

# Guide to the Norman Morrison Isham Papers

MS 1156



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

August 1983

Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1156

**CREATOR:** Isham, Norman Morrison, 1864-1943

**TITLE:** Norman Morrison Isham papers

**DATES:** 1848-1937

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 4.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, writings, architectural drawings, blueprints, photographs, and miscellanea relating to Isham's career as an architect, particularly in the restoration of old houses.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1156>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1156>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of W.D. Miller in 1948.

## Preferred Citation

Norman Morrison Isham Papers (MS 1156). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Architect; A.B., Brown, 1886, A.M. 1890; in practice as an architect, 1892-1943; instructor in architecture, Brown, 1894-1898; head of architectural dept., R.I. School of Design, 1912-1920 and 1923-1933, lecturer in architectural history, 1920-1923 and 1933-1943; consultant on colonial rooms Am. Wing, Met. Museum, 1923-1924; consulting architect on Delaware State House, 1930-1933.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of Norman Morrison Isham pertain to his career as an architect, particularly his work in restoring old houses in Connecticut. The largest portion of the correspondence, which has been arranged chronologically, is between Isham and George Dudley Seymour, and relates to the birthplace of Nathan Hale in Coventry, Connecticut, as well as to other architectural projects. Letters exchanged between Isham and Oliver Gould Jennings concern the Fairfield Memorial Library; those of Annie Burr Jennings, Bishop Edward Campion Acheson, and Henry Watson Kent concern the Glebe House in Woodbury. Correspondence from Caroline B. Knous, Eva B. Leete, George W. Seward, and Henry S. Davis pertains to several buildings in Guilford; there are also letters from Morgan Bulkeley Brainard, Arthur Kingsley Porter, John Frederick Kelly, and Alfred H. Pratt.

Aside from correspondence, this collection contains a small selection of short writings on architecture by Isham, Seymour, and others. The bulk of the collection, however, consists of architectural drawings, blueprints, photographs, maps, printed matter, notes, and other materials arranged by geographical location. The largest sections are those devoted to the Fairfield Memorial Library, the Nathan Hale birthplace in Coventry, buildings in Guilford and Wethersfield, the Glebe House in Woodbury, and the first Yale College house. A number of large drawings, plans, and maps have been separately foldered in an oversize box; cross-references are provided in the box list which follows.

These papers were given to Yale University in 1948 by W.D. Miller. Related materials can be found in the George Dudley Seymour Papers, Ms. Gr. No. 442.

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**Collection Contents**
**Inventory, 1848-1937**

4.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

b. 1, f. 1-15	Correspondence	1896-1939, undated
	Writings on architecture	
b. 1, f. 16	Bush, Celeste E: "The Thomas Lee House, Easton, Connecticut,"	1935.
b. 1, f. 17	Isham, Norman M.: "The Original College House at Yale," <i>Yale Alumni Weekly</i> , 1916 October 20 Vol. XXVI, No. 5	
	Seymour, George D.	
b. 1, f. 18	<i>Researches of an Antiquary: Five Essays on Early American Architects</i>	1928 May
b. 1, f. 19	"Some Notes on Northampton House... Near the Birthplace of Nathan Hale..." English	1930 May
b. 1, f. 20	"The Richard Hale House - South Coventry - Connecticut," English	undated
b. 1, f. 20	Trowbridge, Mrs. Elford P. (compiler): "Connecticut Houses," <i>Bulletin of the Connecticut State Library</i> , No. 10	1924
	Anonymous	
b. 1, f. 22	"Early American Domestic Architecture," <i>The Architectural Forum</i> English	1920 November- December
b. 1, f. 23	"Authentic Precedent in Colonial Interiors," <i>The Architectural Forum</i> English	1921 June
b. 1, f. 24	"Itinerary of the Walpole Society," with "Descriptive Notes" by William B. Goodwin English	1928 October 4-7
b. 1, f. 25	"The Henry Whitfield House" English	1935, undated
b. 1, f. 26	"Colonial Architecture in Connecticut," <i>The Architectural Record</i> English	undated
b. 1, f. 27	"The Theophilus Eaton House" English	undated
b. 1, f. 28	"The United Church on the Green" English	undated
	Geographical files	
b. 2, f. 29	Ansonia, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 30	Berkshire, Ct.	undated

## Geographical files (continued)

b. 2, f. 31	Berlin, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 32	Branford, Gt.	undated
b. 2, f. 33	Brooklyn, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 34	Cheshire, Ct.	1922, undated
b. 2, f. 35	Colchester, Ct.	undated
	Coventry, Ct.	
b. 2, f. 36	Nathan Hale birthplace See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 100</a>	1913-1916, 1931-1936
b. 2, f. 37	Porter House	undated
b. 2, f. 38	Danbury, Ct.	1920, undated
b. 2, f. 39	Dayville, Ct.	1920
b. 2, f. 40	Durham, Ct.	1917
b. 2, f. 41	East Haddam, Ct.	1927
b. 2, f. 42	East Lyme, Ct.	1914, undated
b. 2, f. 43	Easton, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 101</a>	undated
b. 2, f. 44	Elizabeth, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 45	Enfield, Ct.	1930
b. 2, f. 46	Essex, Ct.	1928, 1931
b. 2, f. 47	Fairfield, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folders 102-103</a>	1928-1929
b. 2, f. 48	Farmington, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 104</a>	1924, 1931, n.d
b. 2, f. 49	Glassenbury, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 50	Glastonbury, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 51	Gloucester, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 52	Greenwich, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 53	Groton, Ct.	undated
	Guilford, Ct.	
b. 2, f. 54	Parmelee House See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 106</a>	1916-1920

