



MONUMENTAL MEMORIES

West Side of 300 Spring Street Block – circa 1964

This image was a photo-composited from 17 separate images taken by local photography legend Norris Mode on assignment for the Urban Renewal Authority in September 1967.



Urban renewal swept through the United States during the 1960's and the mindset was that it was a revitalization tool for decaying downtowns. Rather than restoring historic buildings, this movement's focus was "out with the old, in with the new". Many of the buildings you see in this picture are now ghosts of what once was.

On the left, the Bensinger Furniture Company was in a building built by John Spieth in 1896. He ran Speith's Confectionary and he used steam power to make the ice cream. There was a huge water tank on the top of the building that was used to make the steam and there was a large soda fountain on the ground floor. The fifth building in from the left side is the Pfau-Rauschenberger building. Built in 1892, it contained Pfau's Drug Store on the ground floor, doctors' offices and meeting rooms on the upper two floors. The LeRose Theatre just north of the Pfau building replaced the old Falls City Hotel. The LeRose was built in 1920

by Michael Switow and named after his two daughters – Lee and Rose. Mr. Switow operated theatres all over Kentucky and the Saturday matinees were extremely popular with children who loved Westerns and Buck Rogers movies. Two buildings north of the LeRose you see Schimpff's Confectionery where one would buy red hots and peanuts to eat at the movies. Schimpff's invented the Modjeska, a caramel covered marshmallow. Schimpff's is the oldest family operated candy store in America.

The building with the bay window at 355 Spring Street once housed the Homer M. Frank dry goods store. The second floor from which the window projects once housed the City of Jeffersonville's telephone exchange in the late 19th century. According to Baird's 1909 History of Clark County, the bay window "was of great convenience to the operator in spying out persons who were wanted on the 'phone". The company, known as Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company,

was the local Bell telephone licensee at the time. A living reminder of that company to this day is the initial "28" in front of many local telephone numbers; those numbers correspond to the letter C and U in the alphabet letters associated with telephone numbers on the dial. The conventional shorthand for giving telephone numbers in the early days was to say the name of the exchange with the final numbers, such as Cumberland-1234 (in the era of six-digit phone numbers).

The end cap of this photograph is the Voigt building, which was built in 1910. It housed a Savings and Loan as well as the Julius' Florist Shop, which opened in 1913 and is now Walnut Ridge Garden Center. The old vault from the Savings and Loan is still in the building today, however, it is located in the back of what is now Sugar Maples Antique Shop.



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Sallie B. Murphy Millinery - circa 1897

Sallie was the oldest child of a large family. When her parents died she became responsible for her siblings and learned to sew and make hats to help support the children. Sallie was a very plain gal, she wore glasses and had a thinning hairline and so she sewed false bangs to a ribbon, which she then tied around her head to make her hair look full. She had false teeth that would drop from her gums. Many would consider her a spinster.

Later in life she met Dennis Murphy who worked at the Quartermaster Depot. Theirs was a whirlwind romance much talked about in the newspapers of the day. The newspapers were not kind to Sallie during her

