

FORM A - AREA SURVEY

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

Form numbers in this area	Area no.
	75-A

NR 35/80
MRA DIS
RE-Salisbury

1. Town Worcester

Name of area (if any) Knollwood National Register District

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

3. General date or period 1914

4. Is area uniform (explain):
(derived from 17th & 18th in style? yes c. French architecture)
in condition? yes (good)
in type of ownership? no (private & institutional)
in use? no (residential & institutional)

Roll #21

5. Map. Use space below to draw a general map of the area involved. Indicate any historic properties for which individual reports are completed on Forms B thru F, using corresponding numbers. Show street names (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. Indicate with an "x" existing houses not inventoried on Form B.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
USGS Quadrant _____

MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by S. Lee, ed. B.R. Pfeiffer

Organization Worc. Heritage Pres. Soc.

Date January 1978

UTM:

- A 19/266910/4685720
- B 19/267090/4685020
- C 19/267030/4684720
- D 19/266850/4684780

(over)

7. Historical data. Explain the historical/architectural importance of this area.

Description:

The Knollwood National Register District contains approximately 15 acres of the former Lyman Gordon Estate of 122 acres. Boundaries for the district have been selected to include the estate's main house, stable, caretakers' cottages and second house, as well as the open land around these buildings. On the north the district is bounded by Salisbury Street, while on the northeast, east, south and west it is bounded by the rear lots of residential subdivisions which now cover most of the estate's original acreage. Properties in the district are shown in Worcester Assessors' Book 43, pages 1-E (Lots A, C, D, E, F & G) and 1-F (Lots D & 39):

- 1. The Lyman Gordon House, 425 Salisbury Street: built 1914 (Little Brown of Boston, architects). The Lyman Gordon House is a two and one-half storey house, covered with stucco and enclosed by a complex hip roof covered with (copper?) tiles. The house's facade is nearly symmetrical; at its center is a shallow pavilion which rises to a decorated gable at the third storey. This pavilion is set on the house's central section (hip-roofed) which is flanked on each end by projecting pavilions. These projecting pavilions are, in turn, flanked by gabled connectors and hip-roofed end pavilions. The eastern of these two end pavilions serves as a kitchen wing while the western one is pierced by a Palladian window at the first storey and contains a terrace. Trim is restricted to quoining, an elaborate iron and glass canopy over the entry, double entry doors with marquetry and iron grilles, and an ornate lattice fence of arches around a former drying yard. Framing the central portions of the facade are cast concrete railings which extend out symmetrically along the driveway. An important element in the property's landscape is an allee of trees which extend from Salisbury Street to the house, framing the central axis of the house's entry. Except for the minor addition of a one-storey garage just east of the kitchen wing, the Gordon House is unaltered.

- 2. 425B Salisbury Street, built 1914(?) (Little & Brown, architects?) Built in the same style as the Lyman Gordon House, #425B Salisbury Street was part of the original Knollwood Estate and is likely to have been built at the same time as the main house. The

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

Worcester Historical Society. Biography File. (Gordon, Ellis).

"Ornamental Iron Work" Trade catalogue of W.A. Snow Iron Works, Inc. of Boston. (1915). pp. 11, 15, 25, 43, & 46 (photos & arch't reference).

Nutt, C. Hist. of Worcester. Vol. III, p. 52 (Knowles); Vol. IV, pp. 775-77 (Gordon).

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Office of the Secretary, Boston

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2.

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

building is two and one-half stories high with a hip roof covered with (copper?) tiles. The facade of the house is covered with stucco and framed at the corners with quoins. Symmetrically arranged, the facade consists of a shallow center (entry) pavilion with a pediment. This pavilion is set on the house's central, hip-roofed section which, in turn, is flanked by hip-roofed wings. The entry is set in a wide, low arch, flanked by blind arches. At the second storey, windows of the house's central section have wrought-iron railings. Except for the addition of a modern awning at the entry, 425B Salisbury Street is unaltered.

