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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by entering the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Willits, Levi, House

other names/site number New Boston Museum

2. Location

street & number 202 Main Street  not for publication

city or town New Boston  vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Mercer code 131 zip code 61272

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Wheeler, SHPO 3-17-95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

for  
Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Entered in the  
National Register 4/20/95  
Date of Action

Willits, Levi, House  
Name of Property

Mercer, Illinois  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> private                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State            | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal          | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Recreation & Culture/museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century

foundation brick

Greek Revival

walls brick

roof asphalt

other wood

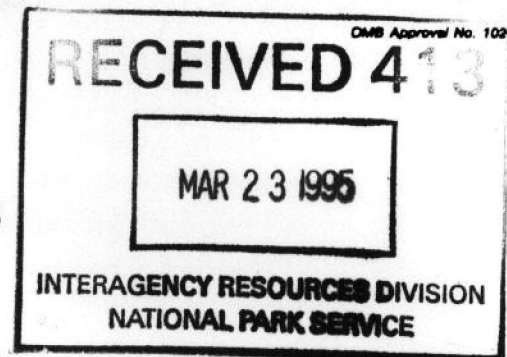
**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Willits, Levi, House

### Narrative Description

#### Summary

The Levi Willits House is a two story brick house built in 1856. It is located at the northeast corner of Main and Second Streets, approximately one-and-one-half blocks east of the Mississippi River in New Boston, Illinois. New Boston is located on the western edge of Mercer County, approximately 33 miles southeast of Rock Island. This Mid-19th century home has many Greek Revival features including its flat window sills and lintels, six-over-six windows, and low-pitched gabled roof. The home was built by Levi Willits. The bricks came from the James Stevenson brick yard in Mannon, Illinois, approximately six miles northeast of New Boston. Some of the bricks around the home has his signature, "J. S." on them. The brick work pattern has seven stretchers and one course of headers. The home is rectangular in design with a small one-story kitchen addition added to the rear in the late 1800s. There is a small addition on the north side added between 1908-1910 for Joe Stineman for an office for his telephone company. This addition was expanded to two stories to provide an outside entrance for an upstairs apartment in the early 1980s. There is an original one story brick summer kitchen to the northeast of the house. The summer kitchen is considered contributing to the nomination. Also, there is a wood frame, two car garage built in the 1930s that is now connected to the house by a breezeway. The garage is considered noncontributing to the nomination. The sits at the northeast corner of Main and Second Streets in the original platted town of New Boston approximately 1 1/2 blocks east of the Mississippi River. The neighborhood is a residential and commercial mix with commercial structures aligned along Main Street.

The home has a low-pitched asphalt shingled gable roof. It is believed that the roof pitch was raised sometime before 1875. This is evidenced by the roof joists which are circular sawn dimensional lumber. There is a chimney located on the west wall, one located approximately two-thirds of the length of the house to the east, and two on the east wall. It is believed that the east section of the house was added shortly after the home was built. This is based on that this section has a dugout basement with the rest of the house having a crawlspace; there is a break in the brick work on the second floor above the south side porch; the interior wall at this break is a load bearing brick wall with a heavy wood beam below in the foundation; the east windows are two-over-two rather than six-over-six, and the interior woodwork although similar in styling is different.

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Willits, Levi, House

There is a one story entry porch at the northwest corner of the house and a larger one story porch along the south side. From a drawing in the 1875 Illustrated Atlas Map of Mercer County, Illinois which pictured the house, the porches were different in design. They had classical square columns and roof-line balustrades. The south porch was much smaller in size. There was also a porch on the east side of the house with classical columns. It was removed at an unknown date. A 1900s photograph shows a porch on the south side with turned spindled columns and spindled balusters. The present porches were constructed in the 1920s. The west porch has large square hollow wood posts with a sloped mansard roof. The south porch has large square hollow wood posts and a balcony with simple wood balusters and a rail.

Windows on the home have wood lintels and sills. Some of the wood sills were replaced with concrete in the 1980s. Today, the home faces south on Main Street, however, it is possible that the front door of the home is located on the west side of the house facing the Mississippi River. The staircase is also located near this door. In the 1850s when the house was built, commercial focus for New Boston was located near the river. As Main Street developed along the south side of the house to the east, the commercial development and focus moved also. Thus an entry was also provided to the south along Main Street. The drawing from the 1875 Atlas shows the home from the southwest corner allowing views of both entries.

## Exterior

The west elevation of the home along the first story has an entryway to the left with an eight-paneled wood door and a five-light transom above. To the south are two, six-over-six windows. Above the entry door on the second story is a door that provided access to a balcony above the porch, it has been boarded over. There are two six-over-six windows to the south. The attic has a single six-over-six window.

