



# VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

File no. 104-72B  
Negative no(s). 565.798

## SURVEY FORM

Historic name \_\_\_\_\_ Common name **CHAS. KING & SONS COMPANY**  
 County/Town/City **CHARLOTTESVILLE**  
 Street address or route number **410 E. WATER ST.**

USGS Quad **CHARLOTTESVILLE EAST, VA.** Date or period \_\_\_\_\_  
 Original owner \_\_\_\_\_ Architect/builder/craftsmen \_\_\_\_\_  
 Original use \_\_\_\_\_  
 Present owner \_\_\_\_\_ Source of name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Present owner address \_\_\_\_\_ Source of date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Present use \_\_\_\_\_ Stories \_\_\_\_\_  
 Acreage \_\_\_\_\_ Foundation and wall const'n \_\_\_\_\_

Roof type \_\_\_\_\_

State condition of structure and environs **FAIR/GOOD**

State potential threats to structure \_\_\_\_\_  
 Note any archaeological interest \_\_\_\_\_

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes \_\_\_ no

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

BRICK (5 COURSE AMERICAN); 2 STORIES; GIBBED ROOF;  
 14+ BAYS; COMMERCIAL VERNACULAR. 1897. 1917.  
 BUILT IN SECTIONS; EASTERN PORTION FIRST.  
 3 BAYS WITH PROJECTING PIERS AT THE CORNERS  
 AND BETWEEN BAYS; SIMPLE CORNICE AND PARAPET  
 WALL; METAL WINDOWS - 6/6 WITH 3 COURSE SEGMENTAL  
 WINDOW HEADS; "HAVE A TAMPA" PAINTED SKIN OVER  
 ENTRANCE.  
 EXPANSION ON WESTERN HALF OF BLOCK IN SIMPLIFIED  
 CONFORMITY WITH ORIGINAL L-SHAPED BUILDING. FACADE  
 DESIGN REPEATED.  
 POST AND BEAM INTERIOR STRUCTURE. SKYLIGHTS.



LARGE SKIN  
 PAINTED ON BRICK:  
 "SENATOR FLOUR"  
 (WAS ORIGINALLY  
 AN EXPOSED WALL).

Interior inspected? YES

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

FROM CHARLOTTESVILLE LANDMARK SURVEY:

"ON OCTOBER 17, 1895, CHARLES KING OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA PURCHASED FROM GEORGE PERKINS AND HATTIE S. PAYNE, THE HOUSE AND LOT ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF WATER AND FIFTH STREETS. CHARLES KING AND SON COMPANY, WHOLESALE GROCERS, A FIRM FOUNDED IN 1877 AND BASED IN ALEXANDRIA, WAS EXPANDING TO CHARLOTTESVILLE. AT THE END OF 1896, AN EXPLOSION AND FIRE.. LEVELLED THE EXISTING BUILDING. THIS LOSS WAS IMMEDIATELY REPLACED IN 1897 BY A NEW WAREHOUSE AND OFFICE BUILDING, THAT WHICH STILL STANDS ON THE SITE TODAY. 1907 AND 1911 ACQUISITIONS GAVE THE KING COMPANY OWNERSHIP OF THE ENTIRE BLOCK ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF WATER STREET BETWEEN FIFTH AND FOURTH STREETS, S.E. EXISTING BUILDINGS ON THESE TWO LOTS WERE REMOVED AND A SECOND WAREHOUSE COMPLEX WAS ADDED THE FIRST IN 1916."

Sources and bibliography

Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.)

Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

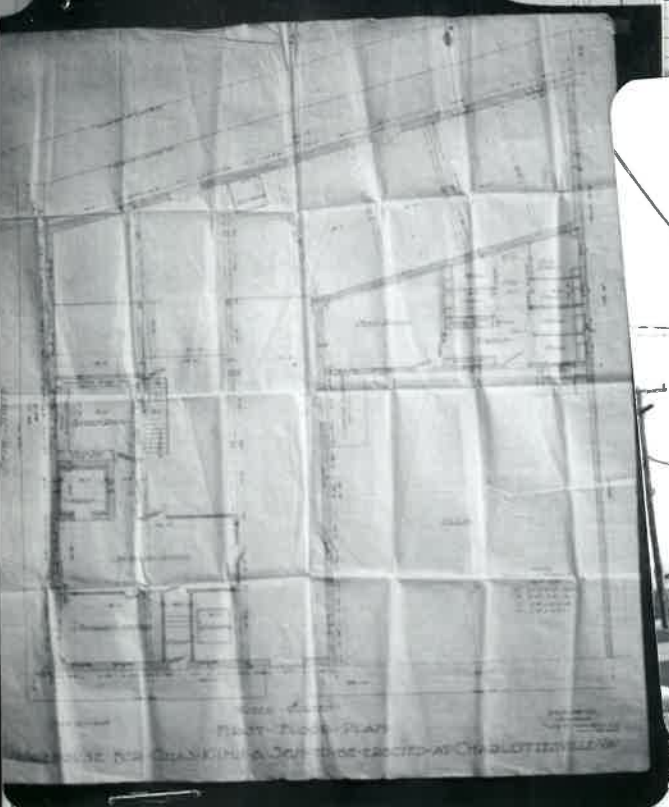
Names and addresses of persons interviewed

