**Worcester's Greek Revival**

**Growth Pre Civil War Home**

**Historical Context**  Salisbury Mansion and Salisbury House

**Tilley Raymond House**  Henry Goulding House

(click on images to see larger view)

**Historical Context** by Jacquelyn McEttrick

Historical revivals tend to occur in places that are striving to establish stability and tradition within their borders. One such place was America in the 19th century. Indeed, not only was America searching for her identity in the wake of the Revolution and the creation of the federal Constitution, she was also trying to adjust to the changes that accompanied population growth and the Industrial Revolution. The desire for stability and continuity was consequently a prominent one throughout the era and it often found its expression in the styles Americans chose for their architecture.

One of the most prominent of these styles invoked the spirit of ancient Greece and was appropriately called Greek Revival. The style has several characteristics, principally the inclusion of a pediment on the façade usually supported by columns or pilasters. These columns then form part of the porch that can run the width or the height of the structure. Beneath the pediment is a frieze. In general, Greek Revival buildings employ wide trim and roof cornices. The entry door is located on the porch and is typically surrounded by small, rectangular windows. The roof is gable or hipped with a low pitch. Chimneys are not a prominent design aspect and are usually thin and plain. Also in keeping with the original Greek inspiration, the structures were entirely painted white in an attempt to resemble the marble exterior of the originals. The use of ornament is not common and in those cases where it is present, it is exclusively Classical in style (Cartley; Hamlin).

The study of the Greek Revival style is important not only to understand so much of the architecture of the first half of the 19th century, but also to understand the attitudes of the people who consciously chose this style. This was America's first truly national style and examples can be found throughout the country. This was due in part to the adaptability of the style which was used to build everything from modest homes to city courthouses to state capitol buildings, such as the United States Treasury Building of 1842. It was also tied to the association Americans made between the ancient Greek democratic ideal and similar democratic ideals upon which their own country was founded. This association gained strength in the 1820s as Greece was embattled in a war for independence from the Ottoman Empire. Nineteenth-century Americans held the Greeks as the founders of democratic government and, thus believed it appropriate to adopt both the Greek political system and architectural style.

In Worcester, as across the nation, the era was a time of optimism and progress. Government was increasingly strengthening itself and making more conscious efforts to connect with its citizens. Industry and business were expanding at an exponential rate. For example, the spread of the Greek Revival style was facilitated by advances within the publishing industry that allowed for information about the ruins that were being discovered at the time in Greece to be printed in inexpensive handbooks for all types of readers. Massachusetts architect Asher Benjamin was one of the most famous producers of architectural copybooks. His The Practical House Carpenter (1830) and The Builder's Guide (1838) particularly focus on Greek design. Minard Lafever's books, The Modern Builder's Guide (1833) and The Beauties of Modern Architecture (1839) contain practical Greek Revival designs attractive to client and to builder. Cities now had the trained architects, such as Worcester's Elias Carter, and the resources to build in self-conscious styles like Greek Revival.

Worcester was one of the expanding American cities in population and wealth during this era, particularly in the years 1830-50. The city appeared an ever-growing seat of democracy, culture, history and progress that favored the Greek politically and artistically. Indeed, the city of Worcester remains even today as one of the best examples of a city with a wide variety of buildings built in the Greek Revival style. The Worcester courthouse stands as one of the most impressive structures built in this style. Several churches throughout the city have been studied and celebrated for their Greek Revival architecture over the years, even though many of these churches are no longer extant. (An example of a destroyed church is Central Calvinist Church [later known as Central Congregational Church], which was located on Main Street, and featured classic Greek architectural elements such as a perfectly symmetrical design with Ionic columns (Sacred Spaces 77-8).

Fortunately, there are some examples of the Greek Revival style in places of worship that remain today, including St. John's Church. Worcester is also home to a number of Greek Revival homes, each with its own unique history.

