

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 8 1976
DATE ENTERED JUN 18 1976NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Castle

~~***~~
AND/OR COMMON

(Round House) (preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 58 Wannalancit Street

CITY, TOWN

Lowell

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fifth

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Thomas B. and Fran M. Dowling

STREET & NUMBER

58 Wannalancit Street

CITY, TOWN

Lowell

VICINITY OF

ST

Massachusetts 01854

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County (North District) Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

360 Gorham Street

CITY, TOWN

Lowell

STATE
Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE
Massachusetts 02108

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated near the top of a small hill less than one-half mile from the Merrimac River, this mansard house is commonly called the "Round House" or "The Castle " because of its unique design. The five-story house was built in 1872 by Jonathan Bowers, an industrialist and owner of a local pleasure resort. It was constructed of granite from Bowers' own quarry in Tyngsboro and cost \$30,000.

The Round House is forty feet in diameter and its walls are eighteen inches thick. Each of the first three floors have eleven foot ceiling heights with a two-foot depth of floor construction. The fourth floor attic is nine feet high and topped with a cupola.

The house is set back from Wannalancit Street about thirty feet. The driveway approach is introduced by a granite wall standing four feet high. Echoing the roundness of the house, the two sections of the wall curve inward at the entrance to the drive and are accented at both ends by a round granite column five feet high which is topped with a flat, round granite slab.

The basement floor of the house is marked by a projecting belt course, and the windows are rectangular and plain. The main entrance on the first floor consists of a one-story, flat-topped porch extending from the round core toward Wannalancit Street. Seven steps lead through a large arch to the double front doors. On the opposite side of the building is another extension which probably served as the pantry. One-story high with a flat roof, it contains three small arched windows and an arched doorway. The first floor has five segmental arched windows. On the south side of the house is a two-story rounded bay window.

The second story windows are arched, and an oriel window projects from the north side. The third floor is in the steep section of the mansard which is covered with fish-scale shingles. The openings on the third floor consist of eight dormers with arched windows recessed beneath pediments. The fourth floor is located in the hipped portion of the roof section and has no windows.

The house is topped by a large walk-around cupola flanked on two sides by round granite chimneys. The hip roof reaches its apex in a round metal post which comes to a ball-like peak. The round cupola is constructed of wood and contains fourteen narrow rectangular windows.

On the interior the first floor is made up of six rooms and an hour glass shaped hall. The round dining room, measuring fourteen feet in diameter, is finished with embossed leather on the walls and ceiling. The living room, fifteen feet by twenty-five feet, is oval. All of the woodwork was cut and molded by carpenters from Bowers' own mill. The second floor contains living quarters; the third the maid's room, billiard room, and ballroom; the fourth an attic; and the fifth the cupola. In the center of the house is a wooden spiral staircase which leads from the first floor to the cupola.

The property of the house is finished off by a five-foot high wooden fence running the length of the back boundary. About twenty feet from the back of the house is a wooden shed. A driveway circumvents the house and the lot is shaded by nine trees.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☒ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☒ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Round House is significant for its unique architectural design and as the home of a well-known local mill owner.

Although the architect of this curiosity is unknown, it is known that the builder was Jonathan Bowers. Bowers, owner of a local mill and amusement park, built the Round House for his daughter's wedding reception. The house cost \$30,000 and the granite used in its construction was from Bowers' own quarry in Tyngsboro. The interior woodwork was cut and molded by carpenters from his mill.

Bowers himself occupied the house until 1879 when he moved to neighboring Willow Dale. The next owner was John G. Rogers, a grain merchant who lived in the Round House until his death in 1890. George F. Libbe, a dealer in plumbing, tin and sheet iron products, was the next occupant of the house. In 1919 Libbe sold the house to a local French society, Club Lafayette, to be used as their headquarters.

In 1925 the Round House was sold to Minnie Bowers Jewett, the daughter of the builder Jonathan Bowers and mother of politician Victor Francis Jewett. Between 1925 and 1934 the house was used principally as law offices by Victor Jewett, who was a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives between 1912 and 1934.

The Round House was abandoned from 1965 until 1971 when it was purchased by the present owners who saw it advertised under the category of "Castles" in a Boston newspaper. The interior of the house is currently being restored to its 1872 appearance. The exterior remains virtually unaltered, and continues to remain one of Lowell's most unique landmarks.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Unpublished papers of the Bowers family, in possession of family members.
City of Lowell Directories, City Library.
Bird's Eye View of Lowell (map), 1876. Lowell Historical Society.
City Atlas of Lowell, G. M. Hopkins, Philadelphia, 1879.
City Sewer Plans, 1880. City Engineer's Office, City Hall, Lowell.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 16,116.65 square feet or .037 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 1 9 3 0 9 1 2 0 4 7 2 3 9 4 0
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Judy D. Dobbs, National Register Editor and Robert Dugan

ORGANIZATION

Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER

294 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN

Boston

DATE

December 19, 1975

TELEPHONE

617-727-8470

STATE

Massachusetts

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

Elizabeth Reed Amadon

TITLE Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

DATE

Dec 29, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Charles H. ...

