

**12. O'Kain House**

(S. Gilmer Street)  
Early 19<sup>th</sup> century Georgian cottage, moved to this site from Elbert County in 1988. Governor George Rockingham Gilmer's home, "The Cedars," originally stood on this site.

**13. Knox House-American Legion Hall**

(107 Boggs Street) (ca. 1857)  
A vernacular Plantation Plain house that displays an eclectic combination of elements from the competing styles of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, including Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and early Victorian. The slender clover-leaf columns are relatively rare in Georgia. The central Masonic emblem and star cut-out designs in the portico sawn work are original. This is the last remaining example of the houses that once surrounded the courthouse square.

**14. Joseph Henry Lumpkin House**

(147 East Boggs Street) (ca. 1790s-1827)  
The home of Joseph Henry Lumpkin, first Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court and co-founder of the Lumpkin School of Law at the University of Georgia, is the oldest documented house in Lexington. The east wing (on the left) is the original vernacular I-House, built by Jacob Elsbury between 1784 and 1797. The main Federal style wing was added by Lumpkin shortly after he purchased the house in 1827. The property was later sold to Thomas B. Moss, considered at the time Georgia's greatest educator, who served as principal of Meson Academy from 1849 to 1889, and mapped Oglethorpe County in 1894.

**15. Original Meson Academy Site**

Meson Academy, the first privately endowed academy in Georgia and one of the finest schools in the state, opened its doors in 1808 on this site. It was moved to the corner of Academy and Church Streets in 1897. On the Joseph Henry Lumpkin House property, near the southwestern edge of the front lot bounded by Main, Meson, and Boggs Streets, is the original site of Meson Academy, the first privately endowed academy in the State of Georgia. An academy building of brick, wood, and stone, two-and-a-half stories high, with large glass windows was built on this hill overlooking the town. Meson Academy opened its doors in 1808 and was moved to a new and larger brick building on the corner of Academy and Church Streets in 1897.

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**27. Lester-Callaway House**

(118 E. Church Street)  
Rare example of an early 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular Double-Pen I-House (note the two separate entrances) with Chippendale inspired Folk Victorian sawn work.

**28. Bray-Andrews House**

(103 E. Church Street)  
This vernacular I-House was built in the late 1700s. The front entrance displays earlier Georgian style elements. It is believed to have housed the first post office in Lexington.

**29. Platt-Brooks House**

(102 E. Church Street)  
This Federal style I-House, built by George Young between 1827-36, has long been considered one of the finest houses in Lexington. The Greek Revival portico with monumental Doric columns was added in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The house was enlarged and a full story added at the basement level in the 1890s.

**30. Lexington Baptist Church**

The congregation was organized in 1847, but a church was not built until 1851. The pointed arch windows display the influence of the Gothic Revival style, popular for religious buildings during this period. The top of the original steeple sits to the left of the building.

**31. Chedell-Broach House**

(120 W. Church Street)  
Originally an I-House, built about 1818 by William Baldwin, M. D., it was enlarged and remodeled in a 4-over-4 Greek Revival style, with a portico across the full facade, supported by huge reeded Doric columns around 1860. The tall, hipped roof was also probably added at that time.



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**16. Paul House**

(140 E. Main Street)  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> century Folk Victorian style house.

**17. Maxwell-Johnson House**

(107 Meson Street)  
This is a transitional turn-of-the-century house. Ionic columns, entrance, dentil work cornice, and tall, hipped roof with dormer are typical Colonial Revival style. Sweeping verandah and tall decorative chimneys are typical Queen Anne.

**17a. Schull-Stevens House**

(125 Meson Street)  
This house is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular Queen Anne form with some transitional classical detailing as seen in the entrance with transom and sidelights, porch posts, and dentil work cornice.

**18. Foster-Marr House**

(140 Deupree Street)  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> century Folk Victorian style. This is a vernacular pyramidal house type with applied Victorian ornamentation.

**19. Deupree- Appling House**

(240 Deupree Street)  
On the right side is the original two-room house, thought to have been built before 1804. It was enlarged to its present form with transitional Greek Revival style entrance and decorative details after 1828.

**20. C. R. Crawford Rental House**

(357 East Church Street) (ca. 1860)  
This vernacular Folk Victorian house was moved from its original site next door in 1905 to make room for the present C. R. Crawford House.

