

Evolution and Preliminary Historic Significance Evaluation of the Former Mill Race Inn Property

4 East State Street – Geneva, Illinois

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Historic photos provided by HPC Commissioner Alan Hiller and the Geneva History Museum

Preliminary Chain of Title provided by HPC Commissioner Carolyn Zinke

Original Draft: January 15, 2014 (Revised July 27, 2016 and August 12, 2016)

STAFF COMMENTS AND CORRECTIONS – February 28, 2018; March 1, 2018; May 9, 2018; November 15, 2018;

November 27, 2018; July 17, 2019; January 23, 2020; July 27, 2020; November 3, 2020; and June 3, 2021.

NOTE: *This report has been compiled at the direction of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission for the purpose of evaluating the potential of granting landmark status to a portion of the former Alexander Blacksmith Shop / Mill Race Inn property. Additional research may provide supplementary information that may substantiate or refute assumptions contained herein. All stated dates are based on documented sources, local histories, and/ or probable dates in the case of construction improvements. Evaluations and conclusions are subject to change based on further research and/or site investigation. Amendments and clarifications have been added based on additional research between the issuance of the initial report (2014) and 2016. Further investigation has been completed to verify the accuracy of the preliminary history that was attached to a Historic Landmark nomination submitted in December 2017. Additional information has been discovered at the Geneva History Museum, resulting from research on other properties within and adjacent to the Geneva Historic District. On July 27, 2020, Shirley Koelling (koellings@yahoo.com) provided additional emigration information pertaining to the Rystrom family from a database of Swedish immigrants. Minor content additions, text clarifications, and grammatical/formatting corrections were made on June 3, 2021.*

Evolution of the Early Industrial Site

First pioneer settlers arrived in vicinity of present-day Geneva in 1833, including Daniel Shaw Haight and James Brown. Following year, Frederick Bird, James Clayton Herrington and Christian Bowen Dodson arrived. In the winter of 1834-35, Haight “sells out his claim” to Herrington.

Between 1835 and 1837, the newly-settled area was known concurrently as “Herrington’s Ford,” “La Fox,” and “Campbell’s Ford.”

Between 1836 and 1840, the nucleus of a community formed on both the east and west banks of the Fox River.

May 1837, a plat for the City of Geneva was recorded for the settlement on the west bank of the Fox River.

1835 – Samuel Sterling arrived at Geneva, living on west side of Fox River. (*Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 819*)

1836 – Julius and Edward Alexander arrived at Geneva (Kane), Illinois but apparently did not settle permanently. (*Geneva, Illinois: A History of Its Times and Places [“Geneva”]*)

1836 – Lyman German arrived and settled on east side of Fox River across from location of Geneva. (*Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 821*)

Late 1836 or Early 1837 – Samuel Sterling and Mr. Gilbert built the first bridge across the Fox River at Geneva, Illinois. The bridge was swept away by the spring freshet before the bridge was completed. Mr. Gilbert was likely P. C. Gilbert of Elgin or Truman Gilbert of South Elgin. Mr. Gilbert had been involved in the construction of several dams upriver in 1836 and 1837. (*The Past and Present of*

Kane County, Illinois [Chicago: Wm. LeBaron, Jr. & Co.], 1878, pp. 323, 359-360)

1837 – Samuel Sterling settled on east side of Fox River across from location of Geneva. (*Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 819*)

May 1837 – Samuel Sterling, Henry Madden, and Mark Daniels began erection of a sawmill, the first industrial concern on the east bank of the Fox River at Geneva. A dam had been built that year (or the previous year); a millrace had been partially completed; and a sawmill was expected to be operational by the spring of 1838. It is probable that Mr. Gilbert of Elgin (who apparently had some engineering experience) assisted in the design and construction of the first dam at Geneva. (*Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 819*)

June 30 – July 1, 1837 – Julius and Edward Alexander arrived from Plainfield, Illinois and settled along the Fox River.

Julius and Edward Alexander were blacksmiths, by trade. The first task undertaken by the brothers was assistance with the completion of the sawmill under construction. (*Geneva, p. 33*)

Julius Alexander laid claim to land on the east side of the Fox River (north and south of present-day State Street).

“When they arrived, (Julius and Edward) cleared the land just north and east of the present bridge, using the lumber to build and roof their first shop. Stone for the forge and chimney came from the nearby quarry. Their first job was for Daniels, Stride, Sterling and Company, the new proprietors of the dam and sawmill enterprise.... With the help of Robert Lester and James and Ralph Adsit, the Alexanders built a one-and-a-half story frame house.... The work done by Julius and Edward Alexander helped to complete the sawmill so essential for (Geneva’s) growth.... The completion of the sawmill made Geneva a little more self-reliant than before.” The first blacksmith shop of Julius Alexander was built the year of the brothers’ arrival, 1837. (*Geneva, p. 34 and The Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois [Chicago: Wm. LeBaron, Jr. & Co.], 1878, p. 323*)

October 1837 – Eben Danford arrived at Geneva. (*Gibbons, The Founders and Early History of Geneva, Kane County, Illinois, 2014, p. 464*)

Autumn 1837- Summer 1838 – Eben Danford and David Lacy (also Lacey) dug the first millrace on the east side of the Fox River. (*Gibbons, The Founders and Early History of Geneva, Kane County, Illinois, 2014, p. 466*)

Likely, Eben Danford and David Lacy completed the millrace that had been begun by Sterling, Madden, and Daniels, who had built a dam and had begun construction of a sawmill in 1837. The dam had been damaged during the spring of 1837.

Spring 1838 – Eben Danford and Alfred Churchill assembled a threshing and mowing machine, the Danford Harvesting Machine which was demonstrated on August 16, 1841 to positive reviews. (*Geneva, p. 37 and Gibbons, The Founders and Early History of Geneva, Kane County, Illinois, 2014, pp. 220, 266*)

Likely, the components of that first threshing machine were not manufactured at Geneva. The patented Danford Reaper and Mower was not wholly produced at Geneva until 1850 when a

blacksmith shop, machine shop, and foundry were added to the Danford furniture manufactory.

1838 – John Penney commenced making brick at St. Charles, Illinois. This is one of the earliest documented brick kilns in northeastern Illinois and likely supplied brick for a later building erected by Julius and Edward Alexander. (*Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois [Chicago: Beers, Leggett & Co.], 1888, p. 1083*)

John Penney (1792-1851) established, by 1839, a brickworks along the north branch of the Chicago River at Chicago which he continued with his sons until about 1845-1848, when the brickworks were relocated to "South Chicago," where the company operated until shortly after John Penney's death. In 1853, George W. Penney (1824-1868), son of John Penney, established the brickworks at Penneyville (later, Brickton, and, now, present-day Park Ridge), Illinois. George operated those brickworks through 1858 but, then, became a merchant until his death in 1868. Father, son, and a brother all died of cholera.

March 30, 1840 – James Brown purchased from Mark Daniels and Robert W. Chapman water power rights and the sawmill on east side of Fox River. (*Kane County Land Records, Book 1, pp. 182-183, also pp 184-186 and p 187-188 [Hendrick Miller & Son Distillery]*)

Elijah S. Foote may have completed the improvements of the mill race.

April 1, 1840 – Daniels, Chapman & Brown deeded water rights to Julius and Edward Alexander. (*Kane County Land Records, Book 2, pp. 446-448*)

This granting of water rights was likely in anticipation of the brick manufactory / foundry built by the Alexander Brothers in 1842. The need for waterpower with a blacksmith shop is unusual and suggests that the "blacksmith shop" was more likely a small foundry that included either water-powered bellows for the forge or, more likely, the operation of a large piece of forging equipment such as a pile or trip hammer.

1840 – U. S. Government completed survey of public lands in Kane County, making registration of claims possible.

1840 – U. S. Government allowed public sale of lands in Kane County through the Chicago District Land Office; Julius Alexander purchased his original land claim at the Chicago District Land Office: the fractional southwest quarter of Section 2 of Township 39 North, Range 8 East, consisting of 135.68 acres.

Circa 1842 – Julius Alexander erected a manufacturing building, constructed of brick, on the north side of State Street at the millrace. It is unclear what purpose the building served, but most probably a blacksmith shop and foundry. (*Geneva, p. 38*) The bricks used in the construction of this blacksmith shop at the south end of the Bennett Mill were the first to be made in Kane County and "were made by an Englishman over on White's Creek..." (03 February 1894 *The Geneva Republican*)

The "Englishman" was probably John Penney, who continued to make bricks at both the White's Creek location (located, in 2018, within Stanley Esping Park in the Ridgewood Subdivision on the east side of Geneva) as well as the Chicago location through the early 1840s, when the clay vein was depleted.

"The young Alexanders were instrumental in founding the Methodist congregation in Geneva. ...in the early 1840s, Julius' second blacksmith shop was built on the north side of

State (street), which has been confused in later histories with the third blacksmith shop of the Alexander Brothers, built on the south side of State Street and was (in 1977) part of the Mill Race Inn." (*Geneva*, p. 38)

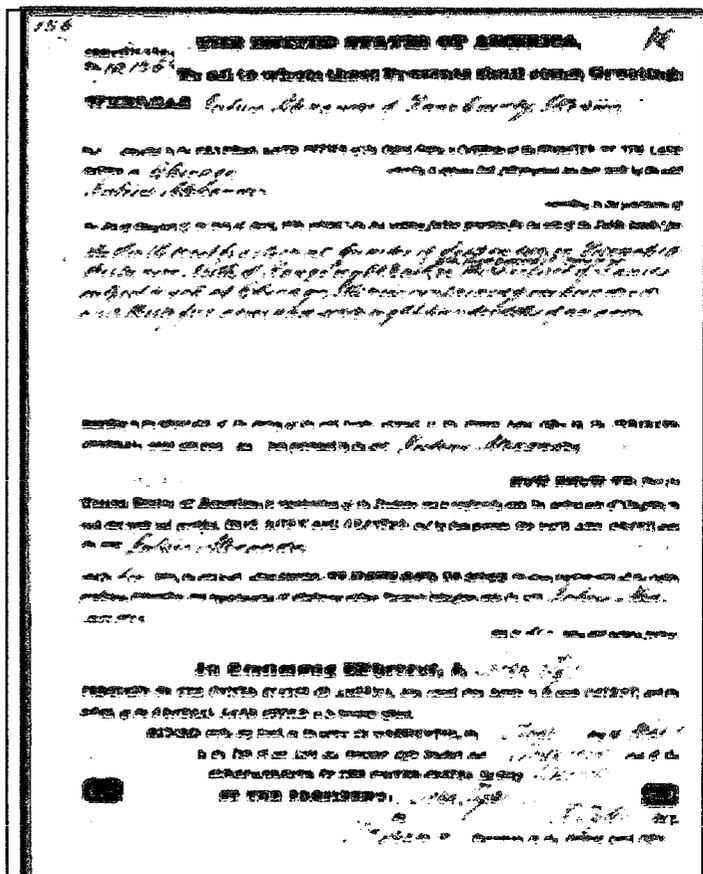
Some local histories identify the brick blacksmith shop that was built on the north side of State Street as having been constructed in 1846. However, that is likely an error of historians confusing the north and south blacksmith shops, primarily an account published in the 03 February 1894 The Geneva Republican newspaper. Historical records, accounts and documents support an "early 1840s" date for the brick structure (second blacksmith shop), which can be reasonably extrapolated to be the circa 1842 date of construction. Consequently, the 1846 date of construction is, most appropriately, associated with the limestone blacksmith shop (third shop of the Alexander brothers) on the south side of State Street.

July 1, 1842 – Julius Alexander and his wife sold 49 acres to Samuel Sterling and Allen Hubbard but retained the water rights granted in 1840 to Julius and his brother, Edward. This property lay north of State Street and east of the Fox River, eventually being subdivided as Howards & Baird’s Addition to the Town of Geneva. The retention of water rights suggests that the Alexander brothers had established their brick shop by this time and that they intended to maintain operations along the millrace. The same, 49-acre property was later deeded to Ira Minard (July 20, 1843), who transferred the property to John Buttrick (June 1, 1844), who sold the property to Leonard Howard (July 1, 1844); the land comprised most of Howard & Baird’s Addition to the Town of Geneva (October 1851). (*Kane County Land Records, Book A, p. 197*)

September 6, 1842 – Julius Alexander’s land claim of SW ¼ of Section 2, Township 39 North, Range 8 East at the Chicago General Land Office was verified between the Illinois and Federal land offices and officially recorded in state records. (*Illinois Public Domain Land Tract Sales Database*)

March 10, 1843 – U. S. Government issued a Land Patent Certificate to Julius Alexander for the fractional southwest quarter of Section 2 of the Township, consisting of 135.68 acres (see image to right).

Due to the large volume of land that the Federal government offered for sale, it was not uncommon that property owners did not receive a land patent (a "title") to their claimed property for several years. When new areas of land were offered for sale, long lines would form at district land offices. Consequently, the long lines, zealous rush for prime parcels, and the long wait for the receipt of patents resulted in the coining of the phrase "doing a land office business."



1843 – Eben, John, and Jarvis Danford moved from their rented furniture manufactory on the west bank of the Fox River and built a new manufactory on the east side of the Fox River, along the east millrace. Water-power supplied the energy to operate the power drive for various furniture-making machinery, including turning lathes.

1843 – Leonard Howard and Alexander M. Baird were at St. Charles, where they were organizers of the Franklin Medical College. (Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 518)

Both Howard and Baird live near the Geneva –St. Charles border. Later, the two men establish Howard & Baird’s Addition to the Town of Geneva.

1844 – David Lacy (also Lacey) built a blacksmith shop north of the Danford factory and, there, manufactured hoes, hayforks, and knives. (Geneva, p. 38)

1845 – Leonard Howard was elected as Geneva Town President. (Joslyn, History of Kane County, Volume 1, 1908, p. 816)

1846 – Julius and Edward Alexander along with Lyman German constructed a limestone building for use as a blacksmith shop. It is highly probable that this limestone blacksmith shop building on the south side of State Street was erected in the spring and summer of 1843 (or shortly thereafter). The source of the limestone was either from the excavation of the mill race, itself, or from the small quarry northeast of the site along the “east river road” (now Bennett Street / Illinois Route 25).

A deed, dated **May 1, 1847**, described the transfer of land situated on the south side of State Street and along the east bank of the Fox River. The land was sold by Julius Alexander and his wife, Wealthy, to Edward Alexander and Lyman German; however the deed noted the exemption and reservation—by Julius Alexander—of “*the undivided third part of a strip one hundred feet wide on the west side of the lot, above described, it being the lot on which the Blacksmith Shop now stands, (emphasis added) to have and to hold the same together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments, privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging or in any wise appertaining...*” (Kane County Land Records, Book 8, pp. 471-473)

While a source of water was necessary to cool small forgings, typical blacksmiths would utilize several barrels of water but not require proximity to a water-power source. It is a most probably a misnomer to identify the Alexander operation as a simple blacksmith shop and think the mistake may be traced to two sources.

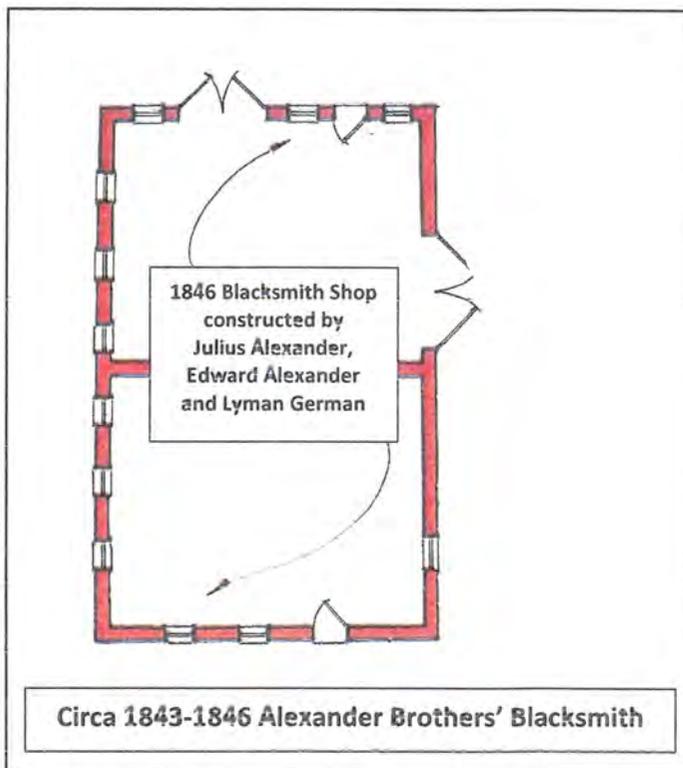
Federal census data for Geneva in 1850 does not distinguish between “blacksmith” and “foundryman.” Although some census locations used the terms interchangeably, other locations made a distinction. Apparently, the Geneva census enumerator fell into the former camp.

Based on a review of blacksmith shops, the need for waterpower is triggered by two needs: a power drive for lathes to create wooden molds for certain types of castings (necessary for mill and agricultural equipment) and—more importantly—the operation of a pile or trip hammer which was useful for shaping large forged items such as shovel blades, plowshares, and turbine blades.

The operations of the Alexander brothers / Lyman German appear to have been more of a foundry rather than traditional blacksmith shop (a place where small implements, horseshoes, and other, common tools were produced). The large doorway at the east side of the limestone building would have been necessary for large wagon repair but also to ship larger mill or factory components. The

Alexander brothers were knowledgeable of the Dillman foundry operation at Plainfield, Illinois, which was established with Julius and Edward Alexander's brother-in-law, Lewis Miller, who was a principal investor and early business partner in the Plainfield enterprise. (Miller, himself, later associated with Cornelius Aultman and established Aultman, Miller & Co. at Akron, Ohio. By the mid-nineteenth century, the C. Aultman & Co. manufactory at Canton, Ohio had become the largest manufacturer of agricultural implements in the world.)

Although a pre-1847 existence is verified for the blacksmith shop / foundry, the limestone building (the third shop of the Alexander brothers) may have been constructed as early as 1843 or 1844, when the Alexanders lay claim to the property and after they sold their interests in their 49 acre parcel north of State Street.



