

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
FEB 6 1979
RECEIVED
MAR 23 1979
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
Lowenstein House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
756 Jefferson Avenue

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Memphis

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Eighth

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Tennessee

CODE
047

COUNTY
Shelby

CODE
157

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <i>institution</i>

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Multiple Owners

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Shelby County Registrar

STREET & NUMBER
Shelby County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Memphis

STATE
Tennessee 38103

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Memphis Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE
January 1978

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Memphis Landmarks Commission, Falls Building, 22 North Front Street

CITY, TOWN

Memphis

STATE
Tennessee 38103

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on a small lot rising several feet above street level at the northwest corner of Manassas Street and Jefferson Avenue, the Lowenstein House is bordered by a low brick wall extending along both street fronts. Two flights of concrete steps lead to the main entrance on Jefferson Avenue.

Built on a rusticated limestone foundation, the two-and-one-half story building is of brick veneer laid in stretcher bond. The hipped roof and intersecting gabled roofs are shingled with composition shingles. Several stylistic influences can be detected in the facade. The irregularity of plan and massing, the veranda and extensive use of stained glass characterize the Queen Anne movement. However, certain features of the Italian Villa style have been incorporated. These include a square tower and round-headed windows, often grouped in twos and threes. In addition the treatment of the large stone round-arched entryway points to an interest in Richardsonian Romanesque decoration.

The facade (south elevation) and hipped roof are divided into two horizontal planes with the two-bay section on the west end projecting from the plane containing the single remaining bay. Balancing the heaviness of the semi-circular arched entrance with its voussoirs and keystone of rusticated limestone blocks resting on stone piers is a wooden arched veranda with lattice spandrels, pendants in the keystone position, and turned posts that extend from the entrance bay and encircle the east end of the building. The asymmetry that marks the bay division is also apparent in the fenestration pattern. Two-part stained glass windows under elliptical heads are used on the first story while the second story contains round headed one-over-one sash windows grouped in threes on the projecting plane. A single window of like configuration appears on the recessed plane. This east plane terminates in a bevelled corner with a round-arched window on the first floor and a rectangular window on the second story set behind a balcony with turned post and wooden railing. Most windows have wood reveals and stone sills. All wood trim is painted white.

Decorative work in brick and terra cotta can be seen across the facade. Brick hood molds intersect brick belt courses decorated with ornate terra cotta plaques. A plain brick belt course between the first and second stories of the west wall plane extends across to a large terra cotta plaque below the east end of the window grouping. The lower two-thirds of the middle window of this grouping has a brick infill decorated with rows of small plaques.

Rising above the roofline of the center of the facade, offset to the east of the entrance, is a square tower with a steep pyramidal roof. A decorative span of brick work around the hood mold of the circular rose window in the second story gives the appearance of being supported by brick piers with terra cotta bases and corbelled capitals. The entire configuration directs attention vertically to the tower. The cornice of the tower--located above a pair of windows accented again by hood molds and terra cotta plaques--is similar to that found along the roofline to the left of the tower. However, instead of the latter's denticular work, there is a panelled frieze under the molded cornice. An identical frieze occurs at the base of the tower. The frieze and cornice used in the tower are repeated at the roofline of the east plane. Above the cornice on both planes is a decorated wooden gutter.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" 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 1890-91, 1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Three areas of interest summarize the significance of the Lowenstein House. Architecturally, the structure is a well preserved example of late nineteenth-century Victorian styling, representing a mixture of Queen Anne and Italian Villa styles. Although combining styles was common, the mixture of these two produced an unusual structure which stood apart even among the contemporaries.

In addition, the Lowenstein House was built by Elias Lowenstein, who was an important Memphis merchant. The firm with which he was associated, B. Lowenstein & Brothers Department Store, was founded in 1855; in 1869, Elias arrived in Memphis from Germany and became associated with the store, which is still important to Memphis' economy.

Finally, the house is significant due to its use after World War I as a home for young professional women, and in the use reflects the social climate of Memphis during that time. World War I brought many social changes, and among them was the hiring of young women to fill positions in the business world. Memphis attracted women from the surrounding rural area, and custom demanded that they live in a protect environment. In the early 1920s Mrs. Celia Lowenstein Samelson, daughter of Elias Lowenstein, donated her family home to the Nineteenth Century Club for use as a residence for young working women. The house was staffed by a housemother or hostess, and a cook. The girls paid room and board in proportion to their salaries and abided by fairly strict rules of conduct regarding recreation and the entertaining of guests. In 1929, the addition to the house was made to accommodate an increasing number of women. By 1977, the need for such living accommodations had ceased, and the ownership of the Lowenstein House for girls reverted to the Lowenstein heirs. The Lowenstein House will continue to be used for quasi-public community service agencies, and is currently being renovated for use as a mental health out-patient clinic.

