

OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY

Ohio Historic Preservation Office
567 E. Hudson St. Columbus, Ohio 43211
614/297-2470



1. No.	2. County LOR	4. Present Name(s) Old Barrows House		<input type="checkbox"/> Coded
3. Location of Negatives O.H.I.O. Resource Ctr.		5. Historic or Other Name(s) Barrows House, Williams House, Byrnes House, Quinn House, Barrows Dormitory		
3. Location of Negatives O.H.I.O. Resource Ctr.		17. Date(s) or Period 1901		17b. Alteration Date(s) 1916
6. Specific Address or Location 207 South Professor Street		18. Style or Design Colonial Revival		18a. Style of Addition or Element(s) High Style <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements <input type="checkbox"/>
6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number 0900-095-104-030		19. Architect or Engineer Howard Van Doren Shaw (Chicago)		30. Foundation Material Sandstone, with cut stone water table
7. City or Village Oberlin		19a. Design Sources Unknown		31. Wall Construction Brick Bearing
8. Site Plan with North Arrow		20. Contractor or Builder Unknown		32. Roof: Type Hip Pitch Steep Material Asphalt Shingle
		21. Building Type or Plan Other House		33. No. Bays Front 5 Side 2
		22. Original Use, if apparent Single Dwelling		34. Exterior Wall Material(s) Brick, Stretcher or Running Bond
9. U.T.M. Reference		23. Present Use Co-operative Housing		35. Plan Shape U-Shaped
Zone		24. Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private		36. Changes (Explain in #42) Altered into a dormitory
Easting		25. Owner's Name & Address, if known Oberlin College 173 W. Lorain St. Oberlin OH 44074		37. Window Type(s) 4 over 4, 8 over 8, 8 over 12
Northing		26. Property Acreage .88		38. Bldg. Dims. 63 x 75
10. <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure		27. Other Surveys in Which Included No		39. Endangered? No Explain:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Object		28. No. of Stories 2 and 1/2		40. Chimney Placement Three or More Chimneys
11. On National Register? Yes		29. Basement? Yes		
12. N.R. Potential?		42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features The middle three bays of the facade are covered by a colossal porch held up by large Ionic columns. The porch has a dentilled cornice. The first floor windows project slightly from the facade, and have round arches of brick, with large sandstone keystones. The second floor windows are topped by brick segmental arches, also with keystones. Most windows have plain stone lug sills. The front door has sidelights and a fanlight with elaborate tracery and a carved-wood tympanum above it, topped by a round arch with a large keystone. The roof has three subtly-pedimented gabled dormers in front, and modillion blocks under its slightly flared eaves. There are one-story additions on the NE and SE corners, and a decagonal bay window on the first floor of the back of the house.		
13. Part of Estb Hist Dist? No		43. History and Significance This house was built for Oberlin College President John Henry Barrows in 1901, but he died in 1902, only seven months after its completion. His father, John M. Barrows, had graduated from Oberlin's theological department in 1838. John Henry Barrows came to Oberlin in 1898, after having organized the World's Parliament of Religions at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. He had also taught comparative religions at the University of Chicago, and published several books about Christianity as a world religion. As Oberlin College's president, he was an able fund-raiser and pulled the College out of dire financial straits. (cont.)		
14. Dist. Potential? Yes		44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (see #52) The house sits atop a hill covered by a giant lawn. There is a small parking lot on the north side of the house. There is a brick wall extending from the north side of the building, with a large carved-stone ornament on it.		
15. Name of Established District (N.R. or Local)		45. Sources of Information Blodgett, Geoffrey. <u>Oberlin Architecture, College and Town: A Guide to its Social History</u> . Oberlin College, 1985. O.H.I.O. Resource Center: Oberlin City Directories. Lorain County Courthouse, Auditor Property Records, 2001. Internet. http://www.loraincounty.com/auditor/index.shtml . Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission Files. O.H.I.O. Resource Center Files. Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pat Holsworth, Oberlin Pioneer Database. Oberlin College Yearbooks, O.H.I.O. Resource Center.		46. Prepared by H. Petersen, M. Franck, D. Musson, and O.H.I.O. Interns
16. Thematic Association(s) Religion - Christianity; Private Education - College		47. Organization O.H.I.O. and H.P.C.		48. Date Recorded 12/16/2002
42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features		49. Revised by		50a. Date Revised
43. History and Significance		50b. Reviewed by		

51. Condition of Property

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good/Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Destroyed/Burned
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	Date _____

54. Farmstead Plan



52. Historic Outbuildings and Dependencies

Barn Type(s)

<input type="checkbox"/> Corn Crib or Shed	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> Silo
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoke House	<input type="checkbox"/> Spring House	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice House
<input type="checkbox"/> Designed Landscape Features	<input type="checkbox"/> Privy	<input type="checkbox"/> Garage

53. Affiliated OAI Site Number(s) _____

OAI Completed? _____

Archaeological Feature:	Observed	Expected on Basis of Archival Research
Well	_____	_____
Privy	_____	_____
Cistern	_____	_____
Foundation	_____	_____
Structural Rubble	_____	_____
Formal Trash Dump	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____

42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features (Continued from page 1)

43. History and Significance (Continued from page 1.)

He and his wife, Sarah, had four children, Mary, Katherine, Arthur, and Eleanor. Arthur attended Oberlin College and Eleanor attended the Conservatory. After Barrows died, Charles Whiting Williams and his wife, Caroline, lived here in 1908 with their daughter, also named Caroline, while Charles worked as an assistant to Oberlin College President Henry Churchill King. In 1910, William E. Byrnes and Arthur Quinn lived here before the College bought the house and used it as a dormitory starting in 1916. In 1963, the house was slated for demolition to make way for the Firelands Retirement Center, but Professor Warren Taylor led a community campaign to save the house. This was the first Oberlin preservation effort to invoke the 1954 Supreme Court ruling that citizens could act to ensure the health and beauty of their communities (Blodgett). Currently, the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association uses the house as a dormitory and kitchen for student members who work together to share cooking and cleaning responsibilities.

John Henry Barrows brought a very cosmopolitan influence from the University of Chicago and the World' s Fair, and it is evident not only in his effect on the college, but also in the architecture of his house, which is one of Oberlin' s most striking examples of the Neo-Classical and Georgian revival that followed the Chicago World' s Fair.