Wilmette & Kenilworth, Illinois
Local History and Genealogy Guide

Compiled by EvaAnne Johnson and Nancy Wagner,
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Contents:

I. <u>Background Information</u>

Brief History

    Wilmette and Kenilworth are villages in Cook County, Illinois, along the North Shore, north of Chicago. Both villages are located in New Trier Township. The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 destroyed many Cook County records, including birth, marriage and death records.

    Before European settlement, members of the Potawatomi tribe lived in the area. The village of Wilmette is named after Antoine Ouilmette, a French-Canadian fur trader who was married to a Potawatomi woman, and received land in present-day Wilmette for his part in signing the second Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1829. In the 1840s, German Catholic farmers from the region of Trier, Germany began to settle in the area. They named their small village Gross Point. In 1848, Ouilmette sold his land to farmers and developers. In 1854, railroad tracks were built through the area, facilitating the settlement of the North Shore. The Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad constructed the first train station in the area in 1869. Just three years later, on September 19, 1872, the village of Wilmette was incorporated. The village of Gross Point was incorporated on the same date in 1874. Gross Point was annexed in two parts by Wilmette, in 1924 and 1926. Gross Point had been dependent on the revenues from the 15 taverns in town, and the village went bankrupt with Prohibition. See a longer history of Wilmette and Gross Point from the Wilmette Historical Society: www.wilmettehistory.org/history-wilmette

    Kenilworth is the newest community on the North Shore, and was developed as a planned community. It was founded in 1889 when Joseph Sears purchased over 220 acres of land between the Chicago and North Western Railroad and Lake Michigan. Sears and his associates formed The Kenilworth Company to develop the ideal suburban village. The village was incorporated on February 4, 1896. See a longer history of Kenilworth from the Kenilworth Historical Society: http://kenilworthhistory.org/history/

Border Changes

- Wilmette and Kenilworth have always been part of Cook County. Cook County was created in 1831 from Putnam County. (For Cook County border changes, see the *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries* found on the Newberry Library website: http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/)
- Wilmette's village borders have changed many times throughout the years. The most significant changes occurred in 1924 and 1926 with the two-part annexation of Gross Point Village. A complete listing of all the border changes are listed in the appendix of <u>Wilmette: A History</u> by George D. Bushnell.
- Kenilworth's village boundaries have remained the same since its inception.

Places/Localities

- **Cook County** - Wilmette and Kenilworth have always been part of Cook County. The county was created in January of 1831 from Putnam County. Cook County includes the city of Chicago and many of its close suburbs. It is the second most populous county in the United States.
- **North Shore** - Refers to the villages along Lake Michigan, just north of Chicago. Includes the villages of Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park, Lake Forest and Lake Bluff. Occasionally the villages of Glenview, Northbrook, Deerfield, Highwood, Skokie and Northfield are also considered part of the North Shore, even though they don't border Lake Michigan.
- **New Trier Township** - About 16 square miles that is made up of the villages of Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe and parts of Northfield and Glenview.
- **Wilmette Village** - A village of about 5.4 square miles, located just north of Evanston along Lake Michigan.
- **Kenilworth Village** - A village of about 0.6 square miles, located just north of Wilmette along Lake Michigan.
- **Gross Point** - A village of its own from 1874-1926. Village went bankrupt during Prohibition, and was annexed by Wilmette in two parts in 1924 and 1926.
- **Plaza del Lago** - Previously called "No Man's Land," and refers to a small unincorporated area between Wilmette and Kenilworth along Lake Michigan and Sheridan Road. It was largely undeveloped and unannexed for many years, until 1942 when it was eventually annexed by the village of Wilmette. The area is now home to a shopping center called Plaza del Lago and high-rise residences.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

II. Where should I look for sources?

Local Repositories and Research Centers

- Wilmette Public Library
    1242 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091
    Phone: (847) 256-5025 // Website: http://www.wilmettelibrary.info/
    Provides access to several genealogical databases, including Ancestry.com, Find My Past, HeritageQuest, Historical Chicago Tribune, Historical New York Times, and Newspapers.com. Local resources include; the Wilmette Life Newspaper Online Index, which includes citations and some full text articles from 1887 on, maps both online and in-house, oral histories, and a Local History Room with vertical files as well as information on houses and residents. For a complete description or to access this collection see the Local History link on the Library's home page.
    http://www.wilmettelibrary.info/localhistoryinfo/localhistory

- Wilmette Historical Museum
    609 Ridge Road, Wilmette, IL 60091
    Phone: (847) 853-7666 // Website: http://www.wilmettehistory.org/
    The museum is run jointly by the Village of Wilmette and the Wilmette Historical Society. They have a substantial collection of materials relating to Wilmette and the surrounding area that are available for researchers. Collections include artifacts, maps, photographs, movies, real estate records, city directories, newspaper clippings, records of local organizations, schools, businesses, houses and individuals, and much more. Their website also has a variety of online resources.

