1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **LOVEJOY, OWEN, HOUSE**

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: East Peru Street Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Princeton Vicinity: N/A

State: Illinois County: Bureau Code: 011 Zip Code: 61356

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property		Category of Property	
Private:	__	Building(s):	X
Public-Local:	X	District:	__
Public-State:	__	Site:	__
Public-Federal:	__	Structure:	__
		Object:	__

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	3 buildings
__	__ sites
__	__ structures
__	__ objects
1	3 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this _X_ 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.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	Domestic	Sub:	Single Dwelling
Current:	Recreation and Culture	Sub:	Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Mid-19th Century

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Brick
Walls: Wood
Roof: Shingle (cedar)
Other:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Owen Lovejoy House sits on approximately 1.2 acres of land on the north side of Peru Street (US Route 6) and 400 feet east of Sixth Street (Illinois Route 26) in the city of Princeton, Illinois, three quarters of a mile east of the central business district on the edge of town. The house is the only contributing building on the property. The house was constructed in 1838 with a north addition built onto the rear very shortly afterward. A larger, east addition was completed in the early 1850s. The exterior appearance of the house remains essentially unchanged after this period.

Site plan

The parcel of land upon which the Owen Lovejoy House sits is essentially square, measuring 250 by 220 feet. Butler Denham acquired this property in 1835, but it is all that remains of the many acres he amassed.[1] The house is located in the southwest corner of the lot and faces US Route 6. There are two automobile entrances onto the highway at the southwest and southeast corners connected by a gravel driveway that loops north around the house and extends almost to the rear of the property, allowing an ample turning radius for buses. A post and split rail fence extends across most of the front of the property, suggesting the location of the Lovejoy-era white board fence. A row of non-native, coniferous trees delineates the rear property line. No archaeological investigations have been conducted to identify locations of outbuildings, gardens, or other land uses.

There are three other buildings on the property. First, a modern privy of board and batten construction built in 1995 sits a few yards from the rear of the house. Inside it is a modern lavatory and toilet to serve visitors. Second, to the northeast of the house towards the rear of the property there is a brick, 1850s, one-room schoolhouse that was moved onto the property in 1972. The school has no historical association with the Lovejoy property. Third, there is a low, one-story log building constructed in the northeast corner of the property in 1976.[2] It is not a replica or presentation of early log construction, but rather a commercial, modern log building. It originally housed an artifact collection unrelated to Lovejoy but stands vacant and largely unused in 1996.

1972 Restoration and stabilization

The City of Princeton began a state-funded restoration and stabilization project of the Lovejoy house in 1971 that was completed in 1972. By this time the building had become seriously deteriorated through neglect. There was not enough money in the project to undertake a complete restoration, but substantial efforts were made to stabilize it. The building was elevated and the original handmade brick foundation was replaced with concrete blocks with new footings and faced with used common brick, laid in appropriate sand and lime mortar. New floor joists were installed beneath the first floor alongside the original hand-hewn log joists. Steel beams were also installed for additional support. The project also called for a new roof of one-

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[1] George Owen Smith, *The Lovejoy Shrine* (Princeton, IL: Tribune Printing Co., 1949), p. 25.

[2] Metal plaques on each building identify their use, origin and date of relocation.

inch cedar shingles that involved some limited replacement of original rafters and sheathing. Work on the roof included repairing and re-pointing the two chimneys. The new roof replaced worn-out composition shingles and a standing-seam metal roof that existed over the rear addition. The original roofing material is unknown. Also at this time the grade to the east and north of the house was raised to compensate for decades of erosion.

The project also had a number of non-structural components. New redwood siding replaced approximately one-third of the original pine clapboards. The porch was removed and reconstructed with new material. Interior work included plaster repair where needed. Wood floors and moldings were re-painted, but otherwise untouched. Electric baseboard heating was installed throughout. The development plan in 1972 called for installing a modern kitchen and bathroom in the east wing for a live-in caretaker, but it was never used in that way. The room used at present for the museum staff was intended to serve as the caretaker's quarters.[3]

Current exterior conditions

The main part of this building is a side gable, one and a half story, wood frame building in simple Greek Revival style with a one-story shed addition to the rear measuring overall approximately thirty-five by thirty feet. The house was built facing south on the western edge of the Butler Denham property and set back from the east-west public road (now US Route 6) approximately fifty feet. Aside from general form and cornice returns, there are very few features identifying it as Greek Revival: doors are set in simple openings without sidelights or ornament; windows are likewise framed and cut into the white-painted, pine or walnut clapboards. A hip-roofed porch added around 1870, built with tongue-and-groove flooring resting on brick piers and supporting square wood columns, runs the length of the main facade and wraps approximately eight feet around the west facade to shelter another entrance. The east end of the porch was enclosed in six-paned windows to create a solarium or "conservatory," which Eunice Denham Lovejoy used often in her declining years.[4] Entry from the conservatory into the dining room is made through two glazed pocket-doors, and the original central entrance from the porch takes visitors into the entry hall through a four-panel door. The only other opening in the main (south) facade of the 1838 portion of the house is a six-over-six shuttered window overlooking the porch.

The west facade is simple clapboard with two two-over-two windows on the second floor and three six-over-six shuttered windows on the first floor. The view of the west facade reveals that the rear portion of this section of the house is a lean-to addition with a roof pitch lower than the front portion of the house. The rear (north) facade has two small two-over-two windows in it. The view from the north also shows the one-inch cedar shingles that cover the entire roof and two dormers projecting from the upper floor overlooking the rear addition. The roof is drained by V-shaped wooden gutters that lead to square downspouts. The massive, slightly off-center,

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[3] Delma Shipp, "Resurrection and Restoration of the Owen Lovejoy Home," in Smith, p. 41; "History of the House," two-page typescript in Owen Lovejoy Homestead files, Princeton, Illinois, April, 1990.