However, unsourced references do identify the construction of a blacksmith shop for the Alexander brothers in 1846. An 1890 engraving made from a *circa* 1850 daguerreotype (from the collections of the Geneva History Museum) shows the limestone building with a gable roof (with its ridge running east-west).

The limestone building was situated close to the mill (or "tail") race to take advantage of either water-driven turbines for power or as a source for intensive water use in the production and/or fabrication of manufactured goods (most likely water to cool forgings and castings).

If a water-driven turbine was the power source (more likely after 1845), then the power drive may have

entered the building through an opening in the west foundation wall.

It is possible that the structure incorporated a vertical water wheel as a power source for a pile or trip hammer. Although a great amount of energy in the race would have been consumed by those factories north on the race, it is possible that an intermediate dam may have provided sufficient head pressure to operate a small vertical wheel.

No evidence of a horizontal water wheel (more common in the early water-powered industries of northeastern Illinois where rivers are relatively shallow) exists on site or in any historical record.

The one story, utilitarian building was constructed with limestone, exterior bearing walls with a wood-framed, gable roof (ridge presumed to run east-west).

Measuring approximately 30 feet wide along East State Street and approximately 48 feet deep, the structure was constructed on a shallow cellar. The main floor was constructed of heavy timber framing

and wood planking; the cellar floor was likely dirt or, possibly, limestone slabs.

Circa 1846-48 – Danford Warehouse of limestone was constructed. (*Geneva*, p. 85)

The Danford Warehouse (still standing in 2018 on the west side of Bennett Street, just north of East State Street) may have been constructed by Leonard Howard, the earliest known mason in Geneva. By 1850, Andrew Stevens is identified as a stonecutter (*i.e.* “quarryman”) and the following men were identified (according to the 1850 United States Federal Census) as masons in the Village of Geneva: George Coorwin, John Kelly, Robert Leicester (possibly Lester), Joseph Shaw, Stephen Torrence, George Westgarth, James Westgarth, and Joseph Wisby.

1849 – John and Daniel Stevens (also Stephens) purchased the 1842 brick structure on the north side of State Street and operated a paper mill in the building until 1851. (*Geneva*, p. 38)

1849 – Mr. and Mrs. John Stevens along with Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Stevens among 12 original members who gathered the Geneva Congregational Church (*Geneva*, p. 263)

1850 – United States Federal Census:

Daniel Stevens, 51 (b. 1799 NJ), merchant John

Stevens, 46 (b. 1804 NJ), papermaker

Joseph C. Stevens, 37 (b. 1813 NJ), papermaker Henry

Shapatin, 35 (b. 1815 PA), papermaker

William Lawrence, 31 (b. 1819 NY), works in paper mill

Jacob K. Anthony, 25 (b. 1827 NJ), papermaker (later becomes Geneva’s first advertised druggist [*Geneva*, p. 332])

Likely, the paper mill utilized cotton rag pulp rather than wood pulp since the process and machinery for producing a quality paper from wood pulp was not developed until 1850. It is likely the paper produced was for stationery and pamphlet printing rather than for wallpaper or other large-scale household use.

1850 – Eben Danford converted the furniture manufactory on the east side of the Fox River to a reaper manufacturing facility. Despite the popularity of Danford’s reaper, threshing, and mowing machines, the reaper factory closed in 1862 due to competition from larger factories—including Cyrus McCormick’s plant at Chicago, combined with war-time shortages of materials, supplies, and manpower. (*Gibbons*, pp. 464-475 and *Geneva* pp. 37-39)

1850 – The United States Federal Census for Geneva, Illinois identified the following men and occupations related to water-powered industry or iron works:

Blacksmith: Julius Alexander, Otis P. Scott (Alexander household), George Henry, David Lacey, Carter Longley, Royal J. Pier, Philetus Pier, and Joseph Williams

Wagon Maker / Wheelwright: Oscar Brown, Jarvis Danford, Oscar Dewey, Cornelius Haight and William Haight

Miller: Andrew McWayne/McWagner, Brigham Moore / Morse, and James Shuttleworth

1851 – Stevens Paper Mill at Geneva closed. The business was sold to and continued by O. M. Butler of St. Charles (03 February 1894 *The Geneva Republican*)

Circa 1852 – David Lacy sold his interests at Geneva and relocated to Kansas Territory, settling at Bourbon County by 1855. (Kane County Land Records, Book 20, pp. 111-112 and Kansas State Census Records, and Find-A-Grave.com)

July 31, 1853 – Julius Alexander and his wife, Wealthy transferred (by Quit Claim Deed) two parcels of land along the east bank of the Fox River, north and south of State Street to Ira Minard. The south parcel is the site of the Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop. (Kane County Land Records, Book 39, p. 364)

1854 – John Rystrom, a blacksmith, emigrated from Rydaholm, Sweden arrived at Geneva in 1854. Upon his arrival, he formed a partnership with John Rysjo, a Swede and carriage maker. The two men took over the former Alexander Blacksmith Shop and added a frame second floor to the building, where carriages were upholstered and painted. (Geneva, p. 85)

A newspaper account (recollections of a local resident) identified that John Rystrom, "in the early sixties" established a "carriage and wagon manufactory at the east end of the bridge in the building where the (Oscar Carlson's Excelsior) laundry is now located." (03 February 1894 The Geneva Republican). However, based on other documents, John Rystrom established and was operating his wagon shop much earlier, likely established no later than 1855. The published recollection in the local newspaper is more likely a reference to when Rystrom added the second floor to the original limestone structure built at least 15-20 years earlier. The wooden, second floor of the Rystrom Carriage and Wagon manufactory, therefore, may be dated to between 1860 and 1863 since material and labor shortages significantly increased as the Civil War continued (1861-1865). John Rystrom and his workers were highly regarded as carriage and wagon makers.

Based on Federal census data, immigration documents, and other records, the Rystrom's family arrival at Geneva can be summarized as follows:

John Rystrom (b. 1821) arrived in Geneva from Sweden in the company of his wife, Annie/Anna (Stina) (b. 1825), along with their first three children, friends, and relatives.

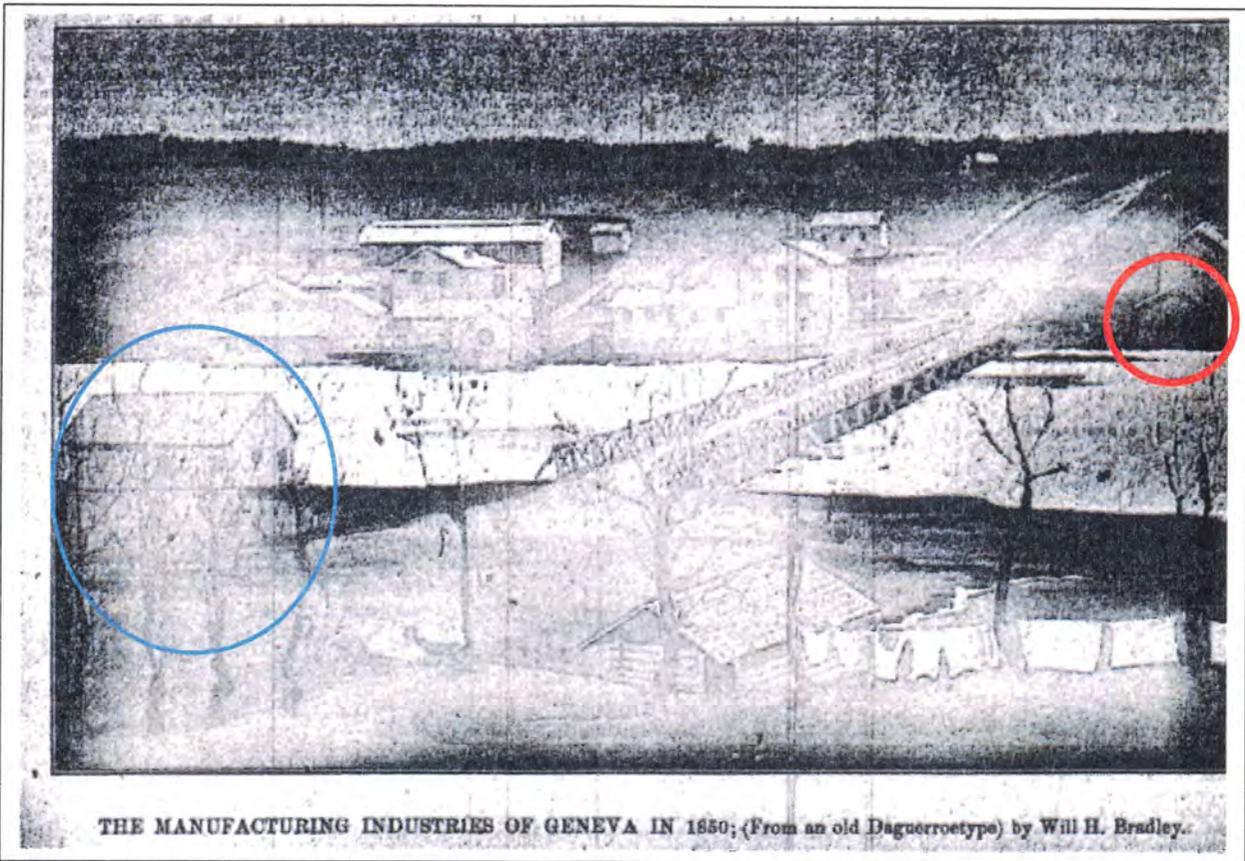
The Rystrom children were: Anders/Andrew (b. 1847); Mary (b. 1849); Christina (b. 1852); John A. (b. 1856); Charles (b. 1858); Albert (b. 1860); Edward "Eddie" (b. 1865); and Clara (b. 1867) – all born in Illinois except Mary (Sweden).

Arriving also from Sweden and residing with the Rystrom family were:

John Riders (b. 1839), wagonmaker;
John Peterson (b. 1821), blacksmith; and
May Carey (b. 1817), presumed sister-in-law.

Under John Rystrom, the 1846 limestone structure was altered dramatically. Although the limestone structure of the Alexander Brothers' blacksmith shop remained in its original form, a wood-framed second floor was constructed above the original limestone building. Consequently, the original roof structure (presumably a gable roof with an east-west ridge) was removed and replaced with a new floor structure, constructed—most probably—of heavy timber posts and beams with plank flooring. The second floor was utilized—as was the common practice—for the upholstery and paint shop of Rystrom's carriage and wagon manufactory. An inclined ramp, rising to the new second floor from State Street, allowed for the movement of lightweight carriages from one level to the other. Apparently, the new second floor addition incorporated an east-west

ridge, based on the 1869 Bird's Eye View of Geneva engraving.



Based on other documentation, the daguerreotype (from which the engraving, shown above, was created) was produced in the 1850s, probably prior to 1854. The view—taken from a point south of State Street between First Street and River Lane—is looking easterly. The building, circled in red, is the circa 1846 Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop. The building in the foreground to the left, circled in blue, is likely very similar to the Alexander Brothers' blacksmith shop once it had been converted and enlarged for the John Rystrom Wagon Shop around 1854. The expansion of the Rystrom shop included a wood-framed second floor, probably with an east-west ridge.

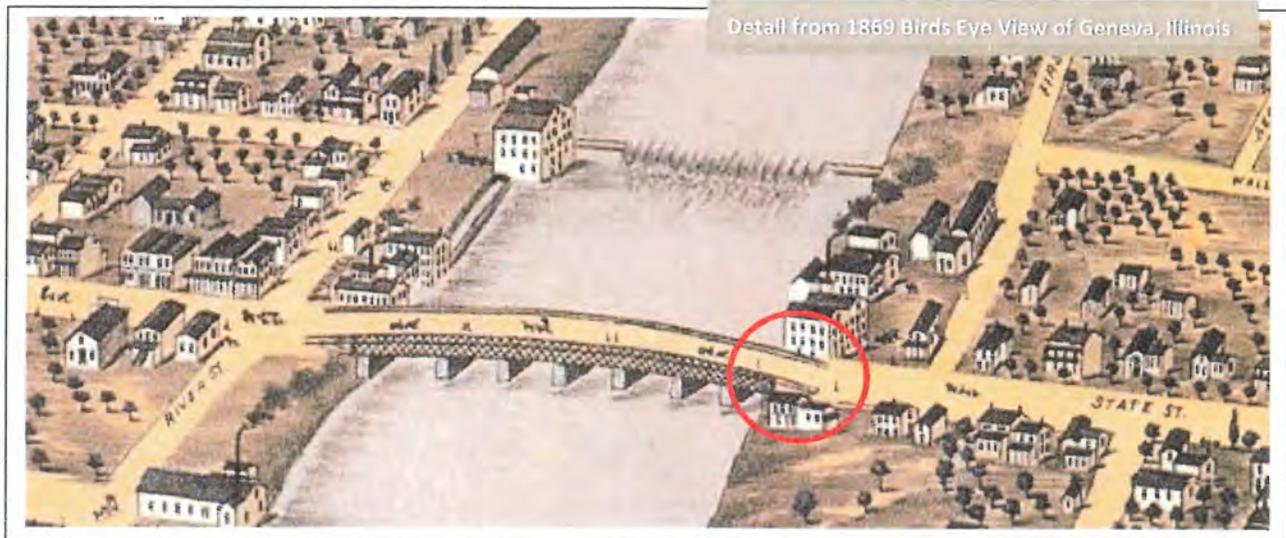
Between 1853 and 1866 – Ira Minard sold the Rystrom Wagon & Carriage Shop property to Patrick and Bridget Clancy of Geneva. (Kane County Land Records)

March 7, 1866 – The property was sold by Patrick and Bridget Clancy to Christian B. Dodson with the provision that the site of the Rystrom Wagon Shop would be deeded simultaneously to John Rystrom. (Kane County Land Records, Book 84, p. 388 and Book 91, p. 504 and Book 104, pp. 117-118)

The sales contract specifically stated that *“the party of the second part shall in no manner interfere with or infuse the walls of the Race running by said premises or obstruct the water running therethru.”*

1868 – Construction began on a new State Street bridge across the Fox River. The bridge consisted of stone piers with an iron truss driving deck. The new bridge included a raised approach at the east

end; the raised approach extended across the west half of the north façade of the 1846 limestone building, constructed by Julius Alexander and Lyman German. Based on various records of sales and mortgages, additional improvements to the Rystrom wagon and carriage shop were likely completed between 1866 and 1868 (see image below with Rystrom wagon and carriage shop circled in red).



1872 – John Rystrom relocated to Oregon (Ogle County), Illinois where he established a well-regarded carriage and wagon manufactory. (*Geneva*, p. 85)

Afterward, Andrew Rystrom continued the family business at Geneva. History noted that Andrew Rystrom was an “exemplary Swedish carriage manufacturer.” (*Past & Present of Kane County, Illinois*)

June 16, 1875 – The Rystrom wagon and carriage shop property was seized for delinquent taxes. James C. Brown of Elgin, Illinois (relationship to Andrew Rystrom unknown) **assumed the liability for the delinquency. At a Sheriff’s Sale, the property was transferred to James C. Brown** with the documents being filed on June 13, 1876. (*Kane County Land Records, Book 164, p. 399*)

On May 18, 1876, James C. Brown transferred (by warranty deed) the wagon shop property to Andrew Rystrom in consideration of \$100.00. Apparently, Andrew Rystrom was also responsible for the payment of the delinquent 1875 and 1876 taxes. (*Kane County Land Records, Book 182, p. 432*)

Seemingly, Andrew Rystrom could not manage the finances of the Geneva wagon and carriage shop. By 1880, he and his brother, Charles, were working, again, alongside their father, John, at the Oregon, Illinois shop. According to the census data, John A. (“Andrew”) was a skilled carriage painter; Charles was a skilled carriage maker. (*1880 United States Federal Census*).

Circa 1878-1879 – The former Rystrom wagon and carriage shop was operated for a period of time by another wagon and carriage painter, presumably William Updike of Batavia.

An undated letter from Eric Anderson (*Geneva History Museum Collections*) stated in reference to Anne Forsyth’s Mill Race Inn restaurant: “Remember your building, vacancy of it. Never remember it as a blacksmith shop. Remember it as Carlson laundry and a paint shop. A fella by name of Updike from Batavia running it. Wagon painter.”

The only member of the Updike family that has been recorded as a painter was William Updike, who—through his relatives—was acquainted with the Rystrom family. The Rystrom family had acquired land near the Geneva wagon and carriage shop from William Updike's older cousin, Johnson Updike. As a painter, William Updike may have worked at the Rystrom shop under Andrew Rystrom.

William Updike was born in 1828 at Somerset County, New Jersey, where he had learned the trade of painter. William Updike arrived at Geneva in 1850 but moved to Batavia, Illinois, where he went to work for the U. S. Wind Engine & Pump Company of Batavia. There, he became foreman of the painting department. He engaged in his trade, for a time, with the Chicago & North Western Railroad. He may have taken over the Rystrom wagon and carriage shop for a brief time between 1879 and 1884, when "tiring of the brush" ...he "abandoned it for the cleaver" and opened a meat market in Batavia. (*Commemorative Portrait and Biographical Record of Kane and Kendall Counties, Ill. [Chicago: Beers. Leggett & Co.], 1888, p. 775*)

Circa 1880 – Site purchased by Lewis E. and Huldah Landon.

Lewis Landon of Wheaton, Illinois was the father of Sarah Landon, first wife of Charles E. Mann; Sarah Landon and Charles E. Mann married in 1868.

No significant information has been discovered about Landon or the early use of the property under the Landon's ownership; however, the building may have continued to be used as a carriage and wagon shop for a short period of time, possibly under the hand of William Updike.

It is probable that Lewis & Huldah Landon were little more than landlords and that the property continued to operate as a carriage shop until mid-summer 1882.

No significant modifications or improvements were known to have been made during the period from 1875-1882.

1882 – C. E. Mann began the manufacture of patented potato planter along with cheese and butter boxes.

