This building is thought to have been the first brick business building in town. Most information found says that it was built in 1897 for Morrow Brothers and Heath (who did in fact move in that year). This first information shows it was actually built a few years earlier.

The Standard (Concord): May 7, 1891

Albemarle is soon to have a large brick building. The contract has been let out. Three stores will be opened in the same, and the upper story will be used as a Town Hall.

The First Brick House
The Standard (Concord): September 3, 1891

Stanly county will soon have a brick house, and it is located in Albemarle. For half a century it has been believed that no brick could be made of Stanly dirt; and no railroad facilities being in existence, the county has never had a brick house. There is on Hon. S.J. Pemberton’s lot a small brick pantry. Now, however, since Stanly county has taken on new life and come to know her many resources and the possibilities before, much material improvement is going on. We started out to say that there is being erected in Albemarle three store buildings, of brick. They are built solid, two stories high, with basement, and are to have the modern glass front. The site is on one corner of the grove around the Hearne hotel. The buildings, when completed, will belong to S.H. Hearne, Esq., merchant R.B. Kluttz and Lawyer Pemberton.

S.H. Hearne
S.J. Pemberton

Blood Will Tell
The Standard (Concord): October 15, 1891

R.A. Brown has finished burning enough brick to complete the three store rooms nearing completion in Albemarle, Stanly County.
The brick block is complete enough to admit the three firms C.P. Cox & Co., Dry, Wadsworth & Co. and R.B. Kluttz & Son, all of whom are now established in their new quarters and enjoying a lively trade, says the Albemarle News. It is a singular fact that these three firms are composed of Cabarrus county men. Albemarle may live, as the metropolis of the “state of Stanly” to see the day when she may equal in glory the state of Concord and city of Cabarrus.

More Brick Buildings
The Daily Standard (Concord): February 11, 1892

Messrs. Sid Hearne, S.J. Pemberton and R.B. Kluttz & Son, of Albemarle, have set things on fire. They erected three handsome, two-story brick buildings with glass fronts in the town of Albemarle, Stanly county. No nicer buildings can be found in any town of Albemarle’s size. These were the first brick buildings ever built in Stanly, except a small flower house, on Mr. Pemberton’s lot.

Albemarle Building
Charlotte Observer: December 15, 1896

Mr. John D. Heath, representing Heath, Morrow & Company, of Waxhaw, came in Thursday, and has bought quite a lot of cotton already. Messrs. Heath, Morrow & Company will open business here January 1. They are expecting to do a wholesale, retail and banking business.

Morrow Brothers & Heath purchased the company store of the Wiscassett and Efird Mills called “The Big Store” in 1902. They then moved from South Street into “The Big Store” location and opened on January 1, 1903. {The “Big Store” was located at the corner of First and West Main. This location was later the home of Lowder Hardware}
On January 1st, the Morrow Bros. & Heath Co., will remove their immense stock of goods into the storeroom of the Wiscassett-Efird Co.- The Big Store, they taking the remnants of the stock and fixtures of the Wiscassett-Efird Co. on that date. This will combine the two immense stocks of both concerns, amounting to $50,000, giving Albemarle one of the largest and most up-to-date department stores in the state.

Morrow Bros. & Heath Co. began business here January 1, 1897, when the town was practically dead, and by push and vim, honesty and fair dealing, they have built up an enormous trade, not only in Stanly county but in extending out into the counties of Anson, Union, Cabarrus, Rowan, Davidson, Randolph and Montgomery.

In addition to their cash business, they do an immense time business.

This firm has been a great help towards advancing the upbuilding of the town, having invested largely in real estate in both town and county.

This move is only another evidence of the great firm’s prosperity and worth to this section.

What happened over the next couple of years is not known but in 1907 at least a portion of the South Street building was occupied by Farmer’s Hardware.

**ATTENTION, GOOD PEOPLE OF STANLY!**

With Spring comes the demand for Spring Hardware of all kinds. Don’t forget the New Hardware Store just opened in the old Morrow Bros. & Heath Co. stand. We carry a full line of Hardware for farmers, mechanics and all classes. We have a full line of Farm Implements and have just added to our stock a complete line of Steam Fixtures and Mill Supplies, Building, Oil, Etc., also a full line of Pole and Pole Ax Supplies, Buggies, Harness, Wagons and in fact all kinds of goods carried in a first-class Hardware Store. We carry the largest line of Building Material carried in the country, including Doors, Sash, Blinds, Planer Lathes, Shingles, Limes, and in fact a full line of all goods in our line. Don’t forget to call on us when in town.

**Farmers’ Hardware Company.**

Stanly Enterprise: February 14, 1907

Stanly Enterprise: May 18, 1911

R.L. Sibley has purchased the central room of the Hearne brick block, on South Street, and will use it for a garage, machine and repair shop. He will add lathes and machinery as needed to equip a nice machine shop.
MORROW BROTHERS & HEATH – South Street (1892)

Albemarle Enterprise: March 9, 1916
The Pepsi-Cola Bottling Works are announcing their opening at their stand on South Street. They have installed a modern sanitary plant and mean to carry a full line of soft drinks, making a specialty of bottled Pepsi-Cola.

*At some point the far left and center sections of the building were demolished. The following article was found in the vertical files at the library that seems to explain when that happened.*

A two-story building on West South Street, reportedly the oldest business building in Albemarle, is being torn down. Once occupied by Morrow Brothers and Heath Company, the building had more recently been used by Standard Auto Parts Company.

It had been vacant for the past few years, however, and deemed a menace to safety by city inspectors who had examined it.  *(There was a handwritten note that said “part of it, only, torn down”)*

According to the Stanly County History Center records, at one this this building was the home of the Stanly Bottling Works.

In addition, other businesses that have been in the building include Standard Auto Parts and Whitley Realty.
Current status (2013): The building still exists and is in use
OLDEST BRICK BUILDING
IN ALBEMARLE
This building was the first brick building in Albemarle. There was space for three businesses on the lower floor and was completed in 1892. The original businesses were C.P. Cox, Dry Wadsworth & Company and R.B. Kluttz & Son who were all out of Concord.

This building is best known as the original location of Morrow Brothers and Heath who moved in during January of 1897.
Later tenants included several garages, the Stanly Bottling Works and Standard Auto Parts. The picture on the screen shows when part of the building was occupied by Stanly Bottling Works. It’s unclear when the one-story part on the right was added.
Here is what the building looked like in 1957 during the Centennial Parade. At this point it had been empty for a couple of years.
During early 1958, city inspectors determined the building was unsafe and plans were made to demolish it. For some currently unknown reason a part of the building was saved.
This is what remains of the building. It has been thought that one section of the building had been demolished and two remained however only the left side of what you see in this photo was part of the original building.
The view on the left shows when Stanly Bottling Works was in the building. You can see the addition that was added on the right side. At some point this addition had a second story added and that is what we see looking at the building as it exists today. This means that the left side is all that is left of the original 1892 building and the right is a later addition.