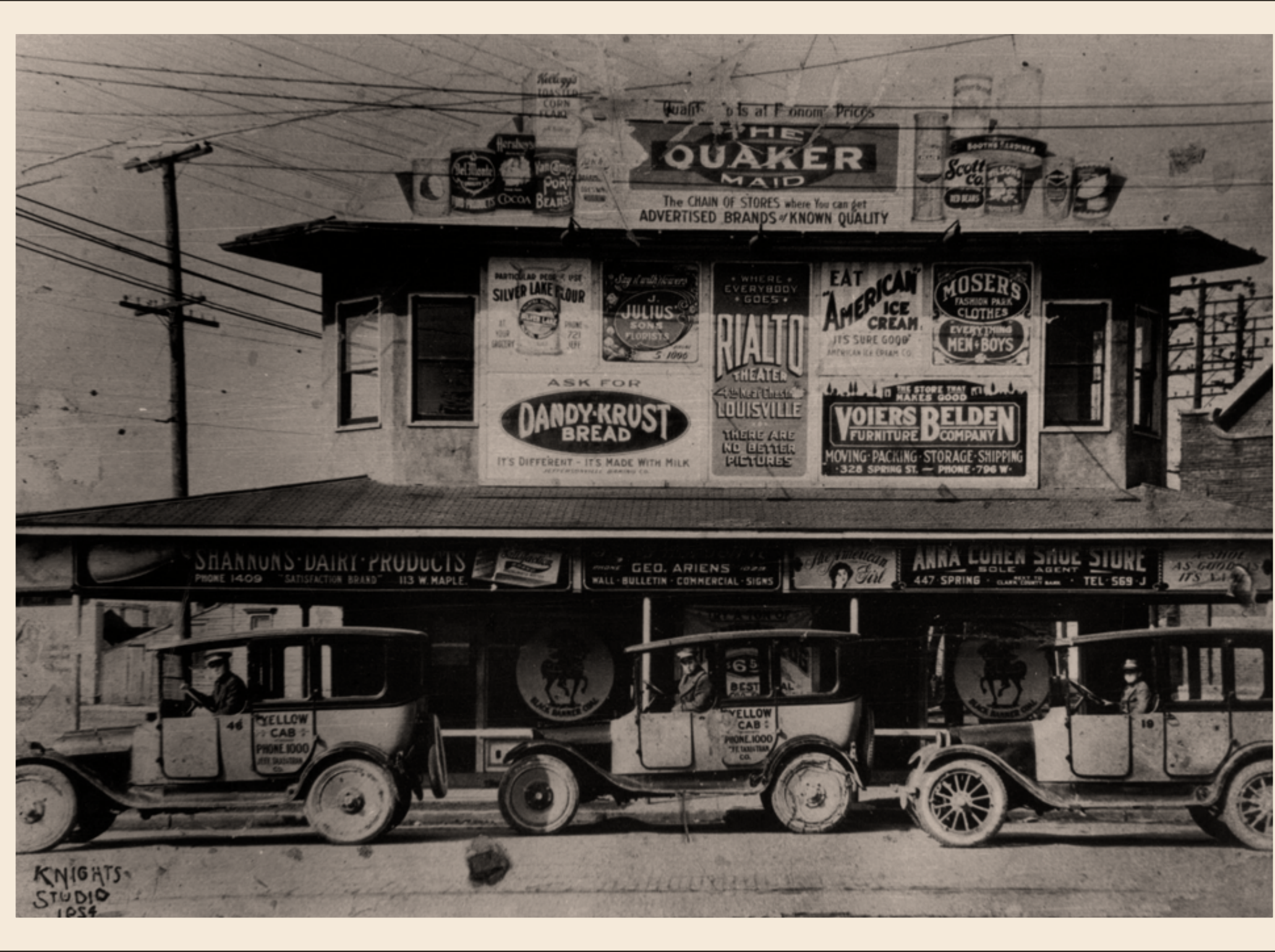
engagement to Dennis. The articles spoke of her being a successful businesswoman and hinted at the only reason one would marry her would be for her money. The reporters publicly congratulated her on avoiding gigolos. Dennis and Sallie were a happy couple. They purchased a large, wooden home with a picture window located on Spring Hill. It was not long into their marriage that Dennis fell ill. He died suddenly and Sallie was devastated and fell into a deep depression. After the death of her husband, Sallie would visit a large photograph of Dennis on an easel near the grave in her front yard. In the glass of the photograph there was a hole drilled at the lapel of his shirt and each day she would put a fresh flower into his picture's lapel.

