

## Describe present and historic physical appearance

The Lewis House is a two story frame dwelling in the transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival style located in a residential neighborhood in the parish seat of Ruston. Built in 1902, it has retained its integrity with only a few alterations.

A dominant front facing gabled wing establishes the asymmetrical design of the house. A smaller pediment is echoed over the central entrance introducing the one story partial front gallery. This gallery wraps around one side wall, while above the front entrance, a balcony presents another level of interest. Adding to the restless configuration, various angles are created by a side two story cutaway bay and a side gabled wing projecting from the central block.

Exterior classical details include Tuscan columns supporting the gallery and balcony, colossal pilasters at the corners, cornice-line dentils and a Palladian motif in the front attic gable and again in the doorway of the balcony.

Upon entering, a spacious stair room is indicative of the interior refinement. Here a three-run stairway is featured with elaborate square newel posts and a turned balustrade. A round tinted window embellishes the first landing. Among other outstanding details displayed throughout the house are five original catalog-ordered neo-classic mantels and decoratively fluted window and door surrounds and baseboards. This same fluting is found on the stairway on the newel posts and the paneled base of the balustrade.

### Alterations:

In the 1940s the original turned balustrade on the front and side gallery was replaced by a solid stuccoed skirt and piers. The original columns were shortened to rest on top of the piers. Earlier, shortly after construction, both the first and second level rear galleries were enclosed in order to provide for bathrooms.

### Assessment of Integrity:

The gallery alteration is the only one of concern, and it has not significantly changed the Tuscan style of the gallery. In addition, even with this change, the Lewis House is still among the finest of any of the seventeen two story period residences in Ruston (see Item 8).

Significant dates	1902
Architect/Builder	unknown
Criterion C	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Lewis House is architecturally significant on the local level as one of Ruston's landmark residences of the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century period.

The Louisiana Historic Structures Survey has identified 718 50+ year old structures in Lincoln Parish, most of which are in the city of Ruston, founded in 1884. Ruston's collection dates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Lewis House is distinguished among Ruston's older residences because of its size, its age, its intricate massing, and the variety and quality of its details. Most of Ruston's older residences are plain single story cottages or bungalows.

There are also some Queen Anne Revival cottages with off center front gables and forward-projecting polygonal bays. The Lewis House is one of only seventeen two story residences from the period, and of these it is one of the finest. Of the seventeen, most are either severely altered or fairly plain. Alterations include replaced front porch columns, enclosed front porches, or resheathing. Many of the seventeen are completely square fronted and have plain square columns. By contrast, the Lewis House has Tuscan columns and a relatively dynamic asymmetrical composition consisting of a wraparound gallery set between two protruding gabled wings. The massing is further enlivened by a second story porch and a separate gallery gable marking the entrance. Moreover, while virtually all major openings on the other examples are of the plain square head variety, the Lewis House features two Palladian motifs.

#### Historical Note:

The Lewis House was built for W. J. Lewis. It was owned by the Lewis family until 1987, when it was purchased by the present owner, Margaret Colvin. Mrs. Colvin and her husband restored the house, and it serves as their antique shop.

#### Major Bibliographical References

Lincoln Parish Historic Structures Survey, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

Historical sketch of house prepared by owner.