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Quincy, Illinois: The Value of the Past in the Present

As people walk up and down the streets of Quincy, Illinois, they can see the remnants of the past in the buildings that surround them. The residential areas of Quincy provide examples of every style of Victorian home, from Queen Anne to Italianate Revival styles. In addition to the residential areas, downtown Quincy retains many buildings from the mid to late nineteenth century. Most of the buildings do not serve the same purposes they once did. For example, the building at 3rd and Hampshire that is now home to the restaurant Tiramisu used to belong to a grocery company. There are buildings, though, that maintain the same type of business as they did in the 1800s. For instance, the Fletcher's Tremont Hotel located at 6th and Hampshire in the Victorian Era is now the Hotel Quincy.¹ The Victorian past can be seen in other buildings in other cities like Port Townsend, Washington, but what sets Quincy apart is its dedication to maintaining as much of its original architecture as possible while keeping up with modern times. In both the residential and commercial sectors, Quincy stands as a paradigm of how a community's values are reflected in its architecture.

This paper will examine how Quincy, Illinois, both followed and resisted the Victorian trends in architecture. The information gathered for this paper comes from city pamphlets, comparative photographs, and histories of both the general architecture and the city of Quincy itself. The topic covered is important because historic buildings need to be studied just as much

¹ "Quincy Illustrated: A Sketch of Early Quincy and a Description of the Quincy of To-Day Containing Over Two Hundred Illustrations, and a Careful Review of Quincy's Advantages as a Commercial and Manufacturing Center," *The Quincy Daily Journal* 1889.

as do historic writings and objects. Lessons about a place and its people are written in the built environment of an area. People today need to look around at what legacy is inscribed in the skyscrapers and cookie cutter homes that present generations are leaving behind. Instead of building cities that the next generation can easily throw away, people need to take care to leave a lasting legacy of which their progeny will be proud. Quincy, as a case study, provides a good example of how a community's values are reflected in its preserved buildings.

The Victorian Era occurred approximately during the reign of Queen Victoria in England from 1837 until 1901. The term refers not only to the reign of the Queen, but also to the ideas, inventions, and people that developed during her time. Great Britain and the United States shared a common language, politics, economics, and culture; therefore, the attitudes of the Victorian age spread across the ocean to America. Because of its geographical distance from the center of Victoria's reign, Victorian America dates from after the American Civil War in 1865 until the end of World War I in 1918.² Victorian America saw an emerging self-confident society, an ascendant middle class, an expanding worldview, increased bureaucratization, a consumer revolution, new communication and transportation technologies, and a growing consensus that power should be achieved through education and merit rather than through inherited wealth. The Victorian Era set the stage for many changes in society, both European and American.³

Just as the societies went through a revolution, so too did the world of architecture.

Before the Victorian age, the style of Beaux-Arts architecture served as the dominant

² Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life 1876-1915* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 12-14.

³ *Ibid.*, 20-32.

architecture. Beaux-Arts architecture is defined as an amalgamation of several different styles, resulting in an opulent and busy style. Beaux-Arts architecture mirrors the tumult of ideas people struggled with during the nineteenth century (1800-1900), such as new communist governments briefly taking over countries during the revolutions of 1848. The revolutionary writings of Karl Marx were published (1848-83), as well as the scientific discoveries of Thomas Edison, and the publication on evolution set out by Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Similarly the turn of the twentieth century saw new technologies such as the car and the airplane and new cultural standards such as women's suffrage being put into place. The Beaux-Arts movement gained a foothold in America from 1885-1920 but only in grand places like the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago.

After the Beaux-Arts movement had some impact on American architecture, many people wished for a simpler style that better reflected they could use in their own lives. The style that historians now refer to as the Victorian style of architecture reigned from 1837-1901; the Victorian styles were more popular in smaller displays of architecture because they were more affordable and more functional for people. While not as simple or geometric as later styles like Art Deco (1918-1930), the Victorian style definitely emphasized simplicity; even though it included artistic elements they were nowhere near as opulent as the Beaux-Arts style. People clearly wished to maintain simpler lines of design as evidenced by the small number of Edwardian, or Neo-Baroque, architecture which followed Victorian architecture. Edwardian buildings attempted to return to the complexity of Baroque architecture, exemplified by drama and grandeur.⁴ Quincy's pride in the economic and social advancements it made during the

⁴Baroque architecture emphasizes the difference between light and dark, opulent use of ornaments. The

Victorian period is evident because of the Victorian buildings that abound in the city, both residential and commercial.⁵

