

GMD NO. 1324-0018

EXP. 12/31/81

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAR 2 1983
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Baker, Samuel, House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 150 West 200 North not for publication

city, town Mendon vicinity of congressional district

state Utah code 049 county Cache code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Gaylen and Judy Baker

street & number Box 686

city, town Mendon vicinity of state Utah 84325

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cache County Courthouse

street & number 179 North Main Street

city, town Logan state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Utah Historic Sites Survey/
title Mendon City Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Spring 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Utah State Historical Society

city, town Salt Lake City state Utah 84101

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Samuel Baker house, located facing east on the hillside above Mendon, is a 1 1/2 story, hall and parlor, vernacular type house. As it was originally constructed in the early 1870s, the house consisted of only the front two unequally sized rooms, with a closet staircase on the rear parlor and a centrally placed stove chimney. There is no indication that the upstairs was ever finished. The walls are random rubble with raised mortar joints lending the surface an appearance of regularity. The stone is the metamorphic sand variety which is found throughout northern Utah. There are pronounced ashlar quoins at the corners. The original decorative features of the house consisted of a plain cornice and frieze, a bare suggestion of the then popular Greek Revival style.

The first remodeling of the home occurred around 1880 and added the rubble stone "T" extension to the rear. This addition, also two rooms with a central chimney, provided the Bakers with a kitchen/dining area and an extra bedroom. The second remodeling was commissioned by Rachel C. Cooley, a relative of the Bakers who acquired the property in 1890. At this time a frame kitchen addition was attached to the northeast corner, and the house also received a new roof and the facade was reoriented to the south, facing the street. This last act was accomplished by adding two gabled porches to the house, one located on the east over the original front door but opening to the south, and the other over the porch on the south side of the west wing. Stylistic elements on this latest remodeling reflected concerns during the late nineteenth century for intricate and detailed ornamentation, evident here in the spindled east porch, the scroll-cut porch brackets, and the elaborate sunburst motif in the south porch gable.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates ca.1870s **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Samuel Baker house, constructed between 1870-1875, is significant as one of ten stone houses remaining in Mendon which document the community's early settlement by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Because they represent the first permanent dwellings erected by the Mormon pioneers outside their camp-like forts, these stone buildings record an important turning point in the life of the town. For their builders, these substantial homes signaled the long awaited end to a precariously fragile frontier existence. For later generations, the houses became monuments to those whose endurance and sacrifice paved the way for the comforts and prosperity of today. In Utah, pioneer buildings acquire the added significance of being essentially sacred artifacts. All religions maintain a need to define themselves against the background of sacred time--that time which documents the events which first brought the religion into being.¹ Mormonism is a relatively recent religion, and it's sacred time is often recorded in the period of trials and persecutions which preceded the exodus to and eventual triumph of the movement in Utah.² The sacred history of Mormonism then is locked up in the events surrounding the founding of the church in New York in 1830, the movement to Ohio and then Missouri in the 1830s, the expulsion from Missouri and the flight to Nauvoo, Illinois in 1838, the expulsion from Illinois in 1845 and, perhaps more importantly, the first, or pioneer stage, in the settlement of Utah after 1847.³ Sacred time becomes interchangeable with pioneer time in Utah, and buildings from the period are the most visible symbols by which new generations of Mormons place themselves in relation to their religion and history. Because all signs of the fort have long been erased from the land, Mendon's chronological narrative begins, materially and spiritually, in stone buildings. The Samuel Baker house is particularly significant because it is one of only four of the extant stone buildings which retains its historic integrity. The other houses are the James Gardner house, listed in the National Register in 1981; the George Baker house, nominated to the National Register in 1981; and the James G. Willie house, nominated to the National Register in 1982. These structures were identified in an ongoing comprehensive study of Mendon's historic buildings during 1980-1982.⁴

Cache Valley was explored in the 1850s as a much needed grazing land for the main Latter-day Saint settlements around Salt Lake City.⁵ By 1859, permanent townsites had been established in the Cache Valley area at Wellsville and Mendon. Arriving at the site of Mendon in 1859, the early settlers quickly erected two rows of log cabins which served both their needs for shelter and fortification. These cabins were small, usually about 16 feet square, and were often found with a shed or lean-to on the rear.⁶ The fort homes were, however, viewed as a temporary condition and by 1864, when the town was surveyed into individual building lots, a sense of personal security and relative prosperity would cause Mendon's residents to contemplate, in the

9. Major Bibliographical References

Cache County Records

Carter, Tom, "The Stone Houses of Mendon," in The History of Mendon, Charles S. Peterson, ed. (forthcoming 1983).

