

PH0011681

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE
AUG 14 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Law, Thomas, House
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Honeymoon House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1252 6th Street, S.W.
CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Congressman Walter E. Fauntroy,
District of Columbia
STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11 COUNTY: District of Columbia CODE: 001

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Community Center

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Tiber Island Apartments
STREET AND NUMBER:
429 N Street, S.W.
CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
STATE:
District of Columbia
CODE: 11

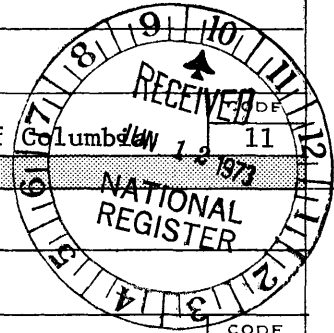
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Recorder of Deeds
STREET AND NUMBER:
6th and D Streets, N.W.
CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
STATE:
District of Columbia
CODE: 11

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia additions to the National Register of Historic Places recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks
DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968
 Federal State County Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
National Capital Planning Commission
STREET AND NUMBER:
1325 G Street, N.W.
CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
STATE:
District of Columbia
CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas Law House, located at the southeast corner of the Tiber Island Apartment complex, stood at the northwest corner of 6th and N Streets prior to the closing of these streets during the southwest urban renewal development. This late 18th century, three-story, brick structure with high basement and twentieth century wings attached at the north was retained when the Tiber Island Apartment complex of concrete and beige brick highrise buildings and townhouses was built in the 1960's. The house was rehabilitated in 1965 to serve as a community center, and a swimming pool was dug immediately to the north. To the south and west is an ample yard with stone paths, trees, and shrubs, a residential traffic circle, and the quays of the Washington Channel.

The exterior of this building, which was erected between the summer of 1794 and March 1796, typifies Federal period architecture which relied on proportions and geometric shape for style. It has the verticality, the smooth flat surfaces, and on the major facades, the symmetry and detailing which characterize late 18th century buildings. The interior has largely been changed and retains few older features.

The rectangular building measures 50 feet by 30 feet with a longer north-south axis. The box-like building has two main facades; the five bay west one and the three bay south one. The brick bearing walls laid in Flemish bond are regularly divided into areas on the main facades by stone beltcourses and by symmetrically arranged openings. Emphasis is given to the raised first story by the central entrance on the west facade, by the stone beltcourses which separate it from the high basement and from the second story, and by the stone impost band and arches which link and outline the entrance and the arched recesses of the windows. Unfortunately the contrast of the white stone trim and the red brick walls has been appreciably reduced since both walls and trim now are painted beige to harmonize with the buildings of the apartment complex. Although curving steps with iron railings are characteristic of the Federal period, the handsome cast iron porch with curving steps at the north leading to the central entrance was probably added in the mid-19th century. The sash of the semicircular fanlight of the entrance door dates from the recent rehabilitation and the facing with modillion cornice and consoles probably has a mid-19th century origin.

The verticality of the building is enhanced by the fenestration of its main facades. The basement has 6/6-light windows with segmental arches. The first story has semicircular arched 10/9-light windows set in arched recesses which begin at the basement beltcourse. The second story has rectangular 9/9-light windows while the third story has almost square, 6/3-light windows. Except the basement windows, all windows have stone sills. The first story windows have the stone arches mentioned previously and the second and third story windows have stone splayed lintels with keystones. The basement windows on the south facade have brick segmental arches. These arches are not visible on the west facade where the basement has brownstone facing. Most window sash dates from the 1965 rehabilitation.

The north facade has somewhat irregular fenestration. On the first story east of the one story wing is a 6/6-light window. On the second story there is a 9/9-light window with large relieving arch above it and a doorway with door lights and transom opening on to the roof of the wing. On the third story there is a 6/3-light window and a double window. Openings have brick jack arches or segmental arches. (Continued on Form 10-300a)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1794-1796 constructed

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <u>Early history of the</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | <u>Federal City</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated the Thomas Law House a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. This Federal style house is one of the few buildings still standing in the Federal City which was erected during the period of land speculation when the seat of government was in the process of being transferred from Philadelphia to Washington. Although not an elaborate design, the building is a handsome structure with fine proportions and restrained detailing. It illustrates that speculative building from 1794 to 1796 did not necessarily mean a lower standard of quality or design.

