



Camden Historic Tour

Proudly presented by:
The Camden Archives
and
Camden Comeback

2022 Edition

A Message from the Mayor

I grew up in Camden. But it wasn't until my involvement with the Bicentennial Celebration in 2018 that I began to unearth its trove of fascinating history.

Among some of my favorite childhood memories were the huge, hand-dipped ice cream cones at Harvey's Restaurant (#30)—the orange sherbet was my favorite! I can still hear the snap of the screen door shutting behind me and the old wooden floorboards creaking beneath my feet as I stepped into Jeffries Market (#20). I always left with a smile on my face and a little brown paper sack bulging with penny candy and a foot-long rope of apple, grape or cherry bubble gum.

Back in the day, after our little league softball games, win or lose—our team would load up in the back of Coach Bowling's pickup and head to the Ark (#10) for a free ice cream cone! Okay, maybe we are talking more about my sweet tooth and the impetus for bringing a dentist to Camden, but my point is that I have many fond memories of growing up in Camden!

While I was getting a brain freeze and cavities from eating all that ice cream and candy, I had no clue that Camden was once home to a grand theater (#37), or that President William Howard Taft delivered a campaign speech from the back of his train at the Camden station in 1912 (#26), and that concrete "practice bombs" were manufactured right here at the Neff and Fry Company (#24) during WWII. Wow!

These are just a few of the enticing snippets of Camden's rich history--and I haven't even mentioned all the eerie tales of Camden's haunted past!

Whether you're a hometown soul or just passing through, I'm confident you'll have a new appreciation for Camden, Ohio, after this tour.

Enjoy the history, the walk, and learn something new!

Karen Moss, Mayor of Camden from 2020-2022

Camden, Ohio

P.S. Want to learn more about Camden's intriguing history? Be sure to visit the Camden Archives inside the Town Hall.

“The Village of Camden...is tastefully laid out and presents a neat and attractive appearance. The streets are broad, cleanly and well shaded, and the residences which flank them are generally thrifty, comfortable, home-like looking places.”

Excerpt from *Index to 1798 History of Preble County, Ohio*,
H.Z. Williams & Bro. Publishers, 1881

The tour is approximately 1.5 miles on flat terrain. Allow one hour to complete the tour at a leisurely pace. Walk at your own risk. Some areas of the tour do not have crosswalks, and have uneven or missing sidewalks.

“Few villages present so little of the unsightly as Camden. It is a community in which good order prevails, and in which the better class of morals form the dominant power. As the center of trade for a large, highly improved section of the country in which the farmers are nearly all well-to-do, Camden has a larger share of retail business than generally falls to the lot of villages similar in size. Although it has seen better days, there are many material evidences of prosperity in the Camden of today, and it is a prosperity which flows from the best possible sources - that is the measured success of the many rather than the large gains of a few individuals, companies or corporations. The village is not dependent upon any one, or two, or three manufacturing enterprises, and therefore cannot be bereft of its prosperity by any sudden disaster. It felt, several years ago, the benefit that accrued from heavy mechanical industries and found out how swiftly financial ruin could sweep away and destroy their usefulness. At present it has the steady, safe, certain sustentation which arises from the patronage of a rich farming country, and as no combination of circumstances can divert this trade which is the chief support of the village, it can make no backward step, but on the contrary, must slowly gain in good condition.

...One who alights from the train, and tarries for a time in the little capital of Somers township, cannot fail to be impressed with its decidedly superior attractions. Looking down upon the little cluster of houses, and churches, and stores from the hill top, one may very naturally imagine one's self nearing the ideal village, and fancy that under the shade of the maples and locusts that shade the streets and half conceal the houses, the current of the river of life must flow onward very smoothly and quietly. The location of Camden was wisely made. It occupies one of those spots which seem intended by nature for the abiding place of man, and which, in addition to all of the elements of practical and material advantage, has the crowing one of beauty. This village of the valley is a gem in appropriate setting.

Camden was laid out in the year 1818, the town plat being acknowledged before Squire Isaac Stephens on July 4th, of that year, under the name of Dover. William Moore, one of the early pioneers of Somers township, may be regarded as the founder of the town. He laid out the greater part of the plat, the lots west of Main Street, while Isaac Sutton laid out those of the east side. And James Black the northern portion.

Additions have been made by Felix Marsh, esq., Samuel Pottenger, and others. The name of Dover proving unsatisfactory to the people of the village, it was changed to Newcomb, in honor of George Newcomb, of Montgomery County, who was a state senator from the district which is composed in part by Preble County. His name is uniformly spelled in the records without a final "b", but the name of the village has always been spelled with one. In 1835, the name of Newcomb was exchanged for that of Camden, which was bestowed as a sort of memorial of Camden, South Carolina, where the Revolutionary battle was fought.”

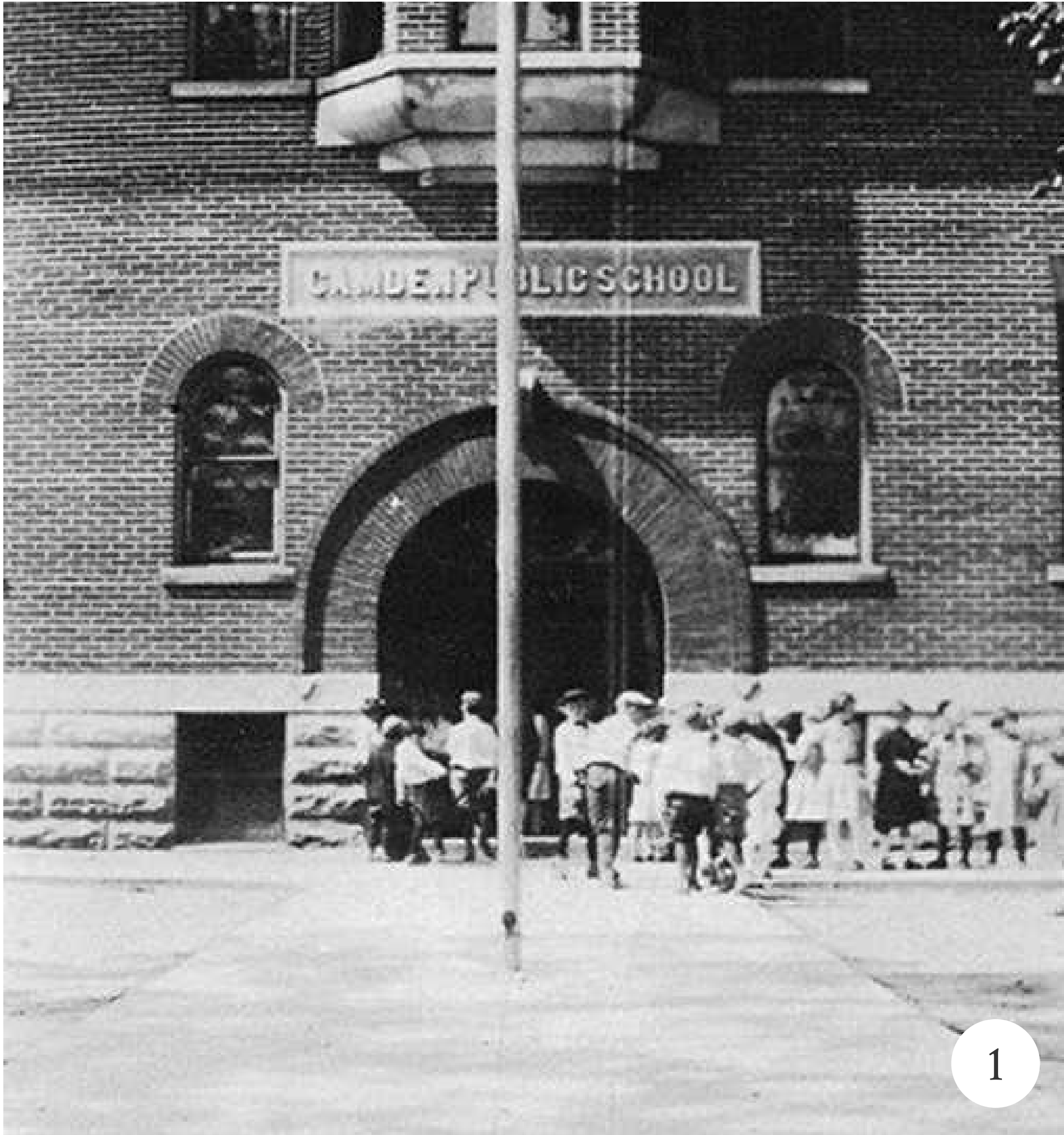
Excerpt from Index to 1798 History of Preble County, Ohio, H.Z. Williams & Bro. Publishers, 1881

