

FORM B - BUILDING

NY no 80000578

In Area no.	Form no.
	116-L-13

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

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

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

Roll 5

1. Town Worcester
Address 59 Elm Street (also 1 Oak St.)
Name Isaac Davis House
Present use Worcester Club

Present owner Worcester Club

3. Description:

Date 1870-1872
city atlases, newspaper
Source clippings

Style Italianate
Gen. Walker of Providence
Architect (1870-1872); Stephen Earle
(1888); James Purdon (1911)
Exterior wall fabric brick

Outbuildings (describe) none
cast-iron fence set into
Other features granite posts, brown
sandstone trim, Corinthian entry porch
on Oak St. side, cornice with dentils
and modillions, oriel window, some
arched window heads, cupola removed

Altered interior altered date 1888, 1911

Moved no Date _____

UTM: 5. Lot size: Assessors' Book 3, p. 34
Lot 6---10, 813 sq. ft.
One acre or less Over one acre _____

19/268350/4682870

Approximate frontage 125'

Approximate distance of building from street

10'

Recorded by W. & M. Seaman
ed. B. R. Pfeiffer

Organization Worc. Heritage Pres. Soc.

Date February 1978

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Isaac Davis
 Original use Residence
 Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Worcester Club (1888 to present)

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> </u>
The Arts	<u> </u>	Industry	<u> </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u> X </u>
Commerce	<u> X </u>	Military	<u> </u>	Transportation	<u> </u>
Communication	<u> </u>	Political	<u> X </u>		
Community development	<u> </u>				

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

Now used as a private social club, the Isaac Davis House is a unique local example of Italianate architecture, resembling the Italianate architecture of Providence, Rhode Island from the which the architect of the house, Gen. William Walker, came. The former Davis House is constructed of brick, three stories high with a low hip roof, surrounded by a dentilled and modillioned cornice. The house has symmetrical facades facing Elm Street (south) and Oak Street (east). The Elm Street facade is divided into three bays, with the center one set in a slightly recessed plane of the wall. The center bay now contains a rectangular bay window at the first story (in the place of the original entry), surmounted at the second story by a rectangular window with sandstone architrave and cap on consoles and at the third story by an arched window. The outer bays of the facade contain at each story one set of paired 1/1 windows set in a moulded sandstone architrave with consoles supporting a cap. The Oak Street facade is essentially the same as the Elm Street facade, except that it is larger and has an elaborate Corinthian entry porch, flanked by long windows at its center. Surrounding the house is an exceptionally fine cast-iron fence set into panelled granite posts. Alterations to the house include an 1888 remodelling of the interior (Stephen Earle, architect), the construction of a three-story brick ell in 1911 (James Purdon, architect) and the removal of the original square plan cupola. Built at a cost estimated, in 1888, to have been \$100,000, the Davis House is by far the most elaborate house of its period extant in Worcester.

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

Worcester Historical Society. Institutional clippings file (Worcester Club folder).
 Albert Waite Papers.
 City atlases & directories.
 Nutt, C. Hist. of Worc. Vol. I, pp. 92-97 (Davis biography)
 Vol. II, pp. 947-948 (Worcester Club)
 Rice, F. Worcester of 1898 (Davis biography)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Worcester

Form No:

116-L-73

Property Name: Isaac Davis House

2.

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

9. Isaac Davis (1799-1883) was a native of Northborough, Massachusetts. After attending Leicester and Lancaster Academies, Davis entered Brown University, from which he graduated in 1822. In late 1822 or 1823 Davis began to study law in the Worcester office of his uncle John Davis and Levi Lincoln (both of whom later became governors of Massachusetts). Admitted to the bar in 1825, Isaac Davis apparently rejected the advice of his uncle (that he begin practice in a small country town) and opened a law office in Worcester. From the beginning, Davis enjoyed great success in his profession, gradually branching out to become involved in local real estate, business and politics. From 1836 to 1842 and again from 1854 to 1878, Davis was president of the Quinsigamond Bank. From 1854 until 1882 he was president of the State Mutual Life Insurance Company and from 1846 until his death he was president of the Merchants' and Farmers' Fire Insurance Company. (During Davis' presidency these two companies built a Second Empire building at 240 Main Street at approximately the same time that 59 Elm Street was under construction (see #116-CBO-13). In addition Davis served as a director of the Worcester & Nashua and the Providence and Worcester Railroads.

Active in the local Democratic party, Isaac Davis ran frequently (often unsuccessfully) for state senator and other elective offices; despite the local and statewide dominance of the Republican party at the time; Davis was elected state senator in 1843 and 1854, and mayor of Worcester in 1856, 1858 and 1861. Between 1828 and 1860 Davis was a representative to every national Democratic convention. Among Davis's public donations were contributions to funds to secure Kansas as a free state prior to the Civil War, the financial support of local Democratic candidates for public office, and the gift of the present Providence Street campus to Worcester Academy, of which Davis was a trustee for forty years (see #151-I). Davis took the title of Colonel from his activity in the local Infantry of the state militia, and, based on this activity, was appointed to the board of visitors of West Point Academy.

Following Davis's death in 1883, the property at 59 Elm Street was sold to the Worcester Club, which had been formed in March of 1878. The Club was organized "for the establishment and maintenance of a place for social meetings" by a number of the city's most prominent citizens, including George F. Hoar (a former United States Senator), Waldo Lincoln, Joseph Davis (son of Isaac Davis) and a number of wealthy residents of the Lincoln Estate - Elm Park Area. Additions for club purposes have been made to the rear of the Davis House and some interior re-arrangement of rooms was carried out to adapt the house to use as a private club.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

Property Worcester Multiple Resource Area (Postal Inventory)

State MA (Worcester) Working Number 8.30.79.2060

TECHNICAL

Photos 383 + 13
Maps 2, 63

CONTROL

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). Opposition is high. Minor problems with some properties are listed on attached sheets.

HISTORIAN

Call/Accept
Lightner
10.30.79

Concur with Amey'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. DUBIE

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

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 bps 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
MARC
2/28/80

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

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

The only properties that I do not recommend listing are

- ✓ 116-CBD-13 - DESTROYED BY FIRE ~~AND~~ 116-CBD-11
- 130-CBD-44 - DOES NOT RETAIN INTEGRITY FOR INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

✓ 102-L-3 I ~~am~~ ^{am} not convinced about boundaries 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); ~~to discuss further~~ ^{to discuss further} w/NR staff + State. DUBIE
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 & demo 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 MAR 5 1980
Federal Register Entry 2.3.81 Re-submit _____ SEE 3/3/80 REPORT



Davis Isaac, House

30 AUG 1979

Worcester MRA, Ma

116 - L - 13

59 Elm St (also
↳ Oak St)

West & south elevations

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

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000304