

ON THE MARKET

The Collins House has a ministerial connection to a landed gentleman

This 18th century Colonial may not have been the first Litchfield home to house the first Litchfield minister, Rev. Timothy Collins. Nonetheless, it seems he did own it. Better connected with his son, therefore colloquially known as the John Collins House, the earliest date attached to this domicile is 1770. But chances are that it was built earlier than that, considering the record shows that by that point Rev. Collins had been an integral part of the community for the better part of five decades. In 1864, Charles Baldwin published "Hyde Genealogy: Or, The Descendants, in the Female as Well as in the Male Lines, from William Hyde of Norwich," which offered some further information about Collins. "The Rev. Timothy Collins graduated at Yale in 1718, where he studied physic and surgery as well as theology," the passage began. "At the first town meeting held in the then new town of Litchfield, 6 Nov., 1721,

he received a call to the ministry there, which he accepted. He was ordained as the first minister of that town on the 19 of June, 1723; and, by the terms of the town grant, became entitled to a large quantity of land, which gave wealth to him and his children." Indeed, to be the primary minister of this or any Colonial New England village is a decidedly lofty honor, and it carried with it a great expanse of property. But this home and its accompanying commercial building, which was built in 1781 four years after Collins died, sit on but one-half of an acre on East Street. Since records indicate that Collins was granted more than 2 percent of the town's rights, it is safe to assume that this parcel was a mere fraction of the original Collins deed. After all of that, he didn't even keep the job. "He continued to discharge the duties of the pastoral office until the 14 of October, 1752, when he was dismissed on his own request," the passage continued. "Shortly afterward he was appointed to the office or justice of the peace. He devoted himself entirely to the duties of that office and to the practice of medicine until his death in 1777." According to listing agent Judy Auchincloss, the adjacent commercial building served as



This circa 1770 Colonial, which comes with an adjacent antique commercial building, was originally the home of the town's Reverend Timothy Collins.



The interior shows original flooring, original detailing, and in the living room one of its seven original fireplaces.

the town's first apothecary. But since it was constructed after the patriarchal Collins' death, it couldn't have housed his practice. Also, it doesn't sit on its original foundation, but was moved to its current location in 1821. "The office has quite an interesting history, from being an apothecary, more currently an antiques shop, and is now a physician's office," said Auchincloss, who noted the exceptionality of a residential and commercial listing in tandem. "I've been in this business since 1991, it's one of the most interesting properties I've ever listed." She said that the house has been renovated in recent years, but was done so while retaining its integrity, including original floors, wainscoting, paneling, Indian shutters, and seven fireplaces. But updating has been done to include central air conditioning, new plumbing and lighting. Even the five bathrooms have been renovated, the kitchen updated, and a bounty of gardens and patios surround the house and the separate building. Plus it once served as a tavern. Bottom's up.

IN THE DETAILS

Listing: Klemm Real Estate

Price: \$1,260,000

Bedrooms: 5 **Baths:** 5

Acreage: .5

Year built: 1770

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— Jack Coraggio