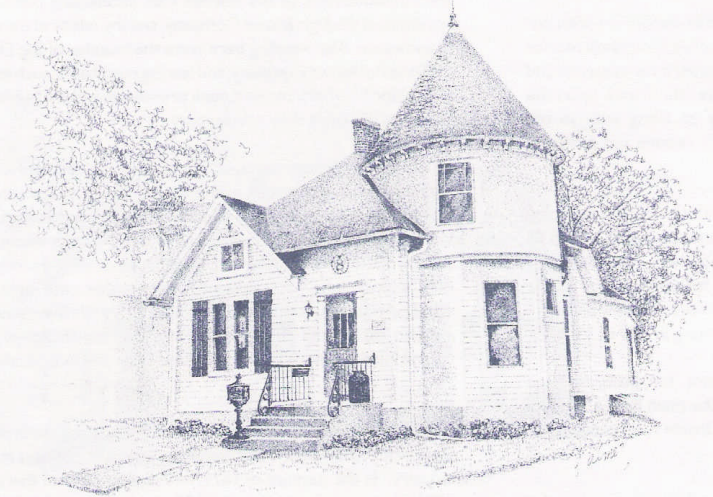


565 Park Street



Pretty As A Princess



his is the original home of Dr. Grant Goodrich, DDS, born near Clinton, Iowa, November 23, 1861. His family moved to Chicago when he was just two, and he was raised there, and put through the public school system. His father was a successful sewing machine dealer, and son Grant, after attending Elgin Academy, worked as his father's bookkeeper for seven years. He then went on to the Chicago College of Dental Surgery, and graduated with the class of 1888.

That same year, on June 4th, he married Miss Kittie Truesdell, and built the house at 565 Park Street, which was their home. They never had any children while living in this house -- it must have been like a long-term honeymoon haven. Dr. Goodrich was considered one of the leading and popular dentists in Elgin, where he opened his practice the same year he graduated, got married, and built his house. He and Kittie lived on Park Street until 1904, when they moved with her parents to California.

The house is a wonderful example of one of Elgin's smallest but most exuberant examples of the Queen Anne style; sort of a "Princess Anne" if you will. Mark & Marcia Habberfield, the current owners, have plans to restore the exterior, with a covered front porch, complete with rows of spindles and fan bracket accents, and the original front bay window. Mark is an expert in woodworking, and they are lucky enough to have a picture of the original house to work from. The bay also had stained glass accents, and they plan to replace those in the next few years too.

Interestingly, the variety of architectural forms and embellishments on this house are achieved in barely a story and one-half. Though the house seems large enough, the elaborate and dominant two-story turret houses a staircase to a small, cozy second level. Ordinarily, a tower such as this would be devoted to the enhancement of a special room, but often times, concern for stylistic embellishment took precedence over functional concerns. No problem -- the Habberfields have adapted to the layout of the house, and it's quite comfortable -- even for three.

Unlike Dr. Goodrich and his wife, Mark and Marcia have a son, Seth, whose bedroom is upstairs. And aside from a rather rustic guest bedroom, originally the maid's room, the only other room upstairs is the turret room - too small to

house a comfortable bedroom. But Marcia says it's the perfect size for a "family room." So, the Habberfields have made functional use of their dramatic tower room.

As you enter the house, you can look straight through to the kitchen. This was not always the case. When the Habberfields moved here, that part of the hall was a bathroom, and they always found it awkward to have to walk through the bathroom to get to the kitchen. Furthermore, the wall obscured a good deal of their beautiful staircase, along with the window underneath it. They have now opened up the hallway, adding a closet, and replaced the downstairs bathroom in a much more *logical* spot (we can't say *original*, since originally, the house did not even have indoor plumbing). The bathroom is breathtaking, too, with a clawfoot tub, pedestal sink, pull-chain toilet, and lots of antique brass accents. Don't miss it, just because you don't have to walk through it anymore!

If you're wondering how much work is involved in restoring a staircase, Marcia stripped the entire bannister over July 4th weekend. She says she started it on a whim, sort of, but once she got going, it went very fast. Most people plan outings for holidays, but for the old house enthusiasts in this town, a three-day weekend means an extra day to work on projects around the house.

The Habberfields have a talent for always having a finished look to their house, even though they are still working on it. That's an important talent to have in this neighborhood, where roof tarps, scaffolding, and dumpsters are a normal part of the streetscape. There have been many loving hours put into making the interior of the house charming, authentic, and comfortable.

The first parlor, or "formal parlor" has an original mantel, which has the named Goodrich written in chalk on the back of it. The Habberfields have met two ladies from the neighborhood who lived in this house in the 1920s, and who have been able to help them with some of the details, such as the now missing mantel top, which consisted of little wooden shelves and a mirrored back. The whole first floor, including the existing mantel in this parlor, is tastefully decorated with authentic antique accessories, and all of the old photos you see in the house are of family ancestors.

The current dining room was at one time the second parlor, or "family area." There was once a wood-burning stove where the antique radio now sits. The little contraption you see attached to the moulding on the doorway is an old damper control. There was extensive plaster work and wood stripping done in this room, and the picture moulding had to be reproduced and replaced.

The master bedroom off the parlor was originally the dining room, of course, which had built-in china cabinets, one of which was a two-sided cabinet which accessed the kitchen. At one time, you could walk through from this room to the kitchen, but that passage has since been walled up. There was

a small brass plate on the floor (now under the bed) which was used to call for assistance from the kitchen.

The Habberfields have plans to remodel the kitchen someday, but they say it's one of those rooms that they need to live with for awhile until they get a feel for how it should be. In the meantime, yes, they do use the antique stove, and Marcia says it works as well or better than any new stove.

Out back is the garage, which is original, and was once used as a dairy drop for Nels Hart and Christ Madsen. Apparently, large stores of dairy products were delivered to designated "drops" in the area, and then distributed from there by the local milkmen. Difficult to see now, there is the remains of a rather high cement step in front of a strange little door in the back of the garage, and this is where the horse would pull up so that the milk could be unloaded.

There was also a carriage house which stood at the back of the property, near the end of the driveway. Like many other little pieces of architectural history, however, the carriage house is now gone.

What is left, though, has been meticulously cared for by the Habberfields, and therefore, is preserved as a little piece of history for us to view today. It takes patience, perseverance, and, yes, money, to preserve history in this way. I suppose it smarts just a little when the Habberfields read in the records that this "pretty little cottage on Park Street cost \$1500" to build.

Along the Way

The origin of Park as the name of this street referred not to Lords Park, but to Colby's Grove, to the east of the Elgin Academy grounds, the site of picnics and Fourth of July celebrations.

Colby's daughter was Myra Colby, was a student and then a teacher at the Elgin Seminary. Later, married to James Bradwell of Palatine, in 1869 she became the first woman to pass the Illinois Bar Examination. Denied an opportunity to practice because of her sex, until 1892, Myra Bradwell through her weekly law review, helped to mold legal opinion and drafted bills removing women's legal disabilities.

