Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Newton D. Baker House

AND/OR COMMON: Newton D. Baker - Jacqueline Kennedy House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 3017 N Street, NW. — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Washington — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11 COUNTY: District of Columbia CODE: 001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		X NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Yolanda Fox

STREET & NUMBER: 3017 N Street, NW.

CITY, TOWN: Washington — VICINITY OF

STATE: District of Columbia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER: 515 D Street, NW.

CITY, TOWN: Washington

STATE: District of Columbia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: None

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Newton Diehl Baker rented this house while Secretary of War. Apparently he maintained no other residence in 1916-20, and consequently this dwelling is the only one associated with the period of his greatest contribution to the Nation. After leaving Washington in 1920, Baker undertook construction of a house in Shaker Heights, Ohio, near Cleveland, and that residence, in which he resided from 1923 until his death in 1937, still stands. No other known Baker homes remain, however, except for the apartment building that he occupied immediately after his return to Ohio, but it was greatly altered many years ago to serve as a hospital.

The Washington house has its own remarkable history. Built by Thomas Beall in 1794, its design seems representative more of New England seacoast mansions than of contemporary Georgetown homes. During its early history, the residence occupied a large plot of land and apparently had a servants' wing attached to its east side. At that time N Street was known as Gay Street and was situated at a higher elevation than today.

In 1796 John Laird, a wealthy merchant, lived here, and later Maj. George Peter, a War of 1812 commander and Maryland Congressman, purchased the house. In 1827 Laird bought the house for his son, but 7 years later William Redin, the first auditor of the Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, purchased it. His unmarried daughter inherited and sold the dwelling, which became the Georgetown Female Seminary in 1868. The student body of boarders and day students totaled 105. About 1890, when John H. Smoot bought it, the structure became a private residence again. In 1915 Col. William E. Pattison French purchased the house, and the following year he rented it to Baker.

Friends urged Baker against moving to the area, which they considered remote and rundown, but the Secretary replied that this dwelling was the only large one that he could afford. One of Baker's aides stated that, during those days, paint peeled from the walls; and, another contemporary recalled that freqnently Baker made sauerkraut in a barrel in the backyard. Baker returned to Ohio in 1920, and for more than two decades French either leased or lived in the house himself. During the Second World War, the British military attache occupied the house and rented rooms to British officers. Consequently such American military figures as George C. Marshall and Dwight D. Eisenhower frequented this dwelling.

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	X MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	X POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1916-1920 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Thomas Beall

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Newton Diehl Baker, according to historian Harvey A. DeWeerd, was "one of the best Secretaries of War in our history."[1] As Woodrow Wilson's War Minister from 1916 to 1921, he presided over America's mass mobilization of men and material in World War I. That effort enabled the United States in the summer and fall of 1918 to turn the tide of battle on the western front in favor of the Allies, and it forced Germany to agree to an armistice on November 11, 1918. An excellent administrator, Baker in 1 year increased the strength of the Army from 95,000 to 4 million men, provided them with the necessary accoutrements of war, and selected in the person of John J. Pershing a commanding officer who, by steadfastly refusing to integrate his troops into the Allied armies, made certain that the U.S. Army would play the decisive role in ending the war.

In addition to his Cabinet duties, Baker, says his biographer Elting E. Morison, served as "one of Wilson's most trusted confidants and as much of an advisor as Wilson ever permitted anyone to be."[2] A strong supporter of the President in the unsuccessful fight for the League of Nations, Baker, according to historian Daniel R. Beaver, "became a keeper of the Wilsonian conscience in foreign affairs in the twenties."[3] At the 1924 Democratic Convention he delivered a stirring speech for American entry into the League without reservations, and until his death in 1937 he was a leading proponent of greater American involvement in world affairs.

Before entering the War Department, Baker had earned a reputation as one of the Nation's leading progressives. From 1901

(continued)

1 Harvey A. DeWeerd, President Wilson Fights His War: World War I and the American Intervention (New York, 1968), 246.

2 Elting E. Morison, "Newton Diehl Baker," Dictionary of American Biography, XI, Supplement 2 (New York, 1958), 19.

3 Daniel R. Beaver, Newton D. Baker and the American War Effort, 1917-1919 (Lincoln, 1966), 246.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beaver, Daniel R., Newton D. Baker and the American War Effort, 1917-1919 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966).

