
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2009



Baker Island
Acadia National Park

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Inventory Summary

CLI General Information:

The Cultural Landscape Inventory Program

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

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treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

Baker Island

Acadia National Park

Baker Island is located within the Town of Cranberry Isles and is part of Acadia National Park in Hancock County, Maine. The island is the smallest of the Cranberry Isles, measuring 3,350 feet north to south and 3,290 feet northwest to southeast, encompassing around 170 acres. The focus of this project is the northwestern part of the island and a narrow area alongside a path to the south shore. The study area, around forty-seven acres in size, was historically the inhabited and cultivated portion of the island and the location of the U.S. Government light station. Situated on the island's high point (about ninety feet) is a brick and now-automated light tower owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and built in 1855. The abandoned keeper's house stands adjacent to the tower, and nearby are an oil house, fuel house, and remnants of other structures and features that once supported operations at the light station. A spruce-fir and mixed conifer forest that was once managed by island inhabitants now obscures most of the light tower and covers much of the island, except for a narrow open area of old fields and pastures that gradually slopes from the light tower down to the north shore landing area. Within this space are several houses and structures built by the island's early settlers, some of which now serve as summer residences through private in-holdings. Granite building foundations, wells, and walls, a small cemetery, and a few apple trees remain as a testament of the former community here. The island is open to the public, but access is limited to private and park ranger-operated boats that land just off the north shore. From here, where fish houses and the light station boat house once stood, a path winds its way past the remaining houses and ruins to the light tower, while secondary routes lead to the island's cemetery and the rocky south shore. Through its extant features and structures, Baker Island represents a seafaring and agrarian way of life that characterized coastal Maine islands in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Unlike many light stations established on a site to serve only mariners, Baker Island has hosted a varied life of fishing, farming, maritime activities, military service, seasonal residency, and passive recreation. These uses were shaped by both the Gilley family and the U.S. Government.

Although there is no firm evidence of Native Americans activity on Baker Island, such groups likely would have realized that the island was among Maine's many abundant and accessible maritime resources, and as such Baker is considered to be within the traditional catchment area of the region's prehistoric, protohistoric, and colonial-period peoples. More permanent settlement of Baker Island was begun sometime between 1806 and 1812 by William Gilley, Jr. of Norwoods Cove on Mount Desert Island. However, Baker Island's relative small size and isolation ultimately limited sustained populations to around twenty-five or thirty people at its peak in the mid-nineteenth century.

William Gilley cleared the forested landscape, hauled rocks, built stone walls, and prepared fields to sustain the agricultural activities that, in addition to the sea, would support his family. Eventually, William and his wife Hannah raised twelve children, including Elisha and Joseph. Some of the children remained on the island their entire lives. William either built or appropriated his first home on Baker Island – a log cabin that stood somewhere between the north shore and the existing cemetery. By 1812 his family had grown large enough to necessitate a larger dwelling, which he built farther inland on a site northeast of the current light tower.

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In 1823, the government recognized that Baker Island's location, height, and absence of trees were ideal for a light station to warn of the treacherous shoals around the Cranberry Islands and the sand bar connecting Baker Island and Little Cranberry Island. By 1828, a wooden light tower and a keeper's house were built. It was the first light tower established in the area of Mount Desert Island and Frenchman Bay. The government apparently purchased the entire island for the construction, but in the deed no evidence exists that William Gilley was considered for squatter's rights on the land he had been clearing and living upon for seventeen years. This ownership issue would later become a point of contention. However, at this time Gilley was appointed the first light keeper and moved from his home sometime thereafter to live in the keeper's house.

William Gilley's son Joseph and wife Adeline moved into his old house, where they raised their eight children. By 1900 their son Charles eventually owned the home, which also had an attached barn and either two or three ells. This complex began to fall to ruin by the 1940s and today only the foundations remain, which are known as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. William Gilley's son Elisha and wife Hannah Stanley in 1840 built a square block house with lateral ells, a privy, and nearby a barn and well. Sometime prior to 1900, Elisha's son Samuel took ownership of this house, which is extant and known today as the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. In 1867 Joseph's daughter Phebe Jane Gilley and her husband Robert Stanley built what is known today as the Stanley/Pearson house. It was around this time that a small cemetery was established near the north shore. One of their children, William F. Stanley, also remained on the island and by 1900 built a house, barn, and fish house. These foundation remains are known as the William F. Stanley House. A map from 1900 indicates there were at least five fish houses on the north shore.

In 1849, William Gilley left Baker Island after he was removed from the post of light keeper that he had held for twenty-one years. His sons, Joseph and Elisha, responded to his removal by harassing the keepers that followed, which led to a series of land disputes with the government. In 1855, an agreement between the Gilleys and the government established a nineteen-acre reservation comprised of ten acres around the light tower, nine acres on the south shore for a fog signal, and right-of ways to the fog signal and the keeper's boat house on the north shore. The right-of-way likely formalized the earlier road that connected the north shore and the light tower. Despite this agreement, land ownership remained contentious for another fifty years.

It was also in 1855 that a new light tower and keeper's house was built on the island to replace the earlier structures that were found by the government to be inadequate. The new cylindrical brick light tower stood forty-three feet high and was crowned with a fourth-order Fresnel lens. A wood-frame keeper's house was built adjacent to the light tower, joined via a passageway. An ell was added to the rear of the keeper's house in 1875, and dormers were added by ca. 1898-1905. To the south of the house was a privy. At this time, there was little if any vegetation in the vicinity of the light tower station.

Technological advances in lighthouse operations at the turn of the twentieth century required new buildings and structures. At Baker Island, several were added such as an oil house (1895), a fog signal

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(ca. 1890s), a paint locker (post 1900), and a fuel house/garage (1905). Many of the buildings were linked to one another by stairs, elevated walkways, and paths. In 1898, the U.S. Signal Corps built a lookout station to the south of the light tower and a barn to the north in support of the Spanish-American War. The southern site was later reused to construct a watchtower in 1942 during World War II. As part of these war efforts, communications was enhanced with the construction of telephone lines on the island, the first in 1898 and the second in the 1940s. The island's elevation, geographic location, and unobstructed views made it a good location for such surveillance activities in times of unrest.

A one-story schoolhouse was built in 1898 to educate the island's many children and still stands today. Its construction, however, reopened the question of the Gilley's land ownership on Baker Island. A U.S. Attorney in Portland stated that the federal government had title only to the land on which the light tower and related buildings were built and that the government had waived its title to other parts of the island and could not claim the entire nineteen acres. The legal case was finally settled in 1909, and it may have been around this time that the government erected a concrete and wire fence to delineate its ten-acre parcel around the light tower and keeper's house.

In the 1930s, the last of the Gilleys left the island and residency became more seasonal. With use of the cultivated fields essentially over by this point, the surrounding spruce forest began to mature and slowly begin to reclaim the fields and pastures. In 1955, the light tower was deactivated and the station was left unmanned, but by 1957 the light was reestablished with the installation of a new automated and unattended light for the benefit of local fishermen and yachtsmen. That same year, the Coast Guard deemed the remainder of the ten-acre station as excess property, and in 1958 it was transferred to the National Park Service for inclusion in Acadia National Park. The transfer did not include the light tower, but did include the keeper's house and other structures. It was around this time that the passageway between the light tower and the keeper's house was removed. The property transfer also set forth conditions that no construction or natural growth was to be allowed on the ten acres that might obscure the light. At this time, the Baker Island light tower was clearly visible.

In 1967, the park acquired the western half of the island, excluding the cemetery grounds, schoolhouse, the Stanley/Pearson house, and an area on the south shore in the vicinity of the former fog signal, all of which remained as private in-holdings. In 1983, the eastern side of the island was added to the park. Throughout this long period, the island's spruce forest continued to mature. By the early 1990s, the growth of the forest around the light tower prompted the Coast Guard to urge the National Park Service to abide by the early restrictions around the tower. Today, forest management alternatives continue to be discussed.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Baker Island is significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A in the areas of exploration/settlement and water-related transportation, and Criterion C in the areas of architecture and engineering. For Criterion A, the site is significant at the state level as a relatively intact example of a 1850s light station complex and at the local level for extant resources related to the early settlement of the island. For Criterion C, the site is significant at the state level for the buildings and structures

associated with the light station complex. Resources associated with the settlement of the island may also be locally significant in the area of architecture as they are similar to resources identified in the 2001 draft Multiple Property Documentation Form, “Significant Architectural Resources in the Town of Southwest Harbor, Maine.” Baker Island may also be significant for archeology. However, evaluation of these particular architectural and archeological areas of significance is beyond the scope of this report.

The period of significance for Baker Island begins in 1840, which is the date of construction of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house for Elisha Gilley – the third child of William Gilley (the light station’s first keeper) who was among the island’s first settlers starting in the early nineteenth century. The building is the earliest surviving structure of the settlement period. Other farmsteads, stone walls, fields, and a main road were developed in the subsequent decades. The most significant buildings at the light station, the light tower and keeper’s house, were built in 1855 and are still extant. An oil house and a fuel house were added around the turn of the twentieth century. Military-related structures were also installed briefly during Spanish-American War and World War II. The period closes in 1955, the year the light tower was deactivated and the last year the light station was manned.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

Significant landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today on Baker Island, and are important to its historic character and unique identity. Although the spruce forest has begun to reclaim some of the formerly open fields and rock ledges, the clustered arrangements of extant buildings within the old farmsteads and light station, and their relationships with the island’s natural features and topography, are still discernable. The main road from the north shore, which is now a grassy path, leads to the 1855 light tower and keeper’s house perched at the highest point at the center of the island. Other paths connect to the 1895 oil house, 1905 fuel house, the cemetery, and the south shore. The main path also passes by the 1840 Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and privy, and near several old wells, stone walls, and apple trees. Other features in the landscape include portions of the government’s concrete and wire fence that marked its ten-acre reservation, a winch and drilled stones associated with the keeper’s boat house, telephone poles and stumps dating to the turn of the twentieth century, and iron bars that once secured a World War II watchtower. There are also numerous house and barn foundations and remnant circulation features that are essential to the historic character, but for the purposes of this report they are identified as undetermined to the site’s significance. The light tower, Stanley/Pearson house, schoolhouse, and cemetery convey the site’s historic significance, but are private in-holdings and are therefore not listed as contributing features.

Several buildings, structures, and landscape features have been lost or removed since 1955, including the fish houses, government boat house, the paint locker, World War II lookout tower, steel flag pole, fuel tanks, and elevated walkways and stairs. Forest succession has begun to reclaim some of the former fields and now blocks the direct views between the north shore and the light tower and keeper’s house, and to a lesser degree between the individual farmsteads. The keeper’s house and the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house have been stabilized and are currently unoccupied. Wooden interpretive signs have been added at various locations, and a security fence surrounds the base of the light tower,

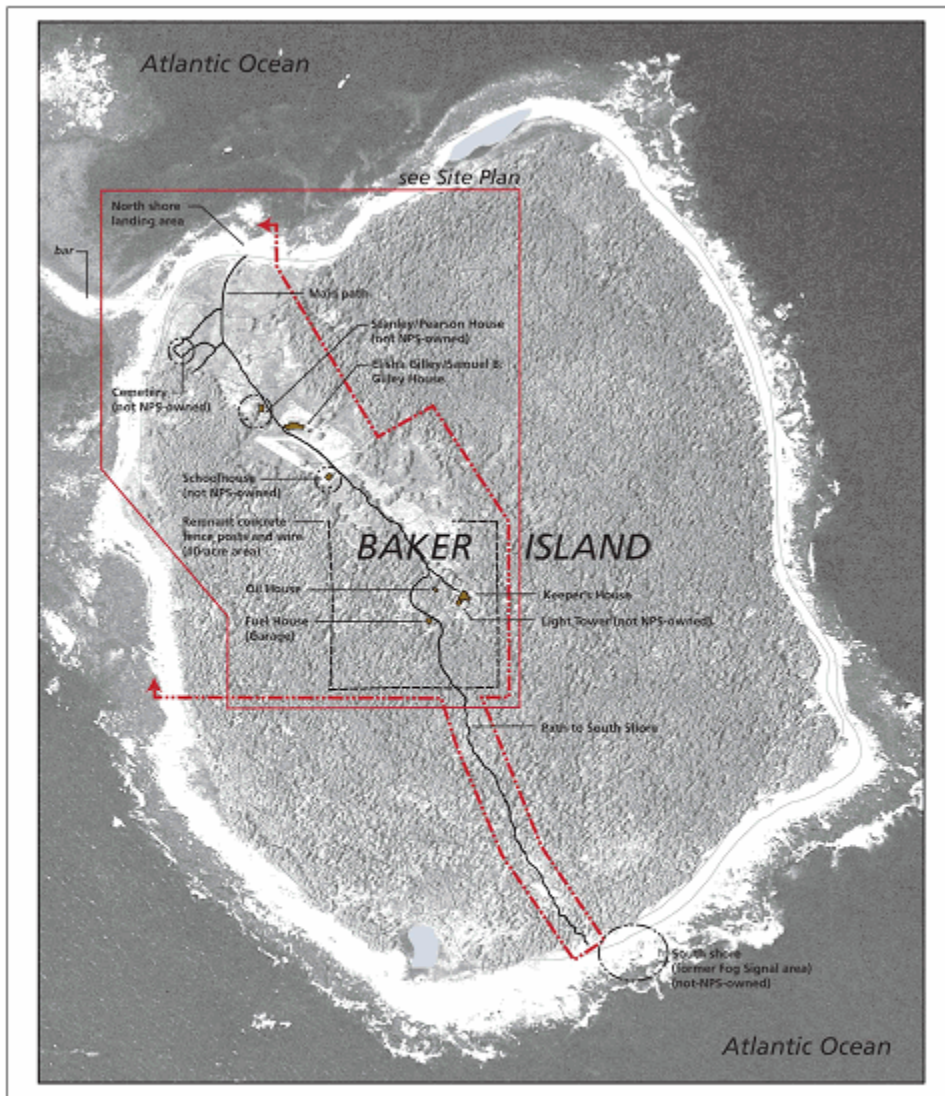
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but they do not detract from the historic scene. Although the site's setting is somewhat diminished due to the loss of some of the site's buildings and structures and the gradual encroachment and growth of the forest, the analysis in this report concludes that the Baker Island landscape retains sufficient integrity in location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance in the areas of exploration/settlement, water-related transportation, architecture, and engineering.

The condition of the landscape at the time of this report's completion is evaluated as "fair." Despite recent stabilization efforts, the harsh marine environment continues to relentlessly impact existing buildings, resulting in peeling paint and damage to siding and window sills. Forest regeneration has begun to grow dangerously close to the light station's existing buildings and impact the structural integrity of some of the wells, stone walls, and foundation ruins scattered throughout the island.

Site Plan



Cultural Landscapes
Inventory

Baker Island
Acadia National Park
Bar Harbor, Maine

Overview Map

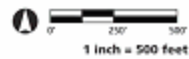


SOURCES
1. Acadia National Park GIS
2. Field visits, October
15-16, 2008

DRAWN BY
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Jeff Kellan, OCLP
Adele Blahnik CS, 11.0.2

NOTES
1. All locations shown are
approximate.
2. Not for use as
construction drawing.

LEGEND
--- CI boundary
--- CI site plan area
■ Building
--- Path
○ Private inholding area (approx.)



Site Plan. Map 1 of 2 for Baker Island. (OCLP 2008)

Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	975506
Parent Landscape:	975506

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Acadia National Park -ACAD
Park Organization Code:	1700
Park Administrative Unit:	Acadia National Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

In addition to the Baker Island landscape, Acadia National Park includes thirteen other landscapes (and one component landscape): Blackwoods Campground, Carriage Road System, Cadillac Mountain Summit, Hiking Trail System, Jordan Pond House, Motor Road System, Picnic Areas, Sand Beach, Schoodic Peninsula (Schoodic Peninsula Naval Base), Seawall Campground, Sieur de Monts Spring, Thunder Hole, and Wildwood Stables.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Field work for this Cultural Landscape Inventory was completed in October 2008 by staff from the National Park Service, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation: Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect, and Rose Marques, Historical Landscape Architect Intern. The team visited the site to evaluate current conditions, confirm previous mapping completed for the report, "Changes on the (Is)land, Baker Island, Acadia National Park, Maine: Archaeological Reconnaissance," and provide current photographic documentation. Acadia National Park's Cultural Resource Program Manager is Rebecca Cole-Will. She can be reached at 207-288-8728.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 07/08/2009
National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination: 09/21/2009

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission concurred with the categorization of the landscape resources and features at Baker Island, Acadia National Park, as contributing, noncontributing, and undetermined, on September 21, 2009. The following revisions were made to the CLI per a conference call with Kirk Mohney at the Maine SHPO:

- Status of "First Keeper's House Well" and "Joseph Gilley/Charles A Gilley Well" changed to Undetermined.
- 360 degrees added to feature name of "Panoramic Views from Light Tower." Text on previous page regarding views from the top of the light tower also revised to include 360 degrees.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

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The Baker Island inventory unit generally covers roughly the northwestern half of the island, as well as a narrow area alongside a path to the south shore. This area, encompassing around forty-seven acres, was historically the inhabited and cultivated portion of the island and the location of the government light station. It was part of a 100-acre area that was studied as part of a two-week field reconnaissance effort for the report, “Changes on the (Is)land, Baker Island, Acadia National Park, Maine: Archaeological Reconnaissance.” Using historical maps as a guide, other areas of the island were not studied in the archeological survey because there were likely to have been few sites there (Morrison 2008:6).

Within the CLI boundary is the former ten-acre light station parcel that includes the keeper’s house, oil house, fuel house/garage, and other foundation remains and landscape features. This ten-acre area, which is partially demarcated by remnants of a concrete and wire post fence, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The remainder of the CLI study area also includes buildings, structures, paths, fields, pastures, and other foundation remains and landscape features that were part of the island’s settlement. The CLI boundary does not include the light tower itself, which is owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and secured by a fence, nor does it include the following private in-holdings: the cemetery, schoolhouse and associated structures, the Stanley/Pearson house and associated structures, and an area on the south shore in the vicinity of the former fog signal.