The south elevation has two, six-over-six windows and a door with glass and four lower wood panels with a five-light transom above. To the east of the door is a single, shorter, newer one-over-one window which replaced the original window. There is another six-over-six window to the east of this. A window on the southeast corner was bricked in during the 1980s when this area was turned into a bathroom. Above on the second floor are two, six-over-six windows, a door providing access to the balcony with an upper glass panel and two lower wood panels with a diamond patterned rectangular

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transom above, and two, six-over-six windows to the east. A window on the southeast corner was bricked in during the 1980 s when this area was converted into a bathroom for the upstairs apartment.

The east elevation first floor has a bricked in window on the southeast corner where the bathroom was placed, a two-over-two window, and the one-story gabled roof brick kitchen addition to the east. The south wall of the kitchen addition has a door and a single two-over-two window. The east wall of the kitchen addition has a one-over-one window. Above on the second story of the main house is a bricked in window on the southeast corner where a bathroom was added and two, two-over-two windows to the north. The attic has a two-over-two window. On the north side of the kitchen addition is an enclosed wood frame porch. Part of its north wall abuts the brick wall of the summer kitchen to the north. There are no openings between these two wall.

At the northeast corner of the first story of the north elevation is a small one-story brick pantry addition. It has a small, six-over-one window. The bricks are identical to the main house bricks and has the same common bond pattern. To the west of the pantry is a two-over-two window. To the west of this window is the wood addition that was added in 1908-1910 for use as an office. It has a small one-over-one window on its east wall and a larger one-over-one window on the north wall. The second story of the main house has a one-over-one window. The second story of the addition which was added in the early 1980s to provide an outside entrance for the second floor apartment has a small one-over-one window on the east wall and a modern wood door on the north wall. To the west of the addition is a six-over-six window.

The summer kitchen shares a brick wall with an enclosed porch which attaches to the kitchen addition. It has parapeted walls with a low-pitched asphalt shingled gable roof. There is a chimney on the north wall. The west elevation of the summer kitchen has two, four-panel wood doors providing access into both rooms. On the east elevation is a door and a six-over-six window.

## Interior

The northwest corner entry hall has an eight-paneled wood entry door with a five-pane transom above. Baseboards in this room are Greek Revival in style with a molding at its top edge. The doorways have simple entablatures. The staircase has a walnut

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newel post and simple balusters. The door into the parlor to the south and the door into the office/den to the east have four panels. There is a small closet located underneath the stair. Floors in the entry, parlor, dining/family room, and current dining room are 2 1/2" wide maple replacement flooring. The original floor may still be underneath as the floor is raised. The walls and ceilings are plaster throughout the house except where noted. Some of the plaster may have been repaired or replaced throughout the years.

The parlor located to the southwest has elaborate Greek Revival styled woodwork. The doorways to the entry on the north and dining room/family room to the east, have Doric pilasters with an entablature and wood panel above. The large windows have Doric pilasters with an entablature above and wood panels below. There are wood panels along the sides of the recessed windows. The baseboards have three boards with a molding at the top edge. There is an enclosed chimney opening between the two west windows that was used for a heating stove.

To the east of the parlor is the dining/family room which also provided outside access to the south porch. Doorways in this room have shouldered architraves with recessed vertical wood panels in the trim on either side. The south exterior door is glass with four wood panels below. There is a five-light transom above this door. Baseboards in this room have a two board design that slopes in to the wall. A later door opening with molded trim was added to the southeast to provide access into a bathroom.

The office/den to the north of the dining/family room includes a 4' x 14' wood addition to the north added in 1908-1910. Doorways in this room have simple entablatures. There is a wooden wainscot cupboard in the northeast corner. The west wall has wooden wainscoting. The south and east wall have been covered with plywood. Baseboards in this room are simple boards.

To the east is the former kitchen which is now the dining room. It has an enclosed servants' staircase and basement staircase on the south wall. The doorway to the servants' staircase has four panels. The doorways in this room have simple entablatures. The former exterior doorway to the east which now leads to the kitchen addition has a three-light transom above. The baseboards have a two board design that slopes in to the wall. A door to east of the staircase along the south wall leads to the bathroom. This room was divided into two rooms at a later date to provide storage and a bathroom. There is a chimney in the west wall of the storage room which also ran to

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a stove on the east wall of the dining/family room. Baseboards in this room have a two board design that slopes in to the wall.

The basement is located underneath the former kitchen and bathroom. It has a brick floor with a herringbone pattern. There is a crawlspace to the west under the rest of the house.

To the north of the former kitchen/dining room is a small pantry. There is a four-panel wood door leading into the room. It has built-in wood cupboards on the east, north, and west walls.

