

In 1893 a wealthy Owensboro whiskey distiller had a house built that has since been occupied by some of the wealthiest citizens of Owensboro and was recently placed on the National Register of Historical Places.

"Highland" was first occupied by Sylvester Monarch who was associated with the Eagle Distillery. Monarch and his family lived in the Queen Anne until the distillery depression of 1898 caused their financial ruin.

The collapse of Monarch's whiskey empire resulted in the sale of Highland (so named because of its commanding position on a hill overlooking the Ohio River) to Maggie Clements, wife of prominent Owensboro attorney and Master Commissioner LaVega Clements. One of the Clements sons died in an automobile accident and the body was laid out in the room on the first level of the three story hexagonal tower that graces the facade of Highland.

LaVega Clements died in 1938 and Maggie Clements died in 1962 leaving the house to her daughter Lucinda. After Lucinda's death in 1984, a lawsuit over her will ^{ordered} ~~stated~~ that the house be put up for auction. On March 22, 1986, the house was sold at auction to Daviess County Attorney Robert Kirtley for \$57,000. Since then Kirtley has put much money and effort into the restoration of Highland.

Highland is a two story, double pile brick Queen Anne dominated by a three story hexagonal tower on the front facade. Sandstone eyebrows over the windows and a sandstone watercourse around the house make for a pleasing contrast of exterior textures.

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The tower is topped with a double capped slate roof. The hip roof on the central block of the house retains its original patterned slate and dormer windows. The entrance is graced by a Greek pediment and ionic columns.

The people that lived in Highland were, like the house itself, extravagant. Like many who had Queen Annes built for their families during the gilded age, I am sure Sylvester Clements wanted to show off his wealth a bit.

On March 28, 1986, Highland was placed on the National Register for Historical Places and described in the register as "the finest example of Queen Anne domestic architecture in Owensboro."