State and County:

State: ME

County: Hancock County

Size (Acres): 47.00

Boundary UTMS:

Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	563,788
UTM Northing:	4,899,377
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	563,792
UTM Northing:	4,899,008
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	564,017
UTM Northing:	4,898,921
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	564,236
UTM Northing:	4,898,585
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19

UTM Easting:	563,822
UTM Northing:	4,898,451
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	563,611
UTM Northing:	4,898,784
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	563,607
UTM Northing:	4,899,240
Boundary Source Narrative:	GIS information from Acadia NP
Type of Point:	Area
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	19
UTM Easting:	563,646
UTM Northing:	4,899,382

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The human overlay on Baker Island falls into a number of categories – agrarian, maritime, military, and recreation. Baker Island’s first permanent residents were those of the Gilley family who arrived in the early 1800s to engage in farming and fishing as a way of life. While the land was not necessarily ideal for agriculture, part of it was cleared and lent itself to simple crops and pasture lands for farm animals. The residents found the north shore to be the most serviceable access point on the island for fishing and transportation needs. Beginning in 1828, the island’s topography and geographic location also made it valuable to mariners as a site for a light tower to help navigate the nearby treacherous shoals and bars. With the light tower came the need for other service buildings, transforming the tower into a light station complex. Having served the seafaring population so well for a light tower, the site was equally well-suited for the military, in particular because of the high elevation that could support a useful surveillance tower during the Spanish-American War and World War II. The agrarian and military uses have long ended, but a maritime use remains as the automated light tower continues to guide mariners. Additionally, the island has acquired a more recreational profile as it transferred to the care of the National Park Service beginning in 1958, and visitors began to come to the island for a day of passive recreation. Today, seasonal residents also frequent the island for weeks at a time.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The most significant physiographic feature in the Baker Island landscape is its highest point, situated at the center of the island and around ninety feet in elevation. This high point is the location of the U.S Coast Guard light tower, built in 1855, and was once the location for military surveillance activities in the 1890s and again in the 1940s. The rocky outcrops and ledges here are also found sporadically across the island and are characteristic of the bedrock that underlies the island’s fairly thin and acidic soils. The island’s elevation falls away from the center, gently descending to the inhospitable shorelines comprised of massive granite slabs, ledges, and rocks except for a small and somewhat less rocky area on the north shore that serves as a landing area for boats. Nearby is a small bluff above the shore, perhaps attributable to erosion. One of the most striking rock formations on the island lies on the south shore where a series of immense and flat rocks, called the “Dance Floor,” are pounded by the crashing waves.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

In 1830, Baker Island was incorporated as part of the Town of Cranberry Isles. In 1849, William Gilley left his post as light keeper, presumably under pressure because his views differed from those of the ruling Whig party. This event triggered hostilities on the island between his sons and the new light keepers. By 1854, the island residents had surrounded most

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of the cleared and settled land – including the north shore boat landing area – with a fence, purposely excluding the light tower and light keeper’s house. In 1855, land ownership issues arose and were legally settled, resulting in the government’s right to nineteen acres on the island and right-of-way access to the north and south shores. By 1900 the U.S. Government had delineated its land – ten acres surrounding the light tower and another nine acres on the south shore for a fog signal – and a fence was installed by at least 1909 around the light tower.

In 1958 the National Park Service (NPS) assumed ownership of the ten-acre light station. Around this time another fence was erected at the foot of the light tower, enclosing an area of about twenty square feet. The transfer of land to the NPS did not include the light tower, which was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard. However, the ten-acre area has been at the root of concerns about vegetative regrowth, which has begun to obscure the light tower. The land transfer to the park carried with it the obligation to disallow any new construction and to maintain unobstructed visibility for the effectiveness of the light tower.

The western half of the island was transferred to the park in 1967 from the Nature Conservancy, which had purchased it from Florence F. Underwood in 1966. When Underwood came to own the property is not clear. The acquisition did not include the U.S. Coast Guard light tower, cemetery grounds, schoolhouse, the Stanley/Pearson house, and the Greening Island Trust’s “Dance Floor” on the south shore where the fog signal was once located. These areas are private in-holdings. In 1983, the eastern part of the island was added to the park. It was transferred from the National Park Foundation, which had acquired it from Gilley descendents in 1976. Today, the NPS owns the entire island except for the light tower and the in-holdings described above.

Track Numbers: 14-101
14-107 (portion)
14-116 (portion)
14-117 (in-holding)
14-118 (U.S. Coast Guard)
14-119 (in-holding)
14-120 (in-holding)
14-121 (in-holding)

GIS File Name: CLI Baker Island

GIS File Description: 1997VegCover_Poly_NPSlandM
AppleTrees_BakerIsland_2008
ASMISPotentialSites_Polys_ShannonWright2002
BakerI_Buildings_200805
BakerI_CutUtilityPoles_200810
BakerI_Trails_200805
BakerIsland_MorrisonLines200508
BakerIsland_MorrisonPoints200508
BakerIsland_PrivateLandAPPROXIMAT
Coastline_Poly_24KUSGS
Contours_Line_24KUSGS
utility line 1900
WaterBodies_Poly_24KUSGS

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 07/08/2009

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

The Baker Island inventory unit meets both of the criteria for the “Should be Preserved and Maintained” management category. Firstly, the site meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion A in the areas of exploration/settlement and water-related transportation, and Criterion C in the areas of architecture and engineering. Secondly, the site is compatible with the park’s legislated significance. On September 25, 1986, the whole of Baker Island was included within park’s permanent boundaries, which aim to “protect and conserve the land and water resources of Acadia National Park in the State of Maine....”

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Type of Interest: None - Other Federal Agency Owned

Other Agency or Organization: U.S. Coast Guard

Explanatory Narrative:

The light tower is owned and operated by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Type of Interest: None - Privately Owned

Explanatory Narrative:

The Stanley/Pearson house, schoolhouse, cemetery, and a small area on the south shore are private in-holdings.

Public Access:

Type of Access: Other Restrictions

Explanatory Narrative:

Baker Island is open to the public, but is generally accessible only by boat. Park-owned buildings on the island are not currently open to the public, including the automated light tower that is owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and surrounded by a security fence. Other buildings are privately-owned summer residences and are not accessible to the public.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

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The islands beyond Baker Island are related to the historic significance of the site. Baker Island was incorporated into the Town of Cranberry Isles in 1830. Little Cranberry Island, situated nine-tenths of a mile to the northwest, is Baker Island's closest neighbor and connected by a bar visible only at low tide and inaccessible by motorized vehicle. This island is the closest focal point from Baker's north shore and from the top of the light tower. Mount Desert Island is about 3.25 miles away to the north and provides additional visual context for the site. Both Little Cranberry and Mount Desert islands also provided the social connections and markets for necessary goods for the Gilleys' survival and well being. Were it not for the proximity of these other islands, Baker Island may have been too desolate to support the small agrarian and maritime community.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

A portion of the Baker Island inventory unit is listed on the National Register of Historic Places under the name “Baker Island Light Station,” and is related to the “Light Stations of Maine” multiple property listing for which documentation was accepted by the Keeper of the National Register on November 20, 1987. The Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) identified two historic contexts within which to evaluate Maine’s light stations: “Maritime Transportation in Maine (ca.1600-1917)” and “Federal Lighthouse Management (1789-1939).” Registration requirements outlined in the MPDF required that the light stations retain sufficient integrity in “workmanship, materials and character, associative significance by virtue of their role in history, in their setting and in notable cases as the work of a master.” The MPDF also stated that, at a minimum, a light station should include a lantern-bearing tower and distinct dwelling quarters, and that the presence of other ancillary buildings or structures could partially offset alterations to these major components.

A ten-acre portion of the Baker Island, called the Baker Island Light Station, was identified as meeting the registration requirements of the MPDF and was listed in the National Register on March 14, 1988. The light station was identified as significant at the state level under criteria A and C in the areas of water-related transportation, architecture, and engineering for the period 1855-1937. The Light Tower, Keeper’s House (LCS #005432), Oil House (LCS #041068), and Fuel House (LCS #041066) were identified as contributing buildings. However, no other landscape features were separately listed with these contributing resources. The light tower is currently owned and maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard.

On July 17, 1979, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission determined that the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house, which is located between the ten-acre light station and the island’s north shore, was ineligible for listing on the National Register. However, in a letter dated July 1, 1996, the Commission wrote that the eligibility of this building “should be reconsidered in view of more recent assessments of the property’s significance in the broader context of local history.”

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	Baker Island Light Station
NRIS Number:	88000046
Primary Certification Date:	03/14/1988
Other Certifications and Date:	MPDF, “Light Stations of Maine” - 11/20/1987

National Register Eligibility

Baker Island
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National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Contributing/Individual: Contributing

National Register Classification: District

Significance Level: State

Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Significance Criteria: C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	The Farmer's Frontier
Facet:	Farming the Northeast
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Agriculture
Facet:	Subsistence Agriculture
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Shipping and Transportation by Water
Facet:	Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, And Other Structures
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expanding Science and Technology
Subtheme:	Technology (Engineering and Invention)
Facet:	Transportation
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Vernacular Architecture
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme:	Peopling Places
Subtheme:	Colonial Exploration and Settlement
Facet:	American Exploration and Settlement
Other Facet:	None

Time Period: AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme: Shaping the Political Landscape
Subtheme: Political and Military Affairs 1865-1939
Facet: America Becomes A World Power, 1865-1914
Other Facet: None
Time Period: AD 1840 - 1955
Historic Context Theme: Shaping the Political Landscape
Subtheme: World War II
Facet: The Home Front
Other Facet: None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Architecture
Area of Significance Category: Engineering
Area of Significance Category: Exploration - Settlement
Area of Significance Category: Transportation

Statement of Significance:

Baker Island

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The Baker Island inventory unit is significant under National Register of Historic Places criteria A and C in the areas of architecture, engineering, and water-related transportation. Based on findings of this CLI, the site is also significant in the area of exploration/settlement. For Criterion A, the site is significant at the state level as a relatively intact example of a 1850s light station complex built by the U.S. Government and at the local level for extant resources related to the settlement of the island by the Gilley and Stanley families. Under Criterion C, the site is significant at the state level for the buildings and structures associated with the light station complex. Features associated with the settlement of the island may also be locally significant in the area of architecture and the associated historic context “Settlement on Mount Desert Island, Maine” identified in the 2001 draft Multiple Property Documentation Form, “Significant Architectural Resources in the Town of Southwest Harbor, Maine.” Baker Island may also be significant for archeology. However, evaluation of architectural and archeological significance is beyond the scope of this report.

Research conducted for this CLI has determined that the period of significance for Baker Island is 1840 to 1955. The period begins in 1840 with the construction of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house for Elisha Gilley – the third child of William Gilley who officially inhabited and settled Baker Island starting in the early nineteenth century. Other farmsteads, stone walls, fields, and a main road were also developed in subsequent years. The most significant buildings at the light station, the extant light tower and keeper’s house, were built in 1855. An oil house and fuel house were added around the turn of the twentieth century. Military-related structures were also installed briefly during Spanish-American War and World War II. The period closes in 1955, the year the light tower was deactivated and the last year the light station was manned. This end date extends the period of significance from the 1937 end date as stated in the “Baker Island Light Station” Registration Form, completed in 1987.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION A

Baker Island is significant under Criterion A in the areas of water-related transportation and exploration/settlement. The Baker Island light station complex represents Maine’s critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made safe navigation possible (National Register 1988:Sec.8). As stated in the “Light Stations of Maine” Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), Maine’s light stations have assumed an important role in the growth and development of the state’s crucial maritime transportation network. They are the most technologically and architecturally significant elements in what is now an extensive system of navigational aids that manifest themselves in a variety of structures. Constructed at first in response to specific local needs, but later as part of a coast-wide pattern of aids to navigation, these complexes continue to emphasize the historic patterns of growth in Maine’s coastal communities (National Register 1987: Sec.F.III).

Maritime transportation has been a crucial factor in Maine’s unique pattern of growth. The state’s abundant natural resources were exploited at an early date largely because those resources were made accessible by the many and deeply sheltered harbors and long navigable inland rivers. Light stations provided both distantly visible directional landmarks for particular coastal areas, as well as warning signals to special hazards (National Register 1987:Sec F.III).

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The first light tower on Baker Island was also the first established in the Mount Desert Island and Frenchman Bay area. In 1823, the U.S. Government initiated efforts to warn of the treacherous shoals around the Cranberry Islands and the great sand bar that connects Baker Island and Little Cranberry Island. By 1828 a wooden light tower and a separate keeper's house, barn, and well were built, but in 1855 these structures were replaced by a new brick light tower and attached keeper's house. In subsequent years other support structures connected by a series of walkways and paths were added in response to changing navigational technologies. Temporary signal stations, watchtowers, and other military-related structures were also built on the island around the turn of the twentieth century and again during World War II. By 1958, the light tower was automated and the light station complex, except for the light tower itself, was transferred to the National Park Service.

The maritime significance of the Baker Island's light station parallels the island's early settlement significance. The light station's first light keeper was William Gilley, Jr. who, with his wife Hannah, arrived on Baker Island in the early 1800s, establishing a home and clearing the land for crops and pasturing. The couple built their first house and barn in 1812. Baker Island's remote location required the Gilleys to be self-reliant Mainers, who in time were able to export items to the mainland.

Subsequent generations of Gilleys and their spouses settled on the island and established farmsteads off of a rough road between the boat landing and fish houses on the north shore and the light station at the center of the island. When William Gilley became light keeper, his son Joseph and wife Adeline moved into his old house and over the years raised their eight children. Their son Charles would eventually own the home, and the house and adjacent foundations are known today as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. William's son Elisha and wife Hannah Stanley built a house in 1840. In time a barn and well were built nearby, and prior to 1900 Elisha's son Samuel took ownership of this house, which is extant and now known as the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. In 1867 Joseph's daughter Phebe Jane Gilley and her husband Robert Stanley built what is known today as the Stanley/Pearson house (Pearson is the current owner's surname). One of their children, William F. Stanley, also remained on the island and by 1900 built a house, barn, and fish house. These foundation remains are known as the William F. Stanley house. Additionally, a cemetery was established around 1867 near the north shore and a one-story schoolhouse was built in 1898 to educate the island's many children, both of which are extant.

The Gilley presence on the island ended around 1930, by which time active land cultivation had all but ceased. Ownership also changed, and year-round residency gave way to summer-only uses. Some houses and support structures were abandoned all together. By the time the light station was deactivated in 1955, vegetation had reclaimed some of the open fields and meadows, but views to and from the light tower were still open. Several houses were in ruins by this time, and most of the fish houses were gone.

Overall, the Baker Island landscape retains sufficient integrity to convey the site's significance to the water-related transportation and exploration/settlement themes. The light tower (1855) (not owned by National Park Service) and keeper's house (1855), the key features of the light station, still remain, as

do the oil house (1895) and fuel house (1905). Several paths, boundary fencing, a well, and stone walls remain, as do foundations and traces of other light station buildings and structures such as the first keeper's house, barn, paint locker, privy, walkways, and staircases that can still be found in the surrounding woods. Forest succession has gradually edged into the former fields that stretch from the north shore to the light tower, and now limits views to and from the light tower and keeper's house. The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house (1840) was stabilized in 2003 and 2004. Its privy, as well as the schoolhouse (1898) and the Robert and Phebe Stanley (Stanley/Pearson house) (ca.1867) and adjacent privies and wells, are still standing (the schoolhouse and Stanley/Pearson house are private in-holdings). All that remains from the other Gilley and Stanley houses, barns, and privies are stone foundations. Remnants of stone walls, cellars, as well as old orchard trees are scattered throughout the remaining open fields.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION C

Baker Island is significant under Criterion C in the areas of architecture and engineering. The Baker Island light station complex possesses a distinctive character that primarily embodies mid-nineteenth century design and construction (National Register 1988:Sec.8). According to the "Light Stations of Maine" MPDF, in 1852 the Federal Lighthouse Establishment was reorganized and improved engineered designs were introduced for the construction of light stations. Subsequent modifications to lighthouse components were made in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as warranted by new technologies. Changes came not only from an engineering discipline but also from the latest architectural trends, as evidenced in the design of the dwellings (National Register 1987:Sec F.III).

Baker Island's first light tower, which was made of wood, and a keeper's house and barn were constructed in 1828. However, both facilities were eventually deemed inadequate and rebuilt in 1855. Like most towers built at this time, the replacement light tower on Baker Island was constructed of brick in a cylindrical shape. The tower also featured a fourth-order Fresnel lens and used lard-oil instead of whale oil in its lamp. The new 1.5-story keeper's house was constructed of wood rather than ashlar granite or brick, which may have been due to masonry's tendency to retain dampness in a cold and wet climate, or to keeper's houses being located in less exposed areas, or simply the heating advantages of wooden-framed houses. A passageway connected the two structures, and it is likely a privy was built around this time. The plan, materials, and detailing of the Baker Island keeper's house were similar to those of other light station dwellings (National Register 1987:Sec.F.II).

The 1855 the light station complex encompassed a ten-acre area around the light tower and a nine-acre area on the south shore for a fog signal. The complex also included the use of a road and path that connected the light tower to the keeper's boat house on the north shore and the fog signal reservation on the south shore. There was also pasturage for the light keeper's animals. In 1875, an ell was constructed at the rear of the keeper's house, and around the turn of the twentieth century dormers were added to the building. The siding was changed from board and batten to clapboards, and at some point the appearance of the keeper's house changed from a dark color scheme to a lighter color.

Significant additions to the light station complex occurred in the 1890s through 1905, including the

construction of a one-story brick oil house to house kerosene to power the lamp, a 1.5-story wood-frame fuel house, one-story paint locker, and other storage buildings, some of which were connected to the light tower and keeper's house by elevated wooden walkways and stairways. In 1903 a second reinforcing masonry wall was added to the light tower. By 1909, the ten-acre reservation was clearly marked with a concrete post and wire fence. The grounds of the light station also served as the location of watchtowers and related structures for the U.S. military during the Spanish-American War and World War II. Coinciding with both of these conflicts was the installation of telephone lines connecting the island to the mainland.

In October 1955 the light was deactivated. In 1957 the light tower was automated but that same year the ten-acre light station was determined to be excess property. The station was acquired by the National Park Service in 1958, exclusive of the light tower that was retained by the U.S. Coast Guard. The inventory of buildings and structures at this time included the keeper's house, oil house, fuel house, paint locker, watchtower, steel flag pole, as well as walkways, landings, and stairs. The boat house was also still present at that time, but the passageway between the light tower and keeper's house had been removed.

Today, the Baker Island landscape retains sufficient integrity to convey the site's significance to the architecture and engineering themes. Principle design and construction characteristics of the light station, namely the light tower (not owned by National Park Service), keeper's house, oil house, and fuel house remain, although these structures have undergone some alterations. The keeper's house is no longer inhabited, but was stabilized in 2002. The well at the first keeper's house, connecting paths, several walls, and the perimeter concrete and wire fence remain. However, only the foundations and traces remain from the first keeper's house and barn, paint locker, and privy, elevated walkway piers, steps, stairs, and telephone poles. Evidence of other historic features, such as the boat house, the fog signal apparatus, military-related structures, and other minor structures is more subtle in the landscape. The open views to and from the light tower and keeper's house that were mostly present in 1955 are limited today due to forest succession on the island.

State Register Information

Identification Number: 88000046
Date Listed: 03/14/1988
Name: Baker Island Light Station

National Historic Landmark Information

National Historic Landmark Status: No

World Heritage Site Information

World Heritage Site Status: No

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed
Vernacular

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Lighthouse

Primary Current Use: Outdoor Recreation

Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function
Agriculture/Subsistence-Other	Historic
Cemetery	Both Current And Historic
Government-Other	Historic
Leisure-Passive (Park)	Current
Lighthouse	Current
Military Facility (Post)	Historic
Single Family House	Both Current And Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
Baker Island	Both Current And Historic
Baker Island Light Station	Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1792	Purchased/Sold	Mme. de Gregoire sells Baker Island to the William Bingham estate of Philadelphia.
AD 1806 - 1812	Settled	William Gilley, Jr., his wife Hannah Lurvey settle on Baker Island.
AD 1806 - 1807	Settled	The Gilleys cut and burn much of the island's forest cover to accommodate necessary agricultural and grazing uses, and move rocks to clear fields.
AD 1806 - 1812	Built	Gilley builds or appropriates a log cabin on Baker Island.
AD 1812	Built	Gilley builds a new two-story house with basement and ell that connects the main house and barn.
AD 1823	Planned	The Secretary of the Treasury is empowered to contract for construction of the Baker Island Light Station.
AD 1827	Purchased/Sold	U.S. Government purchases Baker Island from the trustees of the Bingham estate of Philadelphia for \$300 to build a light tower.
AD 1828	Built	U.S. Lighthouse Service builds the island's first light tower, a wooden structure, on the island's highest point, and nearby a residence for the light keeper. This light station was the first established in the Mount Desert Island area. William Gilley serves as the light station's keeper, a position he holds for over twenty years. (Today, the remains of this structure are called the first keeper's house.)
AD 1840	Built	William Gilley's son Elisha builds a single-story house. A barn foundation to the west likely dates to this year or at least before 1900.
AD 1853	Damaged	The U.S. Lighthouse Board states that the light tower and keeper's house are decrepit and worthless.
	Built	A light keeper's boat house is built on the north shore.