Fife, Austin E. "The Stone Houses of Northern Utah," Utah Historical Quarterly 40:1 (Winter 1972), pp. 6-23.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Wellsville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	2	4	1	8	4	9	0	4	6	1	8	1	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 3, Block 10, Plat A, Mendon City Survey

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tom Carter, Architectural Historian

organization Utah State Historical Society date

street & number 300 Rio Grande telephone (801) 533-6017

city or town Salt Lake City state Utah 84101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Melvin T. Smith

title Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 10, 1983

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Melores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 3/31/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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words of one pioneer, "improving their real estate."⁷ In setting about building new houses, there was a limited number of local materials available to the settlers. Log was never an attractive housing material in Utah for it was universally associated with the deprivations of frontier life. Hewn logs, closely resembling their natural condition as trees, were also not considered aesthetically pleasing.⁸ In a message to the brethren at Logan during June 1860, the Mormon Church President, Brigham Young, addressed the issue of log construction: "What are you going to build with? Log buildings do not make a sightly city. We should like to see buildings that are ornamental and pleasing to the eye as well as convenient and commodious. We wish to see cities that are an ornament to the country."⁹ Young went on to recognize Cache Valley's abundance of timber and recommeded initially that the Saints produce lumber for frame houses. There is some indication that the prophet's suggestion was followed;¹⁰ however, the difficulties involved in erecting sawmills made it hard in the 1860s to secure lumber for rafters, floors, and casings, in addition to acquiring the boards needed to build entire houses. The alternatives exhausted, Young visited the Cache Valley settlements in 1864 and asked the pioneers, "why not quarry rock and build stone houses and make rock fences?"¹¹ Like their counterparts in neighboring northern Utah towns, Mendonites turned during the 1860s and early 1870s to the local stone for their house construction needs.¹²

Samuel Baker was a son of Simon Baker and his second wife, Charlotte. Simon Clark Baker was born in 1811 in West Winfield, New York. At the age of 18 he married Mercy Young. This union eventually produced nine children, Jarvis, Amenzo, Albert, Betsy, George, Joseph, Rebecca, Mary and Sarah, many of whom later played important roles in Mendon's history. (The rock homes of Albert, George, and Joseph Baker are still standing today, although only the George Baker house remains in good condition. The George Baker home was nominated to the National Register in 1981.) The Bakers were early converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it was while living in the Mormon settlements of Iowa, across the Mississippi River from Nauvoo, Illinois, that Simon took Charlotte Leavitt in 1845 as a plural wife under the Mormon doctrine of polygamy. It was thus that Samuel was born in 1856, the fourth son of Simon and Charlott, and the half-brother of the other Baker children. Simon eventually took three more wives, Elizabeth Staples (1853), Amy Walker (1853), and Ann Staples (1857).

The Bakers migrated westward to Utah with the 1847 migration and originally settled in Salt Lake City. During the 1850s, Simon and his sons herded cattle

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in Cache Valley and helped establish a ranch site there for the church in 1855-1856. The Bakers settled initially at Wellsville before moving to the North Settlement, or Mendon, when it was founded in 1859. Simon Baker died in the Mendon fort in 1863. In the early 1870s, Samuel Baker married Annie Leavitt, and probably built the first section of this stone house at that time.

Notes

¹John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975), p. 11. Gager says, "In historical religions, the idea of sacred time normally takes shape around those events which first brought the community into being--symbol systems express their meaning at these events, rituals revive them, institutions derive their authority from them, and the sacred scriptures preserve a record of them for each new generation."

²Wallace Stegner, The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 1-13.

³See James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, The Story of the Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976).

⁴See Tom Carter, "The Stone Houses of Mendon," in The History of Mendon, ed. by Charles S. Peterson (forthcoming).

⁵See Joel E. Ricks, ed., The History of a Valley: Cache Valley, Utah-Idaho (Logan: Cache Valley Centennial Committee, 1956), pp. 67-75.

⁶See Leon S. Pitman, "Folk Housing in the Mormon Culture Region," Dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1973, pp. 116-126.

⁷Issac Sorensen, "A History of Mendon," manuscript, Utah State Historical Society.

⁸See Tom Carter, "Folk Design in Early Utah Architecture," in Utah Folk Art, ed. Hal Cannon (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), pp. 39-42.

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⁹Journal of Discourses, Volume 8 (Liverpool: George Q. Cannon, 1861),
p. 79.