C. H. Cramer, Newton D. Baker: A Biography (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1961).

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10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	321360	4308260
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the nominated property coincides with the boundary of the legal lot known as 3017 N Street, NW., Washington, D.C.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Cathy A. Alexander and Ralph Christian, Assistant Editors; and George R. Adams, Managing Editor

ORGANIZATION: American Association for State and Local History

DATE: February 1976

STREET & NUMBER: 1400 Eighth Avenue South

TELEPHONE: (615) 242-5583

CITY OR TOWN: Nashville

STATE: Tennessee 37203

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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

After the war, Vice Admiral Alan Kirk, later Ambassador to Belgium and to the Soviet Union, purchased the property, then 3 years later Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Cushing bought it. At that time they sold the attached servants' wing as a separate residence to Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Woodward, who built a new front entrance for it. The Cushings replaced the main house's wiring and plumbing, removed some of its interior partitions, and enlarged the living room. In 1954 Mr. and Mrs. James McMillan Gibson bought the dwelling, added a small rear wing, and installed an elevator. A decade later, after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Mrs. Kennedy purchased the building.

Mrs. Kennedy lived here for about a year, during which time the investigative Warren Commission came to the house and in the living room took her testimony about the President's assassination. She redecorated but made no structural alterations. By 1965, oppressed by sightseers, she and her children moved to New York. Then Mr. and Mrs. Michael Straight purchased the house and undertook its repair and restoration. Workmen relined the roof, removed rotten lintels, and by replacing some windows, restored original exterior lines. Also, the rotted wooden front porch base was replaced by a brick and stone base and the narrow, steep stairs to N Street, by a wide limestone stairway. Inside, the main staircase was restored to its original lines, false ceiling beams and a false wall were removed from the dining room, and a new system of lighting was installed on the first floor. Early in 1976 Straight sold the house to its current owner.

Today the three-story light pink brick structure measures five bays, with the front door and portico in the center bay along its front (south) facade. The foundation stands high and consists of brick laid in common bond in front. In the rear, it sits low and includes brick and limestone. In the front, above the foundation, bricks are laid in Flemish bond, while in the back and on the sides, they are laid in common bond. Today, because of the small, two-story east rear wing, the structure has an L shape. On its east, the Baker House still abuts the private residence that apparently served originally as its kitchen and servants' wing. That two-story structure stands lower than the Baker residence because its

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second floor comes up only to the larger dwelling's second-story window sills. West of the Baker House, a small space with a pathway divides it from the neighboring dwelling.

Black-painted louvered shutters frame all the Baker House's front-facing windows, which are rectangular, nine-over-nine sash on the first floor and rectangular, six-over-six sash on the second and third floors. Pink-painted lintels with keystones surmount the first- and second-floor front windows, and brick voussoirs top the third-story ones. Most of the rear windows are rectangular, six-over-six sash, and some have black louvered shutters. In the center rear bay, between the first and second floors, a semicircularly arched window and two narrow, semicircularly arched side windows are enclosed in a pink-painted, corniced surround. Above this Palladian-type window, a semicircularly arched window stands between the second and third stories, and below it, at ground level, a glass, semicircularly arched door opens onto the patio. All windows have pink-painted sills, and below the third story a continuous, pink-painted string course forms those sills. A pink-painted dentiled frieze and bracketed, boxed cornice with a wide overhang trim the main low gable roof, which has an east-west ridge and pedimented gable ends. Similarly trimmed, a flat-roofed, rectangular cupola straddles the main roof, and a nearly flat roof tops the small rear wing. Two interior end red brick chimneys--one near the east and one near west gable end--pierce the main roof.

Apparently improved since Baker's time, the environment of the house is upper middle class. From the brick sidewalk of N Street, limestone steps in a straight flight climb first to a landing then to the basement-level terrace. Additional steps mount to the raised portico floor. Ground cover and magnolia trees shelter the house front, and until about 1903 the rear lot extended back to the next parallel street. Today, a high fence encloses the diminished backyard.

In front, two pairs of smooth, Doric columns on paneled pedestals support the one-story portico, and a complete entablature with dentiled frieze trims the flat portico roof. Below, the doorway is framed by Doric pilasters and a semicircular arch with keystone. Inside the arch, a semielliptical fanlight tops the door and

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three-pane side lights, set off by fluted Corinthian pilasters, flank it. The portico and door trim are painted pink in contrast to the black-painted double leaf, three-panel front door.

