

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED	MAR 10 1982
DATE ENTERED	APR 12 1982

**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 John Kendrick House
AND/OR COMMON Mattatuck Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 119 West Main Street
CITY, TOWN Waterbury N/A VICINITY OF Fifth -
STATE Connecticut CODE 09 COUNTY New Haven CODE 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME The Mattatuck Historical Society
STREET & NUMBER 119 West Main Street
CITY, TOWN Waterbury N/A VICINITY OF STATE CT

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Waterbury Town Clerk
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
STREET & NUMBER 235 Grand Street
CITY, TOWN Waterbury STATE CT

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE State Register of Historic Places
DATE 1975 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Connecticut Historical Commission
CITY, TOWN Hartford STATE CT

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 John Kendrick House, home to Waterbury's Mattatuck Museum, is a large two-story brick dwelling located along the south side of Waterbury's Green or Centre Square. Although the house's own small lot preserves a residential appearance, with its landscaping of rhododendrons and other shrubs close to the house and one small tree, the neighboring properties on both sides are large commercial blocks which dwarf the Kendrick house. The house is set well back from the street, and across the front of the lot is a cast-iron fence. The design combines fleur-de-lis cresting, round-arched arcades, fluted columns, and Medieval cusps.

The house is built in the Tuscan villa style, square in plan with a nearly flat hipped roof. The central bay of the three-bay facade is set off by brick pilasters and capped by a pedimented break in the main cornice. On the second story is a round-arched opening recessed behind the plane of the wall. Together with a balustrade along the flat roof of the entrance portico below, this niche forms a porch accessible from the second-floor hallway. The balustrade is a replacement for the original railing, which was heavier and had stouter balusters. The house's projecting eaves are supported by large brackets with leaf carvings, though a two-story service ell to the rear has simpler modillions along its cornice. Windows are large, fitted with single-pane double-hung sash, and have brownstone sills and pediment-shaped caps carried on consoles. The first-story windows on the facade or north side have cast-iron balconies whose design repeats that of the fence. There is no cresting, however, and the corner posts are different: those of the fence are square and panelled, whereas the balconies' posts are round and ornamented with papyrus leaves. The original slate roof once was surmounted by a square belvedere, but it has been removed and the slates replaced with standing-seam metal roofing. Two-brick chimneys emerge from the middle of the east and west slopes. The house rests on a foundation of granite ashlar hidden in the front by brownstone facing. The brick walls appear to be more than two courses thick, with the outermost layer layed up in common bond with no headers.

The chief exterior feature is the richly-detailed entrance portico. The square paired columns supporting the flat roof are fluted and stand on high pedestals. The bases have elaborate egg-and-dart and rope-turn moldings, and the capitals are based upon the Composite order but much more explicitly vegetative, with thick acanthus leaves forming the volutes. Similarly leafy brackets line the eaves of the portico's roof. The entranceway itself has a single door surrounded by sidelights and a transom, but it appears to be later work than the portico. There are three brownstone steps leading up to the entrance, and originally there were squat brownstone railings as well, though these have been replaced by modern iron handrails.

The interior of the house has been adapted for use as the office and galleries of an art museum. The east lower rooms have been formed into one large gallery, carpeting has been installed in the central hallway, and dropped ceilings now conceal indirect lighting. Nevertheless, throughout the interior are numerous architectural details which preserve the flavor of the period. Nearly all the rooms have parquet floors of oak and maple strips, most in a simple pattern of squares; the floor in the upper east room, now the library, has a more intricate pattern of interwoven bands as its border. All the rooms have molded baseboards, window and door surrounds, and room cornices made up of a series of bold moldings,

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(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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John Kendrick House (Mattatuck Museum)
Waterbury, CT

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Surveys:

Waterbury Architectural Survey
1978 - Local

Survey records with Connecticut Historical Commission
Hartford, CT

Survey conducted by the Mattatuck Museum

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Description (continued)

generally of roll-shaped section. The lower hallway and stairs have a dado of flat panelling, and in the upper hallway is a dado with floral and geometric designs apparantly done in ornamental plaster. The best preserved room is the present museum office, which in addition to complete woodwork, retains its original white marble mantel, an elaborate motif called "Grecian" in catalogs of the period. The complex-curved shelf is supported on consoles, and the round-arched opening has a keyblock or cartouche carved in the shape of a scallop shell.

The museum acquired the house in 1911 and added a large brick extension to the rear of the building, greatly expanding the available exhibit space. Though larger than the house itself, the addition is simply-detailed with a few corbelled courses and extends all the way to the rear of the block; from the front, it is hardly visible and in no way affects the appearance of the house's facade. In addition to works of art, the Mattatuck Museum maintains exhibits illustrating local history, and it also conducts classes and workshops in arts, crafts, and methods of historical research.

