

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

DAVIS AND ELKINS HISTORIC DISTRICT

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Davis and Elkins Historic District

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Davis and Elkins College campus

Not for publication:\_\_\_

City/Town: Elkins

Vicinity:\_\_\_

State: WV

County: Randolph

Code: 083

Zip Code: 26241-3996

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: \_\_\_

Public-Federal:\_\_\_

Category of Property

Building(s): \_\_\_

District: X

Site: \_\_\_

Structure: \_\_\_

Object: \_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

4

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

4

Noncontributing

\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_ objects

\_\_\_ Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

Designated a NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK on

JUN 16 1996

by the Secretary of the Interior

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

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

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic:	DOMESTIC	Sub:	Single Dwelling Secondary Structure
Current:	EDUCATION DOMESTIC	Sub:	College Hotel

**7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

MATERIALS:

Foundation: STONE/Sandstone

Walls: WOOD  
STONE/Sandstone  
SHINGLE/wood

Roof: SHINGLE/wood  
SHINGLE/asphalt  
SHINGLE/slate

Other: WOOD/porches, trim

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**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.****Halliehurst**

Halliehurst, designed by Charles T. Mott, is a large baronial house, built in 1890 for U.S. Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins, a lawyer, businessman, and politician. Its size and elaborate detailing directly reflect Elkins' wealth and influence, as does its location in Elkins, a town that grew up because of the business enterprises of Elkins and his father-in-law, U.S. Sen. Henry Gassaway Davis.

Halliehurst's three main floors are capped by a steep hipped roof punctuated with towers, turrets, dormers, and chimneys. The central block has a porch surrounding much of the first floor. On the south side of the house, this porch is raised to a two story height where it wraps the central, circular tower. This broad tower rises four stories to a flat roof. A much smaller circular stair tower with conical roof adjoins it providing access to the round rooftop deck. These towers with their tall columned porch dominate the south elevation of the house. The roofs of the porches as well as the roof of the central tower were originally edged by simple low balustrades. A three story circular tower with conical roof elaborates the southwest corner of the main block. Treated almost as a separate pavilion is the two and one half story, hipped roofed service wing which is built at an angle to the main block. A small one and one half story section connects the wing to the east side of the house.

The house stands on a stone foundation which is continued up at the edges of the porches to form a solid balustrade. The first floor exterior of the central block is faced with painted wooden cove siding. Stained wood shingles cover the exterior of the other two floors, dormers and the service wing. The original slate roof was replaced in the late 1960s with an asphalt shingle roof.

The simple use of materials on the exterior is little preparation for the refined detailing of the interiors. The first floor of Halliehurst is organized around a large hall that runs the depth of the house from north to south. A stair with elaborately turned balustrade rises from one side of the hall, and a marble faced fireplace with bas-relief overmantel is set within a recess on the opposite side. At one side of the hall are a library and a parlor each with unique woodwork and elaborately carved mantels. To the opposite side of the hall is the vast dining

room and a small fully paneled parlor. Numerous service spaces and kitchen extend back into the angled service wing beyond. Upper floor rooms are less elaborate, but still retain a great deal of original woodwork which reflects careful craftsmanship. A large, entirely wood paneled ballroom/gymnasium with high sloped ceiling occupies the central part of the third floor. Most of the woodwork throughout the house is oak. With the exception of some stained glass, windows are one over one throughout.

The house was a major commission for Charles Mott, who practiced in New York City between 1885 and 1912, and became a member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1894. The September 19, 1891, issue of *American Architect and Building News* included drawings of his designs for the house. These show the exterior of the house essentially as it was built. Interior sketches of the dining room show decorative and wall finishes which do not exist today. The porch mentioned above was added to the

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house in 1904; it seems likely that this was Mott's work, because Mott continued to work with Elkins on building projects in the years after Halliehurst's construction.

In 1923, Hallie Davis Elkins, widow of Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins, deeded Halliehurst and approximately 60 acres of land to Davis and Elkins College. This gift was in keeping with her family's long-term interest in the college, which is named after Senators Davis and Elkins and was founded with their support. The college trustees then decided to establish a new campus and new buildings on this land. Halliehurst became an important component of the campus, first serving as dormitory space for women in 1925, a use discontinued in the early 1930s though later revived. Halliehurst and other college buildings were used by the military, which ran a training program on the campus during World War II. Numerous other college functions were housed here over time including residence for the college president and a 1960s adaptation of the basement for a fallout shelter. College activities were moved out of the building in the 1980s due to concerns about fire safety. The college returned the building to use for administration offices and public functions after the installation of a sprinkler system and the beginning of an extensive rehabilitation.

Despite a history of varied uses, the house has retained a vast majority of its original fabric, inside and out. Repairs to Halliehurst and installation of a new heating system were carried out soon after Hallie Elkins deeded the house to the college. A *porte-cochere* on the north side of the house was removed in the 1980s and the porch along the north side of the service wing was extended in the 1990s. Water damage led the college to remove ceiling paintings and murals in the library, dining room, and drawing room. Current interior decoration dates from the late 1980s. A few windows have been altered for purposes of fire escapes and several others have been glazed with modern stained glass. Most of the original lighting, heating, and plumbing fixtures have been replaced and an elevator has been installed in a secondary space off the center hall. The most recent rehabilitation of the house has retained surviving historic features and respected the general character of the major interior spaces.

After Elkins built Halliehurst and his father-in-law built the adjacent mansion known as Graceland, the family's summer estate at Deer Park in Garrett County, Maryland, became less important in family activities. The Deer Park estate had been the scene of some important political negotiations, but the Elkins cottage there no longer stands. Elkins also maintained a residence on K Street, NW, in Washington, D.C., which also does not survive today.

### **Graceland**

Graceland, home of Henry Gassaway Davis, was prominently sited on high ground of his 360-acre estate just to the west of Halliehurst. From its position Senator Davis could oversee his railroad yards and contemplate future development as he viewed distant mountains. The estate had orchards, gardens, livestock, a dairy, an ice-house (stocked with ice from its own pond) and a greenhouse. These facilities made the estate practically self-sufficient.

The house begun in 1891, was designed by Baldwin and Pennington, an architectural firm in Baltimore, Maryland. The firm was well-known during the time, and their many designs included Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad depots. Davis was likely to have known the

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firm because of his longstanding association with the B&O railroad. Unfortunately, no evidence of a successor architectural firm has been found, and no historic records have been recovered.

Graceland exemplifies the Queen Anne style with its picturesque massing, varied forms and contrasting materials. The rock faced stone of the first two floors lends a somber note to the otherwise characteristic exuberance. The classical detail of the porch columns and many elements of the interior trim reflect an emerging taste for classicism which was soon to supplant the Queen Anne style.

Graceland is basically a high, two story rectangular block with a lower service wing extending at an angle from the east side of the main block. The whole of the building is covered by steeply pitched hipped roofs which encompass two additional floors above the main block and one above the service wing. The basic shape of the house is modified by a variety of projecting bays: rectangular, polygonal and curved, which rise up to elaborate the roof by terminating in gables, dormers and turrets. Broad porches shelter the major entries of the primary north and south elevations and smaller, simpler ones face the north side of the service wing. A large octagonal tower projects from the southwestern corner and rises a full four stories in stone to an open air belvedere beneath a tall pyramidal roof. Much smaller, but nearly as tall, is a cylindrical frame turret that rises from the acute angle where the service wing meets the main block.

Graceland is a masonry structure built of locally-quarried hard sandstone. Laid as rock faced random ashlar, the thick exterior walls are backed with a substantial wood frame to which the interior finish of plaster and paneling are attached. Many interior walls have a masonry core, though the material there is common brick. The stone walls continue from the ground to the top of the second floor where the structure changes to wood frame with wood shingle exterior. On the south elevation the stone is carried up through the third floor on the central dormer and on the corner octagonal tower.

The third and fourth floor spaces are essentially expressed in wall and roof dormers of various shapes and sizes, including several eyebrow dormers. The roof is further punctuated by the simple vertical shafts of several chimneys. The roof is covered in Vermont red slate ornamented with broad bands of fish scale shingles.

Windows are primarily one over one double hung sash except in the service wing where they are two over two.

The floor plan of the first floor exhibits the open flow of space centered on a great hall, characteristic of late Queen Anne and Shingle style houses of the period. Broad sliding doors connect the major rooms with each other and the great hall. The room designed for Davis' office and the numerous service spaces are excluded from this open connection for functional reasons.

The two-story great hall dominates the interior and awes the visitor. A major feature of the great hall is the massive fireplace, faced with glazed tile and, in place of a mantle is fitted with a large wood-paneled hood resting on fluted wood Corinthian columns. The grand stair is actually part of the great hall and rises to an open balcony which wraps the hall at the second floor. The balcony leads to major second floor bed-chambers. The north end of the

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great hall and grand stair are beautifully enhanced with large stained and leaded glass windows. The main hall on the ground floor is 60' x 28'. The Davises furnished the cavernous room so seating was around the fireplace. A 15' high mural of Blackwater Falls was hung above the fireplace.

The conservatory was reached through the dining room, and both the parlor and great hall accessed the large south porch that overlooked Elkins. The porch was furnished with palms and rare orchids that were kept in the two greenhouses during the winter. Both north and south porches were altered sometime after Davis's death in 1916 by his daughter Grace. Stone piers replaced wood columns and a concrete slab replaced the wood floor. The original form of the porches has been recreated during the recent rehabilitation with Tuscan columns on high pedestals, and a simple wood picket railing.

Wood paneling is found throughout the house. The parlor, which features triple-height windows, is paneled in bird's eye maple and has an elaborately carved mantle. The great hall is paneled in red oak which is also used for floors, trim, and banisters and columns.

The formal library is beautifully decorated with finely-crafted cherry wood cabinetry and mantle. The center chandelier was elaborate, fitted for both gas and electrical illumination as were most of the lighting fixtures in the house. The hexagonal room in the northwest corner of the house was Senator Davis's office, originally with beautifully designed walnut shelving on every wall. The only remaining cabinetry is a shelf above the fireplace.

The dining room, executed in oak, has a wood ceiling and fireplace wall, and seated 22 comfortably. The fireplace is framed with two floor-to-ceiling columns and flanked by two windows set at an angle over window seats. The north, east, and west walls exhibit an original mural, from wainscot to cornice, probably painted by a Mr. H. Mattil, a decorative painter from Washington, D.C., who was commissioned by Senator Davis to decorate the entire house except servants quarters and kitchen. The secretary's office is completely decorated with grooved oak paneling, the wood used throughout most of the rest of the house.

