



City of Geneva, Illinois

Local Historic District & Landmarks
Property Inventory Survey

GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION:

HISTORIC NAME: Alexander-Acers-Brown House

COMMON NAME: n/a

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1855

SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION DATES: 1855-1863, 2017

ARCHITECT: n/a

BUILDER: Julius Alexander, Roswell W. Acers

WILSON BROTHERS: ☐ AUGUST ☐ OSCAR ☐ BOTH

ARCHITECTURAL DATA:

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Gable Front, Greek Revival

OVERALL PLAN SHAPE: Irregular

NUMBER OF STORIES: 2

FOUNDATION MATERIAL: Parged

PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL(S): Clapboard

FRONT PORCH: Partial Facade

VISIBLE SIDE PORCH: Yes (2017)

ENTRY DOOR(S): Non-historic

WINDOW MATERIAL: Undetermined

WINDOW STYLE: Double-hung (1/1, 6/1)

PRIMARY ROOF FORM: Gable

PRIMARY ROOF MATERIAL: Asphalt

VISIBLE CHIMNEY: Yes

CHIMNEY MATERIAL: Brick

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:

n/a

PROPERTY ADDRESS:

127 Ford Street

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN):

12-03-279-010



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:

The house was built between 1851 and 1855 by pioneer settler, Julius Alexander. The entrance to the original home appears to have faced Second Street.

In 1855, the property was sold to Roswell W. Acers (1808-1904) who came to Geneva from New York around 1836. Mr. Acers likely constructed the addition at the north end of the main house as well as the side "lean-to" addition on the east side of the residence. Roswell Acers also built a house on Fulton Street (now part of the house at 113 Fulton Street); however, that home likely was built in 1863 for his son and daughter-in-law, Nelson F. and Ellen (Conant) Acers. In 1865, Nelson Acers moved to Iola, Kansas, where he drilled the state's first gas well in 1872, gaining national attention. Roswell died in Kansas in 1904 at the age of 95.

Roswell W. Acers sold the Ford Street property in 1867 to Melvina Brown, a widow and sister of prolific Geneva carpenter John Chambers and well-known dressmakers Jane and Eliza Chambers. Melvina Chambers (daughter of James J. Chambers) married John Ross Brown (son of James Brown) in 1850; John R. Brown died in 1866.

The existing, one-and-one-half story residence is associated with the long tenure of more than 60 years with the extended Brown family.

Between 1869 and 1891, the east wing was doubled in width, and the south wall of the addition was relocated northward to allow for the construction of a porch, flush with the front of the original house. With the construction of the enlarged east addition and porch, the entrance was relocated to Ford Street. By 1923, the Ford Street porch had been removed, but a replacement porch that extended in front of the original house was built by 1930.

During the mid-1980s, the Ford Street house was heavily remodeled, resulting in a reconfiguration of the interior (a historic staircase was retained); replacement of many windows; relocation of first-floor windows at the front (south) facade; and installation of synthetic siding. A single-car garage was enlarged and remodeled (apparently during the 1970s) and was not considered to be contributing to the property in 2017 when the HPC approved the extensive renovation of the historic residence. The property was approved as a Tax Assessment Freeze project.

The property is notable for its association with one or more significant persons, architecture, and community development—specifically the Early Settlement Period of Geneva (1837-1857).

SOURCES:

GHPC Case Studies; GHM Archives; 2016 North 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



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CONTRIBUTING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES:

AS1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

AS2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

n/a

HPC ACTION:

☐

Demolition Approved: n/a

Other HPC Action:

9.19.17 Add'n





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2017



2017



1999

