

Reading Alexandria's Historic Buildings



Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, 1997. Photograph by David Heald © The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York

The evolution of architectural styles is a reflection of the evolution of building technology

Don't Believe Everything You Read (or See)

Must combine both archival & physical field evidence to determine the original date of construction.

Is the present architectural style of the building:

1. The result of upward mobility over time? ...or



Second Empire Style

131 N. Washington
ca. 1821, remodel 1870
(Cameron St. Façade)



Original Federal Style Entry

2. Is it the result of a Phony Colony pastiche to make it more culturally acceptable and, therefore, economically valuable?

320, 322 S. Lee Street



Windows and Door Altered

Original Second Empire Style

*firmitas, utilitas, venustas**

* Vitruvius, The Ten Books of Architecture, 1st Century BC

Commodity, Firmness, Delight

Construction Material

- What was available locally?
- What was affordable?
- How long did it last?
- For alterations, how difficult is it to replace or update in the current architectural style?



301 N. Pitt St.

What Style is This?

- Beaded clapboard siding
- 6/6/ windows w/ brick mould trim
- Broken scroll pediment architrave
- Coach lamps

Construction Materials

Building elements easily replaced:

- Paint
- Window sash
- Doors
- Trim
- Wood siding

Elements not easy to alter:

- Building footprint
- Foundation material
- Brick bond
- Roof form
- Cornice
- Door location
- Window arrangement or bays
- Wood framing: saw marks & fasteners

Look up !



301 N. Pitt St.

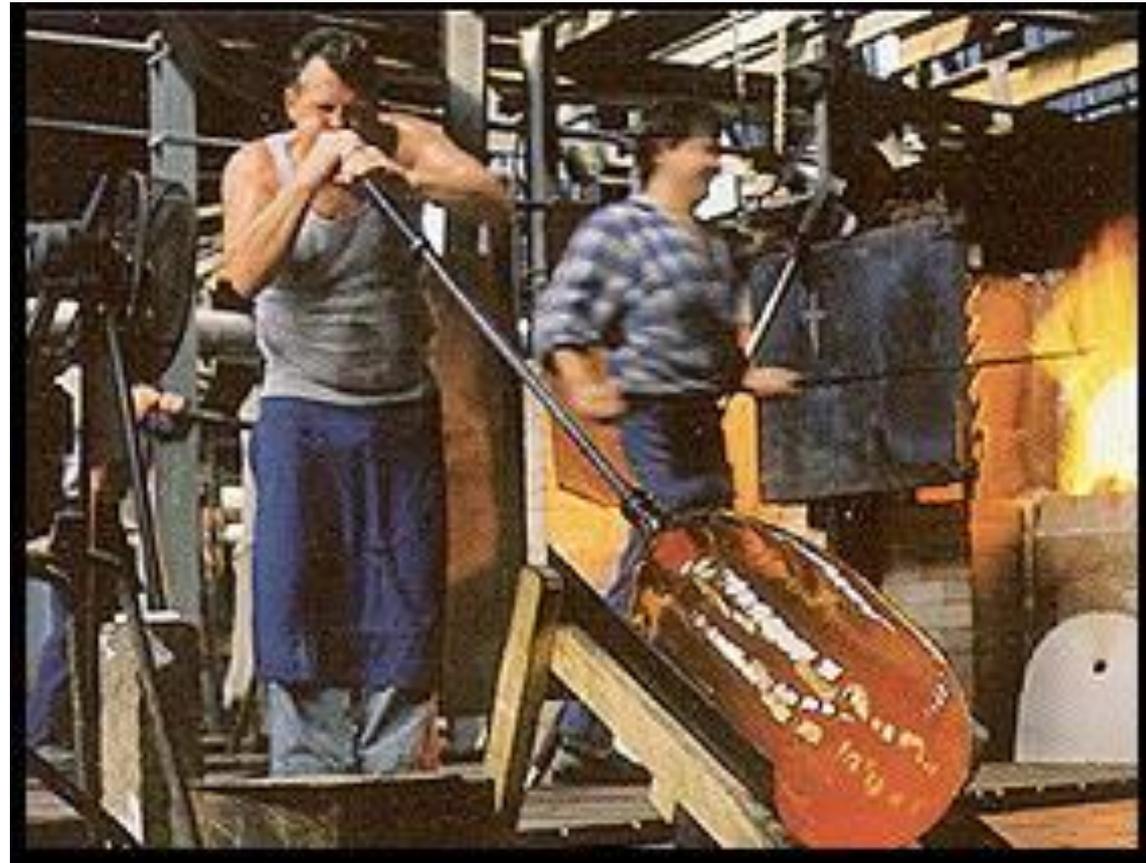
Italianate Style

- Bracketed cornice made possible by band saws
- Low slope roof possible because of sheet metal roofing after mid-19th century