The Victorian Era could be defined as a time of many thematic contradictions. Various social movements concerned with improving public morals co-existed with a class system exacerbated by industrial capitalism, which resulted in harsh living conditions for many. The apparent contradiction between the widespread cultivation of an outward appearance of dignity and restraint and the appearance of social deviances that included prostitution and child labor was occurring at the same time. Various social reform movements and high principles arose from attempts to improve the harsh conditions in newly founded cities with little municipal government. The upper classes continued to control the social trends, but the newer and cheaper means of production meant that the middle class had a new way to imitate the higher classes.⁶

Victorian ideals placed an emphasis on the home as a safe place away from the cutthroat world of business. The trend became to simplify the styles of homes and return to styles that promoted comfort as well as promoting humanistic ideals of the Renaissance and even Greek and Roman civilizations. Thus the Victorian Age saw many revival styles arise, such as Italianate, Romanesque, and Renaissance Revivals.⁷ No matter what style, Victorian architecture contains unifying elements that tie it to its age. Most Victorian architecture includes sloping roofs,

external façade is often characterized by a dramatic central projection. The interior is often no more than a blank space for painting and sculpture; David Watkin, *A History of Western Architecture* (London: Hali Publications, 2005), 115-122.

⁵ Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 10-20.

⁶ Stanley Kutler, *Dictionary of American History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003), 346-352.

⁷ Italianate revival styles feature emphatic eaves supported by corbels, low-pitched roofs barely discernible from the ground, or flat roofs with a wide projection; Romanesque revival architecture is known by its massive quality, its thick walls, round arches, sturdy piers, groin vaults, large towers and decorative arcading, and geometric shapes; Renaissance revival encompasses styles from the 15th century excluding the Greek and Roman influences, like Baroque and Mannerist movements; David Watkin, *A History of Western Architecture* (London: Hali Publications, 2005), 132-45.

wraparound porches, and three stories height with an octagonal or rounded tower. The houses also reflect the Victorian sense of propriety and privacy; therefore, the houses are full of small rooms with each serving a specific purpose. Many of the houses have front rooms, such as parlors and dining rooms, in which to entertain friends and neighbors. Either the back of the house or the highest floors contained servants quarters and rooms for the family.⁸

Residential architecture in Quincy paralleled the national trend, but the city's commercial architecture differed from the nation's commercial buildings. In the arena of commercial buildings, however, the nation took a different tack throughout the nineteenth century. In the first years of the United States, the leaders were still trying to get the newly created country under control. In an attempt to instill order and a sense of real independence from the English, American politicians sought an architecture that set them apart. Thus, architects designed public buildings based on the classical patterns of Greece and Rome, collectively known as Neo-Classical. Leaders wished to show that the young republic could be a new Athens; a center for democracy and independence. The interest in Roman architectural components appealed to political leaders who wished to invoke the ideals of the Roman Republic, like individualism, justice, and national pride. Thomas Jefferson played a large role in instituting the Federal style of architecture, which borrowed many elements from the Neo-Classical movement. He designed the University of Virginia, as well as his home Monticello, in that style. The new buildings reinstated the use of domes, pillars, and pediments, classical architectural elements consisting of the triangular section found above the horizontal structure, typically supported by columns like

⁸Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 23-30.

the Parthenon. The materials used to build the structures include marble and limestone, the same materials that were used to construct many of the ancient buildings.⁹

Starting around 1840 Romanticism swept America and the Neo-Gothic style became the dominant form in American public architecture under the influence of Andrew Jackson Downing, a prominent East Coast architect. He described his return to medieval forms as a reaction to classicism. Instead of the pillars and domes of classicism, buildings once again sported severe slopes, chimneys, and gargoyles. The Neo-Gothic style can be seen at certain universities like Yale and Harvard, as well as many churches such as the Trinity Church in New York.¹⁰

In Quincy, the Neo-Gothic style did not take hold because Victorian commercial architecture adopted the same components of its residential counterparts. Shops adopted a similar approach to appear more inviting and make customers feel more welcome. Companies implemented large front windows at street level as well as sash windows on the upper floors, which let in more light and created more aesthetically pleasing options for architects. Quincy shopkeepers did not concern themselves with following the larger trends of Neo-classicism and Neo-Gothicism. Architects in Quincy stuck with the Victorian plans, even when it came to public buildings. For instance, the Chicago architectural firm of Patton and Fisher built what is now the Gardner Museum of Architecture and Design in 1888 in the style of Romanesque Revival. Even though at the time, Chicago itself had several buildings in the Neo-Gothic style.¹¹

⁹ David Watkin, *A History of Western Architecture* (London: Hali Publications, 2005), 78-110.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 112-116.