The kitchen addition which was constructed in the late 1800s has been remodeled over the years. It has 4' x 8' wood sheets for its ceiling and modern wood panelled walls.

The upstairs hallway has a balcony along the south side of the staircase. A wall has been added on the west side creating a closet space for the northwest bedroom. This closet has a doorway to the west that leads to a former balcony above the west porch. It has been boarded over. Doorways in this hall have simple entablatures. The doorway to the east leads to the attic staircase. It has a single vertical wood panel. The baseboards have a three board design with a top edge molding.

The front or west bedroom has been divided into two bedrooms when the house was converted into apartments. The outside walls' woodwork and window trim remains. Window and door trims in this area have simple entablatures. The baseboards have a two board design that slopes in to the wall.

The middle bedroom to the south has an exterior door along the south exterior wall leading to the balcony above the south porch. This door has an upper glass panel and two vertical wood panels below. There is a rectangular shaped transom above the door with a diamond pattern. Baseboards in this room have a three board design with a top edge molding.

The east bedroom has simpler door moldings with entablatures than the other bedrooms. The baseboards are also simpler in design but have a three board design with a top edge molding. A furnace has been added in the space where the servants' staircase is located.

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To the south of the east bedroom is a bathroom. It has a four-panel wood door with a simple wood entablature leading to the south bedroom. The baseboards in this room are more Italianate in design.

To the north of the south bedroom is the upstairs entry/storage room. It has modern wood paneled walls. There is an exterior doorway on the north leading to an exterior wood staircase. There is also a doorway on the east leading into the east bedroom.

The attic is unfinished and left as one big room. Single windows at the east and west ends provide light for the space.

### Summer kitchen

The summer kitchen has two small rooms divided by a brick wall. The north room is the former kitchen area and has a brick fireplace/cooking hearth. The south room was used for storage. Floors in this building are poured concrete.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1856-c. 1860s

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Willits, Levi, Builder

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Willits, Levi, House  
Name of Property

Mercer, Illinois  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** Less than one

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

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4	5	5	9	1	9	0
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3 

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2 

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4 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title David Newton, Assistant National Register Coordinator

organization Illinois Historic Preservation Agency date February 1, 1995

street & number 1 Old State Capitol Plaza telephone 217-785-4324

city or town Springfield state Illinois zip code 62701

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of New Boston, City Hall

street & number Main Street telephone 309-587-8181

city or town New Boston state Illinois zip code 61272

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Statement of Significance**

The Levi Willits House is locally significant for Criterion C for architecture as a representative example of a mid-19th century house with Greek Revival details. Built in 1856, it soon was added on to on the east side extending the house 14' 6". Its period of significance is from 1856 to the early 1860s when the house was thought to be extended. Among the home's Greek Revival details include its horizontal sills and lintels, six-over-six windows, low-pitched gabled roof, and interior woodwork.

**Architecture**

After the American Revolution, the young nation's builders began turning away from British models for buildings toward the inspiration of the ancient classic world of Greece and Rome. This new direction taken by American leaders including Thomas Jefferson and George Washington was inspired by anti-British feeling and the idealization of the classic world with its republic forms of government. Builders and architects began using Roman and Greek models for the new nation's governmental buildings. Soon statehouses and banks based on Roman designs sprang up throughout the country including Jefferson's designs for the University of Virginia and Virginia Capitol. A national sympathy for the Greek War of Independence and archaeological investigations of Greece aroused interest in Greek architecture. Designs loosely based on Greek models began appearing in carpenter's guides and pattern books. Among them were Asher Benjamin's The Practical House Carpenter and The Builder's Guide and Minard Lafever's The Modern Builders Guide and The Beauties of Modern Architecture which spread the movement throughout the country.<sup>1</sup>

Residential design at the time of the 1820s through the 1850s borrowed classical ideas and details from Greek and Roman models. These included classical inspired columns, porticos, symmetrical arrangements, low-pitched roofs, classical cornices with entablature and frieze, horizontal sills and lintels, and temple like forms. By the 1820s and 1830s this new American design became known as the Greek Revival style. Greek Revival design dominated America's architecture from the 1820s through the 1850s. Prominent east coast architects such as Benjamin H. Latrobe, Robert Mills, and William Strickland popularized the style. Greek Revival architecture was spread by settlers from

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Willits, Levi, House

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the east as they came to the Midwest and also from the south coast as settlers moved further west into the states of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Local builders and craftsmen in the Midwest used Greek Revival details in simple designs for front gabled, double pile, I, and upright and wing houses seen throughout this area. These details could range from using simple Greek inspired forms to adding cornices with friezes and returns, six-over-six windows, horizontal sills and lintels, dentils, and elaborate doorways with transoms and sidelights.

