

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut	
COUNTY: Hartford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
New State House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
State Capitol Building

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Capitol Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Hartford

STATE Connecticut	CODE	COUNTY: Hartford	CODE
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of Connecticut

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House, Capitol Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford	STATE: Connecticut	CODE
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Record Room, City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
550 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford	STATE: Connecticut	CODE
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The New State House is a monumentally-scaled, symmetrically massed, marble three-story building with projecting four-story-high center pavilions, three-story-high end pavilions, towers and turrets at the angles, and a tall central dome rising from the roof. The exterior is of white marble from the quarries at East Canaan, Connecticut, and the granite from Westerly, Rhode Island. The structure has a cruciform plan, with one long and one short axis. The long (east-west) arm is about 300 feet long and 100 feet deep and the short (north-south) axis is 200 feet long and 120 feet wide. The north and south elevations of the center pavilions are each five-bays wide, arcaded with Gothic arches, and flanked at either side by a tall square tower.

A description of the building, written in September, 1877, follows:

"The Capitol is designed in what the architect calls 'modern secular Gothic.' It is two and one-half stories high, and has a frontage of nearly 300 feet upon the City Park (to the north), the building standing upon grounds lately purchased from Trinity College. The recent removal of one of the College blocks opens up from the street below a fine view of the eastern side of the Capitol, which is perhaps the most effective point from which to behold it. The general ground plan is in the form of a parallelogram whose lines are chiefly broken by the projection of the main central portion (or pavilion), whose total length is about 200 feet; the park (north) facade being treated with an arcade through which is the principal entrance, and the south projection (also arcaded) embracing a porte-cochere and an ample vestibule, above which is located the Representatives' Hall. On the same story, - a mezzanine story- in the eastern wing is the Senate Chamber. The Supreme Court Room and the State Library (both since removed and located in separate buildings) are upon the first story, or what is commonly styled the second floor, the library (located in the north wing) having an excellent north light. The court-room is situated in the extreme west wing. The customary offices for the State authorities, the Governor's suite of apartments, and the various rooms for commissioners, etc., occupy for the most part the main wings, and are conveniently located for the various purposes for which they are intended. Two large skylights admit light into the corridors in the intermediate portion of the wings, between the main building and their extremities. The extremities (or end pavilions) of these wings have their length at right angles to the adjoining portions, and are externally treated with gables, flanked by circular (solid) turrets, and pierced with a wheel (or circular) window, the composition being a vague suggestion of certain public buildings recently erected near London. The "various roofs of the building are generally constructed with a high pitch, and the dormers with which their lines are broken present a dull monotony of design. There is no lack of corner towers. These rise from the main building (at the corners of the north and south central pavilions), and are finished in a nearly uniform style, the roofs being of pyramidal shape, with terminals of copper and iron . . ."

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known): **1872-1880**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed by Richard M. Upjohn and erected in 1872-80, the New State House is probably the finest example in the United States of a monumentally-scaled public building built in the High Victorian Gothic style. The exterior and interior of the New State House are little-altered.

History

In 1871, the General Assembly appointed a commission to build a new capitol in Hartford. A half-million dollars was appropriated and the City of Hartford was authorized to appropriate bonds to the extent of \$1,000,000 for the same purpose. The commission accepted the present site from the City of Hartford and in 1873 and 1875 additional sums of \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 respectively were appropriated to complete the building.

The commission held an architectural competition for the design of the proposed capitol and 11 sets of drawings, with Gothic architecture as the prevailing style, were received. In March, 1872, the plans for a building in the "modern secular Gothic" mode, prepared by Richard M. Upjohn of New York City, were selected as the winning design. The estimated cost of construction was set at \$875,000. William B. Franklin was employed as superintendent of construction and James B. Batterson as the builder. The first contracts were let in October, 1872 and after construction had proceeded for one year, the commission decided to change the character of the structure by modifying the design, making it fire-proof throughout, and increasing its elegance. Upjohn's original design apparently called for a tall tower to crown the capitol, but at the insistence of the commission, the architect modified this feature into the existing tall dome. These changes increased the estimate cost to \$2,500,000. The New State House was occupied in January, 1879, and the building was completed in 1880. Total cost of construction was \$2,532,524.43 and the cost of the furniture was an additional \$100,000.

