

# CONNOR HISTORIC DESIGN & CONSULTING

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Mike and Linda Connor

1153 Webster Road • Whiting, Vermont 05778  
(802)897-2321 • (802)522-3030 • [mconnor2244@gmail.com](mailto:mconnor2244@gmail.com)

Photography by Jim Westphalen Photography  
or from the Winterthur Museum archives, unless otherwise noted



## About Connor Historic Design & Consulting

For the past fifty years, my wife Linda and I have dedicated our working lives to the design and construction of homes with distinctive historic character and charm. During that time, we built nearly eight hundred homes and outbuildings throughout New England, the greater Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and beyond. Our greatest satisfaction in that endeavor was to see one of our creations gracing the landscape as if it had been there for centuries. After fifty years of design and construction experience, we are winding down our construction efforts in order to form a design and consulting business singularly dedicated to the architecture we love.

Over the many years involved in the residential construction business, I realized that our best efforts have always resulted from partnering with a seasoned builder who wanted to do something unique and beautiful, and shared our interest in making the build process a true partnership with our clients. We came to learn that that approach was one used centuries ago when the concept of Master Builder defined the process that resulted in the best and most revered architectural creations in American residential architecture. It is the model that we view as still being the best way to design and build homes in America today.

The overriding characteristic of a Master Builder is broad expertise. These accomplished entrepreneurs had deep knowledge of every aspect of construction including design, building, business management and client relationships. While there are still many good and skilled builders who can build a home, only a few have the deep institutional knowledge required to pull it all together so that design and the execution of that design results in a finished home that is not only beautiful and efficiently built, but also makes the entire process a rewarding and satisfying endeavor for the client. Our new company, because of its own deep roots in design and construction, is often able to complete the circle of expertise for the few selected builders that we work with.

To ensure architectural excellence and to do it with utmost efficiency, we will still operate a shop that will build the most complicated architectural elements for our builders. Our deep knowledge of proper scale and proportion, along with the many shop efficiencies we have created over the years will allow our builders to have full architectural excellence with cost-controlling off-site shop production. Among those things we will produce for our builders will be front entry systems, cornice returns, window heads, pre-assembled corner boards and much more, both interior and exterior.

Throughout our long career in classic architecture, we have adapted design to embrace the elegance of time-honored architecture while submitting to the needs of today's modern lifestyle. It is one of the most challenging aspects of what we do, but also a most rewarding one. When we combine our expertise with that of an already seasoned builder whose goals align with ours and our clients', we are forming a three-way partnership that ensures top quality design and construction that is efficient and rewarding for all. It is today's iteration of a centuries-old concept: Master Builder.

Sincerely,  
Michael Connor



## Design Services

Over the years, we have developed hundreds of designs, and have chosen a few client favorites to feature in this book. Many clients choose one of our existing plans as a starting point and make modifications, but if a custom design is desired, or significant changes are required to a catalog plan, we provide custom design services as well.

Modifications might include adding massing, such as a wing for a mudroom or first floor master bedroom; changing the width or depth of the massing; adding a porch or a barn; mirroring a plan; or moving interior walls around to change the layout. Changes to the interior layout tend not to impact the final price significantly while changes to the massing do. Therefore, we recommend a design retainer as a preliminary step if making massing changes to receive an accurate quote before proceeding to Deposit.

Custom designs are initiated with a design retainer of \$1-\$2 per estimated gross square foot. The design retainer initiates a collaborative consultation with us to discuss a custom design. This meeting can be in person or through phone or email communication. Starting from inspirational photos, sketches, and descriptions, we will create a home uniquely suited for each client. The design retainer consultation results in a schematic design that includes first and second floor plans, a front elevation, and a quote for the project from a collaborating builder.

A custom design is also available for additions and renovation projects. Utilizing our expertise in both regional historic architecture and construction ensures that the design of the addition will be in keeping with the original house and that on-site interruptions will be minimal.

After the first review of the plans, clients may provide feedback for one round of revisions as part of the design retainer deliverable. After pricing from the builder is accepted, clients then proceed to a construction contract with the builder. The Connors are still involved throughout the entire project, providing production design and other administrative services to the builder.

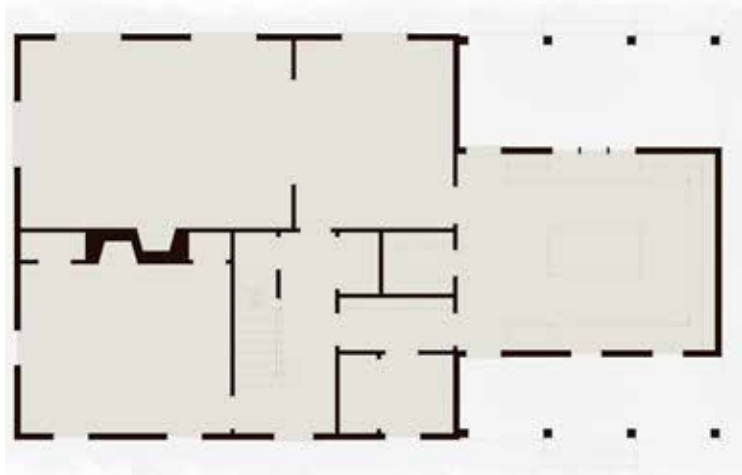


*Modifying Plans: Three Variations on the Mary Bearce House*

The Mary Bearce House (page 14), a classic Federal farmhouse with four bedrooms, open living and dining rooms, and a large kitchen wing flanked by front and back porches, is one of the most popular houses in our collection. Nearly 30 years ago, Linda and Mike Connor designed it for themselves. It has been replicated and modified many times, but it has also been modified in more significant ways to create new, beloved houses.



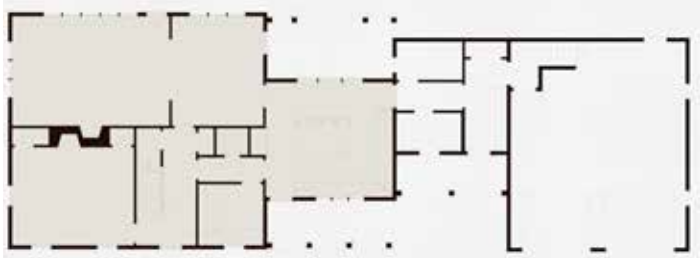
*Original Massing*



I. The Susanna Halley House (page 84) was created by adding a wrap-around porch to the main part of the house, and a mudroom to the front of the kitchen wing and screened porch to the rear.



II. The Rachel Kinnicutt House (page 46) extends the house with a mudroom and porches connecting the barn to the kitchen wing.



III. The Christiana Saeger House (page 64) adds a mudroom wing and barn to the front of the kitchen wing, and a porch across the front of the house.





## Case Study: *A Custom House with a Story*



This custom house was designed to take advantage of lake views, and to tell a story of a lake house built over time, as though a small cottage (far right above) was originally built in the 1800s, a Greek Revival main house was added to that at a later date, and a shingle style carriage house was built after the turn of the 19th century.



## Case Study: *Creating a Seamless Addition*



This breakfast room and pantry wing was added to an 18th century, Federal style brick house just several years ago, but looks like it could have been part of the original house.

Authentic details were replicated on the exterior, but the owners wanted the interior to be less formal than the main house. Reclaimed barn boards were used to cover the interior walls and contrast beautifully with the elegant millwork and cabinetry.





*Case Study: Designing a New England Village*



The Settlement in historic Wells, Maine is a new development - but it will look like a New England village settled hundreds of years earlier. The Connors were chosen to design a village of single family homes that would appear to make up an authentic, historic community. The single family homes largely derive from our extensive collection of plans.

As an example of the kind of thematic and authentic charm our company is capable of, this one-room school house was designed to be used as a sales center and, eventually, a community meeting place.



Our Development Partnerships

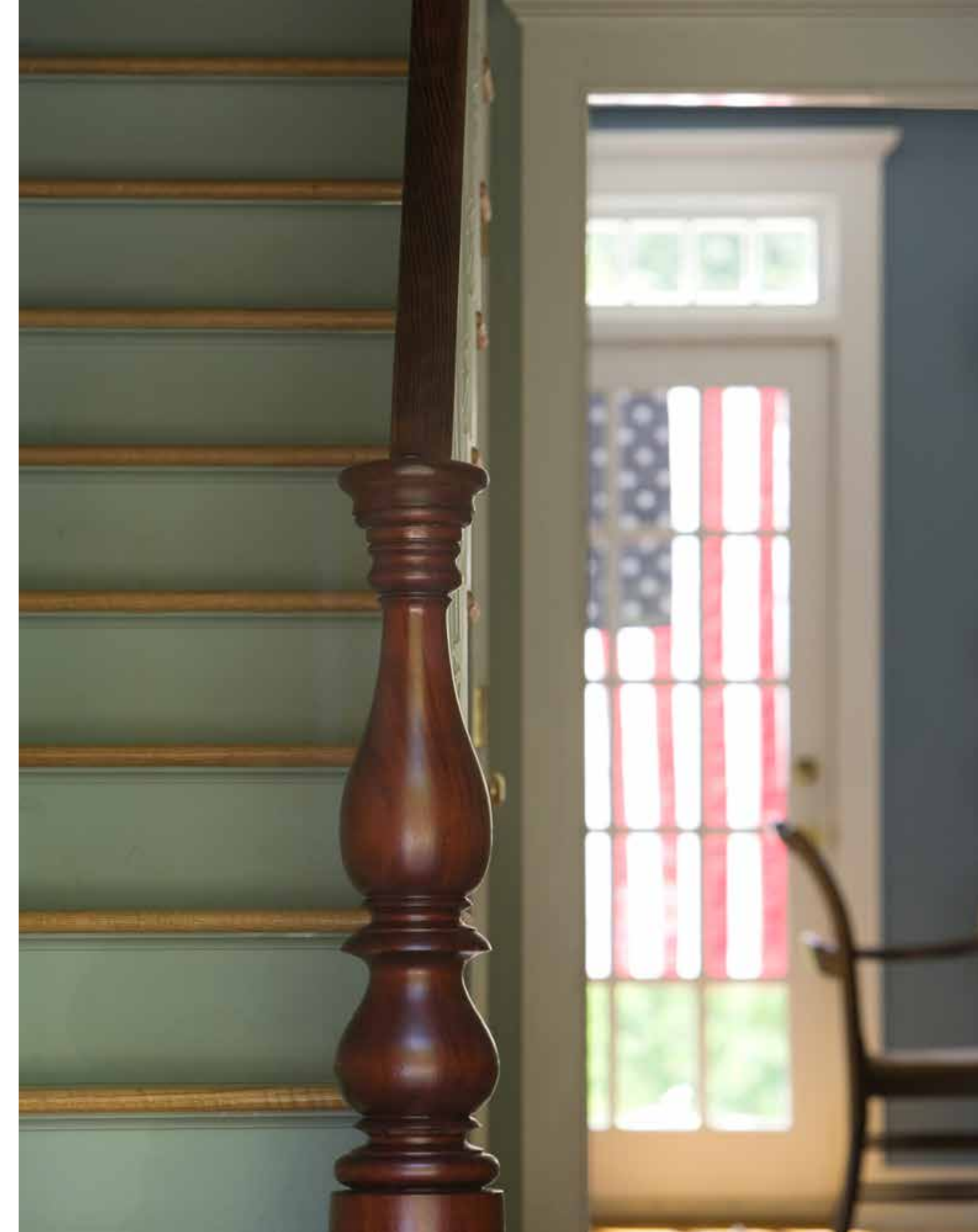
We offer a unique and valuable opportunity for developers who have property to be defined and sold as unified building lots. Here’s how it works:

Successful developments typically have a strong identity that defines what kind of neighborhood is to be created. When that identity includes traditional architecture, our company offers a wide range of photographic and other sales collateral that is an invaluable resource for a developer hoping to establish a first-class distinction for its clients. Most importantly, our company can help with the initial set-up of the development and provide a marketing vision for the project, and be an ongoing consultant for building, marketing and sales throughout the entire build-out.