We hope you have enjoyed the Camden Historic Tour! We've attempted to be as complete and accurate as possible; however, if you have any additional information, or questions or feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Please email CamdenComeback45311@gmail.com.

Camden Comeback is an organization formed in 2019 after dissolution of the Camden Bicentennial Committee. Its mission is to make the community of Camden an even better place to live. Please email CamdenComeback45311@gmail.com if you'd like to serve on the committee.

Special thanks to all of the Camden Archives volunteers (both past and present) who have given countless hours of their time archiving the rich history of Camden. Without their dedication, much of the information presented on this tour would have been lost. Thanks also to Mackenzie and Alex Steele for their work on this project. They are carrying on the legacy of their great-great grandfather, Thomas Donohoe, and their grandmother, Joy Rhoden, who were dedicated to making Camden a great place to live.

Begin tour at the intersection of W. Central Ave. and N. Lafayette St. (in front of the church). Look west across N. Lafayette St.



1. Camden Public School

N. Lafayette St. just north of Bicentennial Park; currently site of a senior living center

- Constructed in 1904 at a cost of \$15,000 and was used as a school until June 1983
- In 1915, Somers Township students were consolidated into the Camden Public School system; the influx of students required a new high school which was constructed on Bloomfield St. During construction of the school, classes were held at the Nonpareil Building which will be mentioned later on the tour

2. Original Camden Public School

NW corner of W. Central Ave. and N. Lafayette St.; school was located at current site of Bicentennial Park

- Constructed in 1853 at a cost of \$4,000 and was condemned in 1903
- This was Camden's first public school. First school in Camden was not a public school and was located in a log building on N. Main St.; second school was near current site of Depot Dairy Bar from 1830 to 1853



Photograph taken in the 1870s

Cross W. Central Ave. and continue walking south toward Camden United Methodist Church.



Photograph taken in 1900

3. The Woodbine Inn

The Woodbine Inn was located at current site of Camden Village Pharmacy

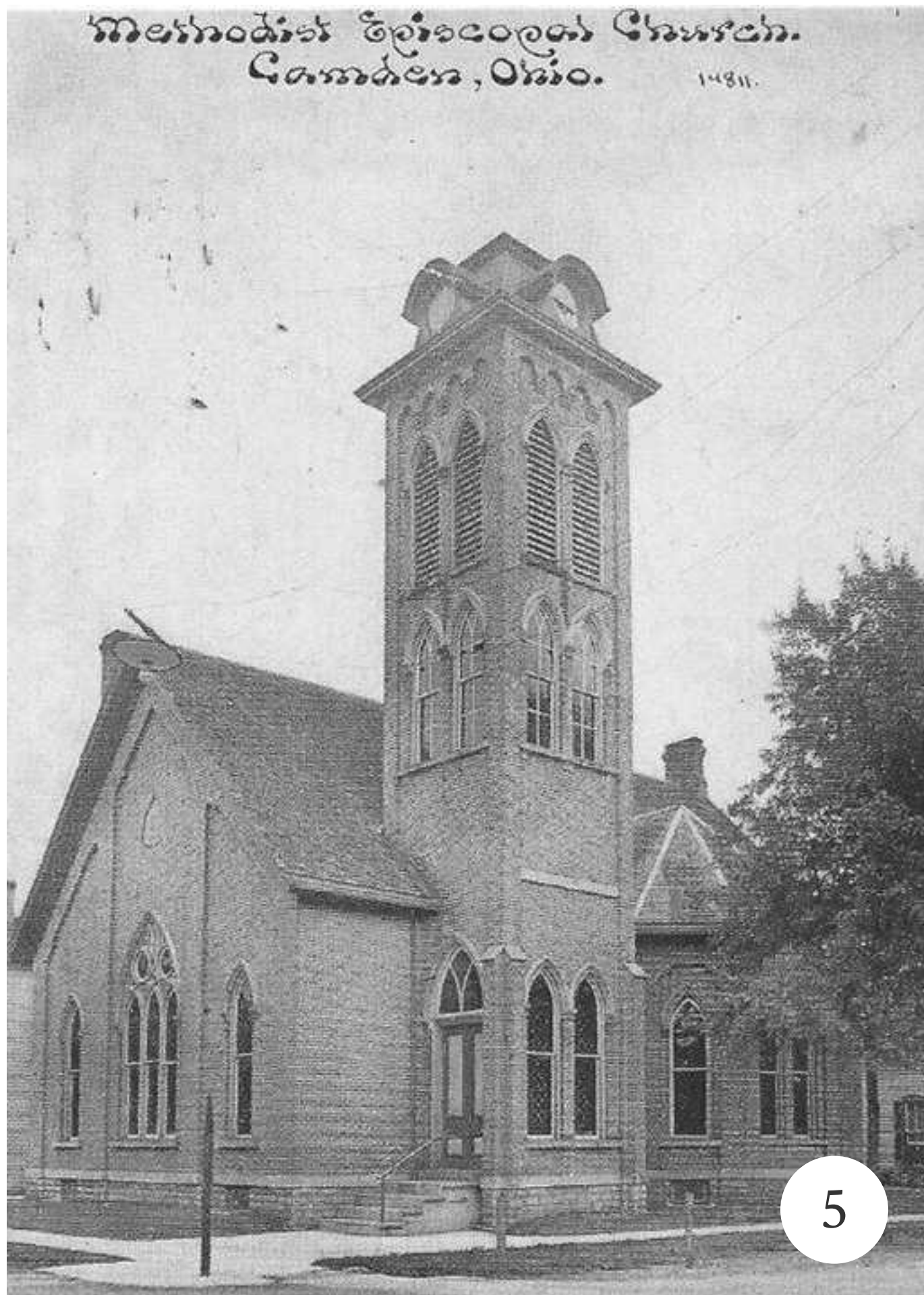
- Structure was moved twice before settling at this location and was demolished in 1984
- The Woodbine Inn was in operation from 1895-1942 and was an important hotel as it provided accommodations for many business traveling men who came into Camden by train. It was also a popular site for wedding receptions
- This location was also the site of Pottenger House (pre-1890), a bakery, Woodbine Apartments (1970s), and Wilma's Beauty Shop
- A Camden resident remembers that during WWII there was a bakery in the building that made flag cakes, packed them in real popcorn, and shipped them all over the U.S.

