

MAPLEWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Designation Report for Historic Landmark

Landmark # D002-05

1. Historic name of property: **Timothy Ball House**

Other names: "Ye Olde Washington Inn"

2. Street Address: 425 Ridgewood Road

3. Tax Map information: Block 7 - 4 Lot 194

4. Description at time of designation, including size and placement on lot, outbuildings, etc.:

The Timothy Ball House is a two and one half story residential structure located on the west side of Ridgewood Avenue at the intersection of Washington Road. The house was constructed in 1743. When the Washington Park Company took over the property in 1919, they added the dormers and colonnaded porch. The principal portion of the house is rectangular with two extensions to the west of the main house: a wood frame open air one story addition that connects to a one story, wood frame two bay garage. All three portions of the house have gabled, asphalt shingle roofs.

The house is constructed of local ashlar sandstone on the lower story with painted wood clapboard above. The stone base story is stepped on the north elevation, rising to the top of the second story at the corner of the east elevation. There are three pedimented dormers on each side of the principal ridge of the roof.

The placement of the windows on all four facades is irregular, reflecting the multiple floor levels of the house. Typically, the windows are wood six-over-six double-hung units, with a number of smaller two-by-two square wood casement units set in the attic story or within the lower stone portion of the building. Each dormer has a six-over-six double-hung window.

Two large chimneys of random ashlar sandstone are located on the main ridge, one at each end of the roof. A continuous dentil band is set below the eave on the south elevation. Historic photographs of the house indicate that this dentil course pre-dates the 1919 renovations. The porch on the north side of the house consists of a five bay colonnade with square classically derived columns. There are four entrances into the house. On the north side of the house, a six step balustraded staircase leads to a principal entrance. There is an additional entrance on the ground floor level, in the stone portion of the north elevation. There is a doorway on the east elevation, and on the south façade, there is a door beneath a small projecting pediment, supported by brackets (likely dating to the renovation in 1919).

The principal orientation of the house is on Washington Road, perpendicular to Ridgewood Avenue. An asphalt driveway leading to the garage is set further up the hill and enters onto Washington Circle. A stone retaining wall defines the southeast corner of the property. A stone staircase leads up to the lawn and is constructed of the same sandstone as the house. A stream, which flows south through the property, is just to the east of the house. There is a legend that this stream was the original dividing boundary between Springfield and Orange Townships. The house sits on a large parcel of land, with expansive lawns to the east and west of the house. Mature trees are scattered throughout the property, including several massive and ancient walnut trees.

The Timothy Ball House is a vernacular structure, meaning that its physical characteristics are derived primarily from tradition and in response to location. It shares elements with a house type known as the “Deep East Jersey Cottage.” This type, typical of areas of New Jersey settled by New Englanders and also revealing some Dutch influence, is typically of frame construction with exposed chimney backs. The roof generally has close-formed eaves with little or no overhang. The uneven height of the stone foundation and first floor suggests two building campaigns. In addition, historic photographs of the building show a distinct line where there is a shift in the horizontal pattern of the clapboards on the south elevation. It is likely that the eastern portion of the house, the location of the original kitchen with massive hearth and bake oven, is the original portion of the house constructed in 1743. Further study of this important building could determine this and provide more information on building traditions in Essex County during the 18th century.

The 1919 renovations, completed during the height of the Colonial Revival era, are clearly inspired by the river-side façade of Mount Vernon--George Washington’s Virginia home. The Timothy Ball House is one of only two houses recorded by the Historic American Building Survey in Maplewood (HABS NJ-50).