A typical example of how we partner with builders and developers are two developments in Southern Maine with which our company has been involved. The first is The Settlement in Wells, Maine. This property is owned by the builder, who has had a life-long interest in historic architecture and works with our company in creating and marketing a collection of homes based on classic architectural design.

The builder is also involved with our company in a second development in Eliot, Maine called Stonecrop Farm. He is the on-site builder for the project and this property is also themed with historic architecture using our company’s designs and marketing collateral.

These two projects are designed as single-family neighborhoods, but we also offer historic-based architecture designs for multi-family units as well. Once again, our concept of Master Builder works extremely well in the design, marketing and sales for multi-lot developments that value historic-architecture.



## Our Design Collection

Our collection of plans can be used as starting points for a new design, and they represent just a few of the many that already exist in our collection. A significant cost savings is available if one of our existing plans can be used with no, or a very few, modifications, as the cost of design work, both schematic and production, is eliminated.

The plans and homes shown in these pages were designed and built by Mike and Linda Connor over their 50 year design and building history, and this collection represents some of the most beloved designs - some have been built more than twenty times, each time with modifications for the client!

In addition, this collection includes new houses that were recently added to the collection in partnership with Winterthur Museum in Delaware. Winterthur Museum granted the Connors, as a licensee of the museum, access to its rich collection of historic home artifacts and archives. The house designs (designated by a Winterthur logo) are shown here with photos of the houses that inspired them, but much more information about that partnership, the history of the antique homes, and the development of inspired designs is available in a separate publication.

Our homes include the design of interior millwork that both complements the historical authenticity of our homes and suits modern living. Millwork includes gorgeous mantels, elegant staircases, maple kitchen and bath cabinetry, custom built-ins, custom millwork such as paneled walls, wainscot and chair rail, trim for windows and doors, baseboard, crown molding, and wide board pine floors, in styles appropriate to the houses.

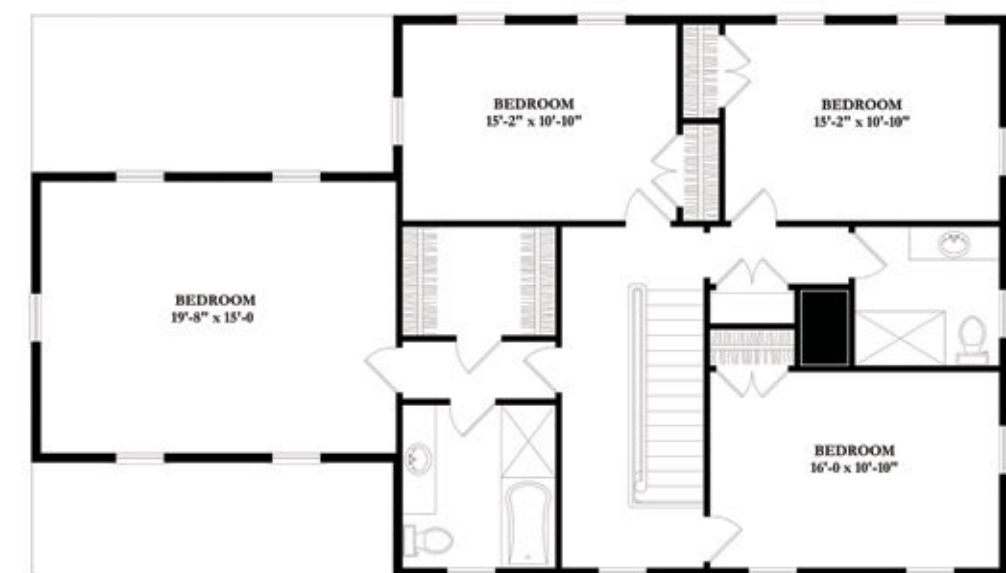
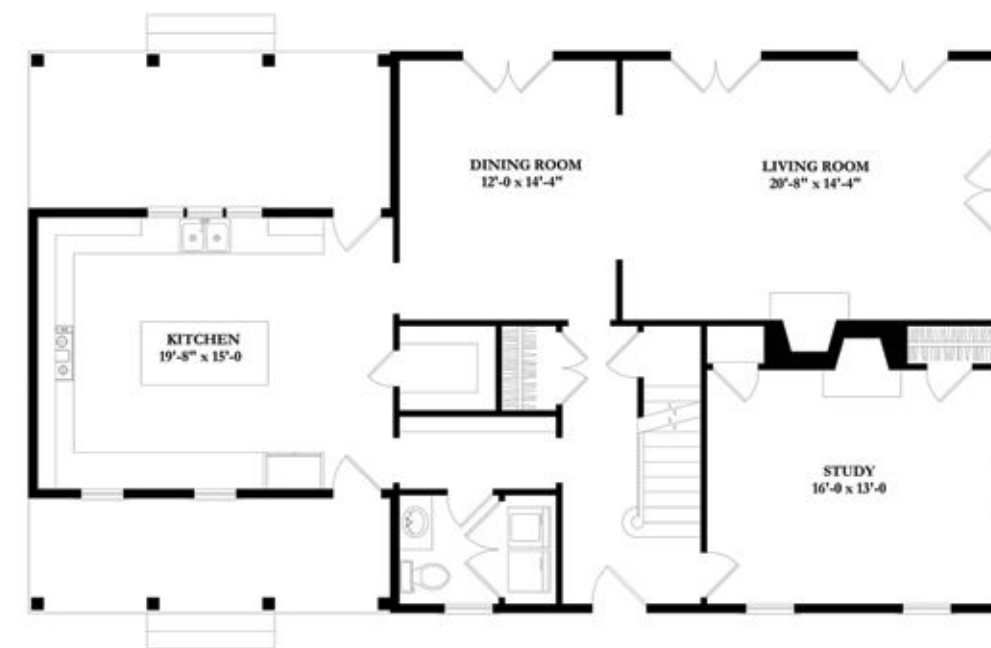
Please note, plans may differ from the photos shown, as clients' homes may have been customized and plans have recently been updated.





## *The Mary Bearce House*

2,748 Square Feet



*Read about how this home inspired many others on page 6.*





*At left, from top to bottom: two early Virginia houses, Morattico Hall and the Tappahannock House, later known as Bank's Tavern, are the oldest sources of inspiration in the Collection, hailing from the late 1600s and early 1700s. Interiors from the homes can be viewed at Winterthur Museum.*

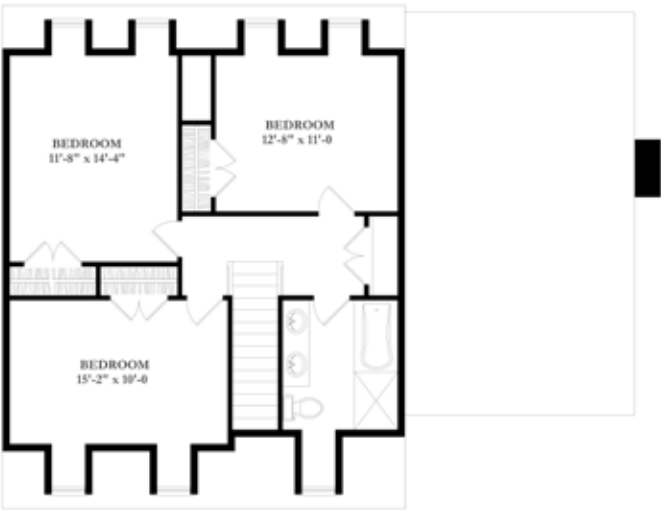
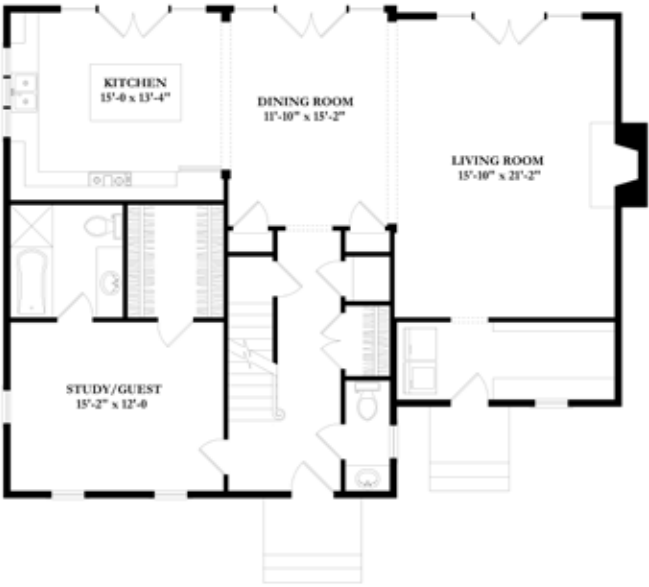
# WINTERTHUR MUSEUM

During the first half of the twentieth century, Henry Francis du Pont, American businessman and design enthusiast, became interested in the beauty and variety of early American architecture. He began expanding his house, Winterthur, with a range of classic American architectural elements, many in the form of entire rooms rescued from early American houses before demolition. His beautiful home became the Winterthur Museum in 1951.

The Connors were chosen by Winterthur Museum as a licensee to design and build a collection of homes, using homes found in the Winterthur archives as inspiration. Some of these homes have architectural elements or entire rooms on display at the museum, others are found in books on architecture and decorative arts in the extensive Winterthur library. Using houses from Georgia to New England, built from the 1600s to the 1900s, the styles in this collection range from Georgian to Shingle, and is truly a celebration of American design and architecture, as admired and promoted by Henry Francis duPont.

