



City of Geneva, Illinois

Local Historic District & Landmarks Property Inventory Survey

GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

HISTORIC NAME: Swarthout House

COMMON NAME: n/a

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1923

SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION DATES: Circa 2005

ARCHITECT: n/a

BUILDER: n/a

WILSON BROTHERS: ☐ AUGUST ☐ OSCAR ☐ BOTH

ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Dutch Colonial Revival

OVERALL PLAN SHAPE: Rectangular

NUMBER OF STORIES: 2

FOUNDATION MATERIAL: Parged

PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL(S): Clapboard (wood) / asphalt shingle

FRONT PORCH: Entry

VISIBLE SIDE PORCH: No

ENTRY DOOR(S): Non-original

WINDOW MATERIAL: Wood / Clad

WINDOW STYLE: Double-hung (3/1) / Casement (1 lite)

PRIMARY ROOF FORM: Gambrel

PRIMARY ROOF MATERIAL: Asphalt

VISIBLE CHIMNEY: Yes

CHIMNEY MATERIAL: Brick

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:

n/a

PROPERTY ADDRESS:

116 Campbell Street

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN):

12-03-457-006



LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE RATING:

- ☐ Significant
- ☒ Contributing
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Built After 1987
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Reversible Alterations
- ☐ Non-Contributing – Irreversible Alterations

HISTORIC DISTRICT LOCATION:

- ☒ Central Geneva NRHD
- ☐ North Geneva NRHD
- ☒ Local Geneva HD
- ☐ Not in HD / Individual Historic Landmark

NR DISTRICT SIGNIFICANCE RATING:

- ☒ Contributing
- ☐ Non-Contributing
- ☐ Not Applicable / Not in NR District



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ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

BRIEF HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION:

In 1922, Grace and Oliver Kenyon (202 S. First Street) sold the lot to Emma (Rice) Swarthout. The Geneva City Council granted a building permit in 1925. The modest Colonial Revival/Dutch Colonial house was built for Emma (Rice) Swarthout (1853-1940).

Born in Wasco, Illinois, Emma (Rice) Swarthout married Walter Hill Swarthout (1844-1924) in March 1872. After farming in Blackberry Township (Kane County), Illinois, the family moved to Geneva in the 1890s. By then, the family included Mabel (1874-1954), Alice (1876-1964), Charles (1879-1919), and Florence (1881-1978). By 1900, Mr. Swarthout was employed as a traveling salesman. The Swarthout family moved to Pennsylvania and, later, to New Jersey. After their son, Charles, died in 1919, Mr. and Mrs. Swarthout and their daughters returned to Geneva, where they settled into a home on James Street. Apparently, life was not happy in the James Street home. At the time, Emma (Rice) Swarthout was 69 years old, and Walter was nearly 78 years old.

In November 1922, Emma (Rice) Swarthout purchased the 50' x 50' Campbell Street property from Grace and Oliver Kenyon. She obtained a building permit from the City of Geneva. In July 1923, Emma (Rice) Swarthout and her daughter, Alice (a schoolteacher), moved into the modest home at 116 Campbell Street (f/k/a 214 Campbell Street). When Walter H. Swarthout died in January 1924, he was still living at his James Street home with his daughters, Mabel and Florence. After his death, the two daughters moved into their mother's Campbell Street home, where Mabel worked as an accomplished seamstress while Florence was employed as an x-ray technician at Community Hospital (Geneva). By 1930, Alice Swarthout accepted a teaching position in Jackson, Michigan, where she worked through the mid-1940s.

After Emma (Rice) Swarthout died in 1940, Mabel and Florence continued to live in the Campbell Street house. They eventually acquired additional property at the rear of the original lot, doubling the original parcel in size. In 1946, the spinster sisters took in a maternal aunt and cared for her until her death in the Campbell Street house in 1948. After Mabel died in 1954, Alice returned to Geneva and continued to live in the Campbell Street house with her sister, Florence. During their lifetimes, the three sisters were active in several community charitable causes and organizations, including the founding of the Geneva Historical Society.

In 1958, when Alice was 82 years old and Florence was 75 years old, the sisters sold their Campbell Street property to Roy L. Baum; however, they continued to live in the house. Ostensibly, Mr. Baum committed to the care of the elderly sisters in exchange for acquiring their property. Alice M. Swarthout died at the Campbell Street house in 1964.

In October 1940, Roy L. Baum (1903-1973), along with Matthew C. McNamara (1888-1942), acquired the property at 115 Campbell Street, directly across the street from the Swarthout home. The bachelors converted the 115 Campbell Street residence into the McNamara Rest Home, a sanitarium/convalescent home, also known as the Christian Science Rest Home. (The two men previously established a "rest home" in 1937 at the Howell-Orton-Burton House that stood immediately north of the 115 Campbell Street property, now the site of the AT&T building. Before coming to Geneva, the two men established a "rest home" in Benton Harbor, Michigan in the mid-1930s.) Mr. McNamara died unexpectedly in September 1942 at the age of 54. After Roy L. Baum also died unexpectedly in 1973, the McNamara Rest Home was closed and sold along with Baum's other assets, including the Swarthout property.

By early 1975, Florence Swarthout (who was nearly 94 years old) moved from the 116 Campbell Street property to San Bernardino, California, where she died in 1978.



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ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

In total, the Swarthout family occupied the house for nearly 52 years, longer than any other residents of the property. Florence Swarthout had lived in the house her mother built for all but a few months of the home's existence. During the Swarthout sisters' tenancy (and during the Period of Significance for the Central Geneva Historic District [1835-1966], zero significant exterior changes were made to the Swarthout House at 116 Campbell Street, Geneva.

In the 46 years since the last member of the Swarthout family vacated the modest, Colonial Revival/Dutch Colonial house at 116 Campbell Street, at least four other owners have occupied the property. Combined, those later residents lived in the Campbell Street House for fewer years than the Swarthout family.

Between 1978 and 2009, a new detached garage was constructed: the windows were replaced; the original, incised / recessed front porch was enclosed; and synthetic / substitute siding was installed over the historic siding materials. The Geneva City Hall does not have building permit records for the recessed front porch to be enclosed or for the installation of the substitute siding. In 2009, the property owners of 116 Campbell Street proposed an addition to the east (left) side and south (rear) side of the Swarthout house. The design of the proposed addition was set back from the front facade, and, upon review by the Historic Preservation Commission, was approved but never constructed. In 2021, an addition was under construction at the rear of the house, and a proposal was under review for the addition of a new front porch.

The property is notable for its association with architecture—specifically the Colonial Revival style.

SOURCES:

GHPC Case History; GHM Archives; 2016 Central Geneva NRHP Update;
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; Geneva City Council Minutes



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CONTRIBUTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES:

AS1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Detached, one-story, two-car garage with composite siding (1960s);
hipped roof (asphalt shingle); and paneled, metal overhead door.
Detached garage is not historically notable.

AS2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

HPC ACTION:

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Demolition Approved: n/a

Other HPC Action:

8.21.99 Fence; 5.19.09 Add'n Garage





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1999