

# NEW HAVEN'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE: ITS CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES



TEACHER EDITION.....

AN ARCHITECTURE RESOURCE CENTER PUBLICATION



**NEW HAVEN'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE:  
ITS CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES**

**TEACHER EDITION**

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## Overview of the 1800s

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### How did people shape New Haven during the 1800s?

#### Academic Performance Standards

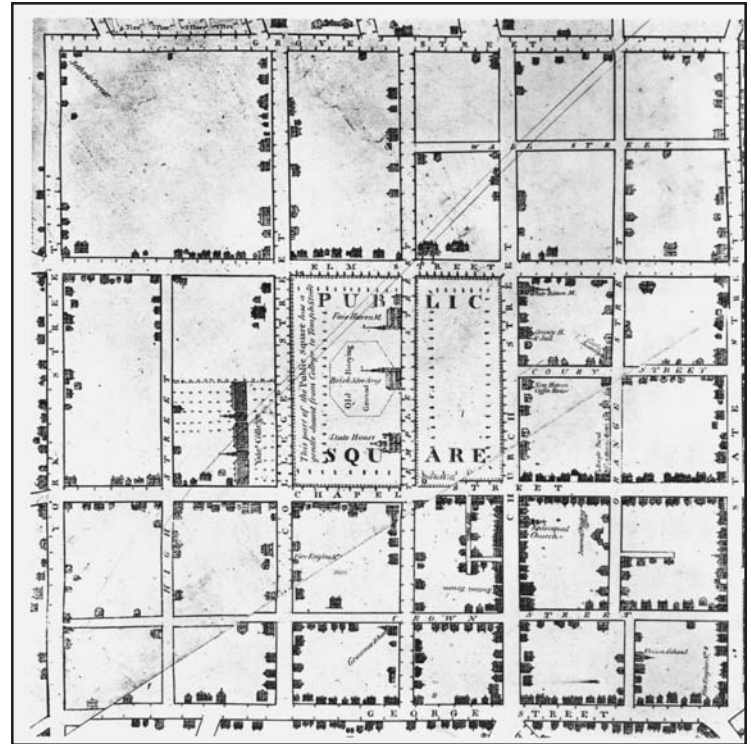
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**A** 2.0, 4.0, 5.1-5, 6.3

The nineteenth century brought even more changes to New Haven, which grew a great deal during that time. At the beginning of the 1800s, the United States was a very young country. Among other goals, the country wanted to develop a stable government and good education system as well as strong trade, transportation, and industry. As the young country grew, many more people moved to the United States from other countries to find work, and within the country people moved to cities to work in the growing number of factories.

The young country also had to deal with issues of freedom and independence for all of its people. When a ship of Africans landed near New Haven in 1839, it led to a number of questions about how the United States thought about slavery. The name of the ship was *The Amistad*, and it turned out the Africans on board had been taken into slavery illegally. When they thought that their captors would kill them, they fought back. They killed most of the non-Africans on board and took over the ship. It took over a year and a half for the United States to hear all the stories and decide what to do. The Supreme Court finally decided the Africans were free and could go back to Africa if they chose.

In the early 1800s, many New Haveners were anti-slavery advocates, including Roger Sherman Baldwin (attorney for the Amistad captives); Simeon Jocelyn (abolitionist and later minister of an African-American church); Nathaniel Jocelyn (brother of Simeon and the artist who painted the portrait of Cinque, leader of the Amistad revolt). In 1855, United Church was the site of the “Kansas Rifle Meeting,” led by Henry Ward Beecher,



Detail, Doolittle map of 1812

who vowed to send rifles (known as “Beecher’s Bibles”) to anti-slavery groups in Kansas.

Arguments about states’ rights, including issues of freedom and slavery, were the main causes for the Civil War (1861-1865), which divided the North from the South. By the end of the war, the United States made slavery against the law in all states. Under the Emancipation Proclamation (1863), all the people who had been slaves under the old law were free.

