FHR-8-300 (11-78)

**United States Department of the Interior**
**Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only
received JAN 29 1982
date entered FEB 25 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic: Mowers' Block

and/or common: Rolfe Building (also Rolfe House)

## 2. Location

street & number: 7 Willow ~~Street~~ ~~(also~~ and 67-83 Blake ~~Street)~~ ___ not for publication

city, town: Lynn N/A vicinity of congressional district: Sixth

state: Massachusetts code 025 county: Essex code 009

## 3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ___ district | ___ public | x occupied | ___ agriculture | ___ museum |
| x building(s) | x private | ___ unoccupied | x commercial | ___ park |
| ___ structure | ___ both | ___ work in progress | ___ educational | ___ private residence |
| ___ site | **Public Acquisition** | **Accessible** | ___ entertainment | ___ religious |
| ___ object | ___ in process | x yes: restricted | ___ government | ___ scientific |
| | ___ being considered | ___ yes: unrestricted | ___ industrial | ___ transportation |
| | N/A | ___ no | ___ military | x other: residential apartment |

## 4. Owner of Property

name: Rolfe House Associates

street & number: 75 Chapman Street

city, town: Providence N/A vicinity of state: Rhode Island 02905

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Essex County Registry of Deeds

street & number: 32 Federal Street

city, town: Salem state: Massachusetts 01970

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth has this property been determined elegible? x yes ___ no 2/14/80

date: May 1977 ___ federal x state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records: Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town: 294 Washington Street, Boston state: Massachusetts 02108

# 7. Description



| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
|---|---|---|---|
| x excellent | ___ deteriorated | ___ unaltered | x original site |
| ___ good | ___ ruins | x altered | ___ moved date _____ |
| ___ fair | ___ unexposed | | |

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Facing Linnehan Square, at the west end of Central Square, the Mowers' Block stands at the northwest corner of Willow and Blake Streets on a lot bounded by Willow Street (south), Blake Street (east), Almont Street (north) and another former factory building (west). The building is constructed of brick, six-stories high and has an irregular "U" shaped plan which creates a small courtyard and alley on its west elevation. As with neighboring structures, the Mowers' Building occupies nearly all of its lot and is attached on its west elevation to a neighboring building.

Except for the western elevation which has an undecorated utilitarian design, all elevations are finished facades which vary in length but are uniformly decorated by storey. The first storey is framed by fluted cast-iron posts which support a pressed metal cornice; on the east elevation posts alternate with cast-iron columns. Second storey windows consist of paired 1/1 sash with transoms beneath an arch of radiating bricks set on rock-faced granite springers and capped with a moulded brick extrados. Third storey windows consist of 1/1 sash surrounded by granite springers and radiating brick arches capped with a brick belt course. Fourth and fifth storey windows are identical to those of the third storey except their arched heads have extrados of moulded brick. Sixth storey windows each consist of 1/1 sash with a semi-circular transom beneath a brick arch with a moulded brick extrados. Above the sixth storey window arches are panels of decorative brickwork and a shallow corbelling. Windowsills throughout are of rock-faced granite.

The east elevation forms the major facade; it is seven bays long and is arranged symmetrically about a wide central bay flanked by two narrow bays, which in turn, are flanked by four wide bays. Wide bays contain two sets of windows at the second storey and four windows in each of the upper stories. Narrow bays contain only two windows per storey; those of the second storey consist of 1/1 sash with a transom beneath a pointed brick arch. Storefronts from the central bay southward consist of plate-glass windows set on bases of dressed granite and cast stone (ca. 1920-1930). North of the central bay, storefronts have been re-built with brick and anodized aluminum (1980). Corners of the facade are curved bays which contain tri-partite 1/1 windows with fluted stiles at each storey above the first; panels of decorative brickwork exist beneath the sills of the third to sixth stories.

The south elevation contains an entry with pressed metal pilasters and a cornice at its center. West of the entry are modern storefronts of anodized aluminum (1980); east of the entry are plate-glass, cast-stone and granite storefronts (1920-1930) identical to those of the east elevation. Upper stories are divided into two bays each of which contains three paired windows at the second storey and five single windows at each storey above the second.