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AD 1854	Planned	In an effort to strike a compromise between the Gilleys and the government, the District Attorney suggests a survey, along with marking boundaries.
AD 1855	Land Transfer	The U.S. Attorney at Portland accepts a compromise with the Gilleys that gives the government only nineteen acres designated as lighthouse property, plus right-of-ways and pasturage. Ten acres surrounded the light tower and another nine acres are located on the south shore for a fog signal.
	Built	The government builds a new brick, cylindrical light tower on the island's high point to replace the original wooden structure. The new light tower has an adjoining passageway connecting it to the new wooden frame keeper's house, also located on the island's high point. The privy was also likely built around this time and the main road between the light tower and the north shore is likely formalized.
AD 1867	Built	Joseph's daughter Phebe Jane Gilley and her husband Robert Stanley build a house. Associated structures include a well, privy, and barn.
AD 1875	Built	The government adds an ell to the light keeper's house.
AD 1876	Established	Adeline Gilley, William Gilley's daughter-in-law, is buried in Baker Island's cemetery, likely established around this time.
AD 1889	Purchased/Sold	Willam Gilley's grandson, Charles A. Gilley, sells a two-acre parcel on south side of the island (known today as the Dance Floor) to J. Thorpe.
AD 1892	Purchased/Sold	Phebe Jane Gilley and Robert Stanley's son William F. Stanley acquires two-fifths of an acre from Samuel B. Gilley on the western side of the main path, north of and adjacent to the ten-acre government lot.
AD 1894	Land Transfer	Joseph Gilley dies, leaving the house to his son, Charles, around this time. (Today, the remains of this house are known as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house.)

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AD 1895	Built	The government builds the brick oil house north of the light tower/keeper's house, ca.1895. An elevated wooden walkway provides access from the keeper's house.
AD 1896	Land Transfer	Land ownership issues reopen when the island needs a new schoolhouse. The U.S. Attorney at Portland concludes that the government only has title to the land on which the light tower sits and has waived title to parts of the island that were not in the 1855 agreement.
AD 1897	Built	Baker Island Light Station includes a fog signal.
AD 1898	Built	The Town of Cranberry Isles builds a new one-room schoolhouse, which continues in operation until around 1914. The land is owed by Samuel B. Gilley.
	Built	In support of the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Signal Corps builds a signal station/building just south of the light tower/keeper's house and a barn near the first keeper's house. There is also a flagstaff.
	Built	The government installs a telephone line between Baker Island and Northeast Harbor. On the island, it parallels the main road connecting the north shore to the light tower and keeper's house.
AD 1898 - 1905	Altered	The government adds dormers to the keeper's house sometime between 1898 and 1905.
AD 1900	Built	William F. Stanley builds his house sometime before 1900. He also owns a hen house nearby and a fish house on the north shore at this time. (Today, the remains of this structure are known as the William F. Stanley house.)
	Purchased/Sold	William Gilley's grandson Samuel B. Gilley takes over his father Elisha Gilley's house sometime before 1900 and also owns a barn and fish house around this time.
	Built	The government builds a paint locker south of the light tower/keeper's house sometime after 1900.
AD 1903	Maintained	The government reinforces the exterior of the light tower with a four-inch layer of brick.

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AD 1905	Built	The government builds the fuel house/garage west of the light tower/keeper's house.
AD 1909	Maintained	The U.S. Circuit Court District of Maine hands down a decision on land rights, finding that the government is entitled to ten acres, right-of-ways, and government buildings as determined in 1855, and states that the boat house site and landing will forever be open and used jointly by the government and all others. Around this time, the government erects a precast concrete and wire fence to demarcate the ten-acre parcel.
AD 1914	Land Transfer	Samuel B. Gilley conveys to the Town of Cranberry Isles the lot upon which the schoolhouse had been built.
AD 1925	Purchased/Sold	William F. Stanley sells to Ethan Rogers Underwood his two-fifths-acre parcel.
AD 1929	Moved	Phebe Jane Stanley dies on the island and one of her sons, Albert, moves to Great Cranberry, ending about 123 years of continuous Gilley habitation.
AD 1937	Built	The government receives a steel flag pole, which is forty feet high.
AD 1937 - 2000	Built	Two large tanks supported by concrete cradles are installed just east of the oil house sometime after 1937.
AD 1940 - 1949	Neglected	William Gilley's old house, Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house complex, begins to deteriorate; the barn has already collapsed.
AD 1942	Built	The government builds a thirty-five-foot-tall watchtower ca.1942 near the location of the previous U.S. Signal Corps structure.
AD 1951	Abandoned	The Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house complex falls to complete ruin.
	Abandoned	Sometime after 1951, the William F. Stanley house is abandoned.
AD 1955	Removed	In October 1955, the U.S. Coast Guard deactivates the light. The light station is likely unmanned at this point.

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AD 1956	Retained	Only two buildings remain on the north shore, the boat house and perhaps a fish house.
AD 1957	Established	The U.S. Coast Guard reestablishes the light with an automated, unattended replacement light in April.
	Abandoned	The government abandons the boat house sometime after 1957.
AD 1957 - 1959	Removed	The Coast Guard removes the passageway between the lighthouse and the keeper's house sometime in the late 1950s.
AD 1958	Land Transfer	The government determines that the light tower complex is excess property and offers the structures and property (excluding the light tower) to other federal agencies. The U.S. Coast Guard transfers the ten acres of surplus land and buildings to the National Park Service, including the keeper's house.
AD 1966	Purchased/Sold	The Nature Conservancy purchases the western half of the island from Florence P. Underwood.
AD 1967	Purchased/Sold	The National Park Service acquires the western part of the island (exclusive of in-holdings) from the Nature Conservancy.
AD 1970 - 1979	Destroyed	Vandals set the William F. Stanley house ablaze ca.1970s.
AD 1976	Purchased/Sold	The National Park Foundation acquires the eastern half of the island from Gilley descendents.
AD 1983	Purchased/Sold	The National Park Service acquires the eastern part of the island from the National Park Foundation.
AD 1991	Planned	The U.S. Coast Guard proposes to discontinue the light because of obscured views, but complaints persuade the agency to reconsider.
AD 1997	Planned	The Coast Guard launches a second attempt to deactivate the light, but the action sparks more complaints.
AD 2002	Stabilized	The keeper's house is stabilized by the National Park Service.

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AD 2003	Stabilized	The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house is stabilized by the National Park Service.
AD 2008	Planned	The Coast Guard declares the light tower as excess property.

Physical History:

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. Historical information for this section draws from a variety of sources, chief among them a report by Archeologist Peter Morrison, “Changes on the (Is)land, Baker Island, Acadia National Park, Maine: Archaeological Reconnaissance,” dated October 10, 2008. Graphics associated with this section are located at the end of this report.

PRE-HISTORY TO 1839: SETTLEMENT AND THE FIRST LIGHT TOWER

Geological Isolation:

Although it protrudes approximately ninety feet above sea level today, Baker Island’s geological history began during the Cambrian Period on the ocean floor. Like most of the region 550 million years ago, Baker Island was composed of mud and volcanic ash that sank below the earth’s surface where it was heated and compressed by forces within the earth. Eventually, uplift and erosion exposed this material at the earth’s surface once again, but as metamorphic rock classified as the Ellsworth Schist. About 360 million to 380 million years ago during the Devonian Period, plate tectonics generated sufficient heat at depths tens of miles below the surface to melt stone, creating pockets of molten rock. This magma rose toward the surface of the earth, and was injected into the Ellsworth Schist, Bar Harbor Formation, and the Cranberry Island Series. Cooling to granite, a type of igneous rock, the masses of Baker Island and nearby islands like Mount Desert Island were formed (Maine Geological Survey, Department of Conservation).

The last major event of geologic history affecting the region was glaciation about 25,000 years ago. Thick glacial ice flowed southward a number of times during the last few hundred thousand years, sculpting the landscape seen today (Maine Geological Survey, Department of Conservation). At Baker, it left behind an island of exposed outcrops interspersed with thin layers of soil, and a rocky shoreline of massive granite boulders, blocks, and ledges. The granite on Mount Desert Island is pink, fine to medium grained, and contains black flakes of biotite mica. Examples of such granites are also well exposed on Baker Island, but here the granite has a faint but distinctive “grain” or alignment of darker minerals in a northeasterly direction. Granite would eventually figure prominently among construction materials used by Baker Island’s first settlers.

Early Uses:

Baker Island is connected by a sand bar (visible at low tide) to Little Cranberry Island situated less than a mile to the northeast. One of the Cranberry Isles, most likely Little Cranberry, is known to have been settled as early as the 1760s, while Baker Island remained uninhabited (Morrison 2008:14). In fact, Baker Island may never have been heavily or consistently occupied prior to the early 1800s, most likely because of its relative isolation from Mount Desert Island and the mainland. According to Archeologist Peter Morrison: “The island was within the traditional catchment area of the region’s prehistoric, protohistoric, and colonial-period peoples. Likely, the island would have been too small to support long term and large scale settlement, but would have been utilized by small numbers of people intermittently.”

Baker Island's location makes it likely to have been visited by French and English colonists who were generally in the area of Frenchman Bay prior to 1800. These visits were probably made under the Massachusetts government before the "intensive settlement" that followed the Seven Years War from 1754 to 1763 (Morrison 2008:15-16). Maine remained under the governance of Massachusetts until it became a separate state in 1820.

Long before such Europeans, Native Americans are believed to have enjoyed the abundance and accessibility of maritime resources along Maine's coastline, including waterways for transportation and sheltered habitation near an abundance of fish, oysters, and other marine life (National Register 1987:1). While a heavy concentration of pulverized shell fragments was noted in 2008 along one short section on the west shore of Baker Island, this deposit has been determined to be the result of natural reworking and redeposition by wave action, rather than evidence of Native American activity (Morrison 2008:52, Appendix A; Review comments, Acadia NP, June 2009).

Regardless of early visits to the island, ownership of Baker Island in the early years is shrouded in mystery and confusion. Maps from the 1760s identify the island as Baker Island, but there is no clear indication of how this name originated. In 1789, Baker Island and four other islands were incorporated as part of the Town of Mount Desert (D'Entremont 2007:1). It was seemingly owned by Madame de Gregoire as part of the vast de Gregoire holdings and conveyed in 1792 to Henry Jackson, a personage about whom little is currently known (McLane 1989:89). However, other reports claim that de Gregoire sold Baker Island to the William Bingham estate of Philadelphia in 1792 (Dwellely 1998:8). Later, in 1830, Baker Island would be incorporated as part of the Town of Cranberry Isles within Mount Desert Island.

William Gilley, Jr. Begins to Clear the Land:

On Mount Desert Island's Norwoods Cove (today's Southwest Harbor), William Gilley, Jr. was born to William Sr. and Eunice (Bunker) Gilley in 1782 (Mancinelli 1996:5). Little William would later settle Baker Island and there serve as the first keeper of the island's U.S. Government light station. He married Hannah Lurvey in 1802 when they were both twenty. Establishing their first home in Norwoods Cove, the young couple was already spending time on Baker Island during the summers, perhaps in a log cabin. Their first child, Hannah, was born in 1803 and their second, William, in 1805. Between 1802 and 1806, William Jr. is thought to have been planning his move from Norwoods Cove to Baker Island and later accomplished this between 1806 and 1812 (Morrison 2008:18).

While the exact date of the family's actual residence on the island remains unclear, documents filed with the U.S. Light-House Board suggest William Gilley assumed control of the small island as early as 1806, but began living there full time only in about 1810 (Dwellely 1997:1). When the Gilleys finally embraced Baker Island as their year-round home, they continued farming and fishing as they had done on Mount Desert Island (Morrison 2008:1,3). In order to do this, they remade what was then an uninhabited and wooded island to suit their needs. Records indicate that as early as 1807 William was paying for hired oxen to clear and haul wood, possibly on Baker Island (Dwellely 1998:2). Taking possession of the island – as there

seemed to be no one from whom William could purchase it – involved a great deal of heavy but familiar labor (“Early History of Mount Desert and Some Early Families,” n.d.). William cleared a large area of the forest on the island’s north side to accommodate planting and grazing, cut lumber for construction and fuel, prepared for acquiring livestock, and eventually built a new home (Eliot 1899,Part 1:3; Mancinelli 1996:3).

William Gilleys’ first home or shelter was reportedly a log cabin that stood overlooking the island’s north shore (near the current cemetery). Some accounts credit William with building the log cabin, while others say he appropriated it. Based on the findings of Morrison, two depressions in the ground still exist near the cemetery site, suggesting a possible cellar and an early barn. However, an oral history from Leslie Victor Stanley, great grandson of William Gilley, suggests a slightly different setting and structure. He states that the log cabin William built was located closer to the shore, about halfway between the shore and the cemetery, was constructed on a ledge outcropping for better drainage, and had no cellar.

In time the family and the homestead grew. From 1807 to 1811, three more children were born to the Gilleys – Elisha, Eunice, and Francis – and by 1812 William had built a larger two-story house on the island with a basement. This building was erected to the northeast of the current light tower (Dwellely 1998:3). Whether originally or later, the house was connected by an ell to a barn where hens, cows, sheep, pigs, and perhaps even oxen were kept. Morrison found two ells and has speculated that a third may have existed to completely connect the house and the barn (Morrison 2008:48). However, it remains unclear whether it was William, his son Joseph, or his grandson Charles who enlarged the dwelling. (On an 1854 U.S. Coast Survey map, the house is shown as a small building with a detached barn. On an 1860 F. W. Walling map, the structure appears as a connected entity and is labeled with Joseph’s name. Later, on a 1900 government survey map, the dwelling appears as a complex under Charles’ name, and the detached barn is no longer shown. As was once the practice, the detached barn may have been moved and joined to the main house.) Since it is likely that William moved out of the dwelling sometime after 1828 when the first light keeper’s dwelling was built and since his grandson Charles was unmarried, it seems most likely that, if the additions were built over time, it would have been Joseph who enlarged the dwelling for his family of eight sometime between 1854 and 1860. Today the ruins of the building are known as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house.

Between 1813 and 1826, another seven children were born to the Gilleys: Joseph, Samuel, Matilda, Lucinda, John, Mary, and Elmira. By the time John was born in 1822, his father and older brothers had transformed Baker Island into a tolerable farm. They had cleared a major part of the island, burning a fine growth of spruce, fir, birch, and beech in the process. Using his oxen, William had broken up the land for the production of hay and other crops, such as wheat, potatoes, and other vegetables (Eliot 1899,Part 1:3). Stones unearthed from the ground had been piled up on ledges and defined crop and pasturage areas (Morrison 2008:13). For its part, the island naturally supplied blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, huckleberries, and wild currants near the shore (Mancinelli 1996:6).

Up to this point, the expanding Gilley family had lived an agrarian life and supplemented it with

fishing. For example, various maps and historical photos indicate that boat and fish houses lined the north shore during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, no obvious signs of these buildings remain, beyond the lines of dried tar on the rocks that show where nets and lines were tarred and then laid out or hung to dry (Morrison 2008:61). This maritime environment was about to play a much greater role in the Gilleys' lives on Baker Island.

The First Light Tower and Keeper's House:

On March 3, 1823, legislation empowered the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to contract for the construction of a light tower on Baker Island. The locations of such light stations certainly were not accidental. Sites were chosen because they offered a suitable elevation for an effective navigational unit in a heavily trafficked area and because they warned of particularly hazardous dangers to navigation (National Register 1987: Section II:7). The Baker Island light was proposed to warn of the treacherous shoals around the Cranberry Islands and of the great sand bar connecting Baker Island and Little Cranberry Island (Komusin 2001:1). The island's natural high point and the fact that it had been cleared of trees also likely played a role in its selection. An initial appropriation of \$2,500 was earmarked and later supplemented with other appropriations totaling \$5,100. This would be the first light tower established in the area of Mount Desert Island.

In order to build the light tower, the government purchased Baker Island in its entirety for \$300 from the Baring brothers, who were trustees of the William Bingham estate of Philadelphia. The title was for 123 acres and 75 rods and was deeded to the federal government on December 18, 1823 (though today we know the island's total area to be around 170 acres). The size of this purchase deviated from the usual acquisition of only three or four acres for a light tower. There appears to be no explanation for this departure (McLane 1989:89). In the deed, no evidence exists to show that William Gilley was considered to receive squatter's rights for the areas of the island he had cleared and settled for at least seventeen years (Dwelley 1997:1). The dubious right of ownership would become a point of contention in later years.

Laying ownership issues aside, the first Baker Island light tower was built in 1828 by the U.S. Light-House Board, under the authorization of Congress and President John Quincy Adams. It was a twenty-six-foot wooden tower with an octagonal wrought-iron lantern, and contained ten whale oil-fueled lamps and fifteen-inch reflectors to focus and magnify a fixed white light. From the apparatus, the beams of light could be seen for twenty-seven miles. Based on the 1854 U.S. Coast Survey map, the tower appears to have been built on the highest point of the island, although other documentation disagrees on the location. The final cost of the original wooden light tower was \$3,798.26.

The U.S. Light-House Board also built a four-room residence with an attached kitchen for the light keeper near the light tower (D'Entremont 2007:1). The detached light keeper's house was located northeast of the light tower (and about 115 feet from the current light tower). The structure had a small ell on the east side, which was likely the kitchen. The house may well have had a porch on the east side and, further east still, an attached barn. While the 1854 U.S. Coast Survey map confirms the location of the ell's foundation seen today, it shows a detached barn to the southwest of the house. A well was likely built ca. 1828 to the north of the house.

It is also likely that by this time, and possibly earlier, a road or path extended from the north shore to the keeper's house and light tower.

William Gilley was appointed the first keeper of the light station on June 12, 1828 and lived in the keeper's house while he held the position. This left his own home vacant for his son, Joseph Gilley, who moved into it in 1837 with his wife Adeline Dolliver Gilley (Morrison 2008:19). (Adeline Gilley would live the rest of her life on Baker and become the first person buried in the island's cemetery in 1876.) The young couple raised seven children, some of whom remained on the island their entire lives. Their son Charles Gilley (1847-1914) would take over what is known today as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. Their daughter Phebe Jane Stanley (1843-1929) had four children and her son, Albert, was last to live on the island, ending the history of the Gilley family residency on Baker Island (Mancinelli 1996:3,13).

1840-1854: DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND MARITIME USES

Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley House:

As William Gilley's children were beginning to marry and move off the island, his son Elisha brought his wife Hannah Stanley back to Baker Island after they married in 1831 (Morrison 2008:19). In 1840, Elisha built a new house for his family and lived there for the rest of his life. The couple would eventually raise nine children. One of Elisha's sons, Samuel Bulger Gilley, would inherit the house from his father, live there with his wife Hattie, and eventually raise a family. Although Elisha died in 1901, Samuel was already listed as the owner of the house on the 1900 government survey map. This house is known as the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and is still standing.

