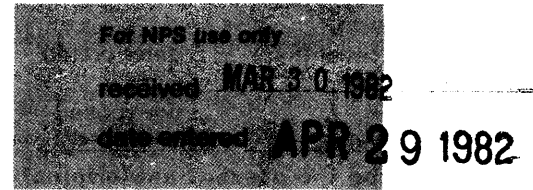


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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, Governor James T., House

and/or common Lewis-Stare House (preferred)

**2. Location**

street & number 711 W. James Street \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Columbus \_\_\_ vicinity of Congressional district

state Wisconsin code 55 county Columbia code 021

**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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Susan E. Stare

street & number 711 W. James Street

city, town Columbus \_\_\_ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53925

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Columbia County Courthouse

street & number P. O. Box 177

city, town Portage state Wisconsin 53901

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1975 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair               unexposed

**Check one**  
 unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**  
 original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Dramatically sited on the crest of a hill on the northwest edge of Columbus, the Lewis-Stare House is an imposing cream brick Italianate structure distinguished by widely extended and bracketed eaves and surmounted by an elaborate cupola. Characterized by unusually tall proportions and overscaled detail, the house is a dominant visual landmark in a neighborhood of more modest buildings.

Built in two phases over a period of three years (1854-56),<sup>1</sup> the house is composed on a cross plan with two sensitively designed twentieth century additions (an enclosed porch and an attached garage) built on the rear. Although the oldest unit of the house (the western wing, completed in 1854) is a two story-plus-attic structure with bracketed eave, the second unit (the eastern wing, completed in 1856) rises 28" higher (two stories, attic) and is crowned with a cupola, dominating the house in size, scale, and character. The low-pitched hip roof has unusually broad eaves with a pronounced cornice, supported by large scrolled brackets (paired at the corners). The same treatment is repeated on the cupola in smaller scale, where extended eaves are supported by similar brackets. Round headed windows rise the full height of the cupola on all sides and retain some of the original sash windows and muntins. On the first two stories, the tall windows are symmetrically disposed across the facade, crowned with molded and projecting cornice-like window hoods. A bracketed balcony (its original balustrade now replaced by a cast-iron rail) extends over the first story window of the center bay on the east facade. A porch with Tuscan columns wraps around the corner of the front (the original railing now removed) and a side porch on the south facade of the original unit was enclosed and converted to a sun porch in the 1920s. At the same time, a two story garage and sleeping porch was built to the rear of the house, designed in a handsome Prairie vernacular style with hip roof, banded windows, and extended eaves. Finally, an original window on the building's north facade (west wing) has been altered into a bay window.

The interior of the Lewis-Stare House remains in a good state of preservation. Although ceilings on three first floor rooms have been lowered (in the parlor, library, and living room) elsewhere the original ceiling heights and hardwood floors have been maintained. Throughout the house, including the first floor rooms, the original wooden window and door trim is unaltered and in good condition. The interior of the cupola, as well, is in original condition.

Situated on a spacious lawn, much of the visual appeal of the property derives from its dramatic location overlooking the northwest side of Columbus. Today, its tall cupola is the highest landmark in the area and perfect for surveying the surrounding neighborhood. A stone barn/storage building in the far northwest corner on the property is included in the nomination. Constructed of locally quarried stone, the gable roof structure once served as a grist mill and, although its original equipment has been removed, the heavy hand-hewn structural timbers remain in good condition and the stone walls, roughly two feet in thickness, are largely unaltered. Built in 1856, it is included in the nomination because of its historic relationship to the property as a utilitarian outbuilding.

## 8. Significance

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
			<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/
			<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> associated with significant persons

**Specific dates** 1854, 1856<sup>1</sup> - 1966 **Builder/Architect** not known

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Historically significant for its association with Wisconsin Civil War Governor James T. Lewis and prominent Columbus businessman Fred A. Stare, the Lewis-Stare House is a distinguished vernacular adaptation of Italianate architecture, reflecting both the skill of local craftsmen and the stature of its occupants. Built in 1854-56 by Governor Lewis,<sup>1</sup> the house is sited on a hill overlooking the city, a commanding visual landmark which recalls over a century of state and local history.

### Architecture

Situated on a gently sloping hill at the northwest edge of the city, the Lewis-Stare House is a restrained but imposing example of vernacular Italianate architecture. First completed in 1854, the west wing of the house was constructed with handmade brick fired upon the premises; the more elaborate cupola-adorned east wing was completed in 1856, built with cream brick hauled to the site by ox team.<sup>6</sup> Although two sensitively designed additions have been appended to the rear of the structure, the characteristic Italianate hallmarks--dramatically bracketed and extended eaves, tall proportions, molded window hoods, and an elaborate cupola--are still well-preserved, reflecting both the dignity and the vigor of the style. Although not elaborate, its scale and attractive siting help make the Lewis-Stare House an outstanding Italianate structure in Columbus. The nearby **stone barn**, constructed of locally quarried stone and supported by hand-hewn structural timbers, remains in good condition but does not contribute to the architectural significance of the property. Built in 1856 by Lewis' brother William, the structure has been a functional part of the property since that date. <sup>10</sup>

