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**Section 8. Significance**

The Kenilworth Historic District merits listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development because it serves as a true archetype of the planned, exclusive, Romantic railroad suburb developed in the United States in the decades preceding World War I. The history of its development, the comprehensive deliberateness behind the development, its social composition, and its material appearance are the essential definitions of this type of American suburb. The historic district also merits listing on the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Architecture because it contains a superb collection of predominantly domestic architecture executed in many styles from late-nineteenth century revivalism to early-twentieth century Prairie Style to the modernist styles preceding and following World War II. The works of architects represented here included the most prominent names in the region from Daniel Burnham to Keck and Keck. The work of George Maher is particularly important as he designed at least forty houses in Kenilworth in addition to important public and semi-public buildings. The period of significance for the historic district is 1890, the date of the earliest development, to 1958, the National Register's fifty-year limit in 2008.

**Kenilworth and the Development of Metropolitan Chicago**

Chicago organized itself into a city not quite twenty years after Illinois achieved statehood. Most early settlement was in the southern third of the state along the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash Rivers. The hinterland at Lake Michigan's southern tip had seen numerous travelers for hundreds of years, but few stayed on as permanent settlers. Many more appeared after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, which linked the mid-Atlantic states to the Great Lakes, but it was not until after the final removal of Native Americans following the Black Hawk War in 1832 and the Treaty of Chicago in 1833 that permanent settlement became more attractive. From that point on throughout the nineteenth century Chicago was the world's fastest growing city, growing from a handful of families living in the shadow of Fort Dearborn to almost 1.7 million people in 1900.

In the 1830s settlers flooded into the entire northern third of Illinois. Improvements in communication and the elimination of potentially dangerous neighbors

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who may have been armed with land claims as well as weapons provided the opportunity to settle this large area. In just a few years the population of the counties in the northern part of the state went from about one person per square mile to a density that supported an intensive town-building process based on an agricultural economy that turned the grassy prairies into fields for food production seemingly overnight. Many of the incorporated villages, towns, and cities in northern Illinois can date their establishment to the ten years following 1832.<sup>1</sup> Towns that persisted and towns created during the second half of the nineteenth century were important to the suburbanization of the Chicago metropolitan area because some of these early towns that were crossroad hamlets or rural farm-based villages became suburbs. Some new towns were created specifically as bedroom communities for the expanding metropolis.

Urbanization and industrialization were nationwide characteristics of the nineteenth century. The use of more and more space for gigantic industrial complexes, commercial enterprises, and habitation for workers and managerial classes led to the creation of specialized land use in areas around Chicago and in neighborhoods in the city. When new transportation technology made movement across a city efficient, the railroad suburb was born to provide home sites for the middle and upper classes. Managers and professionals, those who made suitable incomes from workplaces in the urban core, could remove themselves and their families from the harsher conditions of the inner city to the more salubrious environment beyond the city limits.<sup>2</sup> Chicago's suburban development

<sup>1</sup> There are no meaningful county-by-county census records for the period 1830 to 1850 because Illinois' counties did not assume their present boundaries until the late 1840's. Cook County, which took in most of northeastern Illinois originally, posted an 1840 census return of 10,201 persons. The population of the entire state, however, increased in the 1840 census to 476,183 from 157,445 in the 1830 census, or just over 300 percent in ten years, <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/>. For the creation of counties and incorporated municipalities, see John Clayton's ever-useful, *The Illinois Fact Book and Historical Almanac, 1673-1968* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), especially chapters 5 and 6, pages 25-87.

<sup>2</sup> There is of course a vast literature on the development of suburbs. The works of greatest general influence here include Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), and Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). More specifically, this section of this work has benefitted from Ann Durkin Keating, *Chicagoland: City and Suburbs in the Railroad Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), Keating, *Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988), and Michael H. Ebner, *Creating Chicago's North Shore: A Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). The

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was much like suburban development surrounding other cities throughout the United States.

Two representative examples of Chicago's earliest suburbs were Lake Forest, founded in 1856 in Lake County twenty-seven miles north of the center of Chicago on what was then the Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad, and Riverside, in western Cook County nine miles from downtown, founded in 1869 along what was then the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. Both were designed in the manner of the ideal Romantic suburb: shady curvilinear streets with opulent houses on large lots creating an image of rural serenity where affluent citizens were safely removed from the infelicities at the city-end of the railroad line.<sup>3</sup> In both places the railroad station is in the middle of town. In July, 1855, the few residents of the North Shore witnessed the operation of Chicago's first commuter train—called an “accommodation train”—which ran for a brief time between Chicago and Waukegan, which lay a few miles north of Lake Forest.<sup>4</sup> Both Lake Forest and Riverside are defined as suburbs because they are directly dependent on the nearby city of Chicago; they were neither farm towns nor satellite cities. These two places, like New York's Garden City or Cincinnati's Glendale were made possible by railroads. The relationship between railroads and suburbs in Chicago, however, was different from that in eastern cities like New York, Boston, or Philadelphia where many communities destined to become suburbs existed prior to railroad construction. The first locomotive steamed its way out of Chicago in 1848. By 1860 the pathways for the city's railroad network were complete: eleven main lines radiated from the city well in advance of suburban development. As a result Chicago's suburban development tended to follow the straight lines of railroad tracks.<sup>5</sup>

Ann Durkin Keating, historian of Chicago's suburbs, has analyzed the pattern of suburban development and, having determined that it fits the general pattern of the national experience in the nineteenth century, identified several settlement types: the

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bibliography collected in David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, “Historic Residential Suburbs,” *National Register Bulletin* (Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2002), pp. 117-134, is excellent for the history of American suburbs and for methods of evaluation.

<sup>3</sup> In 1970 the entire Village of Riverside became a National Historic Landmark thereby acknowledging the community's special place in the history of the United States and Frederick Law Olmsted's contribution to landscape design and city planning.

<sup>4</sup> *North Shore*, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Chicagoland*, p. 97.

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south suburbs in the Calumet region are industrial; the northwest suburbs extending into the Chain-O-Lakes area of adjacent McHenry County are recreational; the west and southwest suburbs are middle-class bedroom communities; the suburbs along the northern shore of Lake Michigan are residential but for the most part are far more affluent than any others.<sup>6</sup> Keating also described the suburban context in which the nineteenth and early-twentieth century communities exist. She identified 233 individual communities in the Chicago metropolitan region and concluded that 41 percent were settled initially as farm communities, 30 percent as industrial towns, 15 percent as commuter railroad suburbs, and 14 percent as recreational or institutional towns.<sup>7</sup> Kenilworth is a railroad suburb created in a place where there had been some farming but no other previous settlement.

Suburban development in the Chicago metropolitan area is a significant contribution to the broad pattern of urban growth in the United States in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Kenilworth fits into the context of Chicago's urban development and expansion; it also fits into the smaller context of the development of the North Shore.

#### Development of the North Shore

From south to north Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park, Lake Forest, and Lake Bluff are the eight municipalities along the shore of Lake Michigan north of the city of the Chicago that comprise what is known as the North Shore. All have a boundary that is the lake shore, all are predominantly residential, and all are generally affluent. Towns to the north of them like Highwood, North Chicago, and Waukegan do not possess the same characteristics. Evanston's southern border is Chicago's corporate limit. The villages of Edgewater, Rogers Park, and a few others had been autonomous communities, but by the early 1890s had been annexed to the city, keeping only their names for present-day neighborhoods.<sup>8</sup> The term "North

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<sup>6</sup> *Chicagoland*, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> *Chicagoland*, pp. 7, 12n, 216. This conclusion is based on her compilation of information collected for the *Encyclopedia of Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), and especially her *Building Chicago*.

<sup>8</sup> The main thoroughfares in these northern-most neighborhoods like Broadway Street, Ridge Road, and Sheridan Road were lined with large homes of the well-to-do. In a process that started soon after annexation, peaked in the 1920s, and continues to the present day, the large homes were replaced by multi-

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Shore” was in use as early as 1873.<sup>9</sup> It was more than a geographical description for towns situated on the lake front. It was the conscious designation of a string of towns tied together by the railroad that carried residents back and forth to their work places in the Loop. The North Shore as a whole may be said to be the product of Walter S. Gurnee, Chicago’s eleventh mayor and beneficiary of a private fortune founded on leather goods. It was as president of the Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad, however, that he saw the value of developing a railroad system that hauled suburban passengers in addition to freight. With that in mind he purchased land along the line including a tract of land where he created and platted the town of Winnetka in 1854.<sup>10</sup> The railroad ran through all eight North Shore communities, close to the lake shore in a straight line passing through the middle of each town it served and into the center of Chicago.

The towns of the North Shore were tied together by the railroad and they were tied together by beliefs that the overwhelming majority of their populations shared and expressed in Protestantism and laissez-faire capitalism. The morphology of all of them owed a debt in greater or lesser degree to the Romantic idiom. All, beginning with Evanston, banned alcohol; all promoted homogeneity to potential residents; and each owed its beginning in some part to the profit motive, which is to say that each was the product of the efforts of land developers. None, however, approached the suburban ideal more closely than Kenilworth.<sup>11</sup>

### The Suburban Ideal

Although railroad suburbs began with the expansion of railroad networks in the 1840s, there was no consensus on the ideal or model suburb until late in the century. In Illinois some existing towns became suburbs when rail lines connected them to city centers. Other towns were created as suburbs but laid out around contrived town squares,

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family housing and commercial buildings. See Marian White, *The Book of the North Shore* (Chicago: J.H. White, 1910), *passim*, for many photos of the demolished homes. See also *Chicagoland*, pp. 95-99.

<sup>9</sup> *North Shore*, p. xxix, credits tracing the history of the term to J. Seymour Curry, “Chicago’s North Shore,” *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, No. 13 (1908), 103ff.

<sup>10</sup> *North Shore*, p. 22; Clayton, 83; Melvin G. Holli, “Mayors,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago History*, online version <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/>.

<sup>11</sup> *North Shore*, pp. 41, 67.

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like Chicago's Groveland Park.<sup>12</sup> Lake Forest had features that conformed to the ideal, but the heterogeneity of its composition—the great estate districts, the exclusive subdivisions, and the service sector—and its consequent uniqueness diminish its claim as an ideal. Olmsted & Vaux' Riverside, with its centrally-located commuter railroad station and curvilinear anti-urban street plan, is an ideal, but notwithstanding its great influence on landscape design and its staggering aesthetic value, it was in the final analysis, like so many other suburban developments, an entrepreneurial profit-making venture.

Kenilworth is a suburb that realized the suburban ideal in almost every way. An examination of its history shows how those ideals were applied and explains why Kenilworth looks the way it does. The ideal has many characteristics, but its overarching definition is best stated by cultural historian Mary Corbin Sies who finds in Kenilworth and a few other places that

the suburban ideal was articulated and realized in physical form by groups of upper-middle class urban Americans living in planned, exclusive suburbs in major metropolitan areas of the eastern, midwestern, and western United States. In formulating the design program for this new planning type, the new suburbanites had three goals in mind. They wished to accommodate and formalize their own lifestyle in a suitable residential setting, and to promote their own position and interests in society. They hoped, in addition, to devise a model environment that might, by prescribing a proper way of living, alleviate the worst housing conditions and social problems of the city.<sup>13</sup>

The features of that ideal appear in Kenilworth's history and set the village apart from the history of other types of suburbs. Achieving the ideal required careful decisions in the selection of the town site, in formulating the comprehensive plan, in creating the strategies for maintaining the character of the community, and in establishing the commitment of community members. In the case of Kenilworth the goal of creating and maintaining a special community were pursued from the very first time the town founder Joseph Sears conceived the idea of creating Kenilworth. The desire to maintain that idea

<sup>12</sup> *Chicagoland*, p. 100-101. Groveland Park is today a small gated enclave at Indiana Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street in Chicago.

<sup>13</sup> Mary Corbin Sies, "Paradise Retained: An Analysis of Persistence in Planned, Exclusive Suburbs, 1880-1980," *Planning Perspectives*, 12 (1997), p. 169.

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has persisted. As a result, Kenilworth is the kind of community, in historian Sies' estimation, that has "become increasingly rare and valuable . . . in the midst of a proliferation of mass-produced suburban subdivisions."<sup>14</sup>

### Finding Kenilworth

The earliest known people who used the land that became Kenilworth were actually several different groups of indigenous people who moved in and out at different times. The land was occupied by a band of Miamis when French missionary Father Pierre François Pinet conducted his Mission of the Guardian Angel from 1696 to 1700, probably just west of the current railroad station. Later, Antoine and Archange Ouilmette maintained their two-square mile reservation from 1829 to 1838, after which they moved west to Iowa. Their land became the center of Wilmette, adjoining Kenilworth on the south.<sup>15</sup> By the 1840s all the land in the lakeside townships north of Chicago had been transferred to private owners from the federal government land office. Wilmette was established in 1863, and Winnetka, Kenilworth's northern neighbor, was founded in 1854 as one of the first railroad suburbs in the region. By the end of the 1880s, occupancy of the land between Wilmette and Winnetka had been reduced to a small number of farm families. Brothers John and Jacob Schmitt owned farms there since the 1840s. Michael and Angela Diversey were there along with Timothy Sunderlin. North along the lake front the Doyles had a farm, and to the south Daniel Mahoney had almost forty acres that would play a significant role in Kenilworth's future.<sup>16</sup>

Charles E. Simmons, a land speculator from Oak Park and a real estate manager for the Chicago & North Western Railway, bought up as much land as he could from the farmers east of the railroad tracks. Knowing that these were the last pieces of land along the North Shore that had not been turned to suburban development, he was anxious to acquire as much of it as he could. Daniel Mahoney would not sell, so in the end Simmons was able to assemble a parcel of around 200 acres that was "a thick tangle of

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<sup>14</sup> "Paradise Retained," pp. 185-186.

<sup>15</sup> Village of Kenilworth, *The First Fifty Years*, (Kenilworth, IL: Village of Kenilworth, 1947), p. 113. The original source for Fr. Pinet is Frank R. Grover, "Some Indian Land Marks of the North Shore," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, No. 10 (1905).

<sup>16</sup> *North Shore*, p. 22; Colleen Browne Kilner, *Joseph Sears and His Kenilworth: The Dreamer and the Dream* (Kenilworth, IL: Kenilworth Historical Society, 1969), p. 138.

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woods, and along the lake a cleared area under cultivation, . . . a few houses, and clumps of orchard trees.”<sup>17</sup>

That was the situation when, in the late 1880s, a wealthy industrialist from Chicago named Joseph Sears noticed the woodland between Wilmette and Winnetka as he passed through it on the train. Sears lived in Chicago, but rented a summer residence in Glencoe, the town immediately north of Winnetka. Maintaining a summer place was a common practice for those who could afford to escape the oppression of summer in the city. Viewing the land from the train window he decided to take a closer look with the idea that such land might make a good location for something more permanent than a summer home. Taking the opportunity, he rode over the land on horseback and determined that it was indeed a place where he could build not only a dream home, but an entire dream community.

#### Joseph Sears

No person had greater influence over the substance and spirit of Kenilworth than Joseph Sears. He was the principal person in the company that bought the land and laid out the town. It was also his vision and ideas about suburban living that brought the community into being. Sooner or later someone would inevitably come along and develop the North Shore’s remaining acres of forest and farmland into a residential suburb, and Joseph Sears was that person. Of all the possibilities for the use of the land that became Kenilworth it was his vision that gave Kenilworth its uniqueness.

The Sears family could trace its lineage seven generations to seventeenth-century Massachusetts and beyond to its English roots.<sup>18</sup> Joseph’s father, John, relinquished the family’s yeoman tradition and eventually arrived in Lockport, Illinois, in 1836 as an assistant to the engineer for the construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, where his duties led eventually to reading law. Upon completion of the canal and upon finding the practice of law unsatisfactory, he moved his family to Chicago in 1849 where he found employment in L.M. Boyce’s drug company. The drug company had a separate business dealing in lard and animal fats in which the elder Sears took an interest.

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<sup>17</sup> Colleen Browne Kilner, *Kenilworth Tree Stories* (Kenilworth, IL: Kenilworth Historical Society, 1972), p.189.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Sears is not related to Richard Sears or any of the individuals associated with Sears, Roebuck & Company.

