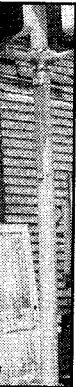


Laut Company left an imprint

ALTHOUGH FALLING ON hard times over the past 30 years, the historic Fletcher Place building was once home to the prosperous H.W. Laut Co., a sheet metal firm responsible for the metal work on such Indianapolis landmarks as the Athenaeum, the Chamber of Commerce Building, Circle Theatre and the Indianapolis Athletic Club.

The one-story frame structure at 630 Fletcher Avenue dates to 1864, when it was built as a grocery by Herman H. Koch. He operated the store until 1873, when Henry W. Laut and William Poppe started a similar operation. By 1879, with Laut the sole operator, a rear room facing College Avenue was rented to a man who operated a stove repair and tin shop.



According to the Fletcher Place Historic Preservation Plan, Koch accepted ownership of that business in place of delinquent rent—and subsequently decided the metal business was more prosperous than groceries.

Soon afterward, he formed the H.W. Laut Co., tanners, a company later operated by his sons until they retired in 1975. ■