6 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1866 - completed

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry Austin (?), R.W. Hill (?)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The John Kendrick House is important because it is a good example of the Tuscan villa style, a popular choice for wealthy 19th-century houses. Moreover, it may have been designed by Henry Austin, one of Connecticut's outstanding Victorian architects (Criterion C). The house is also important because it is the only house of its period along Waterbury's Green: once a residential neighborhood for the city's elite, the area was developed commercially until only this house and a few houses around the corner on Church Street survive to mark the historical character of the area (Criterion A). The house's local historical significance is enhanced by its origin and long association with the Kendricks, one of Waterbury's leading families for three generations.

The Tuscan villa was one of several variants on Italianate architecture favored by the picturesque aesthetic of the early Victorians. The Kendrick House embodies all the key features of the style: cubical form, a flat-roof with overhanging eaves and brackets, and a rather restrained three-bay facade with most of the elaboration confined to the entrance treatment. The models for American villas were Italian Renaissance houses, and therefore ornament was often a very free interpretation of Classical forms. The details of the Kendrick House are a good example, particularly the leafy cornice brackets, the rather lush portico capitals, and the decidedly un-Classical proportions of the square columns. The unabashed eclecticism of the 19th century is aptly demonstrated by the several themes combined in the cast-iron railings and fence. In all, the John Kendrick house is a fine example of Victorian architecture, particularly of the Tuscan villa house.

The association with Henry Austin (1804-1891) is primarily based upon a similar design found in Austin's unpublished papers: the elevation shows a three-bay facade and a portico with a balustrade and paired columns. The floor plan, placement of chimneys, belvedere and window trim are all quite similar, yet the sketch lacks the cornice brackets and the pedimented bay found on the Kendrick House. Moreover, Austin is thought to have made these drawings in the 1840s, long before the house was built. On the side of the Austin attribution, there is firm evidence that the New Haven architect was doing work in Waterbury in those years, and the Kendrick House has certain characteristics associated with Austin's work, such as cast-iron balconies, brownstone trim, and an overall verticality created by the central bay.¹ Yet lacking firm documentary evidence, it is risky to assign the building to Austin on stylistic considerations. Many architects of the period produced buildings in this style similar to Austin's, and Austin himself borrowed designs from the patternbooks of others. Some have attributed the Kendrick House to R.W. Hill, a Waterbury architect trained in Austin's New Haven practice. Regardless of the attribution, the house is clearly a creative work of architecture. The naturalistic foliation on the portico, for example, is at once highly imaginative and academic, a reference to the idea that Greek forms are stylizations of natural vegetation.

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Significance (continued):

The architectural significance of the house can be widely appreciated because of its prominent position facing the city's Green. Nor is the location accidental. As in most other growing towns of the 19th century, Waterbury's businessmen and manufacturers located their houses in the center of the city. Initially, the area of the Green was a swampy patch of ground crisscrossed by muddy roads, but in the 1830s and 1840s, the Green was drained, fenced off as a park, and landscaped. The upper class whose homes ringed the new park were instrumental in these improvements, and intended them both for public benefit and as proper complements to their own residences. This area of the downtown remained an upper class neighborhood until the end of the century, when commercial expansion, nearby apartment blocks, and new status areas on the hillside to the north combined to overtake the area. The John Kendrick House, nevertheless, remains as evidence of the historical development of this part of Waterbury.

One of the early manufacturers was Greene Kendrick, who settled in this neighborhood soon after arriving in Waterbury in 1829. Kendrick was the son-in-law of Mark Leavenworth, a prominent industrialist with whom he associated in the making of pins and other brass items. Kendrick amassed a large fortune and was influential in Waterbury politics, representing the city in the State Legislature. Greene Kendrick built this house and gave it to his son John in 1866. John Kendrick was a lawyer who unsuccessfully tried his hand at manufacturing. His business failure had little effect on his material lifestyle or his social prominence. He was a judge and held numerous political offices, including terms as Mayor of Waterbury. An inventory of his estate in 1877 includes rugs worth \$200 apiece and mirrors worth \$300, half a year's wages for a working man. The Kendricks managed their household with one live-in servant, a black woman from Washington named Maria Wilkinson.

In 1911 John's son Greene Kendrick 2nd sold the house to the Mattatuck Historical Society. He also was a lawyer and had served as mayor. Altogether, the three generations of Kendricks associated with the house typified the elite Waterbury family: an initial start in Waterbury's nascent brass products industry, followed by wealth, social prestige, and opportunities for political office. With its high-ceilinged rooms, marble mantel, parquet floors, and elaborate interior woodwork, the John Kendrick House fittingly reflects the material success of a prominent Waterbury family.

¹See C.L.V. Meeks, "Henry Austin and the Italianate Villa," Art Bulletin, XXX (June, 1948), 145-149.

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Sketches from Henry Austin's papers at Yale University Library:

