

Timothy Bishop House
32 Elm Street
New Haven County
New Haven, Connecticut

HABS NO. CONN-276
HABS
CONN.
5-NEWHA
27.

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS NO. CONN-276

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE

- Location: 32 Elm Street (south side of Elm between Orange and State Streets), New Haven County, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Present Owner: Frederick C. DeVita, Inc., Realtor, 32 Elm Street, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Present Occupant: Frederick C. DeVita, Inc., Realtors and Insurers, U. S. Army Recruiting Station, and other offices.
- Present Use: Office building.
- Statement of Significance: Noteworthy example of Federal town mansion architecture. Spacious center hall and elaborate interior woodwork survive almost intact. Has been attributed to Carpenter-Architect David Hoadley on stylistic grounds by John D. Hoag, Art Librarian, Yale University.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which structure is built. Reference is to New Haven City Land Records.

February 7, 1815 Ebenezer Huggins to Timothy Bishop, "a piece of land situate in sd. New Haven containing 33 rods and 69 feet bounded Northerly on Elm Street 87 feet, Westerly on land of Titus Street 138-1/3 feet, Southerly on land of Abraham Bradley III 87 feet, and Easterly partly on my own land 69 feet and partly on land of sd. Bradley 69 feet." Vol. 63, p. 319.

January 4, 1910 (Description of above land), "with all the buildings and improvements thereon," sold by Louis B. Bishop,

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 2)

Herbert M. Bishop, May Bishop Thompson, executors, to Elihu A. Beckley and Raymond L. Walkley, realtors. Vol. 632, p. 304.

January 4, 1910 Elihu A. Beckley, Raymond L. Walkley to Charles P. Thompson with said house and improvements. Vol. 642, p. 51. Thompson added the brick wing in the rear and operated his furniture shop on this site.

September 6, 1957 Charles P. Thompson to Frederick C. DeVita. Sale of land according to order of the probate court of New Haven. Vol. 1948, p. 297.

Restored by DeVita under supervision of New Haven Preservation Trust.

2. Date of erection: 1816
3. Architect: Attributed to Carpenter-Architect David Hoadley, 1774-1838.
Builder: Attributed to David Hoadley.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: None.
5. Alterations and additions: Charles P. Thompson removed exterior front stairs and added present brick wing to rear in 1929. Mr. DeVita built a new modern steel and concrete first floor entrance stair. Two large store windows and basement door were installed at basement level when Elm Street was lowered c. 1917. Mr. Thompson built attic room in the 1930's; this room inspired by the John Cook house ballroom across the street. Fan lights in attic are original.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Built on land which was garden plot of Reverend John Davenport, founder of the New Haven Colony. Governor Theophilus Eaton's residence was across the street. Davenport and Eaton were friends.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources: The New Haven Land Records archives, Land Records office, Hall of Records

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 3)

for the City of New Haven, Orange Street, New Haven, Connecticut. (Referred to by number of volume and page).

Arnold G. Dana, "New Haven Old and New," unpublished scrapbooks in the archives of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut.

Interviews with John D. Hoag, Art Librarian, Chairman of the Standards Committee, The New Haven Preservation Trust, Yale University Art Library, York Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Hoag advised in the restoration of the Bishop house.

Interview with Frederick C. DeVita.

2. Secondary and published sources: The New Haven City Directory, 1840 to 1952; copies in the Yale Library, Town Clerk's office, and New Haven Colony Historical Society Library.

Prepared by: Jonathan B. Conant
Research Assistant
National Park Service
August 31, 1964

PART II. Architectural Information

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A five-bay frame house of the Federal mansion style with a two-story tetrastyle prostyle Ionic shallow portico flanked by pilasters. Despite use as office building, much of interior woodwork is intact, particularly on the first floor.
2. Condition of fabric: Very good. Carefully restored by Mr. DeVita within the limits of adapting house for office use.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: A two-and-one-half story, five-bay house measuring 44'-3" across the front by 49'-0" deep, including portico. There is also a full basement.
2. Foundations: Stone, stuccoed and painted.

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 4)

3. Wall Construction: Wooden frame with clapboards, painted beige with white trim.
4. Porches, stoops: The front portico projects only 2'-7" from the front wall, with modern steel and concrete split stairway in center bay. Stairway is above stone and concrete steps, across whole front, and leads to basement level. Larger rear entrance stoop is also of steel and concrete with modern steel fire escape extending full height to roof dormers.
5. Chimneys: Three brick chimneys within framing of east and west walls project into interior rooms.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entrance doorway to the first floor is in center bay. Five-paneled wooden door (uppermost panel horizontal) is flanked by narrow leaded and glazed sidelights over wooden panels; paneled pilasters support elliptical fanlight over entire door width. Fanlight contains 12 radiating lights. Door at rear of entrance hall is similar but has no fanlight; door is original. Basement door with sidelights on north front under main entrance was added after 1917.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Window in the second floor bay over the main entrance is a six-over-six double-hung window flanked by narrow four-light fixed windows. Window is arranged in a Palladian-like frame and trimmed with fluted pilasters. Wooden paneling is used below the glazing. Lunette window in attic on north has original fanlight and is framed with plain molding. There is a similar window on northwest side.

