

Sent to Washington

9-30-8

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic George Blackman House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 904 South Main Street  not for publication

city, town Hillsboro  vicinity of

state Illinois code 012 county Montgomery code 135

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<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 Idabel Evans

street & number 904 South Main Street

city, town Hillsboro  vicinity of state Illinois

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Hillsboro state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of Architecture Before World War II in Montgomery County has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date October 1973  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

city, town Springfield state Illinois

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The Blackman House is located on Lot No. 38 in the City of Hillsboro, Montgomery County, Illinois. When George Blackman bought the land in 1842, it was located south of Hillsboro along the west side of the road to Vandalia (now Main Street) and contained two acres, more or less. Blackman built his house on the south half of the property; on the north half he built a wagon and carriage shop with a blacksmith shop to the rear. South of the house, the Blackman cabinet shop stood on land owned by James Blackman, George's father. James Blackman's house was located on a hill behind the cabinet shop. The shop buildings were demolished many years ago and the properties divided into house lots. Only the George Blackman house and lot, reduced to less than 1/2 acre, remain in family hands.

Built in 1842-43, the Blackman House is a 1½ story, frame structure with a stone foundation and side gable roof. The front of the house faces the street (east) with a 6-foot deep porch running the full width of the house. The gently pitched roof extends over the wooden-floored porch and rests on four evenly spaced slender columns. The rotted lower portions of the columns were replaced with short plinths about 20 years ago. The centrally located door is walnut, ornamented with carving, and flanked by sidelights. The two windows either side of the door were enlarged about 1900 and have one over one sashes. All other windows in the house have six over six lights and are original size. There are three of these windows on the ground floor and one in the gable on each side of the house, plus two in the rear. Several smaller windows provide light for the enclosed back porch and steps. All windows originally were equipped with shutters, which have disappeared. Those shown on the south side of the house are modern. Two chimneys are located on the ridge of the shingled roof. Details on the north and south sides of the house suggest that, originally, there may have been a porch on the rear similar to that on the front of the house. Two rooms and a small porch have been added in this space, probably more than 100 years ago.

There are six rooms on the first floor, surrounding a central hall. The floor plan is open, but patches in the floor indicate the location of interior chimneys between the original four rooms. The stairway is on the east wall of the narrow hall and is unpretentious, with simple balusters and newel posts. There are two bedrooms on the upper floor with the sloping ceilings imposed by the roof line. The woodwork is black walnut with simple beading, varnished or painted white. The flooring is walnut and oak. According to George Blackman's records, a large quantity of black walnut was used in the house.

There is a full cellar under the house with a dirt floor and stone walls. An old letter states that the stone was brought from Alton. Stone foundations are rare in the Hillsboro area, perhaps because brickmaking was an important commercial activity from the earliest days of the community.

The diary George Blackman kept between August 1842 and September 1843 details the cost of constructing the house (\$1,226.92). According to this record, Blackman did most of the work on the house himself, although Stephen Abbott, a neighbor and carpenter, was paid for 24 days work. The inventory of George Blackman's estate, filed after his death in 1852, states that he built the house and shop himself.

## 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify

**Specific dates**      1842-1843      **Builder/Architect**      George Blackman

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The chief significance of the Blackman House is in its architectural style, unique in the Hillsboro area. The southern influence indicated by the recessed porch(s) and floor plan is in marked contrast to other surviving examples of mid-19th century homes. The 1839 Abbott house two doors north of the Blackman house, the 1840 Sawyer house a block north, the 1834 Harkey house and other early structures, both frame and brick indicate that the predominant house form was square or rectangular, two story, with gabled or hipped roof. Most of these home owners were New Englanders and failed to adapt the architecture of their homes to the Illinois climate. George Blackman was a Massachusetts man himself, but the shape of his house strongly resembles the so-called "Creole" houses of old St. Louis and the middle Mississippi Valley. The style does not seem to have been popular in Montgomery County, although many of the early settlers were of Southern origin. It is possible that the Blackman house and the more elegant Elijah Iles house in Springfield are the northernmost examples of this style in Illinois. Geographically, and by the pattern of settlement, Montgomery County was divided into spheres of southern and northern influence. With its southern style porch(s) and its Yankee style cellar, the Blackman House combines elements of both cultures in its own unique style.

George Blackman and his father, James, were cabinetmakers in Canton, Massachusetts before they emigrated to Illinois in 1839. Hillsboro was a flourishing small town, 17 years old, and the county seat. The Hillsboro Academy, housed in a fine Greek temple-like structure, was situated a few blocks north of the site the Blackmans chose for their cabinet shop. Perhaps this building influenced the Greek Revival touches of the Blackman House.

