



# City of Geneva, Illinois

Local Historic District & Landmarks  
Property Inventory Survey

## GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

**HISTORIC NAME:** Walter House

**COMMON NAME:** n/a

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:** Circa 1855

**SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION DATES:** Circa 1925

**ARCHITECT:** J. Howard Raftery

**BUILDER:** John R. Schmoldt / Wilson Bros.

WILSON BROTHERS: ☐ AUGUST ☐ OSCAR ☒ BOTH

## ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:** Gable Front, Greek Revival

**OVERALL PLAN SHAPE:** Rectangular

**NUMBER OF STORIES:** 2

**FOUNDATION MATERIAL:** Limestone

**PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL(S):** Limestone

**FRONT PORCH:** No

**VISIBLE SIDE PORCH:** No

**ENTRY DOOR(S):** Historic

**WINDOW MATERIAL:** Wood (likely 1925 replacements)

**WINDOW STYLE:** Double-hung (6/6)

**PRIMARY ROOF FORM:** Gable

**PRIMARY ROOF MATERIAL:** Asphalt

**VISIBLE CHIMNEY:** Yes

**CHIMNEY MATERIAL:** Limestone (ca. 1925)

## OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:

Early (if not original) front door with transom and stone stoop; heavy stone sills and lintels at windows and front door (door lintel has projected drip edge). Additions by Raftery/Wilson Bros. include south-facing bay window, fireplace, and northeast wing (clapboard). Historic massing and form has not been compromised.

## PROPERTY ADDRESS:

**301 South First Street**

## PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN):

12-03-481-001



## 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 January 1850, this property was deeded to Amandus Schmoldt, the father of John Rudolph Schmoldt (the original builder of this limestone house). J. R. Schmoldt was a carpenter and business partner of John (Francis) Walter, who is listed in an 1857 city directory as living at this location. In 1857, J. H. Mayborn owned the property, and in 1858, he sold it to Eben Conant.

During the early 1900s, the property was owned by Thomas Emma and the house was known as "Emma's Store," which sold groceries and "bottled vineyard products (wine)." Thomas Emma conveyed the north ½ of Lots 10 and 11 to August Wilson on July 30, 1928, for \$10.

The house was restored and enlarged in conjunction with Kate Raftery's River Lane Beautification Project which began in 1925. Raftery's son, architect J. Howard Raftery, designed the addition and alterations to the early limestone structure. The remodeling included: the addition of a new, south-facing bay window; a living room fireplace; a rear bedroom; one bathroom; an enclosed porch, and; a breezeway.

In 1942, Wilson and his wife, Anna, sold the property to Miss Signe C. Anderson (1890-1963) and Miss Alice Soiberg (1888-1978). (24 April 1942 Geneva Republican). Alice lived in the house until her death; both women were members of the First Church of Christ, Scientist.

The property is notable for its association with one or more significant persons, architecture—specifically methods of construction (locally-quarried limestone construction)—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 Recorder's Office Land Records; Geneva, Illinois: A History of Its Times and Places; Geneva, Illinois: 150 Reminders of 150 Years; Wilson Brothers - Contractors & Builders, 1905-1931 by Donald Wilson (2002)



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## CONTRIBUTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES:

### AS1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

### AS2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

## CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The date of construction of the limestone wall along First Street is unclear, but the low wall was erected after the initial construction of the house, possibly circa 1928-1930. During the Anderson-Soiberg residency, a unique fence of woven twigs was erected along the Franklin Street frontage that stands in 2020.



## HPC ACTION:

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Demolition Approved: n/a

Other HPC Action:

6.11.14 Shingles; 11.30.16 Shingles







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1999

