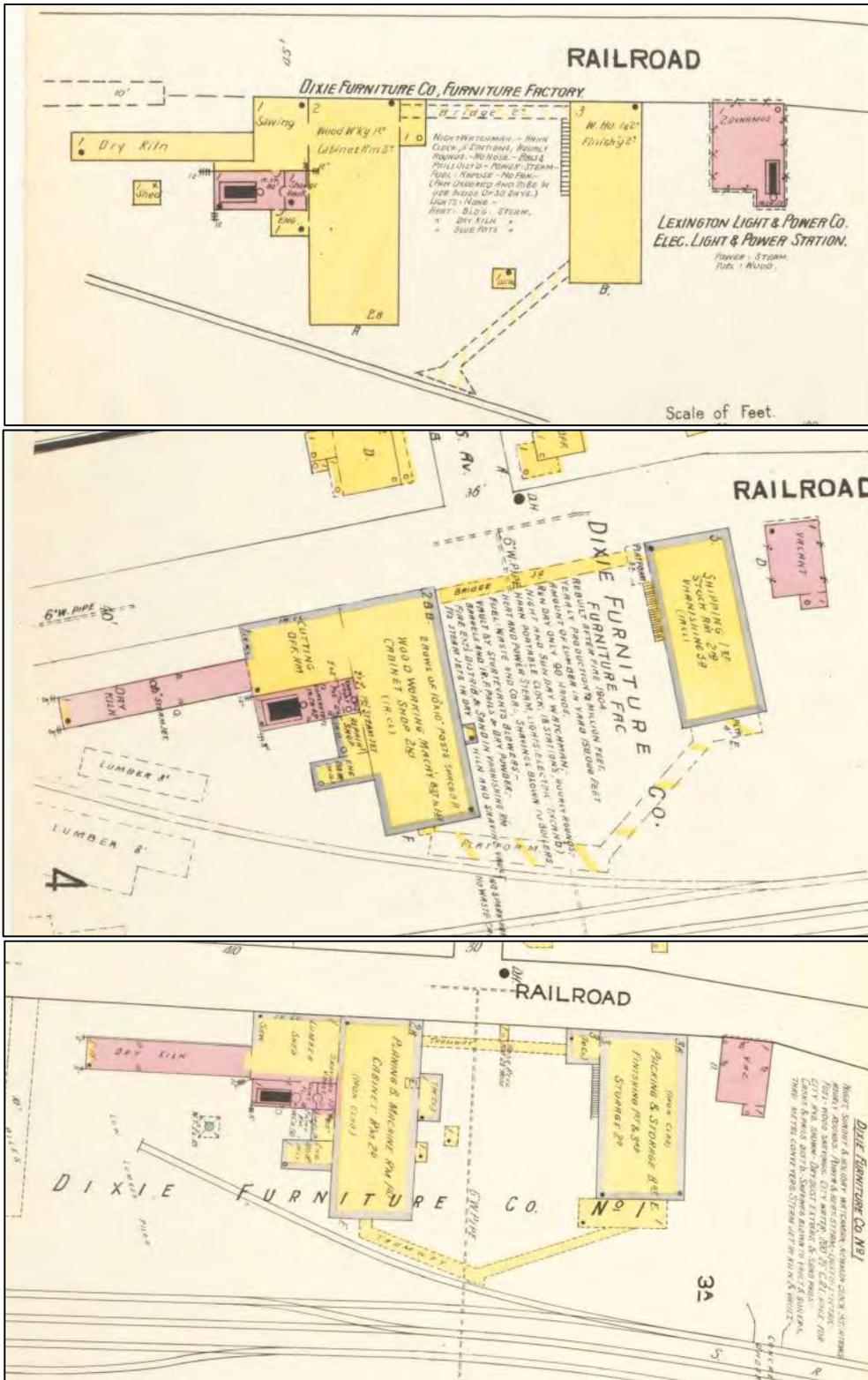


Figure 189: 1902 Sanborn at top; 1907 Sanborn in middle showing factory rebuilt on similar footprint with more fireproof materials, and 1913 map at bottom; likely none or perhaps only bits of depicted buildings are still extant

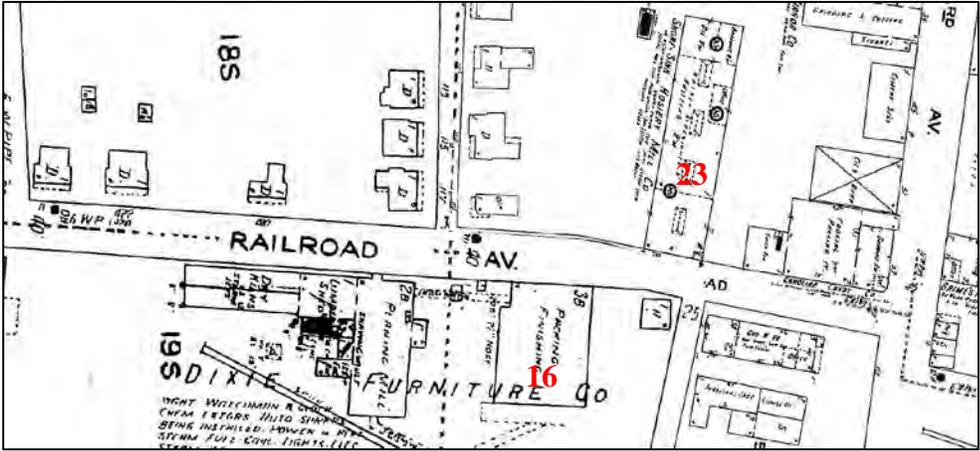


Figure 190: 1923 Sanborn map with 25- building numbers of extant resources marked in red

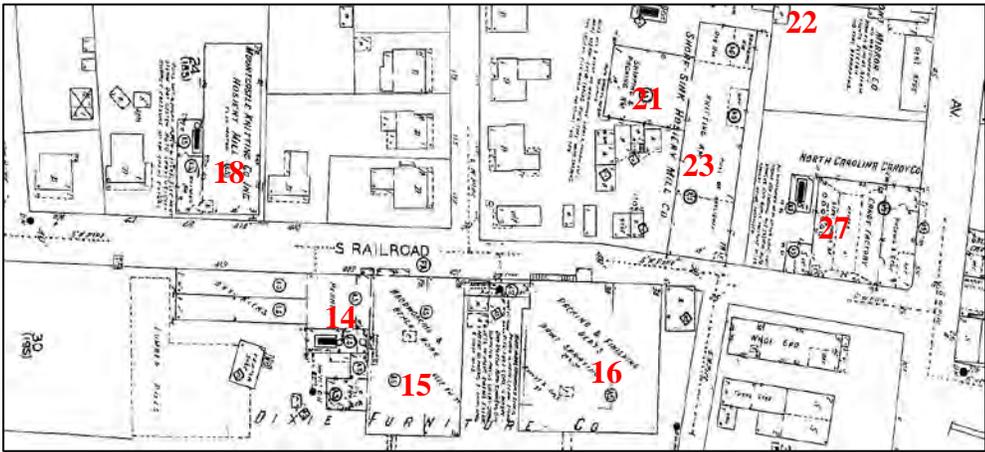


Figure 191: 1929 Sanborn map with 25- building numbers of extant resources marked in red

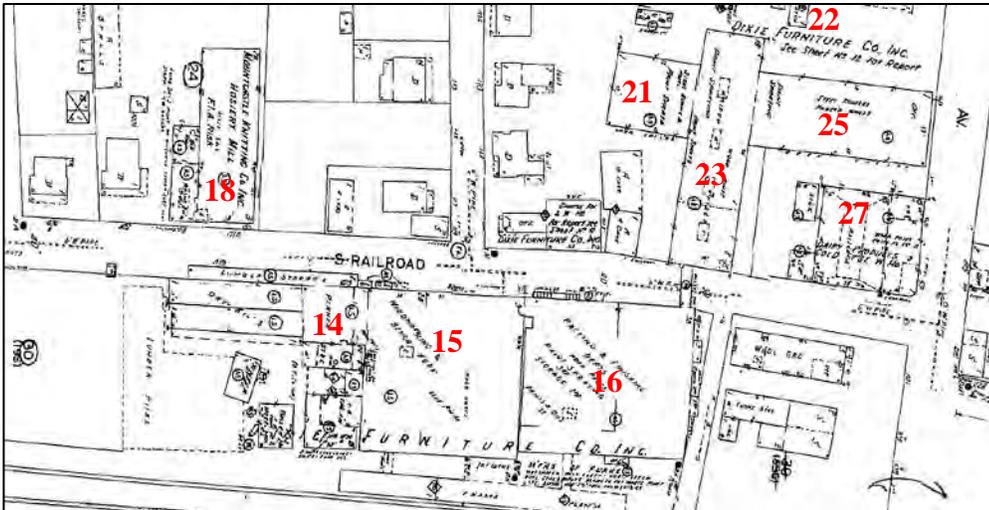


Figure 192: 1948 Sanborn map with 25- building numbers of extant resources marked in red

In 1936 Dixie’s 86 employees labored in two plants that encompassed 90,000 square feet on 2-1/ 2 acres of land at Railroad Street and the underpass beneath the railroad tracks (Sink and Matthews 1972:281-282; *Lexington Dispatch* November 13, 1986). The 1948 Sanborn map shows growth of the factory complex through new construction or acquisition of extant buildings. As shown in the table below, the facility grew greatly in the 1950s and 1960s and continued to add buildings in the 1970s and 1980s as well (Table 6) (Figure 193). Under Link’s leadership, by the mid-1980s the company had grown exponentially around its original site north of the railroad tracks by gobbling up nearby buildings and lots and adding new buildings. According to a 1986 newspaper account (*Lexington Dispatch* November 13, 1986): “Dixie expanded in downtown Lexington largely by buying other factory buildings and renovating them, with Dixie now comprising buildings that used to be the N.C. Candy Company, the Shoaf-Sink Hosiery Mill, the Grimes Ice Cream Company, the Lexington Coca-Cola Company, Sicheloff Manufacturing, Lexington Wholesale Grocery, Myers Coal Yard and Mountcastle Hosiery Mill.”

