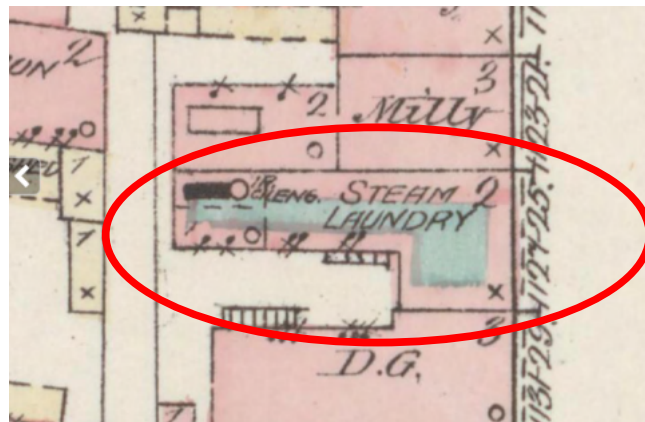




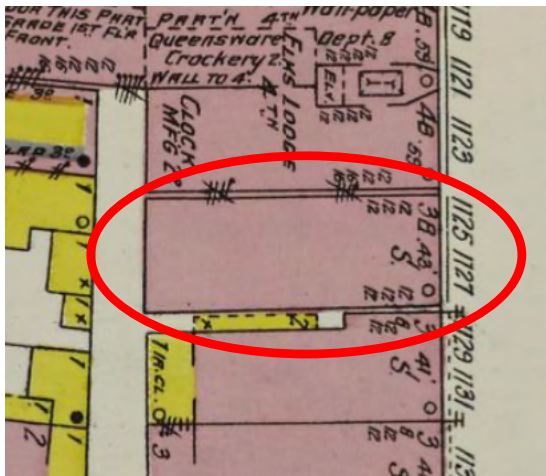
1125-1127 Main Street

Deed records and city directory listings suggest that this building was built in the 1880s, probably by Frederick Unruh (1839-1920). The son of German immigrants, Unruh came to Wheeling in 1851 with his parents and initially worked as a baker and confectioner. After serving as deputy sheriff, he worked as the city collector of Wheeling for some 40 years. According to his obituary, he was “somewhat reserved in manner, he was well informed and a pleasant conversationalist.”

Frederick Unruh purchased the property in early 1882, while his business itself is listed on Water Street in 1884, and the 1884 Sanborn Insurance Main map shows a smaller structure at 1125-1127 Main at that time – a two-story brick “steam laundry.”.



1884 Sanborn Insurance Map



1902 Sanborn Insurance Map

Although Unruh still owned the property, by 1888, L.S. Good & Company, dry goods is shown at 1125 Main Street. City directories indicate that that company was owned by L. S. Good and E. Hanauer and that they were “jobbers and retailers of imported and domestic dry good, notions, wraps, etc.”

The current building – a three-story brick structure – was in place by the time of the 1902 Sanborn map. Tenants changed around that time, with directories listing Daniel Abercrombie & Company and later Abercrombie Brothers, wholesale and retail millinery, from about 1903 until about 1912.

C.A. House, piano agency located at 1141 Market Street, is listed as having a storeroom at this address in the 1917-1918 City Directory, followed by B[runo] Hoehl Piano Company, “vacant above the first floor,” in the 1919-1920 directory.

By the time of the 1921-1922 City Directory, the apparently enterprising Bruno Hoehl housed the Bruno Manufacturing Company at this address, selling malt and hops at that time and imported and domestic hops, malt, and bottlers supplies by 1923-1924 – in the middle of Prohibition (which ran from mid 1914 until 1934 in West Virginia). No birth and death dates were found for German immigrant Hoehl, but the family lived on the Island at 8 Zane Street when his six-year-old daughter Eva Clare died in 1911 and at 449 North Front Street, Wheeling Island, when his wife Clara (born 1865), also a German immigrant, died in 1921.



E.M. Cotton & Company, house furnishings, are also listed at this address in the 1923-1924 directory. This company, operated by Edward M. Cotton, William L. Cotton, and Thomas Y. Cotton, remained in the building for decades, selling “furniture, floor coverings, and window shades” and later, wallpaper. Thomas Yoxall Cotton (1905-1970) purchased the building in early 1946. The son of Edward M. Cotton, Thomas had apparently been a star athlete in high school, playing both football and baseball for all four years at Wheeling High School and being the baseball team captain as a senior in the class of 1924 (senior picture shown). His WWII draft card, dated February 16, 1942, showed that he was 5’7” tall with brown hair and blue eyes and weighed 145 pounds. He was married to Adelaide Bieberson (1909-1998) by that time.

Thomas Cotton purchased the property in early 1946. A few months after his death in 1970, his widow sold the property to Reicharts, a neighboring furniture store. A variety of uses followed: storage for Reicharts Furniture; White’s Sons, manufacturers and designers of mausoleums, monuments, and markers; and Advanced Communications, Robert Levenson, Chairman of the Board.

Reichart Furniture Company sold the property in 1988 to Benjamin Schneider, who had a photography studio in the first floor of the building for many years after that. Schneider’s work on the building resulted in a state preservation award.

Prepared by Jeanne Finstein, Friends of Wheeling
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