- Wilmette, Illinois Family History Center
    2727 Lake Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091
    Phone: (847) 251-9818 // Website: http://wilmettefhc.org/
    Access the vast resources from the LDS Church, including full access to FamilySearch.org and other databases. You can also request microfilm and materials from the Family History Library to use at this family history center. They keep a large collection of duplicate microfilm of Chicago and Cook County related records on-site. Visit their website to view which resources they have on-site and instructions for ordering other materials.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- Kenilworth Historical Society & Museum
    - 415 Kenilworth Ave. Kenilworth IL, 60043
    - Phone: (847) 251-2565 // Website: http://kenilworthhistory.org/
    - Serves as a museum and repository for the local historical materials that document the people, events and organizations involved in Kenilworth's history. Their collection includes local photographs, records relating to the Sears family and the building of the Kenilworth Community, and information about local organizations, churches and buildings.

- Glenview Public Library - Genealogy and Local History Room
    - 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, Illinois 60025
    - Phone: (847) 729-7500 // Website: www.glenviewpl.org/researchGenealogy/index.html
    - A unique collection of genealogy and local history materials, including family histories, genealogical books, periodicals and newspapers, and telephone directories. Their online resources include access to several genealogy databases, Glenview history file, obituary index, and family tree files.

- Evanston Public Library - Evanstoniana Room
    - 1703 Orrington Ave, Evanston, IL 60201
    - Phone: (847) 448-8600 // Website: https://www.epl.org/
    - Their local history room is primarily focused on Evanston history, but includes many materials from surrounding areas. Collection includes Polk directories, city and regional directories, city and regional maps, yearbooks, business and organizational documents and books about Evanston and the North Shore. They also have a clippings index for the Evanston Review, going back to about 1910, including obituaries.

Remote Repositories and Research Centers

- IRAD Depository
    - Ronald Williams Library, Northeastern Illinois University
        - 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL
    - Phone: (773) 442-4506
    - Website: http://neiu.edu/library/illinois-regional-archives-depository-irad
    - The NIU IRAD includes selected governmental records from the late 1800's to the early 1900's for Chicago and Cook County. These records include birth, marriage, death, naturalization, and coroner's inquest records.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- Newberry Library
    - 60 W. Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610
    - Phone: (312) 255-3512 // Website:
        - https://newberry.org/genealogy-and-local-history
    - The Newberry's rich collections include family histories, local histories, censuses, probate, deed, court, tax, and cemetery records, military rosters, periodicals, genealogical guides, and reference works. They have a designated genealogy reading room. Many materials pertain specifically to Cook County, while others pertain to the state of Illinois and USA.

- Cook County Clerk
    - Downtown Chicago: Richard J. Daley Center, 50 W. Washington St., Room 25, Chicago, IL 60602 // Phone: (312) 603-7790
    - Northern Suburbs: 5600 W. Old Orchard Road, Skokie, IL 60077 // Phone: (847) 470-7233
    - Website: www.cookcountyclerk.com/vitalrecords/Pages/default.aspx
    - Both locations have Birth and Death certificates, and Marriage and Civil Union licenses and certificates. The downtown Chicago location also has Notary public certifications, and assumed business names. The Skokie location has notary filings and verifications. You can request select records through their website or through their genealogy website.

- Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court Archives
    - Richard J. Daley Center, 50 W. Washington St., Room 1113, Chicago, IL
    - Phone: (312) 603-6601 // Website: www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/ ?RecArchivePage=6000&section=RecArchivePage
    - Archives of Cook County records, including probate files from 1871-1963, divorce case files 1871-1986, naturalization records 1871-1929, criminal felony case files 1871-1983, index to incompetents 1911-1975, and index to minors under guardianship from 1871-1976.

- Chicago Public Library - Harold Washington Library Center
    - 400 S. State Street, Chicago, IL
    - Phone: (312) 747-4300 // Website: www.chipublib.org
    - Their large collection includes U.S. census records on microfilm, census indexes, Chicago city and suburban directories, fire insurance maps, and materials relating to the history of Chicago and Cook County. Their Special Collections also archive materials relating to Chicago neighborhoods and general Chicago history.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- Illinois State Archives
  - Norton Building, Capitol Complex, Springfield, IL 62756
  - Phone: (217) 782-3556 // Website: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/
  - The depository is for official, public records of Illinois state and local governments. Their collection includes the Federal and State census records, military service records, veterans files, and land sale records.

- Illinois State Library
  - Gwendolyn Brooks Building, 300 S. Second St. Springfield, IL 62701
  - Phone: (217) 785-5600 // Website: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/
  - The State Library is a repository for state and federal documents, including historical documents, contemporary documents, over 185,000 maps and numerous electronic databases. Also hosts the Illinois Digital Archives.

- Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
  - 112 N. Sixth St., Springfield, IL 62701
  - Phone: (217) 558-8844 // Website: www.illinois.gov/alplm/library/
  - This essential genealogy collection contains the collection of the Illinois State Historical Library, and includes many newspapers, histories and genealogies, plat books, census indexes, military records, genealogical periodicals, letters, and is a DAR repository.

- Illinois State Genealogical Society
  - P.O. Box 10195, Springfield, IL 62791
  - Phone: (217) 789-1968 // Website: http://www.ilgensoc.org/
  - Their collection was given to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Their website is a helpful resource for general Illinois genealogy, including a few special databases and previous issues of their newsletter.