Graceland has thirteen master bedrooms and ten master bathrooms. In all, there were at least 35 rooms for family use, and additional rooms for servants and storage. Upper floor rooms have much less wood decoration than rooms on the first floor but some were elaborated with plaster mouldings and fine chandeliers. Marble formed wainscots and trimmed tubs in bathrooms. The decorative painting and stenciling that detailed most major rooms, though now painted over, can be seen in historic photos. There were six major chamber (sitting room) spaces on the second floor, with four bathrooms. The service wing had six chambers and one bath.

The third floor rooms with two exceptions are rather modest in finish. One large space known as the billiard room is fully-paneled and daughter Grace's bed chamber has an elaborate plaster cornice and cherry trim. Her room also featured a sun porch so Grace could dry her hair in the sun after washing it. The third floor rooms are accessed from an eight-foot wide center hall at the east end of which is a large stair landing, located in the southeast turret. The stair landing is the transportation link between the service wing stair and the flight of stairs to the second floor. There are eight bed/sitting room spaces and four

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bathrooms on the third floor. The service wing has one large room at the third level.

Other spaces in the building included a large attic space and a three-quarter size basement with earth floor. What was once a heart-shaped driveway is now a paved parking lot.

Although Graceland was built in the last decade of the nineteenth century, it was equipped with many "modern" conveniences. The house featured gas lights, electricity, telephones, and a burglar alarm system. There was a steam boiler that fed a warm-air convection system and bathroom radiators. Plumbing was done with galvanized water lines and cast iron or terra cotta drain pipes. For amusement there was a nine-hole golf course, two tennis courts, horseback riding, and a bowling alley--all gone now. Special red clay imported from Ireland was used on the tennis courts, as well as for some of the hearths.

Graceland housed students for many years before conditions necessitated it being vacated and left to deteriorate with windows boarded. Severe moisture damage required that most of the first floor floors be replaced as part of the long running rehabilitation to return it to use as an inn and teaching facility.

### **Ice House**

A cylindrical stone structure built by Stephen B. Elkins, the ice house stored the family's ice supply when they were in residence at Halliehurst during the summer months. The circular field stone structure is a utilitarian storage building, but done in the same imaginative style as Halliehurst. There is a long, shingled, overhanging roof with a picturesque cupola venting the roof. A large square bin projects from the wall on ground level. A pair of stone steps descends to the lower level, where there is an entrance door. In 1969, the structure was refurbished and has since been used as a coffee house/pub.

### **Gate House**

At the entrance to the Davis and Elkins College campus stands the gate house, a quaint structure that doubled as a gatekeeper's/caretaker's residence during the years when the Elkins family spent their summers at Halliehurst. The house, with its unusual conical towers, resembles a picturesque castle. After the estate was deeded to the college, it became the residence of groundskeeper Richard Barry, whose family served the Elkins estate during its social and political heyday.

The general profile of the gate house is also Queen Anne, with steeply-pitched roofs broken by several conical towers. The first floor is rough masonry, and the second-story walls are covered by wood shingles. The first floor plan includes the vestibule, hall, kitchen, and porch on one axis, with the dining room projecting off the main rooms, and the living room placed opposite in the largest round turret. There are separate bedrooms over the living room and dining room respectively. The roof is covered by wood shingles.

In 1988, the gate house was adopted as a restoration project by the college's Parent Advisory Council, which led fundraising efforts. Initial funds were used to correct structural deficiencies and repair storm windows protecting the refurbished leaded glass windows.



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During an extensive interior face-lift, walls, woodwork, and fixtures were restored to their original condition and antiquated plumbing in the kitchen and upstairs bath were upgraded to modern standards. Today, the tiny historic building provides accommodations for visiting parents, alumni, scholars, and artists.

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**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 \_\_ C \_\_ D \_\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A \_\_ B \_\_ C \_\_ D \_\_ E \_\_ F \_\_ G \_\_

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme [1987]: VII. Political and Military Affairs, 1865-1939  
B. The Republican Era, 1877-1900  
C. The Progressive Era, 1900-1914

NHL Theme [1994]: IV. Shaping the Political Landscape  
1. parties, protests, and movements  
2. governmental institutions

Areas of Significance: Politics and Government

Period(s) of Significance: 1890-1916

Significant Dates: 1890, 1893, 1904, 1911, 1916

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Mott, Charles T., architect (Halliehurst)  
Baldwin and Pennington, architects (Graceland)

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

Halliehurst and Graceland, a pair of mansions on the grounds of Davis and Elkins College, are the key surviving buildings associated respectively with two of the "Gilded Age's" most important business and political figures, the college's namesakes Stephen Benton Elkins and Henry Gassaway Davis. United personally by Elkins' marriage to Davis' daughter, they became partners in business, and, though titular political opponents, shared a common interest in shaping Federal legislation that favored the interests of those such as themselves who were "captains of industry."

Halliehurst, in Elkins' namesake town, was the summer home of U.S. Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins from the time of its construction in 1890 until his death in 1911. His father-in-law, who had generally resided in Deer Park, Maryland, even when representing West Virginia in the U.S. Senate, joined him in Elkins in 1893 with the completion of Graceland, named for Hallie's younger sister. This remained Davis' home thereafter.

A wealthy lawyer and entrepreneur, Elkins had become a major figure in Republican presidential politics during the 1880s. As a supporter and campaign manager of James G. Blaine, Elkins established himself as an influential member of the Republican party and as a "president-maker." He played a key role in Blaine's 1884 bid for the presidency. His second marriage, to Hallie, the daughter of prominent West Virginia businessman Henry Gassaway Davis, who was already a force in the national Democratic Party, gave him opportunities to join with his father-in-law in rail, coal, coke, and timber enterprises. Together they played a major role in the exploitation of West Virginia's natural resources, bringing an era of prosperity to the State and adding to their personal wealth.

Henry Gassaway Davis and Stephen Benton Elkins remained major players on the national political scene into the second decade of the 20th century. Their wealth and interest in shaping national policy in ways congenial to the interests of industrial magnates made them a force to be reckoned with. Although Henry Gassaway Davis usually merits only a footnote as the aged Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate in 1904, no proper history of Presidential politics from the 1880s through World War I can be written without reference to the role of Davis and his son-in-law.

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: HENRY GASSAWAY DAVIS <sup>1</sup>**

The fortune of Henry Gassaway Davis, the senior partner in the bipartisan duo who dominated West Virginia business and politics in the latter decades of the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century, rested on railroad building. As a 5-year-old boy in Maryland, he witnessed the beginning of the Baltimore and Ohio (B & O), the first railroad

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<sup>1</sup> The biographical sketch of Henry Gassaway Davis that follows is based on Thomas Richard Ross's biography, *Henry Gassaway Davis, An Old-Fashioned Biography* and the *Dictionary of American Biography* entry for Henry Gassaway Davis by James M. Callahan.

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in America, for which his father later worked.

Davis himself went to work for the B & O as a brakeman in 1842. By 1847, he had become supervisor of the railroad's Cumberland line. Marrying in 1853, he became a station agent at Piedmont, Virginia (today West Virginia), a key station for cross-mountain traffic. He started a store in that town in 1854 and quit the railroad to manage it in 1858. A supporter of the Union who voted against Virginia's secession in 1861, Davis prospered from Federal government contracts and sales of supplies to railroads.

After the war, he pursued plans for the development of the upper Potomac and Cheat River valleys, engaging in lumbering operations on his extensive landholdings and laying out the village of Deer Park, Maryland, where he built an estate. Meanwhile, between 1865 and his election to the U.S. Senate as a Democrat in 1871, he served first in the West Virginia House of Delegates and then in the State Senate. He served two full terms in the U.S. Senate. As might be expected, he served on a special committee that dealt with transportation routes to the seaboard and for 2 years, during Democratic control of the Senate, as chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Then and later, he supported high protective tariffs that benefitted his investments in bituminous coal. He declined to run for a third term in 1882, and although he did not again hold public office, he never ceased to dabble behind the scenes in national and State politics.

During the 1880s, Davis and his new son-in-law turned to fresh railroad building and coal mining enterprises that would be of immense consequence in the economic history of West Virginia. By 1889, they had pushed the West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railroad through rough terrain to Elkins, where in 1892 he joined his son-in-law and built his mansion called Graceland, reportedly siting it because it offered a good view of his coal trains. In 1902, he sold that railroad and in 1902-06 built the Coal and Coke railroad from the upper Monongahela through to Charleston.

Davis kept his strong ties to the Democratic Party partially through his cousin Arthur Pue Gorman, longtime Democratic Senator from Maryland, but he also had connections to his son-in-law's formidable influence in national Republican politics as well. Tacitly, in 1888, they made a common commitment to put Benjamin Harrison in the White House after Davis was unsuccessful in getting President Cleveland to support high tariffs on coal. Because of this, Davis resigned from the Democratic National Committee and sat out the election. He helped to maneuver Elkins into the U.S. Senate in 1894, but thereafter remained a Democrat and supported the national ticket even when the populist William Jennings Bryan was the nominee in 1896 and 1900.

In 1904, with the progressive Republican Theodore Roosevelt in the White House, the Democratic Party chose Alton B. Parker, a conservative New York judge, as its Presidential nominee, rejecting the radical upstart, newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst. The party turned to the aged Davis as its Vice-Presidential nominee. Though Davis was already 80 years old, he was remarkably vigorous for his age. It was expected that he would spend generously on the race himself, garner heavy contributions from businessmen afraid of Roosevelt, and carry West Virginia, a doubtful border State, for the national ticket. The party was disappointed on all counts and Roosevelt was returned to the White House in a virtual landslide.

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Davis, confounding those who had asserted he would not have lived out his term if elected Vice President, lived on until 1916. Indeed, he survived Elkins, who died of cancer in 1911. Davis spent his last years tending to his business interests; to the affairs of Davis and Elkins College, which had opened in Elkins in 1904; and to his children and grandchildren.

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: STEPHEN BENTON ELKINS**

Elkins was born in Perry County, Ohio, in 1841, and grew up in Missouri, where he studied law. Following his admission to the bar, he moved to New Mexico in 1864. There he profited from land and mining investments and also became active in territorial politics. He served as the territorial delegate to Congress from New Mexico in the mid-1870s. While in Congress, he developed a friendship with James G. Blaine.<sup>2</sup> During this period, he established a residence and office in New York to pursue his legal and business career. He also married Hallie Davis, daughter of Sen. Henry Gassaway Davis of West Virginia, and went on, as noted earlier, to be a partner in Davis' coal and railroad enterprises.

