

Hopkinsville Landmarks
Homes Built Between 1900 - 1930

The Athenaeum Society

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The first three decades of the 20th Century were a remarkable era in the advancements of American home construction and utilitization. Many technological improvements transformed everyday living through the development of modern conveniences.

Automobiles replaced buggies, electric lights made coal-oil and gas lights obsolete, central steam heat or a stoker furnace was a dream when compared to wood fireplaces, coal grates and warm morning heaters, and running water installed in kitchens and indoor bathrooms replaced the water bucket and trips down the garden walk to the outdoor convenience.

Rapid growth of new transportation systems created a large number of new neighborhoods. Most of the houses constructed during this era exist today though many people take them for granted and attribute little historical or architectural value to them.

Fortunately this attitude is changing. Homes built three quarters of a century ago are becoming recognized as unique architectural and cultural gifts from the Progressive Era. The loss of some of these landmarks by wanton wrecking and fire has also made the public more aware of their value.

Living conditions were far from ideal at the turn of the century. Drinking water was polluted - Hopkinsville's city water system was a mere five years old at century's turn;

a local waste disposal system was non-existent; business district streets were macadamized, residential streets were dirt; and there was no system of garbage collection. Public concern for sanitation caused municipalities to establish street cleaning departments, water treatment plants and waste disposal systems - all were a growing concern during the reform era.

Thus, the early 20th Century neighborhood was the product of social change, scientific advances, population growth and urban reforms. The resulting homes, differing radically from 19th Century styles, led the way to modern subdivisions and the generation of great interest in a variation of styles. As buildings attest to the vision and good sense of the builders, these structures reflect traditions of their age and contribute great enrichment to our heritage.

The early 20th Century brought new architectural fashions influenced by economic opportunity and changes in taste. Trend setters followed several avenues of interest. Many people were attracted to the romantic appeal of other cultures or felt a nostalgia for the 18th Century. A variety of Revival styles were inspired by our Colonial, English and Spanish heritage.

Others, however, thought the new age deserved new architecture designed specifically for the modern world. They created what some call Progressive architecture - an emphasis on practicality, simplicity and a mixture of building materials. The Revival and Progressive movements influenced each other and

shared common ideas. Simplicity was now considered fashionable.

Home styles cannot be classified as easily as automobile brands. Although well-known architects designed pure examples of the different fashionable styles of the period, local architects, contractors and owner-builders freely mixed styles with a fine disregard for consistency.

As we drive the streets of Hopkinsville, at least six distinct styles of home construction between 1900 and 1930 are obvious. They are principally located on East Seventh, South Walnut, South Main, Virginia, Campbell, Alumni Avenue and Hopper Court.

The Queen Anne style is represented by three selected examples. Influenced by the elaborate styling of early 18th Century England the E. M. Blackford home at 706 East Seventh features gable windows, roughcut stone lintels, and elaborate styling in the porch framing. This streamlined version of the Queen Anne style was constructed in 1905 by Mrs. Elizabeth Stites and was for many years the home of her daughter "Miss Sue" and her son, local attorney John Stites.

An earlier version of the Queen Anne period is the Doris Chewning home on South Main. Of frame construction in a more simple fashion, it was built in 1894 for Thomas W. Long, Cashier of the First National Bank. Later occupants included A. H. Eckles, E. C. Radford, Tom Johnson and his sister, Mrs. Ella Cayce.

The last chosen example of this period is the Ramsey Morris

home located on the Russellville Road opposite Western State Hospital. Of brick construction with porch posts of cast concrete, this landmark was built by the occupant's great - grandfather J. M. Morris, a dairyman, in 1910. Name and date stones are very unusual in local home construction.

The Colonial or Georgian Revival style originated in the late Victorian period as the United States staged the Centennial Exhibition. This fair featured a colonial kitchen along with other exhibits of early American life which sparked interest in colonial architecture. Abandoning the dark rich colors of the late Victorian period, these revival houses were painted white, cream, yellow or gray with lavish amounts of white trim. Small-paned windows, a fanlight over the front door, columns and Palladian windows characterize this style.

Six local examples of this period are considered in this observation. The Gene Sisk home at 2015 South Main was named "The White House" by its best remembered occupant, the Confederate veteran and farmer in the Rich community, Edwin D. "Wildcat Ed" Jones. Dr. Almus H. Edwards, ear, eye, nose and throat physician had this classic columned Georgian Revival built circa 1905.

Herbert Lee McPherson built its West 15th Street counterpart in 1914 to replace the historic Greek Revival McPherson home which was destroyed by fire the same year. McPherson, a Cashier of the Bank of Hopkinsville served for years as the

manager of Union Tabernacle and billed his name as "H. Lyceum McPherson." In later years this home was owned by Bethel College and served as the President's Home. Ben Moss is the present owner.

The Buford Todd home at 2108 South Main was built by William J. Glover in 1915 and represents another version of the Georgian Revival - the off-center entryway and hall. Glover's son operated the well remembered Glover-Williamson Men's Clothing Store on South Main for years. Mrs. Buford Todd Sr. resides in this home today.

