

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 16 1982
DATE ENTERED APR 15 1982

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Jonathan Dickerman II House
AND/OR COMMON The Old Red House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 105 Mt. Carmel Avenue
CITY, TOWN Hamden N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE Connecticut CODE 09 VICINITY OF Third COUNTY New Haven CODE 009

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Hamden Historical Society, Inc.
STREET & NUMBER 105 Mt. Carmel Avenue
CITY, TOWN Hamden N/A VICINITY OF Connecticut STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hamden Town Hall
STREET & NUMBER 2372 Whitney Avenue
CITY, TOWN Hamden STATE Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE See continuation sheet
DATE " " " " FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS " " " "
CITY, TOWN " " STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 1961

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Over View

The Jonathan Dickerman II House is a 2½-story, gable-roofed, central-chimney, central-doorway, five-bay, clapboard structure, built c. 1795. The eaves are at approximately the level of the first-floor ceiling, and are flared and overhung in the front. The first story has a conventional floor plan, except for the absence of the usual front stairs, and is maintained as a house museum. The house was moved from its original location across the street in 1962, when the road was straightened out. (Photograph 1.)

Mt. Carmel Avenue runs east from Whitney Avenue, a main north-south thoroughfare, in the northern part of the town of Hamden which is now a northern suburb of New Haven, Connecticut. The Dickerman House is the first structure on the south side of Mt. Carmel Avenue, east of Whitney Avenue, and is 44 feet from the road. Its immediate surroundings on three sides are woodlands, while its neighbor to the east is Quinnipiac College, and Sleeping Giant State Park is located across the street. The site provides a sense of detachment appropriate to its early use as a farmhouse.

Exterior

The house faces west. There is a good sized lawn in front, separating the house from the parking lot. The lawn extends to the north side, between the house and Mt. Carmel Avenue. Behind the house an 18th-century herb garden has been planted, while on the south side the trees and old stone walls of the woodlands are within a few feet of the house.

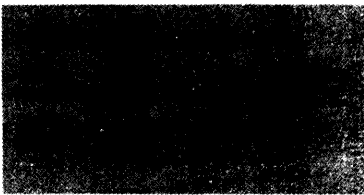
The most striking architectural feature of the house is the flared front eaves. The overhang is approximately four feet, with a soffit of flush boarding. The ends of the overhang also are covered with flush boards, rather than with an extension of the clapboards of the side walls (Photograph 1).

A second outstanding feature of the facade is the panelled double front doors. At the top of each leaf there are two small, square panels, glazed. Beneath them are two long, vertical, raised panels, while the lower section of each leaf is filled with a single, oblong, raised panel. (Photograph 2). These doors are thought to be original, and are surrounded by a seven-inch molded architrave.

The roof has recently been re-covered with wood shingles. The clapboards, not beaded, have about 3 ¾ inches exposed to the weather. The stone foundation walls extend 24 inches above grade, and support an 11-inch sill. The four windows of the facade are 12-over-12 with 5½ x 7½" lights. The sash and window frames are old and are thought to be original. The window lintels form part of the fascia under the roof overhang.

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Jonathan Dickerman II House, Hamden, CT.

Continuation sheet

Surveys

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State Register of Historic Places

Date: 1975

Fed. State County Local

Connecticut Historical Commission

Hartford

Connecticut

Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut (Hamden #15)

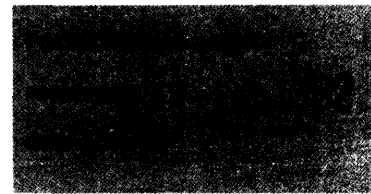
c. 1930s

State

State Library

Hartford

Connecticut

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On the end elevations there is a narrow overhang of the second story over the first. The fenestration of the end elevations is irregular. The north elevation, first story, has a 12-over-12 window about one-third of the way back, a door about two-thirds of the way back that has three vertical, raised panels in its upper portion over two in its lower portion, an abutting 12-over-12 window, and finally, a smaller, lower, and no doubt newer, 6-over-6 window near the back wall. In the second story there is a 6-over-6 window near the front, an 8-over-12 window in the center, and a smaller 6-over-6 window toward the back. The attic has a six-pane window, two lights wide and three high. (Photograph 3.)

The south elevation, equally irregular, at first-floor level has a 12-over-12 window one-third of the way back, a smaller 12-over-12 window two-thirds of the way back, and a small 6-over-6 window near the rear wall. In the second story there is a 6-over-6 window near the front, an 8-over-12 window two-thirds of the way back, and close to it a 6-over-6 window. The attic window is the same as that on the north elevation. (Photograph 4.)

The pitch of the rear slope of the roof changes slightly, to form a modest saltbox effect. The rear eaves do not overhang or flare. The fenestration of the rear elevation, from the north, again irregular, consists of a 6-over-6 window, a door of vertical boards, another 6-over-6 window, and then, toward the east wall, a smaller 6-over-6 window. (Photograph 3.)