4. Camden & Somers Township Fire Department

SW corner of W. Central Ave. and S. Lafayette St.; now home to Camden-Somers Twp. Fire & EMS

- Constructed in 1969 using only volunteer labor
- In the 1860s, Camden's fire company consisted of 50 men who called themselves The Roarers; the firehouse was a rented shed behind 71 E. Central Ave. that housed their equipment for 50 cents per month. In 1867, an ordinance passed to construct an engine house, council room, and prison which led to the construction of the current town hall in 1889 and then housed the fire department until 1969





5. Methodist Episcopal Church

SE corner of W. Hendricks St. and S. Lafayette St.; currently The Dover (a community center)

- This is the third Methodist church at this site and this building was constructed in 1888 at a cost of \$1,500.
- The church moved to this location in 1836, and later built a church in 1851 at a cost of \$1,200
- The belfry was shortened sometime between 1933 and 1952 for an unknown reason
- The Methodist Church was the first church established in this area (even before the town was called Dover which later became Camden). The church was located on the hill just west of the cemetery on SR 725. The church closed its doors in 2020 and was converted to a community center in 2021. The Little Shoppe of Sharing, MedShip, and the law office of Ryan Agee are housed in the building

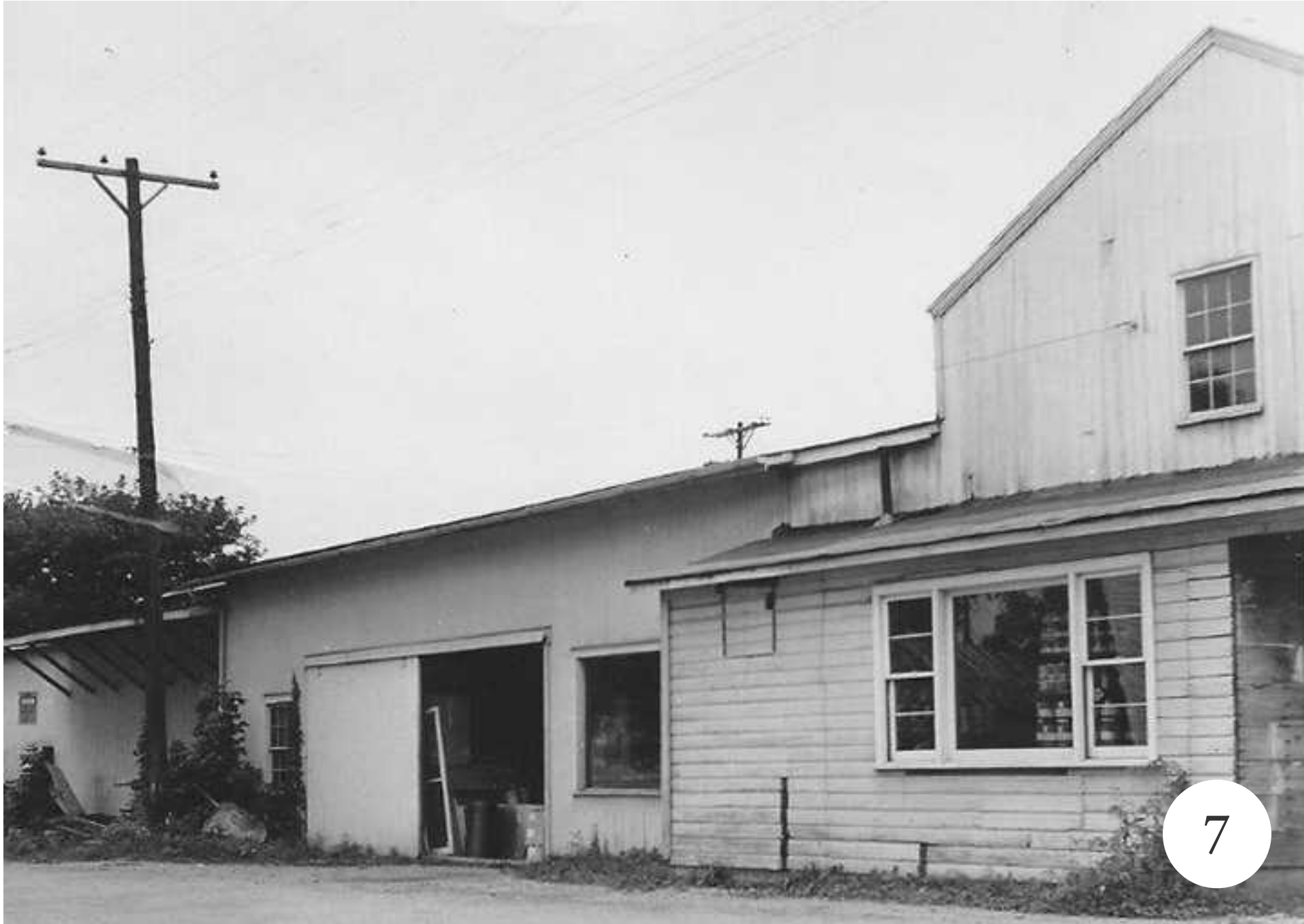
6. Sherwood Anderson's Boyhood Home

142 S. Lafayette St.; currently a residential site

- Sherwood Anderson was a famous author born in 1876 and lived in Camden until he was four years old. He wrote many novels. His most famous work is *Winesburg, Ohio*. There are printed accounts that Sherwood's family moved away because his father, Irwin, owed an outstanding debt for leather
- Note the rock with historical marker in front of the house



Photograph taken in 2018



Photograph taken in 1952

7. South Side Lumber Company *202 S. Lafayette St.; currently vacant*

- Founded in 1902 by R.T. Acton. In 1911, it was sold to Thomas Donohoe and operated by the Donohoe Family until 1969
- Arnold Barrett purchased the building and operated a pallet company at this site until 1994

8. Orville Wood's Radio Tower

The tower was located behind home at 225 S. Lafayette St.