DIXIE FURNITURE COMPANY			
BLDG No. 25-	USE	APPROX. DATE(S)	APPROX. BASE SQUARE FEET
01	Storage	1972	13,000
02	Storage	1967	58,000
03	Storage	1953	41,500
04	Storage	1958	36,000
05	Storage	1960	68,500
06	Finished product storage	1962	66,500
07	Garage	1980	12,500
08	Garage	1969	3,000
09	Wood processing	1966	17,000
10	Warehouse and kilns	1962	20,500
11	Wood parts storage	1953	20,000
12	Woodworking	1952	7,000
13	Wood sanding	1950	25,500
14	Woodworking; boiler room	1950; 1929-1948	39,000
15	Woodworking, gluing, cutting	1948	18,500
16	Packing, cutting, gluing	1913-1923; 1923-1929	62,000
17	Office, showrooms	1962	11,500
18	Office, showrooms (former knitting mill)	1923-1929, mid-1950s	11,000
19	Office	1950	29,500
20	Finishing, spraying room	1983	37,500
21	Finishing	1950s	5,000
22	Laundry cleaning (former hosiery mill warehouse)	1964; 1923-1929	5,500
23	Finishing (former hosiery mill knitting room)	1913-1923	20,000
24	Storage building, parking deck	1969	48,500
25	Finishing	1929-1948	4,500
26	Finishing	1949-1955	12,500
27	Finishing (former candy factory)	1919-1923	12,000
28	Packing, rubbing, trim	1980	32,000

Table 6: Construction date, size, and use of Dixie Manufacturing Company buildings (sources: Sanborn maps; Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010; tax records; and various issues of *Lexington Dispatch*)

Tabulation of the square footage in the table indicates the tremendous footprint of factory buildings erected during the past half century. The total base square footage of the buildings is 738,000 square feet. Of this, 340,000 or 46% of the total base footage is encompassed by buildings erected in 1962 or later; 398,000 or 54% of the base square footage is encompassed by buildings that pre-date 1962.



Figure 193: Dixie Furniture Company at top and Elk/United Furniture Company to south of tracks at bottom, mid-1950s (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.11566)

By 1986 the Dixie Furniture Company was part of a group of four companies officially named Lexington Furniture Industries (LFI), but often referred to as “the Dixie Family”. LFI used the Dixie facility in Lexington to produce its Lexington Home Brands line of furniture. In 1986 the Dixie Family had ten plants with an eleventh under construction and LFI was the largest manufacturer of bedroom furniture in the world and the tenth largest furniture manufacturer in the United States. Although Dixie Furniture president Smith Young saw continued growth for the overall company in 1986, the Dixie complex of buildings had reached its apex (*Lexington Dispatch* November 13, 1986). The last building added to the complex was Building 20, a finishing and spraying room of just over 37,500 square feet that had been erected in 1983. In 1987, less than year after Young issued his sunny forecast for the company, LFI sold its Dixie Family, including the Dixie Furniture Company, to Masco Furniture Company of Taylor, Michigan (*Lexington Dispatch* July 29, 1987). The complex continued in use as a furniture factory, at least in part, until it was shuttered in 2003 (*Furniture Today*, August 24, 2003). No furniture is currently produced at the Dixie facility, although a few small enterprises operate out of a few of its buildings.

Description

The *Depot District Building Survey & Assessment* report prepared by the City of Lexington in 2010 identifies about 28 independently constructed buildings in the Dixie Furniture Company complex—based upon the Davidson County tax parcel database—to which it assigns the numbers 25-01 through 25-28. (Two pairs of buildings that can be sub-numbered 25-14A and 25-14B, and 25-28A and 25-28B, are combined as single buildings in the database. There are other buildings as well with individual numbers that were built in multiple stages.) This identification is used in the following brief descriptions/histories of the buildings. The photographic documentation of Dixie in the *Survey & Assessment* report includes an overall site map, five detail maps, and numerous photographs. As this excellent graphic documentation provides the clearest means for depicting and visualizing the enormous complex, it has been incorporated below along with additional photographs, some historic, added where useful. Note that the photo numbers accompanying individual photographs are keyed to the five detail maps. The *Survey & Assessment* report also includes tabular information on the history, use, appearance, and other basic attributes of the buildings, based largely upon information provided in county tax records. This information has been supplemented (and on occasion amended) based upon historical research and a more detailed study of the Sanborn maps that cover the complex. The resultant historical sketches of each building are included, building by building, with the descriptions below. Two resources within the complex that are recommended as individually eligible for listing in the National Register—the former Mountcastle Knitting Company/Dixie Furniture Company Showroom-Offices (Building 25-18/URS survey #7A) and the former North Carolina Candy Company (Building 25-27/URS survey #7B)—are discussed and assessed in greater detail at their individual entries above.

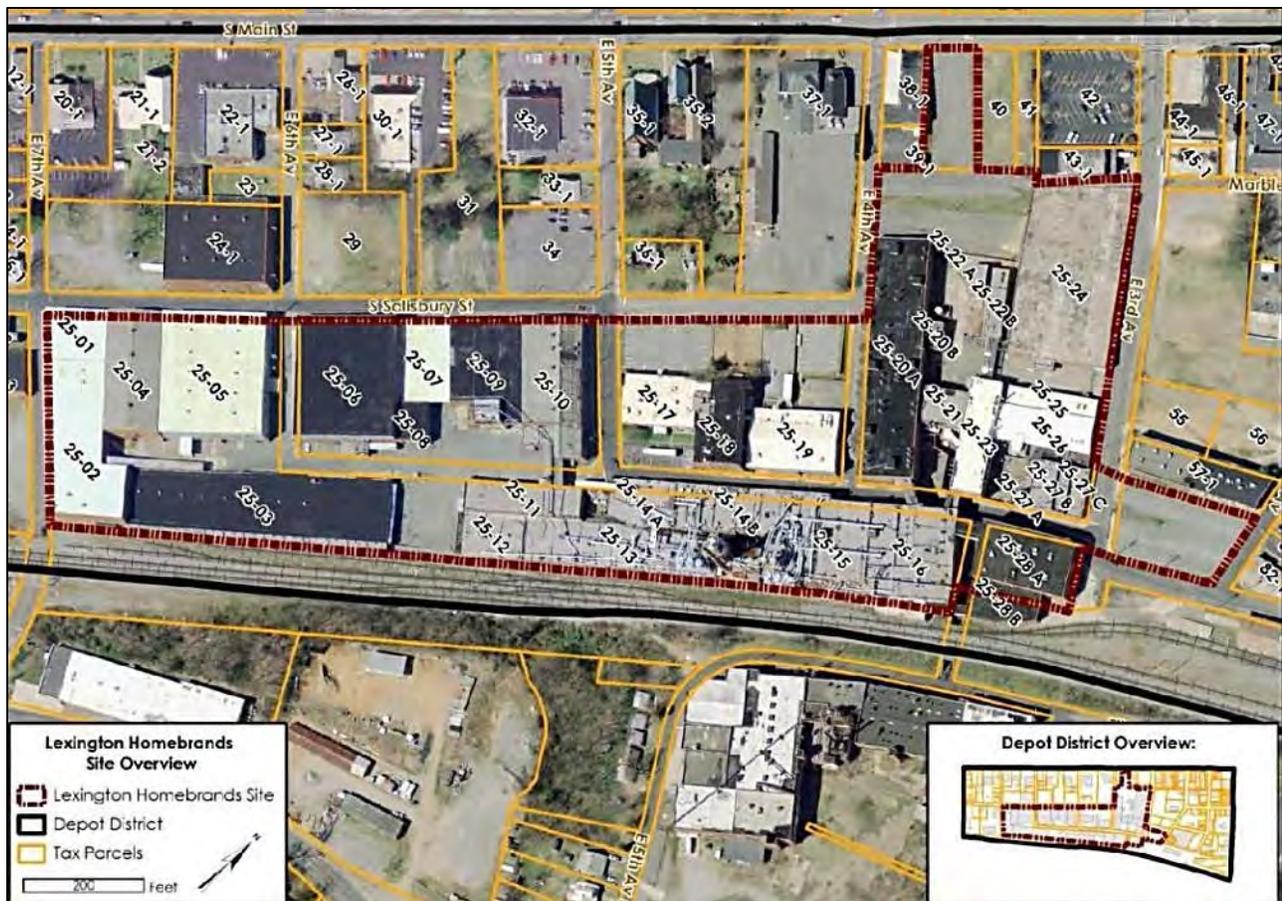


Figure 194: Parcel 25—Lexington Home Brands Plant 1/Dixie Furniture Company overall site map; the series 25-numbers are used below to identify individual buildings (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

Building 25-01

According to tax records, this building was erected in 1972. The Sanborn maps updated though 1948 indicate that a house previously occupied its site. A one-story, almost square building with a masonry structural frame, brick veneer, and a flat roof, it was used for storage by Lexington Home Brands. It occupies the southeast corner of the intersection of South Salisbury Street and East 7th Avenue and is attached to the slightly earlier Building 25-02 at its south (Figure 195, Figure 196 and Figure 199).

Building 25-02

The site of this L-shaped one-story building, which has a masonry structural frame, brick veneer, and a flat roof, was occupied by two houses and the buildings of the Myers & Carver Cotton Gin company in 1948. According to tax records, it supplanted these buildings in 1967. Its long leg extends along East 7th Avenue; its shorter leg parallels the railroad tracks. Lexington Home Brands used it for storage (Figure 195, Figure 196 and Figure 198).

Building 25-03

One house and the buildings of the Myers & Carver Cotton Gin company stood on this site in 1948. The current building, which fronts the railroad tracks, supplanted them in 1953, according to tax records. It is a long, one-story building with a flat roof and a masonry structural frame that is solidly brick-veneered—it appears to have

been built without windows—and, along the tracks, sided with vertical boards pierced by wide sliding doors. It was used by Lexington Home Brands for storage (Figure 195 - Figure 197).

