



SandHill Marketing photo.

Dieter Brothers Pharmacy (Union Block) - 124 North Main Street - 1892 - 1911.



Visually evident in Richland Center in the 1890s, classical design sources were used in a vernacular manner in the Union Block at 110 North Main Street. (Vernacular: Indicative of a structure not formally designed by an architect. Usually simple, and may

exhibit ornamentation suggestive of a particular style, but does not otherwise conform to the pattern typical of that style).

Built in 1892 as investment property for W.H. Pier and Mrs. Laura McCarthy, the Union Block exhibits various cornices, a parapet above a simple cornice, elevations divided by applied brick pilasters, and a classical front-piece comprised by a triangular pediment by capped pilasters on the Main Street façade, all of which are associated with classical architecture. Among the best preserved of the large commercial blocks in Richland Center, the Union Block is one of the few commercial buildings retaining the iron columns, capped brick piers and classical front-piece of its original storefront. The site of the Wolf Shoe Store for many years, the Union Block's ownership was divided when the north one-third was sold before the turn of the century for a drug store to the Dieter Brothers who had an addition built in a similar style in 1911. The interior of the Dieter Brother's addition still has many of its original design features intact such as the entry doors, tin ceiling, wood floors and shelving.



Fred Doudna and Louis Dieter - Albert Rockwell photo.

The Dieter brother's grandparents Christopher and Elizabeth Dieter, immigrated to America in 1846, settling in Butler County, Pennsylvania, for eight years, before moving to Grant County, Wisconsin in 1854, and then finally to Akan Township, in Richland County, in 1859. There, their father Louis Dieter, came to eventually own 400 acres of farmland, which he reclaimed from the virgin forest, and became a very prominent, influential, citizen of the township. Louis and his wife Julia (Karo) raised ten children together. John W. Dieter was born in 1866 and his brother Louis was born in 1871. They were educated in the common schools, as well as receiving religious instruction from the Lutheran churches in Boaz and Muscoda. At the age of fourteen John began to work for Jay Briggs of Boaz and later Dr. Garner. Eventually John came to Richland Center and began working, first for druggist I.A. Cleveland, and next for H.B. Allen. In 1892 he wrote the state boards and became a registered pharmacist. He then went into a partnership with his brother Chris Dieter, locating initially across the street from H.B. Allen's, in the A.A. Bulard building.

In 1892 W.H. Pier and Mrs. Laura McCarthy built the Union Block at the northwest corner of Main and Court Streets and in 1894 the Dieter Brothers moved their drug store into the north one-third of the Union Block building, and became known as the Union Block Pharmacy. It was also in 1894 when brother Louis Dieter, who had left the home farm in 1891 and went to work for I.A. Cleveland, bought out brother Chris Dieter's share of the business, partnering with brother John, in the Union Block Pharmacy. Louis Dieter's ability to speak German and to understand Scandinavian were valuable assets to the business. In 1911 the Dieters had an addition built onto the north end of the store that doubled the size of their business. The Dieter Brothers continued renting the space for their store for twenty-two years before buying it outright in 1916. The Dieter Brother's partnership lasted for forty-five years, until John died in 1939, at his home, from a blood clot in his heart vessels, he was 72, and was the oldest merchant in Richland Center.



**John W. Dieter and Brother Louis M. Dieter
Richland County History Room photos.**

John married Susan B. Joslin, a daughter of Major Joslin a prominent Civil War veteran, in 1901, and they had two daughters. Susan Dieter lived to be 100 years old dying in 1966. After John's death, Louis Dieter continued to operate the drug store until deciding to retire in 1951, ending a business that was in operation for 59 years, 57 of them in the Union Block



location. At his retirement Louis Dieter, like his brother John had become the oldest living merchant in Richland Center, with a career spanning over sixty years. Mr. Lester Noerr bought the Dieter Brother's store from Louis in 1951 and began a stationery business that would last until he retired in 1980.

Louis Dieter married Clara Welton in 1896, and they had one son Earl, who became a pharmacist in Madison. Clara died in 1946, just six days after her and Louis celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. In 1947 Louis married again, this time to Mrs. Grace Stewart and she died in 1952. In addition to his business Louis also served for many years on the Richland Hospital Executive Board. Louis Dieter died in 1953, at the age of 82.

Left: Susan B. Joslin Dieter – Richland County History Room photo.



The Louis Dieter House 462 East Kinder St. SandHill Marketing photo.