3. 425 C Salisbury Street, built 1914 (Little & Brown, arch'ts). Built as a caretaker's or servant's house, 425 C Salisbury Street is a one and one-half storey, stucco-covered cottage with a high slate-covered hip roof. The house's facade is asymmetrical with a pavilion (south) and recessed porch with a shed roof (north).
4. 425 D Salisbury Street, built 1914 (Little & Brown, arch'ts). Built as an employee's house, 425 D Salisbury Street is an asymmetrically planned, two-storey house, covered with stucco and enclosed by a high, slate-covered hip roof. The building's facade has a two-storey hipped pavilion (north), 1½ storey central section and a one-storey section (south) with gabled end wall. Although not a mirror image of #425 E Salisbury Street (south), #425 D Salisbury Street is designed to give the appearance of being a mirror image of 425 E. Stucco-covered garden walls which extend from each building to a central gate add to the illusion that 425 D and 425 E are symmetrically planned about a central court.
5. 425 E Salisbury Street, built 1914 (Little & Brown, arch'ts). Built as an employee's cottage, #425 E Salisbury Street is a two-storey house of asymmetrical plan. On the building's southern half is a two-storey hip-roofed pavilion, north of which is a 1½ storey section with a gable end wall. Extending north from the cottage is a stucco-covered garden wall which terminates in a gate post and which connects (visually) #425 E to #425 D.
6. 425 F Salisbury Street, built 1914 (Little & Brown arch'ts). A one and one-half storey, stucco-covered structure with a high, slate-covered hip roof, this building has a facade consisting of two end wings forming a shallow court around the central section of the facade. This shallow court is enclosed by a stucco-covered garden wall with a gateway north of the house. Altered by the addition of some modern sash on the central section of the facade, #425 F Salisbury Street now is used as a house; its original use is not now known.

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3.

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

7. 425 G Salisbury Street, built 1914 (Little & Brown, arch'ts). 425 G Salisbury Street is a one and one-half storey structure of asymmetrical plan with stucco-covered walls and a high hip roof covered with slates. At the structure's east end is a full, above-ground basement, which suggests (together with over-sized former doorways) that this building once served as a stable/garage. The building's ead walls terminate in hip roofs with gabled dormers. Despite apparent conversion to residential use, the original design of #425 G Salisbury Street remains substantially intact.
8. Notre Dame Academy, school building, built 1954. Unrelated to the development of the Knollwood Estate, this structure was built after the property's conversion to a girls' school. The school building is located in a former lawn, south of the main house and is a two-storey structure faced with buff-colored brick and trimmed with dressed limestone. Of modern design, this school building does not contribute to the property's significance.

Significance:

Approached from Alsisbury Street by an allee of trees, the Lyman Gordon House is perhaps Worcester's grandest "period" house. Based on French manor house architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the house's facade appears to be rigidly symmetrical, with a central pavilion flanked by two sets of pavilions. The outermost pavilions are asymmetrical in fenestration. The house possesses an iron and glass marquise made by the W. A. Snow Iron Works, Inc. of Boston. Along with the entry gates, interior stair railing, balconies, and door grilles, the marquise was illustrated in a 1915 trade catalogue of the Snow Iron Works.

In addition to the high architectural quality of the main house, the Knollwood Estate retains its original outbuildings which include a second house (of similar design to the main house, but scaled down), three employees' cottages, two former stable/service buildings and the various stucco walls and gate posts which were designed to connect the service buildings. The tree-lined drives which connect houses on the property and the field behind the main house help to preserve the appearance of the former estate, as planned by the architectural firm of Little & Brown of Boston.

Commissioned by Worcester industrialist, Lyman Gordon (1861-1914), the house was under construction and nearing completion when Gordon died. Gordon, a founder of Wyman & Gordon Co., was a graduate of Worcester Polytechnic Institute who went to California upon graduation in 1881. In California, he worked for the United States Central Railroad, later for F. A. Rubins & Co., manufacturers of presses and dies in San Francisco. In 1883, he returned to

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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7. Worcester and formed a partnership with H. Winfield Wyman. The firm, which for many years had the only drop forging plant in Worcester, experienced major growth as a result of the success of the automobile industry in the early twentieth century. According to his biographers, Gordon saw the automobile not as the "rich man's plaything," but as a "great benefit to the commercial world." Based on this perception, he re-arranged his company to be able to produce automobile parts and opened a plant in Cleveland. In addition to his involvement with the Wyman & Gordon Co., Lyman Gordon was a director of the American Thermos Bottle Co. and the Merchants' National Bank of Worcester.

In 1917, the Salisbury Street estate was purchased by Lucius J. Knowles, president of the Crompton & Knowles Loom Works, and one of the company's founder. Prior to his move to the Gordon House, Knowles lived at 15 Massachusetts Avenue. After Knowles's death, the house was occupied by his widow, who later married P. L. Stackpole. In 1928, the estate was sold to Theodore T. Ellis, then president of the New England Fibre Blanket Company, president of the New England Supply Co., a member of the Worcester Art Museum, and a prominent local art collector.

After Ellis's ownership, much of the original property was subdivided for house lots. Since the early 1950s, the main house and surrounding land have been used for a girls' school, while the outbuildings of the estate have become privately owned residences.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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5.