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Through a series of firms and partnerships purveying lard, oil, and candles he made enough money to retire when he sold his interests in 1858. His firm eventually was absorbed by the N.K. Fairbank company.<sup>19</sup>

Born in Lockport in 1843, Joseph Sears was a young child when the family moved to Chicago. As the son of a successful businessman, Joseph went to good schools, obtaining self-confidence and a level of education befitting his family background. Through his father's business connections he entered the lard and oil business, but the Civil War interrupted his career. In March, 1864, he enlisted as a private in the 134<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry regiment. He re-enlisted in the 147<sup>th</sup> Illinois, served under Sherman, and ended the war as a lieutenant quartermaster providing logistical support to front-line combat units.<sup>20</sup> After the war he worked for N.K. Fairbank. By 1868 he was plant superintendent and worked his way up to vice president and partner. He established a personal relationship with Nathaniel Fairbank and benefitted from Fairbank's tutelage and trust. In addition to sharpening his business skills, Fairbank also promoted Sears' social consciousness. In return for Fairbank's kindnesses, Sears helped expand the company into international markets selling lard and refined animal products. Sears was especially adept at developing refining and marketing methods for cottonseed oil. In fact, it was cottonseed oil that interested Philip Armour in buying N.K. Fairbank & Company as part of a battle he was fighting with cotton oil interests that he felt were dealing with him unfairly. Sears' share of the purchase price was enough to allow him to retire at age forty-nine and invest in the development of Kenilworth.<sup>21</sup>

Sears and his family lived at 1815 South Prairie Avenue, the most desirable section of Chicago's then most prestigious street. It is here where he built a house in 1879.<sup>22</sup> His social or non-business life was much like that of anyone of his class. He was engaged in civic activities through organizations like the Chicago Club and the Chicago Athenaeum, where he served as a director.<sup>23</sup> His civic-mindedness was undoubtedly related to his Swedenborgian religious convictions learned from his father. Swedenborgians were a loosely-organized Christian sect founded in Europe in the

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<sup>19</sup> *Sears*, pp. 20, 26-28.

<sup>20</sup> *Sears*, p. 46. Kilner reports that Illinois governor Richard Yates praised Sears' "indispensible and invaluable service" behind-the-lines for allowing veteran troops to return to the front.

<sup>21</sup> *Sears*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>22</sup> His home was designed by Daniel Burnham, sold to Arthur Meeker (an executive with Armour and Company) and was demolished in 1967; *Sears*, p. 80.

<sup>23</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, October 26, 1889, p. 12.

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eighteenth century. They believed in the Trinity, the truth of the Bible, the supremacy of the spirit over the body, and doing good.

Swedenborgians in the United States practiced in the New Church. Sears' local church in Chicago was the Church of the New Jerusalem whose members became his closest and most trusted friends. The church had a bearing on Kenilworth's future since members were invited to invest in Kenilworth and to live there. Among the coreligionists, for example, was architect George Maher, who would design many of Kenilworth's public and private spaces. Sears' desire to do good may have also come from his friend and neighbor George Pullman who, during Sear's tenure on Prairie Avenue, was working out his own ideas about building a model community.<sup>24</sup>

In the summer of 1883 Sears embarked on a sales trip to England with his family. The countryside of Warwickshire where they toured was the setting for Sir Walter Scott's novel *Kenilworth*, which Sears read as a boy. The beautiful countryside impressed the entire family and, according to one local historian, put the desire for a country place into Sears' mind since both his grandfather and father built country homes as refuges for their families.<sup>25</sup> Here was the inspiration for the name of his community. Street names in the village of Kenilworth were names found in Scott's novel.

Sears rented a summer home in Glencoe, about four miles north of Kenilworth. He could see the land from the window of the Chicago & North Western trains as he passed back and forth, and one day while on one of his frequent recreational horseback rides he stopped by for a closer look. With a pocket full of money from the sale of the N.K. Fairbank company, a head full of ideas about an ideal suburb for middle class professionals and managers, and no desire to spend his retirement in idleness, he decided to build Kenilworth.

Joseph Sears died in 1912 at the age of sixty-nine, having devoted more than twenty years of his life to creating and promoting Kenilworth. His neighbors recognized his critical role in the town's early history and founding. A year before his death, upon

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<sup>24</sup> Although it has not been proved, Pullman may have been Sears' source of information and possibly even his inspiration for creating Kenilworth, notwithstanding the fact that notions about model communities had been around for centuries. See Thomas J. Schlereth, "Solon Spencer Beman, Pullman, and the European Influence on and Interest in His Chicago Architecture," in John Zukowsky (ed.), *Chicago Architecture, 1872-1922* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1987), pp. 173-188.

<sup>25</sup> *Sears*, p. 113.

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returning from a trip abroad for his failing health, he was presented with a memorial signed by every person in Kenilworth. Kenilworth, they said

is your creation. It is the quality of your personality that has attracted here souls kindred to your own and bound them to you as with bonds of steel. In it all you have demonstrated your superiority and made possible a community of homes imbued with your spirit, enriched by your labors, and aglow with goodwill. Most that you have done has been for others, and there flows back to you a wealth of appreciation and affections that is constant and abounding.<sup>26</sup>

#### Founding Kenilworth

Taken with the natural beauty of the place, Joseph Sears bought Simmons' holding of 224 acres for \$150,300, or \$672 per acre, in November, 1889. A few weeks later on December 18, 1889, Sears formed the Kenilworth Company using his personal fortune to give himself controlling interest and to keep the board of directors to the legal minimum: Ingolf K. Boyesen was Sears' personal lawyer and was made vice president; Charles S. Smith, a retired physician, was secretary and in charge of sales; Sears' half-brother William H. H. Sears was treasurer and oversaw the day to day operations of the firm; Charles Mitchell served as the final board member as well as serving as the Sears' family physician.<sup>27</sup>

Kenilworth was intended to be a Romantic, idealized place. Its location possessed geographical, political, and social advantages. Sears' desire was to keep the atmosphere of the country and to make Kenilworth a refuge from the city without foregoing the convenience of the city. It was the site's natural beauty that attracted him in the first place, and he wanted to keep it that way to attract like-minded people who might wish to become his neighbors. The woods at the north end of the tract and the meadows at the south end became Sears' "poem written in trees and shrubs" and soon gained a reputation for its picturesque qualities and, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, as "this paradise

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<sup>26</sup> *First Fifty Years*, p. 14.

<sup>27</sup> *Sears*, 138; *First Fifty Years*, pp. 1-2.

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along the railroad.”<sup>28</sup> Another desirable feature of the land was that it was subject to the “four mile rule” of Northwestern University in Evanston, whose charter created an alcohol-free zone within a radius of four miles of the campus, which together with Sears’ own intention to forbid the sale of alcohol in Kenilworth, precluded the possibility of public debate on the prohibition issue.<sup>29</sup> In addition, Kenilworth’s location on unsettled, undeveloped land meant that no existing community needed to be displaced or suborned. In the decade preceding Kenilworth’s settlement, residents of the North Shore witnessed the conflict between the burgeoning railroad suburb of Wilmette with the beer-drinking German farmers of the village of Gross Point. Eventually suburbanization prevailed and Gross Point ceased to exist as a municipality. Similarly, but with less tension, Evanston absorbed the settlements of North Evanston and South Evanston in a process that exposed divisions of political opinion and class that created discomfort among the citizens. Such threats to harmony and stability would not be a problem in Kenilworth.<sup>30</sup>

Within months after its formation with Joseph Sears leading it, the Kenilworth Company threw itself into the job of general contractor for town building. It had fill hauled in to drain and level the land, surveys done for the first 200 house lots, the streets laid out, and started building the infrastructure. Sears decided that it would be better to complete the community’s infrastructure as a private undertaking for his company than to wait for a yet-to-be-created municipal government to assume those responsibilities. He had observed how disappointed residents of Highland Park and Evanston were when their local governments were unable to build adequate water and sewer systems because of difficulties with public finance and local politics. Consequently, within the first two years of operation, the Kenilworth Company on its own built three miles of sewers that would meet the needs of the community for forty years, a water plant drawing adequate supplies of fresh water directly from Lake Michigan, and two and a half miles of paved roads and sidewalks. A few years later, in 1897, when Sears was unable to attract an

<sup>28</sup> *Chicagoland*, p. 144; *First Fifty Years*, p. iii; Newton Bateman and Paul Selby, *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois, Cook County Edition* (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1905), pp. 786-788; *Chicago Tribune*, 1893 (exact date not given), cited in *First Fifty Years*, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> The state-issued charter for Northwestern University of 1853 said that there was to be no alcohol sold within a four-mile radius of the center of campus. Therefore, Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, and Rogers Park were dry, at least in theory. See *Chicagoland*, p. 146, and *North Shore, passim*.

<sup>30</sup> See Mark A. Zaltman, *Suburban/Rural Conflicts in Late-Nineteenth Century Chicago*, (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1998); *New Trier Township Report*, pamphlet, (New Trier Township, IL, 1949), p. 21.

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outside owner for the local gas company, he took it over himself. In 1907, when electrification came to the village, Sears negotiated with Samuel Insull to have Commonwealth Edison bury its wires to spare the citizens the unsightliness of overhead wires.<sup>31</sup>

The town was created to have a distinct identity. By 1891 house lots were ready for construction around the spine of Kenilworth Avenue, which connected the railroad station to the Lake Michigan shore. The initial plat of the town contained large 100 feet by 175 feet lots and wide streets. There were to be no alleys. Lots were to be generously landscaped and houses were to be large.<sup>32</sup> Fences were strictly regulated where allowed. It is not clear who actually designed the town, but it is certain that Joseph Sears had the final word on everything, including the restrictions, which appeared as restrictive covenants on deeds. It is also clear that Franklin Burnham, an accomplished architect who served as the Kenilworth Company's architect, would have assisted in the decision-making. In 1891 Burnham, who was no relation to Chicago's celebrated Daniel Burnham, designed the handsome Richardsonian Romanesque railroad station, which served as the entry to the town and the first feature of the town that any traveler on the trains or along Green Bay Road would encounter. Burnham also designed more than a dozen houses for Kenilworth residents. The distinctiveness of the town was furthered by George W. Maher's efforts. Maher was a successful Prairie School architect and a Swedenborgian friend of Sears who was enticed to Kenilworth to become a resident and eventually designed over forty houses and other buildings there. Maher designed urns and for each end of Kenilworth Avenue and pylons at either end of Sheridan Road to make it clear to anyone that they had arrived in Kenilworth. He also designed several bridges over the Skokie Ditch, a nondescript watercourse wending through Kenilworth that connected the Skokie Marsh to the west with Lake Michigan to the east.<sup>33</sup>

The sale of lots in Kenilworth was undertaken as carefully as the plan of the town. Along the North Shore lots were selling from \$15 to \$25 per frontage foot away from the lake and from \$75 to \$150 closer to the lakefront. Sears sold Kenilworth lots for \$60 per

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<sup>31</sup> *Tree Stories*, pp. 35, 175; "Ten Year Report of Municipal Progress," typescript report written by F.L. Streed, village manager, 1932, in Village of Kenilworth Collection, Kenilworth Historical Society, p. 6; *North Shore*, pp. 65, 78; *First Fifty Years*, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> *Sears*, p. 143.

<sup>33</sup> *Chicagoland*, p. 6; Melinda R. Kwedar, *The Suburban Ideal Revisited: Architecture and Neighborhoods in Kenilworth* (Kenilworth: Kenilworth Historical Society, 2006), pp. 5-6.

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frontage foot, telling would-be purchasers that even if the price were high, the land was not overpriced and that it would be a good investment at any price.<sup>34</sup> A sales brochure from 1904 tells readers that houses must cost from \$5,000 to \$15,000.<sup>35</sup> Sears' sales techniques bore certain similarities to conventional real estate promotions of the time, but because he sought exclusive purchasers—people who would actually become his neighbors—his promotions were relatively subdued. Whereas other developers hired trains or streetcars to bring large numbers of people to sales offices in suburban subdivisions or plied potential customers with sales gimmicks, Sears quietly brought potential customers out to Kenilworth in small groups and entertained them with serene picnics rather than carnival attractions. Whereas suburban developers in such places as Lake Forest or Glen Ellyn in DuPage County built hotels to use in their promotions, Sears eschewed the idea. The Kenilworth Company produced expensive brochures, but information about Kenilworth was as likely to spread by word-of-mouth as by any other method. Sears installed Dr. Charles Smith in the company's Loop sales office, but Sears himself was often on hand to interview purchasers before any contracts were signed.<sup>36</sup>

Sears advertised the comforts of suburban life with its clean air and verdant landscape, but he could also offer paved streets, plentiful good water, refuse collection, and a forty-minute train ride to the city. He would not sell lots to just anyone with the money, however. He was interested in people like himself, people who were relatively “progressive,” culturally sophisticated, privileged, “American,” and “Caucasian.” One applicant, Warren Pease, who moved to Kenilworth in 1894, reported that “I had to give an account of myself, my family, occupation, and, in the language of the Constitution, my ‘age, race, color and previous condition of servitude.’”<sup>37</sup> Historians agree that exclusion

<sup>34</sup> *North Shore*, pp. 37-38, 53-54; *Sears*, pp. 213-214. Michael Ebner points out that at the same time lots in Chicago's Gold Coast, the latest exclusive neighborhood in the city, were going for \$800 per foot, *North Shore*, p. 107. Ebner also points out that land prices were affected by nationwide depression in the 1870s and 1890s, and that, despite all the promotions, North Shore development did not necessarily provide an acceptable rate of return for developers' investments.

<sup>35</sup> “Kenilworth Company” brochure, collected in Box 2f, Kenilworth Company Records Collection, Kenilworth Historical Society.

<sup>36</sup> In 1859 the Lake Forest Association sponsored a promotional picnic for 700 people, for example, in *North Shore*, p. 29. Picnics and hotels as common promotional practices are described in *Chicagoland*, pp. 103-104, and Perry Duis, *Challenging Chicago* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), p.70.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in *Sears*, p. 215. See also Linda E. Smiens, *Building an American Identity, Pattern Book Homes and Communities, 1870-1900* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 1999), pp. 67-90.

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based on race, religion, or national origin was a prevailing practice nationwide, especially in newly-emerging suburbs. A series of judicial decisions and statutes from the early-twentieth century on eliminated *de jure* discrimination, but the so-called “gentlemen’s agreements” could continue *de facto* discrimination with nothing written or spoken. In this respect Kenilworth was altogether typical for the age.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Michael Ebner, *North Shore*, p. 79, finds such exclusivity and discrimination “prevalent,” but believes that some communities, on the North Shore such as Highland Park were less so. Real estate promoters could be clear about whom they wanted as clients: a 1914 issue of *The Economist*, touting investment and residential opportunity in the North Shore, suggests that one factor making real estate a good investment there is the area’s “American” character, which was code meaning no recent immigrants, no people of color, and by extension no Jews or in other cases Roman Catholics (See “The North Shore from an Investment Point of View,” *The Economist*, Section 2, Vol. LII, No. 13 (September 26, 1914), p. 1). Patricia Burgess Stach, “Real Estate Development and Urban Form: Roadblocks in the Path to Residential Exclusivity,” *Business History Review* 63 (Summer, 1989), pp. 356-383, explains that developers, including Joseph Sears, based restrictions on the right of free contract, but the US Supreme Court in *Buchanan v. Warley* 245 U.S. 60 (1917), said that discriminatory ordinances violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Private contracts between buyers and sellers were not affected. However, in *Shelley v. Kraemer* 344 US 1 (1948) the Supreme Court said that while racial restrictions were not in themselves illegal, they could not be enforced by any government agency. It is unlikely that the Supreme Court could have put a stop to discriminatory practices.

The issue of discrimination in Kenilworth between historians is interesting. Colleen Browne Kilner, Kenilworth’s local historian, wrote that restricting land sales to Caucasians was “incorporated in the village ordinance.” James Loewen, in his study of the appalling history of housing discrimination in the United States, *Sundown Towns*, claims that someone must have purged the public record in Kenilworth to remove any mention of restrictions in the town’s legislative history. Michael Ebner, historian of the North Shore, who has no interest in defending discrimination, reports that after an exhaustive search he was unable to find any evidence of public ordinances in Kenilworth supporting discrimination at any time in its history. While there is undeniable evidence of a history of racial discrimination, and that no ordinance would be required or in any way necessary to promote discrimination, it may be the case that Kilner was wrong about what was in the local ordinances and that Loewen mistakes what never was for what he thinks has been suppressed. See Kilner, *Sears*, p. 143, Ebner, *North Shore*, p. 230, and James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), pp. 123-125, 144, 218-219, 318.