Lucian M. Cayce, a Delker buggy salesman, and later the "red tie Mayor" of Hopkinsville built this excellent example of the style on South Virginia opposite the old Pennyroyal Fair Grounds in 1920. The cost was reported at \$50,000. It has been the home of the Trimble family since 1926.

The originator of Kentucky strip coal mining, Sterling S. Lanier Jr. built the Earl Calhoun home at 2117 South Main in 1923. A beloved member of the Athenaeum Society, Mr. Lanier had several homes of the periods considered built in Hopkinsville. The Walker Wood family later resided here and it served as the home for rectors of Grace Episcopal Church.

The last home of this style is Fairlelond. Local contractor Lee Oldham built this East Seventh Street landmark for R. M. Fairleigh Sr. in 1926 at a cost of \$13,000. This two-story stucco house features New Orleans style lattiswork embellishing

the small portico and the side porch. A night time skyline view across Hopkinsville from this picturesque spot is a sight not soon forgotten.

American Colonial or Georgian Revival was the most popular house style for more than thirty years.

Another style represented locally, the Spanish Colonial, is easily distinguished by its tile roof, arched doors and windows and low profile. The best known example of the Spanish Revival is the Alumni Avenue home of Wayne and Betty June Bassett Clark. Built by her grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Frank H. Bassett in 1915 - 1916, the home was designed by local architect John T. Waller. Contractors Meacham and Hall built the house for \$12,000. The 25¢ per brick home features a green tile roof manufactured in Georgia and Rockwood Pottery tile hearths. Dr. Bassett was Mayor of Hopkinsville when the home was built.

An extremely popular house style from about 1900 to 1930 is the American Foursquare. The basic characteristic is an unpretentious rectangle or square, with a hipped roof, heavy eaves, a full porch across the front and large dormer windows. As a pattern book house, the American Foursquare was highly adaptable. Constructed of differing building materials - shingle, clapboard, concrete block, brick or stucco were utilized.

Of the periods considered in this presentation, the American Foursquare is the most prolific locally. Seven examples are considered outstanding.

Dr. F. M. Brown built the Gary Haddock home at 143 Alumni Avenue, the first one constructed on the street, in 1905. Of red brick and stucco construction, the Haddocks added the blue color scheme.

The same year Elizabeth Henry's house was built at 719 East Seventh. Fine stonework masonry is evident in this structure and demonstrates the ability of local stonemason Lucian H. Davis, brother-in-law of brickmakers, the Dalton brothers. Davis built the house as his personal residence, but its longest resident was the Hugo Hisgen family.

Just across the street, the W. D. Cooper residence represents a slight variation on this turn-of-the-century theme with its Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie Style straight line characteristic. 802 East Seventh was built by Cooper, a local tobacconist, in 1911, and it was long occupied by the Al C. Rutland Sr. family. John D. Henry is the present owner.

George E. Gary, President of the Mogul Wagon Company and Vice-President of the Forbes Manufacturing Co., built the Louis Ellis home, 1741 South Main, in 1914. This Bowling Green stone, red tile roof painted green, landmark features a beautifully decorated interior. Louis Ellis bought the home in 1929 for \$16,000. A highly recognized businessman, Mr. Ellis was owner of Ellis Ice & Coal Co. and he was President of the Melton-Ellis Motor Co., the Studebaker dealer.

A weatherboarded-wood shingle version of the American Four-square is the Phil Chappell home at 1808 Hopper Court. The late

K. O. Cayce Sr. had this house built in 1914 at a cost of \$3,290. The architectural firm of Waller & Brodie designed the house and the contractor was E. J. Roper. This landmark bears the significance of being the birthplace of our Athenaeum President, Kenneth Cayce Jr.

Locally the use of brick was most common in building the American Foursquare. Two late examples are the E. H. Higgins home on East Seventh and the Franklin-Bogard house which stood at 614 East Ninth next to Virginia Park. Druggist Higgins and department store owner Hyman Franklin had their homes built in 1915. The popular porte-cochere, an automobile era adaptation of the old carriage entrance, was incorporated into both structures. Mrs. John Higgins occupies the Higgins house now. Franklin sold his home to Mrs. Edward Bogard and this landmark was torn down in 1961.

The last definitive style of the period is the bungalow. This term is derived from Bengali, meaning a dwelling of that region of India. Bungalows are one or one and a half-story dwellings with horizontal lines, wide eaves and a low pitched roof, often featuring low wide dormers. Porches with heavy posts are an extension of the living space. The house was designed to have a close relationship with the outdoors and was built of natural materials such as stained brown shingles.

A Hopkinsville example of this material and color is the Rob Embry home at 1805 Hopper Court. It was constructed in 1911 soon after the front lawn of the old E. H. Hopper residence

on East 18th Street was divided into building lots. The house was built for Edward S. Long, a partner in Elgin Cigar Co. and later occupants included Allan C. Choate, manager of the Kentucky Public Service Co., Herbert F. McConnell, manager of the W. R. Dorris & Co. Tobacco Warehouse, and the Embry family who have lived here for over sixty-five years.