- National Archives - Great Lakes Region (Chicago)
  - 7358 S. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60629
  - Phone: (773) 948-9001 // Website: www.archives.gov/chicago
  - Is a regional depository for records generated by the federal government. Their vast collection includes U.S. census records, passenger arrival records, immigration and naturalization records, federal criminal, civil and bankruptcy files, farm ownership case files, photographs, maps, and more. Microfilm catalog and finding aids available online.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- Chicago History Museum Research Library
    - 1601 N. Clark St. Chicago, IL 60614
    - Phone: (312) 642-4600 // Website:
        - www.chicagohistory.org/visit/research-center/
    - Their extensive collection includes Chicago and Chicago area newspapers, maps and atlases, ephemera, Chicago city directories, yearbooks, published histories oral histories, and photographs.

Regional Historical Organizations

- North Suburban Historical Society
    - P.O. Box 3032, Glenview IL 60025
    - Email: NSGS@nsgsil.org // Website: http://nsgsil.org/
    - Serves all the northeastern Chicago suburbs, which includes Wilmette and Kenilworth. Partners with the Glenview and Northbrook Public Libraries, and publishes a bimonthly newsletter.

- Illinois State Historical Society
    - 5255 Shepherd Road, Springfield, IL 62703
    - Phone: (217) 525-2781 // Website: http://www.historyillinois.org/
    - Supports the Illinois State Historical Library and publishes *Illinois Heritage Magazine* and *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*.

- Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois
    - P.O. Box 515, Northbrook, IL 60065
    - Phone: (312) 666-0100 // Website: www.jgsi.org/
    - Serves as a resource for those researching their Chicago area Jewish roots and publishes the newsletter *Morasha*. In addition to on-site books, maps and other resources, they have several databases and death index online.

- Chicago Genealogical Society
    - P.O. Box 1160, Chicago, IL 60690
    - Website: www.chicagogenealogy.org/
    - Publishes a blog about Chicago's families and history and the newsletter *The Chicago Genealogist*. Also has several databases on their website.

- National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution
    - Skokie Valley Chapter, Kenilworth, IL
    - Website: http://ildar.org/chapters/skokievalley/

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution
  Kaskaskia Chapter, Winnetka, IL
  Website: http://kaskaskiadar.weebly.com/

Selected Online Databases and Websites

- Ancestry: www.ancestry.com *
- Certified Prairie Pioneers database (Illinois State Genealogical Society): http://ilgensoc.org/cstm_prariePioneerCerts.php
- Cyndi's List - Cook County: http://www.cyndislist.com/us/il/counties/cook/
- Digital Public Library of America http://dp.la (Search Wilmette, Kenilworth or other specific search terms.)
- Encyclopedia of Chicago: http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/
- Family Search: www.familysearch.org
- Family Search Cook County wiki: https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Cook_County,_Illinois_Genealogy
- Find My Past: www.findmypast.com *
- GenWeb - Cook County: http://cook.illinoisgenweb.org/
- Genealogy Trails - Cook County: http://genealogytrails.com/ill/cook/
- Heritage Quest: www.heritagequestonline.com *
- Illinois Digital Archives: http://www.idaillinois.org/
- Kindred Trails - Cook County: http://www.kindredtrails.com/IL_Cook.html
- Linkpendium - Cook County: http://www.linkpendium.com/cook-il-genealogy/
- Wilmette Public Library Local History page: http://www.wilmettelibrary.info/localhistoryinfo/localhistory *

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

III. Genealogical Sources - Published Resources

(*Please note that the resources listed here are a selection, and more may be available. A link to a free digital full-text version is provided when known. Some texts may only be available in print. Check WorldCat.org for possible holdings.*)

Historical Background Sources

- Wilmette:
  - Bushnell, George D. Wilmette: a history, 1976. *
  - Carlson, Norman (ed.). Competing rails : the Milwaukee Road's legacy in Evanston and Wilmette : early rail competition on Chicago's North Shore, steam vs. electricity, connecting Evanston and Chicago by rail, 2011.
  - Dudley, Sandy (ed.). Wilmette centennial: 1872-1972, 1972. *
  - Grover, Frank R. Antoine Ouilmette : a resident of Chicago A.D. 1790-1826, 1908. *
    - Available online at HathiTrust: https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t89g5kf9q
  - Hussey-Arntson, Kathy L. On the trail of history : a kid's guide to Wilmette's past, 2002. *
  - Hussey-Arntson, Kathy L. Wilmette, 2012. *
  - Leach, David Clark, Jr. Looking back : essays on Wilmette history, 2014. *
  - League of Women Voters of Wilmette. Know your town : Wilmette, Illinois, 1939. *
  - League of Women Voters of Wilmette. Spotlight on Wilmette, 1955. *
  - League of Women Voters of Wilmette. Spotlight on Wilmette, 1966. *
  - Mulford, Herbert B. Little journeys to historical Wilmette, 1948. *
  - Mulford, Herbert B. Frontiers of old Wilmette: a series of historical sketches of the beginnings of the village, 1954. *
  - Mulford, Herbert B. Wilmette and the suburban whirl: a series of historical sketches of life in the suburb from the turn of the century, 1956. *
    - Online version available through WPL: http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/2260716/data?n=20 *
  - Ouilmette: life in 1847, 1947. *
  - Shea, Robert. From No Man's Land to Plaza del Lago, 1986. *
- Kenilworth:
  - Kenilworth Historical Society. Kenilworth: the suburban ideal (DVD), 2016. *
  - Kenilworth: first fifty years, 1947. *

