

*The badge of office
of the Mayor
(made by Ene Valter).*

first floor took the visitor to the court chambers and to the audience chamber of the Bürgermeister. The most presentable room was the council hall located in the right wing of the second floor; the elaborate albeit not very delicate stucco decor of which was made in Walter's studio.

In time, many changes have been made to the town hall. The ground floor has been entirely redesigned. In

addition to the apothecary, a bank used to be housed here. Smaller changes have also been made to the first floor. Despite this, the town hall has to a greater extent maintained its historic image.

The town council and the government of Tartu are still housed in the town hall, emphasising that Tartu is a town of traditions. Tartu's information centre is open on the ground floor of the town hall and provides

valuable information for the tourist as well as the town dweller. There is also a gallery with an exhibit on the history of Tartu.



Tartu's coat of arms developed from the medieval town seal. The key and the sword above the gate are the attributes of the town's patron saints, Peter and Paul.



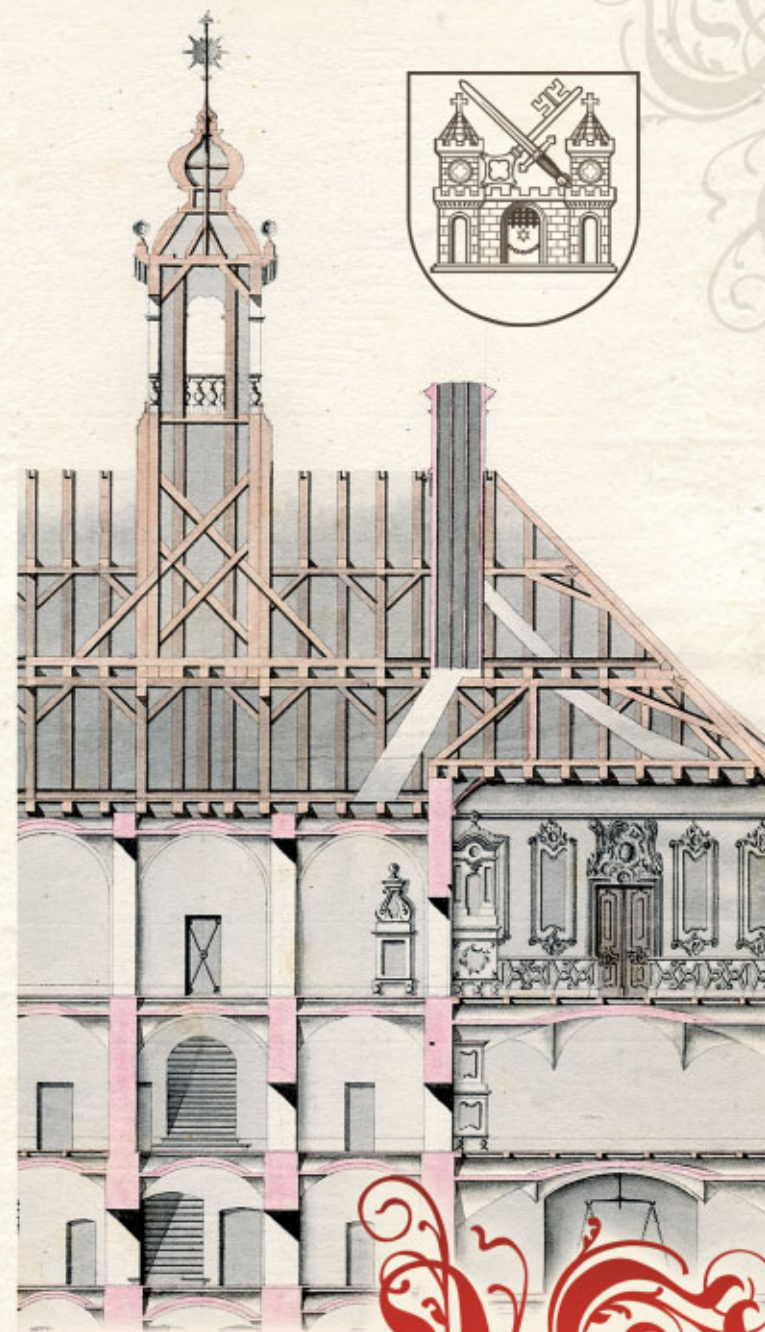
At the end of the 16th century, Southern Estonia was under Polish rule. In 1584, the Polish king Stefan Batory donated a flag to Tartu.



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The Tartu Town Hall

For centuries the Tartu town hall square - the history of which can be dated back to ancient times - has been the centre of Tartu. It is likely that already at that time the main trading place of the settlement was the area that joins the castle on Toomemägi to the port by the river Emajõgi. This tradition remained unchanged for centuries. In the Middle Ages, the centre of town administration, the town hall, was built here. The current building is already the third on the site. Compared to the long history of Tartu, the architecture of the town is not very old: buildings that date back to earlier than the last quarter of the 18th century are rare. The reasons for this are numerous wars and fires. In the great fire of 1775 almost the entire centre of the town was destroyed. It was after this fire that the town began to obtain its current appearance and the present town hall was built.

Winter Parade



The Tartu town hall was designed by the contemporary town architect, Rostock-born Johann Heinrich Bartholomäus Walter. The corner stone was placed in 1782 and although the opening celebrations of the building took place in 1786, finishing works were not completed until 1789.

The Tartu town hall was built at a time when early Classicism was beginning to reach Northern European countries, including Estonia, and push out the Baroque and Rococo styles that were popular until then. This struggle between styles is also documented in the Tartu town hall. The three-storey building with a high-hipped roof and tower is a continuation of the city palace tradition developed in the Low Countries during the Baroque period. The town hall of Narva,

which was built in the 17th century, was also inspired by this style. The tower of Tartu's town hall, built in 1784, is also an example of the Baroque, and is seconded by the Rococo style cartouche on the gable of the main facade. By contrast, in the design of the walls and especially the interior, the early Classical style that was very modern at the time dominates.

The town hall served many functions simultaneously, causing its floor plan to be extremely compressed. The vaulted cellar and the left wing of the ground floor housed a prison with a chamber for the guards. In the right wing - where since 1922, there is an apothecary - were the public scales. To enable the load to be transported to the scales, the back and side facades had gates, the traces of which are noticeable even now that the gates have been bricked over.

The chambers of the town council were located on the two top floors, and connected to the front door by a flight of stairs. Due to the lack of space, the traditional entrance hall was abandoned. The long corridor of the



From the tower of the town hall a chime can be heard every day at 12.01, 18.01 and 21.01. The tower's 18 bells were made in the Karlsruhe Bell Factory in Germany.