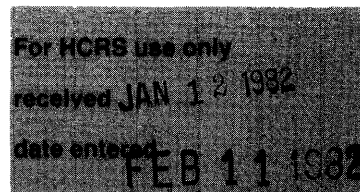


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Isham-Terry House

and/or common Isham-Terry House

2. Location

street & number 211 High Street not for publication

city, town Hartford vicinity of First congressional district William R. Cotter

state Connecticut code 09 county Hartford code 003

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"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, Incorporated

street & number 394 Main Street

city, town Hartford vicinity of _____ state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hartford Land Records, Municipal Building

street & number 550 Main Street

city, town Hartford vicinity of _____ state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title see continuation sheet has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The location of the Isham-Terry House, which was built about 1854, is close to the center of the business district of Hartford.

Like the onion dome of the Colt Armory, the Isham-Terry House is seen and noticed annually by tens of thousands of motorists driving through Hartford on the interstate highways. The house stands within 50 feet of the highway. Its Italianate tower, light cream color, and air of 19th century elegance make it stand out from the mundane central city landscape that surrounds it.

As the highway approaches the house, it enters a cut, below grade. High Street is carried by a bridge across the interstate. The Isham-Terry House is located on the northwest corner of High Street and Walnut Street. To the south of the house, across Walnut Street, is the highway. To the north, east, and west of the house are empty lots, for the most part cleared of the 19th century buildings that once stood on them. Across the highway to the south is the center of downtown Hartford, and beyond the empty lots to the north, east, and west are mixed commercial/residential buildings in a mixed state of repair. The Isham-Terry House is isolated in its setting.

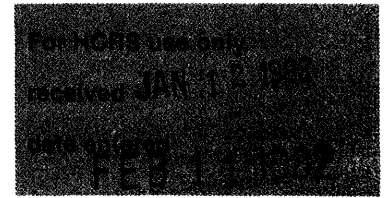
The house is a textbook example of the Italianate style, built of brick on rough tooled sandstone foundations, with wood trim. It is made up of three masses. The principal, front part of the house, a two-story and attic cube under hip roof, is modified by the three-story tower at the southwest corner, and by an ell to the rear. The brick is painted light cream, the trim dark green. An iron picket fence around the house is a replacement for an earlier wooden fence remembered by older residents as having had more charm and character than its replacement. The house has five chimneys, with molded caps.

The facade (east elevation) facing High Street, has three bays evenly spaced. Brownstone steps lead up to a wood-columned entrance portico in the central bay. The clustered columns of the porch support a round arch in whose spandrels are carved foliate designs in low relief. The natural wood finish door has round-headed panels outlined in gilt. The sidelights and overlight of the door are leaded glass in shades of blue depicting a bamboo tree scenic design. Bull's-eyes separate the sections of leaded glass. The two floor-to-ceiling windows to right and left of the entrance are tall six-over-nine sash and have cast-iron balconies in scroll and foliate patterns. These balconies are identical with Design No. 8 in the catalog published in 1853 by a Hartford foundry, the Phoenix Iron Works, Geo. S. Lincoln & Co. The three second-floor windows are six-over-six. All the windows have narrow brownstone sills, but no apparent lintels. The heavy wood window caps are flat at the first floor and triangular at the second, in both cases supported by large carved consoles. Above the second-story windows are two rows of projecting bricks that form a string course under the bracket overhang of the roof. The brackets have turned drop finials, as do the smaller brackets that support the porch roof. All windows have louvered shutters.

The south elevation, facing Walnut Street, consists of the side of the house proper and the projecting tower. A porch runs along the side of the house from the front to the tower, its depth being the same dimension as the projection of the tower, so that its balustrade is flush with the tower wall. The porch roof is supported by five groups of clustered columns and four round

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Isham-Terry House, Hartford, Connecticut

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State Register of Historic Places
1975 State
Connecticut Historical Commission
Hartford, Connecticut

Hartford Architecture Conservancy's Architectural Survey of Hartford
1976-1978 Local
The Stowe-Day Memorial Library
Hartford, Connecticut

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

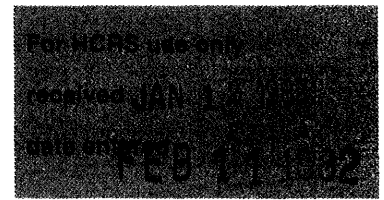
**National Register of Historic Places
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Isham-Terry House, Hartford, Connecticut

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arches with carving in their spandrels, similar to the arrangement on the front porch. The balustrade has delicate turned spindles. At the southwest corner of the house is the tower. A two-story porch projects to the south from its base. The second-story level of the porch is supported by a central round arch, similar to the others, here flanked by circles over a beaded molding. This porch has a balustrade at both first- and second-floor levels, with heavy turned balusters. Both levels of the porch can be entered from the house through French windows. On the first floor, glass over the windows is colored with bull's-eyes in a design similar to that over the front door. The cap over the second floor windows is segmental, while at the third floor of the tower there is a tripartite window with pedimented cornice. The roof overhang of the tower is supported by small, simple, closely-spaced brackets.

