

# The Cottage

by Lynne Belluscio

In 1847 Emily Ingham married Phineas Staunton and they traveled to Europe on their honeymoon. When they returned to Le Roy they moved into the "Cottage" on the Ingham campus.

It was a Gothic Revival home complete with a three storey tower, leaded glass windows and ornate gingerbread. In the style of a Downing cottage it was of board and batten construction. The Cottage faced the picturesque Oatka Mill Pond and stood near the present day Woodward Library. It was surrounded by formal Victorian gardens. Emily often invited students to her home for informal lectures.

In 1867 Emily's sister Marietta and husband Phineas died. Emily continued living in the Cottage and the 26 foot drawing room was the setting for all Ingham receptions and parties. Emily's niece recalled that as a child she loved to play at her aunt's house, where there were trunks filled with silks and laces.

Mrs. Tinsley, the wife of the editor of the Lyons Republican, visited Ingham University and had the opportunity to meet Emily at the Cottage: "Mrs. Staunton, the founder of the school is a highly cultivated agreeable person. At her private residence she has accumulated rare and interesting curiosities from China and Japan and the walls of her home are made beautiful by many of her husband's paintings. One of these represents "The Foolish

Virgins" whose lamp has gone out, which the effect of the torch light is very beautiful. (This painting is in the Historical Society collection.) Here I saw also a Japanese cabinet of paper mache, a rhinoceros' horn covered with beautiful carvings, a jade stone – sacred with the Chinese – very delicately carved to be used as a watch case, some very beautiful Chinese porcelain, a vase that has been mended in their useful manner and tiny tea cups with covers to preserve the aroma of the celestial herb; and perhaps the most interesting article from the age – was an incense burner taken from a Chinese temple and probably thousands of years old – of dark metal, inlaid with gold. There I saw also, brackets and book racks of hard wood covered with delicate carvings in the grotesque designs of the Chinese in which the Dragon and the stork are conspicuous, beside tea trays and other articles in lacquered work in which the same designs are repeated. It was indeed a great treat to look through at one's leisure so many beautiful things brought by missionaries and others from those old



The Cottage on the Ingham Univeristy Campus, Circa 1870.

nations beyond the seas.

In 1889, Emily died and three years later Ingham University closed. The Cottage stood empty until November 1908 when the buildings of Ingham were sold at auction. The Cottage was sold

William Kettle purchased the house in March 1909 and Marion Kettle Russell grew up there. She remembered that Ingham alumnae and former students would often visit the old house when they were in town



The cottage before it was dismantled and moved, Circa 1900.

to William Dowdle for \$325. Dowdle lived at 11 Lincoln Avenue and he had the house cut in two and moved. The North end of the house and the tower were placed at 27 Lincoln Avenue. The front half of the house was moved to 19 Lincoln Avenue and contained the drawing room and the vestibule on the main floor, and the two master bedrooms on the second.

for reunions.

In 1924 the Kettles rented the house to several different families until it was sold to the Boylan family. The house changed hands several more times until on February, 1976 fire broke out in the drawing room. The buildings that stand at 19 and 27 Lincoln Avenue today barely resemble the original structure, but they are the only intact building – albeit divided – from Ingham University.



Half of the cottage at 19 Lincoln Avenue, Circa 1910.