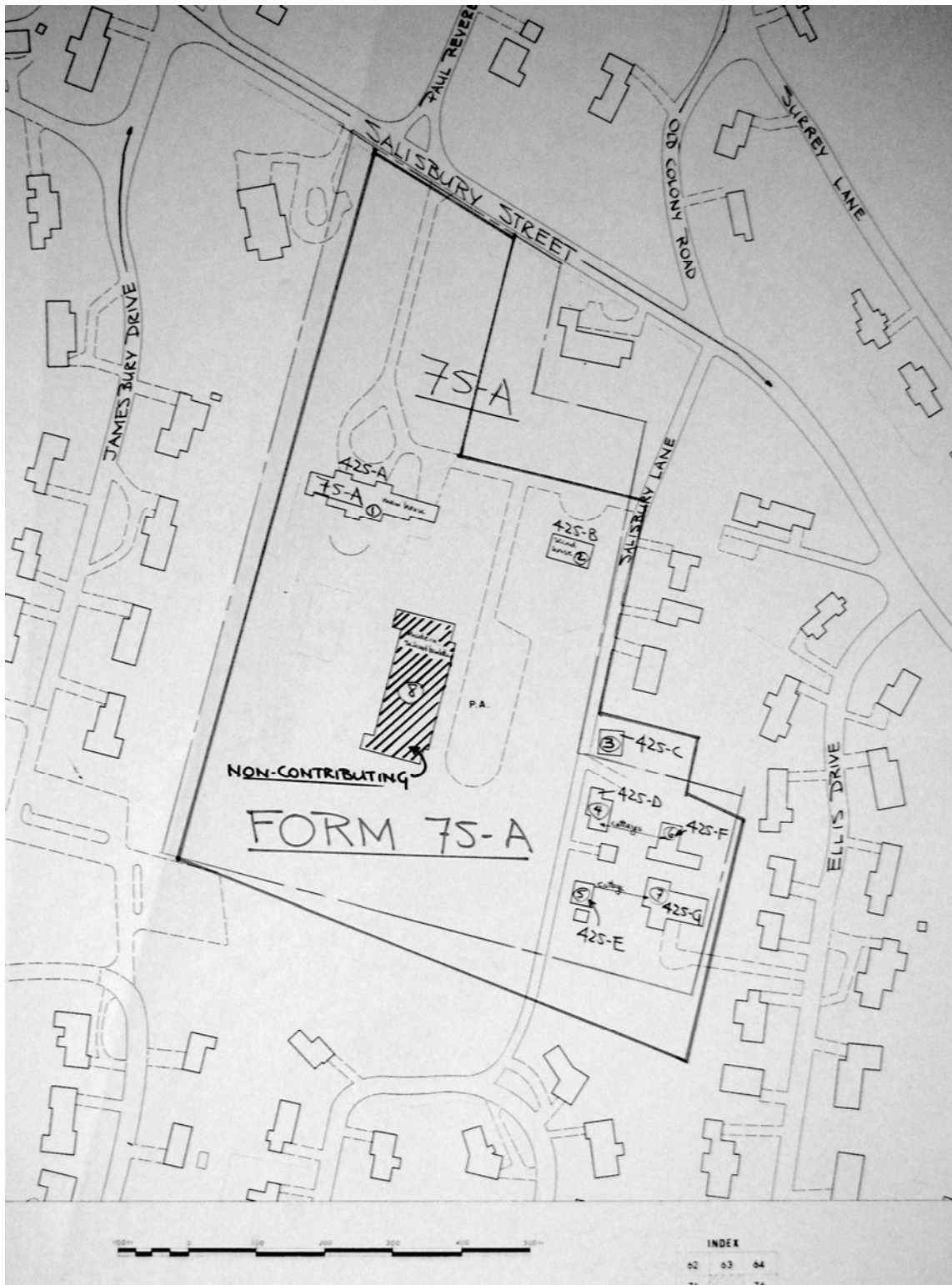
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Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

7. "Knollwood" and outbuildings

Property	Assessors' Data	Present Owner
<u>Salisbury Street</u>		
425	Book 43, p. 1F Lot 39 11.89 acres	Notre Dame Academy of Worcester, Inc. 425 Salisbury Street Worcester, Mass. 01609
425 B	Book 43, p. 1F Lot D 22,176 sq. ft.	Richard & Dolores Green
425 C	Book 43, p. 1E Lot A 12,000 sq. ft.	Israel & Lillian Lubarsky
425 D	Book 43, p. 1E Lot C 10,192 sq. ft.	Mark J. & Claire Forgues
425 E	Book 43, p. 1E Lot D 16,905 sq. ft.	Alfred & Rose Saala
425 F	Book 43, p. 1E Lot G 29,120 sq. ft.	J. Brunell & Sylvia Webman
425 G	Book 43, p. 1E Lots E & F Lot E-28,048 sq. ft. Lot F-21,097 sq. ft. Total-49,145 sq. ft.	St. Michael's Passionist Monastery of West Hoboken, New Jersey