The north elevation is the simplest of the four. It has three windows at first, second and third-story levels. None of them has a window cap. At the first and second floors, the windows are six-over-six, and in the attic they are three panes wide by one pane high, level with the roof brackets between the overhang and the string course.

The west elevation is irregular in plan. There is a three-story section, not part of the tower, forming an ell to the rear. It has a bull's-eye window. The west wall of the tower repeats the fenestration of the south exposure at the second and third stories, with a cast iron balcony in front of the first floor window. There is a wood back porch with supports similar to those of the other porches.

The size of the lot has been reduced over the years to accommodate the widening of the streets, and the fence is not original. Otherwise, the exterior of the house appears to have complete integrity and to be free from even minor alterations since 1854.

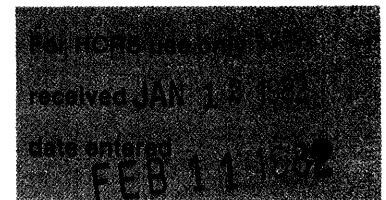
In similar fashion, the interior of the house, both in structure and in furnishings, is also little changed from its original condition. The front door leads to a central hall with a long parlor on the left and reception room and dining room on the right. Behind the parlor, in part of the base of the tower, is the library, and behind the dining room, in the ell to the rear, are the kitchen and pantries. Upstairs, there are four bedrooms in the main block, servants rooms in the ell, and in the tower further bedrooms at the second and third-floor levels. In the attic over the main block the framing of the hip roof is entirely exposed.

In the hall the wainscoting is embossed in a material that appears to be gesso rather than lyncrusta. Several of the plaster walls and ceilings both upstairs and down are stencilled in restrained patterns of fruits and flowers, festoons, and stylized foliage. Several rooms have elaborate central ceiling rosettes, and deep molded cornices. Several rooms have carved white marble fireplaces; in one bedroom the fireplace is pink marble.

The center of the south wall of the parlor is dominated by a wide, ceiling-high mirror supported on a carved base. The mirror frame is gilded wood. There is a bust in the center of the top of the frame that reflects Egyptian influence. Gilt valences over the three windows in this room are

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companion pieces to the mirror. The floor was covered by an Aubusson carpet. Double doors open from the parlor to the library. Through this doorway the library's fireplace surround is seen.

The library fireplace surround, executed in light wood, is an elaborate architectural enframing three times the width of the fireplace and extending from floor to ceiling. A wide shelf over the fireplace is supported by tall carved brackets. There is a stained glass window directly over the fireplace; the flues separate to its sides. The composition is crowned by a band of painted wood panels on either side of a shallow pediment. At its south end the library occupies the base of the tower. Three glazed French doors open from this end of the room east to the side porch, south to the tower porch, and west to an iron balcony. The ceiling of the library is coffered.

The dining room has a breakfront that is a companion piece to the library fireplace surround. The breakfront is of dark wood, equally wide, and runs from floor to ceiling. A shelf projects at sideboard level. Under it are drawers four feet deep. The breakfront has fluted pilasters and a segmental pediment.

Both the exterior and interior of the house are essentially in the same condition as they were in the 19th century.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1854 Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Isham-Terry House, an imposing Italianate residence, was a landmark one hundred and twenty-five years ago as much as it continues to be a landmark today. An exceptional example of the Italianate style of architecture, the house is an anachronism as seen from proximate east-west highways and tall contemporary office buildings which have all encroached upon areas which a century ago were streets and avenues of private residential homes, almost all of which have long since disappeared.

The 100 foot by 225 foot "more or less" undeveloped lot on the northwest corner of High Street and Walnut Street was sold on September 9, 1852 by Henry and Walter Keney, local wholesale grocery merchants to Ebenezer Roberts, an employee (1819-1896). No record of an architect or builder is noted. According to the Hartford Atlas of 1856, Ebenezer Roberts is listed as the first resident recorded at the High and Walnut Street location.

The Italianate style house was the fashion in the middle of the nineteenth century. In Hartford many houses were square brick structures with brown-stone lintels and sills, dependent for their character on flat roofs with bracketed overhangs and elaborate front porches. Some of the Italianate houses rose above this norm by use of bay windows, cupolas, and exceptionally fine materials. A case in point is the Calvin Day House that was built only two years before the Isham-Terry House. Others rose above the norm by more complex spatial compositions and by the use of a tower, as in Colonel Samuel Colt's Armsmear (National Historic Landmark, November 13, 1966), built two years later than the Isham-Terry House. The residence at 211 High Street made use of all these sophisticated design elements.