¹¹ Carl Landrum, *Historical Sketches of Quincy Illinois* (Quincy: Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County, 1986), 23-4.

Ornate constructions did not reflect the simple, home spun ideals the community held. The feeling of a tight knit population with a dedication to family, education, religion, and public works made itself evident even to people from out of town.

Like many other small nineteenth century towns across the nation, Quincy saw a boom in population and productivity with the arrival of the Industrial Revolution in the late 1860s. Historical records make it clear that many more people came to Quincy in the late 1880s and started businesses, which also increased the number of Victorian homes in neighborhoods. The abundance of late nineteenth century buildings still standing testify that much of Quincy's economic and social growth came about during that time. Quincy itself actually became an important manufacturing hub that allowed the city to participate in national and international trade because of its location on the Mississippi River. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Quincy had established itself as a prominent and vital industrial and manufacturing center along the Mississippi River capable of providing almost all of the materials needed to construct and decorate the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Eastlake, Queen Anne, Colonial, and Prairie School homes, which became popular amongst its residents. Any other specific or desired materials became easily obtainable from larger cities by rail or river transport or from increasingly popular mail-order catalogues like Sears.¹²

Industrialization meant that new methods of producing materials and the kinds of objects available to the public changed the way people built and lived in their homes, an integral component to the rise of Victorian culture and architecture. The mass production of iron and steel products allowed nails and screws to be produced cheaply enough to make the use of wood

¹² Joseph T. Homes, *Quincy in 1857: or Facts and Figures Exhibiting its Advantages, Resources, Manufactures and Commerce* (Quincy: Herald Book & Job Printing: 1857), n.p.

an affordable option to many more people and on a greater scale. Without the mass production of steel and iron the middle class would not have been able to build the same type of homes, though smaller, as the upper class. The technology used to harvest trees and make them available for use in construction also witnessed advances. One can see the use of wood in detailing, flooring, and decoration. The numerous lumber mills located along the river provided not only standard lumber needed for homes, but also had the capabilities to mill the desired woods needed to create the elaborate facades and interiors of Victorian homes.¹³

Likewise, leading factories within Quincy catering to local contractors included metal roof works; galvanized iron ornamental works; sash, door, and window factories; and extensive brick, lime and marble works. With miles of gas and water mains, and electric lighting brought about by advanced industry, the city of Quincy had the capability of providing modern homes for its growing middle class population. Furthermore, the production of luxury goods such as glass figurines made it possible for homeowners to adorn their houses with various objects. People in the upper classes competed with each other to accumulate the most decorations, while the ascendant middle class began emulating the upper class. New types of furniture, wallpaper, rugs, and collectibles made their way into every Victorian household in America. What the homes lacked for opulence on the outside, they made up for on the inside.¹⁴

Many historians have written about the Victorian Era both in America and abroad, and local histories of Quincy survive thanks to the work of various organizations. While people might admire the architecture of Quincy for its variety, the majority of literature covers only

¹³ Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1900), 10-12.

¹⁴ John Maass, *The Victorian Home in America* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1972), 14-44.

Maine Street, Quincy Museum, and the Villa Katherine. Authors focus on these three areas because they are types of architectural anomalies that are rarely seen in small towns like Quincy. Maine Street contains the most abundant examples of grand Victorian architecture in the city. The Quincy Museum is an impressive stone building, renovated and turned into a house museum. The Villa Katherine stands alone as a monument to Moorish architecture, essentially the only example of such architecture in the entire city.¹⁵ These areas are also covered because they represent the upper classes instead of the rising middle class of small business owners, salesmen, contractors, and professions.

Recent literature has been more inclusive, but the lack of information available means there is room for improvement. Contemporary chroniclers of the Victorian home, such as Clarence Cook and Edith Wharton, were concerned with instructing the public on how to properly decorate and run the home. Clarence Cook used his expertise as an art critic to describe how people should furnish their Victorian homes, "I do not like to see several rugs in a room, but prefer one large one...."¹⁶ Edith Wharton, best known for her novels published in the first half of the twentieth century, offered decorating advice from the perspective of the wealthy East Coast Victorians. In the twentieth century house historians such as John Maass became consumed with detailing the elaborate interiors and exteriors of Victorian homes. Other trained historians such as Harvey Green began an attempt to analyze the Victorian home, but only fully examined the life of the woman within this setting.¹⁷

¹⁵ David F. Wilcox, *Quincy and Adams County: History and Representative Men* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1919), 20-28.

¹⁶ Clarence Cook, *The House Beautiful: Essays on Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks* (New York: Dover Publications, 1881), 51.