The north elevation has four bays of anodized aluminum storefronts at its first storey. Upper floors are divided into two bays, each of which contains two paired windows flanking a single pointed-arch window at the second storey. Above the second storey each bay contains five windows per storey. The western end of the north elevation terminates in a curved bay, like those of the east elevation.

# 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 | x architecture | ___ education | ___ military | ___ social/ humanitarian |
| ___ 1700–1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music | |
| x 1800–1899 | ___ commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy | ___ theater |
| ___ 1900– | ___ communications | x industry | ___ politics/government | ___ transportation |
| | | ___ invention | | ___ other (specify) |

**Specific dates** 1891 **Builder/Architect** Edwin Earp of Lynn

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Mowers' Block possesses integrity of location, design, materials and setting as well as historical associations with both the shoemaking industry in Lynn and the city's reconstruction after the Great Fire of 1889. Indicative of the massive scale of the shoe industry in downtown Lynn, the Mowers' Block has gained additional importance since the fire of November 28, 1981, destroyed much of the city's former shoe manufacturing district.

One of the largest shoe factories and commercial buildings built in Lynn during the nineteenth century, the Mowers' Block preserves virtually all the elements of the original Victorian Gothic (Panel Brick) design. Particularly fine features include the fluted cast-iron posts which frame first storey display windows, the decorative brick panels in corner bays and beneath the cornice, and the varied, decorated window arches with granite springer blocks. Characteristic of a large number of factories and commercial blocks designed by Edwin Earp of Lynn during the 1880s and 1890s, the Mowers' Block is the most well-preserved of those that remain.

Situated less than 100 yards from the former Central Square railroad depot which provided an important transportation link for nineteenth-century manufacturers, the Mowers' Block and its site have undergone a course of development which is characteristic of the development of the Central Square area. During the 1840-1860s, the site was built up with several small shoe shops of wood-frame construction; in 1872, these buildings were purchased by Alfred and Martin Van Buren Mower, who began to manufacture ladies' shoes here on an industrial scale soon after the purchase. By the mid-1880s, the Mowers had built a large brick factory on the site replacing part of the dense maze of wood-frame buildings which had grown by addition over the years. In 1889, a fire began in the new brick factory and quickly spread south and eastward throughout the area destroying the largest portion of Lynn's manufacturing and commercial center. In the re-building which followed the Fire, the Mowers' Block was among the earliest and largest planned although its construction was delayed for nearly a year while the city debated whether to extend Munroe Street through the site or cut an entirely new street along the line of Blake Street. By May 1891, the decision had been made to create Blake Street and construction began on the Mowers' Block. The building was constructed by Joseph Breed II & Son, carpenters, and Nathaniel T. Davidson & Son, masons. Upon completion in October 1891, the Mowers' Block contained nine store fronts at the first storey, sixteen offices at the second storey and four stories of rental lofts for manufacturing above, a mix of uses which reflected the increased importance of commercial activity around Central Square after the Fire of 1889.

Alfred Adams Mower and Martin Van Buren Mower, like many other local shoe manufacturers, were Quakers whose family had been artisan shoemakers in Lynn since the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Just before shoemaking became industrialized, the two brothers learned shoemaking as apprentices in the father's shoe shop on Broad Street. In 1857, the Mowers formed a partnership as Mower & Brother and began to

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

## 9. Major Bibliographical References


Lynn City Item. May 22, 1891, p. 8.
Lynn Scrapbooks. Vol. 33, p. 42; Vol. 57, p. 48 (unpublished scrapbooks at the Lynn Public Library)


## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of nominated property** 13,534 square feet

**Quadrangle name** Lynn **Quadrangle scale** 1:25,000

**UMT References**

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 19 | 340040 | 4702940 | B | | | |
| C | | | | D | | | |
| E | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | H | | | |

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

The nominated property includes only the lot on which the building stands; this lot is identified on Lynn Assessors' Map 19 (scale 1" = 80') as Parcel #4 of Block #625.