- Orville Wood who owned Wood Oil Company constructed the 232-foot radio tower behind his home
- Mr. Wood was a junior in high school in 1921 when he got his first radio and was Camden's first ham radio operator. His first job was with Eikenberry Bros. Seed (east of the location where the library is currently located) where he used the radio to hear grain prices in Chicago. Later, Orville was licensed by the federal government to connect families to their loved ones in the military. The tower also enabled Orville to play chess with opponents overseas





9. South Side Service Station

*Intersection of S. Main St. and S. Lafayette St.;
currently site of VFW Post #1577*

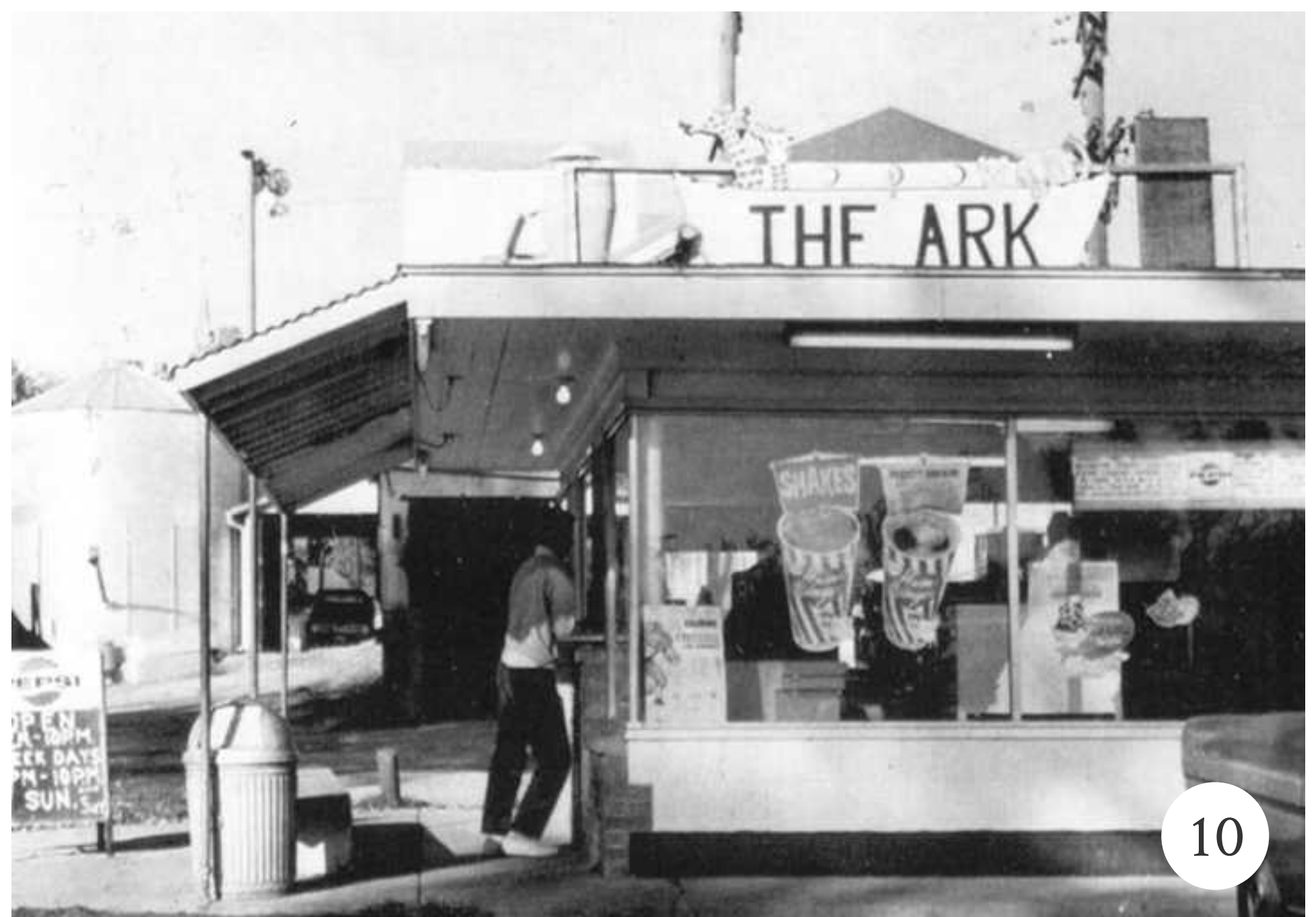
- John White built the first service station at this location in 1924. John's wife sold chicken dinners on Sunday evenings at this location
- The business was sold in 1946 and was operated by Ray O'Dell. In 1961, the business moved to the current site of BP

Circle around the VFW building and head north on S. Main St.

10. The Ark Dairy Bar

*230 S. Main St.; currently site of Camden
FISH food pantry*

- The Ark was owned by the Ark Family from 1966-1981
- The building was constructed in 1953 for George and Cora Deem as a restaurant, The Daisy Queen. The Deems later established The Hillside, a restaurant that was located where



Powerhouse is today. Many Camden citizens still remember their delicious coleslaw



Photograph taken in 1955

11. Cunningham Bros. Camden Mill

202 S. Main St.; currently site of Madden's Mobile Service

- Building constructed in 1850 as a pork packing business. This location was also the site of Jumbo Elevator and Buell's Mill
- Just north of the mill was the site of Camden's first Presbyterian Church. When the railroad came through town around 1850, its location made it hard for the congregation to hear, and many years later it relocated to its current location on N. Main St.

12. Neff & Fry Co. Headquarters

S. Main St. across from American Legion; currently vacant/condemned

- In 1916, Charles R. Neff and Murrel B. Fry, both rural mail carriers, became interested in silos, quit their jobs, and went into business together. Neff & Fry was incorporated in 1923 and manufactured interlocking cement stave silos, burial vaults, and cement storage bins. You will see some of their silos later on the tour. (You might have seen some of their concrete silos at the last stop.) We think at least two people died constructing the silos. Neff & Fry also made concrete practice bombs during WWII. (One of the bombs is on display outside of the mayor's office in the town hall.) There are unconfirmed rumors that they put dye inside the bombs so that the site of impact could be identified



Photograph taken in 1916 before construction of current building

- Before Neff & Fry, this was the site of a brick yard established in 1878



13. Preble County News Building *S. Main St.; currently residential site*

- Founded by W.E. McChristie in 1902 who published the paper from 1902-1908. He sold the paper to Earl Ervin in 1908. The last edition of the paper ran April 9, 1992
- Notice the black pole that held the Preble County News sign currently remains

14. U.S. Post Office & Camden Library

Masonic Temple Building at SE corner of E. Hendricks St. and S. Main St.; currently site of Camden Library and Camden Lodge #159

- Constructed in 1912 to house the lodge (which was founded in 1848 and had been housed in several locations prior to 1912. Jonathan Crowley was the first worshipful master of the Camden Lodge.)
- The post office was located in the north section of the first level from 1928-1958; library was located in the south section. From 1912-1927, the library had been located on the second level
- This was the former site of another structure - Preble House - which was also known as European Hotel and Danser House





