

# FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

31B-003-001	Easthampton		NTH.590
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**Town:** Northampton

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*)

## Photograph



**Address:** 66 Bancroft Road

**Historic Name:** John B. and Mary O'Donnell House

**Uses:** Present: single-family residence  
Original: single-family residence

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1895

**Source:** Atlas and Directory

**Style/Form:** Queen Anne

**Architect/Builder:**

**Exterior Material:**

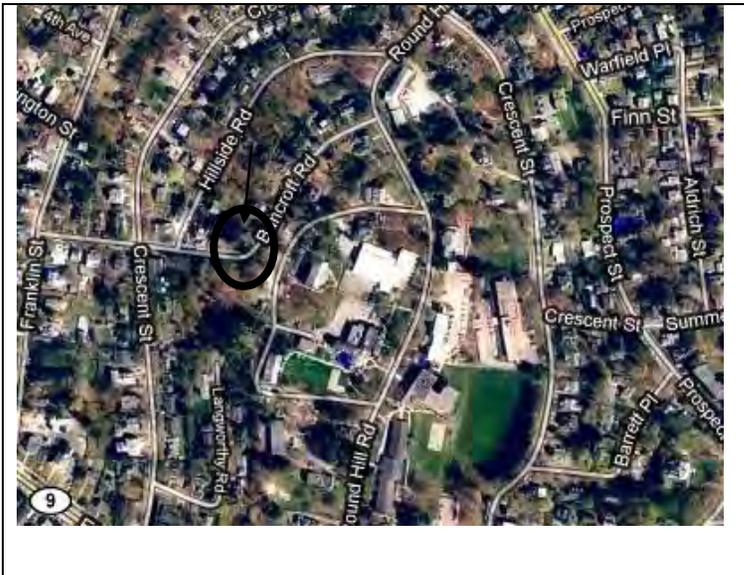
Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: aluminum

Roof: asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

## Topographic or Assessor's Map



**Major Alterations** (*with dates*): sided, windows replaced, porch enclosed ca. 1970.

**Condition:** fair

**Moved:** no | x | yes | | **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acreage:** 0.204 acres

**Setting:** This house is set on a steep hillside with a long sloping lot to its rear or west.

**Recorded by:** Bonnie Parsons

**Organization:** PVPC

**Date** (*month / year*): March, 2010

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

[NORTHAMPTON]

[66 BANCROFT ROAD]

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

NTH.590

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

This is a two-and-a-half story Queen Anne style house whose basement is fully exposed on the south and west for an additional story. It is a front-gabled house with a bell cast tower on its south elevation rising an additional story above the roof. There is a one-and-a-half story, hipped roof wing on the north with an enclosed porch across its façade. The façade of this house appears to be unique. It is three bays wide and the center bay consists of a two-story oriel with paired 2/2 vinyl replacement sash. There is a corresponding oriel on the south elevation, which is three stories tall. The entry is in the side bay under a hipped roof porch that rests on thin turned posts. The aluminum siding on this house masks its finer detail.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

From the 1980 Form B: "During the late 1880s John O'Donnell bought the northern part of Round Hill (above the Clarke School) from Colonel Mark Spaulding. Colonel Spaulding, in partnership with Enos Parsons had bought the Round Hill Hotel and grounds in 1870 and had attempted to keep the hotel operating. In 1874 they issued a prospectus for 100 building lots to be located on the northern slopes of the hill. Ultimately, the hotel proved a failure, and their development plans came to naught. In 1885 a subdivision plan for the "relocation of Round Hill Lots" was filed. This included Round Hill Road First (now Crescent), Second (now Hillside), and Third (now Bancroft) Avenues and part of Franklin Street. Development began soon afterwards and has continued until recent times providing an interesting mix of 20<sup>th</sup> Century residential architecture. This was one of the first houses to be built on Bancroft Avenue and is mentioned in an 1895-96 directory listing for John O'Donnell. Mr. O'Donnell and his son George were lawyers, located on Main Street until April 1 1896, 'after which date, one should enquire at 66 Third Avenue'. Mr. O'Donnell had served as Northampton's fifth mayor in 1892 and 1893 and was responsible for the development of Round Hill as a fine residential section. A 1909 Gazette article described this process 'and feeling that the hill was not appreciated as it should be, he had kept it almost intact all these years. He often had the opportunity to sell small lots for small houses, but he refused feeling that the Hill was by nature the handsomest and most desirable building spot in America. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the house was sold to the Rev. James W. Cole."

In 1900 John B. and Mary O'Donnell lived here with their sons James, George, John, Charles, and Edward. Their son James was a physician, George was a lawyer and John, Jr. was a plumber. The other two sons were still in school. John B. O'Donnell was an Irish immigrant who arrived in 1852. By the 1890s Rev. James W. Cole lived in Northampton on Maynard Street. He was a Methodist minister who sold fire extinguishers on the side.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Beers, F. W. County Atlas of Hampshire Massachusetts, New York, 1873.

Hales, John G. Plan of the Town or Northampton in the County of Hampshire, 1831.

Miller, D. L. Atlas of the City of Northampton and Town of Easthampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, 1895.

Walker, George H. and Company. Atlas of Northampton City, Massachusetts, Boston, 1884.

Walling, Henry F. Map of Hampshire County, Massachusetts, New York, 1860.

Northampton Directories. 1895-96; 1900; 1915; 1922.

Registry of Deeds. Book 394 page 90 and page 9.

Daily Hampshire Gazette, May 7, 1909.

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[66 BANCROFT ROAD]

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**National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form**

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible     Eligible only in an historic district  
 Contributing to a potential historic district     Potential historic district

Criteria:         A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations:     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Statement of Significance by Bonnie Parsons

*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The O'Donnell House would contribute to a potential historic district that extends north of Northampton's primary corridor, Elm Street, encircling and encompassing the primary feature of that landscape, Round Hill. The potential historic district is significant for its 19<sup>th</sup> century development from a few gentlemen's farms to a neighborhood dense with the homes of its most prominent residents and educational institutions that shaped the character of Northampton for several hundred years to the present. John O'Donnell was an important figure in the development of this section of Northampton and his house has significance for that fact.

Architecturally the district is significant for the mix of high style late Gothic Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne style houses that were often architect-designed by the region's most well-known designers. This potential historic district has integrity of workmanship, feeling, setting, design and materials. This house would contribute to the district for its form, though its siding detracts considerably from the whole.