[4] All room designations are those used currently in the property's interpretation.

double brick chimney is also visible from the rear. Most of the east facade of the original portion of the house is covered by the abutting east wing. The setback of this wing, however, allows an east-facing window in the front and a window and an entrance in the rear, which allows direct access to a bedroom through a simple paneled door.

During the mid-1850's, when twelve people lived in the household (Owen and Eunice Lovejoy, Eunice's three children by her first husband, six children by Lovejoy, and Lovejoy's mother), the Lovejoy's constructed a twenty by thirty-five foot two-story, side gable addition to the east, which functioned principally as a dormitory and kitchen wing.[5] The eaves of this wing rise about one foot higher than the original house and the roof ridge, and, although the same height as the original roof ridge, are set back about one foot. The wing appears identical in form, material, color, and fenestration, however.

The front (south) facade of the east wing has three six-over-six shuttered windows on the first floor and four identical windows on the upper floor. There is a glazed panel door serving as an entrance in the center of the wing, which leads into the site administration office. The east facade of the east wing is the gable end and has fenestration identical to the front with two windows on the first floor and two on the upper floor. There is also a sloping cellar door with steps leading through the foundation providing access directly to the basement. The rear (north) facade of the east wing has two two-over-two windows irregularly spaced on the first floor and two irregularly spaced on the upper floor, all without shutters. There is also one small window directly beneath the eaves, serving more as a vent than a source of illumination. A modern steel and composition door covered by a small pent roof provides access for museum staff.

The roof is one-inch cedar shingle, interrupted by a small brick chimney in the center of the east wing, a large double chimney slightly off center of the main part of the house, and two gable dormers looking out from the rear. The entire building rests on a concrete block foundation faced with common brick laid in sand and lime mortar that replaced the failed foundation of hand-made brick in 1972.

It is possible that the front portion was built in 1836 and the rear addition built in 1838, when the Denham family began to grow, as deed records show that he purchased the property in 1835.[6] Physical evidence and even casual observation suggests that the rear was built on to an existing building, but research in the community over several generations has not discovered any reference to a building prior to 1838.

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[5] Edward Magdol, *Owen Lovejoy: Abolitionist in Congress* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1967), p. 38.

[6] "Denham/Lovejoy Land Records," three-page typescript of land entries abstracted from Bureau County deed books, Owen Lovejoy Homestead files, 1995(?).

Current interior conditions

The Lovejoy House has seven rooms on the first floor and five rooms on the second floor, excluding stairhalls, closets and service areas. The absence of documentation makes it impossible to determine the exact uses of each room throughout the history of the building as well as changes in room configuration. Obvious physical evidence shows that walls have been added or removed, flooring patched and walls replastered. No record of conditions or discoveries made during the 1972 stabilization project exists nor is there a historic structure report, comprehensive or otherwise.

While the overall form of the building reflects the Greek Revival style, it is clearly vernacular and the product of its builder's need and tastes. The 1838 section of the house has four rooms plus the front entry hall. The main central entry is to an entry hall with a stair that runs parallel to the front wall. The stair itself has a walnut handrail supported by walnut balusters terminating in a simple turned walnut newel. There is a second entrance into the entry hall from the west at the foot of the stairs. From the entry hall one may exit to the parlor to the north or the dining room to the east, which are also accessible to each other through an archway. The dining room has a fireplace constructed in 1972 of common exposed brick and a mantel that is a single pine plank. The dining room also has glazed pocket doors leading to the conservatory at one end, and a passage through to a washing room to the north, and an entrance to the east wing.

The one-story rear addition contains a study and children's room that are separated by a dressing room and lie immediately behind the parlor and dining room. The study was Owen Lovejoy's, serving as his office and a place where he probably worked in private on sermons during his ministry and speeches during his political life. The children's room at one time served as quarters for lodgers or hired hands. It may be the case that Lovejoy resided in this room prior to his marriage to Eunice Denham.

On the upper floor the three rooms and stair hall over the original west portion of the house have been kept in a state of preservation for interpretive purposes. Patches and other marks on the floors and a chronological medley of moldings and hardware indicate otherwise unrecorded changes from the 1838 plan. There are also clear indications that plaster has been repaired and replaced.

The dining room provides access to the east wing, where the first room is the kitchen, which is the last historically restored room on the first floor. This room's original purpose may have also involved food preparation and other household maintenance activities. The existence of original plaster, floorboards and ceiling material is unknown, but may have been removed in 1972 when ceiling tile, wall paneling and modern wood flooring were installed. The museum administrative office, which has modern flooring and wall paneling, lies beyond the kitchen. A back stairhall and modern kitchen occupy the eastern end of the wing. The modern kitchen and administrative office were intended to serve as a caretaker's residence, but were never occupied in that way.

The upstairs is similar to a dormitory containing a stairhall from the southwest to the northeast corners, five bedrooms, two wide places in the stairhall that could be used for sleeping or clothing storage and a 1972 bathroom.

It is upstairs where tradition places the hiding closet in which runaway slaves found refuge in a triangular space created between wall, roof, and floor.[7] This space runs the length of the stairhall on the second floor of the main wing, but was accessible only from the adjoining southeast stairhall which had been used as a bedroom. A person standing on the first floor preparing to ascend the stairs from the front entry hall would find a wall on the left and the balustrade on the right. At the level of the second floor, however, the wall is on the right and the open stairhall is on the left. Behind the wall on the right is the space where fugitive slaves hid. This design is original to the house suggesting that Butler Denham either intended to hide slaves there or was an unconventional designer since the space would have been too awkward for storage or any other use. It is not certain when the original opening was covered over but in the early 1930s two openings were cut into the wall to show the hiding place itself to visitors:[8] a full-sized door at the top of the stairs and an approximately three-feet square opening in the right wall of the stairway itself, both framed and covered by batten doors.