Elkins first distinguished himself on the national political scene as an ally of James G. Blaine and organizer of Blaine's repeated bids for the presidency. At the 1880 Republican national convention, he worked for Blaine's nomination, gaining Blaine's confidence in his abilities as a political organizer. Elkins' maneuverings at the 1884 convention were an important factor in securing the nomination for Blaine. In recognition of Elkins' skills, Blaine used him as manager of his presidential campaign that year. Despite Blaine's defeat in 1884, Elkins gained "a national reputation as a political strategist that ... played an important role in his translation from New Mexico to West Virginia in later years."<sup>3</sup>

In 1888, Elkins again worked for Blaine's nomination for the presidency. This time, though, Blaine was reluctant to be a candidate. Blaine's colleagues, especially Elkins, worked to create a groundswell of support within the party that would overcome Blaine's objections to being nominated. In doing so, Elkins played a leading role in complex negotiations aimed at a unanimous "draft" nomination for Blaine, or, failing that, nomination of someone indebted to Blaine and his supporters. This strategy brought Elkins to discuss the nomination with Benjamin Harrison, who was not allied with Blaine's opponents in the party, and whose strength in Indiana could aid Blaine in the event of a "draft" movement, or at least help to prevent Blaine's enemies from taking over the convention. Elkins was the principal liaison between Harrison and the Blaine supporters.<sup>4</sup> Harrison succeeded in winning the Republican nomination, and subsequently the Presidency, in the 1888 election.

Following Harrison's election, Elkins continued to act as a link between Harrison and Blaine.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert D. Marcus, *Grand Old Party: Political Structure in the Gilded Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 64-65.

<sup>3</sup> John Alexander Williams, "New York's First Senator from West Virginia: How Stephen B. Elkins Found a New Political Home," *West Virginia History* 31 (1970):74.

<sup>4</sup> Marcus, pp.104-107.

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His efforts were rewarded in 1891 with appointment as Harrison's Secretary of War.<sup>5</sup> Elkins served in that capacity until the end of Harrison's term.

Halliehurst, built in 1890, reflects Elkins' interests in West Virginia commerce and in national politics. He built Halliehurst as his business and railroad interests in West Virginia were expanding. The house site was chosen because of its proximity to the planned terminal for one of the Davis and Elkins railroads. Halliehurst also represents Elkins' political need to be identified with one geographical area after a career that had led him from Missouri to New Mexico, Washington, D.C., and New York, and finally to adoption of West Virginia as his home state.

As early as 1881, it was becoming clear to him that political appointments would be difficult to obtain until he was perceived as a man with political strength rooted in a single geographical area. His varied financial activities and interests across the nation had given him a certain flexibility in political maneuvering in the Presidential nominations of the 1880s, but his decision to be identified with West Virginia made him a member of the established Republican "Old Guard" in the Senate. His move to West Virginia, represented by his establishment at Halliehurst, "was an integral part of the process by which the political and economic resources of West Virginia were marshalled in the service of a national economy in process of industrialization and centralization."<sup>6</sup>

In 1895, Elkins entered Congress as a Senator from West Virginia. By this time, he and his father-in-law, because of their varied coal, railroad, and timber enterprises, were among West Virginia's wealthiest and most powerful citizens. Elkins' activities in the Senate reflected his interest in national policies on trade and transportation. Notably, he was Chair of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce at a time when it was one of the most important committees in Congress, and when railroad legislation was a major aspect of the development of federal regulatory practices. Thus, Elkins, like Davis, is one of the pre-eminent examples of the influence of wealthy businessmen in late 19th-century politics, and one of the architects of federal railroad policies.

Elkins was involved in several major pieces of legislation that supplemented the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887. Court decisions had minimized the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission, established by that act, to effectively carry out the law's provisions against rebating and other discriminatory practices used by railroad companies in setting rates. The Elkins Act of 1903 was the first amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act. Specifically intended to discourage rebating, it prohibited deviations from published rates, but Elkins and his fellow "railroad senators" on the Senate Committee did not in this act give the ICC powers in the rate-setting process.<sup>7</sup> (Not until passage of the Hepburn Act, in 1906, did the ICC get authority to investigate and lower railroad rates, upon complaints by

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<sup>5</sup> Marcus, pp. 162-163.

<sup>6</sup> Williams, p. 86.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur S. Link and William B. Catton, *American Epoch*, vol. I, 4th edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 97.

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shippers.)

Continued resistance by the railroads to federal regulation led to passage of the Mann-Elkins Act of 1910. This law, sponsored by Senator Elkins and Representative James R. Mann, gave the ICC authority to suspend general railroad rate increases on its own initiative, pending investigation, and placed responsibility for proving the reasonableness of original rates and increases on the railroads. It also defined telephone, telegraph, and wireless companies as common carriers, thereby bringing them under ICC jurisdiction.

Elkins, who had been mentioned as a Republican Vice-Presidential possibility in 1904, the same year his father-in-law was the Democratic nominee, never left the Senate and never ceased to be influential in the Republican Party. He died of cancer in 1911. His son Davis Elkins served briefly that year in his father's vacant Senate seat and later (1919-25) served a full term.

### **SITES ASSOCIATED WITH DAVIS AND ELKINS**

After Elkins built Halliehurst and his father-in-law constructed Graceland, the family's summer estate at Deer Park in Garrett County, Maryland, became less important in family activities. The Deer Park estate had been the scene of some important political negotiations, particularly with Presidents Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison, but the Elkins cottage there no longer stands. Elkins also maintained a residence on K Street, NW, in Washington, D.C., which also does not survive today.

The Elkins Coal and Coke Company Historic District at Bretz, West Virginia, already designated a National Historic Landmark, represents but one aspect of the multifaceted Davis and Elkins industrial enterprises, the manufacture of the coke then vital steel production, but they also mined the coal that fed their coke ovens and built and owned the railroads that transported their timber, coal, and coke to mills and factories.

Stephen Benton Elkins has been called "one of the late nineteenth century's most successful businessmen-politicians."<sup>8</sup> As a Senator, along with his "businessman-politician" father-in-law, Henry Gassaway Davis, they both had interests that reflected the complex interrelationships between industry and politics in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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<sup>8</sup> Ari and Olive Hoogenboom, *A History of the ICC* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1976).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register. (**Halliehurst and Graceland individually listed**)
- 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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

Davis and Elkins College

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property:            Approximately 2 acres

UTM References:    Zone    Easting    Northing

<b>Halliehurst &amp; Icehouse</b>	A	17	599920	4309510
<b>Graceland</b>	A	17	599770	4309480
<b>Gate House</b>	A	17	600110	4309290

Verbal Boundary Description:

**Halliehurst**

Beginning at the northernmost point of circular planter on the north side of Halliehurst, follow the curb in a southeast direction 108' to a small parking lot; follow the curb south 42' toward building; follow the curb east 112' to steps and stone wall between Halliehurst and Randolph Hall; follow the wall south 45' to end; proceed southwest 78' to concrete walk (near large tree); follow walk west 162' to intersection in walk; proceed northwest 99' along walk, up steps to juncture with flagstone walk; follow flagstone walk northeast 144' to concrete wall; follow wall northeast 15'; proceed northeast toward planter and follow edge of circular planter to the point of beginning (total of 75'). Note: All distances are

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approximate.

**Ice House**

Proceed on a direct line from the north end of the stone wall mentioned above in the boundary description of Halliehurst across Campus Drive to the intersection of Ice House stairs and road; follow stairs and iron railing down along the east side of the Ice House to patio with stone wall on north side; proceed west along stone wall to end; then follow an arc 15' from circular footprint of Ice House until the arc intersects Campus Drive northwest of the Ice House; follow Campus Drive southeast to starting point. Note: All distances are approximate.

**Graceland**

Beginning at the northeast post of the porte cochere, proceed 15' south to porch; follow curbing in southeast arc for 100' to stone wall; follow stone wall in south-southeast direction for 60'; proceed in straight line south-southwest for 15' to easternmost point of original retaining wall; follow original retaining wall west for 60' to start of rebuilt wall; proceed north 18' along rebuilt wall and turn 90 degrees to the west; follow the wall west 60' and then along arc northwest to end (total distance 96'); continue north from end of wall along crest of hill for 75' to large oak tree; curve northeast for 99' following new sidewalk to parking lot; follow curb in southeast arc to southwest corner of porte cochere at porch; proceed north to northwest corner of porte cochere; close boundary by proceeding east to point of beginning (northeast corner or porte cochere). Note: All distances are approximate.

**Gate House**

Beginning at the westernmost point of stone pillar at the intersection of Campus Drive and Sycamore Street, proceed east along stone wall and Sycamore Street to end of wall and back entrance to Gate House; continue east along wood rail fence and Sycamore Street to large sycamore tree and concrete walk; follow concrete walk north 75' to juncture with Campus Drive; follow Campus Drive west 171' to point of beginning on stone pillar. Note: All distances are approximate.

**Boundary Justification:**

The Davis and Elkins Historic District is a discontinuous district comprising four separate historic buildings on the campus of Davis and Elkins College. The boundary includes the four surviving historic buildings associated with the Davis and Elkins families--Halliehurst, Graceland, an ice house, and a gate house--and the portion of the grounds immediately surrounding each building that retains integrity from the historic period.

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: Laura Feller, Historian, NPS, (based upon National Register study by Ralph Pederson), 1988; revised by James H. Charleton, Historian, Office of International Affairs, 1996.

Telephone: (202) 343-7063

Date: March 7, 1996

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Edited by: Patricia H. Henry  
National Historic Landmarks Survey  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127, Suite 310  
Washington, DC 20013-7127  
Telephone: (202) 343-8163

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS SURVEY  
August 27, 1996

This is not the final

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

copy  
OMB No. 1024-0018

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1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Davis and Elkins Historic District

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Davis and Elkins College campus

Not for publication: \_\_\_

City/Town: Elkins

Vicinity: \_\_\_

State: WV

County: Randolph

Code: 083

Zip Code: 26241-3996

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: \_\_\_

Public-Federal: \_\_\_

Category of Property

Building(s): \_\_\_

District: X

Site: \_\_\_

Structure: \_\_\_

Object: \_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

4

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

4

Noncontributing

\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_ objects

\_\_\_ Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

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

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic:	DOMESTIC	Sub:	Single Dwelling Secondary Structure
Current:	EDUCATION DOMESTIC	Sub:	College Hotel

**7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: LATE VICORIAN/Queen Anne

**MATERIALS:**

Foundation: STONE/Sandstone  
Walls: WOOD  
STONE/Sandstone  
SHINGLE/wood  
Roof: SHINGLE/wood  
SHINGLE/asphalt  
SHINGLE/slate  
Other: WOOD/porches, trim

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**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.****Halliehurst**

Halliehurst, designed by Charles T. Mott, is a large baronial house, built in 1890 for U.S. Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins, a lawyer, businessman, and politician. Its size and elaborate detailing directly reflect Elkins' wealth and influence, as does its location in Elkins, a town that grew up because of the business enterprises of Elkins and his father-in-law, U.S. Sen. Henry Gassaway Davis.