In the early 1800s New Haven developed new transportation systems. In 1828 the first part of the Farmington Canal opened and connected New Haven to Farmington, Connecticut. In 1839 the first railroad opened in New Haven. Later, in the 1840s, the Farmington canal system was changed to a railroad system. More transportation options created opportunities to develop industry, and New Haveners created successful companies producing a variety of goods, notably carriages, carriage parts, and guns. One of New Haven’s most famous citizens,

## *Amistad Memorial*

165 Church Street, in front of City Hall, bronze, Ed Hamilton, 1992



In front of City Hall, there is a monument by sculptor Ed Hamilton in memory of the Amistad captives and their remarkable legal victory, which permitted them to return to Africa. Hamilton's sculpture is a three-sided volume with four sculpted panels (the fourth one is on top). One panel shows Singbe (Joseph Cinque), the leader of the captives, in Africa before he was

captured. The second panel shows Singbe—and some of his fellow captives—pleading their case in court. The third panel shows Singbe and the others returning to Africa. The top panel shows an African man floating in the water. Ed Hamilton suggested that the top panel refers to the Africans who lost their lives because of the slave trade. If you look closely at the sculpture, you can see many references to the Amistad story. Notice that the highest corner is the one that connects the two panels showing Singbe free.

Eli Whitney, manufactured the cotton gin, which he also invented. Later he had a gun factory. The growth of industry was accompanied by a growth in population and in urban fabric.

The Green changed dramatically at the beginning of the 1800s. Between 1812 and 1815 New Haven built the three churches on the Green that came to represent the city. In addition, by the 1820s Yale's Old Brick Row campus facing the Green was well established. By 1831 Ithiel Town's Greek Revival statehouse stood on the Green. Fine houses, taverns, and other shops lined the Green. During their time in New Haven, the Amistad Africans exercised on the Green. They stayed in a jail across from the Green. By 1862 the jail was replaced by City Hall. New neighborhoods outside the Nine Squares were becoming popular residential sections. By the end of the 1800s, trolley tracks and overhead wires for phones and electricity

criss-crossed the busy Nine Squares, then the center of a much larger city.

During the 1800s New Haven distinguished itself with its architecture. Projects such as the three churches on the Green, the Greek Revival statehouse, the Grove Street Cemetery Gates, Old Brick Row, Hillhouse Avenue, and City Hall helped New Haven to become known as a handsome city. Care for the landscape by planting trees and designing streets were equally important to the city's image, and New Haven's elm trees were widely praised. Some New Haven designers became nationally known for their work. Perhaps the best known were Ithiel Town and Henry Austin.

New Haven created an interesting variety of buildings in the 1800s. By the beginning of the century, New Haven was erecting buildings designed for specific industries. The railroad created a need for railroad stations, and New Haven built several. These added to the building types in the city. Monuments and parks also became important in cities. Similar to other cities in the United States and Europe, New Haven tried a number of different architectural styles during the nineteenth century. In the 1800s buildings used more brick and stone than in the nineteenth century. By the end of the century manufactured goods, such as steel and cheap nails, created new ways to make the structure for buildings. (Before nails were common, thick and heavy pieces of wood were cut so that the end of one piece had a protruding bit that fit into a matching hole in another piece.)

By 1800 a few people from other countries beside England had moved to New Haven, including people from Africa, Ireland, Italy, and Acadia (now Nova Scotia, Canada). In 1717 the first Italian immigrant moved to New Haven, and in 1754 thirty-eight Irish arrived. In 1757 there were five Acadian families, and in 1772 there was a family of Venetian Jews. ("Venetian" means from Venice, Italy.)

During the 1820s more Irish came to work on the Farmington Canal. And starting in the 1840s, hundreds of people moved to New Haven from foreign countries each year in hopes of finding jobs and a new life. The Irish started immigrating in large numbers during the 1840s to escape famine in Ireland. Significant groups from Italy, Germany, Russia, Canada, Scotland, Poland, Greece, Portugal, Ukraine, and China came later, along with new

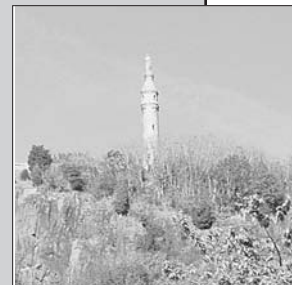
immigrants from England. People from other parts of the United States also moved to New Haven, including African Americans from the South. Many of these African Americans were people escaping from slavery on the Underground Railroad. (The Underground Railroad was a secret trail of hiding places used by African Americans to escape from bondage in the South.) These newcomers filled the factories, constructed the buildings, and built the roads that made New Haven a prosperous industrial city. They also brought their customs, traditions, and religious practices.