The second floor of the east wing is unused except for storage. The two easternmost bedrooms are in deteriorated condition, with wallpapers and plaster failing from pre-1972 water infiltration. Conditions have been stabilized, however.

Finally, the second floor contains a full bathroom installed in 1972 in the stairhall of the northeast corner of the east wing. It is available only to the museum staff and is inaccessible to the visiting public.

History of the House

Butler Denham arrived in Princeton from Massachusetts in 1835 with his brother Luther and began purchasing land, soon acquiring nearly 1300 acres, most from the United States government. By 1838 his wife Eunice had joined him in their newly built house, which eventually sheltered the Denham's and their three daughters. Butler Denham died in August, 1841. By the 1850s Eunice Denham was married to Owen Lovejoy by whom she gave birth to six more children, requiring the construction of the east wing to accommodate the large family. Butler Denham's land and other assets remained the property of his widow Eunice; the title never passed to Owen Lovejoy.

Denham's will required that his estate be used to support his daughters, and as early as the 1850s the Butler Denham estate was forced to sell some parcels of land to pay for the daughters' school

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[7] See for example, Doris P. Leonard (ed.), *Big Bureau and Bright Prairies* (Princeton, IL: Bureau County Board of Supervisors, 1968), p. 162.

[8] Undertaken apparently when the house came into the possession of Jay Spaulding and Susan Spaulding Gross, who wished to operate it as a Lovejoy museum. See the section on the history of the house, below.

expenses. Eunice Denham Lovejoy lived in the house until her death in January, 1899. Her three daughters and one of Owen Lovejoy's sons continued to occupy the house until 1906, upon which time they rented the house as a tenant house for those who farmed the land.

For the next twenty years portions of the property were sold to various purchasers, but Elijah P. Owen Lovejoy, son of Owen Lovejoy, bought many parcels of his step sisters' land, including the house, until he became the only owner remaining from the Denham and Lovejoy families.

In 1931 Princeton attorney Jay Spaulding, with his daughter Sue Spaulding Gross, purchased the house from Lovejoy out of respect and reverence for the abolitionist congressman to maintain it and operate it as a museum.[9] Sue Gross performed some restoration work, for which any record has yet to be discovered, and furnished many rooms with period furniture.[10] In the late 1940s and early 1950s public attention increased and there was even an unsuccessful attempt to get the State of Illinois involved in preserving the building and operating the museum.[11]

Because of few visitors and mounting maintenance costs Sue Gross sold the building on May 15, 1951 to Leonard and Chara Routt, who kept it until November 28, 1953, when they sold it to O.B. and Grace Johnson. The Johnson's in turn sold it to Edwin Finn and James English on April 30, 1955. Finn and English built a hot dog stand on the property in the hope of attracting more visitors; but when success failed to materialize they sold the property to Robert Fritz on July 22, 1966.[12]

By this time the building had deteriorated to the point where only nesting birds could use it. In 1967 Fritz offered the property for sale to the City of Princeton and advised city officials that he would demolish it and construct apartment buildings on the lot if they did not buy it. Concerned citizens from Princeton formed a restoration committee that convinced the State of Illinois to purchase it. On April 10, 1967 the state Department of Conservation, which was the agency in

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[9] Smith, p. 26.

[10] Ruth Ewars Haberkorn, "Nehemiah Matson: Historian of Northern Illinois," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Summer, 1960), p. 159; "Owen Lovejoy Home Refurnished," *Peoria* (IL) *Journal-Transcript*, July 20, 1941, clipping referenced in "Index: Lovejoy" file, George Smith collection, Owen Lovejoy Homestead; "News and Comment," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Winter, 1951), p. 367.

[11] "Owen Lovejoy Homestead" file, Illinois Department of Conservation collection, Illinois State Archives, Springfield, Illinois, contains several letters from citizens and state officials expressing concern about the future of the Lovejoy house.

[12] "Lovejoy Home," one-page typescript of land entries abstracted from Bureau county deed books, Owen Lovejoy Homestead files; "News and Comment," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Spring, 1957), p. 110.

state government that operated state parks and historic sites, bought the building and the 1.2 acre lot from Robert Fritz for $21,500.[13]

Although the state now owned the property, nothing was done to preserve it, reestablish the museum operation, or otherwise save it from further decay. Once again, local citizens joined together to persuade the state to undertake a substantial restoration program. Through appeals to the governor and local legislators the Department of Conservation agreed to spend $30,000 on a restoration project provided that the City of Princeton would take charge of the project and then take title to the property upon completion of the project. In order to accomplish this the city created a special commission to receive and spend the state's money for the project and assume permanent stewardship of it when the city received the title. The Department of Conservation provided funds and technical expertise for the restoration. The house and lot became the property of the City of Princeton on October 13, 1972.[14]

Despite the long history of the house, its prominence in the community, and the attention paid to it by governments, there is barely any written record of its construction or subsequent alterations. Because he was an important abolitionist and served nine years in Congress Owen Lovejoy's manuscripts are extensive and exist in several collections, but none of the material relates to his home.

[13] "Lovejoy Home;" Shipp, p. 39.

