

GOTHIC REVIVAL

The Gothic Revival emerged in the United States in the early 1840s as a reaction to the symmetry, balance, and regularity associated with the classical styles of architecture so popular in this country at that time. The Gothic Revival actually emerged in England in 1879 with Sir Horace Walpole's remodeling of his house, Strawberry Hill in a Medieval style. Over the next century architects and landscape architects promoted the picturesque style of architecture in manuals, books and other treatises. In America the Picturesque style was promulgated by architect Alexander Jackson Davis, and landscape architect, Andrew Jackson Downing. The first documented example of the Gothic Revival in domestic architecture in America was designed by A.J. Davis in 1832. by Davis, and The Architecture of Country Houses by Downing were illustrated publications replete with country Gothic houses referred by the authors as Gothic cottages. Readily available pattern books and catalogs further popularized the style.

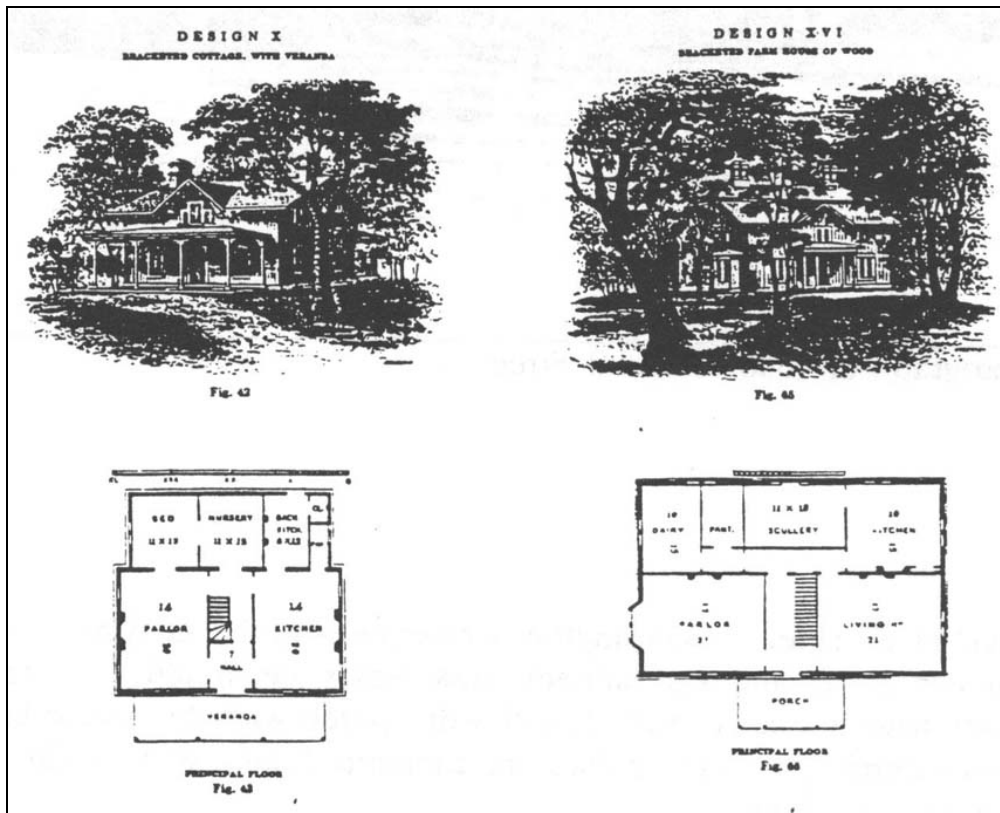


Figure 31: Illustration from The Architecture of Country Houses. pp. 121, 157.



Figure 32: Photograph of 10409 Fawcett Street.

The Gothic Revival as executed in Kensington is characterized by its symmetrical facade compositions with side gables and a prominent cross gables, decorated with vergeboards. Typically the houses have a 1-story entry or full-width porch with decorative brackets, spindles or posts. Windows extending into the gables are common details, with Gothic shapes such as arched, lancet or round windows.

The House at 10409 Fawcett Street is a good example of the Gothic Revival in the Kensington Historic District. Constructed in 1896, this house has a steeply pitched cross gable roof and decoratively carved vergeboard.