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- - - Available online at HathiTrust:
      https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t4cn87887
  - Kilner, Colleen. Kenilworth tree stories: history woven around its trees, 1972. *
  - Kilner, Colleen. Joseph Sears and his Kenilworth: the dreamer and the dream, 1969. *
- Cook County and the North Shore:
  - Alessi, Nancy L. The North Shore: a community guide, 1988. *
  - Andreas, A. T. History of Cook County, Illinois : from the earliest period to the present time, 1884. *
    - Available online at HathiTrust:
      https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31158010110988
  - Ebner, Michael. Creating Chicago's North Shore: A Suburban History, 1988. *
  - Goodspeed, Weston Arthur. History of Cook County, Illinois-- being a general survey of Cook County history, including a condensed history of Chicago and special account of districts outside the city limits; from the earliest settlement to the present time (2 volumes), 1909. *
    - Available online at HathiTrust:
      https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433082209184
  - The history of New Trier Township, 1850-2001 : 150 years of grassroots government, 2001. *
  - New Trier Township, 1850-2010: a journey in time, 2011. *
  - White, Marian A. The Book of the North Shore, 1910.
    - Available online at Archive.org: https://archive.org/stream/ bookofnorthshore00whit#page/n7/mode/2up
  - White, Marian A. The Second Book of the North Shore, 1911.
    - Available online at Archive.org: https://archive.org/stream/ secondbookofnort00whit#page/n5/mode/2up

Regional Research Guides

- DuMelle, Grace. Finding Your Chicago Ancestors: a beginner's guide to family history in the city and Cook County, 2005. *
- Hamilton, Patricia A. Roots on the Prairie: Tracing your Illinois Ancestors, 1996.*
- Johnston, W. Wesley. Researcher's guide to the pre-fire records of Chicago and Cook County, 2014.
- Schweitzer, George K. Illinois Genealogical Research, 1997.
- Szucs, Loretto Dennis. Chicago and Cook County: A guide to research, 1996. *

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

City and Regional Directories

- The villages of Wilmette and Kenilworth have their own published directories, and may also be included in North Shore or other regional directories.
- Wilmette Public Library has the following directories:
    - Online - Wilmette, Kenilworth and local directories: http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/2817937/data?grd=1848 *
    - Print - Directory for Glencoe, Wilmette, Winnetka and Kenilworth: 1909-1912, 1945. *
    - Print - Directory for Wilmette and Kenilworth: 1924-1929, 1935, 1940. *
    - Print - Polk's Evanston and North Shore (Cook County, Ill.) city directory : 1927-1928, 1993, 1935, 1937, 1939. *
- Other City/Local Directories, located elsewhere:
    - Wilmette Historical Museum: Wilmette directories for 1890, 1898, 1908, and 1946 available online: www.wilmettehistory.org/online-resources.
    - Evanston Public Library: printed Evanston and North Shore directories.
    - Glenview Public Library: printed North Shore and regional directories.
    - Archive.org: The Chicago Blue Book of Selected Names of Chicago and Suburban Towns, 1890-1915. (Search by title at https://archive.org/)
- See also "Religious Organizations and Records" section. Some congregational records may include congregation directories.

Maps and Plat Books

- Historic and modern printed maps of Wilmette, Kenilworth and the surrounding area available at many local and regional repositories, including:
    - Wilmette Public Library Local History Room *
    - Wilmette Historical Society
    - Northbrook Public Library
    - Chicago Historical Society Library
    - Cook County Clerk - Maps and Tax Redemption Department
- Historic and modern maps available online:
    - Wilmette Public Library local history webpage: www.wilmettelibrary.info/localhistoryinfo/localhistory/mapinventory *
    - Wilmette Historical Society maps: www.wilmettehistory.org/maps (Free)
    - Tillotson's pocket map and street guide of Chicago : and suburbs of Evanston, Oak Park, Morgan Park, Glencoe, Kenilworth, Wilmette and Winnetka, 1900. Available through HathiTrust: https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t3bz63q1s (Free)

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ 1891 Chicago Suburban Maps Atlas from Historic Map Works:
    www.historicmapworks.com/Atlas/US/12052/Cook+County+1891/
    (Free/$)
  - ○ Modern and historic highway maps for Cook County: www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/Network-Overview/highway-system/maps
  - ○ Sanborn Maps may include some relevant maps:
    http://sanborn.umi.com/splash.html ($)
- ● Published books and atlases:
  - ○ Boyd, Gregory A. <u>Family maps of Cook County, Illinois : with homesteads, roads, waterways, towns, cemeteries, railroads and more.</u> Norman, Oklahoma : Arphax Pub. Co., 2006.
- ● A more comprehensive listing of published plat maps and atlases for Cook County and the North Shore can be found on the University of Illinois Library website: http://www.library.illinois.edu/funkaces/landownership/cook.html