[14] "Agreement with State" file, Owen Lovejoy Homestead files. This file contains a collection of correspondence between 1970 and 1972 from Princeton citizens and state officials that traces the development and resolution of the issue, which was sometimes contentious.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide:_ Locally:_

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B X C_ D_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A_ B_ C_ D_ E_ F_ G_

NHL Criteria: 1, 2

NHL Theme(s): II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
2. Reform movements

National Register Areas of Significance: Social History
Politics/government
Ethnic Heritage--Black

Period(s) of Significance: 1841-1864

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): Lovejoy, Owen

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Denham, Butler, builder

NHL Comparative Category: XXXI. Social and Humanitarian Movements
D. Abolitionism

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Owen Lovejoy House is nationally significant and eligible for listing as a National Historic Landmark under Criterion 1 because the building was an important location in the Underground Railroad, which fugitive slaves used to escape to Canada. The building also meets NHL Criterion 2 because the building is the only property associated with the public life of Congressman Owen Lovejoy, serving as his home from 1838 until his death in 1864. Lovejoy was an abolitionist with a national reputation in the pre-Civil War era and one of the founders of the Illinois and national Republican Party. As a Radical Republican in Congress, he had a leadership role in developing policy for emancipation, the prosecution of the war and agriculture.

Owen Lovejoy

Owen Lovejoy (1811-1864) is significant as an influential abolitionist politician during the pre-Civil War era. He was prominent in the abolition movement and the Underground Railroad, a founder of the state and national Republican Party, and a congressional leader. He was archetype and expositor of the burgeoning political movement that gained dominance and provided leadership for the nation through the remainder of the nineteenth century.

Owen Lovejoy was born in Albion in Kennebec County, Maine, as the sixth of eight children to farmer Daniel Lovejoy, son of a Revolutionary War veteran whose forebears came to the Massachusetts colony in the early seventeenth century, and Elizabeth Gordon Pattee, whose parents emigrated from Scotland.[1] The household operated under the influence of New England Puritanism, valuing education and a rigorous moral code.

Owen Lovejoy enrolled at Bowdoin College in 1830, leaving before graduation to help at the family farm after his father died in 1833. In 1836 he enrolled at Bangor Theological Seminary, apparently leaving after one year without a diploma to join his oldest brother Elijah Parrish Lovejoy in Alton, Illinois. Elijah, nine years older than Owen, had gone to St. Louis, Missouri, to teach and to edit a Whig newspaper after accumulating honors at Monmouth Academy and Waterville (now Colby) College.[2] Driven from St. Louis in 1836 because of his ardent abolitionist views he migrated across the Mississippi River to Alton, Illinois.

Immediately upon arriving in Alton to begin publication of the *Alton Observer*, his reputation preceding him, Elijah's printing press was thrown into the Mississippi. Intimidation and public obloquy failing to dissuade him, a mob broke into his newspaper office one night a year later and destroyed his second press. When a third press arrived a month later it was seized immediately

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[1] Edward Magdol, *Owen Lovejoy: Abolitionist in Congress* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1967), p. 25. Magdol's study is the only major biographical work on Owen Lovejoy. It is the product of comprehensive research of Lovejoy materials from many collections throughout the United States and supersedes all other secondary biographical information; thus the discussion of Lovejoy's biography in this section is taken almost entirely from Magdol's work. Primary and secondary material on Lovejoy's home life is insufficient for inclusion in a major biography.

[2] Magdol, pp. 26-27.

and thrown into the Mississippi. While waiting the arrival of a fourth printing press, Elijah extended his abolitionist activities to co-founding the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society, a local unit of the American Anti-Slavery Society, in the fall of 1837. When the press arrived in the early morning hours of November 7, 1837 a group of pro-slavery Lovejoy opponents intent on destroying the printing equipment yet again encountered a group of Lovejoy supporters equally intent on saving it. The pro-slavery forces proceeded with an incendiary attack on the warehouse occupied by the press and its defenders. An exchange of gunfire found the press once again lost to the Mississippi and its owner dying of wounds. His brother Owen was at his side.[3]

Owen had joined his brother earlier in the year, just in time to assist him in the organization of the anti-slavery society and to become embroiled in the free speech controversy. Owen withdrew to New York City where in 1838 the American Anti-Slavery Society commissioned him and his older brother Joseph to write *Memoir of the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy* with a foreword by John Quincy Adams.[4] Later that year he returned to Alton to study for the Episcopal ministry and served as an agent for the anti-slavery society. He was scheduled to be ordained in 1838 but his ordination never took place since he refused to sign a pledge that he would not discuss abolition from the pulpit.[5] Notwithstanding his lack of ordination he began looking for a church to serve. While at Jacksonville, Illinois, he learned from fellow abolitionist Edward Beecher at Illinois College of a vacancy at the Congregational Church in Princeton, Illinois in Bureau County, one hundred fifty miles north. He accepted a position at an annual salary of six hundred dollars, regardless of opinions on slavery. [6]

At Princeton he found a transplanted New England community, a ministry at the Hampshire Colony Church, and a home for the rest of his life. In 1843, five years after his arrival, he married Eunice Denham, recently widowed with three daughters and a thirteen hundred acre farm, his home until his death in 1864. This property served as a station on the Underground Railroad, as well as the birthplace of Owen and Eunice Lovejoy's seven children.[7]

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[3] See also Robert P. Howard, *Illinois: A History of the Prairie State* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdman, 1972) pp. 184-188. The life and death of Elijah Parrish Lovejoy is a prominent and often-told story in Illinois history. His somewhat dated but not eclipsed biography is Merton L. Dillon, *Elijah P. Lovejoy: Abolitionist Editor* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961). See also Magdol, pp. 4-24.

[4] Magdol, pp. 28-30. See also A. L. Bowen, "Anti-Slavery Convention Held in Alton, Illinois, October 26-28, 1837," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (hereinafter *JISHS*), Vol. 20, No. 3 (April, 1927), p. 330.

[5] Magdol, p. 33.

[6] Bowen, p. 346; Magdol, p. 34.

[7] Magdol, p. 38.

