

Nolte's Pharmacy, Incorporated

Founded: 1886

Location: Northeast corner of George and Walnut Streets, Batesville (1886–90); 1 East George Street (1890–)

George A. Bass opened his Deutsche Apotheke, or German Apothecary, on the northeast corner of George and Walnut Streets in German-dominated town of Batesville. Four years later he moved across the street to a new two-story brick building where the business has since remained. Photographs from the period show Bass's pharmacy with a tin-stamped ceiling, brass fans, and live plants—the perfect image of the Victorian establishment.

During Bass's tenure the business housed the switchboard of the Batesville Telephone Company, with Bass or one of his employees acting as the operator. Bass was active in the community, helping to form the first Red Cross chapter in the city and serving on Batesville's park board. Bass hired Edward B. Schultz as an apprentice in the early part of the twentieth century.

Schultz purchased the apothecary in 1922, renaming it Schultz's Drug Store. Schultz and his wife owned the business for thirty-six years. Like his predecessor, E. B. Schultz was committed to his community. He served as an officer for the Public Welfare Association and sang with a local quartet. Schultz died in 1937, but his wife retained ownership until 1958. She hired Harry Brockman to manage the pharmacy, a job he continued into the 1960s.

Mrs. Schultz sold the drugstore to Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Nolte. After three years the Noltes renamed the business Nolte's Pharmacy. The couple renovated the building twice in the 1960s, expanding the building by nine hundred square feet in 1969. Clinton

Nolte followed in the path of the previous proprietors of the drugstore, serving as a school trustee and actively participating in the Lions Club and his church. Numerous items not usually associated with drugstores, such as textbooks, wallpaper, paint, athletic equipment, and veterinary supplies, could be found at the pharmacy while the Schultzes and the Noltes ran the company. Until at least the late 1960s farmers had to come to the pharmacy to get medical supplies for their sick animals since there was a dearth of veterinarians in the area.

In 1968 Nolte hired Robert Walsman. A few years later Walsman began buying into the business, finally becoming the sole proprietor in 1986. Nolte continued to work at the pharmacy that bears his name after Walsman acquired it. Dedication to the business, among both owners and employees, forms a running theme in the pharmacy's history. In 1986 the average years of service hovered around twenty. Phil Ollier, for example, worked for three separate owners over the span of forty years.

In 1998 Robert Walsman continued to operate the former German Apothecary. During his first year as proprietor he redecorated the business and laid plans to computerize the drug and stock records. To keep up with his craft, Walsman attended professional seminars and took thirty hours of continuing education courses every two years.