The Levi Willits House was built at a time when the Greek Revival style was very popular. The locally crafted house has features associated with mid-nineteenth century design and Greek Revival architecture including its low-pitched gabled roof and six-over-six windows with simple horizontal wood sills and lintels.

Other mid-19th century homes in New Boston have Greek Revival or later Italianate details. They include:

The northwest and northeast corners of Jefferson & Locust, brick gable front and wing Italianate, two story houses with belvedere and brackets. These two nearly identical houses were built c. 1857 for two business partners.

319 Jefferson. Two story, wood framed I-house with side-gabled roof, 5-bay front facade fenestration pattern with four-over-four windows, and transoms over some of the entries. This house has had some windows and doors enclosed.

323 Jefferson. Two story, wood framed, front gabled house with 3-bay front facade fenestration pattern with one-over-one windows and gable returns. This house has been synthetically sided and has an enclosed front porch.

407 Locust. Two story, wood framed, upright and wing house with diamond shaped panel in the attic. The house has six-over-six windows with a porch located in the area between the upright and wing. It has been sided with synthetic siding and the porch has been enclosed.

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Northeast corner of Madison and Broadway. Two story, wood framed, I-house with a 4-bay front facade fenestration pattern and a lunette in the gable end. The house has synthetic siding and the front porch is enclosed.

Northwest corner of Jefferson and Fifth. Two story, wood framed, front gabled house with one-over-one windows and 3-bay front facade fenestration pattern. The entry door has a transom and sidelights.

Southwest corner of Jefferson and Fourth. Two story, wood framed, I-house with end gable returns and six-over-six windows. The house has a 3-bay front facade fenestration pattern. The front porch has been enclosed.

418 South Fourth. Two story, wood framed, side gabled roof house. The house appears to be built in two sections with the north section having six-over-six windows. The front porch has been enclosed.

301 North Third. Two story, wood framed, front gabled house with 2-bay front facade fenestration pattern and one-over-one windows. The house has a stone foundation and a one-story window bay extension on the south. It has been synthetically sided and the front porch enclosed.

Northwest corner Washington and Sixth. Two story, wood framed front gabled house with 3-bay front facade fenestration pattern with pedimented hoods. The entry has a transom and sidelights and there is a lunette in the front gable attic. The house has been synthetically sided and a new front door installed.

414 North Fourth. Two story, wood framed upright and wing house with 3-bay front facade fenestration pattern. There are four-over-four windows and a triangular shaped window in the gable front attic. The front porch has decorative spindlework.

## History

The township of New Boston which includes the village of New Boston was settled by William Denison and his son, John W. Denison in 1827 approximately 1/2 mile south of the present village. Located opposite the mouth of the Iowa River on the banks of the Mississippi River and having a protected channel for boats and shipping, the Denisons

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thought the area to be an idea location for a settlement. In September 1834, the William Denison sold two thirds of his land in the area to Elijah Iles of Springfield and Edward Burrall of Massachusetts and the three men had the town of New Boston laid out. Abraham Lincoln was hired to survey and plat the town.<sup>2</sup>

On January 31, 1835, the Illinois legislature created Mercer County including the area around New Boston. Also, the legislature voted to make the town of New Boston, the first county seat. On April 6, 1835, an election was held for county offices and in April the commissioner's court met in new Boston. In 1836, the commissioner's court voted to move the county seat inland to Millersburg because of its central location.<sup>3</sup>

The first grist mill in the township opened for business in 1838 on the Edwards River by Isaac Lutz. In 1852, the present township of New Boston was organized and in 1859 the village was incorporated with a population of about 700 inhabitants.<sup>4</sup>

Levi Willits, the first owner and builder of this house was born May 31, 1808 in Pickaway County, Ohio on a farm. His parents, William and Mary Willits, had moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio and later moved to Indiana. Levi spent his youth on the farm and had very little formal education. He became a carpenter and cabinet maker and on December 1, 1832 he married Clarinda Drury, the daughter of Edward and Jane Drury of Wayne County, Indiana. After their marriage, the Willits resided in Raysville, Indiana, for four years before deciding to move to Illinois.