Charles E. Mann resigned his position as Kane County Superintendent of Schools and Principal of Geneva Schools. He began a manufacturing site in the former Rystrom wagon and carriage shop “at the east end of bridge.” (*The Geneva Republican*, Volume 47, Issue 12, March 24, 1894)

An undated advertisement (*right*, courtesy of Geneva History Museum files), appears to have been published around the time that C. E. Mann opened his shop on East State Street. The advertisement states:

New Milk Wagons, Buggies or Cutters, Horse-shoeing, and all kinds of Blacksmithing Painting and Wood Work. We wish to invite special attention to the fact that we are now prepared to furnish MILK WAGONS, BUGGIES or CUTTERS at prices less than they can be bought at the factory. Get prices elsewhere if you wish and then come and see us.

At the request of many patrons we are now prepared to do HORSE-SHOEING, having built a shop especially for that purpose... (emphasis added)

The advertisement suggests that Charles E. Mann erected the wood-framed blacksmith shop to the east of the stone structure between 1880 and 1883. However, Mann may have simply remodeled the east wing depicted in the 1869 Bird’s Eye View of Geneva engraving.

“(Charles E.) Mann’s factory turned out a patented potato digger, cheese boxes and similar items beginning in 1882. He started in the abandoned Rystrom carriage shop at the east end of the bridge.” (*Geneva*, p. 56)

October 1884 (recorded 1887) – Site sold to “Clyde E. Mann.”

—NEW—

MILK-WAGONS, Buggies or Cutters, HORSE-SHOEING,

And All Kinds of
BLACKSMITHING
Painting and Wood Work.

We wish to invite special attention to the fact that we are now prepared to furnish MILK WAGONS, BUGGIES or CUTTERS at prices less than they can be bought at the factory. Get prices elsewhere if you wish and then come and see us.

At the request of many patrons we are now prepared to do HORSE-SHOEING, having built a shop especially for that purpose.

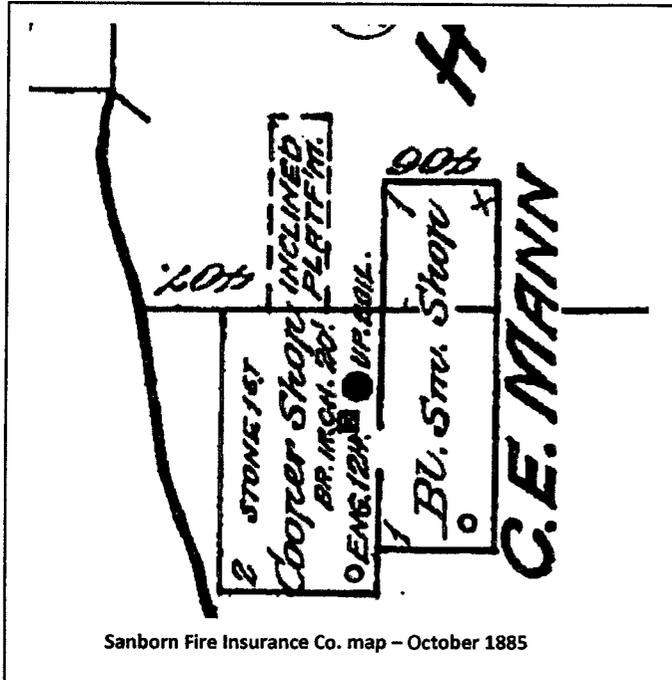
We also do all kinds of wood or Iron Repairing, all kinds of wagon or carriage PAINTING, UPHOLSTERING, top-dressing, etc.

The advantage, both in convenience and in cost of having all of a job, consisting, perhaps, of blacksmithing, wood work, painting and upholstering, done at one place is apparent to any one.

We intend to do all work CHEAP, but we expect cash for it, as we pay cash for everything, but we will give our customers the advantage of so doing and on all bills amounting to Five Dollars or more we will allow, for CASH, a discount of 5 per cent.

Come to the shop at the east end of the bridge, Geneva, Ill., and have your repairing done or give your order for new work.

C. E. MANN.



This entry is confusing (and, likely, a recording error) since Clyde Mann was only 10 years old at the time of the transaction; 13 years old at the time of recording. Also, Clyde’s middle name was “Alison.”

Clyde’s father was Charles E. Mann (1844-1907), who arrived in Geneva during the 1860s and, in the early 1880s, practiced law briefly at Geneva, but before and afterward served as Superintendent of Schools at Geneva, St. Charles, and Batavia as well as serving as the Kane County Superintendent of Schools. Charles E. Mann was instrumental in establishing the high school at Geneva (1874) and served as its first Principal.

Charles E. Mann was first married to Sarah Landon (1847-1883); following her death, C. E. Mann married Emma Violet Curtis (1854-1932).

Two children were born of the first marriage: Mary Estella (1876-1944) and Clyde Alison (1874-1966).

1885 – Alexander Blacksmith Shop / Rystrom Carriage and Wagon Shop remained (1846 limestone building) and was operating as C. E. Mann’s Cooperage. (1885 Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map)

According to several histories, the State Street property was converted to a barrel making factory (cooperage) and a manufactory of wooden butter tubs and cheese boxes as well as a patented potato planter. However, other sources suggest that

Mann’s patented potato planter was manufactured at his plant on the north side of State Street.

The building was remodeled to accommodate manufacturing equipment and a steam-powered lineshaft, powered by a 12 horsepower engine. A vertical steam boiler was vented through a 20 foot tall brick and iron chimney.

Because the cooperage business was so successful, C. E. Mann, in 1885, partnered with Walter D. Turner. The two men erected a new building on the former Danford Reaper Works site and moved the manufacturing company to the north side of State Street (where Mann’s potato planter was produced). However, later that year, Walter D. Turner and his family decided to move to California and the brief partnership was dissolved. (*The Geneva Republican*, Volume 47, Issue 12, March 24, 1894 and Geneva, p. 56)

October 27-28, 1888 – Fire broke out at Mann’s shops on East State Street and was discovered around midnight on Saturday, October 27, 1888. The fire was extinguished in the early morning of Sunday, October 28, 1888, resulting in a loss of \$15,000. The fire destroyed the three-year-old factory on the north side of State Street and wiped-out Mann, financially. Insufficient insurance was in place at the time of the fire to cover rebuilding immediately. (*Sterling Standard*, Sterling, Illinois, November 1, 1888, p 1) According to Walter D. Turner, the fire was intentionally set by “a fiend” who destroyed the cooperage building. (*The Geneva Republican*, Volume 47, Issue 12, March 24,

1894)

Other accounts attributed the October 1888 fire to “drunken loafers loafing around the building.” The Geneva Improvement Association pledged to assist C. E. Mann in rebuilding and putting his 25-30 employees back to work as soon as possible. (*Geneva Patrol*, November 1888 – courtesy of the Geneva History Museum).

Presumably, Mann set up shop at a leased location in Block 5 of the Original Town of Geneva.

Within two weeks of the fire, Mr. Mann, a City Alderman, presented a proposal for fire pumps and hoses to the City Council; the report was accepted and approved to seek funding for the equipment. (*Geneva Patrol*, November 1888 – courtesy of the Geneva History Museum).

December 7, 1889 – Petition for two crossings (presumably of the “Glucose rail spur”) at Mann’s Cooper Shop was approved by Geneva City Council. (*City of Geneva, Illinois – City Council Minutes for December 7, 1889*)

March 1890 – Charles E. Mann acquired Block 5 in the Original Town of Geneva (Fourth and Stevens Streets, north of the “Glucose Line” of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway); purchased from Emily Herrington, et. al. (*Kane County Land Records*)

1890 – The New Haven Wire Goods Factory & Cooperage was established at Aurora; Baker & Morton laid out an addition to the city but defaulted and did not build a factory, as promised, for New Haven Wire Goods Factory & Cooperage. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. Volume 1, p. 589 and Bateman, Selby and Wilcox, Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kane County, 1904. Volume 2, p. 794*)

1890-1891 – Dr. Stephen C. Gillett, of Aurora, and associates acquired the Baker & Morton Addition to the City of Aurora, sold the platted lots; and built a factory, presented to New Haven Wire Goods Factory & Cooperage. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. V1, p 589 and Bateman, Selby and Wilcox, Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kane County, 1904. Volume 2, p. 794*)

The New Haven Wire Goods Factory & Cooperage began operations at Aurora on February 10, 1891 (*The Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois, February 11, 1891, p. 5*)

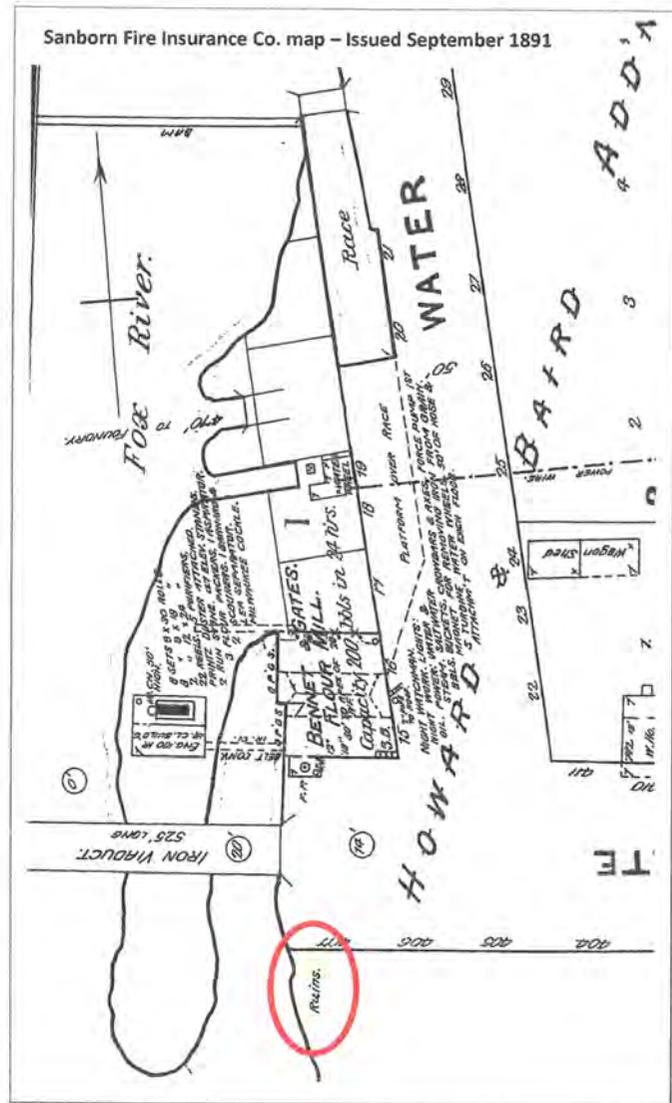
Circa March 1891 – The newly-constructed Charles E. Mann Cooper Shop & Tub Factory at Fourth and Stevens streets in Geneva were completed and in full operation.

September 1891 – Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Geneva (image below to right) is published based on surveyor’s notes recorded months earlier. The Sanborn map shows the Mann site as “RUINS” and not yet reconstructed following a fire earlier that year.

All of the earliest industrial buildings, dating to the 1840s and lying north of State Street, had been removed and replaced by the ever-expanding Bennett Flour Mill. The millrace had been modified over time and the flour mill built over the race, where 5 turbines supplied power to the mill equipment.

The former Rystrom / Mann factory site was apparently uninhabitable; nothing about the operations of a factory or other business was recorded on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map.

The fact that the Sanborn Fire Insurance map does not indicate anything about the structure at this site suggests that the building may not have been functional...again, suggesting that the reported fire may have rendered the building unusable for a period of time and, therefore, uninsurable. Other buildings identified as “ruins” on Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps are known to have suffered a rather recent calamity (fire, flood, storm, etc.) and were uninhabitable at the time of field surveying. Presumably, “ruins” (in this context) does not indicate the complete and wholesale destruction of a building.



Margaret A. (Alexander) Allan—the grand-daughter of Julius Alexander, noted in a paper presented to the Geneva Historical Society (*Geneva History Museum collections*) that a fire occurred at the former Rystrom Wagon Shop / C. E. Mann Cooperage on the south side of State Street and that, afterward, the property sat vacant for a number of years. **A fire in 1891 destroyed the property “despite the best efforts of Bennett’s hose.”** (*Geneva History Museum files*) However, she did not identify her source(s) for the 1891 fire nor the nature of the ineffectiveness of “Bennett’s hose.” Presumably, the hose that was identified in Margaret A. Allan’s sources was the 50 feet of fire hose at the Bennett & Gates Flour Mill, north across State Street, as noted in the 1891 Sanborn Fire Insurance map descriptions. The fire, quite probably, also destroyed the frame building to the east of the stone building (unless it had fallen into disrepair prior to the 1891 fire). Margaret A. Allan, a noted local historian and descendant of Geneva pioneers, did not provide sources of her account and does not describe the extent to which the former Rystrom Wagon Shop / C. E. Mann Cooperage property was destroyed. However, it is presumed that the factory building was not suitable for business operations, and only the limestone walls may have remained standing after the fire.

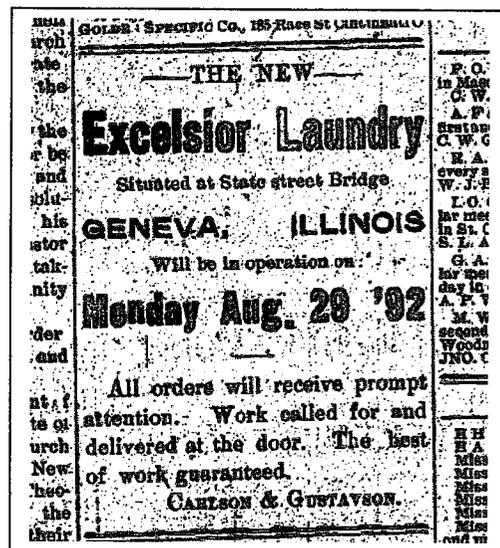
In any case, between 1885 and 1891, the circa 1853-1868 second floor above the stone building (including the inclined ramp), attributable to Rystrom, was removed along with the frame building to the east.

Late 1891 - Early 1893 – The New Haven Wire Goods Factory & Cooperage at Aurora (owned by the Chicago Wire Goods Company) failed (June 17, 1891); the factory was sold on August 22, 1892 for the DuLaney Clock Company of Valparaiso, Indiana (however, the clock company appears to have never occupied the Aurora factory and ended up at Elgin, Illinois); and the factory, machinery, and assets were sold off to E. W. Hall, who acquired the factory but only operated for a few months before fire destroyed a portion of the building and machinery. Hall suspended operations at Aurora. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. V1, p 589* and *The Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois, June 18, 1891, p 8* and *The Inter-Ocean, Chicago, Illinois August 23, 1892, p 12* and *The Inter-Ocean, Chicago, Illinois, November 10, 1893, p. 7*)

1892 – Frank E. Stevens moved from Sweden to Geneva in 1892 and, first, was employed for six months at a local foundry and, then, for six months at a local “coopering establishment,” presumed to be Mann’s (which was the only known such establishment in Geneva at that time). (*Joslyn and Joslyn, History of Kane County, 1908. Volume 2, p. 194*)

Mid-1892 – Former Rystrom Wagon Shop and former C. E. Mann cooper shop at East State Street, Geneva, was rehabilitated to be utilized for the Oscar Carlson Laundry, known formally as the Excelsior Laundry. (*Eric Anderson letter and Margaret A. Allen paper and Colin Campbell and The Geneva Patrol, May 20, 1896, all courtesy of Geneva History Museum*)

A shed roof (sloping from north to south) was constructed at the former C. E. Mann shops building at East State Street, based on Geneva History Museum images with Kane County Courthouse in background (courthouse completed in September 1892).