The 1.5-story house featured a square block design with lateral wing extensions, a gable roof, and a brick chimney built upon a granite foundation (Figure 1). Historic photos show a privy to the southeast of the house. Morrison has documented several small but deep depressions, one of which may be a well. Another well lies about 138 feet southwest, but may be associated with William's grandson Samuel B. Gilley's barn instead (Morrison 2008:41). The barn appears on an early 1854 U.S. Coast Survey map. Its foundation can still be seen today as a single course of field stones laid in a rectangular pattern to the southwest of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. Nearby those ruins are the well that is now filled with stone, animal pen, and stone walls (Morrison 2008:41). It is not clear when Samuel actually took ownership of the house or exactly when the barn was built. However, the barn ruins seem to date to either 1840 or at least sometime before the creation of the 1900 government survey map. (Since Samuel was born in 1852, he could not have owned the barn in 1840, as some documentation has suggested.) The 1900 government survey map also indicates that Samuel was the owner of two fish houses on the north shore.

Land Disputes - Part One:

The agrarian and maritime lives of the Gilley family experienced upheaval in 1849 when William Gilley was replaced as light keeper after more than twenty years of service. While the circumstances surrounding his departure are not entirely clear, there is some indication that his political affiliation conflicted with the popular Whig party and he was replaced on July 28 of that

year. William subsequently left the island to live on Great Duck Island, which he owned. He later returned to Baker Island to live out the rest of his life until 1872 with his son, Joseph, who had never left the island. Joseph's household and that of his brother Elisha were the only two noted in the 1850s census, in addition to the family of the new light keeper John Rich (Dwelley 1998:iii).

With William living on Great Duck Island, his two sons on Baker Island allegedly unleashed a great deal of aggravation upon the new keepers. The first keeper, John Rich, stayed in his position only until 1853 when Joseph Bunker was appointed to replace him. The first official report of trouble was filed on December 10, 1853 by Light House Inspector W.B. Franklin. He stated that the keeper was being deterred from using the land and from free access to the landing area on the north shore. This was evidenced by the wooden fence that had been erected by 1854 to surround almost all of the cleared land from north of the (first) light keeper's house to the northern shore, including the keeper's boat house and fish house that were in place by this time, if not earlier. Franklin reported that the Gilleys had been ordered to leave repeatedly but that they had refused and threatened to use force (McLane 1989:91). He called for the removal of the two Gilleys from the island (History of Baker Island 1954:1). On December 27, 1853, the Secretary of the Treasury directed that legal action be taken against the Gilleys, who were now considered trespassers (History of Baker Island 1954:1).

The next year, on May 1, 1854, the District Attorney reported that the Gilleys, as squatters, would contest the title and request original or certified copies of the deed of conveyance and correspondence at the time the land was purchased. On May 6, the U.S. Light-House Board sent copies of the deeds of conveyance and cession. The District Attorney reported back on September 15, 1854, saying that it would be difficult to secure evidence to prove the federal government's title, due to the death and old age of witnesses, and doubted that the government could prove clear title, especially against nearly fifty years of the Gilleys' unopposed occupation. The clouded question rested on possession having been taken around 1806. In an effort to strike a possible compromise, the District Attorney suggested a survey and the marking of boundaries. He recommended that the government retain a right to nineteen acres, including government buildings and necessary right-of-ways (McLane 1989:91). A decision in the case, however, would not be forthcoming until the following year.

As noted earlier, by 1854 and according to a U.S. Coast Survey map, the light station included a one-story and wood-frame boat house on the north shore of the island (Figure 2). Though nothing remains of the structure today, the location is marked by a rusted, hand-powered, launchway winch just beyond the shore and drilled stones extending in a line from the winch to the water. Stone footings supported a rail-frame structure used to haul and launch the keeper's launch.

Plans for a New Light Tower and Keeper's House:

While the position of keeper was changing in the early 1850s, the light station itself underwent major improvements. In 1853, the U.S. Light-House Board released its annual report, containing a review of the light tower and keeper's house conditions. The board stated that the tower was completely worthless and that the dwelling was so decrepit and leaky that it was

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unhealthy. Requiring an appropriation of \$10,000, the board recommended that both be rebuilt and that a new light tower be fitted with a new Fresnel lens light of the fourth or fifth order (U.S. Light-House Board Annual Report 1853). On March 3, 1851, Congress had already authorized the use of the Fresnel light in its light towers, but it would be another four years before a fourth-order Fresnel was installed at Baker Island (National Register 1987:6). Named after designer M. Augustin Fresnel and first used in 1819, the Fresnel light was a major technological advancement over the earlier Argand lamp. Instead of parabolic reflectors placed behind lamps, the Fresnel apparatus made use of a centrally located oil-burning wick surrounded by a lenticular lens that refracted light into parallel rays (National Register, cites Alexander George Findlay 1987:8).



Figure 1. Post-1867 view of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel Gilley house and privy, looking northwest, with historic Stanley/Pearson House behind (second from left). (No. 0042, Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 2. View looking east at the light station keeper's boat house with launchway rails on the left, after 1957. (Acadia National Park Archives)

1855-1929: A NEW GENERATION FOR THE LIGHT STATION AND ISLAND RESIDENTS

Construction of a New Light Tower and Keeper's House:

On September 29, 1855, a decision was handed down concerning the land ownership issue on Baker Island. An agreement between the Gilleys and the government provided that the government would have use of the boat landing on the north shore in the area of the keeper's boat house, and a right-of-way heading southeast from the landing up to the light tower. The right-of-way would likely have realigned or established more formally the road (known today as the main path) at this time to provide a direct route from the north shore to the light station. The compromise also included use of pasturage for the light keeper's animals and set aside about nineteen acres as government property (History of Baker Island 1954:1-2). Ten acres surrounded the light tower, and approximately another nine acres were set aside for a fog signal on the island's south shore. A distinct path also led to the fog signal reservation and was likely part of a right-of-way as well. For the moment, the controversy of ownership seemed settled, but it would actually endure for another fifty years.

The other main issue resolved at this time was the decrepit conditions of the light tower and the keeper's house. The wooden light tower on Baker Island was replaced in 1855 with a new brick light tower (Figure 3). The use of brick represented advancements in the design of

Maine's light towers that was underway in the 1850s, as did its cylindrical shape rather than a conical shape. The structure was forty-three feet tall and had two windows, one on its north side and one on its south, illuminating the metal spiral steps inside (National Register 1988: Section VII:2). A fourth-order Fresnel lens, having a fixed light with intermittent flashes every ninety seconds, was installed. A lard-oil lamp was put into service, replacing the former whale oil lamp (D'Entremont 2007:3,6). An appropriation of \$5,000 was authorized for the replacement's construction and all but \$36.93 was spent (History of Baker Island 1954:2). Later, in 1903, the light tower's exterior was reinforced with a second course of brick, though the reason is unclear.

Also in 1855, a new keeper's house was built just to the east of the new light tower (see Figure 3). Like the new light tower, the new keeper's house also reflected design improvements. Keepers' dwellings by this time were typically of wood-frame construction rather than ashlar granite or brick (National Register 1987: Section II,2). The change in material may be connected to the decision to locate such dwellings in less exposed sites or with the unfavorable tendency of masonry buildings to retain dampness in a cold and wet marine climate. Also, the advantages of heating a frame house had become obvious by this time (National Register 1987: Section II,4).

The new keeper's house was a 1.5-story wood-frame rectangular building with a gable roof and brick chimney, and was built upon a granite foundation (see Figure 3). The building featured board and batten siding that was painted a dark color until sometime between 1874 and 1880 when it was painted white, which likely coincided with the change to clapboard siding (Figure 4) (National Register 1987:Section II,4; Beacons/Buoys 1874:26; U.S. Light-House Board Annual Report, 1880; Day-Marks 1881:11). A one-story rectangular ell with a gable roof was added to the rear (south) elevation in 1875. Other additions, such as dormers, were added sometime after ca.1898 (Morrison 2008:55). An enclosed passageway connected the keeper's house and light tower and was possibly used as a workshop (Morrison 2008:55).

A gable roof privy was built soon after the construction of the new light tower and dwelling, and was located just south of the keeper's house on the edge of a steep bedrock declivity. Historic photographs also show what appears to be a vegetable garden near the first keeper's house (see Figure 3). Just beyond the keeper's house and the light tower ran a wooden fence consisting of posts and two rails. As early as 1880, this fence ran west from just beyond the light tower and then turned sharply to the north, running to the northwest corner of the ten-acre government parcel. The fence ran either alongside a stone wall or loose stones in piles (see Figure 4).

The Gilley and Stanley Families, and the Cemetery:

The island's population appears to have peaked around 1850, when a census recorded thirty-four people living on the island. During the 1850s and 1860s, between the three households of Elisha Gilley, Joseph Gilley, and that of the light keeper, the island's population was in the twenties. Among the residents in these years was Phebe Jane Gilley, daughter of Joseph Gilley, and her children. William Gilley's granddaughter Phebe married Robert Stanley in 1862, and their house is thought to have been built around 1867 when Phebe was twenty-five

years old (Mancinelli 1996:12). Built on the west side of the main path just northwest of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house, this 1.5-story wood frame house featured a side-entry hall. There was also a well, privy, and possibly another structure nearby (Morrison 2008: 37). The house appears on an 1875 U.S. Coast Survey map and was identified as the Stanley house by the 1881 Colby Atlas (see Figure 1) (Morrison 2008:25).

Sometime around 1876, a cemetery was likely established when Phebe Stanley's mother, Adeline, died. It was located in a cleared area overlooking the north shore, in the vicinity of the log cabin used by William Gilley, Jr. in the early 1800s.

Phebe and Robert Stanley had four children, one of them being William Fredrick Stanley, who was born in 1866 and lived on the island. William Stanley married Carrie E. Ober in 1889. His house was built sometime before 1900, since it appears on a 1900 government survey map. Located to the southwest of the schoolhouse and the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house, the 1.5-story building was built on a granite foundation and included a cistern in the cellar. According to the 1900 survey map, William Stanley also owned a hen house nearby and a fish house on the north shore.

Light Station Improvements and Additions, 1890s-1905:

Around the turn of the twentieth century, the government built several ancillary structures to update operations at the light station, as shown in a 1900 government survey map (Figure 5). In the 1890s, a fog signal was constructed south of the light station in an area referenced as the "fog signal reservation." Entries in government documents listed the fog signal in 1892, 1893, 1898, and 1899 (U.S. Government 1897, Snell, ed. 1974). A fog horn here was reportedly operated by a fly wheel, which involved running on the spokes to start it (Mancinelli 1996:9).

Around this time, kerosene was replacing lard oil as the fuel to power lanterns and a new storage facility was needed to house this combustible fuel at a safe distance from other buildings. Built ca.1895, Baker Island's brick oil house fulfilled that purpose. The one-story brick building was located about 100 feet north of the light tower and featured a gable roof, and chimney, and was built atop a concrete foundation (Figure 6) (Proceedings 1957:2; Buoy/Daymarks 1909:20). Two large tanks supported by concrete cradles were installed just east of this structure sometime after 1937.

In 1903, a second masonry wall was added to the light tower for reinforcement. By 1905, a 1.5-story fuel house/garage was built about 200 feet west of the light tower. The wood-frame and gable roof building was built on a stone foundation and housed the gasoline-powered vehicles that were used by the light keepers to haul supplies from the boat landing on the north shore up to the light tower along the main road, which Elisha Gilley maintained as a town way in return for a reduction in his taxes (Mancinelli 1996:10). A road leading to the fuel house from the main road was likely cut at this time.

Historic photographs show an elevated boardwalk with a railing and set on granite piers providing access between the keeper's house and the oil house, while a flight of stairs led from the ledge at the light tower's elevation down to the fuel house below (Figure 7). Because

Maine's light stations generally existed on uneven rocky land, such walkways provided safe passage between the various buildings. Depending on how severe weather was at a particular location, the walkways were either left uncovered and provided with railings, or they were enclosed completely (National Register 1987: Section II, 6).

After 1900, a paint locker was built just south of the keeper's house next to the privy. The one-story wood-frame building featured a gable roof and was built on a granite foundation (Figure 8) (Proceedings 1957:1). Historic photographs show at some point a boardwalk with railing connecting the paint locker and privy and the 1900 government survey map suggests that it extended to the light tower (Figure 9). In total, the light station had about 150 linear feet of walkways, landings, and stairs (Report of Excess Real Property 1958:2).

Wartime Uses - Part One:

Simultaneous with the light station improvements were additions for war-related uses. Around 1898, the U.S. Signal Corps built a station just south of the light tower, likely in response to the Spanish-American War that began that summer. Morrison speculates that the Signal Corps post on the island may have been intended to give the gun batteries around the entrance to Frenchman Bay an early warning of an impending threat. Another reason may have been to help direct artillery fire (Morrison 2008:27, cites Dr. Vincent Bowditch). This early structure may have been a telegraph house that may have included a signal-flag pole adjacent to it (Morrison 2008:54). Associated with this operation was the government's Signal Corps barn, or shed, built around the same time (see Figure 6). No definitive evidence of these structure remains today, but the poles of the signal station were probably later converted for telephone wires to the Islesford Coast Guard Station (Dwelley 1998:14).

Also in 1898, the government installed a telephone line that connected the keeper's house to the boat house, generally following the main road (see Figure 5). The line connected Baker Island to Northeast Harbor, via Bear Island. The cost of the telephone line was to be covered by an appropriation from national defense (U.S. Light-House Board Annual Report, 1898). (Along with the telephone line, there may have also been a submarine cable [Proceedings 1957:2].)

According to the 1900 government survey map and historic photographs, the west half of Baker Island and about half of the ten-acre light station, was dominated by a low scrubby spruce forest. However, the remaining half was mostly grasses and exposed ledges, which stretched north around the various Gilley dwellings and to the north shore (see Figure 5). Within these open spaces, stone walls, roads, and paths helped to define specific areas. The survey map indicates that a substantial stone wall on the island was within the government reservation and extended some 250 feet in length north of the keeper's house. On the north shore were numerous fish houses (Figure 10).

Land Disputes - Part Two:

At the height of the island's population around 1850 there were many children living on the island, most of whom were fathered by William Gilley's sons Elisha and Joseph. The first school may have been established as early as the 1830s, but some reports state that the school was only established in the mid-1850s, when a "school term would be arranged as needed –

normally in someone's homestead" (McLane 1989:91; Mancinelli 1996:11; Dwelley 1998:10). The first schoolhouse building may have been built around the 1860s (McLane 1989:91). However, in 1898 a new schoolhouse was established on the west side of the main road about halfway between the north shore and the light station. The one-story wood frame structure featured a small entry vestibule attached to the northeast gable-end (Morrison 2008:26,41). The Baker Island school continued to operate at least until 1914, but not many more years beyond (Dwelley 1998:18). The building stood on a plot of land owned by Samuel B. Gilley, who conveyed the land to the Town of Cranberry Isles in 1914 for \$15 (McLane 1898:93).

It was the issue of rebuilding or relocating this schoolhouse that reopened the dispute between the government and the islanders. Some of the summer residents of Mount Desert Island who visited Baker Island and were friendly with the Gilley families hired the best lawyer in Portland to defend the Gilleys' ownership claim (Mancinelli 1996:11). This process apparently began around 1896, and around the time that the schoolhouse was built in 1898 the conclusion of the U.S. Attorney at Portland was announced, stating that the federal government had title only to the land on which the light tower and related buildings were built and that the government had waived its title to other parts of the island and could not claim the entire nineteen acres (McLane 1989:91). The U.S. Attorney stated in part that it would be: "unfair and oppressive at this late date to assert the paramount title of the Government as against the few poor and hardy fisherman living there; and if the United States has and intends to allow them peaceable possession of these scanty and sterile lands, I can see no earthly objection to allowing the town of Cranberry Isles to build a schoolhouse for the proper education of their youth. This schoolhouse is not built upon what is known there as the Government reservation..." (History of Baker Island 1954:2)

The 1900 government survey map shows that the nineteen acre government reservation included three distinct areas: the ten-acre light station reservation, the nine-acre fog signal reservation, and the boat house reservation (see Figure 5). The map indicates that the corners of these areas were physically marked by inscribed stones and/or monuments.

It was not until May 26, 1909 that the U.S. Circuit Court District of Maine decided to clearly and finally settle the question of ownership. The decision stated that the government was entitled to use the right-of-way from the boat landing to the light tower and other government buildings, and that the boat house site and landing would forever remain open to all and used by all who had an interest in the island (History of Baker Island 1954:2). With this definitive decision, it appears likely that a permanent fence was installed to demarcate the ten-acre portion of the light station complex, although it is possible it may have been installed around 1900, or perhaps even earlier as part of the 1855 decision to build the new light tower and keeper's house. Whenever it was, the fence consisted of a gate across the main path and pre-cast concrete posts that were connected by three tiers of a single-strand wire (Morrison 2008:59). There may also have been a gate on the south side for the path that led to the fog signal area. The fence was an obvious sign of the strained relations between the government and the island residents at the time.

William Stanley's mother, Phebe Jane Stanley, died on the island in 1929, and one of her other

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sons, Albert, moved to Great Cranberry Island. Their departure ended approximately 123 years of continuous Gilley habitation of Baker Island (Mancinelli 1996:13). Both are buried on the island, Phebe in 1929 and Albert in 1949 – the last two graves added to the Baker Island cemetery.