In regard to restrictive covenants in the deeds used by the Kenilworth Company and purchasers, the record is incompletely explored. The Kenilworth Historical Society has the Kenilworth Company records in its collections. The Kenilworth Company files contain an 1892 deed conveying the property at 326 Essex Road to Francis Root. The deed has covenants forbidding the sale of intoxicants and regulates fences and walls but says nothing about race, religion, or national origin. This is only one property out of the hundreds sold before such restrictions were found unconstitutional, yet if liquor and fences were taken

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To the extent that Joseph Sears wanted to restrict the membership of his community, he also wanted to bring together those he wanted as members. If the railroad station helped define Kenilworth citizens as people who derived their income from the city, and if their homes defined them as family-oriented managers or professionals, the churches in Kenilworth defined them further as Protestants. The Union Church and the Church of the Holy Comforter are the only churches in Kenilworth. Sears was concerned enough about spiritual matters that he had the Kenilworth Company itself build the Union Church in 1892, which makes it one of the oldest buildings in town. The purpose of the Union Church was to emphasize the essential features of Protestantism so as to bring people together to enjoy the union of their similarities and eliminate their differences. Ann Durkin Keating refers to this suburban phenomenon as “pan-Protestantism.” In practice it meant, for example, that the dedication sermon was preached by a Presbyterian minister from Evanston, the service was led by a Swedenborgian minister from the Chicago Church of the New Jerusalem, the musicians were from the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago, and the permanent pastor was a Methodist-Episcopalian.<sup>39</sup> The Church of the Holy Comforter is an Episcopalian church that was established in Kenilworth in 1899 as a mission, or off-shoot, from the Episcopal church in Winnetka. The building was constructed in 1905 directly across the street from the Union Church on land donated by Joseph Sears, who approved of the denomination’s English origin. Both churches were designed in the Gothic Revival Style and each has needed to build several additions over the years. The importance of the churches is apparent in their early construction and location on Kenilworth Avenue midway between the railroad station and the lake, right in the middle of the original part of the village.<sup>40</sup>

In the beginning Joseph Sears and the Kenilworth Company controlled land use and development in Kenilworth. It was never his intention, however, to create or maintain a monopoly or exercise power in the way that his Prairie Avenue neighbor George Pullman was doing in his own town of Pullman. It was Sears’ and Kenilworth’s citizens’ intention to incorporate as a village at the first opportunity. State law required a minimum population of 300 in order to grant a charter, which was achieved through two births in December, 1895. Steps were taken within weeks and Kenilworth became an

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into account why would other restrictions not be written down? Perhaps the force of a gentleman’s agreement exceeded the force of law.

<sup>39</sup> *Chicagoland*, pp. 109-110; *Sears*, pp. 179-180.

<sup>40</sup> *Sears*, pp. 189-190.

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incorporated village in February, 1896. The local government provided a village president and a board of trustees that took responsibility for hiring police protection and all the other tasks of local government. The board did not hire a village manager until fifteen years later. Much of the daily administration fell on the shoulders of village clerk Harry Weese, Sr. Laborers formerly employed by the Kenilworth Company became civil servants. The small size of the local government did not reflect citizens' interest in civic affairs. On the contrary, public affairs in Kenilworth have always attracted the attention and participation of numerous volunteer civic organizations whose functions were often quasi-governmental. Boosters could claim that the purpose of such organizations was "to unite the village," but groups like Kenilworth Neighbors, which was affiliated with the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, and the Kenilworth Improvement Association and its successor, the Kenilworth Advisory Board, exercised considerable power in determining public policy. For example, the park board, created in 1906 by the village government, and the historical society, created as a volunteer organization in 1922, assumed responsibilities for maintaining the identity of the village, the former by tending the appearance of open space and the latter by keeping records of the village's connection to its past.<sup>41</sup>

#### Continuing Growth

In each of the first three years following the creation of Kenilworth, at least a dozen houses were built in the original plat. In 1892 the Kenilworth Company subdivided an additional nineteen blocks surrounding the original lots. Additions continued to fill out the land east of the railroad through the first decades of the twentieth century, even as Joseph Sears bought out and dissolved the Kenilworth Company in 1904. After Sears died in 1912 his heirs reluctantly sold their father's holdings in 1916 to the real estate firm of McGuire & Orr, which continued selling home sites with the promise of preserving Sears' vision of the community's character.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *First Fifty Years*, pp. 10-11, 20, 56-58; *Tree Stories*, pp. 73, 103; *Sears*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>42</sup> In a letter to her brother, Joseph Sears' daughter, Dorothy, complained that they were selling the land "at a horribly low price and it makes us all kind of sick." McGuire & Orr bought some of the family's holding for as little as \$24 per frontage foot, which does in fact seem sickeningly low. Dorothy consoled herself with the hope that the low price would be offset by "the future benefit of our [remaining] property." Draft letter from Dorothy Sears to Philip Sears, 1916, "Real Estate Development/McGuire Bio" File 16/4, Box 16, Kenilworth Historical Society.

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Brier Street

The Kenilworth Company, Joseph Sears, and other developers managed to control the character of Kenilworth through the establishment of large lot sizes, the street grid, and restrictive covenants. These controls, however, did not extend to the unincorporated land west of the railroad tracks. The rhomboid bounded by Ridge Road on the west, the railroad tracks on the east, what is now Park Drive on the south, and the corporate limit at Winnetka on the north constituted the “Brier Street neighborhood,” named after the longest street in the area, which ran as a north-south spine. At least a half dozen separate subdivisions, some platted as early as 1890 and 1891, and others involving only fractional blocks, comprised the area. The result was a comparatively irregular street grid with rights of way varying from fifty feet to sixty-six feet, and small lots of differing sizes, many as small as 25 feet by 125 feet.<sup>43</sup>

As early as 1898, only two years after Kenilworth’s incorporation as a municipality, residents in the western lands began petitioning for annexation. This went on for twenty years, and each time a petition was presented to the voters it was defeated at the polls because Kenilworth residents were concerned over the small lot sizes and the presence of “cheap frame houses.”<sup>44</sup> Finally, in 1920, a majority of voters approved the measure after property owners in the affected area began discussing annexation with the neighboring village of Winnetka. Were that to have happened, there would have been no guarantees of land use restrictions compatible with Kenilworth. In May, 1924, the remaining land that lay between Brier Street and Ridge Road was annexed as well, and even though the streets and lots did not line up exactly with the existing pattern of Kenilworth, and though set-backs were inconsistent, and though some lots did not conform to Kenilworth’s newly-enacted zoning ordinance, the village was resigned to the annexation as the only way to regulate and control further development there.<sup>45</sup> True to the intent, subsequent development included high-style domestic architecture—albeit of

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<sup>43</sup> Because of consolidations and un-availability of documentation it is difficult to untangle and identify when all the subdivisions were created as well as who was responsible for creating them. Research on this topic is ongoing.

<sup>44</sup> Letter to Jacob L. Crane from F.L. Streed, Kenilworth village manager, on the subject of the history of Kenilworth’s annexations, December 23, 1931, “Real Estate Development” file, Box 16, Kenilworth Historical Society; *Sears*, p. 139.

<sup>45</sup> “Ten Year Report,” p. 1.

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smaller scale—and a Tudor Revival Style design for the commercial strip along Green Bay Road adjacent to the railroad that complied with the ideals of the Romantic suburb.

Kenilworth Beach

McGuire & Orr's purchase of the Sears' family holdings was the first occasion when "outsiders" participated in the growth of Kenilworth. Established in 1894, the McGuire & Orr firm had been involved in sales, management, and first-mortgage lending for real estate along the North Shore for years from their office in downtown Chicago when they turned their attention to acquiring the Daniel Mahoney farm that lay along the lake shore and Kenilworth's southern boundary.<sup>46</sup> Mahoney had refused to sell any of his property to the Kenilworth Company or Joseph Sears or anyone else from the beginning of Kenilworth's settlement.

Mahoney could not have been a very successful farmer because of the poor agricultural value of the land even though it was reported that he grew the "best corn in the county." There was an orchard on the property, but Mahoney probably made the larger part of his livelihood from hiring himself out to his neighbor John Westerfield, a prominent and more successful farmer.<sup>47</sup> When he died in 1907, title to Mahoney's land went to his three children, William, Mary, and Annie, who continued the family's reluctance to sell. The development potential for the Mahoney farm was no secret, and the Mahoneys were sought out by developers and speculators from the city and suburbs. The *Chicago Tribune* called it "the world's most valuable farm," and it made news when the surviving Mahoney sisters agreed to sell to McGuire & Orr upon the death of their brother William. In June, 1923, title to twenty-six of Mahoney's thirty-four acres was transferred to the real estate firm for \$225,000, more than \$9300 per acre. Daniel Mahoney had paid fifty dollars per acre, and two years after McGuire & Orr bought it, the value had risen to \$25,000 per acre.<sup>48</sup> The eight remaining acres were donated to the

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<sup>46</sup> "McGuire & Orr to Have Main Office in Historic Corner," *Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 1933, n.p.; clipping in "Real Estate Development/McGuire Bio," file 16/4, Box 16, Kenilworth Historical Society Collections. Their office was in the Tacoma Building during the 1920s. The Tacoma Building had also been the location of Dr. Smith's sales office for the Kenilworth Company.

<sup>47</sup> *Sears*, p. 139. Westerfield's legacy is found in the North Shore road that bears his name.

<sup>48</sup> *Sears*, p. 139; "Tells Growth of Kenilworth Beach from Farm," *Chicago Tribune*, August 27, 1924, n.p. and "'Most Valuable' Farm Is Sold," *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1922, n.p., both clippings in "Real Estate

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Village of Kenilworth with a life estate for the sisters Mary and Annie Mahoney; this ended in 1931. The property was turned into Mahoney Park, with a wild flower and bird sanctuary designed by landscape architect Jens Jensen. The park was eventually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.<sup>49</sup>

McGuire & Orr's intention was to add on to Kenilworth, neither compete with it, nor change it. Most of the sixty-three lots the firm developed on the farmland measured 75 feet in width by 160 feet in depth; some were 110 feet by 250 feet. Although these lots were somewhat smaller than the original town plat's lots of 100 feet by 175 feet, development was planned to blend into the existing community. A promotional brochure described the developers' vision—and revealed Kenilworth's consciousness of itself—by explaining that Kenilworth

was laid out in accordance with a city beautiful plan—a farsighted plan which has been followed closely with most gratifying results. . . . The people who reside there are refined, substantial, home-loving people, who have a pride in their community as in their individual homes.<sup>50</sup>

Kenilworth Beach would have the same character as Kenilworth, of which it would become a part. It was to be, in fact, “an evolution of Kenilworth, and that as beautiful as is the older section, Kenilworth Beach will show evidence of progress in landscaping embellishments and architecture.”<sup>51</sup> Apartments, hotels, or commercial buildings were not permitted. In order to keep out speculators home sites would be sold only to people willing to build and reside there immediately. Whatever homes that were to be constructed had to be “of value sufficient to be in keeping with the high character of the community,” and to allay fears about the character of the community, or the presence of any characters in the community,

there is added the unusual protection for those who contemplate building their home in Kenilworth Beach in the fact that McGuire & Orr give

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Development” file. Kilner says that the Mahoney sisters sold thirty-four of forty acres in 1922 while the *Tribune*, which interviewed McGuire, said that twenty-six out of thirty-four acres were sold.

<sup>49</sup> Listed as “A Wild Flower and Bird Sanctuary in Mahoney Park,” Cook County, Illinois 1985-04-10.

<sup>50</sup> “Kenilworth Beach” brochure, ca. 1923, p. 1, in “Promotional Brochures” file, Box 2f, Kenilworth Company Records Collection, Kenilworth Historical Society.

<sup>51</sup> “Kenilworth Beach” brochure, p. 9.

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assurances of the high character of neighboring home-owners and of those to whom other lots in Kenilworth Beach will be sold. Indeed, the location is attractive only to people of good taste.<sup>52</sup>

The developers even pledged to continue the practice of deriving street names from Walter Scott's book. Thus the subdivision with Robsart Road and Abingdon Avenue was added to Kenilworth.<sup>53</sup> Within six months of the purchase the developers could claim that 90 percent of the lots were sold and that by April, 1923, less than a year after the purchase, thirteen homes had been built, with values between \$23,000 and \$40,000.<sup>54</sup>

**Kenilworth Community Development**

At the same time concerns over the Brier Street area were coming to a head, civic-minded Kenilworth citizens were also contending with the possibly objectionable effects of the inevitable re-development of the North Shore Golf Club property, which went up for sale in 1920. An informal golf club had been established in 1897 that used property along the lake shore south of Kenilworth Avenue. When the land was taken up for higher use as streets and home sites the golfers formed the North Shore Golf Club and rented approximately forty acres for their nine-hole course on the west side of the railroad south of what is now Park Drive, that is, the land south and west of the railroad station up to Ridge Road on the west. The club eventually purchased the ground, made extensive improvements, and in 1917 opened a new \$15,000 club house designed by George Maher. The property went up for sale again when the club moved out in 1923 to avail itself of an opportunity to acquire 170 acres at the club's present location near Glenview.<sup>55</sup>

Once again the community was faced with the possibility of unsuitable development adjoining its border. Visions of lumber and coal yards with accompanying freight car switching not many feet away from Kenilworth's commuter rail depot plus the construction of inappropriate commercial and residential buildings seemed inevitable.

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<sup>52</sup> "Kenilworth Beach" brochure, p. 9.

<sup>53</sup> "'Most Valuable' Farm Is Sold."

<sup>54</sup> "Tells Growth of Kenilworth Beach."

<sup>55</sup> *Sears*, p. 271.

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Potential purchasers had been talking about annexation to Wilmette where the land use pattern would have allowed the encroachment of commerce along Green Bay Road and smaller lots sizes that would have diminished Kenilworth's appearance as the ideal Romantic suburb. It was clear in the minds of Kenilworth citizens and officials that annexation to Kenilworth was the only way to regulate and control the land and make it possible "to develop it just as old Kenilworth had been developed."<sup>56</sup> In response, forty-eight Kenilworth citizens subscribed \$292,000 and formed the Kenilworth Realty Association that completed the purchase of the golf course property in 1920 so that it could be subdivided according to their own specifications.<sup>57</sup> The project was named Kenilworth Community Development; the developers went to work immediately. In the area that at present includes Greenwood Avenue, Earlston Road, the western portion of Kenilworth Avenue, and the southern portion of Sterling Road, home sites were carved out measuring 80 feet by 165 feet and 100 feet by 165 feet, larger than the lots in the Brier Street area but about the same size as the lots in the Kenilworth Beach addition. The development would have no alleys and the streets would be designed so as to line up with those existing in the older, original part of Kenilworth.

The association's promotional claims for its suburban real estate were conventional: Kenilworth is removed from the troubles of the city, yet close enough to enjoy the city's benefits; schools are small but excellent; it is a good investment, but it is (relatively) inexpensive; finally, it is a great community in which to raise children. The lots were marketed as if they were already under the jurisdiction of Kenilworth and annexation was a foregone conclusion. An expensively-printed brochure also assured prospective buyers the "the building of unsightly homes of insufficient value to be in keeping with the character of the community will not be permitted" and that the association would be "enforcing stringent and unusual measures to prevent the sale of lots to any but people of irreproachable good character."<sup>58</sup> In this way citizens of Kenilworth were confidently expressing the identity of their community in physical and social terms.

<sup>56</sup> Kenilworth village manager Felix L. Streed in "Ten Year Report," p. 1

<sup>57</sup> George Maher and probably others were members of the golf club and subscribers to the Kenilworth Development Association at the same time, which caused some eyebrows to be raised concerning conflict of interest. See *The Suburban Ideal Revisited*, p.16.

<sup>58</sup> "Kenilworth Community Development" brochure, ca. 1922, p. 10, at Kenilworth Historical Society.

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The lots in the Kenilworth Community Development did not sell as quickly as the lots in the lakeside Kenilworth Beach development. Annexation took place in May, 1924, and sales of lots and construction of homes continued well in to the 1930s. By the time most of the lots were sold, however, only \$193,822, or about two-thirds, of the original investment had been recouped.<sup>59</sup> It is interesting to note that a substantial portion of all the houses built in this area were constructed during the Depression when non-governmental construction all but ceased.

#### Institutionalizing the Plan

Kenilworth is a planned community, but for the first few decades of its existence, the plan was only in the mind of Joseph Sears and expressed through the town-building projects of the Kenilworth Company. The subdivisions created by the Kenilworth Company, McGuire & Orr, and the Kenilworth Realty Association complied with the suburban ideal as interpreted for Kenilworth, but in 1920 there were still unincorporated tracts adjoining Kenilworth whose future affiliation and appearance were uncertain. Annexation to Kenilworth alone could neither guarantee harmony with Kenilworth's existing character nor protect the community from unwanted changes. A zoning ordinance would allow control over the entire community and obviate reliance on the good intentions of developers. A zoning ordinance would provide security and stability in the community development process. A zoning ordinance could control the present and the future. Throughout the nation in this period local governments were recognizing the efficacy of land use zoning. On April 30, 1923, Kenilworth enacted its first zoning ordinance, which incorporated many of the private restrictions already in effect in the older part of the village and established restrictions in the newly annexed parts of the village.<sup>60</sup>

At the same time that the village government was preparing its zoning ordinance it was also preparing the Kenilworth Plan of 1922. By 1922 local policy makers knew that the golf course property would be subdivided and annexed to the village. They also

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<sup>59</sup> *First Fifty Years*, p. 12. The North Shore was by no means insulated from the effects of the Great Depression, but it is telling that a number of households moving in to Kenilworth retained enough cash or credit to permit at least a trickle of new home construction.

