



MUSSELMAN HOUSE

2203 Maine

1888—Architect—John Batschy

Queen Anne/Romanesque Style

The DeLafayette Musselman home at 2203 Maine Street is an example of Roman Revival/Queen Anne architectural style. It was built in 1888. The architect, John Batschy, was born in Switzerland in 1855 and came to Quincy in 1864. He was the architect of the Musselman Building at 7th and Hampshire Street, which has since been destroyed. He also designed most of the buildings at the Illinois Veterans Home, and Washington, Berrian, and Irving Schools. Portrait and Biographic Record, Adams County, Illinois (1892) said of Batschy ... "he was known for preparing his elaborate plans with the greatest care and infusing great beauty in his architectural design." The Adams County History and Representative Men published in 1919 said this: "With the gift of design, he wrought wonders in wood, stone, and steel and Quincy may well congratulate herself in the citizenship of one so perfect in his art and so devoted in every way to the best interest of the city he so helped to adorn."

DeLafayette Musselman was born in Fulton County, Illinois in 1842. He fought with the 85th Illinois Volunteer Infantry as a 2nd Lieutenant during the Civil War. He was the founder of Gem City Business College in 1870.

In 1881 he purchased four lots. This home sits on one of those lots. The other three lots were lawn and a carriage house. The homes immediately to the east and west of this home were then lawns.

Mr. Musselman was a lover of trees and the grounds had many specimens of trees native to the Midwest. Several still remain. The west lawn of the home extended to 22nd Street, and according to oral history, was covered with violets. Mr. Musselman loved birds, and oral history records that the neighborhood children were allowed to pick the violets and play on the lawn, but quietly, so as not to disturb the birds.

Mr. Musselman and his wife, the former Mary McDavitt, had three sons D.L., V.G., and T.E., and a daughter Hattie V. The sons all taught at Gem City Business College

The home was restored to its original conformation in 1988-89 by its present owner, John Varnier, using an early photograph graciously provided by Carl Landrum, historian, and with the guidance of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the National Park Service department of the Interior. In this residence the upstairs is presently used as an apartment. The woodwork on the main floor is oak and butternut. On the second floor it is butternut, walnut, and cherry. All the floors are hardwood and in the study and foyer they are parquet. Be sure to look for three unusual stained glass windows. All the glass in the other windows is boiler plate glass, approximately 1/4 inch thick. All hardware on the doors is solid brass. There are six fireplaces in this home—three up and three down. In the study the fireplace is pink Italian marble and the mantel is unusual. The paneling in this room is solid oak. The wallpaper used throughout the home was selected for its similarity to that used in the early 1900's.

There are no square corners on this house, the brick is curved and called bull-nose brick. On the west side two balconies that are decorative, but serve no purpose have been restored. These are on the third floor. On the tower at the west side of the home is a three foot copper finial. This brick home is on a stone foundation and has a slate roof. There are four chimneys—each with three flues. Every fireplace has its own flue. At one time all the brick was painted white—to be restored to its original state it had to be stripped with chemicals and then washed with water pressure at 350 pounds per square inch.

Mr. Varnier is to be commended for this wonderful job of restoration.