



Denton's Furniture

61 Court Square

Trained carpenter and cabinetmaker J. S. Denton first became involved in the furniture business in Bridgewater about 1878. In 1905 he came to Harrisonburg and opened J. S. Denton & Sons on West Market Street in the Paul Building that was located where the Judicial Complex is now.

In 1917 Denton's bought the Kenney property on West Court Square. A five-story, brick building with 40,000 square of floor space was constructed on that site 1922-23 at a cost of \$85,000. The fourth and fifth floors were divided into 24 rental apartments that were later removed to accommodate furniture displays.

During the Great Depression, when potential customers had little cash to invest in new furniture, Denton's moved to a barter economy of accepting goods and jewelry in exchange for furniture. The addition of other products, floor coverings, drapery, and appliances, helped the business survive.

E. Warren Denton, son of J. S. Denton, had joined the business in 1907, and Bernard "Jack" Denton in 1919. Warren's son Warren, Jr., and Warren, Jr.'s daughter Terri Denton were the third and fourth generations to run the business. Denton's closed in 1991 after 112 years in Harrisonburg. James Madison University leased the building and remodeled it as apartments for graduate and married students. Eighty-six efficiency apartments opened in the fall of 1996.



—Dale MacAllister

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