

FORM B - BUILDING

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

AL - LAWRENCE SCHOOL

DEMOLISHED

BKL-508

In Area no.

Form no.

26
125-4

UGGS-BOSIS.



in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.

Town Brookline

Address 109 Sewall Avenue

Name

Present use Apartments

Present owner Poorvu Real Estate Corp

Description:

Date 1885

Source Tax List

Style Queen Anne

Architect Information not available

Exterior wall fabric Shingles

Outbuildings (describe) Garage

Other features 2 1/2 stories, hip roof w/gable, gabled dormers, polygonal bay window, wide porch w/pedimented portico & pilasters on cols., par-getting in pediment, plain & staggered butt shingles, stick style *
Altered _____ Date _____

Moved _____ Date _____

5. Lot size: 14000 sq. ft.

One acre or less X Over one acre _____

Approximate frontage 75'

Approximate distance of building from street
40'

6. Recorded by K. Polk, L. Larkin

Organization Brookline Historical Comm

Date Summer, 1978

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Gordon Plummer

Original use Residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates 2 family house, 1948, Apartments

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> </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)

See other Sewall Ave. houses for community development.

The last in the group of Queen Anne houses at this end of the street, this one was built about the same time as # 97 (see for comparison). It presents a more blocky appearance, and all the details are more rigid and controlled - the paneled squares in the gable peaks, the acute angles of the flanking sashes in the Palladian type window - relieved somewhat by the swirling pargetting work at the window and in the portico pediment, and the nice touch of using bands of staggered butt shingles to extend the line of the Palladian window and underline the second floor eaves. The window itself is quite unusual, especially the curved pargetted panels. The pedimented portico with the off-center entranceway and side window is reminiscent of #103 next door. The irregular massing and roof line, polygonal bay window, pargetting, and the texture achieved by the use of different patterns of shingles are all very typical of the Queen Anne style, and the seven houses in that style now remaining on Sewall Avenue are excellent examples of it.

The original owner, Gordon Plummer, was a partner with L. T. Tupper in Wm. F. Johnson & Co., hides and leather, at 244 Purchase St., Boston.

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

Brookline Atlases, 1884, 1888
 Brookline Tax Lists, 1885-1888
 Brookline Directory, 1886
 Boston Directory, 1886



NE VIEW, 7/2/2007



DETAIL, FRONT PORCH 7/2/2007

RECEIVED

JUL 09 2007

MASS. HIST. COMM



SE VIEW, 7/2/2007

DEATH OF GORDON PLUMMER.

A Prominent Business Man Cut Down in the Prime of Life.

The early death of Gordon Plummer, Sewall avenue, which occurred on Saturday last, is sincerely mourned by a large circle of friends.

Mr. Plummer was born in Newbury, Mass., December 10, 1851, graduated from the Brown High School in that city at the age of 16. At 17 he entered the employ of Johnson, Eaton & Brackett, leather merchants, Boston. This house was succeeded by Johnson, Eaton & Co., in which firm Mr. Plummer became a partner, and retained his interest with their successors, W. F. Johnson & Co. He was one of the organizers and treasurer of the Boston Leather Co., who succeeded to the business of W. F. Johnson & Co. He had, with Wm. Richardson, of Hornellsville, N. Y., president of the Boston Leather Co., secured the sole leather account for his house of the Chicago packers, and it was on his return from Chicago, where he had been to consummate the trade, Monday, November 6, that he contracted the disease that caused his death. He attended to business for a week after his return. Then he was obliged to give up, and for twelve days he was distressingly ill and most of the time delirious till the end came.

The funeral services were held Monday, the 27th, at 2 P. M., at his home, Sewall avenue. The burial was private.

Mr. Plummer was one of three brothers who were long identified with the trade. Wm. E. Plummer, who died Aug. 1, 1890, was universally known. Albert Plummer, the only survivor of the three, has been for sixteen years the manager of the Shoe and Leather Reporter in Boston.

Deceased left a wife and four children,

street corner of Washington street, from sunset to midnight.

At 5 o'clock, a hearing was called on the petition for the re-installment of J. G. Bruteber as special police without pay. After waiting thirty minutes and none of the petitioners appearing, they were voted leave to withdraw.

A plank walk was requested by Mr. Clements for Lancaster terrace.

It was ordered that a telephone be placed in the residence of George H. Johnson, Chief Engineer of the Fire Department.

