

ADDED 9-4-74

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Illinois
COUNTY:	Macon
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME

COMMON:
James Millikin Home

ALSO KNOWN AS:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
125 North Pine

CITY OR TOWN:
Decatur

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17 COUNTY: Macon CODE: 115

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) potential residence for Millikin Univ. President <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Millikin University

STREET AND NUMBER:
1184 West Main

CITY OR TOWN:
Decatur

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Macon County Building

STREET AND NUMBER:
253 East Wood

CITY OR TOWN:
Decatur

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Register of Old Buildings

DATE OF SURVEY: May, 1974 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

STREET AND NUMBER:
247 East North (Decatur Public Library, Miss Margaret Meyer)

CITY OR TOWN:
Decatur

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Illinois

COUNTY: Macon

ENTRY NUMBER

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#6 Representation in Existing Surveys - continued

Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey
1202 West Main
Carbondale, Illinois

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Millikin Home's present exterior appearance is nearly identical to that shown in the earliest photographs of the mansion. There are no discernable modifications except provision for security lighting, the addition of cast concrete steps at the kitchen porch, limited use of cement topping as a stonework patch, and perhaps the present paint color on exterior wood trim. The house has suffered no unreparable vandalism thus far, although an attempt was made recently to steal the large panels of art glass from the stairwell's bay window. The panels have subsequently been removed from the premises until the building is reoccupied.

"Millikin's mansion is basically a towered Italianate residence of a type popular during the 1860's; however, the high mansard roof of the tower, derived from the French Second Empire style, makes the house something of a composite of the two. But whatever its exact nomenclature, the important thing is that it is in large degree an original nineteenth century style, one that does not try to reproduce a historical prototype either in composition, massing or detail. At the same time the design hangs together in unity by virtue of its complex composition, varied colors and materials, and involved decorative details.

Although derived ultimately from European classicism, the building is composed and planned at least in part according to the principles of irregularity developed by the American picturesque tradition: complicated interpenetrations of solid and void characterize the exterior while inside the rooms, of varied size and shape, are arranged around an irregular central hall with fireplace and visually exciting grand staircase."

The mansion's interior appearance has been largely conserved with the exception of decorative modifications evidently added in the Millikin's lifetime, the absence of their original furnishings, and temporary wall covering and lighting dating from the time the building served as an art gallery. Several period photographs of a portion of the interior exist and a few items of furniture have survived. Decorative modifications are mainly those involving the redesign of several fireplaces. An exhaustive description of interior detail on a room by room basis can be found in a graduate level report written in August, 1972 by Leslie Barber of Decatur, entitled, The Historian's Contribution to Community Preservation and Development - The Millikin Homestead, Decatur, Illinois. A copy of this thesis length paper is on file with the Macon County Historical Coordinating Council, 247 E. North (Decatur Public Library), Decatur, Illinois.

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Description - continued

A carriage house located some ninety feet west of the mansion is in a comparable state of preservation. Its original appearance may have been somewhat altered by the erection of a one story addition along its west wall. Research is needed to determine if the addition is a product of this century or rather more nearly contemporary with the carriage house. The addition is matched to the carriage house by use of identical materials, window treatment and decorative motifs. The carriage house proper is a symmetrical structure made of the same red brick as the mansion and forming a stylistic entity with it. On the ground floor interior, horse stalls with oat troughs are still in place. The second floor was until recently, embellished with a marble fireplace. During renovations of the interior to better serve the needs of a local art group, the fireplace was dismantled and stored on the premises. Old photographs show the carriage house in relation to the mansion. The discovery of an exterior profile view and interior views, if extant, are needed to fully establish the outbuilding's original appearance.

FOOTNOTE

1. Sprague, Paul E., Decatur's James Millikin Mansion - Famous Illinois Architecture: VII, Outdoor Illinois, Benton, Illinois, November, 1973.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1876

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	Contiguous with Millikin
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	Place, a private street with
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	three Prairie Houses ca.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	1912 by Frank Lloyd Wright
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	& his associates including
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		Marion Mahony & Walter
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation			Burley Griffin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

"The large Victorian Mansion at the corner of Pine and Main Streets in Decatur was built in 1876 for James Millikin, reputedly the wealthiest man in Macon County at that time. Millikin was born in western Pennsylvania in 1827 and educated at Washington College. In 1848 he moved to Danville, Illinois where he engaged in the livestock business. In 1860 four years after moving on to Decatur, he organized a bank in his name, and thereafter made that city his permanent home, dying there in 1909 at the age of 82. The most extensive of his many philanthropic activities during his later years was the founding by him in 1900 of the James Millikin University at Decatur, which now owns his former residence."²

The visual identity of Decatur is innately tied to this mansion which together with its carriage house and lavish spatial site comprise the City's most imposing Victorian remnant. It housed the Decatur Art Center and predecessor art organizations for nearly half a century becoming a symbol of community culture and fulfilling Mrs. Millikin's wish that it serve the creative life of Decatur. During the great influenza epidemic of 1919 it was used as a contagion hospital. Frederick Koeper, in his book Illinois Architecture From Territorial Times to the Present - A Selective Guide, describes the house in the following way: "The assertive individualism of the post-Civil War period is best displayed in the rich man's house. The James Millikin mansion in Decatur is an example. Its tall narrow proportions and tower with mansard roof are characteristic of the 1870's. When built, it was the finest mansion in Decatur."

