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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Gildersleeve House

AND/OR COMMON
Johansen House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 108 Broadway

CITY, TOWN Hudson VICINITY OF 21 st
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Illinois CODE COUNTY McLean CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Ewing Stevenson Johansen

STREET & NUMBER 108 Broadway P.O. Box 31

CITY, TOWN Hudson VICINITY OF Illinois STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. McLean County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Main and Washington Streets

CITY, TOWN Bloomington Illinois STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey

DATE 1973
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Office of Preservation Services, Ill. Dept. of Conservation

CITY, TOWN Springfield Illinois STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The house is a small five-bay, two-story, frame, Greek Revival structure with a small portico over the main entrance located in the central bay and a one-story addition on the north end. The building is painted white and has dark green shutters.

The layout of the rooms is typical in that the downstairs parlor and sitting rooms are entered from the central hallway from which the stairway ascends to the three upstairs bedrooms. Most of the interior wall surfaces are plastered, but some, notably the central hallway, are paneled with walnut. The banister and the floors of the hallway and sitting room are also walnut.

The original kitchen was attached to the rear of the house, but at some undetermined time (prior to 1865) this kitchen was removed and the facilities installed in the newly built one-story north addition which also included a second sitting room. Another addition made at the same time was a first floor bedroom added at the rear of the central hallway on the back of the house.

Early in the automobile age, a one car garage was added behind the first floor bedroom. A second floor bathroom added at the rear of the second floor hall altered the rear of the house with a dormer. The exact date of construction of these features is unknown.

In 1965, a fire destroyed the garage, and damaged the first floor back bedroom, second story bath, and the rear of the second floor south bedroom. Except for the garage, damage was limited because the ironwood beams had hardened with age, resisting the fire, and because of early detection of the fire. Although the structure survived, the interior has not been remodeled for habitation, but used for storage. The second floor bathroom has been restored, and its dormer extended south from the rear center of the building to the south end of the building thus adding a walk-in closet to the rear of the second floor bedroom that had been damaged. The garage was not rebuilt. The rest of the house remains as it appeared before 1865, except for the installation of modern amenities.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1836

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James T. Gildersleeve

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The decade of the 1830's was a period of rapid expansion and land speculation in Illinois. Many land and colonization companies sprang up in the East to settle the new frontier. The Illinois Land Association, formed in 1836, was one such company. The purpose of this company was to establish a new settlement with colonists from New York.

Each member of the colony bought shares for \$235. James T. Gildersleeve and his brother Joseph, of Hempstead, Long Island, bought four shares, entitling them to nearly 700 acres of land which consisted of prairie, timberland, and town lots. The town was named Hudson after the New York region from where they came. The Gildersleeve-Johansen House is the central, surviving, contemporary symbol of the founding of this colony, as well as an important site throughout the history of the area.

James T. Gildersleeve bought the land to settle and arrived with his family on the site on June 22, 1836. In December of that same year he moved his family into the unfinished house. The settlers of the town anticipated the town to become the county seat and so had surveyed the streets to be 100 feet wide. On the four acres at the corner of the broad way (today Broadway) and the main street, Gildersleeve built his home anticipating it to be the premier house in the county, set in the heart of the future county seat.

However, the railroads later connected at Bloomington, about eight miles south, instead of at Hudson, dooming Hudson to remain forever a tiny town.

The Gildersleeve House was the first house in the area that was frame.¹ It remained the most prestigious structure in the town, and was thus the setting for important area events. Its exceptional quality, built with solid black walnut timbers and one-half inch sheathing of the same wood, as well as the sophisticated styling, attention to detail and reflected level of culture, mark the determination of the settlers not only to create more than a subsistence level of existence for themselves, but to bring with them the culture they knew in order to truly and permanently settle the land. The house has been occupied continually by Gildersleeve's direct descendants.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Significance (Continued):

As well as being an outstanding historical example of the settlement of the state and maintaining its architectural integrity, the house has significance for other reasons.

Its landmark status in the area was established upon construction. James T. Gildersleeve's son, Charles T. Gildersleeve, planted five acorns in a ten foot diameter circle resulting in the botanical rarity of five oak trees grown together as one at their base. This gave the house the name of "Five Oaks". Four of these huge oaks still survive.

The house served as the town's first postoffice, with James T. Gildersleeve as the first postmaster.² The house was later owned and lived in by another area postmaster, Thomas W. Stevenson, who had married a Gildersleeve. T.W. Stevenson was also chief deputy under three sheriffs in Mc Lean County. He was the brother of United States Vice President Adlai Ewing Stevenson, who was often a visitor there.

The Gildersleeve-Johansen House is the birthplace of Melville Elijah Stone (1848-1929), founder of the Chicago Daily News and General Manager of the Associated Press.

The house is believed to be the oldest house still lived in in Mc Lean County.³

¹ History of Mc Lean County, Illinois, (Chicago: Wm. Le Baron and Company, 1879)

² Bloomington (Illinois) Daily Pantagraph, June 6, 1936, pp. 9 and 14.

³ Ibid., June 12, 1954, p. 16.