Historical Newspapers and Periodicals

- ● Some local newspapers are available online and are indexed and/or digitized by the Wilmette Public Library. See the Newspapers in Wilmette page for more information: http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/241/Exhibit. *
  - ○ The Local News (Wilmette, IL; published 1898 - 1916) *
  - ○ Lake Shore News (Evanston, IL; published 1912 - 1923) *
  - ○ Wilmette Life (Wilmette, IL; published 1923 - present) *
  - ○ Wilmette Beacon (Wilmette, IL; published 2010 - present)
- ● Other selected area newspapers include: (*These may be available on microfilm or in print at other local or state repositories. Check Worldcat.org for holdings.*)
  - ○ Kenilworth News (Kenilworth, IL; 1893 - 1895, 1925 - ?)
  - ○ New Trier Times (Kenilworth, IL; 2001 - 2003)
  - ○ North Shore Record (Wilmette, IL; 1900 - ?)
  - ○ Wilmette Record (Wilmette, IL; 1899 - ?)
  - ○ Wilmette Times (Wilmette, IL; 1937 - ?)
- ● Search for a complete list of area newspapers at the Chronicling America directory: http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/titles/.
- ● Other digitized newspapers may be available. Search for articles and obituaries in www.newspapers.com * (Library version available with WPL library card), https://news.google.com/newspapers, and https://elephind.com. Also search in the Illinois newspaper project for information about other possible area newspapers: http://www.library.illinois.edu/inp/database.php.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

Family History Periodicals

- In addition to the following journals, search for "Wilmette, Illinois" or other specific names or locations in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI), which is located at http://search.findmypast.com/search/periodical-source-index. Other, broader periodicals may have published articles about Wilmette or Kenilworth. PERSI will provide a citation for the article. Full articles beyond the citation are available for some periodicals with a subscription to FindMyPast.com.
- Local or Regional periodicals:
    - *Ouilmette Heritage-* Newsletter published by the Wilmette Historical Society, 1976?-present.
    - Newsletter of the North Suburban Genealogical Society, published bi-monthly.
    - *The Chicago Genealogist-* published quarterly, containing historical articles on the Chicago area, record abstracts, queries, and book reviews.
- Illinois State periodicals: (Search PERSI by surname or location for specific article citations.)
    - *Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly-* Published quarterly since 1969 by the Society, surveying Illinois original source material, family genealogies, and research questions.
    - *Illinois Historical Journal* (Formerly *The Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*)- Published quarterly since 1908 by the Illinois State Historical Society. It has excellent articles on local and state history, as well as book reviews.
    - *Illinois Heritage-* Published bi-monthly by the Illinois State Historical Society, aimed at a general audience.
    - *Illinois Libraries-* Published monthly by Illinois State Libraries, often with genealogical collections information.

IV. Genealogical Sources - Original Records and Documents

Vital Records - Birth Records

- Birth records begin in 1872 (the Great Chicago Fire destroyed earlier records), but in the early years not everyone had a birth certificate registered with the county. Birth certificates were required starting in 1916, but counties were not fully compliant until about 1922. There is a 75 year moratorium on birth records for privacy reasons, except for immediate family members.
- Indexes:
    - FamilySearch.org; Illinois, Cook County, Birth Certificates, 1871-1940 https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1462519 (Free)
    - Wilmette Historical Society; Wilmette Health Department Birth Records Index, 1893-1926 http://www.wilmettehistory.org/birth-records (Free)
    - Ancestry.com; Cook County, Illinois Birth Certificates Index, 1871-1922 http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2545 ($)
    - Ancestry.com; Cook County, Illinois Birth Index, 1916-1935 http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1499 ($)
- Records available from:
    - 1872 - 1942 - Cook County Online Genealogy; Locate a name and certificate in their free index, then order a genealogical copy of the certificate for a small fee. Contact the Cook County Clerk's office if you are not able to locate the necessary certificate on their online genealogy index. http://cookcountygenealogy.com/ (Free / $)

Vital Records - Marriage Records

- Marriage records begin in 1872 (the Great Chicago Fire destroyed earlier records). There is a 50 year moratorium on marriage records for privacy reasons, except for immediate family members.
- Indexes: (Search WorldCat.org for book holdings.)
    - Illinois State Archives; Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1833-1901. www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/marriage.html (Free)
    - FamilySearch.org; Illinois Marriages, 1815-1935 https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1680829 (Free)
    - Ancestry.com; Cook County, Illinois, Marriages Index, 1871-1920 http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2556 ($)

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ Ancestry.com. Cook County, Illinois Marriage Indexes, 1912-1942
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2273 ($)
  - ○ Ancestry.com; Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index, 1930-1960
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1500 ($)
- Records available from:
  - ○ 1872-1967 - Cook County Online Genealogy; Locate a name and marriage
    license in their free index, then order a genealogical copy of the certificate
    for a small fee. Contact the Cook County Clerk's office if you are not able to
    locate the necessary certificate on their online genealogy index.
    http://cookcountygenealogy.com/ (Free / $)