Four years after their arrival in Hillsboro, George Blackman built his house and wagon shop. Presumably, his experience in woodworking and joinery equipped him with the necessary skills. Later, he acquired a large, two story building on Main Street to house the paint and varnish shop and the salesroom for wagons and carriages. The upper floor of this building was often used for community entertainments and dances.

The various shops provided employment for a number of craftsmen, as well as producing articles needed by the expanding population, thus contributing to the development and prosperity of Hillsboro. The only reminder today of this influential family is the George Blackman House.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Blackman, George. George Blackman's Book. 1834-1843  
Hunt, Horace. "Old Hillsboro History" The Montgomery County News, Hillsboro, Illinois, November 23, 1926 and November 30, 1926  
Perrin, William Henry. History of Bond and Montgomery Counties, Illinois. 1882

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.48 acres  
Quadrangle name Hillsboro Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>281451210</u>	<u>41313651110</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Idabel Evans  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number 904 South Main Street telephone (217) 532-3959  
city or town Hillsboro state Illinois

# 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William J. ...*  
title Director date 9-22-86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

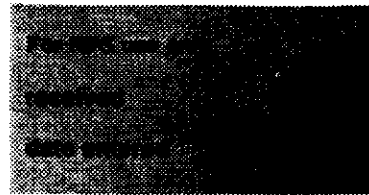
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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



