

# FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number  
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town/City:** Amherst

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*):  
Lincoln-Sunset National Register District

**Address:** 260 Lincoln Avenue

**Historic Name:** Ernest Bolles House

**Uses:** Present: Single-Family Residence

Original: Single-Family Residence

**Date of Construction:** 1910

**Source:** *Springfield Republican*, 2 January 1911, p. 9.

**Style/Form:** Craftsman

**Architect/Builder:** Roswell Field Putnam - Architect  
Bloddet and Spaulding - Masons

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Brick with likely fieldstone below ground

Wall/Trim: Wood Shingle/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**  
Garage

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

**Condition:** Excellent

**Moved:** no  yes  **Date:**

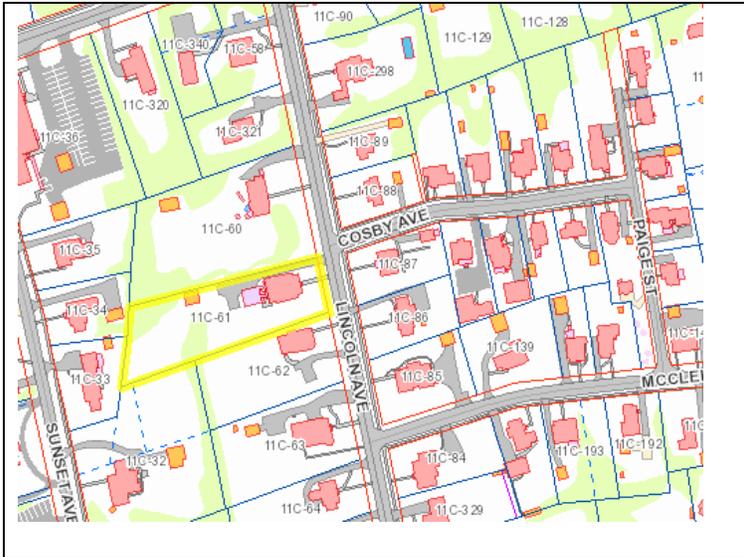
**Acres:** .82 acre

**Setting:** This house occupies a narrow, deep lot on the west side of Lincoln Avenue, near where Cosby and Lincoln avenues meet. Many of the houses in the immediate vicinity date from the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Photograph



Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Steve Bloom/Suzannah Fabing

**Organization:** LHDSC

**Date** (*month / year*): September 2015

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

AMHERST

260 LINCOLN AVE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

E

AMH.176

 Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This side-gabled Craftsman house is related to 272 Lincoln. Both are fine examples of Craftsman style in Amherst. It is a wood frame, 2 ½-story house with hip roof and exposed rafter ends on the first and second story rooflines and the porch. The three-bay façade contains a center entrance, whose door is made of tongue-and-groove boarding and has six-pane fixed lights placed high on the door in Craftsman style. The full-width front porch has a geometric trellis and porch railing whose pattern is strongly reminiscent of the contemporary Glasgow School approach to the Craftsman style. The wide unenclosed eave overhang, exposed rafters and ornamental shed dormer shingles all add to the picturesque effect. However, the geometric patterning of the paired porch supports is the dominant feature.

A small garage with 8/1 windows exists at the rear.

E.M. Bolles contracted with Roswell Field Putnam around 1910 to design a house at 52 Lincoln Ave. (today #260 Lincoln), possibly motivated by the birth of his first child. The *Springfield Republican* of 2 January 1911, in a round-up of the previous year's building, lists E.M. Bolles's at \$6500 as one of ten new dwellings built in Amherst in 1910.

This shingled cottage, with its symmetrical façade and long roof ridgeline parallel to Lincoln Ave., shows the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement on Putnam at the end of his career. The movement counseled simplicity, stripping away the decorative excesses of Victorian design. Here, the front porch supports--clusters of narrow verticals with cross-pieces at top and bottom creating a checkered pattern--are reminiscent of Charles Rennie MacIntosh's chair-backs. The heavy hipped roof with its unenclosed, flared eaves, prominent shed dormer, and exposed rafter-ends shows Craftsman influence and brings to mind some of the early houses of Frank Lloyd Wright. Shingles are back, reflecting the Craftsman preference for rough surfaces and a "handmade" aesthetic (even though increasingly machine-made). The diamond pattern in which the shingles are set between the front dormers is also found on the north façade of Putnam's house for E.D. Marsh at 38 North Prospect Street (1890; AMH.1078).

