

ref no 80000628

In Area no.	Form no.
	141-J

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

1. Town Worcester
Address 838 Main Street
Name Lucius Knowles House
Present use funeral service

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

Present owner W.H.Graham Corp.
838 Main Street

3. Description:
Date 1870, addition 1880
Source atlases, building notices

Roll 9

Style Victorian Second Empire
Architect 1870 - unknown
1880 - Stephen Earle

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

Exterior wall fabric aluminum siding
Outbuildings (describe) garage

Other features slightly projecting entr
pavilion, original front & side
porches, slate mansard roof, brack-
ets with carved swags

Altered siding Date 1970s
Moved no Date _____

UTM
19/267820/4681710

5. Lot size Assessor's Book 6, p.25
Lot 2, 22,432 sq.ft.
One acre or less Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 112'
Approximate distance of building from street
25'

C Charalambides & E.Kunholm

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

(over)

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 Brinley 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 woollens. 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.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

Property Worcester Multiple Resource Area (Partial Inventory)

State MA (Worcester) Working Number 8.30.79.2060

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 383 + 13
Maps 2, 63

HISTORIAN

Call/Accept
Lightner
10-30-79

Excellent multiple resource nomination for the entire city of Worcester. Both the general description or 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.

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.

OTHER

ACCEPT
MacDonald
2/28/80

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

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

of the scale maps and clearly delineated boundaries. Acreage was missing on some properties but ~~is~~ ^{is} now included after the 2/11/corrections.

The only properties that I do not recommend listing are

- ✓ 116-CBD-13 - DESTROYED BY FIRE MD - 16 CBD-11
- 130-CBD-44 - DOES NOT RETAIN INTEGRITY FOR INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

✓ 102-L-3 I ~~was~~ ^{am} not convinced about boundaries BUT BELIEVE THEY WOULD BE OK. ~~BASED~~ ON ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED - I DEFER JUDGEMENT.

Recommend listing all ^{now} properties ~~except~~ ^{except} these 3. Return 116-CBD-11 to State (not eligible); ~~to discuss further~~ ^{to discuss further w/NR staff + State.} DOUBLE
Return 102-L-3 to state for correction; 3/5/80
HOLD 130-CBD-44 for info from state DOUBLE

BRANCH CHIEF 3/3/80

KEEPER

Staff conference 3/5/80 - agreed to action as noted below:
Accept with exception of 116-CBD-11 (official notification of fire & clean from State), 102-L-3 (returning to state for revision - also returning 116-CBD-11) and 130-CBD-44 (holding fruit 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 3/13/80 REPORT



by Berkeley



JUN 1979

80 AUG 1979

Knowles, Lucius, House

141-J

Worcester, MA, Ma

838 main St.

South + east
elevations

by Berkeley



JUN 1979



GRAHAM
Forsyth Home

by Berkeley



JUN 1979

by Berkeley



JUN 1979

Knowles, Lucius, Heese

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