In the Isham-Terry House the proportions of width, length, and height and the proportions of fenestration to solid wall are subtle and pleasing. The tower is a landmark, probably even more so today than in 1855 because, visible from the passing interstate highway it is now in sharp contrast to its surroundings. The detail of the front porch and front entrance, and of the side porch, which forms the base of the tower, and of other elements, is carefully thought out and delicately executed. The whole is a sophisticated and exceptionally fortuitous example of the Italianate style of architecture.

Ebenezer Roberts prospered in his business affairs. He became a director of the Hartford National Bank, Travelers Insurance Co., Collins Co., Smythe Manufacturing Co., Anchor Mills Paper Co., and National Fire Insurance Co. In his 77th year, on March 7, 1896, he died in his home.

On October 3, 1896, Oliver Kingsley Isham, M. D. (1865-1949) with the financial aid of his father, Henry Griggs Isham, purchased the property and buildings at 211 High Street from the executors of the estate of Ebenezer Roberts.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Representative Men of Connecticut, 1861-1894, Everett, Mass.: Massachusetts Publishing Co., 1894.

Catalog of Phoenix Iron Works, George S. Lincoln and Co., Hartford, Conn. 1853. (private collection.)

Kathleen A. Cavanaugh, West Hartford, Conn.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

AREA NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property one-third

Quadrangle name Hartford north

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 1.8 6 9 2 9 1 0 4 6 2 6 8 0 0
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is city lot number 2450 as described in the Hartford Land Records, volume 352, page 106.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arthur W. Leibundguth, Director
Kathleen A. Cavanaugh, Executrix of the estates of Julia L. Isham and Charlotte T. Isham
 organization The Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, Inc. date Sept. 26, 1980
 street & number 394 Main Street telephone 247-8996
207 Warrenton Avenue telephone 233-8724
 city or town Hartford, state Connecticut
West Hartford, state Connecticut

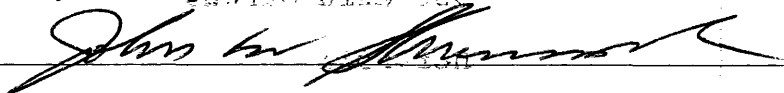
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date January 4, 1982

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	Entered in the National Register date <u>2/11/82</u>
<i>for factory</i> Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

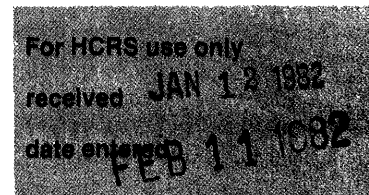
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The conveyance included the parcel of land, 150 feet by 150 feet (in this transaction the depth of the lot was reduced from 225 feet to 150 feet), with the dwelling house (and barn) thereon "together with the carpets, curtains and gas fixtures now in said house, and also the mirror in the parlor and the coal now in the cellar." (Hartford Land Records Book No. 248, Page No. 344). The gold leaf framed pier mirror is in the parlor to this day along with the three matching French Empire style gold leaf window valances. The built-in fireplace surround in the handsome wood panelled library and the magnificent breakfront in the dining room to house the beautiful collection of china, porcelain, and glass, are all original to the house.

At the time of purchase by Dr. Isham, approximately forty years after its construction, the house at 211 High Street was in a state of extensive disrepair. The roof leaked badly (being tin and in need of repairs) having damaged the ceilings and walls on the upper floors, the frontal brick on the High Street entrance was broadly cracked, and the entire north wall of the dining room (of solid brick construction) was precariously giving way to a crumbling deterioration. Immediate work was required and attention focused on rebuilding, repairs, and restoration.

The original pine floors in the front room (Dr. Isham's office), the library, three bedrooms on the second floor and two of the bathrooms were laid over with hardwoods and parquet installation. Painting and repairs throughout the house were required. Decorative stencil work and hand painting on two bedroom ceilings was commissioned to be done at this time along with a decorative stencil design throughout the hallways. It is to the credit of the Isham family that the home was brought back to its original state of elegance, improved upon, and continually maintained thereafter.

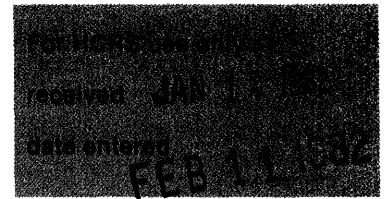
Dr. Isham deeded the parcel of land 150 feet by 150 feet with all buildings thereon to his father, Henry Griggs Isham on June 13, 1910. Three years later, on July 28, 1913, Henry Griggs Isham in turn deeded "a certain piece or parcel of land 150 feet by 150 feet with the dwelling house, barn and shed thereon" to Julia L. and Charlotte T. Isham, his two youngest daughters. Their mother, Mary Jane Terry Isham, who was the family's loving and guiding influence had recently died on June 25, 1913. Their father died soon after on January 10, 1915.