### Associated with Significant Person

The Lewis-Stare House, built by Governor James T. Lewis in 1854-56,<sup>1</sup> is historically significant as the last remaining structure associated with Wisconsin's final Civil War governor. An early and important Columbus settler, James T. Lewis rose steadily through the ranks of local and state government, serving successively as district attorney, county judge, constitutional convention delegate, general assembly member, state senator, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and, beginning in January 1864, Wisconsin's ninth governor.<sup>2,3</sup>

Lewis was elected governor on the Union Republican ticket in 1863, amassing the largest majority of votes received by any gubernatorial candidate prior to 1896.<sup>4</sup> As the state's chief executive during the closing years of the Civil War, Governor Lewis was preoccupied with overseeing Wisconsin's role in the conflict. Concerned with the lack of facilities and care provided to wounded soldiers by the federal government, Lewis was successful in securing the transfer of sick and disabled Wisconsin soldiers to hospitals within their home state. In addition, Lewis was able to adjust Wisconsin's draft quota to a lower and, to Lewis' mind, fairer level. Despite these successes, Lewis declined renomination in 1865, as well as repeated offers of state and national political office, and chose instead to devote his time and attention to local Columbus affairs.<sup>5</sup>

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 2.0

Quadrangle name Columbus, WI

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A 

1	6	3	3	6	1	5	10	4	8	0	10	6	10	10
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** . The nominated property is a rectangle, contained within Lot 1, Block 10 of Lewis' First Addition to Columbus, WI, described as follows: Beginning at a point 80 feet southwest of the northwest corner of the intersection of west James and Charles streets on the Charles Street property line of 711 W. James St., and continuing along said line (parallel to Charles St.) for 265 feet, then (continued)

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

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Davis/volunteer and Leonard T. Garfield/Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 12-8-81

street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-2970

city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 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 Richard Henry

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 4/11/82

For NPS use only

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

date 4/29/82

for Delores Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

Lewis-Stare House, Columbus, Columbia County, Wis.

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Lewis first arrived in Columbus from his native New York State in 1845 and was for a time Columbia County's first and only lawyer. In 1854, while he served as lieutenant governor in the administration of William Barstow, Lewis built his first home (now known as the Lewis-Stare House). The original portion of the 18-room Italianate structure was built with cream-colored brick fired upon the premises; the Lewis family moved in while the front portion with the cupola was still under construction.<sup>6</sup>

In 1856, Lewis sold the property to his brother William, and subsequently moved his own family to a Greek Revival house across the street where he resided until his death in 1904. But, the second Lewis house was demolished in 1920,<sup>7</sup> and the Lewis-Stare House retains significance as the last remaining structure associated with Governor Lewis's life and career.

Since 1917, the house has been home to the Fred A. Stare family. Fred Stare was a successful businessman and a noted pioneer in the canning industry, widely recognized for his contributions to that historically important Wisconsin industry.

Stare joined the newly formed Columbus Canning Company in 1901, eventually becoming general manager in 1924 and president of the firm the next year. Under his administration, the company was reorganized and expanded into the Columbus Foods Corporation, a major enterprise in the city.<sup>8</sup> During World War II, Stare served the canning industry as a member of the first Industry Advisory Committee for the War Production Board, frequently serving as a consultant in Washington. In 1945, Stare assumed the presidency of the National Cannery Association for two years, during which time Columbus Foods Company merged with Stokely Van Camp, Inc.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, in 1944, Stare was appointed president of the Farmers and Merchants Union Bank in Columbus and served in this capacity until 1963 when he was named chairman of the Board of directors. The author of numerous books and publications, including The Story of Wisconsin's Canning Industry, Stare died in 1966. Today, the house remains in the Stare family.

<sup>1</sup> Property Abstract, in possession of Susan E. Stare, 711 W. James St., Columbus, WI 53925.

<sup>2</sup> The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography (Milwaukee: The North American Press, 1960), p. 230.

<sup>3</sup> F. A. Stare, "Story of Columbus," Columbus Journal-Republican, June 11, 1953.

<sup>4</sup> Richard N. Current, The History of Wisconsin, Vol. 2. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976), pp. 406-08.

<sup>5</sup> Soldiers' and Citizens' Album of Biographical Record (Chicago: Grand Army Publishing Co., 1890), p. 691.

<sup>6</sup> F. A. Stare, "Story of Columbus," Columbus Journal-Republican, June 11, 1953.

(continued)

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<sup>7</sup> F. A. Stare, "Story of Columbus," Columbus Journal-Republican, January 5, 1956.

<sup>8</sup> F. A. Stare, The Story of Wisconsin's Great Canning Industry. (Baltimore: The Canning Trade, 1949), pp. 372-76.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> F.A.Stare, "Story of Columbus", Columbus Journal-Republican, March 5, 1953.