Building 25-04

The updated 1948 Sanborn maps depict a house on the site of this two-story building, which was erected, according to tax records, in 1958. Brick-veneer covers all of its masonry structural frame—it appears to never have had windows—and a shallow-peaked, gable-front roof tops it. Lexington Home Brands utilized it for storage (Figure 195, Figure 196 and Figure 200).

Building 25-05

The updated 1948 Sanborn maps picture a single house on the site of this building which, according to tax records, was built in 1960. Corrugated metal sides its masonry structural frame, which is two stories tall, shielded by a flat roof, and appears to have always been windowless (Figure 195 - Figure 196 and Figure 201 - Figure 202).



Figure 195: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-01 to 25-05 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 196: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-01 to 25-05 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 197: Dixie Furniture Company, railroad (south) elevation of Building 25-03



Figure 198: Dixie Furniture Company, East 7th Avenue (west) and railroad track (south) elevations of Building 25-02; lower Building 25-03 extends into distance along tracks



Figure 199: Dixie Furniture Company, South Salisbury Street (north) and East 7th Avenue (west) elevations of Building 25-01 at left and center; 7th Avenue elevation of Building 25-02 at right behind railroad crossing sign



Figure 200: Dixie Furniture Company, south side of South Salisbury Street between East 7th Avenue and East 6th Avenue with Building 25-01 at right, Building 25-04 at left center behind street sign, and Building 25-05 at far left



Figure 201: Dixie Furniture Company, South Salisbury Street elevation of Building 25-05 at right with Building 25-06 beyond at center left



Figure 202: Dixie Furniture Company, East 6th Avenue elevation of Building 25-05 at right; East 6th Avenue and South Salisbury Street elevations of Building 25-06 at left

Building 25-06

This two-story, masonry-structural-frame, brick-veneered building, which appears to never have had windows, rose in 1962, according to tax records, upon a site that was occupied by a single house in 1948. A nearly square building almost identical in size to Building 25-05 to its west, it was used by Lexington Home Brands to store finished furniture products (Figure 203 - Figure 205).

Building 25-07

This relatively small building, which has a masonry structural frame, bricked-veneered walls without windows, and a flat roof, was erected, according to tax records, in 1980. In 1948 a house stood on its site. Lexington Home Brands used it for vehicle and equipment storage (Figure 203 and Figure 204).

Building 25-08

This small building, which was erected in 1969 according to tax records, occupies the 1948 site of the backyard of a house. A one-story building with a masonry structural frame, brick-veneered windowless walls, and a flat roof, it was used by Lexington Home Brands for vehicle storage, matching the use of Building 25-07 to which it is attached on the north (Figure 203 and Figure 204).

Building 25-09

In 1948 two houses stood on the site of this one-story building, which has a masonry structural frame, brick-veneered walls that appear to have always been windowless, and a flat roof. According to tax records, it was

erected in 1966. The building, topped by a flat roof, was used for processing wood by Lexington Home Brands (Figure 203 and Figure 204).

Building 25-10

The site of this building was occupied by four houses in 1948. It is one and two stories tall and was used by Lexington Home Brands as a warehouse and a wood kiln. This suggests two different building periods which, according to tax records, both took place in 1962. It has a masonry structural frame, brick veneer never pierced by windows, and a flat roof (Figure 203, Figure 204 and Figure 206).



Figure 203: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-06 to 25-10 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

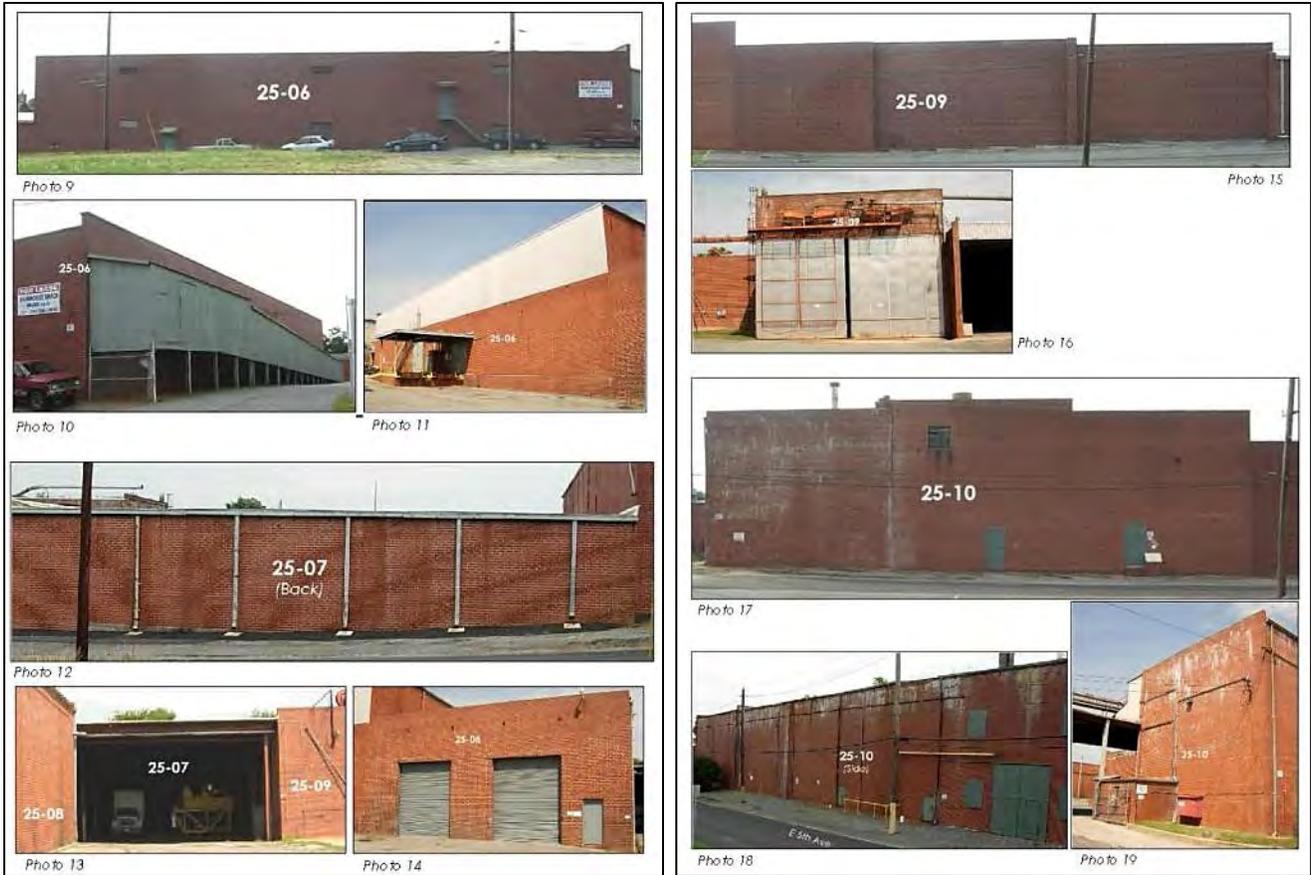


Figure 204: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-06 to 25-10 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 205: Dixie Furniture Company, East 6th Avenue elevation of Building 25-06



Figure 206: Dixie Furniture Company, East 5th Avenue and South Salisbury Street elevations of Building 25-10 at left; shorter Building 25-09 stands immediately to right of 25-10 and, just beyond, are the projecting metal garage doors of Building 29-07

Building 25-11

This two-story building, which has a masonry structural frame, brick-veneered walls that still retain long casement windows, and a flat roof, was erected in 1953, according to tax records. Its site was an empty lot in 1948. Lexington Home Brands stored wood parts in it (Figure 207 - Figure 210).

Building 25-12

This one-story building, which has a masonry structural frame, brick-veneered walls and, at its south elevation facing the tracks, large door or window bays, was erected in 1952 according to tax records. In 1948 its site was an empty lot. Lexington Home Brands used it for woodworking (Figure 207 - Figure 209).

Building 25-13

According to tax records, this one-story building was constructed in 1950. It has a masonry structural frame, a flat roof and, facing the tracks, brick veneering and large door or window bays. Its site in 1948 was an empty lot. Lexington Home Brands used it for wood sanding (Figure 207 - Figure 209 and Figure 211).

Building 25-14

The western section of this building—Building 25-14A—was built on a lot that stood empty in 1948. According to tax records it was erected in 1950. Two stories tall, it is a masonry-structural-framed, flat-roofed building with brick-veneered walls pierced in spots by ventilator openings. Lexington Home Brands used it for woodworking. The eastern section—Building 25-14B—was built at multiple times. Its rear (southern) portion stands on the site

of a one-story, frame kiln built by the drawing of the 1902 Sanborn. This likely burned in a 1904 fire and was replaced, by 1907 Sanborn by a one-story kiln built of brick, which also appears on the 1913 Sanborn. By 1923 a second kiln of equal size but uncertain material was added to the front (north) of the kiln along Railroad Street. These paired buildings are also marked as kilns on the 1948 Sanborn updated map. They were likely supplanted about 1950—the date assigned by tax records—by the current two-story, masonry-structural-framed, flat-roofed building that Lexington Home Brands used for woodworking. Its brick-veneered walls are pierced by regular rows of ventilated openings. At the rear (south) of this woodworking building is a one-story ell that Lexington Home Brands used as an engine house. This ell was erected between the drawing of the 1929 Sanborn map and its 1948 updating. A freestanding, concrete-block, partially brick-veneered building immediately to its west, also added between 1929 and 1948, held the boilers. Immediately to its west, also likely built between 1929 and 1948, is a soaring brick chimney stack bearing the words “Dixie” in large capital letters. The stack is the most visible feature of the entire complex. The complex’s second most visible feature—aside, perhaps, from its sheer extent and bulk—is the dust collection system on the roof. To the east of the stack are three cyclone separators served by an extensive system of outsized ductwork. To the west are three additional cyclone separators connected to less monumental ductwork. A cyclone separator uses centrifugal force to remove particulate matter—such as wood dust at furniture factories or cotton fibers at textile mills—from industrial facilities. They date back to at least the turn of the century (Hexamer 1905:216; Turner 1926:730). An earlier dust removal system is visible on aerial photographs from the 1950s (Figure 193, which also depicts cyclone separators atop the buildings of the United Furniture Company). The current system probably dates from the 1960s or 1970s (Figure 207 - Figure 209 and Figure 212).