Cylinder Glass – 1840 to early 1900`s

Courtesy JELD-WEN Windows and Doors

- ❖ Molten Glass blown into a Cylinder, halved and then reheated to create a sheet of glass. This creates a larger and more uniform pieces of glass.
- ❖ It typically has small imperfections (seeds) from blowing bubbles or reams (fold marks or a wave in the glass)
- ❖ **Machine drawn cylinder sheet** was the first mechanical method for "drawing" window glass. Cylinders of glass 40 feet (12 m) high are drawn vertically from a circular tank. The glass is then annealed and cut into 7 to 10 foot (2 to 3 m) cylinders. These are cut lengthways, reheated, and flattened. This process was invented in the USA in 1903 and was manufactured during the early 20th century.





Cylinder glass panes

Window Muntins



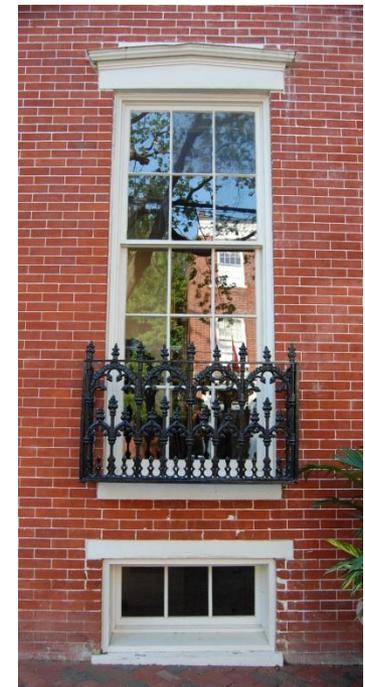
12/12
Georgian



9/9
Georgian / Federal



6/6
Federal / Greek Revival



6/9
Greek Revival



4/4
Late Greek / Early Victorian



2/2
Victorian



Gothic Lancet



9/1
Colonial Revival / Craftsman

Window Forms & Groupings



Greek Revival



Queen Anne



Queen Anne



Second Empire



Sullivaneseque / Prairie

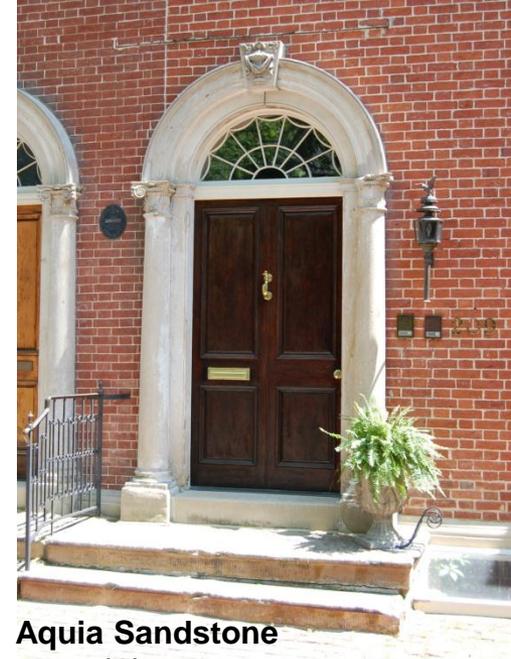


International Style

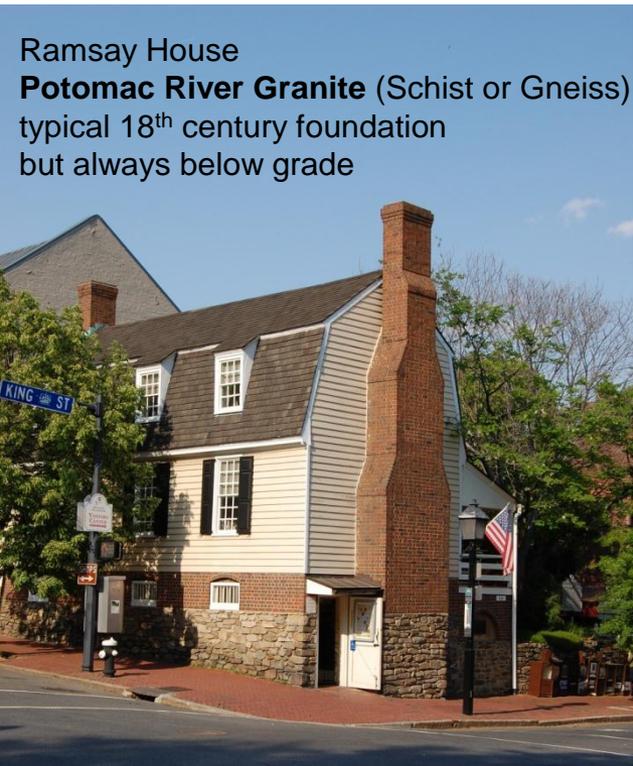
Stone



Carlyle House
Originally Aquia Creek Sandstone