Figure 3. A 1859 view looking south of (from left) the roof of privy, keeper's house, passageway, and lighthouse. Note road with low stone walls, foundation of first keeper's house, and furrows of garden at bottom right. (Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 4. View looking southeast at government's ten-acre lot at keeper's house, passageway, and light tower between 1880 and 1895. Note wooden fence in the foreground alongside either a stone wall or piled loose stones. (Acadia National Park Archives)

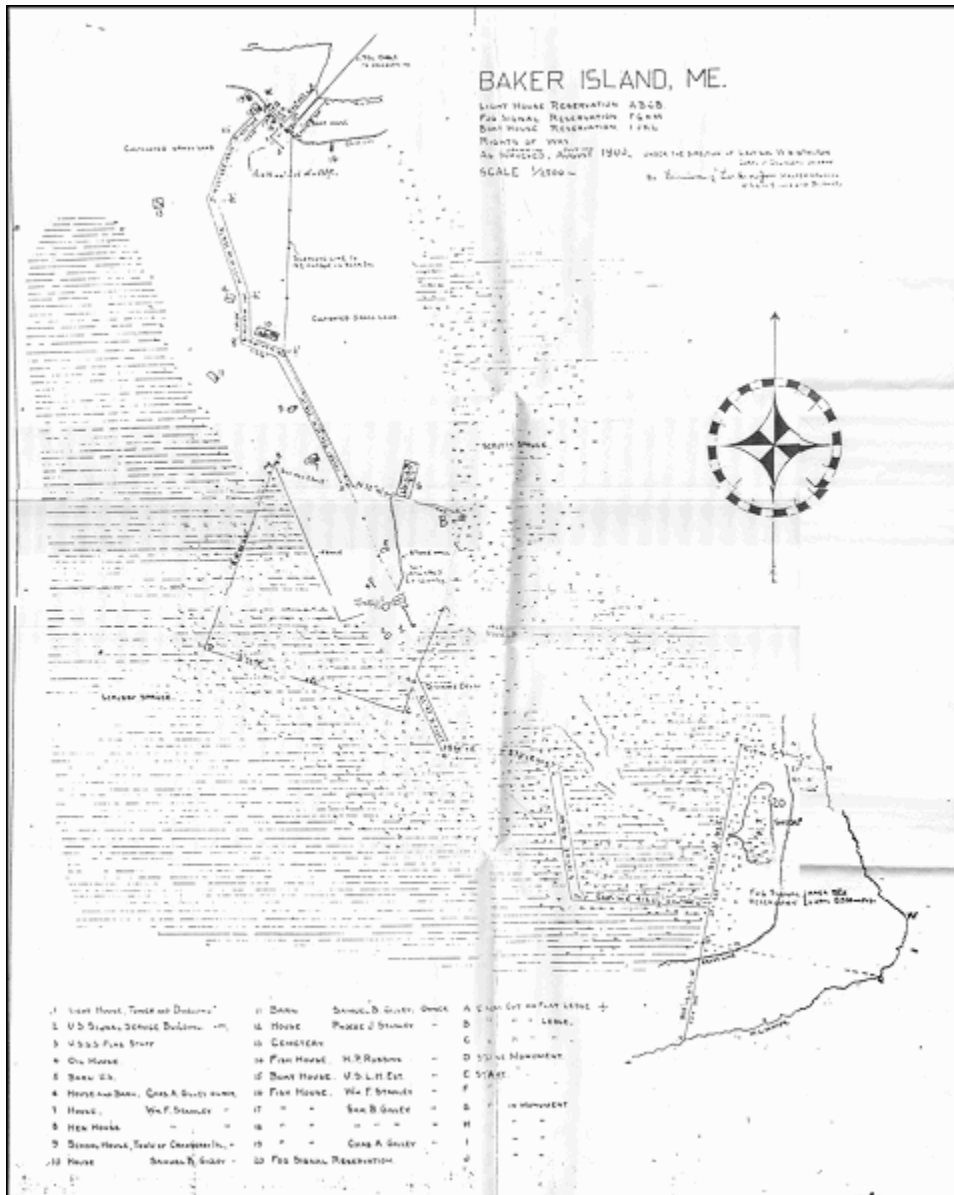


Figure 5. U.S. Government survey map from 1900, showing three reservations: a ten-acre light station (center), nine-acre fog signal (bottom), and a one-acre boathouse (top), all connected by right-of-ways. (Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 6. An 1895-1898 view looking south at (from left) an unknown outbuilding, Signal Corps barn, privy, keeper's house, passageway, light tower, walkway, and oil house. Stone walls are visible at image left. (Acadia National Park)



Figure 7. Keeper's house, passageway, and light tower after 1905, view looking southeast. A wooden staircase leads to the fuel house located just beyond image right. (Postcard photo courtesy of Jeremy D'Entremont)



Figure 8. Pre-1937 view looking south at (from left) paint locker, keeper's house with passageway to light tower, and oil house, after 1898. Note phone pole (far left) and walkway from oil house toward the keeper's house. (Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 9. Post-1942 view looking east from the military watchtower down to the paint locker (left) and privy with connecting walkway. (No. 0045, Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 10. View of fish houses on the north shore of Baker Island, looking southwest, after 1900. (Acadia National Park Archives)

1930-1955: NEW RESIDENTS, A NEW SIGNAL TOWER, AND CLOSURE OF THE LIGHT STATION

Vanishing Homesteads:

New families came to Baker Island in later years, but primarily as seasonal residents (Figure 11). In the 1930s and 1940s, according to an oral history provided by Kenny Sawyer, the Underwood family summered at Southwest Harbor and visited Baker Island occasionally, staying in the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house that they had acquired. The Underwoods also owned the schoolhouse and much of the western half of the island at this time. How the Underwoods might have been connected to the Gilley descendants is unclear. Meanwhile, Joseph Gilley's first daughter, Harriet or Hattie, married Stanley Colter. The Colters basically owned the eastern half of the island (Mancinelli 1996:12). Meanwhile, William Gilley's old house, the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house, had portions of the roof and windows missing by the 1940s and the barn had collapsed (Figures 12-13). By 1951 the rest of the structure was in ruins (Morrison 2008:48).

Wartime Uses - Part Two:

Such destruction and decay would soon seem a minor concern as World War II touched all lives, even the few who still lived quietly on the island. In 1942, a watchtower was erected on nearly the same site as the previous Signal Corps service building shown on the 1900 government survey map (Morrison 2008:27). According to an oral history from Leslie Stanley, the watchtower was built for submarine surveillance. The skeleton timber structure was about thirty-five feet high and remained in place until sometime after 1958 (Figure 14) (Proceedings 1957:1; Morrison 2008:54). In addition, photographic evidence reveals a Coast Guard outbuilding just to the west of the fuel house dating at least to 1951, but perhaps even as early as World War II. It may have been a second garage, but its exact purpose is unknown (Morrison 2008:54).

It was also around the 1940s that a new line of telephone wires was installed on the island. Similar to the earlier line, it ran from the boat house south to the keeper's house, but the route of the new line was east of the old line. It is unclear if the first telephone line was dismantled around this time.

Forest Succession Begins:

Part of the reason Baker Island had long served as an important site – whether for a light tower or a watchtower – was that there were unobstructed and panoramic views from the island's highest point. Most trees had been removed since the Gilleys had taken over the land beginning in the early 1800s. However, as the island's population began to decline after the 1850s and as farming later declined as well, vegetation gradually returned. By 1854, the island's vegetation was primarily spruce (although the 1854 map calls it white pine) except for the wide open swath of inhabited and cultivated land that stretched from the light tower to the north shore. The 1900 government survey map shows basically the same broad swath of open land from the light tower north to the shore, with the surrounding forest labeled as “scrubby spruce.”

Historic photographs suggest that by the 1940s and 1950s, the “scrubby spruce” areas were thickening and slowly beginning to reclaim some of the former fields and pastures. By the 1950s, however, the areas around the light tower and keeper’s house were still mostly open, and the tower was clearly visible from the north shore boat landing and the life saving station on Little Cranberry Island. Most of the northwestern corner of the island and the land between the Stanley/Pearson house and the cemetery was also still open, providing views to the ocean (Figures 15-16) (Mancinelli 1996:13,14,20,23). The main road between the north shore and the light station was still clearly visible in 1951.

Deactivation of the Light:

Another issue in the 1950s was the changing role of the light station. In 1955, the federal government determined that the light was no longer needed and it was deactivated. At this point, the light station probably became unmanned.



Figure 11. Visitors to the island ca. 1938 on the north shore. Note the boathouse launchway rails. (No. 1460, Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 12. View looking north of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house with barn beginning to deteriorate, ca. 1940s. Note telephone pole (left), stone wall in foreground, and paths running north and northeast. (Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 13. View looking north of the deteriorating Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house, with the house in more ruinous condition and the barn already removed or collapsed, ca. 1940s. (Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 14. View looking south at watchtower, probably in the 1950s. Note peeling paint on structure. (No. 0046, Acadia National Park Archives)



Figure 15. View south in ca.1958 of (from left) paint locker, keeper's house, watchtower (behind house), light tower (passage gone, fence up), and oil house (tanks gone). More trees since ca.1937 (Fig 8). (No. 0633, Acadia National Park Archives)

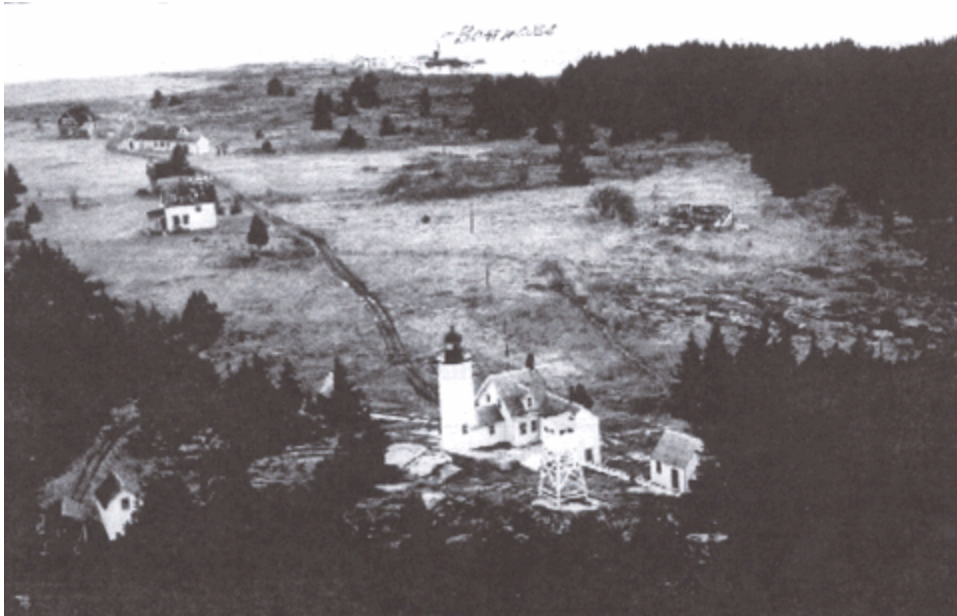


Figure 16. This view from ca.1951 looks north at the inhabited portion of Baker Island, showing open fields and views between the buildings. The ruins of the ca.1812 Gilley house and barn are on the east side of the field. (U.S. Coast Guard)

1956-2009: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STEWARDSHIP AND THE SUMMER RESIDENTS

Acquisition of the Light Station Property:

In 1957, the light was reestablished with a new automated and unattended light for the benefit of local fishermen and yachtsmen (Survey 1957:2; D'Entremont 2007:4). However, the usefulness of the buildings – and their disposition – was a more complex question. On August 2, 1957, Proceedings of a Board of Survey recommended that the light tower be disposed of as excess property. On March 25, 1958, the General Services Administration/Public Buildings Service (GSA) sent out to other federal agencies a “Notice of Availability of Excess Real Property,” stating that the Baker Island light tower had been determined to be excess property, and offering the property to other federal agencies for their use.

Within the notice, the GSA listed the following buildings: a two-story dwelling with six rooms and a basement (keeper’s house), a single-story paint locker, a two-story garage and loft, a single-story oil house, a lookout tower, a steel flag pole, a single-story boat house, walkways, landings, and stairs (Morrison 2008:59). The total fair market value of the entire property as described was, at the time, \$2,500, while the cost had been \$7,548.28. The list also outlined limitations on use of the site: the twenty-by-twenty-foot area of land immediately around the base of the light tower still belonged to the U.S. Coast Guard, and no new construction or tree growth would be allowed to obstruct the view of the light (GSA, Public Buildings Service 1958:1-2).

The Report of Excess Real Property also offered a physical description of the island, noting it as being half wooded, twenty-five percent cleared, and twenty-five percent rock outcroppings. Interestingly, it shed light on current thinking at the time – and perhaps offered a bit of foreshadowing – as it noted the range of possible uses for the Baker Island property to include either summer homes or a recreation/resort area (GSA, Public Buildings Service 1958:1-2).

In 1958, the Coast Guard transferred the ten-acre light station reservation, except for the light tower, to the National Park Service for inclusion in Acadia National Park. The transfer included the keeper's house and other structures. At the time, the earlier condition was restated: no construction or natural growth was to be allowed on the ten acres that might obscure the light (GSA, Public Buildings Service 1958:1-3). At this time, the Baker Island light tower's light could be seen for at least eleven miles (U.S. Government 1958:23, Snell, ed. 1974).

Acquisition of the Island:

It was not until 1967 that lands beyond the ten-acre light station became part of Acadia National Park. The western half of the island became part of the park in 1967 and was acquired from the Nature Conservancy, which had purchased it from Florence F. Underwood in 1966. When Underwood came to own the property is not clear. The acquisition did not include the U.S. Coast Guard light tower, cemetery grounds, schoolhouse, the Stanley/Pearson home, and the Greening Island Trust's "Dance Floor," a series of massive, flat granite slabs at the water's edge on the island's south shore. This area was in the vicinity of the former fog signal reservation (Morrison 2008:3). In 1983, the eastern part of the island was added to the park. It was acquired from the National Park Foundation, which had acquired it from Gilley descendants in 1976.

Managing Forest Succession:

The National Park Service found it fairly easy to disallow the construction of new structures and thereby comply with the Coast Guard's building restrictions for the light tower area. However, the regrowth of trees proved much more difficult to manage. Former owners of the Stanley/Pearson house (overlooking the north shore) recall a clear line of sight from the west side of their house to the water as late as the 1960s. The two tracks of the original road were also still clearly visible in 1967 (Mancinelli 1996:14,18,23).

In the decades that followed, the island's spruce forest continued to mature. By 1991 the Coast Guard raised concerns about succession and the impact on the light tower, and proposed to discontinue the light because the surrounding trees were blocking most or all the light from the water. However, more than 150 complaints persuaded the Coast Guard to reconsider its position (D'Entremont 2007:5). A few years later, the National Park Service partnered with the College of Forest Resources at the University of Maine to determine the best course of action to manage forest succession. Students measured the topography and trees, and in a 1993 report, "The Forest and the Beacon of Baker Island: Topography, Tree Height, and Tree Growth," evaluated management alternatives that included: implementation of the Coast Guard's proposal of using lighted marine buoys, raising the level of the light to make it more visible from the sea, and developing a resource management plan based on the periodic removal

of trees obstructing the view of the light from the water. The last two alternatives included a recommendation to sector the northern portion of the light tower beacon red to warn boaters of the shoals between Cranberry Isle and Baker Island (University of Maine 1993:1). The report's key finding was that a great deal of clearing and trimming of trees would be needed to keep the light visible, and such an undertaking was likely beyond the park's means and resources (D'Entremont 2001:2). Another report in 1994, by a student from the College of the Atlantic, explored options that favored a combination of cutting and burning (Danskin 1994: 1,22). The fire management alternative drew a response from the Islesford Historical Society, which feared that such fires might inadvertently escape their confines and destroy what was left of the old Baker Island community. The group preferred a combination of other alternatives, including selective forest cutting, grazing, mowing, and herbicides (Dwellely 1994:2).

In 1996 the Coast Guard began making plans to repair the light tower, and observed that the optic, though not yet obscured, soon would be if tree growth continued at the current rate. In a letter to Acadia National Park, the agency warned that if this issue was not properly addressed, the light tower could not be maintained as an aid to navigation. The Coast Guard also stated that forest succession had occurred during the National Park Service's ownership, the concern had been raised earlier in 1991, and the issue continued to be unresolved. Since there were no acceptable substitute locations at that time, the Coast Guard could not simply discontinue its maintenance and operation of the Baker Island light tower (U.S. Coast Guard 1996:1-2). Park Superintendent Paul F. Haertel responded to the Coast Guard's concerns on October 21, 1996, acknowledging that the two basic issues were: maintaining and/or restoring remnants of the historic landscape, and maintaining and/or restoring visibility of the light as a navigational aid (National Park Service 1996:1). By this time, the two tracks of the main road had faded to a narrow grassy path (Mancinelli 1996:17,18).

The Coast Guard initiated a second attempt to deactivate the light in 1997, but the proposal sparked a letter-writing campaign that once again convinced officials that mariners still needed the beacon (D'Entremont 2007:5). The light continued to shine, and in the late 1990s a new solar panel was added to power it. In May 1997, the park took another step to address forest succession and improvement of visibility of the light tower, setting out a perimeter around it for possible timber harvesting. Within the total area to be harvested – approximately 26.96 acres – four stands were delineated in 1998. Among the conclusions was that the Baker Island forest was very thick, and logistically a harvesting project would present challenges and likely cost more than the market rate for the logs (Acadia National Park, Baker Island Cruise 1998:1,11). Ten years later, succession issues have continued. In the last few years, the Islesford Historical Society has again called upon the park to take some action and return the island to the way it looked when the park took over much of the island (Dwellely 2007:1). The park continues to study the various proposals. Most recently, the Coast Guard in 2008 declared the light tower as excess property (Review comments, Acadia NP, June 2009).

Visitation to the Island:

While some visitors to Baker Island come to the island on their own as boaters, most come in the summer on an interpretive boat cruise led by park rangers who narrate the history of the

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island. In 2006, 1,183 visitors participated in the 4.5-hour program. The following two years, the number of visitors increased to 1,688 and 1,697 respectively. Visitors receive detailed talks about life on a Maine island in the nineteenth century. The lives of the Gilley family of Baker Island, homesteaders and later light keepers, are well documented and make a fascinating story. Being able to see the intact homestead and light makes the story very real to visitors and allows them to go away with an increased appreciation for the fortitude and legacy of our ancestors. As intact sites of the settlement period become rarer, this protected Maine island will provide an increasingly valuable experience (Project Management Information System, 2008).

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

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The significant landscape characteristics identified for the Baker Island inventory unit include natural systems and topography, land use, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, cluster arrangement, views and vistas, small-scale features, and archeological sites. Many of these characteristics have associated with them features that contribute to the site's overall historic significance and identity, as well as features that do not contribute or are undetermined.

The physical integrity of the Baker Island landscape is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1840-1955) with current conditions. Although the spruce forest has begun to reclaim some of the formerly open fields and rock ledges, the clustered arrangements of extant buildings within the old farmsteads and light station, and their relationships with the island's natural features and topography, are still discernable. The main road from the north shore, which is now a grassy path, leads to the 1855 light tower and keeper's house perched at the highest point at the center of the island. Other paths connect to the 1895 oil house, 1905 fuel house, the cemetery, and the south shore. The main path also passes by the 1840 Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and privy, and near several old wells, stone walls, and apple trees. Other features in the landscape include portions of the government's concrete and wire fence that marked its ten-acre reservation, a winch and drilled stones associated with the keeper's boat house, telephone poles and stumps dating to the turn of the twentieth century, and iron bars that once secured a World War II watchtower. There are also numerous house and barn foundations and remnant circulation features that are essential to the historic character, but for the purposes of this report they are identified as undetermined to the site's significance. The light tower, Stanley/Pearson house, schoolhouse, and cemetery convey the site's historic significance, but are private in-holdings and are therefore not listed as contributing features.

Since 1955, several buildings, structures, and features have been lost or removed, including the fish houses, government boat house, the paint locker, World War II lookout tower, steel flag pole, fuel tanks, and elevated walkways and stairs. Forest succession has begun to reclaim some of the former fields and now blocks the direct views between the north shore and the light tower and keeper's house, and to a lesser degree between the individual farmsteads. The keeper's house and the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house have been stabilized and are currently unoccupied. Wooden interpretive signs have been added at various locations, and a security fence surrounds the base of the light tower, but they do not detract from the historic scene. Although the site's setting is somewhat diminished due to the loss of some of the site's buildings and structures and the gradual encroachment and growth of the forest, the analysis in this report concludes that the Baker Island landscape retains sufficient integrity in location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance in the areas of exploration/settlement, water-related transportation, architecture, and engineering.

Methodology:

The boundary of the Baker Island Cultural Landscape Inventory, encompassing around forty-seven acres, was historically the inhabited and cultivated portion of the 170-acre island and the location of the government light station. It was part of a 100-acre area that was studied as part of a two-week field reconnaissance effort for the report, "Changes on the (Is)land, Baker Island, Acadia National Park,

Maine: Archaeological Reconnaissance.” Using historical maps as a guide, other areas of the island were not studied in the archeological survey because there were likely to have been few sites there (Morrison 2008:6).

The following evaluation of integrity also considers several buildings not currently owned by the National Park Service but nonetheless contribute to the significance and character of the island’s early settlement and maritime landscapes. These include the light tower owned by the U.S. Coast Guard, the privately owned Stanley/Pearson house and schoolhouse, and the Baker Island cemetery owned by descendants of the Gilley and Stanley families.

ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY

Location:

The locations of buildings and structures related to Baker Island’s early settlements and light station are unchanged. The island’s physical and topographic features influenced the siting of the boat landing on the north shore, the numerous Gilley farmsteads near it, and the government’s decision to build a light station, and later military watchtowers, on the island’s highest point. Despite the slow but persistent growth of the surrounding forest, the now-automated light tower still shines atop the island’s highest point to warn of the dangerous shoals and bars nearby.

