

FORM B - BUILDING

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

905

In Area no.	Form no.
	32A-223



Northampton

is 78 Pomeroy Terrace

Osmyn Baker House

it use Mass. Dept. Mental Health

it owner Mass. Dept. Mental Health

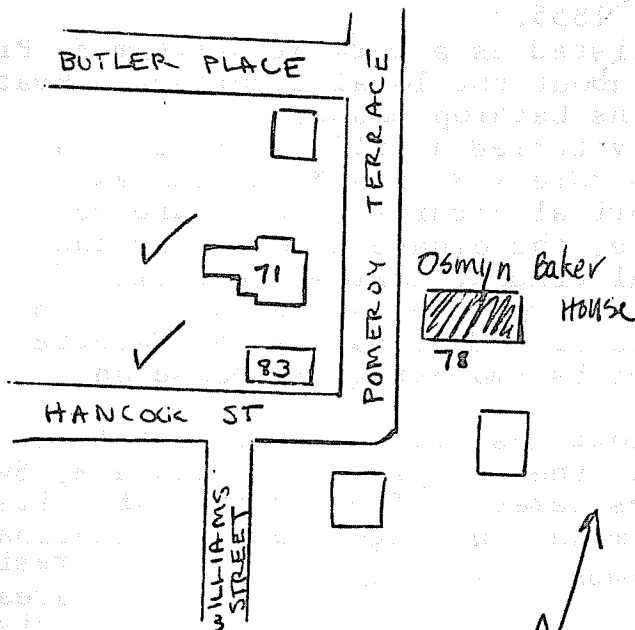
ption:

1855

rece Daily Hampshire Gazette,  
10/27/1855, 12/11/1855

Modified Villa

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



Architect Wm. Fenno Pratt

Exterior wall fabric stuccoed brick

Outbuildings (describe) none

Other features flat roof with 4 chimneys

and central cupola; portico with

elaborate columns; numerous

additions

Altered additions Date \_\_\_\_\_

Moved no Date \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lot size:

One acre or less \_\_\_\_\_ Over one acre x

Approximate frontage 209 feet.

Approximate distance of building from street

40 feet

6. Recorded by C. Dubie

Organization Northampton Historical

Commission  
Date May 15, 1975

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

RECEIVED

✓ other inventoried property:

- 71 Pomeroy Terrace
- 83 Pomeroy Terrace

JUN 1975

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7. Original owner (if known) Osmyrn Baker

Original use Residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Residence; Northampton School for Girls 1924-

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

1974

Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science/ invention	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social/ humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Community development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

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

The Daily Hampshire Gazette provides the following information on the Baker House:

"Osmyrn Baker is erecting a dwelling on Phillips Place" (October 2, 1855)

"That (residence) of Osmyrn Baker, on the opposite side of the street is built of brick, to be stuccoed, and commands, from the cupola at the top, a view equalled by that from Round Hill....The house itself will be built with all the improvements of modern architecture and will be one of the most substantial and tasteful residences in town." (December 11, 1855.)

The Osmyrn Baker residence is listed as a work of William F. Pratt in a Gazette article, 12/26/ 1865, about the local architect. Pratt is also credited with the J. Stebbins Lathrop house.

The house is more appropriately termed a villa style than a Greek Revival (southern) house. "Greek Revival" designates architecture imitative of the historical architecture of Greece. Neither the massing of the structure, the ornate cupola, nor the treatment of the portico and central window, follow the forms of the pure Greek Revival. The ornate composite columns and second story window cornice are possibly later additions, as the Gazette note in June, 1868, that Osmyrn Baker is improving his house on Phillips Place.(Pomeroy Terrace).

Half a dozen fine houses and cottages were built on Phillips Place/ Pomeroy Terrace 1840-1870. Several fine examples of Italianate, Swiss Cottage, villa, and bracketed styles remain. The section, with its superb view of the flood plain and mountain range, was the fashionable

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

Daily Hampshire Gazette, October 2, 1855, December 11, 1855, December 26, 1865.

RELATION OF SURROUNDING TO STRUCTURE

Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_

2. Landscape Features: Agriculture Open Wooded Garden: Formal/Informal  
Predominant features shrubs- large trees- view of mountains  
Landscape architect Northampton School for Girls

3. Neighboring Structures  
Style: Colonial Federal Greek Revival Gothic Revival Italian Villa Lombard Rom.  
Venetian Gothic Mansard Richardsonian Modern

Use: Residential Commercial Religious Conditions: Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF SITE (Refer and elaborate on theme circled on front of form)

This is the third house to be built from the same architectural plans which were brought from the South by J. Stebbins Lathrop. "It was built by Attorney Osmyn Baker who duplicated the original cupola on the Lathrop home and the railing atop the front porch, which still survive- but added a winged arch to the middle upper window. Each of the three staunch friends who built these almost identical houses, J. Stebbins Lathrop, Samuel Williston ( in Easthampton), and Osmyn Baker, changed some architectural details of the exterior, evidently preferring the personal and distinctive touch to the preceseely imitative".

Osmyn Baker was an attorney and the leading spirit in the founding of the Hampshire County Law Library and the Public Library. He was the first president of the Smith Charities and a Trustee of the Clarke School. Also a junior counsellor to Daniel Webster in the case of Oliver Smith's will. He was also a member of the United States Congress.

After her father's death, Miss Elizabeth Baker occupied the house before selling it to Mr. French who in turn sold it to the Watson family. In 1924 it was purchased by Miss Sarah Whitaker and Miss Dorothy Bement for the administration building of the Northampton School for Girls which they founded.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/OR REFERENCE

- Hampshire Gazette January 24, 1970
- The Northampton Book (1954) Pp 99, 290, 291

RESTRICTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

Original Owner: Osmyn Baker  
Deed Information: Book Number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Registry of Deeds

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