Halliehurst's three main floors are capped by a steep hipped roof punctuated with towers, turrets, dormers, and chimneys. The central block, in addition to those towers, has a porch surrounding much of the first floor. On the south side of the house, this porch extends to a portico two stories high around a central, flat-roofed tower. The portico's columns are among the most prominent features of the south side of the house. On the east side of the building a service wing balances the porch.

The house stands on a stone foundation. The first floor exterior of the central block is faced with wooden siding. Shingles cover the exterior of the other two floors and the service wing. The original slate roof was replaced in the late 1960s with an asphalt shingle roof.

Halliehurst's interiors are more ornately detailed than its exterior. Especially noteworthy are carved mantels in the main hall and library, stained glass, and the main staircase and balustrade. Upper floors are less elaborate but still retain a great deal of original woodwork which reflects careful craftsmanship.

The house was a major commission for Charles Mott, who practiced in New York City between 1885 and 1912, and became a member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1894. The September 19, 1891, issue of *American Architect and Building News* included drawings of his designs for the house. These show the exterior of the house essentially as it was built. Interior sketches of the dining room show decorative and wall finishes which do not exist today. The porch mentioned above was added to the house in 1904; it seems likely that this was Mott's work, because Mott continued to work with Elkins on building projects in the years after Halliehurst's construction.

In 1923, Hallie Davis Elkins, widow of Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins, deeded Halliehurst and approximately 60 acres of land to Davis and Elkins College. This gift was in keeping with her family's long-term interest in the college, which is named after Senators Davis and Elkins and was founded with their support. The college trustees then decided to establish a new campus and new buildings on this land. Halliehurst subsequently served a variety of college functions over the years. It has provided dormitory and classroom space, and once was the home of the college president. Beginning in 1925-26, it was used as dormitory space for women, a use discontinued in the early 1930s and then later revived. A chaplain's office, college radio station, dispensary, and Presbyterian Guidance Center have also been housed here. For a time, the service wing housed the Student Union before present-day Benedum Hall was built. In the early 1960s, the college began conversion of Halliehurst's basement for use as a fallout shelter.



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Despite these multiple uses, the house retains the vast majority of its original fabric, inside and out. Repairs to Halliehurst and installation of a new heating system were carried out soon after Hallie Elkins deeded the house to the college. As noted above, the slate roof has been replaced. A *porte-cochere* on the north side of the house is now gone. Ironwork from it remains and there are plans to replace it. Water damage led the college to remove ceiling paintings and murals in the library, dining room, and drawing room. A few windows have been altered for purposes of fire escapes. The kitchen was altered to serve college needs, and most of the original lighting and heating fixtures have been replaced. Many original plumbing fixtures have also been removed.

College functions were moved out of the building in 1982 because of concerns about fire safety. Since that time, the college trustees and administration have done repair work on the exterior of the house and have developed specifications for installation of a sprinkler system.

After Elkins built Halliehurst and his father-in-law built the adjacent mansion known as Graceland, the family's summer estate at Deer Park in Garrett County, Maryland, became less important in family activities. The Deer Park estate had been the scene of some important political negotiations, but the Elkins cottage there no longer stands. Elkins also maintained a residence on K Street, NW, in Washington, D.C., which also does not survive today.

### **Graceland**

Graceland, home of Henry Gassaway Davis, was prominently sited on high ground of his 360-acre estate. From its position Senator Davis could oversee his railroad yards and contemplate future development as he viewed distant mountains. The estate had orchards, gardens, livestock, a dairy, an ice-house (stocked with ice from its own pond) and a greenhouse. These facilities made the estate practically self-sufficient.

The house was designed by Baldwin and Pennington, an architectural firm in Baltimore, Maryland. The firm was well-known during the time, and their many designs included Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad depots. Davis was likely to have known the firm because of his longstanding association with the B&O railroad. Unfortunately, no evidence of a successor architectural firm has been found, and no historic records have been recovered.

Graceland is late Victorian and can be described as Queen Anne--a style characterized by irregular roof shapes, usually with a large, front, gable; patterned shingles; bay windows; and partial or full exterior porches. English architects, led by Richard Norman Shaw, named and popularized the Queen Anne style. Graceland can be more closely identified with Shaw's later English models, executed in masonry, in which free classical adaptation became widespread. This trend is expressed in the formal wood trim and classical columns of the great porches and *porte-cochere*.

Graceland is basically a masonry structure built of locally-quarried hard sandstone. Exterior walls are nearly two feet thick, consisting of a stone exterior with the 3' x 6' wood heavy frame furring and thick plaster applied over wood lathing strips. Common brick was used as a back-up for the stone in many areas and as a structural material for some first floor interior

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walls. The stone facade continued from the foundation to the third floor line, where the structure changes to wood frame with wood shingle exterior and plastered interior. The third floor spaces are essentially expressed in wall and roof dormers of various shapes and sizes, including several eyebrow dormers. The roof is covered with Vermont red slate.

The floor plans are quite formal in organization on the north-south and east-west axes. The principal rooms of the first floor (or public spaces) have large windows facing almost due south, which opened onto a large porch and conservatory. There is no satisfactory explanation for why the back building (servants quarters and kitchen) are angled almost 60 degrees from the east-west axis of the house, except to make the comings and goings of house servant and services less visible to the family and visitors.

First-floor spaces in Graceland were given to the public and business. The two-story great hall space dominates the interior and awes the visitor. A major feature of the great hall is the massive fireplace, faced with glazed tile and, in place of a mantle, fitted with a large wood-paneled hood resting on carved wood columns with embellished Corinthian capitals. The fireplace is large enough to accommodate six-foot logs. The grand stair is actually part of the great hall and rises to the second floor balcony spaces around the hall. The balconies lead to major second floor bed-chambers. The north end of the great hall and grand stair are beautifully enhanced with large stained- and leaded-glass windows said to have been created by a Tiffany workman. The main hall on the ground floor is 60' x 28'. The Davises furnished the cavernous room so seating was around the fireplace. A 15' high mural of Blackwater Falls was hung above the fireplace.

The conservatory was reached through the dining room, and both the parlor and great hall accessed the large south porch that overlooked Elkins. The porch was furnished with palms and rare orchids that were kept in the two greenhouses during the winter.

Wood paneling is found throughout the house. The parlor, octagonal in floor plan and featuring triple-height windows, is paneled in bird's eye maple and has an elaborately carved mantle. The great hall is paneled in golden oak. The floors, trim, and banisters are of oak, bird's eye maple, cherry, and walnut.

The formal library is beautifully decorated with finely-crafted cherry wood cabinetry and mantle. The fireplace is framed with Delft tiles depicting various Bible verses. In the summer of 1977, eight of these tiles were chipped away and stolen. The center chandelier was elaborate, fitted for both gas and electrical illumination. Senator Davis had a hexagonal office with beautifully designed walnut shelving on every wall. The only remaining cabinetry is a shelf above the fireplace.

The dining room had a wood ceiling and fireplace wall, and seated 22 comfortably. The fireplace is framed with two floor-to-ceiling columns and flanked by two windows set at an angle over window seats. All wood is oak.

The north, east, and west wall exhibit an original mural, from wainscot to cornice, probably painted by a Mr. H. Mattil, a decorative painter from Washington, D.C., who was commissioned by Senator Davis to decorate the entire house except servants quarters and kitchen. The secretary's office is completely decorated with grooved oak paneling.

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Graceland had thirteen master bedrooms and ten master bathrooms. In all, there were at least 35 rooms for family use, and additional rooms for servants and storage. Second floor chambers have much less wood decoration than rooms on the first floor but some were elaborated with plaster mouldings, marble wainscots in bathrooms, marble trimmed bathtubs, and fine chandeliers. Mr. Matil did decorative paintings in all rooms but, except for some historic photographs, all evidence of his work has disappeared. There were six major chamber (sitting room) spaces on the second floor, with four bathrooms. The back building had six chambers and one bath.

The third floor rooms, except for a large fully-paneled space called the billiard room, were rather modest in appointments except for daughter Grace's bedchamber, which has an elaborate plaster cornice on wall and ceiling. The room also featured a sun porch so Grace could dry her hair in the sun after washing it. The third floor rooms are accessed from an eight-foot wide center hall at the east end of which is a large stair landing, located in the southeast turret. The stair landing is the transportation link between the back building stair and the flight of stairs to the second floor. There were eight chamber/sitting room spaces and four bathrooms on the third floor. The back building has one large room.

Other spaces in the building included a large attic space, an observation-type open-air space in the southeast tower, and a three-quarter size basement with earth floor. What was once a heart-shaped driveway is now a paved parking lot.

Although Graceland was built in the last decade of the nineteenth century, it was equipped with many "modern" conveniences. The house featured gas lights, electricity, telephones, and a burglar alarm system. There was a steam boiler that fed a warm-air convection system and bathroom radiators. Plumbing was done with galvanized water lines and cast iron or terra cotta drain pipes. For amusement there was a nine-hole golf course, two tennis courts, horseback riding, and a bowling alley--all gone now. Special red clay imported from Ireland was used on the tennis courts, as well as for some of the hearths.

### **Ice House**

A cylindrical stone structure built by Stephen B. Elkins, the ice house stored the family's ice supply when they were in residence at Halliehurst during the summer months. The circular field stone structure is a utilitarian storage building, but done in the same imaginative style as Halliehurst. There is a long, shingled, overhanging roof with a picturesque cupola venting the roof. A large square bin projects from the wall on ground level. A pair of stone steps descends to the lower level, where there is an entrance door. In 1969, the structure was refurbished and has since been used as a coffee house/pub.

### **Gate House**

At the entrance to the Davis and Elkins College campus stands the gate house, a quaint structure that doubled as a gatekeeper's/caretaker's residence during the years when the Elkins family spent their summers at Halliehurst. The house, with its unusual conical towers, resembles a picturesque castle. After the estate was deeded to the college, it became the residence of groundskeeper Richard Barry, whose family served the Elkins estate during its social and political heyday.

