

The Capital City

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In a former article reference was made to the growth of the business portion of Lansing during the past decade.

The business portion Washington avenue commences at the intersection of Kalamazoo street. Between this point and Allegan street the growth within the period mentioned has nor been as rapid as in other portions of the city, but there is quite a business done –in fact, more than the entire city could boast 25 years since. But it is not with the old establishments that it is our present purpose to deal.

The first building that comes within our limits is located on the southwest corner of Kalamazoo street and Washington avenue. It is a single story, frame 22 by 100 feet in size, and was built as nearly as we can learn in 1875. It was first occupied by the late John S. Harris as an agricultural warehouse, but has been occupied for three years past by J.W. Stewart's marble factory. There are seven men connected with this factory, turning out work to the amount of about \$8,000 per year.

Just north of this is the Butler block which was built late in the year of 1872, by our former townsman, C.W. Butler. It is of brick, consists of three stories and a basement, and is 66 feet front by 90 in depth. The first floor contains three store rooms, each 22 feet front. The south store is occupied as a grocery by Porter & Strong, and the others are vacant. The second and third stories, which were furnished for a boarding house, and afterwards used for hotel purposes, are now largely occupied by tenants.

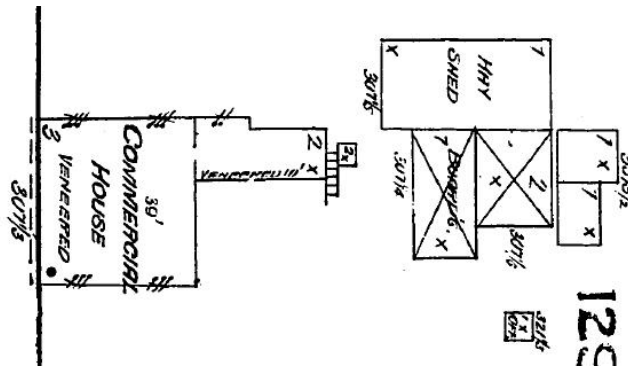
Opposite the Butler block is a two-story brick, about 22 by 80 feet in size, erected in 1878 by Ferle & Warner as a furniture warehouse. It has since been converted into a meat market and is occupied by Fred Bertch.¹

Near the center of the block, on the west side are two stores similar to that above described, one of which was erected in 1872, and the other about three years later. The last mentioned building is occupied by Peck, Esselstyn & Son's wholesale bakery and confectionary house. About 22 years ago William Berridge opened here a retail bakery. He afterwards perfected a partnership with W. Christian, and then withdrew, and Christian & Ganssley opened a wholesale candy factory, but soon dissolved and Mr. Berridge again took control. In 1875 he received as partner Elihu Peck, and they commenced the wholesale manufacture of crackers. B.H. Hinckley was also a member of the firm for a brief period, but withdrew, and in 1880 James Esselatyn purchased an interest, Mr. Berridge soon after retiring. The house now manufactures a full line of crackers, cakes, and confectionary for the trade, and their goods are gaining a reputation second to none in the state. They employ 12 men besides the three members of the firm, use 30 to 35 barrels of flour and from 1,500 to 2,000 pounds of sugar per week, and manufacture everything in the way of candies, from plain stick to the choicest French and

¹ 333 South Washington Ave.

cream novelties. They ship to all parts of the state, and last year's business reached about \$45,000.

The adjoining building to the north is owned and occupied by John Whiteley, the well known grocer, who has done much in the way of gaining a good trade and improving vacant property.

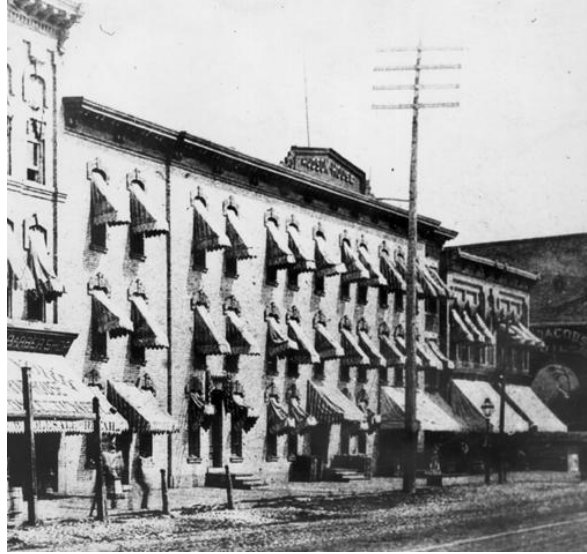


Nearly opposite stands the Commercial house, the successor to the old Edgar house, well known to every old resident of Lansing and vicinity. The house was moved back and remodeled in 1876 by Dennis Edgar, who added a brick front and veneered the entire building, converting it into one of the cleanest and neatest hotels for its size in the city. It met with varying fortunes, however, and finally came into the hands of Mrs. Laura Burr. It has 40 guest rooms and a dry and roomy basement. The house is now occupied by D.D. Waite who has greatly improved it, adding a fine horse barn, 20 by 40 feet in size and containing 20 stalls. Mr. Waite is well known as a landlord, having previously made the Chapman house a favorite with the traveling public, and his reputation has followed him to his present quarters as is evidenced by the largely increased patronage since he assumed control.

Passing on the intersection of Washtenaw street and Washington² avenue we find a large veneered building, 66 feet by 76 feet in size, and consisting of three stories and a basement. It was erected by P.C. Ayres, in 1875, and was occupied from the time of completion, as a hack barn until about three years ago. It was afterwards used as a livery stable, and is now used as an agricultural warehouse. The third story is occupied as an armory by the Governor's guards. The second story is unoccupied.

Adjoining this building on the north is a two-story brick built by P.L. Daniels in 1878m, and is 22 by 76 feet in size. It is occupied by its owner as a drug store. Between this store and the next, which was built by Messers Daniels and Isbell in 1872 there is a vacant which we understand is soon to be filled by the construction of a brick block in which Mr. Daniels and members of the Grand Army post will be interested.

² 231-237 South Washington, this building was replaced by 1892.



Hudson House

We next reach the Hudson house, which like the Commercial, has risen over the remains of the old American. It was built by Martin Hudson, in 1876, and has since been improved by the addition of 12 feet on the south, and one of the prettiest dining rooms in the state. The house has three stories and a front on the avenue of about 100 feet. It can accommodate about 100 guests with rooms and dine double that number. The house and its proprietor are too well known, not only at home, but to the traveling public, to any commendation in this article.

Across the street just south of the old state office building, on old capitol block, is a very neat two-story brick building 22 by 90. This building was erected during the season of 1882 by Mrs. Pratt, mother of Mrs. Thomas Bell of this city. Soon after its completion the first floor was occupied by D. Bendit of East Saginaw and the second floor by H.P. Bartlett's commercial college. Mr. Bendit has recently vacated the premises and they are now occupied by H.W. Ziegler & Co as a wholesale leather and findings store.³

This comprises the buildings erected within the decade on Washington avenue, between Kalamazoo and Allegan streets and represents a cash outlay of about \$100,000.

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³ 206 South Washington Avenue.