Worcester Multiple Property Submission Assessor's Map Excerpt





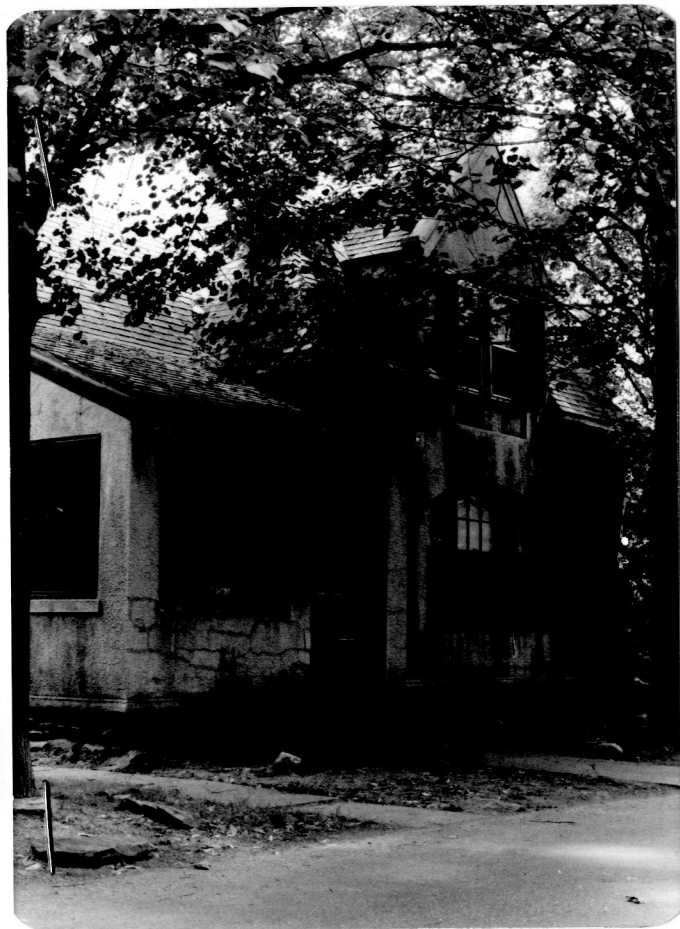
425 B SALISBURY ST., N ELEV.



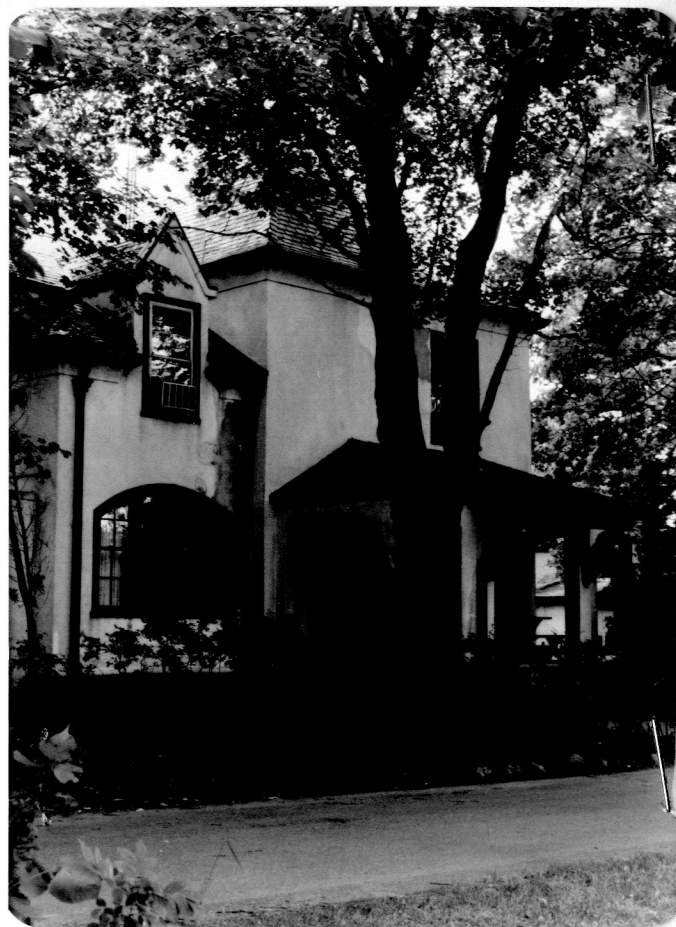
425 D SALISBURY ST., NORTH ELEV.



425 D + 425 E SALISBURY ST.,
GATES BETWEEN



425 C SALISBURY ST, W ELEV.



425 E SALISBURY ST, W ELEV.