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The general profile of the gate house is also Queen Anne, with steeply-pitched roofs broken by several conical towers. The first floor is rough masonry, and the second-story walls are covered by wood shingles. The first floor plan includes the vestibule, hall, kitchen, and porch on one axis, with the dining room projecting off the main rooms, and the living room placed opposite in the largest round turret. There are separate bedrooms over the living room and dining room respectively. The roof is covered by wood shingles.

In 1988, the gate house was adopted as a restoration project by the college's Parent Advisory Council, which led fundriasing efforts. Initial funds were used to correct structural deficiencies and repair storm windows protecting the refurbished leaded glass windows.

During an extensive interior face-lift, walls, woodwork, and fixtures were restored to their original condition and antiquated plumbing in the kitchen and upstairs bath were upgraded to modern standards. Today, the tiny historic building provides accomodations for visiting parents, alumni, scholars, and artists.

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**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\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A\_\_ B\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_ E\_\_ F\_\_ G\_\_

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme [1987]: VII. Political and Military Affairs, 1865-1939  
B. The Republican Era, 1877-1900  
C. The Progressive Era, 1900-1914

NHL Theme [1994]: IV. Shaping the Political Landscape  
1. parties, protests, and movements  
2. governmental institutions

Areas of Significance: Politics and Government

Period(s) of Significance: 1890-1916

Significant Dates: 1890, 1893, 1911

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Mott, Charles T., architect (Halliehurst)  
Baldwin and Pennington, architects (Graceland)

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

Halliehurst and Graceland, a pair of mansions on the grounds of Davis and Elkins College, are the key surviving buildings associated respectively with two of the "Gilded Age's" most important business and political figures, the college's namesakes Stephen Benton Elkins and Henry Gassaway Davis. United personally by Elkins' marriage to Davis' daughter, they became partners in business, and, though titular political opponents, shared a common interest in shaping Federal legislation that favored the interests of those such as themselves who were "captains of industry."

Halliehurst, in Elkins' namesake town, was the summer home of U.S. Sen. Stephen Benton Elkins from the time of its construction in 1890 until his death in 1911. His father-in-law, who had generally resided in Deer Park, Maryland, even when representing West Virginia in the U.S. Senate, joined him in Elkins in 1893 with the completion of Graceland, named for Hallie's younger sister. This remained Davis' home thereafter.

A wealthy lawyer and entrepreneur, Elkins had become a major figure in Republican presidential politics during the 1880s. As a supporter and campaign manager of James G. Blaine, Elkins established himself as an influential member of the Republican party and as a "president-maker." He played a key role in Blaine's 1884 bid for the presidency. His second marriage, to Hallie, the daughter of prominent West Virginia businessman Henry Gassaway Davis, who was already a force in the national Democratic Party, gave him opportunities to join with his father-in-law in rail, coal, coke, and timber enterprises. Together they played a major role in the exploitation of West Virginia's natural resources, bringing an era of prosperity to the State and adding to their personal wealth.

Henry Gassaway Davis and Stephen Benton Elkins remained major players on the national political scene into the second decade of the 20th century. Their wealth and interest in shaping national policy in ways congenial to the interests of industrial magnates made them a force to be reckoned with. Although Henry Gassaway Davis usually merits only a footnote as the aged Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate in 1904, no proper history of Presidential politics from the 1880s through World War I can be written without reference to the role of Davis and his son-in-law.

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: HENRY GASSAWAY DAVIS <sup>1</sup>**

The fortune of Henry Gassaway Davis, the senior partner in the bipartisan duo who dominated West Virginia business and politics in the latter decades of the 19th century and

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<sup>1</sup> The biographical sketch of Henry Gassaway Davis that follows is based on Thomas Richard Ross's biography, *Henry Gassaway Davis, An Old-Fashioned Biography* and the *Dictionary of American Biography* entry for Henry Gassaway Davis by James M. Callahan.

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into the first decades of the 20th century, rested on railroad building. As a 5-year-old boy in Maryland, he witnessed the beginning of the Baltimore and Ohio (B & O), the first railroad in America, for which his father later worked.

Davis himself went to work for the B & O as a brakeman in 1842. By 1847, he had become supervisor of the railroad's Cumberland line. Marrying in 1853, he became a station agent at Piedmont, Virginia (today West Virginia), a key station for cross-mountain traffic. He started a store in that town in 1854 and quit the railroad to manage it in 1858. A supporter of the Union who voted against Virginia's secession in 1861, Davis prospered from Federal government contracts and sales of supplies to railroads.

After the war, he pursued plans for the development of the upper Potomac and Cheat River valleys, engaging in lumbering operations on his extensive landholdings and laying out the village of Deer Park, Maryland, where he built an estate. Meanwhile, between 1865 and his election to the U.S. Senate as a Democrat in 1871, he served first in the West Virginia House of Delegates and then in the State Senate. He served two full terms in the U.S. Senate. As might be expected, he served on a special committee that dealt with transportation routes to the seaboard and for 2 years, during Democratic control of the Senate, as chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Then and later, he supported high protective tariffs that benefitted his investments in bituminous coal. He declined to run for a third term in 1882, and although he did not again hold public office, he never ceased to dabble behind the scenes in national and State politics.

During the 1880s, Davis and his new son-in-law turned to fresh railroad building and coal mining enterprises that would be of immense consequence in the economic history of West Virginia. By 1889, they had pushed the West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railroad through rough terrain to Elkins, where in 1892 he joined his son-in-law and built his mansion called Graceland, reportedly siting it because it offered a good view of his coal trains. In 1902, he sold that railroad and in 1902-06 built the Coal and Coke railroad from the upper Monongahela through to Charleston.

Davis kept his strong ties to the Democratic Party partially through his cousin Arthur Pue Gorman, longtime Democratic Senator from Maryland, but he also had connections to his son-in-law's formidable influence in national Republican politics as well. Tacitly, in 1888, they made a common commitment to put Benjamin Harrison in the White House after Davis was unsuccessful in getting President Cleveland to support high tariffs on coal. Because of this, Davis resigned from the Democratic National Committee and sat out the election. He helped to maneuver Elkins into the U.S. Senate in 1894, but thereafter remained a Democrat and supported the national ticket even when the populist William Jennings Bryan was the nominee in 1896 and 1900.

In 1904, with the progressive Republican Theodore Roosevelt in the White House, the Democratic Party chose Alton B. Parker, a conservative New York judge, as its Presidential nominee, rejecting the radical upstart, newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst. The party turned to the aged Davis as its Vice-Presidential nominee. Though Davis was already 80 years old, he was remarkably vigorous for his age. It was expected that he would spend generously on the race himself, garner heavy contributions from businessmen afraid of

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Roosevelt, and carry West Virginia, a doubtful border State, for the national ticket. The party was disappointed on all counts and Roosevelt was returned to the White House in a virtual landslide.

Davis, confounding those who had asserted he would not have lived out his term if elected Vice President, lived on until 1916. Indeed, he survived Elkins, who died of cancer in 1911. Davis spent his last years tending to his business interests; to the affairs of Davis and Elkins College, which had opened in Elkins in 1904; and to his children and grandchildren.

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: STEPHEN BENTON ELKINS**

Elkins was born in Perry County, Ohio, in 1841, and grew up in Missouri, where he studied law. Following his admission to the bar, he moved to New Mexico in 1864. There he profited from land and mining investments and also became active in territorial politics. He served as the territorial delegate to Congress from New Mexico in the mid-1870s. While in Congress, he developed a friendship with James G. Blaine.<sup>2</sup> During this period, he established a residence and office in New York to pursue his legal and business career. He also married Hallie Davis, daughter of Sen. Henry Gassaway Davis of West Virginia, and went on, as noted earlier, to be a partner in Davis' coal and railroad enterprises.

Elkins first distinguished himself on the national political scene as an ally of James G. Blaine and organizer of Blaine's repeated bids for the presidency. At the 1880 Republican national convention, he worked for Blaine's nomination, gaining Blaine's confidence in his abilities as a political organizer. Elkins' maneuverings at the 1884 convention were an important factor in securing the nomination for Blaine. In recognition of Elkins' skills, Blaine used him as manager of his presidential campaign that year. Despite Blaine's defeat in 1884, Elkins gained "a national reputation as a political strategist that ... played an important role in his translation from New Mexico to West Virginia in later years."<sup>3</sup>

In 1888, Elkins again worked for Blaine's nomination for the presidency. This time, though, Blaine was reluctant to be a candidate. Blaine's colleagues, especially Elkins, worked to create a groundswell of support within the party that would overcome Blaine's objections to being nominated. In doing so, Elkins played a leading role in complex negotiations aimed at a unanimous "draft" nomination for Blaine, or, failing that, nomination of someone indebted to Blaine and his supporters. This strategy brought Elkins to discuss the nomination with Benjamin Harrison, who was not allied with Blaine's opponents in the party, and whose strength in Indiana could aid Blaine in the event of a "draft" movement, or at least help to prevent Blaine's enemies from taking over the convention. Elkins was the principal liaison between Harrison and the Blaine supporters.<sup>4</sup> Harrison succeeded in winning the Republican nomination, and subsequently the Presidency, in the 1888 election.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert D. Marcus, *Grand Old Party: Political Structure in the Gilded Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 64-65.

<sup>3</sup> John Alexander Williams, "New York's First Senator from West Virginia: How Stephen B. Elkins Found a New Political Home," *West Virginia History* 31 (1970):74.

<sup>4</sup> Marcus, pp. 104-107.



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Following Harrison's election, Elkins continued to act as a link between Harrison and Blaine. His efforts were rewarded in 1891 with appointment as Harrison's Secretary of War.<sup>5</sup> Elkins served in that capacity until the end of Harrison's term.

Halliehurst, built in 1890, reflects Elkins' interests in West Virginia commerce and in national politics. He built Halliehurst as his business and railroad interests in West Virginia were expanding. The house site was chosen because of its proximity to the planned terminal for one of the Davis and Elkins railroads. Halliehurst also represents Elkins' political need to be identified with one geographical area after a career that had led him from Missouri to New Mexico, Washington, D.C., and New York, and finally to adoption of West Virginia as his home state.

