

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0675989

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 25 1979 AUG 17 1979
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Goffe Street Special School for Colored Children

AND/OR COMMON

Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Masons

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

106 Goffe Street

---NOT FOR PUBLICATION*

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New Haven

--- VICINITY OF

Third--Robert Giamo

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Connecticut

09

New Haven

009

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

Masonic Lodge

NAME

Prince Hall Grand Lodge, c/o M.W. Preston L. Pope

STREET & NUMBER

710 Park Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Windsor

--- VICINITY OF

Connecticut

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New Haven Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

161 Church Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New Haven

Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

State Register of Historic Places

DATE

1978

---FEDERAL STATE ---COUNTY ---LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Hartford

Connecticut

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Goffe Street Special School is a two-story-plus-attic structure constructed of brick located at the southeast corner of Goffe and Sperry Streets, approximately six blocks northwest of the New Haven Green. Designed as a school building in the Italianate style, its interior has been remodeled to serve as a meeting hall for a Masonic Lodge although the exterior retains its basic original design. The surrounding neighborhood consists primarily of one- and two-story commercial and light industrial buildings of 20th century origin and nondescript architectural character. Directly opposite on Goffe Street is the firehouse of Engine Company No. 6, a modern structure erected 1973, and diagonally across are the Florence Virtue Homes, a suburban-scaled moderate-income co-op housing project built in 1964.

The facade of the structure has a gable roof and is three bays wide with a center entrance. The wide, dentillated cornice is typical of the massive proportioning popular in the 1860s. Windows are recessed slightly in a blind arcade and they contain 6-over-6-pane sash. A Federal Revival entrance portico is of delicate proportion and probably dates from immediately after World War I, when the building was remodeled for use as a Parish House for St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The brick is laid in common bond atop a foundation of random ashlar that reaches four feet above ground. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The side walls are of similar proportion, five bays wide with its windows also set in a blind arcade. A chimney flue is built into the pilaster separating the third and fourth bays on either side of the building. The three central bays have 6-over-6-pane windows; the two on the outside contain somewhat narrower 4-over-4-pane sash. The rear of the building is two bays wide and has a doorway with a bracketed Victorian hood at the southeast corner.

A single-turn interior staircase is built against the front wall immediately to the right of the main entrance. Apparently an original feature of the building; it has heavy, turned balusters, a moulded oak handrail, and a massive, turned newell post with a rounded cap.

The remainder of the first floor appears to be the work of an early 20th century remodeling. Floors are of narrow-width oak; doors are four-panel with unornamented brass-plated knobs and escutcheon plates and simple, mitred mouldings. The third of the first floor towards the front contains two small offices and a storage room with a hallway in between which leads to the "social room", which occupies the middle third. This room contains two free-standing cast-iron columns, fluted and with Aeolian capitals, that appear to have been part of the original construction. The rear third of the floor contains an extension of the social room as well as bathroom and storage facilities.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			Black History

Criteria A and C

SPECIFIC DATES 1864

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry Austin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Goffe Street Special School is perhaps the most notable monument to the history of Black people in New Haven, a city which was a center of abolitionist sentiment prior to the Civil War. In addition to its long association with the history of the local Black community, the structure itself is an important example of the work of Henry Austin, who was perhaps Connecticut's most influential architect in the mid-19th century.

Prior to the passage of some state legislation in 1869, Black children were excluded from the public schools of the city. Some classes were conducted by private individuals in their homes, most notably by Sally Williams, who began teaching in 1854. In 1864 a group of influential New Haven citizens (Wyllys Warner, Atwater Treat, Chauncey Goodrich, Andrew DeForest, Cyrus Northrop and Thomas Merwin) met at the home of Atwater Treat and resolved to begin a special educational facility with the specific purpose of providing for "...the intellectual and moral well being of the colored people of the Town of New Haven and especially of their children...for the elevation and benefit of the class among us, particularly in view of the fact that they have been less favored than others as well as to educational advantages."¹