Photograph taken in 2018

15. McCord Building

NE corner of E. Hendricks St. and S. Main St.; recently purchased and planned for renovation as a daycare

- Constructed in 1879 by J.E. McCord as a hardware store. The store also sold stoves, tin ware, and home furnishings until 1928. There was a tin shop at the rear of the lot which no longer remains
- This location was also the site of Earl Souder's Hardware Store (1928-1930), Dick Francis Ice Cream (1943), J.H. Gwynne Steel Co. (1944-1953), FWB Distributors (Faye Decamp Boats; 1953-1960), Vernon Caskey's Show Room (1961-1973), and NAPA (1973-2001)
- Notice the boat lift on the south side of the building – the beam helped to raise and lower boats and boat parts into and out of the building

16. Nonpareil Building

SW corner of E. Hendricks St. and S. Main St.; currently site of laundromat and parking lot

- Constructed in 1889 and demolished in 1969 due to disrepair
- Nonpareil means “very best” or “model of excellence or perfection”
- This location was the site of W.E. McChristie Company (a copying and printing business from 1889-1927), Preble County News headquarters (1902-1925), Democratic Party Headquarters (1920), Dover Theater, Central Auto Supply, chick hatchery (1936), and Chevrolet Sales and Service (1950-1968)
- Copying and printing company once employed many people and did business all over the U.S. A resident recalls that salesmen would go door-to-door and sell portraits to families who would come to the building, dress up in fancy clothes, and have a portrait taken and developed
- A resident remembers class trips to the Dover Theater for “talkies” (the first films – usually shorts - that included dialogue). Dean Pottenger often would play piano along with the movies
- A particularly fascinating act at the Dover in 1938 was “Kirma, the Internationally Known Mystic”. Kirma appeared in several shows at the Dover over one entire week—and the shows were packed. During one night's performance, the Mystic placed a young lady into a 24-hour hypnotic sleep and placed her in the window of the Camden Hardware Store (now the current location of Ron's Pizza) for all to observe. His subject remained in a deep sleep until he awakened her at the Dover Theater the next night to the oohs and ahhs of his audience





Photograph taken in 1902 looking south

17. South Main St.

- This street was once a thriving and bustling part of town with many businesses
- The picture depicts Mark Hanna Day in Camden in 1902 when republican U.S. Senator Mark Hanna from Ohio came to Camden accompanied by Ohio Gov. George Nash and Sec. of Agriculture, Jerry Wilson, during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt. There was a parade and political speeches were given that day

18. Shank's Variety Store

North section of Sam Shellenbarger Building at 15 S. Main St.; currently a residential site

- Constructed in the 1860s and south section housed Collet's Clothing Store
- Shank's was established in 1911 and was in several locations before settling at this location in 1939; in 1972, Shank's was sold and became Camden Variety Store
- This location was also the site of White Villa grocery (1935-1943)



Photograph taken in 1972



19. Camden Hardware

IOOF Building at SW corner of W. Central Ave. and S. Main St.; currently site of Ron's Pizza

- Constructed in 1848 by Oddfellows Lodge #109
- This location was also the site of a department store, a dry goods store, and a hardware store
- The Duskey family has been operating a hardware store in Camden since 1907

and the hardware store was in this building from 1938-1988. The current and original location of the hardware store is east of 4Js on E. Central Ave.

Cross S. Main St. and head east toward railroad tracks.

20. Bohn Building

16 S. Main St., currently undergoing renovation

- Constructed by John Henry Livingston Bohn in 1852 as an apothecary shop and was open for 22 years
- This location was the site of Bryson Drugs (which later moved to Dearth Building), Drummond Drugs, and Jeffries Grocery and Meat Market (1952-1984)





21. First National Bank in Camden

Collet Building at SE corner of E. Central Ave. and S. Main St.; currently Somerville Bank

- Constructed in 1881-1882
- First National Bank of Camden was established in 1906; in 1934, was renamed First National Bank in Camden

- This location was also the site of Camden Telephone Company on second floor (1901-1907), Commercial Bank, and doctors' offices
- This block (bank building and parking lot) was referred to as Collet's Block
- Notice the roof line – this building was once two separate buildings

22. Flood of 1913

- The flood of 1913 caused the flooding of the entire eastern section of Camden. Water came within a few feet of the intersection of Central Ave. and Main St. According to a newspaper article, some of the businesses harmed were: J.E. Parker Poultry and Produce House, Payne and Eikenberry Company, R.R. Duskey, and The Farmer's Grain and Supply Company. Preble County's government appropriated \$5,000 for flood recovery, and county losses amounted to \$50,000. It was the worst flood since 1886 according to many accounts



Photograph taken in 1913 looking east

- There was another flood in this same part of town in 1989



23. Camden Nursing Home

107 E. Central Ave.; currently vacant/condemned

- Was home to Joseph Loop and then to Will Yost
- Opened as a nursing home in 1963 and operated until 1974
- Two dentists had offices located in the east wing, Dr. Paul Ickes and Dr. Joseph Pierce
- The town offices and police dept. were located on the east side of the building from 1988-1993

24. Neff & Fry Co. Factory

107 E. Central Ave.; currently vacant

- Constructed in 1902 as a tobacco warehouse that employed many people. Its proximity to the railroad facilitated shipping of tobacco
- Purchased by Neff & Fry Co. in 1942 after it was awarded a contract by the Dept. of Defense to manufacture concrete practice bombs. Locals referred to it as the “bomb place” according to a resident. Many women were employed here during WWII. The factory and land were divided into separate parcels and auctioned in 1980
- Note the Neff & Fry cement silos



Photograph taken in 2018



Photograph taken in 1931

25. Dodge Ice & Coal

*E. Central Ave. near railroad tracks;
currently Hair by Nicki*

- Dodge Ice & Coal was founded by Clifford C. Dodge
- Coal was delivered in the morning and ice in the afternoons
- Ice men delivered ice to homes in an insulated ice box (an early refrigerator). Residents would put a card in their

window that had either “25” or “50” facing the street to indicate how many pounds of ice they wanted that day. A resident remembers that children would follow the ice man around town and he would give them ice shavings and it was a wonderful treat. In 1937, electric refrigeration was introduced which was revolutionary at the time

- According to a resident, the soda stand in the picture was probably taken on a holiday. The stands were set up on special occasions such as the 4th of July and often sold hot dogs and soda

