

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lewis, Virgil A., House

AND/OR COMMON

Shumaker-Lewis House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Brown Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mason

VICINITY OF

Third

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

West Virginia

54

Mason

053

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

Historical Society
Headquarters

NAME

Mason County Commission

STREET & NUMBER

Mason County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Point Pleasant

VICINITY OF

West Virginia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Mason County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

6th Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Point Pleasant

West Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Virgil Lewis House on Brown Street at Mason, Mason County, West Virginia, assumed its present form c.1885 from the plans of an unknown local builder who may have benefited from a planbook of 19th century "cottage" architecture. The modest size of the former residence in no way hides a formal air conveyed by exceptional exterior and interior ornamental woodwork and floor-length windows in the lower and upper front elevation facade. A 1922 photograph of the house shows it with dark painted weatherboarding and contrasting light (white?) colored paint. With the application of asbestos shingles to the wall surfaces in the late 1940's, the original siding and noteworthy wooden gable trim boards were hidden, detracting to a small extent from the charm of the house as it appeared in the late 19th century.

Ownership of lot number 27 upon which the house stands dates to the Shumakers as early as 1866. A possibility exists that the present house was built over or remodeled from an older structure though the Victorian period construction is so thorough, particularly as it relates to the two-tier porch as an integral element of the building's front roof plane, that the character of the building was established in the 1880s (A map owned by the Mason City Historical Society shows the building standing in 1887.) and has changed little since.

Across the three-bay front of the house is a two-tier porch rich in Eastlake style woodwork. Here the spindles, pendants, and posts were turned on lathes in contrast to jigsaw style work that was apparently even more popular with local area builders. The turned post ornamentation, echoed in a side porch on the east side of the house, is represented in the rich woodwork of the mantelpieces of the formal rooms to the right and left of the small foyer.

Four-panel hardwood doors with configured metal hinges, handles, and keyhole plates are found in the first floor rooms. Similar attention to detail is seen in the superb hardwood door, window, and baseboard trim that features a continuous foliate relief pattern (machine produced in all probability) with original finish. Skirting the perimeter of the parlor's hardwood floor are bands of dark wood, probably cherry, that contrast with the lighter oak. The door and window casing is further detailed with rose (bull's eye) blocks.

The three major upper and three major lower rooms (a single-flight stair at the rear leads to the second floor) are furnished

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with period pieces, including a desk and secretary once belonging to Virgil Lewis. A kitchen, housed in a single-story board and batten ell with gable roof, stands at the rear of the house. The "Tidewater" style raised seam tin roof of the main house descends to nearly meet the ridge of the ell.

Virgil Lewis built a tiny two-room frame Victorian office/library in the late nineteenth century to house his equipment and books. This building, at the (southeast) side and rear of the house, has a fine three-sided bay facing southwest.

Virgil Lewis was a lover of plants and trees. On lot No. 25, purchased by the historian in 1894 (northwest of the house), a formal flower garden and blackberry patch were planted. Behind the office an apple orchard stretched to the alley. The walkway to the rear of the house was flanked by a grape arbor. Lewis grew currants and gooseberries, and pear, plum and cherry trees. With the exception of a ginkgo tree and a giant rhododendron (both to the northwest of the house), none of the original plantings survive.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PE) AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1885

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Virgil Lewis House on Brown Street at Mason, Mason County, West Virginia, was built for a Mr. Shumaker in the late 19th century. The cottage, with Eastlake style exterior and interior woodwork unique in the vicinity, was sold in 1893 by Martha E. Shumaker to Elizabeth Lewis, wife of Virgil A. Lewis, the first State Historian and Archivist of West Virginia. In addition to lots 27, 27 $\frac{1}{4}$, 27 $\frac{1}{2}$, and 27 $\frac{3}{4}$, purchased by Mrs. Lewis, Virgil Lewis acquired in 1894 lot No. 25 to complete the Lewis town holdings that were famous at the turn-of-the-century for their gardens and plantings of diverse West Virginia flora.