## The Pauline Louise House

2,264 Square Feet

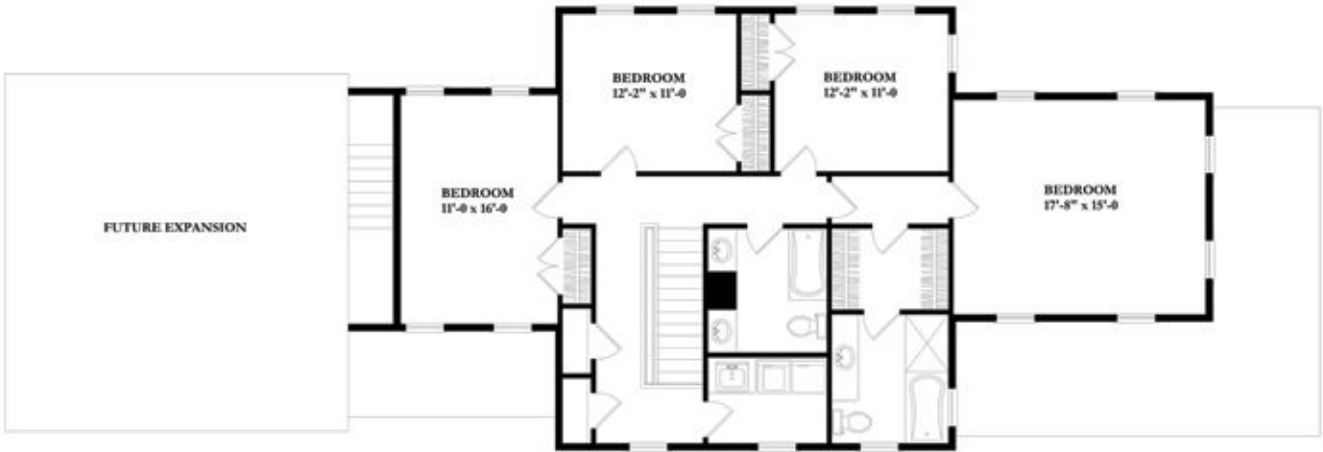






# *The Helena Woolsey House*

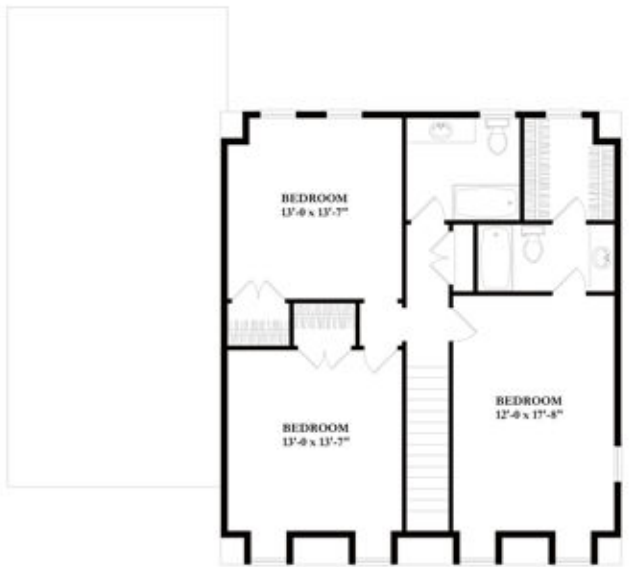
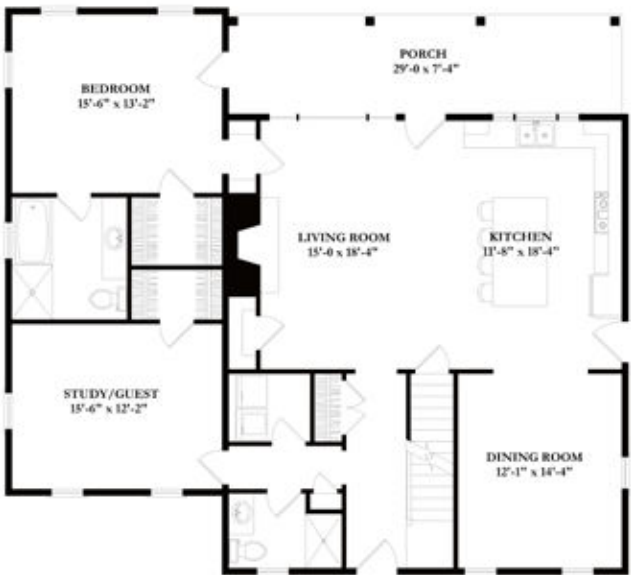
2,664 Square Feet





The Margaretta Gilpin House

2,616 Square Feet



At left: Vauxhall Gardens, built by Thomas Maskell on the southern New Jersey shore in the early 1700s, was documented in the 1930s as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey. A paneled room from the interior of the house can be seen in the Vauxhall Room at Winterthur Museum.

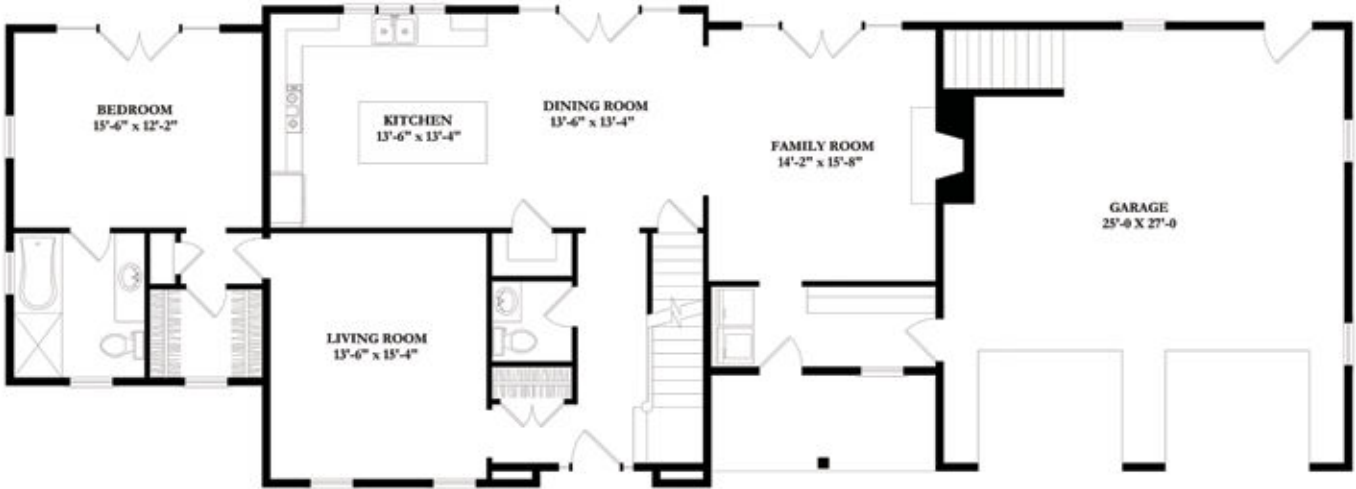
Images courtesy of Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey New Jersey collection.





# *The Sarah Hampton House*

2,580 Square Feet







*Interiors*

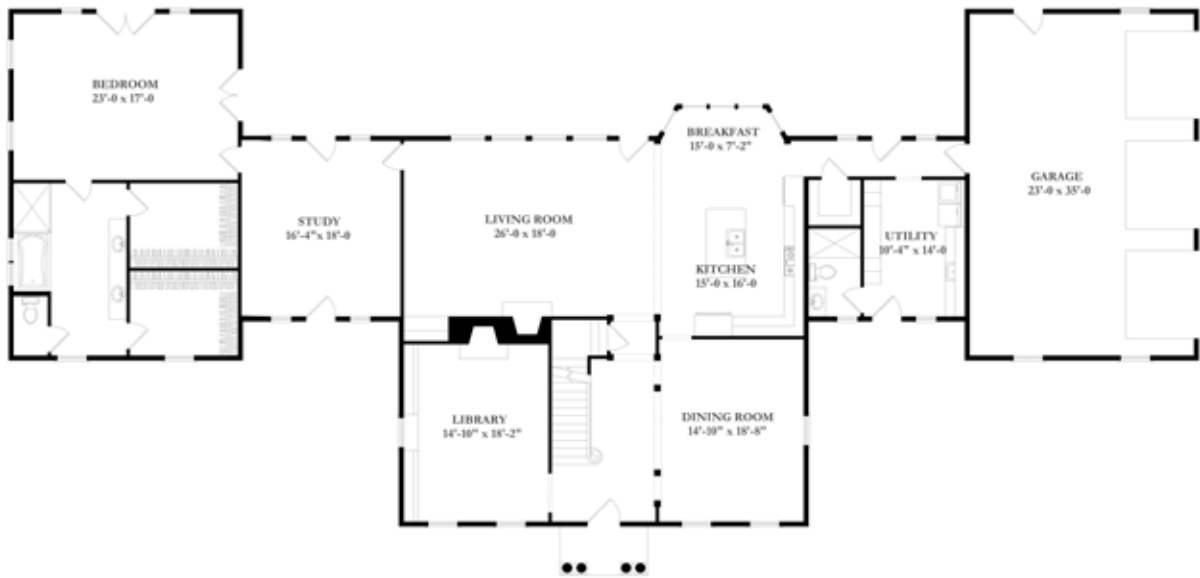






*The Carlisle Dean House*

4,832 Square Feet



*The Carlisle Dean is an amalgamation of three noteworthy Winterthur Houses: (top to bottom) Readbourne, Hampton Court, and Belle Isle. Architectural elements from all three can be found at Winterthur.*

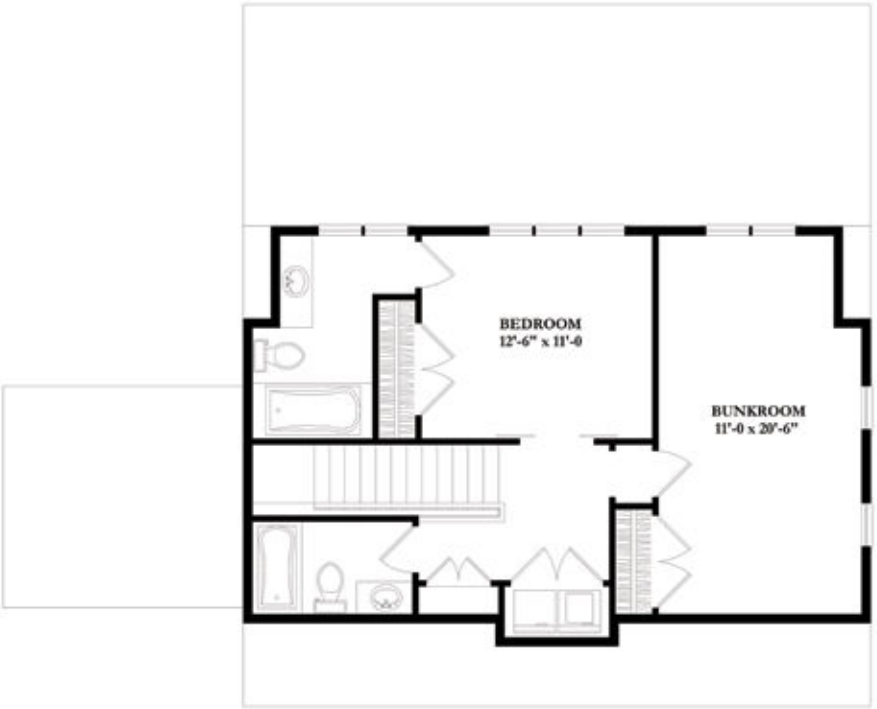
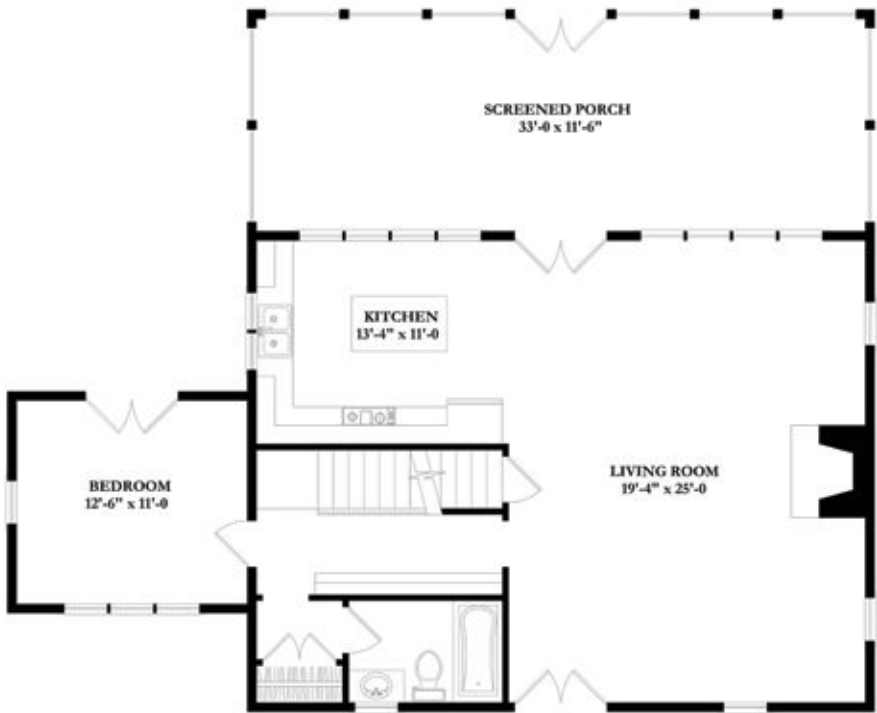