Interior

The room layout of the first floor, 24 x 36 feet, is the conventional arrangement around the central chimney of hall in front, a front room on either side, and kitchen behind the chimney. A further rear area, 11 feet deep, forms a lean-to section.

There is no front stairway in the usual position between the hall and the chimney. There is a wall of vertical, beaded boards, 14 - 16 inches wide closing off the space where the stairway usually is found.

The front room to the left (north) has a panelled fireplace wall that includes a door to a closet in front of the chimney. The room to the right has a similar panelled fireplace wall with corresponding door leading to a closet. Thus, the space normally occupied by a front stairway in this house is devoted to two closets. The fact that the doors to the closets are panelled doors, integral parts of fully panelled fireplace walls, suggests that the present condition is original, and that the house never did have the usual front stairs. (Photograph 5.)

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In the left front room the brick fireplace has an opening 44 x 34 inches in size with an iron lintel and stone hearth. The mantelpiece of flanking pilasters, architrave and narrow shelf is old but perhaps is too elaborate to be original. There are cupboards over the mantel, and in the northeast corner of the room there is a plain corner cupboard with three butterfly-shaped shelves that is thought to be original. The back of the cupboard is visible from the stairs to the basement. The round cupboard wall is seen to be formed of vertical lath and plaster. (Photograph 6.) The room has a molded chair rail that is an extension of the window sills, and flared corner posts, cased and beaded. The walls and ceilings are plastered. The ceiling is 7 feet 8 inches high, while the floor boards, running north-south, are 7 - 8½ inches wide. There is no summer beam.

The right (south) front room has similar panelled fireplace wall, molded chair rail, flared posts, and plastered walls and ceiling. There is no mantelpiece, and the brick fireplace is smaller, with a 32 x 25 inch opening, iron lintel, and hearth of 7½ inch-square bricks. The floor boards are 11 - 14 inches wide, running east-west. A new door has been cut through the middle of the rear wall, to the right of the door to the kitchen. The area behind the chimney and the front rooms is now a single, open, oblong space, instead of being divided into the usual three rooms of central kitchen plus smaller rooms at each end. The presence of posts in the framing south of the chimney indicates that there once was a separate room at this end. The situation at the north end where there is an exterior door, old but probably not original, and where the stairs to the second floor are located, is not as clear.

The brick fireplace is a normal height, 53 inches, but is shallow, only 22 inches deep, and is divided by a brick partition into two sections. The right (north) section, 49 inches wide, is the fire box. The left section, 33 inches wide, has a beehive oven at the top of its rear wall with a rectangular cavity below. There is a flue from the top of this section, in front of the oven. A wood door, on hinges, closes over this left section. Lintels of both sections are wood, each section has a stone hearth, and a narrow mantel shelf extends the full width of both sections. There are cupboards above with panelled doors. (Photograph 7.) The kitchen has an old plaster ceiling and modern, wide wooden flooring. There is a chair rail at the south end of the kitchen space, and a dado of two wide horizontal boards along the east and north walls.

The wall between the kitchen and the 11 foot area behind it is covered, on the east side, in part with clapboards, indicating that it once was the back wall of the house. There is also an exterior window in this wall, of eight small panes over six larger panes. Four doors connect the kitchen area with the lean-to area where the partitions and most of the finish are not old. One theory holds that this 11 foot lean-to area, in whole or in part, initially was open to the weather, like a shed.

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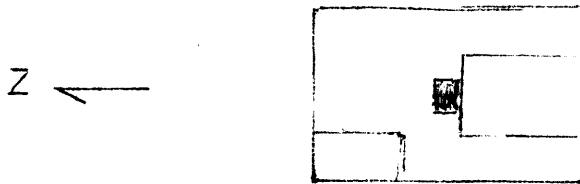
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The stairs to the second floor are located in the kitchen area, north of the door from the north front room. The stairway is closed off by a door of vertical boards. The stairs consist of two risers to the west (toward the front of the house), two winders to the north, six risers to the north to a landing, and one step both to the west and to the east from the landing to second-floor level.

The floor plan of the second floor is irregular, and probably reflective of several periods in the development of the house. The largest room is south of the chimney, is centered on the chimney, and occupies more than half of the floor space from front to back, as indicated by sketch.



The room has a small fireplace and walls of vertical boards. The outline of an exterior door is visible in the south wall. This door appears in a 1923 picture of the exterior.¹

There is a second room, with plaster walls, in the northwest corner.

In the front and back walls of the house, at second-floor level, the rafters come down to plates that are 21 inches above the floor. (Photograph 8.) The framing of the flared front eaves in front of the plate is not visible.

