

The David Davis Mansion  
Monroe and Davis Streets  
Bloomington  
McLean County  
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-302

HABS  
ILL,  
57-BLOOM,  
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

**ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS**

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## THE DAVID DAVIS MANSION

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Address: Monroe and Davis Streets, Bloomington, McLean  
County, Illinois.

Present Owner: State of Illinois

Administrator: Illinois State Historical Library

Present Use: House museum

Brief Statement  
of Significance: Built by Judge David Davis, an associate of  
Abraham Lincoln in law and politics for more than  
twenty years, member of the United States Supreme  
Court (1862-1877), and U. S. Senator (1877-1883).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: 1872-1886: David Davis.  
1886-1959: successive descendants of David Davis.  
1959-present: State of Illinois
2. Date of erection: 1870-1872
3. Architect, builders, suppliers, etc.: Alfred H. Piquenard,  
architect, emigrant from France, designer of Illinois  
Statehouse. Builders and suppliers: [extracted from  
letters and bills among David Davis' papers, Illinois  
State Historical Library]:
  1. Fell House, previously on present site, moved by  
M. L. McIntire, May 1870.
  2. Excavation by James Long, paid June 30, 1870.
  3. Lumber, George Bruner, Bloomington.
  4. Stonework, Charles Gindele
  5. Tin and sheet iron work by C. H. Read and Brothers  
Bloomington
  6. Railings, "Grecian Border" and steps from Philadelphia  
Ornamental Iron and Bronze Works.
  7. Painting and glasswork by Sampson and Davidson,  
Bloomington.
  8. Plastering, H. W. Corman and Grow.

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9. Plumbing, George McIntosh
10. Stairs, Letillier & Conden
11. Doors, August Wildermuth, St. Louis
12. Fresco and decorative painting, 1872, Aug. H. Becker of St. Louis.
13. Carpets, drapes, and curtains by Alex. T. Stewart & Co., New York
14. Carpets laid July 1872 by T. J. Hoffman
15. Furniture supplied by Frederick Krutina, New York in 1872
16. Drain, new barn, corn cribs by R. Greenlee, Bloomington.
4. Notes on alterations and additions: The second-floor tower room was expanded into the hall by 6-1/2' at some unspecified date.
7. Sources of information: The David Davis Mansion, A Museum of Nineteenth-Century Living (Springfield, Illinois: Illinois State Historical Library, 1961).  
Excerpts from the David Davis papers at the Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois, by Bernard Wax, Field Representative of the Library.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: A very complete example of an elaborate, late-nineteenth century mansion, having had a minimum of alterations and being in excellent condition.

Total construction cost: over \$75,000.

### B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimension: 99' ± x 65' ±
2. Foundations: Brick faced with a dressed stone water table in front
3. Wall construction: Yellow, hard-burned brick with stone quoins
4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: Porches have stone foundations, wood floors, cast-iron railings both at

floor level and roof level, wood posts, hip roofs.  
Front stoop: Stone steps, landing baluster, columns,  
pediment, and roof parapet. Other stoops: Wood steps  
and platforms and cast-iron handrails, hipped roofs sup-  
ported by wood brackets.  
Bulkhead: Brick cheeks, wood doors.

5. Chimneys: Brick with stone trim and pots and sheet metal roof-like collars.
6. Openings;
  - a. Front doorway is arched with molded stone trim, has double doors and transom.
  - b. Windows are generally double hung sash, arch head, stone trim; oval bulls' eyes.
7. Roof: Flat in center, hipped at edges with slate.
8. Tower: Slate, mansard roof on tower with dormers.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Basically each floor has a central hall with connected stair hall, around which are clustered rooms with fireplaces and porches, and to the rear, a service wing.
2. Stairways: Front and rear, both open. Risers of front stair are carved.
3. Flooring: Hardwood strips
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster with plaster and wood trim.
5. Doorways and doors: Arched plaster openings in hall; several doors have transoms
6. Lighting: Original metal gas fixtures with glass globes have been converted to electricity.
7. Heating: Eight, Italian marble fireplaces (table tops are made of same marble); brick, coal-burning furnace in basement; built-in ranges in kitchen and laundry.
8. Plumbing: Water pumped manually from basement to tank in attic and distributed by gravity to rest of house; original baths, shower, sinks remain.

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9. Communication: Speaking-tube system.

C. Site

1. Orientation: Front faces south.
2. Outbuildings: Garage, woodhouse, stables.
3. Landscaping: Oval, gravel drive around house; trees, lawn, shrubbery.

Prepared by Robert E. Cooper, Architect  
National Park Service  
January 1962.

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FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001