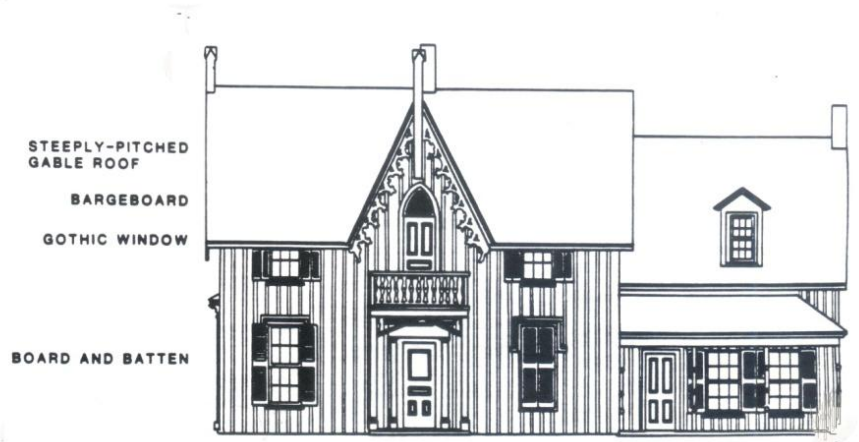


RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

American architecture has developed and evolved since the first permanent buildings were constructed in the United States. Many ideas were transmitted from Europe and across this country through travel, architectural handbooks, and periodicals. Dates and style labels are used as general guidelines to distinguish various design forms. Care must be used in attaching design labels to specific buildings. Few examples of pure styles exist.

Before 1870, the major design resource for builders were *pattern books* that illustrated plans and elevations of buildings. Often houses were built with parts from more than one pattern, and favorite details of several styles were combined. In addition, many styles received local variations in response to different climates, availability of building materials, and personal needs. In many cases, designs continued to be built in some areas of the country long after they were considered out of fashion in others. Dates used in this section reflect the appearance of the design in Illinois.

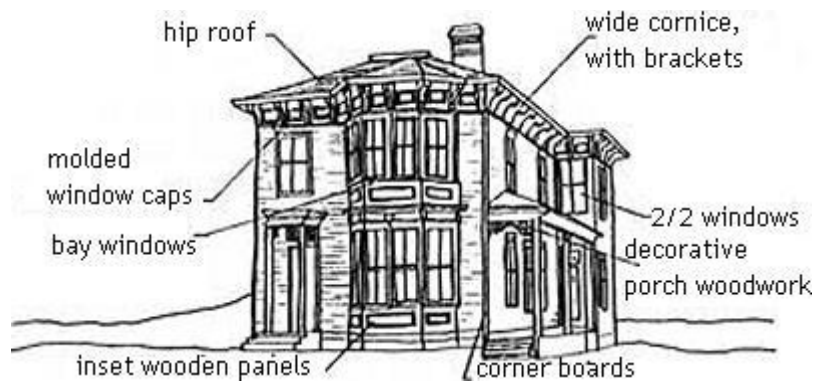
Gothic Revival (1830s–1870s)



Gothic Revival Style

The Gothic revival looked back to medieval cathedrals in France and England built between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. When the style was first introduced in the United States in the 1830s, it was primarily used for church structures; it was later popularized for private residences.

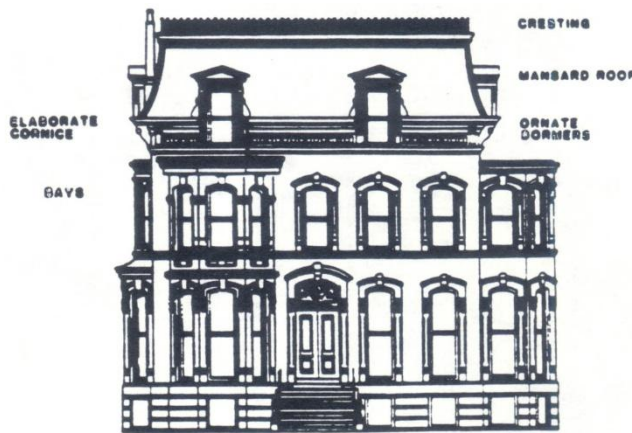
Gothic buildings are typically asymmetrical and are characterized by Gothic (pointed) windows. Although stone was occasionally used, most houses were built of wood. The development of cutting tools led to the creation of decorative wood trim known as bargeboard. Gables, towers, and elaborate wood details added to the gingerbread effect. Ornament was three-dimensional, carved and turned, as well as cut with a scroll saw. In Oak Park currently, most bargeboard has been removed, but some pointed arch windows and elaborate gable decorations still exist.



