1. 105 N. Randolph Street  The original two over two brick structure with basement kitchen was built in 1849 by Diego Evans, a free black businessman, and his wife. They would sell the house and emigrate to Liberia, a nation founded by freed U.S. slaves in 1847, when they planned to start an import-export business. Instead, like so many of their companions, they died of disease.

2. 112 N. Randolph Street  Irish immigrant and Civil War veteran John Sheridan purchased the property and made it his home in 1887. That same year, he helped the Lexington Livery Stable to be established on N. Main Street. The Randolph Street property subsequently had many owners and served as the site of numerous businesses. In 1970, J.B. Lewis, Jr. purchased the property.

3. 201 N. Randolph Street  The 1893 "Sheridan House" was designed by William G. McDowell, architect of the 1897 Rockbridge Courthouse, as well as many prominent residences in Lexington. Located on the highest point on Randolph Street, the house was occupied by John Sheridan until his death in 1929.

4. 207 N. Randolph Street  The home was purchased in 1893 by William Price. Born in 1869, Price would serve as butler to Curtis Lee, son of the ground floor is of stone construction, while the upper floor is frame. It was the home of Dr. Alfred W. Pleasant, Sr. and Dr. Alfred W. Pleasants, Jr., who graduated from Leonard Medical School of Shaw University in Raleigh.

5. 214 Massie Street  One of the more unique buildings in the community, the ground floor is of stone construction, while the upper floor is frame. It was the home of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, a major center of the African-American community. Members of the Odd Fellows purchased and subsequently converted it into a meeting hall for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

6. 205 Fuller Street  Hayden and Rebecca Holmes moved to Lexington from Amherst County following the Civil War. They purchased a small shop, while the family lived above. He would subsequently purchase the home and turn it into his butcher shop, while the family lived above. He would subsequently purchase the home and turn it into his butcher shop, while the family lived above.

7. 12 Fuller Street  The substantial early 20th century building was home to John B. Thompson and his family. Thompson was an entrepreneur and a leader in Lexington's African-American community. Among his entrepreneurial activities, he was a caterer, who together with his wife, would cater Fancy Dress and other parties at Washington and Lee University.

8. 300 E. Washington Street  Designed by architect Isaac E.A. Rose, the Ruffner building now serves as Lexington City Hall. The present First Baptist Church building was purchased in 1897, the home was owned by Zach and Arlena Franklin. It is also the story of European-Americans like Irish immigrant and Civil War veteran John Sheridan, who lived on Diamond Hill and helped in its development.

Diamond Hill is also a lesson in 19th and 20th century architecture, from the elegant "Blandome," an Italian villa built in the late 1820s, to numerous vernacular styles of the early 20th century. Additionally, the neighborhood and nearby North Main Street is home to several late 19th century churches and a National Register designated building constructed in the late 1920s as Lexington's "Colored School."

Following the Civil War in 1865, nearly 4,000 African-Americans in Rockbridge County had been freed, and they joined several hundred others known as free blacks. Many came to Lexington to seek work and an education. They settled mainly along north Main Street and eastward along Randolph Street. Across from VMU lay a largely open hill that became known as Diamond Hill. The origin of its name is unknown.

In 1883, a street from North Main to the top of the hill was called Diamond Street. Following the Civil War in 1865, nearly 4,000 African-Americans in Rockbridge County had been freed, and they joined several hundred others known as free blacks. Many came to Lexington to seek work and an education. They settled mainly along north Main Street and eastward along Randolph Street. Across from VMU lay a largely open hill that became known as Diamond Hill. The origin of its name is unknown.

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Note: Locations 16 and 18 are located outside the area covered by the general map. Some patrons may choose to drive to the address listed in lieu of walking.

Cover top left to right: Patrick Payne, VMI cook in the 1890s, courtesy of VMI Archives; Blandome; marching band on N. Main Street; Lylburn Downing School