

## 107 SOUTH GENEVA STREET

As long ago as 1659, the English in India were describing houses built for them as bunguloues. After several variations spellings, the "bungalow" became the accepted spelling of these houses and the style was generally that of a one-storey house found mostly in the woods or at the seashore. However, at the turn of the century, suburbia was being created, particularly in California, and a need existed for "an innovative, small, single-family, simple but artistic dwelling; inexpensive, easily built, yet at the same time attractive to the new middle-class buyer." Enter the California Bungalow, a term that was in use by 1905 if not earlier.

Along with this development on the West Coast, the Prairie School of architecture was being developed by Frank Lloyd Wright whose horizontal lines further influenced the Bungalow. There was a period of many years when the Bungalow was regarded as rather sub-standard housing, but happily, the darling of the first quarter of the twentieth century is back in favor.

It is interesting to note that the houses on this block are all relatively young houses, yet they are located in J.T. Gifford's original plot of the City of Elgin and only a few feet away from the site of the original Gifford log cabin. For many years, one mansion occupied this block, that of Henry Sherman. Sherman arrived in Elgin in 1851 with 8¢ jingling in his pocket. He worked for many years in the drug business, and eventually was instrumental in bringing the National Watch Company to Elgin; was involved in a creamery; was instrumental in bringing the Northern Illinois Hospital and Asylum for the Insane to Elgin; was connected with the Home National Bank, and was one of the organizers of the Elgin Packing Company. In 1888 he donated his home at North and

Channing Streets to be used as a hospital, the only stipulations being that it be called Sherman Hospital and that it recognize no creed or sect. The remainder of his days were spent in his mansion, and his family continued to live there after his death.

The mansion was vacant for several years and was finally torn down. The property was subdivided by Grote & Runge in 1922.

The Bungalow you are touring today is quite typical with its low pitched, front gable roof, and is the only solid brick structure on this block, according to the Sanborn Maps. Its one and one-half storey projecting gable dormers on the north and south sides and the wide overhang show the strong Prairie influence, while the asymmetrical entry allows for a living room where a porch would be in other types of bungalows.

Inside, the owners have created a home that can scarcely be called typical, as you will notice as soon as you have gone up the few steps leading inside. Enjoy!