Princeton, the seat of government and market center for Bureau County was incorporated the same year Lovejoy arrived. It was a so-called "community town," settled largely by Congregationalists from Massachusetts. The Congregationalists were at the center of anti-slavery sentiment in that part of Illinois and many of them were abolitionists, but they were not particularly active politically. Firmly established as an abolitionist already, the twenty-seven-year old Lovejoy was comfortable preaching abolitionism from his pulpit and in other churches. His New England theology, his up-bringing and accrued abolitionist experience--not the least of which was the close relationship to his late brother Elijah--molded him for leadership in the anti-slavery movement.[8] Although Lovejoy would fill other roles as farmer, family man, preacher and parent, the central activity of his life was abolitionism.

Since the great majority of Illinoisans at that time came from slave states, especially in the southern half of the state, there was not much sympathy for anti-slavery sentiment. In fact, until the state constitution of 1848 settled the matter, several hundred individuals had been held in bondage under various legal guises.[9] Abolitionists of any stripe were considered fanatics and trouble-makers. It was in this context that Lovejoy lived and worked. He was the sort of abolitionist who thought that slavery could be done away with through political action, as opposed to the followers of William Lloyd Garrison who eschewed politics.

Lovejoy became a leader in the state's Liberty Party, calling for repeal of Illinois "Black Codes," elimination of Congress' "gag rule," and other slavery issues. By 1842 he was a member of the party's central committee and served on a panel responsible for preparing the party's manifesto. In the election of 1846, the same election that put Abraham Lincoln in the House of Representatives as a Whig, he ran unsuccessfully as the Liberty Party candidate for Congress in the Fourth District. He ran again, also unsuccessfully in 1848; but as the one-idea Liberty Party began to crumble Lovejoy found himself attending meetings of the Free Soil Party and flirting with the even shorter-lived Free Democrat Party.[10]

In the early 1850s Lovejoy joined a few other political leaders agitating for an anti-slavery fusion party. He was a practical politician and did not feel that a one-idea party could succeed or that a fusion party could satisfy all its members. The anti-slavery party he found willing to accommodate abolitionists was the nascent Republican Party, first organized in Wisconsin and Michigan. Lovejoy attended a party convention in Springfield, but those in attendance were uncertain about the new party's policies and membership. At this time Lincoln served on the state central committee, a presence that concerned the abolitionist Republicans who fretted that he did not take a hard enough line on the slavery issue. As a political leader and "the high priest of abolitionism" Lovejoy kept Illinois abolitionists from supporting Lincoln until Lincoln

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[8] Percival Graham Rennick, "The Peoria and Galena Trail and Coach Road and the Peoria Neighborhood," *JISHS* Vol. 27, No. 4 (January, 1935), p. 407; Frank J. Heinl, "Newspapers and Periodicals in the Lincoln-Douglas Country, 1831-32," *JISHS*, Vol. 23. No. 3 (October, 1930), pp. 371ff; Frank J. Heinl, "Congregationalism in Jacksonville and Early Illinois," *JISHS*,.Vol. 27, No. 4 (January, 1935), pp. 454-459.

[9] Howard, pp. 129-131 .

[10] Magdol, pp. 59, 70-83.

pledged to take a stronger position on slavery. Trusting Lincoln, Owen Lovejoy took it upon himself to serve as liaison between the more radical abolitionists and party moderates, resulting in a more secure party organization and consequent Republican victories at the polls. Lovejoy's efforts pushed the Republican Party closer to abolition than mere anti-slavery.[11]

In 1854 Lovejoy was elected to the House of Representatives in the Illinois General Assembly where he introduced anti-slavery resolutions and bills, including a bill to repeal the law disqualifying blacks from giving testimony in courts of law.[12] In 1856 Lovejoy traveled to Pittsburgh to help create the national Republican Party. In his role as clergyman he opened the meeting with a prayer, and as party leader he was the third speaker, following Horace Greeley and Joshua Giddings.[13] That same year he was elected to the United States House of Representatives amidst dissension over his abolitionism and his role in the Underground Railroad.[14]

Election to Congress meant giving up his ministry, but he did not give up the farm. As a Republican congressman he involved himself in many issues of interest to Western farmers, the corruption of Democratic President James Buchanan's administration, and especially slavery. In Congress he gained a national reputation through his congressional and party leadership and his fiery anti-slavery speeches. In the years immediately prior to the Civil War when tension and tempers ran high his taking the floor often brought southern members to their feet and more than once provoked confrontations and threats of violence in Congress. Southerners called him a "Negro-thief" for his role in the Underground Railroad, but northerners made him a hero. "Nobody can intimidate me," he said.[15]

Speeches he gave from the floor of the House of Representatives, several of which were printed for distribution, gave him national prominence. His attacks on slavery and his strident abolitionism created furors and public discussion throughout the country. His topics included

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[11] Magdol, pp. 109-18; Frank E. Stevens, "Life of Stephen Arnold Douglas," *JISHS*, Vol. 16, No. 3-4 (October, 1923-January 1924), p.565.

[12] Magdol, p. 120.

[13] Magdol, p. 136-7. In 1912 Lovejoy's name was placed on a plaque in Pittsburgh as one of the founders of the national Republican Party as described in Paul Selby, "The Editorial Convention of 1858," *JISHS*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (October, 1912), p. 349.

[14] Magdol, p. 167.

[15] Quoted in Magdol, p. 235.