# *The Conrad Oakland House*

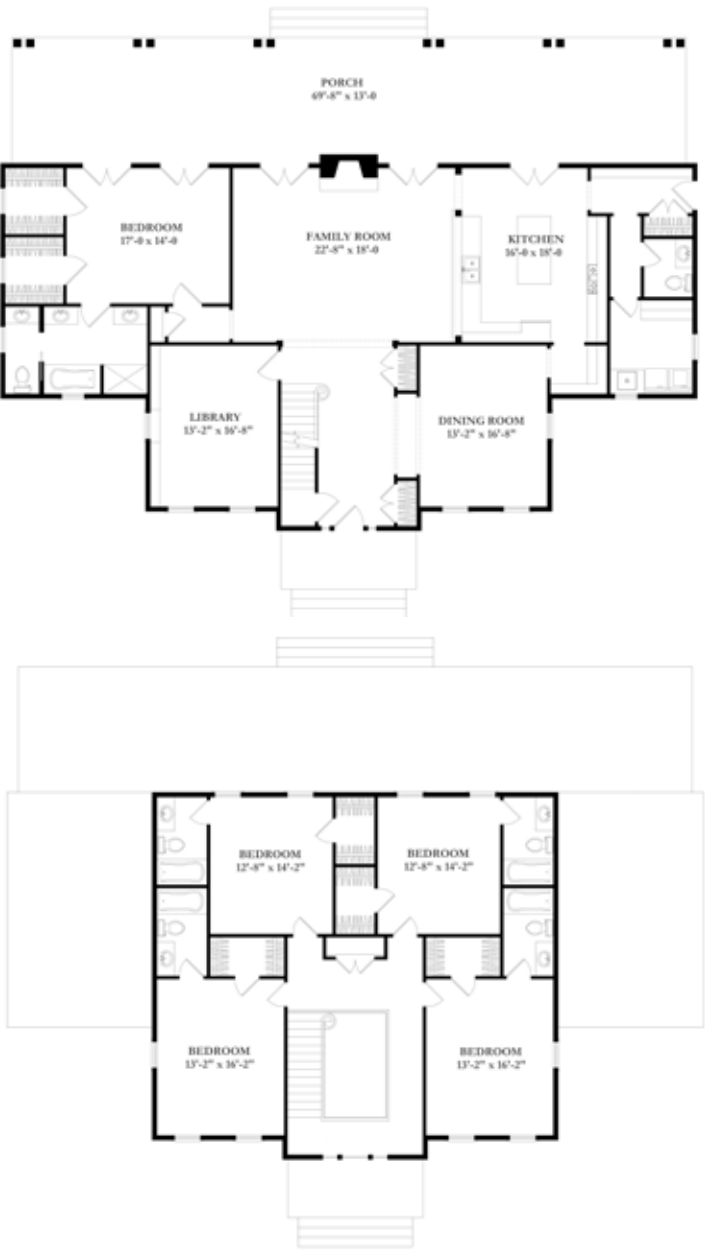
1,764 Square Feet





*The Francis Copeland House*

3,804 Square Feet



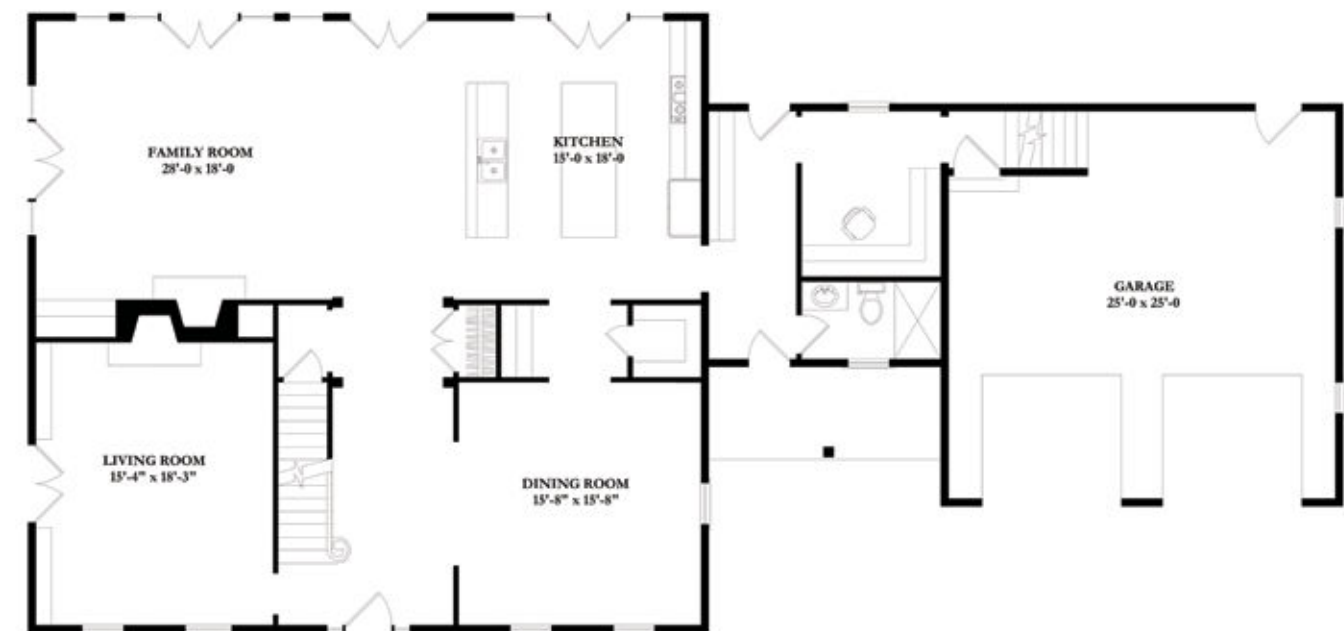
*The five-bay Georgian style Port Royal with a projecting central pediment and Palladian window provided the inspiration for this new design. Henry F. du Pont acquired the Georgian-period entrance of the house to use as the main entrance to Winterthur Museum.*





## *The Captain Price House*

3,775 Square Feet



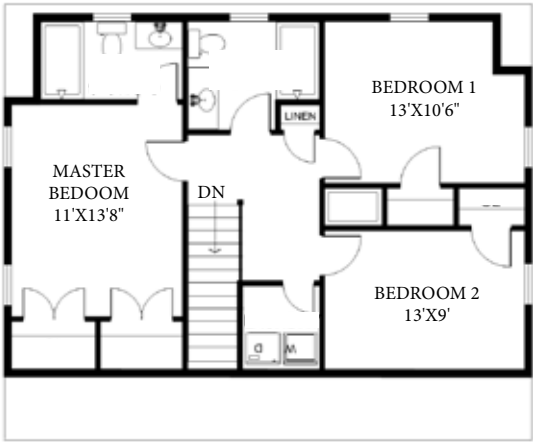
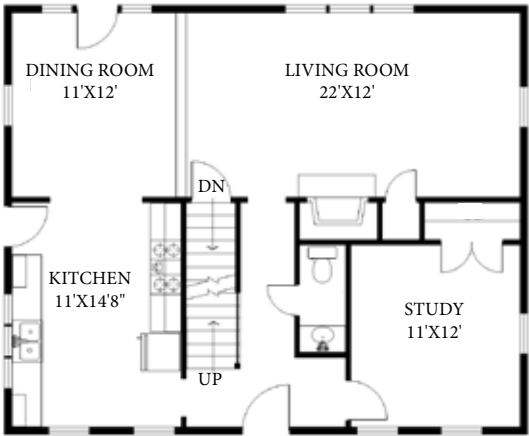




View into the dining room of the Captain Price House

# The Hannah Grady House

1,733 Square Feet





## The Benjamin Crowell House

1,774 Square Feet

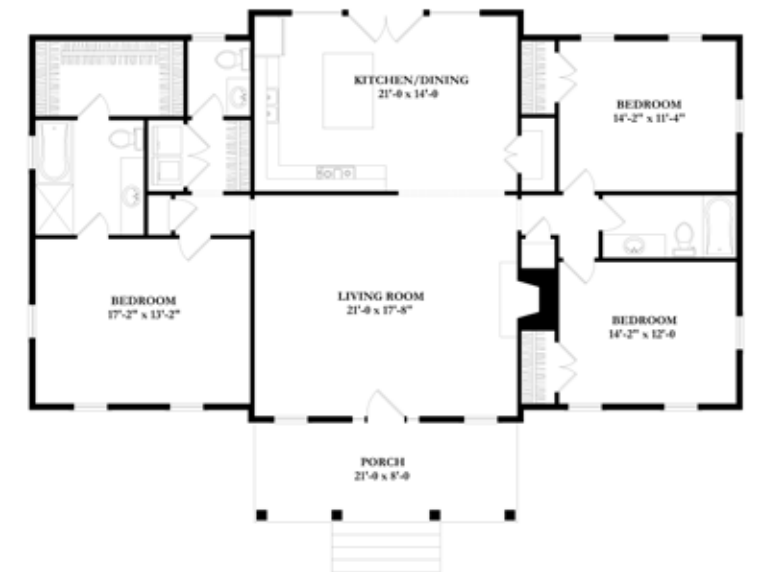


## The Pierre Samuel House

1,776 Square Feet



*The second story of the Brewton House in Charleston, South Carolina provided the inspiration for the Pierre Samuel House. No architectural elements from the house are at the museum, but photos are in the archives, as DuPont added a desk from the Brewton family to the Museum, which was returned to the city of Charleston in 2008.*





# Kitchens







## *The Timothy Wells House*

2,192 Square Feet







If you don't see what you're looking for in this collection, remember that we have hundreds of *additional plans* in our archives. Call or email us to discuss your ideas - we may already have designed the perfect home for you!  
(802) 522-3030 [mconnor2244@gmail.com](mailto:mconnor2244@gmail.com)

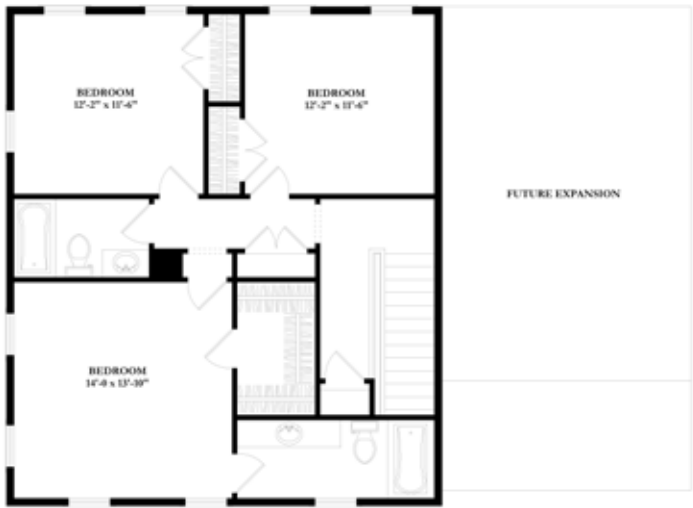
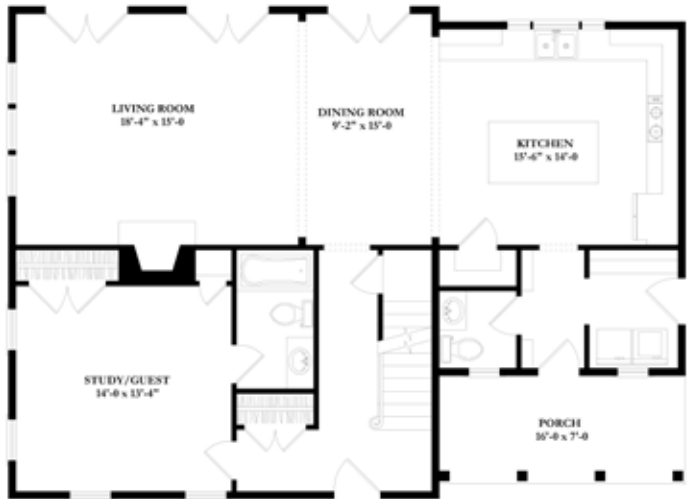






