

238 S. 12th Street (1889)



Ezra and Florence W. Best house
Modified Romanesque Revival & Queen Anne
Architect: John Batschy

The residence of Ezra and Florence W. Best, located at 238 S. 12th, is of a modified Romanesque design, an early work of the Quincy architect, John Batschy, Swiss born and European trained, who immigrated to Quincy in 1886. The Quincy Daily Journal of Oct. 7, 1889, noted that "Mr. Ezra Best is building a fine residence at the corner of Twelfth and York streets. It is a red stone front. We are informed that the stone was shipped from Minnesota." Mr. Best was the founder and president of E. Best Plumbing and steam Heating Company.

The massing and details of the design are elements of both the Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne styles. The octagonal tower to the left of the front entry porch on the front façade, the steeply pitched and irregularly shaped roof, and a mix of shingle styles on the upper portions of the projecting tower and gable ends above the second story are Queen Anne design elements. The wave patterning of the shingles on the gable over the front entry porch and low relief carved wooden triangular pediment over the front steps, are elements that appear in a number of Batschy-designed residences throughout Quincy. Batschy's own house, less than a block to the south at 316 S. 12th, but not on tour this year, shows a number of similar exterior details.

The interior displays numerous examples of 19th century stained and leaded glass windows, including a keyhole pattern and an arched triple window unit located on the front façade above the first floor entry porch. Oak woodwork throughout the house is accented with cherry, and massive pocket door of solid cherry grace the front and back parlors. In the nook formed by the back stairwell, an original marble corner sink stands near the door into the dining room.

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