



#### 600 MARGARET PLACE

##### HISTORY

In 1837, Vincent S. Lovell purchased 160 acres of land in Elgin. One of the incorporators of Elgin Academy, Lovell eventually became a judge and served as mayor of Elgin (1889-1900). It was for him that the grand home that is now Lovellton, a treatment center directly to the south, was built.

And it was for his son and namesake, Vincent S. (Jr.) that the home on tour today was built. Of the date and builder, there is little doubt, for found on an interior wall was an inscription reading "Henry Jensen—1886." Thus the year before he built 18 Warwick for himself, Jensen was building for Lovell, who, with his brother Edward, owned an ice dealership and real estate company that handled loans and insurance as well.

Since the home was built, it has had 3 addresses. Of its owners, prior to its recent purchase, 600 Margaret Place served as Elgin's Crisis Center.

Although they moved in on Halloween of 1987, the new owners have not been spooked ever since. Instead, they have lived in relative sanity on the second floor while restoring the first. Guided by the philosophy, "Do it once and do it right," they are proceeding methodically. When done with the interior, they will begin restoring the exterior.

## EXTERIOR

Style This 1886 house was probably a typical Victorian expression of Stick/Eastlake architecture. (See Glossary)

Siding: Concealing much of the exterior personality is not one but two layers of siding—one of aluminum, the other of shingles, probably asphalt. Both will be removed to reveal the original clapboard.

Bays & Windows Eastlake in design are 1) the stylized floral designs incised on window casings and 2) the stylized sunburst at the base of the second-story triangular bay.

Beneath the triangular bay is a double-hung window so large that the 2 weights required to raise and lower it weigh 40 lbs. a piece.

The triangular window above the entry adds architectural interest to the interior as well as exterior.

The double, or 2-story, rectangular bay has the only 3-paned window in the house. A replacement, it will be replaced.

In the attic dormer is a stained glass window. Multi-paned and multi-colored, it is Queen Anne in design.

Porches Decorative diagonal braces form an arch in the gable of the entry porch.

The entry porch's columns, turned by a steam-driven machine, are Eastlake features, as are the stylized flowers incised on their bases. On the outside framing under the east rail of this porch are traces of another stylized sunburst.

The enclosed porch on the east side is a later addition and will be removed.

The porch of the double bay is not a walk-out one.

Foundation A beaded, or raised, mortar joint was used to give the stone foundation a more decorative finish.

## INTERIOR

Entry Greeting visitors is a massive, 8-paneled door. Painted on the glass of the top panels are birds on nests. The remaining panels alternate between panels of concentric, circular trim commonly known as bull's eye and panels with diagonal inserts with a stylized flower.

Equally massive, the door leading from the vestibule to the front parlor includes 4 stained glass panels.

Stylized sunbursts, stalks of corn, etc., reflect the Eastlake influence on door hardware.

A small, stained glass window featuring 2 angels is expected to be repaired and back in place in time for the tour.

Room Sizes

18.6 x 18	Front Parlor	15.8 x 15	Master Bedroom
19.6 x 15	Second Parlor	17.8 x 11	Sitting Room
18.6 x 13.6	Dining Room	18.6 x 13	Second Bedroom

Fireplaces All 6 are in working order.

The owners have removed layers of dead shellac from 2. The remaining 4, coated with paint, will be stripped.

The woods used for the mantles/trim are 1) oak (front parlor), 2) cherry (second parlor/master bedroom), 3) pine (bedroom sitting room) and 4) birch, stained mahogany (dining). Yet to be uncovered and discovered is the wood of the fireplace in the second bedroom.

Eastlake in design are the following fireplace features:

- 1) the overmantles, a "little museum" of spindled shelves intended to hold "objects of quality";
- 2) the incised mantle tops;
- 3) the stylized flowers in the ceramic tiles of some;
- 4) the stylized designs of the iron grills.

(Note in particular the cattails in the front parlor's grill and the flowers in the dining room's.)

Bookcases Along one side of the fireplace in all but the dining room and second bedroom are built-in bookcases, some of which have drawers as well as shelves.

Pocket doors in working order are between the 2 parlors as well as between the second parlor and the dining room.

Door/window/drawer hardware throughout is original and features the stylized designs popularized by Eastlake.

Plaster The roughly textured plaster throughout the first floor was originally painted rather than papered.

Woodwork Of pine, all was so encrusted with paint that the owners have removed the woodwork to strip it. Some will be back in place for the tour.

Wainscot As wallpaper was stripped, it was evident that the beadboard wainscot along the stairs of the front parlor had run throughout the main rooms of the first floor. It will be reproduced.

Flooring Because the flooring of the front parlor is but pine or fur, similar flooring is expected to be found under the linoleum covering the rest of the first floor.

Upstairs is wide-planked softwood, which has been painted.

What will be done with the floors has yet to be determined. Not ruled out is laying hardwood in some rooms.

Front/Formal Parlor In addition to features already noted, the following made this a fitting room in which to receive callers:

- 1) the glass of spiderweb design in the full-length window at the foot of the stairs;
- 2) Eastlake-inspired spindlework suspended from the ceiling to border the staircase;
- 3) a paneled ceiling with bull's eye trim.  
(The stain of the pine is thought to be original, so the owners are toning the once-painted woodwork to it.)

Although the walls were originally painted turquoise, the owners have opted for a bluer tone in order to pick up the color of the fireplace tiles.

Second Parlor The room that served as the first-floor sitting room for the family will be more easily viewed from the dining room, to be seen at the end of the tour.

#### Second Floor

Glass transoms above bedroom doors adjust for ventilation.

The sitting room's nook is defined by the triangular window seen above the entry. In this room is also the triangular bay.

In the master bedroom is the rectangular bay.

No, the paneling is not original; yes, it will be removed.

Each bedroom has a closet.

The small room adjacent to the bath is thought to have served as a dressing room.

In the almost-gutted bathroom, a section of the wall is temporarily cut away. Revealed is just how well insulated this house is.

Insulation As in all old homes, the plaster that forms the interior walls is anchored by lath that runs horizontally. Less typical, however, is the layer of plaster behind this wall. Anchored to lath that runs vertically, it in essence serves as a layer of insulation. (The pink fiberglass insulation was added recently.)

In order to muffle sound from upstairs, in the ceilings is a similar double layer of plaster.

Attic The door in the upstairs hallway that is closed for the tour leads to a huge, finished attic.

Kitchen It is believed that the original kitchen was where the attached garage now stands or perhaps even in the basement. The room now so used was probably simply the butler's pantry, complete with all the cupboards in view.

The small passage way with coat hooks that leads from the kitchen to front parlor would have given the butler easy access to the front door.

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Dining Room The florescent lighting and accoustical tile ceiling will be removed.

Central Air Although not original to the house, this<sup>4</sup> feature, added by the Crisis Center, is one feature that the owners are keeping!