

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

9 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:		SITE NO.:	
UTM: 18	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

- 1. BUILDING NAME: Common: "92 Theatre" Historic: Rich Hall
- 2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: COUNTY: Middlesex
- 3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): High St. (College Row, between Church and Washington)
- 4. OWNER(S): Wesleyan University PUBLIC PRIVATE
- 5. USE: Present: Theatre Historic: Library
- 6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain theatre usage no

DESCRIPTION

- 7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1866-68
- 8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input type="checkbox"/> brick
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: brownstone
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		ashlar
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:

<input type="checkbox"/> wood frame: <input type="checkbox"/> post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> load bearing masonry <input type="checkbox"/> structural iron or steel
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
- 10. ROOF: type:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> gable	<input type="checkbox"/> flat	<input type="checkbox"/> mansard	<input type="checkbox"/> monitor	<input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth
<input type="checkbox"/> gambrel	<input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> hip	<input type="checkbox"/> round	<input type="checkbox"/> other _____

 material:

<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> roll asphalt	<input type="checkbox"/> tin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> slate
<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> built up	<input type="checkbox"/> tile	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
- 11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 1 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 101'x56'
- 12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- 13. INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no yes, explain: Interior converted from library to theatre
- 14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

<input type="checkbox"/> barn	<input type="checkbox"/> shed	<input type="checkbox"/> garage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other landscape features or buildings: University
<input type="checkbox"/> carriage house	<input type="checkbox"/> shop	<input type="checkbox"/> garden	campus green to east
- 15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: University campus

<input type="checkbox"/> open land	<input type="checkbox"/> woodland	<input type="checkbox"/> residential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> scattered buildings visible from site
<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> rural	<input type="checkbox"/> high building density
- 16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This brownstone building is a member of a row of five older Wesleyan buildings arranged in line along the west side of the University campus green. As a group these buildings are the traditional focus of the campus, and constitute one of Middletown's best known sights.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Elaborate Buttress Pinnacles
Interior remodelled for theatre usage

SIGNIFICANCE

Builder: Caleb Johnson & D.N. Arnold

Architect: _____
18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This building was dedicated in 1868 as the new home of the College library. It was named Rich Hall after Isaac Rich, whose pledge of \$25,000, to be matched in kind, was the impetus for its erection. Rich Hall served as the college library until 1930 when it was converted into a theatre through the gift of the class of 1892, hence its present name, "92 Theatre."

Like its neighbor to the north, Memorial Chapel, this building is in the Gothic Revival style which dominated institutional construction in Middletown after the Civil War. Common features of these brick and brownstone buildings are steeply pitched roofs, pointed-arch windows, tracery, and other Gothic decorative elements. Except for the Russell Library (1874), Rich Hall is the only non-ecclesiastical building in this style in Middletown. This distinction is further illustrated by the lack of any steeple or tower, which leaves the building with a symmetrical form uncommon to this style.

By virtue of the rare application of the post-civil war Gothic Revival to a non-religious building in Middletown, Rich Hall has great architectural interest. Its membership in College Row and its original function give it an added significance to the history of Wesleyan and Middletown.

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Roger Sherman
date: 6/78 view: east
negative on file: Roll 24, #2



COMPILED BY:

name: John E. Reynolds date: 4/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: History of Middlesex County (Chicago: J.B. Beers 1884); Rich Hall/92 Theatre file, Wesleyan Archives; 1874 Beers Atlas; 1877 Bailey Map

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

none known highways vandalism developers other: _____
 renewal private deterioration zoning explanation: _____