

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	AUG 1 1975
DATE ENTERED	SEP 9 1975

**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 New Haven City Hall and County Courthouse (Annex)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 161 Church Street

CITY, TOWN New Haven

STATE Connecticut

___ VICINITY OF

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

#3-Robert N. Giaino
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New Haven 0085

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of New Haven

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN New Haven

___ VICINITY OF

STATE Connecticut

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER 200 Orange St.

CITY, TOWN New Haven,

STATE Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE New Haven Architecture: Selections from the Historic American Buildings Survey (Number 9)

DATE 1970

FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN Washington, D.C.

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The New Haven City Hall was constructed in 1861-2 and designed by Henry Austin (1804-1891). To the left of City Hall and set back twenty-five feet further from the street is the old Courthouse (1871-3) designed by David R. Brown (1831-1910).¹ Together the buildings provide a united facade marking the first phase of the High Victorian Gothic Style in America. Both buildings are three and one-half stories, constructed of brick, with facades faced with Portland and Nova Scotia stone. City Hall has a three part asymmetrical facade with the center section recessed. Until the upper portion was removed as a safety precaution in 1968, the most imposing element of City Hall was the clock and bell tower which terminated in a steep slate roof with dormers and clocks on four sides. The Courthouse has two matching flanking sections and a two-bay center section with a shallow recession above the first floor. Over the entrance is a bracketed stone balcony with pierced quatrefoil stone railing. Alternate bands of dark and light stone, some sections considerably weathered, transverse the facades of both buildings and create a polychrome effect. Both buildings also have groupings of various size Tudor and Gothic arched windows; the mullions and inner arches of the City Hall windows have distinctive carved wood, rope moldings. City Hall's third and fourth story tower windows are encased in a two-story paneled wood tracery frame. The three arched portals on City Hall and the two on the Courthouse retain their original traceried wooden and glass entrance doors. Above the City Hall entrance is a stone arcade composed of eight arches supported by spiral colonnettes and a series of quatrefoils with carved foliate bosses. The central boss bears the date 1861. On the Courthouse the date A.D. 1871 is carved on a pier between the two central second floor windows. The initials "DRB" (for David R. Brown) are interwoven and carved in stone above a small arched passageway between the City Hall and Courthouse. Above the archway, a three story stone ligature rises between the two buildings. City Hall has two masonry dormers with pointed roofs separated by a pierced balustrade; the Courthouse has three similar dormers, the center one slightly taller to echo the height of the City Hall tower.

The interior of City Hall has a large central stairhall preceded by a polychrome tiled vestibule. A grand cast iron staircase leads to the council chambers and administrative offices on the second floor. Light is provided by a ceiling skylight. A walnut railing with foliate cast-iron bannisters leads up the stairs and surrounds the stairwell on both the second and third floors. Oak wainscoting and Gothicized door frames with carved tympana accentuate the interior. A contemporary white marble plaque on the second floor at the head of the stairs lists the members of the City Hall building committee, the architect, and the contractors. A similar black marble plaque appears in the same location in the Courthouse. Original City Hall building accessories include the oversize regulator clock above the marble plaque, the large walnut dais in the Aldermanic chamber, and marble fireplace mantles in several offices. The staircase and interior room arrangement of the Courthouse is similar to the City Hall, but more modest in scale and ornament.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

Connecticut Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources

1975

State

Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect Street,
Hartford, CT 06106

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Both buildings have undergone some alterations. In addition to the removal of the upper portion of the City Hall tower, an arched stone and brick carriageway at the northern front corner of the Courthouse has been demolished.² A large elevator has been placed to the left front of the grand staircase in City Hall and a small elevator has been placed in the rear of the Courthouse. Glass walls on the second floor of the Courthouse now enclose the formerly open stairwell and on the third floor the entire stairwell has been covered by a floor. Other minor alterations consist of remodeled and subdivided room space.

¹The two buildings, their dates and architects are discussed in E. E. Atwater, History of New Haven (1887), pp. 462-3.

