

Elisha Potter

built The Octagon House in 1850 and lived there with his wife Miranda Barnell Maxson Potter until his death in 1884. The house was lived in by the Potter family for nearly 75 years.

Henry C Hunting

obtained possession of the house in 1923, where he lived until his wife's death in 1947 when he moved to a farm near Andover. The house then was rented as two apartments.

The Octagon House (The Potter-Hunting House)

is built in the Italianate Style with a Greek Revival entrance. It is of plank and frame construction, with clapboard siding with a 4" exposure and 7 1/2" wide corner boards. The cornice is simple, with a projecting crown moulding and fascia and a wide plain frieze with 2"-thick sawn brackets at each angle. The roof has a very low pitch with a large third-floor cupola in the center with double-hung windows in the cardinal directions and closed shutters in the other four directions.

The house originally had a 5' porch extending completely around its eight sides. This was interrupted in c 1899, when a two-story addition was built to the east where the summer kitchen and woodshed formerly stood.

On the right side of the Entrance Hall is a beautiful semi-circular staircase. Two large rectangular rooms extend in a double-parlor across the first floor of the house. A stair with an octagonal railing leads up from the second floor to the cupola.

Below L: View of semi-circular staircase to Second Floor

Below R: View of stair to Cupola (note octagonal railing)



Location Plan

57 South Main Street, Alfred, New York

The Octagon is located on Lot 49.2 (shown below). The property spans the Kanakadea Creek.



The Octagon

Recent photographs of exterior and interior work

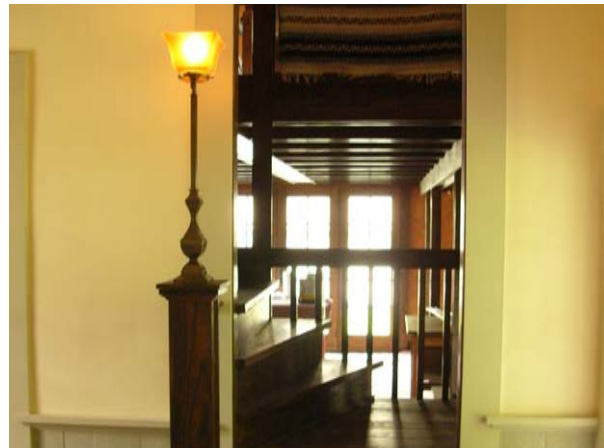
Below: View looking northeast (taken 10/22/09)

View looking northwest (taken 10/22/09)



Below: The Addition (built c 1899)

Beams and panelling are made from wood cut on family lands.



Interior Vignettes

Coffered Beam and Panel Ceilings are found in Pantry, Dining Room and Kitchen

The beam and panel ceiling in the Pantry is mahogany; in the Dining Room glazed and striè; and in the Kitchen oak and ash.

Design of Bathroom Furniture

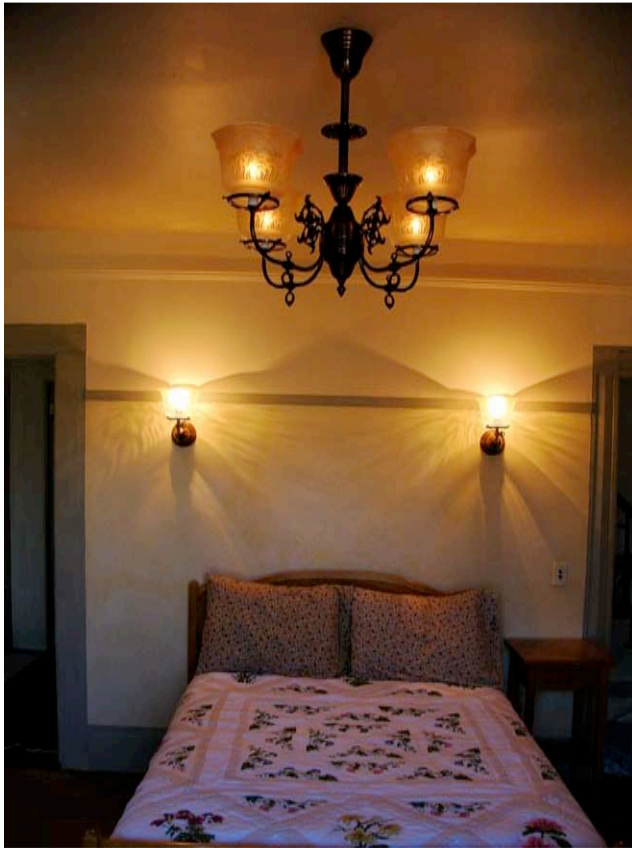
The bathrooms are built of mahogany, bronze, and copper, according to designs taken from an 1850 catalog from a Brooklyn, New York supply company.

Wall and Trim Finishes

The original glazed wall finish found on the second floor has been reproduced, as has the original grey striè glaze over tan undercoat on the trim. Interior doors were faux tiger maple.

Built-in Furniture

Bookcases, shelving, window seats, and Butler's pantries are built of mahogany or glaze and striè in The Octagon and oak and ash in the Addition, with period mouldings and hardware.



Interior: Second Floor
North Bedroom

Greek Revival trim shows here on the right door casing, and also appears on the double windows behind the camera; also shown are the Shaker trim and picture moulding above the sconces, the tall baseboard, and the wide plank floor. The glazed wall finish is original, and the aged copper chandelier and sconces are period.



Interior: First Floor
Pantry

The coffered mahogany Pantry ceiling is seen above, with a period pendant fixture in aged brass.



Interior: First Floor
Bathroom

The period mahogany surround with copper panels is seen above, with the sink centered, shower to the left, and toilet to the right, both enclosed by portières. The hardware is Venetian Bronze; the wall and ceiling fixtures are flashed copper; and the push-button light plates are aged brass.



Interior: First Floor
North Parlor

Distinctive, unusual carved trim is seen in the eared architraves above the door (left) and built-in shelving (right): The grey striè glaze matches the original. Also seen are the restored double-glazed finish on the tripartite walls, and the picture moulding and chair rail.



Interior: Second Floor
Study

The period mahogany bookcase is seen above against a glazed wall; a wall fixture, one of a pair, is seen to the immediate left. The bookcase mouldings and base are made historic design.