Italianate (1850–1880s)

The Italianate style was derived from farm houses and villas in northern Italy. Characteristics include brackets supporting overhanging eaves on shallow hip or steep gable roofs, often with a tower or belvedere. Balconies, bay windows, and verandas were also common. Windows were rounded or had a cornice at the head.

Second Empire Style



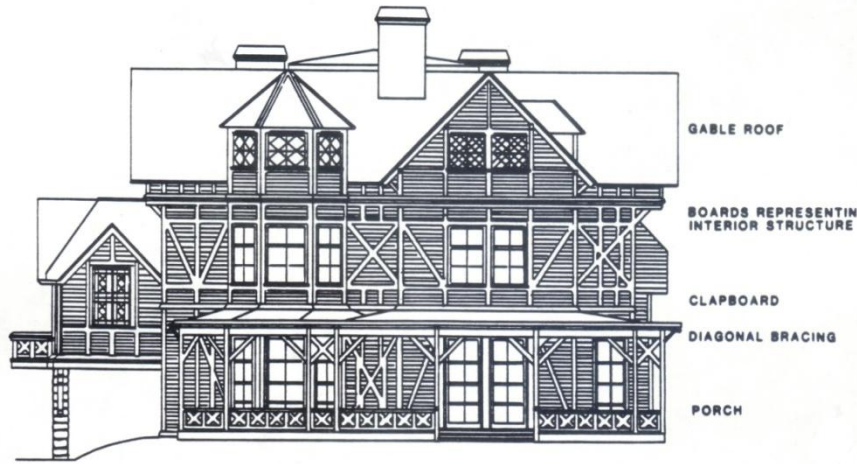
Second Empire (1855–1885)

This style was considered the high style of the Victorian era. It is derived from Baron Haussmann's architecture for the redevelopment of Paris during the reign of Napoleon III. The two international expositions in Paris in 1855 and 1867 brought many visitors to Paris, and subsequently the style was popularized.

The characteristic feature is the Mansard roof (named after the French architect Francois Mansart), which provided an extra floor in the attic space of the building but avoided the city tax charged for each floor of a building. Other identifiable elements are prominent cornices and brackets (usually placed symmetrically on the mansard roof), classical decorations, arched or rounded windows, and towers extending above cornices.

Late Picturesque Periods

Stick (1870–1880s)



Stick Style

The transition from timber to balloon frame created an interest in the structural system of a building. The Stick style expressed this unseen frame in the use of vertical and horizontal stripping on the exterior walls, with the diagonal stick work representing the trusses and bracing of the steep and jagged roofs. The areas between these strips were frequently filled with a variety of textural decoration, including clapboard and sculptured shingles, and work of the lathe and scroll saw. The tall thin windows and doors appear to fill voids between the members of the frame rather than as holes punched in the facade. This emphasis on the skeleton frame was the beginning of the structural honesty later espoused by Louis Sullivan and Wright. Corner towers and truncated corners were common. Plans were complex with boxlike rooms against which Wright later rebelled. Verandas were extensive and supported on wooden posts. Facades were flat without curving lines.

Victorian Eclectic (Queen Anne) (1870s–1900s)



Victorian Eclectic Style

The designs labeled 'Queen Anne' in England have very little to do with the architecture built during the reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714). Mark Girouard in his book *Sweetness and Light* describes English Queen Anne designs as “an architectural cocktail with a little genuine Queen Anne, a little Dutch, a little Flemish, a squeeze of Robert Adams, a generous dash of Wren and a touch of Francois I, all mixed with skill and gaiety.”¹

The style in America had even less to do with the reign of Queen Anne and was considered the characteristic style of the “gilded age.” In America, Queen Anne designs were derived from two half-timber houses built by Great Britain at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. The plans of these houses, not the elevations, interested Americans. The plans did not come from the Queen Anne period, but from the Elizabethan era when the entrance hall, complete with fireplace and staircase, served as the circulation center for surrounding spaces. Rooms opened onto the hall and varied in size, shape, and location according to function.

As in England, the spirit of combining design elements from many earlier styles is present. Significant characteristics include a complex plan, asymmetrical facade, irregular massing, turrets, porches, wings, pinnacles, and prominent decorated chimneys. The building was surfaced with a variety of materials, often with thin clapboard on the first floor, and “fish-scale” or other patterned shingle siding on the gables. Ornament was fussy, of small scale, and sometimes classical. Bay windows, with plate or leaded glass, were common. Gable ends were elaborately decorated. It was an exuberant style creating a feeling of complex ornateness. Some historians categorize the most extreme and heavy-handed ornament of the Queen Anne period as “Eastlake.”