The stairs to the attic run north to south, behind and next to the chimney. In the roof framing the twelve principal rafters, 4½ x 6 inches, are joined at the ridge line by mortise and tenon, pegged. The only braces are the purlins at the level of the attic floor. The purlins are 3 ¾ x 7 inches, and are single, 34-foot timbers.

The basement of the house is modern, and is fitted out as a meeting room for the Hamden Historical Society.

Aside from the basement, central heating, plumbing and electrical wiring have never been introduced in the house.

1. Dickerman, opposite page 96.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1795

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Jonathan Dickerman II

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion

The Jonathan Dickerman II House is an 18th-century structure with more than usual integrity. Its framing, two-leaf panelled front doors and two front rooms with panelled fireplace walls and corner cupboard all appear to be original, while its flared front eaves are out of the ordinary for early Connecticut houses. (Criterion C.) The association of the house with one of the town's founding families adds to its local significance. The Dickermans were one of the first in New Haven to buy land and settle in the area that became Hamden. (Criterion B.)

History

Abraham Dickerman (d. 1711), a resident of the New Haven Colony, bought lands in the area known today as the Mt. Carmel section of Hamden in the second quarter of the 18th century. His sons, Jonathan I (d. 1795) and Samuel, were among the first to establish residence there.¹ Jonathan I signed the 1757 petition to the Connecticut General Assembly, which was granted, to establish a Mt. Carmel² Parish and church within the bounds of New Haven. When the Town of Hamden was incorporated in 1786 the Mt. Carmel Parish entity ceased to exist.

Jonathan Dickerman I's son, Jonathan Dickerman II, was married in 1770. On the theory that he probably built his house about that time,³ the year 1770 has been popularly associated with the house, and is used in the sign over the front door. Recent research, however, has established that Jonathan I gave land and half a dwelling house to Jonathan II in 1771,⁴ which Jonathan sold in 1795.⁵ Concurrently, an inventory of Jonathan I's estate makes mention of "land on which Jonathan's new house stands,"⁶ and describes the land in terms consistent with the description used in the 1821 probate records of Jonathan II. Consequently, a construction date of c. 1795 for the house seems more likely than c. 1770.

The Jonathan Dickerman II farm continued active into the 19th century, producing 500 barrels per year of apples as late as 1844,⁸ although the last Dickerman in the direct line to live in the house was Rebecca, second wife of Jonathan II, who died in 1835. Ownership changed hands several times. John Grogan, a widower, was the last person to live in the house as a year-round occupant. He died in 1907. Thereafter, the house was rented as a summer place until, in 1924, it was given to the

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.5

UTM NOT IDENTIFIED

AGREEMENT NOT IDENTIFIED

QUADRANGLE NAME Mount Carmel

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1 : 24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 675440 4587280

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is described in the Hamden Land Records, volume 423, page 292 and volume 454, page 116 (two adjacent parcels).

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

David F. Ransom

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

July 5, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

203 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL x

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE February 23, 1982

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the
National Register

DATE

4/15/82

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Sleeping Giant Park Association, and perhaps used for a time by a park ranger. In the light of this history, it is possible to understand and accept the fact that the house never was fitted with heat, electricity, and plumbing.

The Hamden Historical Society assumed responsibility for maintenance of the house in 1936, was given title to the house by the Park Department in 1961 with the understanding that it would be moved as part of the project to straighten the road. The distance moved was not far, essentially just across the street, and still within the bounds of the original Jonathan Dickerman II farm. The house originally faced south; it now faces west.

Discussion

The architectural features of the Jonathan Dickerman II house that are of above average in interest include its general profile (a 2½-story house with eaves at about the level of the first floor ceiling), the flare of the front eaves, the absence of a stairway in front of the chimney, and the completeness of the front rooms.

While 2½-story houses with eaves at about the level of the first floor ceiling were by no means the norm in the New Haven Colony, they appear to have been more prolific there than in other Connecticut areas. The Jonathan Murray House,¹⁰ Madison, c. 1690, is a fine case in point (Madison was East Guilford, part of the New Haven Colony), and is of interest in contrast with the Jonathan Dickerman II House because it does have the usual stairway in front of the chimney. The Jonathan Murray House also has the front overhang, but not the flare.

Kelly in his plate XXXI shows, without comment, three 2½-story houses with low eaves. One, the Hart House¹¹ in Guilford (Guilford was in the New Haven Colony), does have the flare. Flared eaves often are associated with Dutch influence, but a Dutch connection, if any, with the Jonathan Dickerman II House is unknown. Also unresolved is the matter of whether the flared front eaves are an original or added feature. As the feature is not unknown in the New Haven Colony, and there are others in Hamden,¹² it would seem quite possible that it is original.