SANBORN MAPS  
1886 DWELLINGS  
AND TENEMENT  
1891 SAME  
1907 CHARLES KING

Plan (Indicate locations of rooms, doorways, windows, alterations, etc.)



dependencies and significant topographical features.)



Name, address and title of recorder

MARGARET DAVIS

LWA

Date

MARCH '80

# That Final Order Will End an Era

By ROBERT BRICKHOUSE  
of The Progress Staff

One day in the next week or two, the last salesman carrying the last order will walk in under the Hav-A-Tampa cigar sign and an era will draw to a close.

When the last truck pulls out to make its delivery, Charles King & Son Co. Inc., Virginia's oldest and Charlottesville's only surviving wholesale grocer, will shut its doors after more than a century of business.

The three-story, block-long brick warehouse on Water Street is almost empty now. A few cases and bales of dry goods stand stacked here and there in the vast interior, waiting to be checked out.

"Some days you could hardly get by there was so much stock in here," recalled B. E. Harlow, the company's president and general manager, as he went through the building last week attending to final details. "It's all just about gone now."

"When I came here in 1915 World War 1 was just getting started. Those were good years," he said. "You could sell it faster than you could get it."

Harlow, who is 80 now, started with Charles King & Son as an office boy. At one time or another, he has worked all jobs, from salesman to stenographer, with the firm, which catered to the smaller independent grocery stores in Charlottesville and eight surrounding counties. He is now presiding over Charles King's dismantling.

"Being a wholesale grocer is a challenge for anybody today because of the chains you have to compete with," he said. "But there is and always will be a place for a wholesaler to supply the independent stores."

Dettor Edwards & Morris Inc. of Ivy and Quality Foods cooperative in Lynchburg are among the main suppliers of the area's smaller stores today.

Charles King & Son was founded in Alexandria in 1877. It opened a branch here in 1890, which eventually became the firm's main operation. (The Alexandria portion of the business closed in the late 1930s.)

When the company's original Charlottesville location on South Street was destroyed by fire around the turn of the century, the firm moved to a newly-built warehouse on Water Street beside the C & O train station. That is where it has remained until the present day.

The King family of Rappahannock County, descendants of the



Progress Photo by John Atkins

original Charles King, still holds controlling interest in the business. The decision to liquidate was made by the board of directors in late summer, according to Harlow.

About 30 employees, some of them retiring with the business, will be leaving when Charles King closes.

Between answering questions about final orders and saying last goodbyes to travelling product salesmen who dropped by, Harlow took time one day last week to reminisce about the early days of the company.

By the time he joined in 1915 it was already well-established, carrying everything in the dry grocery line from sugar and flour and coffee to spices, candy and tobacco, staples that continued to be the mainstay over the years.

"In those days the rural stores relied altogether on operations of our type," Harlow recalled. "When I came here we didn't have a single truck. We delivered by horse and wagon around the city and shipped by local freight to the rural areas."

"The merchant himself would have to go out with a wagon to his local station to pick up the order."