(quarry operated ca. 1694-1827)
Restored 1970s w/ Indiana Limestone



Aquia Sandstone
carved doorway



Ramsay House
Potomac River Granite (Schist or Gneiss)
typical 18th century foundation
but always below grade



806 Prince

Seneca Sandstone
Used during the Brownstone Era 1840 – 1880
(Seneca Maryland quarry operated ca. 1780 – 1900)



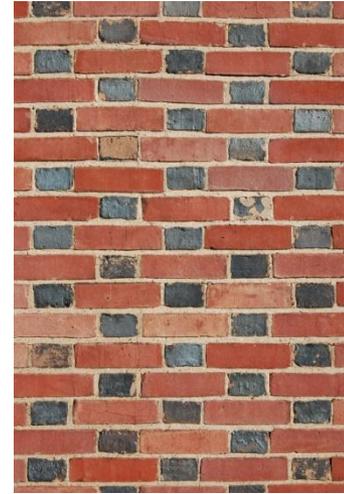
Brick



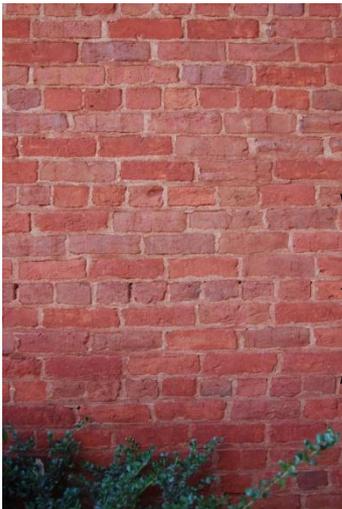
Flemish Bond



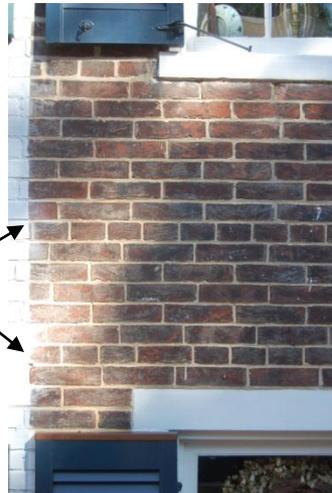
Flemish Bond Watertable



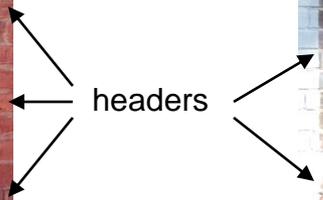
Flemish Bond with Black Header Brick
Colonial Revival Period



4 course American Bond



6 course American Bond



headers



Running Bond

Local Laws Affect Form and Materials

The Original Alexandria Building Ordinances

1. Must build on the lot within two years of purchase.
2. Buildings to be constructed of brick, stone or wood, at least twenty feet square and nine feet in height, with a brick or stone chimney.



Slave cabin, Stratford Hall



"Flounder" house
S. Lee Street

Local Laws Affect Form and Materials

3. A 1752 resolution by the trustees further required that “all dwelling houses ...be in line with the street as chief of the houses now are, and that no gable or end of such house be on or next to the street.”



