

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED APR 1 1976  
DATE ENTERED JUL 12 1976

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 James Bishop House

AND/OR COMMON  
James Bishop House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Bishop Campus of Rutgers University,  
facing College Avenue near Bishop St. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN New Brunswick VICINITY OF Fifteenth CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE New Jersey CODE 34 COUNTY Middlesex CODE 023

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Trustees of Rutgers College, c/o William Richardson,  
Administrator

STREET & NUMBER Real Estate, Rutgers University

CITY, TOWN New Brunswick VICINITY OF New Jersey STATE New Jersey

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Middlesex County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER Bayard Street

CITY, TOWN New Brunswick STATE New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey New Jersey Number 712

DATE 1960  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS National Park Service

CITY, TOWN Washington STATE DC

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bishop House is an asymmetrical irregular form 2½ story Italianate style building with a central hip-roofed three story projecting tower.

Quite similar to a design William Ranlett termed Anglo-Norman style in The Architect the Italianate building is a brick structure stuccoed, painted pastel yellow, and scored to simulate stone. The foundation is cut brownstone. This irregular building has numerous breaks, towers, wings, and bays while still maintaining a strong architectural balance. The reserved quoin-like effects at the roof line and at the corners serves to further highlight the house.

Openings are generally axed on gables or at the center of the towers. The first story windows are mostly tripartite form casements with circular arches.

The center square tower is three stories; the floor having a large Romanesque arch which creates an open vestibule. Each floor level is set off by belt coursing. The low pitched roof of the tower is hipped.

Abutting the center tower is a one story open stuccoed porch which extends the length of the East portion of the South facade and encompasses a castle-like octagonal turret.

The shape and materials of the roofs are varied; some have gable ends and wood shingles, some are shallow pitched to metal covered decks, and one tower deck is covered with quarry tile. The hip roof over the center square entrance tower is slightly concave with a metal covered eyebrow window on each of the four sides.

The chimney tops, three in number, are similar to those in A. J. Downing's Country Houses - elongated round capping in various decorative patterns, probably made of brick tile.

Second floor windows are round-arched and grouped in threes where bays project and twos where recessed. These windows are narrow single pane over single pane with double-hung sash.

The interior of the Bishop House has a center hall, flanked by rooms of various sizes but mostly rectangular in shape. The hall bypasses the main stairs and continues to the rear and a servants stairway leading to the second floor.

The house has forty-two rooms.

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Middlesex County  
New Jersey 034

CONTINUATION SHEET

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7. Description (Continued)

The main stairs begins in the center of the front hall and leads to a landing where it returns in two flights against the walls to the second floor. The balustrade is walnut with two faceted newel posts, rather heavy turned balusters and a broad, gently curved, moulded handrail. About 1957 another flight of stairs was built from the second floor, beyond the wall, rising over the railing to the attic. Now used for offices this floor was probably originally the servants quarters and storage facilities as only the rear servants stairs originally had access to this floor. The new flight of stairs attempted to closely match the original stairway.

All interior walls are plastered. The ceilings of the principal rooms have moulded plaster cartouches and plaster cornice designs.

All door and window trim is large with heavy wooden mouldings. The library, to the right of the front entrance hall, is lined with bookcases enclosed with circle-headed glass doors reaching nearly to the ceiling. They are capped with a wood frieze and cornice which breaks around each book case and forms the main cornice of the room. The corner of each bookcase has clustered triple slender columns with Gothic mouldings. Window paneling has semi-circular arches supported by slender colonettes. The window recesses are fitted with paneled interior shutters, in two parts, and recessed into the window jambs.

The flooring of the front hall is ceramic tiles laid in a diagonal pattern. All other floors on the first and second levels are of hardwood. The floor of the library, however, is laid in an intricate star-shaped pattern using different colored woods. One room in the rear section has an alternating striped hardwood floor of contrasting colors with a sailing ship worked in as a central motif.

From 1925 until 1934 the Bishop House served as the residence for Rutgers College's Dean of Men and his family. After 1934 it was used exclusively for classrooms and offices. This is its present function; the first floor is generally large classrooms while the second and attic floors are divided into faculty offices.

