



William Schmitt House, 475 North Central Avenue.

William Schmitt House, 475 North Central Avenue, 1937.

Featuring a steep gabled roof, dormer and entrance bay, this two story Tudor Revival styled house is characterized by false half-timbering on the front gable with brick fill in, multipaned windows, stone arches above the lower windows, and a stone wall chimney. This rather elaborate example of the late Tudor Revival influence in Richland Center was built in 1937 for the owner of the Schmitt Brothers Cheese Company, William Schmitt. Constructed mainly of stone by contractor Clarence Steiner, the Schmitt House exhibits the steeply pitched gables, false half-timbering and a variety of building materials including stone, brick and wood used to create the appearance of an English Tudor styled house. Significant as the most elaborate example of the four architecturally significant examples of the Tudor Revival in Richland Center, this house's stone construction makes it an uncommon example of the style and contributes to its significance as one of the few examples of twentieth century stone construction in the city. The four extant architecturally significant examples of Elizabethan Tudor Revival style in Richland Center include the Schmitt House, the Judge and Mrs. McCorkle House, the A.V. Pier House, and the Leo Keegan House. This Tudor style apparently was the preferred historic style used in the construction of the city's fashionable houses in the 1920s and the 1930s.

Not only is the William Schmitt House significant in the architectural history of Richland Center, the building razed to make room for its construction has an interesting story as well.

The home was known as the George Krouskop Mansion and was one of the truly magnificent homes ever built in Richland Center.





Photograph courtesy of Sylvia Schmitz.

The George Krouskop Mansion, 475 North Central Avenue, 1881.

George Krouskop was one of the pioneer settlers of Richland County and was a well-educated person who came to Richland County from Ohio along with his parents and siblings and settled in Sextonville in 1851. For a year or two he alternately taught school and ran his father's saw-mill. In 1865 he removed to Richland Center to engage in the mercantile business. In 1870 he opened one of the first banks in Richland Center and became quite prosperous; at one time he was the largest tax-payer in the city. Krouskop was one of the principle stockholders in the Pine River Valley & Stevens Point Railroad. Politically, he was a Democrat and served two terms as state senator in the Wisconsin legislature.



George Krouskop.

The Republican Observer newspaper described the Krouskop House as "An Elegant Residence" and that it was a wonder in the Richland Center of 1881. The great house stood on North Central Avenue and was two and one-half stories high, each story being 12 feet high. There were 24 rooms which included seven marble fireplaces and a large circular staircase. There were 44 large windows of which four were huge bays

made of French plate glass. The large house hosted many parties and elaborate balls with music provided by the massive grand piano. The house was deserted after

Krouskop's passing and remained vacant for twenty years until it was razed for the construction of the William Schmitt House.



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(Keep in mind the homes listed are private residences which are not open to the public. Please respect the occupants' privacy when viewing their homes from the sidewalk).