

Hall, Bank & Tavern



When Alexandria was founded in 1749, this corner was planned as the main intersection in the new town, with the streets named in honor of Thomas Fairfax, 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron, a major land-owner in Northern Virginia. From Cameron Street, the streets to the north and south reflect the descending order of the British monarchy by gender, as originally planned.

City Hall

By 1752, a market area and City Hall were established along the two streets on the sites so designated when Alexandria was first laid out. The tall, steeped clock tower on North Royal Street, which contrasts with the building's Second Empire-style massing



and detailing, is a reconstruction of the tower designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe, which was part of Alexandria's 1817 town hall. That hall burned in 1871, necessitating construction of the current building a year later. The new building was designed by architect Adolph Cluss, a recent immigrant to Washington D.C. from Germany (where he was a friend and associate of Karl Marx), who had designed the U.S. Department of Agriculture building in 1869 and Washington's Central Market in 1870. Through the years, City Hall has undergone several alterations, including a major rehabilitation during a period of "urban renewal" in the 1960s when a paved plaza replaced the early market area and buildings along the adjacent streets.



Bank of Alexandria

On the opposite side of North Fairfax Street is the second location of the Bank of Alexandria, which moved to this corner in 1807. The building is presumed to be the second oldest extant banking house in the United States and has been restored

to its Federal-period appearance, notable for its neoclassical arched doorways and American eagle carvings on the keystones.

"The buildings are chiefly of brick, some of them very stately and elegant. The banks are kept in houses quite magnificent...." Captain Henry Massie describing the town of Alexandria in 1808.

The bank failed in the "Panic of 1834" financial crisis and in 1848 was acquired by James Green and included as part of "Green's Mansion House Hotel," built in front of the elegant residence of John Carlyle and blocking it from view on North Fairfax Street. The hotel was used as a hospital during the Civil War and later became a lodging known as Braddock House. The old hotel was demolished in 1973, leaving the bank and opening up an unobstructed view of the historic Carlyle House.

Wise's Tavern

Diagonally across the intersection is Wise's Tavern, built in 1777 where twelve years later George Washington bid farewell to fellow Alexandrians from the front steps, just before leaving for New York to be inaugurated as the first President of the United States.



Shopping

Dining

Market Square

King Street

Visitor Center

Waterfront

Torpedo Factory Art Center



WALKING MAP LEGEND

- Information
- King Street Trolley Stop
- MetroRail Station
- Public Parking
- Taxi Stand
- Water Taxi
- Museum
- Lodging
- Capital Bikeshare
- Shopping & Dining
- Bike Route
- 5-minute walk (1/4 Mile)
- Park
- Visitor Attraction
- Civic Destination