<sup>11</sup> The dates of specific significance represent the years of construction (1854, 56) and the year of F.A. Stare's death (1966).

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Lewis-Stare House, Columbus, Columbia County, Wis.

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Bibliographic Reference

Current, Richard N., The History of Wisconsin, Vol II. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976.

Soldiers' and Citizens' Album of Biographical Record. Chicago: Grand Army Publishing Company, 1890.

Stare, Fred A. "Story of Columbus," Columbus Journal-Republican, 1951-1963 (appeared serially).

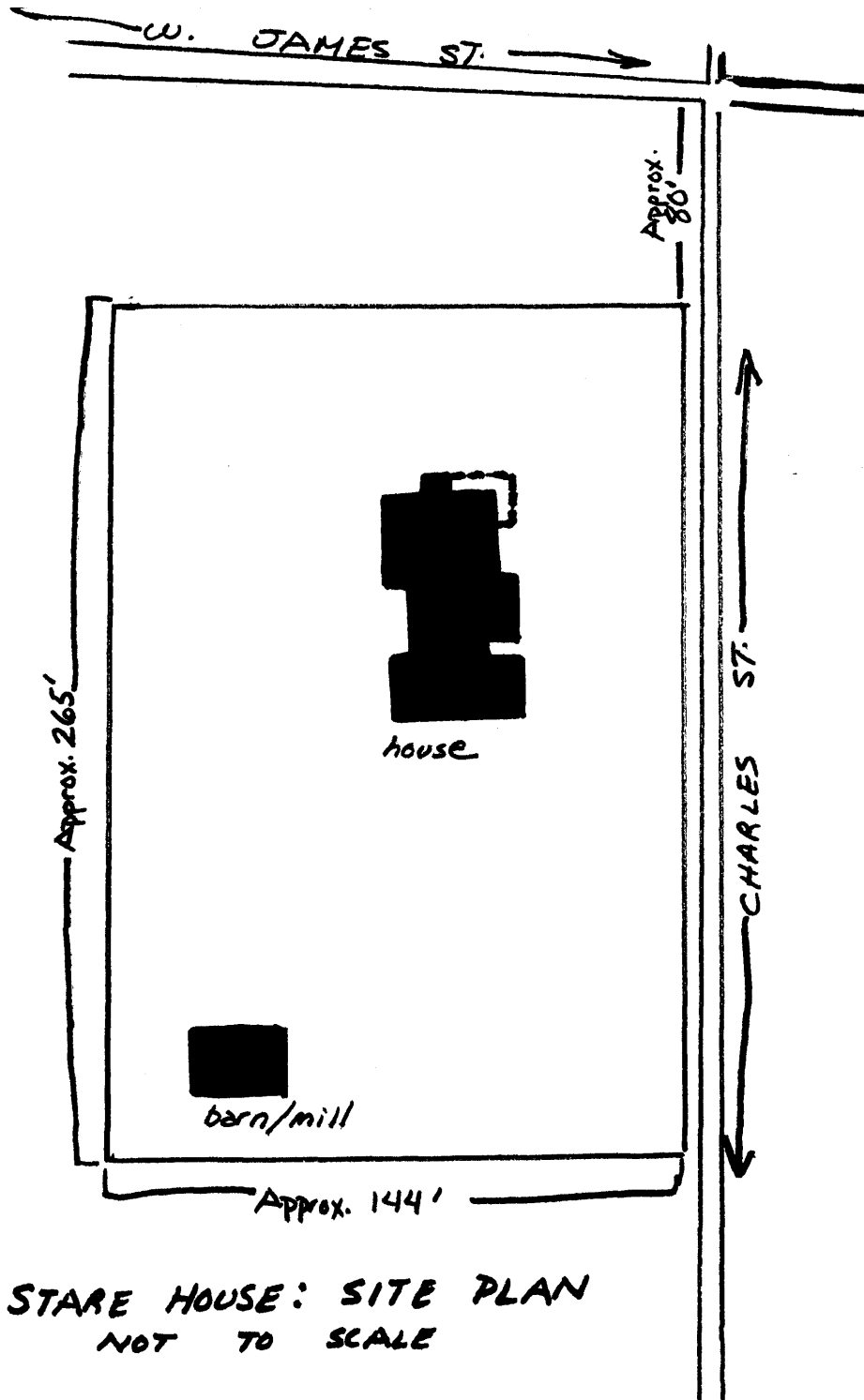
Stare, Fred A. The Story of Wisconsin's Great Canning Industry. Baltimore: The Canning Trade, 1949.

Verbal boundary description (continued):

turn right 90° and proceed northwesterly 144 feet, then turn right 90° and proceed northeasterly 265 feet, then turn right 90° and proceed southeasterly 144 feet to point of beginning.

LEWIS-STARE HOUSE  
711 West James St., Columbus  
Columbia Co., Wis.

Sketch map of site plan



LEWIS-STARE HOUSE: SITE PLAN  
NOT TO SCALE