Sallie's building has had many transitions over the years. At one time, it was Dr. Isler's office as well as a license bureau. In 1930, Heuser Hardware added onto the Sallie B. Murphy building and have occupied the space ever since. James R. Heuser and Frank Stultzenberger, learned the hardware trade from their days at Belknap Hardware and started their new business in August 1923 with fellow investor John Kenny at their first location located at 8th and Spring Streets. J. Willard Heuser, James's brother, joined the business a year after its founding when Kenny left. For most of its history, locals affectionately called the business "Jimmy Heuser's".



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Taxi Stand -1924 | Flatiron Building

The last picture in this row is of McFarland's Fish Market, which was in existence around 1910. It was in this fish market that fresh fish from the Ohio were sold. Can you find the flying fish? The guys in the front of the building were holding some of their bounty. The little boy in the center of the picture is Ernie Isgrigg. It was Ernie who was in charge of fishing turtles out of the flooded basement of this building for the customers. Many of those turtles became soup at the famous Stauss Hotel in Jeffersonville on Riverside Drive.

Later this building became a Yellow and Brown taxicab stand, as you see in the first image, which is from a 1924 photograph. As a building at the entrance or

gateway into town, this small structure was plastered with advertisements from Jeffersonville, Louisville and many other area businesses to solicit business from passers by. The picture in the center is one from the 1937 flood. Pay close attention as you will see overturned buildings, the big four bridge, an interurban car and an electrician atop a pole!

