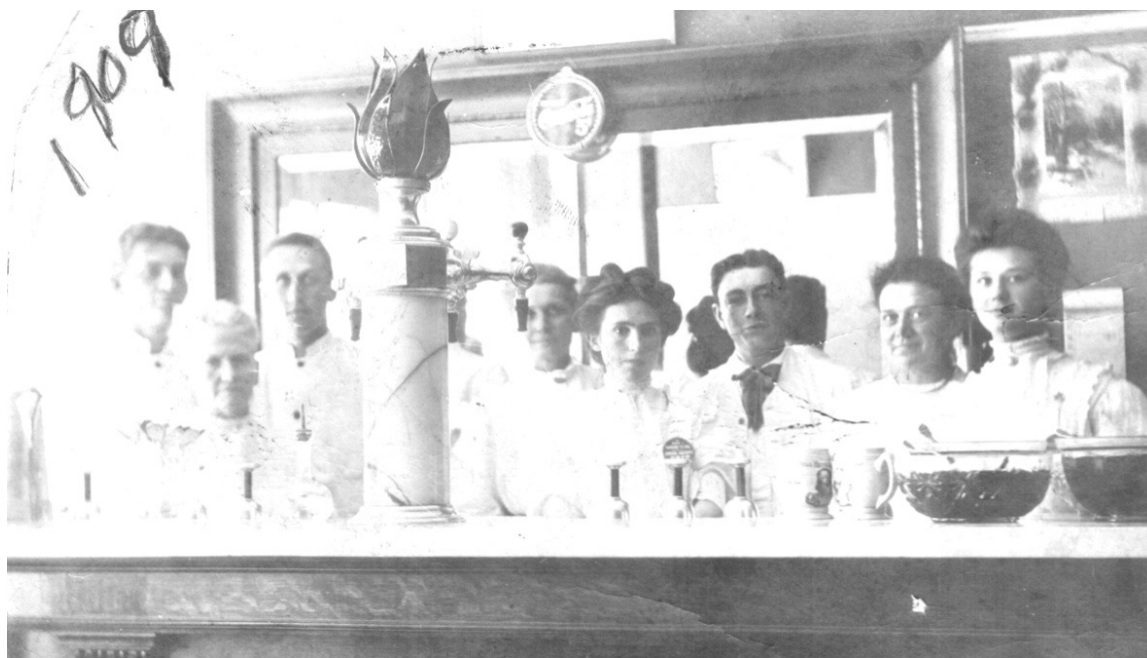


## Krise's Emporium

As the new owners of the building at 1014 17th Avenue continue working on their building so that they can open the Sunrise Donut Cafe later this summer, I decided to write a bit today about some of the earlier businesses that were housed in the building. Of course, people of a certain age will remember that the Waffle Shop was located in that building for decades.

The Monroe Evening Times reported on January 2, 1906 that E. B. Krise & Co. had rented this space to open a fruit and confectionery store with a soda fountain and ice cream parlor. This storefront had previously housed the Strohber-Huffman piano house, which had closed on December 23. The room was being fitted up for Krise, which was expected to open on January 15.

The grand opening of Krise's Emporium was held on February 3 with music from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. The large advertisement for the grand opening encouraged people to come and see the "20th Century Fountain." The ad also stated that, "A souvenir awaits all patrons of the ice cream parlors." They carried a variety of items including sweet meats and cold drinks, fruits and vegetables of the choicest kind, and ice cream year round (which was also sold in quantity). They were also the sole agents for the Famous Original Allegretti Chocolates and carried a complete line of strictly high-grade tobaccos with foreign and domestic cigars being a specialty.



This photo of the former Krise's Emporium came from the collection of Marcia Crawford. It shows her mother, on the right, at Circus Day in the Emporium during 1909. Her mother was Melvie Boyd (later Sery), who worked in the building that housed the Waffle Shop for decades.

There were many callers that day who admired the neat and attractive place, which promised to become a popular headquarters in the fruit, confectionery, soda and ice cream line. The entire outfit was in flemish oak and an elaborate soda fountain was the chief feature. There was a large ice cream parlor fitted up in the rear of the room. "The proprietors are to be congratulated upon the very inviting appearance of the establishment."

Not a lot was printed in the paper about this business. The Cardinal Club attended a "stag dinner" there at 9:00 on Sunday evening, November 25, 1906. A three-course meal was served, which "reflected great credit upon those who prepared it." About 25 members of the club attended the musical program at the club rooms and then the meal as a farewell to Earl Sanders, who was leaving Monroe to make Freeport his home.

An article on June 12, 1908 stated that E. B. Krise & Co. handled Allen ice cream, which was made in a new plant in Rockford. Proprietor Burt M. Allen had been in the ice cream business for nine years and was a master of his trade. The freezers in his new plant were able to output 140 gallons an hour, which was one-third faster than other methods. No ice was used until the cream was ready for shipment.

Several simple ads were mixed in with the news in the papers during the next two years. A few are shared here. "Krise's Emporium is headquarters for short order lunches. Hot beef sandwiches, a specialty." Another said, "Hot drinks of all kinds served at Krise's Emporium. Try them." They were written as a tease such as, "If you have never had one, get a pound for 25c at Krise's Emporium. German kisses." These ads give an idea of the variety of items carried there. "Pistachio ice cream, Well, its delicious at Krise's Emporium." Still another said, "The one place in Monroe to get a good oyster stew is at Krise's Emporium."

No news was reported on the sale of the emporium by Krise, but H. J. Burger sold the confectionery store and cafe in 1912. He had operated the shop on the east side of the square for two years. The sale to Clarence Isely and Spurgeon Miller took place at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 17. Mr. Burger retired from the business because of his partial deafness, which had made it difficult for him to take care of his trade. Mr. and Mrs. Burger then assisted the two young men until they became familiar with how to run the business.

An ad in October showed that Isely & Miller's cafe had opened for the winter season with Oscar Schroeder in charge as chef. Short orders, hot coffee, and pure Jersey ice cream was available at all hours. Fancy steaks was a specialty. Home baked pies, doughnuts, and bread was for sale at all times. They also "paid special attention to private parties."

Another ad before Christmas that year stated that they were the exclusive agency in Monroe for Lowney's box candies with "every box absolutely guaranteed." They also had candies in bulk as well as Christmas cigars, some of which were "put up in Christmas boxes."

Unfortunately, the men dissolved their partnership in July 1913 with Isely becoming the sole owner of the emporium, which had enjoyed a thriving patronage. At that time, Spurgeon Miller was contemplating a move to South Dakota where he would engage in raising cattle.

A later ad in November 1914 said that Isely's Emporium had opened their lunchroom for the season and would "be glad to see our old patrons as well as new ones." Three years later he announced that a short order lunch was a feature at the store. They had just completed painting and decorating throughout at that time. "With our excellent ice cream and confectionery, we can serve you with a good, appetizing meal on short notice."

Henry J. Streiff purchased the old Isely Emporium from L. C. White in March 1918. His plan was to conduct an ice cream and candy parlor. He must have only operated the business until shortly before Henry G. Leuenberger opened the Waffle Shop in December 1919.