See KING, Page A12

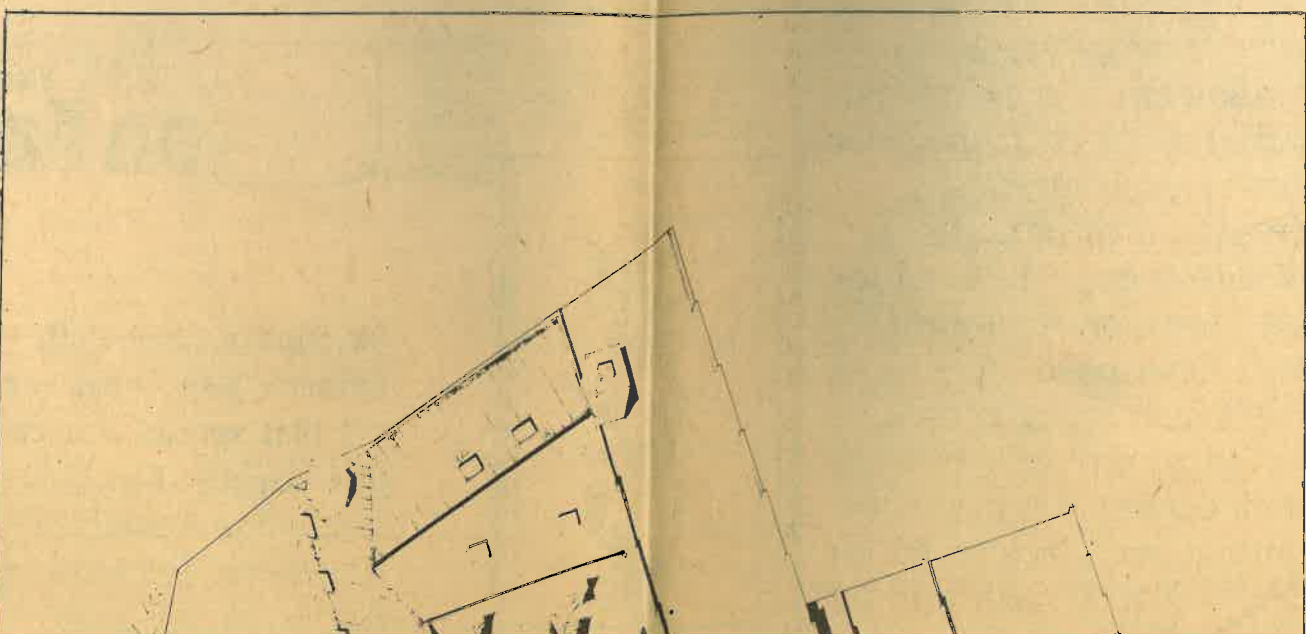


B.E. HARLOW, WHO STARTED WITH CHARLES KING & SON IN 1915, WILL SEE IT CLOSE  
'Those Were Good Years — You Could Sell It Faster Than You Could Get It'



Progress Photos by Ken Higgins

**RENOVATORS PLAN TO KEEP THE OLD-FASHION ATMOSPHERE OF THE WAREHOUSE**  
New Owners Figure About \$500,000 Will Be Necessary for the Transformation