"The Barbarism of Slavery", "The Fanaticism of the Democratic party," and "Human Beings Are Not Property."[16]

Lovejoy remained seated in Congress from his first term in 1855 until his death in March, 1864. Lovejoy's political success increased with Republican success. He became chairman of the Committee on Public Lands, which was an important position for a western farmer and an important position in regard to the disposal of the public domain and the issue of slavery in the territories.[17] When the election of 1860 put more Republicans in Congress, Lincoln in the Executive Mansion and the southern states in rebellion, Lovejoy focused on suppressing the rebels and emancipating the slaves. He was, as a Radical Republican, staunchly behind a policy of swift and violent defeat of the South and saw the war, first, as a method to free the slaves and, second, to preserve the Union.

In the spring of 1861 after the outbreak of hostilities Lovejoy, at age fifty, was given the rank of colonel to serve as an aide to General John C. Fremont in Missouri. He saw no combat, but witnessed some of the consequences of warfare. He returned to Congress in the fall of 1861 where he focused on promoting various methods of emancipation including universal emancipation bills to codify Lincoln's proclamation of January, 1863.[18]

By this time his health began to fail as recurring bouts of kidney and liver failure, diagnosed later as Bright's disease, kept him bedridden for periods of time. In between these attacks, however, he traveled through parts of the North promoting the anti-slavery cause and the war effort. On such a mission in Brooklyn, New York he was finally confined to bed until his death at age fifty-three on March 25, 1864, his wife and daughter at his bedside.[19]

The Underground Railroad in Illinois and Princeton

The Owen Lovejoy House is a significant place in the history of the Underground Railroad in Illinois and the United States. Princeton, Illinois, was an important stop on a major fugitive slave route from Missouri and other southern states to Canada. Lovejoy's national reputation as an abolitionist and Underground Railroad operator attracted attention to his home and his community in a way that surpassed many quieter and less active places in the system.

Projecting southward from the tip of Lake Michigan to the edges of two slave states, Illinois was a convenient conduit for slaves escaping to Canada. Portions of the Mississippi and lower Ohio Rivers gave Illinois a continuous five hundred mile border with Missouri and Kentucky that could be crossed without much difficulty. The proximity of free soil with a sufficient number of

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[16] Ruth Ewers Haberkorn, "Owen Lovejoy in Princeton, Illinois," *JISHS*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (September, 1943), p. 301.

[17] Magdol, pp. 231-324.

[18] Magdol, pp. 287-298.

[19] Magdol, p. 403.

anti-slavery sympathizers made Illinois an attractive Underground Railroad route for fugitive slaves.

It is difficult to assess and identify the places and personalities associated with the Underground Railroad in Illinois, as in all states in which the Railroad operated.[20] The absence of written records yields to oral tradition--as reliable or unreliable in this instance as in any other history--handed down in families and entire communities. Even newspaper accounts incur some doubt in regard to accuracy, especially in the case of abolitionist newspapers, which tended to exaggerate and applaud the exploits of their more politically active constituents. Court records, however, provide dependable information on individuals arrested for harboring and abetting fugitives slaves. Combining reminiscences, contemporary accounts, and official documents makes it possible to produce a persuasive portrait of the Underground Railroad in Illinois, the surrounding hyperbole and melodrama notwithstanding.

While details on the establishment of the Underground Railroad are unknown, there is agreement on three principal routes through the state. One route began in Chester, on the Mississippi River about seventy miles below St. Louis, leading through the upland prairies to Sparta, thence to Centralia, where after 1850 the Illinois Central Railroad could be utilized for passage to Chicago. A second route ran from Alton, also on the river a few miles above St. Louis and the site of Elijah Lovejoy's murder, to the anti-slavery hot-bed of Jacksonville, thence up the Illinois River valley to Chicago. A third route began in Quincy across from northern Missouri leading to Galesburg, then Princeton, then on to the Illinois River at Ottawa and then to Chicago. From Chicago fugitives could be hidden on Great Lakes steamers to Canada or sent overland, often as railroad passengers, to Detroit and ultimate freedom.[21]

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[20] The history of the Underground Railroad in Illinois is found in contemporary newspaper accounts, court records and personal reminiscences. The subscription county histories from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include much of such material, but in varying degrees of scholarly achievement. Wilbur Siebert's *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898) influenced the writing of the history of the Underground Railroad in Illinois much as it did in other states. See for example, Vera Cooley, "Illinois and the Underground Railroad to Canada," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 23 (1917), pp. 76-98, an early scholarly treatment of the topic, which is essentially an extraction of all the Illinois material contained in Siebert's work.

[21] Siebert, p. 79; Cooley, p. 80; Buckmaster, p. 201; Rufus Blanchard, *Discovery and Conquest of the Northwest with the History of Chicago*, 2 Vols. (Chicago: R. Blanchard and Company, 1900), v. 2, p. 286; John H. Ryan, "A Chapter from the History of the Underground Railroad in Illinois," JISHS, Vol. 8, No. 1 (April, 1915), p 28. Local histories commonly have a section or chapter on the Underground Railroad to claim their own role. See, for example, Spencer Ellsworth, *Records of the Olden Times*, (Lacon, IL: Home Journal Steam Publishing Company, 1880). If Underground Railroad activities were as extensive and frequent as many local histories purport, a map of the Underground Railroad would indicate a very widespread web, rather than a concentration of activity along certain "routes." Larry Gara, *The Liberty* Line, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1961), p. 90, and Charles Blockson, *The Underground Railroad*, (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1987), p. 202, suggest just such a phenomenon.

Generally, northern and western Illinois were more hospitable to fugitives than southern and southeastern parts of the state. Virtually the entire population in the latter area emigrated from or were the descendants of emigrants from Kentucky, Virginia and the upland South. Slavery itself existed in Illinois with ambiguous laws supporting indentured servitude until a new state constitution in 1848 eliminated all forms of slavery.

