

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

59 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

- BUILDING NAME: Common: KNK Fraternity Historic: Edward Augustus Russell House
- TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
- STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 318 High Street
- OWNER(S): Kappa Nu Kappa PUBLIC PRIVATE
- USE: Present: Fraternity Historic: Residence
- ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain _____ no

DESCRIPTION

- STYLE OF BUILDING: Greek Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1841-42
- MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick bearing walls
<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: <u>brownstone</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>flushboarding</u>		<u>foundation & entrance steps</u>
- STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
 wood frame: post and beam balloon
 load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
 other: _____
- ROOF: type:
 gable flat mansard monitor sawtooth
 gambrel shed hip round other: _____
 material:
 wood shingle roll asphalt tin slate
 asphalt shingle built up tile other: _____
- NUMBER OF STORIES: 3 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 47'x47'
- CONDITION: Structural: excellent good fair deteriorated
 Exterior: excellent good fair deteriorated
- INTEGRITY: Location: on original site moved, when: _____
 Alterations: no yes, explain: Third floor added after 1934; interior remodelled
- RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES: to accomodate fraternity
 barn shed garage other landscape features or buildings: _____
 carriage house shop garden _____
- SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: College campus
 open land woodland residential scattered buildings visible from site
 commercial industrial rural high building density (nearby)

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This Greek Revival style house faces west from the east side of High Street north of the corner at High and Court Streets. A large wooded lawn extends to the Honors College (Russell House 1828) property to the north. High Street between Church and Washington Streets was the most prestigious residential area in Middletown during the 19th century. It is now a part of the Wesleyan University Campus.

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

Elliptical stained glass window south facade (not original)

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: possibly I. Town or A.J. Davis Builder: _____

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This house was built in 1841-42 for Edward A. Russell (1797-1874) on a portion of the Russell family estate. Edward Russell worked in the foreign mercantile trade until he returned to Middletown in 1838. He later served as mayor, state representative and national convention delegate.

Edward A. Russell had personal contact with the firm of Town and Davis while supervising the building of the well-known Greek Revival Russell House (1828) for his younger brother, Samuel W. Russell. Thus it is possible that Edward retained the services of this firm when his house was built. Such a possibility is reinforced by early photographs showing the original proportions and decoration. These indicate that the house was a sophisticated and high style example of the Greek Revival, and stylistically close to the DeRham Brevoort House (attributed to Davis) in New York City and "Highwood", Henry Whitney's estate in New Haven (1835-36) by Town and Davis.

Edward Russell's grand-nephew, Richard L. deZeng (1847-1932), occupied the house until his death in 1932. Wesleyan purchased the property from the administrators of the estate of E.A. Russell and then sold it to Alpha Sigma Delta Alumni Assoc., Inc. in 1934. At this (see continuation sheet)

PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 8/78 view: west
negative on file: Roll 33, #10



COMPILED BY:

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

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown City Directories; Notes by Alain Munkittrick in Greater Middletown Preservation Trust files; Alice B. Richter, "History of Church of Holy Trinity" (Middletown: 1963); 1851 Clark Map; 1877 Bailey Map; Photos in Wesleyan Archives

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET:
Form number: 18 Date: 4/78

Edward Augustus Russell House
318 High Street, Middletown, Ct.

time the structure was altered for use as a fraternity house.

The heavy cornice at the top of the building was lowered to the second floor and windows were placed above the cornice to form a full third floor. Window cornices were removed and new window openings cut in the south facade. The second and third floors were divided into three room suites; however, the first floor remains largely unaltered.

This house was the last example of Greek Revival architecture to be built in the prestigious area of High Street.