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## 7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The T-plan Findley house is constructed of brick laid in common bond on a stone foundation. The main block is two bays deep and three wide, the rear wing three bays long. There is a chimney, brick covered with cement, toward each gable end. Windows are round-arched, 2/2 sash with keystoned hoods; those of the basement are segmentally arched. The central entrance is also round-arched. sheltered by a small wooden porch which repeats the arch shape, and features a narrow, denticular cornice and small pendant brackets. The gable roof of the main block has a wide, denticular cornice, paired brackets, and partial returns. The rear wing conforms in mass, roof- and window-shape, but the cornice here is plain.

Original features, now gone: tall shutters, shaped to fit the window arches; a small balustrade around the front porch roof; a two-story porch along the north side of the rear wing -- its arches were similar to those of the front porch, but wider.

Until 1917, there was a small frame summer kitchen, with a shed extension, located at the rear of the house. It was replaced that year with the onestory frame structure attached to the south end of the main block. It served as a kitchen while the dwelling was used as a boarding house. It is now an office for the historical society.

The house is set on a small corner lot near the town square, and is operated as a county museum. Also on the lot is a small log cabin, attributed to Mormons who crossed Iowa during the 1840's and 1850's to Utah, and a 19th-century frame schoolhouse. These structures have been moved from their original locations, and to not appear to qualify for the National Register. They are part of the historical museum complex.



## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although no firm date has been established for this house, it is believed to have been built about 1860, making it one of the oldest dwellings left in Bloomfield. It does not conform to any specific style, but the wide, bracketted cornice, in particular, suggests Italianate influences. Overall, it is a well-executed example of vernacular house architecture. The Findley house is also one of only five brick houses remaining in the town. Brick was not a common building material in Bloomfield, and most of the housing stock was of frame construction.

The first owner of the house was William M. Findley. Findley was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1816, and studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He came to Bloomfield in 1843, after practicing in Indiana and New London, Iowa. During the Civil War, Findley acted as surgeon for the 4th Iowa Cavalry.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Davis County, Iowa. Des Moines: State Historical Company, 1882, pp. 616-7.

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