**21. Bush-Turner House**

(354 East Church Street) (ca. 1854)  
An exceptionally fine vernacular transitional Plantation Plain house with elaborate Greek Revival entrance and decorative corner (continued next column)



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**32. Willingham-Watkins House**

(222 West Church Street) (ca. 1832)  
Built by Thomas Brewer, the Greek Revival entrance and the portico, supported by monumental Doric columns were added in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Unusual features include the textured round granite bases on the columns, elaborate capitals and cornice, "sheaf of wheat" design of the balcony railing and egg-and-dart molding around the upper glass section of the entrance door. A curved Victorian addition to the right is covered with fish-scale shingles.

**33. Upson-Evans House**

(221 W. Church Street) (ca. 1812)  
The home of Stephen Upson (eminent lawyer and representative to the General Assembly 1821-1823), the one-story portico is a 1950s addition to what was once the rear of the house. The original entrance, facing Main Street, has an elliptical fanlight and sidelights. The stacked granite wall, typical of New England, is unusual in Georgia, but is explained by the fact that Upson was originally from New England. The old gardens are included in Garden History of Georgia.

**33A. Baptist Pastorium**

(243 W. Church Street)  
This ell-shaped granite home was built in the 1930s and serves as the Baptist Pastorium.

**34. Mathews House**

(244 West Church Street)  
A particularly nice example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century shingled Craftsman style side-gabled bungalow.

**35. Swan-Mathews House**

(306 W. Church Street)  
The original two-room house, built on this property before 1840, can still be seen where it was incorporated into the rear of this late 1895 vernacular Queen Anne Free Classic house.



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boards, and an Italianate front porch added in 1873. The outbuilding to the left rear is a pauper's house from the old Clarke County Poor Farm, moved to the site in 1990.

**22. C. R. Crawford House**

(337 East Church Street) (ca. 1905)  
Nice example of a transitional Queen Anne Free Classic style house (a variation of the Queen Anne style that features classically inspired details).

**24. Final Site of Meson Academy**

(corner of E. Church and Academy Streets)  
Meson Academy was moved into a new and larger brick building erected on this site in 1897. It was enlarged and became a public school in 1917. Designated the Oglethorpe County High School in 1920, it continued to operate at this location until 1954. The building stood vacant and deteriorating and was finally demolished in 1970. The brick enclosed area is the outline of the original building.

**25. The Presbyterian Manse**

(211 E. Church Street)  
The unusual plan indicates this house may have been built before 1817 as a residence/dormitory. An L-shaped Victorian sawn work porch has been removed. This building was the first theological seminary in Georgia, established in 1828. Dr. Thomas Goulding who was still at that time serving as minister of the Lexington Presbyterian Church, was appointed the first Professor of Theology, teaching the first class of five students in this house.

**26. Lexington Presbyterian Church**

Organized as Beth-Salem Church in 1785 by the Rev. John Newton, the first resident of Georgia to be ordained to the Presbyterian ministry. In 1822, the congregation moved to Lexington and reorganized as the Lexington Presbyterian Church. The present church building was constructed in 1893. This was the first Presbyterian Church organized in northeast Georgia and is believed to be the oldest chartered and continuously organized Presbyterian Church in the state. Its cemetery is the final resting place for several notable Georgians, including the Rev. John Newton, Francis Meson, Gov. George R. Gilmer, Stephen Upson, and Judge Lewis J. Deupree.



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**36. Lallie's Hill**

(311 W. Church Street)  
Built for James Stewart in 1898, a Queen Anne cottage with a variety of Victorian ornamentation, including decorative shingles and spindlework. The porch is supported by Doric columns on square piers. A grape arbor supported by granite piers is located in the yard.

**37. Gillen-Armour House**

(344 West Church Street)  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> century Queen Anne cottage with ornamental shingles in the gables, turned porch posts, and decorative sawnwork.

**38. Samuel Lumpkin House**

(113 North Gilmer Street)  
Early 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular double-pen house with many later additions and modifications.

**39. Old Oglethorpe Echo Office**

(110 North Gilmer Street)  
This late 19<sup>th</sup> century wooden vernacular commercial building was the original printing office of the county newspaper, The Oglethorpe Echo, established in 1874.

**40. Shaking Rock Park**

(South Upson/Shaking Rock Road)  
A picnic area featuring huge natural granite outcroppings in unusual shapes, including Saddle Rock, Table Rock, and Shelter Rock, the Shaking Rock is situated within a large mass of boulders, near a small precipice at the end of the path. It can be rocked with very little pressure applied to the proper spot. The park also has nature trails and an active beaver pond. The park was once part of Governor George R. Gilmer's estate.

