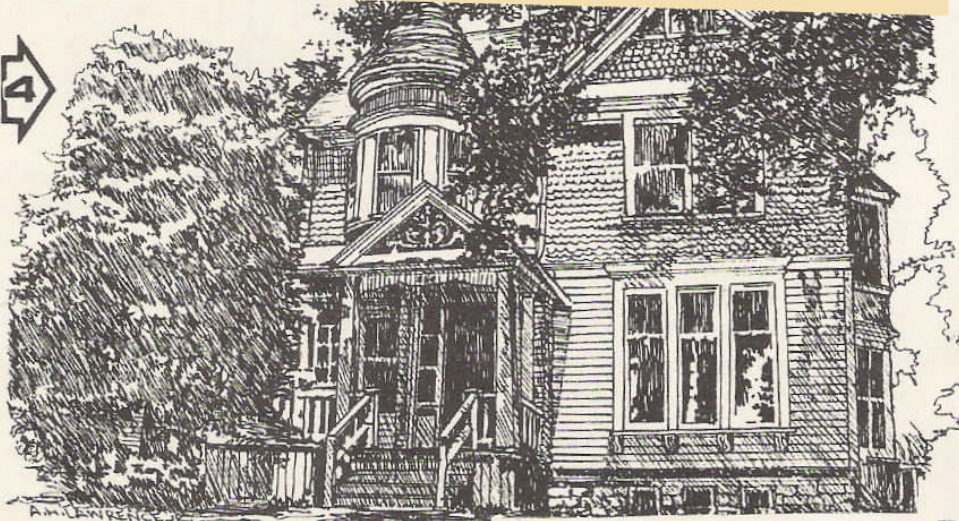


4



564 EAST CHICAGO STREET

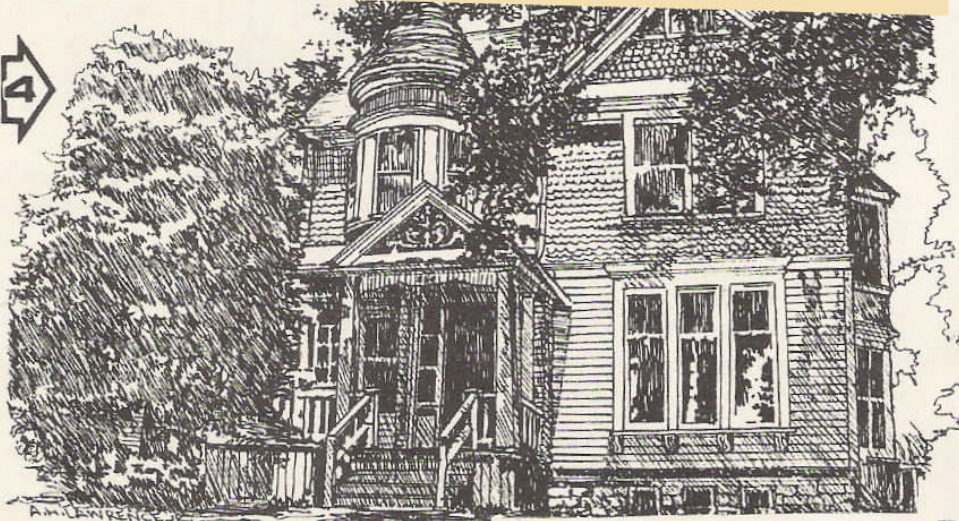
Hiram Thomas was born in Massachusetts in 1843 and, as a boy, was apprenticed at clock making. He first worked in watchmaking in Waltham until he served in the Civil War. After the war he returned home but came to Elgin soon after and began work in the Watch Factory in 1867, shortly after it began operation. He was made foreman of the plate department, a position he held until into the 1900's.

He had a wife and daughter, and in 1890 architect Smith Hoag designed and John A. Wright built this restrained Queen Anne home for them. It is characterized by the asymmetric turret (note the detail in the finial above the turret) and the play of roof forms against the sky. The pediment with incised decoration over the porch, variety of surface textures such as the stone foundation, clapboard first, fish scale shingles on the second floor and the narrow vertical siding above the fish scale shingles all contribute to this very Victorian style. Note, also, on the front facade, the upper panel stained glass and leaded glass.

This portion of the block could be called "Watch Row," as Thomas' neighbor to the west at 558 was New England-born E. F. Gooding, foreman of the balance department, and his neighbor to the east at 570 was, of course, Connecticut-born William Gabriel.



4



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