*The Lamott Joseph House*

2,176 Square Feet



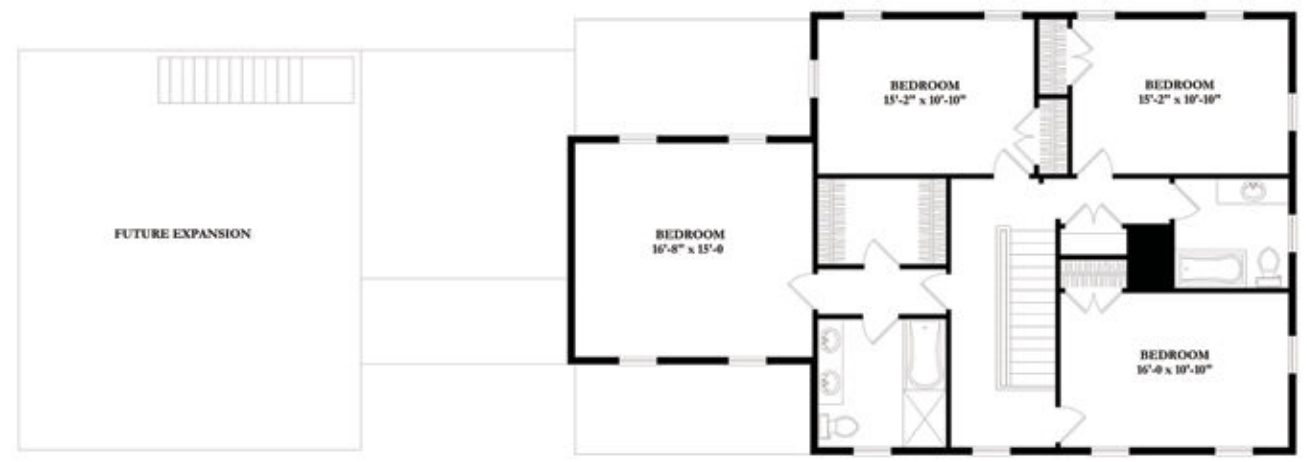
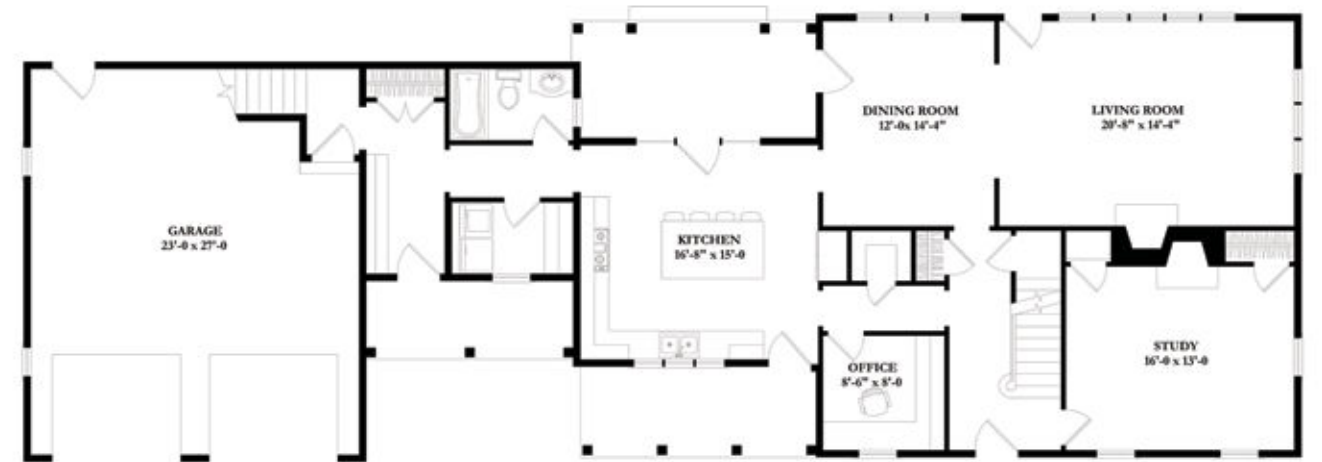
*An outstanding example of Georgian architecture is Mordington House, built in the late 1700s by James Douglass in Kent County, Delaware. This historic home provided the inspiration for the Lamott Joseph. In 1930, the main entrance, porch detailing, and some interior woodwork were installed at Winterthur, but the house is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.*





# *The Rachel Kinnicutt House*

2,877 Square Feet

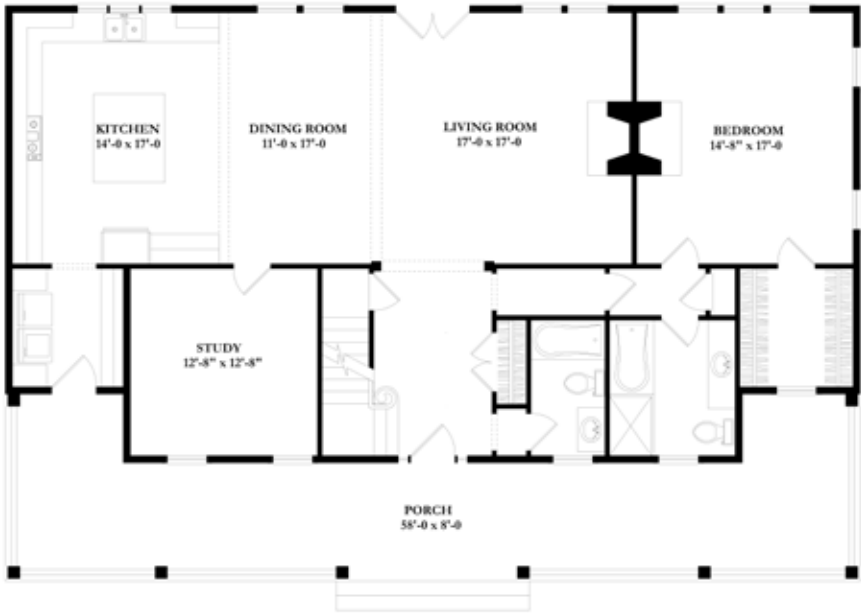






# The Martha Chandler House

3,020 Square Feet

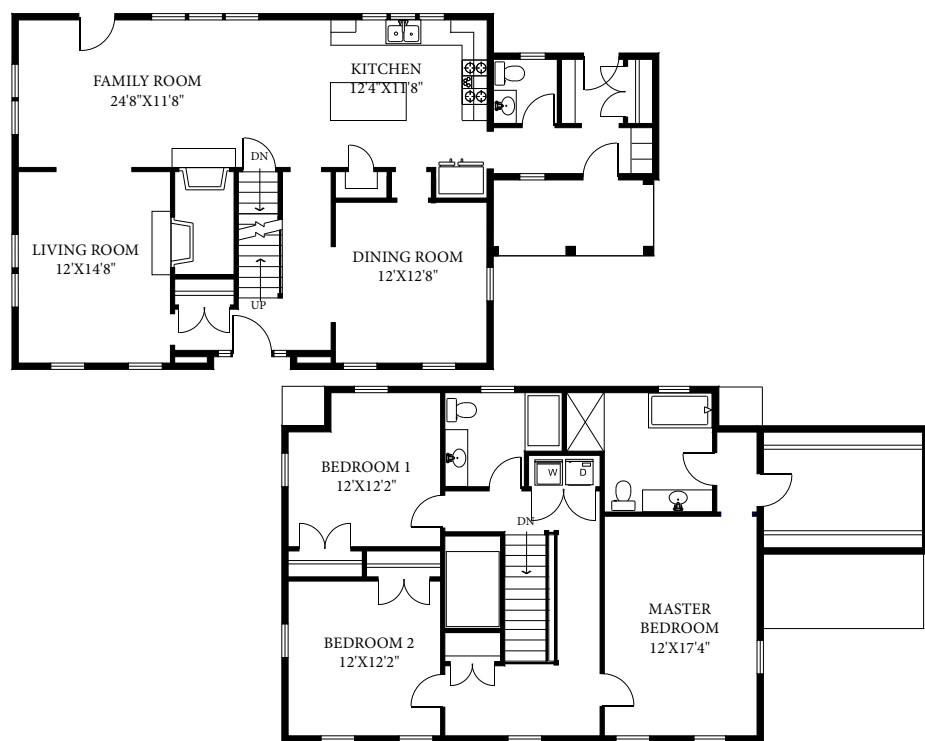


*The original Greek Revival style house built in 1839 at Winterthur. It was expanded and altered for 112 years by successive generations until opening as Winterthur Museum in 1951. The Greek Revival style was incredibly popular in America, particular in the northeast, in the mid-1800s, and no collection of American architecture would be complete without an example. It is a style with which the Connors are very experienced, having built many examples, after meticulous study of the many historic Greek Revivals to be found near them in New York and New England.*



