

Tillinghast Tompkins House
11 Redwood Street
Newport
Newport County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-311

HABS
RI,
3-NEWP,
32-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

TILLINGHAST TOMPKINS HOUSE

HABS
RI,
3-NEWP,
32-

Location: 11 Redwood Street.

Present Owner: Dr. and Mrs. Charles Dotterer.

Present Occupants: Owners.

Present Use: Residence and doctor's office.

Statement of
Significance:

This large frame house was built for Tillinghast Tompkins about 1854-1855. It is a well-preserved example of the formal Italianate house of the mid-19th century with a central hall plan and richly bracketed eaves and porch.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

The building is located in Plat 25, Lot 92. The following is an incomplete chain of title from Newport City Clerk's Records for the City of Newport. Reference is to number and volume of the Land Evidence Books, (LEB.--, p.--).

1845 Deed of December 8, 1845, recorded in LEB. 25, p. 482.

From: Edward Clarke
To: Peleg Clarke and William Clarke
For: \$600

"... a plot of land [containing no buildings]... bounded Northerly on a Street leading Easterly from Bellevue or East Touro Street, North of Redwood Library, eighty feet, Easterly on land of this grantor, one hundred twenty two feet, Southerly on land of this grantor, eighty feet, and Westerly on land of Peleg Clarke, one hundred twenty seven feet..."

1854 Deed of July 8, 1854, recorded in LEB. 33, p. 628.

From: Peleg Clarke and William A. Clarke
To: Tillinghast Tompkins
For: \$3,500

- 1859 Deed of November 29, 1859, recorded in Probate Court
Record Book 20, p. 94.
From: Tillinghast Tompkins, by will
To: Charlotte Tompkins
- 1904 Deed of March 5, 1904, recorded in LEB. 84, p. 121.
From: Frederick Tompkins, son of Charlotte
To: Hamilton B. Tompkins, brother
- 1908 Deed of March 9, 1980, recorded in Probate Court
Record Book 84, p. 1.
From: Hamilton B. Tompkins
To: Emily H. Spafford, cousin
- 1926 Deed of April 22, 1926, recorded in LEB. 118, p. 64.
From: Joseph H. Spafford
To: William P. Sheffield and Agatha S. Sheffield, wife
- 1946 Deed of November 6, 1946, recorded in LEB. 162, p. 191.
From: William P. Sheffield and Agatha S. Sheffield
To: Charles Dotterer

2. Date of erection: 1854-1855. According to the City of Newport tax records of 1854, Tompkins was assessed \$2500 for real estate and \$10,000 for personal property. In the 1855 tax records, he was assessed \$9,000 for real estate and \$11,000 for personal property.

3. Architect: Unknown

4. Builder or contractor: Unknown

5. Original plan: None known

6. Alterations and additions: None known

7. Important old views: None known

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:
Frederick Tompkins, son of Tillinghast, was prominent in Newport and Rhode Island banking. He was a noted expert in the bond and stock certificate markets.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:
Records of Deeds in the Newport City Hall.
Newport Tax Records in the Newport Historical Society.
2. Secondary and published sources:
Arnold, James N., Vital Records of Rhode Island, 1636-1850, Vol. 4, Narragansett Historical Publishing Co., 1893.
Downing, Antoinette F. and Scully, Vincent J., Jr., The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, New York: Clarkson N. Potter, second edition, 1967.
Dripps, M., Map of Newport, Rhode Island, New York, 1850.
Dripps, M., and Tilley, B.I., Map of the City of Newport, Rhode Island, New York and Newport, 1859.
Newport City Directories in the Newport Historical Society.
3. Likely sources not yet investigated:
Personal papers of Tillinghast Tompkins.

Prepared by Thomas M. Slade
University of Notre Dame
Project Historian
June, 1970

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a well-preserved example of a large, frame, formal Italianate house of the mid-nineteenth century.
2. Condition of fabric: The house is in excellent condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 42 feet by 42 feet; square; three bays; 2-1/2 stories.
2. Foundations: The foundation walls are of fieldstone below grade level. The upper portion of the walls are granite in a regular ashlar bond.
3. Wall construction: All the exterior walls are sheathed with horizontal clapboards.
4. Structural system: A frame structural system is employed throughout the building.
5. Chimneys: There are four brick chimneys on the end walls.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways: The six-panel front door has side and top lights.
 - b. Windows: The front facade has paired, double-hung windows with four-light sashes. The remaining double-hung windows have six-light sashes. All the windows have heavy sills and heads carried on brackets. Centered under gables on the third story are triple, round-headed windows.
7. Roof: The hip roof has gables at the center of each side. The deep eaves are decorated with paired brackets with double drops. The center cupola has the same brackets.
8. Porches, stoops, and bulkheads: The open entrance porch has six granite steps. The flat roof is carried on clusters of four columns at each corner. The porch is decorated with arch patterned braces with pendants.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: Facing north, the central hall four-room plan has parlors to the left and right of the entrance and a kitchen at the southeast corner. At present, the northwest and southwest rooms are used for doctor's offices. This plan is repeated on the second floor. In the attic each center gable contains a room.
2. Stairways: The straight run staircase in the central hall has a curve at the top of the open well. This staircase is decorated with massive turned newels, two balusters per step, molded handrail, and sawn step end ornaments. There is a back stairway from the kitchen.
3. Flooring: The flooring on the first floor is parquet. The flooring in the second floor is in thin oak strips.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The plaster walls have heavy wood cornices. The ceilings are plaster. There are ceiling medallions in the central hall and parlor.
5. Doorways and doors: The six-panel doors have mitered architraves with ramped moldings.
6. Special decorative features: The house has interior sliding shutters which are panelled and louvered.

7. Hardware: The doors have silver knobs and key hole covers.
8. Lighting: There are modern fixtures throughout.
9. Heating: There is a modern heating system. The house has seven fireplaces. The two marble fireplaces in the parlors have iron coal grates.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces north on a level lot. A deep yard to the rear has large trees and informal landscaping.
2. Historic landscape design: None
3. Outbuildings: A modern garage at the southeast corner of the lot replaces a stable.
4. Walks: A straight walk leads to the front door.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

Newport HABS Project -- 1969. Sponsored in cooperation with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Antoinette F. Downing, Chairman. Under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of HABS, and Osmund Overby, (University of Missouri), Project Supervisor, Jack E. Boucher, photographer.

APPENDIX
FOLLOWS...

Addendum to
Tillinghast Tompkins House
11 Redwood Street
Newport
Newport County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-311

HABS
RI,
3-NEWSP
32-

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Service
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240