5. Ownership history for property: [deed research ongoing]

1743 – 1758 Timothy and Esther Ball
1758 Esther Ball
prior to 1779 – 1799 Uzal Ball
Property in the Ball family until 1853
1919 Washington Park Company
1930s E. Arthur Ball, Muncie, Indiana

The following occupants are listed in the “Directory of the Oranges” :

(1916, 1918, 1920 no occupant listed)
1922 Edward J. Drake, broker NY

After the renovation in 1919, the following individuals operated the Timothy Ball House as a restaurant:

1924 Mrs. Grace E. Drake, “Ye Olde Washington Inn” tearoom
1928, 1929, 1932 Sue B. Fulton “Ye Olde Washington Inn”
1934 Edward G. Ten Eyck, “Timothy Ball House Restaurant”
1936 Mrs. Dorothy Howe “Washington Inn”
1938, 1940, 1942, 1948 Mrs. Dorothy H. Roe, “Washington Inn”
1950 Edward H. Kuster, “Washington Inn”

History

The first European settlers in what is now Essex County came to Newark from the New Haven Connecticut Colony, led there by Robert Treat in the mid-seventeenth century. By 1678, the outer limits of the Newark Colony stretched to the top of the First Watchung Mountain. Early roads from Newark were surveyed, often along old Indian trails, two of which eventually became South Orange and Clinton Avenues. Settlers from the Newark Colony, in search of land to farm or to develop early industry, moved west along these roads. They established farms where they grew wheat, rye, Indian corn and fruit trees, raised cattle and set up grist and saw mills.

Over the course of the early eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, small settlement developed in the western and eastern parts of what is now Maplewood. These settlements took on local names—that in the west eventually took the name of Jefferson Village, the east, North Farms. A few local roads developed creating links between farms in the area, including Ridgewood, Elmwood, Parker, Tuscan and Valley. Another important artery, the Newark-Springfield Turnpike, was constructed in 1806. Because those who settled here were primarily of English descent, their farmhouses generally followed English traditions and were built close to these main arteries. Early families such as the Balls, the Crowells, the Baldwins, the Beachs, the Browns, the Smiths, and the Heddens, bought large plots of land and eventually members of these extended families owned property throughout the area.

The Timothy Ball House was constructed during Maplewood’s early settlement period, when settlers pushed out from Newark to the ridge of “the first mountain.” Timothy Ball’s grandfather, Edward Ball, was originally from Connecticut. He migrated to what is now Newark in 1666 with Robert Treat. He was one of the signers of the “Fundamental Agreement,” “to form a common township at New-Ark on Pesayack.” This compact established rules for the Newark settlement and limited civil power to church members. Edward and his wife Abigail Blatchley had six children who survived to adulthood. In 1710, Edward’s youngest son Thomas, (born 1688 in Newark, died in 1744) a blacksmith, married Sarah Davis. They had twelve children. Thomas’s eldest son Timothy was born in 1711 in Newark. In 1718, Thomas settled a large tract of land between “North Farms” and “Jefferson Village.” The house is believed to have been located near Tuscan Road, adjacent what is now Maplecrest Park.

Timothy Ball has been described in various sources as a tanner, weaver and farmer. He married Esther Bruen (1715-1803) in December 1734. They initially settled in a cabin near where they would construct their home in 1743. The subject house was constructed with local red sandstone, quarried on the mountain, and from local timber. A date stone, inscribed “T & E.B. 1743” is

located on the front chimney. Timothy and Esther had ten children (one reference says 15). Timothy Ball contracted smallpox during an epidemic that raged from Newark to Princeton. He died of the disease in January 1758 and is buried in the "Old Burying Ground" at the First Presbyterian Church in Orange. Timothy Ball's will left "...my loving and beloved wife Esther the use of all my lands Tenements and Hereditaments during the time she shall remain my widow..." He also left to his sons "namely John & Uzal...all my Lands and meadows eqaly to be Divided amongst them..." To his daughters Sarah, Charity and Rachel he left "fifty Pounds apeace...when they are eighteen years old or before if they are married." Ball's widow continued to live in the home with her five children and was left to manage the farm on her own. During the Revolutionary War, Timothy Ball's sons were in the New Jersey Militia. Uzal and David were privates in Captain Isaac Gilliam's Company, and John was an ensign in Captain Isaac Halsey's Company.

There is a local legend that George Washington stayed in the Timothy Ball House during the period of the "Battle of Springfield" in June of 1780. No documented proof of this has yet been found, however, it is not improbable that he would have boarded at available houses in the area. The Timothy Ball House is located fairly close to the area of the battle, and even closer to the site of the skirmish at the Vaux Hall Bridge (Littel's Bridge). In addition, there was a stable used by soldiers located just north of the Timothy Ball House, near what is now West Cedar lane.