In 1837, the couple arrived in New Boston and erected a log house. Soon Mr. Willits added to the house with different frame additions. Levi Willits and William Drury entered into a partnership selling groceries, paints, medicines, and liquor to the local residents and settlers. The partnership became a very lucrative business for the two men. Willits also opened a general merchandise store in Millersburg. He was extensively involved in the lumber business, speculated in land, bought and shipped grain, had a pork packing firm, and was a general contractor for a number of buildings in and around New Boston. In 1856, Levi Willits constructed this house as his permanent residence. In 1857 Levi Willits and Judge John S. Thompson laid out the town of Aledo on land that they owned. Aledo was located in the center of the county and became the county seat in 1857. Willits founded colleges for both the Presbyterians and Methodists in Aledo, both of which were short-lived. He also built the Barton Hotel, Aledo's first hotel. On March 2, 1858 after suffering with inflammatory rheumatism, he passed away. During the late

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1850s, Willits had spent much time living in Aledo in rooms due to his business dealings there, but maintained his permanent residence in New Boston, where his wife, Clarinda, kept house.<sup>5</sup>

Clarinda continued to live in the house in New Boston until it was sold to Anthony Burdick, in the 1870s. Anthony Burdick was a partner with James M. Mannon in the general merchandise firm of Burdick & Mammon in the 1870s.<sup>6</sup> The house was sold in 1896 to Joseph Stineman. In the early 1900s, Stineman owned the local telephone company, and he had an one-story wood framed addition added in 1908-1910 to the north side of the house for the telephone office. The house passed through a number of owners and later became an apartment house. In the early 1980s, the an outside staircase and second addition above the first story wood frame addition was added by owner John R. Sloan to create an outside entrance to the upstairs apartment.

After John R. Sloan's death in 1989, his will stated that the home should be left to the village of New Boston in hopes that they would turn it into a museum. The New Boston Historical Society was formed to manage the museum for the village government. The house has had some minor repairs and has been decorated with collections of the area's residents. Two of the upstairs rooms are rented out for over-night lodging to hunters, fishermen, and vacationers.

The Levi Willits House remains today in the town of New Boston as a good example of locally built, brick, mid-19th century house with Greek Revival details. It maintains its historic integrity and is in good condition.

### Endnotes

1. Hamlin, Talbot, Greek Revival Architecture in America. New York: Dover Publications, Inc. (Reprint of 1944 edition), 1964, p. 3-4, 18. McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991, p. 170-172, 180.

2. H. H. Hill and Company, History of Mercer County. Chicago: H. H. Hill and Company, Publishers, 1882, p. 73, 80.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 12

Willits, Levi, House

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3. Ibid, p. 81-83.
4. Ibid, p. 84.
5. Ibid, p. 583-586.
6. Ibid, p. 97.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9,10 Page 13

Willits, Levi, House

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**Bibliography**

W. B. Brink and Company. Atlas Map of Mercer County, Illinois. Chicago: W. R. Brink and Company, 1875.

H. H. Hill and Company. History of Mercer County and A Short History of Henderson County. Chicago: H. H. Hill and Company, Publishers, 1882.

Hamlin, Talbot. Greek Revival Architecture in America. New York: Dover Publications, Reprint of 1944 edition, 1984.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

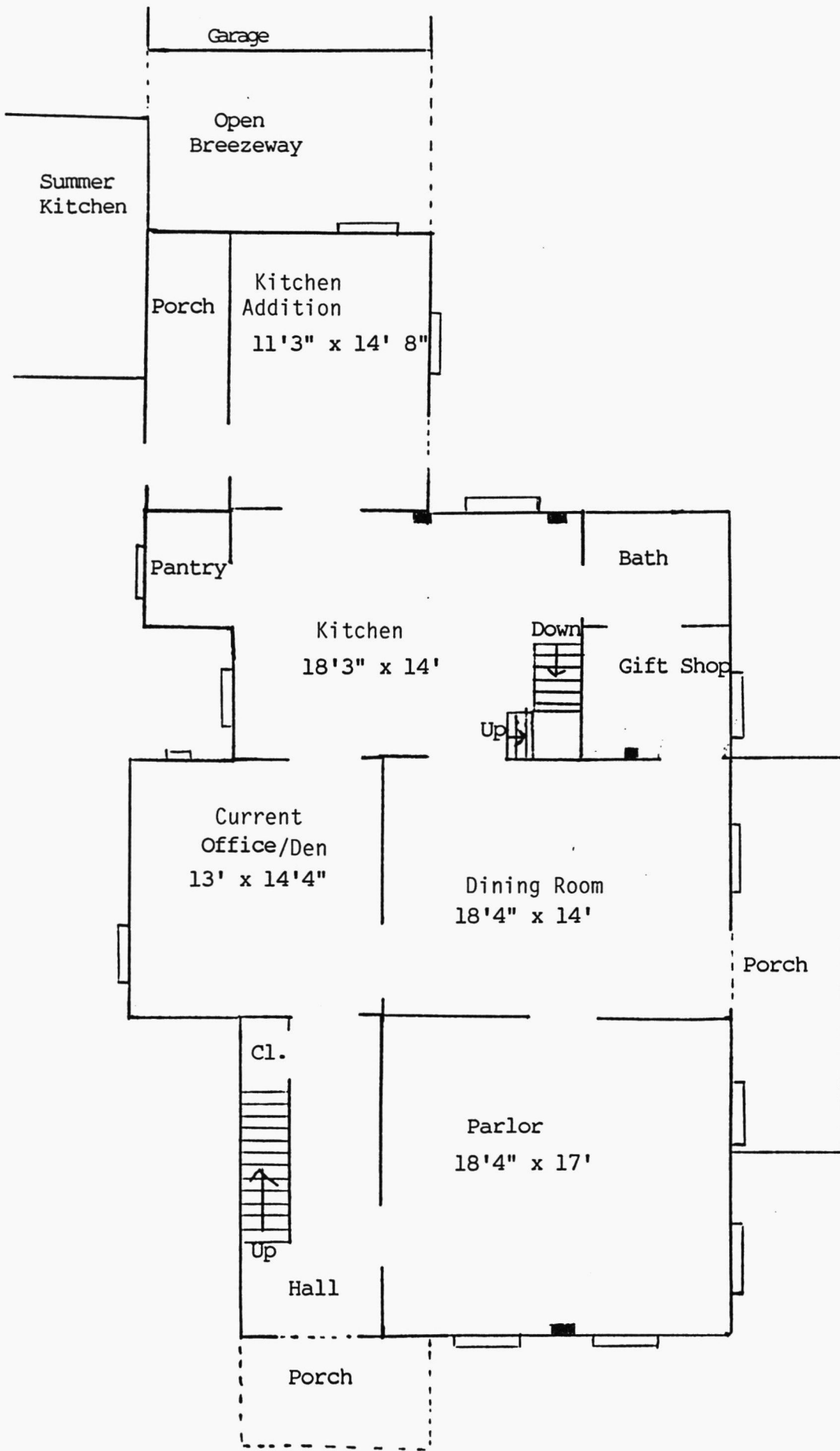
Noble, Allen G. Wood, Brick, and Stone. Amherst, Massachusetts: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Levi Willits House sits on Lots 5 & 6 of Block 6 in the original town of New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois.