<sup>60</sup> "Ten Year Report," p. 5; "Real Estate Development and Urban Form," p. 368. The City of Chicago enacted its first zoning ordinance in 1923 as well.

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knew that the disposition of the area west of the railroad and north of the golf course property was uncertain. Generally the entire area just west of the railroad needed tidying up: Railroad Avenue, which was to become Green Bay Road, was an unpaved mess; the “garage district” across the railroad tracks southwest of the station was a cluttered remnant of “a once unincorporated area of narrow lots and low-cost buildings like a worn and mud-bespattered skirt.”<sup>61</sup> The Plan called for getting rid of the clutter, creating a commercial district in a unified architectural style along Green Bay Road, an automobile-oriented shopping plaza similar to Lake Forest’s Market Square, and a town hall. Parts of the plan were enacted: Park Drive was created as a paved parkway connecting Ridge Road to the village center, Tudor Revival Style commercial buildings were built along Park Drive and Green Bay Road, the garage district was re-divided and Green Bay Road widened. The most dramatic feature of the Plan was an ambitious grade separation that would elevate both the railroad and the interurban line. The Depression interrupted completion of the Plan so the shopping plaza did not get built and the land was turned into passive green space. The railroad grade separation was never built, and to this day the village government operates from rented space. The Kenilworth Plan of 1922 and the 1923 zoning ordinance, known technically as Official Ordinance No. 190, taken together mark the maturation of Kenilworth and represent the community’s commitment to Joseph Sears initial ideals.<sup>62</sup>

**Conclusion: Creating the Whole**

By 1930 Kenilworth had established its present corporate limit. The Lake Michigan shoreline and the abrupt rise of Ridge Road made logical natural boundaries. The zigzag boundaries between Winnetka on the north and Wilmette on the south were the result of historical settlement, developers’ aggressiveness, and compromises between the parties involved, as when Winnetka bent its Winnetka Avenue boundary to allow an approximately seven-acre tract to become part of Kenilworth, to which the tract had been historically associated. In another episode a tract of several blocks squeezed between the railroad tracks and the golf course site named the Kenilworth Park Subdivision wound up in Wilmette, which put the Kenilworth commuter station, the putative center of town,

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<sup>61</sup> *Tree Stories*, p. 211.

<sup>62</sup> *First Fifty Years*, p. 23; *Tree Stories*, p. 99, 211; “Ten Year Report”, pp. 2-5.

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only a block away from Wilmette.<sup>63</sup> With its borders secure Kenilworth could, without fear of insufficiently-regulated land use, continue pursuing public improvements, civic achievement, and ideal suburban lives as it had been doing since Joseph Sears first conceived the ideal a generation earlier.

It took forty years for Kenilworth to grow into the complete whole that it is at present. All its subdivisions and additions adhered to the original plan of the town as much as possible. When real estate economics dictated the necessity of smaller lots in Kenilworth Beach and the Kenilworth Community Development other restrictions in regard to architectural quality, housing price, and the character—or race, religion, or national origin—of new residents were strictly enforced. Annexing the Brier Street neighborhood with all its compromises was a defensive move. Nothing could be done to change what existed, but there were many empty lots where new construction could be regulated and controlled.

Kenilworth Architecture

The Styles:

The architecture of the Village of Kenilworth adheres to the same high standards as does its planning history. In the 1890s, when Sears was developing the community, he engaged Franklin Burnham, who had worked for city planner Daniel Burnham, to design houses that epitomized the best of Queen Anne architecture, many with rough-faced stone Richardsonian Romanesque details. Burnham built his own home on the lake, at 37 Kenilworth Avenue, in 1891. Charles Smith’s house at 258 Melrose, is Queen Anne in form, but because it is covered in shingles it is today called Shingle Style, another beautiful example of early Kenilworth architecture. Joseph Sears own house, which was located on Sheridan Road overlooking Lake Michigan in the northeast corner of Kenilworth, burned in 1943, but his brother’s home at 354 Kenilworth Avenue remains. These are but a few of the houses that represent the quality of housing Sears envisioned for his ideal town. Most appropriately, the Gothic Revival Style, long associated with ecclesiastical architecture, was selected for the design of both the Kenilworth Union Church and the Church of the Holy Comforter. Several of the houses built in Sears’ original community looked to Classical architecture for inspiration. Kenilworth’s

<sup>63</sup> “Ten Year Report,” pp. 1-5

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Classical Revival buildings were a reflection of the influence of the White City, as Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 was known. Classical architecture embodied the values of permanence and stability—drawing from the inspiration of Greek and Roman architecture. The house at 326 Essex, listed on the National Register, was in fact designed by Daniel Burnham, in charge of planning for the fair. Other Classical Revival homes include 149 Kenilworth Avenue, designed by Franklin Burnham, and 519 Warwick, Paul Starrett's house, built in 1896.

The great majority of Kenilworth buildings are executed in the Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival Styles, which perhaps attests to the residents' solid (not stodgy) and up-to-date view of the world. Revival styles reflected a confirmation of traditional American cultural values, values that were commonly held in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries—a time seen as threatened by industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and various attendant social phenomena. Colonial Revival architecture, in the variety of its manifestations, Georgian to Cape Cod, captured the surge of patriotism that followed the country's celebration of its Centennial in 1876. The classical details that characterize Colonial Revival architecture bear a not-so-subtle reference to the country's connection to Athenian democracy. Robert Seyfarth, Spencer S. Beman, Jerome Cerny and many less familiar names were among the highly competent architects who designed Colonial Revival houses in Kenilworth. Tudor Revival architecture reached farther back than East Coast Colonial architecture to America's English roots. Beman, Raymond Houlihan, William Braun, and Bertha Yarex Whitman, one of the few women architects practicing in Chicago, are among the architects who designed handsome Tudor Revival houses in Kenilworth.

Kenilworth's architects and builders did not exclude new or even exploratory architecture. Arts and Crafts houses, with their simple geometric details and expression of the building's structure, were popular, particularly as applied to the Foursquare. Even more progressive architecture, specifically the Prairie School, had a tremendous presence in the community, largely because architect George Maher lived in Kenilworth. The entire stylistic range of his work is represented here. Large and small, the vast array of his work includes designs that were predominantly Prairie, (exemplified by the Kenilworth Assembly Hall or the Frank G. Ely House at 305 Kenilworth Avenue), Arts and Crafts homes (his work on Essex), houses referencing Colonial precedent (like the Morton L. Gould House at 314 Abbotsford) and houses influenced by Austrian Secessionist architecture (the Franklin N. Corbin House at 533 Roslyn and the Francis Lackner House

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at 521 Roslyn). All of his Kenilworth buildings display special design ingenuity. Only Oak Park, with its vast number of houses designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, is comparable to Kenilworth in reflecting the architectural breath of design executed by one of Chicago's foremost progressive residential architects. Maher's Prairie architecture, along with Prairie School houses designed by John Van Bergen, Tallmadge and Watson and Frank Lloyd Wright exist side-by-side with the village's stylistically conventional neighbors.

If Joseph Sears saw Kenilworth as a refuge from an uncertain world, he saw at the same time that it was a celebration of the kind of society he valued himself, one that embodied high architectural standards. Sears' plan served as the frame that Kenilworth's property owners and real estate developers continue to fill with an astonishing array of domestic architecture designed by the region's most notable architects—from traditionalists like Daniel Burnham, Benjamin Marshall and Ernest Mayo to progressives like George Maher and Frank Lloyd Wright. Modern homes designed more recently, by Keck and Keck and by L. Morgan Yost, are equally significant. The newer houses in the community, those built from the 1930s to the 1950s show a willingness of their owners to embrace new things and the sensibility of those owners to employ the best architects in the region to assure the highest quality design. Builders such as Charles Hemphill maintained equally high architectural standards, employing Raymond F. Houlihan, a highly competent École des Beaux-Art-trained architect as his designer. Interestingly, these architects designed significant houses, in a variety of styles, throughout Kenilworth, not just in the area east of the tracks developed by Sears.

### The Neighborhoods

The earliest houses in the village, built in Sears' original development along Kenilworth Avenue and its adjacent perpendicular streets laid out in a grid pattern were Queen Anne, Shingle Style, Classical Revival and Colonial Revival. It is here where Franklin Burnham made his mark. In the late 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century Arts and Crafts and Prairie School houses, many designed by George Maher, joined the mix. As a literal interpretation of historical architecture became more popular following World War I, Colonial, Tudor, Italian Renaissance, French Eclectic/Renaissance Revival and Spanish Renaissance Revival architecture found a presence on early Kenilworth streets, but in a limited number nearer Kenilworth Avenue.

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More are located along Raleigh Road and the east end of Woodstock Avenue. William Braun, Maher & McGrew, Spencer S. Beman and Maher were among the architects who built historical revival style homes here in the 1920s. Along Sheridan Road, on the east edge of Sears' original development, are several mid-twentieth century homes and newer traditionally-styled homes that have replaced older houses that have been demolished.

The Kenilworth Beach neighborhood, developed by McGuire & Orr on the agricultural land that belonged to William and Mary Mahoney was divided into sixty-three lots in 1922. Forming the southeast corner of Kenilworth, the area encompassing Robsart Road, Robsart Place, Abington Avenue, and short sections of Warwick and Sheridan Roads are, from a planning standpoint, similar to Sears' development. Although lots are somewhat smaller, uniform setbacks, the devotion to retaining open front yard space and the overall quality of the architecture marks a continuation of the area to the north, despite corner curving streets. The styles favored, because the neighborhood was largely built in the 1920s, however, are quite different. The Arts and Crafts Style, which continued in popularity through the twenties, characterizes many of the homes, but a high percentage draw inspiration from Colonial and European architecture. There are also many houses that take their stylistic cue from English Tudor and Italian Renaissance architecture. The majority of houses are substantial and built of brick or stone masonry construction. Tudor Court, a smaller, slightly later addition to Kenilworth Beach, consists of 1930s French Renaissance Revival houses, a Colonial Revival house, and a Ranch, but the street consists of largely newer houses.

The Kenilworth Community Development, which consisted of forty acres purchased by Kenilworth Realty from the North Shore Golf Club (primarily to keep out industrial use on the west side of the Chicago & North Western tracks) was also developed in the 1920s. Large masonry high style houses were laid out on winding streets that incorporate landscaped islands west of Green Bay Road, and south of Park Drive to the boundary of the Village of Wilmette, along Sterling Road, Earlston Road, Road, Kenilworth Avenue, and Greenwood Avenue. This annexation, (despite curving streets, not streets laid out on a grid) which grew out of Kenilworth's plan of 1922, was drawn up by George Maher and continued the Kenilworth tradition. Covenants, generally consistent with those established for the original village, assured quality architecture, open front yards and uniform setbacks. The overall impression is of large predominantly masonry houses built in a picturesque setting. Stylistically they are characterized by Colonial Revival and European-inspired architecture—consistent with

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architectural styles popular in the 1920s and into the 1930s. A large number of houses built on Kenilworth Avenue were built in the 1930s and early 1940s. There are many Tudor and a high percentage of French-inspired houses. Many of these particularly handsome houses were designed by Raymond Houlihan. Other distinguished architects who built houses in this area included Benjamin Marshall, Philip Brooks Maher, Spencer S. Beman, and Maher & McGrew.

The Brier Street neighborhood consists of two distinct areas: Brier Street East, the area west of Green Bay Road and east of the houses fronting on Brier Street and Brier Street West, the area between Brier Street and Ridge Road.

The section known as Brier Street East, consisting of Melrose Avenue west of Green Bay Road, Wayland Avenue, Sterling Road north of Park Drive, Exmoor Road and Roger Avenue east of Brier Street, was developed from the 1890s to the 1950s. It is characterized by simple Colonial Revival houses and vernacular homes displaying basic forms and little ornamental treatment. There are houses with gable fronts, cross-gable forms, a bungalow, and some mid-twentieth century ranch houses. The neighborhood also contains some early work of significant architects associated with the Modern movement, including L. Morgan Yost of Yost & Taylor and Perkins & Will. Raymond Houlihan also designed some Modern houses in Brier Street East. The business district, which was established as a result of Kenilworth's 1922 plan, is located along the west side of Green Bay Road and the north side of Park Drive running west a short way. These buildings were built in a variety of styles including Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Modern. There are a small number of commercial buildings constructed as residences, including a Foursquare with a barn in back of it. This and other vernacular buildings dot the commercial area. Despite the variety, it is the low-scale Tudor Revival commercial buildings that created the most important look of the village's commercial architecture. It is these buildings, in the idiom of Market Square in Lake Forest and similar to the town centers of the other villages on the North Shore that are the most prominent and most architecturally important. In scale, detailing and materials, they recall the character of an English Village, complementing the residential architecture of Kenilworth.

The section known as Brier Street West was annexed into the village in several pieces between 1922 and 1930. Generally developed between the 1920s and 1940s and displaying the same quality of design, respect for open space and setbacks as Kenilworth Beach and Kenilworth Community Development, this area also contains houses designed

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in the same architectural styles. Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, French Eclectic, prevail with a small number of houses influenced by Italian Renaissance and Spanish Colonial architecture. The houses along Maclean, Cummings, Roger Avenues, Kent Road, and Brier Street show great variety of styles, yet are quite similar in scale and materials. They rest on smaller lots than those of the other two development areas and the houses are somewhat smaller, but quality is not compromised and, in fact, the same architects practiced there. There are houses designed by William Braun, by Spencer S. Beman, by Raymond Houlihan and by Bertha Y. Whitman. There are also some early designs by Perkins & Will and by George Fred Keck. Both offices went on to achieve national reputations for their commercial and residential designs. Several houses along Maclean Avenue and Brier Street were designed by Robert Rae in the late 1920s for J. Crabb. The east side of Ridge Road is part of Brier Street West. It is made up of two distinctly different sections. The section to the south contains a small concentration of houses dating from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, including one Italianate house. The section to the north includes houses built from the 1920s through the 1950s including houses by L. Morgan Yost and Perkins & Will. Yost's own Modern house, built in 1940, is located at 323 Ridge Road.

**Kenilworth Architects and Builders**

Kenilworth's outstanding collection of residences representing the best American architecture from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century was largely built by architects recognized throughout Chicago and, in many cases, nationally. There are some who are not particularly well known but equally significant. The following list of architects and builders represents many of the distinguished architects who worked in Kenilworth.

Spencer Solon Beman (1887-1952)

Spencer Solon Beman was the son of Solon Spencer Beman, the architect responsible for the design of the planned railroad car manufacturing town known as Pullman. The younger Beman was born in Chicago and educated at Oxford University in England and at the University of Michigan. Father and son worked together until Solon

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Beman passed away in 1914. Together they designed over ninety religious buildings.<sup>64</sup> After his father's passing, Beman opened his own architectural practice in 1914, continuing to build churches and residences. He was a Christian Scientist, like his father, and took over his father's ecclesiastical work, designing and building eighty Christian Science churches in his lifetime. A resident of Winnetka, Beman built houses there as well as elsewhere on the North Shore. His best known houses were picturesque interpretations of the Tudor and the Jacobean Styles popular on the North Shore during the 1920s, with steeply pitched roofs, dormers, towers, and garden walls that extended the footprint of the house.<sup>65</sup> Beman designed at least seven handsome Colonial, Tudor and Italian Renaissance Revival houses in Kenilworth.

William Theodore Braun

William Theodore Braun was born in either 1887 or 1888. After attending public school he took four years of instruction at the Chicago School of Architecture, graduating in May, 1913, with a Bachelor of Science degree. He was licensed in 1915. During his school years he worked as a draftsman in several offices, including Lewis M. Maxwell's at 9 South LaSalle Street in Chicago. In the teens he participated in exhibitions of the Chicago Architectural League. In 1920 he was listed as Braun & Nitsche at 155 North Clark Street. The 1923 *Handbook for Architects and Builders* lists his address at 64 West Van Buren, Steinway Hall. It was here that Dwight Perkins (the architect for the building) earlier shared offices with Frank Lloyd Wright and many other architects active in the Prairie Style and the Arts and Crafts movement. He is known for having designed two homes in Glencoe, one for Dwight Orcutt at 786 Greenleaf and one for August Gatzert, 789 Greenleaf, both in 1929. He also designed at least six homes in the Deerpath Hill Estates section of Lake Forest, listed as a historic district in 2002. All were either in the Tudor or Colonial Revival Style of the late 1920s. He also designed several Tudor Revival homes in the Beverly section of Chicago. Braun designed six Colonial, Tudor and Italian Renaissance Revival houses in Kenilworth.