**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** B.R. Pfeiffer, ACT for Massachusetts for Candace Jenkins, Registration Director

**organization** Massachusetts Historical Commission **date** December, 1981

**street & number** 294 Washington Street **telephone** (617) 727-8470

**city or town** Boston **state** Massachusetts 02108

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

**The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:**

___ national ___ state ✓ local

**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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.**

**State Historic Preservation Officer signature** Patricia L Weslowski 1/18/82

**title** Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission **date**

**For HCRS use only**

**I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register**

Ben Ben Morgold **date** 2/25/82

for **Keeper of the National Register**

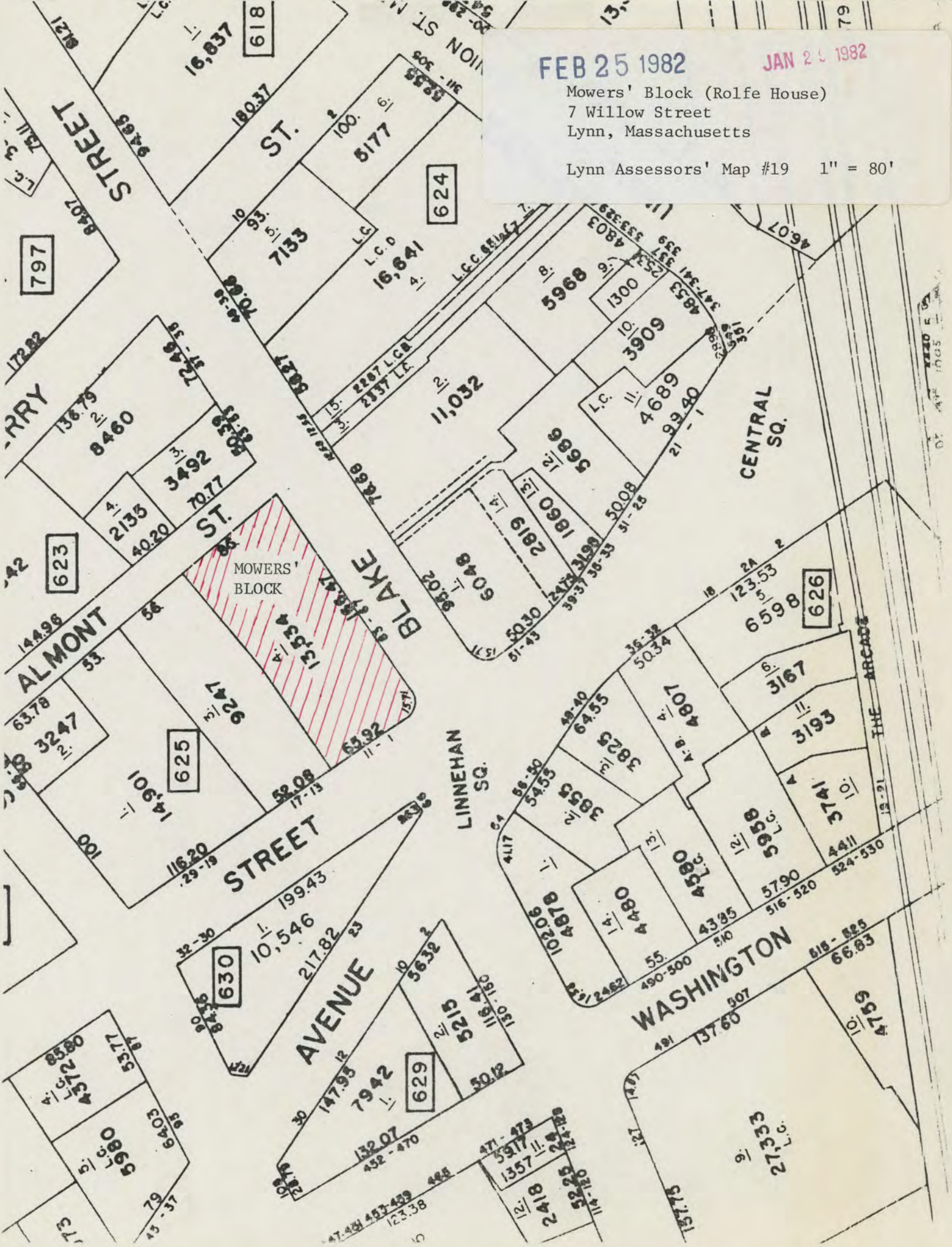
**Attest:** **date**

**Chief of Registration**

manufacture ladies' shoes, then Lynn's major product. Benefitting from the mechanization of shoemaking, the Mowers' Brothers business grew rapidly in the 1870s and 1880s, providing both with a financial "competency" by the mid-1880s. When the Fire of 1889 destoryed their factory, the Mowers ceased manufacturing and, instead, became the owners of investment properties, beginning with the new Mowers' Block of 1891.