**Boundary Justification**

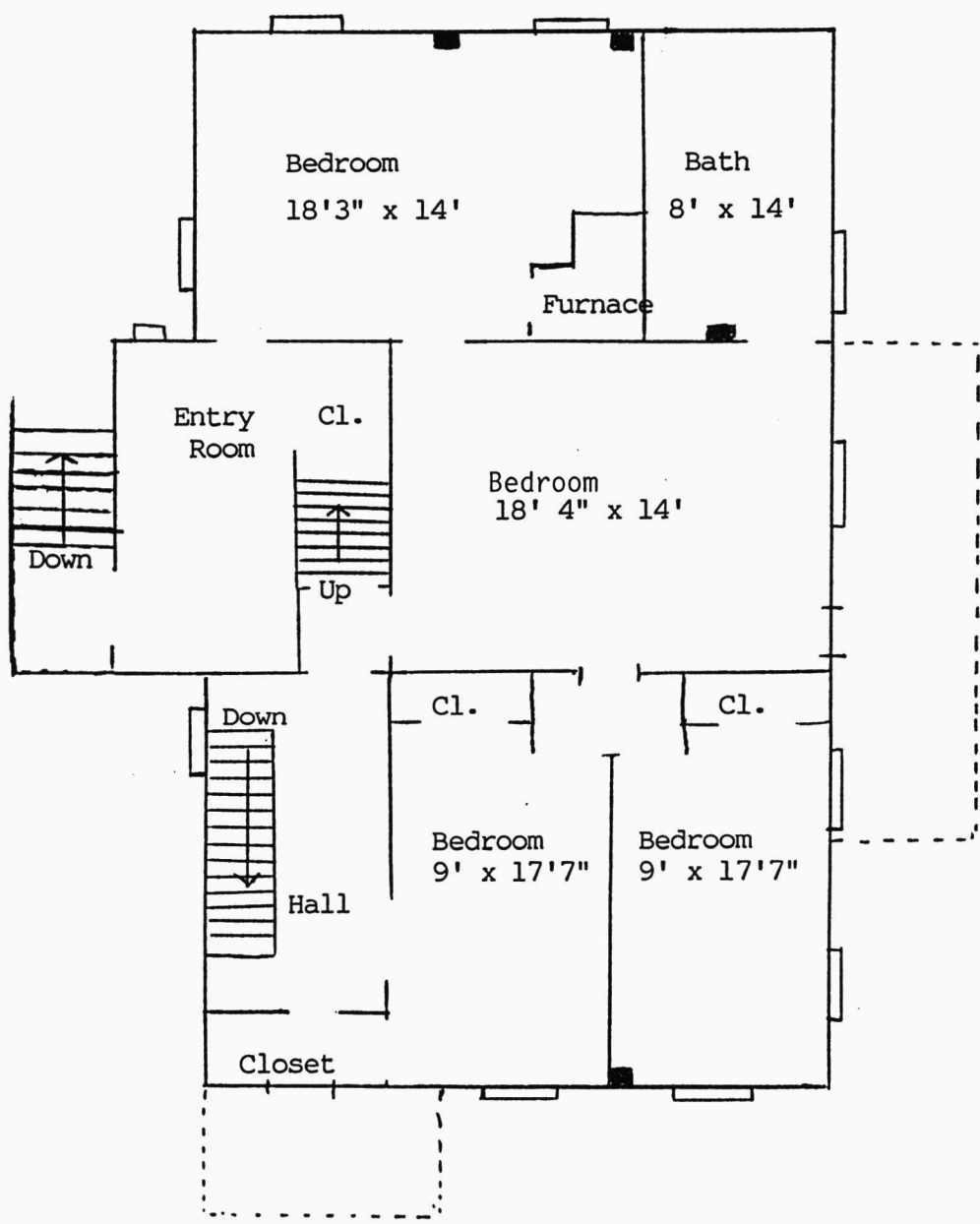
The boundary includes the house, summer kitchen, and surrounding lots that have historically been associated with the Levi Willits House.