Bulley & Andrews

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<sup>64</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 13.

<sup>65</sup> Stuart Cohen and Susan Benjamin, *North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lakefront Suburbs, 1890-1940* (New York: Acanthus Press, 2004), p. 307.

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*Frederick E. Bulley*  
*Allan E. Bulley, Sr.*

Bulley and Andrews were well known North Shore builders. Frederick E. Bulley was born in 1870. At the age of fifteen he began a four-year period working for his father in order to learn the art of bricklaying. Bulley moved to Chicago in the 1880s where he worked as a stone mason building chimneys. In 1891 he formed a partnership with architect Alfred B. Andrews. The first work of the firm of Bulley & Andrews included manufacturing plants and office buildings, including the Transportation Building and several structures at the University of Chicago. The firm also designed many North Shore homes. The firm built the home of Frederick Bulley, designed by Ernest Mayo, at 220 Sheridan Road in Kenilworth in 1908. Bulley & Andrews worked with the architects Mayo & Mayo on two other homes in Kenilworth at 506 Sheridan and 310 Warwick. The firm also designed the houses at 212 and 224 Sheridan Road. Frederick Bulley gained full control of the firm when Andrews retired in 1925. Bulley retired in 1949 and left control of the firm to his son, Allan E. Bulley.<sup>66</sup>

Allan E. Bulley, Sr., graduated from the University of Illinois' Engineering School in 1922. He then joined Frederick's firm Bulley & Andrews. After his entrance into the company the firm concentrated primarily on commercial and institutional construction. In 1941 Bulley & Andrews constructed the facilities for the Atomic Energy Commission's "Manhattan Project" at the University of Chicago. During Allan E. Bulley's time at the firm, Bulley & Andrews constructed two homes in Kenilworth with Mayo & Mayo. Bulley & Andrews also constructed additions for both the Church of the Holy Comforter and the Kenilworth Union Church. In addition the firm constructed the Kenilworth Historical Society/Village Hall designed by Philip Maher at 415 Kenilworth Avenue/419 Richmond Road. Allan E. Bulley, Sr., served as president of firm from 1955 until 1970.<sup>67</sup>

Daniel Hudson Burnham (1846-1912)

Burnham was born in Henderson, New York, and moved with his family to Chicago in 1854. He showed artistic talent early on, but failed to pass the entry exams at

<sup>66</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 12-13.

<sup>67</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 13.

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both Harvard and Yale Universities. Because of his son's interest in architecture, Burnham's father arranged an apprenticeship for him in the office of William Le Baron Jenney, the designer of Chicago's first metal-frame skyscraper. Burnham later worked for Carter, Drake & Wight, under Peter B. Wight, whom Burnham regarded as a mentor. In Wight's office Burnham met John Wellborn Root, with whom he formed a partnership that lasted until Root's premature death in 1891. Burnham and Root received their first commission from John B. Sherman, whose wealth came from the Chicago stockyards. Burnham married Sherman's daughter, which led to important social connections and numerous residential, small commercial, and train station commissions throughout the Midwest. In the 1890s and 1900s the firm built iron- and steel-frame office buildings that were among the world's first skyscrapers. Most important of their tall buildings were the Monadnock Building (masonry, not steel-framed), the Rookery and Reliance buildings in Chicago and the Flat Iron building in New York. The Reliance Building, which Root had begun work on, was finished by Charles Atwood after Root's death.

Daniel H. Burnham is best remembered as the planner of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The White City of Burnham's World Columbian Exposition was the impetus for and chief influence on the City Beautiful movement of American urban design from the turn of the century through the 1920s. Burnham also served as city planner, preparing plans for Chicago, Washington D.C., Cleveland, San Francisco, and Manila, and for his famous adage: "Make no little plans, they have no magic to stir men's blood." Burnham was the first corporate architect to practice architecture on the scale of big business. According to Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, Burnham said he was "not going to stay satisfied with houses; my idea is to work up a big business to handle big things, deal with big businessmen, and to build up a big organization."<sup>68</sup> Daniel Burnham designed two houses in Kenilworth. The house at 326 Essex is listed on the National Register.

Franklin Pierce Burnham (1853-1909)

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<sup>68</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 308.

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Franklin Pierce Burnham was born at Rockford, Illinois, son of a builder. He moved to Chicago with his parents in 1860, and was trained in various Chicago architecture offices, including the firm of J.H. Barrows, for whom he went to work at the age of fourteen. Burnham is remembered as having been the chief architect for the Kenilworth Company, hired by Joseph Sears in 1890. He designed at least eight remaining residences in Kenilworth. Burnham also designed the Kenilworth train station, Kenilworth Union Church, and a number of private residences there and elsewhere along the North Shore. Joseph Sears own residence, which burned, was located at 517 Sheridan Road. He was in partnership with Willoughby J. Edbrooke (1843-1896) from 1879 until 1892, when Edbrooke was appointed supervising architect of the U.S. Treasury. Burnham had acted as the firm's principal designer. During this period, Edbrooke and Burnham won the national competition to design the Georgia state capitol in Atlanta. They were also responsible for several opera houses, churches, and buildings at Notre Dame University. In *Joseph Sears and his Kenilworth* (1969), Colleen Browne Kilner suggests that Franklin Burnham was a young assistant working for Daniel H. Burnham, and that Burnham recommended him to his friend Sears to design his house. This story seems unlikely, since the dates of Franklin Burnham's partnership with Edbrooke are well documented, and show that he would have been working with Edbrooke at the time he designed the Sears house. In 1899 he left Kenilworth, where he had built a wonderful stone and wood Shingle Style house overlooking Lake Michigan, to establish an architectural practice in Los Angeles.<sup>69</sup>

Jerome R. Cerny (1901-1970)

Jerome Robert Cerny was born in 1901 in Chicago and received his education at the Armour Institute of Technology, now Illinois Institute of Technology, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Cerny would later serve as Fellow of Yale University in painting and sculpture. Before opening his own practice in 1930, Cerny apprenticed himself to several prominent Chicago architects, including Benjamin Marshall, designer of luxury apartments and hotels. He was a great admirer of David Adler, and often incorporated features in the design of his homes influenced by the work of Adler. Cerny would operate from offices in Chicago and in the clock tower of Lake Forest's Market Square (273 Market Square), from which he designed hundreds of buildings, specializing in country

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<sup>69</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 308.

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residences on the North Shore. His work included homes that at one time served as residences for both Senator Charles Percy in Winnetka and actor Bert Parks in Greenwich, Connecticut. Cerny was an incredibly prolific architect, who was believed to have designed over seven hundred residences during his thirty-five year career, many of which were published in local newspapers and national publications, such as *Town and Country* and *House and Garden*.<sup>70</sup> Cerny passed away on February 28, 1969, at the age of sixty-eight, while vacationing in Hawaii. He resided in Lake Forest at 1252 Estate Lane.<sup>71</sup> There are at least four houses in Kenilworth designed by Cerny

Edwin Hill Clark

Edwin Hill Clark was born in Chicago in 1878. He graduated from Yale in 1900. Joining with William A. Otis in 1906, he became a partner in the firm of Otis & Clark until 1920. He then went into partnership with Chester Wolcott and became a partner in Clark & Wolcott. In 1924 he founded his own firm and practiced alone for most of the time until his retirement in 1946. An eclectic architect who favored Classicism, Clark drew from a multitude of sources, designing buildings inspired by Tudor, Italian Renaissance and Colonial Revival models. In all of them he created carefully detailed and elegant designs. Edwin Clark became a prominent architect, often published in architectural journals and popular magazines, and had many impressive projects to his credit, including Brookfield Zoo (1934), Plaza del Lago shopping center (1926) and North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka (1922). Clark designed many handsome North Shore residences, including two homes for himself in Winnetka, where he lived for 35 years, as well as the Winnetka Village Hall and the prestigious Indian Hill Country Club. He died in 1967. The house at 221 Essex Road was designed by Clark.

Dean & Dean

George Dean was born in 1864 in India. He worked in both Boston and Chicago for the architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge before entering into private practice in 1895.<sup>72</sup> George Dean practiced independently until 1903 when he formed a

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<sup>70</sup> Susan Benjamin, "Snite, John T. House," Highland Park, Illinois, Local Landmark Nomination.

<sup>71</sup> "Jerome Cerny Dies; Noted as an Architect," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 1, 1970, p. A10.

<sup>72</sup> Susan Benjamin, "Pope House," Glencoe, Illinois, Local Landmark Nomination, Part 1, p. 2.

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partnership with his brother, Arthur Dean. The two brothers are recognized as Prairie School architects whose work was commissioned nationally. The firm primarily designed residences; however, the Prairie Style and Arts and Crafts inspired the 1906 Whitcomb Conservatory/Lee Memorial Chapel built on the Doane College Campus in Crete, Nebraska, where the brothers were alumni.<sup>73</sup> In the late 1890s, the brothers were members of the group known as the Eighteen. This group was composed of Prairie School architects, some of whom worked in Steinway Hall, who gathered once a month for a luncheon roundtable—the group often met at the Bismarck restaurant and met for about two years. The group came to include Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Spencer, James Gamble Rogers, Hardy and Cady, Richard Schmidt, Hugh Garden, George and Arthur Dean, Dwight Heald Perkins, Howard Van Doren Shaw, Alfred Granger, Arthur Heun, Myron Hunt, and Irving and Allen Pond. George Dean was also heavily involved with the Chicago Architectural Club, an educational organization composed of draftsmen and young architects that sponsored lectures, demonstrations, and competitions held within the Art Institute of Chicago's Club Rooms. In 1902, Dean served as the juror overseeing the admissions to the annual exhibition and as the catalogue editor. George Dean also was a member of the Architectural League of America, which sprang from the Chicago Architectural Club, and served to unite nationally various education clubs and exhibitions through conventions.<sup>74</sup> Dean & Dean designed the house at 115 Robsart.

Charles A. Hemphill

Charles A. Hemphill was a prolific North Shore Builder, who began building homes in the late 1920s, when he formed a successful full-service construction company. The business continued under the direction of his sons James and Robert until 1993. A job offer brought Hemphill to Chicago from New York in 1924. Finding himself unhappy in his new position, his wife and he began building houses. He bought land on Grant Street in northwest Evanston for his own house, then began buying property one lot at a time and building houses to sell. In the early days of the firm, he always used architect Raymond Houlihan, a Beaux Arts-trained architect.

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<sup>73</sup> "Whitcomb Lee Conservatory," *The Chronicle of Higher Education: Campus Architecture*, [http://chronicle.com/stats/architecture/architecture\\_detail.php?building\\_id=10227](http://chronicle.com/stats/architecture/architecture_detail.php?building_id=10227) Accessed May 5, 2008.

<sup>74</sup> H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 31-37. See also Wilbert R. Hasbrouck, *The Chicago Architectural Club* (New York: Manacelli Press, 2005).

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Hemphill developed an atypical approach to architect-designed construction. Usually a client approached an architect to design a house and then went out for bids, not knowing the anticipated costs; if the bid came in too high the client would have to scale back the project. Hemphill could tell clients what costs would be before construction began. The total cost would be based on the amenities a client wanted. Hemphill was adroit at knowing costs; to ensure quality and control costs he made subcontractors his employees. As a result he could offer clients high quality work and reduce the financial uncertainty of architect-designed construction.

Hemphill lived at 54 Kenilworth Avenue from 1937 until 1946, leading to commissions in Kenilworth, primarily in the Community Development neighborhood. In addition to building homes on the North Shore, Hemphill was actively involved in Evanston as president of the Evanston Rotary Club and president of the Evanston Chamber of Commerce.<sup>75</sup> Hemphill passed away in Winnetka in 1967.<sup>76</sup> Raymond Houlihan designed many of the fine residences built by Hemphill. Charles Hemphill's son, Robert Hemphill, died in 2008.

Frederick Hodgdon

Frederick Hodgdon was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1894, later relocating to Chicago where he received his architectural schooling. Hodgdon attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago from 1918 to 1921 and the Chicago Technical College from 1919 to 1920. After concluding his studies, he worked as a designer with the architectural offices of Schmidt, Garden & Martin, later forming his own partnership, known as Coolidge & Hodgdon. By 1962 Hodgdon was working independently as Frederick Hodgdon, AIA, in California, while belonging to the Orange County American Institute of Architects Chapter. Hodgdon was licensed in California where he worked on residential, commercial, religious, educational, penal institutions, and public buildings and structures. Some of Hodgdon's most recognized projects include the First Presbyterian Church in Clinton, Iowa, (1932), the Highland Park City Hall (1933), the

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<sup>75</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 15.

<sup>76</sup> Northeast Evanston Historic District, Cook County, Illinois, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Section 8, pp. 121-122.

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Evangelical United Brethren Church in Santa Ana (1956), and the Abraham Lincoln School, in Corona del Mar.<sup>77</sup> Frederick Hodgdon designed two houses in Kenilworth. Raymond Florence Houlihan (1902-1955)

Raymond Florence Houlihan was born in Chicago on June 11, 1902. He began his architectural career after graduating from the Armour Institute of Technology in 1923. Houlihan was associated with many firms but worked as an associate of C.A. Hemphill for twenty years. Together the men designed and built many private residences including thirty-seven houses in Kenilworth. Working independently Houlihan also designed five houses in the Brier Street Neighborhood. He was appointed Cook County Architect and in that capacity designed several buildings including the interns' residence at Cook County Hospital and the Oak Forest Old People's Home. In 1955 Houlihan died at the age of fifty-five when he drowned in Lake Michigan.<sup>78</sup> Raymond Houlihan was one of Kenilworth's most prolific architects, having designed over forty-two houses in the village between 1927 and 1951. The quality of his work was consistently excellent, but his stylistic range varied and he was equally adroit at designing houses inspired by Tudor, French or Colonial precedents or influenced by Modern architecture.

Jens Jensen (1860-1951)

Jens Jensen, arguably the Midwest's most significant landscape architect, and known for his work influences by the region's prairie terrain, was born outside the village of Dybbol in the Danish province of Slesvig, Denmark, and attended Tune Agricultural School near Copenhagen. He came to the United States in 1884 and worked initially as a gardener for Chicago's West Park System. Rising through the ranks, he became Superintendent and Landscape Architect in 1905. In that capacity he was responsible for the redesign of Humboldt, Garfield, and Douglas Parks. Jensen's work in 1901-2 surveying lands surrounding Chicago led to the creation of the Cook County Forest Preserve. During those years he acquired his first private clients, Harry Rubens and Hermann Paepcke in Glencoe. Like Frederick Law Olmsted, Jensen used native plants, grasses, weeds, and wildflowers to produce natural-looking landscapes. Unlike Olmsted, Jensen's inspiration was the flat Midwestern prairie, and in his park designs for Chicago

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<sup>77</sup> George S. Koyl, *American Architects Directory, 2nd Edition*, (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1962), p. 317.

<sup>78</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 15.

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and in his landscapes for private clients, he created prairie meadows and planted simulated prairie rivers with native wetland plants. A unique feature of Jensen's landscapes was the council ring, comprised of low, circular stone seating intended to accommodate outdoor social gatherings and musical and dramatic performances. From the early 1900s until 1935, when he left his Highland Park studio for the Clearing in Door County, Wisconsin, Jensen created landscaped settings for many important estate houses on the North Shore. His natural-looking landscapes, as opposed to formal gardens, worked well with Prairie Style architecture, and also with popular English revival styles. In prestige, Jens Jensen is the Midwest's counterpart to Frederick Law Olmsted in the history of American landscape architecture.<sup>79</sup> Jensen's Prairie Style Mahoney Park is listed on the National Register.

Keck & Keck

*George Fred Keck (1895-1980)*

*William Keck (1908-1995)*

George Fred Keck was born in Watertown, Wisconsin, and received his education at the University of Illinois where he studied architectural engineering. After graduating he worked for D.H. Burnham & Company, and for Schmidt, Garden & Martin. Keck taught at the University of Illinois from 1923 to 1924, and opened his own architectural practice in 1926. His Miralago Ballroom, built in Wilmette in 1929 and razed after a fire three years later, was one of the first International Style buildings in the Chicago area.

In 1931 Keck's younger brother William joined the practice and was eventually promoted to partner in 1946, after having served in World War II. William Keck was born in 1908 in Watertown, Wisconsin, and received his architectural education at the University of Illinois.<sup>80</sup> Keck and Keck built two extraordinary exhibition houses at the 1933-34 Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago: the House of Tomorrow, an octagonal house with a central core and floor-to-ceiling plate-glass

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<sup>79</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 317.

<sup>80</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 18.

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windows, and the Crystal House, featuring an external skeleton of truss columns and roof beams from which the roof and floors are suspended.