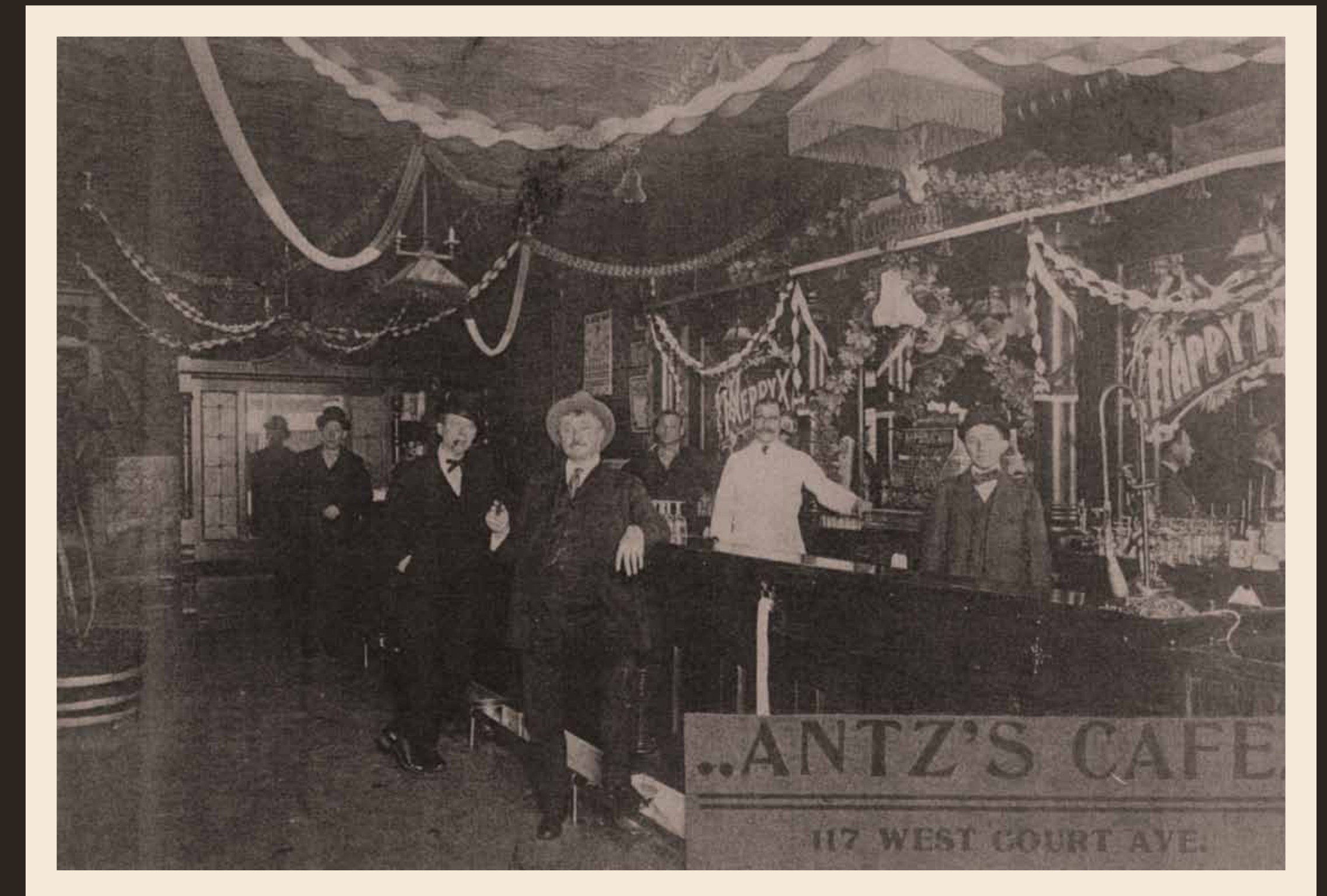
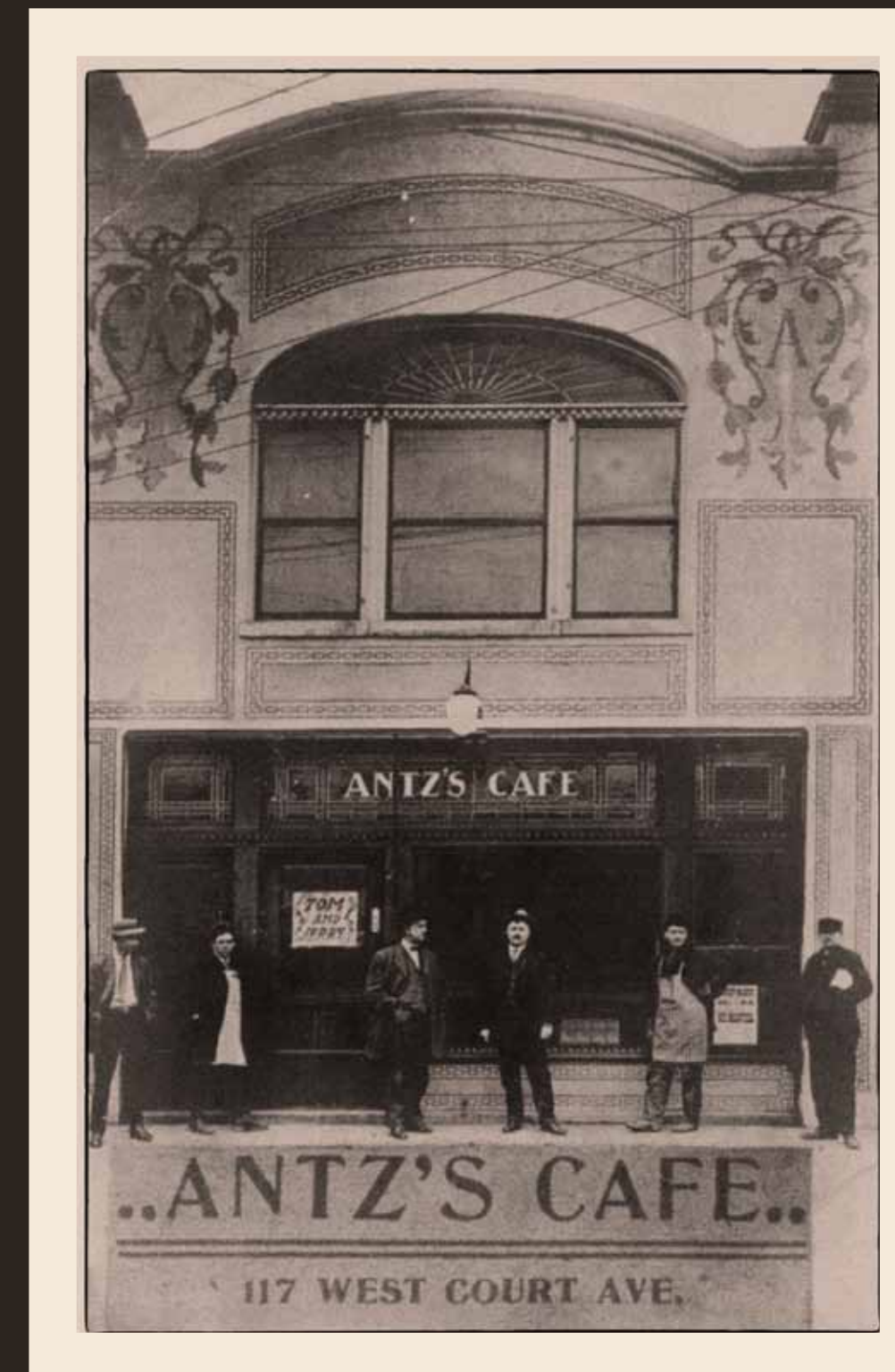
Why is this photograph on the Benton's Jewelry building? Many people don't realize that the Benton's Jewelry building (before it was a jewelry building of course) was the auto body shop where the taxicabs were serviced. Cabs were also stored in what is now Benton's Jewelry. Benton's Jewelry was owned and