**Salisbury Mansion and Salisbury House** by Deanna DeArango

One's home represented his wealth and status and was the foundation of the family. A grand structure demonstrated a high status, as demonstrated in the building supported by Stephen Salisbury II, one of
The **Salisbury House** of 1836-38, however, demonstrates Stephen Salisbury II's desire for a truly grand and elegant residence in a pure Greek Revival style. Built by the prominent architect Elias Carter (1781-1864), it has been called the best of Carter's numerous buildings in Worcester. It is two stories with a one story piazza with six strong and simple Doric columns. It displays a simple exterior with little superfluous decoration. On both sides of the house are porches supported by Doric columns as well. Unity and simplicity are demonstrated in the exterior of the house, through the repetitive use of even rows of five windows on both stories on all sides of the house. The most ornamental part of the firm exterior of the house is the row of five small circular windows in the frieze on top of the house. Repeating on all sides of the house, the windows in this row are framed by classical Greek wreaths that encircle the window and weave together at the top. The simple elements of the exterior balance to complete the precise and strong design of the house.

The inside of the house can be described as nothing other than extraordinary. The main staircase gracefully occupies the rotunda in the center of the house leading up to an entirely open circular gated hallway on the second floor. The ceiling of the second floor then leads up into a rotunda with eight Corinthian columns bordering a dome in the center. As sunlight shines through the dome, it brilliantly illuminates both the first and second floors of the house. Every doorway inside the house has a simple border with a Greek ornamental floral design on the top corners. The extraordinary elegance of the house is shown through the use of simple, but exquisitely crafted Greek architectural designs. Their sense of balance makes an immediate impression on the viewer.

Although the Salisbury Mansion is preserved as a house museum by the Worcester Historical Museum, the Salisbury House serves as a functional work site as well as a site of historic importance. It is currently occupied by the Worcester chapter of the American Red Cross. The structure is truly a symbol of pride for the city of Worcester, providing both a base for such an important organization in the community, while maintaining its architectural beauty and significance to the city.

**Tilley Raymond Home by Alexa Ferrer**

On a less grand scale is the more practical yet still elegant home built by Tilley Raymond in 1847. A builder, Raymond and partner Horatio Tower constructed many well-known buildings both in the city of Worcester and in California. One of their most famous buildings is Mechanics Hall completed in 1857. We might conjecture that the Tilley Raymond house was constructed with the Mechanic's ideals of practicality and beauty. A well-built house like this is both functional and beautiful, which reflected on the Association's efforts toward creating perfection in mechanical arts. Upon Raymond's death, his son Edward occupied the residence. In 1898 the house was sold to Henry Whitcomb who at that time converted it into apartments. Today Raymond's house is used as a teen residence center.

Built on rock-faced granite, the Tilley Raymond House is a classic example of Greek Revival design. These structures were reminiscent of Greek temples with their bold but simple moldings, symmetrical linear shapes and decorative details. Pedimented gables are complemented by open entry porticos and free standing columns of Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian design.

One of the house's striking features is its massive form. Attention is drawn to the sense of power conveyed through the substantial wood panels and heavy entablatures. Like other Greek Revival houses, the exterior of the Tilley Raymond house was most probably painted white but more recently is of painted grayish clapboard with white trim and columns likening it to a Greek temple. It is location on a hill, like a Greek temple, which forces viewers to look upwards giving the building a sense of imposing stature and grace. The basic structure displays a perfect interplay of linear geometric shapes including rectangles, squares, and triangles.

The interrelationship of these elements is an important characteristic of the Greek Revival period. Aesthetically pleasing buildings relied on order and precise form, and the Tilley Raymond House is an excellent model of this principle. First, the façade is subdivided into three sections, creating a pleasing interact of parts. The bottom level contains two elongated evenly shaped and spaced narrow windows complemented by long vertical rectangular shutters. The main door is set to the left of these two windows. This is a simple, straight, and sturdy setting. This entrance design of rectangular windows and door is in proportion and convey the sense that there are three exact rectangular shapes. Going along with the design of the bottom subdivision, the second section also contains three equally arranged symmetrical and rectangular windows of the same width and height. The third subdivision is a triangular pediment and caps off the façade. A single window is centered in the middle and divides the rest of the space into three smaller triangles. The triangular pediment faces the street analogous to a temple pediment.
Another Greek Revival characteristic represented by this house is a sense of clarity and simplicity in structure and design. The tetra style Doric columns, the most preferred order by architects, are plain and fluted with a basic capital and no base. The corner pilasters on the edges of the house also embody the classical appearance of the Doric design. This order exhibits perfect proportions, strength, beauty and practicality as noted in contemporary design books such as those of Minard Lafever (BEAUTIES, plate 41; BUILDERS GUIDE, plate 44). Reflecting on the ideology of the Mechanics Association, these qualities were encouraged and embraced by members of the industrial community. The open sided portico offers easy access inside the house. Simple proportions give a sense of dignity to the interior design. It is both simple in elegance and extensive in moldings. The ceilings are high in comparison to most colonial houses adding a sense of sophistication to the Greek Revival period.

