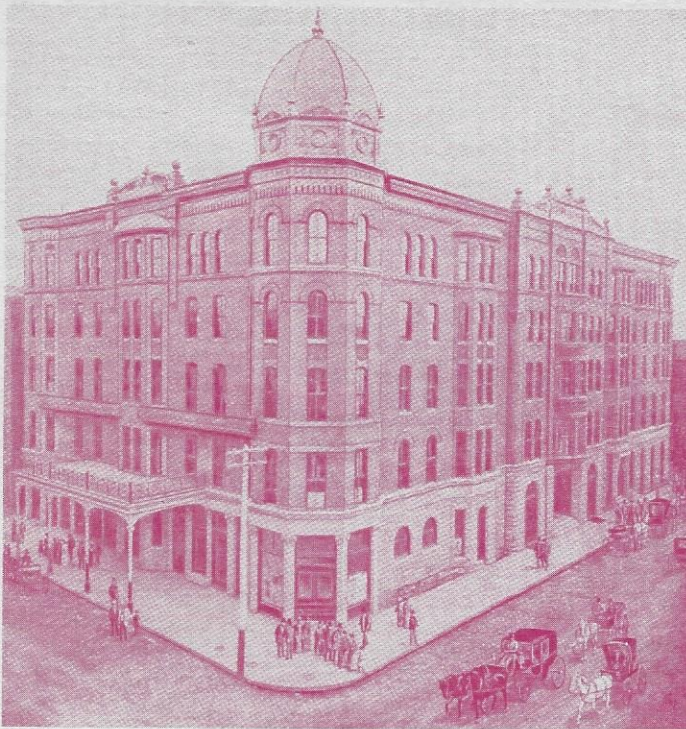


The Rise And Fall And Rise Of The Newcomb



The Newcomb Hotel

The Newcomb Hotel building has gracefully stood at the southeast corner of Fourth and Maine streets in Quincy for nearly 100 years. Designed in 1888, by well-known St. Louis architect Isaac S. Taylor, construction began in March of that year and was completed in February, 1889. Built in the Romanesque Revival style, the exterior is white limestone and cherry red brick. Much of the detailing on the first floor, such as the pilasters and capitals surrounding the entrances, and the entablature, were constructed of pressed tin. The use of tin in this manner was a common practice in earlier days because it was lightweight and inexpensive to use. Several different window treatments were used by architect Taylor, especially on the west facade (along 4th Street). A large octagonal shaped dome was placed at the corner of the structure, rising nearly 150 feet above the ground. Speculations suggest the dome was removed around 1920, for safety precautions.

The interior was grand as well, with marble and mosaic tile flooring in the spacious lobby and other main floor areas. The lobby was trimmed in cherry and walnut woodwork with a beautiful marble stairway and brass balustrade. Attractive cast iron columns were also present in the lobby, acting functionally (load bearing) while adding to the beauty of the space. Rooms and suites featured Italian marble mantels and marvelous views of the Mississippi and downtown's Washington Park. The hotel, once described as the largest and finest of its kind west of Pittsburgh, opened March 5, 1889, with a lavish grand opening ball attended by hundreds.

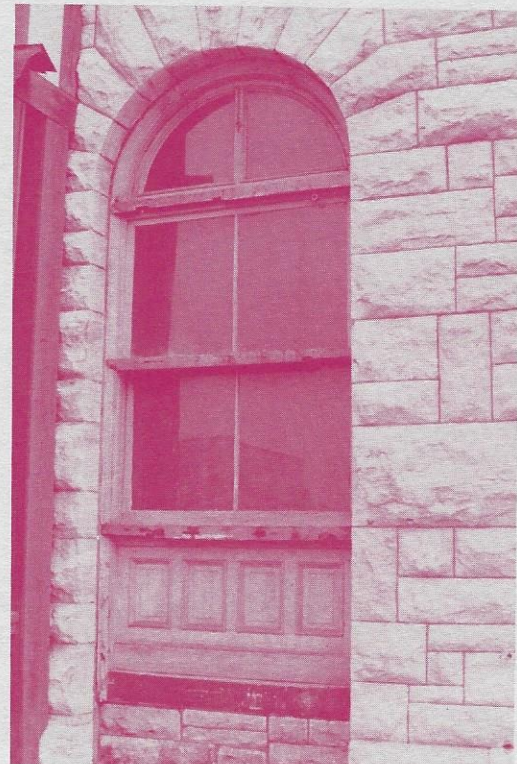
The building was purchased this past July by the Circle Quincy Limited Partnership through Rappaport Companies, Inc. of Minnesota, and will be developed and managed by Rappaport/Kensington. It will be renovated into a "full-service" hotel for the elderly. The re-named Kensington, when completed will consist of 106 units rented on a month to month basis.



Lobby interior, c.1930

A recent tour of the building by manager Judy Taylor allowed me to view how much of the architectural integrity had been abused over the years. Gracious tall ceilings had been lowered in nearly all rooms (which was rather unsightly from the exterior), many marble mantels had been painted, marble floors in the grand lobby had been forgotten, the nice lobby columns were unsympathetically covered and the lobby itself was divided into small apartments. I've been assured that where possible, all of these elements of grandeur will be restored (and renovated) making the former Hotel Newcomb a place many of our local elderly will proudly call home for years to come.

—David Bonnett



Recently uncovered main floor window of the old Newcomb Hotel, revealing some original detail