Virgil Anson Lewis (1848-1912) was born in the Waggener District of Mason County near West Columbia. He maintained a home in Mason County for most of his life despite professional commitments in history and education that frequently called him to Charleston on long stints. Despite his eventual success in publishing history on statewide topics of importance, Lewis never forgot his interest in the history of his home area, particularly of the Battle of Point Pleasant, a major encounter of Dunmore's War.

Virgil Lewis was a largely self-educated man who taught school in Mason and Putman Counties (Lewis was principal of Buffalo Academy in Putman County in 1878). He practiced law for a short time after his admission to the bar following studies under Judge James H. Hoge of Winfield. Lewis held several elective offices, including Mayor of Mason, 1891 (he declined a second term), and State Superintendent of Free Schools, 1892-96. West Virginia's successful representation at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1903 and at the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 owed much to the secretarial and interpretive services rendered by Lewis.

Remembered best for his writings in West Virginia history, Lewis produced works for school children and the general public that supplied information on the general themes of the entire state that were heretofore uncompiled. This was especially important during the period following Charleston's selection over Wheeling as

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the permanent Capital in 1885. Of the dozen or so books written by Lewis, his History of West Virginia, 1889; The Life and Times of Anne Bailey, 1891; and History and Government of West Virginia, 1896, are perhaps his best known works. Virgil Lewis was also instrumental in recognizing the need for the state to organize, collect and preserve its historical materials. This important task was taken up by Lewis when he served as first State Historian and Archivist from 1905 until 1912.

Though Lewis's contributions have been overshadowed for several decades by the work of professional historians employed by the history departments at West Virginia universities and colleges, (Dr. James Morton Callahan, the state's first professional historian, founded a Hopkins style history department at West Virginia University in 1902,) the contributions of Virgil Lewis nevertheless mark an important early point at which West Virginians gained a clearer view and better understanding of their state's history.

The Virgil Lewis House was acquired by the County Commission of Mason in 1974, restored, and given to the Mason City Historical Society for use as a headquarters and memorial to Virgil Lewis who died in the house on December 5, 1912.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atkinson, Geo.W. and Alvaro F. Gibbens. Prominent Men of West Virginia. Wheeling, WV; W.L. Callin, 1890, pp. 633-34.

Brand, Irene B. "Mason County Remembers Virgil A. Lewis". Wonderful West Virginia Magazine. Fairmont, WV; Fairmont Printing Co. (WV Dept. of Natural Resources) Vol. 41, Jan. 1978, no. 11, pp. 2, 3.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 city lot 70'/200'

QUADRANGLE NAME Pomeroy, Ohio-WV

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	4 1 0 7 1 0	4 3 1 9 2 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located on city lot #27, the house is centered at the front of a lot 70' wide and 200' deep on Brown Street. The Mason Public Library is located on the city lot east of the Lewis House at the corner of Brown

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

and Third Street.

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Rodney S. Collins, Architectural Historian

DATE

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Unit, W.V. Dept. of Culture & History Oct. 25, 78

