

Register of Old Buildings
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: 156 S. Main (includes the front formerly listed as 162
S. Main)
Northeast corner of S. Main and Wood.
Legal description: Resurvey of Blk 1 of Original Town of
Decatur, Lot 31.

Date of original construction: 1855.

Name of original owner: John Imboden.

History:

1. Operators of the store at 156 S. Main have been as follows:
1855-1906 (51 years) - The Imbodens.
John Imboden - a meat market - followed by Imboden Brothers - a meat market - operated by John's sons, Cyrus and John G. Imboden.

1906-1929 (23 years) - E. A. Nichols - a meat market.

1930's - In succession, were the following operators of
of food markets at 156 S. Main:

O. V. Vest
Jacob Morgenstern
Chan Bayless
O. N. Freischlag
Clarence A. Haines

1940-1960 - Howard E. Bardsley
(Bardsley combined 156 with 162 S. Main)
NOTE: 162 S. Main had been a grocery store
previously, having been operated by Frank
Plumer around 1910.

1960- to
the present-Mrs. Howard E. Bardsley, widow of Mr. Bardsley,
since his death in 1960.

2. See Xerox copies of clippings that follow.

Present owner's name: 148-162 S. Main, Gertrude M. Bachrach and Rose M.
Smith et al.

156 South Main



Photo, Margaret M. Meyer, 1974



Pictures taken by Margaret Meyer
June 23, 1974

Decatur Diary

Grocery Opened 112 Years Ago Downtown

By Richard S. Edinger
Of the Herald and Review

It's been a long time since the neighborhood grocery store took the major share of the share of the housewife's food dollar.

By far, most food sales are rung up on the cash registers of large supermarkets and chain stores.

It's not that there are any fewer of the smaller "corner stores," but rather housewives, for the most part, prefer supermarket shopping.

There are now some 60 neighborhood stores in Decatur while there were about 25 in the 1890s. With the outward growth of the city, more smaller stores have been added—and so also have the supermarkets.

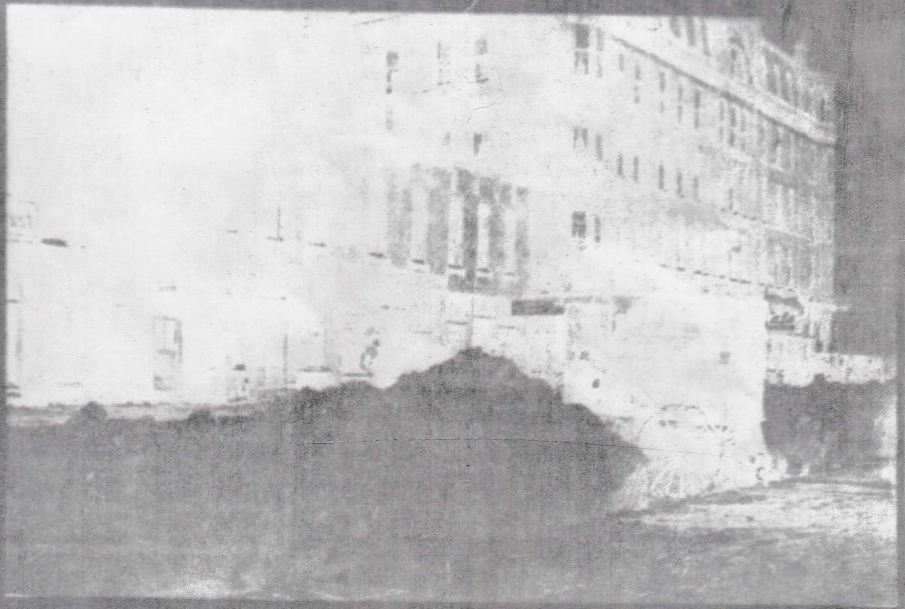
When the city was small, there was a heavy concentration of corner groceries in what is now the downtown area. In the one block length of Merchant Street alone, there were five groceries at one time.

Downtown Groceries

At various times, these groceries have operated on Merchant Street: H. Lyon at 154, Logan & Beik at 150, D. H. Heilman at 108, Cash Market at 122, Barbey at 130 and the Food Arcade at 156.