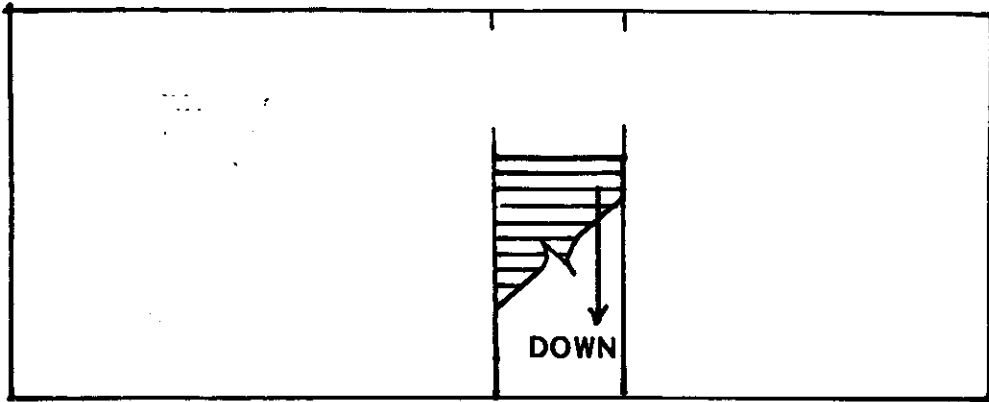
Continuation sheet

Item number 10

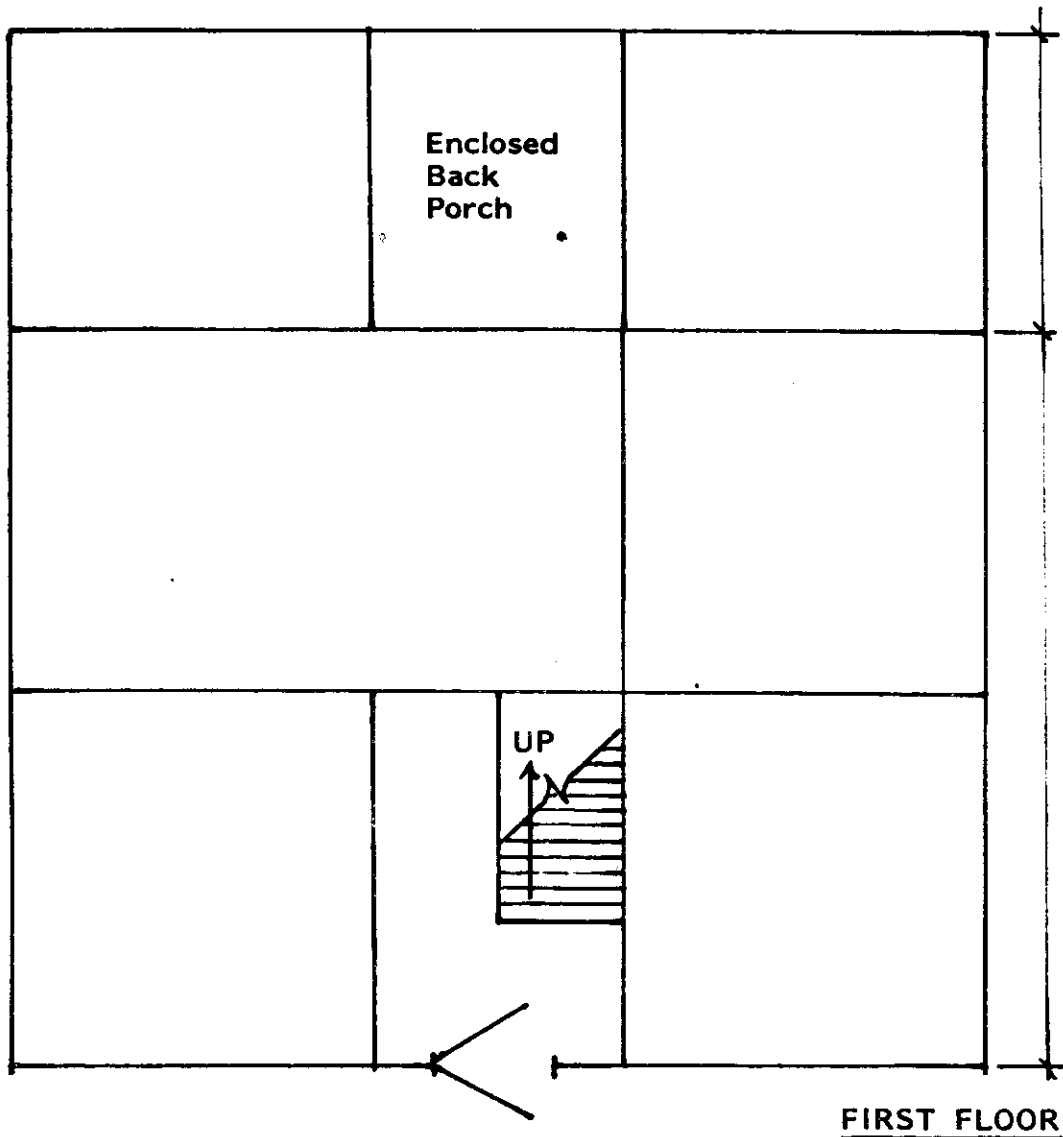
Page 4

10. Verbal Boundary Description

Part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section Eleven (11) Township eight (8) North, Range four (4) West of the 3rd P.M. described as follows to-wit: Beginning at a point on the West line of South Main Street 625 1/2 feet due North of the South line of said quarter quarter section; running thence West 297 feet more or less to a point 297 feet East of the East line of Jefferson Street; thence South 69 1/4 feet; thence East 303.6 feet more or less to the West line of South Main Street and thence Northwesterly along the West line of South Main Street 69 1/2 feet more or less, to the place of beginning, situated in the City of Hillsboro in Montgomery County, Illinois.



UPPER HALF-STORY



FIRST FLOOR



904 South Main  
Hillsboro, Illinois 62049



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

**NOV 14 1986**

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places beginning November 2, 1986 and ending November 8, 1986. For further information call (202) 343-9552.

STATE, County, Vicinity, Property, Address, (Date Listed)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, East Commerce Street Historic District (Greenville MRA), Roughly bounded by Cedar, Chesnut, Commerce, and Hickory Sts. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Greenville City Hall (Greenville MRA), E. Commerce St. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Little--Stabler House (Greenville MRA), 710 Fort Dale St. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Post Office Historic District (Greenville MRA), W. Commerce and Fort Dale Sts. (11/04/86)

ALABAMA, Butler County, Greenville, Ward Nicholson Corner Store (Greenville MRA), 219 W. Parmer (11/04/86)

ARKANSAS, Monroe County, Brinkley, Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 409 S. Main St. (11/04/86)

DELAWARE, Kent County, Clayton, Clayton Railroad Station, Bassett St. (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Buildings at 1644--1666 Park Road NW, 1644--1666 Park Rd., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Embassy Building No. 10, 3149 Sixteenth St., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, McLachlen Building, 1001 G St. NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Southern Aid Society--Dunbar Theater Building, 1901--1903 Seventh St., NW (11/06/86)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Washington, Walsh Stable, 1511 (rear) Twenty-second St., NW (11/06/86)

FLORIDA, Manatee County, Palmetto, Palmetto Historic District, Roughly Bounded by Twenty-first Ave., Seventh St., Fifth Ave., and the Manatee River (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Alexander County, Tamms, Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad Depot, Front St. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Champaign County, Urbana, University of Illinois Astronomical Observatory, 901 S. Mathews Ave. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Legler, Henry E., Regional Branch of the Chicago Public Library, 115 S. Pulaski Rd. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Chicago, Uptown Broadway Building, 4703--4715 N. Broadway (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Montgomery County, Hillsboro, Blackman, George, H., 904 S. Main St. (11/06/86)

ILLINOIS, Williamson County, Marion, Goddard Chapel, Rose Hill Cemetery, Rt. 37 N. (11/06/86)

IOWA, Harrison County, Dunlap, Wheeler, John R., Jr., House, 407 S. Third St. (11/06/86)

IOWA, Ringold County, Maloy vicinity, Shay, Lee, Farmhouse, Off CR P-27 (11/06/86)