The house had a number of interesting occupants. The most notable are Thomas Law and his wife, Eliza Parke Custis, and Richard Bland Lee. The house functioned as a hotel for several years in the 1860's. In the 20th century it has served important functions in its neighborhood, first as a clinic and now as a community center.

The lot on which the Law House is located originally belonged to Notley Young. He deeded it to the Commissioners when the site of the Federal City was determined. In 1793 it was bought by James Greenleaf and became part of the speculative land holdings of the Greenleaf Syndicate which controlled one-third of the saleable land in Washington before its principals went bankrupt in 1797. This land deal played a significant role in the early development of the Federal City.

The Syndicate on December 24, 1793, was required by the Commissioners to build 20 houses yearly for 7 years or they would not receive title to their property. Between the summer of 1794 and March 1796 the Law House was constructed. The design is attributed to William Lovering, an architect-builder who designed other speculative buildings. Bricks were supplied by Daniel Carroll.

In March 1796 Thomas Law occupied the house after his marriage to Martha Washington's granddaughter, Eliza Parke Custis. The house became known as "Honeymoon House" as the Laws lived there during their honeymoon while awaiting completion of their house. On September 7, 1796, the house at the corner of N and 6th Streets was advertised for let.

Thomas Law (1756-1834), a member of a wealthy English family, had been in the Indian Service. He came to New York in 1794. James Greenleaf interested him in the new Federal City. In 1795 he purchased speculative property in Washington and received a mortgage on the Syndicate's property there. After marrying Eliza Custis he settled in Washington and continued to live there most of his life although he and his wife separated in 1804 and were divorced in 1811. Law was one of Washington's wealthiest citizens and was active, although not successful, in business enterprises. He eventually lost his fortune. (Continued on Form 10-300a, page 2)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atlas, City Directories, and Newspaper Clippings. Washingtoniana Collection. District of Columbia Public Library.
Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774-1927. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1928, p. 1215.
 Bryan, Wilhelmus B. A History of the National Capital, 1790-1814. Vol. I. New York, MacMillan, 1914.
 Clark, Allen C. Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City. Washington: W.F. Roberts, 1901.
 Columbia Real Estate Title Company, Deed Search Files. Case 22,748.
 (Continued on Form 10-300a, page 2)

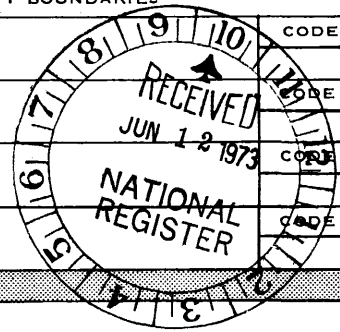
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 52' 29"	77° 01' 12"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **23,755 square feet**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
T. Robins Brown, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: **National Capital Planning Commission** DATE: **Feb. 5, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **11**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *James H. Smith*

Title: Assistant to the Mayor for Housing Programs

Date: JUN 4 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robertson Utley
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 8/14/73

ATTEST:

Wm. Bennett B.
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 7 30 73

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7. Description - Thomas Law House

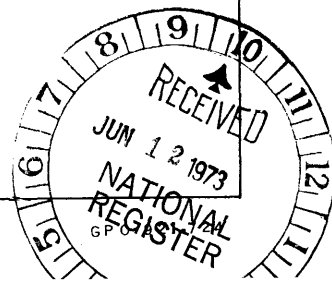
The low roof now covered with standing seam tin is hipped on the west but has a vertical end on the east. The roof is not very visible from the ground and is not a major design factor.