operated by Jim Benton who began his career as an acrobat in the Lewis Brothers Circus in the 1930's. When the war broke out, Jim Benton enlisted in the army and was a paratrooper awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. When Jim returned from the war he traveled with the circus once again as a solo act (specifically the high pole act- 138 feet in the air). Jim utilized the G.I. bill to go to a watchmaker's school in Louisville. It was from this experience that Jim began his journey into watch repair at the Bacon's Department store, which eventually led to him to this location to open his own jewelry business.



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Antz Cafe - circa 1930

Gangsters, gambling and drinking - oh my!

Many "cafes" in the 1930's were a front for what was really happening within. The gambling in Clark County goes as far back as 1809 when Major John Harrison developed the Jeffersonville Springs. It was about a mile and a half north of Jeffersonville off of Spring Street. Card games and other gaming activities were popular. People came from all over the south to enjoy the medicinal waters and to while away the summers sightseeing and gambling in Jeffersonville. Jeffersonville was later called "Little Reno".

Next to Antz Café there is the Cottrill Restaurant and then, the 121 Club. Antz's and the 121 Club were both gambling venues. On the far western end of Court Avenue was the Municipal Bar, another casino. There were many others and gambling continued into the 1940's until Judge Bottorff and concerned citizens rose up and put an end to it by raiding the casinos, smashing the machines and jailing the occupants. Jeffersonville is between Chicago and Miami, which were controlled by gangsters. The Greyhound Casino was located next to Highway 62, which ran south to Miami. Gangsters as well as big bands visited the Greyhound nightclub as did Hollywood stars, such as Clark Gable. The

gangsters would stop and collect their monies from the Greyhound and gas up at Millholland's Grocery on Eastern Boulevard. Many times, the gangsters, with their guns visible under their jackets, would 'forcibly' eat dinner with the family that owned the grocery store. The children of the family were warned not to ask questions at dinner, not to look the gangsters in the face and not to tell anyone that they had been there.



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Dream Theatre - circa 1907

In the era of silent films, this was the first theatre in Jeffersonville that celebrated film as a new entertainment medium. The theatre would hire a pianist to play music to accompany the action and printed dialog on the screen.