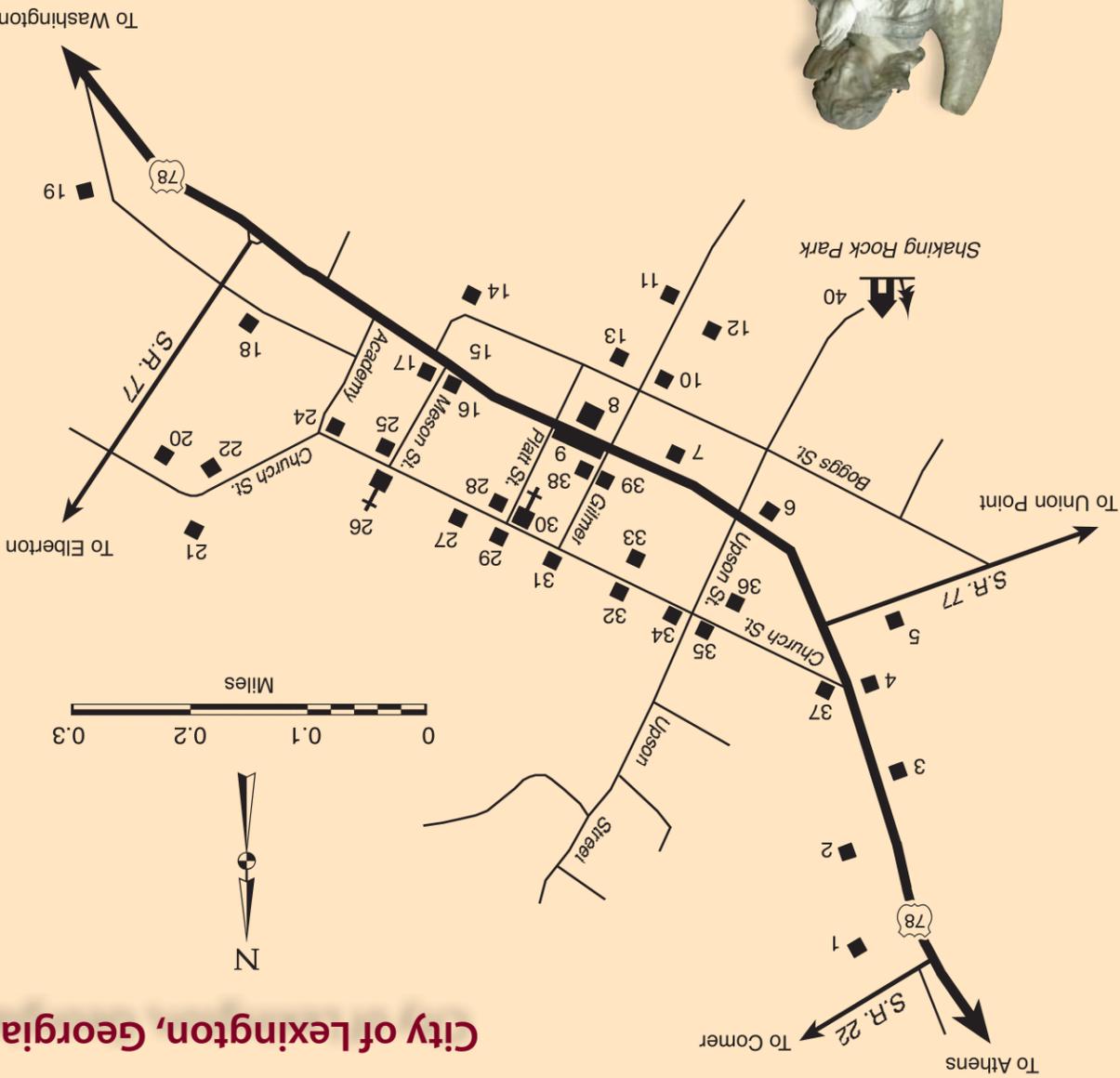


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# LEXINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT WALKING TOUR

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## Lexington History

Lexington is the county seat of Oglethorpe County. It was apparently already a small settlement before the county was established in 1793. The original site selected for the new county seat proved to be undesirable due to a lack of good springs. It was moved to its present location and named Lexington, after Lexington, Massachusetts. Lexington quickly grew and prospered, becoming an important trade center. It was noted for the education, culture, and refinement of its citizens. The first Whitney cotton gin in Oglethorpe County was operated on Troublesome Creek at the edge of Lexington. Its owner was one of the first men to use water rather than horses to power a cotton gin.