All other windows are six-over-six light, double-hung with plain wooden trim, dentilled cornice, equipped with wooden adjustable louvered shutters. Two large rectangular "store" windows were added after 1917 in the north basement wall.

7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof covered with modern asphalt shingles. Main ridge runs parallel with front; subsidiary front gable is lower than main ridge.

1964
CONN
SHEWHA
27

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 5)

- b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice of the portico continues around all four sides of building, including the gabled ends. Both pediment and gable have raking cornices. Cornices are supported by small modillions.
- c. Dormers: There are three modern dormers on rear roof slope.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: Rectangular plan with central hall flanked by two rooms on each side. Hall is divided by a modern aluminum and glass partition near the front door and two arched openings which define stair hall. The balustrade side of the stairs above first seven risers is in the same plane as the side wall, thus stairwell is beyond hall width. Front and rear rooms were connected by wide arched openings. Opening between east rooms is now sealed to form arched alcove in front room; arch between west rooms is also closed but is pierced by modern door. Fireplaces project into the two front rooms and southwest room the full depth of the chimneys.
- b. Second floor: Plan is basically similar to first floor.
- c. Attic: Attic is divided into small offices and large center room under main gable parallel with front of building.

2. Stairways: The main stairway has 17 risers; first six risers are winders of moderate curvature projecting slightly beyond stair well into hall. The balustrade is open with a mahogany handrail and square balusters. The first tread and balustrade terminate in a spiral. Open stringers at each step have applied triangular pattern. Stairway to attic is straight run directly above main stairs.

3. Flooring: Asphalt tile and linoleum.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster; some walls papered above chair rails.

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 6)

5. Doorways and doors: Six paneled wooden doors; a few original doors have five panels.
6. Decorative features and trim: Simple molded baseboards; chair rails with banding of incised vertical lines alternating with plain sections. Molded wooden trim surrounds hall arches which spring from simple paneled pilasters. Doors and windows in front room are flanked by elements containing slightly concave reeded pilasters with rosettes at upper intersections. Face trim of arched openings in front rooms has incised pattern; soffit of arch is reeded, arches spring from pilasters with reeded half columns. Cornice moldings in two front rooms are of small-scaled multiple membering combined with beaded picture mold in the east room and egg and dart motif in west room. Ceiling in third floor center room has arched central portion flanked by narrow flat soffits; wooden cornice of vaulted portion is ornamented with triglyphs and pateræ.
7. Notable hardware: Both front and rear entrance doors have box surface locks, with several thumb latches. Hardware appears to be original.
8. Lighting: Modern electric.
9. Heating: Central heat; several fireplaces. Fireplace in east front room is closed with cast-iron unit which is framed by pair of wooden columns supporting a deep entablature which projects over the columns. A row of dentils is incorporated in the shelf-piece. Northwest room wooden mantel is more ornate; slender coupled, fluted colonnettes are surmounted by pairs of slender urns which support the shelf.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: House is on the south side of Elm Street and faces north. Area is becoming commercialized with parking lots and businesses.
2. Outbuildings: A large two-story brick office wing has been added to the rear of original house.

TIMOTHY BISHOP HOUSE
HABS NO. CONN-276 (Page 7)

3. Landscaping, enclosures: Rear and side yards are enclosed by chain link fence, brick and concrete block wall. Yard is asphalt paved for parking.

Prepared by: Woodrow W. Wilkins
Architect
National Park Service
August 11, 1964

III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records and five sheets of measured drawings were prepared as part of the Summer, 1964 New Haven Project, jointly undertaken by the HABS and the New Haven Preservation Trust, and financed by "Mission 66" funds of the National Park Service with assistance from the NHPT, following a 1963 HABS inventory survey of old New Haven carried out by the NHPT under the direction of Professor Christopher Tunnard of Yale University, President.

The project was under the direction of the Eastern Office of Design and Construction, James C. Massey, HABS Supervisory Architect, and was supervised by Architect Woodrow W. Wilkins, Professor of Architecture at the University of Kentucky, assisted by Ned Goode, Photographer, Frazier, Pennsylvania; Annette H. M. Gottschalk, William P. Hersey, and Charles R. Tichy, Student Assistant Architects and students at Carnegie Institute of Technology, Yale University, and Iowa State University, respectively; and Jonathan B. Conant, Research Assistant and student at Yale University.