¹⁷ Harvey Green, *Light of the Home: An Intimate View of Women in Victorian America* (New York:

As a discipline, architectural history became established in the early nineteenth century. The nineteenth century also saw the emergence of the professionalization of architecture with the individual architect, the amalgamation of whose conscious intentions would become the subject of artistic movements. In these aspects, architectural history is a sub-discipline of art history that focuses on the historical evolution of principles and styles in the design of buildings and cities. Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), a famous English architect and design theorist, is seen as one of the first commentators on how society influences architecture. He advocated the Gothic style as the true Christian style, the antithesis of ‘pagan’ Classicism.¹⁸

Another early architectural commentator was art and social critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) supported gothic architecture like Pugin as the ideal style. Ruskin, better known as an art and social critic, espoused the need for historic conservation. He did not encourage restoration because he felt it impossible to truly restore great architecture.¹⁹ In the mid 1970s, the Quincy Preserves organization began. Quincy Preserves’ goal is in its name; it seeks to preserve and restore historic architectural buildings in the Quincy area. The organization also works to save documents and photographs that record the changes Quincy has undergone. Quincy Preserves has been instrumental in not only preserving its residential buildings but also helping Quincy save its commercial architecture through the Façade Program, which helps owners of commercial buildings offset the costs of restoring period architectural designs.²⁰

Both the house historians and purely architectural works fall short in covering small town

Pantheon, 1983).

¹⁸ Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 5-12.

¹⁹ John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, 1880), 186.

²⁰ The Quincy Society of Fine Arts, *Community Rediscovery '76* (Quincy, 1976).

architecture and the need for preservation. Quincy Preserves makes a commendable attempt, but it is one organization that recently had its budget cut. People must recognize that their built environment is not simply in place to keep them out of the weather, but it is a testament to the culture and the ideas valued by a society.

Even though the amount of literature might not satisfactorily explain why communities build certain buildings, the architectural evidence cannot be denied. Quincy underwent a population boom in the mid-nineteenth century, thanks mostly to German-American migrants from New England and immigrants from the German states in the 1840s.²¹ Industrialization gave rise to middle class citizens, which raised the need for more buildings. Of course, as Victorian Americans the people of Quincy wanted the newest architecture available at the time, but they also wanted the style that would most represent who they were as a society. The Victorian type of architecture best suited the people of Quincy because of its emphasis on the home and the family. The tree-lined streets of Quincy lent themselves perfectly to the inviting architecture of the Victorian Era. The rise of industry and individual German craftsmanship allowed the wooden frames of Victorian homes to sprout up all over the city. The Victorian sense of civic duty led to the completion of Quincy's extensive park system as well.²²

Other areas of America adopted the Victorian architecture too, but each region placed its own fingerprint on the basic blueprints. For example, the homes built in San Francisco were painted bright colors and came to be known as the Painted Ladies. The various artists of San

²¹Quincy Plan Commission, *A Preliminary Report Upon Population Growth Quincy, Illinois* (St. Louis: Harland Bartholomew and Associates City Planners, 1944), n.p.

²² Carl Landrum, *Historical Sketches Of Quincy Illinois* (Quincy: The Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County, 1986), 1-10.

Francisco and the boisterous characteristics of the people living in some of the neighborhoods led to the painting of the houses using vibrant colors.²³ Quincy allowed the Victorian ideals and architecture to seep into every aspect of its city. So not only did architects build Victorian houses, but they also built public and commercial buildings in the tradition of the Victorian style. The sheer number of nineteenth century buildings that survived into the twenty-first century also speaks to Quincy's dedication to preserving the ideals of the age. Quincy's changing architecture shows how a city's values are reflected in the buildings they preserved and those they let decay.

Like other nineteenth century cities west of the Appalachians, Quincy began as a small frontier settlement. In 1812 the federal government set aside a considerable portion of land in the present day states of Illinois, Arkansas, and Michigan, as military tracts. The government intended to use this territory as land grants for those individuals who had volunteered their service in the War of 1812. Out of the one hundred ninety-eight miles of land extending from the junction of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, including all the land in between, the city of Quincy came into existence.²⁴

In 1821 John Wood, an adventurous New Yorker, purchased the military land grant from a man by the name of Flynn and settled in Quincy. In 1825, the town became organized as the seat of Adams County, and by 1834 Quincy became incorporated as a self-governing town in the state of Illinois.²⁵ From the building of the first log cabin until 1834, Quincy's growth remained

²³ Joan M. Brierton, *Victorian: American Restoration Style* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith Publisher, 1999), 54-6.

²⁴ Gen. John Tillson, *History of the City of Quincy, Illinois* (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1900), 5-15.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 30-46.

slow and unpromising. Although located on the Mississippi River and abundant in natural resources, the settlement of the area took time. With a small number of citizens, the production of goods only existed for the subsistence of the town, and the handful of early businesses in the 1820s dealt mainly in dry goods and staple foodstuffs, which could not be produced at home. By 1840 the once small settlement, which seemed constantly on the brink of failure, became chartered as a city. Early business endeavors, outside of dealers in dry goods and foodstuffs, included a saddler, a tailor, a hatter, a tavern, a pottery works, a blacksmith, a wagon shop and a shoemaker. Many other early industries, related directly to Quincy's natural resources, included flour and lumber mills, ice cutting, and the transportation of goods along the Mississippi River.²⁶

From mid-1830 through the 1860s industry in the city grew substantially as the increasing population provided a sizeable work force, most of who could now rely on the railroad for supplies and transportation. Located on the Mississippi River between St. Louis and St. Paul, its levee and harbor became readily prepared to function as a primary docking and trading point. Well removed from other large cities, Quincy's position to command trade of large parts of Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa became obvious. Slowly, but steadily, as industry and population grew during the first half of the nineteenth century, Quincy moved to an enviable position among the important cities of the West, such as St. Louis.²⁷

While Quincy saw considerable growth of industry during the first half of the nineteenth century, in the latter half of the 1800s the city began to grow as a manufacturing center and a place of wealth and residence for many individuals influenced by the cultural mores of Victorianism. Wealthy men from eastern states looking for a place to establish industries built

²⁶ Ibid., 46-48.

²⁷ Ibid., 48-63.

homes and businesses within Quincy and brought with them their East Coast Victorian values. With more workers entering the city and men endeavoring to begin their own businesses, the middle class grew. The desire of these families to obtain what had previously only been available to the wealthy, coupled with a growing consumer culture, and popular literature promoting Victorian values, and the example set by industrial leaders cultivated the desire to belong to the Victorian upper and middle classes in Quincy's citizens.²⁸

The population boom and the rise of the middle class led to expansion of the residential areas, leading to the expansion of Victorian architecture. Wealthy business owners of Quincy separated themselves from the lower classes by erecting homes in areas of the city where many citizens could not afford land. The segregation of classes was nothing new or unusual; however, Victorianism brought with it organizational steps to do so. Neighborhoods promoting the concentration of similar social classes and wealth began to spring up in the late 1880s and 1890s. For instance, purchasing land to construct a home in Park Place, an exclusive neighborhood located less than a mile from downtown, came with restrictions. Developers of the area required occupants to build two-story houses of brick or stone and spend at least \$3,000 on the construction.²⁹

Quincy's manufacturers began to ship items such as stoves, elevators, and carriages abroad and gained an international name for the city. Nationally, these same items could be found in various cities and regions throughout the country, and these items along with Quincy's breweries, brick and block companies, farm implements, pickles, limestone and limestone products gained Quincy a reputation of national excellence. Hundreds of varying industries are

²⁸Rev. Landry Genosky, *People's History of Quincy and Adams County and Adams County, Illinois: A Sesquicentennial History* (Quincy: Jost & Kiefer Printing, n.d.), 1-15, 25-28, 30-40.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 46-49.

listed in the pages of the Quincy city directories between the years 1870 and 1910, along with advertisements in newspapers, trade pamphlets, magazines, and souvenir books of the time.³⁰

With many diverse kinds of businesses located within the city limits, Quincy became an economic hub of activity and industrial leaders began to build beautiful homes displaying the Victorian culture in which industry allowed all Quincy's citizens to participate. The upper classes separated themselves from the middle classes by building their homes on larger plots of land, as well as building larger houses in general.³¹

As stated in an early souvenir book, "North, south and east, in all directions branching from the business center, Quincy's streets and avenues are lined with residences and adorned with private grounds that would be a credit to any city." The author or authors, revealing the dependence of Quincy's Victorian homes upon economic growth, depict a city benefitting from its industries not only economically, but materially, socially, and culturally as well.³² Quincy's residential progress expanded from its commercial success. The same values that helped Quincy get ahead in the economic world spread into its domestic sphere. Contrary to the typical Victorian ideal of separating the business world from the domestic, Quincy actually developed a tight-knit architectural relationship between its industrial and private sectors, setting it apart from other Victorian towns.