²The carriageway is visible in the line drawing, E. E. Atwater, History of New Haven, p. 462.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1861-1862/1871-1873 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry Austin/David R. Brown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The primary importance of New Haven City Hall, or Hall of Records, as it was first called, is its identification as one of the first municipal buildings in New England and one of the first American buildings in the High Victorian Gothic style.¹ The building exhibits a remarkable affinity for English taste, in particular Fuller and Jones Canadian Parliament, built in 1859 which has been suggested as a possible source for City Hall.²

City Hall was also designed by the distinguished architect and New Haven resident, Henry Austin (1804-1891). Austin, who began his career with the architectural firm of Ithiel Town and A. J. Davis, opened his own New Haven office in 1837.³ In the succeeding fifty years, he was responsible for a substantial number of New Haven's more forceful structures, including the Gothic Revival library at Yale University and the Egyptian Revival Grove Street Cemetery. The importance of Austin's New Haven architecture is generally recognized, as he designed eight of the eighteen buildings included in the 1964 Historic American Buildings Survey of New Haven.⁴ Two of the buildings surveyed were the City Hall and the James D. Dana House (1849), already placed on the National Register.

The County Courthouse, now called the Annex, was completed in 1873 and designed by David R. Brown, a former draughtsman for Austin. Brown, who designed a number of New Haven buildings, as well as the Connecticut Building at the Centennial celebration in Philadelphia, is also credited by one historian with the initial design for City Hall.⁵

The Courthouse was designed to compliment and reflect the Victorian Gothic style of City Hall. Together the buildings form one of the most impressive Victorian Gothic facades in New England.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Drawings and Photographs:

Watercolor drawing, front elevation of City Hall (New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, Connecticut)
Twenty architect's drawings (floor plans, elevations, exterior details) of City Hall (on loan to New Haven Colony Historical Society)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Two (2)
UTM REFERENCES

A 18 | 67.3 | 72.0 | 4.5 | 7.4 | 7.2.0
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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
Stephen J. Raiche

ORGANIZATION
Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE
5/22/75

STREET & NUMBER
50 South Prospect St.

TELEPHONE
203-566-3005

CITY OR TOWN
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X STATE _____ 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

John W. Shuman

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE 5/22/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 9/9/75

ATTEST:

Wm. M. ...

DATE SEP 8 1975

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The two buildings stand in a preeminent position on the east side of the New Haven Green, itself a National Register Historic District. The City Hall and Courthouse are the physical link with the many city administrations that have helped shape over one hundred years of New Haven history. In the words of the noted architectural historian and Yale University professor, Vincent Scully, "they represent the increasingly rare, still living fabric of another past life style of the city that it would be infinitely poorer without,"⁶

¹C. L. V. Meeks, "Henry Austin and the Italian Villa," Art Bulletin, 30 (1948), 145.

²Ibid., 145.

³Henry F. Withey & E. R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956), p. 26.

⁴Historic American Buildings Survey, New Haven Architecture (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1970).

⁵George Dudley Seymour, New Haven (Privately printed, 1942), p. 250.

⁶Quoted in Stanley Venoit, "Tower, Facade on City Hall Being Restored," New Haven Register, 3 April, 1975, p. 52.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

C. 1867 photograph (prior to construction of Courthouse) (Art Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut)

Books and Articles:

Atwater, E. E., History of New Haven (1887).

Flint, Peggy, A Ten Years War, 1962-1972, The First Decade of the New Haven Preservation Trust (1973).

Historic American Buildings Survey, New Haven Architecture, Washington, D.C., National Park Service, 1970.

Meeks, C. L. V. "Henry Austin and the Italian Villa," Art Bulletin, 30 (1948), 145-149.

Seymour, George Dudley, New Haven, privately printed, 1942.

Venoit, Stanley J. "Tower, Facade On City Hall Being Restored," New Haven Register, 3 April, 1975, pp. 1, 52.

Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (1969), pp. 89-96 "High Victorian Gothic."

Withey, Henry F. and E. R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.