

Albemarle Hotel
197 N. Second St.

At its completion in 1923, the Albemarle Hotel boasted 60 rooms, all of which had telephone service and at least a half bath. The first floor accommodated a ballroom, a dining room, and a spacious lobby. The hotel, led by owner W.C. Fitzgerald, replaced the old Central Hotel as the town's center for social activities and civic club meetings.



11

First Presbyterian Church
126 W. North St.

The Presbyterian Church was organized in 1898 at the Masonic Hall that was located on the corner of South First and West Main Streets. By 1900 the Presbyterians erected a Victorian style sanctuary (pictured) on the corner of North First and West North Streets, diagonally across from its current location. The present structure was built in 1924 in restrained Beaux Arts style.



12

Cabarrus Bank and Trust Building
160 W. Main St.

The Cabarrus Bank and Trust Company was founded in Concord, North Carolina in 1897 to serve the needs of the Cannon Mills Textile Corporation and its employees. A branch of the bank was opened in Albemarle in September of 1899. Its third location, on the corner of West Main and North First Streets, was completed in 1927. Following the bank's closing, its iconic corner clock was removed and remounted in Courthouse Square Park.



13

Maralise Hotel
213 W. Main St.

The Maralise Hotel, operated by Alice Mabry, was completed in 1908. The building had a porch for every floor, the largest modern indoor plumbing system in town, and as far as is known the 28 room hotel contained the town's first plumbed bathtubs. The hotel's restaurant became one of the most popular in town due to its proximity to the railroad station. The hotel closed in 1965 and was demolished in 1968. The site is now public parking.



14

Masonic Lodges, Fitzgerald Building
151 W. Main St.

Prior to the construction of the Fitzgerald Building on this site, the Freemasons had erected a Masonic Lodge by 1894. In 1901 a second, two-story Masonic Lodge was constructed here and became a center for social activities. That building was destroyed by fire in the early morning hours of 27 November 1901, less than nine months after its completion. Built in 1927, the Fitzgerald Building housed Rose's 5-10-25c store until the last quarter of the 20th century. The building's second story was utilized by the Tar Heel Club, an exclusive social club that maintained offices, lounges, a ballroom, and its own orchestra from the 1920s until World War II. Reputedly, the Club was able to offer "medicinal" spirits to its members during Prohibition.



15

Smith-Biles Building and Starnes-Parker Building/Opera House
119, 127, 133 West Main St.

In 1905 R.L. Smith and A.F. Biles constructed the two and a half story commercial building shown on the left in the picture. Their first tenant was P.J. Huneycutt, a furniture maker and undertaker. In 1933 Belk Department Store moved into the building and remained there for many years. The Starnes-Parker building shown on the right in the picture was completed in 1908 by F.E. Starnes, D.F. Parker, and J. C. Parker. Starnes Jewelry Store, founded in 1898 (making it the oldest retail business in Stanly County) was located in several other places in town before moving to this site. An Opera House was located on the second floor of the building and was host to hundreds of lectures, revivals, theatre productions, musical performances, and several early motion pictures. The theatre was largely abandoned as a performance venue upon the completion of the Alameda Theatre in 1916. During the Great Influenza Epidemic of 1917-1918 a passageway was cut from the Smith-Biles Building into the eastern wall of the Starnes-Parker building so P.J. Huneycutt could store his supply of coffins and caskets in the Opera House.



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Ogden and Elizabeth King House
200 S. Second St.

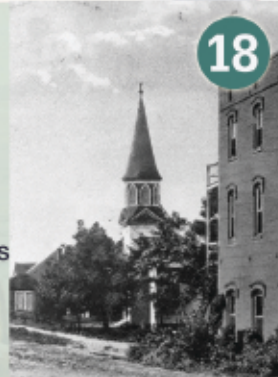
Originally this was a small frame house probably built by Ebenezer Heame in 1850. Ogden King significantly expanded the house after his marriage to Ebenezer's granddaughter, Elizabeth Heame. King was a successful physician from eastern North Carolina and prospered via his medical practice as well as through lucrative land speculation and commercial development deals in Albemarle following the arrival of the railroad and textile industry.



17

First Lutheran Church
230 S. Second St.

The First Lutheran Church was established in 1880. The first sanctuary (pictured), a white frame building, was constructed in 1881 on South First Street near the intersection with King Avenue. At the sanctuary's dedication, it is told, the church's floor collapsed either "under the weight of the crowd or a loose nail," causing a stampede toward the church's front doors. Several congregants made their escape via the structure's lancet windows. The present sanctuary was constructed in 1908 in the Gothic Revival style and was the first brick sanctuary completed in Albemarle.



18

Morrow Brothers and Heath Co. Store
115 W. South St.

