

*Architectural And Historic  
Survey*



*Identification*

**STREET ADDRESS:** 121-123 Fourth Street, NE  
**MAP & PARCEL:** 33-219  
**CENSUS TRACT AND BLOCK:**  
**PRESENT ZONING:** B-4  
**ORIGINAL OWNER:** Dr. Joseph Norris?  
**ORIGINAL USE:** Medical Office & Residence  
**PRESENT USE:** Book Store  
**PRESENT OWNER:** Edward C. & Julie C. McAdams  
**ADDRESS:** 121-123 Fourth Street, NE  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22901

**HISTORIC NAME:**  
**DATE / PERIOD:** c. 1860's? c. 1921-25, 1937,  
**STYLE:**  
**HEIGHT (to cornice) OR STORIES:** 2 storeys  
**DIMENSIONS AND LAND AREA:** 30.75' x 50' (1537 sq. ft.)  
**CONDITION:** Fair  
**SURVEYOR:** Bibb  
**DATE OF SURVEY:** Spring 1985  
**SOURCES:** City/County Records Edward C. McAdams  
Sanborn Map Co. - 1886, 1896, 1920, 1969  
1877 Gray Map of Charlottesville

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Set on a corner lot, this 2-storey brick building has entrances on both streets, though the Fourth Street facade has probably always been the principal one. The building is set on a high foundation constructed of brick laid in 5-course American-with-Flemish bond. There is a concrete water table on the Market Street facade. Wall construction is of brick laid in stretcher bond on the Fourth Street facade, in Flemish bond on the Market Street facade, and in 5-course American-with-Flemish bond on the rear (western) elevation. Seams on both eastern and western elevations show that the southern bay was added at a later date. That bay contains a stair to the second storey, and so it may have been added when the building was converted from residential to commercial use. Thus the Fourth Street facade was originally three bays wide. The center bay projects slightly and is crowned by a very low pitched bellcast pediment. The very low pitched hip roof is covered with \_\_\_\_\_ and has projecting eaves, a bracketed boxed cornice and a plain frieze. There is another very low pitched pedimented gable with a delicately pierced air vent centered over the Market Street elevation. There is an interior end chimney near the eastern end of the Market Street elevation. Windows are double-sash, 2-over-2 light, with plain trim and wooden cornice and frieze. They are of similar height at both levels. There are paired windows at the second level of the projecting bay and at the first level in the side bays of the Market Street elevation. Fenestration on the rear elevation is irregular. Basement windows on the Market Street elevation are 4-light metal, hinged sash; those on the rear are 4-light wooden casement. There is a basement entrance on the rear elevation. At the first storey level of the Fourth Street facade, there is an entrance door with one light over two panels. There are 1-over-1 light windows with wider surrounds and raised paneled spandrels in the flanking bays. A narrower door in the south bay gives access to the stair to the second storey. All of these openings on the first level of the Fourth Street facade are flanked by plastered pilasters carrying a frieze and shaped lintel. There is an inset concrete panel in each bay between the first and second storey windows. The one over the entrance bears the name: "LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING". There is a recessed entrance in the second bay of the Market Street facade. It has a cornice and frieze matching those over the windows, and a round-arched concrete panel and the name "Life Insurance Building". Five concrete steps within the recess lead to the entrance door.

## HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

Dr. Joseph Morris had his office in a building on this lot as early as 1867 (ACDB 63-220). The 1877 Gray Map seems to show that it was either a different building or the northern three-quarters of the present building, without the stair hall. The 1886 Sanborn Map shows the building in its present form. Dr. John C. Hughes had purchased the lot from the estate of David Michie in 1856 and sold Dr. Norris a portion of it before 1866, but no deeds were filed until the mid-1870's (ACDB 70-86, 74-112). Hunter Pendleton inherited the property from Dr. Norris's widow and sold it in 1910 to Mrs. Josephine N. Porter (City DB 22-3). A substantial increase in building value in 1926 probably reflect extensive remodeling and modernization. The building changed hands four times in the year 1934, ultimately ending in the possession of Dr. Dan O. Via (DB 84-56, 76, 77; 88-89). The 1938 tax records show a small increase and note "improvements added", possibly remodeling for the studios of radio station WCHV which occupied the building throughout the 1940's. Emmalou W. Barham bought the building in 1947 (DB 131-171) and sold it in 1950 to Knox Twinbull (DB 149-219) for his insurance agency. It was at that time that it acquired the name "Life Insurance Building". Ownership was transferred to the Shadwell Corporation in 1957 and to the Markham Corporation in 1963 (DB 197-457, 247-419). George Gilmer, Jr., bought it in 1964 (DB 260-65) and sold it in 1974 to Edward C. and Julie C. McAdams of Daedalus Bookshop (DB 361-25).

