

2131 Grove Avenue - "Spanish" style - 1921 - Martin Geise, architect

The unique home at 2131 Grove was built in the 1920's for Dr. Albert Sohm, a well known Quincy dentist. Dr. Sohm was born in Quincy in 1882, was educated in Quincy schools, and received professional training at Washington University. He returned to Quincy to set up his dental practice, and quickly became known as a leader, not only in his profession, but in all civic and social matters.

It may well be fitting that such a progressive professional man should break new ground in Quincy's architecture when his new home was built in 1921. The lot on which the home stands was at one time part of John Wood's property, and later was owned by the Poling family, whose imposing home stands on Lawndale Triangle. The Sohm residence practically defies architectural classification. It contains elements of both the Prairie style and the Spanish style. The "overhangs" of the home show some influence of Frank Lloyd Wright's well known tastes, but it definitely is full of Spanish touches.

The home is two stories with a red tile roof, so often seen in homes in the southwest. The Spanish atmosphere is expressed through the recessed doorway with its slender columns and ornamental lintel. Wrought iron railings and a second floor balcony over the front door continue the feeling. The ivory-colored stucco is still in perfect condition. A small patio on the east side of the house adds to its refreshing charm.

Apparently the Sohms did not move into their home until 1926, even though construction began in 1921. Dr. Sohm died in 1946, but Mrs. Sohm continued to live in their Grove residence until 1958 when she moved to Des Moines to live with a nephew. Robert Geise, a nephew of the architect, then acquired the home. With the exception of 1964, Robert Geise retained possession of the residence until 1972. The current owner is Mrs. Patricia Geise.

A word about the architect is in order. Martin Geise practiced in Quincy from 1906 through 1945. He is reputed to be the first licensed architect in Adams County. Geise was very active in his profession. He was one of the architects on the Halbach-Schroeder building, now the Carson, Pirie, Scott store. Credit is given to Geise for designing the Illinois State Bank building, the new Irving School, the present Jefferson School, the Knights of Columbus building, many commercial buildings, and several private residences in addition to the Sohm house on Grove.

The Sohm residence was cited in 1973 in the Illinois Historic Sites Survey for its unique contribution to Quincy's architectural heritage and as a significant example of an unusual style.