Levi Willits House  
 First Floor  
 Not to Scale

N ←

N ←



Levi Willits House  
Second Floor

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Willlits, Levi, House  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ILLINOIS, Mercer

DATE RECEIVED: 3/23/95 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/04/95  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/20/95 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/07/95  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 95000488

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 4/20/95 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register.

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



Levi Willits House

New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

Fall 1994

R.R. 2, Box 225, Aledo, IL 61231

Looking NE

REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Levi Willits House  
New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

Fall 1994

R.R. 2, Box 225, Alledo, IL 61231

Looking North



ON 7523

W 96

Levi Willits House

New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

Fall 1994

R.R. 2, Box 225, Alado, IL 61231

Looking NW



Levi Willits House

New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

Fall 1974

R.R. 2, Box 225, Aledo, IL 61231

Looking East at summer kitchen

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176



Levi Willits House

New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

Fall 1994

R.R. 2, Box 225, Aledo, IL 61231

Looking SE

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176



Levi Willits House

New Boston, Mercer County, Illinois

Barb Kelly

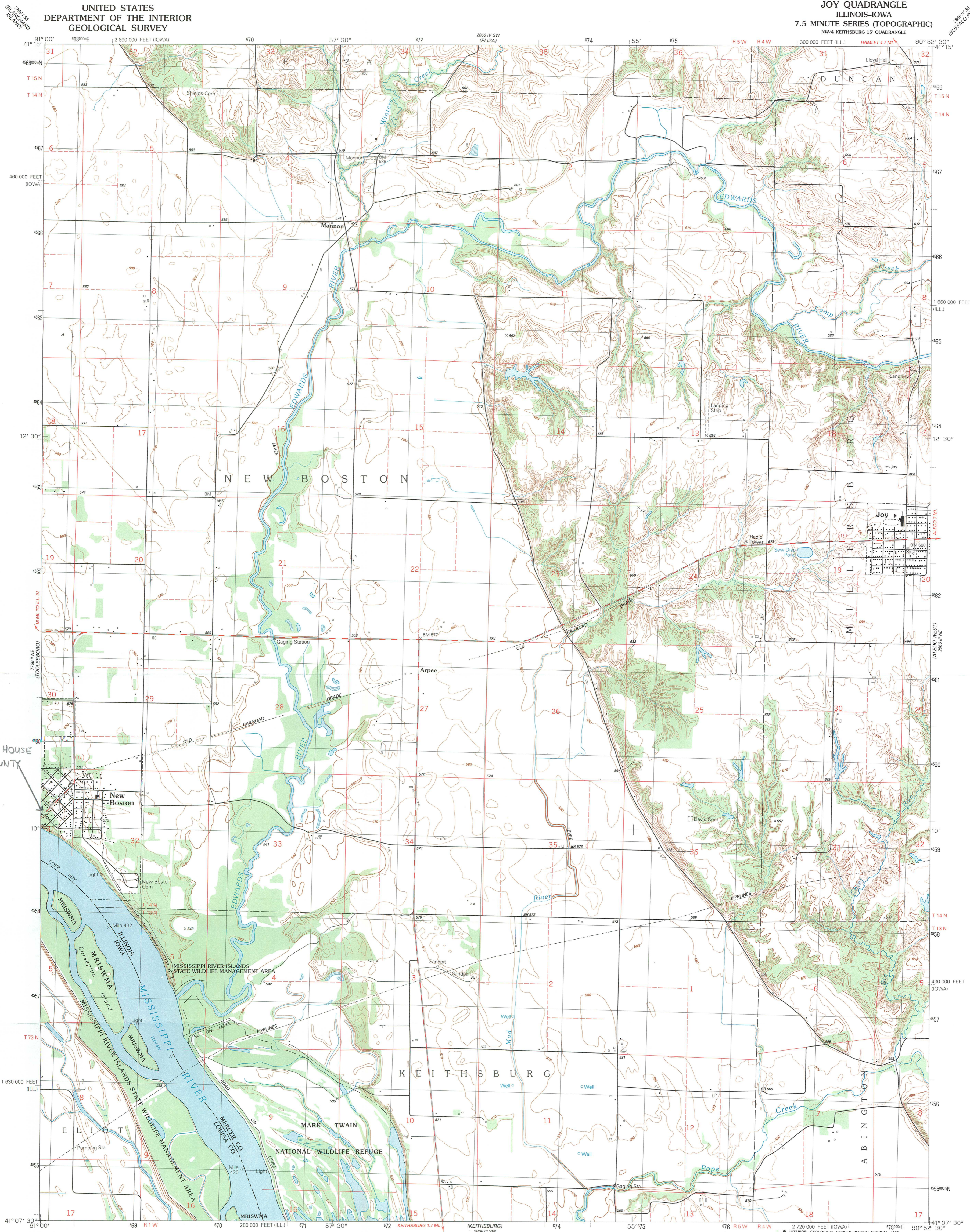
Fall 1994

R.R. 2, Box 225, Alledo, IL 61231

Looking SE

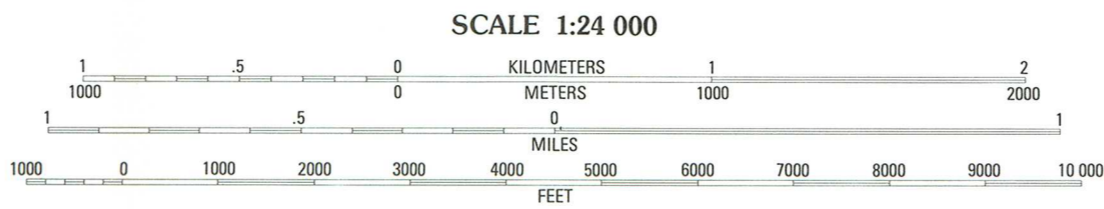
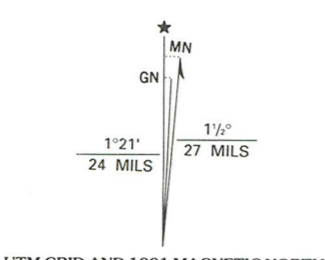
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

JOY QUADRANGLE  
ILLINOIS-IOWA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
NW/4 KEITHSBURG 15' QUADRANGLE



WILLITS, LEVI, HOUSE  
MERCER COUNTY  
ZONE 15  
E 667810  
N 4559190