August 1892 – Excelsior Laundry operated by Carlson & Gustavson opened on the 29th of August (*Geneva Republican 23 September 1892*). In addition to operating the Excelsior Laundry, Oscar Carlson was employed full-time; first, at the Howell Foundry and, after 1910, at the Burgess-Norton Company. (*U. S. Federal Census records, obituary and Geneva History Museum files*)

March 30, 1893 – C. E. Mann’s Cooperage on North Fourth Street was destroyed by fire for second time; \$11,000 loss. (*The Geneva Republican, Geneva, Illinois, April 1, 1893, p. 1* and *The Geneva Republican, Geneva, Illinois, April 8, 1893, p. 1* and *DeKalb Chronicle, DeKalb, Illinois, April 8, 1893, p. 7* and *The Belvidere Standard, Belvidere, Illinois, April 12, 1893, p. 8* and *Marion County Democrat, Salem, Illinois, April 28, 1893, p. 2*)

Circa May – June 1893 – The Aurora Cooperage Company was organized “with C. E. Mann, of Geneva, as manager, which bought the (Aurora) factory, and Mr. Mann moved some cooper’s machinery from

Geneva into it and continued the manufacture of barrels and butter tubs in large quantities." An announcement of organization of the Aurora Cooperage Co. at Aurora, Illinois was published in *The Iron Trade Review* "for manufacturing and general cooperage business; incorporators: S. C. Gillett, E. W. Hall, C. E. Mann, Edw. Pierce, Pierce Burton. Address letters to Hopkins, Aldrich & Thatcher, Aurora, Ill." (*The Iron Trade Review*, Vol 26, Issue No. 27; Cleveland, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois. July 6, 1893 and *The Chicago Tribune*, Chicago, Illinois, May 10, 1893, p. 13) (SEE ALSO: https://books.google.com/books?id=NzU6AQAAMAAJ&pg=RA47-PA18&lpg=RA47-PA18&dq=%22Aurora+Cooperage%22+Aurora,+Illinois&source=bl&ots=5kTrlhQDr4&sig=fcUTb_IQYzTlzhkpoJbJhCMCqb4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwias-rsx8LZAhUlXoMKHUhhB38Q6AEINjAD#v=onepage&q=%22Aurora%20Cooperage%22%20Aurora%20Illinois&f=false accessed February 23, 2018)

The barrel-making work resumed at the Geneva factory by mid-June 1893; however, the butter tub manufacturing was reported to be moving to Aurora. (*The Geneva Republican*, June 17, 1893). Dr. Stephen C. Gillett served as President of the Aurora company and his son, William E. Gillett, served as Treasurer. Under the management of C. E. Mann, the Aurora Cooperage Company was never profitable. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. Volume 1, p. 589*)

1893 – Frank E. Stevens moved to Aurora, where “he was employed by the Aurora Cooperage Company” for one year. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. Volume 2, p. 194*)

August 3, 1893 – “C. Rebenstorff, foreman of the Aurora Cooperage, has purchased a home near the factory and has moved his family to this city from Geneva.” (Source: *Aurora Daily Express*, Aurora, Illinois. August 3, 1893, Issue 3377, p. 3)

February 1894 – The Mann Shops at Geneva were closed down, and the remaining lumber stock was purchased for use in a new home in the Wilcox Addition to Geneva. (*The Geneva Republican*, February 9, 1894)

May 16, 1896 – A thunderstorm struck Geneva, Illinois which may have initiated a fire at the Carlson Laundry on East State Street at the east end of the bridge. The fire was quickly extinguished “but not until it had ruined all the inside apparatus, and damaged the building somewhat.” (emphasis added) (*The Geneva Patrol*, May 20, 1896) **The implication of the article is that the building structure was salvageable but likely resulted in the damage to the roof structure that remains in 2018.**

1896 – C. E. Mann was removed as manager of The Aurora Cooperage Company and replaced by William E. Gillette, who continued to serve as both manager and Treasurer with great success. (*Joslyn and Joslyn. History of Kane County, 1908. Volume 1, p. 589* and *Bateman, Selby and Wilcox. Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Kane County, 1904. Volume 2, p. 794*) **Note:** The Aurora Cooperage Company continued in operation until 1923 (*National Coopers’ Journal*, Philadelphia, Volume 38, No. 11, March 1923, p. 11)

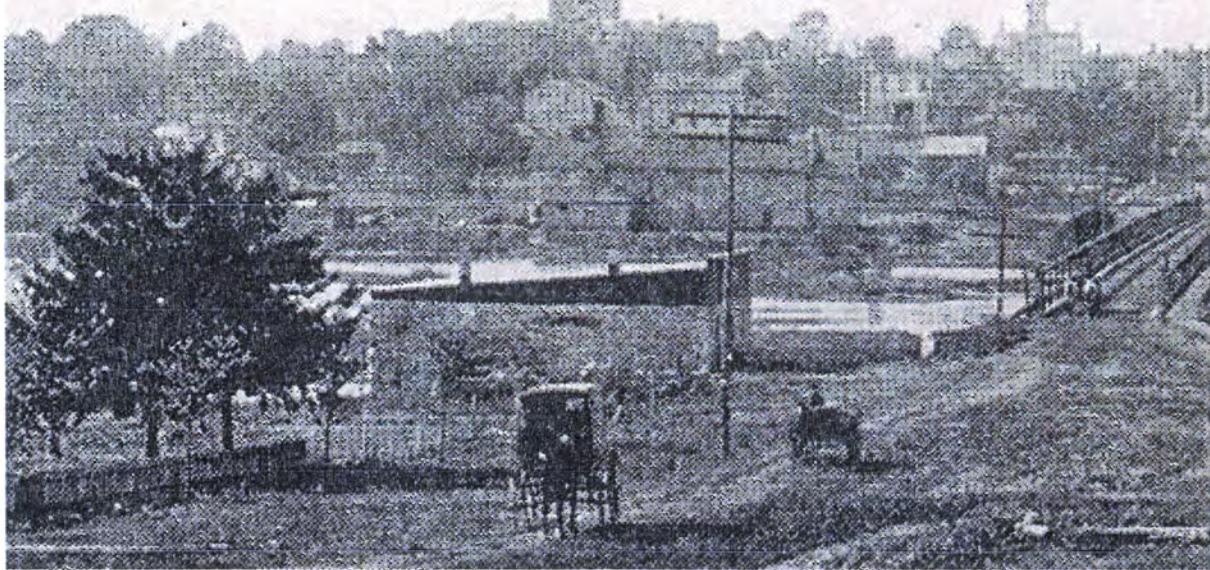
1896 - 1897 – Operated by Oscar Carlson, the Excelsior Laundry on East State Street “at the east end of the bridge” was advertised in the Kane County Business Directory. (*Geneva History Museum collections*)

Photo courtesy of
Alan Hiller, 2014



Circa 1896-1909

Photo Courtesy:
Alan Hiller, 2014

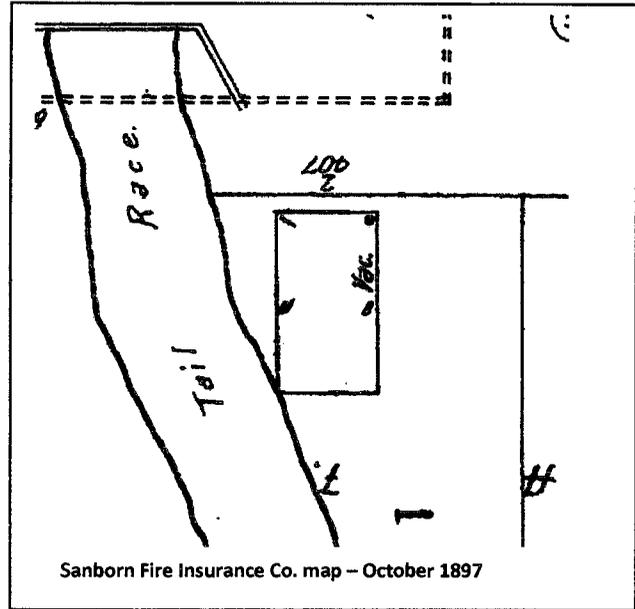


February 1897 – C. E. Mann was declared insolvent (bankrupt) and voluntarily assigned all interest in the North Fourth Street property at Geneva, Illinois to Charles A. Miller. (*Kane County Land Records*)

June 1897 – C. E. Mann accepted employment as the Superintendent of St. Charles, Illinois schools.

October 1897 – The building at the south side of State Street, immediately east of the bridge, was identified as “vacant” on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map.

The notation indicates that the building may have been sitting idle following the May 1896 fire or that Oscar Carlson simply closed down or relocated his laundry following the fire. The building may or may not have yet been repaired or reconstructed. It is probable that C. E. Mann, who by this time had returned to the educational profession, had transferred the property to his son, Clyde A. Mann during the bankruptcy proceedings earlier that same year. It is probable that no funds existed to fully restore the building or that Clyde A. Mann was in the process of disposing of his father’s property.



Jan 1900 – Clyde A. Mann sold the property to Charles W. Carter.

Charles Willard Carter (1868-1957) was the brother-in-law of Clyde A. Mann; married to Mary Estella (Mann) Carter (1871-1944). Presumably, the property provided rental income to the Carter family, who lived in Aledo (Mercer County), Illinois, where he was a physician.

The Excelsior / Carlson Laundry ceased to exist at this location sometime between 1897 and *circa* 1902. No known modifications to the building have been identified during this period.

Circa 1902 – The former blacksmith shop-turned-carriage shop-turned laundry was occupied (likely rented) by Joseph Kirk, who established a painting shop in the limestone building.

Joseph Kirk (1842-1918) came to Kane County from Scotland around 1860 (after three years in Connecticut). He married Mary Ann Marshall at Kane County on March 17, 1865 after serving in the Civil War. They were the parents of ten children: Sarah, Jennie, Lottie, Hattie, Minnie, Joseph “John” W. (1876-1912), Estella, Maggie, George (1885-1961), and Irene. He farmed near St. Charles, Illinois. In 1900,

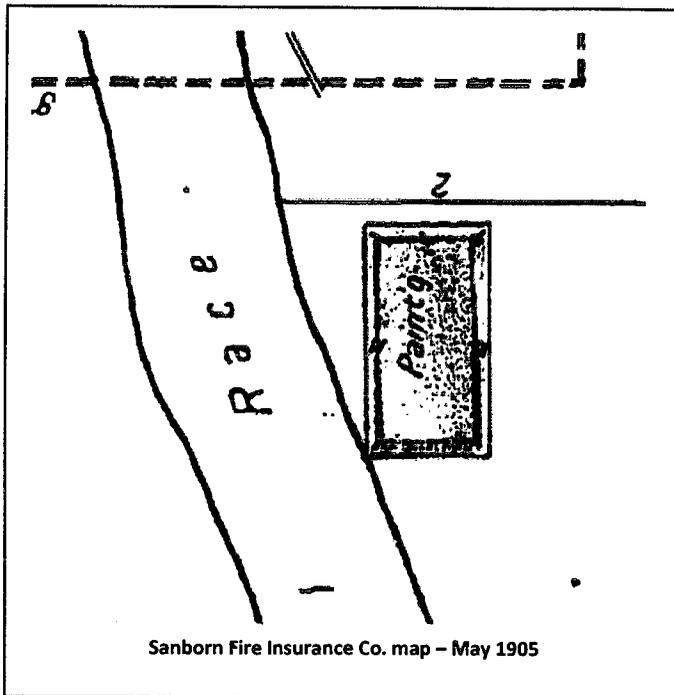
JOSEPH KIRK, retired farmer, Geneva, born Aug. 24, 1843, in Lanarkshire, Scotland, son of Joseph and Charlotte (Scholes) Kirk; came to the United States in 1857, when about fourteen years old; lived at Northford, Conn., until 1860, when he came to Illinois and settled on a farm east of St. Charles, Kane County, remaining four years, when he located on a farm which he had bought north of St. Charles. He spent a year in Maple Park and about four years in what is now Lily Lake. In 1873 he moved to a farm of 100 acres which he now owns, and on which he lived until he retired from active work in 1900. The latter year he removed to Geneva, where he now (1903) resides, and rents his farm to his two sons. While a resident of District No. 6, near St. Charles, he served twelve years as School Director. Mr. Kirk was married March 17, 1865, to Miss Mary Ann, daughter of William Marshall, of St. Charles. In political belief he is a Republican.

Find A Grave Memorial 19281282
www.findagrave.com
www.Ancestry.com

he retired and moved the following year to Geneva. Around 1902, Joseph Kirk—at the age of 60—rented the State Street property from and managed the property for the Carter family (who lived at Aledo, Illinois). Joseph Kirk opened a painting shop, presumably for the painting of carriages, buggies, and wagons.

By 1904, the building at the “east end of the State Street bridge” had been occupied as the painting shop of Joseph Kirk for approximately two years.

In late 1903, the property was rented by John M. Updike of Batavia, Illinois, who continued the painting and varnishing of carriages, buggies, and wagons at the property. (January 9, 1904 *Geneva Republican*)



John M. Updike
OF BATAVIA,
 Having rented the Paint Shop of Joseph Kirk, on the east side,
GENEVA, ILL.,
 Is prepared to do all work in the
PAINTING AND VARNISHING....
 line. Carriage buggy and wagon work a specialty.
All Work First Class and Guaranteed. Prices Reasonable. Shop east end of State Street Bridge.

This may be the “Updike” mentioned in the undated letter from Eric Anderson (*Geneva History Museum Collections – see pages 10-11 of this report*) stated in reference to Anne Forsyth’s Mill Race Inn restaurant: “Remember your building, vacancy of it. Never remember it as a blacksmith shop. Remember it as Carlson laundry and a paint shop. A fella by name of Updike from Batavia running it. Wagon painter.”

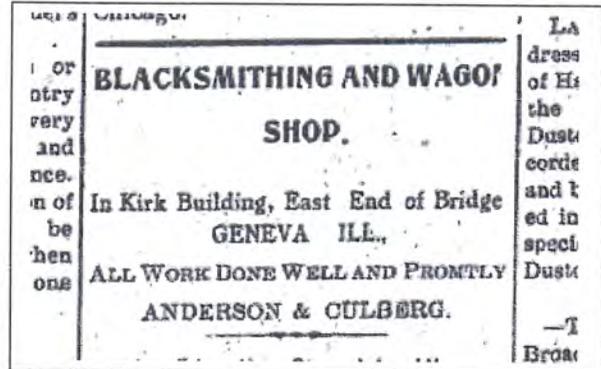
May 1905 – One story “Painting Shop” was recorded on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map. (image to right)

Margaret A. (Alexander) Allen presented an account to the Geneva Historical Society with a mention of two men who used the building for wagon and carriage painting after Oscar Carlson closed his laundry and abandoned the East State Street building. However, she is not specific about the dates of this occupation. (*Geneva History Museum*) Presumably, the men that Margaret Allen did not identify were John M. Updike and Joseph Kirk between circa 1902 and circa 1906. John Montgomery Updike, Jr. is listed in the 1910 Federal census as a widowed carriage painter (shop

location unknown), born about January 1860, and living on Church Street in Batavia. In November 1906, the property was transferred through several transactions to M. Estelle (Mary Estrella) Carter, wife of Charles Willard Carter and sister of Clyde A. Mann.

By 1907, the building was known as “the Kirk Building” and was used as a blacksmith and wagon shop.

When the wagon shop and carriage painting businesses that Margaret A. (Alexander) Allen identified closed, the building was occupied as the blacksmith and wagon repair shop of Anderson & Culberg (*Geneva Republican*, February 1907 Advertisement). Likely, the partners in this business were Andrew/Anders O. Anderson and Artel Culberg.



Andrew Anderson, a blacksmith by trade, was born in Sweden in 1859 and settled at Geneva, Illinois after his 1881 arrival in the United States. Artel Culberg, also a blacksmith by trade, was born in Sweden in 1872 and settled at Geneva, Illinois after his 1898 arrival in the United States.

1909 - 1910 – The 1868-69 bridge was removed and replaced with a concrete bridge.

At this time, the raised grade of the east approach to the Fox River bridge was lengthened, terminating a substantial distance east of the 1846 manufactory building. The elevation of State Street had been raised approximately 6-8 feet above the historic grade and new retaining walls were added at each side of the roadbed approach. The new approach obscured a significant portion of the north façade of the 1846 manufactory building. After that time, the large doorway at the east elevation certainly became the primary access point to the limestone structure.

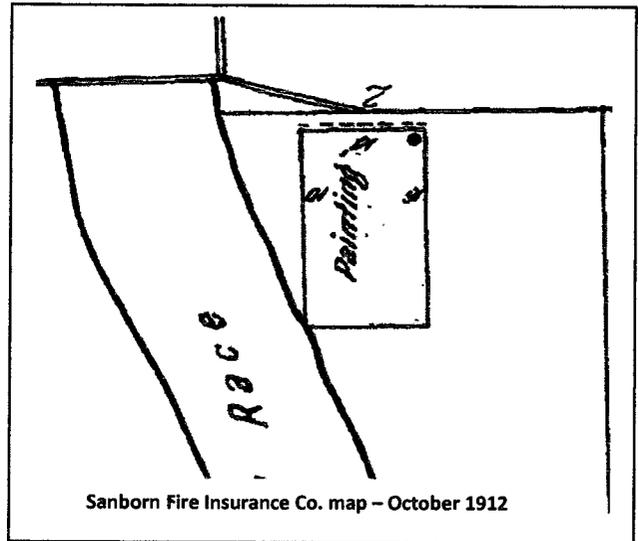


Note the exposed basement at the southwest corner of the former blacksmith shop; the basement level is not viewable in 2018 because of grading changes and building additions over time. The building sat at the edge of the east bank of the tail race; the corner of the limestone building was protected by rip-rap (large stone) to prevent erosion of the building corner from flowing water and ice damming.

October 1912 – One story “Painting Shop” was recorded on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map.

Presumably, the blacksmith and wagon shop went out of business prior to 1912, possibly shortly after the grade of State Street was raised. No additional information about the nature of the “painting shop” is known; however, it is possible that the sons of Joseph Kirk (Joseph “John” W. Kirk and George Marshall Kirk) re-established their father’s earlier painting business.

Circa 1918 – Building is believed to have been used as a machinist’s (repair) shop by brothers George M. Kirk and Joseph “John” Kirk.



December 1921 – The property was sold by Charles W. Carter to George M. Kirk.

At this point in time, no family other than the extended Mann family owned the property for a longer period of time; the property was held by that family for at least 37 years. Although the Mann family did not occupy the premises the entire time, the building underwent significant alterations—in response to calamity and necessity—during the Mann family tenure.

No significant changes to the structure have been identified during this period. However, the mill race on the west side of the limestone building had begun to fill in with soil. It is possible that during this period, some of the original limestone walls may have been painted at either the interior or exterior or both.

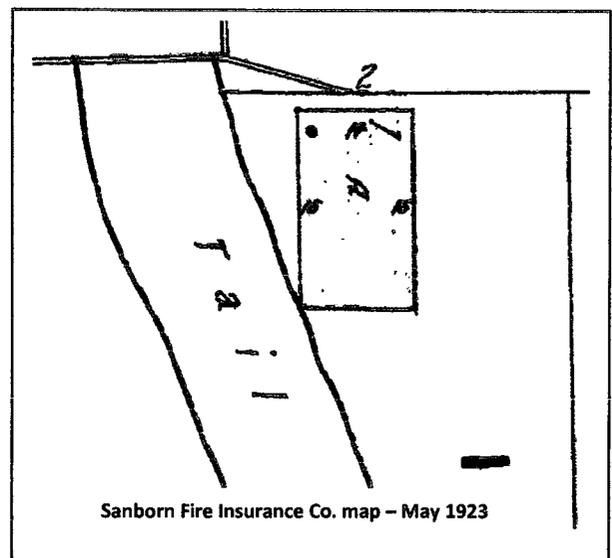
September 1922 – Building and property were sold at Sheriff’s Sale to Emery T. Moore.

Emery Thomas Moore (b. 18 May 1870 at Lisbon, Illinois) was a resident of St. Charles, Illinois. He had been engaged as a retail merchant in 1910, but had become a real estate dealer, specializing in farmland by 1930. When he died on 27 October 1938, he was engaged in farming and had lived for 60 years at St. Charles.

May 1923 – Building was used for an auto business as recorded on Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map. (image to right) The recorded use could have referred to either auto sales or auto repair.

By this date, the building consisted only of the 1846 limestone structure; however, decorative parapet walls (likely wood-framed construction) were added at the roofline above the original limestone walls of 1846.

Presumably, Emery T. Moore replaced the wooden floor structure (likely plank over heavy timber frame) with the existing, cast-in-place



concrete floor structure in order to adapt the building for automobile sales and/or repairs. At this time, the south basement may have been filled.