The plan for the building was provided without charge by Henry Austin. In her book New Haven--A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design, Elizabeth Mills Brown notes "He must have rummaged in his drawer and pulled out something that came to hand, for the building standing here today was surely once destined to be a church--note especially the side elevation."²

A "History of the Goffe Street School" compiled by Leroy E. Fitch outlines subsequent developments:

In 1866, the Trustees allowed the evening school and colored people to use the facilities at night. In 1869, the basement was remodeled as an infant's school, and Mr. Mill Hillhouse and others presented a library to the school...In 1871, the State of Connecticut as well as the local education laws were modified and allowed for the public education of Negroes. As a result of this action, the

¹"Historical Sketch", quoted in Fitch, p. 2

²p. 175

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brown, Elizabeth Mills. New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.
 Fitch, Leroy. History of the Goffe Street Special School. Unpublished manuscript published for Prince Hall, Grand Lodge of Masons.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME New Haven

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 minute

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 672840 451751620

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles W. Brilvitch National Register Consultant

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Connecticut Historical Commission November 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

59 South Prospect Street 203-336-5737

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Hartford Connecticut

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE X LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

March 23, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol Hull
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 8-17-79

ATTEST: *Thomas M. Dejeu*
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 8/17/79

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Survey of New Haven Landmarks (local)
New Haven Preservation Trust
New Haven, Connecticut

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Like the first floor, the second floor is almost entirely a product of the early 20th century. The stairhall occupies the front portion, back of which is the main Lodge Room, which measures approximately 36 by 60 feet. A long, narrow cloak room, back stairway and bathroom are built along the entire east wall of this floor.

The unfinished attic, where the braced-frame construction of the roof is to be seen, is accessible by a steep staircase in the northwest corner. The basement has mostly been finished, and retains an ornate early 20th century tin ceiling. The furnace room at the southeast corner has a brick floor and a notable 19th century furnace.

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education of Negroes was approved by the City of New Haven's Board of Education, and the building was used to forward the welfare of the Negro Community in various ways. Mrs. Turner was allowed to use the school for sewing classes (1875); Boys' Club sponsored by the United Church (1889); Danish Church meeting here (1891); Hodson Church (1891); James S. Shell's Masonry School (1891), and Hillhouse Training School, which later became the Olympian Athletic Club (1892).³

The Olympian Athletic Club was chartered as the Colored Young Men's Christian Association in 1895. The Trustees of the Goffe Street School undertook large-scale modifications of the building at this time, which included bathing facilities on the first floor. After World War I the building was utilized as a Parish House and Black Community Center by St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

With the construction of the nearby Dixwell Community Center in 1924, the Trustees felt there was a much-diminished need for a facility such as the Goffe Street School and it was decided that the building should be sold. The purchaser in 1929 was the Grand Lodge of Negro Masons which, as noted in the Fitch history, "was interested in the keeping of this building, with its fine historical background, in the care and possession of New Haven's colored community."⁴

The Lodge's commitment to the preservation of the building is summed up by the closing paragraph in Fitch's history:

There are very few sites anywhere, especially here in the State of Connecticut, more deeply imbedded with the history of the Black Community than the "Old Goffe Street Special School", and its continued service and importance to the total heritage of Blacks and the generous efforts of many liberal Whites for the community's general betterment is a monument of paramount importance. It must be preserved for posterity.⁵

³p. 5

⁴p. 7

⁵p. 8

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Goffe Street Special School for Colored Children
New Haven, Connecticut

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The Goffe Street Special School includes the portion of Lot 1, Block 302 in the City of New Haven bounded as follows:

Beginning at a point of intersection of the East street line of Sperry Street and the South street line of Goffe Street;

Thence Southwesterly for a distance of 90 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the East property line of Lot 1;

Thence Southerly for a distance of 100 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the South property line of Lot 1;

Thence Westerly for a distance of 110 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the East street line of Sperry Street;

Thence Northeasterly for a distance of 150 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the South street line of Goffe Street.

The parcel is shown on Map 296 of the Assesor's Maps of the City of New Haven.