



## ITALIANATE TREND IN WINCHESTER

### Walking Tour

The Italianate style is derived from a reinterpretation of the Italian villas for English, and later American, audiences. It developed in England through the work of well-known British architects John Nash and Sir Charles Barry in the early 1800s. The trend crossed the Atlantic in the 1840s and was popularized by pattern books, or illustrated catalogs of architectural details and designs. In Winchester, Italianate structures date from the 1850s to 1890s, with the height of the fad coinciding with the Reconstruction Era (c. 1866-1877). It is one of the best represented styles in Winchester, comprising approximately 10% of the local historic district construction.

The Italianate style is one of a number of styles popular in the Victorian era (1837-1901). Thanks in part to the proliferation of pattern books, Italianate buildings may combine elements of Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival to form a transitional style structure. Because of its adaptability, the Italianate style also lent itself to construction on a more modest scale. Buildings of this type are called vernacular, meaning they were developed from local building traditions and materials with the function taking precedence over fashion.

Most structures will sport a low-pitched or flat roof, often hipped with large overhanging eaves. Under the eaves are a decorative cornice and brackets and sometimes small frieze windows. Main windows are usually tall and topped with segmental arches and

ornamented hood moldings or pediments. In form, Italianate buildings appear massive, with brick structures often sporting decorative quoins, or exaggerated cornerstones, traveling the length of the facade to lend additional textural interest and appearance of structural integrity. Buildings may be almost square in appearance or have a tower or angled bay projections. The facade is usually completed by a porch decorated with elaborate balusters and corner brackets.

#### START OF TOUR:

##### HEXAGON HOUSE: 530 Amherst St.

Constructed 1871-1873 by James W. Burgess, this unusual six-sided house represents many of the major elements of the Italianate style. Take note of the low hipped roof, bracketed cornice, bay windows, and the decorative scrollwork and turned balusters on the front porch. The polygonal shape stems from Orson Squire Fowler's pattern book Octagon Houses: A Home For All, first published in 1853. The hexagonal form is a rare variant.



##### SELMA: 514 Amherst St.

The original Selma at this site was a twin to the Federal-style house Hawthorn at 610 Amherst Street. James Murray Mason, the author of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, lived in the original Selma. While Mason was abroad as the foreign representative of the Confederate States, Union troops destroyed his home during the First Battle of Winchester (1862). New Selma, constructed by Judge Edmund Pendleton in 1873, is a superb example of a

rambling Italianate mansion, enhanced by its spacious and hilly lawn.



#### 320 and 310 AMHERST STREET

These 1880s vernacular frame Italianate buildings are almost identical. Note the fluted cornice brackets and carved frieze panels at 320 Amherst. 310 Amherst Street features frieze windows and a shallow hipped roof.



#### KATHERINE CONRAD HOUSE: 222 AMHERST STREET

This pleasing brick Italianate residence was constructed in 1889 by Robert Y. Conrad for his daughter Katherine as a provision of his will. Katherine never married; local lore says she was waiting for her beau Turner Ashby, who was killed in action at Harrisonburg in 1862. The facade is dominated by the massive two story bay projection. The carved floral accents on the window hood molding add a touch of delicacy.



#### 111 and 115 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

These 1870s-1880s brick Italianate cottages display typical features of decorative cornice brackets, tall first-floor windows, two-story bay projections, and segmentally arched windows. Note the quoins on the corners of the buildings, corbelled chimneys, and the light and airy porch brackets.

#### 201 and 209 FAIRMONT AVENUE

Angerona, the former Frederick Parish Poorhouse, was located at 201 Fairmont Avenue. First constructed in 1798, the poorhouse was named Angerona after the Roman goddess of silence and suffering. A succession of girls' schools was located here following the construction of the new poorhouse in 1820. Under Ann Magill, the owner of

Angerona in the 1860s, the house was much improved with modern decorative features, including a quintessentially Italianate belvedere, or open tower, providing a "beautiful view" of Winchester and its environs. Angerona was destroyed by fire circa 1930.



