Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

None

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

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_BUILDING(S) X_P	RIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK	
X STRUCTUREB	ОТН	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	X_PRIVATE RESIDE	
	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE X YES. RESTRICTED	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS	
OBJECTIN	PROCESS	YES. RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC	
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	Mrs. Louis L. (R	uth Todd) Levy			
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COURTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.	Noble County Cou	rt House, Office of	County Recorder		
STREET & NUMBER	Orange Street	F =			
CITY, TOWN	Albion, Indiana	46701	STATE		

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

_EXCELLENT

__DETERIORATED

_UNALTERED

X_ORIGINAL SITE

__FAIR

__UNEXPOSED

MOVED DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jacob Straus House is located in Ligonier, Indiana, at the intersection of Main and Third Streets. Built in 1898-99, the wooden clapboard structure combines elements of the neo-classical style and neo-colonial mode. The main (east) facade suggests the colonial influence. A large porch extends the length of the building and features lower and upper balustrades which link paired columns with Ionic capitals. The porch roof has a decorated swan's neck pediment over the entrance. Medallions and finials complete the porch embellishments. There are pilasters with Ionic capitals at the four corners of the building, which has an overall square shape. A plain cornice with dentils supports a truncated hipped roof. There are three gable dormers above the main elevation. Two side chimneys flank these dormers and there is another chimney at the rear of the house. The symmetry of the main elevation is broken by a semi-circular projecting bay to the left of the center entrance. Access to the porch roof is through a center entrance with shell-decorated fan.

The south elevation suggests more of a neo-classical style of architecture. Three central bays on the first and second floors are covered by a two-story portico. Four columns and four pilasters with Ionic capitals support a decorated monumental pediment. There are medallions above the columns, and dentils decorate both the portico cornice and pediment. There is also a balcony with a railing. The first floor has two windows with monumental pediments which flank the portico. There are small, diamond-shaped windows above the first floor windows.

While the north side has irregularly placed windows, a symmetrical impression is provided by a one-story portico over a drive. The portico is supported by paired columns. Above the portico is a three-sided projecting bay. The windows in this bay have fanlights. The roof on this side has a hooded, curvilinear dormer with two windows. There is a single oval stairway window toward the rear.

The rear (west) elevation is the most irregular of the sides. There is a three-sided projecting bay at the second story with a single window below. The roof has one double window, hipped dormer and a round, curvilinear dormer. The original enclosed entrance projecting from this side was enlarged sometime in this century to provide for additional kitchen and bath facilities.

There have been few alterations in the structure. Aside from the above-mentioned addition to the rear, the major exterior change has been the removal of the balustrade around the roof deck. The other changes have been interior "modernizations" of fixtures.

The property also contains a large, two-and-a-half-story frame garage. The garage repeats many of the features from the house, such as a hipped roof, hooded, curvilinear dormers, pilasters at the corners, and a projecting bay above the garage doors.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	HECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
— PREHISTORIC — 1400-1499 — 1500-1599 — 1600-1699 — 1700-1799 X 1800-1899	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC _ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC _AGRICULTURE _XARCHITECTURE _ART X_COMMERCE	COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSERVATION ECONOMICS EDUCATION ENGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY	RELIGION SCIENCE SCULPTURE SOCIAL HUMANITARIAN THEATER TRANSPORTATION
X.1900-	LOMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY INVENTION	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES 1899

BUILDER/ARCHITECT H. L. Ottenheimer

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE The Jacob Straus House is significant for its architecture and its associations with the Straus family. The structure was designed by Chicago architect H. L. Ottenheimer. Ottenheimer's creation is noteworthy since it combined two architectural styles in one structure. The main elevation is a statement of the neo-colonial style which was becoming popular at the turn of the century. The truncated, hipped roof, swan's neck pediment, bay windows, large porch, and dormers indicate the neo-colonial influence. In contrast, the south side portico and window treatment are part of the neo-classical mode. Use of the neo-classical features is notable not only in its combination with neo-colonialism but also since it is a style that was applied more often to public or quasi-public buildings. The Straus House was the first example of the neo-colonial (and probably of neo-classical) style in Ligonier.

The structure was constructed from May, 1898, to March, 1899, for Jacob Straus, who had been a leader in the town's development. Straus' older brother, Frederick William, was the first of the family to settle in Ligonier. He and another peddler immigrant named Soloman Mier, came to the small Indiana community in 1854. The opened a general store and soon prospered. Both men were German Jews, and they encouraged their brethren to come to northern Indiana. The result was an unusual concentration of Jews in this small, Midwestern town.

Jacob Straus was among those Jews who were induced to settle in the community. Born in Laufersweiler, Germany, in 1830, he migrated to Indiana in the 1850's. He had studied business practices and upon his arrival with another brother, the three Strauses established the Straus Brothers General Store. They were soon successful and expanded their activities by establishing a buggy factory and buying and selling land. Increasingly, people came to them for financial advice and capital.

Realizing the opportunities in financial activities, they sold their general store in 1868 and founded the Ligonier Citizens Bank. The two older brothers retired in 1884 from the Ligonier Bank, moved to Chicago, and expanded the family's financial activities elsewhere in the Midwest. Jacob Straus managed the Ligonier Bank until 1892 when he, too, moved to Chicago to assist with the family's growing financial activities. The Straus brothers were responsible for establishing banks in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Ontario, Canada.

In 1898 Jacob Straus retired, moved back to Ligonier, and built the house at Main and Third Streets. During his years in Ligonier, he was a leader in the business, religious, and social life of the community. He took an interest in the town's public schools, and donated a significant portion of the funds raise to complete a Carnegie Foundation grant for a library. He was a leader in the local Hebrew Congregation and served as its president for many years. Until Straus' death in 1914, his house was the setting for

numerous parties and social events in the community.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Schwartz, Lois Fields, The Jews of LigonierAn American Experience. Fort Wayne:
Indiana Jewish Historical Society, 1978.
Ligonier Banner Art Number, "A Most Beautiful Home," March 2, 1899
South Bend <u>Tribune</u> , November 23, 1975
OGEOGRAPHICAL DATA .
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QUADRANGLE NAME Ligonier UTM REFERENCES A [1 6 6 1 7 7 9 5 4 5 9 1 0 2 0] ZONE EASTING NORTHING C
ELJ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The historic property is defined by the property lines of Lot 63 in the original Town Platfof Ligonier.
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
STATE . CODE COUNTY CODE
FORM PREPARED BY
Dr. Virgil L. Levy February 28, 1977
ORGANIZATION DATE
STREET & NUMBER 2937 Westbrook Drive/420 Cart of Miles - 219/484-8201
CITY OR TOWN STATE
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805- 152 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20
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
TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Office DATE
OR NPS USE ONLY