The building is situated on a slight knoll off College Avenue and is presently surrounded by more educational facilities.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Architecture

Architecturally, the Bishop is one of the few known Italianate buildings in New Brunswick and one of the most elegant of its style in the county and the state. Thought to have been built by Isziah Rolfe, an obscure figure in New Jersey, in 1852 the structure is a monument (perhaps the only extant physical remnant connected to him) to his talent as a builder/architect. The excellence of the building and its size indicates the social and economic bounds within which its owner, James Bishop, lived.

### Industry

James Bishop, descended from a Puritan family which helped found Newbury, Massachusetts in 1637, and later, in 1667, founded Woodbridge, New Jersey.

James inherited a good part of his fortune from his father, who was a wealthy merchant and industrialist.

James, however, had a difficult time maintaining the fortune, partially as a result of the economic turmoil of the second half of the 19th century.

Born in New Brunswick in 1816 Bishop lived in New Jersey most of his life, save a three year residency in Europe. Educated in the Spaulding School and the Rutgers College Preparatory School, both in New Brunswick, Bishop followed in his father's footsteps as a shipping merchant with large interests in regional industrial pursuits, particularly petroleum oriented concerns.

### Religion

Bishop's obituary in 1895 indicated that he was New Jersey's most influential layman in American Methodism. While this report was possibly somewhat biased Bishop was certainly a principal founder and active member of the St. James Methodist Church in New Brunswick.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1974 Rutgers Daily Targum (newspaper) article by Rob Gleaner  
 Mansions, Mills and Main Streets by Carole Rifkind and Carol Levine, Schocken  
 Books, 1975, New York  
 Who Was Who in America, Historical Volume 1607-1896 (Rev. ed., 1967), Marquis  
 Company, Chicago, Illinois  
 Historic American Buildings survey New Jersey Number 712 (Bishop House) Work-  
 sheet Personal observation by preparer of nomination (Rutgers graduate history  
 major)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one quarter (approximate)

UTM REFERENCES

600		540							
A	18	546	540	448	3600	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C						D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael C. Barr (Revisions by Terry Karschner, Historic Sites, DEP)

ORGANIZATION

Rutgers Alumni Association

DATE

September 29, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

College Avenue

TELEPHONE

(609) 292-2023

CITY OR TOWN

New Brunswick

STATE

New Jersey

# 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*David J. Barr*

TITLE

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

JAN - 9 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

*Charles M. Gifford*

DATE

9/12/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

6-25-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

RBR for WJM 7/8/76

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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8. Significance (Continued)

Political

Politically active, Bishop served as a member of the New Jersey Assembly in 1849 and 1850. Later, he was elected to the 34th United States Congress as a Whig member of the House of Representatives from New Jersey in 1855. Shortly afterwards Bishop assisted in founding the Republican party in New Jersey.

Between terms in the Assembly and the U.S. House of Representatives Bishop decided to construct his house on College Avenue and tour Europe. The decision to go overseas was apparently made as a result of failing health.

Unfortunately, while abroad for nearly three years Bishop's financial empire slowly eroded until the depression in 1873 completely destroyed him.

The following year Bishop sold the house to Mahlon Martin. Afterwards, however, James Bishop made a recovery of sorts. In 1878 he was appointed Chief of the Bureau of Statistics for New Jersey, a post which he ably occupied until his retirement in 1893.

Bishop died in 1895, living with his son-in-law near Morristown, New Jersey.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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9. Bibliography (Continued)

Biographical Directory of the American Congress: 1774-1971,  
United States Government Printing Office, 1971 (p. 595)

James Bishop Papers. Manuscripts and letters in Rutgers University  
Special Collections. (Accession #1677)

David Bishop Papers. Genealogy of the Bishop Family. Manuscript  
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The New Brunswick Directory for 1866-67 and 1868-69 by J. H.  
Lant, New York. (p. 19)

Sherman, William E. "The History of Bishop House." History Department  
Files, Rutgers University, 1951.

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712), 1960.