The transitional Greek Revival to Italianate style structure at 209 Fairmont was part of the Angerona lot. The land was subdivided and this house built around 1858 for Dr. William S. Miller. Papers and money from the Bank of Winchester were hidden in the cellar during the Civil War for safekeeping. The low-pitched

roof and frieze windows show the Italianate influences on this home, while the six-over-six light windows are more typical of the Greek Revival style.

### 303 FAIRMONT AVENUE

Constructed in 1875, this High Victorian Italianate dwelling combines diverse stylistic elements from the Victorian era with a traditional symmetrical facade to create a unique composition. Note the cornice, porch brackets, and diamond-shaped panes of glass in the central tower.



### 342 FAIRMONT AVENUE:

This transitional Greek Revival to Italianate house was constructed around 1873 and features most of the typical traits of the Italianate style with a bracketed cornice, tall windows, and a low-pitched roof. The home derives its name from John Steck, a local attorney, member of the Virginia General Assembly, and a chairman of the Winchester School Board, who

purchased the home in 1911.

### WALK TOWARD NORTH AVENUE INTERSECTION

Notice that many houses in the 300 and 400 blocks of Fairmont Avenue are of the same T-shape form and footprint. Most of these houses are Italianate and have a two-story bay projection with a single story porch spanning the remainder of the façade. All of these houses were constructed after the Civil War as speculative building investments.

### 445 FAIRMONT AVENUE

Hidden from the street, this residence is a simplistic and symmetrical Italianate style often called Tuscan Villa. Note the central projecting window hood and polygonal hood moldings on the second story, unusual features for Winchester buildings. The house was built in 1869 for William L. Clark, Jr., a local judge. To obtain a closer view of the house, you may proceed west on North Avenue before continuing the tour.



### CROSSING NORTH AVENUE TOWARDS NORTH LOUDOUN STREET

Peyton Street was the northernmost cross-street in Winchester during the height of the Italianate building era. North Avenue, a "formerly dismal section," was cleared around 1900 according to T.K. Cartmell. Most residences lining the street are a mix of late Victorian, Colonial Revival, and vernacular styles. The home at 16 North Avenue, the best Italianate example on the street, once sat on the corner of Loudoun Street and North Avenue. It was moved to its current location so that a gas station could be built on the prominent corner lot to capture travelers on the busy Valley Pike.



**447 NORTH LOUDOUN STREET**  
This three-story home is a subdued expression of an Italianate mansion. The spacious front yard lends the impression the home is an isolated country villa. Note the unpainted brick quoins, corner braces along the porch and bracketed cornice as well as the unusual six over six windows. The house was built by C.M. Gibbens, a Winchester clerk of courts, in 1874.



**419 NORTH LOUDOUN STREET**  
The Darlington-Hardy House, built in 1847 by Joseph Baker, is a combination of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. There are three obvious Italianate influences: the low roof, the tall windows, and the bracketed cornice. Constructed on the site of Fort Loudoun, the yard still contains the well that supplied water to the mid-18th-century fort designed by George Washington in 1756 during the French and Indian War.



**418 NORTH LOUDOUN STREET**  
The Magill-Keller House is an intriguing combination of Italianate and Queen Anne styles. It features a heavy bracketed cornice, elaborate window hoods, and a two-story four-sided bay projection on the Loudoun Street facade, and a two-story porch lined with delicate balustrades facing Clark Street. During the Civil War, Anne E. Magill and her daughter Mary Tucker Magill lived in this home. The Magills, staunch Confederate supporters, gave bread and eggs to Confederate soldiers as they passed by the house, heading south through Winchester after the Battle of Gettysburg.

#### **2, 4, 6, 8 PEYTON STREET**

This rambling dwelling was built on part of the site of Fort Loudoun in the 1840s by Joseph Baker. A succession of educational institutions used the building until its conversion to apartments in 1925. The core of the structure has a bracketed cornice and a low roof with a wide overhang characteristic of the Italianate style, surrounded by later Colonial Revival additions.

