

WASHINGTON

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

**1. Name**

historic Olof Johnson House

and/or common Edward H. Muncaster Residence (current owner)

**2. Location**

street & number 408 N.W. 4th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Galva N/A vicinity of congressional district 19th

state Illinois code 012 county Henry code 073

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Edward H. Muncaster

street & number 516 5th Street

city, town Wilmette N/A vicinity of state Illinois

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Henry County Courthouse, Recorder's Office

street & number 302 S. State

city, town Cambridge state Illinois

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Inventory of Historic Structures - Henry County

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date October 1972  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Illinois Department of Conservation, Historic Sites Survey

city, town Springfield state Illinois

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" 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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The exterior of the Olof Johnson House follows the Italianate style of the Victorian period from 1860 - 1900. Having been built for one of the leaders of the community and one of its more cosmopolitan members, the house is symbolic of the material success of its owner and, therefore, significant to Galva.

Typical of the Italianate style\*, the exterior emphasizes light and shadow through heavily bracketed cornices and its deep encircling porch. (See Photograph #2) The brackets are doubled and located not only on the cornices of the roof but also at the projected window heads.

Outwardly of a cross-gable plan, the composition is one of symmetrical formality, compactness, and blockishness, recalling its Classical origins. This latter characteristic is relieved by the verticality of window proportions and the slender columns of the porch. Doors and windows throughout are trimmed with heavy surrounds. The front door is especially detailed in this manner and is deeply recessed into the exterior wall surface. The windows are also flanked by wood shutters - these were found in the owner's barn (this building since destroyed). (See Photographs #1, #3, #4, and #5)

What is not evident from the exterior is the lack of symmetry in the plan. The layout is one allowing for informal family needs while serving the formal needs of its prominent owner. Especially impressive are the parlor and formal dining room, with their marble mantle and cast metal frontpiece fireplaces and decorative ceiling medallion ornaments. The parlor features floor length, double-hung windows opening onto the porch offering a fine view of the park across the street. (See Photograph #6) The formal dining room features built-in cabinetwork for linens and dining service, which can be reached from the small family dining room on the other side. (See Photograph #7) The first floor also includes a family dining room, kitchen, pantry (now a bathroom), and one bedroom as well as a rear stair to the second floor.

Following a front ornamental stair with its stained wood balustrade to the second floor (See Photograph #8), one finds a large front bedroom (See Photograph #9) and three small bedrooms, bath, and kitchen. The hallway divides the large front bedroom from the other rooms. The bathroom was possibly originally a sewing room converted at some later date. The tub and washstand designs indicate that it was a very early conversion. All of the bedrooms have large windows that start at the floor. They still have their original trim. In recent years two of the rooms in the back of the second floor have been converted into a separate apartment, thus plumbing was added to make a Kitchen in the northeast room and a new window installed on the east wall.

A feature of the floor length windows on the second floor is their low head height of approximately 6'. This device was used in the Italianate designs to diminish the upper story height by allowing deeper bracketed cornices to be continuous around the perimeter of the roof. (See Photograph #10)

Most of the surfaces have been refinished by the current owners but the original craftsmanship is visible in the wood and plaster moldings (See Photograph #11), the pressed-pattern wainscoting of the front stairway (See Photograph #12), the exterior woodwork, and in some of the original finishes such as that of the front door which is woodgrained (in a painting technique) by Olof Krans (See Photograph #13).

(continued)

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET JOHNSON, OLAF, <sup>HOUSE</sup> ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Description

Of structural interest are the "breastsummer", or summer beams (See Photographs #14 and #15) running from front to the rear of the house, visible in the basement. These stout wood members, 6" x 8", are supported on stone piers, while the foundation walls are brick. The full width joists are notched and fitted into these beams.