Building 25-15

This building stands on the site of earlier buildings, but was likely erected in only one or at most two construction episodes. The portion adjacent to Building 25-14 partially occupies the site of a two-story, frame building erected in part by 1902. This likely burned in the 1904 fire and was replaced by 1907 Sanborn by a metal-clad, frame building on the same footprint. This building in turn was expanded to the east between 1923 and 1929. By 1948 that entire building had likely been replaced and greatly enlarged to the east where it connects with Building 25-16. It is a masonry-structural-framed, flat-roofed building with brick-veneered walls pierced by regular rows of ventilated openings. The building was used for woodworking, bench work, and gluing in 1948. Lexington Home Brands utilized it for woodworking, gluing, and cutting (Figure 207 - Figure 209 and Figure 213).

Building 25-16

This building was erected in two or three sections. The portion adjacent to Building 25-15 stands on the site of a building erected by 1902 and likely replaced after the fire of 1904. Tax records assign it a construction date of 1905, but that building is no longer extant. This western portion of the building likely dates between 1913 and 1923; its many changes make it difficult to pinpoint its date of construction through the Sanborn maps. It was further expanded by additions to the east and south between 1923 and 1929. In 1929 it housed Dixie’s packing and finishing and the spray painting departments and by 1948 it was additionally used for storage. It is a two-story building with a masonry structural frame and a flat roof. Its brick-veneered walls are pierced by regular rows of ventilated openings (Figure 207 - Figure 209 and Figure 214 - Figure 215).



Figure 207: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-11 to 25-16 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

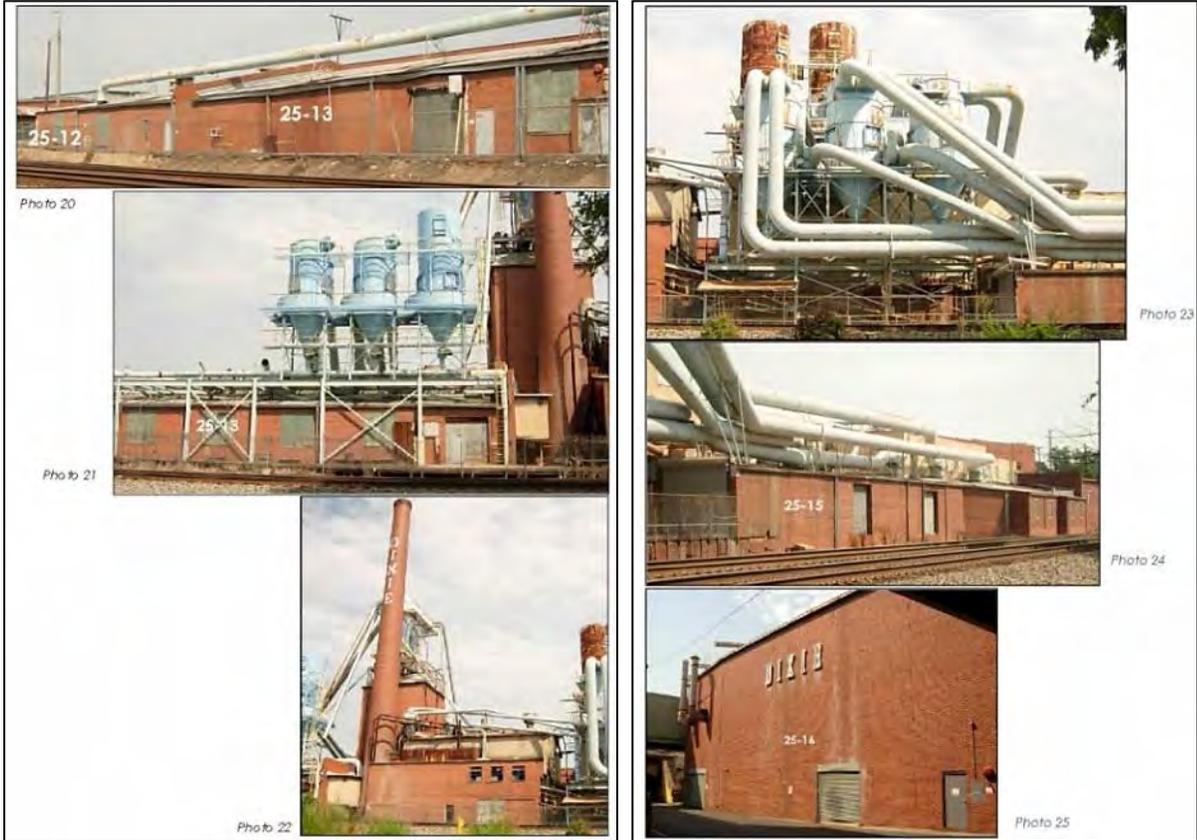


Figure 208: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-11 to 25-16 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

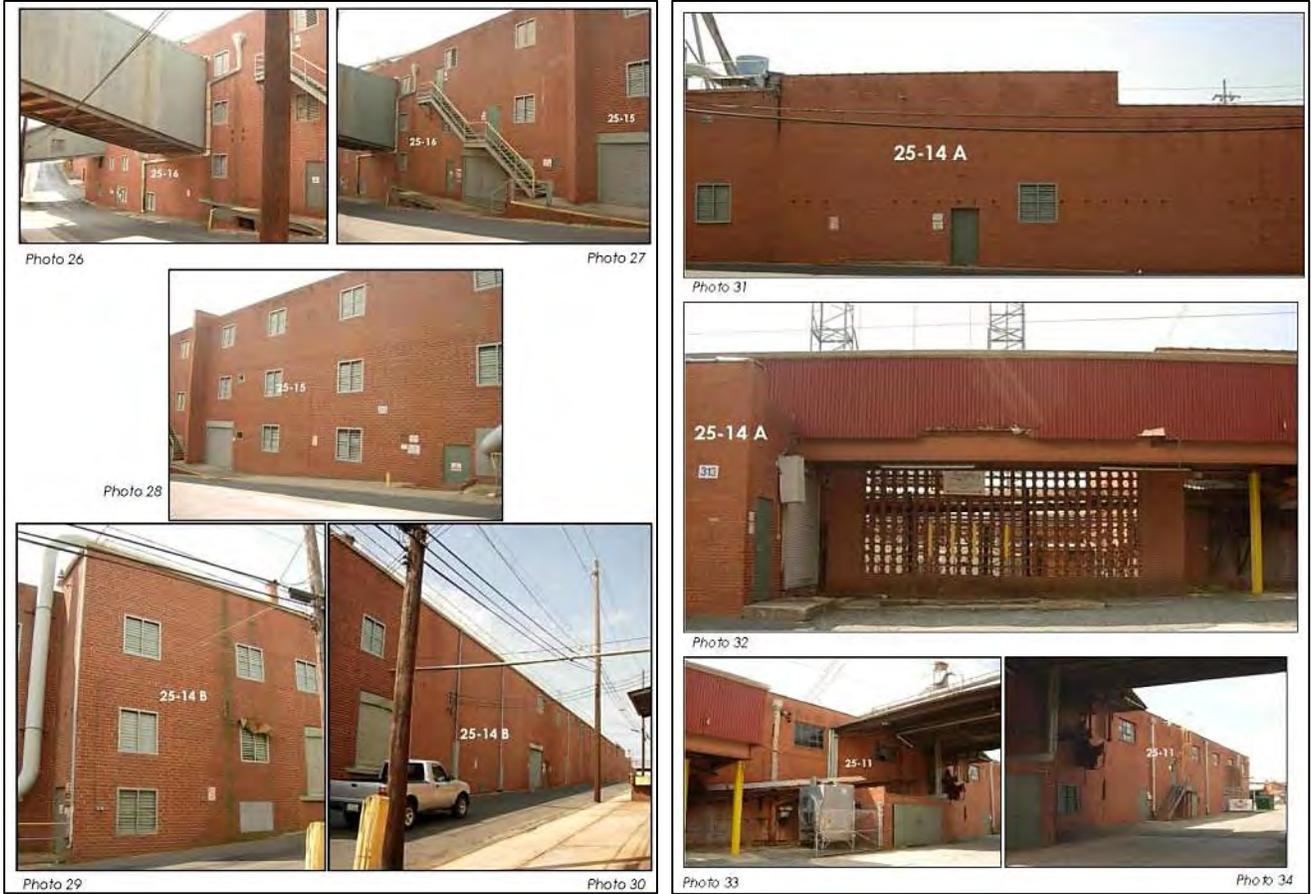


Figure 209: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-11 to 25-16 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

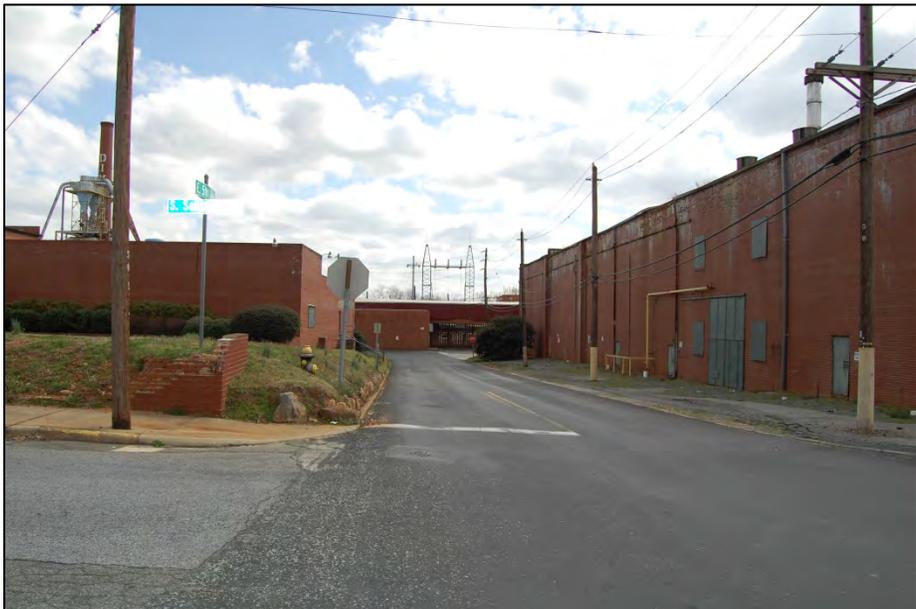


Figure 210: Dixie Furniture Company, East 5th Avenue (west) and South Salisbury Street (north) elevations of Building 25-11 at left; 5th Avenue (east) elevation of Building 25-10 at right