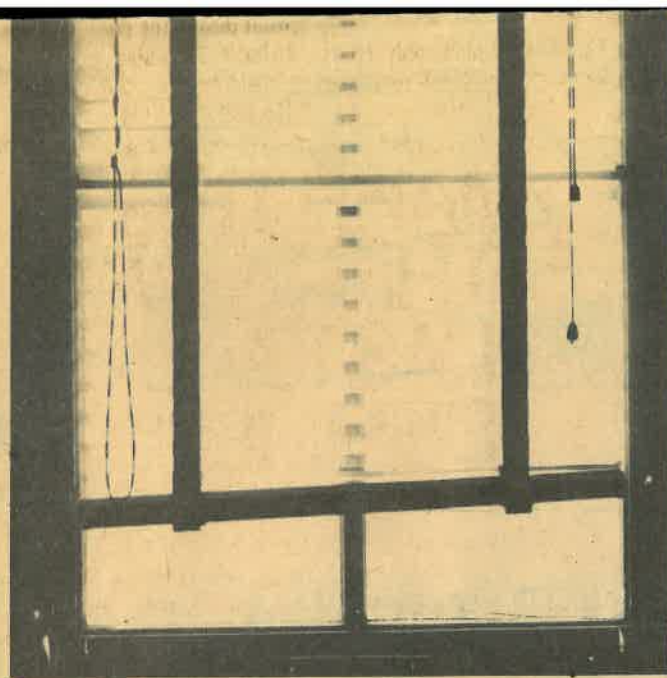


## King Grocery May Get A Facelift

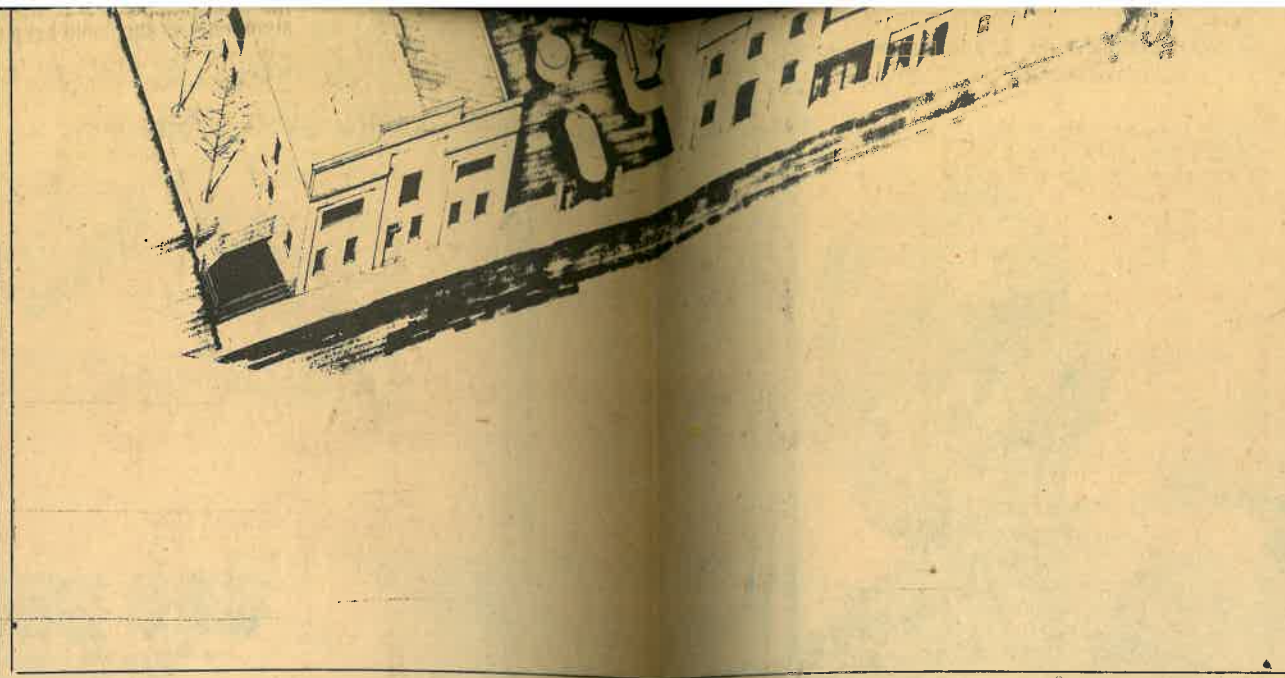
By ANNE RICHARDSON  
of The Progress Staff

The block-long wholesale grocery used to bustle with warehouse men stocking, rearranging and carrying from train to horse-drawn wagons all those things grocery stores keep in stock.

Downstairs, near the broad-board slanted part of the floor that led to Charles King & Son Co.'s own siding, workers stacked the canned goods and cigarettes that came off the train. Upstairs, under the skylights, sauces, paper towels and work-



**HAV-A-TAMPA CIGAR SIGN**  
The Sign Sold Caravati on the Warehouse



**ARCHITECT'S DRAWING OF THE RENOVATED CHARLES KING & SONS CO. WHOLESALE GROCERY**  
The Three-Story Building Is Located on Water Street Downtown



**AN EMPTY ROOM STANDS BEHIND THE TOP OF THE NOW-UNUSED PINE-SLATTED OPEN FREIGHT ELEVATOR**  
Investors Theorize That Renovation May Bring In 10 Medium-Sized Retail Stores

mute.

A corner where the 100-pound sacks of flour stood still has some white flecks on the floor. Rows of pine shelving, aged by the years to a decorous rich brown, upstairs still are labeled with the names of the spices they used to hold. At the top of a bricked-over hole, pointed out Charles King Co.'s last manager, parts of a pulley for horsefeed still hang intact.

On an inside wall the old yellow and red painted Senator Flour Is Guaranteed sign peeks through the flaking white paint that tried to cover it when the new part of the warehouse was added in 1907 to the main building constructed in 1897.

And, of course, there's that sign. Over the main entrance to the warehouse hangs the Hav-A-Tampa cigar stained glass window that passersby have been coveting ever since the business closed last year and no one knew what might happen to the old brick building.