Vital Records - Death Records

- Death records begin in 1872 (the Great Chicago Fire destroyed earlier records),
  but in the early years not everyone had a death certificate registered with the
  county. Death certificates were required starting in 1916, but counties were not
  fully compliant until about 1919. There is a 20 year moratorium on death records
  for privacy reasons, except for immediate family members.
- Indexes:
  - ○ Illinois State Archives; Illinois Statewide Death Index, 1916-1950
    http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/idph
    deathindex.html (Free)
  - ○ Wilmette Historical Society; Gross Point Register of Permits to Dispose of
    Human Body Index, 1902-1919
    http://www.wilmettehistory.org/gross-point-register-permits-dispose-hu
    man-body-index (Free)
  - ○ Wilmette Historical Society; Death Certificate Index, 1913-1953
    http://www.wilmettehistory.org/death-certificate-index (Free)
  - ○ Wilmette Historical Society; Out-of-State Death Certificate & Permit for
    Transfer of Bodies Index, 1915-1928
    http://www.wilmettehistory.org/out-state-death-certificate-permit-transf
    er-bodies-index (Free)
  - ○ FamilySearch.org; Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths, 1916-1947
    https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1438856 (Free)
  - ○ Ancestry.com; Cook County, Illinois, Deaths Index, 1878-1922
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2552 ($)
  - ○ Ancestry.com. Cook County, Illinois Death Index, 1908-1988
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1501 ($)

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ Ancestry.com; Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693 ($)
- Records available from:
    - ○ 1872-1997 - Cook County Online Genealogy; Locate a name and certificate in their free index, then order a genealogical copy of the certificate for a small fee. Contact the Cook County Clerk's office if you are not able to locate the necessary certificate on their online genealogy index. http://cookcountygenealogy.com/ (Free / $)

Census Records

- U.S. Federal Population Schedules are available for 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940. No fragments of the 1890 census exist for Cook County.
    - ○ The Cook County Non-population Schedules (Mortality, Industry, and Agriculture Schedules) are available for 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880.
- Illinois State Census records are available for Cook County for 1855 and 1865.
- Census records have been digitized and are searchable through several online resources, such as FamilySearch, Moosetracks, FindMyPast, HeritageQuest, and Ancestry. In addition, several local repositories hold copies of the census on microfilm or in printed resources. Wilmette Public Library has access to census records through Ancestry.com and HeritageQuest subscriptions. *
- Census returns are released when they are 72 years old; new census records will be released once they meet this criteria.

Immigration Records

- Passenger lists and indexes can be found through:
    - ○ Ancestry.com has a large number of passenger lists and other immigration records. *
    - ○ LDS Family History Center - a large number of passenger lists and indexes on microfilm may be requested from the Family History Library or searched on FamilySearch.org.
    - ○ National Archives Great Lakes - on microfilm. Includes ports of New York, Great Lakes and others.
    - ○ Chicago Public Library - a few passenger lists on microfilm, and bound indexes for East Coast ports.
    - ○ Newberry Library - some indexes for ports of New York and New Orleans.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

Naturalization Records

- Records begin in 1871, and are released when the record is 100 years old. There are no Cook County naturalization records prior to 1871 because of the Great Chicago Fire. Naturalizations prior to 1906 were done in the local and state courts. After 1906, naturalizations were processed by the federal courts, and these federal records and indexes are typically found in various National Archives regional offices. Prior to 1922, married women obtained derivative citizenship when their husband was naturalized. After 1922, foreign-born women had to apply for their own citizenship.
- Indexes:
    - FamilySearch.org; Illinois, Northern District Naturalization Index, 1840-1950. Pre-1906 inquiries require the use of a surname's soundex code. https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1838804 (Free)
    - National Archives Great Lakes; Soundex Index to Naturalization Petitions for the United States District and Circuit Courts Northern District of Illinois and Immigration and Naturalization Service District #9, 1840-1950. (Free)
    - Ancestry.com; Illinois Federal Naturalization Records, 1856-1991 http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=61196 ($)
    - Database of Declarations of Intention to become a U.S. citizen, 1906-1929 http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/NR/about.aspx (Free)
- Copies of records:
    - FamilySearch.org; Illinois, Northern District, Chicago Division, petitions for naturalization, 1906-1994 https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/2212212 (Free)
    - National Archives Great Lakes has copies of naturalization records from federal courts, 1871-1906.
    - National Archives Great Lakes holds naturalization records from federal courts in Chicago and surrounding areas, 1906-1991. Includes indexes, declarations of intention and petitions.
    - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has duplicate copies of naturalization petitions created after 1906 to the present. They also have alien registration files ("A" files) from 1940 onward.
    - IRAD also has microfilm copies of naturalization records for Cook County.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