As early as 1881, it was becoming clear to him that political appointments would be difficult to obtain until he was perceived as a man with political strength rooted in a single geographical area. His varied financial activities and interests across the nation had given him a certain flexibility in political maneuvering in the Presidential nominations of the 1880s, but his decision to be identified with West Virginia made him a member of the established Republican "Old Guard" in the Senate. His move to West Virginia, represented by his establishment at Halliehurst, "was an integral part of the process by which the political and economic resources of West Virginia were marshalled in the service of a national economy in process of industrialization and centralization."<sup>6</sup>

In 1895, Elkins entered Congress as a Senator from West Virginia. By this time, he and his father-in-law, because of their varied coal, railroad, and timber enterprises, were among West Virginia's wealthiest and most powerful citizens. Elkins' activities in the Senate reflected his interest in national policies on trade and transportation. Notably, he was Chair of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce at a time when it was one of the most important committees in Congress, and when railroad legislation was a major aspect of the development of federal regulatory practices. Thus, Elkins, like Davis, is one of the pre-eminent examples of the influence of wealthy businessmen in late 19th-century politics, and one of the architects of federal railroad policies.

Elkins was involved in several major pieces of legislation that supplemented the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887. Court decisions had minimized the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission, established by that act, to effectively carry out the law's provisions against rebating and other discriminatory practices used by railroad companies in setting rates. The Elkins Act of 1903 was the first amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act. Specifically intended to discourage rebating, it prohibited deviations from published rates, but Elkins and his fellow "railroad senators" on the Senate Committee did not in this act give the ICC powers in the rate-setting process.<sup>7</sup> (Not until passage of the Hepburn Act, in 1906,

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<sup>5</sup> Marcus, pp. 162-163.

<sup>6</sup> Willimas, p. 86.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur S. Link and William B. Catton, American Epoch, vol. I, 4th edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 97.

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did the ICC get authority to investigate and lower railroad rates, upon complaints by shippers.)

Continued resistance by the railroads to federal regulation led to passage of the Mann-Elkins Act of 1910. This law, sponsored by Senator Elkins and Representative James R. Mann, gave the ICC authority to suspend general railroad rate increases on its own initiative, pending investigation, and placed responsibility for proving the reasonableness of original rates and increases on the railroads. It also defined telephone, telegraph, and wireless companies as common carriers, thereby bringing them under ICC jurisdiction.

Elkins, who had been mentioned as a Republican Vice-Presidential possibility in 1904, the same year his father-in-law was the Democratic nominee, never left the Senate and never ceased to be influential in the Republican Party. He died of cancer in 1911. His son Davis Elkins served briefly that year in his father's vacant Senate seat and later (1919-25) served a full term.

#### **SITES ASSOCIATED WITH DAVIS AND ELKINS**

After Elkins built Halliehurst and his father-in-law constructed Graceland, the family's summer estate at Deer Park in Garrett County, Maryland, became less important in family activities. The Deer Park estate had been the scene of some important political negotiations, particularly with Presidents Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison, but the Elkins cottage there no longer stands. Elkins also maintained a residence on K Street, NW, in Washington, D.C., which also does not survive today.

The Elkins Coal and Coke Company Historic District at Bretz, West Virginia, already designated a National Historic Landmark, represents but one aspect of the multifaceted Davis and Elkins industrial enterprises, the manufacture of the coke then vital steel production, but they also mined the coal that fed their coke ovens and built and owned the railroads that transported their timber, coal, and coke to mills and factories.

Stephen Benton Elkins has been called "one of the late nineteenth century's most successful businessmen-politicians."<sup>8</sup> As a Senator, along with his "businessman-politician" father-in-law, Henry Gassaway Davis, they both had interests that reflected the complex interrelationships between industry and politics in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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<sup>8</sup> Ari and Olive Hoogenboom, *A History of the ICC* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1976).

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register. (**Halliehurst and Graceland individually listed**)
- 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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

Davis and Elkins College

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreeage of Property:            Approximately 2 acres

UTM References:    Zone    Easting    Northing

<b>Halliehurst &amp; Icehouse</b>	<b>A</b>	17	599920	4309510
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<b>Graceland</b>	<b>A</b>	17	599770	4309480
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<b>Gate House</b>	<b>A</b>	17	600110	4309290
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Verbal Boundary Description:

**Halliehurst and Ice House**

Beginning at a point where an imaginary north-south line 30 feet east of Halliehurst's east side (midway between Halliehurst and the Jennings Randolph Hall Library) intersects the south side of the campus belt road directly north of Halliehurst, proceed south along that imaginary line to a point 100 feet south of Halliehurst's southern facade. Then proceed westward to a point in line with the eastern edge of the driveway on Halliehurst's west side. Proceed north to the campus belt road, along the east side of the driveway, and then eastward along the south side of the belt road to a point 15 feet east of the ice house, and then to the southwest back to the point of beginning.

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**Graceland**

Beginning at an point where the southern edge of the parking lot immediately north of Graceland intersects the 2030-foot contour line east of Graceland (between Graceland and Benedum Hall), proceed south to the 2020-foot contour line. Follow the 2020-foot contour line west and turning north to where it intersects the southern edge of the footpath midway between Graceland and Allen Hall on Graceland's west side. Follow the southern edge of the footpath northeast to the south edge of the parking lot directly north of Graceland. Proceed east along the south edge of the parking lot back to the point of beginning.

**Gate House**

Beginning at a point where the north side of Sycamore Street intersects the east side of the campus belt road, proceed due north along the east side of the campus belt road on the west side of the gate house. Proceed northeast along the southern edge of the east fork of the campus belt road to the point where it intersects the footpath on the east side of the gate house. Then proceed south along the west edge of the footpath to the point where it intersects the north side of Sycamore Road, then due west back to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification:**

The Davis and Elkins Historic District is a discontinuous district comprising four separate historic buildings on the campus of Davis and Elkins College. The boundary includes the four surviving historic buildings associated with the Davis and Elkins families--Halliehurst, Graceland, an ice house, and a gate house--and the portion of the grounds immediately surrounding each building that retains integrity from the historic period.

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Name/Title: Laura Feller, Historian, NPS, (based upon National Register study by Ralph Pederson), 1988; revised by James H. Charleton, Historian, Office of International Affairs, 1996.

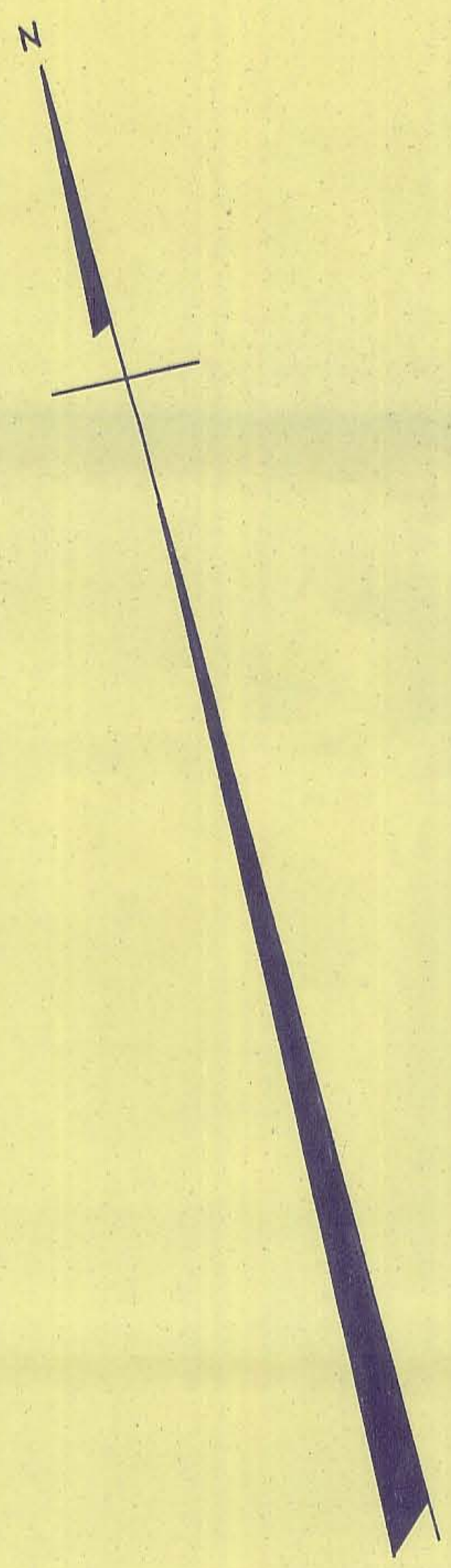
Telephone: (202) 343-7063

Date: March 7, 1996

Edited by: Patricia H. Henry  
National Historic Landmarks Survey  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127, Suite 310  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Telephone: (202) 343-8163

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS SURVEY  
March 7, 1996



BROWN & MORRISON, TRUSTEES  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 Tract 3  
 24,660 Sq. Ft. DB 111 P367  
 (Fee Simple)

DAVIS ELKINS ET AL  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 0.88 Ac. DB 184 P102  
 53.40 " DB 157 P356  
 54.28 Ac. TOTAL  
 (Reverter Deed)

HALLIE DAVIS ELKINS  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 61.62 Ac. DB 112 P340  
 (Reverter Deed)

BROWN & MORRISON, TRUSTEES  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 TRACTS DB 231 P367  
 28.70 Ac.  
 (Fee Simple)

GRACELAND FARM ADDITION

GRACELAND ESTATE ADDITION

GRACELAND ADDITION

W VA PRESBYTERIAN EDUC FUND, INC  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 NINE LOTS DB 202 P325  
 (Fee Simple)

KENNETH B & EMMA CURRENCE  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 Lot 65 & Tract DB 214 P352  
 (Fee Simple)

C. A. GROSS ET UX  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 DB 215 P310 (Reverter Deed)

DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 To  
 C. A. GROSS  
 DB 156 P 581