Until now, that is. If four entrepreneurs have their way, the Charles King building will be bustling again before long.

They have drawn up plans to turn the building into a restaurant that includes take-out street service at lunch and elegant patio dining in the evening in one of the oldest parts of the building. Above it and in the new part of the warehouse, they hope to rent out office space and space for about 10 small and medium-sized retail stores.

The idea, they said, is similar to Richmond's Shockoe Slip (another warehouse district recently renovated for fashionable restaurants and shops), but classier.

Between the two parts of the building, where in later years trucks instead of wagons pulled up to load groceries, the courtyard will be filled with plants and a few seats for browsers who can sit and watch a fountain flow in the middle. Off the courtyard will lead several doors to the shops and restaurant.

At least, that's the plan architect William Prillaman, renovator Blake Caravati, landscape contractor Thomas Newell and real estate investor Joe McMurray are working on.

The new owners of Charles King warehouse figure it will take slightly more than \$500,000 to turn the old warehouse into a new center for downtown business. They're putting up some of the money themselves and have applied to the city for a \$407,000 revitalization grant. If that doesn't come through, they said they'll just have to look for other investors to go in with them.

"We'd like to do it with the city, because it will be good for the city," Prillaman said. "We expect it to employ about 150 people and generate about 30 new jobs."

No matter what, they're determined to make busy once again this deserted part of what Charles King Co.'s last manager, B.E. Harlow, described as Charlottesville's red-light district at the turn of the century. This time, of course, they're aiming to draw a different clientele.

In daytime, the building would be convenient for nearby office workers to shop and have lunch, Prillaman said. By day, the restaurant would be divided into a New York-style delicatessen with take-out service and a more traditional restaurant with indoor and patio seating.

At night, people would be drawn downtown by the restaurant, which will be more formal than in daytime and will open onto an old dining car renovated as a bar.

In addition, he said, if the stores there stay open later than most of those nearby, shoppers will be drawn downtown again after work.

Caravati said they were attracted to the building because of its location, its roomy design and its atmosphere. Its large, uncluttered spaces are punctuated throughout with dark beams and natural skylights that were designed to be more functional than decorative — an effect is the developers want to modify as little as possible.

Basically, he said, new heating and electrical systems are needed and the spaces will be modified to suit the needs of tenants. A kitchen will be added for the restaurant, the wood will be re-treated, the windows widened, the building cleaned and painted and a patio added. In the basement, the floor will be dug deeper to provide more head room.

But the renovators plan to keep the old-fashioned atmosphere that drew them to the building in the first place.

"When I first came here, I'd never been downtown," said Caravati, who recently moved here from Washington, D.C. "As soon as I saw that Hav-A-Tampa sign, I thought, 'this is it.'"

Monday, October 15, 1979

## ★ King

Continued from Page A1

The original stable for Charles King's delivery horses was located at what is now the western corner of the warehouse, Harlow said. He produced a buggy whip from somewhere within a cluttered closet.

The sales force, which travelled to the farther reaches of Madison, Nelson, Orange and Buckingham counties, as well as to those closer by, went by train.

"They'd leave here on Monday and wouldn't get back until Friday," Harlow remembered. "They'd stop somewhere along the way and rent a room. They'd rent a horse and buggy from the livery stable to call on the stores."

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Harlow himself handled almost every job over the years.

"I worked both the city and the county trade on numerous occasions," he said. "And I could type as good as anybody."

He briefly attempted retirement a few years ago. "But I came back like a nut," he said.

In 1917, two years after Harlow joined the company, the original portion of the Water Street warehouse, which was constructed in 1897 and 1898, was expanded with an addition that is now the western portion of the block between East Fourth and Fifth Streets. The whole warehouse will be sold, Harlow said, when the business closes.

"They don't build them like this today," he said, adding that he hopes the structure will not be razed, as were the next two blocks down the street.

The massive warehouse along the railroad tracks has been the subject of several enquiries, according to Harlow. He would like to see it put to good use.

Some time within the next two weeks the sales force will be disbanded, Harlow said. Whatever stock is left will then be sold to the general public.

Warehousemen were still busy last week among cases of beets and beans and chow mein and chewing tobacco. Harlow still saw to it that a burned-out light bulb got replaced in a dark corner. A group of tobacco company representatives called on him to say goodbye.

"This is one way you'll retire, maybe," one of them said.