Francis Meson, a former teacher who had become a wealthy merchant in Lexington, died prematurely in 1806. His will stipulated a portion of his large estate to be used to build an academy in Lexington and that his valuable landholdings in and around the town should be used as an endowment. Meson Male Academy, the first privately endowed academy in Georgia, open in 1808. Renowned for its high teaching standards and the quality of education it offered, it drew students from all over the state, boasting a considerably larger enrollment than Franklin College (University of Georgia). The education of girls was considered equally important in Lexington. A "Genteel Boarding School" for girls was opened in 1810 and a Female Department was added to Meson Academy in the early 1820s.

In 1828, the first Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Georgia was established in Lexington. Dr. Thomas Goulding, minister of the Beth-Salem Lexington Presbyterian Church (the first Presbyterian Church established in north Georgia), was appointed Professor of Theology. The seminary was later moved from the Presbyterian Manse in Lexington to Columbia, S.C., and renamed Columbia Theological Seminary. It is now located in Decatur, GA.

By the 1820s, Lexington had become a thriving town with an elegant courthouse, 38 dwellings, 15 stores, numerous shops and hotels, male and female academies, a public library, and churches. Athens, at that time, was still a small, struggling town. Its residents came to Lexington to shop at stores owned by some of the biggest merchants west of Augusta, who had their goods shipped in from New York.

Lexington was home to some of the most noted lawyers and politicians in Georgia including William Harris Crawford, George Rockingham Gilmer, Wilson Lumpkin, Joseph Henry Lumpkin, Stephen Upton, Thomas Willis Cobb, John Henry Lumpkin, and Samuel Lumpkin. People from across the state gathered in the stately groves of oaks and hickories surrounding the town to hear political issues discussed and debated by the leading politicians of the day. It was said that "the voice of Oglethorpe gave voice to the politics of the state."

As fertile new lands to the west were opened for development during the 1840s-60s, Oglethorpe County's population began to decline. Athens and the University of Georgia became the new cultural and commercial center for the area. Lexington entered into a slow but steady decline that was relieved somewhat by an economic boom lasting from the 1880s until the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Lexington has evolved into a quiet, dignified, and elegant old town. Its lack of growth in later years has allowed it to remain relatively true to its 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century origins. The Lexington Historic District, which encompasses most of the town, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

### 1. Col. John Billups House

(582 W. Main Street)

(ca. 1836)

Transitional vernacular Plantation Plain house with large and elaborate Greek Revival entrance and elaborate Greek Revival entrance and Doric columns supporting the porch.



### 2. Howard-Cunningham House

(534 W. Main Street) (ca. 1892)

A good example of Victorian Queen Anne style, built for Congressman Wm. M. Howard. This property includes an unusually fine series of period outbuildings, including a rare 1902 stone barn constructed with local granite.



### 3. Arnold Pace House

(541 W. Main Street) (ca. 1854)

The Italianate porch was added later. Lexington's first residential indoor bathroom was installed here in 1899.



### 4. Gottheimer-Shapiro House

(425 W. Main Street)

Restrained 19<sup>th</sup> century Queen Anne cottage.



### 6. Smith-Turner House

(307 W. Main Street) (ca. 1798)

Disguised within the right half of this vernacular I-House is a very early two-story log house over a full basement. Additions to the rear are later. The front porch displays a fine example of early sawnwork.



### 7. Oglethorpe County Jail

(ca. 1878)

With its arched window crowns, quoins, and bracketed cornice and entrance, the jail shows a strong Italianate influence that is very unusual for this type of building.



### 8. Oglethorpe County Courthouse

(ca. 1886-87)

Richardsonian/Romanesque Revival style, designed by L.B. Wheeler, W. H. Parkins & H.I. Kimall. It was built entirely of local materials except for the limestone capitals on the columns, at a cost of \$30,000. The Seth Thomas clock in the tower weighs 1,000 pounds and was wound by hand until it was electrified in 1988. On the right front lawn is a Monument to the Confederate Soldiers, erected in 1916, but the United Daughters of the Confederacy.



### 9. Downtown Commercial Block

Vernacular variations of the typical masonry one-story commercial storefront buildings constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Lexington's 3-story "skyscraper" features a recessed corner entrance supported by a decorative cast-iron Corinthian column.



### 10. Aaron-McGehee House

(206 S. Gilmer Street) (ca. 1800)

This very early 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular I-House was originally a hotel and tavern. It has a huge dry well in the basement that was used to keep large quantities of stored foods cool. It faces on the old post road from Lexington to Greensboro (S. Gilmer Street).



### 11. Cunningham House

(219 S. Gilmer Street)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular Georgian plan house with classical detailing. Across the street is the late 19<sup>th</sup> century resored Cunningham Commissary.