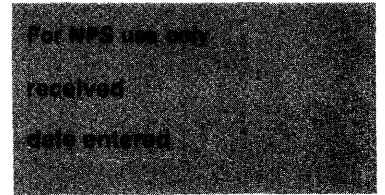
¹⁰Samuel Crowther Mitton constructed a large frame house in Wellsville
around 1865. This home has been listed in the National Register of Historic
Places, 1982.

¹¹Joel Ricks, History of a Valley, p. 57.

¹²See, Austin E. Fife, "The Stone Houses of Northern Utah," Utah
Historical Quarterly 40:1 (Winter 1972), pp. 6-23.

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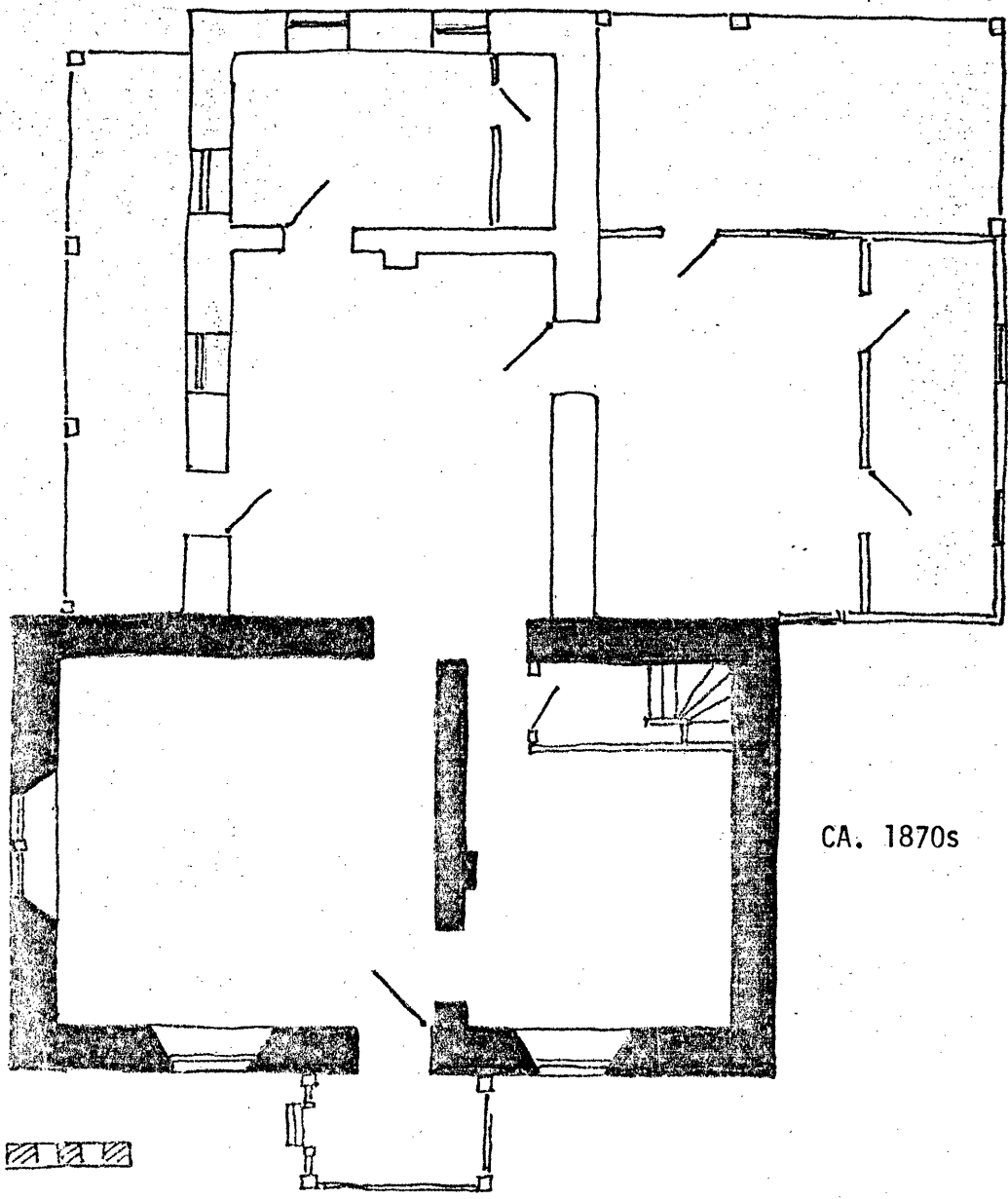
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Ricks, Joel E., ed. The History of a Valley: Cache Valley, Utah - Idaho. Logan, Utah:
Cache Valley Centennial Committee, 1956.



SAMUEL BAKER HOUSE



CA. 1880

CA. 1870s