

1631 Maine Street



Col. William A. Distin House

1631 Maine

Date: 1880/1882 (John B. Carson)

Richardson Romanesque

The house now known as the Distin house was built for railroad magnate John B. Carson, president of the Hannibal and St. Joe Railroad. The home was built on a lot in Nevins addition to Quincy, formed from a parcel of 160 acres of Illinois bounty land originally warranted in 1818 to a veteran of the War of 1812. In 1885 the home was purchased by Col. William A. Distin, a veteran of the Civil War who joined the Iowa Infantry in 1863, was captured, and imprisoned for a time at the notorious Andersonville POW camp. It is clear that no expense was spared in the construction of this large and magnificent Richardson Romanesque structure, on either the exterior or interior. On the exterior, the massive stone masonry is accented by polychrome stone work in the arches above the dormer windows, and the elaborate detailed carving of the stone columns and capitals, as well as the massive stone chimney caps. Almost lost to the eye of a ground level visitor is the shining pink marble or granite column located near the front of the house at the southwest corner of the second story.

On the interior, three stories of spacious rooms spread out from the oversized, elaborately wood paneled first floor entry, each holding another architectural treasure of details. An enclosed sun porch to the east on the first floor offering a more informal living space, is built against the homes original stone façade. Throughout the house, original gas ceiling fixtures of many different designs remain and have been converted to electricity. On the second floor, three family bedrooms open off a central hall, with servant's quarters several steps down to the rear. Throughout the house, the windows retain their triple fold interior shutters, which recess neatly into the window frames when not in use. The third floor, under the many dormer eaves, is now outfitted as a game and pool room.

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