Sewer assessments were layed upon estates on Washington, Boylston, Walnut, Brook, Kent, Perry and Marion streets, Sumner, Clark and Dean roads, Walter, Pond and Longwood avenues and upon the sewer in private lands rear of Boylston street, as reported by the committee. Said assessments are made payable on January 30, 1894.

The contract for printing the forthcoming Annual Town Report was awarded to C. A. W. Spencer.

EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

Of Interest to Pupils, Teachers and Citizens Generally.

The Evening School is now in successful operation. Nearly one hundred students have been enrolled. The teachers are: Mr. B. E. Webber, principal, Mr. Charles Douglass, Miss Addie Dodge and Mr. Alex. Miller, who give instruction in mechanical drawing two evenings in the week.

New courses of study in Language and History are in preparation, and will soon be ready to submit to the School Committee for adoption. An outline in Lessons on Health is also being prepared.

Miss Catherine H. Spence, of Australia, Honorary Commissioner to the World's Fair, by government appointment, spent

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been for sixteen years the manager of the Shoe and Leather Reporter in Boston.

Deceased left a wife and four children, three daughters and one son. He had a beautiful home in Longwood, and his domestic life was thoroughly happy.

He was of a sunny temperament and endeared himself to all with whom he was associated, either in business or socially. It can be truthfully said of him that he "had not an enemy in the world."

Mr. Plummer was a great favorite with every one in the trade. One of his friends, a leading manufacturer of leather, writes this tribute to his memory:

That this excellent man should have been taken in the prime of life from all that he loved, from wife, children and friends, is a bitter sorrow to those who have been bereaved. It was not long ago that his oldest brother died; now has passed away the youngest boy of the family, leaving one brother and thousands of friends to mourn. Twenty-five years ago, when seventeen years of age, Gordon Plummer commenced his business life. When he died he was treasurer of the Boston Leather Co., a corporation growing out of the leather firm with which he started. He made a record to be proud of. During his entire business career he has always had the confidence and good will of everyone who had business relations with him. What better legacy to leave one's family than that of honesty and integrity! That youngest child, a boy eight years old, whom he has left for the mother to watch over, will find that if he should ever wish for a situation in a leather store his father's reputation for uprightness will be of great value to him. Blessed is the boy or girl that starts in life with such a heritage. Gordon Plummer we shall never meet again on earth, but his friends will never forget him. His cheery voice, his bright smile, his hearty greeting, rendered every meeting with him a pleasure. Endowed with a happy disposition, he had the faculty of imparting it to others. A vacant chair he has indeed left. The lesson he taught was that there are no races or classes, but one human brotherhood.

SELECTMEN'S DOINGS.

A Record of the Proceedings of the Board


Committee for adoption. An outline in lessons on Health is also being prepared.

Miss Catherine H. Spence, of Australia, Honorary Commissioner to the World's Fair, by government appointment, spent a day in the William H. Lincoln school during the past week. She expressed enthusiastic approval of what she saw there; in several rooms she addressed the pupils most interestingly.

