

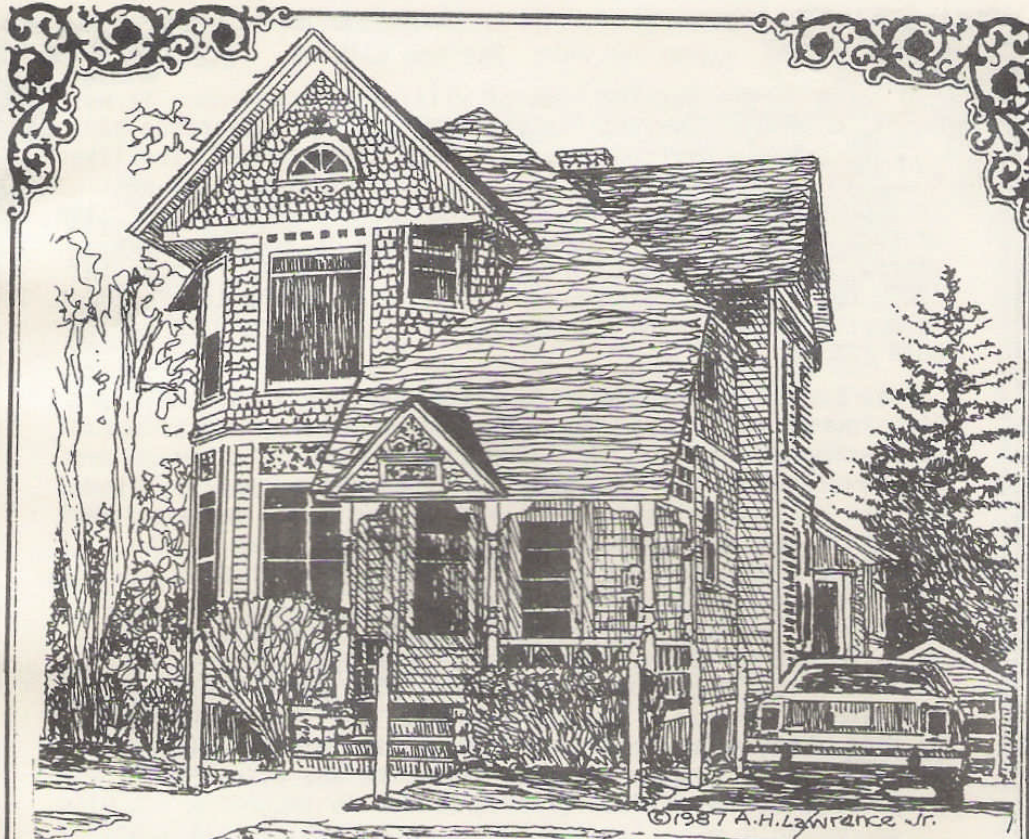
116 NORTH PORTER STREET

Fred H. Ackemann was born February 2, 1869 and came to America in November of 1887 from Winzlar, Hanover, Germany, with his brothers. He worked a few months in his brother William's dry goods store and then took a position with William Grote's real estate office, a position he would hold for decades.

In 1894, Fred and brother Henry F. erected the business block on Highland Avenue, which company still bears their name. The following year all five brothers - William D., Henry F., Fred H., August W., and Conrad F. - formed a co-partnership and opened the department store known as "Ackemann Bros., the Big Store." Ackemann's dealt in almost everything and a well-known slogan of their advertising was, "We supply the people from the cradle to the grave."

Fred H., however, was not active in the family business. His interests lay in his real estate partnership with Grote and the Seybold Reed-Pipe Organ Company. Other positions he held included Vice President of the Courier Publishing Co., Treasurer of the Elgin National Gas & Oil Co., and he also served as a director of Gail Borden Library.

Fred H. and Christie Deuchler of Dundee were married in 1895 and they continued living in this house until 1909 or 1910 when they moved to 802 Douglas.



In 1891-92, this house was built for Fred H. by Henry Jensen at a cost of \$3,000. Built in the EASTLAKE style, the house has a variety of sidings: the first floor is clapboard, the second, hexagonal shingles with square shingles above. Note the parallelogram shingles in the south pediment and the wavy siding in the porch pediment. The unique sloped roof forms a strong architectural element. Note the Eastlake influence in porch columns and details. On the lower half of the porch ballustrade there used to be spindles (note the plugged holes). On the south facade, note the free classic motif (fake window with urn) which has been highlighted with paint, as has other trim. Visual interest was created with the second floor overhanging the diagonal first floor walls. It appears that the decorative brackets support the second floor. The sloping lot provides for a walk-out basement in the rear. As you enter the house, note the etched "FHA" on the front door window.

This house has been a two-family since 1910, and the present owners are returning it to a single-family residence. The remodeling has revealed a few things. In the foyer, a solid wall on the left was removed and replaced by French doors as per the original design. A built-in cabinet was removed, revealing a French door opening into the room off the second parlor. Removal of wallpaper showed the image on the plaster of where a picture rail once was. Indications are that changes might have been made to the second floor above the stairs.