Mowers' Block (Rolfe House)
7 Willow Street
Lynn, Massachusetts

Lynn Assessors' Map #19 1" = 80'



Substantive Review

DUE 2/25/82 - 3/15/82

dnr-3

Name Mowers' Block
State, County MA, Essex
Working Number 1-29-82-324

Fed Nom or Request—Agency
Federal Register Date 2.7.83

✓ Nomination
__ Determination of Eligiblity
__ On Nomination Form

Maps 1,1
Photos 2

✓ Bldg(s)
__ Site
__ Object
__ Structure
__ District

Within:
__ Multiple Resource Area
__ Thematic Group

Nomination prepared by:
__ State Staff
__ Local
✓ Other

Action:
✓ ACCEPT 2/25/82
__ RETURN ____
__ REJECT ____

Check if Appropriate:
__ State Request for Review
__ Keeper's Decision to Review
__ 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

meets criteria A+C as a locally significant factory building which embodies almost all characteristics of its type + style and which was locally significant to the late 19 century shoe manufacturing business.

Accept Travers 2/23/82

II. Evaluation of Nomination

| | Good | Adequate | Poor | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Descriptive Statement<br>Short Format __ Yes X No | | X | | |
| 2. Significance Statement<br>Short Format X Yes __ No | | X | | |
| 3. Concepts/Integrity | | X | | |
| 4. Concepts/Criteria | | X | | |
| 5. Concepts/Boundaries | | X | | |
| 6. Contextual Evaluation | | X | | |

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

Reviewer/Date Travers 2/23/82

See Attached __

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior


BLAKE ST

Mowers' Block
7 Willow Street
Lynn, Massachusetts

Brian Pfeiffer, Photographer November 1981

negative at: ACT for Massachusetts
45 School Street
Boston, MA 02108

View of the east elevation taken from a position facing northwest.


essexbank
BLAKE ST

Mowers' Block
7 Willow Street
Lynn, Massachusetts

Brian Pfeiffer, photographer November 1981

negative at: ACT for Massachusetts
45 School Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

View of the south elevation taken from a position facing northwest.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

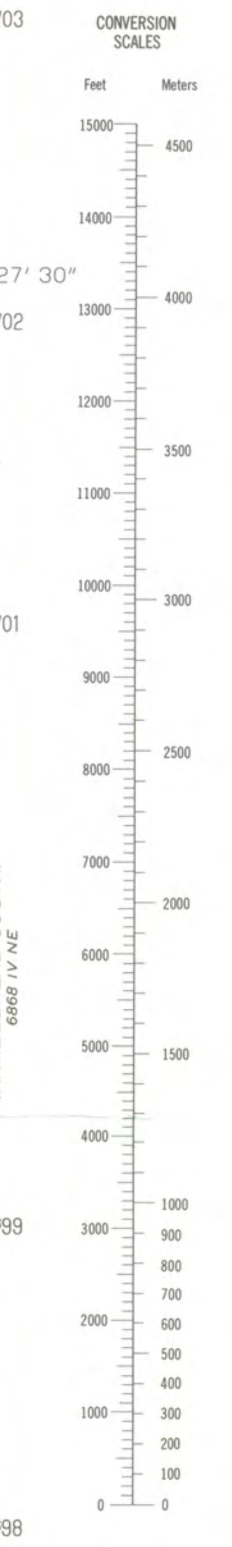
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

# LYNN QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

Lynn, Massachusetts
Mower's Block
7 Willow Street

UTM REFERENCES:
19/340040/4702940

CONVERSION SCALES



| Feet | Meters |
|---|---|
| 1 | .3048 |
| 2 | .6096 |
| 3 | .9144 |
| 4 | 1.2192 |
| 5 | 1.5240 |
| 6 | 1.8288 |
| 7 | 2.1336 |
| 8 | 2.4384 |
| 9 | 2.7432 |
| 10 | 3.0480 |