The chimneys are major features. Breaking the north slope of the roof near its northwest corner is an interior chimney which has a narrow rectangular plan. More impressive is the double stack chimney at the east. The stacks which are almost freestanding are joined by a semicircular arch at approximately the cornice level. Above the arch they form one central massive chimney stack. The east wall which has no openings is abstractly sculptural due to this chimney. This wall was probably rebuilt as it is laid in all stretchers and its bricks are smaller than those of the other walls. Chipping paint reveal that they are a brighter color. The joining of the south and north walls with the east wall is unusual. The plan of the corners suggests that squares of approximately 1/2 foot width were removed where the walls come together.

The building has a wooden cornice with paired mutules with guttae and a fluted frieze. The cornice returns at the east.

Except for the change in color and additions to the north the exterior retains its late 18th century appearance. Alterations include the removal of a 19th century dormer and a plain metal fence around the yard. In the late 19th and early-20th centuries there was a frame addition at the north. This had been removed by 1928 and by 1938 the present north wings had been added. They consist of a one-story brick wing with flat roof, and a one bay, one-story passage connecting the older house with a one- and one-half story house 6 bays wide on the west. This house built in the 20th century has a gable roof broken by three dormers. The one-story wing, two bays wide on the west, has a high basement which has been stuccoed and scored to match the ashlar brownstone facing of the west basement facade of the main block.

The interior was completely rehabilitated in the 1960's. No attempt was made to have an archeologically correct restoration although "colonial revival" features were employed. The original central hall was modified to allow bathrooms and closets. The stair at the south in the central hall was one of the few older interior features retained during the rehabilitation. This stair with open well and a number of flights rises from the first to the third floor. Its massive newel dates from the mid-19th century, but the rest of it probably is original to the building. It has plain balusters, simple brackets, and low risers. Other interior features include the black marble, Greek Revival style mantel in the south parlor and in the same room the cornice with its acanthus leaf moulding, band of mutules with guttae alternating with lozenges, and an enriched talon and claw moulding. The second floor's parlor has plain wooden wainscoting and windows have paneled soffits. There is a Greek Revival style mantel with closets on either side. Double doors link the first and second story parlors with the central halls.



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8. Significance - Thomas Law House

The Law house was probably a rental property until 1871. Its title become entangled in the legal dispute following the bankruptcy of the Greenleaf Syndicate.

Richard Bland Lee (1761-1827) lived in the house from 1814 to 1827. He was the brother of Lighthorse Harry Lee. Richard served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1784-88, 1796, and 1799-1806. From 1789 to 1795 he was in Congress and was instrumental in having Washington chosen as the site of the Federal City. After Lee moved to Washington, President Madison in 1816 appointed him a commissioner to adjudicate claims arising out of the loss and destruction of property during the War of 1812. In 1819 President Monroe appointed him judge of the Orphans' Court of the District of Columbia. He held this position at his death.

In the 1860's the building housed the Mount Vernon Hotel. The 1864 city directory lists John Miller as proprietor of the Mount Vernon Hotel at the corner of 6th and N Streets, Southwest. In October 1864 Cornelius G. VanReypen leased the property for 3 years. He continued to operate the hotel. In September 1865 he assigned his lease to Sarah L. VanReypen who is listed as the hotel proprietor in 1866. In 1867 the hotel is no longer listed.

The first known owner-occupant of the Law House is Edmund G. Wheeler. Wheeler, a junk dealer, bought the house in 1871 and lived there until 1898. In 1894 Benjamin Leighton, a Washington Lawyer, subdivided the property.

In the early 20th century the house was owned by Henry G. Hadley, M.D. In 1929 he deeded it to the Seventh Day Adventists. Until the area became an urban renewal project, the Hadley Memorial Clinic operated in the building and its 20th century wings. In 1965 the Washington architectural firm of Keyes, Lethbridge, and Condon rehabilitated the building to serve as a community center for the residents of the Tiber Island and Carrollsburg Square apartment complexes.

9. Bibliographical References

D.C. Redevelopment Land Agency. A Brief History of Southwest Washington. Washington, 1957, pp. 7-8.

Eberlein, Harold D. and Cortlandt V.D. Hubbad. Historic Houses of George-town and Washington City. Richmond: Dietz Press, 1958, pp. 371-386.

National Capital Planning Commission. Landmarks Files.