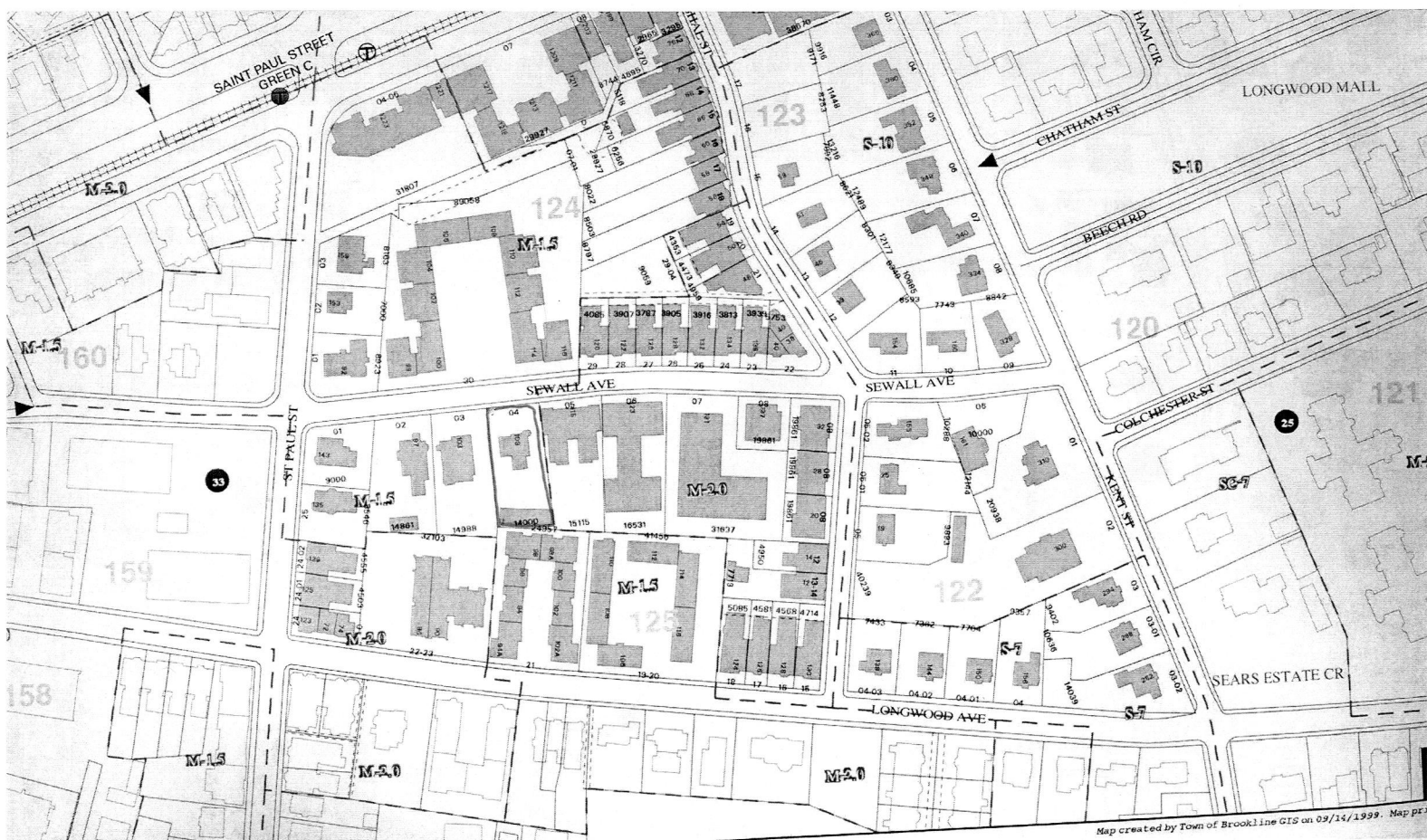
An annual statement has just been issued by Dr. W. T. Harris, the Commissioner of Education, in which he speaks of the vast importance of the World's Fair, in view of the changes now in progress in our educational system. He is especially impressed with its probable effect upon the mechanic arts, and says: "Strange as it may appear at first sight, it is possible to elevate the productive power of the whole people in this way, and it is not necessary to have any ignorant or unskilled people reserved for lower forms of industry. The intelligent brain that is set to work at lower forms of industry invent a machine and deftly slips it in between himself and his drudgery. He becomes a productive power and accomplishes much more with the machinery under his charge than he could have done with mere hands and muscles. The world's fairs have taught the new lesson—that it is a matter of national concern to educate the taste of its people by the establishment of schools of art and design, and by elementary art education in the people's schools of all grades."

Among the many important works undertaken by the Bureau of Education during the past year has been an original investigation of the physical, nervous and mental condition of children in the public schools of Washington, for which measurements have been made, with the aid of the teachers, upon about 25,000 children. This work has been under the direction of Dr. Arthur MacDonald, the specialist of the bureau.

The class of '94, Lawrence School, has an orchestra of eleven pieces which rehearses for half hour on Tuesdays, under the direction of Mr. S. W. Cole.

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FOR MHC USE ONLY	
Original (pink) form to CLG file	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
One copy to the following:	
Eligibility file	
Inventory form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Town file (with correspondence)	
MACRIS Coordinator	
National Register Director	

Community: Brookline

CLG OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received:		Date Due:		Date Reviewed:	
Type:	Individual <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	District (attach map indicating boundaries)		Yes/No	
Property Name	Gordan Plummer House			MHC Inv Form #:	26 125-4
Prop. Address	109 Sewall Avenue				

Action	Honor	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	ITC	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Grant	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
	CLGC initiated	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No			Other		

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES		DISTRICTS	
Eligible	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Eligible	Yes/No
Eligible, also in a district	Yes/No	Ineligible	Yes/No
Eligible only in a district	Yes/No	More Information Needed	Yes/No
Ineligible	Yes/No		
More Information Needed	Yes/No		

