



City of Geneva, Illinois

Local Historic District & Landmarks
Property Inventory Survey

GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

HISTORIC NAME: Wells-Burton House

COMMON NAME: n/a

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: Circa 1854-1855

SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION DATES: Circa 1857, 1917, 1923, 1962

ARCHITECT: B. E. Holden, Frank Brownfield Gray

BUILDER: Richard Winship

WILSON BROTHERS: ☐ AUGUST ☐ OSCAR ☒ BOTH

ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Greek Revival

OVERALL PLAN SHAPE: L-Plan

NUMBER OF STORIES: 2

FOUNDATION MATERIAL: Parged

PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL(S): Clapboard

FRONT PORCH: Covered Entry (1962)

VISIBLE SIDE PORCH: Stoops (1917-1923)

ENTRY DOOR(S): Wood (1923 or later)

WINDOW MATERIAL: Wood (1917 or later)

WINDOW STYLE: Double-hung (6/6, 4/4, 6 lt) and Casement

PRIMARY ROOF FORM: Gable

PRIMARY ROOF MATERIAL: Asphalt

VISIBLE CHIMNEY: Yes

CHIMNEY MATERIAL: Brick

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:

Oriel window at south facade, second-floor; Greek Revival details; entry door hoods (1917 [south] and circa 1963 [east]); early home relocated to site and attached to west end of original house (1917).

PROPERTY ADDRESS:

136 South Fifth Street

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN):

12-03-380-017



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 1854, Richard Winship purchased the S ½ of the block and built a home for himself on the eastern lots. The original house is contained within the north wing of the Fifth Street frontage (and was clearly evident during the 2015-2022 remodeling). The original, 2-story house occupied approximately the western 3/4 of the current foyer and bedroom above. The Richard Winship and David Lacey families moved to Bourbon County, Kansas in 1857.

The house was sold in 1857 to Charles B. Wells (See: Wells House 220 Third Street). Wells made additions to the house to accommodate his five sons and two daughters, adding a two-story addition to the south side of the earlier Winship house. The Wells family also added a one-story kitchen at the west end of their addition and a large, one-story porch along the south side of the remodeled house.

The Wells family lived here until 1888; the house was then sold to Mrs. Fanny L. Johnston of Chicago (See: 102 S. Fifth Street), who lived there with her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter. Mrs. Johnston died in 1910, but her daughter's family remained until June 1914, before returning to Chicago.

Arthur Burton of Chicago purchased the house in April 1917. A renovation designed by architects B. E. Holden and Frank B. Gray was constructed by the Wilson Bros., including the relocation of the second structure abutted to the west side of the house (evidenced by roof construction and other framing exposed during 2015-2022 remodeling); a south door hood; a second-floor oriel window; and an interior re-configuration including the conversion of the former one-story kitchen to a dining room, new stairs, and a living room.

B. E. Holden was a Chicago-based architect who designed the 1904 Aurora Public Library.

Born in Elgin, Illinois and raised in St. Charles, Illinois, Frank B. Gray was a very active architect in the Fox River Valley between 1918 and 1958, designing many homes, schools, churches, and municipal/industrial buildings. This house is one of Gray's first (if not the first) residential commissions in Geneva, where he eventually built his own house. Gray's first commission in Geneva was the Island Park Field House. Gray established his own office in 1917 in Chicago, Illinois. In 1918, Gray assumed control of the Worst & Shepardson firm in Aurora, Illinois.

In 1923, Burton moved to Wilmette and sold the property to Leonard C. Mead (publisher of the Geneva Republican).

In 1945, the property was sold to Miss Frances Jewett and her father, eventually becoming the home of Frances and her husband, Edwin H. Lyon (who retired to Florida in 1972; she died in 1980; he died in 1982). House renovations (including garage and connecting sunroom) were designed in November 1962 by Geneva architect, Wesley R. King, but were apparently never built. King designed a new east side entry hood which was completed in 1963.

Hon. John A. and Lydia Krause purchased the property in 1973 from Lyons (Hon. Krause [ret.] died in 1982 at the age of 55 in Countryside Center, Yorkville, Illinois).

The property was subdivided in 1977 to create the 128 S. Fifth Street lot. The property was sold to James C. Knotts in November 1986. In 2016, Jason Stoops of Batavia began, but did not complete renovations.

The detached garage is non-historic.



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ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Geneva History Museum Plaque - n.d.

The property is notable for its association with one or more significant persons (including occupants/owners, builders, and architects), architecture—specifically the Greek Revival style and changes over time—and community development—specifically the Early Settlement Period of Geneva (1837-1857).

SOURCES:

GHPC Case Studies; GHM Archives; 2016 Central Geneva NRHP Update; 1869 Bird's Eye View of Geneva; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; Kane County Land Records; Geneva, Illinois: A History of Its Times and Places; Geneva, Illinois: 150 Reminders of 150 Years



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CONTRIBUTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES:

AS1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

AS2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Picket fence is not historic and is not a reproduction of a historic fence but is complementary to the property. Fence was constructed in 1993 by the Briner family.

HPC ACTION:

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Demolition Approved: n/a

Other HPC Action:

8.31.16 Windows; 11.15.16 Renovation - Porch; 5.17.22 Exterior Rehab; 10.23.23 Fence, New Patio Pavers





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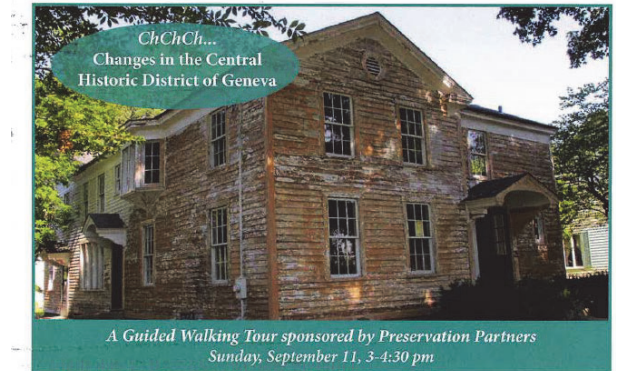
136 South Fifth Street





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approx 2016



1926-1927
Allen Mead,
courtesy Liz Safanda