DATE

6/18/76

DATE

6.18.76

Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Property

State

Working Number

TECHNICAL

Photos

Maps

Great building

called Judy Gibbs 1-26 re name. Harland

CONTROL

OK 1.26.76

HISTORIAN

Accept
W.R. Line
3/31/76

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ACCEPT
LEBOUR
3-23-76

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory

Review

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Col
5-31-76

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

Photos should be published - Marvelous!

6-18-76

National Register Write-up

Federal Register Entry

Send-back

Re-submit

Entered

JUN 18 1976

INT:2106-74



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC The Castle

AND/OR COMMON

Round House (preferred)

Jonathan Bowser House

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Lowell

____ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Middlesex

STATE MA

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Thomas B. Dowling

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT 58 Wannalancit Street, Lowell, Massachusetts 01854

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Looking east, northeast at frontal view of house. Lower section
of photograph is driveway wall.

PHOTO NO 145

photo is driveway

145



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PHOTO NO 2 of 5

Looking northwest at back side of house. Pantry extension is shown center right.
Fence is part of the property.

*House Pantry extension is
shown center right.*

2 of 5



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Looking southeasterly at side of the house. Entrance on right side, pantry extension on left.

PHOTO NO 3 of 5

Side, Pantry extension on left
3 of 5



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Interior shot of spiral staircase leading to cupola.

PHOTO NO 4 025



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Interior view of the oval living room, first floor.

PHOTO NO 5 *2/5*

Loc. *Interior view of the oval
living room, first floor*

5/5

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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DATE ENTERED JUN 18 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC The Castle

AND/OR COMMON
Round House (preferred)

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Lowell

____ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Middlesex

STATE MA

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE USGS, Lowell Quadrangle

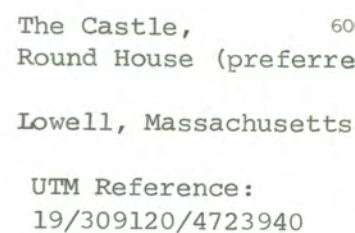
SCALE 1:24000

DATE 1966

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



UTM GRID AND 1966 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

MASS.

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

AMS 6769 III NE—SERIES V814



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE **MASSACHUSETTS**

Date Entered **JUN 18 1976**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Bowers, Jonathan, House (Round House)	Lowell Middlesex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Paul Tsongas
Regional Director, North
Atlantic Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

PR MMott/row 6/24/76

Ask the Globe



8

Q—This question has bugged me for a long time. Why did Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas debate each other across the entire state of Illinois in 1858 when it was actually the state legislature which selected US senators and not the citizenry? — W.M.B., West Yarmouth.

It is true that, until 1912, US senators were not elected by the general voting public but rather by the state legislatures. The purpose of the Lincoln-Douglas debates was to convince the voting public to vote for the candidates to the legislature who favored one side or the other. Candidates had declared which side they preferred. As it turned out, the Lincoln candidates received more total votes than the Douglas candidates, but the state was divided into districts in such a way that Douglas men won a majority of the seats in the legislature. As a result, Douglas was reelected to the US Senate by a vote of 54-46.

Q—I hear that there's a completely round house in Lowell. When was it built? Are there any other round houses in this state?—F.O., Somerville.

A—The Round House or Castle in Lowell was built in 1872 by local industrialist and eccentric Jonathan Bowers. Bowers, owner of a local amusement park and mill, had the interior woodwork cut and molded by carpenters from his mill and the granite used in its construction came from his own quarry in Tyngsboro.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission reports that the Round House was

accepted into the National Register of Historic Places on June 18, 1976. The present owners bought the house in 1971 and are currently restoring the interior to its 1872 appearance. The exterior remains virtually unaltered. The three floors of the Round House have 11-foot ceilings and the fourth floor attic is nine feet high, topped with a cupola. The ceiling of the cupola is painted with several constellations and Halley's Comet.

There is at least one other round building in Massachusetts. It is a barn and is at Hancock Shaker Village on Rte. 20 in the town of Hancock, five miles west of Pittsfield.