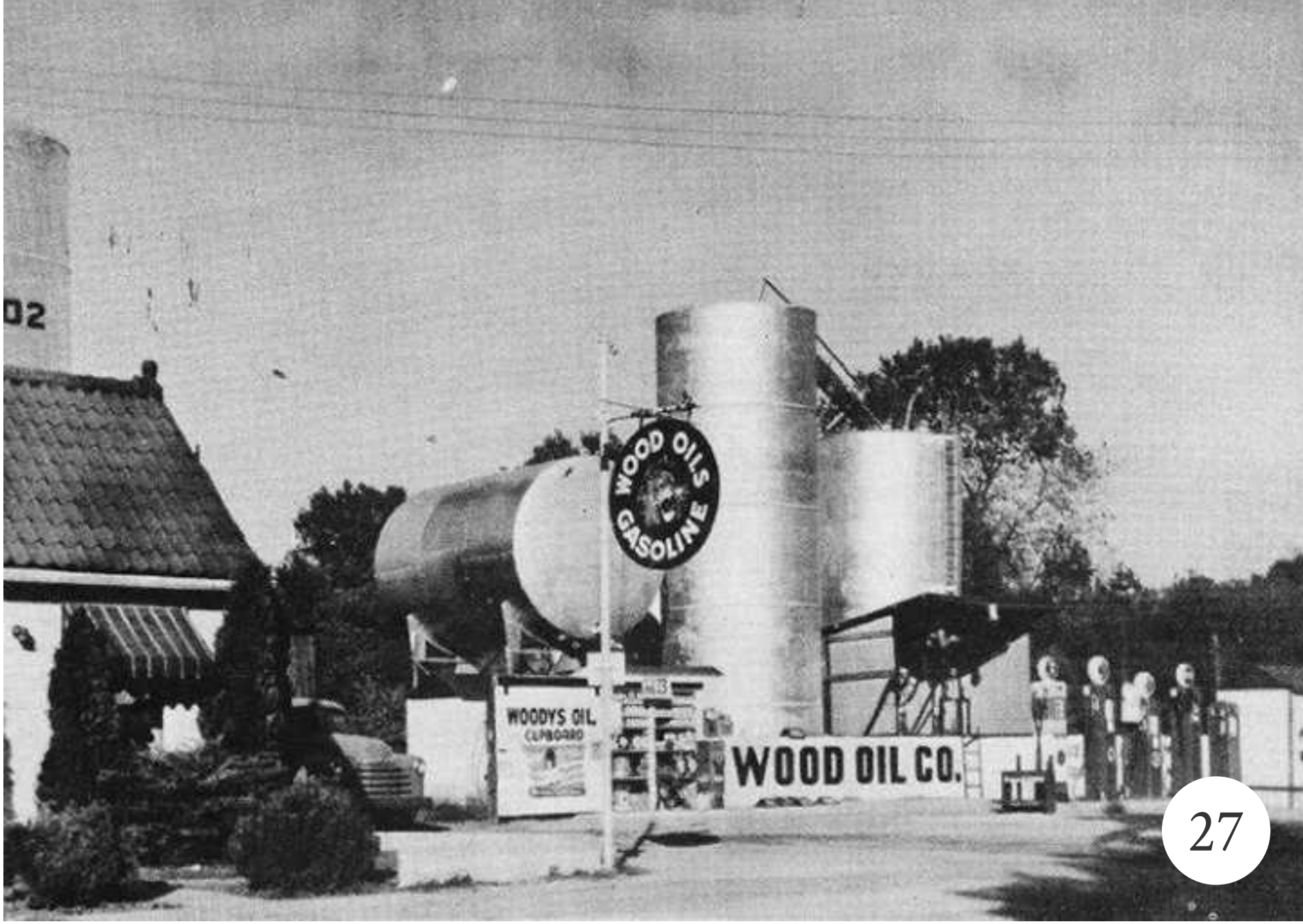
Cross E. Central Ave. – go to the other side of the street - then walk west toward Main St.

26. Pennsylvania Railroad Depot

The original railroad depot was located near site of current Depot Dairy Bar

- Railroad went into operation in the spring of 1852. Its first trip occasioned great excitement in Camden and throngs of people were at the station to view the spectacle
- Camden’s original depot was dismantled and reconstructed in West Alexandria in 1970 where it remains today, and the current Depot Dairy Bar structure was moved here from Douglas St. near the site of the Marathon Station in Camden





Photograph taken in 1954

27. Wood Oil Company

Look north; was at site of Camden's grocery store which is currently vacant

- The Wood Oil Company was founded in 1927 by Frank M. Wood. In 1929, he leased the land north of the railroad depot to build a 15,000 gallon fuel storage tank. In December 1930, a fire broke out and killed a man named Lester Gardner. In August 1951, another fire believed to be started by lightning forced the company to close until 1953

28. White Villa Camden Food Market and Camden Locker Co.

52 E. Central Ave.; currently site of 4Js

- Constructed in 1879
- This location was also the site of Bennet's Opera House, White House Restaurant and Saloon, White House Hotel, Kroger (1921-1932), a barber, a creamery, a church assembly room, apartments (1932-1936), a bowling alley (1939-1940), White Villa (1944-1966), White's IGA (1966-1974), Family Store (1977-1984), a flower and gift shop (1984-1989), antiques and collectibles (1989), a video store, pizza shop, and tanning salon (1991-2013), and 4Js Café and Pizza (2014-)
- Opera house was used by local entertainers and traveling troupers



Photograph taken in 1954



Photograph taken in 1931

29. Camden Telephone Company
*NE corner of E. Central Ave. and N. Main St.;
 currently site of Edward D. Jones*

- Originally opened as a hardware store in 1880; in 1907 became the home of the telephone company until 1964
- This location was also the site of Shank's Variety Store (1916-1938), Rodeffer Insurance (1985-1994), and Somerville National Bank (1990-2008)

At Main St., turn right and head north.