TELEPHONE

STREET & NUMBER

The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

(304) 348-0240

CITY OR TOWN

Charleston

STATE

West Virginia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Charles Morrow

1-16-79

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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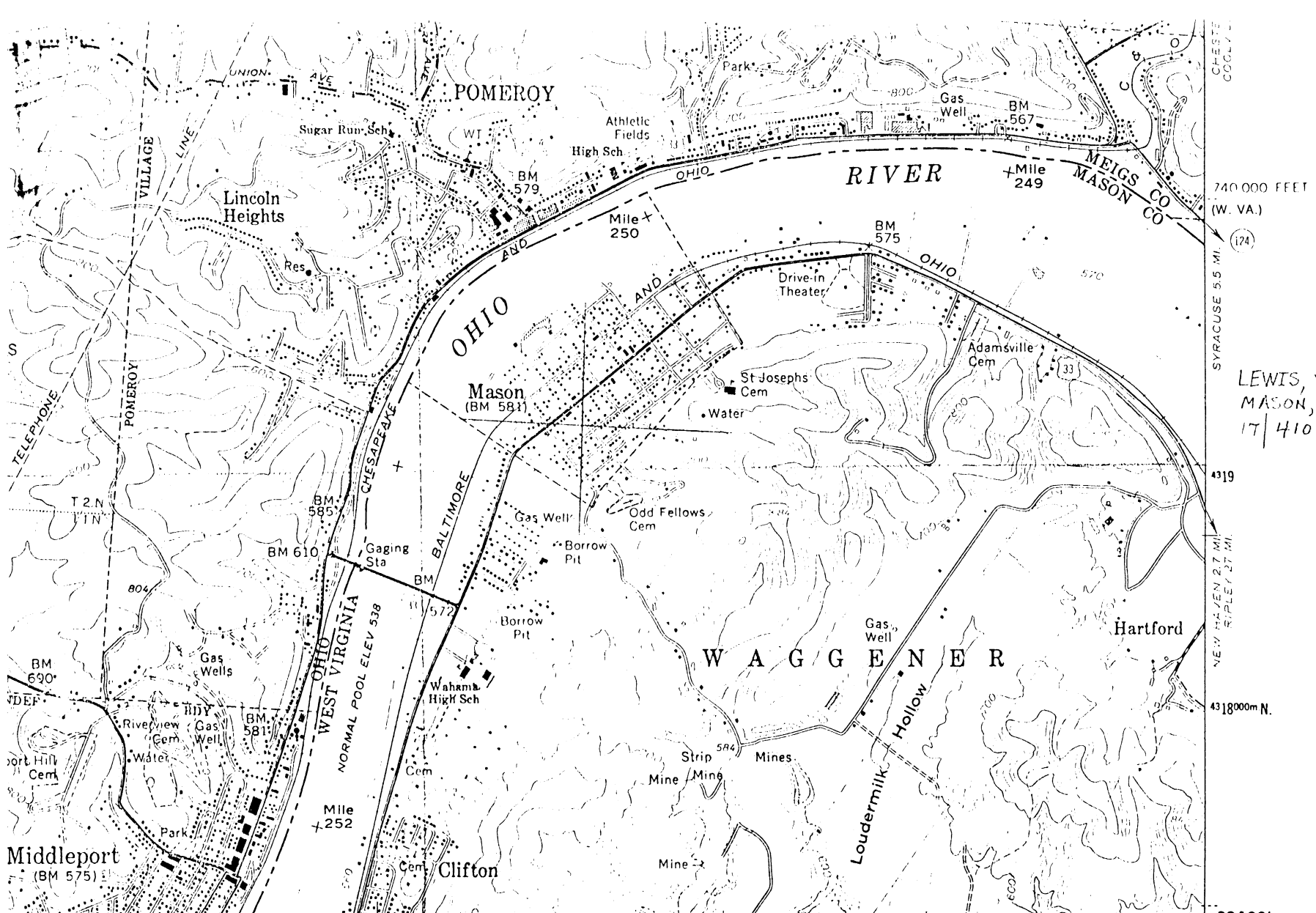
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2

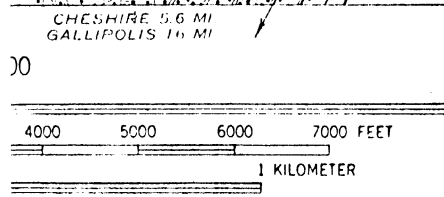
Deeds, 1893-94, Mason County Clerk's Office, Point Pleasant.

Hardesty's Atlas of the Upper Ohio Valley. (Map of Pomeroy and Mason) 1887.

"Life of Former State Historian Included in Biographical Volume".
The Sunday Advertiser. Huntington, W.V. March 30, 1924, p.1.



LEWIS, VIRGIL A., HOUSE
 MASON, MASON, W.VA.
 17 | 410 710 | 4319 200



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty		Light-duty	
Medium-duty		Unimproved dirt	
	U. S. Route		
			State Route

POMEROY, OHIO—W. VA.

N 3000—W R 200 / 7 E