Queen Street

Architectural Styles

Period Used*

-
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| ■ Georgian | 1700 - 1780 |
| ■ Federal | 1780 - 1820 |
| ■ Greek Revival | 1825 - 1860 |
| ■ Gothic Revival | 1840 - 1880 |
| ■ Victorian period | 1860 - 1900 |
| • Italianate | 1840 - 1885 |
| • Second Empire | 1855 - 1885 |
| • Queen Anne | 1880 - 1910 |
| • Richardson Romanesque | 1880 - 1900 |
| • Colonial Revival | 1880 - 1955 |
| • Craftsman/Prairie | 1890 - 1930 |
| ■ Beaux Arts | 1885 - 1930 |
| ■ Art Deco & Moderne | 1920 - 1940 |

* *A Field Guide To American Houses*, McAlester, 1984

The Georgian Style in America

1700 - 1780



King George I
1714 - 1727

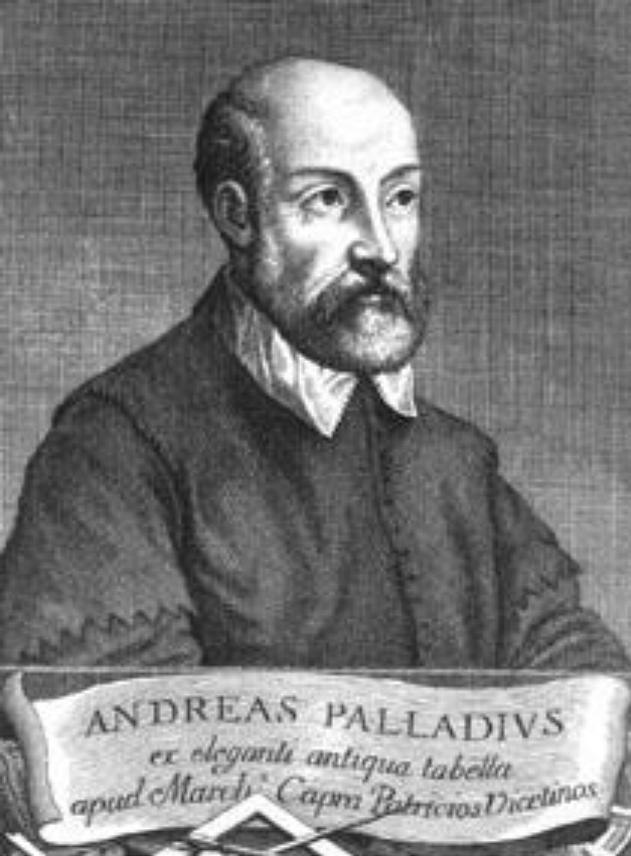


King George II
1727 - 1760

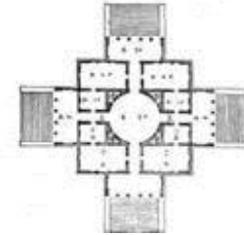


King George III
1760 - 1820

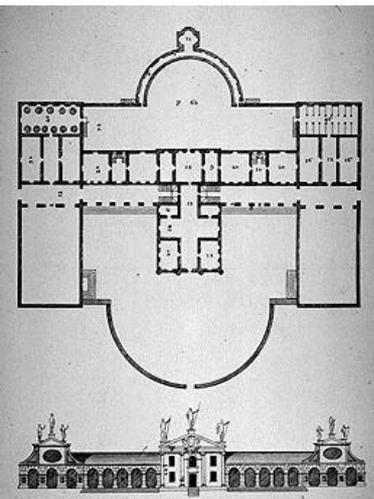
House of Hanover



I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura, 1570



Villa Capra (La Rotunda), 1571
Andrea Palladio, Architect



Andrea Palladio
1508 - 1580

Villa Barbaro
Maser, Italy, 1560



Villa Capra, Vicenza, Italy

John Carlyle House

ca 1753



Structural Quoins

Hip Roof w/
Painted Fishscale Shingles

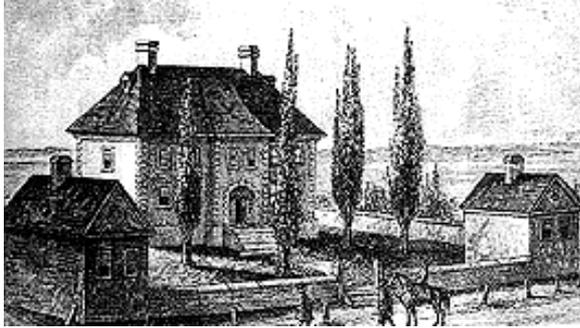
6/6 Double Hung Sash

Quoins

6/9 Double Hung
Window Sash

Watertable

5 bay, Center Hall Plan
w/ Projecting Center Bay



Carlyle House outbuildings, 19th c.