Design:

The practical design and clustered arrangement of the various Gilley and Stanley farmsteads, the schoolhouse, and the government’s light station buildings and structures reflect the island’s remote location, harsh weather conditions, and physical characteristics. All of these features were sited relatively close to the lone boat landing on the north shore, but purposely sheltered from the sustained winds blowing in off the ocean from the northeast. They were also in close proximity to each other, linked together by fenced and walled pastures and fields and a main road that lead to the shore. These physical arrangements also bore witness to the close-knit community of intergenerational families that lived here. Within each farmstead was a dwelling with various combinations and arrangements of ells, barns, privies, wells, gardens, and other structures close by. At the light station specifically, the second (current) keeper’s house and light tower were joined by a passageway, and later were accessed by elevated walkways and stairs to a privy, oil house, fuel house, and paint locker. The new light tower and keeper’s house also reflected the latest trends in lighthouse engineering and design; the tower was built as a sturdy brick cylindrical structure with a fourth-order Fresnel lens, while the keeper’s house was constructed with a wooden frame and siding that was easier to heat. While some of the buildings and structures are gone or in ruins and vegetation has reclaimed some of the once open fields and bare rock ledges, enough historic buildings, structures, and views remain to convey these important design characteristics.

Setting:

The setting of Baker Island is diminished due to the loss of some buildings and structures related to the settlement of the island and light station, and also the slow but steady forest succession in some of the formerly open fields and exposed granite ledges. When the Gilleys were actively working the land and

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managing vegetative growth on Baker Island in the 1800s, they changed the island's setting from a mostly dense forest to one of cleared fields and bare rock ledges in a distinct area from the north shore to near the island's peak. Such conditions, however, were ideal for establishment of the government light station at the center of the island in 1828, which became the cornerstone of this community. But after William Gilley's departure as light keeper in 1849, tensions mounted between the two separate but intertwined uses, leaving the neighbors emotionally and physically divided through a series of wood and wire fences, gates, and stone walls erected by both the island residents and the government. By the end of the historic period, however, both the agricultural and maritime uses were in decline, with some features already in ruins or abandoned. Today, the agrarian setting has been replaced by one of seasonal residency for two unrelated families and occasional passive recreation, while the maritime uses are limited to the light atop the automated light tower. Other buildings and structures have been abandoned or are in ruins, and the main road has become a grassy path. That said, the intact buildings, structures, remaining fields, and views together still convey at least a sense of the early settlement and maritime settings.

Materials:

Historically, materials used in buildings, structures, and walls were found on the island, in part due to the difficulty of transporting the needed materials from nearby islands and the mainland. The island offered up granite for foundations and field stone for walls, while the forests of spruce, fir, birch, and beech provided lumber for dwellings, outbuildings, fences, and telephone poles. By the 1940s and 1950s, some of the island's abandoned wood-frame structures had fallen to ruin, but their stone and granite foundations continue to be visible in the landscape. Other structures built only with timber, such as the fish houses and boat house on the north shore, and the watchtowers, walkways, and stairways at the light station, have disappeared. In 1855, the U.S Light-House Board chose brick as the material of choice in the construction of the new light tower and again when a reinforcing wall was added to it in 1903. Brick was also used to construct the oil house in 1895. Pre-cast concrete posts and smooth wire were used in ca.1909 to demarcate the ten-acre reservation. The masonry and concrete materials are extant.

Workmanship:

Granite foundations provide the best evidence of workmanship on Baker Island. The William F. Stanley and Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley houses have extant foundations of randomly shaped split granite arranged in random courses. While neither of the houses is extant today, the foundations bear witness to the practical yet unpolished skills of the builders, like members of the Gilley and Stanley families. Stone wells and walls in the landscape display a similar utilitarian style. However, the first keeper's house foundation and ell are built of dry laid split and dressed granite blocks. Since this house was commissioned by the government for the light keeper, it is possible that hired workers rather than the islanders built the structure and account for the different styles.

Feeling:

Many of the most significant buildings and structures associated with the farmsteads and the light station continue to convey Baker Island's historic significance. Taken together, these structures, along with the remnant foundations and the less worn but still extant main path, represent the community life

that surrounded agrarian efforts and then expanded to include maritime activities. During the period of significance, most of the buildings were in clear view of each other, thereby heightening the sense of connectedness to each other and to the sea. Since the historic period, vegetative regrowth on the island has obscured some of these key views. However, the extant houses – the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house, the Stanley/Pearson house, and the schoolhouse – are still in view of one another, creating the distinct sense of community that once existed throughout the island. The Stanley/Pearson house is still a residential property, though not owned by National Park Service. The light keeper’s house and the Gilley house are not currently in use, but have been recently stabilized and retain their character from the historic period. The schoolhouse, also not owned by the National Park Service, has been converted to residential use.

Association:

Baker Island continues to be a site that exemplifies Maine’s farming and seafaring economy – a way of life that elsewhere disappeared with the development of summer colonies. The light tower and the keeper’s house are extant from 1855 and continue to represent the island’s maritime uses. The light tower is automated now and still an operational navigation aid, and the uninhabited keeper’s house has been stabilized and may someday again serve as a residence. Two of the light station’s support structures, the oil house and the fuel house, are extant and exhibit the growth and importance of Baker Island as a light station. Two of the historic farmhouses – the unoccupied Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and the seasonally occupied Stanley/Person house – remain, as does the old schoolhouse that is today used as a seasonal residence. The main path, though more narrow than in the past, continues to connect the structures on the north side of the island to the heart of the light station complex at its center. Extant stone walls mark, at least in part, former fields and pastures, while old apple trees, some with bountiful fruit, dot the landscape.

The section that follows presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features, and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property’s National Register eligibility for the historic period (1840-1955) and to its historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. Items noted with an * are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Landscape Characteristic:

Other - Natural Systems and Topography

Historic and Existing Conditions:

Baker Island encompasses around 170 acres and is located slightly over three miles south of Mount Desert Island and less than one mile southwest of Little Cranberry Island. The island connects to Little Cranberry Island via a sand bar visible only at low tide. The granite outcrops, ledges, and rocky shorelines that characterize Baker Island are similar to the distinctive pink and fine to medium-grained granite on Mount Desert Island, except here the granite features a faint “grain” or alignment of darker minerals in a northeasterly direction. During glaciation, thick glacial ice flowed and retreated across this region, sculpting the landscape seen today.

The island’s physiography influenced the development of the Baker Island community. The

rocky shoreline limited safe landing to a small cove on the north shore, thereby establishing a critical single access point (Figure 17). In the early nineteenth century, William Gilley and his family settled on the island, clearing away a swath of forest from the north shore up toward the island's highest point and pulling up rocks from the thin soil to create fields and pastures. Gilley's first dwelling stood near the north shore, but around 1812 he built a larger house further inland where it was certainly less exposed to the open water and elements. In time, subsequent generations of Gilleys and their spouses established small farmsteads, a cemetery, and even a school in a narrow area stretching southward from the north shore up to a high point near the center of the island, an elevation of about ninety feet.

In 1828, the U.S. Government built a light tower on the island's cleared high point to warn mariners of the dangerous shoals and sand bar. In 1855, a new brick light tower and attached keeper's house were built on the high point, and they remain there today. Around the turn of the twentieth century, support structures to house kerosene and other fuels were built at a safe distance downhill and amongst the granite ledges that defined the light tower and keeper's house area. Elevated walkways and stairways linked these buildings and other storage structures to the light tower and keeper's house. The island's high point also proved to be ideal for military watchtowers in the late 1890s and the 1940s.

Prior to William Gilley's arrival, the land on the island was heavily forested with stands of spruce, fir, birch, ash, and beech trees. Wild blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, huckleberries, and wild currants reportedly grew near the shores, and historic maps indicate that there were several small swamps on the north, west, and south shores. Agricultural activity held forest regeneration in check, but by 1900 a forest described as scrubby spruce had returned to cover much of the island except for farmstead areas between the north shore and the light tower. As agricultural activities and regular human intervention continued to decline into the 1900s, the forest gradually thickened and began to reclaim some of the open lands. In 1958, when the light station was transferred to the National Park Service, the island was estimated to be half-wooded with about twenty-five percent rock outcroppings and another twenty-five percent cleared land. At that time, the trees were perhaps about ten to twenty high and still allowed unobstructed views to and from the light tower. However, the vegetative regrowth on the island continued to the point where in 1991 the U.S. Coast Guard warned that the light tower's beam would soon be obstructed if forest growth was left unchecked (Figure 18). Presently, ninety percent of the island is wooded, dominated by red spruce and lesser amounts of balsam fir, white birch, and white spruce. The portion of the island from the landing area on the north shore to the light tower is a large swath of grass and forbs with scattered low-lying shrubs and groups of trees. There are also patches of lupine and sumac scattered throughout, and some old apple trees (see Vegetation section below).

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 17. View of some of the flat granite slabs on the south shore, looking west. (OCLP 2008)



Figure 18. View to the north from the top of the light tower showing long views to Little Cranberry Island and Mount Desert Island. The maturing spruce forest has blocked the historically open views to Baker Island's shorelines. (OCLP 2008)

Land Use

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

In Baker Island's early history, Native Americans possibly used the land and its shores as one of a number of abundant and accessible maritime resources along Maine's coastline. The island may have provided temporary or intermittent habitation for small numbers of people but was probably too small to sustain long-term or large-scale settlement. Due to its geography and geology, the island is unlikely to have been heavily or consistently used prior to the early 1800s.

With the arrival of Europeans, more defined agricultural and maritime activities occurred on Baker Island. William Gilley moved to the island between 1806 and 1812 and cleared a portion of the land of vegetation and stones for his agricultural fields. He also kept farm animals, thereby making required pastures as well. The island's soils were primarily glacial in origin, thin and acidic, which made farming difficult. Still, the Gilley's grew wheat, potatoes, and other vegetables, as well as hay and flax. They also likely had smaller garden plots associated with their dwellings. In 1897, a cultivated flower garden existed on the island and was praised for its marigolds. As shown on a 1900 government survey map, cultivated grass lands were also maintained. From the earliest Gilley years to at least the 1930s when the last of the Gilley/Stanley families moved away, farming was conducted on the island, as was a limited degree of granite quarrying for building foundations.

By 1828, the first light tower was built by the government. The light tower marked the southwestern entrance to Frenchman Bay and warned of the treacherous shoals around the Cranberry Islands and the hidden sand bar linking Baker Island and Little Cranberry Island. Around 1854-1855, disagreements over land use rights were documented between island residents and the government's second light keeper, and the residents used stone walls and wooden fences to encircle much of the cleared land north of the keeper's house. Within these limits were most of the agricultural lands. In the late 1890s, disagreements resurfaced again and by 1909 the government established its own fence to enclose ten acres of land around the light tower and the attached keeper's house. Approximately nine acres of land on the southern shore was also reserved for the government's location of a fog signal to assist mariners. Over the years, the number of structures on the island increased in support of light tower operations. These included the addition of the paint locker, the fuel house, and the oil house, all within the government's ten acres. The light tower was deactivated in 1955, and this is the last year that the light station was manned, but the light was reestablished in 1957 with an automated light. However, the remainder of the ten-acre property was determined to be excess property and offered to other federal agencies. The parcel was transferred the National Park Service in 1958.

The cleared fields and generally low vegetation also afforded the use of the island for military purposes. In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, the government built a signal station just to the south of the light tower and a barn, or shed, to the northeast. Archeologist Peter

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Morrison believes that the Signal Corps post may have been intended to give the batteries around the entrance to Frenchman Bay an early warning of an impending threat. Another reason may have been to offer spotting for directing artillery fire. Later, during World War II in 1942, the island again served a military role when a watchtower was erected on nearly the same site as the previous signal station.

The Baker Island cemetery was likely established sometime around 1876 when Phebe Stanley's mother, Adeline, was first to die and be buried on the island. In subsequent years, twelve other graves would be added to the cemetery, ending with those of Phebe herself in 1929 and her son, Albert, in 1949. A fence may have enclosed the cemetery.

A plot of land was also devoted to a schoolhouse built in 1898 about halfway between the light tower and the north shore on the west side of the main road. The schoolhouse building and its land were owned by Samuel B. Gilley who sold the property to the Town of Cranberry Isles in 1914. The school closed soon after this date.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

The Baker Island light was reestablished in 1957 with an automated light. The remainder of the ten-acre property, exclusive of the light tower, was determined to be excess property and offered to other federal agencies. The parcel was transferred to the National Park Service in 1958.

While agricultural land uses have long since disappeared, such activity is evidenced in the form of remnant open fields and stone walls. In addition, scattered apple trees remain from fruit orchards. The open fields are now host to goldenrod, iris, asters, daises, thistle, rosa rugosa, wild blueberries, and lupines, for example. A conspicuous patch of St. Johnswort in a distinctly square shape lies north of the cemetery and may indicate the outline of a former garden plot. These plantings and gardens were closely associated with the residents' farmhouses as an extension of their agricultural practices on a smaller scale.

The automated light tower is currently owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and continues to be an active aid to navigation, but the keeper's house, oil house, and fuel house have been abandoned and are now owned by the National Park Service. Portions of the boundary fence – in the form of many concrete posts – still mark the ten acres that were once designated as being under the government's direct ownership. The World War II watchtower was removed sometime after 1958, thus leaving the island's military history to be evidenced today by only two vertical iron bars that secured the wooden watchtower to the granite ledge bedrock south of the light tower and now hidden by trees. Much of the acreage that was once devoted to maritime and military uses has been reclaimed by the forest.

The cemetery, though within the boundaries of Acadia National Park, is privately owned by descendents of the Gilley and Stanley families (Figure 19). It has had no new graves since the end of the historic period. By 1996 the cemetery was considered by some to be in poor

condition, and today some of the grave stones are now covered with thatch and lichens, and at least two headstones have fallen over. Elisha Gilley's stone has broken into several pieces. The grave markers are generally white marble, and one grave – that of Robert Stanley – is outlined with granite curbing. The cemetery is not enclosed by a fence or marked by any other boundaries. A grass path looping from the main path to the cemetery and back to the path is kept mown.

The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley home was owned by Florence Underwood in 1966 who sold it to the Nature Conservancy, a non-profit conservation organization that protects ecologically important lands and waters. The National Park Service acquired this house and the western half of the island in 1967. The park acquired the eastern half of the island in 1976 from the National Park Foundation, which had acquired it from Gilley family descendents. The schoolhouse building is presently owned by the Kolm family as an in-holding within the park's boundaries, and used as a seasonal residence. Another in-holding in the park is the former Phebe Jane Stanley home, which has continued to be used as a residential property and is now owned by the Pearson family as a seasonal residence.

Today, Baker Island is a recreational destination for a small number of Acadia National Park visitors who venture to the island with a park ranger. Other visitors arrive on the island's shores in their own water craft for a day of passive recreation. An interesting recreational use of note is on the south shore and in an area called the "Dance Floor." The large flat rocks here have in the past served as an occasional gathering space for social events and dances. This area was likely the same area owned by the government and known at least by 1900 as the fog signal reservation. Today, the area is privately held by the Greening Island Trust.

A small concentration of pulverized shell fragments was noted in 2008 on the shore of Baker Island's west side. Such exposed shells can often be indicative of Native American shell middens, but the site has offered no firm evidence of Native American activity.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Fields
Feature Identification Number: 139056
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 19. The Baker Island cemetery and surrounding fields, looking southeast. The Stanley/Pearson house (red) and Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house (white) are seen in the distance. (OCLP 2008)

Vegetation

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

Certain types of vegetation stood witness to human habitation and active cultivation, including rhubarb, spirea, grasses, and apple trees. Cultivated flower and vegetable gardens are also believed to have been associated with the dwellings. However, specific documentation is scarce.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

For all the vegetative growth on Baker Island over the years, certain types of other plants declined or were lost. According to memories of former island residents and photographs gathered by Isabel Mancinelli, fire weed, blueberry, and even succulent sea spinach were once more dominant (Mancinelli 1996:14). Why these plants went into decline and to what extent forest succession played a role is unclear. Traces of planted gardens are no longer evident except for a patch of St. Johnswort in a distinctly square shape that lies north of the cemetery.

Old apple trees are scattered across the formerly inhabited portion of the island, and in October 2008 the National Park Service conducted an inventory on Baker Island to locate, assess, map, and photograph the apple trees and their varieties (Figure 20). This survey was part of a larger ongoing project to locate and document historic orchards in Acadia National Park, where there are numerous orchards associated with historic homestead sites. Many are presumed to date

to the earliest period of historic occupation of the area, ca.1780-1860, but the orchards have never been systematically inventoried, nor their condition evaluated to determine their significance as components of cultural landscapes. Orchards like those on Baker Island may include heirloom apples varieties that are rare or disappearing. In the next phase of the project, fruit specimens will be collected for identification.

Character-defining Features:

- Feature: Apple Trees
Feature Identification Number: 139060
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: St. Johnswort Patch near Cemetery
Feature Identification Number: 139058
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 20. One of several apple trees on Baker Island. This tree is near the foundation remains of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. (Acadia National Park, 2008)

Circulation

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

The location of early walking paths on the island are unknown, but were likely worn tracks that

connected the various dwellings and structures. One such footpath had likely been used to access the area of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house, the first substantial dwelling on the island. Another footpath likely developed after 1876 to reach the newly established cemetery on the northwest side of the island.

The primary means of circulation on the island was along a road that connected the north shore boat landing to the light tower and keeper's house. Over time, most of the main dwellings and structures built by the Gilley family and the government were built near or directly alongside this route. Passing through open fields, the road probably existed in some form by 1828 when the government's first light tower and keeper's house were built. In 1855 a court decision established the government's ten-acre light station reservation and the second light tower and keeper's house were built. The route was made part of a government right-of-way and may have been realigned or improved. At this time, though, the road was considered a town road, and at its crossing on the north side of the reservation there was a gate. On the south side of the government's acreage, it continued south as a path through another gate to the government's nine-acre fog signal reservation. A third gate may have secured access to this reservation.

The main road was a two-track road as late as 1951 and could accommodate motor vehicles. In some areas, retaining walls and fill were added to level the surface. The road surface was natural – whether grass, stones, ledge, or soil – as the island's geography dictated. Over time, as the population declined and the surrounding forest began to reclaim former open areas, the main road began to gradually narrow and shift in places. Around 1905, a secondary road branched off from the main road to the fuel house, also known as the garage. It traversed mostly level terrain, suggesting it was used by motorized vehicles. Again, the road surface was natural.

Walkways – whether covered or open with wooden railings – were common features within Maine's light station landscapes where uneven ground and rocky outcroppings made passage difficult or dangerous. On Baker Island, a wooden walkway is known to have existed from the keeper's second house south to the privy. Eventually, the walkway also incorporated the paint locker en route. Another wooden walkway with handrails existed ca.1895 from the keeper's house north to the brick oil house. This walkway was raised on granite piers. For the convenience of light station personnel, a set of stairs was built on the ledge outcropping between the light tower and fuel house below. The staircase had a brick/concrete platform on the level above and a concrete base on the lower level. It was presumably built ca.1905 when the fuel house was constructed.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

While historic grass paths have long since disappeared, a path to the cemetery from the north shore looping back to the main path is kept mowed, as is another path from the cemetery to the Stanley/Pearson house.

The main road today is more accurately described as the main path, as it is no longer a two-track road but rather an earthen and grass footpath varying in width along the route from the north shore to the light tower (Figure 21). Another path extends from the fuel house south to the former fog signal reservation area on the south shore (Figure 22). The road to the fuel house is extant but is impassable in some areas due to low hanging tree branches. A brick/concrete pad at the top of the ledge outcropping marks where the wooden staircase once led down to the fuel house below. At the lower elevation where the stairs would have ended, a second concrete pad is extant. While nothing remains of the wooden walkway that connected the keeper's house to the privy and later the paint locker, the granite piers that once supported the walkway between the oil house and the keeper's house are still visible.