By the end of the 1800s, New Haven had far exceeded the bounds of the original Puritan village. As New Haven grew, new neighborhoods had sprung up to house more people. Old neighborhoods filled with immigrants needing a place to stay. Ethnic groups (e.g. Irish, African Americans, Eastern Europeans, Italians) tended to settle together, and entire neighborhoods in the city had the flavor of a European city with shops, houses, and places of worship of their own. (These included synagogues.) Some neighborhoods drew a collection of ethnic groups. New Haven's nineteenth-century immigrant neighborhoods included the Oak Street neighborhood, the Hill neighborhood, and Wooster Square. Writer and Yale graduate, Sinclair Lewis, described the neighborhood on Oak Street as a place that had the exciting feel of a foreign country.

Besides growing in size during the nineteenth century, New Haven grew in terms of the amenities that it was able to offer its citizens. For example, in the 1820s New Haven paved its sidewalks at the center of the city with cobbles or more often with logs, and as early as 1851 it started a macadamization (early paving) program for the city roads. Also during the nineteenth century, large department stores were built downtown along Chapel Street. Because more people needed water and more trees were cut down (which caused water levels to drop), wells could no longer supply enough water for the community. In 1849 the New Haven Water Company formed, and in early 1862 it started pumping water throughout the city. By the Civil War the city desperately needed sewers, and New Haven constructed its first sewers starting in 1861. The New Haven Gas Company was started in 1847, New Haven Electric Light Company in 1883, and George Coy's New Haven Telephone Company in 1878. Gas streetlights lit the streets by 1848. The first electric trolleys ran in 1892, and

## ***Soldiers and Sailors Monument***

Summit of East Rock, East Rock Park, stone and bronze, Alexander Doyle and John M. Moffit, Dedicated June 17, 1887



The Soldiers and Sailors Monument was erected to remember those who fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. The monument is 110 feet tall and has a squarish base, a columnar shaft, and a figure on the top. Each of the sides of the base represents one of the wars. The figure on top is the Angel of Peace, which looks down over the city. The people of New Haven dedicated the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on June 17, 1887. A record number of people (between 100,000 and 175,000) attended the dedication. The monument is visible from spots all over New Haven. (There had been some controversy regarding where to place the memorial—in East Rock Park or on the Green. The Green would have been a very appropriate location, but the monument would not be as visible throughout the city.) Why do you think there are little windows at different heights around the shaft? There is a staircase inside the shaft of the monument. Why do you think so many people attended the dedication? Commemorating the four wars was probably very important to them.

the first electric streetlights shone in 1890. By 1890, New Haven had its own park commission, although the city had been interested in developing parks much earlier in the century.

## ***Student Questions and Possible Responses***

- 1. How did transportation and industry grow in New Haven during the 1800s?** In the 1820s New Haven worked to develop a canal system. In 1839 the first railroad opened in New Haven. These new means of transportation increased opportunities for trade and industry. New Haven developed a number of factories in the 1800s, especially in the carriage and gun industries.



“Bird’s-eye-view” of New Haven, Connecticut, 1879

**2. What groups of people immigrated to New Haven during the 1800s? Why did they come? How did they help change the city?**

The Irish started coming in large numbers during the 1840s to escape famine in Ireland. Significant groups from Italy, Germany, Russia, Canada, Scotland, Poland, Greece, Portugal, Ukraine, and China came later, along with new immigrants from England. People from other parts of the United States also moved to New Haven, including African Americans from the South. Many of these African Americans were people escaping from slavery on the Underground Railroad.

**3. What are some events of the 1800s that dealt with freedom and independence for all people?**

The Amistad affair raised issues about freedom for the Mende (African) people who had been taken as slaves from Africa illegally. By extension, the trials raised

issues about freedom for all who had been enslaved. The Emancipation Proclamation (1862) granted freedom and independence to all who had been formerly enslaved. The Civil War (1861-1865) dealt with whether the states were free to decide whether or not to allow slavery.

**4. What do you suppose it was like to live in a city without sewers, water, electricity, gas, telephones, sidewalks, parks, or public transportation?**

Encourage discussion with additional questions if needed. What were bathrooms like? Were there bathrooms? Where did people get water for drinking, cooking, and bathing? How did people heat their houses? Cook their food? How did people communicate from house to house? From across the city? How did people get around without trolleys or buses? Where could people enjoy trees and grass

without parks? If time allows, have students do research to learn more about how people lived in the 1800s.