To convert feet to meters multiply by .3048

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

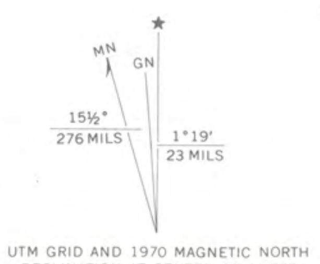
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 240(1970), 246 and 248 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19

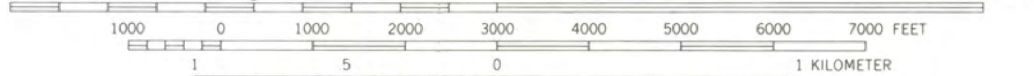
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



UTM GRID AND 1970 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:25 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.2 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Primary highway, hard surface | ▬ | Light-duty road, hard or improved surface | ═ |
| Secondary highway, hard surface | ▬ | Unimproved road | ========= |

Interstate Route    U. S. Route    State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

(NANTASKET BEACH) 6868 IV SE

Mowers' Block (Rolfe House)
7 Willow Street
Lynn, Massachusetts

LYNN, MASS.
N4222.5—W7052.5/7.5
1970
AMS 6868 IV NW—SERIES V814

FEB 25 1982

RECEIVED
JAN 29 1982
NATIONAL
REGISTER

CJ — here's one waiver

JOHN H. SHERBURNE (1919-1959)
WALTER POWERS (1919-1977)
DANIEL NEEDHAM (1919-1971)

F. WILLIAM ANDRES
JOHN BARR DOLAN
F. STANTON DELAND
ROBERT F. WHITE
DANIEL NEEDHAM, JR.
WILLIAM D. WEEKS
JOHN T. COLLINS
STEPHEN A. HOPKINS
KARL J. HIRSHMAN
THEODORE L. TILLOTSON
ROBERT E. McWALTER
C. THOMAS SWAIM
JAMES POLLOCK
WILLIAM V. TRIPP III
STEPHEN S. YOUNG
ANTHONY E. BATTELLE
WILLIAM F. MACHEN
JACOB C. DIEMERT
SAMAYLA D. DEUTCH
PHILIP J. NOTOPOULOS
HAROLD W. POTTER, JR.
JOHN L. DALY
ROBERTA L. BRUNDRETT
JOHN J. NOLAN
MARK SCHONFELD
JAMES D. SMEALLIE
PAUL KILLEEN
CYNTHIA A. CLAFF
RICHARD M. YANOFSKY
JAMES E. McDERMOTT

NEAL HOLLAND
OF COUNSEL

SHERBURNE, POWERS & NEEDHAM
ONE BEACON STREET · BOSTON · MASSACHUSETTS 02108
617/523-2700

CONCORD OFFICE
57 MAIN STREET, CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742
617/369-1611

DELIVER

January 11, 1982
WDW/B



Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Office of the Secretary of State
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Re: National Register Nomination for Mowers' Block (Rolfe House), 7 Willow Street (also 67-83 Blake Street), Lynn, Massachusetts

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

This is with further reference to our telephone conversation on December 28, 1981 in connection with the above National Register Nomination for Rolfe House.

Thank you very much for your note of that date enclosing sample letters providing for written notice of waivers of formal notification for our use in connection with the above Nomination.

We now enclose herewith written waivers of formal notification from the owners, Rolfe House Associates, and the Mayor of the City of Lynn, Mayor Antonio J. Marino.

We understand from your letter of December 28 that having these waivers of formal notification in hand, you will be able to consider the above property for nomination at the regular monthly Commission meeting this Wednesday, January 13, 1982. Unless we hear from you to the contrary between now and Wednesday, we shall assume that the nomination will be acted upon at this Wednesday's meeting of the Commission.

If there is anything further that you need from us in order to have the above nomination acted upon at your Commission meeting this Wednesday, please do not hesitate to let us know. Thank you again for your assistance in this matter.

Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski, State
Historic Preservation Officer

January 11, 1982

Please acknowledge receipt of the enclosures herein by signing and returning to the bearer of this letter the extra copy of this letter enclosed for this purpose.