hyphens

Palladio, **Villa Godi**, Vicenza, 1537-42



Georgian Details



211 Prince St.
1793



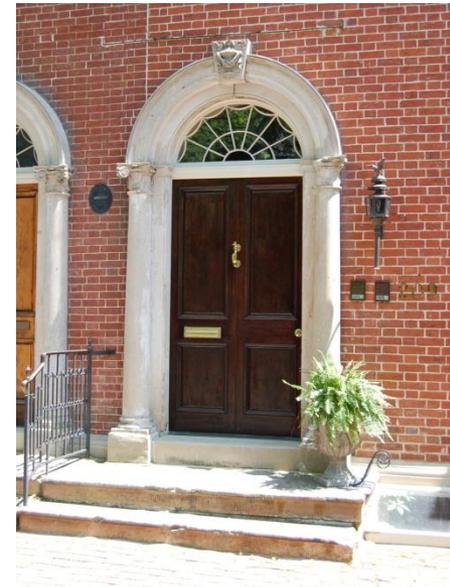
209 Prince St.
1786



207 Prince St., late 18th c



208 N. Royal St., 1799



209 N. Fairfax St., 1800-1805

Gadsby's Tavern ca 1785

- Gable Dormers
- Side Gable Roof w/
Sawn Wood Shingles
- Dentiled Cornice
- Winged Keystones in
Acquia Stone Lintel
- Carved Stone Sill
- Flemish Bond Brick
- Stone Belt Course
- Pedimented Architrave w/ 6-
Panel Door & Fanlight Transom
- 6/6 Window Sash
w/ Wide Jamb Trim
- Molded Brick Watertable
- Symmetrical, 5 bay,
Center Hall Plan



Georgian Variations: Gambrel Roof



Hooe House, 200 Prince St., ca. 1780

Ramsay House
221 King St.
2nd half of 18th century

Wolfe St.





Georgian Churches

St. Martin in the Fields
London, 1721
James Gibbs, Architect



Christ Church

1767-73
James Wren, Architect

Tower 1785-99
Alterations 1818

Christ Church
Sanctuary Entrance

Gibbs published a folio of his designs, his *Book of Architecture* in [1728](#), and in [1732](#) the *Rules for Drawing the Several Parts of Architecture* that became part of every carpenter-builder's repertory in the English-speaking world.



Christ Church: Georgian Details



Keystone

Impost block in
brick jack arch

9/9 Windows w/
Wide Muntins

Carved Timber Frame

Palladian Window
From Batty Langley's
*City and Country Builder's and
Workman's Treasury of Designs*,
published in London in 1756

Stone Sill

Dentiled Cornice

Quoins

Flemish Bond w/
Random Glazed Headers

Water Table



Vernacular Georgian



Wood, Fishscale Shingles Stained Red



Flush, wide-board siding
painted white or oxide red,
typ.

517-519 Duke St.
c. 1786

400 Prince St., c. 1797

Vernacular Georgian

John Douglas Brown house
517 Prince St., ca. 1775



Fish Scale Shingles on
Side Gable Roof w/ Dormers

5 bay Center Entry (now relocated to side)

Siding Painted White on Front

Original Stone Foundation Covered
With Plaster After Street was Lowered



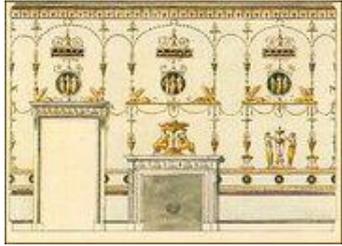
Cat-Slide Roof on Salt-Box Style Addition

Beaded Random Width
Flush Siding Stained Red

Kitchen Ell Originally Detached

The Federal Style

1780 - 1820



Osterley Park, 1773
Robert Adam

First Harrison-Gray-Otis
house, Boston, 1795 - 1796
Charles Bulfinch, Architect



711 Prince St. -- Pickens-Fowle house

The original ca. 1797, two bay wide flounder house on the east side of this dwelling was incorporated into a five bay, center hall plan expansion when William Fowle purchased the property in 1811.