In 1923-1924 (per City Council Minutes of October 1923), a one-story, masonry automobile sales and repair garage (Lundeen Garage built by the Wilson Brothers, Geneva contractors) was constructed on the lot east of the property that would become the Mill Race Inn. It is possible—but unlikely—that the new building may have accommodated the business that had been housed (circa 1918-1930) in the former Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop, built of limestone by 1846.

March 1929 – Emery T. Moore sold the property to John R. Tallman, who opened a plumbing and heating business in the building.

John R. Tallman (b. 19 Sep 1882) was a resident of Geneva, Illinois, where he worked as a plumber prior to and after 1920.

John R. Tallman was married to Elizabeth (b. 1880) in 1901, and they had at least three children: Wheeler (b. 1903), Bernice (b. 1906) and Grace (b. 1919).

1930 – Occupied as the Plumbing and Heating Shop of John Tallman. (per several historical accounts)

Federal Census identifies Tallman as “proprietor of plumbing shop,” but he likely closed his business near the onset of the Great Depression (1929-1938) and began farming on South Batavia Road, where he remained through at least 1940. John R. Tallman died in August 1962.

1933 – John R. Tallman leased the former industrial property to Anne Forsyth, who named her new restaurant “Mill Race Inn.”

Anne Forsyth was single and a resident of Aurora, Illinois, where she had worked in a variety of clerical positions before becoming a police woman at Aurora (*according to records of the Geneva Historical Society per Glorianne Campbell, presenter of “Remembering the Mill Race Inn” lecture on January 14, 2014*).

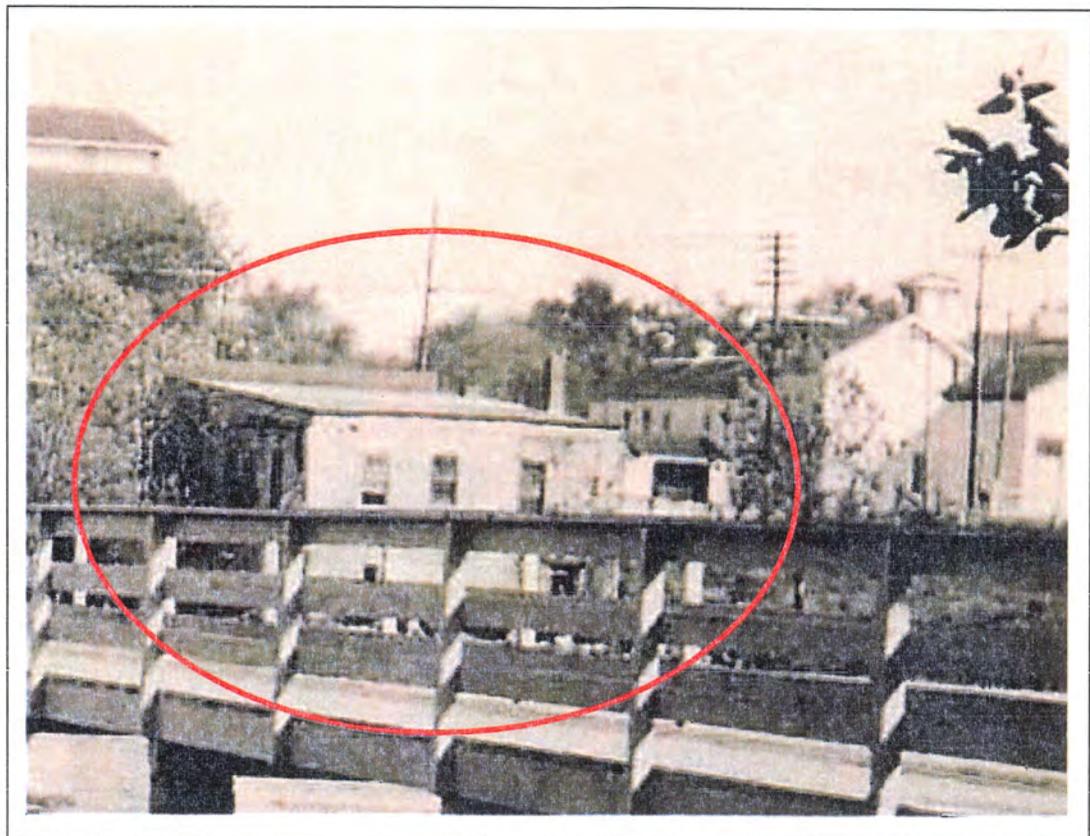
Anne's father, Alex, had been an official with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (C B & Q) Railroad, but had died in 1913. At that time, Anne (b. 20 Nov 1875) lived with her mother, Rose M.; a spinster (unmarried) sister, Margaret “Marjorie” (b. 25 Oct 1873), who was a kindergarten teacher in the local schools; and an adopted, bachelor brother and artist, Harold (b. 1909). The family (said to be a missionary family according to records of the Geneva Historical Society) lived at 78 S. Root Street, Aurora.

Kate Raftery of The Little Traveler shops and lunch room which—as a gift shop and restaurant established in the late 1920s—had operated successfully and grown “topsy-turvy” on Third Street, encouraged Anne Forsyth to open the small restaurant on the east bank of the Fox River. Kate Raftery also encouraged several other women to open restaurants, bookstores, art studios, and gift shops in downtown Geneva. Also at this time, Kate Raftery encouraged artists, literary people, and upper middle class families to move to Geneva.

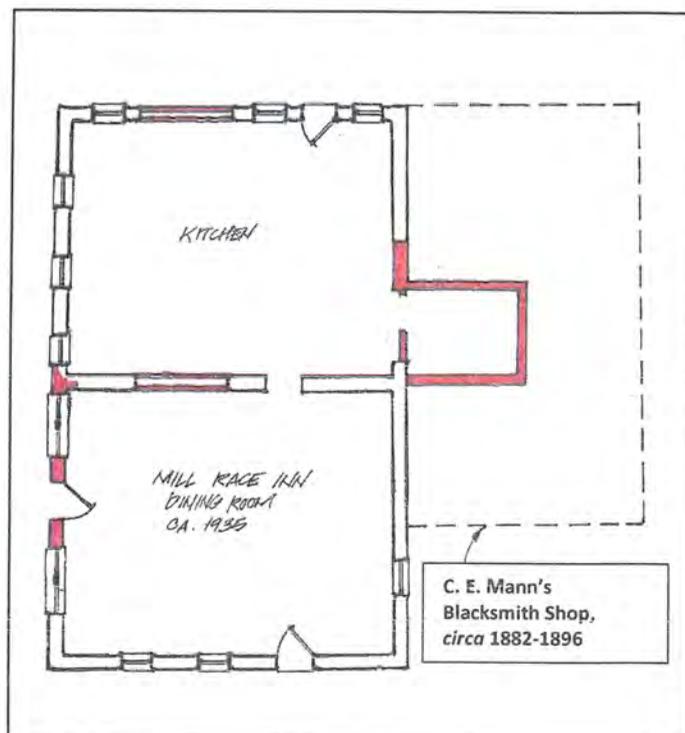


LEFT: Detail of photograph from previous page (pre-1931, probably *circa* 1920) showing the 1846 blacksmith shop (later wagon painting shop and cooper shop) before 1933 remodeling by August Wilson & Son for Anne Forsyth's Mill

Race Inn. Note: exposed lower level at south wall which does not appear to be accessible from the north basement in 2016 (not accessible from south basement of later additions to Mill Race Inn). Also, a later addition (probably wood frame) has been removed from the left (west) side by evidence of an old roof line above the windows at the



1933 – The circa 1846 Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop building was remodeled for Anne Forsyth by local contractor, August Wilson & Son (formerly a principal partner in Wilson Brothers Contracting).



The remodeling consisted of providing larger windows to the west side of the building (to afford better views of the former mill race and Fox River); remodeling of the north section of the building for use as a Kitchen; and two, small, limestone additions to the east side (probably for a walk-in refrigerator and a storage or mechanical room). The entrance was located at the southeast corner of the building through an original (or early) doorway that, later, connected the original limestone structure to the C. E. Mann addition to the east of the original structure.

The historic window to the east at the southeast corner may also have been enlarged, at this time, to match the west windows installed for Anne Forsyth. A parapet (likely of wooden construction) may have been added to the north façade at this time to increase the visibility of the new

establishment. No other structural changes are known to have been made to the exterior of the building.

Based on several photographs, the limestone walls at the exterior were unpainted; the interior finishes of the original restaurant are unknown although one account states that the interior walls were "whitewashed" during Anne Forsyth's tenure. (*Geneva History Museum files*)

The 1933-1935 remodeling may have included the addition of some decorative elements to the State Street façade of the building as well.

Anne and Marjorie Forsyth opened their new restaurant on Saturday, May 20, 1933. The Mill Race Inn operated as a seasonal eatery—serving lunch, tea, dinner and supper—from 1933 thru 1939.

The building was not centrally heated or cooled; therefore, the restaurant operated only between mid-April and early November. The only source of heat, according to several articles, was the fireplace that Anne Forsyth had constructed on the east wall of the Dining Room when the building was remodeled for the restaurant. (*Geneva History Museum files*)

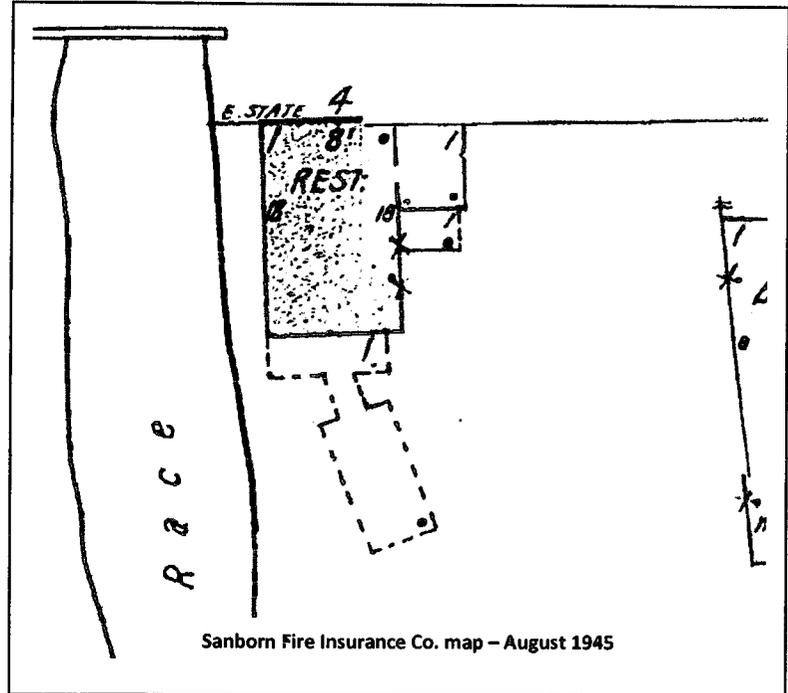
Nov. 1939 – Anne Forsyth purchased building from John R. Tallman.

For a short period of time in the early 1940s, Margaret Sollinger, wife of Albert Sollinger, of Aurora provided some financial support for the operation of the Mill Race Inn; the extent of the business relationship is unclear. Presumably, this business relationship had allowed Anne Forsyth to purchase the property and expand her restaurant operations and offerings.

Circa 1940-45 – Anne Forsyth completed second renovation of her restaurant.

At this time, the Kitchen was expanded at the northeast corner of the 1846 former mill building of limestone, and—likely about 1940—an open-air porch and attached pavilion was constructed to the south of the original 1846 building.

Within a short time, the 1940s-era pavilion was screened for outdoor dining and special events use. Possibly, the space was utilized for dancing, especially with the return of veterans from World War II.



It is likely that, during this period, the exposed limestone walls in the Kitchen and support areas were painted for a healthier food preparation environment.

March 1946 – Property was sold by Anne Forsyth to Mill Race Inn, Inc.

The parties to the new corporation included Anne Forsyth along with her sister, Marjorie, and Kathleen Covey; Anne Forsyth was 71 years old.

After 1946, the extent of Anne Forsyth’s involvement in the daily operation of the restaurant is unclear; however, it is probable that she reduced her day-to-day association with her advancing age.

Consequently, the years of Anne Forsyth’s significant years of management and operation of the Mill Race Inn ceased sometime between 1946 and 1955, but most probably in 1946.

At this point in time, the cozy dining setting along the scenic Fox River—the hall Forsyth’s original Mill Race Inn—began to disappear in favor of an ever-larger restaurant expanding customer base.

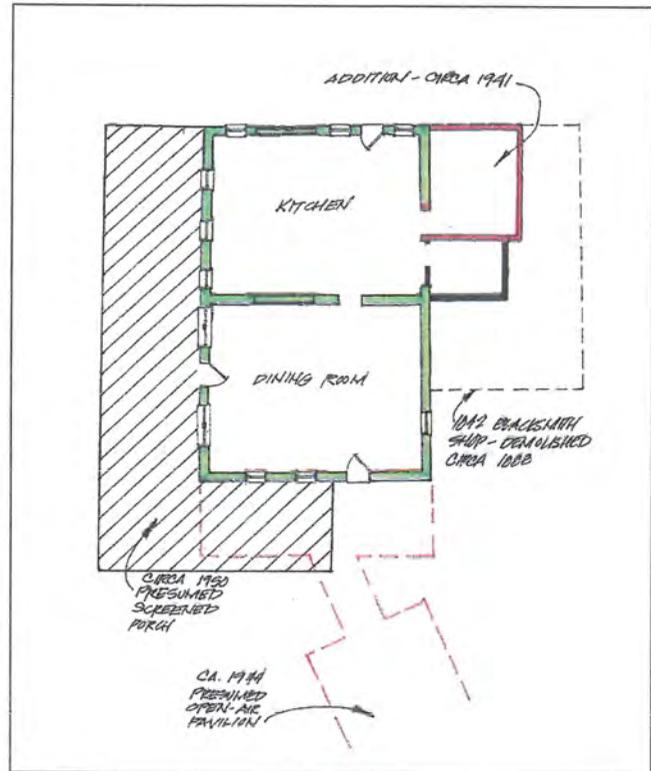
C. E. Mann’s
Blacksmith
Shop, circa
1882-1896

In April 1946, an open-air, uncovered dining porch was added at the direction of Kathleen Covey, according to City Council records of building permits issued in March 1946. Built by August Wilson, the new dining porch was added to the west side of the restaurant; the west addition utilized salvaged streetcar rails for structural beams. Likely this work occurred shortly after the close of World War II, when scrap iron and steel was no longer in demand for the war effort (many communities had removed streetcar rails to provide scrap metal for the war effort).

By 1950, the west porch was enclosed with screening.

Circa 1955 – The interior dining space was enlarged by the Mill Race Inn company.

Around 1954, the business was sold to Ray C. Johns of Wayne, Illinois. Under Ray C. Johns ownership, numerous changes were made between 1955 and 1960 to the Mill Race Inn building. The Kitchen was expanded to the north, encroaching into an un-used right-of-way along State Street. The Kitchen, also, was expanded to the east, destroying the original stone additions constructed by August Wilson & Son between 1933 and 1935. Likely, additional painting of the original limestone walls was completed in the food service areas of the restaurant. The circa 1946 west deck was enclosed with stacked awning and fixed windows within new exterior walls and a permanent roof about 1956. The new space was used as an additional dining room. Other building additions also provided a new entrance area at the east side of the complex as well as a private dining room at the northwest corner of the 1846 limestone building.



Only a small portion of the south and east walls at the southeast corner of the 1846 limestone structure remained exposed to the exterior. The exposed stone walls—nearly 175 years old—appear to have survived unpainted.

Under Ray C. Johns, the restaurant continued to operate seasonally between mid-March and late November.

1963-1964 – The mill race north of State Street was filled in by the State of Illinois.



Roy S. Lasswell, Geneva attorney, fought the filling of the historic waterway...going as far as blocking

equipment with his own automobile. Claiming that downstream water quality would be affected, Lasswell's represented several clients: Walter Frazier, Howard J. Raftery, J. Ross Drever, Neil R. McBain, Richard Barney, R. C. Johns, and Mill Race Inn. Others named in suit were Hillquist Bros. Construction and Ted Hillquist (February 27, 1964 *Chicago Tribune* Section 1C , p 11 and March 1, 1964 *Chicago Tribune* Section 10, p 1)

Ray C. Johns died in 1964

1964 – The Mill Race Inn was operated by Stuart Johns.

Following the death of his uncle, Stuart Johns managed the restaurant for a number of years.

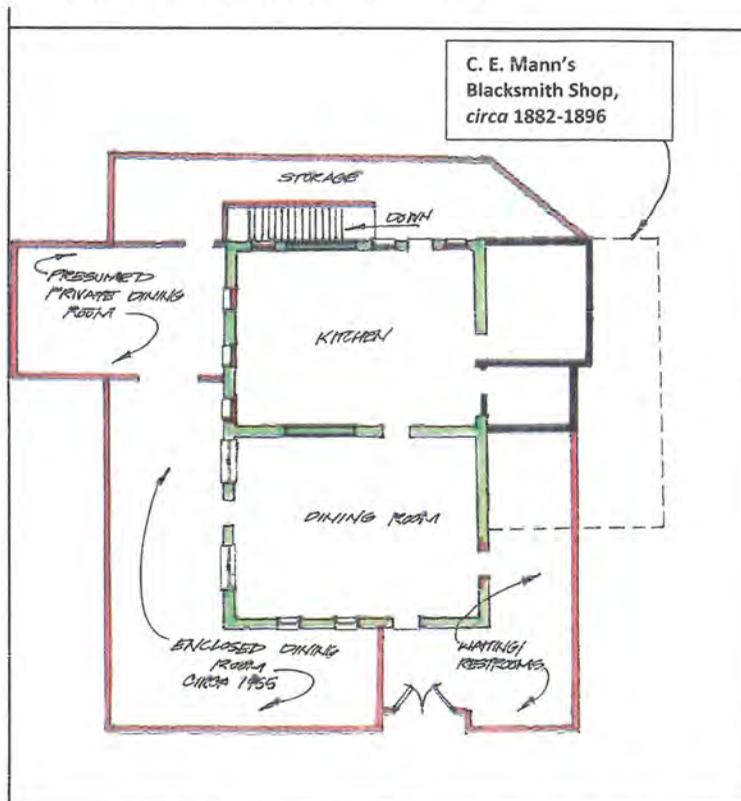
1965 – The Mill Race Inn's original owner celebrated a milestone birthday.

