

PH0054972 2nd District
William D. Hathaway

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

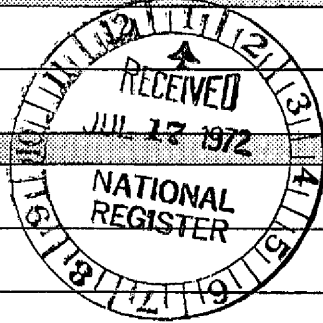
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE: Maine	
COUNTY: Oxford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER OCT 17 1972	DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

HB
L 357280
2419
49/8/90



1. NAME

COMMON: (Ada Durrell House)

AND/OR HISTORIC: Dr. Moses Mason House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: Bethel

STATE: Maine CODE: 23 COUNTY: Oxford CODE: 017

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Estate of Mrs. Daniel (Ada) Durrell

STREET AND NUMBER: Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: Bethel STATE: Maine CODE: 23

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Oxford County Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: South Paris STATE: Maine CODE: 23

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: not so represented

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

STATE: Maine
 COUNTY: Oxford
 ENTRY NUMBER: OCT 17 1972
 DATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ada Durrell House is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Broad and Mason Streets in Bethel, Maine, opposite the Bethel Common. The house faces west, fronting on Broad Street. There is a large barn behind it. The house was built in 1813-15 by Dr. Moses Mason, a local physician.

The wooden frame house is two-and-a-half stories high with a gable roof and two interior chimneys. A one-and-a-half story lean-to was added across the rear at a later date. The exterior is clapboarded. The Mason House was the first house in Bethel to be painted white, and it remains white today.

Except for the substitution of four-light windows for the original ones, the exterior of the Mason House looks today as it did originally. The central doorway is framed by tall pilasters. The door is sidelighted and has an elliptical fanlight over it. There are two windows to either side of the doorway and five windows across the second floor. The window architraves project slightly from the clapboards.

The interior of the Mason House has been modernized, but the outstanding wall murals of the main hall and stairway remain in excellent condition. The work of Rufus Porter and/or his apprentices, they depict rural and harbor scenes, and are typical of Porter's subject matter and painting methods. The arrangement of the trees is quite similar to a mural painted by Porter in the Old Barrows Homestead in Fryeburg, Maine, c. 1830. Probably the Mason House murals were painted during this period.

The house contains much gracefully ornamented interior woodwork. The main hall has a molding band of delicate vertical relief separating the murals from the lower wall surface. The dining room and an upstairs bedroom have wainscoting. The dentil molding of the dining room wainscoting matches the molding used in the handsome classical mantelpiece in that room. The house has been well maintained.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



3. SIGNIFICANCE

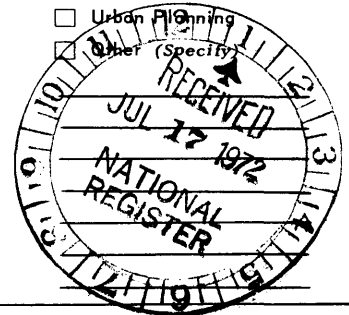
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1813-15**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Rufus Porter (1792-1881) was an important early American painter. He popularized the use of local scenes and scenery in large scale painting. He was the first painter to use stenciling and stamping, methods previously used for furniture decoration, in landscape painting. Porter had a distinctive style. He used large elms and stylized shrubs in the foreground of his work, he shaded the sides of trees and buildings heavily, he repeated variations of Portland harbor, orchard, and farm scenes. The murals in the Dr. Moses Mason House are an excellent example of the work done by Porter and his small school of pupils. Rufus Porter was also an active inventor and the founder of the Scientific American.

The Dr. Moses Mason House is important itself. A handsome Federal house, essentially unchanged on the exterior, it one of many old homes which surround the Bethel Common, giving the town a picturesque and distinguishing unity. The Bethel Inn and Bethel Library also face the common. The Bethel Historical Society intends to use the Mason House as a meeting place and museum.

Dr. Moses Mason (1789-1866) was a leading figure in Bethel. He gained his medical education by apprenticeship to a local doctor and started his own practice in 1813. In 1814 he was appointed Bethel's first postmaster; the post office was in the rear of his house. He was postmaster until 1834. He was commissioned a Justice of the Peace in 1821. Dr. Mason served as Representative to Congress from the Second District of Maine from 1833-37. Also a successful businessman, he built sawmills in Mason Town, a village later named for him. He was a Bethel Selectman for 14 years, and a Trustee of Gould Academy in Bethel from 1854 until his death. Dr. Mason is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in Bethel.

Dr. and Mrs. Mason brought up Ada Twitchell, the daughter of cousins. The house was owned by her descendents until 1971, the last descendent being Ada Everett Durrell. (Elizabeth Mason Carter, who helped prepare this form, is the greatgranddaughter of Dr. Moses Mason's brother, Ayres Mason.)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bean, Eva: East Bethel Road, Bethel, 1859

Lapham, William Berry: History of Bethel 1768-1890., Augusta, 1891.

Lipman, Jean and Winchester, Alice: Primitive Painters in America 1750-1950, New York, 1950.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		44° 24' 19" N	70° 47' 26" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY (See Continuation Sheet)

NAME AND TITLE:
Mrs. Elizabeth Mason Carter, Trustee

ORGANIZATION: Bethel Historical Society DATE: March, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 44

CITY OR TOWN: Bethel STATE: Maine CODE: 23

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Louise Stuart
 Title: Commissioner, Parks & Recreation
 Date: June 25, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest Allen Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
 Associate Director
 Professional Services

Date: OCT 17 1972

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date: Oct. 13, 1972

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Maine	
COUNTY Oxford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
OCT 17 1972	

(Number all entries)

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Mary-Eliza Wengren, Consultant

Greater Portland Landmarks, Inc.

Station A Box 4197

Portland

Maine

