REVISITING PUTNAM COUNTY'S HISTORIC HOTEL LANDMARKS

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By Glenn Jones and Carol Bradford, for the Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN.

Putnam County has had many hotels over the years. Some of these landmarks changed their names with different owners; others became dilapidated and were torn down. Many are gone because of fire.

One well-known historic hotel still stands today in **MONTEREY** — the **Imperial Hotel**, built in 1909.

Arlington Hotel was located at 15 N. Oak Ave. just north of West Broad Street in Cookeville.

P.G. Cooper acquired the 22-room hotel in 1910 and ran it until he died in 1953. His widow operated the hotel until two years before her death in 1964.

Their daughter, Elise Cooper Ellison, started renting it out as a rooming house.

Early Sunday morning at 12:30 a.m. on June 2, 1968, Waymon Garrett, a resident of Arlington, was returning home after work and discovered the fire there.

Some of the tenants on the first floor managed to get their possessions out. The fire started in the rear of the second floor, which burned away quickly and caved in.

Two men perished and a third was critically burned in the fire that gutted the Arlington Hotel.

Hollis Daniels was said to be the last person to escape the inferno, with severe burns on his hands, feet, and head. He was rushed to a Nashville hospital.

Kenneth Smith and Hobert Bennett died in the fire.

Other hotels of Putnam County's past

ALGOOD

Bilbrey Hotel was located on the corner of Wall Street and Third Avenue and managed by Quitman Bilbrey.

Cornwell Hotel was built by a Mr. Ragland and operated by the Cornwell Family.
Marshall Hotel was located on Second Avenue, just north of the Algood railroad station.
McDaniel Hotel was located on the southeastern corner of the intersection of Main Street and Second Avenue and later became the Algood Hotel.

BAXTER

Mine Lick Hotel was located up the hill from the Mine Lick Depot. The hotel's name was changed when the town of Mine Lick's name changed to Baxter in 1902. The hotel closed in 1928 and became apartments. The building became dilapidated and was torn down in the 1970s. Baxter's City Hall now stands on this location.

BLOOMINGTON SPRINGS

In 1865, Ridley Draper improved the spring and made it a summer resort. He built several small cabins for guests. Later a 200-guest hotel was built with B.W. Buford as the owner and manager. The town of Bloomington Springs became the center of Putnam's tourist industry of the day. They had a bowling alley and an overnight jail.

The railroad built a train station where DelMonaco Winery is now and the hotel would transport the large number of tourists from the station to the hotel.

COOKEVILLE

Eureka Hotel was on the northwest corner of Broad Street and Walnut Avenue. In 1888, Silas Kuykendall built small cabins for guests.

It was first called the **Jenkins House** by owner Virgil Jenkins. Later owner, B.G. Adcock, named it The Eureka Hotel.

The eight-room hotel was torn down in 1931 to make way for a modern movie palace, named the Strand Theater. It was torn down, and the Cookeville Performing Arts Center is there now.

Shaw Hotel was built soon after the Civil War by T.J. Shaw, south of the Square. It was destroyed by fire in 1881.

Reagan Hotel was built by Isaac Reagan just after the Civil War. The first building burned; it was rebuilt near the southeast corner of the Square. It was later known as the Staley Hotel.

McKinney Hotel and Tavern was built in 1856 by J.M. McKinney. It was on the south side of the square. He sold the hotel to W.J. Isbell in November 1888 and changed the name to Isbell Hotel.

In 1896, W.J. Isbell sold the property to John G. Duke. It was later sold to L.G. Garner, postmaster of the Cookeville Post Office; the post office was inside the hotel. The hotel was leased to Felix Brown and renamed the Brown Hotel.

The building was torn down in 1910.

Richelieu Hotel was located just south of the Square, on South Washington. In the late 1800s, it was first an old tobacco warehouse and then turned into a hotel in 1890 by Alex Reagan.

In 1927, F.S. Sidwell bought the Richelieu and renamed it the **Sidwell Hotel**. When the hotel burned in August 1962, it was owned by Rastus Huddleston.

Jared House was located on the south side of West Broad Street. It was built in 1890 as a residence and bought in 1891 by Brice Byrne Jared and converted into a hotel. In April 1937, the building was torn down to make room for a modern brick building.

The **Duke House** was built in 1894 at Broad and Cedar, across from the Depot.

In 1926 H.F. Shanks bought the Duke House and built a large modern brick building all the way around it and named it the **Hotel Shanks**.

It was a fancy hotel until 1968 when the old wooden part of the Duke House that was in the center burned, destroying the rest of the building; it was torn down.

MONTEREY

West Crest Hotel was completed in the spring of 1894 in Standing Stone, later Monterey. The owner, Arthur Ashley, sold the hotel in 1896 to Thomas Emmett Goff. The building was destroyed by fire in 1905.

Cumberland Hotel was originally known as the Ramsey Hotel; it was built by Tilbert Ramsey in the early 1900s. The name was changed to Cumberland Hotel with a grand opening in June 1902.

Reagan Hotel was located on the southeast corner of Cleveland Avenue and Oak Street. It was built and completed on March 1, 1899, by the Monterey Hotel Co. William Reagan leased the hotel from the Monterey Hotel Co. The name was changed to Park Hotel.

Other Monterey hotels that the Archives is seeking information on are the **Dow Hotel**, **The Monterey Hotel** and **The Imperial Hotel**.

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*Read more about the history of Putnam Co., TN & surrounding areas at:
'Forgotten Crossroads' History of Putnam County, TN: http://www.ajlambert.com