## Geographical files &gt; Guilford, Ct. (continued)

b. 2, f. 55	Whitfield House See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 107</a>	1901-1906, 1936
b. 2, f. 56	General	1901, 1913-1916, undated
b. 2, f. 57	Hadlyme, Ct.	undated
b. 2, f. 58	Hamden, Ct.	1924
b. 3, f. 59	Hartford, Ct.	1848, 1896, 1900-1936
b. 3, f. 60	Killingly, Ct.	1931-1932
b. 3, f. 61	Litchfield, Ct.	1933
b. 3, f. 62	Lyme, Ct.	1920, undated
b. 3, f. 63	Madison, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 64	Middletown, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 108</a>	1927
b. 3, f. 65	Milford, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 66	Moodus, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 109</a>	1936
b. 3, f. 67	Morris Cove, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 68	Mystic, Ct.	undated
	New Haven, Ct.	
b. 3, f. 69	First Yale College House	1924, undated
b. 3, f. 70	General	1912-1916
b. 3, f. 71	New London, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 72	Newington, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 73	Northford, Ct.	1920
b. 3, f. 74	Norwich, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 75	Norwichtown, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 110</a>	[1916-1917]
b. 3, f. 76	Plainfield, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 77	Pomfret, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 111</a>	1920
b. 3, f. 78	Pratt's Ferry, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 79	Preston, Ct.	undated

## Geographical files (continued)

b. 3, f. 80	Putnam, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 81	Ridgefield, Ct.	1922, undated
b. 3, f. 82	Southbury, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 83	Southold, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 84	Stonington, Ct.	1927-1928, undated
b. 3, f. 85	Suffield, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 86	Wadsworth, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 87	Wallingford, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 88	Washington, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 89	West Haven, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 90	Westbrook, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 91	Westchester, Ct.	undated
b. 3, f. 92	Wethersfield, Ct. See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 112</a>	1899, 1929, undated
b. 3, f. 93	Windsor, Ct.	1919, 1929
b. 3, f. 94	Woodbury, Ct.: Glebe House See also: <a href="#">box 5, folder 113</a>	1933-1937
b. 3, f. 95	Woodstock, Ct.	undated
b. 4, f. 96	Miscellaneous notes and printed matter	1956, undated
b. 4, f. 97	Miscellaneous photographs	undated
b. 4, f. 98-99	Miscellaneous drawings See also: <a href="#">box 5, folders 114-115</a>	undated
Oversize materials		
b. 5, f. 100	Coventry, Ct.: Nathan Hale birthplace	1914-1916
b. 5, f. 101	Easton, Ct.	1937
	Fairfield, Ct.	
b. 5, f. 102	Academy	1927-1928
b. 5, f. 103	Memorial Library	1928-1930
b. 5, f. 104	Farmington, Ct.	1931-1935, undated
	Guilford, Ct.	



## Geographical files &gt; Oversize materials &gt; Guilford, Ct. (continued)

b. 5, f. 105	Parks House	1935
b. 5, f. 106	Parmelee House	1916-1917
b. 5, f. 107	Whitfield House	1901-1903, 1934
b. 5, f. 108	Middletown, Ct.	undated
b. 5, f. 109	Moodus, Ct.	undated
b. 5, f. 110	Norwichtown, Ct.	1916-1917
b. 5, f. 111	Pomfret, Ct.	1920
b. 5, f. 112	Wethersfield, Ct.	undated
b. 5, f. 113	Woodbury, Ct.	1932
b. 5, f. 114	Miscellaneous drawings	1925, undated
b. 5, f. 115	Miscellaneous maps	undated

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Architects  
Architecture -- Conservation and restoration  
Housing

### **Geographic Names**

Connecticut  
Coventry (Conn.)  
Guilford (Conn.)  
Woodbury (Conn.)

### **Genres / Formats**

Blueprints

### **Names**

Acheson, Edward, 1902-1966  
Bainard, Morgan Bulkeley  
Davis, Henry S., 1876-1971  
Hale, Nathan, 1755-1776  
Isham, Norman Morrison, 1864-1943  
Jennings, Annie Burr, 1855-1939  
Jennings, Oliver Gould, 1865-1936  
Kelly, J. Frederick (John Frederick), 1888-1947  
Kent, Henry Watson, 1866-1948  
Knous, Caroline B.  
Leete, Eva Bishop, 1859-1955  
Porter, Arthur Kingsley, 1883-1933  
Pratt, Alfred H.  
Seward, George W.  
Seymour, George Dudley, 1859-1945