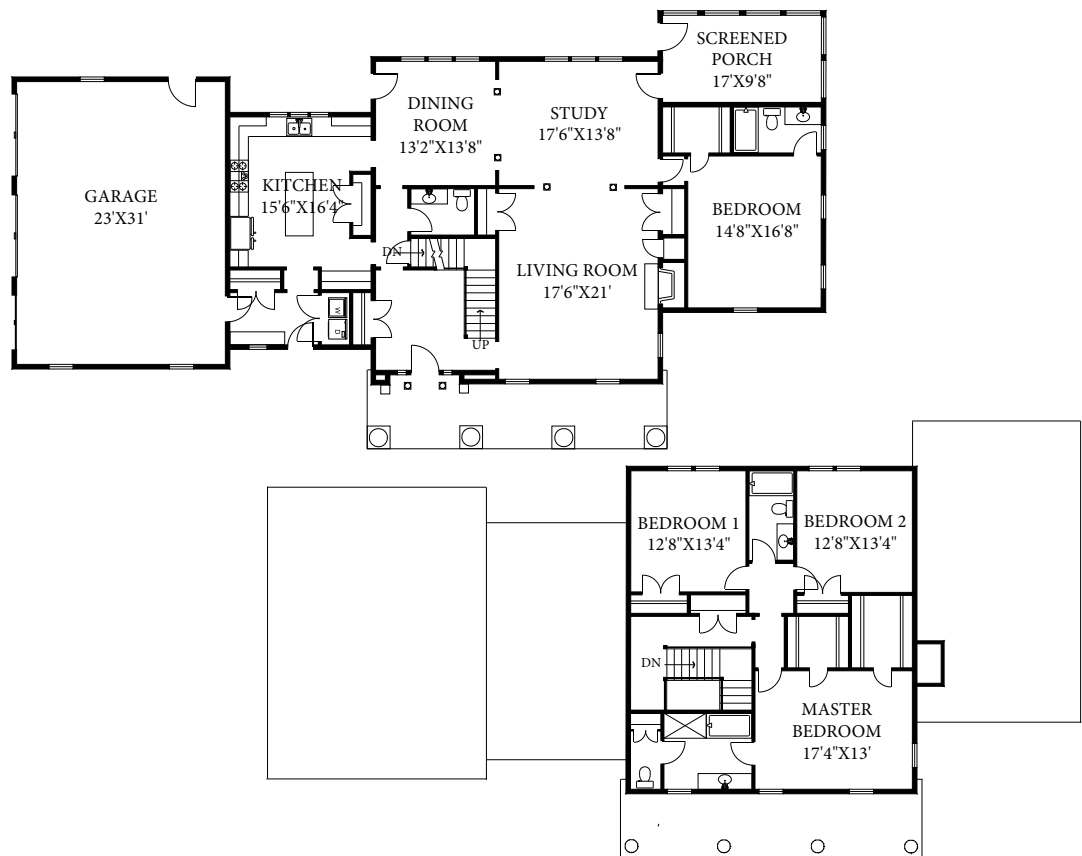
*The Ferome Nash House*

2,370 Square Feet



*The Henry Lee House*

3,134 Square Feet

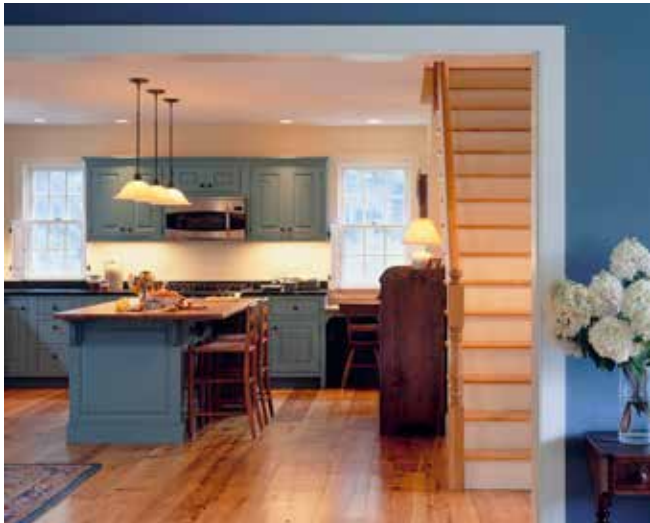






# *The Halm Gifford House*

2,551 Square Feet







# Millwork



*Clockwise, from upper left: recessed panel arched entry and built-in dining room hutch; beaded tub surround and standard window trim; flat panel bath cabinetry; Palladian window trim and built-in window seat with storage.*







# *The Lucy Sayre House*

2,004 Square Feet



*We excel at designing authentic New England cape style homes, and have many additional plans in our archives, ranging in size from 900 square feet to over 3,000.*







*The Isabelle Edmonds House*

4,379 Square Feet



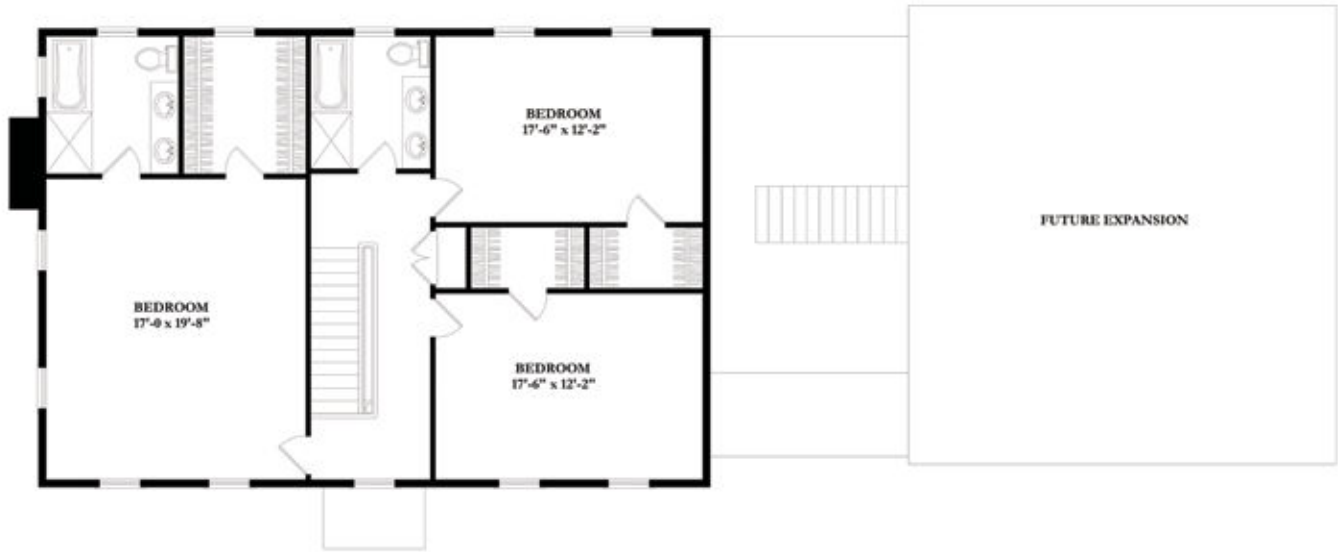
*Oak Hill in Danvers, Massachusetts, which was dismantled to make way for a shopping center, inspired the stunning Isabelle Edmonds House. DuPont recreated the Oak Hill entrance at Winterthur Museum in 1960.*





*The Margaret Fitzgibbons House*

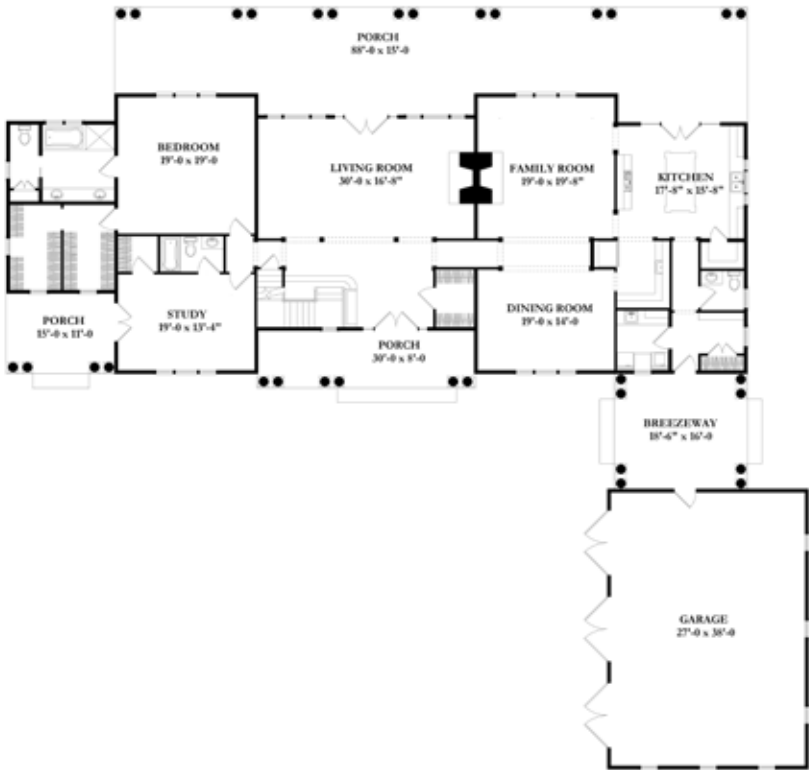
2,926 Square Feet



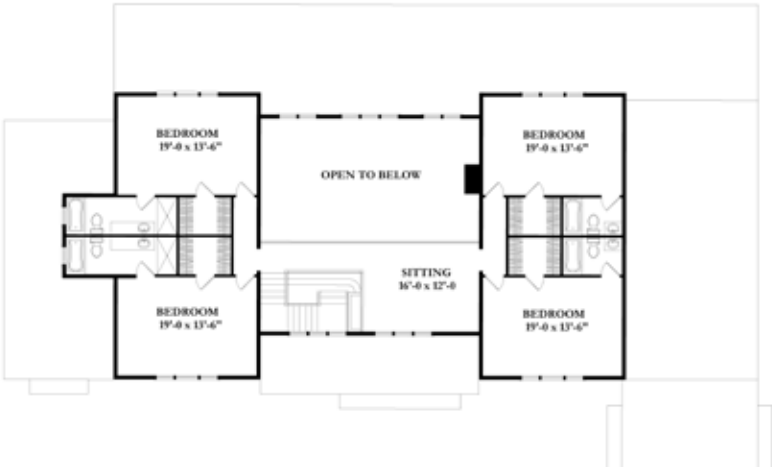


The Philip Everett House

5,400 Square Feet



*The du Pont's Southampton summer house, Chestertown, and the shingle style dairy barns located on the Winterthur property (not pictured) provided inspiration for a Shingle Style addition to the Winterthur collection.*







# *The Christiana Saeger House*

3,398 Square Feet







# Staircases

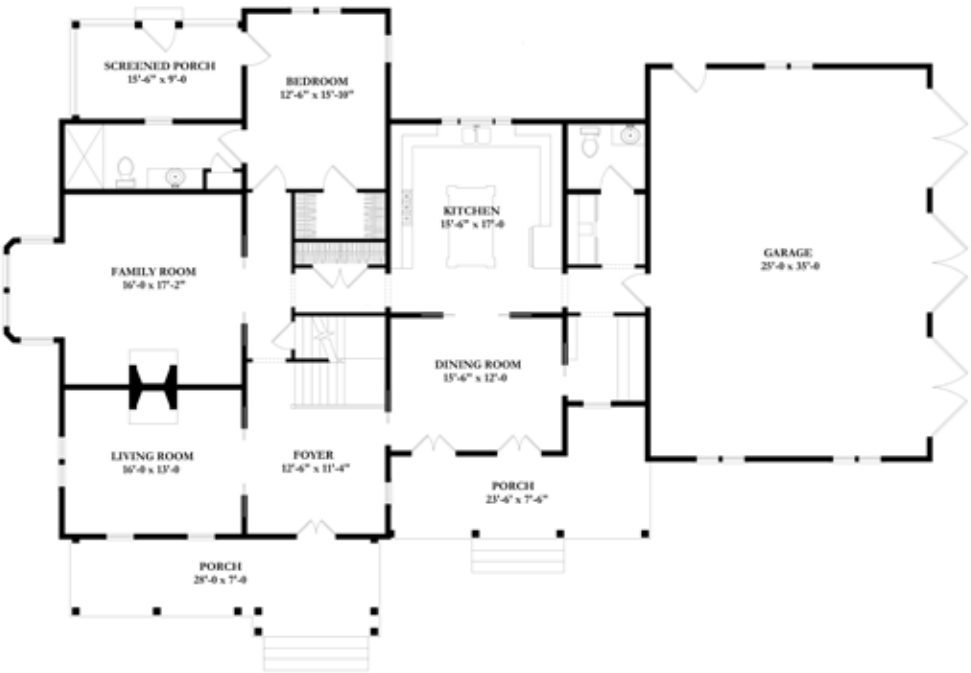
*Clockwise, starting upper left: a coffered living room ceiling, stained mantel, and built-in bookcase; custom mud-room bench and six-panel pine door with period hardware; cherry library with raised panel walls and built-in bookcases, with raised panel wainscoting in the front hall; built-in buffet with beaded backing.*





*The Evelina Gabrielle House*

3,220 Square Feet



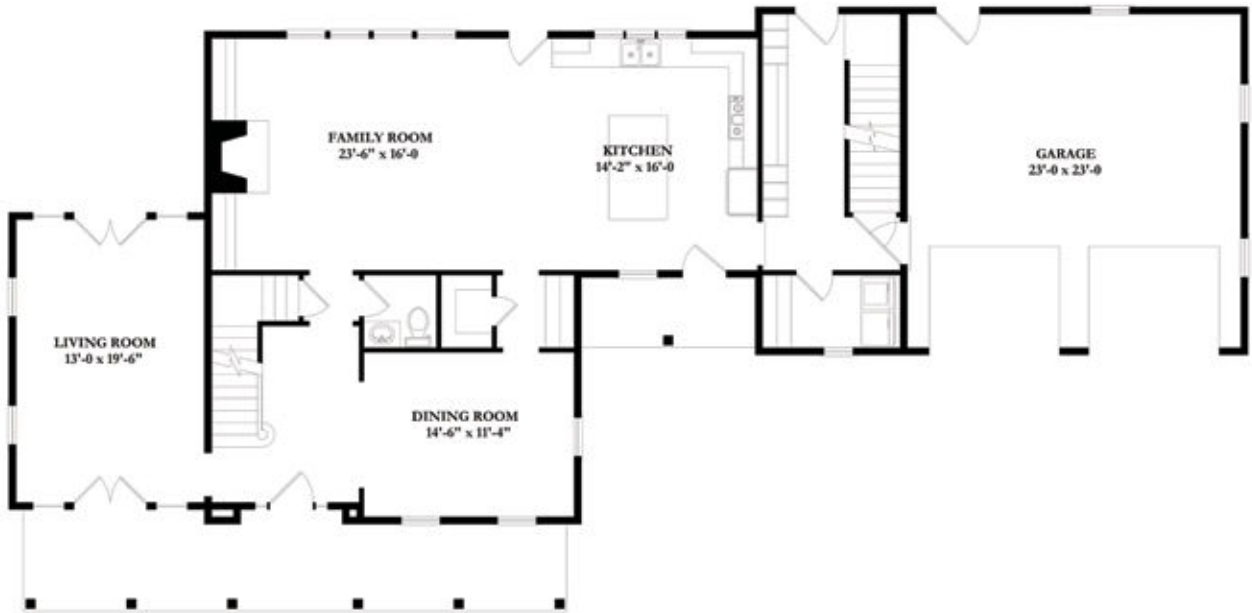
*An Italian Villa from Francis Goodwin's 1833 "Domestic Architecture", a book found in the Winterthur library archives. The Italianate style grew in popularity in the latter 19th century to become a common and uniquely American house style.*





*The Rebecca Chipman House*

2,980 Square Feet







# The Sophie Hayward House

2,382 Square Feet



*The Gate House as it looked in Henry F. du Pont's time. The structure held strong attachment for the duPont family and the massing is reflected in the Sophie Hayward House, which could be built charmingly in a variety of exterior materials.*

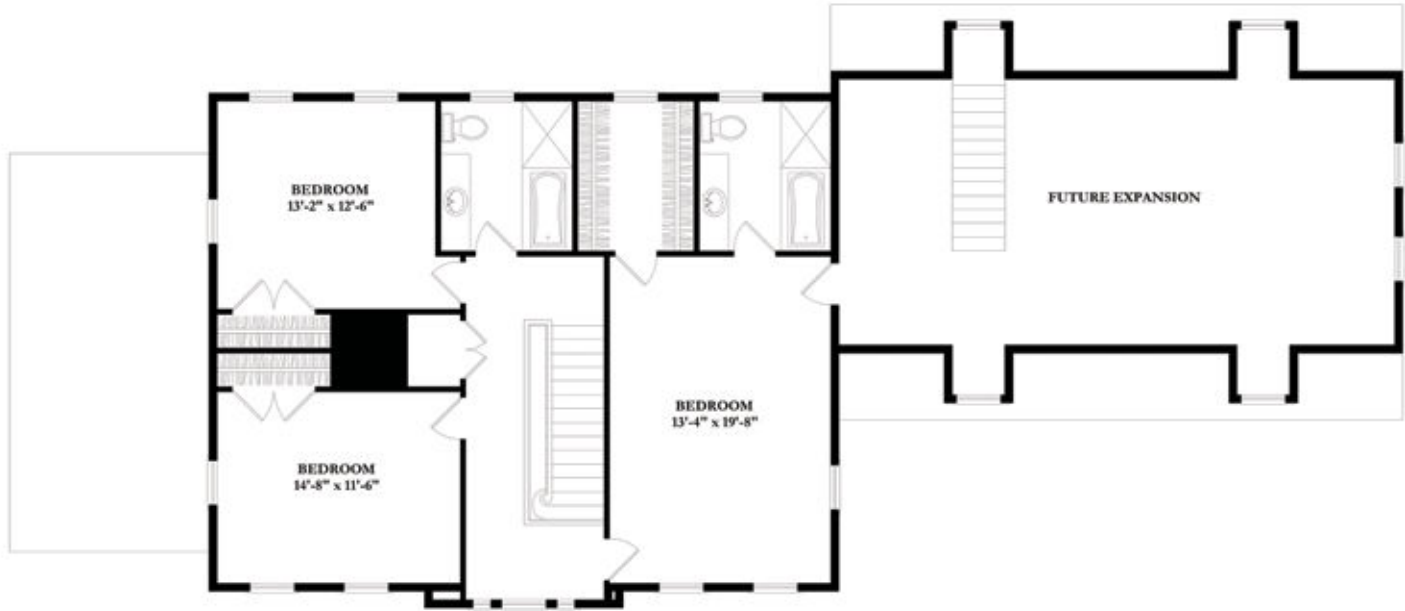
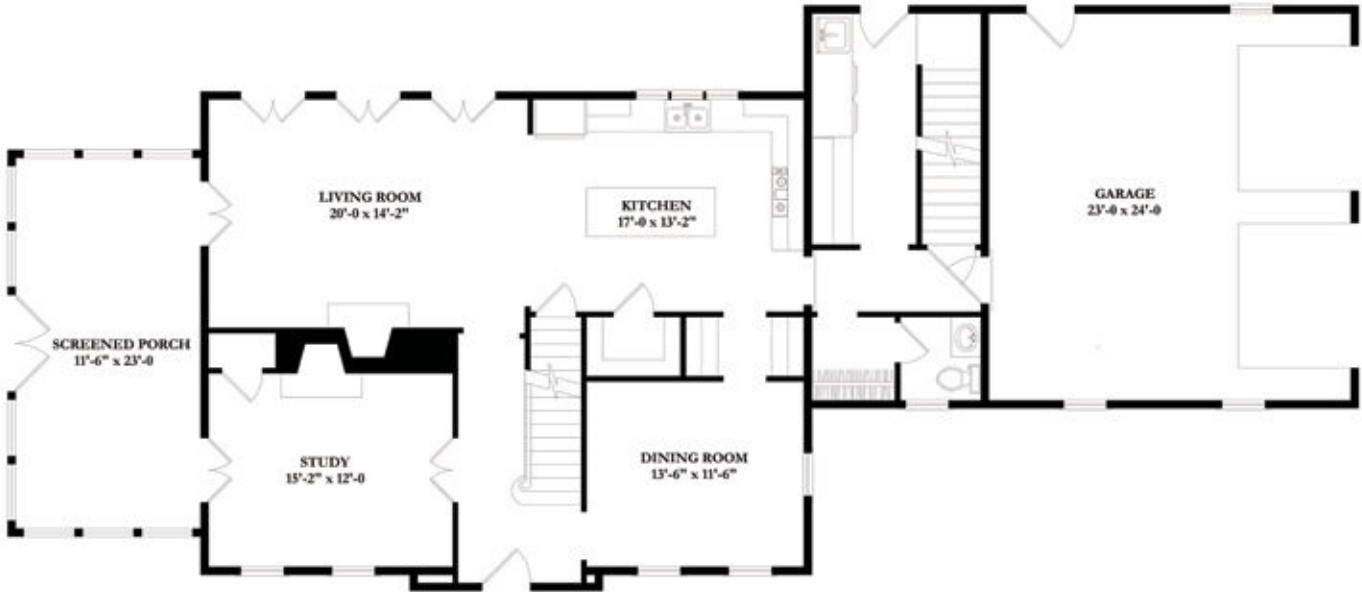






# *The Anna Wynants House*

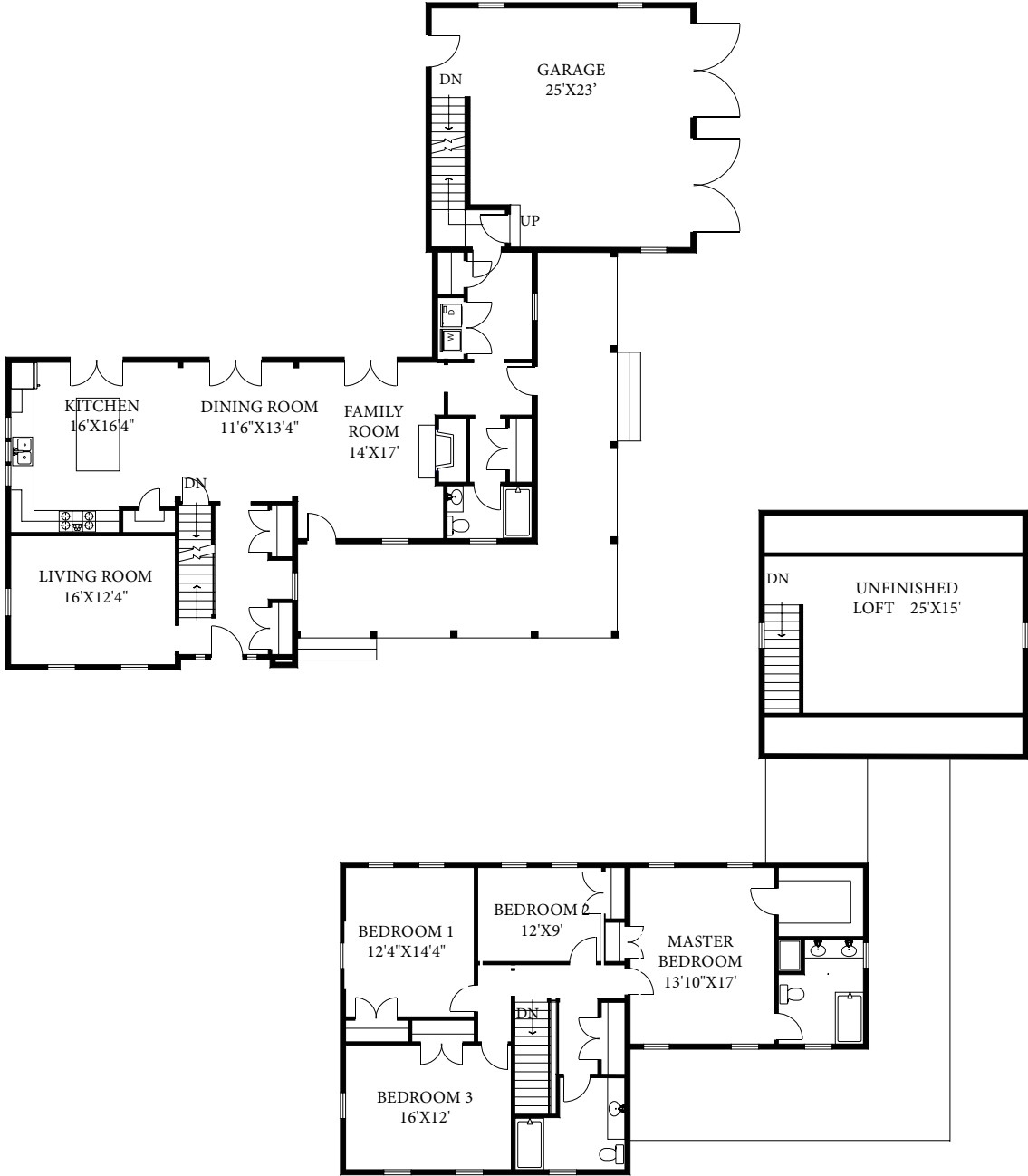
2,699 Square Feet





*The Pieter VanderVoort House*

2,654 Square Feet







*Images from T. Rutter's sketchbook of rustic furniture, a collection of watercolor illustrations found in the Winterthur archives. T. Rutter created garden furniture, gazebos, and the like for summer houses. These designs, using natural materials, are similar to the Shingle Style represented by the Henry Ridgely House.*

*The Henry Ridgely House*

3,076 Square Feet





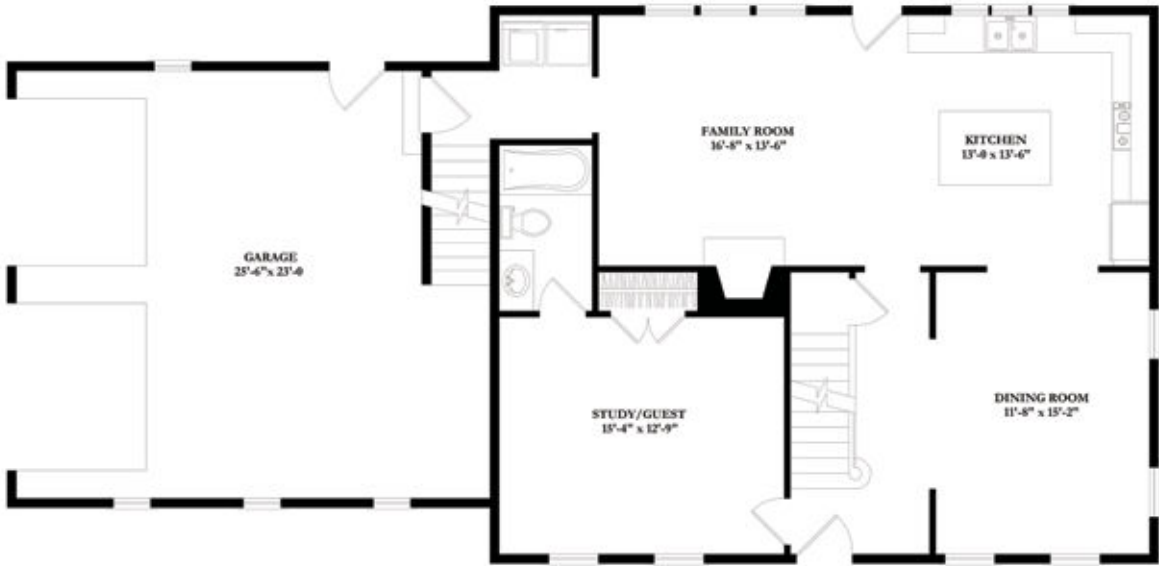


Photo: Linda Connor



# The Phoebe Soule House

1,994 Square Feet



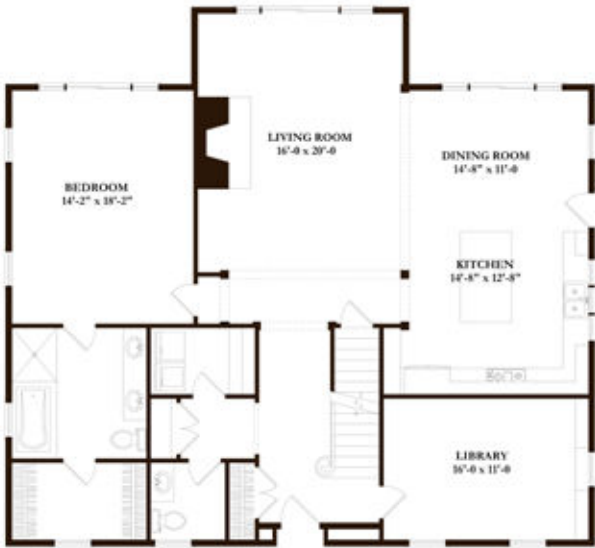
*This is the second home Mike and Linda Connor built for the same client. The client liked the floorplan of their first home, a saltbox, so much that the Connors adapted the plan for a cape. Several years later, a new client adapted the same plan for a shingled beach-front house in Massachusetts with the addition of third-storey dormers. We can easily modify these floorplans for different types of homes.*





*The Thomas Baynard House*

3,414 Square Feet



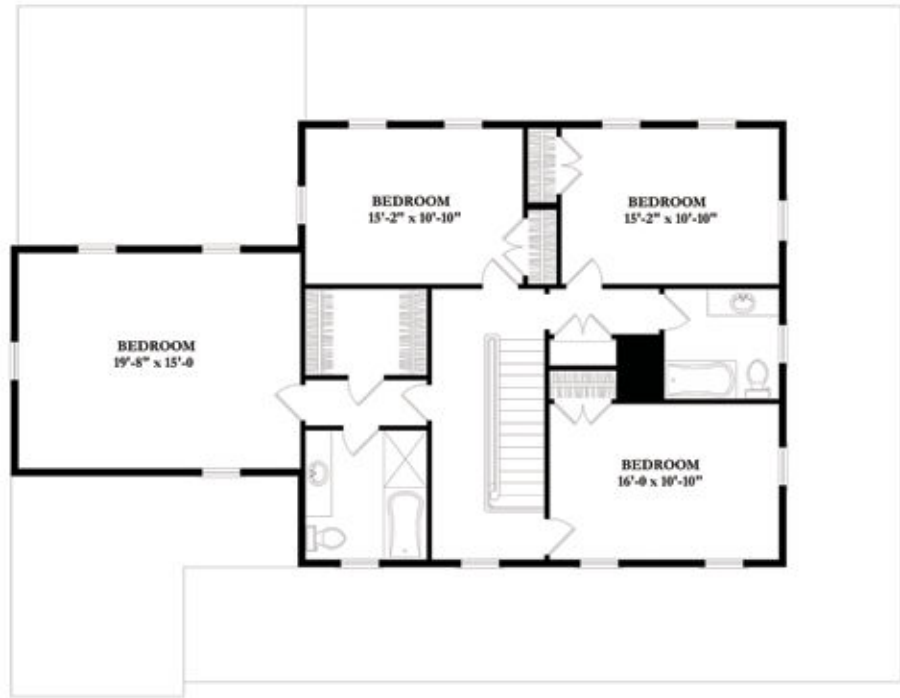
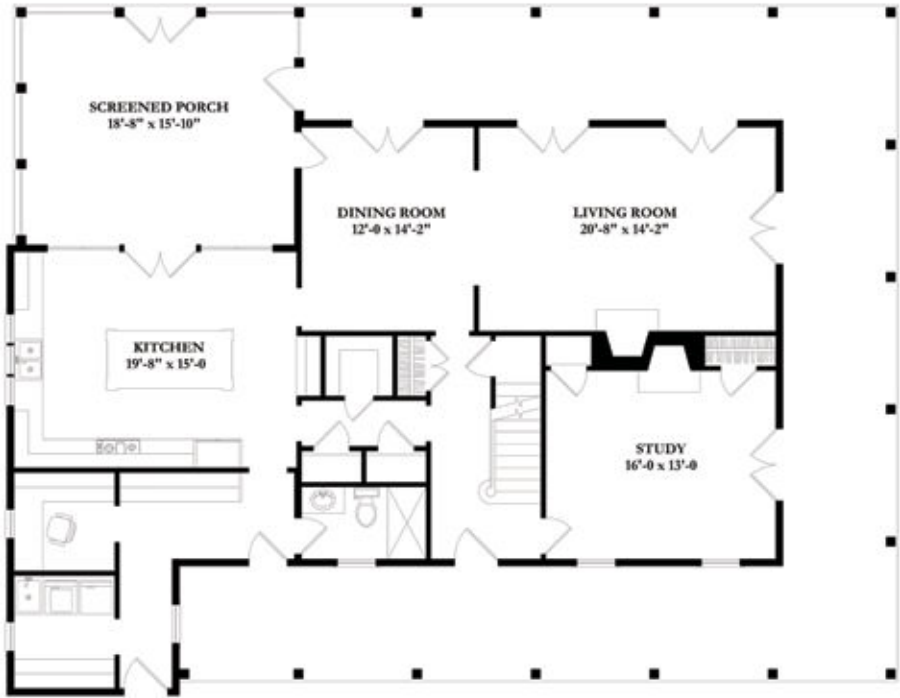
*The Hottenstein House around the time that Henry Francis du Pont purchased the second floor interior woodwork.*





# *The Susanna Halley House*

2,983 Square Feet





# Barns & Outbuildings

In a historic setting, most of the houses in our collection would have been built adjacent to outbuildings for livestock, agriculture, light industry, and carriages. Our barns and outbuildings are designed to be historically authentic, to complement the illusion of a historic property when added to one of our homes, or to stand independently. The barns in this collection can be built as shown, or used as inspiration for a new design. We have many more barn designs available, and plans and pricing are available upon request.

We offer barns at two levels of specifications: the same specifications as our houses for barns with finished space, or with simplified specifications more typical of an outbuilding. Material specifications may be changed as desired, and we also offer custom design services for barns and outbuildings.





## How We Can Work For You

Instead of contacting a builder, an architect, an engineer, permit specialists etc., contact our company, Connor Historic Design & Consulting. We will first let you know if we have a builder that we know and work with who is in your area. If we do, we will suggest a meeting between the three of us to determine next steps, and perhaps even give you some early estimates on the likely cost of your project. If we don't have a builder in your area, we may be able to work with you to find one. Many of our client-selected builders later become a building partner with our company.

We often meet at the building site so that we can get a first-hand look at site conditions and related costs. Our goal at this point is to quickly establish an estimated cost for your home so that you can start to make further decisions.

If, after an initial meeting, you decide that our Master Builder approach makes sense for you, the next step is to choose a design. There are three ways to choose a design.

- A. Choose one from our extensive collection of plans.
- B. Provide a schematic design to us that you have from another source.
- C. Place a design retainer and have us design a custom home for you.

The first option is the easiest and least expensive. Even if you make some limited but minor design changes, you will save considerable design costs in going this route.

Option two can also work, although we need to review an outside plan to be sure it is compatible with our approach. The upfront cost of a design retainer is between, \$1-2/ Sq Ft. We can give you a more accurate costing for custom design work once we've seen the scope of the project

Option three is the most common but costs can range from minimal to quite expensive. Again, initial cost for a custom schematic design is \$1-2/ Sq Ft., but costs for necessary construction drawings is additional.



*Front entrance at Mike and Linda Connor's home in Vermont*



Throughout all of the process, our expertise and the builder's expertise operate together to provide a seamless path to the end goal of a quality design and build, and prevent and overcome all the usual stumbling blocks of a typical build project. By applying deep institutional knowledge and experience, the overall quality of product is enhanced while its costs are reduced.

Once the process is in motion, the construction contract will typically be with the builder who will in turn hire and rely on Connor Historic Design & Consulting to provide plans for permitting and any other levels of expertise needed to enhance his own. The owner will be billed by the builder only who will include all of his costs including our company's efforts in his construction contract price. While the foregoing is the typical, there will of course be exceptions given the parameters and requirements of each situation, but in keeping with the Master Builder concept of transparency and competency, costs are always defined and discussed openly as the project moves forward.