The construction date of 1863 has been ascertained by an Abstract. This was only seven years before its owner's death. One two changes have been made (other than finishes): (1) The creation of two front doors at the expense of one window. This change further heightens the symetry of the exterior; (2) A rear entry was added to connect to the rear stair located off the kitchen to service the second floor apartment. This apartment was also served by a second heating system installed prior to World War II. The present owners now use the rear dining room as the kitchen and the original kitchen has been converted into an additional bedroom.

\* A Field Guide to American Architecture, Carol Rifkind, Page 63

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) History
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

**Specific dates** 1863 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Olof Johnson House in Galva, Illinois, in Henry County, is not only a fine example of early Italianate design, it serves as a lasting expression of its owner's importance in the communities of Bishop Hill Colony and Galva.

Olof Johnson, born in 1829, immigrated to America in the mid-nineteenth century with other Swedes under the leadership of Eric Jansen (and assisted in the establishment of Bishop Hill Colony in Henry County). He became one of the seven trustees of the Colony and handled its business and financial dealings with the outside world. Much of the development and prospering of the Colony took place following the death of its founder, Eric Jansen, when Olof Johnson and four other members were appointed to a Board of Trustees. During this time railroads were beginning to lay track through the region but the Colony members were unable to convince the railroad to locate through Bishop Hill, though they did much of the labor on the roadbed near their lands. As the new settlement along the railroad sprang up, Olof Johnson figured prominently in its business dealings and was given the privilege of naming it "Gefle" from the name of the Swedish seaport where he was born. (The name was changed to Galva due to the difficulty in pronouncing this Swedish name.)

In 1854 Johnson was appointed one of three general agents for the Colony and was given authority to buy, sell, and convey real estate and properties and sign contracts as binding as if acted upon by the full Board. During this time Olof was empowered to obtain loans for the Colony to allow expansion and to invest their monies in business ventures. Due to a series of business reversals and a general national recession, the Colony lost considerable resources in holdings that defaulted, most notably local banks in the area. This time was fraught with turmoil and many in the Colony blamed their financial hardship on Johnson, who many felt had cast aside their religious beliefs and had squandered their monies on his many trips to the cities to establish trade contracts.

The Colony members met in 1860 to regain more control over the business aspects of their community and voted to dissolve the communistic status they had shared and divide their holdings. It speaks for Johnson's importance and prestige in the area that he was given considerable influence in the share-out of the holdings and was appointed head of one of three parties or major share subdivisions of the Colony holdings. The subdivision of holdings and properties was continued for a considerable time and upon Johnson's death, the settlement of his estate and final settlement of the affairs of the Bishop Hill Colony became the prime Illinois court case for a decade.

During his life, Johnson had been a controversial figure in the history of both Bishop Hill and Galva in its prosperous times and in the lean years that followed the decline of Bishop Hill. He had traveled widely for the business of the Colony and had amassed a considerable amount of wealth through investments. The architecture of his home reflects both his affluence and his experiences on his trips to New Orleans, Mobile, Chicago, and New York City. His home also serves as a reminder of the affluence that not only he, but many other early Swedish colonists were able to achieve. At present this home is thought to be the only home standing in recognizable form of a Senior Bishop Hill Trustee.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bishop Hill, Ill., A Utopia On The Prairie, Olov Isaksson, Lt. Publishing House, Stockholm, Sweden, 1969

The History of Henry County, H. J. Kett & Co., Chicago, Illinois (continued)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 126' x 164'

Quadrangle name Galva

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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7	4	7	6	8	0
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4	5	6	1	6	2	0
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The East One Hundred Twenty-six (126) feet of Block Four (4), except the North One Hundred (100) feet thereof, in Wiley's Addition to the Town, now City, of Galva

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslie H. Kenyon/Larry D. Davis - Architects

organization Kenyon and Associates, Architects date October 8, 1980

street & number 735 N. Knoxville Avenue telephone (309) 674-7121

city or town Peoria state Illinois 61602

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David Kenyon

title Director date 1/2/81

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet JOHNSON, OLAF, HOUSE

Item number 9

Page 2

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Bishop Hill Colony, M. A. Mikkelsen, John Hopkins Press, 1892

Olaf Krans of Bishop Hill, George Swank, 1976

A Field Guide to American Architecture, Carole Rifkind, The New American Library, Inc., New York, 1980

Abstract of the house.