### **William Lanson** **More about Long Wharf**

In 1810 and 1811, William Lanson built a part of Long Wharf that was one of the hardest to construct. Lanson, an African American, got stones from East Rock, loaded them onto boats, and ferried them across the harbor to the construction site.

### **Suggested Topics for Further Exploration**

1. Research Eli Whitney, his inventions, and his factories in New Haven.
2. Research the Amistad story. Visit The New Haven Colony Historical Society, see the slide show about the Amistad Incident, and tour the exhibit. There is also an Amistad story telling program (grades 5-8) available.
3. Research the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, issues of slavery, and/or the Civil War.
4. Research and discuss urban infrastructure systems. For example, students could learn about the environmental impact of water treatment and other water services.
5. Research aspects of immigration and discuss its affect on cultural richness in New Haven.

### **Activity**

*Work together to add to the class map of New Haven. First make a list of things you know changed during the 1800s. Be sure to think about more than just buildings, and be sure to look at the map in your book. Then make the changes to the map.*

See the activity for the overview to the 1600s. Be sure to use post-its or other moveable materials for things that will have to be moved later in time. Don't let students forget to think about the canal and railroads or East Rock Park. They may have to study maps from the 1900s in order to take in all of the changes mentioned in the text.

Since the scale of the city—as shown in the drawing of 1879—is quite large, students may want to use a collage method to imply the scope of the city rather than clearly depict every component to scale.

### **Related Resources**

#### **Websites/Museums**

**<http://www.state.ct.us/sde/>**

Website for the Connecticut State Department of Education. See teacher resource guides to African Americans, Irish, and Puerto Ricans in Connecticut.

**<http://www.aya1.aya.yale.edu/classes/yc1979/knjiga/index.htm>**

Souvenir View of New Haven and Yale University, circa 1903. This site has an interesting collection of Yale photos from approximately 1903. A number of well-known New Haven buildings are presented, including City Hall, the churches on the Green, and Yale Bowl, among many others.

**<http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/history/index.html>**

Website for the City of New Haven. Includes a brief history of the City.

**<http://www.connhistory.org>**

A general Connecticut history site designed by a teacher with curriculum pieces.

**<http://www.stonesoups.org>**

Website for Stone Soup, a non-profit public history research group. Has information on a range of Connecticut history topics.

**<http://www.fredsmith.com>**

A site that covers the life of an important, black New Haven doctor in the middle of the 1800s.

**<http://www.si.edu/resource/faq/nmah/afroam.htm>**

Smithsonian Museum site on African-American history.

The Amistad Foundation at the Wadsworth Atheneum  
600 Main Street  
Hartford, CT 06103-2990  
Phone: 860.278.2670

**<http://www.amistadfoundation.org>**

African-American art, artifacts, history with some CT focus

Connecticut Historical Society  
1 Elizabeth Street  
Hartford, CT 06105  
Phone: 860.236.5621  
<http://www.chs.org>

The Ethnic Heritage Center at Southern Connecticut  
State University  
117 Wintergreen Building  
501 Crescent Street  
New Haven, CT 06515  
Phone: 203.392.6126  
<http://www.ohwy.com/ct/ethherce.htm>  
Resources pertaining to Jewish, Italian, Afro-American,  
Ukrainian, and Irish communities.

Mattatuck Museum  
144 Main Street  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
Phone: 203.753.0381  
<http://www.mattatuckmuseum.org>  
Waterbury Museum that is doing great work on early  
African-American history and slavery. The museum has a  
traveling exhibit on early twentieth-century black  
Waterbury.

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127  
Phone: 860.424.3000  
<http://www.dep.state.ct.us>

Kellogg Environmental Center  
P.O. Box 435  
500 Hawthorne Avenue  
Derby, CT 06418-0435  
Phone: 203.724.2513

The New Haven Colony Historical Society  
114 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06510  
Phone: 203.562.4183  
Fax: 203.562.2002  
Offers exhibits, tours, hands-on programs, and other  
presentations.

### *Non-Fiction Books*

*American Family Album Series*  
(African American, Chinese, Cuban, German, Irish, Italian,  
Japanese, Jewish)  
Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler  
Reading level: Ages 9-12  
Oxford University Press

*Dear Austin: Letters from the Underground Railroad*  
Elvira Woodruff, Nancy Carpenter  
Reading level: Ages 9-12  
Knopf; ISBN: 0679885943

*Amistad Rising*  
Veronica Chambers  
Reading level: Ages 9-12  
Harcourt Brace; ISBN: 0152018034