



At a public meeting, held on October 17, 1856, the decision was made to build a new town hall citing the existing one as being, "quite behind the times in appearance and accommodation." That original structure, built in 1838 by Alex Scrimger, was removed to make way for the edifice standing there today. Sold for \$130.00, it was put on rollers and moved to Cambridge Street, where it was converted into housing and stands to this day (picture to the left shows this building at its new location - July 1997).

With money in hand, in what was described as an "unusually stormy indignation [stet] meeting" concerning the design of the hall, James Young remarked that, "It is some vindication of the good taste of the municipality that a majority of those present condemned the plan which had been adopted by the building committee." Since the contract was scheduled to be handed out the next day, these comments and actions went without regard.

The architect/partners, H.B. Sinclair and R. Burrows were chosen to erect the hall with William Graham as overseer. Mr. H.B. Sinclair designed the building in the 19th century, Italianate public building style.

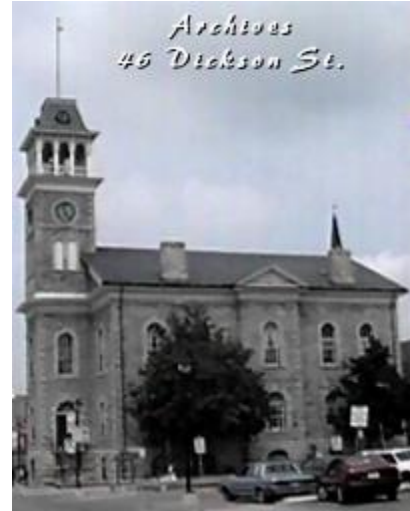
At a ceremony held on May 13, 1857, the cornerstone was laid by the first mayor of the new Town of Galt, Morris C. Lutz. These ceremonies officially marked the commencement of construction as well as the elevation of Galt to "town" status. A time capsule containing, among other things, a list of prominent local people and institutions, by-laws and coins; was placed in the cornerstone. Interestingly, no trace of this capsule was found when renovations to the building were undertaken in 1965.



Construction of this new town hall did not proceed smoothly. Sinclair and Graham bickered until Mr. Sinclair walked away from the project leaving many bills unpaid. This delayed continuation of construction. Mr. Burrows finally agreed to complete the building in consideration of \$500.00 to be paid upon completing of the construction.

Finally completed in October of 1858. It was built of granite and white limestone. Blue granite was used as a decorative feature. These local materials, typical of Galt, are what lead to the city being known as "The Granite City".

November 5, 1858 marked the official opening of the new town hall - followed by a grand ball in the assembly hall (now the Council Chambers). The Galt Quadrille Band played, in the centre of the room. The party started at 9:00 in the evening and resting for a midnight supper, continued through to 5:00 the next morning. Marketing was held, as planned, in the basement of this construction until 1887 when the new market was built to ease the pressure of increased traffic brought on by a growing population. The picture on the right depicts the then new City Hall in its early years.



In 1958 the local population, having vetoed construction of a new civic complex, left the city thinking on how to house municipal administration. By 1964, over the objections of many who disagreed, it was decided to upgrade City Hall.

**Peter John Stokes** was hired to undertake this project at a cost of about \$350,000.00. Among other works, an elevator was added to the building and on November 19, 1965 (107 years and 12 days after the initial official opening of this municipal office) City Hall was officially reopened.

During the 1990's, with the amalgamation of the smaller communities to make up the City of Cambridge, City Hall was housed in a modern office complex at 73 Water Street North. The once new city hall (now known as Old City Hall) became the municipal archives for the City of Cambridge as well as being home to limited municipal offices. Today, City hall is located at 50 Dickson Street.

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