"The details of this handsome and expensive residence are of the highest standards both in design and craftsmanship. The fireplaces incorporate carved marble of various colors and hearths of patterned mosaics. The glass in the elegant copper-covered bay window containing the staircase is rich and sensuous. There is even a fresco - but not in the style of the house and possibly of European origin - in the ceiling above the stairs. The carved ornamentation of the fireplaces, whether in wood or marble, is especially interesting because it is in that highly

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Statement of Significance - continued - page 1

original abstract style popular during the seventies that was based on a rigid conventionalization of floral motifs.

The Millikin House is, in short, no ordinary dwelling just as its owner was no ordinary person. Its very high quality in every respect indicates that its unknown architect was of the first rank. The Millikin House is certainly one of the more prominent buildings in the state both from a qualitative standpoint and by virtue of the prominence of its original owner."³

Any evaluation of the significance of the Millikin Homestead must address itself not only to the mansion complex and grounds but to its contiguous environs as well. Just north of the house and parallel to it is the Millikin Place Area that encompasses a private drive, at least three houses of national importance and an integral system of landscape architecture and ornamental lighting. Millikin Place was formed from Millikin owned land and conceived ca. 1909. It is in reality a de facto architectural park exhibiting the talents of Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony and Frank Lloyd Wright. Griffin was responsible for the landscape design of the entire area. The design of entrance gates and lampposts represent a problem of attribution, being the work of either Griffin or Marion Mahony. Two residences, #1 and #4 Millikin Place are generally credited to Frank Lloyd Wright and Marion Mahony. The house at #2 Millikin Place is the design of Frank Lloyd Wright. All three houses are stylistically Early Modern Prairie School of ca. 1909-1910.

The formidable combine of talents brought together in this unique assemblage of work produced a priceless visual entity. In concert with, and inseparable from the Millikin Mansion it forms a virtual concentrate of architectural history that merits official recognition and preservation.

FOOTNOTES

2. Sprague, Paul E., Decatur's James Millikin Mansion - Famous Illinois Architecture: VII, Outdoor Illinois, Benton, Illinois, November, 1973.

3. ibid

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Statement of Significance - continued page 2

A factual knowledge of the lives of the original owners of the homes in Millikin Place is an essential prerequisite for any appreciation of Millikin Place as a historic landmark. By the term Millikin Place this author understands those homes and grounds which originally belonged to James Millikin (125 N. Pine), Robert Mueller, E. P. Irving, and Adolph Mueller (1, 2, and 4 Millikin Place respectively).

James Millikin came to Decatur (1856) as a prosperous inventor in livestock and real estate. Within four years he was approached by citizens trying to persuade him to open a bank. Millikin did open a bank (1860). He had had no previous experience as a banker, and at the time, the atmosphere for such an investment was uncertain. Millikin accepted a partnership with Jerome Gorin (1865) and later (1881) with Gorin's son, Orville. Legally this partnership was known as James Millikin and Company. The business prospered despite national panics (1873 and 1907) and a local "run" (1908) which posed especially grave threats to the Millikin enterprise. Millikin invested in other Decatur business ventures, the Decatur Coal Company and the Union Iron Works Company. Through such companies as these, Decatur participated in the national process of late nineteenth century industrialization. By loans and counseling Millikin influenced other elements in Decatur's economic growth. At the time of Millikin's death (1909), the Bank (re-named the Millikin National Bank in 1897) had assets totalling five million dollars. Regarding size, convenience, and physical security, the Bank was second only to those in Chicago.

Millikin's interests in Decatur extended beyond the financial realm. Motivated by the desire to found an institution which would teach practical industrial and homemaking skills to boys and girls respectively and "character" to both, the wealthy banker contributed half the money (\$200,000) and the land (Oakland Park) necessary for the founding of James Millikin University. The school opened in September, 1903. Millikin's benevolence was even more general. He left an estate of one and a half million dollars to be used by the Bank's officers for charitable and educational purposes in Decatur.