The Lowenstein House is primarily significant for its architecture. It is possible that many similar structures graced this once exclusive residential area. Since the early twentieth century, however, adjacent structures have been replaced by those of more modern architecture. In this area, the Lowenstein House is a last reminder to passers-by of an earlier way of life that existed within another urban setting.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Memphis City Directories

Interview with Ira Samelson (Ann Bennett, interviewer, March 14, 1978).

Interview with Mrs. Auvergne Williams, President, Nineteenth Century Club,
(Ann Bennett, interviewer, October 1977).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/3

QUADRANGLE NAME Northwest Memphis, Tenn.-Ark.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 115 7701100 3892710

B

C

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E

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G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The property nominated is a rectangular tract which measures approximately 102.66 feet by 165.84 feet by 100 feet by 165.84 feet and is bounded as follows: Beginning at the point where the western edge of Manassas Street intersects the northern edge of Jefferson; thence northerly along the west side of Manassas 102.66'

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

Kay E. Benton, Preservation Planning Intern

ORGANIZATION

Memphis Landmarks Commission

DATE

November 1978

STREET & NUMBER

22 North Front Street, Suite 901

TELEPHONE

901-528-2834

CITY OR TOWN

Memphis

STATE

Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

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

Herbert E. Hager

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

1/30/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

3-23-79

ATTEST:

Kay E. Benton
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3/22/79

Herbert E. Hager
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Lowenstein House heirs:

Robert S. Haft
15 West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

Mrs. A. P. Haft
c/o Mrs. Robert S. Haft
(see above)

Mrs. Fred Whipple
35 Elizabeth
Belmont, Massachusetts 02178

Mr. Alfred P. Haft, Jr.
170 East 77th Street
New York, New York 10023

Mrs. Dorothy Villmont
45 Longwood Avenue
Brookline, Massachusetts 02146

Mr. Ira Samelson
4282 Nellwood
Memphis, TN 38117

Mr. Richard Samelson
(see above)

Mr. Lester E. Samelson, Jr.
5050 Poplar
Memphis, TN 38157

Mrs. Ira Samelson
Robert Kremer
Richard Kremer, Trustees
c/o Mr. Ira Samelson
(see above)

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The placement of a gabled dormer to the west of the tower and a gabled projecting bay behind the veranda on the east elevation reinforces the irregular massing of the structure. Arched openings and brick ornamentation are present on both the first and second stories.

Within both gables rectangular windows are grouped in twos or threes. Dentils above the dormer windows create the effect of a pediment. The side gable has a denticular cornice both above and below the windows, latticed vents at the top of the gable, and a boxed cornice return.

A rear one-story enclosed porch with arched window openings--portions of which have been weatherboarded--abuts both the gabled projecting bay and a two-story weatherboard addition attached to a two-story brick wing with a gabled roof set perpendicular to the west end of the rear elevation. Two brick chimney stacks flank the gable on the east elevation while a total of three chimney stacks are located on the rear wing.

At one time the west end of the house was decorated by a small porch with wooden arches and a cupola topped by a weather vane. In 1929 this porch was removed and a two story wing was added at the western end of the house. This addition is red brick with white painted cast stone sills, plaques and trim. A low-pitched hipped roof and large wooden bracketed eaves also appear on the wing, which is joined to the house by a short connecting wing with a flat roof and stone coping. In the connecting wing is a decorative engaged arch over french doors. Both the new and connecting wing have six-over-one windows.

The interior of the older portion of the Lowenstein House is almost unchanged. The interior walls are primarily of plaster with wooden thin moulded plaster friezes used in several rooms and turned and carved wooden screens appear over some doorways. There is a central stair at the rear of the entry hall; rooms on each side of the entry utilize double sliding doors. Ornate fireplaces, heavily carved and enhanced by encaustic tile hearths, are still present in the downstairs rooms. Original ornate lighting fixtures are still present. The interior of the new addition, built in 1929 as a dormitory, is also unchanged.

The property nominated is the entire parcel owned by the Lowenstein heirs. The tract contains approximately one-third acre.

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to a point; thence north $70^{\circ} 05' 22''$ west a distance on 165.84' to a point; thence north $19^{\circ} 54' 43''$ east 100' to a point on the north side of Jefferson; thence south-easterly along the northerly side of Jefferson to the point of beginning.