Undoubtedly the oldest surviving food market in the city is the grocery that is now known as Howard's at 162 S. Water St.

John Imboden, founder of the first meat market on the site, came to Decatur in 1855 and purchased the then vacant lot at S. Main and Wood streets 10



Large snowfall about 1910 didn't prevent Frank Plumer from making food deliveries.

days after his arrival. He built the first structure on the lot shortly afterwards.

Cyrus Imboden, son of the original owner, went into the meat market business there in 1865, and later on with his brother, John G. Imboden in the business, it was known as the Imboden Bros. Market.

The store continued with the Imbodens until 1906, when it was taken over by E. A. Nichols who kept up the meat market tradition until he moved out in 1929.

Subsequent Owners

There were several owners in

the 30s. They were O. V. Vest; Jacob Morgenstern, Chan Bayless, O. N. Freischlag and Clarence Haines.

In 1940, Howard E. Bardsley purchased the store from Haines and since his death in 1960, the store has been run by his widow.

Shortly after Bardsley purchased the building, he combined the building next door at 156 S. Main St. which he had owned with the front of 162 S. Main St.

Bardsley had also operated food stores at 2600 W. Main St. and 1136 E. Eldorado St.

One of the tenants in the

building was Frank Plumer who was considered the dean of Decatur's grocerymen when he died in 1934. Plumer lived to be 89 years old and operated out of the 162 S. Main St. store around 1910.

Like most of his fellow grocerymen at the time, Plumer operated a grocery delivery service. Very few markets offer such service today.

Plumer's store did not have grocery carts. Customers did not buy much at any one time because they could not stock up. Foods were more perishable then.

(BLOCK HAS MUCH CITY HISTORY)

Much City History

of Lincoln Square some of the oldest buildings in the city, including Decatur's oldest existing hotel, the oldest existing grocery store and three buildings which still in the 1850s.

building at 129 E. Main Street housing the GAC Printing Corp., was the first three-story structure in the city. It was constructed in 1853.

Uses
Immediately after it was built, it was used as a city hall. It was also the home of some of the city's early print shops.

From 1881 to 1901 it was a restaurant which was owned by several persons.

For most of the building's existence, it was owned by George Leiby, a pioneer Decatur resident. He sold the building to Larus, Allheimer & Co. for \$30,000.

Leiby's Clothing occupied the

building front for 50 years. In 1954 it became Robert's Clothing and in 1960 was occupied by the Kaybee family apparel shop. Since 1964 it has housed GAC.

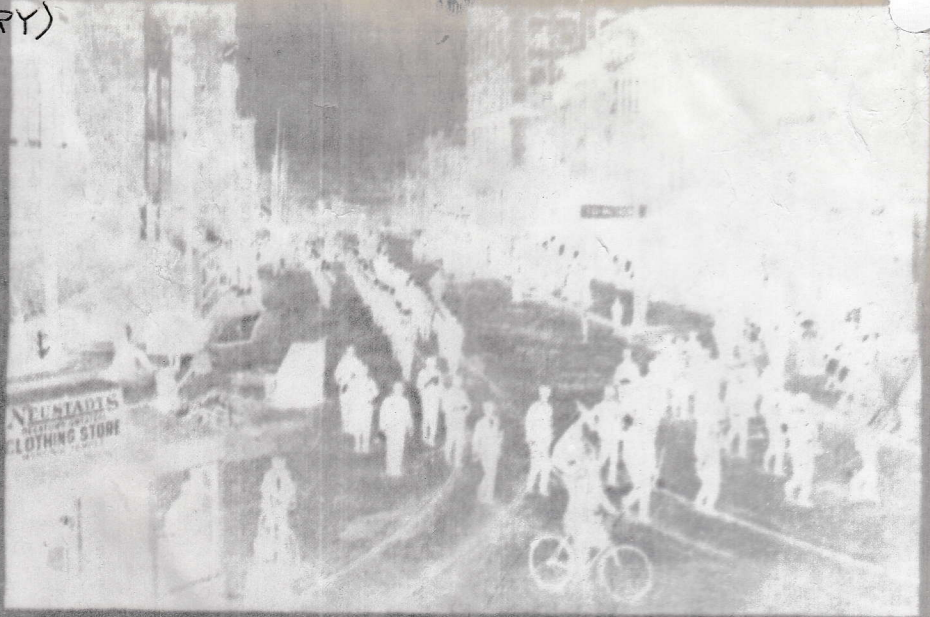
Nearly as old is the building next door at 135-139 E. Main St. It was built by William Powers in 1856.