Note: The remnant circulation features listed below contribute to the historic significance and character of the Baker Island landscape. However, according to National Register criteria, they do not have integrity as above-ground resources. As an evaluation of their integrity has not yet been made by an archeologist and concurred by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, they are evaluated as "undetermined."

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Main Path

Feature Identification Number: 139128

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Path to Fuel House

Feature Identification Number: 139130

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Path to South Shore

Feature Identification Number: 139132

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Mowed Paths to Cemetery

Feature Identification Number: 139134

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Piers of Keeper's House-Oil House Walkway (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139136

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Pads of Keeper's House-Fuel House Stairway (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139138

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 21. View looking south along the main path that once was the main road to the light station complex. (OCLP 2008)



Figure 22. View looking south along the path to the south shore. The trail alternates between an earthen tread to one of exposed ledge shown here. (OCLP 2008)

Buildings and Structures

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

William Gilley's first shelter on Baker Island was presumably a log cabin near the north shore, between 1806 and 1812. It is unclear whether he built it or appropriated an already existing structure, and little is definitively known about its size or configuration of the building. However, some reports contend that the one-story structure was square, and may have had a cellar and also a barn nearby. These structures were likely to have been among the earliest on Baker Island. They were probably dismantled or abandoned after William Gilley built a larger home on the island.

Beginning in 1812, the first of several and more permanent houses were built in an area between the boat landing on the north shore and the island's central high point. Northeast of the high point, William constructed a more substantial dwelling for his growing family. The two-story house had a cellar of granite blocks and field stone and measured approximately forty-four by eighteen feet. It eventually consisted of two or three ells and a barn measuring about twelve by sixteen feet, and may have had a front porch. A well was located about sixty-five feet to the northwest and may have been dug at the time the house was built. The house passed down to William's son, Joseph, and later to Joseph's son, Charles. By the 1940s these structures were deteriorating, with portions of the roof and windows missing and the barn completely collapsed. By 1951 the entire complex had fallen to ruin.

In 1828, the government built the first light tower and keeper's house on Baker Island. The twenty-six-foot tall wooden light tower was built on the island's highest point and featured an octagonal wrought-iron lantern. To the north of and downhill from the tower, the government built the first keeper's house. This dwelling – completely detached from the tower – was a four-room structure and had a small ell on the east side, probably serving as the kitchen. The house may well have had a porch on the east side and, farther east still, an attached barn. About eighteen feet north of the house was a well, likely dug around this time. Both the tower and the house were deemed to be in poor condition by 1855 and were abandoned or partially dismantled.

In 1840, the Gilley family added another structure to their island community. William's son, Elisha, built a dwelling for his family about halfway between William's house and the north shore. The double-pile Cape Cod-style structure featured twelve rooms with wing extensions at both gable ends. The main block was a two-story, five-bay, square structure facing north. A central chimney punctured the gabled roof on the main block. The lateral wings were gabled, single-story units, measuring about half the depth of the main block. The western wing had a second interior chimney and a small ell at the back, to the east of which is the cellar bulkhead. The structure sat on a random rubble masonry foundation with a partial cellar beneath the main block. Nearby was a single-hole privy which later became a two-hole privy. By 1900 this house was owned by Elisha's son, Samuel B. Gilley. Around 1900, Samuel also owned a barn southwest of the house. The barn was possibly built in 1840 but certainly by 1854. A well was located about thirty-three feet from the barn.

In 1853, the government built a boat house on the island's north shore for the light keeper's use. The structure measured thirty by twelve feet and featured a wood foundation, frame and siding, along with a hand-operated launchway winch. Though the date is unknown, cement-asbestos roof shingles were later added. Also, there were wooden rails about 100 feet long set on wooden posts. According to National Register documentation, boat houses in this region were almost always built as rectangular, wooden frames with a gable roof that had a large opening at one end for boat slips and a variety of windows and doors in the remaining walls. Baker Island's boat house exemplified this style. Just to the east of the boat house in 1854 was a small fish house, likely belonging to the light keeper.

Both the light tower and keeper's house were rebuilt in 1855, on the island's highest point. The new light tower was a brick cylindrical tower and was connected to the new keeper's house by a passageway likely used as a workshop. The new Fresnel lens was installed in an octagonal glass cupola with a rounded metal dome and ball finial. The light tower's exterior was reinforced with 4 inches of brick in 1903. The new attached keeper's house was a six-room, wood-frame dwelling consisting of a rectangular 1.5-story main block with a gable roof (running east-west). The house was set upon a stone foundation with a brick skirt on the main block. The main block had a brick chimney at the ridge, and the roof was shingled in wood. The keeper's house had its main door on the west side of the front (north) façade and a cellar bulkhead on the main block's east side. In the cellar, the dwelling had a cistern and a coal-fired

steam furnace. Also, a privy was located south of the light keeper's house. It measured thirty square feet and had a wood-shingle roof, and was connected to the keeper's house by a wooden walkway. In later years, the keeper's house underwent some alterations. In 1875, the government built a single-story rectangular ell attached on the house's south side. It had a gable roof (running north-south) with a chimney protruding from the south end of the ell's roof ridge. A side entrance on the ell's east elevation was accessed by wooden steps. The ell had a cellar doorway on its south elevation and a rear entrance on the south end of its west elevation. This last entrance had an enclosed porch with a shed roof that extended from the ell's west roof slope. The ell's south elevation was the only wall of the house that did not have windows. The exterior of the keeper's house was initially covered with board-and-batten siding but replaced with clapboards sometime between 1874 and 1880. It was also originally painted brown, as was customary, but sometime during these same years the building was repainted white. Single-gable dormers were added to both roof slopes of the main block between 1898 and 1905. The last light keeper arrived in 1953, and in 1955 the light station was deactivated and the keeper's house presumably abandoned. The light tower was reactivated and automated in 1957.

By ca. 1854-1855, but possibly earlier, there were several stone walls built on the island that marked edges of fields and pastures and also separated the Gilley lands from the government's lands. One stone wall was situated east of the first keeper's house and ran northeast to William Gilley's second house and barn, and then connected to another wall or fence that continued on to the north shore. Another stone wall ran from the northwest corner of the first keeper's house to the southwest, and then tied into another wall or fence that ran northwest to the vicinity of the Samuel B. Gilley barn and another series of stone walls and fences that continued to the northwest shore. By 1900, another stone wall/wooden fence ran west of the light tower and then turned north to tie into the northwest corner of the government's ten-acre reservation. Concurrent with construction of the new light tower and keeper's house were improvements to a road leading to it from the north shore, which was part of the government's right-of-way. In an area where two ledges met just before the keeper's house and light tower, low stone retaining walls were built to level the road and provide direct access for supplies. However, it is also possible the walls may date to later when vehicles are known to have been driven on the island.

Around 1867, William Gilley's granddaughter, Phebe, married Robert Stanley and added another residence to the Baker Island community, on the west side of the main road and just northwest of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. The couple's 1.5-story, side-entry-hall home had a privy nearby and a well. It may also have had a barn. This house later became known as the Stanley/Pearson house.

In 1895, a brick oil house was constructed to store combustible kerosene that had replaced lard oil as the fuel to run the light tower's lantern. Built north of and downhill from the light tower, the building measured 100 square feet, had a concrete slab foundation, and, at some unknown date, asbestos roof shingles were installed on its gabled roof. An elevated wooden walkway

set on granite piers crossed the uneven terrain and lead to the light tower and keeper's house. Two large metal tanks supported by concrete and brick cradles were added east of the structure sometime after 1937, but their contents are not known.

To educate the island's growing population, a one-room schoolhouse was built around 1898 on the west side of the main road, between the light tower and the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. The schoolhouse building and its land were owned by Samuel B. Gilley who sold the property to the Town of Cranberry Isles in 1914, soon after which the school closed. The single-story building had a small entry vestibule attached to the northeast gable-end, and a privy was located nearby.

A 1900 government survey map showed other buildings and structures on the island at this time. In addition to the boat house and the keeper's fish house, there were four other fish houses belonging to Samuel B. Gilley (who owned two), Charles A. Gilley, and William F. Stanley. It is unknown when the fish houses were abandoned or dismantled; they were not noted on a 1935 U.S.G.S. topographic map, but they may have been overlooked. William F. Stanley also owned a 1.5-story house, measuring about twenty-five by thirty feet, on the west side of the main road and just south of the schoolhouse. The map indicates he had a small hen house directly west of his home. The house was built by 1900, and historic photographs suggest it was abandoned by ca.1951.

Soon after 1900, a single-story paint locker and wooden deck were built to the south of the light tower, adjacent to the keeper's house privy and connected to the privy and house via a wooden walkway. This storage building measured about 18.5 by 16.5 feet, had a stone foundation, and wooden shingles on the roof and the exterior walls. In 1905, a fuel house (also called the garage), measuring about 19.5 by 13 feet, was built southwest of the light tower by the U.S. Coast Guard to store fuel and automobiles driven by light station personnel. The structure had a wood post foundation and loft above the ground floor.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

Extant buildings and structures currently owned by the National Park Service include the second keeper's house, oil house, fuel house, and the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and its privy. Of these, the most significant is the 1855 keeper's house (Figure 23). The passageway between the house and the light tower was likely removed between 1957, when the light tower was reestablished with an automated light, and 1958 when the National Park Service acquired the house. The light tower remained under U.S. Coast Guard ownership. Wooden stairs on the east side of the structure leading from a door in the ell to the ground below have been removed and left to decay in the adjacent woods. In 1990 a Condition Assessment Report made recommendations for preservation and stabilization of the building. The keeper's house was painted and stabilized in 2002 and evaluated as being in fair condition in 2008. The house is presently unoccupied, and the windows are secured with vented sheets of plywood.

The 1895 oil house is in good condition, although the windows are boarded up and some peeling paint can be seen on the exterior woodwork (Figure 24). The adjacent concrete cradles also remain, but the tanks were removed in the late 1950s or after. A 1984 inventory recommended exterior restoration and adaptive interior reuse in conjunction with the keeper's house. The 1905 fuel house was evaluated as being in fair condition in 2006 (Figure 25). Some of the shingle siding is missing or in poor condition and paint is beginning to peel. In 1951 there was another structure just to the west, probably another garage, but today no trace of it remains.

The house that Elisha Gilley built in ca. 1840 is now known as the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house (Figure 26). In the 1970s, the building showed areas of deterioration, but in 2003 it was stabilized and its condition was assessed as fair. The windows of the unoccupied house are now boarded up. The three granite steps at the front door have sunken such that one step is above grade, the next is at grade, and the last is below grade. Although the extant privy is unlikely to be original to the house, it appears to be in the same location and similar in design to the privy shown in historic photographs (see Figure 1). The wood-frame structure features a two-hole privy today.

There are many remnant foundations of other buildings and structures associated with the Gilleys and the light station, including the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house and barn, first keeper's house and barn and privy, Samuel B. Gilley barn, William F. Stanley house, paint locker, and various wells and unidentified cellars. The remains of William Gilley's second house built in 1812 are known today as the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house, after his son and grandson who inherited it in turn. The structure's foundation is still visible but partially filled with timber, planking, and vegetative growth (Figure 27). The barn foundation is less evident with only a course of field stones and angular granite blocks. Between the house and the barn lies a line of stones indicating the location of two adjoining ells that once extended at least part of the way to connect the two structures. The first ell found to the south is a single course of field stones and granite blocks at grade. The second ell is evidenced by a depression, but the outline of the structure is no longer distinct. If there was a third ell to completely connect the house and the barn, its outline is no longer visible. Nearby, under a tree, is the stone-lined well that is about six feet deep (Figure 28).

The ruins of the first light keeper's house, built in 1828, are still evidenced today by portions of its stone foundation walls and ells. The main part of the foundation is built of dry laid granite blocks. A line of granite stones encircles the northern portion of the structure and a portion of the east side as well, suggesting the existence of a porch. Another foundation of granite blocks indicates the small ell that likely served as a kitchen on the east side of the dwelling. The ell had no cellar, and the interior of its foundation is filled with small stones. To the east of the ell lie the remains of the attached barn, and the stone-lined well is still visible north of the house. The main foundation, which is the most visible of structures in this complex, has been obscured by spruce trees growing within and around it.

The foundation remains of the barn associated with the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house,

built between 1840 and 1854, are marked by a single course of field stones laid out in the rectangular pattern. The well nearby has been filled with stones. This area has amassed a collection of miscellaneous refuse that includes a truck chassis, other auto parts, and a cast iron stove and its parts. The ground here is covered with goldenrod, and spruce trees have grown inside the barn foundation. Just to the south are the ruins of William F. Stanley's house, constructed by 1900, abandoned ca.1951, and set on fire by vandals in the 1970s. The building's basic size and location are still visible as an extant cellar hole with a 6,000-gallon cistern in the northwestern corner. Granite steps lead to the cellar, which today is filled with timber and debris (Figure 29). The remains of the light station's paint locker, built after 1900, are marked today by mortared stone foundation walls that still tell of the size of this single-story building. Spruce trees have closed in on the site. Nearby on the edge of a steep bedrock declivity are the foundation remains of the privy that was likely built around the same time as the 1855 keeper's house. The privy was removed sometime around the 1950s.

Several of the island's stone walls can still be seen. One of the most visible runs east of the foundation ruins of the first light keeper's house and toward the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house/barn foundations (Figure 30). This wall measures around 250 in length, three feet tall, and four feet wide. Shorter and lower stone walls lie east of and perpendicular to the main path between the two ruins and are in poor condition. Another stone wall begins west of and perpendicular to the main path and extends west and south around the fuel house, and also is in generally poor condition. The most substantial and intact series of stone walls, however, runs just west and north of the Samuel B. Gilley barn foundation. The low retaining walls bounding the main path near the keeper's house are now barely visible, with the coping stones flush with the ground or partially obscured by soil and vegetation. Other filled cellar holes and conspicuous stone piles and dumps are hidden in the old fields bounding the main path, hosting lichens and encroached upon by vegetation. These piles may have been associated with outbuildings or simply piled up as the land was cleared, but little is known about their exact history.

Since the end of the historic period, several structures have disappeared. In 1956, a U.S.G.S. map recorded only two buildings on the north shore – the light keeper's boat house and presumably a fish house. The boat house was likely abandoned sometime after 1957 and removed at an unknown date. Its location is marked by a rusted hand-powered winch sitting just beyond the shore. Extant drilled stones extending in a line from the winch to the water are all that remain of the marine railway for the light keeper's launch. In addition, the lines of dried tar on the rocks indicate where nets and lines were tarred and laid out or hung out to dry. The fish house was removed sometime after 1958. Scattered timber pieces in the grass nearby may be the remains of these structures or perhaps of the other fish houses that once stood along the north shore.

Several other extant structures are currently private in-holdings, and as such have not been inventoried for this Cultural Landscape Inventory. Nonetheless, they are important to the history of Baker Island and the character of the cultural landscape. The ca.1867 Phebe

Stanley house, now known as the Stanley/Pearson house, is owned by Arn and Mary Lou Pearson of South Portland. The ca.1898 schoolhouse is owned by Elizabeth Kolm. Both houses are used as seasonal residences. The U.S. Coast Guard owns and maintains the light tower. The automated tower is currently in need of stabilization, as many bricks are spalling and the exterior paint is peeling.

Note: Items noted with an * are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The foundations listed below contribute to the historic significance and character of the Baker Island landscape. However, according to National Register criteria, they do not have integrity as above-ground resources. As an evaluation of their integrity has not yet been made by an archeologist and concurred by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, they are evaluated as “undetermined.”

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Keeper’s House * (BLDG 158) (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139140

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 5432

LCS Structure Name: Baker Island Light Station - Keeper's House

LCS Structure Number: BLDG158

Feature: Oil House * (BLDG 163) (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139142

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 41068

LCS Structure Name: Baker Island Light Station - Oil House

LCS Structure Number: BLDG163

Feature: Fuel House * (BLDG 162) (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139144

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 41066

LCS Structure Name: Baker Island Light Station - Fuel House

LCS Structure Number: BLDG162

Feature: Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley House (BLDG 298) (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139146

Baker Island
Acadia National Park

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 5433
LCS Structure Name: Baker Island - Elisha Gilley House
LCS Structure Number: BLDG298

Feature: Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley House Privy (BLDG 160) (ME 107-040)
Feature Identification Number: 139148
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 41069
LCS Structure Name: Baker Island - Elisha Gilley Privy
LCS Structure Number: BLDG160

Feature: Samuel B. Gilley Well (ME 107-042)
Feature Identification Number: 139150
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Main Path Retaining Walls (ME 107-048)
Feature Identification Number: 139156
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone Walls
Feature Identification Number: 139158
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 41062
LCS Structure Name: Baker Island - Rock Wall
LCS Structure Number: HLF01

Feature: Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley Well (ME 107-046)
Feature Identification Number: 139152
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: First Keeper's House Well (ME 107-047)
Feature Identification Number: 139154
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined
IDLCS Number: 41063

Baker Island
Acadia National Park

LCS Structure Name: Baker Island - Stone Well

LCS Structure Number: HLF02

Feature: Samuel B. Gilley Barn foundation (ME 107-042)

Feature Identification Number: 139176

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: William F. Stanley House foundation (ME 107-043)

Feature Identification Number: 139224

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley House and Barn foundations (ME 107-046)

Feature Identification Number: 139236

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: First Keeper's House and Barn foundations (ME 107-047)

Feature Identification Number: 139238

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

IDLCS Number: 41099

LCS Structure Name: Baker Island - Stone Foundations

LCS Structure Number: HS01

Feature: Keeper's House Privy foundation (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139240

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Paint Locker foundation (ME 107-048)

Feature Identification Number: 139242

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Cellar holes-log house (ME 107-036)

Feature Identification Number: 139244

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Other cellar holes, stone wells, piles

Feature Identification Number: 139264

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 23. View looking south at the 1855 keeper's house (owned by NPS) and light tower (owned by the U.S. Coast Guard). The main path and low retaining wall are barely visible in the foreground.(OCLP 2008)



Figure 24. View of the ca.1895 oil house, looking west. The concrete cradles once held large tanks. (OCLP 2008)



Figure 25. View looking south at the front of the ca.1905 fuel house, also known as the garage. (OCLP 2008)



Figure 26. View looking northeast at the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and privy, and the Stanley/Pearson house at image left. Note the growth of spruce trees compared to the view in the late 1800s (see Figure 1). (OCLP 2008)



Figure 27. View looking northwest at the foundation remains of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house, originally built in 1812. The house and adjacent barn were in ruins by the 1940s. (OCLP 2008)



Figure 28. This stone well is typical of those found on the island, and is located just northeast of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. (OCLP 2008)



*Figure 29. Ruins of the William Stanley house, built by 1900, view looking southeast.
(OCLP 2008)*



Figure 30. View looking north at the island's most visible stone wall, located between the foundation of the first keeper's house and the foundations of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house and barn. (OCLP 2008)

Cluster Arrangement

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

What began on Baker Island as a frontier settlement spearheaded by William and Hannah Gilley in the early 1800s eventually became a community bound together by the common threads of family and agriculture and maritime activities. The Gilley houses were built in close proximity to one another, indicating not only the practicality of locating close to the north shore boat landing, but also the strong multigenerational family ties and each family's interdependence on every other family, particularly considering the remoteness of the island and Maine's frequently inhospitable weather conditions. In addition to the houses themselves, the farmsteads included various attached and detached ells, barns, privies, wells, various other outbuildings, and fenced and walled areas for gardens, pastures, and crops. Concurrent with these developments was the construction of the government light station beginning in 1828 at the center and highest point of the island, and the construction of a boat house and several fish houses on the north shore. These three clusters were linked together by a primary road that stretched from the north shore to the light station.