Mrs. Anna B. Millikin shared her husband's altruistic sentiments. She helped promote the Macon County Industrial School for Girls (incorporated 1890) and the Anna B. Millikin Home (incorporated 1892). The latter developed as a home for aged women and dependent children. For a building to house both the Industrial

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School and the Home, Mr. Millikin contributed two-thirds of the necessary funds (\$15,000). His wife's will directed that the Millikin home at Pine Street be used to promote art. Throughout their life the Millikins had also contributed to the Decatur and Macon County Hospital, the Art Institute, the Day Nursery, and the Y.M.C.A. After the death of its occupants, the Millikin Home was used as an art museum. It is noteworthy too that in 1918 the home sheltered 175 patients during the influenza epidemic when the regular hospital was incapable of ministering to the extraordinary demand.

The homes of two members of the Mueller family, Adolph and Robert are present in the Millikin Place complex. They represent a second generation of successful Decatur businessmen. Together with four other brothers they labored beside their father, Hieronymus, to develop the several enterprises which by 1897 were consolidated into the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company. The family was unique because the father and each son contributed special skills that produced the Mueller fortune. Adolph had been a plumber, received a formal education in mechanical engineering, and then studied at a business college. In 1910, he was president and treasurer of the company. In the same year, Robert was assistant treasurer and secretary. He had received a practical education in plumbing and management after graduating from high school. By the time Adolph and Robert had commissioned the homes in question, the company which they were helping to direct was competing successfully in a national market and earning two million dollars annually. Their father had come to Decatur (1857) to open a gunsmith shop. Just over fifty years later the family's efforts had resulted in the company's being Decatur's single largest industrial company and the nation's largest producer of water, plumbing and brass goods.

E. P. Irving, whose home is situated between those of the two Muellers, was a Decatur businessman of the same generation as the brothers. Irving married a daughter of Robert Faries, who like the Muellers' father, had a mechanical inclination, had come to Decatur in the 1860's, and had become a wealthy man. In 1894, Faries founded the Faries Manufacturing Company, noted for its manufacture of several kinds of wire-forming machines. Irving left his position as principal at Brown's Business College (1889-1894) to become secretary-treasurer of Faries Manufacturing Company.

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Statement of Significance - continued page 4

James Millikin's association with the land on which his home still stands began almost as soon as he came to Decatur. It was six years after his appearance in town that he bought the property at Pine and Main (1862). This purchase was just two years after he started the Bank, the growth of which has been ever since so closely involved with that of Decatur. The home at Pine and Main was finished in 1876. It was Millikin's third residence in town. He designated the location of every tree and shrub around the house. He selected a cucumber and a tulip tree for planting. At the time they were rather rare in Illinois and their owner was especially fond of them. On the surrounding property there were only a few buildings of little value. Millikin's home has the finest in the entire city. Throughout the next third of a century that James and Anna Millikin lived at Pine and Main they became further identified with the home and through their business and shared fortune, with Decatur's welfare. Their numerous philanthropies were a fabulous legacy. Of these, the most meaningful to all of Decatur has been the James Millikin University. For more than a half a century after Mrs. Millikin's death (1913), the home, as an art center, was devoted to education in aesthetics. This was her wish. The entire Millikin home, carriage house, and grounds are one entity whose past and present associations are strands in an entire social fabric which is Decatur.

North of Millikin's home, those of the Mueller brothers, Adolph and Robert, remain as tangible elements of a family unique in the city's history. In addition to their collective fortune, the family is noteworthy for its members' successful integration of their individual personalities and skills in a common business aim. The homes of Adolph and Robert were commissioned at a time when the business they helped manage had achieved its greatest success to that time. Furthermore, it was partly through the brass goods that the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company sold on the national market that Decatur's livelihood was integrated with the nation's.

Adolph and Robert Mueller, together with E. P. Irving, stood among the most successful Decatur businessmen at the time of the construction of the homes in question. While not the initiators, they were important later contributors to the industrial enterprises they were helping to direct when their homes were commissioned and built at Millikin Place. Of course, James Millikin's Bank was immensely successful. He was of the

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first business generation; he began the Bank. Thus, the Millikin Place homes reflect a history of two successive generations of businessmen who were largely responsible for Decatur's economic development. The Millikin Place homes are significant symbols of a single economic theme; in this way the homes can be regarded as a single entity. The close proximity of the homes further justifies their consideration as a single historical element among Decatur's landmarks. As the physical and historical entity described above, the homes of Millikin Place stand as uncommon in the large portion of east-central Illinois with which this author is familiar.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Koepfer, Frederick. Illinois Architecture from Territorial Times to the Present; A Selective Guide. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Bailey's Decatur Directory 1874-75, 1874.
 Banton, O. T., 80 Years of Banking, 1860-1940, Decatur, Illinois: Millikin National Bank of Decatur, 1940.
 Beasley's Business Director of Decatur 1875-76.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES								
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE	LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	"	"	"	"	"	"	39 "	50 '	31 "	88 "	51 '	1 "
NE	"	"	"	"	"	"	North			West		
SE	"	"	"	"	"	"						
SW	"	"	"	"	"	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF HOMINATED PROPERTY: 5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Lucien C. Kapp

ORGANIZATION: Macon County Historical Coordinating Council DATE: May 1, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 5 Millikin Place

CITY OR TOWN: Decatur STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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Bibliography - continued

Centennial History of Decatur and Macon County, Decatur, Illinois: Review Publishing Co., 1930.