Lunette Window

Side Gable Roof w/
Front Gable

Simplified Stone Lintel
Over 6/6 Window Sash

Flemish Bond Brick

Palladian Window

Elliptical Arch Above
6-Panel Door w/
Sidelights

Slender Colonettes

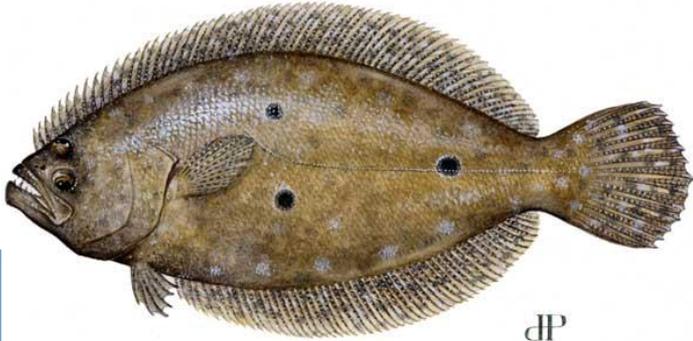
5-bay Center Hall Plan

Original Flounder

“Flounder” Houses



“Flounder” Variations



Gulf Flounder



515 Queen

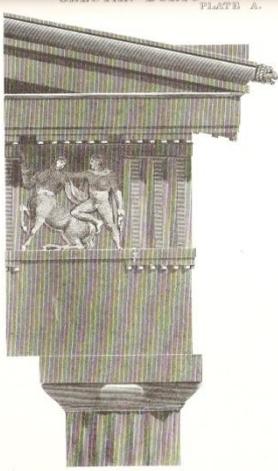
513 Queen

511 Queen

Shed Roof

Front Gable

Charleston Single House



The Greek Revival

1825 - 1860



Greek Doric order, from *The American Builder's Companion*, Asher Benjamin, 1827

Front Gable Pediment

Doric Entablature

Cornice w/ Metopes

Frieze w/ Triglyphs

Architrave

Fluted Greek Doric Columns

Athenaeum

(Originally Old Dominion Bank)

201 Prince St., 1851-52

The Greek Revival

Classical Entablature
on elevated wall

Cast Iron (?) Window Hood

6/6 & 9/9 Windows
in new locations

Classical Entablature &
Ionic Columns on Porch

4-panel Door w/
Transom & Sidelights

207 S. Fairfax St.
ca. 1787

Greek Revival Alteration, ca. 1866 ?