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Compiled from aerial photographs taken 1986  
Field checked 1988. Map edited 1991  
Projection: Illinois coordinate system, west zone  
(transverse Mercator)  
10,000-foot grid ticks: Illinois coordinate system,  
west zone and Iowa coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15  
1927 North American Datum  
The difference between 1927 North American Datum and North  
American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) for 7.5-minute intersections  
is given in USGS Bulletin 1875. The NAD 83 is shown by  
dashed corner ticks  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the  
National or State reservations shown on this map  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
ILLINOIS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS 61820  
AND IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

JOY, ILL.-IOWA  
NW/4 KEITHSBURG 15' QUADRANGLE  
41090-B8-TF-024  
1991  
DMA 2866 III NW-SERIES V863



**Illinois Historic  
Preservation Agency**

Old State Capitol • Springfield, Illinois 62701 • (217) 782-4836

March 20, 1995

Ms. Beth Boland  
National Register Program  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
800 North Capitol Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20421

**RECEIVED 413**

MAR 23 1995

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Dear Beth:

Enclosed please find the National Register documentation forms for these properties in Illinois. They are as follows:

- ✓ Levi Willits House, New Boston
- Joseph Schertz House, Metamora vicinity
- Louis Jehle House, Pana
- Moultrie County Courthouse, Sullivan
- Hamilton Park, Chicago
- Trumbull Park, Chicago
- Portage Park, Chicago
- Indian Boundary Park, Chicago
- Rills Park, Chicago
- South Side German Historic District Boundary Increase, Quincy

Bryn Mawr Avenue Historic District, Chicago--one owner objection letter enclosed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

*David Newton*

David Newton  
Assistant National Register Coordinator

enclosures