CONSULTING CIVIL  
ENGINEERS

REGISTERED LAND  
SURVEYORS

PLANNING ENGINEERS

RURAL ROUTE #2

GALESBURG, ILLINOIS 61401

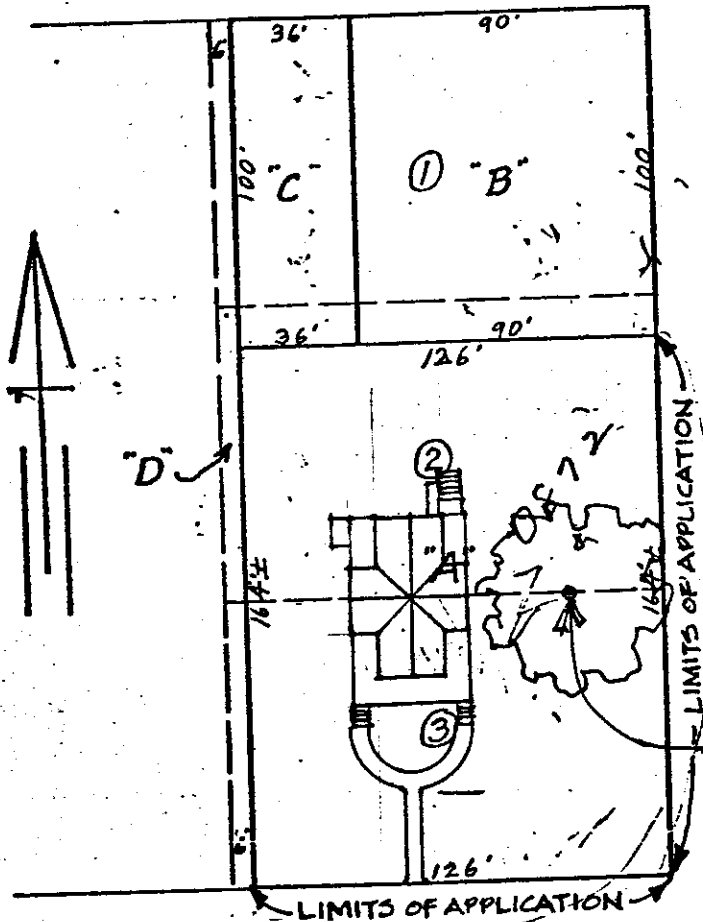
6 April 1979

OFFICE  
ONE HALF MILE WEST  
OF THE AIRPORT ON  
W. S. 34 AND 100  
YARDS SOUTH.

