

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.

Form no.

141-J

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form
Photo number _____

Roll 9

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location
in relation to nearest cross streets and
other buildings. Indicate north.

1. Town WorcesterAddress 838 Main StreetName Lucius Knowles HousePresent use funeral servicePresent owner W.H.Graham Corp.
838 Main Street

3. Description:

Date 1870, addition 1880Source atlases, building noticesStyle Victorian Second EmpireArchitect 1870 - unknown
1880 - Stephen EarleExterior wall fabric aluminum sidingOutbuildings (describe) garageOther features slightly projecting entr
pavilion, original front & side
porches, slate mansard roof, brack-
ets with carved swagsAltered siding Date 1970sMoved no Date _____5. Lot size Assessor's Book 6, p.25
Lot 2, 22,432 sq.ft.One acre or less X Over one acre _____Approximate frontage 112'Approximate distance of building from street
25'

C Charalambides & E.Kunholm

6. Recorded by ed. B.R.PfeifferOrganization Worc. Heritage Pres. Soc.Date November 1977

(over)

UTM
19/267820/4681710

7. Original owner (if known) Lucius J. Knowles

Original use residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates funeral service (mid 20th century)

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u> </u>	Conservation	<u> </u>	Recreation	<u> </u>
Agricultural	<u> </u>	Education	<u> </u>	Religion	<u> </u>
Architectural	<u> X </u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u> </u>	Science/ invention	<u> X </u>
The Arts	<u> </u>	Industry	<u> X </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u> </u>
Commerce	<u> </u>	Military	<u> </u>	Transportation	<u> </u>
Communication	<u> </u>	Political	<u> </u>		
Community development	<u> X </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

The main body of the Lucius Knowles House was built in 1870 and remains among the city's best examples of Second Empire architecture, despite the application of aluminum siding. The facade is symmetrical, containing a slightly projecting pavilion at its center. At the first storey this pavilion contains two pairs of ornate wooden doors and an original entry porch. On the house's south elevation is a second original entry porch (now glazed) above which a semi-circle oriel has been added (ca 1900). Other details of the building's original design are its concavely curved mansard roof covered with fish-scale slates and paired cornice brackets which have carved swags at their bases.

A unique detail of the Knowles House is its music room which was designed by Stephen Earle of Worcester and added to the house's northeast corner. (This bay was reputedly designed to provide space for a harp played by Knowle's daughter). Both the main body of the music room and its corner bay were originally lit by stained-glass skylights, set in coved ceiling, now covered on the exterior, but intact and visible on the interior. The room's interior is decorated with wooden panelling, varying bands of arabesques (in plaster or lincrusta) and stained glass windows bearing portraits of musicians and artists. Unaltered and retaining most of its original colors, the Knowles House music room is one of the most important Victorian interiors in Worcester, one which represents the most advanced taste of its period. Other rooms in the house contain a variety of Second Empire and Colonial Revival style fittings.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

American Architect & Building News, Vol. VIII, 8/28/1880, p.108.
(addition notice)

Plumber & Sanitary Engineer, Vol IV, September 1880, p.398.
(addition notice)

Nutt, Charles. Hist.of Worcester, Vol. III, p.53.

Washburn, C., Industrial Worcester, pp. 89-93.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Worcester	Form No: 141-J
Property Name: Lucius J. Knowles	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

9. Historical significance

Lucius Knowles (1819-1884) was a native of Hardwick, Massachusetts who pursued a variety of businesses before achieving prominence as an inventor and manufacturer of looms. By 1842, Knowles had become Worcester's first daguerreotypist, operating an office in Brinely Row. In 1843, Knowles added electro-gilding and silver plating to his business. Subsequent business ventures of Knowles included the spooling of thread (1844), the manufacture of cotton warp at Spencer (1847) and the manufacture of satinets at Warren (1855-1858). In 1856, Knowles made the first of many improvements in the design of looms for making "fancy goods". By 1862, Knowles and his brother, Frank B., were manufacturing looms for hoop-skirt tapes. In 1863, the brothers took patents on their designs and, in 1866, the firm moved to Worcester.

Once in Worcester, the company's business grew rapidly, based on new inventions of the Knowles brothers, including improved looms for plaids (1868). Known for their use of the open shed principle the Knowles took out a patent in 1873 for a broadloom for fancy wools. In 1876, the brothers added a forty-harness loom which was exhibited at the Centennial Exposition. By 1879, the firm's increasing business led to the rental of large portions of the Junction Shop (form 142-B) which was occupied by the Knowles Loom Works until 1890 when the present Grand Street Factories were built. In 1897, the Knowles Loom Company was merged with the Crompton Loom Company to form the Crompton and Knowles Loom Works, which remains one of Worcester's major industries.

Property Worcester Multiple Resource Area (Partial Inventory)

State MA (Worcester) Working Number 8.30.79.2060

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 383 + 13
Maps 2, 63

Excellent multiple resource nomination for the entire city of Worcester. Both the general description & statement of significance & the individual inventory sheets are well done. Each type of property included is well justified & reasons are listed for not including others at this time (e.g. 3-deckers). ^{Owner} opposition is high. Minor problems with some properties are listed on attached sheets.

HISTORIAN

Call/Accept
Lightner
10-30-79

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Concur with Bruce's comments on 102-L-3, 116-CBD-11, 117-E, and 130-CBD-50 and 44. Integrity and/or boundaries need to be addressed specifically on individual forms. DOUBLE

ARCHEOLOGIST

116-CBD-11 - Destroyed, cannot be listed.
130-CBD-44 - I am not convinced this has lost integrity. See attached.
102-L-3 - Period of significance and categorization of 1 bldg need to be discussed with State.

With 3 exceptions all properties appear to me to meet the criteria and the forms are adequate. ~~Both~~ ^{both} technically and to determine significance. Although some of the forms did not contain strong statements of significance the resource categories were thoroughly discussed in the body of the nomination; therefore significance was established. VBDs were not necessary because

OTHER

Accept
MacDonald
2/28/80

of the scale map and clearly delineated boundaries. Pledge was missing on some properties but is now included after the 2/11/80 corrections.

HAER

The only properties that I do not recommend listing are

Inventory _____

✓ 116-CBD-13 - destroyed by fire MD - 16 CBD-11

Review _____

130-CBD-44 - Does not retain integrity for individual eligibility

✓ 102-L-3 I ~~was~~ ^{am} not convinced about boundaries

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

but believe they could be OK. ~~based~~ ^{based}

on additional documentation submitted - I defer judgement.

Recommend listing all properties ^{now} except these 3. Return 116-CBD-11 to State (not eligible); ~~return 102-L-3 to State for revision~~ to discuss further w/ NR staff + State. DOUBLE
Return 102-L-3 to State for correction;
HOLD 130-CBD-44 for info from State

BRANCH CHIEF 3/3/80

Staff conference 3/5/80 - agreed to action as noted below:

KEEPER

Accept with exception of 116-CBD-11 (official notification of fire & claims from State), 102-L-3 (returning to State for revision - also returning 116-CBD-11) and 130-CBD-44 (eligibility from State)

Soldner
3/5/80

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered _____

Federal Register Entry 2.3.81

Re-submit _____

MAR 5 1980



by Berkeley

Prestige Prints

JUN 1979

80 AUG 1979

Knoblos, Lucias, Heise

141-J

Worcester, MA

838 main St.

South + east
elevations

by Berkeley

Prestige Prints

JUN 1979



JUN 1979



by Berkey

JUN 1979



by Berkey

Kirkland, Lucius, Heide

141-J

Worcester, MA, Ma

838 Main St.

East & north
elevations

80 AUG 1979

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000304