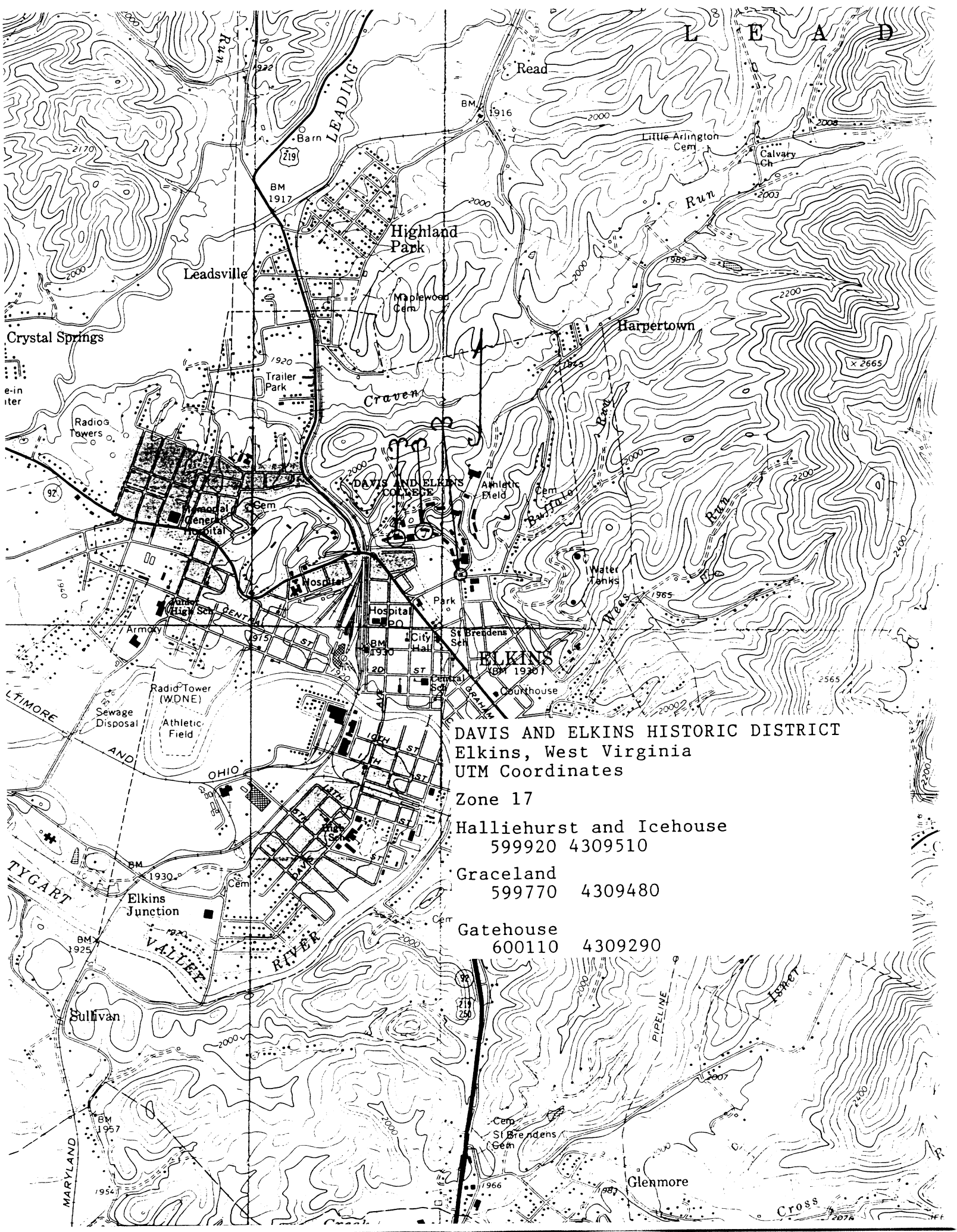
DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 To  
 WINIFRED GROSS

BROWN & MORRISON, TRUSTEES  
 To  
 DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE  
 Tract 4 DB 221 P387  
 (Fee Simple)

*(Handwritten note)*  
 = nominal Hallichurst & associated  
 properties  
 7/10/32  
 RSE

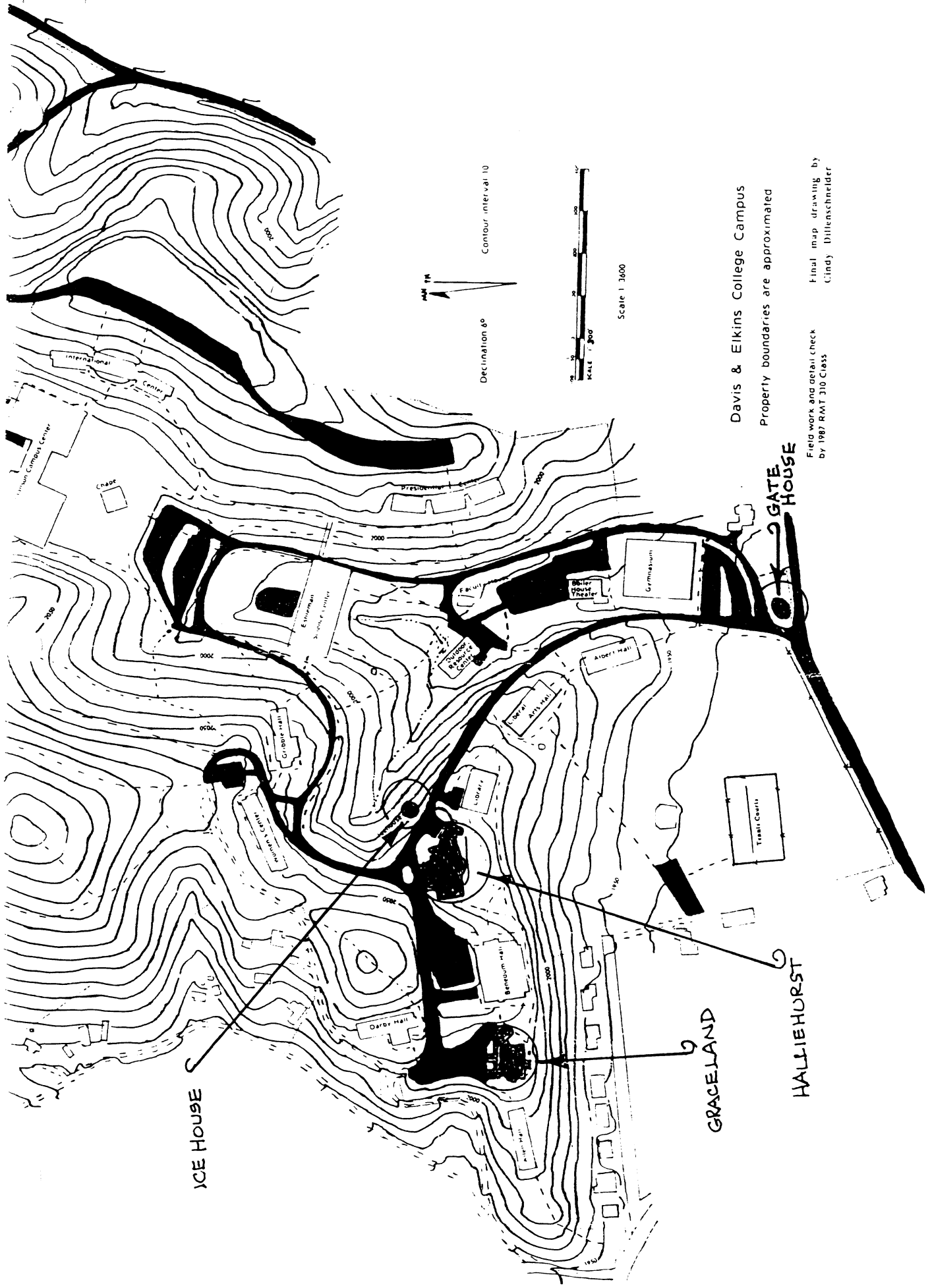
PROPERTY MAP  
 OF  
**DAVIS AND ELKINS COLLEGE**  
 ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA

SCALE 1"=100'  
 APRIL 1961  
 HORNOR BROS. ENGRS.  
 CLARKSBURG, W. VA.



**DAVIS AND ELKINS HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
Elkins, West Virginia  
UTM Coordinates

- Zone 17
- Halliehurst and Icehouse  
599920 4309510
- Graceland  
599770 4309480
- Gatehouse  
600110 4309290