Figure 211: Dixie Furniture Company, railroad (south) elevation of Building 25-13 at left



Figure 212: Dixie Furniture Company, dust collection system and stack at Building 25-14 from south side of tracks



Figure 213: Dixie Furniture Company, looking east on Railroad Street at north elevation of Building 25-15 at right and south elevation of Building 25-19 at left; beyond, connected by an overhead passage, are Building 25-16 on right and Building 25-20 at left

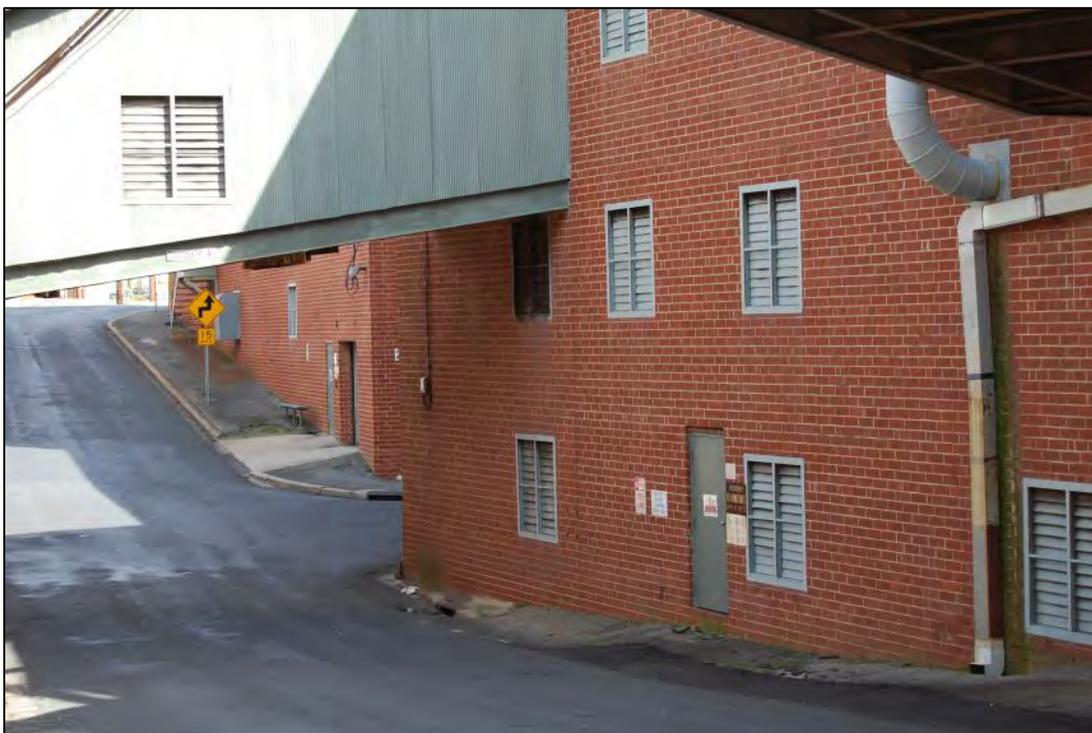


Figure 214: Dixie Furniture Company, north elevation of Building 25-16 at right with elevated passages crossing Railroad Street; intersecting road at center leads to railroad underpass; Building 25-28A to right of yellow road sign



Figure 215: Dixie Furniture Company, looking south down Elk Street connector from Railroad Street toward concrete railroad underpass with Building 25-16 at the right and Building 25-28A at the left

Building 25-17

In 1948 two houses stood on the site of this building which, according to tax records, was constructed in 1962. It is a one-story, masonry structural framed, flat-roofed building that was used by Lexington Home Brands as an office and showrooms. Its brick-veneered walls appear to have always been broken by only a few entries and bays (Figure 216 - Figure 218).

Building 25-18

The Mountcastle Knitting Company factory was opened in late 1928. In the early or mid-1950s, the Dixie Furniture Company acquired the former factory building, as part of its rapid post-war expansion in the area, and converted it into offices and showrooms. The company hired the High Point architecture firm of Voorhees and Everhart to add a Modernist, curtain-wall façade to the building's north-facing elevation. The building is recommended as individually eligible for National Register listing. More information on it and additional images can be found above at its individual entry (URS survey #7A) (Figure 216 - Figure 217 and Figure 219 - Figure 220).

Building 25-19

This building was erected—in 1950 according to tax records—on a lot that in 1948 held a house and outbuildings. A two-story, masonry-structural-frame building topped by a slightly peaked gabled roof, it is sided with corrugated asbestos and brick veneer. The veneer once had more openings, which were subsequently bricked in. It held office space for Lexington Home Brands (Figure 216, Figure 217 and Figure 220).



Figure 216: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-17 to 25-19 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 217: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-17 to 25-19 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 218: Dixie Furniture Company, South Salisbury Street elevations of Building 25-17 at right and Building 25-18 at left



Figure 219: Dixie Furniture Company, Building 25-18 façade at South Salisbury Street



Figure 220: Dixie Furniture Company, east side elevation of Building 25-18 at right and north elevation of Building 25-19 at left

Building 25-20

The site of this building is first included on the Sanborn map of 1923, which depicts five houses on it. On the 1948 Sanborn update, all of the houses still stood, but for the one at the corner of Railroad Street and East 4th Avenue. The site of this house was occupied by a small office with a sample room/warehouse attached to its east owned by Dixie Furniture. This building, all of the houses, and additional open land to the north were supplanted by the current long two-story building which was built, according to tax records, in 1983. It is a flat-roofed building with a masonry structural frame encased by a nearly unbroken expanse of brick veneer. Lexington Home Brands utilized it a finishing and spraying room (Figure 221 - Figure 226).

Building 25-21

This two-story building is assigned a 1935 construction date by tax records, but it does not appear on the 1948 Sanborn map. It was likely erected in the 1950s. Lexington Home Brands utilized it as a finishing plant. It is flat-roofed with a masonry structural frame. Its brick-veneered exterior is pierced by large casements windows at its north elevation (Figure 221 - Figure 225 and Figure 227).

Building 25-22

This one-story building was erected in two sections on land that was the backyard of houses in 1923. Its first, southern section rose between the drawing of the 1923 and 1929 maps. It was a box warehouse associated with the Shoaf-Sink hosiery mill. By 1948 it had been acquired by Dixie along with the entire Shoaf-Sink facility and expanded to the north by a warehouse. That expansion appears to have been supplanted by the current northern portion of the building, probably around 1964, the date assigned by tax records. Both sections of the building are flat-roofed, have masonry structural frames, and are fully clad in brick veneer that likely dates to ca.1964. Lexington Home Brands used the building for laundry cleaning (Figure 221 - Figure 225).

Building 25-23

Between 1913 and 1923, on a vacant tract of land, the Shoaf-Sink Hosiery Mill Company erected this building. It housed their entire operation—a large knitting room and a small office, a dye room, and a “boarding room”. By 1929 Shoaf-Sink had added Building 25-21 to the west side of this building and a separate boiler room, which was removed and replaced by 1949 by Dixie Furniture and now provides part of the site for Building 25-22. Dixie added a second story to the southern end of the knitting factory building and clerestory windows, perhaps in 1935, the date of construction assigned by tax records. It subsequently added a third story. Dixie utilized the space in 1948 for paint spraying. Lexington Home Brands used it as a finishing plant. The building has a masonry structural frame, flat roof, and brick-veneer cladding. The second-story windows at its east side elevation remain largely in place. Those at its south elevation on Railroad Street have been bricked. The various colors of brick veneer and infill on this elevation reflect the building’s various building periods (Figure 221 - Figure 225 and Figure 227).

Building 25-24

This building was erected—in 1969, according to tax records—on the 1948 site of three large sheds of unspecified use. The largest single building in the complex, it is one-story tall and has a masonry structural frame clad in brick veneer that is broken only by a few scattered bays. Its pre-stressed concrete roof was built strong enough to support a parking deck. It was used by Lexington Home Brands as a storage building and for parking (Figure 221 - Figure 225).

Building 25-25

On land that stood open just behind the North Carolina Candy Company, Dixie Furniture built this one-story building between 1929 and 1948. Tax records incorrectly assign it a date of 1953. Its masonry structural frame is topped by a slightly rounded roof with a stepped parapet wall at the East 3rd Avenue (east) elevation. Brick veneer sheathes the building. Former window bays on the east elevation have also been bricked in. A photograph from the mid-1950s captures the appearance of the building before its bays were closed in. Lexington Home Brands used the building as a finishing plant (Figure 221 - Figure 225 and Figure 228 - Figure 229).

Building 25-26

This building was added after 1948, probably by the mid-1950s, to the north side of Building 25-25. Tax records incorrectly assign it a date of 1935. It is a one-story, flat-roofed, masonry-structural-framed building that is brick veneered. As can be seen in a historic photograph, its windows have been filled in. Lexington Home Brands used the building as a finishing plant (Figure 221 - Figure 225 and Figure 228 - Figure 229).

Building 25-27

The North Carolina Candy Company erected a factory on this site between 1919, when the company was founded, and 1923. That building burned and was replaced in 1929 by the current building, which likely retains much of the first building’s walls. The Dixie Furniture Company acquired it after 1948 and utilized it as a finishing plant. The main central block of the brick building is two-stories tall with segmental-arched windows. One-story sections flank it to east and west. The building is recommended as individually eligible for National Register listing. More information on it and additional images can be found above at its individual entry (URS survey #7B). (Figure 221 - Figure 225 and Figure 230).



