

Kirby Wilber's Shoe Store

It was approximately 1812 when a man named Kirby Wilber established a small custom shoe shop in Quaker Street. Wilber trained his four sons so that they could continue the business after he retired. Over the decades, the business changed hands among the members of the Wilber family several times. In time, business increased such that a small shoe store was added to the shop.

In 1872 the business passed out of the hands of the Wilbers and into the hands of DeWitt Duane MacDonald and William H. Davies. Three years later, MacDonald and his son, Seward, bought out Davies and became co-owners of the shoe manufacturing business. A new shoe factory was built in 1883 by the MacDonalds on property they purchased from the Quakers. By this time the boot and shoe business had become a very important industry in this area. About 50 men were employed, some doing piece work at home and approximately 1200 cases of boots and shoes were shipped each year from Quaker Street to other parts of the state and as far away as Ohio.

The father and son partnership continued until the death of the elder MacDonald in July 1889. At this time, the shoe business was ended. About 30 families left Quaker Street to find employment elsewhere. Seward MacDonald continued with a new business, that of a general store. This store still exists today—Wolfe's Market.