



Colonel Davenport House
Built in 1833

George Davenport originally came to Rock Island as the sutler, a camp follower who provided provisions, for Fort Armstrong. By 1818, he had resigned from that duty and established a more lucrative trading post on Rock Island. During the Black Hawk War, he served as the quartermaster for the militia and troops earning him the honorary title of Colonel. In 1833, he built a mansion on Rock Island overlooking the Mississippi River. The Federal-style, two-story frame house was one of the finest homes north of St. Louis for years. The skeleton of the house was built as if it were a log structure, and the logs were squared and notched to fit tightly against each other.

Industry flourished during this era and the area expanded with the growth of the cities of Davenport, Iowa and Moline, Illinois. The first meeting to bring the railroad to the local area was held in Colonel Davenport's home. Convinced no one was at home and that considerable sums of cash were kept in a safe, John and Aaron Long and Grandville Young, three men who were part of the "Banditti of the Prairie," murdered Davenport in his sleep on July 4, 1845.

The Davenport family lived in the home until 1857. In 1863, the home was rented to Captain Reynolds, the commander of the Arsenal prison barracks and later became the prison headquarters. After years of neglect, Davenport's granddaughters and the Old Settlers and Pioneers group saved and restored the main structure.

The Colonel Davenport Historical Foundation was created in 1978 with a goal of preserving the house and sharing its rich history. The home is on the National Register of Historic Homes.