Figure 221: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-20 to 25-27 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 222: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-20 to 25-27 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

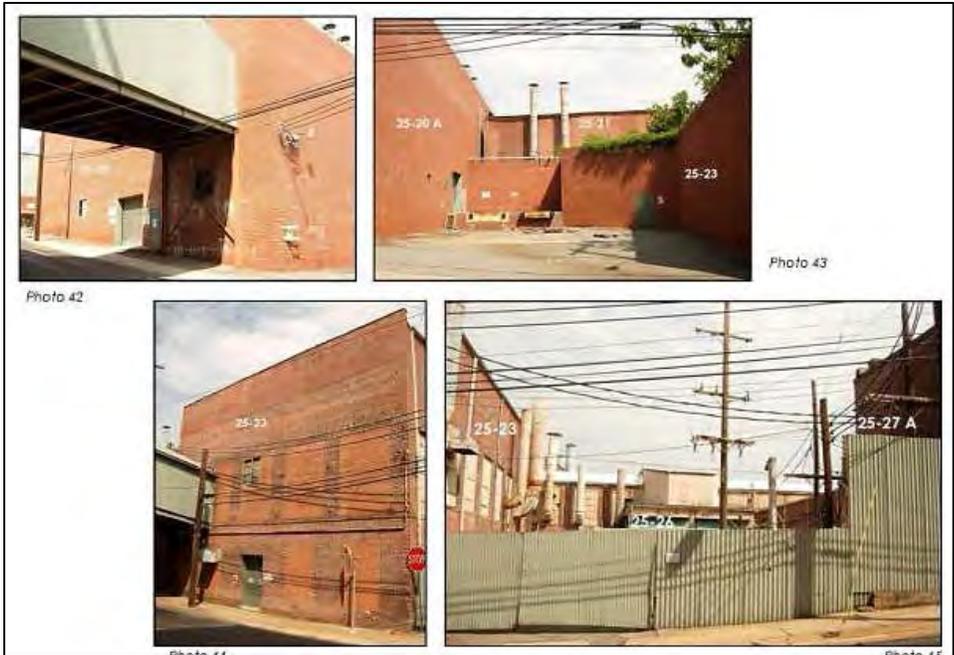


Figure 223: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-20 to 25-27; note various construction periods apparent at varied brickwork at Building 25-23 at lower left (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Photo 50



Photo 51

Figure 224: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-20 to 25-27 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

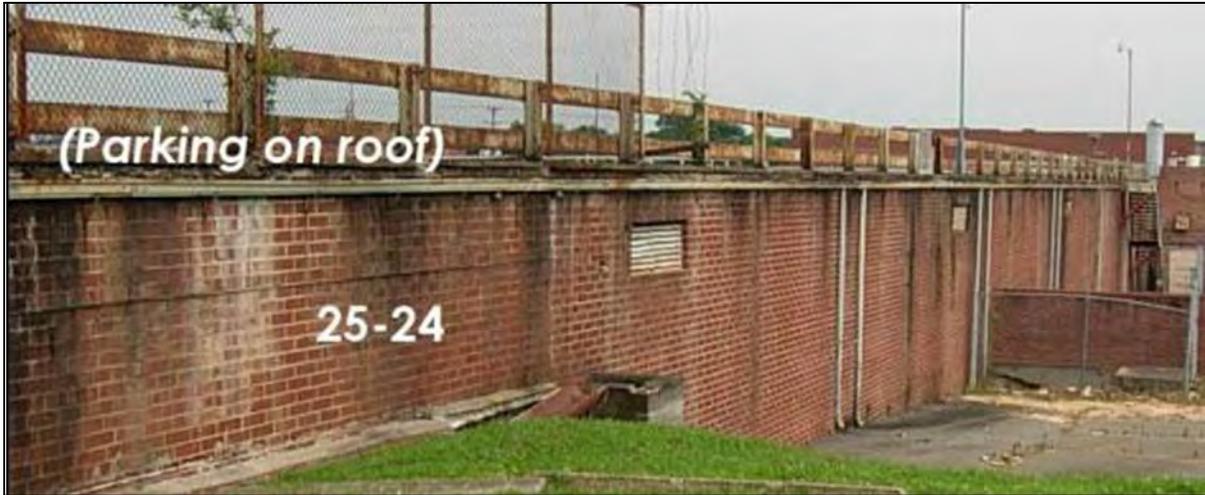


Photo 52



Photo 53 (Mosaic)

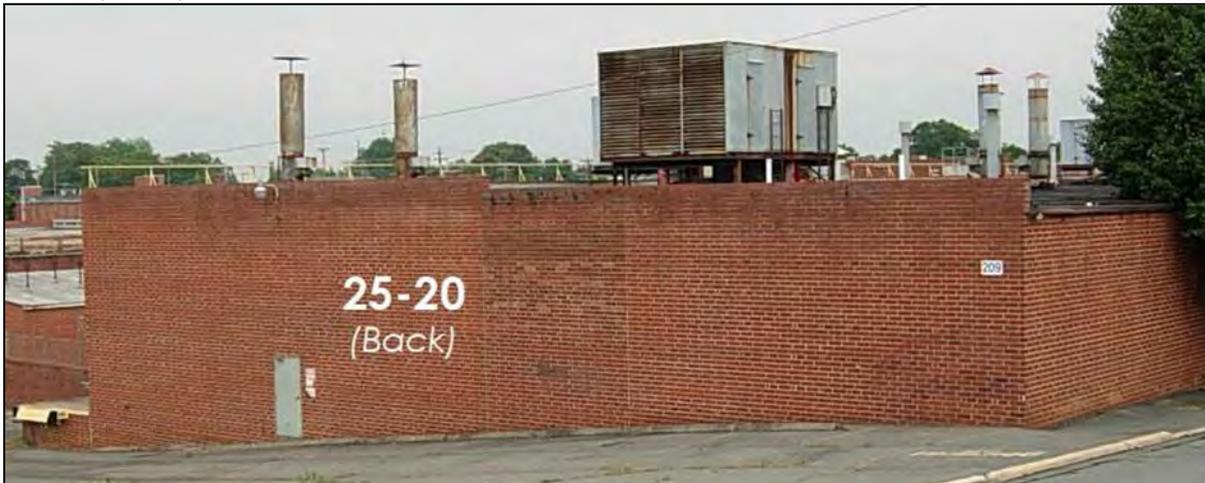


Photo 54

Figure 225: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-20 to 25-27 (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 226: Dixie Furniture Company, Railroad Street (south) elevation Building 25-20 at left; Building 25-15 at right



Figure 227: Dixie Furniture Company, looking east on Railroad Avenue at Building 25-23



Figure 228: Dixie Furniture Company, 3rd Avenue (east) elevations of Building 25-26 at left with “Dixie” over door and Building 25-25 at right with long glass-block windows, ca.mid-1950s (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, image P 01.58.3a)



Figure 229: Dixie Furniture Company, modern view of Figure 228 above



Figure 230: Dixie Furniture Company, looking west on Railroad Street with Building 25-27 on right and Building 25-28A at left

Building 25-28

Two separate buildings previously stood on the sites of the attached components of this resource, Building 25-28A and Building 25-28B. A wholesale grocery warehouse occupied part of the northern portion of the site by 1907, and between 1913 and 1923 that warehouse was replaced by a larger warehouse. On the southern portion of the site, a furniture storage building was erected between 1913 and 1923. About 1980, according to tax records, Building 25-28A was erected on the sites of the warehouse, much of the storage building, and land in between the two and to their east. At the same time, Dixie erected Building 25-28B on part of the site of the storage building and additional property to the south. Like the other buildings constructed by Dixie from the 1950s into the early 1980s, the two buildings are flat-roofed, brick-veneered, and have very few openings. Some square bays fitted with vents pierce their brick veneer and, at their east-facing elevations, there are three loading-bays with roll-up doors. Both buildings have structural steel frames (Figure 231 - Figure 234).



Figure 231: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-28A and 25-28B (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)

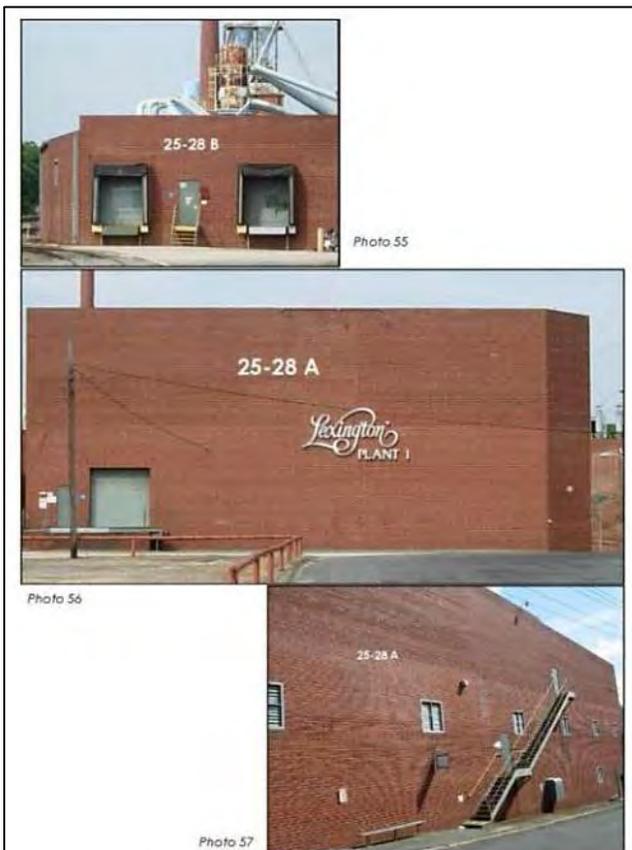


Figure 232: Dixie Furniture Company, Buildings 25-28A and 25-28B (source: Lexington Redevelopment Commission 2010)



Figure 233: Dixie Furniture Company, Railroad Street (north) elevation of Building 25-28A at right and east elevation at left



Figure 234: Dixie Furniture Company, Building 25-28A at right and 25-28B at left, from south side of tracks

Assessment

The former Dixie Furniture Company dates from 1901 and two of its approximately 28 buildings were erected—one by the company, the other by the Shoaf-Sink Hosiery Mill Company—between 1913 and 1923. Perhaps small sections of even earlier buildings are incorporated into later ones. By 1948 eight of the company's current buildings were standing, most of which had been built by other enterprises—Mountcastle Knitting, Shoaf-Sink Hosiery, North Carolina Candy—and acquired by Dixie as part of its rapid post-World War II expansion. With extensive construction activity from the late 1940s into the early 1980s, the complex became a major producer of furniture in Lexington, statewide, and even nationally.

