

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: QUEEN ANNE - 1880 - 1900

The Queen Anne style was named and popularized by a group of 19th century English architects led by Richard Norman Shaw. The name is rather inappropriate, for the historical precedents used by Shaw and his followers had little to do with Queen Anne or the formal Renaissance architecture that was dominant during her reign (1702-14). Instead, he borrowed most heavily from late medieval models of the preceding Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. The half-timbered and patterned masonry American types are most closely related to this work of Shaw and his followers.

The first considered American example of the Queen Anne style was built in 1876, and by 1880, the style was being spread throughout the country by pattern books and the first architectural magazine, **The American Architect and Building News**. The expanding railroad network also helped popularize the style by making pre-cut architectural details available through much of the nation.

The earliest American examples followed Shaw's early, half-timbered designs, but during the 1880's and 90's, a relatively few high-style urban examples continued to imitate Shaw's later English models, which were executed in masonry. In the decade of the 1890's, the free classic adaption became widespread. It was but a small step from these to the early asymmetrical Colonial Revival houses which, along with other competing styles, fully supplanted the Queen Anne style after 1910.

Correct examples of the Queen Anne house have brick facading on the ground floor and tile above in the imitation of the English prototypes. Brick and tile may also be intermingled. More often the upper walls are shingled, or have a mixture of shingles and half-timbering. Many different combinations of wood siding, shingles, and half-timbering are found. Roofs are covered with shingles, slates, or tiles. Most of the ornamentation comes from the varied textures and colors of the wall surfaces which occur in bands and panels, the boldly modeled high chimneys, and decorative treatment of roof covering. Cresting or pronounced ridge shingles are often used.



222 S. 16th
1888, Joseph Lyman Silsbee, Architect



1100 State Street
Architect unknown

When looking for a Queen Anne house the most often found feature is a tower, which may be round, square, or polygonal, (the square form is the least common). These are of varying height and may rise from ground level, be cantilevered out at the second floor, or show other variations in position. In later examples, the tower may appear to be less a separate design element than a mere bulge growing from the main mass of the house. Round or polygonal wooden towers are particularly characteristic of the Queen Anne house. Towers placed at a front facade corner are most often Queen Anne, whereas those embraced within the construction of the house or centered on the front facade are equally common in several other styles.

Major interior spaces of this type of house tend to be expansive and low, with molded beam ceilings, paneled wainscots, wood cornices, and heavy molded wood trim. Major rooms might have wide openings into each other and into the main hall. Lathe-turned wooden grillwork is often employed around the characteristically wide stairways, and between the ceiling and the tops of screen walls. Wood strip flooring covered in part with Oriental rugs was another distinctive trait, with the wood work and flooring done in golden oak. Walls were usually covered with wallpaper, stenciled canvas, or occasionally with leather.

Several homes in Quincy are in the Queen Anne style. Although some have been altered slightly, they still retain the characteristics of the style. The Isaac Lesem house at 1449 Maine, built in 1891, by architect Harvey Chaten, the William S. Bull house at 222 South 16th, built in 1888 by Joseph L. Silsbee, the Tibbets/Selner house at 8th and Spruce, and the Albert Dick house at 1100 State are all fine examples.

The above information about the Queen Anne style has been excerpted from **A Field Guide to American Houses** by Virginia and Lee McAlester, and from **American Architectural Styles - 1600 - 1940** by R. T. Panek.