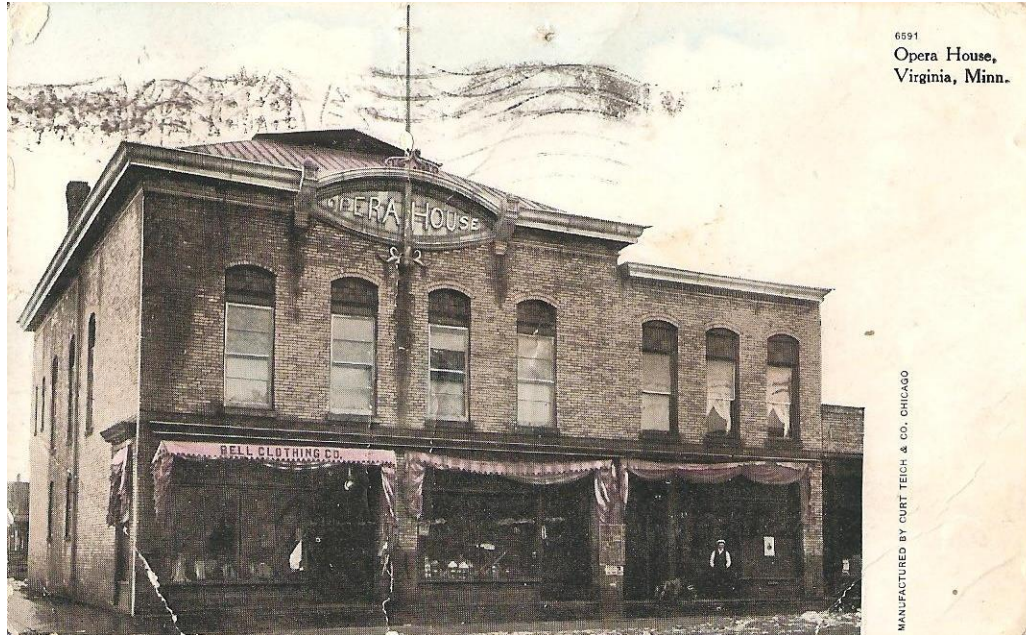


Lyric Opera House



"The estimated cost of the building, which will be one of the handsomest in the city and unquestionably the best appointed opera house on the range, will be \$50,000, and we feel that the faith of the promoters in the erection of such a playhouse for Virginia is well placed, believing the investment will be found a profitable one." (A quote from the October 6, 1911, Virginia Enterprise.) In time, the Lyric began to book vaudeville acts and was on a major vaudeville circuit extending from Milwaukee to Minneapolis, Duluth, Virginia, and then on to Winnipeg, Canada. The Lyric Opera House moved into the 1920's showing a mixture of opera, musicals, plays and films.

The Lyric Center for the Arts building is located at 510 - 514 Chestnut Street, Virginia, Minnesota, an Historic Downtown District listed on the National Register. The structure was built in 1912 by a group of Virginia businessmen, H. J. Sigel, J. A. Kennedy, and D. W. Elmquist. Existing original drawings show the architects as Ellerby, Round and Sullivan with an office location in the Palladio Building, Duluth, Minnesota. Then known as the Lyric Opera House, it was designed to have a theater seating upward of 700 people, two store fronts, and second floor offices and ballroom/gymnasium. Early on, the ballroom doubled as the local YMCA as well as housing a local radio station. An apartment on the second floor provided living space for the building manager and family.

Photograph 2013:

