the Bracketed style in several of his books beginning with *Cottage Residences* (1842). Although he regards Italianate as somewhat inferior to Gothic, Downing nevertheless praises it for its interesting appearance, freedom in planning, and refined cultural ties.

■ *Renaissance Revival*. In the early 1830s, Sir Charles Barry initiates the Renaissance Revival (or Palazzo Style) in England by turning to Italian Renaissance urban palaces for inspiration (Fig. 32-2). By the end of the decade, High-Renaissance-style palaces define gentlemen's clubs, a few country houses, banks, and commercial buildings across England. The style spreads to North America during the 1840s where it soon is used mainly for public buildings and commercial structures (Fig. 32-3).

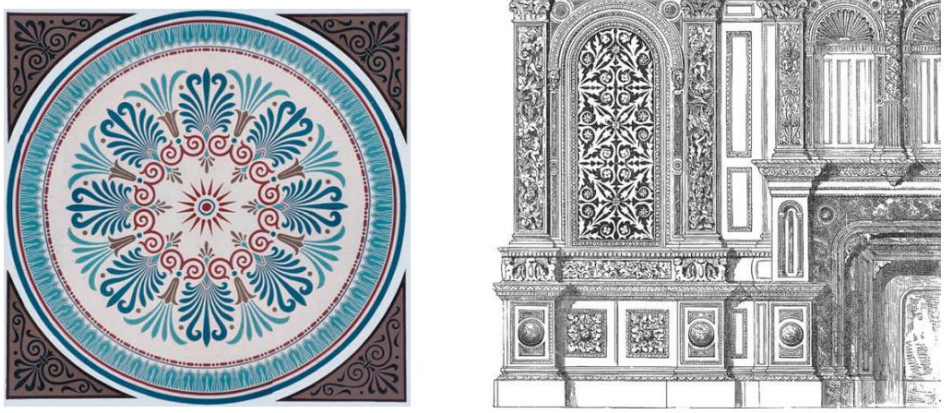
CONCEPTS

Although both are derived from Italian models and develop during the same period, Italianate or the Italian Villa style is asymmetrical and picturesque, whereas Renaissance Revival is classical, symmetrical, and refined. Both have associations of Italian culture and sophistication in design. Italianate, which draws from vernacular Italian farmhouses, villas, and churches, is a picturesque style that becomes an alternative to Gothic Revival. It offers asymmetry and freedom in design without the religious or moral overtones associated with Gothic. Renaissance Revival architects are not primarily interested in the order, harmony, and proportions of Italian Renaissance examples. Instead, they view them as expressions of Italian refinement and culture as well as wealth and luxury. Renaissance Italy further appeals because it is nearer to their homelands and time than the remote, somewhat obscure, classical antiquity.

Unlike architecture, Renaissance Revival interiors and furniture draw upon Italian, French, German, English, and Northern European Renaissance and Mannerist forms and motifs. But, like architecture, they express refinement and culture. Designers adapt and reuse forms and motifs, not to replicate past glories, but to create something new and uniquely of the period.

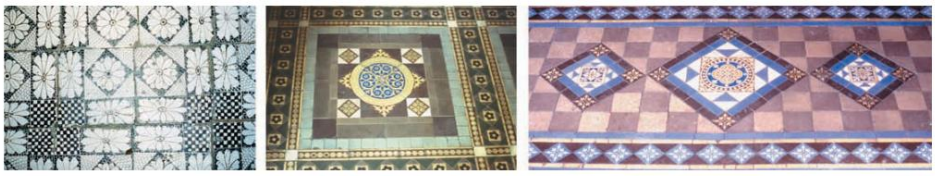
MOTIFS

■ *Motifs*. Classical motifs in Italianate and Renaissance Revival architecture and interiors include pediments, stringcourses, quoins, hood moldings, brackets, columns on porches or verandas, swags, acanthus, arabesques, and round arches (Fig. 32-1, 32-2, 32-3, 32-4, 32-5, 32-6, 32-7, 32-8, 32-9). Additional motifs (Fig. 32-11, 32-12, 32-13, 32-17, 32-18, 32-20) for interiors and furniture are fruit, game, animals, masks, strapwork, Greek key, sphinxes, lotus blossoms, palmettes, urns, roundels, cabochons, pendants, and applied bosses or lozenges.



(a) (b)

▲ **32–1.** Motif and Architectural Detail: (a) Ceiling detail, 1892, from *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*; George A. Audsley, and (b) bookcase and chimneypiece detail, Great Exhibition, Crystal Palace, 1851; London, England; T. A. Macquoid.



▲ **32–10.** Floor tiles, 1860s–1880s; Virginia.

DESIGN SPOTLIGHT

Interior: Like the other rooms in the Wilcox mansion, the Renaissance Revival parlor is designed *en suite*; that is, the mantel, overmantel mirror, window cornices, light fixtures, and furniture match. The white marble mantel has paneled columns, acanthus leaf carving, rosettes, and a cartouche in the center. The mirror above the mantel and the door surrounds have similar details. The carpet is typical of the period in color, and its scrolling geometric motifs recall Renaissance arabesques. It is a reproduction of a carpet from Paris found in a New York City house. Window treatments of boldly shaped lambrequins hang from ebonized cornices that match the mirror. The painted ceiling has flowers and rosettes. Made by John Jelliff and Co. of Newark, New Jersey, the Renaissance Revival parlor suite features similar details to the room's architecture. It is made of rosewood with mother-of-pearl medallions.

The exterior of the house is Second Empire and displays the style's characteristics of mansard roofs on the house and its tower, brackets supporting the roof, dormers, and round-arched windows with hood moldings. An 1870 newspaper description of the house called the style Franco-Italian and noted that the architect was Augustus Truesdell.

▲ **32–11.** Renaissance Revival parlor, Jedediah Wilcox House, 1870; Meriden, Connecticut [Gift of Josephine M. Fiala, 1968 (68.133.4, 7); American Wing Restricted Building Fund, 1968 (68.143.5); Purchase, Annonymous Gift, 1968 (68.207ab). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. NY, U.S.A. Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, NY].

▲ **32–12.** Dining room, James Whitcomb Riley House, 1872; Indianapolis, Indiana. Renaissance Revival.

■ *Walls*. Common wall treatments include architectural details, paneling, paint, and wallpaper (Fig. 32-2, 32-9, 32-11, 32-12, 32-13). Pilasters, engaged columns, brackets, niches, and other architectural details define important rooms in public and private buildings. Plaster or *papier-mâché* strapwork, roundels, cabochons, bosses, and other Renaissance or Mannerist details may embellish paneling or walls. Panels may have Renaissance motifs carved or painted in the center or may be composed of contrasting colors of wood. Deep cornices exhibit brackets, leaves, foliage, or flowers.

■ *Wallpapers*. Wallpapers with Renaissance motifs may cover walls, although there are fewer Renaissance patterns than other styles. Patterns include textile imitations, flock designs, fresco styles that imitate moldings, and gilded elements and motifs. Leather in embossed and gilded designs often is used in dining rooms because it is thought that leather will not absorb smells.

■ *Chimneypieces*. Mantels are commonly of slate or marble, with white the preferred color (Fig. 32-11). Other colors are black, gray, rose, brown, dark green, or two colors such as black and white. Most mantels are rectangular with an arched opening and a shaped shelf above. They may have carved cartouches, tablets, brackets, caryatids, or columns. Heavy or decorative moldings surround the opening, and a centered keystone carved with shells, fruit, acanthus leaves, or scrolls accents it. Moldings and carvings may decorate the spaces over the opening and the sides. Plainer mantels are used in less important rooms.

▲ **32–13.** Mrs. A. T. Stewart's bedroom, c. 1870s–1880s; published in *Artistic Houses*, 1883. Renaissance Revival.

▲ **32–14.** Lighting: Gasoliers from Rhode Island and Indiana.

■ *Staircases*. Staircases may be straight, rectangular, or curved with a mahogany handrail. The large and prominent newel post may be polygonal or baluster shaped. In wealthy homes, staircases may have niches for sculpture. Some staircases are lit from above with skylights.

■ *Window Treatments*. Deep lambrequins or pelmets hanging from gilded cornices replace the complicated swagged drapery of earlier (Fig. 32-11, 32-13). Lambrequins often have complex shapes and fringe trim. Beneath them hang a pair of fabric panels and muslin or lace curtains next to the glass. Curtains may be tied or looped back over cloak or curtain pins during the day. Plain panels hanging from rings on rods are a simpler treatment for less important rooms. Heavy plain or patterned fabrics are usual for lambrequins and curtains. Also common are roller blinds in linen or brown Holland cloth painted with scenes or designs.

