

Drive barn appeared in late 1800s

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This photo taken about 40 years ago shows brothers Don and "Skip" Landauer looking over plans for their store's expansion. Here they stand at the corner of Beaver Alley and North Liberty Street in front of a large stone building.

This structure does not show on the 1875 map, so I assume it was probably built in the fourth quarter of the 19th century. On the 1913 map it shows it as being



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owned by heirs to John Pratt, and on a 1917 map it appears as the William Kitchen Drive Barn. Over the years this served various purposes, including the Kenyon Kab Company in the late 1920s early 1930s.

The Landauer brothers purchased this building and had it torn down to allow space for a parking lot, as it remains today. With interest in restoring the Pratt Opera House, I think it's interesting to see it all from the rear as

it appeared years ago. In the upper left corner of this shot is the peaked roof of the Pratt Opera House.

It was only natural that a drive barn nearby be very practical. Drive barns were where horses could be rented or stabled for short periods of time. In other words, a family coming into town to a show at the Pratt Opera House needed a place to put the horse and carriage while attending an event.

I recall, as the picture

indicates, that this was a large structure built of sandstone with a huge gambrel roof typical of barn construction. This indicates that it was a place for the storage of hay.

It was a totally utilitarian barn and a necessary part of the daily life supporting what we now see as worth restoring. It is, however, unfortunate that these supporting elements of the past, often not pretty, were destroyed.