The Greek Revival

Side Gable Roof w/
lower slope

Molded Brick
Classical Cornice

Stone Lintels

Extruded Brick in
Running Bond

Windows Become Smaller
At Each Floor

Door Surround w/ Full
NeoClassical Entablature
& Pilasters

Use of Octagon Form

Cast Iron Balcony Rail

Simple Granite, Marble or
Seneca Sandstone Steps



The Greek Revival

Windows in Frieze



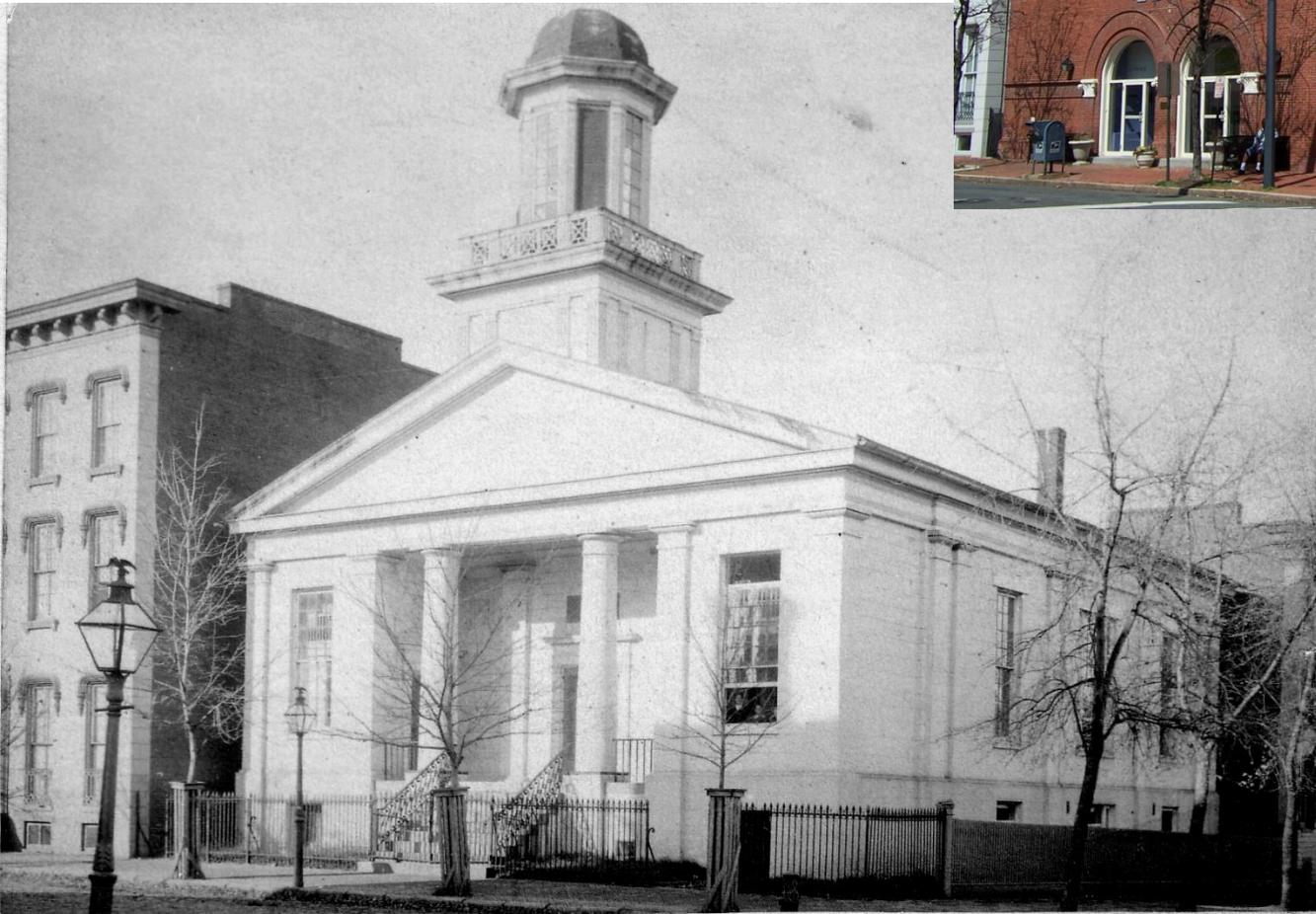
215 N. Pitt St., 1854



218 S. Lee, 1844

Greek Revival Churches

601 Prince
Second Presbyterian
Church, 1840



601 Prince - re-modeled in a
Richardson Romanesque
Style by Glenn Brown, 1889

Glenn Brown, FAIA
1854-1932





Queen Victoria
r. 1837-1901

Victorian Period 1860 – 1900*

- ❖ Gothic Revival 1840 – 1880
- ❖ Italianate 1840 – 1885
- ❖ Second Empire 1855 – 1885
- ❖ Queen Anne 1880 – 1910
- ❖ Richardson Romanesque 1880 – 1900
- ❖ Colonial Revival 1880 - 1955

* *A Field Guide To American Houses*, McAlester, 1984

The Gothic Revival

1840 - 1880



St Paul's Episcopal Church, 1817
Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Architect
222 S. Pitt St.



St. Mary's Catholic Church,
1881 façade by Philip N. Dwyer
310 S. Royal St.



319 Cameron St.

Italianate

1840 - 1885

Bracketed, Dentiled Cornice & Frieze

Low Slope Roof Sheds to Rear

Cast Iron Head & Sill
with 1/1 Windows



Incorrect 6
panel door



Italian Villa Style

510 Wolfe, 1854



Italian Renaissance Revival

**Washington Street
Methodist Church**

109 S. Washington

Greek Revival Church begun in 1850
present façade 1875



Chiesa di San Zaccaria, Venice, 1444 to 1515.
Antonio Gambello, principal architect, facade
completed by Mauro Codussi