Uzal Ball was born in 1748. He married Rebecca Hedden and after her death, he married Abigail Burnet. One child, Noah, was born to Uzal and Rebecca. Uzal and Abigail had six children: Rhoda, Enoch, Jonathan, Lafayette, Rachel and Mariah. Uzal took title to the house prior to 1779. "Tax Ratables" for Newark Township from 1779-1793 indicate that Uzal Ball owned 57 acres of land, and had at various times from 2-3 horses and 6-9 cattle. Uzal Ball died in 1799 and was buried in the old cemetery in Springfield near the Presbyterian Church. Esther Ball remained in the house until her death in 1803. Cyrus Durand's map of Jefferson Village in 1815 shows "E. Ball" at the location of the Timothy Ball house, just to the west of the stream. It is likely that this refers to Enoch Ball. Records for the following years are sketchy, however, the house remained in the Ball family until 1853. After that time, the house gradually deteriorated. Its condition and vulnerability caused enough concern that when the Washington Park Company developed the adjacent land, they also undertook a renovation of the Timothy Ball House in 1919. It was at this time that the classical portico and pedimented dormers were added. From 1919 until [] the house was operated as a "tea room" and restaurant. A Ball descendent, Arthur Ball from Muncie, Indiana, owned the house during the 1930s.

Sources

Bates, Helen B. *Maplewood Past and Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948

Directories of the Oranges. (various years.)

Durand-Hedden House and Garden Association. *Maplewood (Images of America Series)*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing Company, 1998.

National Park Service, Historic American Building Survey, drawings and photographs, 1933. Newark Township, Essex County, N.J. "Tax Ratables." Microfilm, Newark Public Library.

Pierson, David Lawrence. *Narratives of Newark*. Newark: Pierson Publishing Company, 1917.

www.altlaw.com/edball/html/doo46/i00363.htm. (Ball genealogy site)

Wacker, Peter O. "New Jersey's Cultural Landscape Before 1800", in *Proceedings of the Second Annual Symposium of the New Jersey Historical Commission*. Newark: The New Jersey Historical Society, 1971.

7. Statement of significance, incorporating criteria for designation:

According to the criteria set forth in Section 7 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance of the Township of Maplewood (#2166-01), the Timothy Ball House is eligible as a Maplewood Historic Landmark under Criteria (1), (2), (4) and (7).

(1) Of particular historic significance to the Township of Maplewood by reflecting or exemplifying the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community;

The Timothy Ball House has particular historic significance to the Township of Maplewood as one of its earliest buildings extant (1743). The Timothy Ball house represents the area's early settlement period, when settlers from Newark established farms on the slopes of "Newark Mountain." The house also represents the period of the American Revolution. Three sons of Timothy and Esther Ball--Uzal, David and John, served in the New Jersey Militia during the Revolution.

(2) Associated with an historic personage(s) important in national, state or local history; and

Timothy Ball was the grandson of early Newark "founder" Edward Ball, and son of Thomas Ball, a blacksmith and constable in Newark and early resident of "North Farms." Timothy Ball constructed the house of local materials in 1743. The Ball Family was an important family in Maplewood's early history—there are several historic Ball houses remaining in Maplewood. The house remained in the Ball family until 1853. There is a local legend that George Washington stayed in the house at the time of the Battle of Springfield in June 1780.

(4) An embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of architecture or engineering; and

The Timothy Ball House is a significant example of 18th century New Jersey vernacular architecture, of a type known as a “Deep East Jersey Cottage”. The house was remodeled in the 1919, at the height of the Colonial Revival period, by the addition of a classical portico, pedimented dormers and entrance hood over the rear entrance. These renovations of the house reflect the interest at the time in America’s colonial past. The design of the portico and dormers are clearly inspired by Mount Vernon, the Virginia home of George Washington.

(7) Able or likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Its early date makes the Timothy Ball house, through archaeological investigation, likely to yield information important in the early settlement history of Maplewood and Essex County. The fact that the house remained in the same family for a long period of time makes it likely to yield information on the changes in and agrarian life and economy in the area, from the early settlement period through the mid-19th century.

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