Michael Switow, constructed the building on the site of the old Market House in 1907. He strategically placed a sign in the lobby of the theatre, which read " Please do not expectorate on the floor if you expect to rate with the management". He built theatres in Kentucky and Southern Indiana. This theatre closed in 1950 and was torn down during the time of Urban Renewal.

The LeRose Theatre was built in 1920. It was within the LeRose that theater-goers experienced the "Talkie". The "Talkie" was a motion picture with sound. The LeRose was very elegant and had a very high style for the period. The LeRose building was named after Mr. Switow's daughters- Lee and Rose. You can see by the lines of people waiting outside of the venue how very popular the movies were. It was very "in" to get your peanuts and red hots at Schimpff's two doors down the street in the morning before attending an afternoon matinee.

The picture in the center is an early form of guerilla marketing! The fabric connected to the side of the automobile was adorned with hundreds of bells. The bells would shimmy and shake down the streets of Jeffersonville. This ruckus would cause people to look upon the auto to see the advertisements for the upcoming movies - brilliant!



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Yeoman's Building - circa 1962

Yeoman's Linda Shop sold women's apparel in 1962. This Art Deco building has an interesting façade with a saw tooth top that made it very identifiable from a distance. Directly right of the Yeoman's store is Swartz's Dry Goods.

Allen A. Swartz founded Swartz's Dry Goods. It was in this building that one could purchase fabric, buttons, handkerchiefs, tablecloths, clothing and anything else for the home that was a dry good. An interesting

element within this building was the pneumatic tube system, which connected the sales person downstairs with the office upstairs. The money was taken and change was given and sent back downstairs to the clerk - swoosh! Swartz's Dry Goods housed many businesses throughout the years. Horn's Billiards and Pool was to the right of what is now Ginny Possum. Jeffersonville had three pool halls, all on Spring Street! This is where truant officers looked for wayward boys playing hooky.

Directly left of Yeoman's in this photograph is Gold's Pawn Shop. Gold's Pawn Shop was in this location in 1962, although this commercial building is Italianate in style and much older. It sat right on the alley until the 1990s, when it was demolished. Gold's Pawn Shop has since moved across the street and is still in business today.



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Spring Street Looking North 300 Block - circa 1924

Welcome to the business district. Look at this picture from 1924 and compare it to the street scene before you as it is today! What are some commonalities, what are some differences?

Commerce was hopping in the 30s and business was concentrated in the heart of the downtown area. Most of the outlying lands were farms. Directly south was our Ohio River bank humming with shipping goods. Jeffersonville received coal from Pittsburg, iron and steel from other areas in Pennsylvania and Ohio to help with manufacturing of railroad cars and barges.

Jeffersonville shipped out agricultural products with corn being one of the top crops sent away. The affordability of mass produced automobiles allowed people to live outside of crowded cities and spurred the advent of the sub-division. Businesses follow people and downtowns deteriorated. This phenomenon became known as urban sprawl.

In these active photographs you see Spring Street filled with businesses that specialized in certain merchandise and services. Some of the businesses specialized in things such as tobacco, pharmaceutical drugs, paints,

clothing, shoes, cleaning supplies, meats and produce. These specialty stores have now been absorbed into the big box stores that we see surrounding us today. Notice the inter urban car in the center image. One purpose of the inter urban line as well as the cars (like the one you see in the third image) was to bring country folks into the city.



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The Lewman Store Building - circa 1940

Street celebrations and parades were very common in the past and much better attended than some are today. In the picture of what is now Red Yeti, you will notice that the crowd has assembled in front of an Army Surplus store. Post World War II, army supplies from the Quartermaster Depot were liquidated and many stores purchased these surplus items for a deep discount with the goal to resell them to the general public. The Lewman's building has had many businesses come and go. These businesses include a doctor's office, a pharmacy, an undertaker/embalmer as well as an antique store.

