

EZRA BEST HOUSE -- 238 S. 12th St. -- 1889 --John Batschy,
Architect -- Queen Anne/Romanesque

This imposing brownstone-trimmed home at 238 South 12th Street was built for prominent Quincy Businessman, Ezra Best and designed by John Batschy, a Swiss-born architect who immigrated to Quincy in 1886. Many examples of his work remain in Quincy, including several homes in the immediate vicinity of 238 South 12th. His designs are characterized by lavish and fanciful use of molded terra cotta and brick coursings. The Best House blends two related styles, the Queen Anne with its turrets, dormers and multiplicity of shingle types and the heavy majesty of the Romanesque Revival with its massive, low-arched windows and large rough-cut stone construction.

This house is notable for its fine examples of 19th century stained leaded glass. The attic, as well as housing an exceptional piece of stained glass, has unusual beams that curve up toward the rafters. The oak woodwork throughout the house is accented with cherry. Massive sliding doors of solid cherrywood grace the parlor and an original marble corner sink remains near the dining room. An unusual feature of the Ezra Best House is that the original coal-burning fireplaces remain, accented with tiling typical of the Art Nouveau period. This grand home has survived a century relatively untouched by time. Its fortunate new owner, Mr. Rob Dwyer, Director of the Quincy Society of Fine Arts and a recent emigrant to Quincy from Nevada, plans to restore this landmark house.

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