Three main areas show how the dynamics of Quincy's architecture illustrate changes in Quincy's values, changes that can be seen nationwide. The first area is 5th Street and Hampshire

³⁰Important Industries, Manufactories, Etc In The City Of Quincy, Ill. (Quincy: Volk, Jones & McMein, 1893); Quincy City Directories (1870-1910).

³¹John, Maass, *The Victorian Home in America* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1972), 3-6.

³²*Important Industries, Manufactories, Etc in the City of Quincy, Ill* (Quincy: Volk, Jones & McMein, 1893), 30-40.

Street, where the WGEM building and Corner Café exist now. The second area is 3rd Street and Hampshire Street, the location of Tiramisu. The third area is Washington Park located on 5th between Maine Street and Hampshire. Each of the three areas has changed since the late 1800s, but they also maintain remnants of their former splendor. At 5th and Hampshire, the WGEM building is missing two of its original floors and the details on the joints of the Corner Café building have been scaled down. In the case of 3rd and Hampshire, the only original building that remains is the one that houses Tiramisu because of the growth of services moved away from the river. Washington Park remains virtually the same, except for the removal of the fountain centerpiece and the replacement of some benches.³³

The corner of 5th and Hampshire used to house, among other things, a cigarette manufacturer and various street level cafes and sidewalk grocers.³⁴ Since Quincy relied so heavily on the Mississippi River for the delivery of goods, the area closer to the river used to contain the small business district. With the number of businesses gathered in the area, streets close to the river became a social hub where daily matters could be discussed. The demands of industry determined where the centers of commerce developed, accordingly determining where the public social scene developed.

In the archived photo the many people gathered on the sidewalks are men; not one skirt can be seen on any of the figures (Fig.1). Victorian women stayed away from the business quarters of the city because Victorian protocol deemed such associations unfit for proper ladies. The business sector was connected as such to the public social arena because Victorian men

³³ Figs. 1-8 (Appendix A)

³⁴ "Quincy Illustrated: A Sketch of Early Quincy," *The Quincy Daily Journal* (Quincy: 1889).

needed to discuss business matters and other ‘manly’ subjects, such as politics, away from the genteel sphere of their homes, where their wives dominated. Moreover, men supposedly needed a reprieve from the cutthroat world of business, so they would not take their work home with them.³⁵

Socially, Quincy follows the Victorian models of separating the corporate scene from that of the familial. From the photographic evidence, Quincy can be seen as a quintessential industrial Victorian town. The men gathered in public near their businesses, leaving behind the refined world of their homes. The attire of gentlemen was always formal as a way to visually represent their personal success and the seriousness of their work. Modernization can be seen in many ways in the surviving photographs, especially with the street lights and the telegraph lines that adorn the business district. Again, Quincy looks like a typical Victorian city reaping the benefits of a new industrial age.³⁶

When comparing the city’s commercial architecture, Quincy differs from the majority of other Victorian cities’ commercial buildings. Port Townsend, Washington, for example, reveals a community reaching beyond its means. Port Townsend developed much like Quincy did, with the prospect of becoming one of the most prestigious nineteenth century cities of the West Coast. Like Quincy, it sported several Victorian style homes as well as commercial buildings. Port Townsend did not reach its potential, however, because the North Atlantic Railroad failed to connect it to other influential coastal cities.³⁷ The citizens of Port Townsend did not seem to

³⁵ Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life 1876-1915* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 16-20.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 30-38.

³⁷ The Jefferson County Historical Society, “Port Townsend” *Images of America* (San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 1-15.

commission the construction of the kind of buildings that would best reflect the city as a whole.

The architects of Port Townsend tried to maintain an elaborate façade, when they needed to make sure that the buildings had the actual working space that would ensure their survival.

Quincy businessmen did not operate under an inflated sense of grandeur like Port Townsend did.

They took a practical approach to their architecture, while still providing the aesthetic characteristics of Victorian architecture.

Most Victorian businesses featured elaborate facades topped by a spectacular cornice, which served no function other than to be aesthetically pleasing, such as those on the building in Port Townsend (Fig.2). The ceiling of the second floor is just above the window arches; everything above that is a false front. The top story of the tower is also just for show: it is far too small to have any practical use as an office, most likely a garret that can only be reached by ladder. Victorianism espoused the need for a proper public demeanor, despite what occurred behind closed doors. Compare the smaller upper floors of the Port Townsend building with the larger and more proportional floors of the Quincy buildings. Quincy architecture also lacks the superfluous towers.³⁸ Quincy architects followed the requirements of Victorian architecture without sacrificing utility. In this respect Quincy separates itself from the norm of Victorian architecture. Quincy, as a town full of working citizens, understood the value of using every space, thus they did not waste space in their buildings.

