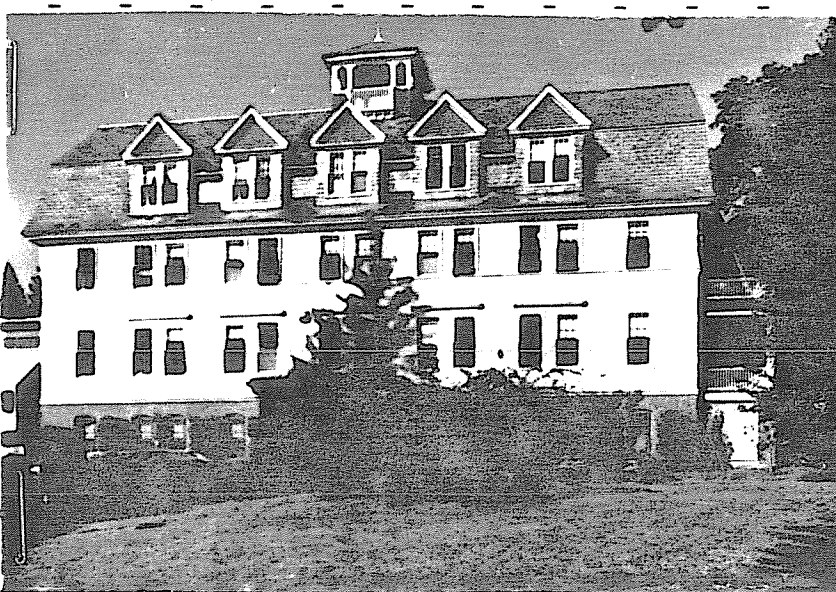


MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
	31 B 170

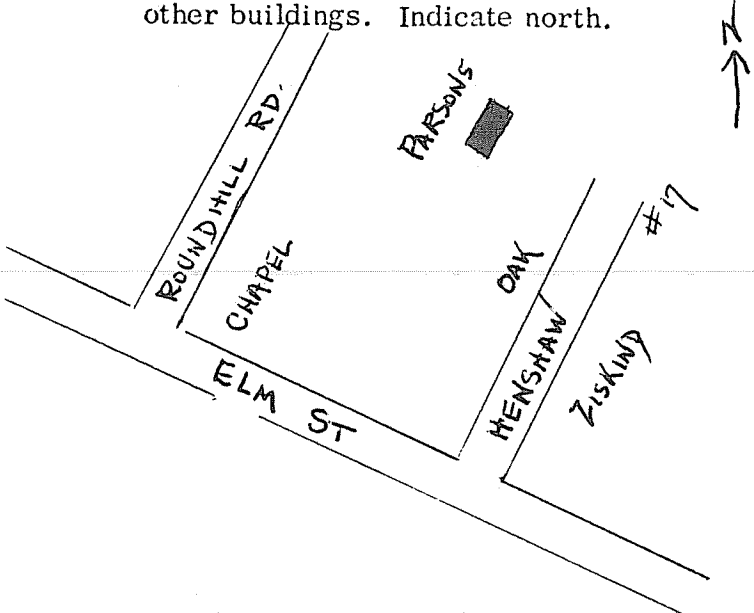
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1. Town Northampton
 Address Henshaw Ave, Smith campus
 Name Parsons House
 Present use college dormitory
 Present owner Smith College

3. Description:
 Date 1902
 Source Smith College Archives
 Style eclectic

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



Architect _____
 Exterior wall fabric clapboard
 Outbuildings (describe) none
 Other features 4 stories; irregular massing; cupola
 Altered rear additions Date _____
 Moved no Date _____

5. Lot size:
 Less than one acre _____ Over one acre _____
 Approximate frontage Smith campus
 Approximate distance of building from street _____

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE
 USGS Quadrant _____
 MHC Photo no. _____

6. Recorded by Ann Gilkerson/ Robin Strou
 Organization Northampton Historical Commission
 Date March 23, 1977

7. Original owner (if known) Miss Capen

Original use Capen School for Girls; educational structure

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates bought by Smith College in 1921

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u> </u>	Conservation	<u> </u>	Recreation	<u> </u>
Agricultural	<u> </u>	Education	<u> x </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> </u>				

9. Historical Significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

In 1921, Parsons House was purchased from the builder, Miss Capen, who had used the building, then called Faunce House, as a part of Capen School. In 1928 the Trustees of Smith College changed its name to Parsons House, in honor of the prominent Northampton family. Cornet Joseph Parsons was one of the founders of Northampton in 1654; his descendant Harriet Parsons graduated from Smith in 1892. The house stands on the old Sydenham Clark Parsons property.

Built in 1902, this Henshaw Ave. house exemplifies the eclectic style in architecture common in the early twentieth century. Four stories in elevation, the house is composed of a brick first floor foundation, clap-boarded second and third floor level, and a shingled uppermost story.

An "L" shaped plan is composed in elevation of two different types of massing. The longer facade wing is of a typically Georgian symmetrical and self-contained shape, while the shorter rear wing is further articulated by three irregularly spaced, multi-storied bay windows. Intersecting gambrel roofs with projecting pedimented dormers, sheathed in either wood or slate shingles, contribute to the active and picturesque skyline. Crowning the roof is a late Victorian wooden rectangular cupola. An extensive wooden Ionic columned porch with balcony is situated on the east side of the house; a smaller balcony is placed to the rear. A rectangular brick entryway projects from the center of the facade.

Relatively austere in ornamentation, the symmetrically arranged facade is composed of paired sash windows, with plain classical white wooden moldings and cornices above. The light yellow clapboarding reflects the turn of the century Colonial revival.

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

Smith College Archives.