Another Guilford house shown by Kelly in his plate is the Jonathan Bishop, Sr., House. Both of these Guilford houses, like the Jonathan Dickerman II House, do not have stairways in front of the chimney. Both have stairs to the second floor running along the left wall of the kitchen. This is the same general location as in the Jonathan Dickerman II House, but in both the Guilford houses the stairs are a straight run from back to front along the kitchen wall. In the Jonathan Dickerman II House this wall is missing, preventing possible study of whether it once had stairs adjacent

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to it. In the Jonathan Dickerman II House the two runs connected by winders leading to a landing one step below second-floor level is more complex and elaborate than in the other two houses, and on the theory that initially simple solutions were used it may be argued that the stairs in the Jonathan Dickerman II House are not original. If not, they are at least very old.

The panelled two-leaf front doors and the panelled fireplace walls of the two front rooms seem to be all of the same period, and are thought to be original. They are suitable decorative elements for a farm house of the late 18th century, as is the plain corner cupboard. The significance of the two front rooms rests more with their completeness than with their delicacy or refinement. The molded chair rails, floor boards, flared corner posts, panelled doors, and what may well be the original wall and ceiling plaster are all in place and collectively give an excellent sense of the period.

The kitchen is another matter. Obviously, this section of the house should not be a single room. Partitions are missing. And the fireplace is so shallow as to suggest that it has been modified, perhaps with the addition of the brick divider between the two parts. The beehive oven, however, is a fine specimen.

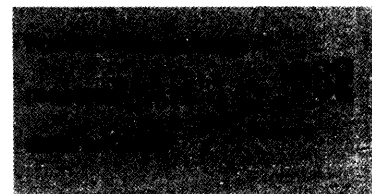
The lean-to section behind the kitchen offers more questions than answers. One theory holds that only the central section, where the clapboards and window are, was originally exposed to the weather, as a central shed between two lean-to rooms. If true, this scheme would be of considerable interest because of its uniqueness, but there is no evidence in the matter.

One general statement that may be made about New Haven Colony 2½-story houses with eaves at first-story level is that second-floor plans offer surprises.¹³ In the Jonathan Dickerman II House the surprise is that the arrangement is so irregular, and that there appears to be one room, only, that may be original. This room is the one south of the chimney, with the fireplace, partitions of wide, vertical boards, and former outside door. The door suggests the possibility that the second floor, or at least this room on the second floor, was used for storage in connection with operation of the farm and that only the first floor of the house was living quarters.

The clean framing of the roof, the long purlins, and the termination of the rafters at a plate above second floor level are all obviously original and constitute an interesting and important element in the general integrity of the house.

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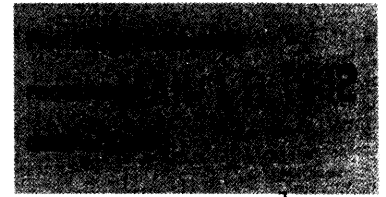
Summary

The Jonathan Dickerman II House is not the oldest house in Hamden, nor is it the most elegant surviving 18th-century structure. Its importance lies in the fact that it has never had major alterations. It is an 18th-century house in Hamden that, with the exception of the basement, is now nearly in its original condition. Its roof profile, floor plans, original front doors and many original windows, and its unaltered front rooms give it architectural distinction that is outstanding in the town.

1. Hartley, p. 51.
2. Mt. Carmel is a good sized hill, altitude 708 feet. Its profile is said to resemble that of a sleeping giant, hence the name of the park across the street from the house.
3. Dickerman, photo caption opposite p. 96.
4. New Haven Land Records 32/463.
5. Hamden Land Records 5/56.
6. New Haven Probate Records, 18/256 (1795).
7. New Haven Probate Records 32/32 (1821).
8. Hartley, p. 344.
9. This subject is not discussed in the two standard books on the subject, Kelly, and Norman M. Isham and Albert F. Brown, Early Connecticut Houses, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965, republication of The Preston and Rounds Company, 1900.
10. Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Jonathan Murray House is pending.
11. Now known as The David Parmelee I House.
12. Hartley, p. 181, says that Simeon Todd (1766-1833) "made his own buildings and some for his neighbors." Todd's own house, with flared front eaves, is half a mile further east on Mt. Carmel Avenue. The circumstance suggests the speculation that Hamden's flared eaves reflect the design preference of Simeon Todd.
13. See the nomination of the Jonathan Murray House to the National Register of Historic Places for a discussion of this subject.

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Continuation sheet Bibliography Item number 9 Page 1

Martha M. Becker, research of land records, probate records and geneology relating to the Jonathan Dickerman II House.

George Sherwood Dickerman, The Old Mt. Carmel Parish, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925.

Rachel Hartley, The History of Hamden, Connecticut, Hamden, 1943.

J. Frederick Kelly, The Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, Dover Publications, Inc., 1963, republication of Yale University Press, 1924.