Evidence of Quincy's dedication to utility can be seen in riverfront businesses from both the past and present. As small business relied less on the river as a lifeline it moved inland.

³⁸ Ibid.

Larger companies and corporations that did not rely on the river began to buy the cheap land, for example, now the WGEM building resides on one corner. On the opposite corner the Corner Café sits, reminiscent of the sidewalk cafes that used to line the street. Further down the same block is a Mexican restaurant built in the 1990s, evidence of changing demographics. While some businesses moved inland, some were wiped out altogether. The loss of the locally run store removed the need for residencies above the family store. Corporations no longer needed the extra space, thus the paring down the WGEM building to two floors. Furthermore, the horses and carriages were replaced by cars and trucks. Also missing from the picture are the groups of men. The workplace remains something from which to escape, but now people are not afraid to bring their work home and discuss it with their spouses. Because the buildings now belong to private companies, the sidewalk cannot be used as a public meeting place; rather, socializing takes place in specified areas now such as church, home, or restaurants. The emergence of the cars in the picture is not the only evidence of advances in technology; light poles and telephone lines can be seen along the street. Satellite dishes and antennae project from the tops of the buildings, proof of new communications technology.

An area that has changed most drastically is the block of 3rd and Hampshire. In the late 1800s, many buildings occupied both sides of the street; among them stood the Cincinnati Coffin Company and the Warfield Grocer Company. Again, the bottom floor served as the sales floor. The second floor contained storage for such things as extra materials or packing materials. The

third floor housed either the family that owned the business or a tenant.³⁹ A few trees line the street as people walk past on their way to or from the stores. One woman strolls down the street on the arm of her male companion, illustrating that everyone used this particular part of the city as a social spot. The streets by the river used to serve as the social and commercial cross-section of the city. This “cross pollination” of business and pleasure in the lives of the people permeated to the kinds of buildings they built. Quincy stood unique as a place where the typical lines between public and private spheres blurred. Quincy broke the Victorian standard of separating business from domestic dealings.

Today, the only building on the block contains the Tiramisu restaurant. One tree stands over the cars, the empty lot, and the garbage dumpster (Fig. 3). With the consolidation of businesses like funeral homes and grocery stores, the need for locally run businesses fell away. Regional and national food chains like County Market have taken over the market, leaving the area by the river abandoned except for a few buildings. Even though there remains only one building, it retains its original structure. Clearly equipment for ventilation and air conditioning has been added, but no other major structural changes. Despite the fact that the area does not contain as many businesses or buildings, the one that survived appears to be from a different place and time. Quincy proves its dedication to preserving the architecture of its most prosperous period. Not only did Quincy thrive economically, but it thrived in its dedication to creating a secure town for all its citizens. Even when its buildings stand alone, Quincy’s

³⁹Nugent Robinson, *Collier’s Cyclopaedia of Commercial and Social Information and Treasury of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge On Art, Science, Pastimes, Belles-Lettres, and Many Other Subjects of Interest in The American Home Circle* (New York: P.F. Collier, 1882), 15-22.

buildings stand as testaments to Quincy's commitment to safeguarding its past and its values.

A third area where the private and public spheres intersect occurs in Quincy's extensive park system. The industrial boom of the nineteenth century created an ascendant middle class with more leisure time on its hands. In particular, middle class women did not have as much work to do at home because of labor saving devices and their ability to hire domestic servants, leaving them free to devote themselves to civic projects and social improvement projects. The city built Washington Park first in 1857, the park is located on 5th Street between Maine and Hampshire. Washington Park also claims the distinction of being the location of the sixth the Lincoln-Douglas debate of 1858.⁴⁰

The park contains benches, a fountain, and a grand stand. The park sits in the middle of a busy business district.⁴¹ The juxtaposition of a park next to an area of business speaks to the idea that the people of Quincy devoted themselves to balancing their professional time and their leisure time. Having a park area also allowed the women a chance to come out in public and mix socially in the business district; a place they usually would not be seen. Like a smaller version of Central Park in New York, Washington Park allowed citizens of Quincy a chance to escape from the exhausting demands of living and working in the city. Washington Park precedes Central Park by about eight years, since Lincoln and Douglas debated there in 1858, before Central Park even existed.⁴²

As seen in the image, the fountain used to contain an elaborate fountainhead, which has

⁴⁰ Stanley I. Kutler, ed., *Dictionary of American History. Vol. V* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003), 100-110.