Among the other long-time Charles King employees who will be leaving are W. Howard Melone, a warehouse foreman who has been there for 51 years; Mrs. Lutie W. Lucas, an office clerk with 42 years of service, and her husband Hugh H. Lucas, a salesman for 30 years; Ashby C. Harlow, a warehouseman with 36 years experience; Mrs. Jean Mayo, with 23 years of service as a clerk, and Winston C. Armentrout, a warehouseman with the firm for 19 years.

On the wall by the front door, a bill from the last century, framed and faded, announces that Charles King & Son has bananas in stock: "Carry three grades, specify kind. Good sellers, good profit."

An ancient sign buried in a closet bears evidence that "Missing Link" tobacco once was sold here.

On a table in an office someone has tossed the latest issue of a trade magazine, Progressive Grocer. "What's ahead in the 80s?" blares its garish cover.

# LANDMARK



# SURVEY

## IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 410 East Water Street  
Map and Parcel: 28-60  
Census Tract & Block: 1-204  
Present Owner: Charles King & Sons, Co., Inc.  
Address: 410 East Water Street  
Present Use: Wholesale Grocers  
Original Owner: Charles King  
Original Use: Wholesale Grocers

## BASE DATA

Historic Name: Chas. King & Sons Company  
Date/Period: 1897, 1916  
Style: Victorian  
Height to Cornice:  
Height in Stories: 2  
Present Zoning: M-1  
Land Area (sq. ft.): 23,776  
Assessed Value (land + imp.): 148,100

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The first building in the Charles King and Sons Company, Inc., warehouse complex, that at the east end of the 400 block of East Water Street, is of a vernacular Victorian style. The street front facade is composed of three bays, defined by projecting piers at the corners and between bays. A simple cornice and parapet wall (with the central bay stepped higher) crown the facade and conceal a low-pitch, gable roof covered with standing-seam tin. Height is two-stories above a full basement. Wall construction is brick with heavy-timber, post and beam interior structure. The building covers the full extent of the lot, stretching between Water Street and the C & O Railroad tracks, with the exception of a small courtyard opening onto Water Street just west of the main facade. Windows are metal, six-over-six-light double-hung sash with segmental-arch lintels on the first floor, and metal frame, banded windows on the second. Skylights help to light the upper storey. The door to the main office is balanced to the left of a single window in the central bay of the facade. A "HAVE A TAMPA" advertisement decorates the door transom-light, and a long painted, white-on-black sign, reading "CHAS. KING & SON CO., Inc. WHOLESALE GROCERS," stretches across the facade between first and second floors. The expansion onto the western half of the block in 1916 is in simplified conformity with the original facade. Toward the center of the block, next to the old courtyard a slightly higher and narrower version of the first edifice was constructed. A low section of garage doors joins this central block to a somewhat smaller and simpler corner building that was built to house horses and feed.

## HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

On October 17, 1895, Charles King of Alexandria, Virginia purchased from George Perkins, Special Commissioner, and Mattie S. Payne, the house and lot on the southwest corner of Water and Fifth Streets (City DB 6-326). Charles King and Son Company, Wholesale Grocers, a firm founded in 1877 and based in Alexandria, was expanding to Charlottesville. At the end of 1896, an explosion and fire, allegedly caused when sparks from a passing train touched off gunpowder stored in a wooden addition, leveled the existing building. This loss was immediately replaced in 1897 by a new warehouse and office building, that which still stands on the site today. 1907 and 1911 saw purchases from James E. Irvine (DB 18-161) and from E.W. Moss and W.A. Marshall (DB 22-425) respectively: these acquisitions gave the King Company ownership of the entire block on the southside of Water Street between Fifth and Fourth Streets, S.E. Existing buildings on these two latter lots were removed and a second warehouse complex was added to the first in 1916. Charles King and Son Company, Inc., in its 100th year of operation, still does business from these original buildings. See also: City DB 17-180.

