



Alexandria Times

Established in 1797 as *The Alexandria Times and Advertiser*

Out of the Attic

Old Virginia House

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Image: Old Virginia House. Photo, Alexandria Library Special Collections.

Constructed as early as the 1820s at the southwest corner of King and Peyton streets, the Virginia House hotel would later be known as the Old Virginia House and the Hotel Jackson. The inn, seen in this late 19th-century photograph and located on the outskirts of Old Town, was a popular stop for cattle drovers and wagon drivers who brought produce and other goods to Alexandria from western counties.

In 1853, owner Lucien Peyton advertised that the hotel, with the addition of another story, contained about 30 bedrooms, a large dining room and a barroom, as well as a stable that could accommodate 50 horses. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Virginia House hotel required significant repairs, with walls falling down due to heavy rains and water damage that occurred when a chimney defect caused a roof fire.

During the Jim Crow era, hotels in Virginia served one race or another, and by the mid-1890s, the Old Virginia House, as it was then called, served an African-American clientele. Within a few years, the hotel had an African-American owner, Washington "Wash" Jackson, and a new name -- the Hotel Jackson.

Jackson was active with civic and business groups, and the Hotel Jackson served as a gathering point for African American activities, such as the staging area for the emancipation celebration in 1903 and the meeting site for a local branch of the National Negro Men's Business League in 1905.

In 1927, a tornado ripped through Alexandria, severely damaging dozens of buildings and ripping away the King Street façade of the Hotel Jackson. The structural damage was so significant that the city ordered the historic building be razed. A few years later, Jackson sold the property to the Coca-Cola Company which built offices and bottling operations there in 1932.





**Office of Historic Alexandria
City of Alexandria, Virginia**

“Out of the Attic” is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as “Marking Time” and explored Alexandria’s history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into “Out of the Attic” and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.