TELEPHONE:  
A.C. 309/343-S041

# Sketch of Block A of Wiley's Add. to Galva

N. W. Fifth St.



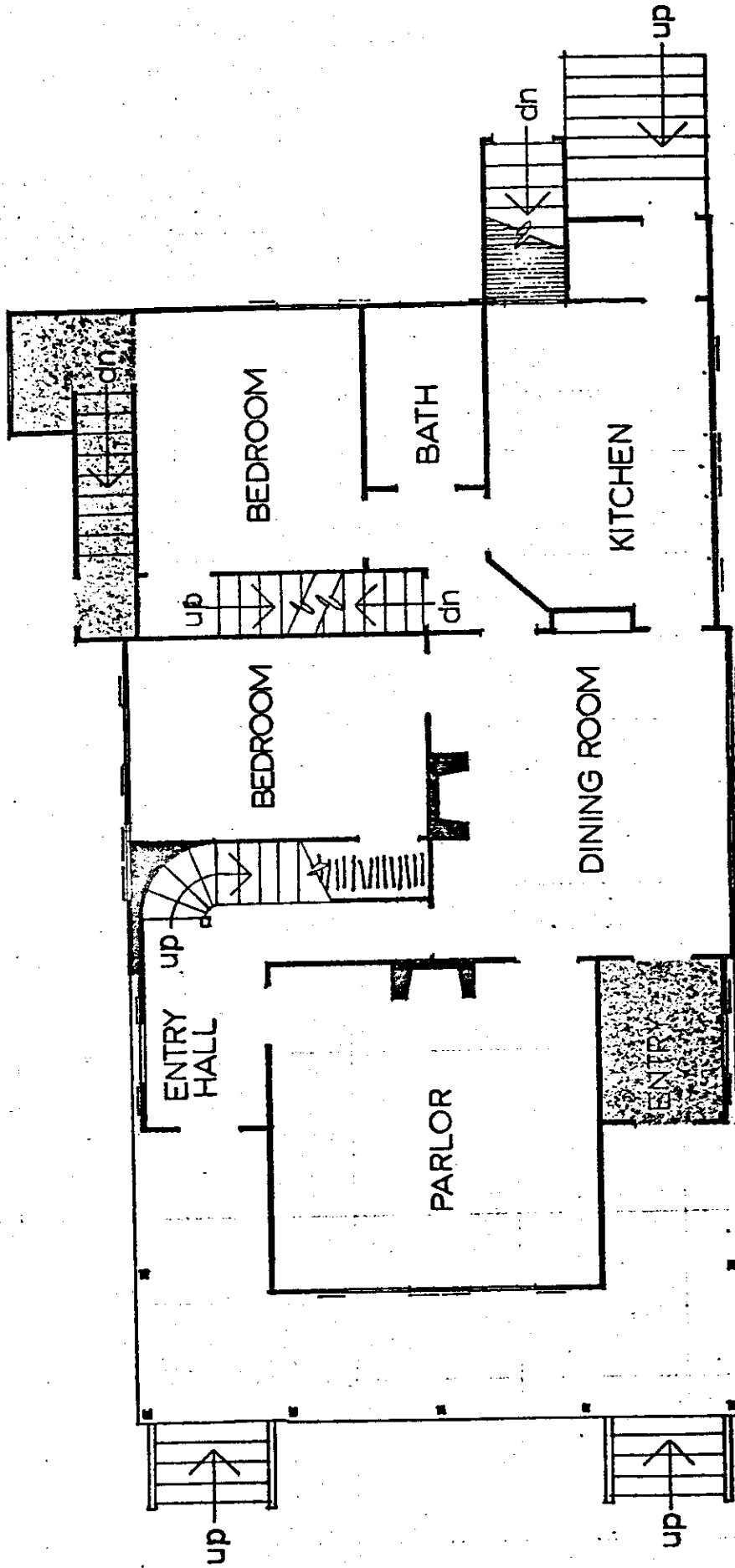
N. W. Fourth Ave

- Tract "D" conveyed by Habley to Everett in 1943 (A58-565)
- Tract "C" conveyed by Overbaugh to Steffey in 1961 (639-53)
- Tracts "A" + "C" conveyed by Overbaugh to Muncester in 1974 (74R210)
- Tracts "B" + "C" conveyed by Steffey to Steffey Main in 1975 (75R948)

You will note that Overbaugh sold Tract "C" to Steffey in 1961 and to Muncester in 1974