Illinois law also created Black Codes, adapted from southern states, in the first year of statehood. Free blacks were required to have a certificate of freedom and had to leave the state if they could not support themselves. It was also illegal to bring slaves into Illinois with the intention of setting them free. Harboring a fugitive was defined as a felony. These laws were reinforced in 1845 and again in 1853 following the enactment of the federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850.[22]

Pro-slavery and anti-abolitionist sentiment existed throughout the state, however, sometimes with government support. There was no shortage of constables, prosecutors or judges to catch and penalize fugitives and their abettors. In 1843 Illinois Governor Thomas Ford excoriated Underground Railroad operators as a "fanatical and misguided sect."[23] While towns like Galesburg, Quincy and Chicago assisted fugitives, Shawneetown on the Ohio River and Illinoistown, later re-named East St. Louis, were places where captured fugitives and kidnapped free blacks were sent south.[24]

Abolitionist and Underground Railroad activity was more intense in those areas of the state settled by New England and Middle Atlantic migrants. Missionaries from the "burnt over" region of New York and the Yale Band of preachers and educators assumed influential roles in Presbyterian and Congregational churches and the small colleges that sprang up throughout northern and western Illinois during the 1830s.[25] Jacksonville, Quincy, Ottawa, Princeton, Chicago and Galesburg were well-known and unabashed centers of anti-slavery sentiment and activity. Chicago's *Western Citizen* reported that Galesburg, lying less than sixty miles southwest of Princeton, was "probably the principal Underground Railroad Station in Illinois."[26]

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[22] Elmer Gertz, "The Black Laws of Illinois," *JISHS*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (Autumn, 1963), pp. 463-472, Howard, p. 188.

[23] Cooley, p. 86.

[24] Howard, p. 188.

[25] Herman R. Muelder, "The Moral Lights Around Us," *JISHS*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Summer, 1959), p. 252; Heinl, p. 407; Henrietta Buckmaster, *Let My People Go*, (Harper and Brothers, 1941), p. 95.

[26] Quoted in Cooley, p. 83; Siebert, pp. 31,97; Blockson, p. 201.

Princeton, Illinois, was an archetypal abolitionist community. Founded and led by New Englanders, Princeton was surveyed in 1832, became the county seat when Bureau County was created in 1837, and incorporated as a village in 1838.[27]

Citizens of Princeton participated in the Underground Railroad before Owen Lovejoy arrived there to become minister at the Congregational Church. John Leeper, reputed to be the first Underground Railroad conductor in Illinois (see above), moved to Princeton in 1833 and continued to practice his covert avocation. Examination shows a large number of Underground Railroad operatives lived in Princeton and Bureau County relative to surrounding counties and also shows a favorable comparison with other counties involved in the system.[28]

Fugitives on the "route" through Princeton came from the southwest from Galesburg to Chicago, passing fifteen miles northeast to LaMoille or thirty-five miles east to Ottawa on the Illinois River. John Leeper claimed to have helped over thirty fugitives in one six-weeks period. David Norton claimed to have sheltered "over one hundred" escapees in his home.[29] John H. Bryant, a founder of Princeton and brother of poet William Cullen Bryant, was an outspoken critic of slavery and also participated in the Underground Railroad. The first indictment in Bureau County for harboring a slave was for John T. Holbrook, who was acquitted by a sympathetic jury in 1840.[30] It has also been claimed that Butler and Eunice Denham hid fugitives in their home before Owen Lovejoy lodged there.[31] John Cross of nearby LaMoille advertised his participation in the Underground Railroad through handbills and abolitionist newspapers. He was regarded as the "superintendent" of the line until Lovejoy succeeded him.[32]

When Owen Lovejoy arrived in Princeton in 1838 he found an established abolitionist community, although all sides of the slavery issue were represented. The Congregational church that hired Lovejoy was generally, as most Congregationalist churches, anti-slavery in sentiment and did not proscribe anti-slavery sermons. However, to oppose slavery was not necessarily to be an abolitionist, and a strident abolitionist like Lovejoy found vocal opponents on the street and in his church as well. Once a member of his congregation began walking out during an anti-

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[27] John Clayton, (comp.) *Illinois Fact Book and Historical Almanac, 1673-1968*, (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), p. 29; H.C. Bradsby (ed.), *History of Bureau County* (Chicago: World Publishing Company, 1885), p. 267.

[28] Siebert's appendices list known and reputed Underground Railroad operators throughout the United States and lists fifteen for Bureau County, a large number considering a population of only a few hundred. Siebert, pp. 380-385.

[29] *Biographical Record of Bureau, Marshall and Putnam Counties, Illinois* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1896), p. 663.

[30] Nehemiah Matson, *Reminiscences of Bureau County* (Princeton, IL: Republican Book and Job Office, 1872), p. 362.

[31] Doris P. Leonard (ed.), *Big Bureau and Bright Prairies*, (Princeton: Bureau County Board of Supervisors, 1968), p. 162.

[32] Matson, p. 364.

slavery sermon and Lovejoy called out that he would keep preaching until the person returned and then would keep preaching as long as the person stayed. Another time, when threatened with assault if he came into town, he rode slowly up and down the main street defying anyone to carry out the threat, and no one did.[33]

Owen Lovejoy and the Underground Railroad

As a vociferous and active abolitionist, Owen Lovejoy used his home just outside Princeton to harbor fugitive slaves on their way north. In fact, several times he faced prosecution for his role in the Underground Railroad. He was quite proud of his opportunities to help slaves flee to freedom and admitted this publicly, not as a boast, but to defy the supporters of slavery.