#### **28 and 32-34 PEYTON STREET**

These two buildings were occupied by various members of the Affleck family for almost 100 years. 28 Peyton Street features most of the hallmarks of the Italianate style in a small but pleasing facade. Note the simple arched corner braces on the porch; the clean lines prevent the small facade from appearing too cluttered.

The duplex at 32-34 Peyton Street was built for two spinster Affleck sisters. It was likely upgraded in the 1870s with a bracketed cornice and delicate, leafy brackets along the porch to conform to the fashions of the day.



#### **331 NORTH BRADDOCK STREET**

This impressive home was constructed circa 1863. Originally the home of Charles B. Meredith, a jeweler and silversmith, the residence was sold to the Loudoun Street Presbyterian Church as its manse in 1891. The heavy bracketed cornice and the arched windows topped by intricate window hoods and pendants are superb examples of Italianate detailing.



### 303 NORTH BRADDOCK STREET

This residence was likely built around 1854 when Samuel Trenary, a brick mason, acquired the property. Trenary was a Union supporter during the Civil War and became the sheriff of Winchester during the Reconstruction. Note the corbelled chimney, fancy brackets and flat balusters on the porch, contrasted to the simple and clean lines of the windows and frieze.



### 218 and 216 NORTH BRADDOCK STREET

These quaint frame houses are excellent examples of vernacular design, meaning that they were constructed of local materials in a traditional manner. 216 North Braddock combines spindlework with fan-shaped porch brackets, while 218 North Braddock concentrates on classic Italianate cornice and brackets.

### WALKING TO LOUDOUN STREET MALL

The Greek Revival building at 135 NORTH BRADDOCK STREET was the home of Lloyd Logan. Logan, a tobacco merchant, built his residence around 1848. During the Civil War, the building was used as the headquarters of Federal Generals Robert Milroy and Philip Sheridan.

The Phillip Williams House at 25 EAST PICCADILLY STREET is an especially notable example of Greek Revival style. The plethora of ironwork on the facade is unmatched in quantity or quality in Winchester. It is said these architectural details were buried during the Civil War to prevent them from being melted down for the war effort. Molded metal was often used to replicate intricate Italianate detailing for cornices and window hoods.

### LOUDOUN STREET WALKING MALL

The Loudoun Street Mall is the heart of Winchester's Historic District. Many storefronts along the northern half of the mall are Italianate in style. The Lovett, Huntsberry, and Union Bank buildings are some of the best examples. Dominating the mall is the 1840 Frederick County Courthouse. The old courthouse is considered one of the best Greek Revival-style courthouses in Virginia and is easily recognized by its massive Doric columns, cupola, and fish weathervane. Flanking the courthouse on Rous Avenue is Lawyers Row, a conservative commercial Italianate building constructed in 1872.



### 25 WEST BOSCAWEN STREET

This transitional style dwelling was likely built around 1857. Dr. W.S. Love, whose name is immortalized on the white doorbell panel, was an Irish immigrant. He settled in Winchester in 1866 after serving as a surgeon for the Confederacy during the Civil War. The porch contains a harmonious collection of balusters, brackets and pendants topped by a band of ogee molding. The cornice has deceptively simple jigsaw brackets and bands of intricate bead-and-reel and carved circle molding.





#### 230 WEST BOSCAWEN STREET

The Holly House is another transitional style dwelling. George W. Seevers, an officer of Farmer's Bank of Virginia, likely constructed this house around 1854. Union General Banks made this his headquarters during the Civil War. Note the triangular hoods over the first floor windows, a blending of Greek Revival and Italianate styling not seen elsewhere in Winchester.



#### 302 WEST BOSCAWEN STREET

This engaging High Italianate residence is located on the site of the Winchester Medical College. The College was burned in 1862 by Union General Banks in retaliation for the supposed graverobbery performed on one of John Brown's sons by Winchester medical students for anatomy class. Charles L. Crum

subsequently purchased the lot to construct his residence here in 1881. The building's finest feature may be the gable ornamentation, a plethora of pinnacles, pendants and brackets.

END OF TOUR