

# “Baldwin’s Block”



**B**aldwin’s Pharmacy occupied the west ground-level corner of what became known as Baldwin’s Block, with the Green Dragon Nite Club in the basement and St. Mary’s Hospital above. Entrances from Barton Street took patients into Dr. Baldwin’s and other medical offices, such as Dr. Vickers, the dentist. Look closely and you can see advertisements for the Fair in both the pharmacy and the Sanitary Barber Shop, later known as Shake’s. Further east was the Douglas Cafe, the entrance to the movie theater, a second-floor hotel and another ground-level restaurant.

**J**ust as the buildings and store names of the well-remembered Block changed between the time Dr. Dana O. Baldwin first conceived of a black business district for Martinsville in the 1920s and their demolition in the last years of the 20th century, the term “the Block” evolved to include other blocks and businesses along Fayette Street.

**T**oday “going to the Block” could mean dropping by Floyd Gravelly’s Community Market No. 2, the K&B barber shop or Imperial Savings & Loan. A Sanborne Fire Insurance map (top left) believed to date from 1957 shows how Bug Lane and the unpaved Elizabeth Street made way for the current extension of Market Street.



*“Block” photo courtesy of the Martinsville Bulletin; fire insurance maps from the City of Martinsville Engineering Department.*



**WORKING AND PLAYING ON FAYETTE STREET:** an exhibit created through the partnership of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Fayette Area Historical Initiative.