As was not uncommon among Underground Railroad operators, Lovejoy went so far as to advertise his surreptitious occupation in the *Western Citizen*, the principal abolitionist newspaper serving Illinois. On June 1, 1843 Lovejoy had printed a notice announcing the availability of the "Canada Line of Stages" for "the ladies and gentlemen of color of the South who wish to travel North for the benefit of their condition."[34]

In a 1859 speech in Congress that drew national attention Lovejoy addressed his role in the Underground Railroad directly with

> A single word as to this charge of Negro stealing. . . . If the object is to ascertain whether I assist fugitive slaves who come to my door and ask it, the matter is easily disposed of. I march right up to the confessional, and say I do.
>
> I recollect the case of a young woman, who came to my house [who had been] sold to a libertine from the South, she being in St. Louis. She escaped, and, in her flight from infamy, and a fate worse than death, she came and implored aid. Was I to refuse it? Was I to betray the wanderer? Was I to detain her, and give her up a prey to the incarnate fiend who had selected her as a victim to offer up on the altar of sensualism?
>
> Sir, I will never do this.
>
> Owen Lovejoy lives at Princeton, Illinois, three quarters of a mile east of the village; and he aids every fugitive that comes to his door and asks it. Proclaim it

[33] Haberkorn, p. 151-152.

[34] Magdol, p. 42.

> then upon the housetops. Write it on every leaf that trembles in the forest, make it blaze from the sun at high noon. . . . I bid you defiance in the name of my God![35]

Other incidents demonstrate Lovejoy's bold commitment to the Underground Railroad and the lengths to which he would go to help fugitives. He found himself in law courts more than once defending his anti-slavery behavior, the most celebrated being the "Agnes-Nancy case." The Bureau County grand jury indicted Lovejoy in May, 1843 on charges involving harboring two slave women, Agnes in March, 1842, and Nancy in February, 1843. He was charged with "keeping in his house, feeding, clothing and comforting the said Nancy" and "harboring, feeding, clothing one said Agnes, a slave."[36] When he came to trial in October, 1843 he was represented by James Collins, a noted abolitionist attorney from Chicago, and he participated in his own defense. The week-long trial filled the courtroom every day. Most of the testimony went against Lovejoy, but the jury acquitted him after Judge John D. Caton in his charge to the jury stated that since the two women fled their masters while they were in Illinois, and since slavery was not permitted in Illinois, then the two were free the minute they stepped into Illinois. Although the county court ruled the same way in a similar case in Quincy, Illinois, the state supreme court overturned the local decision. Apparently, this action had no effect on the outcome of Lovejoy's case.[37]

Another time, in the spring of 1849, Lovejoy used his house to hide a fugitive whose would-be captors were in hot pursuit. John Buckner had fled bondage in Missouri and was staying with Enos Matson (one of Lovejoy's abolitionist neighbors) when two white men spotted him and took him into town a prisoner. While waiting for a warrant for Buckner's arrest a scuffle erupted with anti-slavery sympathizers who succeeded in giving Buckner an opportunity to run to Lovejoy's home. An pro-slavery crowd followed to Lovejoy's where they encountered a defiant Lovejoy assembled with his friends to deny them any access to the fugitive. During the ensuing stand-off, which involved much shouting, shoving, and threatening at the front gate, Buckner made his way to freedom out the back.[38]

These and other documented cases verify that the Lovejoy House served as a station on the Underground Railroad, but the extent and frequency of Lovejoy's involvement with fugitives cannot be known because of the clandestine nature of Underground Railroad operations. Whatever his role in the Underground Railroad, Lovejoy did not hide his activities. His reputation as a "conductor" was widespread throughout Illinois, Congress, and even the South.[39]

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[35] Haberkorn, p. 301; Magdol, p. 51.

[36] Quoted in Magdol, p.40.

[37] Magdol, pp. 40-44; Haberkorn, pp. 297-299; Percival Graham Rennick, "Courts and Lawyers in Northern and Western Illinois," *JISHS*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September, 1937), pp. 329-330; Ryan, pp. 23-30.

[38] Magdol, pp. 47-50; Haberkorn, pp. 293-294.

[39] Magdol, pp. 25-51, passim; Haberkorn, pp. 291-299, passim; Heinl, "Newspapers and Periodicals...," p. 438; Stevens, p. 573, which also refers to Lovejoy as "the high priest of abolitionism in Illinois"; Larry Gara, "The Underground

Among the Underground Railroad operators in Illinois Lovejoy was perhaps the best known. It was well known in Illinois before the Civil War effectively ended slavery that Lovejoy was "in charge" at Princeton and that fugitives passing through Princeton from slavery to freedom were riding "the Lovejoy Line."[40]

Railroad in Illinois," *JISHS*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Autumn, 1963), pp. 510.

[40] Gara, "Underground Railroad...", p. 510; D. N. Blazer, "The History of the Underground Railroad of McDonough County, Illinois," *JISHS*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (April, 1922-January, 1923), p. 580; Blanchard, vol., 2, p. 281.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

__ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_X_ 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: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State Agency
__ Federal Agency
_X_ Local Government
__ University
_X_ Other (Specify Repository): Bureau County Historical Society

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 1.2 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	16	295220	4582720

Verbal Boundary Description:

From a point four hundred three feet east of the northeast corner of Sixth Street and East Peru Street in the City of Princeton, Illinois, north two hundred fifty feet; thence east two hundred twenty-two feet; thence south eighty-four feet; thence west sixteen feet; thence south one hundred sixty-six feet; thence west to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification:

The designated property extends beyond the immediate site of the Lovejoy House to include

three non-contributing structures because the 1.2 acres on which it sits is part of Butler Denham's original holding acquired for the construction of the home in 1838. This is the property historically associated with Owen Lovejoy and his residence in Princeton. This remaining parcel includes sites of long-demolished outbuildings dating from the period of significance. While there has been neither archaeological investigation nor much research into the early appearance of the farmstead, sub-surface evidence surely exists and requires protection and designation for any future analysis.

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