Anne Forsyth was 90 years old.

1966 – The Mill Race Inn was expanded by Stuart Johns.

Apparently, the screened south porch and pavilion were removed around 1966 to make way for a new reception area and waiting room. The addition completely enveloped the historic 1846 blacksmith shop building.

Between 1967 and 1968, a new dining room along the river edge was built around the west and south sides of the original Mill Race Inn restaurant building. It is likely that the first air conditioning system was installed during this time.



The new addition was constructed within a portion of the former mill race channel and required a basement; the basement floor was set approximately 3 feet lower than the cellar floor of the 1846 structure.

The mill race—which had long been stagnant and filled the Mill Race Inn with a noticeably pungent odor during the late summer months—had been filled in through a joint effort of the Geneva Park District and the Johns family.

According to recollections of former owners and employees, the newly-constructed basement was prone to flooding from the time it was constructed. In fact, the restaurant operators “knew exactly what to do when the river rose” because it “flooded quite often” according to

comments of Diane Ellsworth (speaking at the “Remembering the Mill Race Inn” lecture– Geneva

History Center, 01.14.2014).

1969 – The Mill Race Inn was remodeled for nearly year-round use.

During Stuart Johns' tenure the building was "winterized" with the addition of an expanded entry (Arthur Nelson of State Bank of Geneva notes, Geneva History Museum Archives). A building permit was issued for an addition in December 1968, according to the 09 January 1969 issue of the Geneva Republican) However, the restaurant still continued the tradition of closing several months during the winter.

Central air conditioning was installed about this time.

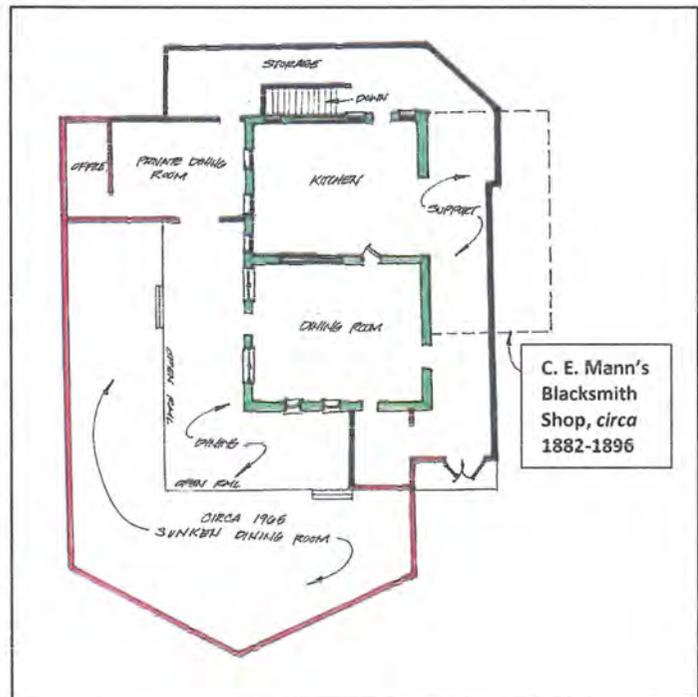
1973 – The Mill Race Inn management was assumed by Ray C. Johns' daughter, Rae Johns Ellsworth.

1974 – An original Mill Race Inn partner died.

Margaret "Marjorie" Forsyth died in February 1974, nine months short of her 100th birthday. She was buried alongside her parents and brother at Spring Lake Cemetery, Aurora.

Circa 1975 – The Mill Race Inn management responded to growing popularity of the Geneva dining destination.

A major expansion along the east side of the Mill Race Inn complex was undertaken as early as 1975 but—more probably—beginning in 1976.

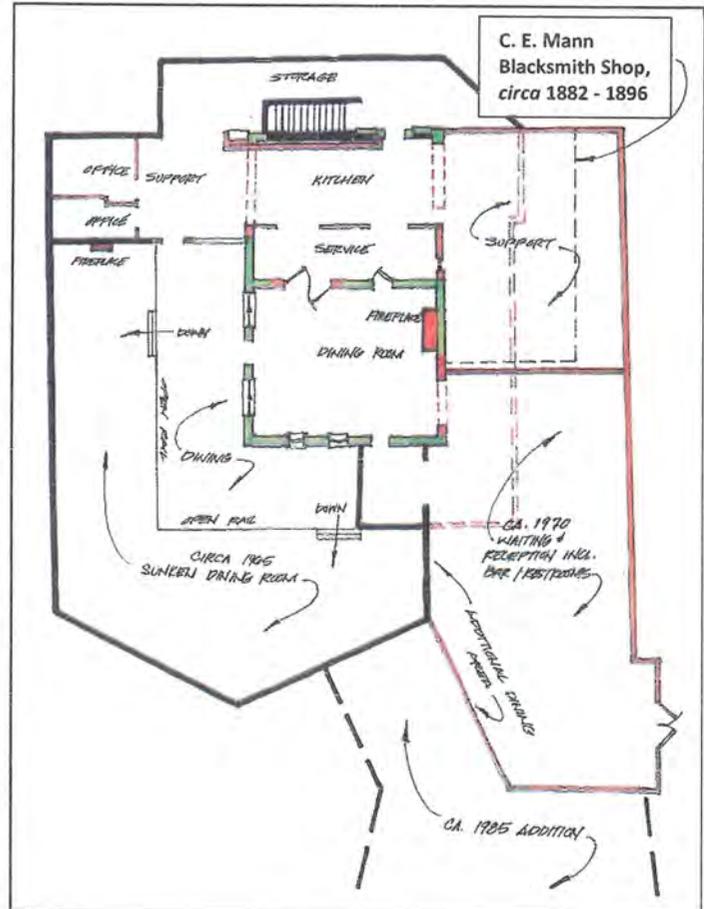


At this time, several fireplaces were installed throughout the restaurant, including a gas fireplace inserted within the original Dining Room fireplace of Anne Forsyth's Mill Race Inn.

During this remodeling, the Kitchen design required the removal of a section of the east and west walls of the 1846 building. The east wall was comprised of a large doorway; however, the west side required the removal of a portion of the historic limestone perimeter walls. With the completion of this remodeling effort, the original 1846 limestone walls of the 1846 Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop were completely enveloped within the Mill Race Inn complex.

Upon the completion of this expansion, the Mill Race Inn operated as a year-round restaurant.

1976 –The Mill Race Inn's original owner and creator died.



Anne Forsyth died in May 1976, 100 years and 5 months old. She was buried at the family plot at Spring Lake Cemetery, Aurora.

Following the death of Anne Forsyth, the Mill Race Inn continued to be transformed from a cozy, intimate dining establishment to a larger, modern restaurant. Although historic limestone walls and many of the early small dining rooms remained, the regionally-famous restaurant was not able to meet the demands for larger parties. Notably, the restaurant's patrons were drawn to the legendary restaurant along the historic, Fox River—a site steeped in the legends of early Geneva and its pioneer settlers.

February 6, 1978 – The Owners of the Mill Race Inn requested a Variance for use of basement level.

In an effort to serve its patrons more effectively, the Mill Race Inn management appeared before the Geneva City Council to make the following request:

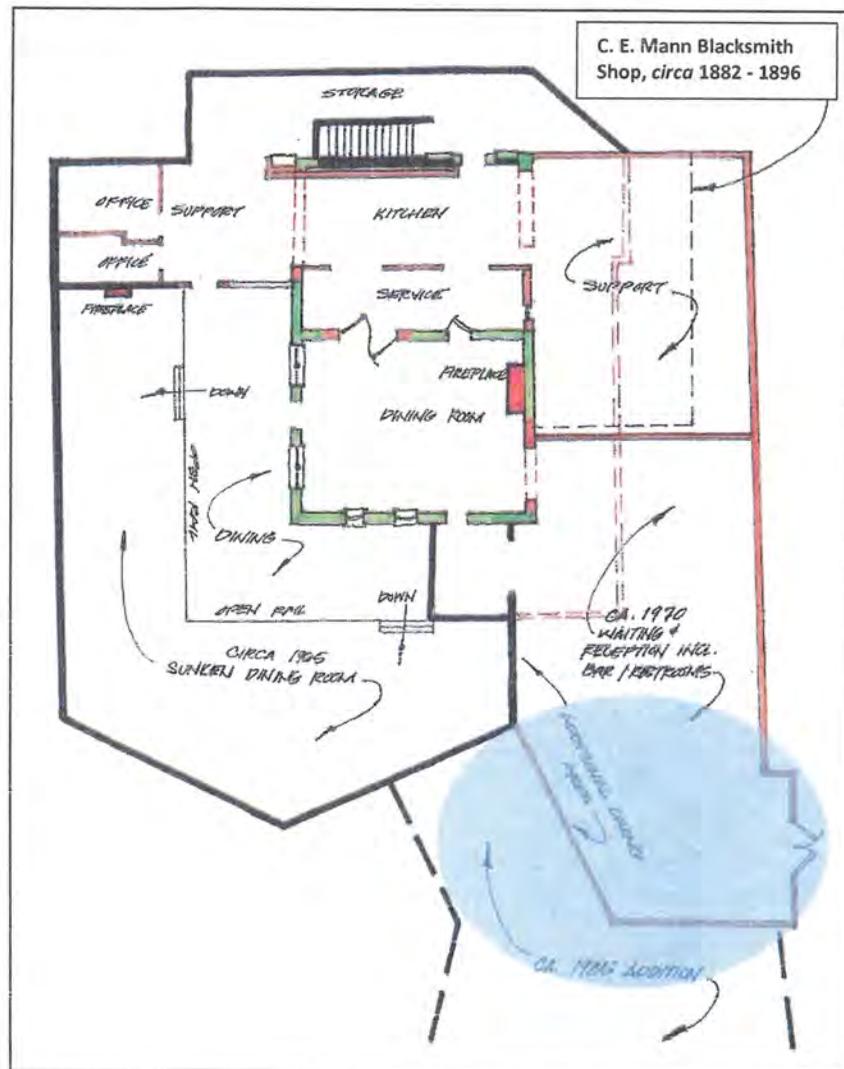
Alderman Mayer advised the Council that the Mill Race Inn wished to change the plans under their present building permit which would provide for a basement storage room to be converted to a banquet room.

The Building Commissioner was unable to extend the permit to cover the change because BOCA Code does not permit such use in a flood plain under the water level. The problem was reviewed by the Building Planning and Zoning Committee and determined that in the best interests of the Commercial district and the City as a whole, the Mill Race Inn should be permitted to expand its facilities. Thus the City Attorney was instructed to prepare an indemnification agreement to hold the City harmless in the event of a damage claim resulting from a flash flood. Such a document was prepared and presented for consideration. Because the City Attorney felt uncomfortable concerning a possible liability even with passage of the agreement, considerable discussion followed. Alderman King felt that the BOCA Code prohibits such a structure, then why are we

trying to break the code (sic) Alderman Mountsier inquired if the document could really hold the City harmless. Mr. Radovich advised of a possible exposure here. The integrity of the Mill Race comes into play and we would have to rely upon them to provide legal counsel in the event of a suit against us. Motion by Mayer that the City Attorney be instructed to study a variation amendment to the Building Code. The motion died for lack of a second. Motion by Montsier, seconded by Langeness, that the question be sent back to committee for further study and a recommendation. The motion passed unanimously.

(Based on the Council Meeting Minutes, it is presumed that the area of the proposed basement level Banquet Room is the space identified by a blue oval [see illustration on preceding page]. However, the request may have been for the conversion of the circa 1965 storage room along the river bank.)

No evidence has been discovered suggesting the banquet room expansion was permitted.

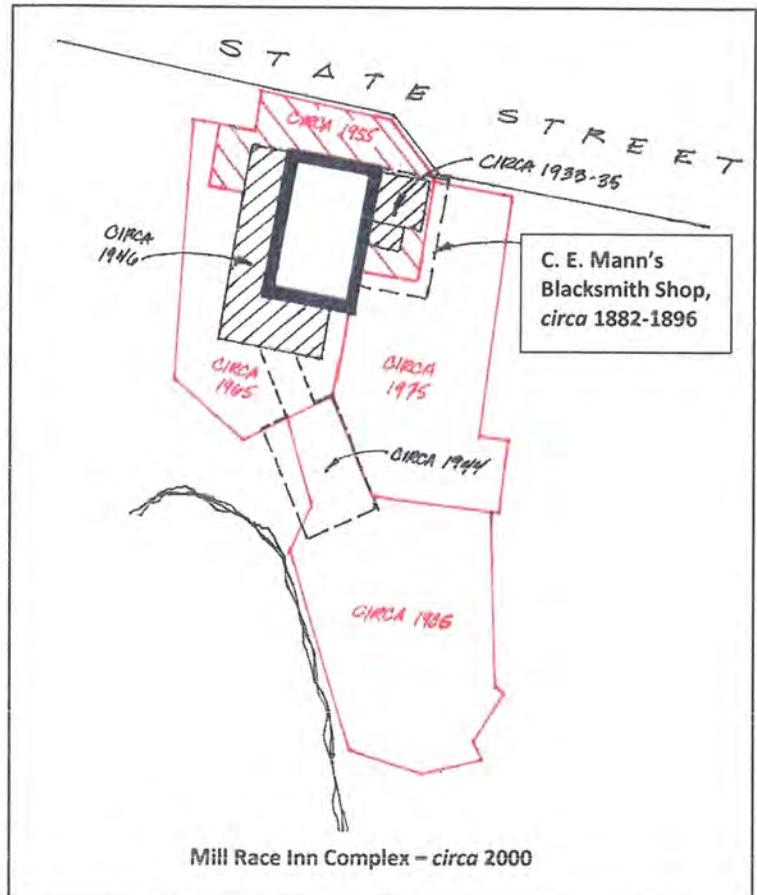


Circa 1983 – The Mill Race Inn was managed by John Mitchell and Bonnie Rae Off, the grand-daughter of Ray C. Johns.

At some time between 1981 and 1986 (apparently opened in 1985), an expansive, timber-framed Dining Room and Bar (“The Mallard Room”) as well as a Lower Level casual dining room (“The Mill Grill”) and bar (“The Duck Inn”) were added to south end of the building, in the location of the former 1940s-era pavilion.

The interior and exterior limestone walls of the 1846 structure that were exposed to public view were *faux* painted to mimic the original limestone and to mask modern enhancements (soffits, HVAC ductwork / louvers, and lighting) to the original limestone building.

2005 – The Mill Race Inn was sold to new owner, Charlie Roumeliotis.



During the tenure of Charlie Roumeliotis, few—if any—significant changes were made to the Mill Race Inn complex.

Thursday, January 20, 2011 – The closing of the Mill Race Inn was announced for the approaching weekend.

The building was vacated and began to deteriorate over a two year period. The lowest basements of the abandoned building flooded several times, and the property was vandalized periodically.

Mid-Summer 2013 – A prospective purchaser of the abandoned Mill Race Inn complex approached the City of Geneva with plans for redevelopment of the site.

November 19, 2013 – The Mill Race Inn property was discussed as a possible local landmark at the regular meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission.

HPC Staff (Preservation Planner) was directed to investigate the historic significance of the Mill Race Inn complex and to identify the extent of any remnant portions of the reported 1842 structure or the 1933 restaurant.

November 20, 2013 – Investigation of what remained of the 1840s structure(s) began.

November 26, 2013 – Geneva Preservation Planner, Michael Lambert, and Geneva Code Enforcement Officer, Jim Forni, toured the abandoned structure with the prospective purchaser.

December 10, 2013 – A draft report of the Mill Race Inn property was prepared for review by the City of Geneva Administrative and Community Development Staff.

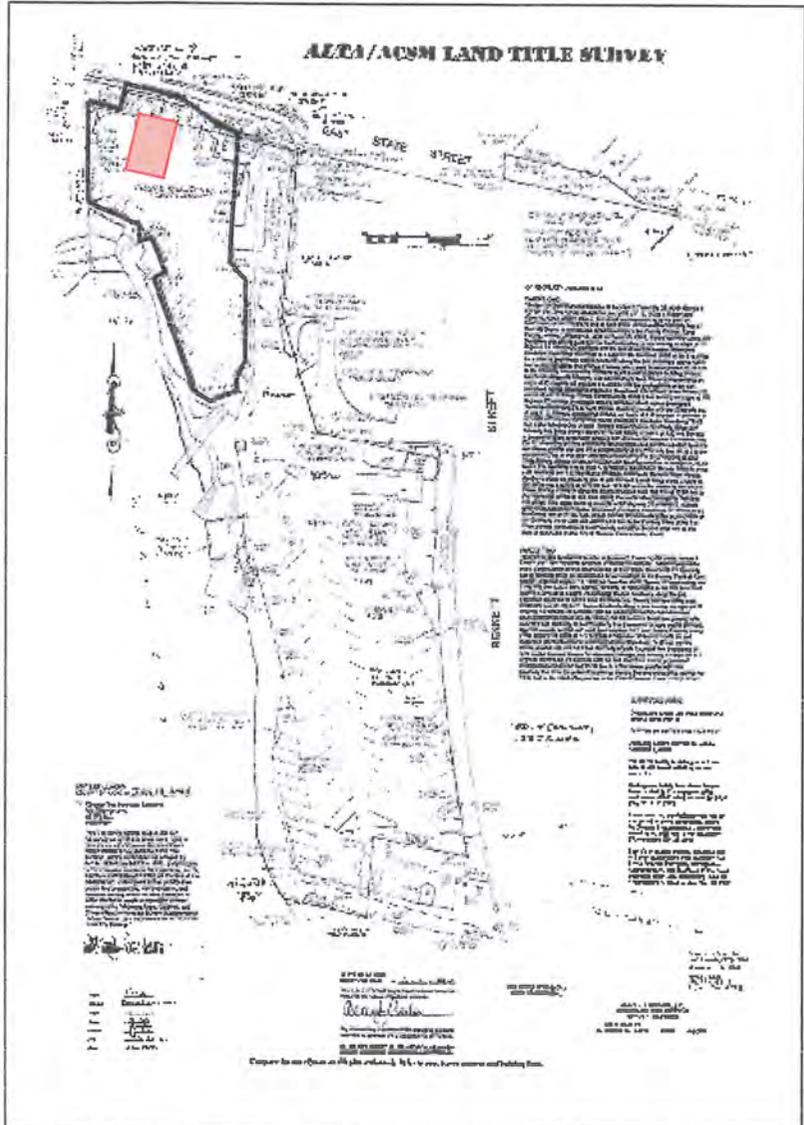
December 20, 2013 – Revisions were made to the draft report based on questions and comments raised by internal staff review and based on additional historical research provided by HPC members Carolyn Zinke and Alan Hiller, including access to photographic and archival files of the Geneva History Center (a/k/a Geneva History Museum).