Dixie was certainly an important factory complex in Lexington and beyond. However, the company's complex of buildings is not eligible for National Register listing because so much of it was erected within the past 50 years and it does not satisfy the "exceptional importance" exception of National Register Criterion Consideration G. The total base square footage of the complex's buildings is 738,000 square feet. Of this, 340,000 or 46% is encompassed by buildings erected in 1962 or later, most of them from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. Due to the large numbers of buildings built well within the past 50 years and the relatively common and workmanlike nature of such buildings—for example, Thomasville, about ten miles to the east in Davidson County, has numerous large furniture factory complexes from the period, some still in operation—the Dixie complex does not have the exceptional importance necessary for it to have achieved significance within the past 50 years. Its many less-than-50-year-old buildings are not remarkable for their architecture or history and, at the current date, the complex does not meet any of the Criteria/Criteria Considerations—historical, personal associational, or architectural—required for National Register listing.

It should be noted that the complex is not eligible under Criterion B for its association with Dixie president Henry Talmadge Link. Link was a significant figure in the furniture industry and, although he presided over a company with factories other than this Dixie complex, the complex was connected with his historic contributions. However, significance for Dixie's connection with Link runs into the same Criterion Consideration G obstacles of exceptional importance and significant accomplishments within the past 50 years. For his association with a complex of buildings almost half of which dates from the past 50 years, he would have to have been of exceptional importance within the past 50 years. Further, any evidence of his mechanization efforts in the 1940s has been physically lost, for the buildings that stood at that date—most likely Building 25-15 and Building 25-16—have been altered inside and out over time: they now stand as vacant shells. It should be further noted that two intact components of the complex—the former North Carolina Candy Company and the former Mountcastle Knitting Company/Dixie Furniture Company Showroom-Offices—are recommended elsewhere in this report as individually eligible for National Register listing. If the Dixie complex is revisited in another ten years' time or so, it too may meet the requirements for National Register listing.

LEXINGTON SHIRT CORPORATION (URS survey #12)
205 East 3rd Avenue

History

The 1923 Sanborn map does not depict the Lexington Shirt Corporation. Accounts of industry in Davidson County of 1925 (Sink) and 1927 (Leonard) also do not include the company. It first appears on the 1929 Sanborn map on West End Drive near the western edge of city limits. It is this factory that is depicted in a photograph (not included here) in the collection of the Davidson County Historical Museum (H. Lee Waters collection 96.2504). By the 1948 update of the Sanborn map, the West End Drive factory had become home to the Hulin Lumber Company. Between 1929 and 1948 Lexington Shirt erected a new factory—this building—at an address given as 109 East 2nd Avenue. By 1957-1958, according to city directories, the factory had taken on its current address of 205 3rd Avenue. This likely reflected the construction of a new addition that expanded the facility the length of the block from 2nd to 3rd Avenue.

Lexington Shirt apparently went out of business for a time during the Great Depression. It is not included in the 1928-1929 city directory but reappears, at its new 2nd Avenue location, in the 1937 directory. The eastern half of the current building was erected around that time. In 1957-1958 the factory was home to the Lexington Manufacturing Company and Lexington Sportswear, Inc. The 1974 directory lists it as holding Edgewood Apparel, as does the 1991 directory. By the compilation of the 1994 city directory, however, Edgewood was gone and the building was apparently vacant. It is not believed to have functioned as a factory since. It is now, or until recently was, used as a mini storage facility and as the home of the Trinity Independent Baptist Church.

Description

The ca.1937 block of the factory, which fronts on 2nd Avenue, is a functional, two-story, brick industrial building (Figure 235 - Figure 238). Its east façade retains a minimal stepped-parapet edged by concrete. The bays at this elevation are set in slightly recessed panels. All but two pairs of the elevation's casement windows have been boarded up or partially bricked in. The original entry has also been bricked over. The block's south side elevation retains wide casement windows at its second story. A few such windows remain at the first story, but most have been supplanted by rolling garage-type doors added when the building was converted in part into a mini storage warehouse. The windows at the north side elevation of the block have either been bricked in or replaced by roll-up doors for the storage business. The 1950s-era wing of the building is also two stories tall and sided with brick and has been altered in similar fashion. It retains its second-story casement windows at its south elevation, but its first story windows there have been boarded over. At its north side elevation, its first-story windows have been replaced by garage doors and its second-story windows filled with brick. Its functional rear elevation retains a loading dock and a few doors.

Assessment and Recommendation

The former Lexington Shirt Corporation building has no known historical or architectural significance. Its ca.1937 and 1950s-era blocks form a workmanlike industrial building that is not notable. Further, the building has been altered by the filling of numerous window bays and the addition of sliding garage doors. It is therefore not eligible for National Register listing under any of the Register's Criteria.



Figure 235: East front (East 2nd Avenue) and south side elevations of Lexington Shirt Corporation



Figure 236: South side and east front elevations of Lexington Shirt Corporation



Figure 237: West rear (East 3rd Avenue) and north side elevations of Lexington Shirt Corporation



Figure 238: North side elevation of Lexington Shirt Corporation

WELLBORN BUILDING (URS survey #13)
15 East 2nd Avenue

History

The Wellborn Building was erected in two phases by Dr. Samuel G. Wellborn (1921-2010) on lots that on the 1948 Sanborn map were residential. The first, northern portion of the building was built in 1951, according to tax records and a plaque on the front (east) elevation that says “Wellborn 1951” (Figure 239). The 1951-1952 city directory places Wellborn’s medical office in the building. He lived a few blocks away at 511 South Main Street. By 1955-1956 the building had two occupants, Dr. James T. Wellborn and dentist R. Reynolds Shoaf.

In 1958, according to tax records, Wellborn placed an addition on the south side of the building. Whether he was still in Lexington at that time is uncertain. By no later than 1960 he had moved to New Orleans, where he practiced anesthesiology and was to die in 2010 (*Times-Picayune*, May 5, 1960; Davidson County Deed Book 2027/Page 666 (2010)). Wellborn’s heirs received the building and other property held in trust following his death in 2010 and sold it two years later to its current owner, the Standell Corporation (Davidson County Deed Book 2054/Page 910 (2012)).

Description

The northern (1951) portion of the Wellborn Building is constructed of masonry clad in brick veneer and topped by a flat roof (Figure 240 - Figure 244). The front (east) elevation on 2nd Avenue is finished with Roman brick set in running bond with alternating darkened stretchers. A low matching wall with the same brickwork sets off landscaping in front of the facade. The elevation is also marked by limestone panels, which are arranged in an L-shape around the recessed off-center entry and as a pilaster at the former south end of the block. A single, large, metal casement window pierces the front elevation of the block. The name plaque is set above it beneath the concrete coping of the roof. The block’s north side and west rear elevations are plainly finished with standard brick veneer and metal casement windows. The southern portion of the building (1958) essentially mirrors the original block with the same brick-veneer, limestone panels, and wall at the front, and standard brick veneer at the north and west. It is smaller, however, extending back only about 50 feet rather than the approximately 75 feet of the original block.

The body of the entire building and its side and rear elevations exemplify standard commercial-type design and finish found at similar buildings erected from the mid-1940s through the 1960s. The Roman brick, limestone panels, and low wall, however, give the front elevation a minimal mid-century-modern-type design. The overall appearance of the building suggests the design hand of a contractor rather than an architect.

Assessment

The Wellborn Building has no known historical or architectural significance and is therefore not eligible for National Register listing. It is not a notable example of mid-century-modern design. A few elements of the style are present at the building’s front elevation, but it is essentially a standard commercial-type design from the period. Further, Samuel Wellborn is not known to have been a significant person in our past, as required for eligibility under National Register Criterion B.

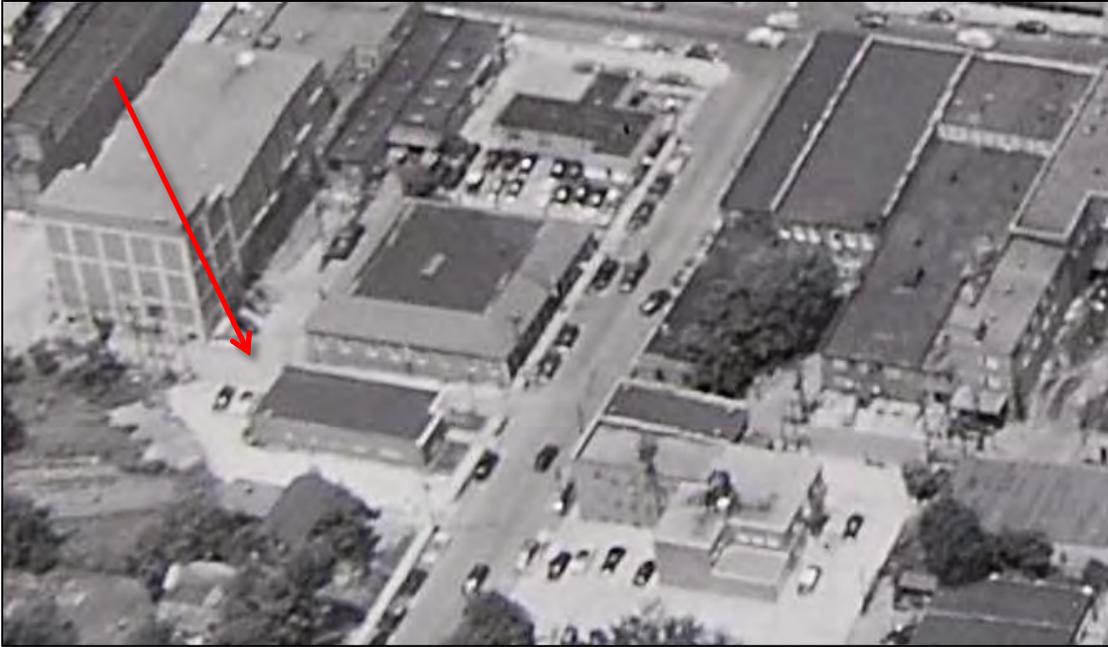


Figure 239: Detail of aerial view of downtown Lexington showing northern half of Wellborn Building at red arrow, taken between ca.1951 and 1958 (source: Davidson County Historical Museum, H. Lee Waters collection 96.7472)