Look closely at the photograph in the middle and see if you can find the flying bicycle! This was a creative way to advertise for the bicycle repair store within. The

building directly south of the Bicycle Shop is the old Elk's Building. The Elks were a fraternal organization in town whose mission was charitable and through their donations, they made communities stronger, educated children and ensured that widows and orphans were supported. There were many fraternal organizations in Jeffersonville whose meeting rooms were on the upper floors of downtown buildings. Some of these organizations included The International Order of Odd Fellows, The Masons, The Knights of Columbus and the Fraternal Order of Police. The members of these organizations could buy insurance at low rates with benefits going to the survivors. This system encouraged personal responsibility before government welfare was created.

Cast your eyes across the street at our lovely Glossbrenner Garden. This garden was once the site of the first "sky scraper" four story building in Jeffersonville. If you look closely at the third picture above, the building to the left is the side of the "sky scraper" also known as the Louis Building. The other building in that picture is the Grisamore House, which was originally intended to be a block long row house. The sky scraper met its fate in 1940. It was torn down and an appliance store called Ehringer's was erected in its place. That building met the same fate. The space is now our beautiful Glossbrenner Garden.



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Evening New – circa 1964

Where are they now? Notice how different the streetscape looks in the picture above compared to today. The three tall mid century Italianate commercial buildings pictured were filled with a sewing machine agent, a men's furnisher and hatter, a grocery store, an oil company and even a pool hall at one time.

Notice the Evening News offices, which are in the first picture and are the two on the left. The Evening News began publication in 1872 and what you see as the picture in the center above, is the very first issue. O.O. Stealey who started in the newspaper business in the

1850's as a young boy named the Evening News. He worked as the printer's devil, who is a person that locates each letter of the lead type for the printer, replenishes the ink and runs errands. O.O. Stealey ended up a newspaper correspondent in Washington D.C. In his day, O.O. Stealey was the local cupid. For pocket money, he would pass notes from prospective suitors to their intended sweet hearts for a quarter. In one day, he made forty-three dollars, which was a large sum for the 1860's. He credited himself with making several love matches.