Within the three clusters, certain familiar spatial characteristics developed. By 1854 the Elisha Gilley house had a detached barn a distance from the house. The barn had an animal pen to the south enclosed by a stone wall and a second enclosure in the shape of a rectangle running northwest from the west corner of the house. The house itself had an area enclosed by a fence – between the house and the privy – and the area may have been a planted garden area. The Joseph Gilley house had a similar configuration at this time with a detached barn and a stone wall to fence in animals to the west of the barn. The light keeper's house had a detached barn, though not as far from the house as the aforementioned dwellings, and a stone wall boundary extending from the northwest corner of the house to the west. However, this wall does not appear to form an enclosure. These houses were similar in that each one was designed with ells, as was fairly common. The Elisha Gilley house and the keeper's house each had an ell. Joseph Gilley's house had three ells sometime over the years and all of these may have functioned together to connect the house to the barn. In later years, the Phebe Stanley house was built with an ell and a detached barn just to the south. In time, the second light keeper's house was built with an ell, but did not have a barn. However, as a government building with a maritime purpose, this cluster required different support buildings over the years including the oil house to the north, the paint locker to the south, and the fuel house to the west. Elevated wooden walkways and stairs traversed the rocky ledges, connecting the light station and keeper's house to the various support structures.

Initially, the light station was an intricate and central part of the small community while William Gilley held the post of light keeper. Following William's departure from the keeper's post in 1849, however, disagreements between the island residents and the light keepers led to a rift in the community which created a subset cluster. The light keeper's house and the light tower were physically excluded from the community by 1854 by fences and stone walls that

surrounded most of the Gilley's cleared land. The arrangement of this cluster changed in 1855 when the government built a new light tower, attached keeper's house, and a privy within a designated ten-acre area. In ca.1909, after the light station expanded with the construction of several support structures, the government erected a permanent fence to physically delineate its legal ownership of ten acres of land surrounding the light tower. Within this enclosure, during the Spanish-American War in 1898, a signal service building was built south of the tower and a barn or shed was built to the north. Another watchtower was built again in the 1940s during World War II.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

Due to forest succession, it has become more difficult to understand how physically close families lived on Baker Island, how intricate their relationship to the light tower and to the sea was, and how important their visual relationship was to the life saving station on Little Cranberry Island. Also with the removal of the fish houses and the boat house, a sense of the strong connection between Baker's residents and the sea has been lost, which is a critical component in understanding their lives on the island. Only the boat house winch remains today.

Still, the proximity of both extant dwellings and structures and foundation remains within each farmstead and the light station complex provides evidence of the difficulty of clearing the land, the limited workable soil on the island, the rocky terrain, and the harsh winter weather conditions. The extant dwellings include the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house, the Stanley/Pearson house, the schoolhouse (Kolm residence), and the second light keeper's house, all still connected by the main path that winds past their doors. The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house's barn structure and well are seen today by lines of granite stones, and at least two stone walls of the animal pen are extant. The Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house foundation and well are extant, and there is evidence of the ells and barn. The barn foundation at the Stanley/Pearson house also exists. Within the government's former cluster, the light tower, keeper's house, oil house, and fuel house remain. Remnants of the first light keeper's house and well, paint locker, and privy consist of foundation walls. Evidence of the military buildings have all but disappeared, save for two vertical iron bars that mark where two legs of the watchtower south of the light tower were once secured to the bedrock.

Views and Vistas

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

Prior to William Gilley's arrival on the island, Baker Island is believed to have been densely forested. While clearing portions of the land for crops in the early 1800s, he created open conditions that would later become valuable to the government for a light station. Over the years as the land clearing and burning continued, a swath of open space developed and the island's peak became void of trees or other obscuring vegetation. Photographs from ca.1895-1898 show a clear view of the light tower and attached keeper's house with no large vegetation in the foreground or even most of the background. The return views to the north from the keeper's house were likely similarly expansive. Historic photographs taken from Great Cranberry Island looking toward Baker Island's west side clearly show the light tower and other buildings.

Farmsteads were built on the cleared land between the north shore and the light tower, and thus were all in view of one another. Even as late as 1951, the view from the light keeper's house north to the William Stanley house and beyond to the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house was clear. Farther still, the Phebe Stanley house could have been seen. Views from the top of the light tower were also panoramic and 360 degrees, and a visual connection would have been possible with Little Cranberry Island and Mount Desert Island. The interior views of Baker Island during the historic period revealed the ledge outcroppings and scrubby vegetation.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

Views and vistas are perhaps one of the most ephemeral components of a landscape. Since the close of the historic period, the vegetative regrowth has compromised the critical views that made Baker Island an ideal location for a light station. Meanwhile, some of the once-open views from the ground have vanished entirely. From the north shore at the boat landing, the first view is of the Stanley/Pearson house to the southwest and of the western corner of the Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house. However, spruce trees and other vegetation have begun to encroach upon the Stanley/Pearson house and to obscure the Gilley house from this perspective. The light tower can no longer be seen from the shore. The open fields through which the main road once passed from the north shore to the light tower are now smaller and dotted with successional trees and vegetation, and therefore each turn in the main path reveals another section of the landscape ahead, but rarely if ever a wide or panoramic view. The light tower and keeper's house are not viewed from the main path until the visitor is within close proximity, that is, near the foundation remains of the first light keeper's house just north of the tower. The view from the extant keeper's house back to the north shore is entirely obscured by spruce trees.

From the top of the light tower, the island's shoreline is no longer visible because of the tall spruce trees, but one can still see the sea and land beyond for 360 degrees (Figure 31). Views of the island itself from here are much obscured, and once visible ledge outcroppings are covered by vegetation. The main path disappears from view shortly after the area of the first light keeper's house. The path heading south to the south shore is tightly hemmed in by vegetation on either side, save for occasional clearings atop ledge outcroppings. Though the ocean can be heard from the path, it is not visible until one arrives at the shore.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: 360 dg. Panoramic Views from Light Tower

Feature Identification Number: 139266

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View from Keeper's House to North Shore

Feature Identification Number: 139268

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: View from North Shore to Keeper's House

Feature Identification Number: 139270

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 31. View from the top of the light tower, north across the island to Little Cranberry Island and Mount Desert Island on the horizon. Reforestation has blocked interior views between some of the former farmsteads and the north shore. (OCLP 2008)

Small Scale Features

Historic Conditions (through 1955):

A wooden rail fence was erected by 1853-1854 to surround the cleared land north of the light keeper's house to the north shore, including the keeper's boat house and fish house but purposely excluding the first keeper's house and the light tower. The enclosed area was more than seventeen acres. Within this area and around the houses were smaller fences that likely enclosed gardens and animal pens.

Around 1898, a telephone line was constructed to connect Baker Island with Northeast Harbor. A second telephone line was installed on the island around the 1940s. Both lines ran from the keeper's house to the boat house on the north shore, but the second line was established to the east of the first. These poles have also been variously called telegraph or utility poles. The U.S. Signal Corps station that operated during the Spanish-American War in 1898 just south of the light tower may have served as a telegraph house, and it is possible that poles associated with the station may have been converted for telephone wires to the Islesford Coast Guard Station at some point. The 1900 government survey map indicates that a signal flag pole was located near the watchtower. It is not clear when these features were removed. There was also a steel flag pole to the northeast of the keeper's house, beginning in 1937.

Long-strained relations between island residents and the government likely inclined the government to delineate its ten acres around the light tower and keeper's house with a fence. The fence was constructed of concrete posts with three separate strands of single wire, and it was erected to form a square whose sides each measured 660 feet in length. The fence had at least one gate where it intersected with the main road heading to the north shore and possibly one to the south where a path led to the fog signal reservation on the south shore. The fence was likely installed in 1909 when the ten-acre reservation was made official. However, this square-shaped area is shown on an early government survey map from 1900, which indicates its corners are marked by stone monuments and crosses etched in the ledges. This fence also enclosed a segment of the residents' former wooden fence/wall, thereby preserving it for a time, starting at William Stanley's hen house at the northwest corner of the reservation and running southeast toward the tower, then turning sharply to the northeast at the tower to form an L shape. The 1900 map does not show the remainder of the wooden fence outside the government boundary.

After the country entered World War II, a twelve-foot-square, thirty-five-foot high watchtower was built by the U.S. Signal Corps just south of the light tower. It was secured into the granite by iron bars. Historic photographs suggests that the Signal Corps barn once located north of the first keeper's house was removed by 1951.

Post-historic and Existing Conditions:

All that remains today of the light keeper's boat house, which was abandoned sometime after 1957, is a hand-powered winch and some additional debris and timbers in the immediate area. The winch was part of operating the boat house's launchway rail system. A line of drilled stones on the shore shows the former location of the rails along which the boats were hoisted

across the shore. The World War II watchtower was removed sometime after 1958. Two vertical iron bars protruding from the granite that secured the wooden tower were left behind.

There are no traces of the island's first telephone line that paralleled the main road and connected the boat house and keeper's house. However, some poles from the island's second telephone line do remain, mostly in the form of poles cut off 2-3-feet high from the ground. There are also several intact but downed poles with their top crossbars still attached. One lies just northeast of the keeper's house while the other lies to the north of the Joseph Gilley/Charles A. Gilley house. There may be other fallen poles hidden in the fields. The steel flag pole is shown rusted and leaning in a photograph from ca.1958, good evidence perhaps of the light station's earlier abandonment in 1955. The flag pole was removed at an unknown date.

Portions of the government's concrete fence posts remain, marking where the former boundaries once ran (Figure 32). Some long runs of posts remain, but many of the posts are covered in lichens and difficult to spot against the spruce trees. Some posts are leaning severely, while others still hold pieces of the wire strands. Other sections of fence, especially on the north side, have been removed or knocked over. Interesting remnants of other features are scattered throughout the island, including the iron bars that once secured the World War II watchtower. In several locations along the main path are small plywood interpretive signs with hand-painted stencil lettering. These signs are peeling, fading, and in generally poor condition. They are also inconsistent with other interpretive signs in Acadia National Park. There is also an eight-foot-high security fence surrounding the base of the U.S. Coast Guard's light tower, presumably installed after the National Park Service assumed control of the ten-acre light station in 1958.

There are other small-scale features whose original purposes or dates are not entirely known. Just south of the light tower and amongst the spruce trees, one can still see the old granite quarry that probably supplied foundation stones for many of the island's buildings and structures. Nearby is a dump of building debris and a dump of pieces of discarded batteries from the light tower. Another dump of debris and possible remains of an outbuilding lie just east and downhill from the keeper's house. On the northwest shore, rusted steel cables protrude from the cliff and hang down the embankment, which Archeologist Peter Morrison surmises may have been used to haul boats on shore. Nearby, about thirty rocks delineate a stone circle around thirteen feet in diameter that, according to Morrison, may have been a fire ring, small garden plot, or tent or tarpaulin weights. He suspects that if the stones had weighed down a tarp, the site might have stored equipment such as fishing gear. On the south shore, metal pins and hooks protrude from rock on the south shore near the trailhead, at an area also known as the "Dance Floor," a section of flat rock that has served as a place for social gatherings and dances. In 1900 this area was the site of a fog signal, and the pins may have secured this device.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Winch and Drilled Stones (ME 107-050)

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Feature Identification Number: 139272
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
Feature: Telephone Poles and Stumps (ME 107-051)
Feature Identification Number: 139274
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
Feature: Concrete Fence Posts and Wire (ME 107-049)
Feature Identification Number: 139276
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
Feature: Iron Bars of Watchtower (ME 107-048)
Feature Identification Number: 139278
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
Feature: Wood Interpretive Signs
Feature Identification Number: 139280
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing
Feature: Fence around Light Tower
Feature Identification Number: 139282
Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing
Feature: Granite Quarry and Tailings (ME 107-048)
Feature Identification Number: 139284
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined
Feature: Remnant Dumps (ME-107-048)
Feature Identification Number: 139286
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined
Feature: Outbuilding Ruins East of Keeper's House (ME 107-048)
Feature Identification Number: 139288
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined
Feature: Steel Cables (ME 107-037)
Feature Identification Number: 139290

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Stone Circle (ME 107-038)

Feature Identification Number: 139292

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: Remnant Pins and Hooks near "Dance Floor"

Feature Identification Number: 139294

Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 32. Remnant concrete posts from the U.S. government fence still exist. The post and wire fence was erected by 1909 around the ten-acre light station property. (OCLP 2008)

Archeological Sites

The National Park Service has recently taken several steps to organize and document the resources on Baker Island. In 2005, the park commissioned Crane & Morrison Archaeology of Freeport, Maine, to prepare a report based on archaeological reconnaissance. That summer, a team from Crane & Morrison and the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, Maine, catalogued the archaeological sites on the island to help the park meet its obligations under Section 110 of the

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The report was issued in October 2008. The table below identifies two potential ASMIS sites on Baker Island.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Fishhouses
Feature Identification Number: 139296
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Feature: William Gilley Site
Feature Identification Number: 139298
Type of Feature Contribution: Undetermined

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 07/08/2009

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

There is clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and human forces at Baker Island, and some degree of corrective action will be needed in the next 3-5 years to prevent further harm to the site's cultural and natural values. The harsh marine environment continues to relentlessly impact the site's existing structures. Despite recent stabilization efforts, there is evidence of peeling paint and some damage to siding and window sills. Forest regeneration continues unabated, and has begun to grow dangerously close to the light station's buildings and structures. Tree growth has also begun to impact the structural integrity of some of the foundation ruins, wells, and stone walls scattered throughout the island. Erosion of the bluff above the northwest shore is of slight concern primarily because of the proximity of the historic cemetery some 150 feet away.

Stabilization Measures:

Part of the project "Rehabilitate Baker Island Cultural Landscape (PMIS 14027)" includes removal of vegetation encroaching on "the historic island community scene." The park should consider a short-term stabilization project to identify and remove trees that may be hazardous to the light tower and keeper's house if they fell. This project should also include the identification and removal of woody vegetation within three feet of remnant building foundations, wells, stone walls, and other structures. The park is considering acquiring the light tower from the U.S. Coast Guard. A project, "Stabilize Baker Island Lighthouse Tower" (PMIS 152608) for \$112,711, aims to slow exterior brick deterioration and interior corrosion, and enhance the structure's ventilation.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Erosion

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: Erosion off the bluff above the northwest shore should be monitored so that it does not impact the nearby historic cemetery.

Type of Impact: Exposure To Elements

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: The often harsh weather associated with this maritime location will continue to speed deterioration of existing structures, ruins, and cemetery headstones.

Type of Impact: Release To Succession

External or Internal: Both Internal and External

Impact Description: The primarily spruce forest comprised primarily of red spruce has matured to the point where it is blocking views that were historically open from both the light tower and on the ground between the keeper's house and the north shore boat landing. The forest is also reclaiming formerly open fields.

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 60,000.00

Cost Date: 02/04/2008

Level of Estimate: C - Similar Facilities

Cost Estimator: Regional Office

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

The cost estimate above is from the project "Rehabilitate Baker Island Cultural Landscape" (PMIS 14027), for \$60,000. It includes the removal of hazardous trees around the light tower and keeper's house, and removal of woody vegetation around remnant building foundations, wells, and stone walls for a total of \$50,000. The balance of the estimate considers cost for logistics and staging, which for this island location would likely be quite high. It does not include costs for stabilization of the light tower (not owned by the park).

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

According to the park's 1992 General Management Plan (GMP), Baker Island falls within three management zones: a natural zone, special use zone, and a cultural zone. Most of the island falls within the natural zone-natural environment subzone, which aims to "conserve natural resources and provide environmentally compatible interpretive and recreational activities in ways that do not adversely affect those resources and processes." The island's private in-holdings are part of the special use zone-in-holdings subzone, which aims to "acquire the private in-holdings as available." The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and associated vernacular landscape are part of the cultural zone-preservation subzone, which aims to "preserve and interpret historic sites, sites, structures, ethnographic resources, objects, and landscapes that are important because of their aesthetic value or their association with persons, events, or periods in human history and that merit full communication of these values to the public." The Baker Island light station is part of the cultural zone-preservation/adaptive use subzone, which considers the "use, with necessary modifications, of historically significant structures for leasing, public activities, or administrative activities and functions that perpetuate the characteristics that qualify these resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places." The plan also notes that the keeper's house should be adaptively reused so that a volunteer caretaker can live there to provide on-site interpretation, protection, and maintenance services, and that other associated structures will be stabilized (GMP 1992:34,52,58,60). To date, the keeper's house has not been rehabilitated but has been stabilized, as have associated structures such as the oil house and fuel house. The Elisha Gilley/Samuel B. Gilley house and privy have also been stabilized.

There is currently a project in the Project Management Information System (PMIS) entitled "Rehabilitate Baker Island Cultural Landscape" (PMIS 14027). Among this project's goals are the removal of vegetation encroaching on historic island community scene. Tree removal would be through a combination of mechanical tree removal, brush sawing, and possibly fire to return a portion of the island to its appearance during the settlement era from 1806 to 1929. Another project, "Rehabilitate Interpretive Signs on Baker Island" (PMIS 10930) intends to replace existing plywood signs with new signs that include the NPS Messaging Project, current cultural landscape research, stewardship messaging, and management initiatives.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

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Citation Title: List of Lighthouses, Lighted Beacons, and Floating Lights of the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific Coasts of the United States, corrected to January 1, 1872 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1872
Citation Publisher: n/a
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: List of Beacons, Buoys, Monuments, and Other Day Markers in the First-Light District, corrected January 1, 1874 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1874
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: List of Beacons, Buoys, Towers, and Other Day-Marks in the First Light-House District, corrected to July 1, 1881 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1881
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office

- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: List of Beacons, Buoys, and Day-Markers in the First Light-House District, corrected to May 1, 1897 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1897
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: List of Lights, Buoys, and Daymarks in the First Light-house District, corrected to May 1, 1909 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1909
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: Buoy List, Maine and New Hampshire, Atlantic Coast of United States, First Light-house District, 1920 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1920
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: Report on Light Stations: First Light-house District, C.E. Sherman, Superintendent of Lighthouses; (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1930
Citation Publisher: National Archives, Record Group No. 26 (from Site Folders)
- Citation Author:** Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: Light List of Atlantic and Gulf Coast of the United States, corrected to January 1, 1948 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1948
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office

Citation Author: Snell, Charles W., ed.
Citation Title: Complete List of Lights and Other Marine Aides of the Atlantic Coast of the United States, corrected to January 1, 1958 (ed. 1974)
Year of Publication: 1958
Citation Publisher: U.S. Government, Government Printing Office

Citation Author: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Citation Title: General Management Plan, Acadia National Park, Maine
Year of Publication: 1992
Citation Publisher: Washington D.C.: NPS, North Atlantic Region

Citation Author: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
Citation Title: General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, Acadia National Park, Maine, Public Review Draft
Year of Publication: 1991
Citation Publisher: Washington D.C.: NPS, North Atlantic Region

Citation Author: United States Light-House Board
Citation Title: Entries in annual reports concerning Baker Island, 1853-1905, from the "Clipping" file for the Baker Island Light-Station, Maine, four pages
Year of Publication: 1905
Citation Publisher: U.S. Light-House Board, National Archives Record Group No. 26

Supplemental Information

Title: Baker Island, Maine
Description: Drawn and surveyed by William L. Lurkin, U.S.L.H.E., 1900
Title: U.S. Coast Survey, Baker's [sic] Island, Maine
Description: Map by W.E. Greenwell, Assistant, U.S.C.G, 1854.