CRITERIA:	A-Yes/No	B-Yes/No	C- <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	D-Yes/No
LEVEL:	Local- <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	State-Yes/No	National-Yes/No	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by:
(Refer to criteria cited above in statement of significance. If more information is needed, use space to describe what is needed to finish eligibility opinion)
<p>The Gordan Plummer House is eligible for individual listing under Criterion C. The 1884 house is an outstanding surviving intact example of the Queen Anne style with exceptional architectural detailing characteristic of the work of an unknown architect who was familiar with the style in the early years of its popularity. The house is an important survivor of the late nineteenth century period shortly before the enlargement of Beacon Street with its new electric trolley line.</p> <p>The Longwood neighborhood of Brookline was first developed by David Sears in the 1850s. The historic core that includes the original Sears property is part of the Longwood National Register District. Developed as one of the earliest fashionable suburban neighborhoods of Boston, Longwood continued to be popular for wealthy Bostonians who commuted in via Beacon Street or the Boston & Albany Railroad at the Chapel Street station. The original Sears development ended at Kent Street, but expanded west along Sewall and Longwood Avenues in the post-Civil War period. A large number of single family homes were built designed by a variety of fashionable architects. Unfortunately, many of these houses were demolished in the mid-to-late-twentieth century for apartment blocks. For that reason, the Longwood NR district did not extend beyond Kent Street to include houses such as 109 Sewall Avenue.</p> <p>On May 3, 1884 the <i>Brookline Chronicle</i> announced that Gordan Plummer was planning to build a house on Sewall Avenue. The house was probably not completed until 1885 as Plummer was not taxed on the house until 1886. Plummer (1851-1894) was one of the organizers and a treasurer of the Boston Leather Company. As a prominent businessman, Plummer was typical of the Boston businessmen who built homes in the Longwood neighborhood.</p> <p>By 1884 the Queen Anne style was at the height of its popularity among fashionable architects. The Plummer House</p>

exhibits outstanding features of the style, particularly the front verandah with its stylized posts and pediment with a very ornate floral design. The floral motif is repeated in the Palladian window in the gable end. In an unusual feature, the flanking windows are recessed to allow for curved panels supporting this floral design. Above the Palladian window, and in the dormer pediments, is Queen Anne style half-timber ornament. Most of the windows are wood with two over two double hung lights, but the upper sash in the dormer windows has small multi-pane lights. Also characteristic of the style is the use of decorative wood shingle patterns.

Alterations to the house have mostly been restricted to the interior. In 1922 Dr. Arthur Cushing hired architect Dana Somes to add a sleeping porch on the rear, as well as make other unspecified interior changes. Subsequent changes occurred after WWII, beginning with the construction of a brick seven car garage in the rear for Hasat Real Estate Company (Saul Moffie, architect) to serve the apartment block on an adjoining lot. The house was converted for a two-family residence in 1948 for Harris Poorvu, Herman L. Feer, architect. The same architect was brought back for additional interior changes in 1950. Throughout these alterations the exterior remained intact, although it required extensive repairs in 1994. At the same time the two kitchens were remodeled.

The 14,000 s.f. property includes the seven car garage built in 1927, which is not considered a contributing resource as it is historically related to the apartment block on the adjoining property, 115 Sewall Avenue. The apartment block at 115 Sewall Avenue is not considered eligible at this time.

Use reverse side if necessary

MHC STAFF OPINION			
Date Received:	7/9/07	Date Reviewed:	7/11/07
Opinion:	Concur	Disagree	More Information Needed
Use Reverse for Comments			

see attached comments

MHC response to CLG opinion
Gordon Plummer House, 109 Sewall Avenue, Brookline

MHC staff have reviewed the opinion, and we agree that the property is individually eligible for National Register listing under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of the Queen Anne style, epitomizing that popular style and reflecting the development of the Longwood neighborhood of Brookline as one of imposing, stylish houses, many built for wealthy Boston commuters. We recommend that the property is also eligible under Criterion A as well, for its historical associations with the development of Brookline in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We note that the addition of the multi-car garage at the rear of the property several decades after the house was built reflects the evolution of the area from largely single family to one including many multifamily and apartment-style residences; at approximately the same time, this house was being converted from single family to two-family use and apparently remained so through the second half of the 20th century. It is quite likely that should a nomination be prepared for this property, the period of significance would include the later period during which the garage was constructed.

Staff notes, too, that it is quite likely that this property stands within an area potentially eligible for listing in the National Register as a district. That potential district could include other residential properties on Sewall Avenue built at approximately the same time and in similar styles, as well as properties on nearby St. Paul Street. Additional documentation on the present condition and appearance of these residences would be necessary in order to corroborate the presence of a potential district, and boundaries of such a district would remain to be determined.

BF 7/11/07