ICE HOUSE

GRACELAND

HALLIEHURST

GATE HOUSE



Declination 6°  
Contour interval 10



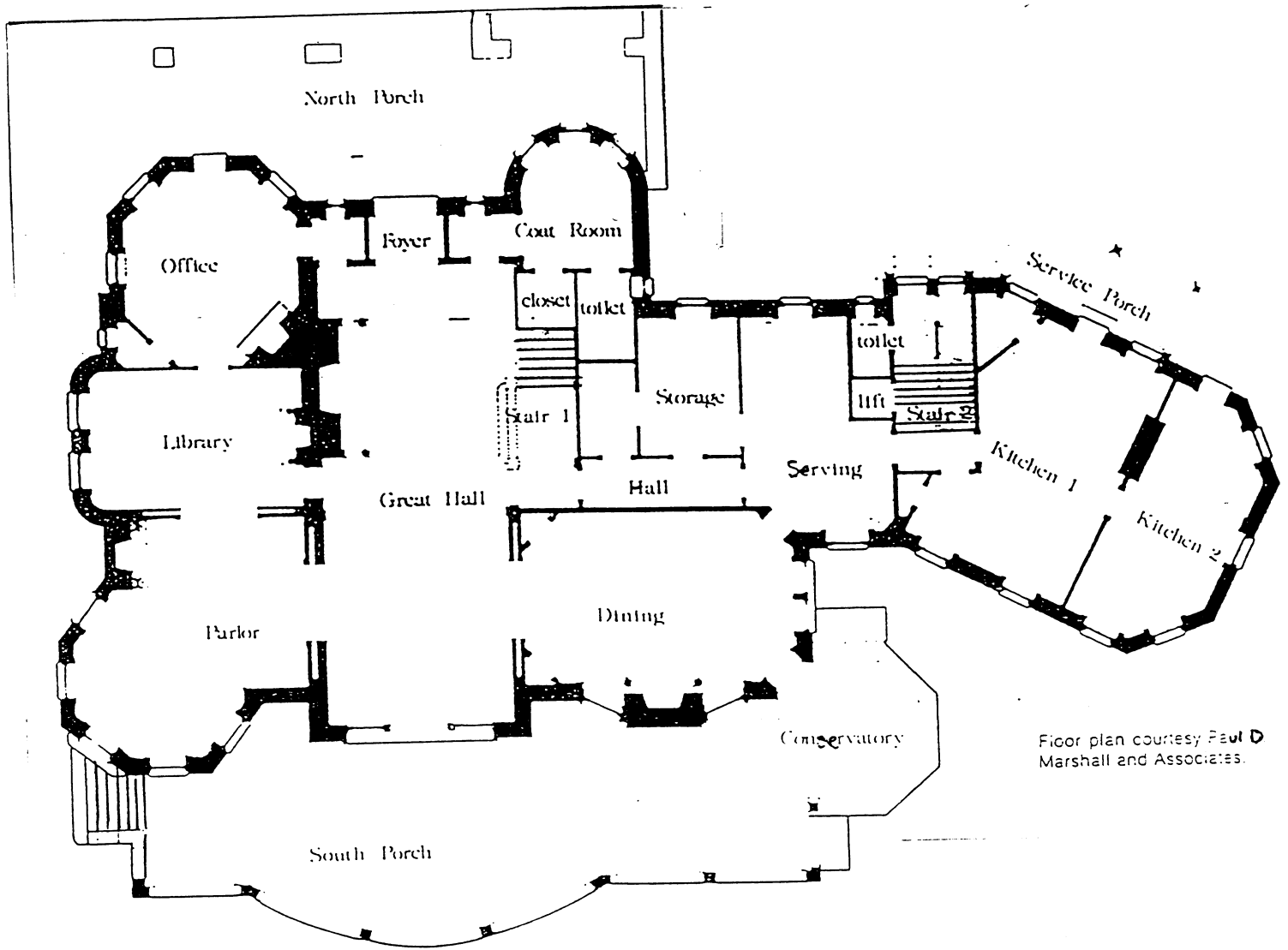
Scale 1:3000

Davis & Elkins College Campus

Property boundaries are approximated

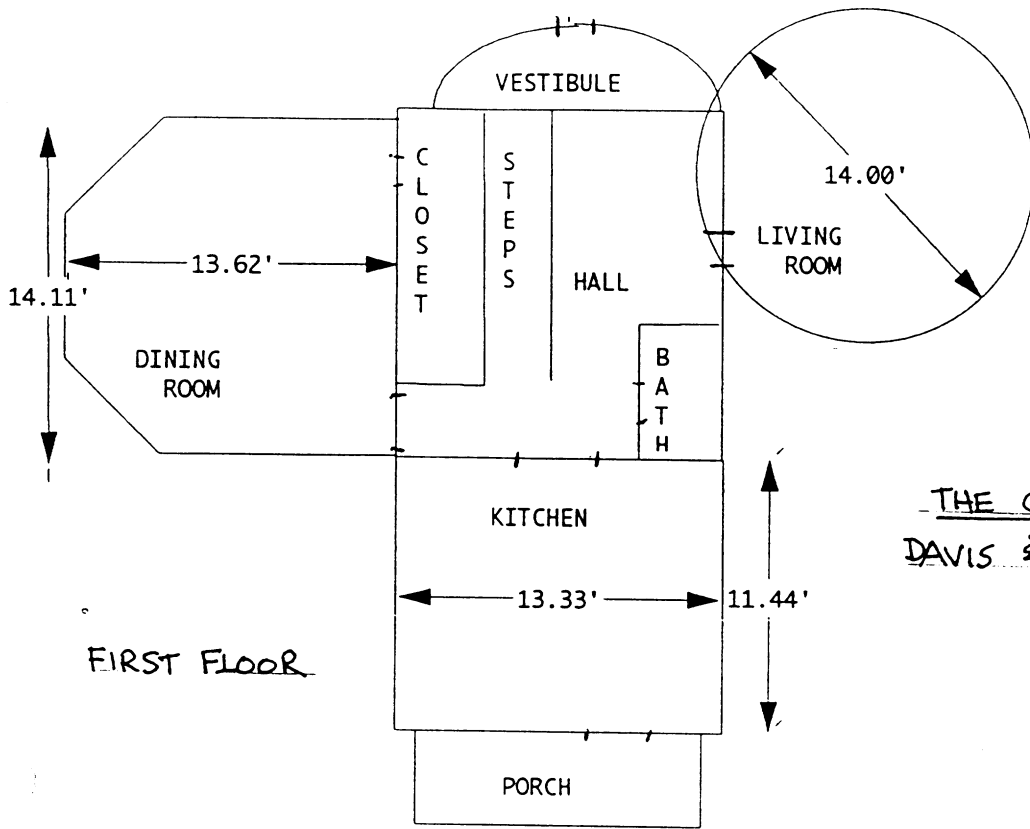
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by 1987 RMT 310 Class  
Final map drawing by  
Cindy Dillenschneider



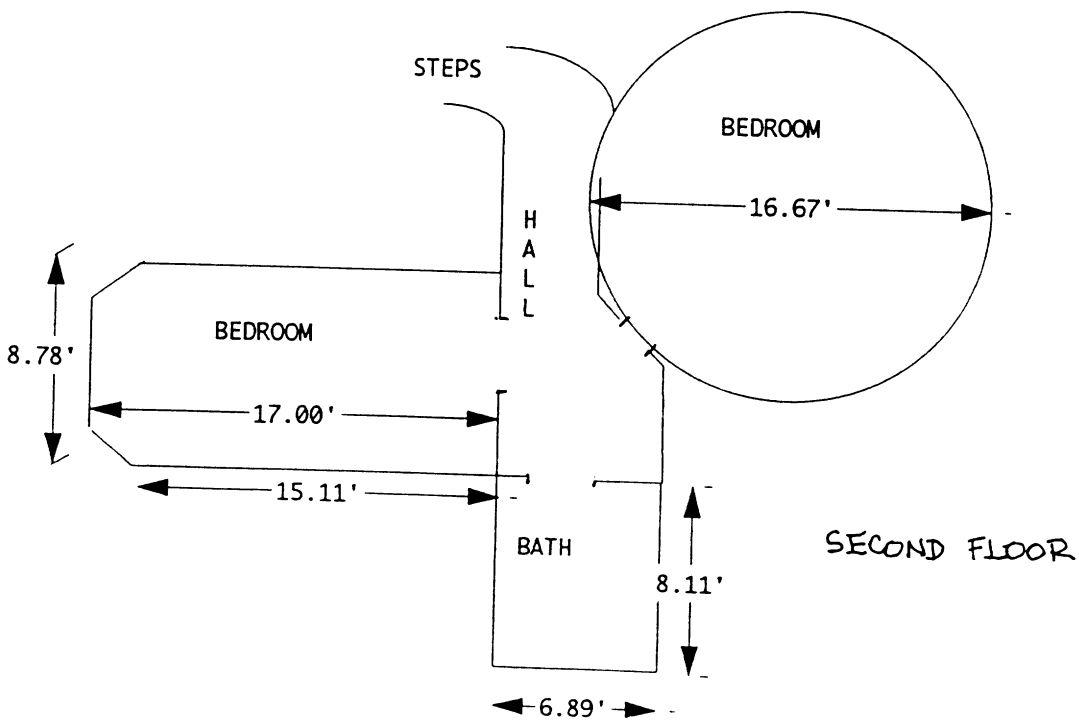


Floor plan courtesy Paul D Marshall and Associates.

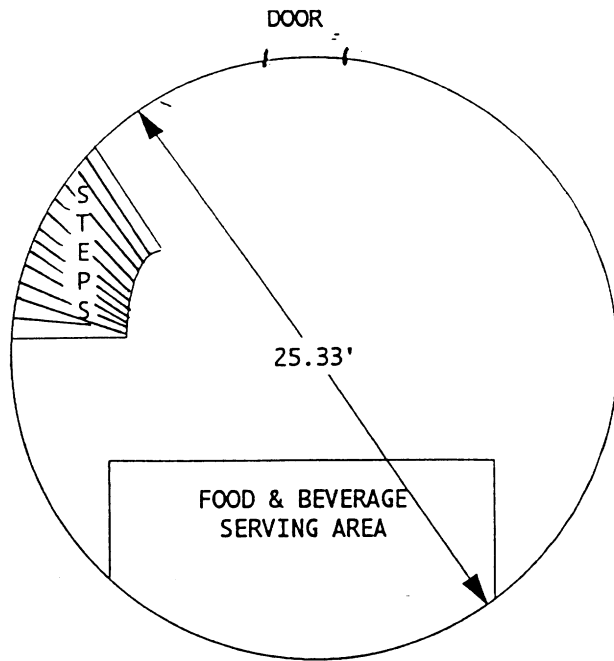
GRACELAND - FLOOR PLAN



THE GATEHOUSE  
 DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE

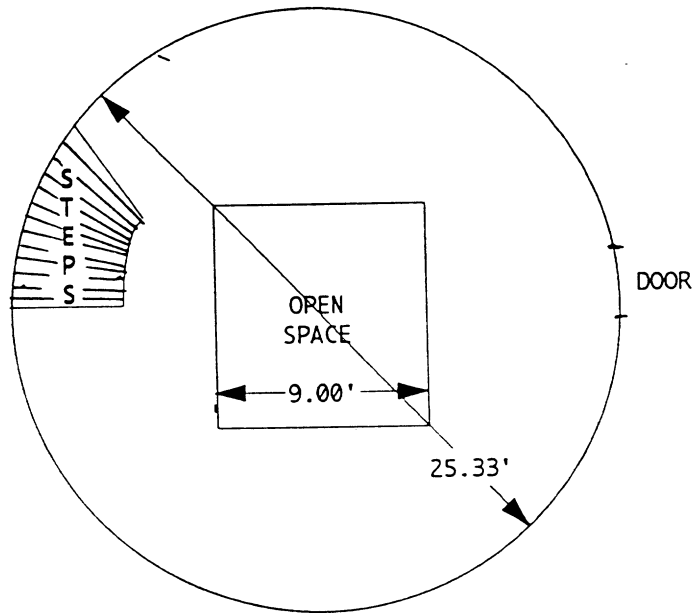


SECOND FLOOR

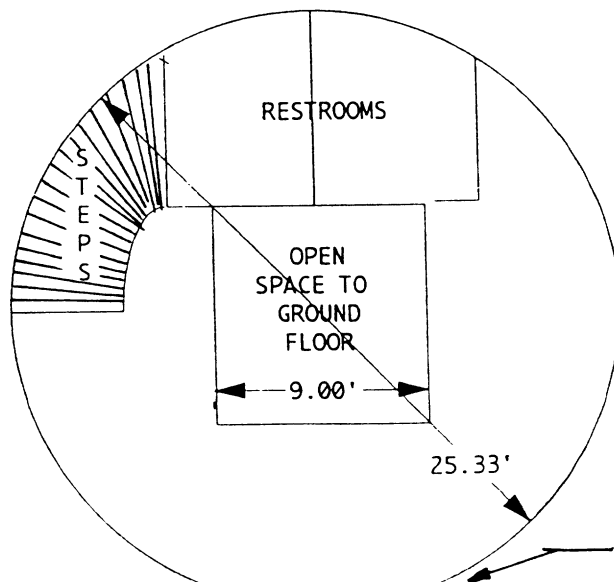


THE ICEHOUSE  
DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE

GROUND (FIRST) FLOOR



MIDDLE (SECOND) FLOOR



TOP (THIRD) FLOOR