In the mid-1930s Keck & Keck built significant International Styles houses in Wilmette and Lake Forest, while his work in the late 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s focused on innovative design utilizing solar heating, sun screening, evaporative cooling, and energy efficiency. The designs features flat-roofed, wood, stone and glass houses similar to the work of Marcel Breuer who was designing at the same time.

George Keck was a friend of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, who had come to Chicago to open the new Bauhaus. Moholy-Nagy asked Keck to teach courses in architecture at the school that later became the Institute of Design at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) after Mies van der Rohe became head of the school of architecture. George Fred Keck passed away in 1980; William died fifteen years later in 1995.<sup>81</sup> One of Keck and Keck's most noteworthy houses is located at 303 Sheridan Road.

Herman H. Lackner (1912-1998)

Herman Lackner was born on June 20, 1912, in Evanston, Illinois. Lackner left Illinois to attend Harvard College from 1930 to 1932, returning to complete his studies at the Armour Institute of Technology (now Illinois Institute of Technology) from 1934 to 1936. While studying architecture, he supplemented his classroom education with work as an office boy for architect Chester H. Wolcott during the summers of 1930 and 1931 and as a draftsman for General Homes beginning in 1933. Lackner continued working for General Homes, which was an architectural firm that designed prefabricated housing, until 1940. From 1940 to 1942, Lackner worked in the office of Holabird & Root, after which he served in the United States Navy Seabees during World War II.<sup>82</sup> While serving with the Navy, Lackner was in a construction battalion that helped to build bases on Guadalcanal and in the Philippines.<sup>83</sup> Lackner opened an independent architectural office in Winnetka, Illinois, in 1945. He is recognized for his work with landscape architecture Gertrude Kuh, his sensitive additions to historical residences, and residential commissions—most of his work can be found on the North Shore. Some of Lackner's

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<sup>81</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 313-314.

<sup>82</sup> Herman H. Lackner Interview, Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Burnham Library, Art Institute of Chicago. Interview by Betty Blum.

<sup>83</sup> Steven J. Stark, "Herman Lackner, Winnetka Architect," *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 1998, p. 7.

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more prominent commissions include the Botanic Gardens of Chicago Horticultural Society in Glencoe, Illinois, the Hadley School for the Blind in Winnetka, and the Ridge Farm Building, Chapin Hall, Chicago in 1965-1966.<sup>84</sup> Lackner passed away at the age of eighty-six in June of 1998.<sup>85</sup> Although most of Lackner's Kenilworth houses were built less than fifty years ago, he is a noteworthy architect worthy of recognition.

George Washington Maher (1864-1926)

George Washington Maher was born on December 25, 1864, in Mill Creek, West Virginia. In the late 1860s, his father relocated the family to New Albany, Indiana, later relocating to Chicago.<sup>86</sup> When Maher was thirteen and residing in Chicago, he began his architectural career as an apprentice in the office of Bauer & Hill.<sup>87</sup> His apprenticeship with Bauer & Hill was short, after which he worked in the office J.L. Silsbee.<sup>88</sup> Another draftsman within Silsbee's office at this time was Frank Lloyd Wright. Maher opened his own practice in 1888, shortly after presenting a paper entitled "Originality in American Architecture" to the Chicago Architectural Sketch Club on September, 1887. In 1889 Maher formed a partnership with Charles Corwin that ended by early 1893. The year 1893 proved to be very important to Maher's professional development. The year included a European tour, where he studied structures that influenced American design. He also made the acquaintance of J.L. Cochran, who gave him the opportunity to design many residences in Cochran's new development in the northern suburb of Edgewater, which is now a Chicago neighborhood. While designing in Edgewater and throughout his career, Maher incorporated the Prairie School of design and his "motif-rhythm theory" in many of his plans, which consisted of selecting a local, indigenous plant or specific geometric shape as a unifying decorative element incorporated throughout the residence. After World War I, his son, Philip Maher, joined his practice. The partnership permitted Maher more time to devote to other endeavors, such as more active involvement with the American Institute of Architects. He had been a member since 1901, elected to Fellowship in 1916, and served as President of the Illinois chapter in

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<sup>84</sup> Herman H. Lackner Interview, Chicago Architects Oral History Project .

<sup>85</sup> "Herman Lackner, Winnetka Architect."

<sup>86</sup> Rudd, "George W. Maher." *The Prairie School Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (First Quarter, 1964), p. 5.

<sup>87</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> *The Prairie School Review*, p. 5.

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1918. Additionally, Maher served as Chairman of the Municipal Art and Town Planning Commission of the Illinois Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for which he helped to restore Charles Atwood's Fine Arts Building from the World's Columbian Exposition.<sup>89</sup> Maher built forty-two residences in Kenilworth, as well as many others throughout the North Shore, Chicago, Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, and New Jersey. Among Maher's designs in Kenilworth are his home at 424 Warwick (1893), the Kenilworth Fountain and adjacent hardscape, the Kenilworth Club (1907 and 1913-14), an addition to Kenilworth Union Church (1909), the demolished Joseph Sears School (1914 and 1924) and the demolished North Shore Golf Club Clubhouse (1917).<sup>90</sup> George W. Maher passed away on September 12, 1926, in Douglas, Michigan.<sup>91</sup> Maher built over forty buildings in Kenilworth and the village is a museum of his work.

Philip Brooks Maher (1894-1981)

Philip Brooks Maher was born in Kenilworth in 1894. Maher studied architecture at the University of Michigan, training in the Beaux-Arts tradition, and then traveled extensively in England, France, and Italy. He practiced with his father, George Washington Maher, beginning in 1914. They practiced together again after his return home from the army as the firm of George W. Maher & Son. In the mid-1920s Philip established his own firm. Most of Philip Maher's Kenilworth work dates from the 1920s, and includes both houses and the Maher & Son village plan. In 1926 he designed the site plan for Indian Hill Estates in west Wilmette, a harmonious residential development reminiscent of Kenilworth Community Development, which had been laid out by Maher & Son as part of the Kenilworth plan.<sup>92</sup> Philip Maher became well known shortly thereafter for his elegant designs for buildings along Chicago's North Michigan Avenue, with their stripped-down classicism and Art Deco influence. Maher also designed the Woman's Athletic Club at 626 North Michigan Avenue and 1260 and 1301 North Astor, the street's most sophisticated high-rise Art Deco style apartment houses. He went on to build the Glencoe Women's Club and a number of houses along the North

<sup>89</sup> *The Prairie School Review*, p. 10.

<sup>90</sup> *George Maher in Kenilworth*, pp. 3-22.

<sup>91</sup> *The Prairie School Review*, p. 10.

<sup>92</sup> Connie Casey, *A Guide to Historic Indian Hill Estates, Wilmette, Illinois*, (Wilmette, IL: Wilmette Historical Museum, 2006), p. 2.

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Shore, including his own stunning International Style home in Lake Bluff. Maher was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1940. Near the end of his life, he returned to Kenilworth, designing the Kenilworth Village Hall in 1971. He died a decade later in his father's Kenilworth house where he grew up.<sup>93</sup> He is credited with designing three houses in Kenilworth on his own: 708 and 712 Kent and 135 Melrose as well as the Modern building designed in 1972 at Kenilworth Avenue/Richmond Road that houses the Village offices and the Kenilworth Historical Society.

**Maher & McGrew**

Harry E. Maher was born in Chicago and practiced architecture for more than forty years in the Evanston firm he established. Kenneth A. McGrew, who grew up in Chicago, was his partner for many years. They both lived in Evanston. They helped to design and build New Trier East High School in Winnetka and the Glencoe Village Hall. In Evanston they designed the Police Station on Elmwood, the Rotary International Building and the Library in 1959. In Kenilworth they designed 213 Raleigh. Maher died in 1967; no record was located for McGrew.<sup>94</sup> Maher & McGrew designed six houses in Kenilworth.

**William D. Mann (1870-1944)**

William D. Mann was born in Rockville, Indiana, remaining in the state to receive his degree in civil engineering from Purdue University.<sup>95</sup> Mann kept his own architectural practice for over forty years and also served as an architect for projects by Western United Gas and Electric Company and Public Service Company.<sup>96</sup> During his career, he is said to have designed approximately five-hundred residences spread throughout the country. Many are located on the North Shore. Mann retired from his long-standing and prolific architectural practice in 1943, for several decades having operated an office in

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<sup>93</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 315.

<sup>94</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 19.

<sup>95</sup> "W.D. Mann, Well Known Architect, Dies After Illness," *Highland Park News*, August 31, 1944.

<sup>96</sup> "Obituary, William D. Mann," *Illinois Society of Architects Monthly Bulletin*, Vol. 29, Nos. 4-5 (October-November, 1944), p. 8.

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both Highland Park and Chicago.<sup>97</sup> He passed away a short year later, on August 25, 1944, at the age of seventy-four at his home located at 218 North Sheridan Road in Highland Park.<sup>98</sup> Mann designed two Kenilworth houses and remodeled one.

Edward Marks (1902-1989)

Edward Marks was born in New York City and educated at the University of Wisconsin. He was a civil engineer and architect, working in both capacities throughout the 1920s. His employers during this period included the Chicago architectural firm of Schmidt, Garden & Erickson. Later he practiced as a partner in the firms of Houlihan, Hauser & Marks, Architects and Engineers, and R.F. Houlihan-Edwards Marks, AIA. In 1950 he formed his own firm, Edward Marks, located in Evanston. Marks' work in Kenilworth is exclusively residential and dates from his partnership with Houlihan, and later as a solo practitioner working in a primarily Modern idiom. All these houses were constructed in conjunction with the quality North Shore builder C.A. Hemphill.<sup>99</sup>

Benjamin Marshall (1874-1944)

Benjamin Marshall was born in Chicago in 1874 and began his early career as a clothing designer before becoming an architect.<sup>100</sup> He entered the architectural office of Marble and Wilson as a clerk at the age of nineteen with no formal training or college education. When Marble died two years later, Wilson made Marshall his partner. In 1902, Marshall established his own practice, and in 1905 formed a partnership with Charles E. Fox, who handled the firm's construction work. This partnership lasted until Fox died in 1926. Marshall resided in a studio residence built in 1921 facing the Wilmette yacht harbor on Lake Michigan. He built hundreds of buildings in Chicago and across the country, including the South Shore Country Club in Chicago (1906), Chicago's Blackstone Theater (1910), the *Popular Mechanics* building and printing plant (1922) in Chicago, and from 1915 to 1937, fast food restaurants for Horn & Hardart in Chicago and for Thompson Restaurants of Houston. He designed both the Lake Shore Bank building

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<sup>97</sup> "W.D. Mann, Well Known Architect, Dies After Illness."

<sup>98</sup> "William D. Mann," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 26, 1944, p. 12.

<sup>99</sup> American Institute of Architects, *Directory*, (1962), p. 462.

<sup>100</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 13.

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(1921) and the Uptown Bank in Chicago. His most important commissions were for hotels and apartment buildings along Chicago's Gold Coast. For many of these projects, Marshall was also an investor. His hotel commissions in Chicago included the Blackstone and the Drake Hotels and the demolished peach-colored stucco Edgewater Beach Hotel. In addition, he built mansions and country houses for many wealthy clients, among them, Samuel Insull of Chicago's Commonwealth Edison Company, and coal magnate Francis Stuyvesant Peabody.<sup>101</sup> Benjamin Marshall closed his architectural practice in 1939 and passed away at the age of 70 in 1944.<sup>102</sup> Marshall designed the house at 517 Greenwood in 1939.

Ernest Alfred Mayo (1865-1946)

Ernest Alfred Mayo was born and educated in Birmingham, England. Before immigrating to the United States, he practiced architecture briefly in South Africa, becoming a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In the 1890s Mayo settled in Evanston and set up his highly successful practice in Chicago, where he specialized in designing large houses. His imposing structures, primarily in the Tudor Revival Style, appealed to the prosperous businessmen of the North Shore. Mayo designed six houses in Kenilworth, sometimes practicing with his son.

Michaelson & Rognstad

The architectural firm of Michaelson & Rognstad were extremely prolific in Chicago with much of their work being on field houses designed for the Chicago Park District. The firm reached the height of its popularity by the mid-1920s, by which time it proved quite adept at designing in popular styles, including Spanish Colonial Revival, Prairie, eclectic, and revival designs. The firm continued into the 1940s with their work changing to reflect a capacity for modern styling. A short list of the firm's extant works, includes: the Austin Town Hall Park Field House, 5626 W. Lake, constructed in 1929;<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 315-316.

<sup>102</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 13.

<sup>103</sup> Alice Sinkevitch, *AIA Guide to Chicago, 1st Edition*, (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1993), p. 299.

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Cabaret Metro (Northside Auditorium Building), 3730 N Clark, built in 1928;<sup>104</sup> East Seventh Street Hotel (South Loop Club), 1 E. Balbo, built in 1930;<sup>105</sup> Douglas Park Field House, located near California and Roosevelt, constructed in 1928 to mirror the Georgian field house in Humboldt Park;<sup>106</sup> a 1928 gymnasium addition to the Prairie designed Shedd Park Fieldhouse, designed by William Drummond in 1917;<sup>107</sup> and the Art Moderne apartments arranged around a central open area consisting of twenty units with the complex occupying a full block, built in 1939 at 4901-4959 N. Wolcott.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, the firm received two commissions from a Chinese restaurant owner that led to the construction of two highly-ornamented Chinatown restaurants: Emperor's Choice Restaurant at 2238 S. Wentworth, constructed in 1928 with a two-story addition undertaken in 1932, and Won Kow Restaurant, 2233 S. Wentworth, built in 1928. The relationship with this restaurateur, who was also a prominent member of the On Leong Chinese Merchant's Association, resulted in a commission to design the association's new south side location at 2216 S. Wentworth, completed in 1928. The Association Building (now known as the Pui Tak Building) would service the community by providing a hostel for immigrants, a Chinese language school, business services, job placements and dating services.<sup>109</sup> The highly ornamental and sculptural terra cotta facade was designed and overseen by Rognstad and was named a City of Chicago Landmark in 1993.<sup>110</sup>

In addition to the Pui Tak Building, Michaelson and Rognstad designed two additional significant buildings that are located on Chicago's west side: the Midwest Athletic Club and the Administration Building in Garfield Park. The Midwest Athletic Club was designed for a prominent social club in Garfield Park that was chartered in January, 1924. The Club began its building planning in early January of 1926 with an estimated cost of \$1,000,000; ground was broken on the north edge of Garfield Park shortly after Michaelson and Rognstad, who were club members, submitted the drawings. The Club was completed at a cost of \$1,800,000, with a Baroque exterior and containing an Olympic-sized swimming pool, handball courts, gymnasium with a track, library,

<sup>104</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 211.

<sup>105</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 144.

<sup>106</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 347.

<sup>107</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 344.

<sup>108</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 222.

<sup>109</sup> *AIA Guide to Chicago*, p. 359-360.

<sup>110</sup> Pui Tak Building. [www.chinataown-museum-foundation.org/Places.html](http://www.chinataown-museum-foundation.org/Places.html). Accessed May 5, 2008.

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dining rooms, and two large ballrooms. In 1930, the Midwest Athletic Club was remodeled to serve as a hotel.<sup>111</sup> Michaelsen and Rognstad also designed several buildings in the late 1920s in Garfield Park, all of which were in classical styles. Of those buildings, only two are extant. The construction boom at Garfield Park was the result of a \$10,000,000 bond for the West Park Commission in 1927 to build new buildings. Garfield Park received several new buildings in 1928 through the bond funding provided in 1927: a three-story warehouse and shops building; a comfort station (demolished in 1976); nine large propagating houses, a horticulture hall, and exhibition room for the Garfield Park Conservatory; and, most notably, the West Chicago Park Commission Administration Building. The two-story brick Administration Building was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival with terra cotta ornamentation. The centerpiece of the buildings is a forty-foot in diameter, ninety-foot-tall dome sheathed in gold-leaf terra cotta—the large dome constructed originally with two smaller flanking domes.<sup>112</sup> The inside of the rotunda was finished with four low-relief panels designed by Richard Bock, famous for his work with architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The Administration Building would prove to not only be a landmark within the park itself, but for the entire west side of the City.

In 1937 the firm was located at 3256 Franklin Boulevard as announced in the obituary for Sigurd Anton Rognstad, who passed away on November 18, 1937, at the age of forty-six.<sup>113</sup> They designed the house at 145 Oxford.

J.A. Nyden (1878-1932)

J.A. Nyden was born in Sweden in 1878. After moving to the United States at the age of seventeen, Nyden began an independent architectural practice in 1907. An Evanston resident, Nyden designed residential hotels and apartment buildings as well as the Admiral Hotel in Chicago. He also designed Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis and the Swedish-American Historical Museum in Philadelphia. He designed two houses

<sup>111</sup> The Midwest Athletic Club, Cook County, Illinois, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Section 8 pp. 1-3

<sup>112</sup> The Midwest Athletic Club, Section 7, p. 12.