Tilley Raymond's house also has the typical bold but simple paneling and frameworks of the Greek style. The top pediment which, traditionally is decorated, here is plain except for one single window. Elements of the Greek Revival design are also continued on the sides of the house with pediment-topped windows, wide moldings and decorative bands of wood.

Henry Goulding House by Patrick McCurdy

Another Greek Revival residence, 4 Dix Street, was built for Henry Goulding, a founder of the Worcester Mechanics Association, and a prominent Worcester industrialist. The Goulding house immediately impresses the viewer by its elegant long rectangular shape. Like the temples of ancient Greece, the house projects a simple beauty in a two and half story, rectangular structure. The pilasters on the corners of the building add a strong accent to the shape of the building, again emphasizing its Greek temple roots. Although less grand, the Goulding house has the traditional granite foundation that is found in ancient Greek architecture as well as in larger Greek Revival buildings. The three bays that are set on the front portico, complete with large long rectangular windows, create a sense of openness that is inherent with ancient Greek architecture. The windows are similar to the window designs seen on Plate 15 of Minard Lafever's The Beauties of Modern Architecture. The large windows are what help set the building apart from other architectural styles. Because of the high ceilings the opportunity to be able to install such large windows is an architectural advantage. The windows do not only brighten the interior of the house but also help create a sense that it is more open. The bays are created using four columns across the front of the portico.

Perhaps the most definitive aspect of Greek Revival architecture is the use of columns. As shown on Plate 46 of Lafever's The Modern Builder's Guide, the columns are clearly of the Ionic order. The columns exalt the power while at the same time the ornamentation of the Ionic order adds elegance. The columns emphasize the high ceiling within the building and add grandeur to the structure. Literally capping off the building is a large pediment. An image is created as if the pediment is actually resting upon the four pilasters. Although structurally unnecessary the pilasters help allude to the ancient Greek temples. Despite the stylistic Greek ornaments that add to its architectural theme, it is the building's image of beauty and power in its clean rectangular shape that is striking.

The social prominence of the owner - and changing taste - can be seen in the history of this building. Goulding was a part owner of Washburn and Goddard, a woolen mill. Not only did Goulding own woolen mills, but he was also president of the Mechanics National Bank. Being such a prominent figure and such a successful businessman, Goulding was looked up to by the community. Therefore he lived in the prominent neighborhoods and lived in "modern" style residences. He resided in his Greek Revival home for a very few years. He moved the house to its current location on Dix Street in 1849, and in its place on Harvard Street constructed large Italianate style building where he lived until his death in 1866.

Bibliography


Salisbury Mansion has gone through many changes over the years, from a rooming-house to a gentlemanâ€™s club. Salisbury Mansion was originally located at Lincoln Square. Through tireless research and documentation, Salisbury Mansion has been restored to the 1830s to reflect the time when it was home to the widow Elizabeth Tuckerman Salisbury. It is considered one of the best documented historic house museums in New England. Closed captioning no. Identifier SALISBURYMANSONPROMO. Hâªbergemens dans Salisbury. Hâªbergemens dans Salisbury. House is situated in a private location in the Berkshireâ€™s with plenty to do. Hiking, biking, museums, theater, Tanglewood, antique shops, and a wide variety of restaurants!Â Her house is spotlessly clean and stylishly decorated. The beds were very comfortable and there was plenty of room for the eight(8) of us. Krysia was very prompt to answer any of our questions during our stay. Salisbury House remained home for the Weeks familyâ€”Carl, Edith and their four sonsâ€”until 1954. At that time, Salisbury House was purchased by the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), and served as their headquarters until
1998. During the late 1990s, the house, grounds, and collections were purchased by the Salisbury House Foundation. The property was then converted into a historic house museum. Thousands have passed through the house’s great arched doors and come away awed by its architecture and extensive collections of artwork, rare books, and artifacts. Learn More. Our blog explores a