

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Covington Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	4	6	6	4	3	0	4	4	4	2	9	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 250 and 251 in Piatt's Addition to the Town of Covington.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Warner W. and Carol A. Freese

organization N/A

date 9-14-82

street & number 602 East Washington Street

telephone 317/793-2710

city or town Covington

state Indiana 47932

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 9-6-84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

10/11/84

for Melrose Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

8. Significance

Period	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 type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1867 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sewell-Freese House is an excellent, unaltered example of Italianate architecture and the only house of its type in Covington. It was originally the home of William C. B. Sewell, a prosperous Covington businessman.

The house is in excellent condition. Its distinctive, characteristically Italianate features include the elaborate, tall, narrow main level windows, cresting, and an oval transom above the door.

The original owner, William C. B. Sewell, son of early Covington settlers, was an operator of a packing house along the Wabash and Erie Canal. He built the house for his bride in 1867. Sewell reportedly had the house copied after one he had seen in New Orleans and was said to have imported the marble fireplaces, light fixtures, wrought iron fence, and the lions, which are cast-iron replicas of those at the Yalta Palace in Russia. The house remained in the Sewell family until 1972, when it was purchased by the present owners.

The Sewell-Freese House is among the more well-to-do residences in Covington. There are a number of homes of similar status in Covington, partially due to its being the county seat and having a number of judges, state officials, and U.S. Senators living there over the years. Around the 1840's through the 1860's, when many of these houses were built, Covington was experiencing substantial growth and development due to the completion of the Wabash and Erie Canal through Covington. It became a center for shipment of lumber, grain and pork to cities in the East. Grain elevators and packing houses, like Mr. Sewell's, were located along the canal.

By the end of the 1860's, the canal had failed, and this resulted in a drastic decline in Covington's prosperity. The decline was shortlived; around 1870, construction of the Indianapolis, Bloomington and Western Railroad was begun at Covington, and this restored value to property and impetus to business.

A number of Covington's early residences are extant, but the Sewell-Freese House stands out in its excellent, unaltered condition.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Sewell House

Item number 7

Page 1

The summer kitchen (Photo 5), just east of the house, is a one-story, gable-roofed, brick structure.

The interior walls of the house are horsehair plaster and lime finish. Interior doors are cherry and have transoms. The ornate woodwork is poplar. Beneath each of the downstairs windows is a wood panel that extends to the baseboard. Interior woodwork has always been painted. Five of the ceiling fixtures are original to the house. There are two Italian marble fireplaces with rounded openings and brass and cast-iron fittings. The parlor has an 11 foot, built-in, walnut bookcase and pier mirror. The entrance hall has a winding staircase with a walnut newell post and railing. Two bathrooms were created, one from a trunk room and one from a downstairs side entrance hall.

The house is unaltered on the exterior and is in excellent condition. Some interior rehabilitation, including a new kitchen and furnace, was done in 1972.

Item No. 9

Beckwith, H. W. History of Fountain County. Chicago: H. H. Hills and N. Iddings, 1881.

Clifton, Thomas A., ed. Past and Present of Fountain and Warren Counties, Indiana. Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen and Company, 1913.

Covington Bicentennial-Sesquicentennial Committee. "Covington, Indiana, Historic Homes Tour." Guide, 1976.

Indianapolis News. November 11, 1983, p. 1, c. 1.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sewell-Freese House is located in Covington, the seat of Fountain County, on two of the original lots of the Piatt Addition to Covington, laid out in 1823. The grounds encompass one-third of a city block and are surrounded on two sides by the original wrought-iron fence. In front of the porch is a pair of cast-iron lions (Photo 4), one on each side of the walk, which give the house the name by which it is known locally, the "House with the Lions."

Italianate in style, the house is comprised of a main part and two wings. There is a separate summer kitchen.

The main part (Photos 2 and 3) is a two-and-one-half-story common bond brick building with a three-bay facade, rectangular plan, and a front gable roof. A decorative, one-story wood porch extends the length of the facade. There is a cast-iron panel fence around the edges of the porch roof. A small one-story, decorative wood porch shelters a four-panel door in the central bay of the rear (south) facade.

The main entrance of the house (Photo 4) is on the first floor in the west bay of the north facade. This is a four-panel door with round-arch sidelights and oval transom light. The door surround also includes pilasters on each side and panels below the sidelights, and a smooth stone lintel above. Opening onto the porch roof directly above the main entrance is a four-panel door with four-light sidelights, a three-light transom, and a smooth stone lintel.

All windows in the house have sandstone lintels and a pair of louvered shutters, and retain most of their original glass. First-story front facade windows are tall and narrow with sandstone sills incorporated into a smooth stone water table that extends around the house. These windows are double-hung with six lights over nine. Other windows are double-hung with six lights in each sash and smooth stone sills. In each of the gables there is a double-hung window with six lights in each sash, a round-arch opening and frame, a round-arch, smooth stone lintel, and a smooth stone sill.

There are two plain brick chimneys, one on each slope of the roof, in the main part of the house. The roof is green and red Vermont slate arranged in a geometric pattern. A molded box cornice has returns at the gable ends, and there are paired, scroll-sawn brackets under the eaves.

Extending from the southernmost bay of the east facade is a shed-roofed, one-story, common bond brick, three-bay by one-bay maid's wing (Photo 6). In the west bay of the wing's north facade is a paneled door with a three-light transom and stone lintel. Windows are double-hung with six lights in each sash, louvered shutters, and stone sills and lintels. There is a plain brick chimney extending from the roof. The roof is covered with green asphalt shingles, which replaced the original wood shingles. There are paired, scroll-sawn brackets and a molded box cornice under the eaves. Beneath the cornice on this facade is a wide band of projecting brickwork.

The other wing (Photo 5), which extends from the easternmost bay of the south (rear) facade of the main part, has a gable roof, is brick laid in common bond, and is one-bay (south facade) by four bays wide. In the second bay from the south on the west facade is a paneled door with a three-light transom and a smooth stone lintel. Windows are double-hung with six lights in each sash. There is a plain brick chimney extending from the roof. The roof is covered with green asphalt singles. Beneath the gutter are paired, scroll-sawn brackets.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received **SEP 14 1984**

date entered **OCT 11 1984**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Sewell, William C. B., House

and/or common Sewell-Freese House

2. Location

street & number ~~602 East Washington Street~~ N/A not for publication

city, town Covington N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Fountain code 045

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Warner W. and Carol A. Freese

street & number 602 East Washington Street

city, town Covington N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47932

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Fountain County Court House

city, town Covington state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state