<sup>113</sup> “S.A. Rognstad, Partner in Architect’s Firm, Dies, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 19, 1937, p. 33.

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on Oxford Road in Kenilworth. In 1926, J.A. Nyden was appointed State Architect of Illinois. Nyden died in 1932 after twenty-five years of architectural work.<sup>114</sup>

Olsen & Urbain

*Jules Urbain* (1894-1964)

*Leif E. Olsen*

Jules Urbain was born in Chicago on January 24, 1894. He received a degree in architecture and interior design through formal studies at both the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and at Northwestern University. His professional training included working in the firm of Bennett-Rebori from 1913 to 1916, working as a designer with Otis & Clark from 1916 to 1918, and briefly working with Schmidt, Garden & Martin. In 1919 he began a partnership with Jules Olsen, known as Olsen & Urbain, which was maintained until 1954. In 1955 the firm changed its name to Olsen, Urbain & Sandstrom, returning to Olsen & Urbain in 1956. Urbain was licensed as an engineer in Arizona, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Iowa, Maryland, New York, Ohio, and Oklahoma, in addition to Illinois, with a focus on industrial and educational designs. Some of his most noted commercial/industrial work, included: the Pilot Plant & Garage (1953) and commercial buildings for the Universal Oil Products Company in Des Plaines, the Sunbeam Corporation, Goss Printing Press Company, and McGraw Electric Company in Elgin. The Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry recognized Urbain in 1955 for his Universal Oil Products Company office building. In addition, he helped plan the Great Lakes Naval Training Center during World War I. At Brookfield Zoo he designed flight houses, birdhouses, and the small mammal houses. Urbain drew his thirty-eight year career to a close by retiring from the partnership in 1957. At the time of Urbain's death in May, 1964, at age seventy, his residence was listed as 894 Foxdale Road in Winnetka.<sup>115</sup>

Leif E. Olsen began practicing architecture in Chicago in 1919 with partner Jules Urbain. The partnership lasted until 1957 when Urbain retired, and was located at 5 South Wabash Avenue. Together the firm designed buildings at the Brookfield Zoo, while Olsen specialized more in industrial architecture for large Chicago businesses.

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<sup>114</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 10.

<sup>115</sup> *American Architects Directory*, p. 719; "Obituary: Jules Urbain," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 16, 1964, p. B18; "Obituary: Jules Urbain," *Chicago Tribune*, May 14 1964, p. E10.

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Olsen was an active citizen as a member of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, as a director of the Shedd Aquarium, and the Municipal Art League, as well as of the DuPage Trust Company of Glen Ellyn. At the time of his death in October, 1962, he resided at 199 Taylor Avenue in Glen Ellyn and was seventy years old.<sup>116</sup> Olsen and Urbain designed two French Eclectic houses in Kenilworth, one in 1936 at 309 Sterling and one in 1940 at 110 Robsart.

Dwight Heald Perkins (1867-1941)

Dwight Heald Perkins was born on March 26, 1867 in Memphis, Tennessee. After receiving his primary education he relocated at the age of eighteen to Boston to study architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating in 1887. Following graduation Perkins stayed at MIT where he was employed as an instructor in architecture for one year before pursuing in-office architectural training. Perkins again relocated, this time to Chicago, where became a draftsman in the architectural office of Wheelock & Clay, before being employed in the office of Burnham & Root beginning in 1889. By 1894 Perkins decided to form a partnership with William K. Fellows and John L. Hamilton, which quickly established a reputation for high school designs. The firm of Perkins, Fellows & Hamilton existed from 1894 until 1925, except for the period 1905-1910, during which time Perkins was Architect for the Chicago Board of Education. While working with the Chicago Board of Education, Perkins designed forty school buildings including Carl Schurz High School and Albert G. Lane Technical High School. He is also credited with designing the Evanston Township High School and additions to the Joseph Sears School in Kenilworth. The firm of Perkins, Fellows, & Hamilton was responsible for New Trier High School, Lincoln Park's Lion House (1912). Perkins served as chairman of the Playground Committee of the park commission from 1899 to 1909, during which time helped create the small parks and playground system of Chicago. He also served on the Chicago Planning Commission, the Municipal Art Commission, and as Honorary President of the Regional Planning Commission of Chicago. He also volunteered outside the city by serving on the Outer Belt Commission

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<sup>116</sup> "Leif E. Olsen, Zoo Architect, Is Dead at 70," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 14, 1962, p. H45.

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created by the Cook County Board in 1903, by serving on the Planning Commission of Cook Country Forest Preserves in 1916, by writing the original Metropolitan Park report recommending the creation of the Forest Reserve District, and after 1922, by serving as the President of the Northwest Park District of Evanston. He became an active member of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects after 1902 and was selected to the Institute Fellowship in 1907. Dwight H. Perkins died on November 2, 1941 in Pasadena, California.<sup>117</sup> Perkins, Chatten & Hammond designed much of the Abbotsford Road section of Sears School.

Perkins & Will  
*Lawrence Bradford Perkins (1907 – 1997)*  
*Philip Will, Jr. (1906 – 1985)*

The firm of Perkins & Will was founded in 1935. Lawrence Bradford Perkins was born in Evanston, Illinois, in April, 1907. After graduating from New Trier High School, Perkins attended the University of Wisconsin and Cornell University. Perkins worked in the office of his father, Dwight H. Perkins from 1931 until 1933. He had met Philip Will at Cornell, and in 1935 they formed a partnership. Soon they were joined by E. Todd Wheeler and the firm was known as Perkins, Wheeler & Will. The young firm received attention nationally when they associated with Eliel and Eero Saarinen on the design of Crow Island School in Winnetka, Illinois in 1939-41. Subsequently the firm of Perkins & Will designed many schools, hospitals, and office buildings as well as private residences. In addition to the Winnetka Public Library, New Trier West, and Glen Brook North High School, Perkins & Will completed the 1950 and 1960 renovations to the Joseph Sears School at 524 Abbotsford Road. The firm also built three residences in the Brier Street Neighborhood. Perkins retired in 1972 and worked as an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago from 1974 until 1982. On December 3, 1997, Larry Perkins died in Evanston.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970), p. 468; *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 22; *The Brickbuilder*, Vol. 24, No. 6, (August, 1915), p. 141; Dwight Perkins House, Cook County, Illinois, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Section 8, p. 4.

<sup>118</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 19.

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John E. Oldaker Pridmore (1864-1940)

John Edmund Oldaker Pridmore was born in England on July 18, 1864, and was educated at Greenhill College in Birmingham before his family immigrated to the United States in 1880 when Pridmore was sixteen. The family initially settled in Minnesota, relocating by the end of 1883 to Chicago so that the nineteen-year-old Pridmore could train as an apprentice draftsman. Pridmore opened an independent architectural practice on the south side of Chicago by 1890, which he relocated downtown in 1891. Pridmore formed a partnership in 1893 with Leon Stanhope in an office that they kept for five years before Pridmore went back to independent practice, which he established in the developing Edgewater community on the north side of Chicago in 1899. Pridmore was a prominent Chicago architect who made his reputation primarily through his church and theatre designs, although he also designed apartment, commercial, and hospital buildings, which included the Protestant Episcopal Chapel of St. John the Divine on the University of Illinois Campus, Church of the Atonement, 1915, Preston Bradley's People's Church, Iroquois Memorial Hospital, 1911, Bush Temple of Music, 1901 (headquarters and showroom for Bush & Gerts Piano Company), and Austin Hospital.

Pridmore designed many high-class apartment buildings, many of which were in Edgewater, including: 4715-17 N. Sheridan constructed in 1903, featuring six flats with three bathrooms each, "The Manor House," "The Beaconsfield," and "The Gables," all constructed within one block of each other in a five-year period. The "Manor House," on Bryn Mawr and Kenmore Avenue, was originally designed to contain six apartments with two to a floor and was constructed in the English Tudor style. "The Beaconsfield" was larger, containing fifteen apartments in four separate buildings at Winthrop and Hollywood. "The Gables," located at Kenmore and Hollywood, but since demolished, contained nine apartments of ten to fourteen-rooms. Pridmore designed many theaters in the Midwest that were inspired by ancient Greek and Roman temple and theater designs. They are primarily in Chicago and although many are demolished some still standing include the: Adelphi (Chicago, demolished), Empress (Chicago, demolished), Lexington (Chicago, demolished), Liberty (Terra Haute, Indiana, 1918), Midway (Rockford, closed), Orpheum (Duluth, Minnesota, closed), State Theatre in 1922 (Minneapolis, Minnesota, open), Varsity (Evanston, closed), Vic Theatre (Chicago, open), and Victor Theatre (Evansville, Indiana, open). Minneapolis' State Theater was acknowledged at its

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opening as being “the nation’s most elaborate and technologically advanced concert hall,” featuring an artesian-well-driven air conditioning system and a glass floor.

Pridmore’s first wife, Carole Lee, passed away in 1914 at the age of fifty; he remarried in 1916 to second wife, May Blossom Hull, in the Church of the Atonement. Shortly after, Pridmore volunteered to serve the armed forces during World War I; although he was an older recruit, he was commissioned by the British Army to serve as an interpreter in France. May Blossom Hull passed away in 1925, leaving Pridmore with two sons: John E.O. Junior, age six, and Robert Hales, age three. Pridmore lived to the age of seventy-five, passing away after a brief illness on February 1, 1940. His service was held in the Church of the Atonement, where he served as a vestryman as well as being responsible for the design of the parish house, rectory, and expansion of the church; he was interred at Rosehill Cemetery.<sup>119</sup> Pridmore designed three houses in the 1920s in Kenilworth, at 89, 93, and 99 Robsart.

Robert Rae (1854-1943)

Robert Rae was born in Philadelphia in 1854. After attending Princeton University, Rae worked for Wheelock & Clay before opening an independent office in 1934. Rae designed many homes in the original development area, the Brier Street, and Kenilworth Beach neighborhoods. He also designed the State Building at the Columbian Exposition and various residential structures throughout the Chicago area. Rae died in Wilmette in 1943.<sup>120</sup> In the 1920s, Robert Rae designed at least twenty-five buildings in Kenilworth, most in the Brier Street neighborhood.

Richard E. Schmidt (1856-1951)

Richard E. Schmidt was born in Ebern, Germany, and came to America with his family as an infant. He attended Chicago public schools and the Massachusetts Institute

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<sup>119</sup> LeRoy Blommaert, “J.E.O. Pridmore, Edgewater Architect The Man and His Work,” *Edgewater Historical Society Newsletter*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Fall/Winter, 1992); *Biographical Dictionary of American Architect*, p. 490; Mike McCormick, “Historical Perspective: A Final Salute to Architect J.E.O. Pridmore. *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* website, accessed April 30, 2008; “J.E.O. Pridmore Dies: Chicago Architect, 75,” *New York Times*, February 4, 1940, p. 43; John E.O. Pridmore, *Cinema Architect*, Cinema Treasures website, accessed April 30, 2008;

<sup>120</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 14.

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of Technology, where he studied architecture from 1883 to 1885. He began his architectural practice in 1887. Many of Schmidt's early buildings were done in collaboration with Hugh Garden, who worked for him as a freelance designer during the depression that followed the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. In 1895 Schmidt invited Garden to be his partner, which Garden accepted although he continued to maintain his own office space until 1899. Schmidt and Garden were later joined by Edgar Martin, an architect and structural engineer, who later formed a partnership with Pond & Pond. Among Schmidt, Garden & Martin's best-known works are the Schoenhofen Brewery, Michael Reese Hospital, and the Montgomery Ward & Company Warehouse Building, which is considered one of the canonical buildings of the Chicago School of Architecture.<sup>121</sup> In 1911 Richard Schmidt designed a house at 256 Woodstock.

Robert Seyfarth (1878-1950)

Robert Seyfarth was born in Blue Island, Illinois. The son of a prominent hardware store owner, he attended the Chicago Manual Training School, a vocational high school, which was founded by the Commercial Club of Chicago to provide instruction and practice in the use of tools, mathematics, drawing, and carpentry. In 1898, after graduation, Seyfarth went to work for Prairie School architect George W. Maher, where he supervised the construction of several major buildings on the campus of Northwestern University as well as many homes. Seyfarth left Maher's office in 1909 with a legacy of simplicity, and two years later moved to Highland Park where he began designing homes for his neighbors. During the 1910s and 1920s and into the 1930s, Seyfarth generally built houses for the upper middle-class in Chicago, Barrington, Libertyville, River Forest, Oak Park and the North Shore. A prolific architect producing quality residential designs, his elegantly proportioned houses were characterized by simple roof lines, inset dormers, classical stone or wood entrances and large floor-to-ceiling double-hung windows. His work, which was exclusively residential, was published in the pages of the *Western Architect* and the *Architectural Record*. Seyfarth designed at least four houses in Kenilworth.

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<sup>121</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 313.

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Joseph Lyman Silsbee (1845-1913)

Joseph Lyman Silsbee was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1845 and attended the Philips Exeter Academy, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After working in Syracuse, New York, for ten years, Silsbee moved to Chicago to continue his career. In Kenilworth Silsbee designed the house at 158 Melrose in 1893. Credited with helping to introduce the Shingle Style to the area, he also designed several residential structures throughout Chicago and the grandstand in Chicago's Garfield Park. He continued to work in architecture until his death in 1913.<sup>122</sup> In addition to the noteworthy designs that Silsbee's architectural practice was responsible for creating, the office also served as a training ground for such notable architects as Frank Lloyd Wright and George Maher. In 1893 Silsbee designed the house at 158 Melrose.

Paul Starrett (1866-1957)

The "Remarkable Starrett Brothers" were sons of William Aiken and Helen Starrett. William was educated as a minister then worked in education and journalism before moving the family to Highland Park, Illinois, in the 1880s. Helen had been a suffragette and a journalist and educator. Paul was the second son, who was born on November 25, 1866. He had several jobs with very long hours until he had to go to New Mexico to recover his health. His older brother, Theodore, secured him a position with the Daniel Burnham and John W. Root firm. Paul greatly admired "Uncle Dan," to whom he referred as "one of the handsomest men," and became a draftsman, to prepare to become an architect. He was put in charge of the Machinery and Mines Buildings at the 1893 Fair and buildings in Buffalo, New York, and Philadelphia. Paul and his wife, Teresa Hinman, lived at 519 Warwick when first married. His brother, Ralph, and his four sons, lived at 201 Cumberland in Kenilworth. He left Burnham to become a builder and was responsible for the Flat-Iron Building, the Lincoln Memorial and the Empire State Building in the early 1930s in New York City. He referred to this as the climax of his career in his autobiography, *Changing the Skyline*. He died in 1957.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 3.

<sup>123</sup> *The Suburban Ideal*, p. 6.

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Ralph Stoetzel

Ralph Stoetzel was born in Chicago on April 20, 1892, later moving east to receive his architectural education at Columbia University. Stoetzel was a Life Member of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and worked independently as Ralph Stoetzel, Inc., Architects-Engineers from 100 West Monroe Street, Chicago.<sup>124</sup> In addition, Stoetzel was licensed in Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan and New York, as an architect and licensed engineer. Stoetzel worked on residential, commercial, industrial, religious, educational, recreational, public buildings, transportation, communications, scientific structures, and interior design. Stoetzel designed two houses in Kenilworth.

Tallmadge and Watson

*Thomas Eddy Tallmadge (1876-1940)*  
*Vernon Spencer Watson (1879-1950)*

Thomas Eddy Tallmadge (1876-1940) and Vernon S. Watson (1879-1950) met while they were working in the office of D.H. Burnham and formed their own firm in 1905. Tallmadge, who joined Burnham's staff after graduating from MIT in 1898, won the Chicago Architectural Club Traveling Scholarship to travel in Europe in 1904 then went into partnership with Watson, a graduate of Armour Institute. Watson was probably the chief designer, yet Tallmadge is better known because of his activities as a teacher and historian at the Armour Institute from 1906 to 1926 and his lectures on architectural history at the Art Institute of Chicago. He coined the name "Chicago School" (actually referring to the residential work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his contemporaries) in 1908 and in 1927 published *The Story of Architecture in Chicago*. Tallmadge also authored *The Story of Architecture in America* (1927), *The Story of England's Architecture* (1934), and *The Origin of the Skyscraper* (1939). In 1941 *Architecture in Old Chicago* was published posthumously in Tallmadge's name. The firm was known for its early Prairie Style houses and their later ecclesiastical architecture (including the First Methodist Episcopal Church, First Baptist, and the First Congregational Church, all in Evanston). The firm specialized in residences, many in Evanston, where Tallmadge lived, or in Oak

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<sup>124</sup> *American Architects Directory*, p. 679.