January 14, 2014 – “Remembering the Mill Race Inn” was the “Brown Bag Luncheon” topic at the Geneva History Center (a/k/a Geneva History Museum) at Geneva, Illinois.

January 17, 2014 – Report of significance and preliminary findings was completed.

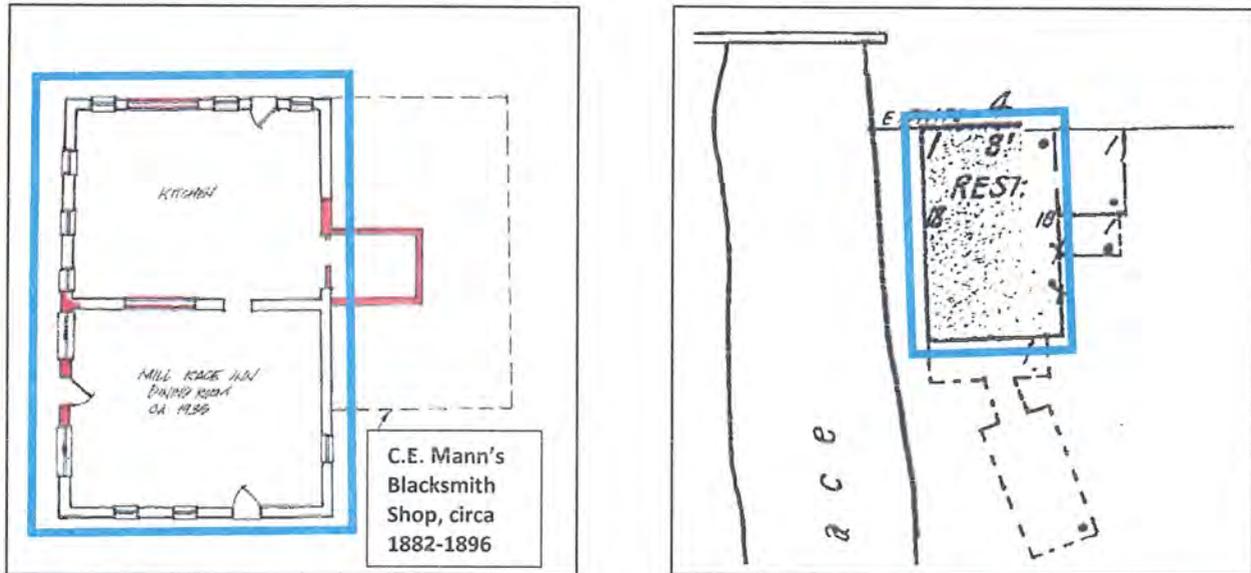
March 18, 2014 – An assignment of membership interest was granted to an LLC titled: 4 East State Street Holdings, L.L.C. a/k/a 4 East State Street Holdings, L.L.C. This made the Shodeen Family Foundation the sole member “owner” of this entity. At the time of the assignment, 4 East State Street Holdings L.L.C. a/k/a 4 East State Holdings, L.L.C. was in title to the property. This entity has since been dissolved.

April 9, 2014 – The property was deeded from 4 East State Street Holdings, L.L.C. a/k/a 4 East State Holdings, L.L.C. into the Chicago Title Land Trust 8002364152 of which the Shodeen Family Foundation was the 100% beneficiary.



July 27, 2016 – Report was updated to provide minor additions of new information and documentation of the historical development of the Mill Race Inn.

August 10, 2016 – The City of Geneva announced that the Shodeen Construction Co., had submitted an application for the selective demolition of the Mill Race Inn that would raze the majority of the existing building and expose the historic structure (*circa 1846 – circa 1944*) for further evaluation of historic and structural integrity as well as potential adaptive use within future development of the site.



Areas outlined in blue (above diagrams) represent the historic [Alexander Brothers' Blacksmith Shop](#), scheduled to be exposed during the selective demolition undertaken by Shodeen Construction Co.

December 2017 – The Shodeen Family Foundation applied for a demolition permit of the surviving, *circa 1846* limestone structure. In response to the demolition permit request, a nomination for Historic Landmark designation was filed and duly amended by Fred H. Zinke, local Geneva resident.

February 20, 2018 – The Geneva Historic Preservation Commission held a public hearing to consider the Historic Landmark nomination; the Commission continued the public hearing to its **March 20, 2018** meeting, when the Commission voted to recommend Historic Landmark designation by a vote of 4:1.

April 16, 2018 – The Geneva City Council considered the Commission's recommendation for Historic Landmark designation; the Council continued discussion to its **May 7, 2018** meeting, when the City Council voted to uphold the Commission's recommendation for designation by a vote of 9:1. During the interim between Council meetings, Landmarks Illinois—the statewide organization for preservation advocacy—identified the building as one of Illinois' Ten Most Endangered Properties on **April 25, 2018**.

June 24-27, 2019 – A planning and design charette, organized by the City of Geneva and the Shodeen family Foundation and headed by The Hitchcock Design Group (Naperville, Illinois) proposed a mixed-use development of the landmark property that dismantled the historic structure and re-purposed a portion of the salvaged material. The Geneva City Council ratified the charette parameters on July 15, 2019.

October 2, 2024 – This property was deeded from Chicago Title Land Trust 8002364152 to Mill Race Land Company, L.L.C.; the current owner of the property.

Preliminary Historic Significance Evaluation of the Site and Buildings

Early Settlement-era structures (those properties constructed within the first 15-20 years of the establishment of a populated place) are rare historic resources, particularly in suburbanized communities where growth pressure has been constant for significant periods of time.

Typically small and humble, Early Settlement-era properties are often utilitarian, vernacular structures of little to no architectural style. However, the character of these early 19th century buildings provides a glimpse of the buildings that the first pioneers erected when establishing a new community.

The Mill Race Inn complex contains a remnant Settlement-era structure from Geneva's earliest days as a populated place.

General Condition of the Mill Race Inn Complex

The Mill Race Inn complex was a complicated assemblage of additions to an Early Settlement-era limestone structure that dates to the earliest years of the Geneva community.

The complexity of the floor plan made it difficult—for the average person—to understand the historic and non-historic portions of the existing building.

However, the 1846 manufactory building that became, in 1933, Anne Forsyth's original Mill Race Inn was clearly evident within the sprawling complex (see illustration to right).

As it stood to 2016, the Mill Race Inn complex, overall, was in a poor state of repair. The building and grounds were abandoned stood but with little effort to stabilize the structure or prevent damage and deterioration during a long period of no occupancy. Based on visual



inspection of those areas that were accessible and without the aid of special instrumentation or investigative aids, the original limestone building appeared to be structurally sound and showed no readily-discernable signs of imminent structural failure.

Several windows had been broken; exterior decking was in poor condition and the pavement and sidewalks were beginning to deteriorate. Furnishings and miscellaneous restaurant appointments, along with upholstered furniture and worn carpeting, were scattered throughout the complex. Kitchen fixtures—with few exceptions—had been removed in their entirety.

Building systems (electrical, HVAC and plumbing) were antiquated and installed in piecemeal fashion throughout the rambling complex. It was doubtful that any building systems retain any functional utility. Water had flooded the lowest basements areas of the structure; however, no standing water was evident in the 1846 cellar. In fact, little evidence of water ever being present within the 1846 cellar existed; the 1846 cellar floor was substantially higher than the newer basements. The presence of standing water and the long-vacant condition combined to create a poor interior environment.

Demolition of the post-1945 additions to the original building as well as efforts to “mothball” the original structure between 2016 and 2018 preserved the remaining portions of the original 1846 structure that had been modified over time, principally for the establishment of the Mill Race Inn restaurant in 1933.

What Remains of the Alexander Brothers’ Early Settlement Buildings?

The earliest structures attributed to the Julius and Edward Alexander have disappeared from the Geneva landscape: the original Alexander Brothers’ Blacksmith Shop (1837-38) north of State Street; their wood-frame home (1837-38); and their 1842 brick blacksmith shop on the north side of State Street. In fact, records that indicate the second 1842 building exists are incorrect.

However, the *circa* 1846 limestone structure—which measures approximately 30’ X 48’ and comprises little more than 1400 square feet of the entire property—remained clearly visible within the rambling Mill Race Inn complex. **The *circa* 1846 limestone building is, in fact, the third blacksmith shop of the Alexander brothers and the remaining, settlement-era building directly associated with this important pioneer family.**

Identifiable, today, by the original limestone bearing walls, the Alexander Brothers’ 1846 blacksmith shop no longer retains its original floor or roof. However, that condition is not as much an issue of building deterioration as a case of building evolution over time.

Three of the four original exterior walls of the 1846 limestone structure were visible within the present-day building; the exterior and interior faces of those walls are readily visible. However, the historic exterior face of the east wall is largely obscured from examination or observation; the interior face is largely exposed.

Unfortunately, approximately 15% of the historic west wall and approximately 40% of the historic east wall have been altered over time. The west wall loss encompasses a portion of the bearing wall and at least one original window opening. The east wall loss incorporates a large area that was once a sizable doorway (see *circa* 1892-1909 image). However, an initial assessment suggests that at least 82% of the original walls, as exposed in 1846, remain intact with minor modifications made for Anne Forsyth’s restaurant in 1933.

The cellar level of the 1846 manufactory building remains in exceptional condition. However, the original ceiling / floor structure has been replaced with poured concrete over time.

Although some historic window and door openings of the 1846 structure remain unaltered (particularly at the north façade), few—if any—retain original jambs. Where historic jambs exist, no historic window sash or doors were evident during the site visit. Many window openings appear to retain original lintels and sills.

What Examples of Pre-Civil War Industrial Buildings Remain in the Fox River Valley?

Although a comprehensive survey of this building type has not been undertaken, it appears—based on surveys of many communities south of and including Elgin, Illinois—that the Alexander Brothers’ blacksmith shop building at Geneva is one of a handful of the original, pre-Civil War, industrial buildings remaining (in 2019) in the Fox River valley. The 1840s Bennett Mill at Aurora was dis-assembled and reconstructed at a new site with old and new material and is a recreation (but not an authentic building) employing both historic and modern building techniques. The most impressive, surviving, pre-Civil War industrial building is the 1854 Gray Mill at Montgomery (but the foundry there was dismantled along with other river-powered factories many decades ago). The blacksmith/foundry industry that was key to the development of these river communities is all but lost at this point in time (July 2019). No other pre-Civil War industrial buildings have been located as a result of previous studies of Ottawa, Sheridan, Millington, Plano, Yorkville, Oswego, Montgomery, Aurora, St. Charles, South Elgin, and Elgin. While highly unlikely, it is possible that one or two sites may be as indiscernible as the Geneva property when it was enveloped within the Mill Race Inn. Perhaps, an early, industrial building of this type lies north of Elgin. However, it is unclear whether the communities north of Elgin (East Dundee, West Dundee, Carpentersville, Algonquin, Fox River Grove, Cary, Port Barrington, Burton’s Bridge, Island Lake, Holiday Hills, McHenry [Gagetown], Johnsborg, or Fox Lake) have ever been surveyed for this type of structure. With the possible exception of McHenry [Gagetown], the towns north of Elgin were settled as either agricultural centers, railroad stops, or entertainment resorts; many were established in the early to mid-twentieth century. Only McHenry [Gagetown] references any sort of mill or industrial complex in its early history.

What Remains of Anne Forsyth’s Mill Race Inn of 1933?

With the exception of the early service additions constructed along the east side of the 1846 structure, Anne Forsyth’s original restaurant was contained within the walls of the 1846 limestone structure.

Eighty years after Anne Forsyth’s tiny restaurant first opened, the dining room space of the original Mill Race Inn remains intact, including the fireplace she had installed, although finishes and some walls have been modified over time. Several windows installed in the early 1930s by August Wilson remain.

Alterations made after 1946 were largely not associated with Anne Forsyth’s original eatery; those areas of the complex were an odd arrangement of spaces and differing floor levels. Unfortunately, many of the original limestone walls were painted after Anne Forsyth was no longer involved in the day-to-day operations of the Mill Race Inn. Subsequent owners continued to modify and alter the original Mill Race Inn with the addition of later dining rooms.

However, the boundaries of Anne Forsyth’s 1933 restaurant are clearly identifiable as the perimeter of the 1846 structure; the 1933 Mill Race Inn restaurant is clearly evident within the abandoned complex.

What Architectural Integrity Remains?

As an early vernacular structure, constructed of indigenous materials and adapted for many uses over time, the building retains a sufficient amount of integrity to be identifiable as the early blacksmith shop building. Although the John Rystrom Carriage & Wagon Shop was, likely, the second most significant business at the site and C. E. Mann’s Cooperage was the third significant business to occupy the site, little of the architecture constructed for either of those ventures remains today.

However, the diminutive building survives as one of the few examples of pre-1850 commercial or industrial buildings in Geneva and is among the oldest of its kind in the entire Fox Valley. The building stands, in 2018, as an example of a utilitarian building that—for more than 170 years—has been adapted and re-purposed,

continuously, to accommodate growth and redevelopment of the east bank of the Fox River at Geneva.

A thorough investigation of the architecture of the remaining 1846 structure, as modified by Anne Forsyth in 1933, could better quantify the extent of original, extant materials from the two most significant periods of the structure's history that have survived: the 1846 manufactory and Anne Forsyth's 1933 Mill Race Inn.

Does the Building Satisfy Any Criteria for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places or as a Local Landmark?

The National Register of Historic Places has established criteria that evaluates properties based on the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

(a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

(c) that embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

(d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Admittedly, vernacular, utilitarian buildings are often challenging structures to nominate for landmark recognition. However, the Alexander Brothers' 1846 blacksmith shop building may qualify for National Register listing under Criterion A because the building is one of the few remaining Geneva buildings that is closely associated with the initial settlement of the pioneer community. Furthermore, it may be argued that the structure qualifies under Criterion C as an example of an early manufactory building associated with the early industrial development along the Fox River at Geneva. Few examples of these very early (pre-Civil War) industrial buildings remain throughout the Kane County section of the Fox River Valley. A survey of the Fox River valley communities may verify that the building at Geneva is the sole surviving (or one of a dozen or less), pre-Civil War industrial building still at its original location (Aurora's Bennett Mill was dis-assembled and reconstructed at another site around 2013). Additionally, the building has associations with several other industrial users that were important in the development of Geneva through the nineteenth century: the Rystrom Wagon Shop and the C. E. Mann Cooperage, primarily, but—to a lesser degree—even the Carlson Laundry.

Important to any case that would lead to landmark status for the Mill Race Inn site would be the appropriate identification of a Period of Significance for the remaining structure. Based upon this preliminary investigation, an appropriate Period of Significance may be 1846-1945 (the date the building was first constructed thru the final year Anne Forsyth operated the Mill Race Inn, individually. Without further investigation, it is difficult to suggest that later (post 1946) sections of the Mill Race Inn complex meet the National Register criteria or merit consideration for landmark status due to continued modifications of spaces in recent times.

In either case, the building may qualify for Investment Tax Credits and other grant funds that could assist in the preservation of those portions of the complex determined to have historic significance. Identification of the appropriate parts of the structure that may be preserved as well as an appropriate Period of Significance would allow the redevelopment of large portions of the abandoned Mill Race Inn complex and site.

Following a similar evaluation (although the evaluation is not as restrictive at the local level), the City of

Geneva—which is a designated Certified Local Government—could identify the property as a local landmark.

How Does Landmark Status and Rehabilitation of the 1846 Limestone Manufactory Fit with the City of Geneva Planning Efforts?

The Geneva community has a long history of embracing its historic places and utilizing its history to promote economic development. To that end, several community planning documents have been developed within the last ten (10) years, each including goals and objectives for the preservation of architecturally and/or historically-significant buildings, sites and structures. Although the former Mill Race Inn building lies outside of the boundaries of the Geneva Historic District, the building has been identified by the City of Geneva as a historically-significant site.

Historic Preservation Plan (2008)

The Historic Preservation Plan (2008) identifies numerous early settlement buildings and sites on the east side of the Fox River, including the former Mill Race Inn site. Goals of the Historic Preservation Plan that may be applicable to the former Mill Race Inn site include:

Goal 1: Identify historic resources including architecturally and/or historically-significant buildings, sites and/or structures.