It is impossible to say how the interior looked either originally or in Baker's day. During the Straights' residence, they painted the walls white. Carpets cover some floors, but where they do not, 3- to 6-inch-wide floorboards appear. Walls have simple baseboards, and some have dentiled cornices. The front door leads into a vestibule and wide center hall. The two-flight, open front staircase stands in the west rear of the hall. West of the hallway lies the living room, which occupies the entire west side of the first floor, contains a simple fireplace, and has a 20-pane rear picture window flanked by two rectangular, glass-paned and single-paneled doors. Across the center hall stands the dining room, which holds a fireplace, and behind it, extending into the rear wing, lie the kitchen and utility room. Dogleg rear stairs link the rear wing's first and second floors, while the connection to the former servants' wing is sealed.

Between the first and second floors, on the landing of the main stairs, is the Palladian-type window previously described. The second story holds various rooms, two fireplaces, and an arcaded pink-painted wooden porch across the rear of the west room. On the main stairway, between the second and third stories, the arched window previously described overlooks the landing. A dogleg stairway mounts to the cupola room.

No historic furniture remains in the house.

to 1909, he was the closest advisor of Tom Johnson, the reform mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, and served as Cleveland mayor himself from 1911 to 1915. The Johnson-Baker administrations fought long and successful battles for reduced streetcar fares, municipal home rule, city-owned public utilities, and a sound and equitable tax structure. According to reformer Lincoln Steffens, they made Cleveland "the best governed city in America."[4] Men like Johnson and Baker gave an important boost to the progressive movement, according to historian Arthur S. Link, because "the first reform wave came in the cities with a great drive to overturn the politicians allied with corporations, railroads, and utilities."[5]

This three-story, light pink brick house was Baker's residence while he was Secretary of War, and consequently it is closely associated with his chief service to the Nation. Built in 1794, the house possesses its own history, too, having served, for example, as a girls school in the 19th century and as Jacqueline Kennedy's home in 1964-65. As for Baker, excepting a residence that he built in Ohio and occupied for 14 years after his retirement from the Cabinet, there are no other known extant houses associated with him.

Biography

Newton Diehl Baker was born December 3, 1871, in Martinsburg, W. Va., to Newton D. and Mary Ann Baker. His physician father provided the family with a reasonably comfortable standard of living, and young Newton received every possible educational advantage. After graduation from Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va., in 1889, he entered Johns Hopkins University where he came under the influence of outstanding scholars like Richard Ely and Woodrow Wilson. After graduation in 1892, he remained at Hopkins for an additional year of study in juris-

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4 Cited in George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America, 1900-1912 (New York, 1958), 64.

5 Arthur S. Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917 (New York, 1954), 2.

prudence and Roman law. In the fall of 1893, Newton entered law school at Washington and Lee University and finished the 3-year course of study in 9 months.

Returning to Martinsburg, Baker opened a law office and, like most attorneys just commencing their practice, found business slow. In 1896 his father's friend William L. Wilson, who was serving in Grover Cleveland's Cabinet as Postmaster General, summoned young Baker to Washington, D.C., to serve as his secretary. After McKinley's inauguration in 1897, Baker made a brief tour of Europe, and while on the return voyage became acquainted with Martin A. Foran, one of the leading attorneys and political figures in Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1899 Foran asked Baker to join his firm--an offer which Baker readily accepted. His tenure with Foran was destined to be short, however, because a political speech he delivered at Foran's request made a deep impression on Tom Johnson, Cleveland's newly elected reform mayor. Johnson immediately asked him to become legal advisor to the city board of equalization, and Baker agreed. Within a year Baker was promoted to city law director, and in 1903 was elected city solicitor. During Johnson's tenure as mayor from 1901 to 1909, Baker was his closest advisor, wholeheartedly supporting his program of municipal home rule, cheap public utilities, and an equitable tax structure. He spearheaded the city's lengthy court battle for reduced streetcar fares against the traction magnates led by Senator Marcus Alonzo Hanna and eventually won a reduction from 5 cents to 3 cents. Despite their achievements, Johnson and his ticket, with the exception of Baker, were defeated for reelection in 1909.