The building was owned for a time by Henry Bachrach. He sold it in 1913 for \$30,000. Mutual Home and Saving Association bought the site in 1926 where the firm has been located ever since.

Restaurant Since 1899

Harvey Greider opened a restaurant on the corner of Main and Water streets in 1899 and the restaurant business has been there ever since, now known as the Wooden Shoe.

The building was constructed about 1855 and has been remodeled and enlarged several times during its long history.



Buildings on the right side of street—still standing—are suggested civic center site.

The old Wooden Shoe which had been located at 241 E. Main St. merged with Greider's Cafe in 1962.

Ownership of the building passed from the William Powers estate in 1883 to Mrs. Sarah Ewing for \$23,500. It subsequently passed from the W. T. Wells estate in 1912 to Mrs. D. Shockley, then to Henry Bachrach in 1912 for \$30,000.

Harvey Greider owned the building from 1934 until his death in 1942. It has been under the ownership of his widow until her death in January of this year.

Another old-timer is the building at 117 E. Main St., where Enloe's Drug Store is now located.

The building was built in 1861 after an old frame building which had housed one of Decatur's early post offices and a general store had been located.

The present site has been the location of a drug store for 122 years. The site was known as Dr. Robert's Drugstore from 1843 until 1870, occupying both the old frame building and the present building.

Clint Armstrong operated a drug store at the site from 1870 until 1892. The operation was taken over by E. A. West in that year and he was succeeded by Roy Enloe in 1939.

Decatur's oldest existing hotel was built in 1860 on the northwest corner of Water and Wood streets. It has undergone

many name-changes and changes of ownership in its 107-year history.

It was constructed by Charles M. Reddick and first named the Pennsylvania Hotel. It was also known as the American and Brunswick before it was renamed the Decatur Hotel in 1947.

Oldest Grocery Store

Decatur's oldest grocery store—and still in operation—is located on the corner of Main and Wood streets. The building was built in 1855 by John Imboden and he and his sons ran a meat market there until 1906.

The grocery store is now Howard's Supermarket. It was purchased by Howard Bardsley in 1940 and is currently run by Mrs. Bardsley.

H. E. Bardsley Dies at Age 56

1960

Howard Edward Bardsley, 56, of 1240 E. Lake Shore Dr., died at 1:05 p.m. yesterday in Decatur and Macon County Hospital.

Mr. Bardsley was the owner of Howard's Royal Blue Super Market at the corner of Wood and Main streets and entered the retail grocery business in Decatur in 1924.

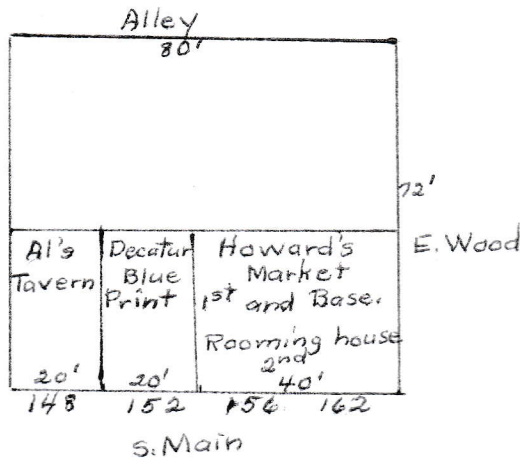
From 1922 to 1944 he owned the Food Arcade at 128 Merchant St., and also owned a grocery store at 1136 E. Elberado St.

In 1951 he bought a fruit and grocery market at 861 N. Water St.

He is the former president of the Central Illinois Food Dealers and Illinois State Food Distributors Assn.

He was born March 4, 1904 in Collinsville, the son of Martin N. and Alice Jane Howard Bardsley.

Mr. Bardsley moved here from Hillsboro in 1924 and entered the grocery business.



Assessor's Office
1974