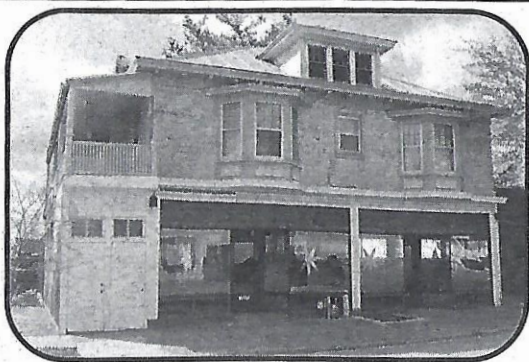


836 South 8th Street



836-838 South Eighth Street

Commercial Style – 1890 and 1912 – Architect Unknown

Pieper Shoe Store and Politsch Hardware

Although "Piepers" is tiled into the store entry at the 836 South Eighth Street address, this commercial building is likely remembered as a long-time Quincy business, the Politsch Hardware Store. It was W. H. Pieper, Sr. however, who constructed a metal-clad "double store" in 1890, and the 836 address was originally occupied by a notions store and later by Pieper's son, William, who maintained a boot and shoe business there for twenty-five years (1899 -1924). In 1891, W. H. Pieper notified the public in the newspaper that he had sold his hardware, stoves and tinwork business at the 838 address to John Wemhoener and Henry Schield who then managed their hardware business at the same address from 1891 to 1914.

To provide more space for these quite small commercial establishments, Pieper senior purchased land behind the stores in 1902 for a later one-story rear addition. In 1912, Pieper transferred the entire property to his son, and William began extensive remodeling to the storefronts, adding a second floor living quarters for his family that was covered on the outside with molded sheet metal which looks like dressed stone. He also added oriel windows and exterior stairs, but most impressive were the addition of new storefronts to both addresses which had the latest in display window design. The existing storefronts reflect 1912 trends in commercial design with their recessed entry areas, roller awnings, and Kawneer display windows designed to support large areas of glass for customer viewing. The transom area is filled with prismatic glass made by the Luxfur company, and especially notable are the geometric squares Frank Lloyd Wright designed for Luxfur in 1897. Note the roof's moderately wide eaves with exposed rafter ends and 1912 double wood doors on the south end which open to stairs to the family flat, or to the hardware storage area.

In 1914, William Pieper and Charles Politsch purchased Wemhoener and Schield's hardware stock, and Politsch took over managing the hardware store next to Pieper's shoe store. In 1924, Charles Politsch purchased the entire property from Pieper and the Politsch family moved into the upstairs flat. The Politsch Hardware continued in business eventually occupying both 836 and 838 addresses until 1970, a period of fifty-six years.

Note that both interior addresses have original metal ceilings and wood flooring. The display window cases which once held the latest products can be accessed from wood doors inside the stores. The flat has original woodwork, some with faux graining, an extensive pantry storage, coffered ceilings with 1912 ceilings lights, decorative columns and mirrored cabinet. Floors in the formal dining area and living room are quarter-sawn oak and the oriel windows in the living room and bedroom bring additional light into this comfortable residence.

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