This building was the first brick commercial building in Albemarle. Three businesses, led by men from Cabarrus County, opened here when the building was completed in early 1892. Morrow Brothers and Heath took over the building in early 1897. That company moved into larger quarters on the northwest corner of West Main and North First Street in 1903. Following Morrow Brothers and Heath's tenure, the building was used by other businesses, most notably the Coca-Cola Bottling Company and Southern Dairies. Parts of the original building are no longer standing.



19

Freeman Hotel and Stagecoach Stop, Central Hotel, Stanly County Courthouse, Bivens Cabinet Shop
201 S. Second St.

From 1847 until 1899 the Freeman Hotel was situated on this site. The hotel, built by Daniel Freeman, was a two-story building with a high pitched roof and a large covered porch and balcony supported by four fluted columns. The hotel, and most of the block between East Main Street and South Second Street, burned in a great fire in December of 1899. The hotel was rebuilt in brick in 1900. It was renamed the Central Hotel (pictured), and regained much of its importance in town as a social venue. The hotel was demolished in 1967 to make way for the current courthouse. The current Stanly County Courthouse was completed in 1972. It contains several subterranean vaults for public records and a tunnel running between it and the county jail used to transport prisoners to court safely. At one time J.M. Bivens' Cabinet Shop was situated just south of the hotel. A jack of all trades, J.M. Bivens was a prolific blacksmith, wagon maker, and furniture maker from about 1860 until the 1880s. Later, his son, J.D. Bivens, opened a print shop in his father's former workshop and began his long career in the newspaper industry in Stanly County.



20

Albemarle Telephone Exchange and Brown, Brown, & Brown
101 S. Second St.

This building was constructed in 1898 by the Morrow Brothers and Heath Company. At one time the second floor housed an office and exchange relay for the Albemarle Telephone Company. The wire insulators can still be seen on the Main Street side of the building. One of the original town wells, once located in the round-about surrounding the first courthouse, is now part of the building's foundation. The building has housed a number of tenants including a drugstore, a cafe, a boarding house, and a bank. After having been in several other locations, the Brown family law firm, the oldest business in Stanly County, has occupied the building since 1957.



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1 MILE Historical Walking Tour of **DOWNTOWN ALBEMARLE**

In 1841 Montgomery County west of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River was partitioned to create Stanly County. The split was largely due to the western citizenry's difficulty in traveling to court on the east side of the river. Following Stanly County's creation, Nancy Almond Hearne, widow of Nehemiah Heame, and her children donated 50 acres for a new county seat. The new county seat of Albemarle was established in 1842 and later incorporated in 1857. Stanly County was named for eminent (and sometimes controversial) statesman John Stanly of New Bern. Albemarle was named for Albemarle County, once located in the northeast corner of the state.

Albemarle's original six blocks were centered on a public square located at the intersection of Main Street and Second Street. The town boundary went from First to Fourth Street and from North to South Street.

Many of the historic sites visited on this walk have changed over time. Some of the buildings are gone. Some have been replaced with more modern structures, and some have been torn down and not replaced. Albemarle has experienced much change over time, but the heart of our community remains the same.



Additional Support Provided by
Stanly County Department of Public Health
Stanly County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Vac and Dash

KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY BY FREQUENTLY ENJOYING THIS ONE MILE WALK.

Stanly County Museum
Founded 1971, 245 E. Main St.

The Museum is currently located on the eastern-most edge of the old town and borders the old Town Creek Ford (the modern 'Five-Points') and the River Road (Pee Dee Avenue) which led to several ferry crossings on the Yadkin-Pee Dee River.

Freeman-Marks House
Built ca. 1835

Located next to the Museum

The Freeman-Marks House is the oldest structure within the original town limits of Albemarle. The house is a two-room 'hall and parlor' dwelling constructed in the Federal style of architecture popular around the turn of the 19th century. Daniel Freeman constructed the home on his farm about a mile outside of town on the River Road (Pee Dee Avenue). About 1847 he moved this home into town. The house was used as a general store, law office, and doctor's office until purchased by Whitson Marks in 1884. The Marks family lived in the home until they constructed a boarding house in 1906. From 1906 until the 1960s the house was a rental property. The structure was donated to the Museum by the Marks family in 1975 and moved to its current location.

Isaiah & Ellen Snuggs House
Built 1852, 112 N. Third St.

The Snuggs house is thought to have been built by merchant John O. Ross and was a one-story, two room log cabin constructed on a traditional hall and parlor plan. About 1865, Ross sold the cabin to Lafayette Greene, a merchant, lawyer, and state legislator. It is believed Greene may have attached the house's detached kitchen to its southern wall. He later used it as his law office. In 1873 Greene sold the house to Isaiah Wilson Snuggs, a Civil War veteran and saddler who had recently relocated to Albemarle from the Norwood area. Snuggs married Ellen Milton in 1874, and about 1880 he began to enlarge the house by adding a second story and new kitchen. As Sheriff in 1892, Snuggs hid several prisoners from the County jail on his back porch while a mob, intent on lynching Alec Whitley, surrounded the jail across the street. Snuggs served the county in various roles until his death in 1904.