Drury, John, Old Illinois Houses, Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Daily News, 1948.

How, D. F., Art Work of Decatur, Illinois, Chicago, Illinois: W. H. Parish Publishing Co., October 30, 1896.

Nelson, William E. ed., City of Decatur and Macon County, Illinois Volumes I & II, Chicago, Illinois: Pioneer Publishing Co., 1910.

Taylor, Albert R., Life Story of James Millikin, Decatur, Illinois: Graduating Class of the Quarter Centennial Year as an Expression of Appreciation, 1901-1926.

Wiggins & Co's. City Directory of Decatur, Illinois 1871-1872, 1871.

Published documents:

Sprague, Paul E., Historic American Buildings Inventory Form, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago, July 19, 1971.

Sprague, Paul E., Decatur's James Millikin Mansion - Famous Illinois Architecture: VII, Outdoor Illinois, Benton, Illinois, November, 1973.

Unpublished documents:

Barber, Leslie, The Historian's Contribution to Community Preservation and Development - The Millikin Homestead, Decatur, Illinois. Decatur, August, 1972.

(A copy of the Barber paper is on file with the Macon Co. Historical Coordinating Council, c/o the Decatur Public Library, 247 E. North, Decatur, Illinois.)

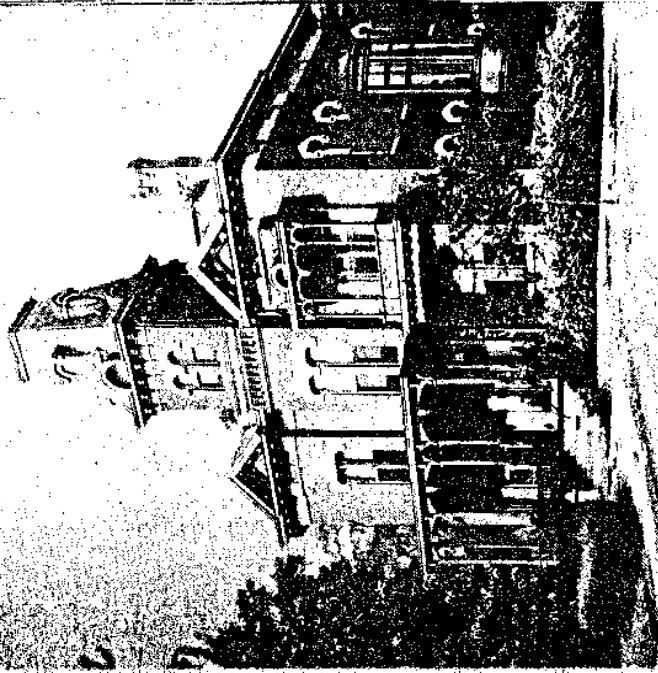
Millikin House, Decatur. 1876.

The assertive individualism of the post-Civil War period is best displayed in the rich man's house. The James Millikin mansion in Decatur is an example. Its ancestry is in the tentative eclecticism of Alexander Jackson Davis and Richard Upjohn, whose "Bracketed" or "Tuscan" villas of the 1840's established a basic freedom in house design as opposed to the Greek Revival style. Such designs were amenable to additions and variations for many decades and even classical elements found their way back into part-time usage—as seen in the pediments of the Millikin House. Its tall narrow proportions and tower with mansard roof are characteristic of the 1870's. When built, it was the finest mansion in Decatur.

Whether an elaborate Victorian house is a proper work of architecture is an argument heard less often as passing years lend respectability and interest to the Victorian age. Once regarded as an unstable and ostentatious phase of American fashion, late nineteenth-century work is being critically re-examined. Aesthetic fatigue with sleek and undecorated modern architecture has also aided its popularity.

James Millikin was a banker and founder of James Millikin University (1901). His house became the Decatur Art Institute in 1917 and the Decatur Art Center in 1944, at which time it also became officially connected with Millikin University.

Address: 124 North Pine Street.



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered DEC 3 1974

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
✓ Millikin, James, Home	Decatur Macon County

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson, III
Hon. Edward R. Madigan