

1017 Duncan

In February of 1891, the area called R.N. Botsford's Addition was annexed to the City of Elgin. Within the following year, Charles J. Rouley, a painter by trade, had a 2-room house built for himself, his wife Anna, and their daughter Lizetta, at 1017 Duncan Avenue.

The family quickly grew and the need for more room resulted in a large addi-

tion to the small house in 1898. When you enter, notice the narrow front double doors which are typical of the Italianate style, and create a formal entry to the beautifully decorated interior. Much of the original woodwork and cabinetry is intact. There are decorative plaster mouldings in the living room, and gingerbread fretwork divides it from the dining room. Some of the details of the house which are not original were obtained through GPA salvages, so while they didn't come with the house, they are authentic (like the maple flooring upstairs).

The kitchen and pantry have original wainscoting and cabinets. At one time, there was a safe in one of the drawers. The original back porch was destroyed in a 1920 tornado, and the concrete ring in the backyard is the foundation for an old fountain that once stood there.

The lot directly north of 1017 Duncan has remained "house-less" for over 100 years, but it did become part of the Rouley property in 1908 in an interesting way. According to daughter Charlotte, Anna Rouley made small monthly payments on it until it was paid for in full, and *then* she told her husband, "Honey, I bought the lot next door." The house and extra lot remained in the Rouley family until 1985, when the present owners bought it. Be sure to wish this house a happy birthday -- it turned 100 this year.

tion to the small house in 1898. At one point, Charles and Anna and five children were living in the house, which at the time consisted of the kitchen and a sewing room. Even with the addition, it's difficult to imagine how such a big family fit in this house. In all, nine children were born to Charles and Anna. Their house is celebrating its 100th birthday this year, and three of their daughters, Charlotte, Agnes, and Emmaline, are still living.