Teddy Roosevelt

Q—I was once told that Teddy Roosevelt was somehow responsible for giving Maxwell House coffee its name. Can you explain?—G.K., Waltham.

A—Teddy Roosevelt was not responsible for giving Maxwell House its name, but he is responsible for coining its slogan, "Good to the last drop."

In 1874, Jack Cheek, a Kentucky traveling salesman, developed a new blend of coffee and was selling it to the Maxwell House hotel in Nashville. The popularity of the coffee at the hotel's restaurant led to its brand name. Years later, Roosevelt tasted the coffee while staying in Kentucky. When asked if he'd like a second cup he responded, "Will I have another? Delighted! It's good to the last drop."

Send questions to: Ask the Globe, Boston Globe, Boston, Mass. 02107, or call: 929-2990.



The Castle in Lowell

Boston Sunday Globe 12/26/76
"New England" Magazine

NR: Lowell, Jonathan Bowers House



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CITY _____

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☐ C.O.D.

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m2

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: ¹ ² Bowers, Jonathan, House (Round House)

2 OTHER NAMES: The Castle - Sec

3 date of entry: 6-18-76

4 county code: 017

5 LOCATION street & number: 58 Wannalancit St. city / town: Lowell vicinity of: state: MA county: Middlesex

6 NPS REGION: North Atlantic

7 OWNERSHIP: ☒ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☐ MUNICIPAL ☐ COUNTY ☐ MULTIPLE ☐ FEDERAL (AGRIC. BOND)

8 ADMINISTRATOR:

9 EXISTING SURVEYS: ☐ NABE ☐ NAEK ☐ NHL ☐ FUNDING: ☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ CONGRESS DISTRICT: 5 ☐ SOURCE OF NOMINATION: ☒ STATE ☐ FEDERAL

10 WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☒ YES NAME: ☐ NO ☐ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? ☒ YES NAME: ☐ NO ☐ ACCESSION: ☒ 1

11 CONDITION: ☒ excellent ☐ good ☐ fair ☐ deteriorated ☐ ruins ☐ unexposed ☐ unexcavated ☐ altered ☒ unaltered ☐ reconstructed ☐ excavated ☒ original site ☐ moved ☐ unknown

12 FEATURES: ☒ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☒ UNKNOWN-4 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-7 ☒ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☒ UNKNOWN-5 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-8 ☒ INSTANTLY INTACT-3 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-6 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-9

13 ACCESS: ☐ YES - Restricted ☐ YES - Unrestricted ☒ NO ACCESS ☐ UNKNOWN

14 ADAPTIVE USE: ☐ YES ☒ NO

15 SAVED: ☐ YES ☒ NO

16 IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☒ YES

17 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ☐ ARCHITECTURE - 1 ☒ ARCHITECTURE - 4 ☐ ART - 5 ☐ ENGINEERING - 11 ☐ ENTERTAINMENT - 26 ☐ EXPLORATION - 12 ☐ HEALTH - 21 ☐ ECONOMICS - 9 ☐ EDUCATION - 18 ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH. - 10 ☐ LAW - 15 ☐ LITERATURE - 17 ☐ MILITARY - 18 ☐ MUSIC - 19 ☐ PHILOSOPHY - 20 ☐ POLITICAL / GOV. - 21 ☐ RELIGION - 22 ☐ SCIENCE - 23 ☐ SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN - 24 ☐ SOCIAL / CULTURAL - 30 ☐ TRANSPORTATION - 25 ☐ RECREATION - 28 ☐ SETTLEMENT - 29 ☐ URBAN PLANNING - 31 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY):

18 CLAIMS: explain 'first' ☐ 'oldest' ☐ 'only' ☐

19 functions: WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: private residence CURRENTLY: same

20 dates of initial construction: 1872 major alterations: historic events:

21 ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION:

22 architectural style(s): Second Empire

23 architect: ?

24 master builder:

25 engineer:

26 landscape architect / garden designer:

27 interior decorator:

28 artist:

29 artisan:

30 builder/contractor:

31 NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: Built by Jonathan Bowers, 1872. EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:

32 NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP: ³ Dressed granite, 2 1/2 stories ^{over high basement,} round; mansard roof with dormers, ^{with} center cupola, ^{and} round interior chimneys w/ corbeled caps, 1-story enclosed entrance porch with round-arched portal & double-door entrance; ^{segmental and round-arched, oval,} central spiral staircase leading from first floor to cupola. Second Empire. Home of Jonathan Bowers, well-known local mill owner. ^{and bowed 2nd-story oval and 2-story bay windows;}

reviewers initials: Martha date: 1/13/78

IF ADDITIONAL SPACE NEEDED, NUMBER & PUT ON REVERSE