N. W. Fourth St.

Park

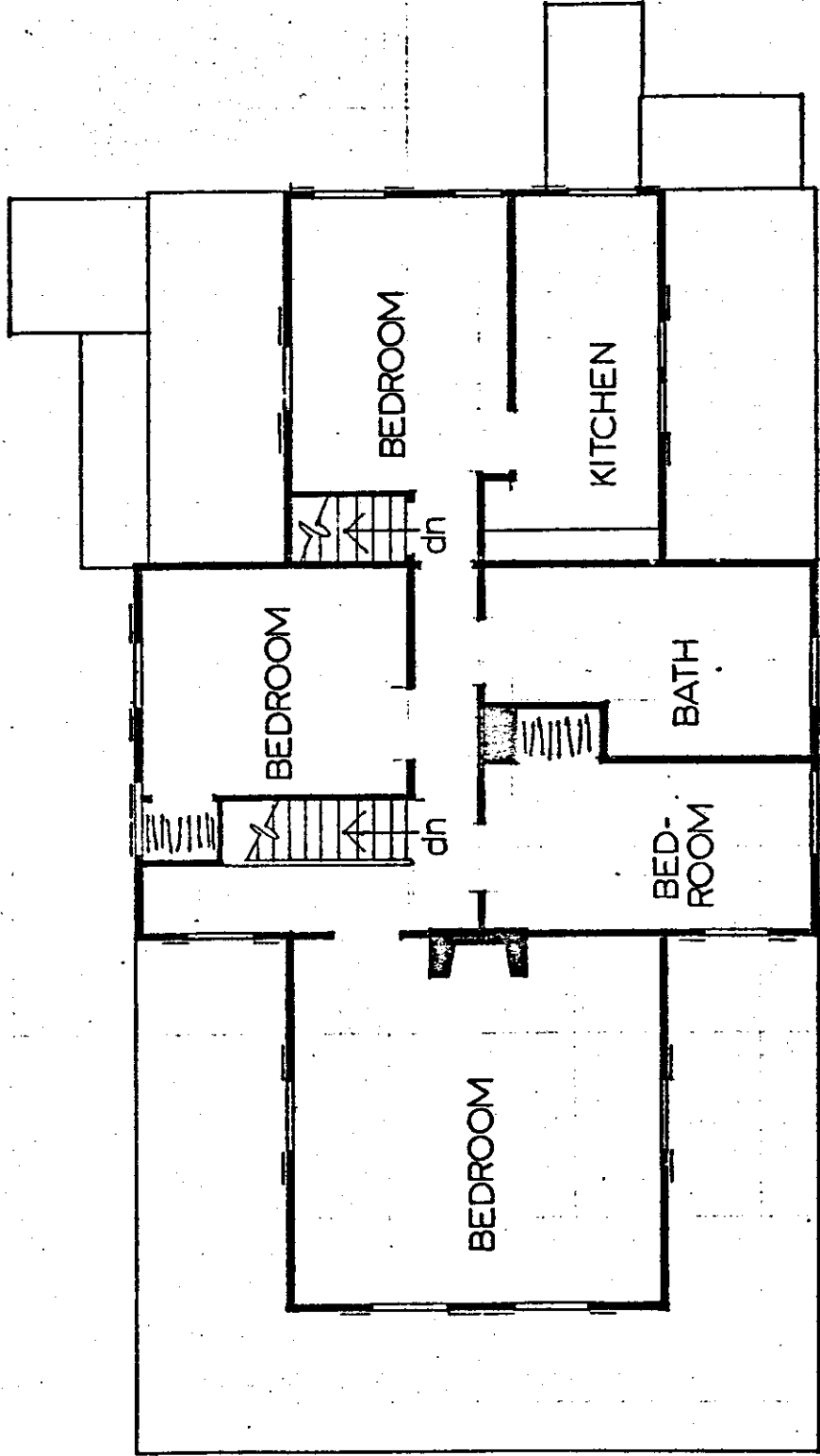


FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 OLOF JOHNSON HOUSE  
 GALVA, ILLINOIS

north

not to scale  
 shaded areas were later additions





SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
OLOF JOHNSON HOUSE  
GALVA, ILLINOIS  
north  
not to scale

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered FEB 11 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Van Epps, William H., House	Dixon Lee County
Johnson, Olof, House	Galva Henry County
Galva Opera House (Blue Ribbon Temperance Hall)	Galva Henry County
Allen, Willis, House	Marion Williamson County

Also Notified

Honorable Charles H. Percy  
Honorable Alan Dixon  
Honorable Lynn Martin  
Honorable Thomas F. Railsback  
Honorable Paul Simon

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)348-6001.

272-3504