In 1911 Baker won the first of two terms as mayor on a platform pledged to expanding the municipal electric plant and reducing electrical rates. During his 4 years in office, Baker not only redeemed his platform pledges but was able to win home rule for the city from the Ohio Legislature. His new charter provided for a centralized mayor-council system of government, non-partisan elections; and recall of the major and council. Other Baker accomplishments included organization of a municipal orchestra; creation of public dance halls, establishment of a city-owned fish market; and expansion and improvement of the city hospital and water

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system. Men like Johnson and Baker gave an important boost to the progressive movement, according to historian Arthur S. Link, because "the first reform wave came in the cities with a great drive to overturn the politicians allied with corporations, railroads, and utilities."[6]

After Tom Johnson's death in 1911, Baker, in addition to gaining recognition as one of the Nation's leading progressives, became the leader of the Democratic Party in Cleveland and a powerful force in Ohio politics. An early supporter of his former professor, Woodrow Wilson, for the 1912 Presidential nomination, Baker headed the Wilson forces in Ohio and helped carry Cleveland for him in the State's primary. At the Democratic National Convention, Baker led the fight against the unit rule, which allowed the majority in a State delegation to cast the State's entire vote. His "impassioned appeal to the Convention" to abrogate the rule, says historian Arthur S. Link, helped prevent a first ballot victory for Champ Clark and contributed greatly to Wilson's ultimate success.[7] In 1913 Wilson asked him to join his administration as either Secretary of the Interior or as his personal secretary, but Baker refused because of his desire to complete his reform program in Cleveland.

In March 1916, shortly after his second term as mayor had expired, Baker accepted the post of Secretary of War. Because of Baker's reputation as a pacifist, President Wilson hoped, says historian Daniel R. Beaver, that the Clevelander might be able to "temper the demands of the army for military expansion and diminish the agitation for preparedness that threatened to disrupt" the country.[8] Despite his antiwar inclinations, the international situation forced Baker to take an opposite tack. A few days after

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6 Arthur S. Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 2.

7 Arthur S. Link, Wilson: The Road to the White House (Princeton, 1947), 439.

8 Beaver, Newton D. Baker and the War Effort, 4.

taking over the War Department, he ordered Gen. John J. Pershing to pursue Pancho Villa into Mexico, and he played a leading role in persuading Congress to pass the National Defense Act of 1916 which increased the size of the Army, enlarged the Military Academy, created the Reserve Officers Training Corps, and brought the National Guard under stricter Federal control.

After the declaration of war with Germany in April 1917, Baker, according to military historian Harvey A. DeWeerd, soon demonstrated that he was "one of the best Secretaries of War in our history."[9] An excellent administrator, in 1 year he increased the strength of the Army from 95,000 to 4 million men, provided them with the necessary accoutrements of war, and selected in the person of John J. Pershing a commanding officer who, by steadfastly refusing to integrate his troops into the Allied armies, made certain that the U.S. Army would play the decisive role in ending the war. Baker, says historian Russell F. Weigley, "believed his primary duty was to build an army with which Pershing could fight, and then leave Pershing to fight it."[10]

In addition to his Cabinet duties, Baker served as one of Wilson's closest advisors, and according to historian Arthur S. Link, the President had "no more loyal or congenial friend in the cabinet."[11] In fact, says scholar Elting E. Morison, Baker was "as much of an advisor as Wilson ever permitted anyone to be."[12] A strong supporter of the League of Nations, Baker continued to advocate it even after Wilson's death. He went to the 1924 Democratic Convention "with one purpose in mind," says his biographer C. M. Cramer, and that was "to fight for a pro-League plank" in the party platform.[13] He delivered a stirring speech in its behalf but failed to sway the delegates to

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9 DeWeerd, President Wilson Fights His War, 246.

10 Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York, 1967), 378.

11 Arthur S. Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 187.

12 Morison, "Newton Diehl Baker," 19.

13 C. N. Cramer, Newton D. Baker: A Biography (Cleveland, 1961), 218.

vote for it. For the remainder of his life, he was one of the leading proponents of greater American involvement in world affairs.

Although Baker concentrated on his law practice **after** leaving office in 1921, he was prominently mentioned as a compromise candidate for the 1932 Democratic Presidential nomination in case of a deadlocked convention. He supported Franklin D. Roosevelt in the election that year but by 1933 was denouncing most of the New Deal legislation as unconstitutional. According to historian Otis L. Graham, Baker "thought progressivism had completed its work when it had reorganized municipal and state governments, and he saw little need for further exertions."[14] Despite his disillusionment with the New Deal, he remained in the Democratic Party and supported Roosevelt in 1936. On December 25, 1937, Baker died of a heart attack at his home in Shaker Heights near Cleveland at the age of 66.

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14 Otis L. Graham, Jr., An Encore for Reform: The Old Progressives and the New Deal (New York, 1967), 162.

DeWeerd, Harvey A., President Wilson Fights His War: World War I and the American Intervention (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968).

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Weigley, Russell F., History of the United States Army (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967).