⁴¹ Quincy Plan Commission, *A Preliminary Report Upon the Economic And Social Background Of The City Quincy, Illinois* (St. Louis, MO: Harland Bartholomew and Associates City Planners, 1944), 56-65.

⁴² Eugene Kinkead, *Central Park, 1857-1995: The Birth, Decline, and Renewal of a National Treasure* (New York, N.Y.: Norton, 1990), 1-15.

been removed (Fig.6). The fountain probably broke beyond repair and people did not care to replace it. Like the Tiramisu building, Washington Park underwent some changes. Newer and fewer benches replaced the old, paved sidewalks replaced the dirt paths, and the park lost some trees (Fig. 7). The Victorian value of being able to take a break from the work world and spend time with the family changed. People today want to fill their parks with pavilions, water slides, and baseball diamonds. While all these facilities help enhance the community, only one fifth of the parks in Quincy today offer a simple walk through shaded acreage. Modern companies keep creating gadgets that make people's lives easier and the transfer of information faster. The changing times are reflected in the activities-filled parks. Quincy clearly still cares about creating areas where people can come together and create a sense of community, but now that sense of community comes from doing activities together instead of walking and talking together.

Undeniable connections exist between the architecture of Victorian Quincy and the values held by its citizens. Industrialization allowed the city to boom economically and socially. Newer and cheaper materials permitted the middle class to imitate styles they saw the upper class using. Early nineteenth century styles, like the Beaux-Arts movement, did not fit the lifestyle of Quincy's citizens. Quincy, as a small town, did not utilize the grander style of the Greek or Roman architecture because it did not match the gentler and quieter demeanor of the city. In the early twentieth century, the Art Deco architectural movement arose in 1918, but during that time, Quincy had declined in economic power because river transportation faced stiff competition with multiplying railroad lines and later trucks and hard surface roads. Therefore, only a few

buildings in the downtown area portray the geometric design of Art Deco, such as the State Theatre, revealing the city's economic situation of the era (Fig.8). At a time when Quincy held the power to decide what kind of environment they wished to create for the city, they decided to build using Victorian trends. Not only did they use the Victorian architecture and building techniques for their homes, but they also used it in their commercial buildings. Quincy exemplifies how a city can follow a national trend, but still maintain its own a sense of identity. When other cities placed facades on the top of their businesses, Quincy architects held true to Victorian style but they used the upper floors for residences because of their dedication to not waste space.

The history and values of any city or people can be seen in the buildings that stand the test of time. The Pyramids of Giza, the Parthenon, the Hagia Sophia; all these great buildings are still being talked about and studied to this day. Architectural historians not only study the materials and building techniques used to construct these edifices, but they also study the people and the times in which the monuments were built. The Hagia Sophia started as a Christian church, then became an Islamic mosque, and now serves as a museum for contemporary visitors.⁴³ Historians discuss residential buildings like the Breakers, built for the Vanderbilt family, and the local John Wood Mansion. Their themes range from what functions rooms filled, who lived in the houses, and where and when the houses were built. Lessons in architecture learned in Quincy spread across the country in the person of Robert Sawers Roeschlaub, who became a noted Colorado architect. Roeschlaub's family emigrated from

⁴³Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 1-12.

Germany in 1845 to Quincy, so he claims a part in the rich German history of Quincy.

Roeschlaub designed several buildings that exist as national landmarks in Colorado.⁴⁴

Preservation, conservation, and exploration of architectural history cement the importance of the structures that people built and what those buildings reveal about the people used them.

When people arrive at times of prosperity and can choose for themselves what buildings they want, their choices reflect the values they hold in esteem at that time. When Chicago burned to the ground, the city invited many different architects to help rebuild because they understood that they could rebuild the city into something new and fascinating, now the city is revered as a site of architectural progressiveness. Religion was the motivation behind different structures, such as the Pyramids, the Parthenon, and Medieval Cathedrals. All these edifices connect religion, politics, economics, and culture because without the right mixture of any of these components the buildings would not be standing today.⁴⁵ The Victorian Era is no different, in that the ideals of gender separation, fostering an appearance of dignity, and delineating the social classes can all be seen in the architecture of the time. For instance, people in the upper classes built bigger houses on bigger pieces of property with hidden stairways for their domestic servants in order to escape the imitation in style from the middle class. The relationship between people, their values, and the structures they build must be acknowledged.

⁴⁴ Francine Haber, Kenneth R. Fuller, and David N. Wetzel, *Robert S. Roeschlaub: Architect of the Emerging West, 1843-1923* (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1988), 1-35.

⁴⁵ David Watkin, *A History of Western Architecture* (London: Hali Publications, 2005), iii-ix.