A typical Queen Anne home in the Midwest would be a large, asymmetrical home of wood set on a stone foundation with a porch running across the front and around one side to the dining room door. Complexity was achieved in the roof, dormers, and gables that projected over bays of windows of varied size and shape.

Shingle Style (1880s–1890)



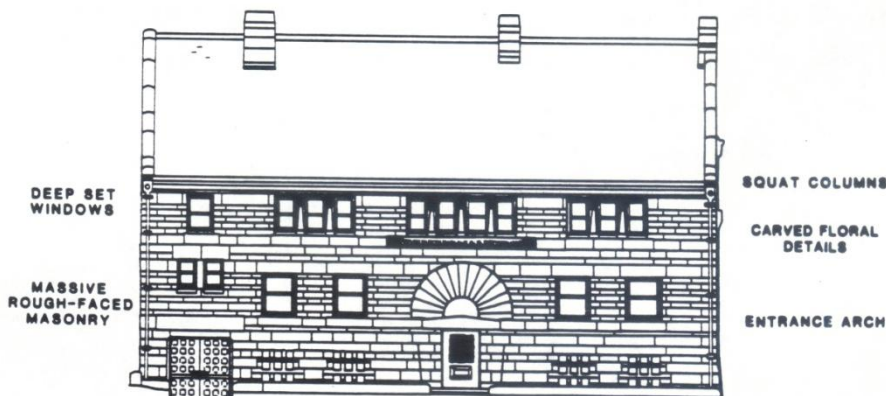
Shingle Style

This label was applied by Vincent Scully, art historian, to describe a mutation of the American Queen Anne that greatly increased the openness and flow of interior space. This style first appeared in New England; architects designed summer cottages for prosperous families. It is influenced by the simplicity of the colonial farmhouse. Unlike the Queen Anne style, gambrel roofs with short upper slopes are more prevalent; there is no applied decoration, and there is harmony among the complex parts unified by the simplicity of the unpainted shingles that wrap around the entire house. From Victorian designs the style borrowed wide porches, shingled surfaces and complex asymmetrical forms. From the Colonial Revival, it adapted gambrel roofs, lean-to additions, classical columns, and Palladian and diamond-paned casement windows. From the Romanesque Revival, it borrowed rounded arches, massive stone on the lower stories and an emphasis on irregular sculpted forms.

The "living hall" became the center of the house with the other spaces grouped around it. There was a greater feeling that the exterior was shaped by the spaces within. The careful placement of the sheltered porches and verandas continued the flow of the interior space to the outdoors.

H. H. Richardson (better known for his Romanesque-style designs), Bruce Price, and the New York firm of McKim, Mead and White designed Shingle-style houses on the East Coast. Joseph Lyman Silsbee, Frank Lloyd Wright's first Chicago employer, popularized the style in the Midwest. The shingle style was the forerunner of the developments Wright later made in domestic architecture. Wright's design for his own home indicates his awareness of Price's work.

Romanesque Revival. Also called Richardsonian Romanesque (1880–1890s)



Richardsonian Romanesque Style

The revival of Romanesque architecture began in religious architecture during the 1850s and 1860s and spread to domestic architecture with the work of the Boston architect H.H. Richardson. Characteristics include large rough-faced, rusticated stones; deep window openings; steep gabled roofs; and towers, dormers, and round-arched entrances. In Richardson's era, a critic remarked that these structures make people feel secure and respectable. As a result, the design form was considered suitable for libraries, railway stations, churches, and banks as its massive rough masonry surfaces projected a sense of strength and permanence.

Glessner House (1800 South Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois) by Richardson, is perhaps the best known

residential example in the Chicago area, if not the entire country. Most Oak Park homes of the period were more modest and built of wood. Consequently, there are no pure examples of Romanesque Revival in the neighborhood, but the detailing on a number of rowhouses and apartments shows the influence of the Romanesque style.

Colonial Revival (1890–1900s)



The 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia woke America to its own heritage. People began to look toward their own earlier architectural designs for inspiration, and an interest in colonial designs emerged. While some houses were accurate copies of earlier buildings, most Colonial Revival houses used only details from the past. Characteristics included symmetrical facades, dormers, double-hung sash windows, Palladian windows, and other classical details.

20TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

Bungalow (1900–1940s)



Bungalow Style

The word 'bungalow' originated with the British in 19th-century India. It was derived from a Hindustani word 'bangla' and referred to a one-story house with a surrounding porch and deep overhanging eaves. In America, the bungalow began with small, one-story seaside cottages that were constructed out of local

materials to harmonize with the landscape. Cobblestones were often used for foundations and chimneys. Walls, whether clapboard, shingles or brick, were a natural shade of brown. Low hipped roofs had wide overhangs that displayed exposed rafters over front porches. Ornament was minimal. Bungalow designs were reproduced throughout the country. Magazines and books published working plans and designs that people could order. Sears offered several models through their mail-order catalogs that provided not only plans but also pre-cut lumber, nails, doors, and other building materials shipped to the site via railroad. Many documented Sears houses survive throughout the Western suburbs in towns like Riverside, Elmhurst, and Downers Grove.

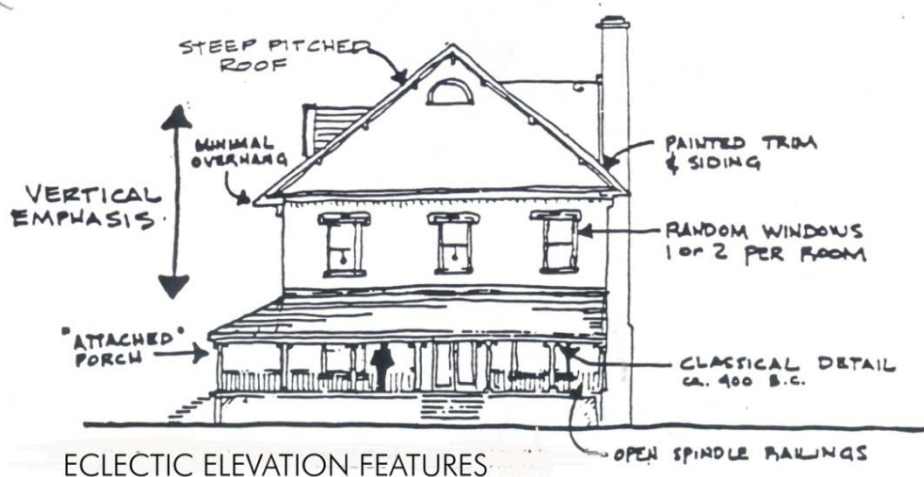
More than 100,000 bungalows were built in and around Chicago during the 1920s. These "Chicago bungalows" supplied affordable housing to working people living in cities. While there is variety in the designs of these houses, most are built of brick and are long, narrow, one-and-a-half story structures with many windows. All Chicago bungalows are of this same basic form, yet the wide variety of texture, color, and design elements allowed for subtle individuality. More elaborate versions included decorative art glass, octagonal front sunrooms and tile roofs.

American Foursquare (1910–1920s)

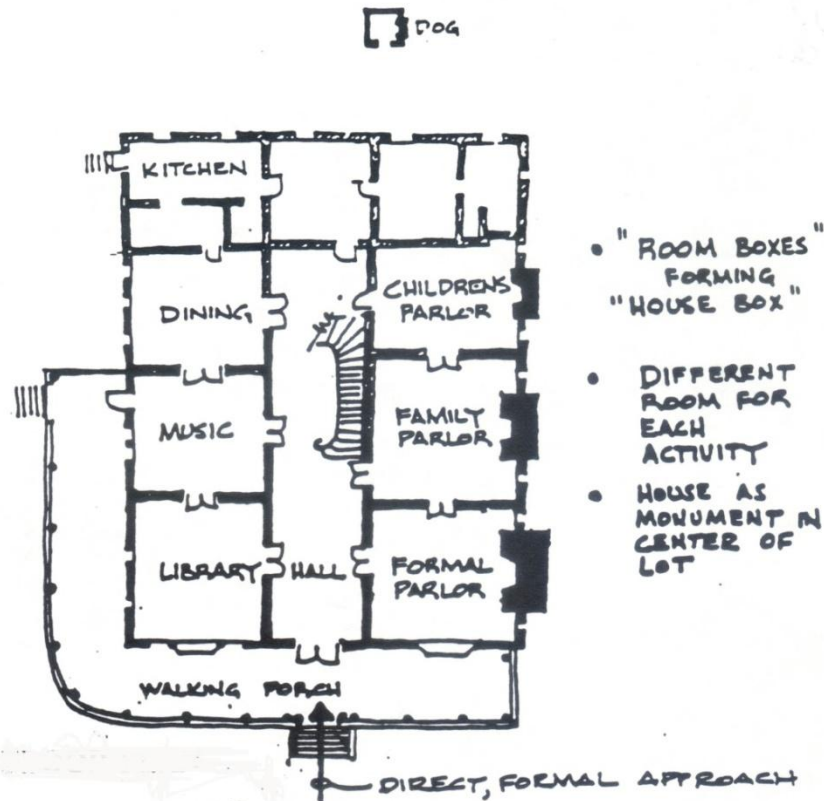
The nationwide sale of pattern books and mail-order catalogs made it possible for the same house designs to be built anywhere in America. One house form that became extremely popular was the American Foursquare style. There were many variations of the boxlike house with hipped roof and centered dormers that provided a maximum amount of space with the least amount of building materials. The limited detail of the simple and practical Foursquare could be modified with Classical, Colonial Revival or Prairie details.