Military Records

- General military resources:
  - Wilmette War Memorial information, 2 volumes in print and online: http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/2313203/data?n=1 *
  - Military service records, WWI draft registration records, and Veterans' Homes, Pension, and Burial Records available from Illinois State Archives.
  - Military records can be ordered from the National Archives. See more at: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records
  - Illinois State Archives guide to Illinois military record research: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/ard126.pdf
  - FamilySearch.org, Fold3 and Ancestry.com provide many military indexes, such as enlistment records, WWI and WWII draft registration records, pension indexes, and much more.
  - The Honor Roll of Veterans Buried in Illinois. Springfield, Ill. : State of Illinois General Assembly, 1956. Covers 1774–1955 for veterans buried in Illinois.
  - The Roll of Honor, Containing the Names of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines of All the Wars of Our Country Who Are Buried in the Cemeteries of Cook County, by Eli Robert Lewis, Chicago, Ill.: Printing Products Corp., 1922. Available online at www.genealogycenter.info/military/burials/search_cookcoroll.php
  - Databases for Illinois Veterans: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/home.html
  - Illinois Veterans History Project, Illinois Digital Archives: http://www.idaillinois.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/ivhp
- Civil War:
  - Szucs, L.D., K. Bobko, J. Stoddard, and S. Murdoch. List of Pensioners -- Chicago and Cook County, IL -- January 1, 1883.
  - Civil War Centennial Commission of Illinois. Illinois military units in the Civil War.
  - Cook County Companies and Rosters of the Civil War: http://civilwar.illinoisgenweb.org/county/cook.html
  - National Parks Civil War Soldiers and Sailors database: https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm
- World War I:
  - The Roll of Honor, Cook County, Illinois. and Index to the Roll of Honor, Cook County, Illinois, compiled by Marilyn J. Markham, 1988.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ Index of WWI Draft Lottery for Cook County:
    http://cook.illinoisgenweb.org/wwi-draft-lottery/
  - ○ Ancestry.com; U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=6482
- World War II:
  - ○ World War II Honor List of Dead and Missing Army and Army Air Forces Personnel from Illinois. (NARA Publication)
    https://research.archives.gov/id/305289#.WP5xpsynGF0.link
  - ○ Ancestry.com; U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1002
  - ○ Ancestry.com; U.S., World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946
    http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8939
- Korean War:
  - ○ Index of Cook County Missing & Dead:
    http://cook.illinoisgenweb.org/korean-honor-roll/

Land and Building Records

- Many land records were burned in the 1871 Chicago fire, but many were reconstructed after the fire. Copies of land records are held in the office of the Recorder of Deeds, in the Cook County Recorder and Treasurer office. Some records are also held at the IRAD NEIU repository.
- Land in Cook County was originally sold by the federal government. Search for land patents at Bureau of Land Management website:
  https://glorecords.blm.gov/search/
- WPL has some materials relating to house and property histories, including a file relating to architects, directories, maps, newspaper clippings and tax lists. See the House History page on the website:
  http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/236/Exhibit/2 for more information. *
- Wilmette Historical Society has some real estate documents, photographs, news clippings and other materials about Wilmette properties. Likewise, the Kenilworth Historical Society has similar materials for Kenilworth properties.
- Cohen, Stuart Earl and Susan S. Benjamin. North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lakefront Suburbs, 1890-1940, 2004. *
- Also see Szucs, Chicago and Cook County: A guide to research, chapter 23; and "Land and Property" section of FamilySearch.org Cook County wiki.
- Also see "Selected maps and plat books" in the Published Resources section.
- Also see "Photographs and Postcards" for possible sources of images of the properties or buildings in the area.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

Probate and Related Records

- Probate records for Cook County begin in 1871, but some pre-fire records have been reconstructed from later records.
- Indexes:
    - FamilySearch.org; Wills filed 1850-1915, Cook County, Illinois https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/2582017 (Free)
    - FamilySearch.org; Probate court records : Cook County, Illinois docket Book A, 1871-1872 https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/722451 (Free)
- Copies of records:
    - Request certified or uncertified copies of records between 1871-1963 from the Cook County Circuit Court Archives. ($)
    - Probate division in the Daley Center, Room 1202. Probate records from 1964 to the present. Locate and view in-person. ($)
    - Ancestry.com; Illinois, Wills and Probate Records, 1772-1999. Searchable. http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=9048 ($)
    - IRAD has microfilm copies of some probate records for Cook County, starting in 1871.

Religious Organizations and Records

- Religious records may contain baptism, marriage, funeral, and confirmation records, congregation directories and/or membership lists.
- WPL has a file on local churches in the Local History Room. *
- Churches, synagogues and religious centers in Wilmette (W) and Kenilworth (K):
    - Bahá'í House of Worship (W, Bahá'í Faith)
        - The Bahá'í temple, house of worship of a world faith. Commemorating completion of exterior ornamentation, 1942, 1942. (Available online at HathiTrust: https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015025039622)
        - For the celebration of my praise : commemorating the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the First Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of the western world to public worship, Wilmette, Illinois, May 1953-May 2003, 2003.
        - Hill, Candace Moore. Images of America: Bahá'í Temple, 2010.
        - Whitmore, Bruce W. The dawning place : the building of a temple, the forging of a global religious community, 2015.
    - Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah (W, Jewish)
    - Chabad of Wilmette (W, Jewish)

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ The Church of the Holy Comforter (K, Episcopal)
    - ■ Church records, 1903-1947 (microfilm) (Microfilm of originals in the First United Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois.)
  - ○ Congregation Sukkat Shalom (W, Jewish)
  - ○ First Congregational Church of Wilmette (W, United Church of Christ)
  - ○ First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette (W)
    - ■ Registers of church officials; communicants, 1911-1934; baptisms, 1911-1949; cradleroll, 1909-1940 (microfilm)
    - ■ Collins, William R. A history of the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette, 1986.
  - ○ Kenilworth Union Church (K, nondenominational Christian)
  - ○ St. Augustine's Episcopal Church (W)
    - ■ Parish register and history, 1871-1928 (microfilm) (Microfilm of originals in the First United Methodist Church in Evanston.)
  - ○ St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church (W)
    - ■ Church records, 1904-1916 https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/520355 (Free)
  - ○ St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (W)
    - ■ Baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc., 1892-1931 (microfilm)
  - ○ St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church (W)
    - ■ Founded in 1843, and was Wilmette's first church.
    - ■ Historic St. Joseph Church and Gross Point Village [VHS] 1995. *
    - ■ Cathedral of the North Shore [DVD] St. Joseph's, 2013. *
    - ■ Baptisms, marriages and deaths, 1845-1915 https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/400331 (Free)
  - ○ Trinity United Methodist Church (W)
    - ■ Names, names and addresses, alphabetical record of members in full connection, record of probationers, marriages, baptisms, 1879-1908 (microfilm)
  - ○ Wilmette Baptist Church (renamed Community Church of Wilmette) (W)
  - ○ Wilmette Evangelical Lutheran Church (W)
  - ○ Wilmette Methodist Episcopal Church (W)
- The periodicals *Ouilmette Heritage*, *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*, and others also may have published articles, histories and abstracted records from local churches. Check PERSI for citations for specific articles, and see the "Selected History Periodicals" section for information about these periodicals.