Of seven children in the family, four came to live at 211 High Street with their mother and father. Albert Terry Isham died in 1864 before the age of five years and Jennie Louise Isham died in 1869 before she was six years old. Grace Terry Isham passed away when she was twenty-one years old in 1894. One sister, Mary Terry Isham married Frank Fuller of Hartford December 14, 1899 with the wedding ceremony performed at the Isham residence with a society wedding catered reception immediately following.

On March 21, 1949, Dr. Oliver Kingsley Isham died. His two beloved and devoted sisters, Julia and Charlotte, who were the youngest in the family continued to reside in the family home as they had from October 10, 1896.

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September 22, 1977 Julia Louise Isham passed away and her sister, Charlotte Terry Isham, the last of their historic family, continued to live in and maintain the family residence until her death on October 19, 1979.

The Isham-Terry family traces its American heritage on two lines of the family to William Bradford, second governor of the New England colonies in Massachusetts.

Their mother's great great grandmother had the family name of Strong and was a sister to the mother of Nathan Hale.

Their maternal great grandfather was Samuel Terry, famous inventor of clocks, along with his brother Eli Terry. Samuel Terry's son, Dr. John Burnham Terry, a physician and a dentist, was the brother of Nathaniel Terry, one of the founders of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, and Eliphalet Terry, a President of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company. Dr. John Burnham Terry was the father of Mary Jane Terry, wife of Henry Griggs Isham. Mary Jane Terry at times helped her father at his medical office which he shared with Dr. Horace Wells who was the inventor of "laughing gas", the forerunner of anesthesia.

Paternal grandfather was Dr. Oliver Kingsley Isham, a Yale Medical School graduate whose namesake was his grandson, also a medical doctor and older brother of Julia and Charlotte Isham. Their grandfather was outstanding as one of the first Connecticut State Senators serving at the Old State House on Main Street in Hartford. His picture along with some of his writing equipment was donated by Julia and Charlotte to the Connecticut Historical Society. Medical books and medical equipment of both medical doctors, grandfather and grandson, were presented to the New Haven Historical Society by Julia and Charlotte after their brother died in 1949.

The younger Dr. Oliver Kingsley Isham attended the University of the City of New York graduating from the Medical School in the year 1889. There was a class of over three hundred students with commencement exercises held at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City at which time Dr. Isham was awarded the Valentine-Mott silver medal for academic excellence. This medal was the second highest award given by the University.

Continuing his education Dr. Isham went on to the Orthopedic School of Surgery at the University of the City of New York graduating in 1893 at the head of his class. He then returned to Connecticut and was granted a license to practice medicine in 1893. He functioned as a health officer for several years prior to purchasing the property at 211 High Street where he maintained his medical office from 1897 on, until his death in 1949.

Dr. Isham's career encompassed the design of orthopedic braces and aides, surgery, the development of a moist deep heat therapy machine for the relief of arthritis, general medical practice, and for a period of almost two years was interim Acting Director of Hartford Hospital.

Dr. Isham's advanced ideas and techniques of surgery and bone setting were responsible for saving the lives and limbs of patients who without his ability would have had to undergo amputation, or suffer crippling effects, or worse--the loss of life during that era of medical and surgical history.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

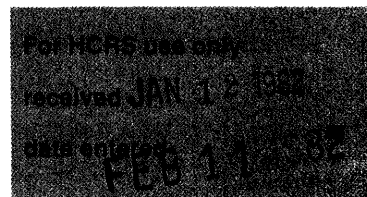
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Dr. Oliver Isham was a man dedicated in his profession and devoted to his family.

The Isham-Terry family history is one of accomplishment and pride. Twenty-eight original founders of Hartford form a background to the ensuing generations of family members who contributed their services for the good of mankind and the community.

The house at 211 High Street is representative of both Isham and Terry family history containing furniture, paintings, handiwork and memorable antique collections all carefully used and conserved by succeeding family members.

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32

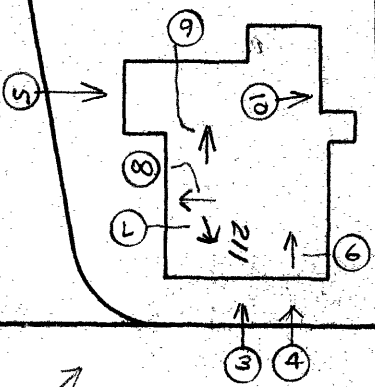
Isham-Terry House

219

223

HIGH

WALNUT STREET



220

CHA

City of Hartford, CT
Engineer's Map No. 13
Scale - 1" = 50'

OCT 2 1877
FEB 11 1882