■ *Doors*. Doors may be arched or rectangular and are generally paneled in dark mahogany, walnut, or rosewood (Fig. 32-2, 32-12, 32-13). Sliding or pocket doors in double parlors may have frosted or etched glass panels. Robust moldings, pediments, or entablatures surmount doors in public buildings or important rooms in homes. Doorknobs may be white or decorated porcelain, glass, silver plate, or solid silver.

■ *Ceilings*. Flat ceilings may be plain with a plaster rosette, have beams, or be compartmentalized with strapwork, pendants, bosses, or other patterns inside them. Some ceilings are painted to imitate compartments (Fig. 32-9, 32-11). Gas fixtures hang from plaster rosettes.

■ *Textiles*. In contrast to the prototypes, Renaissance Revival rooms usually have a great many textiles. Carpets or rugs cover floors. Walls may have leather or textile coverings, and windows are elaborately draped. A wide variety of textile types and patterns are common. There are few distinctive Renaissance Revival textiles, but some resemble earlier Renaissance designs, such as damasks with large repeats in undulating patterns with naturalistic flowers and leaves. In the 1850s, textiles emulate the arabesques and grotesques of Ancient Rome and the Renaissance. Upholstery fabrics include damasks, moreen, horsehair, leather, and velvet, plain and patterned. Bed drapery may be of damask, velvet, satin, or moreen.

■ *Lighting*. As in other styles of the period, candles, oil lamps, and gas fixtures illuminate both Renaissance Revival and Italianate interiors (Fig. 32-9, 32-11, 32-13, 32-14). Unlike Gothic Revival or Rococo Revival, only a few feature distinctive Renaissance forms or motifs. Some forms copy ancient Greek vases or have classical motifs.

■ *Later Interpretations*. In the late 19th century, Renaissance architectural details, paneling, and other elements again define interiors in wealthy homes. These versions are more correct because the Renaissance is better understood than in the previous revival styles. Wealthy Americans import entire Renaissance rooms or specific architectural details from Europe and install them in their homes. In the 20th century, there is less direct importation of rooms and more reinvention of stylistic features. As an example, various hotels incorporate designs based on Renaissance Revival influences (Fig. 32-15).

▲ **32–15.** Later Interpretation: Grand Hall, Venetian Hotel, 1999; Las Vegas, Nevada. Hotel by Wimberly, Allison, Tong, & Gao with interiors by Trisha Wilson, Wilson Associates, Texas. Modern Historicism.

CHAPTER 32

Italianate, Renaissance Revival

1830s–1870s

Italy provides the models for Italianate and Renaissance Revival architecture, interiors, and furnishings beginning in the 1830s. Various titles describe the architectural style, including Italianate, Renaissance Revival, Palazzo Style, and Italian Villa Style. Public and private buildings rely on two Italian building types: formal, classical urban palaces; and picturesque, asymmetrical farmhouses or other vernacular structures. Renaissance Revival interiors and furniture are highly eclectic, mixing characteristics from various periods and countries in addition to Renaissance Italy. The style goes by many names, such as Henri IV, Louis XIII, François I, Tudor, and Free Renaissance, the latter in Great Britain.

> *There is also far greater latitude and variety in the ornaments of the different modes of the Italian architecture . . . than in the purely classical style. It addresses itself more to the feelings and the senses, and less to the reason or judgment, than the Grecian style, and it is also capable of a variety of expression quite unknown to the architecture of the five orders. Hence, we think it far better suited to symbolize the variety of refined culture and accomplishment which belongs to modern civilization than almost any other style.*
>
> —Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL

Italianate and Renaissance Revival of the 19th century look back to the Renaissance, the rebirth of interest in classical antiquity that appears first in Italian literature, and then in culture and art in the 14th century.

■ *Italianate or Italian Villa Style.* In the early 19th century, the Picturesque Movement inspires English designers to explore alternatives to classicism, Gothic, and other styles of the Middle Ages. Some turn to Italian vernacular farmhouses whose asymmetry, irregularity, and rambling forms are appealing and picturesque, yet Italian. By the 1830s, Italian Villa–style country houses and train stations become more common in England. In the 1840s, the style is given royal approval by Osbourne House, a seaside home for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert enlarged in the style beginning in 1845.

Publications spread the Italianate style to North America, with the first examples appearing in the late 1830s (Fig. 32-6, 32-7, 32-8, 32-9). During the early 1840s, its use increases after writer and design critic Andrew Jackson Downing (Fig. 32-7) begins to advocate the style as a rural alternative to classical and Gothic. He publishes examples by Alexander Jackson Davis of what he calls Italian Villas, Italianate, Tuscan Villas, Lombard Style, or