Eclectic Residence (1920–1945)

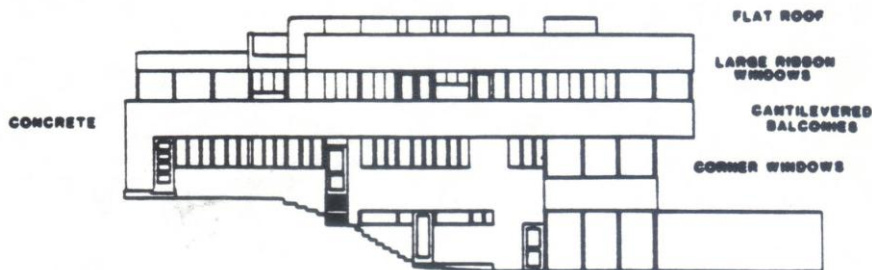
The revival of earlier styles came into fashion as they had in the 1890s and 1900s. A small-scale English country house could sit next to a six-room French chateau with turret and slate roof, across the street from a chalet that was next to a hacienda. The logic of a plan was no longer expressed on the exterior. The same basic plan could be covered with a Dutch Colonial or Spanish exterior. This produced a semblance of individuality without risk of eccentricity.



ECLECTIC FLOOR PLAN



International Style (1920–1970s)



International Style

The publication of Wright's work in the *Wasmuth Portfolio* and the design of factories and grain elevators built in the United States were a great stimulus and inspiration for European architects, whose subsequent experimentation with fully integrated architecture ultimately gave rise to what became the International Style. The term has been loosely applied to modern works created out of steel and glass. In 1932, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson published their book *The International Style*,

Architecture Since 1922, and this was the first time an American artistic development had influenced Europe. The cycle was completed when the leading members of the European architectural community, who were fleeing the Third Reich, immigrated to the United States. They came in the mid-1920s to head architectural schools—Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at Illinois Institute of Technology and Walter Gropius, joined by Marcel Breuer, at Harvard. New building materials served as design inspiration: steel or reinforced concrete was used to create flat-roofed, boxlike houses that included large-pane windows. The typically white houses emphasized volume, regularity and order and avoided any applied ornamentation.

Post World War II (1945–1970s)

Little building went on during World War II. When house construction resumed, designs based on historic precedent were largely abandoned in favor of variations of modern designs. Houses included simpler lines and less ornament as a result of the modern movement. Faint reminiscences of colonial designs were used, including double-hung sash windows and shutters. Other characteristics include aluminum, brick, or wide wood siding, broad overhanging eaves and attached garages. Lines from ranch and split-level houses popular in the 1950s and 1960s were derived from the Prairie and Usonian house designs.

Postmodern (1970s+)

Beginning in the 1960s, disenchantment with the International Style of architecture grew and architects began to search for alternatives to modern designs. In its heyday, modern architecture was considered democratic, impartial, efficient and, rational. Critics charged modern architecture with three shortcomings:

1. It failed to communicate in meaningful symbols.
2. Its claim of universality means only that it is specific to no place or people.
3. Buildings often failed to serve their function because they were overbuilt or planned without sufficient investigation of needs.

Architects such as Robert Venturi and Philip Johnson began to borrow elements from previous design traditions and applied them in new and innovative ways. Traditional ornament can be found at various scales in nontraditional ways. Geometric window openings are also common. The Postmodern-style houses often reflect the best characteristics of neighboring buildings by using them in spirited and creative manners, although the style has also generated considerable criticism.

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