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Park, Watson's home.<sup>125</sup> Their later homes, built in the 1920s, are derived from historic styles. The firm designed the Colonial Village at Chicago's 1933-34 Century of Progress Exposition. He also served on the advisory committee for the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. Tallmadge and Watson practiced together for thirty-one years until Watson retired in 1936. Tallmadge was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1923.<sup>126</sup> Tallmadge & Watson designed the Prairie School house at 240 Essex Road.

John Van Bergen (1885-1969)

John Shellette Van Bergen was born in Oak Park, Illinois, on October 2, 1885, to William Frederick and Ella (Shoudy Wood) Van Bergen. The family purchased land and began building their own residence in the Fair Oaks subdivision of Oak Park in 1893—Fair Oaks was located on the north side of Oak Park, neighboring open prairies. The subdivision would later receive two Frank Lloyd Wright residences: the Furbeck house, built across the street from the Van Bergen's in 1897 and the Frick house, which was constructed next door in 1901, both of which featured geometric shapes, massive chimneys, decorative leaded glass windows and overhanging eaves. Van Bergen completed his primary schooling at Ridgeland School (now Beye School) in 1901, completing high school at Oak Park and River Forest High School in June, 1905. After graduating, he moved to Hollywood, California, where he worked building houses for his uncle and as an electrical contractor. Returning to Oak Park in 1907, he put the skills he learned in California to use working for a speculative house builder. In January of 1907 he began work as an untrained draftsman in the office of architect Walter Burley Griffin, the son of a family friend. Van Bergen learned much from his patient teacher during his brief period of employment at the office, which concluded in October 1908 because of lack of jobs.<sup>127</sup>

In late 1908 Van Bergen enrolled at the Chicago Technical College to pursue his architectural license while moonlighting as a draftsman for Oak Park architect E.E.

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<sup>125</sup> *Prairie School*, p. 102.

<sup>126</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, pp. 320-321, and Northeast Evanston Historic District Nomination Form Section 8, pp. 118-119.

<sup>127</sup> Martin Hackl, *The Work of John S. Van Bergen, Architect*, p. 3; James Muggenberg, *The Chicago Guide*, p. 127; Linda Legner, "John Van Bergen: The Wunderkind No One Noticed," *Chicago Guide*, p. 128.

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Roberts. In January 1909 he left the architectural program to work for Frank Lloyd Wright, the son of his mother's friend. Van Bergen's employment with Wright was brief, though educational, concluding in 1909 when Wright absconded with the wife of a client, Mrs. Cheney. While working for Wright, Van Bergen supervised construction of the Mrs. Thomas Gale House in Oak Park and worked on the drawings for the Robie House in Oak Park. In June, 1910, Van Bergen began working in the office of William E. Drummond, former chief draftsman for Frank Lloyd Wright. He continued working here until passing the architect's examination and receiving his license in June of 1911, at which point he opened his own office in Oak Park. After several years of irregular commissions, Van Bergen enlisted in the army in March, 1918, where he was put to work on construction projects. In October, 1918, he was transferred from Washington, DC, to Fort Sheridan, Illinois, where he met volunteer Ruth Bemis of Highland Park. Van Bergen was discharged from the Army on August 1, 1919, and married Ruth barely a month later on September 9, 1919. The newlyweds settled in a house in Highland Park where John would reopen his architectural practice and the couple would raise a family, beginning with daughter, Nancy, born in June 1920. In 1926, the family welcomed their second daughter, Joan.<sup>128</sup>

The undeveloped and natural setting found in Highland Park was a fruitful location to in which to establish an architecture practice. Van Bergen's practice opened on Cedar Avenue, officially in Ravinia in 1921, now part of Highland Park. While practicing independently, Van Bergen designed multiple residences and received an unusual commission in 1928 to design Braeside School, which would be used as a model for his later public school designs. Van Bergen's firm prospered in the 1920s, but never fully recovered after the stock market crash and subsequent Depression that slowed building nationally. During this time, Van Bergen focused on designing small and efficient residences that took advantage of their natural surroundings in siting and material usage. The Van Bergen's sold their Highland Park residence in 1946, relocating to Lake Zurich, Illinois, where they built a new residence. In 1950 they relocated to Barrington, Illinois. Approximately, five years later, the retired Van Bergen and Ruth, moved to Montecito, California, where they constructed their residence "Wide Horizons," which featured a twenty-two-sided living room that provided a panoramic view of the surrounding land—the design was unique and popular, resulting in his

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<sup>128</sup> *The Work of John S. Van Bergen*, p. 5; "John Van Bergen," Architect Biography website, accessed April 30, 2008.

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retirement becoming only semi-retirement as he received sporadic commissions from this design. In 1962 the Van Bergen's built a new residence in Montecito. On December 19, 1969, Van Bergen passed away from complications of a second stroke at the age of eighty-four.<sup>129</sup> In the mid 1920s, Van Bergen designed the houses located at 615 and 621 Warwick.

Russell Smith Walcott (1889-?)

Russell Walcott was born in Chicago on May 28, 1889, graduating from Evanston High School in 1908. Walcott then moved east where he attended Princeton University, graduating in 1912. Upon graduating he traveled to Europe where he continued his architectural studies in 1912 and 1913. After his educational sojourn, he returned to Chicago to work as an architectural draftsman from 1913 to 1917. Walcott married Eugenia M. Buffington on October 12, 1917. Shortly after the wedding, Walcott entered the military and became a sergeant in Company A of the 335<sup>th</sup> Battalion Tank Corps. His military service resulted in a lapse in his professional career that lasted until 1919. Afterwards he went into partnership with his brother, Chester H. Walcott, that lasted only one year. From 1920 to 1922 Russell Walcott continued to work with his brother; however, the arrangement was revised with Russell serving as a member of the firm (Edwin) Clark & Walcott.<sup>130</sup> It was while working with his brother, he applied to the American Institute of Architects. His application, filed on December 21, 1921, showed that he received his architectural training by working in offices rather than attending formal educational institutions. He also stated that his office training included two years with Howard Van Doren Shaw and one year with Henry Corwith Dangler, which is assumed to have been while he was a draftsman from 1913 to 1917.<sup>131</sup> Russell Walcott left the partnership with his brother, Chester Walcott, and Edwin Clark, to open a private practice, which he maintained from 1922 to 1928.<sup>132</sup> After 1928 he began a partnership with Robert Work. It is likely that Walcott met Work while working as a draftsman in the early stage of his career as Work had also been employed by both Shaw and Dangler,

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<sup>129</sup> *The Work of John S. Van Bergen*, p. 8; "John Van Bergen," Architect Biography website.

<sup>130</sup> *Who's Who in Chicago and Vicinity: 1931*, (A.N. Marquis Company, 1931), p. 1009.

<sup>131</sup> Application for Membership to the American Institute of Architects. Russell S. Walcott.

<sup>132</sup> *Who's Who in Chicago and Vicinity: 1931*, p. 1009.

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as well as being a prior partner of David Adler's from 1918 to 1928.<sup>133</sup> According to the *Who's Who in Chicago, 1931*, Walcott lived in Barrington, Illinois, with his office at 75 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago. A December 12, 1937, *Chicago Tribune* article indicates that Walcott sold his fourteen-acre Barrington estate and moved his practice to Tryon, North Carolina.<sup>134</sup> Once in North Carolina, Russell Walcott opened an independent practice under the name Russell Walcott, Architect, from 1937 to 1939. In 1939 Walcott partnered with architect, Shannon Meriwether, under the name Walcott & Meriwether. The partnership existed from 1939 to 1942, after which each partner returned to independent work.<sup>135</sup> In 1926, Walcott designed the house at 241 Cumberland.

Bertram A. Weber (1898-1989)

Bertram A. Weber was born on October 1, 1898, in Chicago, in the second of three generations of Chicago architects. Weber began attending school at Northwestern University in 1918 where he studied liberal arts; however, World War I interrupted his studies. Before returning to school in 1920, he worked for his father, architect Peter J. Weber, who designed Ravinia Park in Highland Park. In 1909 Peter Weber designed the house at 306 Kenilworth Avenue. This year of experience within his father's practice resulted in Weber changing his focus to architecture, which he studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1920 to 1922. During the summers of 1920, and 1922, Bertram Weber worked in the office of Chicago architect, Howard Van Doren Shaw. In 1923 Weber partnered with architect Charles White, until 1936. After White's passing in 1936, Weber practiced independently, specializing in residential and institutional buildings. In 1973 Bertram Weber partnered with his son, John, doing business as Weber & Weber from 1973 to 1984. His peers recognized Weber in 1953 when he was elected to the College of Fellows the American Institute of Architects. He was also named a Fellow of the Illinois Society of Architects in 1986 and received an Honor Award from the American Institute of Architects in 1958. In addition he served as a Life Trustee on the Ravinia Festival Association, as a member of the Highland Park Plan Commission, as president and Board Member of the Builder's Club of Chicago and the Highland Park District, and as a Trustee of Highland Park Hospital. Weber passed

<sup>133</sup> National Register Nomination: Green Bay Road Historic District, Section 8, p. 41.

<sup>134</sup> "Walcott Sells Barrington Estate; Price is \$40,000," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 12, 1937, p. 24.

<sup>135</sup> Survey of North Carolina Architectural Firms, North Carolina State University Library Website.

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away on December 17, 1989, in Pompano Beach, Florida.<sup>136</sup> Bertram Weber designed the house at 122 Melrose

Bertha Yarex Whitman

Bertha Yarex Whitman was one of a very small number of woman architects practicing in the Chicago area in the 1920s. There were only a handful, including Marion Mahoney, her predecessor, and Elizabeth Martini, her contemporary.

Bertha Whitman was a 1920 graduate of the University of Michigan. She paved the way for women at Perkins, Fellows and Hamilton, serving as their first woman draftsman. Though licensed in 1926, she often found it difficult to work claiming that no one was interested in hiring women. Because she was the sole support of her family, she always maintained a full-time position in social work, never daring to be financially dependent on her architectural practice. However, she had a prolific practice, designing over 200 buildings, mostly private homes.<sup>137</sup>

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959)

Frank Lloyd Wright is arguably America's most famous architect. His professional career covered seventy years, during which he designed over 300 buildings. As with other great twentieth century architects with long careers, Wright's architecture developed and changed. In his early and most innovative period, spent working in Chicago and its suburbs, he produced a body of Prairie Style work that had a significant effect on the development of twentieth-century European modern architecture. Throughout his career Wright built important religious, civic, and commercial structures, including Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois (1906), the Larkin Building in Buffalo, New York (1904), the Johnson Wax Building in Racine, Wisconsin (1936-46), and the Guggenheim Museum in New York City (completed after his death in 1959).

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<sup>136</sup> Bertram A. Weber interview, Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Burnham Library, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>137</sup> Northeast Evanston Historic District National Register form, Section 8, pp. 119-120.

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Wright made his greatest mark and did his most important work as a residential architect. He worked in the Chicago area from 1887 to 1909, and during this time he developed a language of highly original residential architecture by reinventing, transforming, and abstracting the elements of the traditional house. He understood interior space and its visual relationship to the exterior in a new way that stressed the spatial connections between rooms and between inside spaces and outdoor porches and terraces. Wright's work, and the work of Chicago architects that he influenced, came to be known as the Prairie School of architecture.

Wright was born in 1867 in Richland Center, Wisconsin. His father William, a New England clergyman, settled the family in Madison, Wisconsin, when Wright was eleven. They lived near the family of Wright's mother, the Lloyd Joneses, who were Welsh Unitarian farmers. His father abandoned his family and Wright never finished high school, although he spent one semester as a special student at the University of Wisconsin in the engineering department. Through a recommendation from his uncle, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, he went to work in the Chicago office of Joseph Lyman Silsbee. Silsbee had designed a small Unitarian chapel for Wright's uncle and took the young man on as an apprentice. From Silsbee's office, Wright went to work for Louis Sullivan. Adler & Sullivan employed him from 1888 to 1893, during which time he was put in charge of the residential commissions in the office.

In 1889 Wright married and, with Sullivan's help, bought property in Oak Park where he designed and built a fashionable Shingle Style house like those he had worked on in Silsbee's office. Wright also designed residences for friends in Oak Park, but because this was in violation of his contract with Sullivan, he was fired. Wright set up his own practice in Chicago, working with his friend Cecil Corwin and sharing space with Dwight Perkins in Steinway Hall. In 1895 he added an office and studio to his house in Oak Park and moved his practice there, hiring Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin, John Van Bergen, William Drummond, and Barry Byrne to work with him. Important residential commissions from this period included the Ward Willits house in Highland Park (1902), the Darwin Martin house in Buffalo, New York (1904), the Avery Coonley house in River Forest (1908), and the Frederick Robie house in Chicago (1909).

In 1909 Wright left his family in Chicago to go to Berlin with the wife of his client Edwin Cheney, with whom he was having an affair. The purpose of the trip was to arrange for the publication of a portfolio of drawings of his work to be issued by the

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Berlin publisher Ernst Wasmuth. The Wasmuth Portfolio greatly enhanced Wright's growing international reputation at a time when his life was in shambles. His wife refused to give him a divorce, and the growing scandal caused his departure for Europe with Mrs. Cheney effectively ended his career in Chicago. Wright moved on, building a new residence and studio in 1911 on farm property his mother owned near Spring Green, Wisconsin.<sup>138</sup> In 1905 Wright designed the house at 205 Essex.

Lloyd Morgan Yost (1908-1992)

Lloyd Morgan Yost was born in Ohio and later moved to Kenilworth. He attended New Trier High School, Northwestern University, and received his architecture degree from Ohio State University. "It was my interest in the modernity of George Maher that led me to want to study architecture when I graduated from New Trier High School" Yost confided to Kenilworth historian Colleen Kilner.<sup>139</sup> A president of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and also distinguished as a Fellow of the AIA, Yost partnered with D. Coder Taylor from 1952 until 1960 and practiced solo thereafter.<sup>140</sup> His work was primarily executed in modern styles and included residential, industrial and commercial buildings, many located on the North Shore. In addition to his own home and studio at 363 Ridge Road in Kenilworth and the award-winning commercial building at 506 Green Bay Road, he designed at least fifteen other buildings in Kenilworth. He was also active as an editor and writer for popular home magazines and was an early executive director of the Chicago School of Architecture Foundation, where he helped raise funds to restore master architect H.H. Richardson's Glessner House on Prairie Avenue.<sup>141</sup>

William Carbys Zimmerman (1856-1932)

William Carbys Zimmerman was born in Thiensville, Wisconsin. He completed a two-year course in architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and after several years of practical training, including working for the firm of Burnham and Root,

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<sup>138</sup> *North Shore Chicago*, p. 317-318.

<sup>139</sup> *Sears*, p. 159.

<sup>140</sup> American Institute of Architects, *Directory*, (1962), p. 786.

<sup>141</sup> "Architect L. Morgan Yost, Avid Packard Historian," Obituary, *Chicago Tribune*, May 20, 1992.

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he opened his own architectural office in Chicago in 1886 in partnership with John J. Flanders. The firm of Flanders & Zimmerman was best know for major public commissions, including the Supreme Court building in Springfield, the physics building at the University of Illinois, the Pulaski Fieldhouse and the Seventh Regiment Armory in Chicago, and the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet. After 1898 Zimmerman maintained a solo practice until he took his son-in-law Albert M. Saxe and his son, Ralph Waldo Zimmerman, as partners. William Carbys Zimmerman also designed large houses for prominent businessmen, including those for meatpacker Louis F. Swift in Lake Forest and Edward Kirk Warren in Evanston. From 1905 until 1913, Zimmerman served as State Architect of Illinois. He retired from practice in the mid-1920s.<sup>142</sup>

Conclusion

The Village of Kenilworth is special among the towns of the North Shore, even among the broader suburban areas that make up metropolitan Chicago. Few suburban communities can match the overall excellence of its residential architecture or can claim a similar continuity of planning. Many of Chicago's most significant residential architects—both traditional and progressive in spirit--worked in the Village. Jens Jensen, the Midwest's foremost landscape architect, also made his mark. Despite the loss of some houses and the alteration of others, a high percentage of Kenilworth's residential fabric is intact. You enter Kenilworth with a sense of arrival. Because of the large amount of landscaped open space (both broad front lawns and beautiful park land) and carefully designed hardscape features (including stone bridges, pylons, benches, urns and the fountain where Kenilworth is approached from the train) the village has the character of houses set in a park. This expresses Joseph Sears vision, a vision that exists today throughout the entire village.

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<sup>142</sup> North Shore Chicago, p. 322; *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects*, p. 678.