
DOWNTOWN OCALA HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

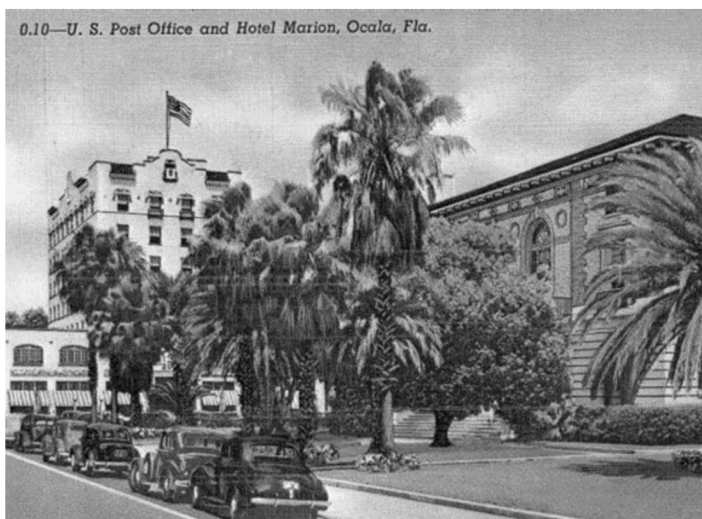
DUNN BLOCK

101-135 N MAGNOLIA AVE, OCALA, FL 34475

John F. Dunn, the prosperous owner of Merchants Bank and a key figure in many Ocala businesses, including railroads, purchased Dunn Square in 1875. After Marion County was declared bankrupt as a result of their Reconstruction practices, the courthouse, public square, and county jail were auctioned off. Dunn offered the high bid of \$101 for the public square. He planned to hold the property in trust until the much-hated Republicans, who were blamed for the county's bankruptcy, were voted out of office. After a change in county government at the end of the Reconstruction era, he deeded the property back to the county.

In 1883, Dunn offered the square as the site for a new courthouse, only a block north of the existing structure, in return for the property being deeded back to him. He offered to dedicate the square to the city as a park and parade ground. The county commission declined this offer.

In 1909, the United States government began the construction of a post office and a court and office building on Dunn Square. The Ocala Post Office opened in 1909 on the block across from the Hotel Marion site, formerly the First Baptist Church site. This was the second Ocala Post Office; the originally established post office was held at Fort King in 1844. It was demolished in 1965 and is currently the site of a parking lot and Catalytic Site identified for future development.



Post Office and Hotel Marion c. 1940



Post Office c. 1920

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