Stanly County Public Library, site of two former County Jails
133 E. Main St.

The first public library was established in the Albemarle Community Building on Second Street in 1916. It was initially funded by the Albemarle Women's Club, private donations, and later the town of Albemarle. In 1927 the Library became a joint City-County effort and was relocated into larger quarters in the Hotel Albemarle. In 1939 the Library moved into a handsome slate-stone building erected by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) at the current site of Courthouse Square Park. The current Library, dedicated in 1972, is situated on the site of the County's second and third jails. The second jail (also called the gaol or calaboose) was a log structure chinked with mud. It was this jail, that a mob of citizens broke into and scurried alleged murderer Alex Whitley off to the edge of town to be lynched on 9 June 1892. The circumstances drawing the large crowd pictured in front of the third jail are unknown.

Former Public Square
Intersection of Main/Second St.

Following Stanly County's founding in January 1841, the County's first commissioners ordered a new town surveyed to serve as County Seat. In 1842, after much debate and two lawsuits, the new town, called Albemarle, was established on the crest of a ridge line southeast of Little Long Creek. A public square, measuring 100 yards on each side, was laid out at the center of town. The pictured two-story, east-facing courthouse was erected at its center. In order to "improve" traffic flow, the courthouse was moved to the northwest corner of the Square in 1868.

Above sketch of Stanly County's original courthouse, by local artist Joyce Lambert.

Site of first Jail, County's second Courthouse, Courthouse Square Park
Corner of Main/Second St.

By 1843 this northeast corner quadrant of the town square contained the County's first log jail, whipping post, and stocks. Though used infrequently, whippings and public shaming continued on this site until after the Civil War. In 1893 Stanly County's second courthouse (pictured), a tall, two-story, Victorian-styled building with a cupola was constructed on this site. Courthouse Square Park, once a part of the public lands surrounding the first courthouse, was established after the demolition of the second courthouse.



John Ross House, Alameda Theatre
147 N. Second St.

Prior to the construction of the theatre, John Odom and Mary Kirk Ross's home was located here. Ross was a leading merchant and citizen in Albemarle during and after the Civil War. The Alameda Theatre, owned by M.F. Little, was originally managed by A.B. Thompson and later by Eben Hearme. Built in 1916, it was the first modern movie theatre in Albemarle. Its construction heralded the end of stage productions and movies at the Opera House and the beginning of silver-screen celebrities and "talkies."

Central United Methodist Church
172 N. Second St.

Methodist services have been held on this site since at least 1852, making Central United Methodist Church the oldest church in Albemarle. In 1852 and 1853 Daniel Freeman donated the land to the trustees of the Church. Originally constructed of exposed logs, the Church, along with the Courthouse and Freeman Hotel, was the center of the town's community life and hosted a variety of community events. The Church was the initial meeting place of the County's Freemasons (Pee Dee Lodge, established in 1852, and Stanly Lodge, established in 1875) and the local Division of the Sons of Temperance, also established in 1852. The Church was rebuilt as a 1½ storied frame structure about 1882 (pictured). The construction of the current Church building, built in the Gothic Revival style, was begun in 1908.

Russell's Grog Shop, Austin's Harness Shop, Pennington's Chinese Laundry
192 N. Second St.

G.W. Russell operated a grog shop, or saloon, on this site from the early 1850s until the late nineteenth century. In 1852 Russell sold his saloon to the Sons of Temperance, so long as they used the building as a Temperance Hall. Russell likely moved his saloon into larger quarters on the same property. Russell recovered his property once the Temperance Society failed during or shortly after the Civil War. Russell ran one of two saloons in Albemarle; the other was operated on South Second Street by Isaac Biles and later by Kearn Howell. In 1905 Noah Pennington purchased Russell's former saloon building that had been used by Sidney Austin as a harness and shoe shop for many years. Pennington eventually opened a "Chinese" Laundry. He hired Lum Lee, presumably a native of China, to assist him. Pennington was also responsible for lighting the town's oil streetlamps into the 1900s.

First Baptist Church
202 N. Second St.

The Baptist Church was formed in 1888 and met in a Victorian-style sanctuary (pictured) located on the corner of North Third and East North Street. The first church was noted for its extraordinarily tall spire which on occasion swayed unsteadily in the wind. One January night strong winds "decapitated" the church sending the spire crashing into the vacant street below. Construction on the current Beaux Arts style sanctuary began in 1916 during World War I.