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

Cemeteries and Burial Records

- Cook County Cemeteries
  - The Illinois Genealogical Society has a fairly complete list of all the cemeteries that do or did exist in Cook County. Search for Cook County, then select a cemetery to read a brief description: http://ilgensoc.org/cstm_cemeteryIndex.php
  - Also see Szucs, Chicago and Cook County, chapter 5, which lists most cemeteries in the Metropolitan Chicago Area.
- Cemeteries in or near Wilmette (W) and Kenilworth (K):
  - Calvary Cemetery (Evanston)
  - Church of the Holy Comforter (K)
  - St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery (W)
    - Cemetery index available from the Wilmette Historical Society: www.wilmettehistory.org/st-josephs-cemetery-index
    - Scheskie, James R. Cemetery inscriptions : copied from St. Joseph's cemetery at Lake and Gross Point Rds., Wilmette, Illinois, 1974.
    - Interment records, 1900-1987 https://familysearch.org/search/catalog/291119 (Free)
  - St. Peter Catholic Cemetery (Evanston)
  - Memorial Park Cemetery (Skokie)
- Other online transcriptions:
  - Find-a-Grave has some grave listings & headstone photographs: www.FindAGrave.com
  - BillionGraves also has some listings for graves in Cook County: https://billiongraves.com/search/
- *Burial Records:* If the cemetery is still active, contact the individual cemetery offices to find out if they hold the burial records that you need.

Education

- Some schools may have enrollment records, yearbooks, class photos, or other useful sources. These records may be restricted under privacy laws. Other published resources about each school are listed if available.
- Public Schools
  - Baker Demonstration School (grades K-8; 1918-present)
  - Bell School (grades K-5; 1965-1979)
  - Central School (grades K-4; 1871-present)
  - Gross Point School (grades 1-8; 1896-1931)

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- ○ Harper School (grades K-4; 1942-present)
- ○ Highcrest Middle School (grades 5 & 6; 1931-1977, 1995-present)
- ○ Howard School (Jr. High grades 6-8; 1924-1979)
- ○ Laurel School (grades K-4; 1920-1971)
- ○ Marie Murphy School (grades 6-8; 1870-present; originally called Avoca School and grades 1-8)
- ○ McKenzie School (grades K-4; 1893-present; originally called Logan School)
- ○ New Trier High School (located in Winnetka; grades 9-12; 1901-present)
  - ■ Harper, Robert Alexander. Some New Trier reflections, 2002. *
  - ■ A history of New Trier High School, 1901-1981, 1982. *
  - ■ Johnson, Julie West. New Trier : portrait of an American high school, 2006. *
  - ■ New Trier West High School : Northfield, Illinois, 60093, 198-. *
  - ■ 1901-2001, the New Trier century : opportunity, excellence and tradition, 2000. *
  - ■ Selected yearbooks and alumni directories available at Wilmette Public Library. *
- ○ Romona School (grades K-4; 1958-present)
- ○ Sears School (Kenilworth; grades K-8; 1899-present)
- ○ Stolp School (grades 7-8; 1917-1962)
- ○ Wilmette Junior High School (grades 7 & 8; 1962-present; originally called Locus Jr. High)
- ● Private Schools
  - ○ St. Francis Xavier School (grades K-8; 1910-present)
  - ○ St. Joseph School (grades K-8; 1873-1986, 1998-present)
  - ○ Ronald Knox Montessori School (preschool; 1963-present)
  - ○ Loyola Academy (high school, grades 9-12; 1909-present)
  - ○ Regina Dominican High School (grades 9-12; 1958-present)
  - ○ Arlyn Day School (alternative school for jr. high and high school; 1983-present)

Photographs and Postcards

- ● Wilmette Public Library has some digitized photographs on our website: http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/2817942/data?grd=1856 *
- ● The Digital Public Library of America (http://dp.la) and the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov) have several photographs of Wilmette and the area.
- ● Hussey-Arntson, Kathy L. Wilmette (Images of America), 2012. *

* resources with an asterisk are available at the Wilmette Public Library.

- <u>New Trier pictorial : business, professional, municipal, educational, religious, social</u>, 1923. *
- Smaller physical collections of photos and postcards may be found in local historical societies and museums, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

Miscellaneous items of interest

- WPL has various Oral Histories of local residents. http://history.wilmettelibrary.info/2816728/data?grd=357
- Kenilworth History Photography group on Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/groups/kenilworthhistory/ -

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