30. Harvey's Restaurant

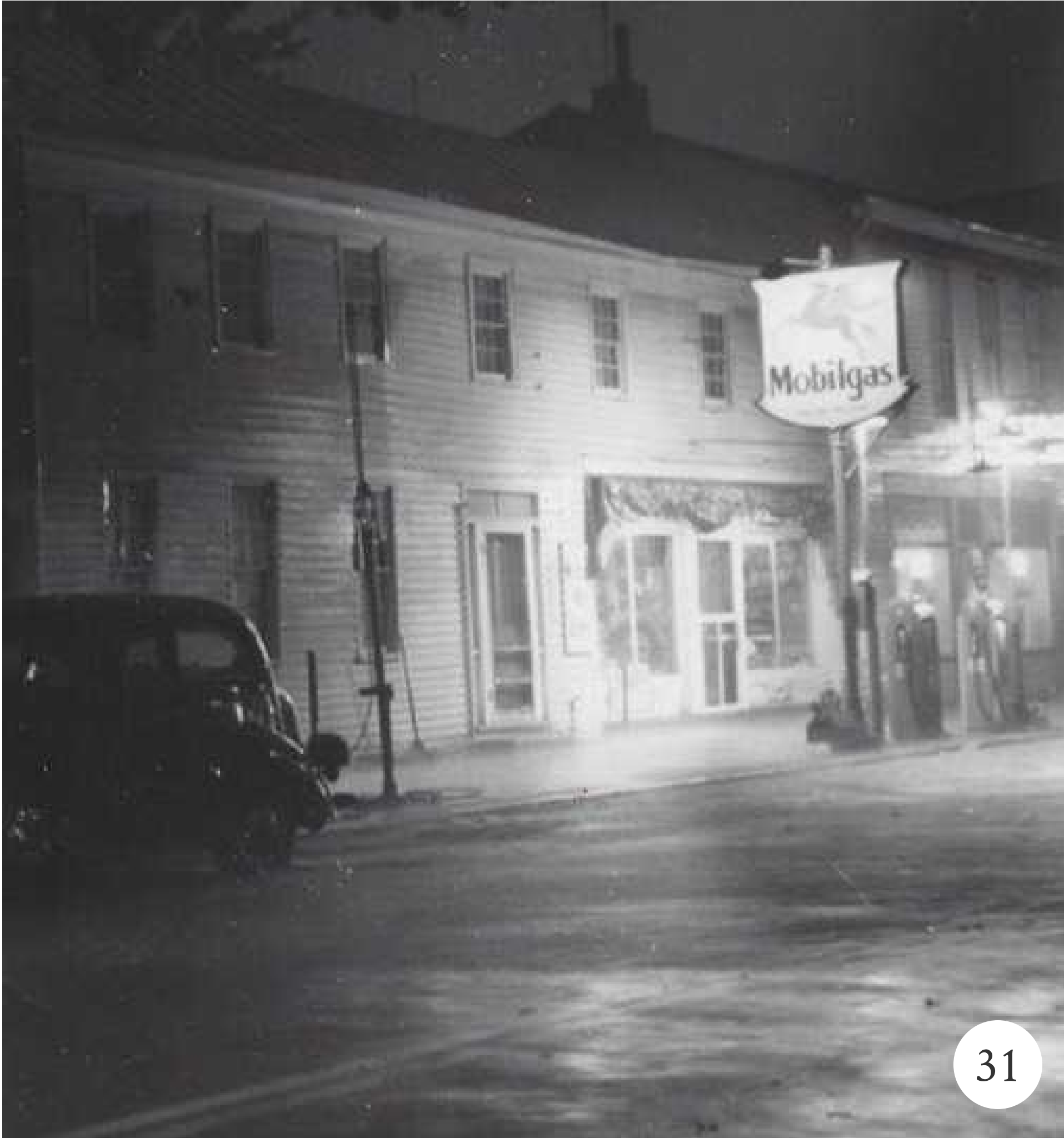
6 N. Main St.; currently houses ShadeTree Images (a photography studio)

- This location was also the site of Fred Neff's Grocery and restaurant called That Restaurant (1916-1934), Dunlap's Café (1934-1936), Walt's Café (1936-1944), George's Grill (1948-1949), Bob Shaw's Grill (1949-1950), Barber's (1950-1958), Harvey's Restaurant (1958-1986), Sam's (1986), Loretta's Kitchen (1986-2000), Camden Kitchen (2000-2017), Little Shoppe of Sharing (2017-2021)



Photograph taken in 1950s

- Many remember Harvey Douglass dipping out very large 25-cent ice cream cones



Photograph taken in 1952

31. Mobilgas

10 N. Main St.; currently site of Style Station

- Two buildings were razed, the Webb Hotel and the home and office of Dr. Charles C. Jones in 1953, to construct the Mobilgas station Don Buell opened in 1954 and operated until 1976
- This location was also the site of a hotel (1823-1880), Camden House (a tavern), and Eaton Tire Service Company

32. Camden Loan & Building Association

48 N. Main St.; currently site of Somerville Bank's offices

- The Camden Loan & Building Association was organized in 1881 and moved to this location in 1957
- During the depression when many loan and building associations closed their doors and depositors lost heavily,

Camden Loan & Building Association's investors did not suffer any losses, and, in fact, received a 5-cent dividend





33. Camden Ford Motor Co.

56 N. Main St.; currently vacant

- The front of the building was the showroom and the rear of building was the garage
- This location was also the site of a blacksmith shop (pre-1922), Porter Reeve Garage (1922-1927), Ketring-Hill Chevrolet (1961-1966), a laundromat, Wood Gas Company, Rhuie's Beauty Shop, Twindale Music, car wash (1966-1972), Lasco Pillows (1976-1982), Camden Printing (1990-1993), Camden Village Offices and Police Dept. (1993-2017), and Antler Ridge Beekeeping Supplies (2017-2019)

34. First location of Camden's U.S. Post Office

98 N. Main St.; currently residential site

- Post office was located in the home of postmaster, Ira K. Place, who served as postmaster from 1824-1839. The log structure that housed the post office was incorporated into part of the current house. Ira K. Place was the great- great-uncle of Barbara Bush and great- great-great- uncle of George W. Bush



Photograph represents an unknown Camden mail carrier

Before crossing the street:

- 1. Look north to the fifth house on the west side of N. Main St. (currently painted reddish-purple). It was a sanitarium from 1913 to 1919**
- 2. While looking north, also notice the Presbyterian Church. At the site of the church, a brick yard was established in 1853 that supplied bricks to build the first Camden Public School and the J.H. Bohn Drug Store**
- 3. Look west and note the large gray house on the left side of Bloomfield St. just ahead. It once sat on the lot of Taylor Tire next to the dark green house on S. Main St.**

Cross N. Main St. and walk toward Taylor Tire, and then walk south to Central Ave.



Photograph taken in 2018

35. Treasures at Forty-Seven

47 N. Main St.

- Constructed in 1831
- It was the home of three of Camden's physicians – Lurton Dunham (1832-1867), Daniel McQueen (1892-1930), and Charles McKinley (1930-1966). Dr. McKinley moved his office to the house next door. The first school building, a log structure, was on this site
- The lovely wrought iron fence fronting the property is one of the few such remaining in Camden. Prior to World War II many Camden homes were surrounded by similar fences until they were sacrificed as scrap iron for the war effort
- There are some great treasures inside! Head in and talk

to the owner, Helen Satterfield, who has done a lot of research on the house's history. She has uncovered that the great- great- great-grandmother of Barbara Bush lived here. Clatterbuck the Squirell in front of the house was named after the folks who built the house

36. Harness Shop

25 N. Main St.; currently storage and residential property

- Constructed in 1882
- In 1881, there were three harness makers in Camden: Geroge W. Will, Joseph E. Smith, and P.A. Dearth, but there is uncertainty which harness maker constructed this building
- This location was also the site of Herb Wagers' law office (1961-late 1980s), and Camden Flower Shop



Photograph taken in 2018



37. Majestic Theater

15 N. Main St.; currently site of Rodeffer-Rodbro Insurance

- Constructed by Charles Dearth in 1934 to house a modern movie theater for a price of \$10,000. The contractor was Neff & Fry Co.
- The first movie was *Kid Millions* in April of 1934. The cost of a ticket was 10 cents for kids and 20 cents for adults
- This location was also the site of Ruth Logston's Beauty Shop (1962-1963), Rhuie's Beauty Shop (1963-1966), Hill's Donut Shop (1970s), Antiques and Almost, Majestic Tan, and Gary's Bait and Tackle Shop (1987-1990), a meat market, a flower shop, candle and gift shop (1990-2000), and Rodeffer-Rodbro Insurance (2000-)