33-219 ✓

B-4  
30.75 x 50 (1537)

121-123 4th NE

#529

361-25	Edw C + Julie C <sup>same add.</sup> M <sup>rs</sup> Adams	1944	plat 260-69
260-65	George Gilmer, Jr.	1964	"
247-419	Marckham Corporation	1963	
197-457	The Shadwell Corp.	1957	
149-219	Knox Turnbull	1950	

25 + base.

concrete & brick found, brick, built-up flat roof  
built 1930

1979 - replace fixtures

Sanborn maps

1886, 1896 - 2-3 dwelling / officer; stair on S; *may be same as now*

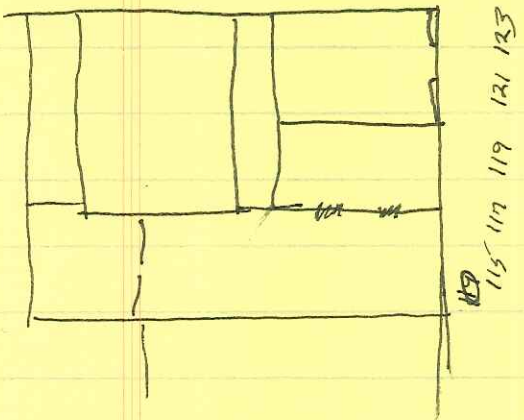
1920, <sup>1907</sup> - as it is now

1877 Gray maps - diff. bldg. - or just without stair?

1877

1929

1957

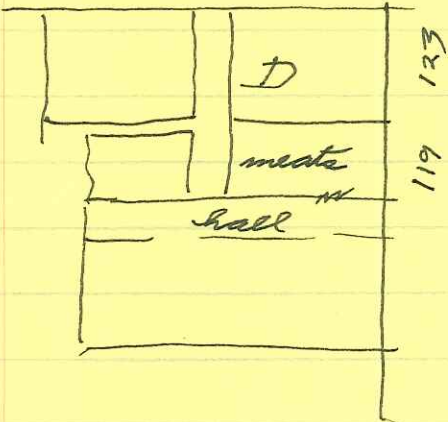


24'

24'

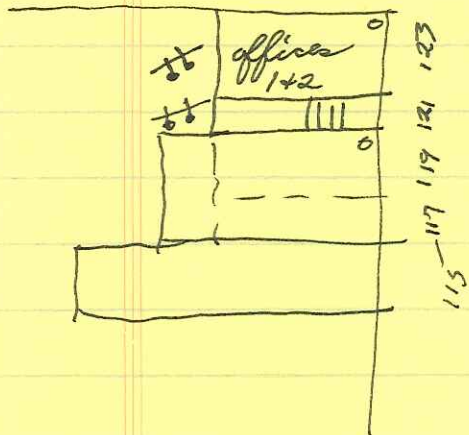
24'

1920



24'

1876



City Directories

123 4th NE

1214th

314  
E Market

1924

↑

1927

Chas W Beauchamp, dentist

Harry L. Smith, "

