

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) Lewis House (Religious Life Center, Center for Service and Learning) <input type="checkbox"/> Coded										
3. Location of Negatives O.H.I.O. Resource		5. Historic or Other Name(s) Severance House; Lewis House										
<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th>Roll #</th> <th>Exp. #</th> <th>Facing</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Front 2</td> <td>3</td> <td>W</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rear 2</td> <td>4</td> <td>E</td> </tr> </table>		Roll #	Exp. #	Facing	Front 2	3	W	Rear 2	4	E		
Roll #	Exp. #	Facing										
Front 2	3	W										
Rear 2	4	E										
6. Specific Address or Location 68 South Professor		17. Date(s) or Period 1894	17b. Alteration Date(s)									
6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number 00-09-085-108-095		18. Style or Design Shingle (Dutch Colonial)	High Style <input type="checkbox"/> Elements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>									
7. City or Village Oberlin		18a. Style of Addition or Element(s)										
8. Site Plan with North Arrow		19. Architect or Engineer Joseph Lymann Silsbee										
		19a. Design Sources										
		20. Contractor or Builder										
9. U.T.M. Reference		21. Building Type or Plan Center Hall										
<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th>Zone</th> <th>Easting</th> <th>Northing</th> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>		Zone	Easting	Northing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	22. Original Use, if apparent Residential				
Zone	Easting	Northing										
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>										
10. <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Object		23. Present Use Educational										
11. On National Register? No		24. Ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private										
12. N.R. Potential? Yes		25. Owner's Name & Address, if known Oberlin College 40 N. Professor St. Oberlin OH 44074										
13. Part of Estb Hist Dist? No		26. Property Acreage .541										
14. Dist. Potential? Yes		27. Other Surveys in Which Included Trenchard (96)										
15. Name of Established District (N.R. or Local)		28. No. of Stories 2										
16. Thematic Association(s) Parochial/private education: Higher		29. Basement? Yes										
42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features This two-story stone and shingle-constructed building has strong Shingle Style elements. The masonry first floor has a central hallway adjacent to a large bay window. The wide front door has side lights, and nearly all remaining windows of the first and second stories are twelve over one double-hung. The gambrel roof has bell-cast eaves that extend to create a long porch along the front facade supported by Doric posts on stone braces. Four shingled dormers on the front facade have rounded edges and gables with returns above each window. The rear orientation has a shingled gambrel end that shows slight returns between the shallow and (cont.)												
43. History and Significance This house was commissioned by James R. Severance in 1894. At that time, Mr. Severance had a house on this lot, occupied by Dr. L.R. Raymond (City Directory), that was demolished when Mr. Severance returned to Oberlin to assume General Shurtleff's position as Oberlin College Treasurer. Mr. Severance and his family lived in the house, and he served as Treasurer until his death in 1916 (Blodgett). After his death his wife, Mrs. R. G., and daughter, Julia, remained in the house; with the exception of 1931-1933 Julia Severance was listed in the house until 1942 (City Directory). (cont.)												
44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (see #52) This residential street has many well cared for historic homes, but rehabilitations and conversions to rental threaten the neighborhood's historic integrity. The outbuilding to the west of the main building is a small carriage barn with similar squared, roughed stone masonry and a hip roof. It has triangular dormers and two four over four double hung windows. The carriage door has been altered with replacement windows and an extra door.												
45. Sources of Information Lorain County Courthouse: Lorain County tax records. Oberlin Public Library: Oberlin City Directories. O.H.I.O. Resource Center: Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission Files; Oberlin City Directories. Blodgett, Geoffrey. Oberlin Architecture College and Town: A Guide to its Social History. Oberlin College, 1985. Oberlin College Library Special Collections: Oberlin City Directories.												
		30. Foundation Material Stone										
		31. Wall Construction Stone										
		32. Roof: Type Gambrel Pitch Steep Material Composite Shingle										
		33. No. Bays Front 4 Side 1										
		34. Exterior Wall Material(s) Square and Coursed Ashlar										
		35. Plan Shape L-Shaped										
		36. Changes (Explain in #42) Some Alteration										
		37. Window Type(s) Double-hung; 12 over 1										
		38. Bldg. Dims. 56 ft. x 58 ft.										
		39. Endangered? No Explain: Well-maintained college building										
		40. Chimney Placement 1 Off-center within ridgeline										
		41a. Distance from road										
		41b. Frontage on road 102.4 ft.										
		46. Prepared by M. Fedelchak-Harley; J. Heaton; L. Preville										
		47. Organization O.H.I.O. and H.P.C.										
		48. Date Recorded 1-20-1999										
		49. Revised by										
		50a. Date Revised										
		50b. Reviewed by										

51. Condition of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruin
<input 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)

Carriage House

<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garage

53. Affiliated OAI Site Number(s) _____

OAI Completed? _____

Archaeological Feature:	Observed	Expected on Basis of Archival Research
Well	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Privy	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Cistern	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Foundation	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Structural Rubble	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Formal Trash Dump	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Other _____	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>

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

sharp slopes of the roof. It is also covered with shingles. This house has been modified into office space to accommodate Oberlin College student life organizations.

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

Julia Severance was an artist. She had a glassed-in studio attached to the rear barn and she designed the new college seal in 1911 (Blodgett). In 1942 a James Nelson was listed as occupant (City Directory). The house was sold later to Ben and Gertrude Lewis; Mr. Lewis taught at the college from 1925 to 1967 as a nationally recognized economist. The Lewis family left the house in 1984 (Blodgett).

This house is significant for its long association with the college through the college Treasurer, faculty, and an artist. The house is a unique and distinguished example of the Dutch Colonial variant of the Shingle Style and is unusual in Oberlin for its architect-designed details. Severance House was listed by the City of Oberlin as an Oberlin Historic Landmark in January of 1999.