Figure 240: Wellborn Building, east front (2nd Avenue) elevation with 1951 block at right and 1958 block at left



Figure 241: Wellborn Building, east front and north side elevations of 1951 block



Figure 242: Wellborn Building, east front and south side elevations of 1958 block



Figure 243: Wellborn Building, west rear and south side elevation of 1958 block; note how it is less deep than 1951 block



Figure 244: Wellborn Building, west rear and north side elevation of 1951 block

FLOYD LEE BERRIER VFW POST NO. 3074 (URS survey #20)
625 South Main Street

History

The official website of the Veterans of Foreign Wars or VFW includes a summary of the organization's early history:

The VFW traces its roots back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service: Many arrived home wounded or sick. There was no medical care or veterans' pension for them, and they were left to care for themselves.

In their misery, some of these veterans banded together and formed organizations with what would become known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. After chapters were formed in Ohio, Colorado and Pennsylvania, the movement quickly gained momentum. By 1915, membership grew to 5,000; by 1936, membership was almost 200,000.

On March 19, 1945, the officers of the "Floyd Lee Berrier Post #3074 Veterans of Foreign Wars" took over the mortgage on a deed of trust on the property on which the current building stands (Davidson County Deed Book 159/Page 636). Whether they erected a new building or retrofitted an existing one was not determined: the core of the VFW Post, behind additions and brick veneer, may be that of a small, one-story, L-shaped, gable-end house with a projecting rear ell, a form found commonly throughout Lexington. The taking over of an existing mortgage also suggests a house or other building may have stood on the lot. It also was not determined whether the VFW was in operation in Lexington prior to 1945 or was newly organized. It may well have been a new post, or at least one without a home, for it does not appear in the Lexington city directory of 1941-1942. The post may have been named after a Floyd Lee Berrier (ca.1895-1937) who is buried at the Shiloh United Methodist Church cemetery in Lexington (FindAGrave website). His military-issue marker says he served as a cook with the 6th Division of the 53rd Infantry. (Attempts to contact the post for information were not successful. A priest at the neighboring Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church said that the building is rarely used and questioned whether it was for sale.) Extensive online searches unearthed no additional information.

Description

The VFW post building, or hut as it is called in city directories, is one-story tall and brick veneered (Figure 245 - Figure 248). If it started out as a single-pile, L-shaped residence, it soon acquired in the VFW's hands a gabled entry at the front and a small flat-roofed wing that now carries the name of the post. These portions of the building are clad in matching brick veneer. Rather than windows, the front (north) gable has a central entry flanked by metal ventilators. This appears to be a later alteration. A gable-end and flat-roofed wing were subsequently added across the rear (south) elevation and an even later flat-roofed wing, which is covered with orange-tinged brick veneer, extends to the east at the front elevation. Access could not be gained to the interior.

Assessment

The Floyd Lee Berrier VFW Post No. 3074 building has no known historical or architectural significance and is therefore not eligible for National Register listing. It is not one of the original VFW posts, which were formed in Denver and Pittsburgh. Nor is it known to be a rarity in North Carolina: the VFW website identifies 173 posts in the state. No information could be found identifying Floyd Lee Berrier as a person significant in our history. And the building is not architecturally notable, but rather appears to be at heart an altered early twentieth-century dwelling.



Figure 245: Floyd Lee Berrier VFW Post No. 3074, north front (Main Street) elevation



Figure 246: Floyd Lee Berrier VFW Post No. 3074, north front and east side elevations; note different brick veneer on later addition at left



Figure 247: Floyd Lee Berrier VFW Post No. 3074, east side and south rear elevations



Figure 248: Floyd Lee Berrier VFW Post No. 3074, south rear and west side (7th Avenue) elevations

C. Resources Not Requiring Further National Register Eligibility Assessment

During the weeks of March 5 and October 15, 2012 principal investigator Marvin A. Brown conducted a reconnaissance-level survey of the project's Area of Potential Effects. He photographed all resources that appeared to be 50 years old or older or of exceptional importance. He additionally conducted preliminary research into the history of these resources. As part of this effort, he identified 56 individual resources or groups of resources. On October 25, 2012 he made a PowerPoint presentation to Justin Kockritz and Ann Swallow of the North Carolina HPO that reported on the results of this reconnaissance-level effort. They requested that 20 of the resources be reported on at the intensive level. These are the resources assigned URS survey numbers 1 through 20, which are reported on at Sections II.A and II.B above. They identified the remaining 36 resources as not appearing to be eligible for National Register listing and therefore not requiring intensive-level inventory, either individually or—as in the case of the dwellings on Adams Street and East 5th Avenue Extension—as part of any potential historic district.

Following are two maps—one covering the eastern portion of the APE, the other the western portion—that depict the locations of these resources, which are assigned URS survey numbers 21 through 56 (Figure 249 - Figure 250). Following the maps are a photograph or photographs of each of these resources and an approximate date of construction (Figure 251 - Figure 300). The dates are based upon tax records, physical appearance and style and, in some instances, Sanborn map and other historical research. Historic images of a few of the resources are also included.

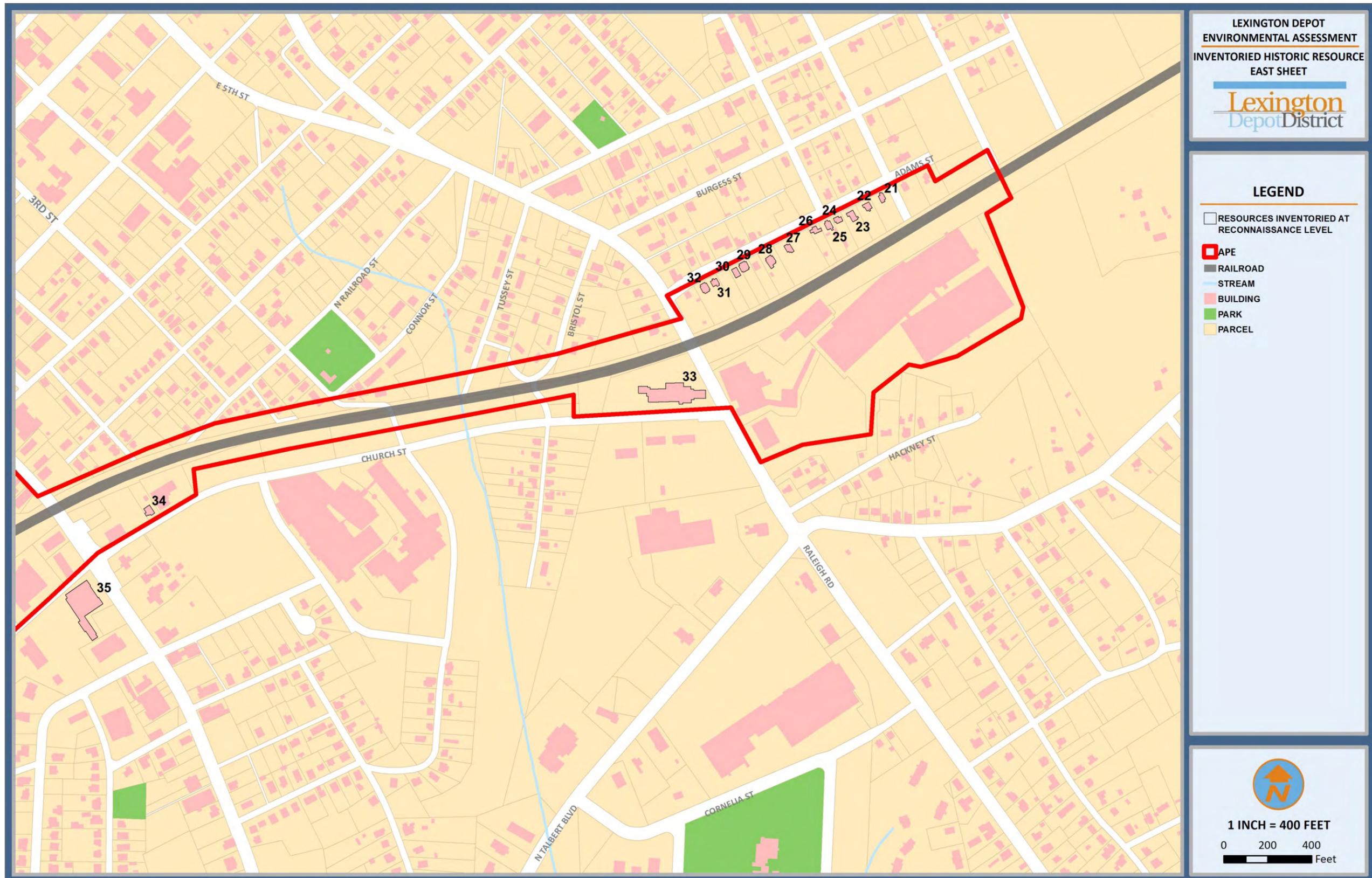


Figure 249: Area of Potential Effects map (eastern half) with APE outlined in red and resources inventoried at the reconnaissance level identified with URS survey numbers