Second Empire *

1855 – 1885

Mansard Roof w/ Slate
Fancy Cut Shingles

Bracketed Cornice

Segmental Arch over Windows

Original 2/2 Windows

Inappropriate 6/6
replacement windows

Bracketed
Entry Architrave

2/2 windows

* Second Empire is a
identical to the
Italianate Style in
Alexandria except for
the Mansard roof



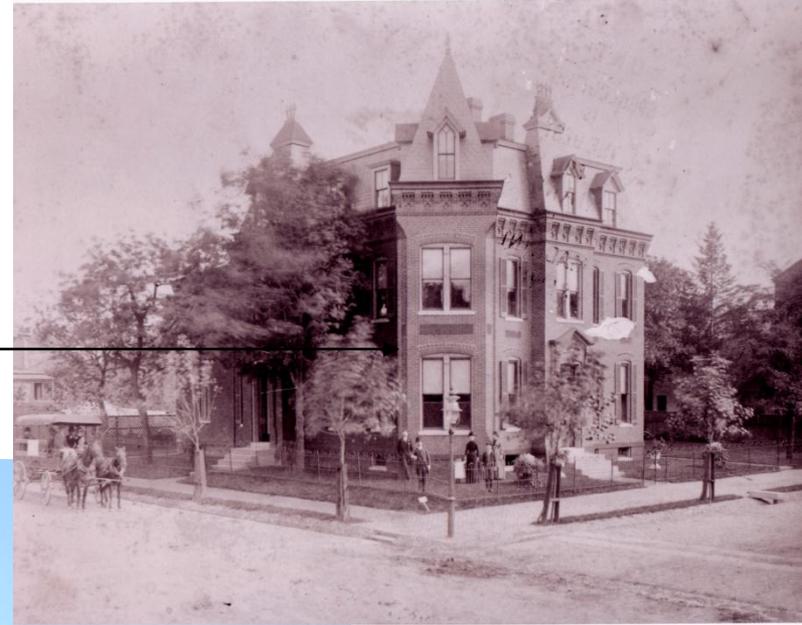
Queen Anne

1880 – 1910

Freestanding, Chateausque Style

Corner Towers & Bays

617 S. Washington Street



The Harlow House,
1893, Glenn Brown
Architect. (demolished
mid-20th century)



Queen Anne Rowhouses



200 N. Columbus



Decorative Brick Patterns

Front Gable & Bay
Provide Vertical
Expression

Corbeled Brick Cornice

Molded Brick
Segmental Arch

1/1 Windows

Patterned Brick Panel

Brick String Course



Queen Anne

Vernacular

Fishscale Shingle Siding

Knob & Spool Fretwork Porch

Corbeled Brick Cornice
w/ Low Slope Shed Roof

Molded Brick Segmental Arch
Over 1/1 Windows



215-219 N. Columbus
Glenn Brown, Architect



400 Block N. Alfred St.





Henry
Hobson
Richardson

Richardson Romanesque

1880 – 1900



Polychrome Slate

Semicircular Arch

Short Columns

Copper Window Bay

Visually Heavy Massing
& Dark, Earth-Tone Colors

907 Cameron St.



601 Prince - re-modeled in a Richardson
Romanesque Style by Glenn Brown in 1889

Alexandria Armory by Glenn Brown
(demolished)





Richardson Romanesque

Slate or Tile Roof

Molded Copper Trim

Semi-Circular Arches

208-210 N. Washington



219 S. Alfred St.

Rusticated Seneca Sandstone Base



915-917 Prince

Colonial Revival

1880 - 1955

Alexandria Union Station
Penn Railroad, 1906



Colonial Revival

George Mason Hotel,
130 S. Washington St.
ca. 1929



Bostetter Federal Courthouse
200 S. Washington St., 1930
James A. Wetmore,
Supervising Architect

Craftsman/Prairie

1890 - 1930

Ganged windows in
Frame with Floral decoration



204 S. St. Asaph



805 Prince St.

Beaux Arts

1885 - 1930



Elks Club
Prince St.

Commercial



Burke & Herbert Bank
King Street

Beaux Arts Residential

Flat Roof w/ Parapet

Neoclassical Entablature

Yellow Brick

Large 1/1 Windows

2/2 windows on Rear Ell

200 N. Alfred St.



Art Deco & Moderne

1920 - 1940



King St.



Oronoco St.





George Washington National Masonic Memorial
1932

The End

Al Cox, FAIA, 2013