



Joseph and Katie Rhode House 1408 Oak—1892

The Rhode house is one of those sturdy brick residences which are so familiar to Quincy residents that their architectural interest tends to pass us by. Like its many brothers and sisters, the house squeezes a lot of use out of a small plot by pushing upwards and back out the rear and pulling its porches into the inside angles of the plan. The vertical lines are emphasized further by steeply pitched roofs and, as an effect of that, terrifically tall chimneys.

From a functional standpoint, the house is actually a stacked version of the shotgun cottage, one room wide and as deep as the owner could afford to build. This plan had the double benefit of economy and familiarity to a tradesman who was used to the shotgun plan but had developed deep enough pockets for a full-size house. Joseph Rhode was just such a man. Beginning as a blacksmith, he had worked his way up in the 1880s to his own wagon-making business on Broadway. In 1891, he purchased the lot on Oak; and a year later, just as the Panic of 1893 hit, he put up the house for himself and his wife of fifteen years, Katie Tofall.

The plain brick surfaces of the Rhode house are relieved by rounded corners, a simple design feature likely introduced by a local architect in the early 1880s which quickly spread to new construction throughout the city. Fretsawn work appears in the tympanum of the second story windows as well as on the porch brackets. At one time, the house also had wooden shutters, another nearly universal feature of the vernacular brick house of its period. For a view of how the gable used to look, go around the block to the house's twin at 1405 Spring, which apart from the gable has undergone considerably more alteration.

*BEHIND CLOSED DOORS
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