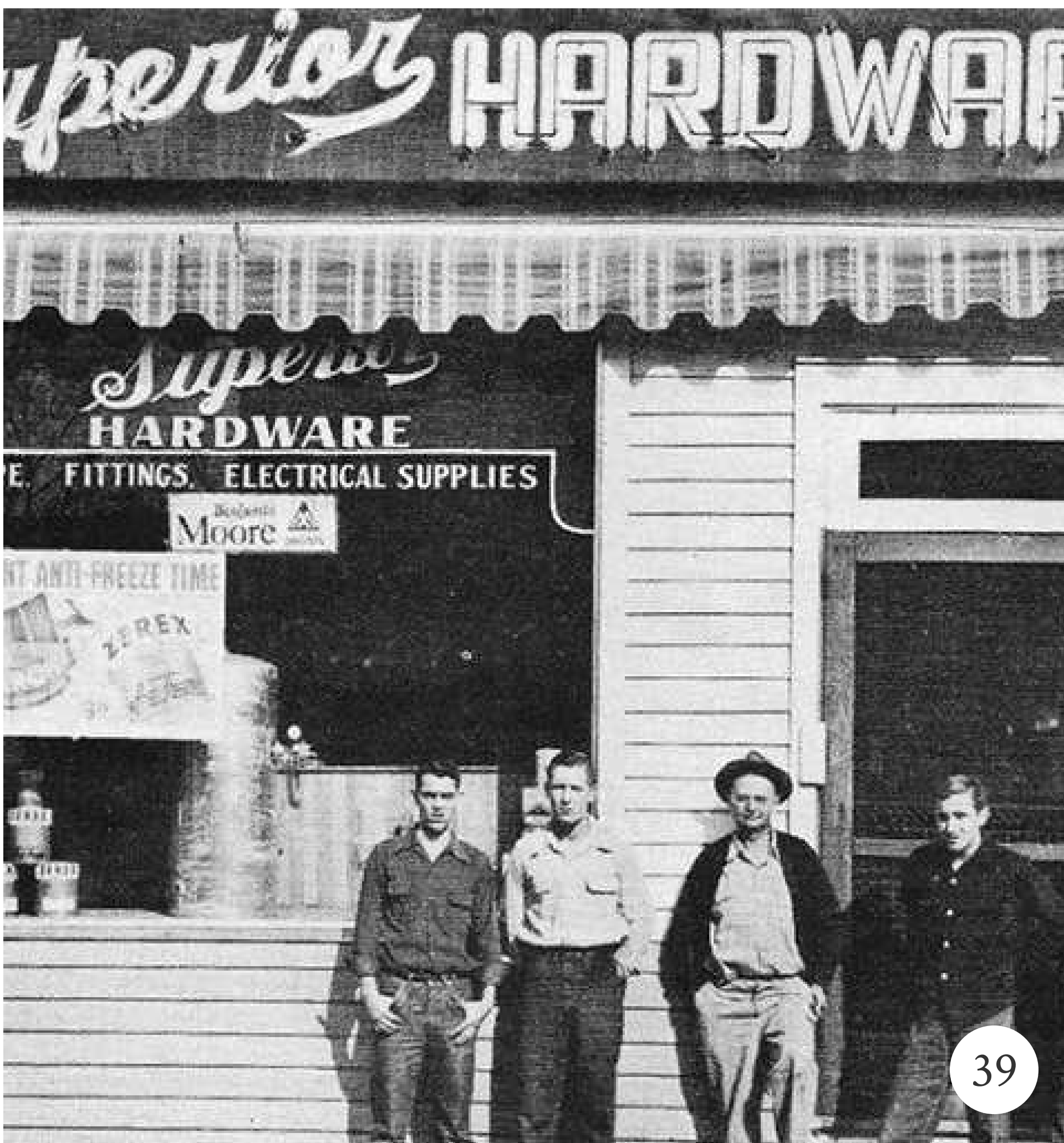
38. Webb's Drugs

1 N. Main St.; Dearth Building was located at site of Veteran's Park

- Constructed in the 1850s and destroyed by fire in 1988
- Had three addresses – 1, 7, and 11 N. Main St.
- This location was the site of: 1 N. Main - Earhart Department Store This (1850s-1895), E.J. Phares General Store (1895-1930), A&P Grocery (1927-1935), Lindamood Market (1936-1943), Leroy and Dorothy Witter Drug Store (1943-1945), Webb's Drug Store (1945-1952), Camden Drugs (1952-1959), Webb's Drugs (1959-1971), Camden Village Pharmacy (1972-1984), and Ron's Pizza (1985-1988); 7 N. Main – post office (1897-1927), A&P Grocery (1927-1933), Bryson Drugs (1933-1943), various grocery stores (1943-1954), Green's Market (1954-1967), and Ron's Pizza (1969-1985); 11 N. Main – The Pullman Restaurant (1921-1938), Moldoff Men's Clothing Store (1928-1930), Walt's Café (1944), Girt's Inn (1944-1952), and Oasis Restaurant (1958-1988)
- On Saturday nights in the mid-20th century, kids from town and the country would jockey for a parking space in front of this building. They would see a movie at the Majestic Theater and get a soda from the soda fountain, and then just hang out. A resident believes that Camden's soda jerk made the best chocolate phosphates anywhere at the soda fountain



At Central Ave., turn right and head west toward the town hall.



Photograph taken in 1954

39. Superior Hardware

*Fornshell Building at 24 W. Central Ave.;
currently site of Tech Force Onsite*

- Constructed in 1877 by Benjamin N. Fornshell as a hardware store
- Mr. Fornshell started a tin ware business in 1868 after he returned from fighting in the Civil War before opening the hardware store that he and his son, Glen, operated until 1944
- This location was also the site of a grocery and meat market (1865-1868), an antique store, Acorn Garden Designs, tanning loft, and Camden Hydroponics

40. Camden Opera House and City Hall

56 W. Central Ave.; currently site of Camden Town Hall

- Constructed in 1889 for \$15,000 to house city hall, an opera house, and the fire department; burned in 1936 and 1988
- Second floor was home to talent shows, basketball games, roller skating, road shows, and dances. The first basketball game was in December of 1904 and high school basketball games took place here until 1949 when they were moved to the high school gym with a brief interruption - the second floor was condemned in 1927 because there was no second-floor fire escape. The boys of the Progressive Club worked to help it reopen in 1933
- A resident remembers having great times in the building - there were lively dances featuring Dean Pottenger and his band, and he remembers that the building did not have restrooms
- First floor was restored in 2017 and second floor is undergoing renovation in 2020. It is once again the town's center of activity and the pride of Camden. It houses the village offices, police department, and Camden Archives



Photograph taken in early 1900s



The Camden Archives
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