350 Years, Variety of Architectural Styles

1849

1872

1887

1863
Getting a Sense of Style

• Style vs. Type and Era
  – Italianate is to Sidehall like Camry is to Sedan
  – Queen Anne or Three-decker? Yes, can be both.
  – “Victorian” is a period (1837-1901), not a style

• Style guides
  – *A Field Guide to American Houses* by McAlester
  – *Architectural Style Guide* by Historic New England
    http://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/your-older-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide
Georgian (1725-1780)

- Windows with double-hung sashes, typically with nine or twelve small panes per sash; windows never in adjacent pairs
- Paneled door, normally with decorative crown supported by decorative pilasters
- Row of small rectangular panes beneath crown
- Cornice usually emphasized with tooth-like dentils or other decorative molding
- Windows typically five-ranked and symmetrically balanced with center door, less commonly three-ranked or seven-ranked
Georgian
Federal / Adam (1780-1820)
Greek Revival (1825-1860)
Gothic Revival (1840-1880)

- Gabled roof
- Wall dormer
- Diamond-shaped window
- Eared label moulding
- Bracketed bay window
Gothic Revival
Italianate (1840-1880)
Italianate
Second Empire / Mansard (1855-1785)

1. Corner board
2. Water table
3. Frieze board
4. Cornice bracket
5. Band moulding
6. Window hood
7. Drip moulding
8. Window bracket
Second Empire / Mansard
Stick (1860-1890)

gabled roof, usually steeply pitched

decorative trusses in gables

steeply pitched cross gables usually present

overhanging eaves, usually with exposed rafter ends

horizontal and vertical bands (less commonly diagonal) raised from wall surfaces for emphasis

diagonal or curving porch-support braces

wooden wall cladding (boards or shingles)

all identifying features rarely present in combination
Stick
Queen Anne (1880-1915)
Queen Anne
Shingle (1880-1900)

- Irregular, steeply pitched roof line, usually with cross gables
- Extensive porches (may be smaller or absent in urban examples)
- Wall cladding and roofing of continuous wood shingles
- Shingled walls without interruption at corners
- Multi-level eaves
- Asymmetrical facade
Shingle
Colonial Revival (1885-1915)
Colonial Revival
Craftsman (1900-1930)
International (1925-present)

- no decorative detailing at doors or windows
- smooth, unornamented wall surface
- flat roof, usually without ledge (coping) at roof line
- windows usually metal casements set flush with outer walls
- asymmetrical facade
Roofs

**Gabled Family**
- Side-gabled
- Front-gabled
- Cross-gabled
- Gambrel (dual-pitched gables)
- Shed (half-gabled)
- Parallel gables
- Saltbox
- Hip-on-gable

**Hipped Family**
- Simple
- Pyramidal
- Cross-hipped
- Dual-pitched, hipped ("mansard" when steep lower slope)
- Half-hipped
- Parallel-hipped
- Deck (flat-topped, hipped)
- Gable-on-hip

**Flat Family**
- Flat, with eaves
- Flat, with parapet
Survey Books Published 1965–1977
East Cambridge Survey
71 Winter Street (1844)

ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY: CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 196
ADDRESS: 71 Winter Tract Block
USE: residential commercial religious
TYPE: single double row 2 deck 3 deck double 3d tenement Apart.
STORIES: 1 2 3 4 MATERIAL: Frame Brick Mod. compo
ROOF: gable front gable flank mansard flat hip
PLACEMENT: narrow to street broad to street square
ENTRANCE: flank front side front center
ORNAMENT: little moderate elaborate
DATE: 1790 1800 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 1000 10 20 30
DEGREE OF REMODELING: drastic moderate minor CONDITION: poor fair excel.
IMPORTANCE TO SETTING: detrimental none moderate great INITIALIZED for
DESCRIPTION: (for more important structures only)

Survey Sheet

Deed and Tax Research
workers once stood on New Street, the oldest surviving examples were constructed in brickyard subdivisions in 1847-1848. At 336 Rindge Avenue is the house of the superintendent of the Wychsf yard, erected in 1848 (see Fig. 88). Built entirely of brick, with a subtle gable cornice, the house has a five-bay facade with a sidelighted center entry, a three-run stair, and fireplaces on the rear wall. More typical, because constructed of wood, are 195-197 Sherman Street (1847), built for John Leary, and 206 Rindge Avenue, built for John Callahan, and later succumbed over (1849; Fig. 101). Modifications in the proportions of the workers cottage took place after 1850. These changes produced a smaller, less expensive building than the Late Federal prototype. The three-run interior stairway was eliminated in favor of a steep, straight flight, the five-bay facade was reduced to three, and fireplaces were replaced by flue outlets in which stoves could be connected. These simplified cottages were constructed on Murdock’s and Sargent’s lots in the early 1850s, and little-altered examples remain at 22 Donnell Street (1851) and 73 Bolton Street (1852; Fig. 102). When the Race Course lots were opened up in the mid-1850s, the larger five-bay plan was used in several houses, but

after 1860 the smaller three-bay plan predominated.

Beginning in the mid-1870s, workers cottages were succeeded by the side-hall, multiple-family tenement which allowed for a greater population density. Where there was less need to crowd, however, as in newly-established industrial areas, the older workers cottage type continued to be used late in the century. Examples are 17 Smith Place (1878-1879), built as one of five tenants’ houses for the Niles Brothers slaughterhouse, or those built near the Nows claypits at 10 and 26 Stearns Street in 1891 for J. W. Fenno.

Multiple-Family House Types

Following the Depression of the 1870s a major change in suburban house types occurred in Northwest Cambridge. The single family
Old Cambridge Historic District

24 Kelly Road (1868/1885)

c. 1970  
2013  
2015
19-21 Prince Street (1881)

Before

After siding removal and restoration
Many of the style drawings were copied from the publication, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, by Virginia and Lee McAlester. A very good reference to have on hand. New edition by Virginia McAlester is much bigger—very comprehensive but possibly overwhelming to the novice.

Online resources:


Feel free to call the Historical Commission office at any time to confirm building dates and styles or to ask regulatory questions. 617-349-4683 (main line) or 617-349-4687 (Sarah Burks).