



OLDEST HOUSE—The oldest house in Wilmette, dating back 98 years, is the Paul Nanzig home at 335 Ridge road. The top picture shows the house as it looked in about 1909, and the lower photo as it appears today.

Constructed in 1849, for Reinard Nanzig and his bride, the former Miss Ann Marie Hoffmann, the house still rests on its original beams. In the front room, Reinard Nanzig conducted his shoe-making business and maintained a post office for Gross Point settlers.

The upstairs was not finished when the structure was first built. Since then the house has been re-decorated and remodeled several times, as can be seen in the lower picture. The present kitchen was the old wood shed. The room now used for dining was Reinard Nanzig's living room and kitchen.

Spelled Town's Name Wrong But Proved a Good Prognosticator

"Wilmett," according to the Sunday Times (Chicago) of May 4, 1873, "is the next station beyond Evanston, and about 14 miles from the city. The major part of the town," the article goes on to report, "was once the property of Alexander McDaniel, an old fishman, who still exercises a sort of paternal vigilance over the locality.

"The depot at this place is quite a pretentious affair, and said to be the finest on the entire line of the road. The general lay of the land is fair, and averages about 30 feet above the lake.

"The town census claims 300 inhabitants, and the vigilant reportorial eye discerned about 60 pleasantly situated residences. The town was laid out in 1871 (1869 is the more accurate date), when the depot was

Thinks Romantic Urge Impelled Pioneer's Arrival

"I think my father had his eye on Ann Marie Hoffmann when he came over from Germany with the Bartholmeus Hoffmann family in 1844," remarked Paul Nanzig when asked about his father's immigration to this country.

Whether Miss Hoffmann was the sole reason for Reinard Nanzig's coming to America is not known, but he did marry her in 1849.

His first job in this country, according to his son, was with a shoe-making business in Chicago. After his marriage, however, he opened his own shoemaking shop in the front room of his new home at 335 Ridge road. (Story of historic house is found elsewhere on this page.)

Reinard Nanzig was a prominent Gross Point village official and held several jobs in the township. For a number of years he was New Trier township clerk, holding this position from 1855 to 1858, 1860 to 1865, 1874 to 1876, and 1878 to 1882. He was township assessor from 1870 to 1874 and township highway commissioner from 1852 to 1853.

The first village clerk of Gross Point, Mr. Nanzig was also one of the three directors of the original school board of Gross Point. He held the position of school clerk on this board, of which Maternus Schaefer and Peter Reinart (also township highway commissioner, 1858-59) were also members.

Mr. Nanzig died in 1882, and Mrs. Nanzig in 1910.

Charles McDaniel Was Early Sidewalk Builder

Charles McDaniel, son of Alexander McDaniel, was one of the village's earliest carpenters. About 1890, he laid a wooden walk along Lake avenue from the railroad west to Ridge road. He also built walks in other improved sections of the village. These walks were always staked to the ground to prevent "floating away" in the spring.

built. Since then it has enjoyed a steady growth, and more prosperous days are in store. A union church is now building at a cost of \$6,000, and will be completed in a few months. The schools are reported equal to the average.

"Property in bulk is valued at \$500 per acre, while that divided into lots sells at prices ranging from \$5 to \$10 a front foot, within a reasonable distance from the station. Thirty new homes are now in course of construction, and others will no doubt be begun and even completed before the building season is over."

Edmond P. Dunshee Was Leading Figure in Civic Activity

A prominent village official after the turn of the century was Edmond P. Dunshee. Serving as Village Clerk from 1898, until his resignation in 1903, Mr. Dunshee also held the positions of Superintendent of Public Works and Justice of the Peace.

He was Police Magistrate from 1917 to his death, August 17, 1918. Appointed Village Collector and Office Manager on August 1, 1918, he also occupied these posts until the time of his death. In addition, Mr. Dunshee was at one time clerk of the Board of Local Improvements and clerk of the Board of Education.

Mr. Dunshee was born November 8, 1852, in Twinsburg, Ohio. At the age of two he moved with his family to a farm near Waupun, Wis., and when he was 13 years old they moved to Charles City, Iowa, where he lived, except for slight intervals, until September 1887, when he came to Wilmette.

He attended Wayland Academy at Beaver Dam, Wis., and high school at Charles City. He started studying at the Iowa Agricultural college at Ames, but the death of his father ended his educational career.

During a short residence in Ft. Wayne, Ind., he met and married Emerine H. Hurd. They had four children—Esther A., now Mrs. Lorin A. Bower, 1216 Ashland avenue; Zilpha R., who was drowned in Lake Michigan in 1896; Marion E., now a resident of Houston, Tex., and Robert, who now lives in Waldport, Ore.

For the first few years of his residence in Wilmette Mr. Dunshee was engaged in the real estate business with the Drury Brothers. He was a member of the First Congregational church.

President Zipf Was Debt Eraser

Elected president of the village in 1917, Edward Zipf served four terms, retiring in 1925. Finding the village heavily in debt, Mr. Zipf quickly established a modern accounting system for the village books, directed measures which put the municipal treasury on a cash basis and pushed through a number of civic improvements, including the laying of a new water main, the purchase of the village green site, the construction of a second story on the village hall, and new equipment for the fire department.

During his administration, the electric street-lighting system replaced the old gas lamps. All these projects were handled on a cash basis, and upon Mr. Zipf's retirement, the village had a surplus sufficient in the treasury to operate municipal functions for almost a year.

It was during his administration that the Village of Gross Point was annexed to Wilmette in 1924, extending the village limits as far west as Illinois road. Also, while he was in office, in 1920, the Palm Sunday tornado struck the central business district. Mr. Zipf directed the rehabilitation work.

Mr. Zipf was president of the Wilmette board of education from 1912 to 1917, and it was during his term that the Byron C. Stolp school was built.

Founder of the Zipf Brothers Coal company in 1904, Mr. Zipf was president of the concern at the time of his death, August 26, 1940, at the age of 76 years. He was president of the Chicago Coal Merchants' association in 1920.

A native of Kankakee, he had attended Naperville college.



GROSS POINT'S FIRST POST OFFICE—Standing in exactly the same place (the northeast corner of the Paul Nanzig home, 335 Ridge road) that it did about 85 years ago in Reinard Nanzig's shoe shop is the old Gross Point post office. Pictured with the historic box are Mr. and Mrs. Paul Nanzig, son and daughter-in-law of the pioneer shoe-maker. Also shown is the old Gross Point ballot box, used for both school and village elections.

Early Gross Point settlers came to Nanzig's shoe shop with and for the mail just as pioneer settlers of Wilmette went to Alexander McDaniel's real estate office for mail service. As village clerk and school trustee, Reinard Nanzig also used the post office as a file for his official papers. (Photo by Harvey Steffens)

HIGHWAY OFFICIAL

Paul Nanzig, 335 Ridge road, was township highway commissioner from 1902 to 1914. The street now named Central Park was formerly called Nanzig avenue in his honor. For 40 years Mr. Nanzig was a wholesale florist until his retirement several years ago.