The house is basically a rectangular block. An elaborate brick chimney runs up the south side; it is decorated with a rectangular panel of glazed tiles, centered with three lozenge shapes side-by-side. The attribution of the house to Putnam is based on correspondence and drawings in the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works records, held at the Spruance Library of the Bucks County Historical Society. At Putnam's request, the firm furnished a design for the tile panel, meeting his size requirements and \$6 budget. He left the choice of design up to them: "I will rely on you to select the right thing, using some green tones, some dull red...remembering that the walls of the house are shingled, stained dark, and that the brick is laid up in red mortar giving a monotonous surface."

The chimney's bricks are laid so that repeating horizontal bands five bricks wide project beyond single courses of brick set between them. Two crosses made of brick are centered above and below the tiled rectangle. Ernest Bolles was active in the Baptist Church in Amherst, serving as its Treasurer and in other capacities. It is tempting to conjecture that these crosses allude to his faith, but it is more likely that they were created to pick up on the "Maltese crosses" in the tile panel designed by the Moravian Tile Works. Putnam instructed that the tile panel was to be shipped to Blodgett and Spaulding, a firm of masons and builders in Amherst that must have been involved in constructing the Bolles house.

This appears to be the last house Putnam designed before his death in April 1911. As usual, he shows himself aware of the latest trends in architecture, including the earliest bungalow and bungalow cottage designs.

**\*\*SELECTED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT (2/22/1993)\*\***

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## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

Ernest Moore Bolles (1876-1950) was the son of Lemuel Nelson Bolles, an Amherst grocer, and his wife Emeline (Banning) Bolles. E. M. worked in a shoe store and then, in 1897, opened a shoe store of his own. In 1899 he moved it from Chase's block to the Cook block, according to the *Springfield Daily Republican*, 15 Sept 1899, p. 8.

On 18 August 1903, in Amherst, E.M. Bolles married Charlotte Wheeler Ladd (1881-1950), a native of Quebec. Charlotte already had a son from her first marriage, Everett Ladd (b. ca. 1900), and around 1909 the couple had a daughter, Audrey. This may have precipitated their decision to move from McClellan Street, where they were living, into a new house on Lincoln Ave. By the 1930 Census, two grandsons and a cousin are sharing the house with them. By 1940, they have moved elsewhere in Amherst.

Bolles came to play many roles in town beyond proprietor of a shoe store. He was president of the Amherst Business Men's Association. He served for a time as acting chairman of the Massachusetts Bay tercentenary committee for Amherst in 1930. He was a trustee of the Amherst Savings Bank in the 1940s. He headed Amherst's rationing board during WWII. Bolles retired around 1946, and the couple moved to Harwichport.

Ernest Bolles died in Amherst April 27, 1950, and is buried in Wildwood Cemetery. His wife died on August 26 of that same year at the home of her daughter Audrey (by then Mrs. Warren Carter) in Conway.

This section of Lincoln Avenue was developed between 1910 and 1930, later than the southern end of the street. The occupations of residents at that time reflected the proximity and growing importance of the Agricultural College. Many professors, teachers and workers lived on Lincoln, which had earlier been the domain of the town's business leaders.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

"Amherst's Banner Year," *Springfield Republican*, 2 January 1911, p. 9.

Spruance Library, Bucks County Historical Society, Doylestown, PA, The Papers of Henry C. Mercer, Record group 2, Series 1, job file number: 1910-07, including a letter from Roswell Putnam of 22 July 1910.

Maps, 1910, 1916, 1930.

U.S. Census, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940.

Amherst Street Lists.

Amherst City Directories.

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form, Lincoln-Sunset Historic District, Amherst, section 7, p.10.

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Form B (1988), online in the MACRIS database.

Biographical information on Ernest and Emeline Bolles at ancestry.com, accessed September 2015.