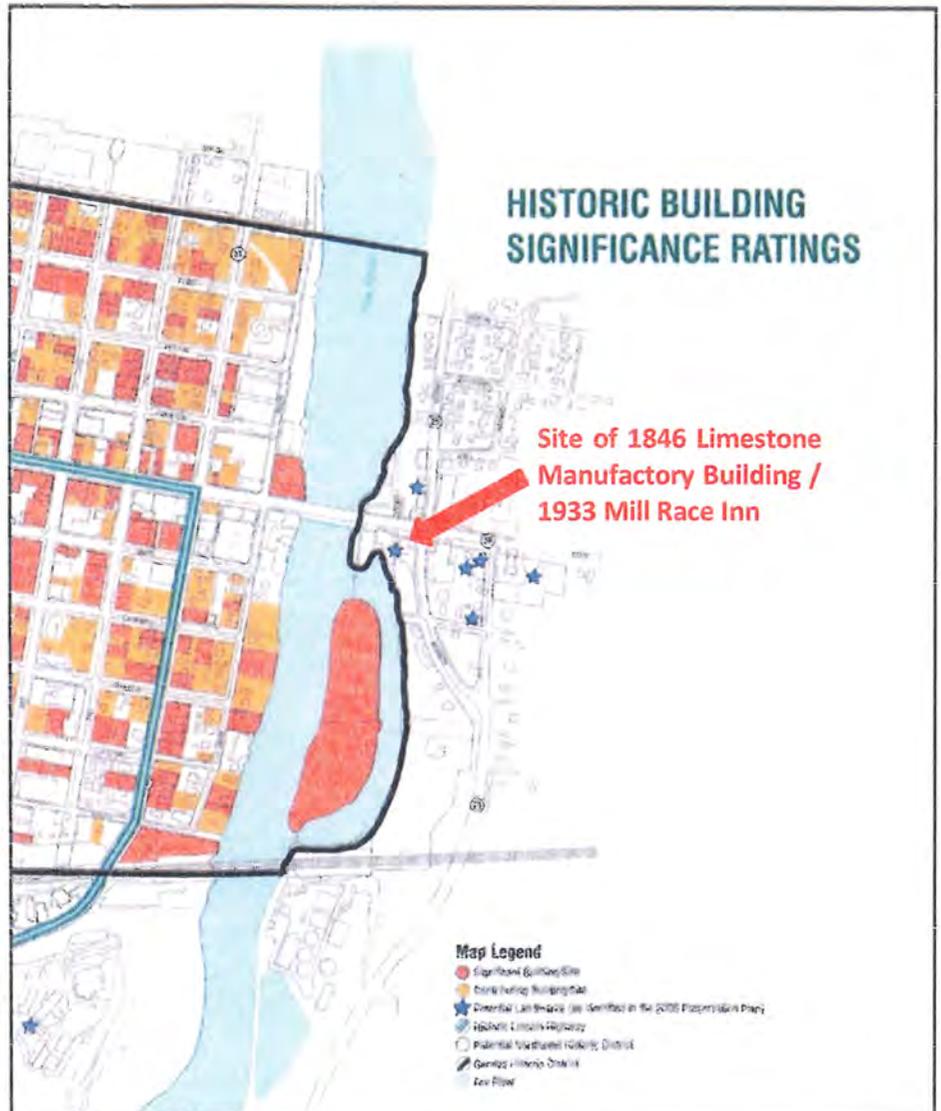
Goal 2: Protect historic resources through landmark designation.

Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012)

The Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012), which incorporates the east side of the Fox River, embraced historic preservation.

The Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012) identified seven (7) architecturally and/or historically significant structures on the east side of the Fox River in Downtown Geneva. These sites were identified as “Potential Landmarks” in the 2008 Historic Preservation Plan.

These extremely rare buildings—dating to the mid-1840s and 1850s—are representative of Geneva’s initial period of settlement.



Although many significant “settlement era” properties on the west side of the Fox River are incorporated within the boundaries of the Geneva Historic District, none of the identified “settlement era” buildings on the east side of the Fox River, to date, have been individually landmarked. One of those buildings is the former Mill Race Inn property. (Page 15)

In fact, “many participants (in The Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012) focus groups) were in support of new redevelopment and reuse of existing buildings Downtown, however, the majority stressed that they had concerns regarding the type, style and architecture of future developments. Preserving the City’s historic architecture and character, while also promoting new infill development, will be an important (consideration to) balance moving forward.” (Page 20)

The Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012), identifies the Mill Race Inn as a site (contained within Opportunity Site 6 – East Shoreline Opportunity Concept) with significant historical value but that is, also, prime for redevelopment for commercial and/or residential use. (Page 30) The nearby intersection has been identified as a prime development “gateway” to Downtown Geneva in the plan as well.

Opportunity Site 6 East Shoreline Opportunity Concept

Development Concept Overview
The development concept for this opportunity site is intended to improve the area east of the Fox River as more of an extension of Downtown by providing opportunities for new retail, lodging, and residential uses in an attractive setting along the Fox River, along with public space, trails, and riverfront access. Sites along East State Street are shown as new residential development, utilizing the change of grade as a development asset. Each of the individual developments and uses illustrated in this concept can be evaluated independently of one another or in whole, while still achieving an overall improvement to the area.

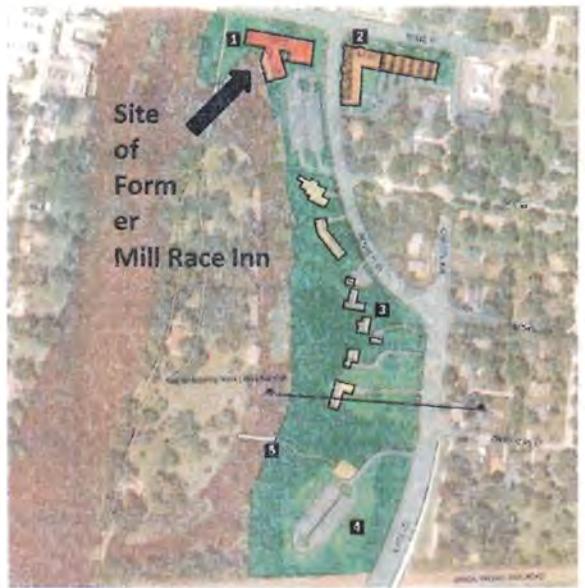
East State Residential
The area along the south side of State Street between Bennett and Crissey is shown as a combination of row houses and multi-family residential. Working with the site’s topography, rear alley provides access to the rear-loading parking for the row houses with the multi-family building being located on the western portion of the site.



Example Character Images

Mill Race Inn & Southwest Corner of State and Bennett
The Mill Race Inn has a long history in Geneva and this concept illustrates a newly redeveloped Mill Race Inn and new retail development on the corner. This redevelopment concept keeps the boutique and restaurant use and provides a layout that makes better use of the river frontage with parking that could support the addition of a lodge or boutique hotel with outdoor dining along the river. New retail development is also shown at the corner. This concept would allow for the development at the corner to serve as an attractive “gateway” into Downtown Geneva.

Open Space, Trails, and Trailhead
With a traditional public parking lot, trails and riverfront open space can be easily accessed. Open space and trail connectivity are a primary component of this concept as is the notion of maximizing the riverfront as an accessible community asset.



- 1 Reconnected Mill Race Inn or boutique hotel with riverfront and expanded parking
- 2 Multi-family building at the corner with staggered row houses north east up the hill
- 3 Single family detached residential
- 4 Public open space with a parking lot and trailhead
- 5 Potential pedestrian bridge to Fisher Park

Historic Architecture is addressed in the Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012): “Architectural details play a tremendous role in the creation of the area’s image, identity and sense of place. Building materials, ornamentation, style, articulation, doors and windows, rooflines, architectural features and massing are all elements of the built form that contribute to urban design. In Downtown Geneva, several traditional styles are represented and reflect the rich history of the area. It is this architectural and historic character that many residents recognize as one of the most valuable and important Downtown assets. Many of the existing buildings in Downtown are historically significant and have been identified as structures that should be preserved. (Page 50)

The Downtown / Station Area Master Plan (2012) identifies several implementation Goals and Objectives that may be applicable to redevelopment of the former Mill Race Inn site including (pages 68-71):

Goal 1: Preserve Downtown’s Authentic Character While Accommodating New Infill Development

Objective 1: Encourage preservation and adaptive re-use of historic and architecturally significant buildings

Objective 2: Ensure that new infill buildings respect the existing historic context and character of downtown.

Objective 4: Establish programs that provide financial support to property owners and business owners for building improvements and rehabilitation projects.

Goal 2: Strengthen Downtown’s Role as the Central Business District (CBD)

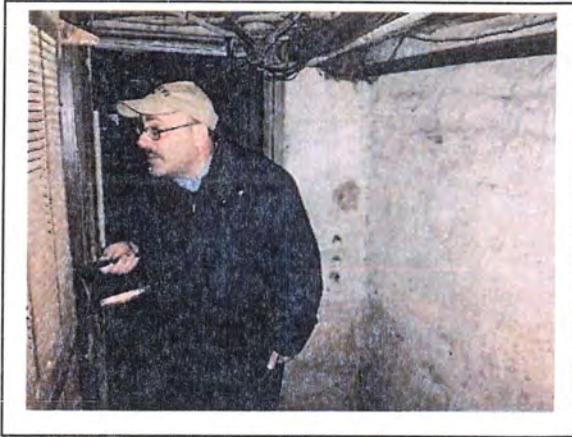
Objective 3: Initiate programs to encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings and spaces that are already, or are becoming, functionally obsolete.

Examples of Historic Buildings Integrated into Contemporary Adaptive Use Spaces.

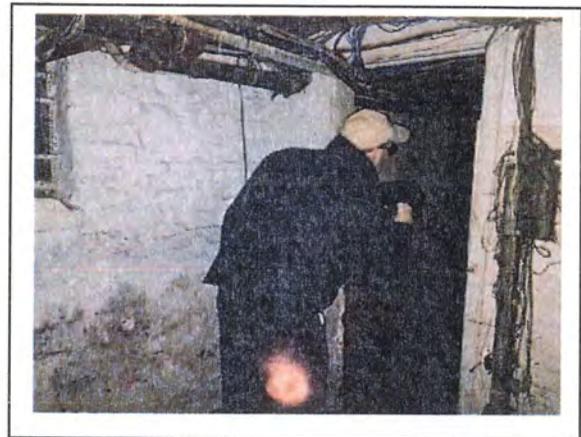
The Geneva community has a long history of embracing its historic places and utilizing its history to promote economic development and creative, continued adaptive use of its iconic buildings. Examples of adaptive use—whether local or elsewhere—provide an immediate sense of timelessness and connection to a local community which supports the goals of the City of Geneva’s planning and economic development efforts.

The Geneva business and development community has re-purposed numerous remnant historic structures and entire buildings into vibrant, commercial assets for the community. In fact, iconic Third Street is rooted in a very early example of adaptive use that integrated a former, historic residence within a much larger retail complex: Kate Raftery’s The Little Traveler (established in 1924 with significant enlargement in 1946). A few, more recent, local examples include Dodson Place, The Herrington Inn, and Geneva Bank & Trust. Beyond the Geneva streetscape, numerous examples of small historic structures have been integrated into larger, contemporary complexes that serve as highly-successful restaurants, inns, pubs, spas and other commercial and hospitality-related uses across the United States.

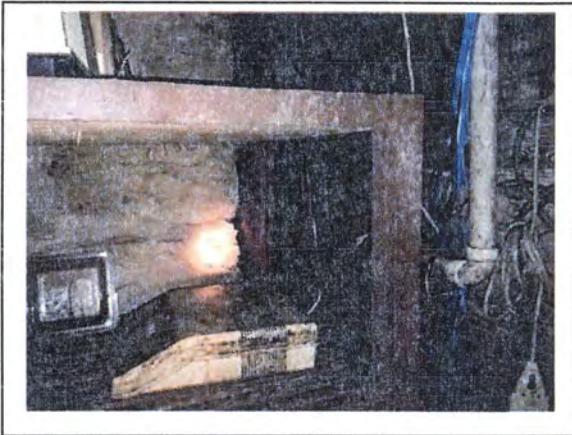
Images of the Former Mill Race Inn – November 2013



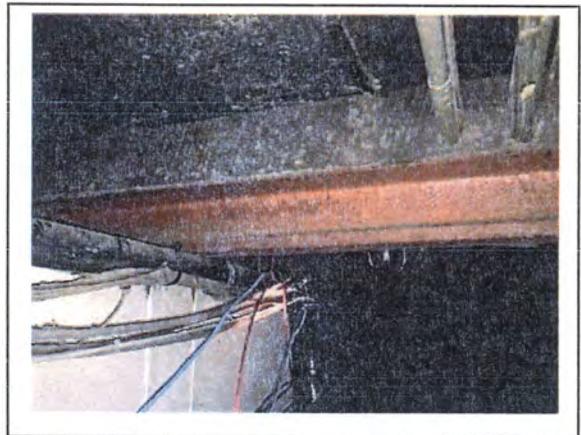
Original 1846 West Foundation Wall to right



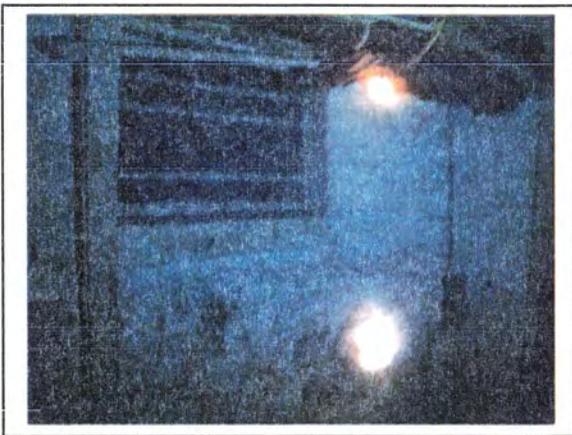
Original 1846 Foundation Wall and Window at left



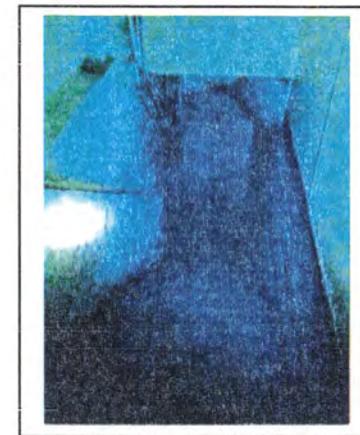
Original Southwest Corner of 1846 Building



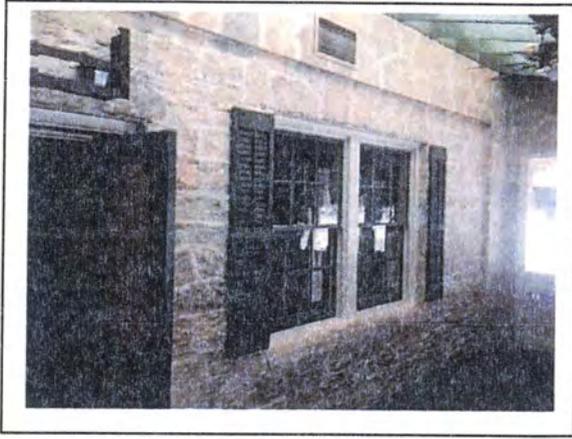
Streetcar Rail "Beam" at Post-1945 Addition



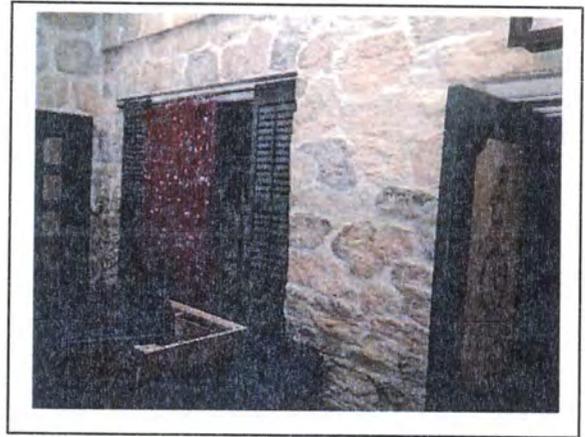
Original Window Opening at 1846 Cellar



Circa 1955 Stairway to Basement along Original North Foundation Wall with Original North Façade Window Opening at Left



Original 1846 Exterior West Wall Looking Southeasterly – Original 1933 Windows



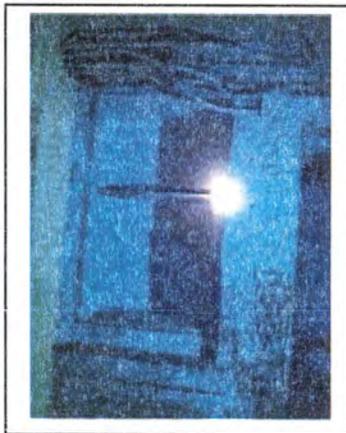
Original 1846 Exterior West Wall Looking Northeasterly – Original 1933 Windows



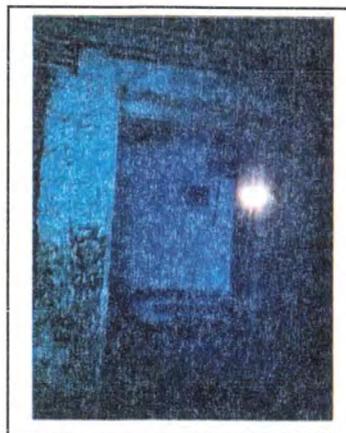
Original 1846 Exterior South Wall Looking Northwesterly – Original Window Opening with 1933 Windows



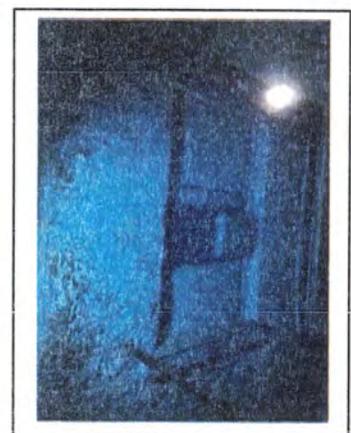
Original 1846 Exterior South Wall Looking Northwesterly – Original Window Opening and Doorway



1846 North Façade Original Window Opening



1846 North Façade Original Doorway Opening



1846 North Façade Original Window Opening



Original South Wall as Modified for Anne Forsyth's Original Mill Race Inn Dining Room (1933 compare to 1918 photo)



Original West Wall as Modified for Anne Forsyth's Original Mill Race Inn Dining Room (1933 compare to 1890 photo)



Interior of Southwest Corner of 1846 Limestone Building as Modified for Anne Forsyth's Original Mill Race Inn Dining Room (1933 as updated)



Interior of Southeast Corner of 1846 Limestone Building as Modified for Anne Forsyth's Original Mill Race Inn Dining Room – Original Doorway (right) and Altered 1846 Window (left)

All graphics, illustrations and other information provided herein is representational, in nature, and does not attempt to depict actual dimensions of building walls, areas, or configurations. The information provided in respect to building evolution is based on the best available data accessible on the date when the report is identified as completed and amended. The report is informational only and provided to assist in the evaluation of the property for adaptive use potential and possible local landmark status. The site was designated as a local Historic Landmark in 2018.

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