

Newsletter  
of the  
Illinois  
State  
Archives  
&  
The Illinois  
State Historical  
Records  
Advisory Board

**Jesse White**  
Secretary of State  
&  
State Archivist

Volume 31  
Number 2

## Archives completes work on Illinois attorney's oaths

In 2009, in conjunction with the renovation of the Illinois Supreme Court building, the Illinois State Archives agreed to restore or take preventative preservation measures on 91 boxes of Illinois attorney oaths that had been stored in the basement. Signing an oath is the final step an attorney must take before practicing law in Illinois and many of these oaths date prior to the Civil War. The oath stipulates that the newly minted attorney will support the Constitution of the United States and of Illinois and faithfully execute the duties of an attorney.

The work performed by the Archives included humidifying and flat filing the oaths, placing them in archival quality folders and repairing the

most damaged oaths. Many of these oaths were in poor condition due to mold and water damage. The Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission provided the archival folders and boxes needed to preserve the oaths and assisted in identifying oaths of notable Illinois attorneys.

"I am pleased with the results of this project, which seeks to restore and preserve a unique facet of our state's history," said Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White, who also serves as State Archivist. "Approximately 142,000 oaths, some preceding the Civil War, have been restored."

Six of the seven Illinois Supreme Court justices recently visited the

Archives to inspect the work done by conservation staff. Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Lloyd A. Karmeier said, "The court recently had the opportunity to tour the State Archives and see, firsthand, the efforts being made there to conserve these important documents. Attorney oaths offer scholars, educators and students a very tangible, but very fragile connection to the lawyers who have helped shape our laws and the legal profession over the past two centuries. The court is extremely grateful to the Archives for everything it has done to ensure that this irreplaceable record of the legal profession's history is preserved and protected for future generations. The work done by the Archives' staff has been nothing less than extraordinary."



LEFT: Justices Robert Thomas, Anne Burke and Thomas Kilbride, and Clerk of the Supreme Court Carolyn Grosboll examine damaged attorney's oaths. ABOVE: Archival Conservator Alex Dixon explains the benefits of encapsulation to Justice Rita Garmin.

Illinois State Archives • Margaret Cross Norton Building • Capitol Complex • Springfield, IL 62756  
217-782-4682 • Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. • Closed state holidays

## DATES & REMINDERS

### Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

19th Annual Conference on Illinois History

October 5-6, Springfield

<https://www2.illinois.gov/ihpa/Involved/Pages/Conference.aspx>

217-785-9132

### Midwest Archives Conference

2017 Fall Symposium

"Transitioning from Good to Great Exhibits"

October 13-14, Columbus, Ohio

<http://www.midwestarchives.org/>

### Illinois Association of Museums

2017 Annual Conference

October 18-20, Mt. Vernon

<http://www.illinoismuseums.org/inspire/annual-conference/>

### Illinois State Genealogical Society

2017 Fall Conference

October 27-28, Moline

<http://www.ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=536>

### Downstate Local Records

#### Commission Meeting

1st Tuesday of the month, 10 a.m.

(unless otherwise noted)

Margaret Cross Norton Building, Springfield

[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

### Cook County Local Records

#### Commission Meeting

2nd Tuesday of the month, 11 a.m.

Video Conference Room, 9th floor

Thompson Center, Chicago

or Capital City Center, Springfield

130 W. Mason St.

[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

### State Records Commission Meeting

3rd Wednesday of every month, 9:30 a.m.

Margaret Cross Norton Building, Springfield

[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

## 200 years of Illinois history (1818-2018)

In 2018, Illinois will celebrate its 200th birthday. In anticipation of this bicentennial celebration, *For the Record* is featuring in each issue a document from the State Archives' holdings relevant to a significant event in Illinois history. The ninth featured document concerns the expansion of paved roads in Illinois.

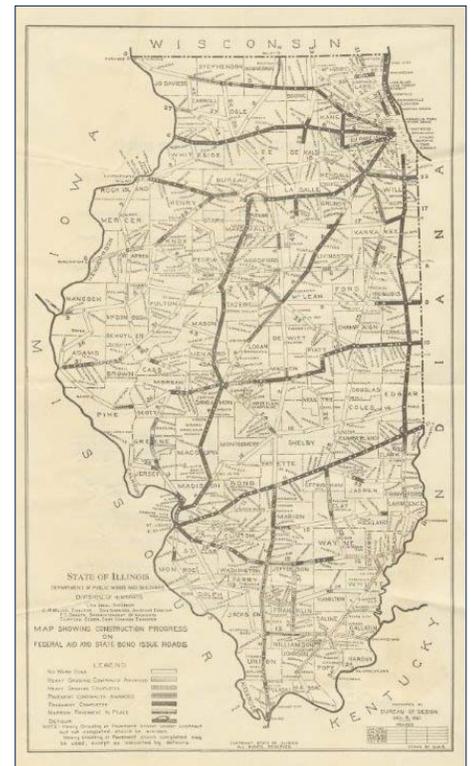
In the early 20th century, few roads in the U.S. were well-suited for wagons and motor vehicles. Dirt roads often became rutted and muddy, causing them to be impassible and bringing travel to a halt. Farmers in particular were negatively affected by such road conditions, and in 1893 the Office of Roads was established in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In Illinois, the Good Roads Commission was created in 1903 to "investigate the various problems of road building in Illinois," and in 1905 the State Highway Commission was created to "investigate and carry on experimental work in road building" and "recommend standards for the construction of highways."