## GRAPHICS

## CONDITIONS

Good

## SOURCES

City Records  
B.E. Harlow, Company President  
Arthur M. King, Company Director

## HIST.

On 17 October 1895, Charles King of Alexandria, Virginia purchased from George Perkins, Special Commissioner, and Mattie S. Payne, the house and lot on the S.W. corner of Water and Fifth Streets (City DB 6-326). Charles King and Son Company, Wholesale Grocers - a firm founded in 1877 and based in Alexandria - was expanding ~~expanding~~ to Charlottesville. At the end of 1896, an explosion and fire - allegedly caused when sparks from a passing train touched off gunpowder stored in a wooden addition - leveled the existing building. This loss was immediately replaced in 1897 by a new warehouse and office building - that which still stands on the site today. In 1906, the property was transferred to the Company name by ~~Charles King and his son Frank T. King~~ (DB 17-180). 1907 and 1911 saw purchases from James E. Irvine (DB 18-161) and from E.W. Moss and W.A. Marshall (DB 22-425) respectively: these acquisitions gave The King Company ownership of the entire block on the south side of Water street between Fifth and Fourth Streets S.E. Existing buildings on these two latter lots were removed, and a second warehouse complex was added to the first in 1916. Charles King and Son Co., Inc., in its 100<sup>th</sup> year of operation, still does business from these original buildings ~~and site~~. See also: City DB 17-180.



## ARCH DESC.

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a slightly higher and narrower version of the first edifice was constructed. A low section of garage doors joins this central block to a somewhat smaller and simpler corner building that was built to house horses and their feed.

1901 or 1905 built? Check Taxes  
Was painted Yellow circa 1915

BE. Harlow Pres. / Managers 20 yrs  
began 1915 Employed 62 years

Arthur M King <sup>25 yrs old.</sup> Director, grandson of  
↑ orig Chas King  
↓ Alexandria

TAXES

① ③  
Built 1897, 1916

	lot	bdg
① 1896 -	400	800
1897 -	500	—
1898 -	500	5500
<u>1916</u>	3000	6500

1.

② 1907	400	600	Levine
1908	400	800	King
1911	500	800	"
1912	500	800	
1916	700	800	

③ 1910	300	300	Moss + Marshall
1911	400	300	"
1912	700	300	King
1916	900	—	" House Down

1917	410	bdg	land assessment joined
	lot	Bldg	dupls added.
	4600	12,400	

Chas King & Son Co.

205-9144

Mr. Harbour.

2:15pm - 2:30 Mon

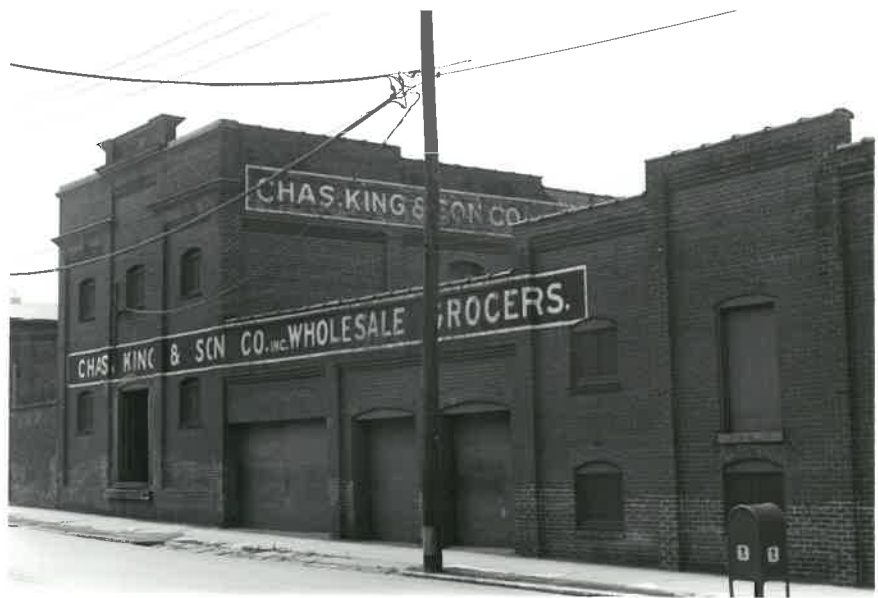
Chas. King + Son<sup>Co.</sup>, Inc 1904-20 410 E. Water St.  
Wholesale Grocers Bldgs.

King, Chas + Son's Co., Inc  
410 E Water St.  
Chiclle

~~118900~~  
DB 18-161 2-9-07  
DB 22-425,427

lot size 199.34 x 106 avg

land 118900  
imp 29200  
total 148100



No. WATER STREET  
Name KING WAREHOUSE  
Order 107  
Remarks \_\_\_\_\_  
Retouched \_\_\_\_\_  
Order Finished Aug. 1974  
Reorder \_\_\_\_\_







April 1987

April 1987

April 1987