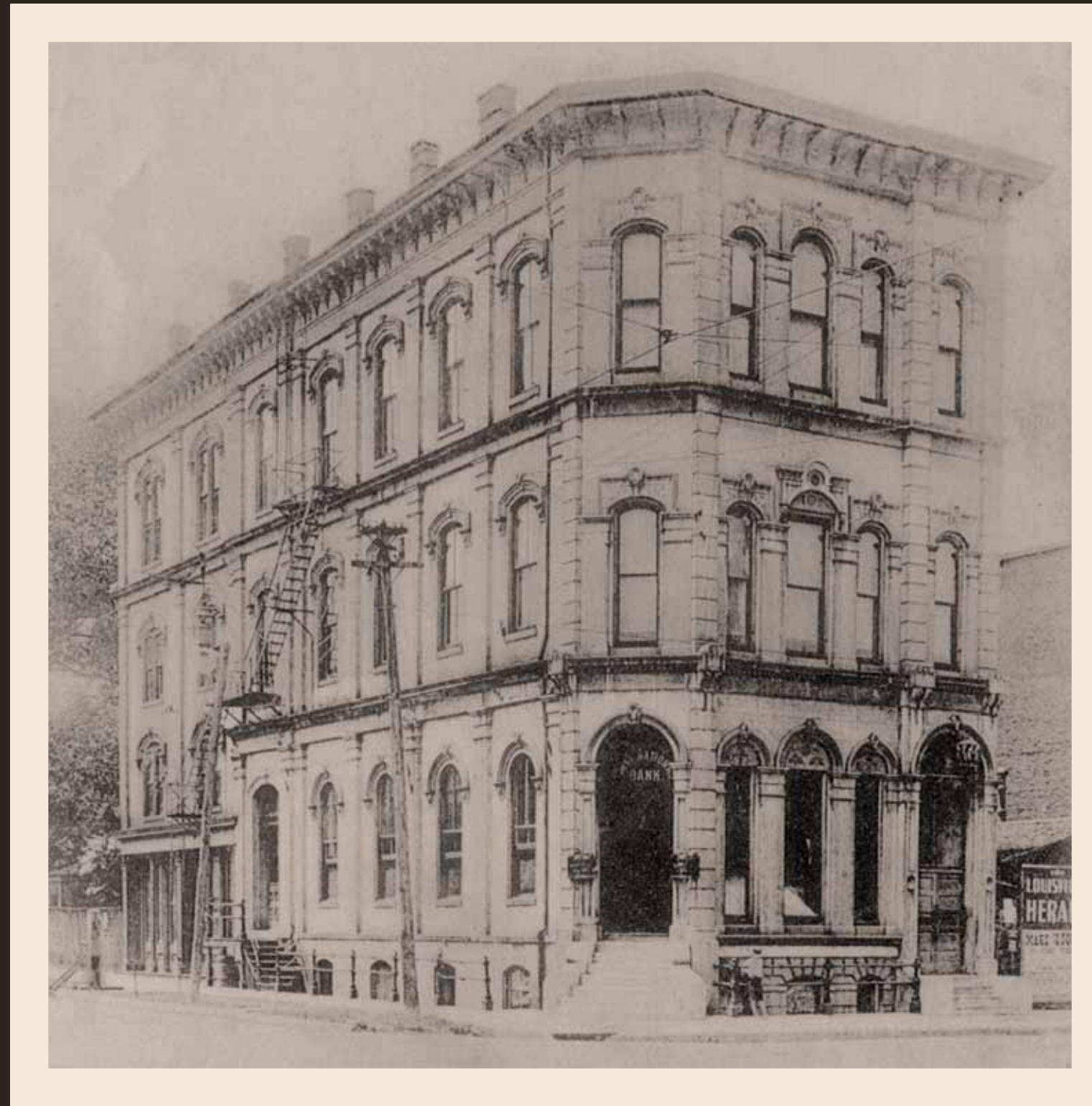
In the photograph to the far right, is a building referred to as Mozart Hall. The downstairs was always a grocery store, run by Boniface, Weber and Allen. The upstairs was a musical hall used for early Jeff High gradations, musical entertainment and minstrel shows. Happy Cal Wagner and his Minstrels performed there often.



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First National Bank – circa 1869

This Italianate style building had multiple uses. The first floor was the bank and the second floor was office space and meeting rooms. It had a basement with access on the south side and, in the 1890s, the Lyon family was walking here when they turned around to find little Sid Lyon had suddenly disappeared. What happened to Sid you ask? Well, he fell down into the basement stairwell.

Look to the center image and see a bit of the First National Building peeking in on the left side of the picture's edge. The center image is of a mule car, which was built by American Car and Foundry in Clarksville. The line was started by Mr. Howard as a method for

people to get up and down easily from the Howard Shipyard in Port Fulton. The mule cars were removed in 1904 and replaced by electric cars. The buildings behind the mule car were commercial buildings that were damaged by the 1937 flood. They date from the 1830s-40s. There were no buildings north of Market Street until after the 1830s. Most of the early buildings were along Riverside Drive.

The last image is of City Hall and was located behind the First National Bank built in 1881. City Hall had a plate glass foundation. The plate glass was made at the Jeffersonville Plate Glass Company and the glass was used to keep moisture out of the solid brick walls.

It took many years to build City Hall because of the financial panics and also the shortage of bricks. The city was very proud when the structure was completed. It was illuminated with gas lighting. There was a big celebration for the opening of the new City Hall. Many dignitaries attended including the Mayor of New Albany, who declared that he wished New Albany had something as fine as the Jeffersonville City Hall. This comment was much to the delight of the Jeffersonville City officials. The wrought iron fence that surrounded City Hall was sacrificed for scrap metal during World War II. This site is now Preservation Park.



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