1931

Nash E Mann, "

vacant

1936

Andrew Hart, Phys

1940

WCHV, →

1947

1953

Life Insurance Bldg

vacant

Knox Turnbull, ins & est. planning

Bettie ↓

Bettie Enfield, milliner

1962

4th & Market

- 149-219 Emmalou W & Charles Barham Jr → Knox Turnbull \$25,000  
 3/1/1950 lot w/ impts at SW corner Market & 4th NE  
 same as 131-171
- 131-171 Dan O & Josephine E Via → Emmalou W Barham \$18,500  
 3/31/1947 SW corner Market & 4th, 30' x 50'  
 same as 88-89
- 88-89 Harold A & Louise L Via → Dan O Via  
 4/27/1934 Market & 4th  
 same as 84-77
- 84-77 J. Emmett & Helen S Bleason → Harold A & Louise L Via, \$17,900  
 11/21/1934 30' on 4th x 50' on Market  
 same as 84-76
- 84-76 R A & Sadie B Watson → J. Emmett Bleason \$6,250  
 9/20/1934 same as 84-56
- 84-56 W E Crank, under 1935 deed of trust from Josephine N & Dr W H  
 9/18/1934 Porter (80-354) → R A Watson  
 corner Market & 4th  
 same as 22-3
- 22-3 Hunter & Louise Pendleton ⇒ Mrs Josephine N Porter, of Louisiana \$3000  
 3/10/1910 lot w/ impts at 4th & Market  
 same as willed to Hunter Pendleton by Mrs Juliatt. Norris  
 ACDB 74-112, 1878, John L Hughes est → Dr Jos. Norris

<sup>34</sup>  
 1931, <sup>32</sup> ~~1878~~ Josephine N. Porter L17 121-123 W.S. 4th 1800 + 4500 = 6300  
 1935 Harold A. Via " " " 2000 + 4000 = 6000 fr. J. Porter  
 1936, 37 Dan O. Via " " " " " " fr. H. Via  
 1938, 41 " " " " " + 4500 = 6500 impts added

1927 Josephine N. Porter " " " 1500 + 3500 = 5000

1895, <sup>98, 1902, 05, 06</sup> 2nd Dr Joseph H. Norvin (est 1802) pt L19, " " #121-123 (1802-) 500 + 1500 = 2000  
 1911, 22 Josephine N. Porter " " " " 1000 + " = 2500 fr. H. T. Rendleton  
 1916, 17, 22, 24, 25 " " " " 1500 + 2000 = 3500  
 1926 " " " " " + 3500 = 5000

1907 2nd Julia Norvin est - pt L19 - 121-123 NW 4th 1000 + 1500 = 2500

1889, 91, 93 Dr Jos. H. Norvin - L19, 5 side mkt - 1500 + 2000  
 1894 " " " "

~~1872-1876~~ ~~1877-1888~~ ~~2000 + 3500 = 5500~~  
 summary 1889 500 + 1500 = 2000 (\$2000 lost in fire)  
~~1889-1893~~ 1500 + 2000 (sic?)  
 1894-1906 500 + 1500 = 2000  
 1907-1912 1000 + " = 2500  
~~1912-1915~~  
 1916-1925 1500 + 2000  
 1926 → " + 3500  
 1931-1934 1800 + 4500  
 1935-1937 2000 + 4000  
 1938-19~~37~~<sup>41</sup> " + 4500 impts added



ACDB James D. Jones, exec est of John C Hughes → Joseph Norvin #1000  
 74-112 w/ specially (inc) warranty only  
 11/22/1878 lot at corner of Union & Mkt St, 30' on Union x 50' on Market  
 "same lot whereon sd Norvin now ~~has~~ has his office & was  
 purchased by sd Norvin of sd decedent Hughes in his  
 lifetime"  
 part of tract for Beal Cove

~~63-220~~  
 63-220 (re: Eureka House)  
 1867 Dr. Hughes is deceased; his "office lot" is west of  
 Eureka House property (which goes back 55' 8")  
 Dr. Joseph Norvin's office lot is N of Eureka

74-112 Geo Cove, corner in Adm est David Michie or Michie  
 11/22/1872 → James D Jones, exec John C Hughes  
 70-86 12/22/1856 Cove sold to Hughes  
 11/12/1875 part Lot 19, on Market  
 bounded by Market St on N, by st on E, on S by  
 lot formerly owned by Mrs Black, on W by Foster & Bibb  
 c 1/4 acre  
 owned by David Michie