Critics of the period differed over the merits of Upjohn's design: One wrote: "Mr. Upjohn has had a rare opportunity, and he has availed himself of it rarely. The capitol of Connecticut will not only be by far the finest of our state-houses, but it will be about the most important and creditable piece of civic architecture in the country." The opposing view, however, was represented by another writer who reported that a New York critic who saw the plans suggested that the architect "had dined on Gothic, with an

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Baltimore, 1963), 195.
Talbot F. Hamlin, The American Spirit in Architecture (New Haven, 1926), 164.
Connecticut, A Guide to Its Roads, Lore, and People (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1938), 173-174.
John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America, A Social and Cultural History (Boston and Toronto, 1961), 185.
Alan Gowns, Images of American Living (Philadelphia & New York, 1964), 334, 336

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	41	0	45	51
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	72	0	40	58
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"				
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **4 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE **7/7/70**

STREET AND NUMBER:
801-19th Street, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE **D. C.** CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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7. Description:

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After criticizing the overall design for its "lack of imposing effect," the writer continued: "The poverty of the design nowhere expresses itself more prominently than upon the lower story, which seems to mourn its neglect, and envy the stories above; plain oblong apertures for windows, unrelieved save by a bead and stop chamfer, pierce the walls on this floor, arranged somewhat on the factory principle, and innocent of any thing like harmonious grouping, so often effective in a structure of this character. The ornamental carving seems to have been attracted in spots, and where introduced the display is lavish, almost profigal. Special effort has been made to render the approaches to the building striking, and to enrich the arcades and entrances to an almost unlimited extent. This is seen at once in the crocketed arches, the elaborate lintels, the carved capitals and polished shafts of the columns and the delicate patterns of diaper-work (of the east and west ends and the north and south facades of the central pavilions). The tympana of the (17) arches are to be embellished; and already a fine bas-relief of the famous Charter Oak has been cut upon a tympanum over the east entrance; and between each arch are corbels with miniature columns, crowned with absurdly large caps (at the second floor level). These are intended for the reception of statues. The provision for these marble gentlemen is ample, there being no less than 22 projecting corbels. The effect of Connecticut worthies thus distributed (5 each on the east and west ends, and 6 each on the north-south central pavilions) and standing each under his beehive like canopy of marble, will doubtless be unique, and the scene will be a busy one. The major portion of foliated work of the string-course and capitals is cleverly done; the designs are good, and the execution is spirited. The models for this work or a part of it were furnished by the well-known New York sculptors, Messrs. Ellin & Co.; and the carving was executed on the site by foreign workmen. Critical eyes, not to say average good taste, cannot fail to notice a want of harmonious proportion in much of the carving placed at a considerable height from the ground, particularly about the finials of the turrets, and also in those forming the terminations for the pedestals of the balustrades (located at the bottom of the steep roofs). . . The ridges are crowned with a finely designed iron cresting. . . The building is deserving of credit in one particular which is not unfrequently overlooked. It presents four facades nearly in keeping with each other, and while three of the number are more elaborate, still the remaining facade (that on the west) is not treated as though, being in the rear, it was of no great importance and consequently called for little or no design. . .

"The dome (which weighs about 12,000 pounds) is now being built; when finished it will stand some 260 feet high and be crowned by a symbolic figure in bronze. (By 1879 it was reported: "A colossal wing bronze, typifying the Genius of Connecticut, stands on the lantern, and 12 figures are to crown the pillared buttresses of the dome below, which is dodecagonal in plan.") The diameter of the dome is nearly 60 feet. Whatever may be the aesthetic effect of this conspicuous feature externally, internally (in 1877) the vast piles of masonry which support it, and confront the visitor as he enters the

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north vestibule, are almost appalling; and if the numberless columns about the masonry and the lumbering proportions of the costly marble staircase are included in the same view, the scene will be enough to confuse Connecticut statesmen for years to come. Interior work is being pushed forward. . .; and already McPherson of Boston is at work upon the wall decorations. The site of the Capitol is a fine one. The untrammelled nature of the ground, and its commanding elevation above the City Park, render it pre-eminently a good location for a public edifice; and its lofty dome, its towers and vast proportions of its marble walls set in a background of rich foliage, unite to attract the attention of the public. . ."

The interior columns are of marble and granite from Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, and Rhode Island and the woodwork finish is oak, black walnut, and ash. The numerous marble columns, and gothic arches, the marble floors and walls, and the marble east and west staircases are elaborately decorated in blazing colors. The little-altered State House is in excellent condition, still serves as the seat of Government in Connecticut, and is open to visitors.

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8. Significance

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entree or two of French chateaux and a dessert of Renaissance, and had then gone to bed and dreamed this horrible nightmare."

Except for the removal of the 15-foot bronze statue of the Genius of Connecticut, which originally stood on top of the dome, the New State House retains its original appearance. Sculptured by Randolph Rogers, this 4,000 pound statue was removed from the dome following a hurrican in 1938 and a replica of the original is now located in the north lobby of the building.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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The American Architect and Building News, October 21, 1876, 340-341.
January 18, 1879 (Vol. V, No. 160, 17-18; March 29, 1879, 101-102.
September 15, 1877, 295-96.
February 17, 1877 (Vol. II, No. 60); Nov. 9, 1878; June 19, 1880,
January 31, 1885.
March 20, 1885, 122.