Very truly yours,

William D. Weeks

William D. Weeks

Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Office of the Secretary of State
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

January 8, 1982

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

This will confirm that Rolfe House Associates is fully aware of the effects of listing a property in the National Register of Historic Places. It recognizes that, under the National Historic Preservation Act, Rolfe House Associates is entitled to object to the proposed listing of its property by a notarized, written statement. If it is the sole owner and it objects, its property will not be listed. If there are multiple owners of this property and a majority of the owners object, the property will not be listed.

Following is the address of the property owned by Rolfe House Associates:

Rolfe House
7 Willow Street
(also 67-83 Blake Street)
Lynn, Massachusetts

Rolfe House Associates hereby waives its right to object to the proposed listing and notifies you that it requests that its property be listed in the National Register at the earliest possible date.

Sincerely,

ROLFE HOUSE ASSOCIATES

By Thomas P. Dimeo
Thomas P. Dimeo
its General Partner

# City of Lynn, Massachusetts
## Office of the Mayor

STUART S. DAVIS JR.
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

CITY HALL 01901
(617) 598-4000

Antonio J. Marino
Mayor

Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Office of the Secretary of State
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

January 4, 1981

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

This will confirm that I am fully aware of the effects of listing a property in the National Register of Historic Places. I recognize that under the National Preservation Act, I am entitled to comment on the proposed listing of property within my jurisdiction.

Following is the proposed listing:

Rolfe House
7 Willow Street
(also 67-83 Blake Street)
Lynn, Massachusetts

I hereby waive my right to comment on the proposed listing.

Sincerely yours,

Antonio J. Marino

Mayor Antonio J. Marino

AJM/caa

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**TELEPHONE REPORT**

DATE 1-26-82

TIME OF CALL AM PM

1. CALL ☐ TO: ☐ FROM *(Name)*

2. ADDRESS *(Tel. No. if needed)*

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Call Jeff Stanfield 785-8222

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

Moore's Block Bldg — Lynn, Mass.
needs to be listed
by March 15
Candace Jenkins —
Jan 18
Moore's Blk
Fabens Bldg —
Look for
Fabens Bldg
Call him on arrival &
review

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL | TITLE | OFFICE

FHR-8-227
June 1978

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

# TELEPHONE REPORT

DATE 1/29/82

TIME OF CALL AM PM

1. CALL ☐ TO: ☒ FROM (Name)

Berri Sommer

2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)

Calling for Jeff Stanfield 785-8222

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Mowwer BLock, Lynn,Ma.

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

She said that Carol had said to Mr. Stanfield that if they hand carried a copy of the Nomination to us today that we would process it as if it were recieved on Jan. 18. I told her that I thought that that agreement did not sound plausible, but thatt I would try to find out what the agreement was

---

Called Carol Shull-- She stated that we had agreed to process a hand delivered nomination in the normal fashion. She also recalled that the propetty did not need to be listed until March 15.

---

Called Sommer back and made arrangements to have the nomination dropped of to the control office.

---

Collette found the nomination in today's mail.

---

Called Sommer back to say that the nomination had arrived. Said that we would let her know if we identified any problems with the submission. She will let me know if ~~there is another~~ OUR understanding of the date by which the property must be listed is incorrect. I SAID THAT THE EARLIEST IT COULD BE LISTED IS APPROX. 3 WEEKS.

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL: MacDougal

TITLE:

OFFICE:

FHR-8-227
June 1978

STANFIELD CALLED TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE MISCOMMUNICATION ABOUT HIS AND CAROL'S AGREEMENT. APPARENTLY HIS SECRETARY MISUNDERSTOOD. HE RE AFFIRMED THAT THE PROPERTY NEEDED TO BE LISTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT ALSO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE 45 DAY REQUIREMENT AND THE LENGTH OF FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered FEB 25 1982

| Name | Location |
| --- | --- |
| Fabens Building | Lynn<br>Essex County |
| Mowers' Block | Lynn<br>Essex County |

Also Notified

Honorable Paul E. Tsongas
Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules

Mid-Atlantic Region, NPS
North Atlantic Region, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Mailed copy of notification to:
Samayla Deutch
Sherburne, Powers, and Needham, 1 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

For further information, please call the National Register at (202) ~~343-6401~~. 272-3504

NR Eady/mc 2/26/82