35-145 E. Benjamin & Mary Adeline Watts → David Michie #900  
 8/21/1837 lot bounded by Union St on E, Mkt St on N, Wm B  
 Phillips on W, & Mrs Frances Black on S  
 1/4 acre, northern part L 19  
 for Lawrence T Collett 6/20/1836

33-466 Lawrence T & Sally N Collett → E. ~~Watts~~ Watts #700  
 6/20/1836 ~~lot~~ part L 19, form  
 formerly belonging to est of Isaac Isaac  
 → Nathaniel → Jos Bishop → E W Reinhard → Collett

1837 Michie bought lot  
1841 (or 50) David Michie died  
1856 Michie estate → John C Hughes  
1856-~~1860~~ Hughes → Dr. Joseph Norris  
~~before 1872~~ ~~Dr. Joseph Norris died~~  
~~1866~~ John C. Hughes died  
1875 Hughes estate received deed  
1876 fire destroyed something, apparently either "Eweka Home"  
1878 Norris received deed south of this bldg or Dr Hughes's  
office west of it  
" new building on part Hughes estate kept

Market 24th

~~1872, 73, 74 Hughes L 526, 470, 485 L19 ml + 0 = 800  
 + 4500 = 6000  
 Norman 59460 + 3500 = 4000  
 1874, 76 Hughes 526 " + 4500 = 6000  
 1876 Joe Norman L 60 + 3500 = 4000  
 " " " " + 0 = 50~~

40, 79  
 1878, 85, 82 Joe Norman L 19 + 1500 = 2000  
 1878 " " " ml  
 " John Hughes est L 19 + 1500 = 3500  
 1880 " " " " + 1800 = 3300  
 1879 " " " " " " " " off \$2000 -> Joe Norman  
 1877 " " " " + 1500 = " from Sarah Michie est  
 off \$1800 incl added  
 off \$2000 for lost force

~~1872~~  
 1872, 73, 74, 76 Hughes L 19 ml  
 1876 Sarah Michie est L 19 + 3500 = 5500  
 1877 " " ml  
 1872 " " L 19 + 3863 = 5400

tax increases - \* before 1872

1913-16 - general increase, land & improvements

\* 1926

1927-31

" " " "

\* 1938

bond  
4th faced??  
roof mat.  
both bellcast?

4th & Market

25 + basement

4 bays on 4th, 4 on Market

found 5-c dm-wf-Flem, conc water table on Market St only  
Flem bond on Market

low hip roof ( ) w/ proj eaves, boxed cornice,  
brackets (all 4 sides), pl frieze

very low-pitched pedimented central gable (over 2 cent bays)  
on Market St w/ delicate ~~cornice~~ <sup>ripped</sup> vent

1 int end chim N wall bet 1st 2 E bays

windows 2/2 w/ pl trim, cornice, + frieze, 2 ht, per side  
bays 1st level M

recessed ent in 2nd fl <sup>bot</sup> W on Market: 314

cornice + frieze matching windows,

round-arched conc. panel w/ name "Life Insurance Building"

5 conc steps in recession to door (12/1 panel, trim)

basement wind ~~short~~ 2/2 4-l metal mbl,

4-l wooden case. rear

rear 2 bay + 1

surrounds - pl

## 4th & Market

2-5, 4 bay

5 bay narrower & set off by seam in brick, <sup>also at rear</sup> but matches  
cent bay of other 3 proj sl & is crowned by very  
low pitched bell-shaped pediment

stretcher bond on 4th

5.0 am. w. of Elm R. rear

roof appears low hips, metal, proj eaves, boxed  
cornice, brackets, pl frieze

2nd level

wind 2/2 w. of wooden sills & pl trim, wooden  
cornice & frieze; double wind proj bay  
inset com panels under windows,

"LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING" on proj bay

1st level ~~wind~~ openings all are flanked by pilasters carrying  
frieze & ped. shaped lintel

5 bay: door (12/2 panels), 1-l transom, stair

cent": wider door " "

flanking bay: 1/1 wind, raised panel gandrill, wider pl <sup>surround</sup>

base ent rear