Although some well-known architects designed bungalows, inexpensive plans were available from pattern books and magazines. The bungalow as a basic building type was interpreted in various styles. Thus they were built in many different configurations.

The Swiss Chalet influence is evident in the Tandy Cottage at 1603 South Virginia. Constructed in the garden of Mrs. E. M. Flack's home on South Main in 1908, this landmark is the survivor of a duplicate pair which stood on the southwest corner of 16th Street and South Virginia. W. T. Tandy, President of the City Bank at the time these houses were built, utilized these places as rental property - thus duplicating the three Latham Cottages built on Campbell Street in 1889 and the three Forbes Cottages built on Clay Street in 1890. Mrs. Olivia Moss owns the Tandy Cottage today.

Japanese flavor is revealed in the bungalow built by Thomas W. Long in Hopper Court in 1910. The cashier at First National Bank, Mr. Long incorporated wide eaves, dormer windows, and a deep porch, all strong bungalow characteristics.

A Hopkinsville grocer and one-time Buick dealer W. R. Wheeler, had a Craftsman influenced bungalow constructed at 124 Alumni Avenue in 1922. The exposed beams beneath overhanging eaves of this structure mark the craftsman's individual taste and ability. The home is now owned by Miss Sarah Gardner.

The Colonial Revival impression is evident in the Maddux home at 2213 South Virginia. Built in 1924 by George W. Cavanah, a tobacconist with L. B. Cornette, the house features leaded glass, and handsome columned porch, and a wood trim color scheme which enhances the brick. J. W. Maddux, operator of Hopkinsville's first gasoline station, Sudden Service, located at 12th and Main, resided here for many years. The family of Larry Moore occupy the home now.

Several Hopkinsville homes built between 1900 and 1930 portray a most interesting combination of styles though they are indefinable relative to a specific classification. They represent elements of pure styles combined to make their own personality.

The First Methodist Church built a two story brick ten room parsonage at the corner of 12th and Campbell Streets in 1902. The cost was \$3,640. Tradition relates the congregation's use of the parsonage rest room on Sunday, then located directly behind the Ninth and Clay Streets church, prompted construction a greater distance from the church. Serving as a parsonage for

twenty-five years, the landmark was subsequently used as a rooming house and then was divided into apartments. Vacant for a number of years, the house was partially destroyed by fire on October 10 of this year. It now stands awaiting the wreckers tools.

"Hilltop," the East Seventh Street home of the Yost family for fifty-five years is another interesting eclectic example. Built in 1908 by Frank K. Yost, Mayor of Hopkinsville and President of Hopkinsville Milling Co., the house was designed by architect John T. Waller. Forbes Manufacturing Co. was the contractor and it cost \$6,454.40. The house features red sandstone veneering on the first floor with wood shingles covering the second. Three front gables highlight the main facade.

The Joseph Schneider home at 2205 South Main not only represents an interesting appearance, it has been the scene of some of Hopkinsville's most gala social occasions. It was built in 1914 by Mrs. Louise Jones Peterson, wealthy daughter of Lucian Jones, founder and first president of the City Bank. Her husband Erich G. Peterson opened the first local Cadillac agency here in 1912. Later occupants of this home were J. M. Forbes, Billy Anderson, Dr. Jack Harned, and Mayor Dutch Lackey. A grand party was given here by Billy Anderson the night radio station WFIW went "on-the-air," in February, 1927. Kentucky Governor William J. Fields was present and the event reportedly lasted until dawn.

The widow Peterson married Rodman Meacham, local stone contractor, and they built the handsome Ross Morgan home at 2104 South Main in 1923.

Mrs. Mary Wilkins Perry built the last eclectic version considered in this observation. John T. Waller was the architect and Roy Lile the contractor for the place called "Marymont." Located on South Virginia, this home, built in 1931, was later owned by Dr. Harvey Stone and is now occupied by Bill Deatherage Jr. Mrs. Perry and her mother operated the "Marymont" Needlecraft Shop located in this rustic cabin on the lawn during the 1930's. The logs came from a pen barn on the Dawson Road farm of the late sheriff Pat H. Major.

The early 20th Century neighborhood developed as the unique result of modern technology, changing lifestyles and new architectural fashions. The forces and times that produced these neighborhoods are now gone. For those who take the time to look, these old landmarks provide a wide variety of visual links with the past. These homes are indeed a valuable addition to America's rich architectural heritage, deserving serious recognition. DO NOT PASS THEM BY!

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Christian County Clerk's Office, Hopkinsville, Kentucky,
Deed Books

Hopkinsville, Kentucky - City Directories: 1897, 1899, 1907,
1910, 1912, 1914, 1916, 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1930

Interviews:

Miss Marion Adams
Frank H. Bassett Jr.
Kenneth O. Cayce Jr.
Robert M. Fairleigh Jr.
Kit Garrett, Director, Pride Inc.
Mrs. Robert Gaines
Al C. Rutland Sr.
Mrs. John Starnes
Mrs. Buford Todd Sr.
Mrs. W. R. Wicks
Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Yost