In 1913, with the passage of the Tice Law, a State Highway Department was created and tasked with general supervision of highway and bridge construction. The burden of funding and maintaining major roads was shifted to the counties and bond financing was also approved for highway building. With the issuance of \$60 million in state bonds in 1918 for the state highway system and the beginning of federal aid programs for state highways, the 1920s became the golden era for road construction and improvement in Illinois.

During Len Small's tenure as governor from 1921 to 1929, approximately 7,000 miles of paved roads were built. The featured document this month shows work already completed by July 1922 and proposed road

projects throughout the state. In 1922, Illinois set a record of 741 miles of road paved in a year. The state broke that record again the following year, completing 1,085 miles of paved road. Illinois also set a record in 1924 by completing 2,669 feet of paved road in one day.

Governor Small also boasted of forcing down the price of building concrete roads. The first bids received by the State Highway Department under Small were far higher than expected, around \$40,000 per mile. Consequently, the bids were all rejected and bidders were told that no contracts would be awarded over \$30,000 per mile. The next round of bids came in much lower and in 1922, the average cost per mile for contracts was approximately \$27,170.



During the 1920s, Illinois created a record-setting road building program. Despite rail and coal strikes, Illinois set a record in 1922 for the most miles paved in a year.



# ILLINOIS BICENTENNIAL

## Discoveries made in Illinois Supreme Court records

During the Archives' recent restoration of heavily damaged Illinois attorney's oaths housed at the Supreme Court, a number of notable oaths were discovered, including oaths for Elmer E. Ellsworth, Charles Guiteau and Joseph Cannon.

Elmer E. Ellsworth was a law clerk in the offices of Abraham Lincoln and William Herndon and served in the Union army in the Civil War. "In May 1861 Ellsworth was killed removing a Confederate flag from the Marshall House in Alexandria, Virginia, right across from the District of Columbia and he is often considered the first major Union casualty of the Civil War," said John Lupton of the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission. Until his oath was discovered there had been no evidence that Ellsworth had become a lawyer before leaving for the war.

Also discovered during restoration was the oath signed by Charles Guiteau, who would gain notoriety when, on July 2, 1881, he shot and killed President James Garfield. Included with Guiteau's attorney's oath, which was signed in 1868, is a certificate attesting to Guiteau's good moral character.

Another notable oath discovered was that of Joseph Cannon of Danville. Cannon served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 46 years from 1873 to 1923. He served as the United States Speaker of the House from 1903 to 1911 and is considered by many to be the most powerful Speaker in U.S. history.

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## ISHRAB offers online grant writing class

The Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board (ISHRAB) is offering "Grant Writing for Digitization and Preservation Projects," an online course for 25 Illinois archivists and archival volunteers, presented by LYRISIS. This 4-hour course, taught over two 2-hour sessions, will be held on Tuesday, June 6, and Thursday, June 8, from 2-4 p.m.

ISHRAB will award scholarships to pay the registration fees for Illinois applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Complete information and an application form can be found at: [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com) (click on Departments, Illinois State Archives, Illinois Historical Records Advisory Board). Deadline to apply is May 29, 2017.

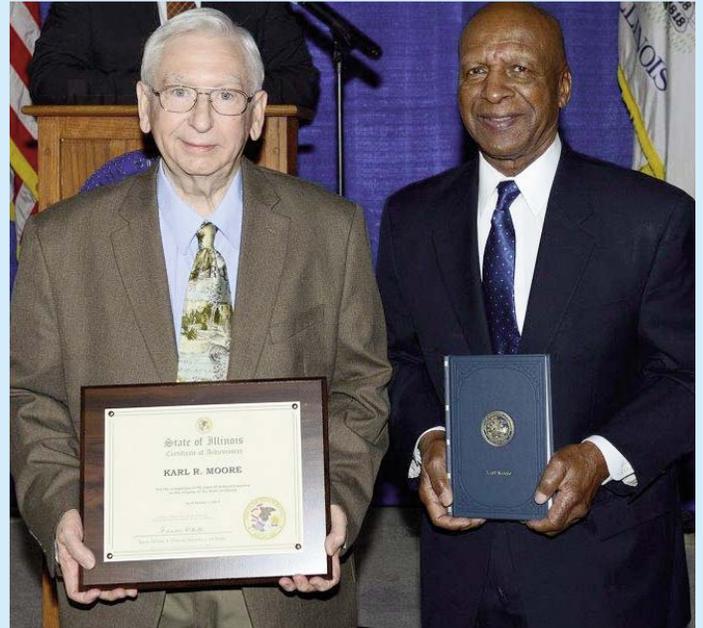
If you have any questions, please contact:

David Joens, Director  
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Margaret Cross Norton Bldg.  
Capitol Complex  
Springfield, IL 62756  
217-782-3492  
217-524-3930 (fax)  
[djoens@ilsos.net](mailto:djoens@ilsos.net)

Funds for these scholarships are provided by a State Board Programming Grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

## Secretary of State service awards

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White recently honored two State Archives employees for their years of service to the Secretary of State's office. Lynn Kahbeah of the Records Management Unit received a 35-year service award for her work. Karl Moore, an Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD) supervisor, received a 40-year service award from the Secretary of State.



Secretary of State Jesse White honors Karl Moore with a certificate of service for his 40 years of work with the Secretary of State's office. Moore is the supervisor of the Illinois Regional Archives Depository (IRAD).

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## ISAAB/ISHRAB member appointments

Secretary of State Jesse White has appointed two new board members to the Illinois State Archives Advisory Board/Illinois Historical Records Advisory Board. Cecilia Salvatore of Dominican University will carry out the remainder of departing board member Aisha Haykal's term through 2018. Cecilia is a professor in the School of Information Studies and the coordinator of the Archives and Cultural Heritage Certificate Program at Dominican University. Mary Fijal, a grant consultant at the Illinois State Library, was appointed as the Illinois State Library's designee. For a complete listing of ISAAB/ISHRAB members and their contact information, visit: [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com) (Departments, Illinois State Archives, Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board).

### Illinois State Archives

Margaret Cross Norton Building, Capitol Complex  
Springfield, IL 62756 • 217-782-4682; 217-524-3930 (Fax)

Monday-Friday: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Closed all state holidays.

## World War I centennial commemorations in Illinois

April 6, 2017, marked the 100th anniversary of America's entry in World War I. For more information about events commemorating the centennial of the war, please visit the Illinois World War I Centennial Committee website at: <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/illinois-wwi-centennial-home.html>.



On Dec. 11, 1930, the Gold Star Mothers' Memorial was unveiled to honor mothers of soldiers from Illinois who lost their lives in World War I. Sculpted by Leon Hermant, the statue is located in the Howlett Building on the Capitol Complex in Springfield.

## Select Archives Publications

*Federal Township Plats, 1804-1891* (2002): 102 Illinois counties with each county on a single CD-ROM (contains plat images in MrSID format) – \$20 per county

*Abraham Lincoln in Illinois: A Selection of Documents from the Illinois State Archives* (2008), teacher's manual (87 pp.) and 35 document facsimiles with transcriptions – \$10.00\*

*Hard Times in Illinois, 1930-1940: A Selection of Documents from the Illinois State Archives* (2002), teacher's manual (119 pp.) and 50 document facsimiles – \$10\*

*The Illinois and Michigan Canal, 1827-1911: A Selection of Documents from the Illinois State Archives* (1998), teacher's manual (115 pp.) and 50 document facsimiles with transcriptions – \$12\*

*Illinois at War, 1941-1945: A Selection of Documents from the Illinois State Archives* (1994), teacher's manual (119 pp.) and 50 document facsimiles – \$12\*

*From the Ashes, 1872-1900: A Selection of Documents from the Proceedings Files of the Chicago City Council* (1990), teacher's manual (123 pp.) and 50 document facsimiles with transcriptions – \$10\*

*Early Chicago, 1833-1871: A Selection of City Council Proceedings Files from the Illinois State Archives* (1986, 1999), teacher's manual (115 pp.) and 50 document facsimiles with transcriptions – \$14\*

**\*Teaching packets are available FREE to Illinois educational institutions by submitting a request on letterhead stationery.** All other requests are filled for the fee listed. To order publications, please contact: Illinois State Archives, Publications Unit, Norton Building, Springfield, IL 62756, 217-524-9844. Please make checks payable to Secretary of State. For a complete list of Illinois State Archives publications, please visit: <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/publications.html>

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Jesse White • Secretary of State & State Archivist  
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