

Cara Maib

Dr. Peter Barr

American Art History ARH 330

22 November 2014

The Mumaw House: 717 N. Broad, Adrian, Michigan

What's in a name? In the naming of the Mumaw House, a residence located at 717 North Broad in Adrian, Michigan, it appears it was given as a 'right time, right place' event, at which houses were being labeled, and the Mumaws, well known amongst the community, had been the longest reigning residents of this beautiful home. One could assume the name had something to do with the original owner, or perhaps the architect, but neither is the case with this home. Nor is it the case that the Mumaw name was a name of sufficient notability that one could easily research it alone. However, this particular name aside, the physical style of the Mumaw House speaks volumes, particularly in



The Mumaw House, front view, Cara Maib ©2014

respect to its currently defined state. This house, on my initial interest toward it, was listed as an Italian Villa style home, built in the 1860s, and remodeled as a Queen Anne style two decades later. According to my research, however, I believe the residence known as the Mumaw House is neither Italian Villa in origin, nor was it built in the 1860s; I believe this home to have originated in the Queen Anne style, likely constructed during the 1890s.

My initial research originated at Art History Professor Peter Barr's website on 19th-Century Adrian Architecture, on which the Mumaw House is listed under Italianate and Italian Villa Style (Barr, Italianate). It is there defined as having been built in the 1860s, and then remodeled two decades later as a Queen Anne style. Upon further research into the Adrian Historical Society's archives, I discovered the source for this information, the Lenawee County Historical Society Calendar for 1997. For the month of November, Charles Lindquist, the writer for the calendar, printed that the house "dates back to the 1860s" and mentions that the Mumaw family lived there from 1936 to 1987 (Lindquist, Calendar). This of course begs the question; if they didn't live there until 1936, supposedly nearly 70 years after its construction, why is the house named after them? While this unfortunately goes unanswered, Lindquist also wrote about the distinctive tower of the home, equating this particular characteristic as definitive that the house originated as an Italian Villa.

What Lindquist failed to notice, though, was that although this home does indeed feature a beautiful tower, it does not feature another primary indicator of an Italian Villa style home:

decorative brackets beneath the eaves of the roof (McAlester, 211). As shown in Figure 1, pictures Lindquist himself captured while he was researching the home show these decorative brackets are only located above the porch, not on the roof. It's true that this could be an argument toward the theory of a remodel



Figure 1: "A170.717.1.9" and "A170.717.1.8", photographs of the home by Charles Lindquist in 1996, Graphic with circle provided by Cara Maib ©2014

several decades after it was built, however there are other factors which suggest this theory is highly unlikely.

One such factor is Lindquist's final statement of the house on the calendar, which identifies the bow window and decorated porch as "clearly a house from the Victorian era."

Queen Anne style is associated with the Victorian era, not Italian Villa style, which was of the Romantic era (McAlester, 211 and 263). It appears that Lindquist had the correct era, just not the correct style to go with it.

To properly define this home's style, there are multiple characteristic traits one can



Figure 2: Highly decorative detailing of the porch of the Mumaw House shows typical detail of a Queen Anne home, c. 1890s, photo by Cara Maib ©2014

identify. The Mumaw House features the following aspects of its outer structure: A steeply pitched roof with hips and gables, an asymmetrical shape and a wrap-around porch that extends across both the front and one side, as well as highly decorative detailing (see Figure 2), such as spindle work on the porch supports and gable

ornamentation on the roof, sometimes known as a verge board or gingerbread ornamentation. All of these characteristics are typical of Queen Anne style, according to Virginia and Lee McAlester, authors of "A Field Guide to American Houses" (263-268). Based on the doubled up porch supports and decorative brackets supporting the porch's roof, this home appears to be a combination of the Free Classic and Half-Timbered subtypes of the Queen Anne style. I would be more inclined to identify Free Classic as the overwhelming choice of definition, even without the classical columns typical of the style, largely because of the tower Lindquist was so eager to identify as Italian Villa style, as well as a Palladian window set on the third floor, which is defined as an arched window bordered on both sides by smaller square windows—these windows would suggest a date after 1893, in which the Columbian Exposition popularized this feature. The Free Classic subtype accounts for about 35 percent of all Queen Anne style homes,

and became the most common style right around the 1890s, when I believe this home was built. Further, the foundation of the home appears to be brick. Assuming this is not a façade and is actual brick, this home is not likely to have been in the 1860s. According to Jennifer Kaser, the current owner of the home along with her husband Morgan, the inspector they used prior to purchasing the home told her that they only used fieldstones for foundations at that time (Kaser). The inspector estimated the house was built sometime around 1885. In addition, while stone foundations appear very early in American architecture, brick foundations were used until about 1900, which were then followed by concrete block. Therefore, the brick foundation suggests—though it does not irrevocably prove—a building date before 1900.

Moving into the home, visitors enter through double doors into a foyer with a low-bannistered stairwell to the left, as well as doorways to the right and ahead. The doorway to the



Figure 3: Textured ceiling decoration as photographed from the 2nd floor of the Mumaw House, photo by Cara Maib ©2014

right features a double pocket door with beautiful wooden moldings on all sides. In Queen Anne style homes, wall surfaces are used as the “primary decorative elements,” according to the McAlesters (264). This is accomplished through devices such as these moldings (objects that project into the room) or wall coverings with multiple textures. Moving up to

the second floor, a glance at the ceiling provides just such a texture, as seen in Figure 3.

The second floor featured a bathroom, a master bedroom, and two more bedrooms, currently being used for a craft room and a guest bedroom. Between the master bedroom and the craft room were stairs leading up to the attic, which featured an extra room in the tower. Going back down the stairs and into the living room, to the right was a large picture window (more physical ornamentation), and to the left was another molded set of sliding doors, leading into an

extra space. This room once contained a set of stairs leading into the basement, but it had been remodeled during the depression to close off the wall and redirect the stairs down the opposite side (Kaser). You can still see the outline of the remodel, as pictured in Figure 4. This also allowed the owners at the time to add a second bathroom to the home.

Turning left from this room, you walk into a dining room complete with a beautiful bay window and three doorways, two to the left (one leading back into the foyer, and another leading out onto the side porch) and one to the right, leading into the kitchen. In the kitchen are yet two more doorways, one leading into a pantry, and

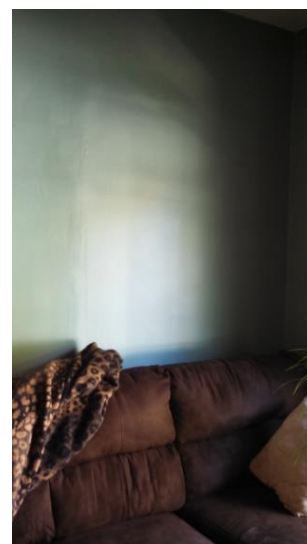
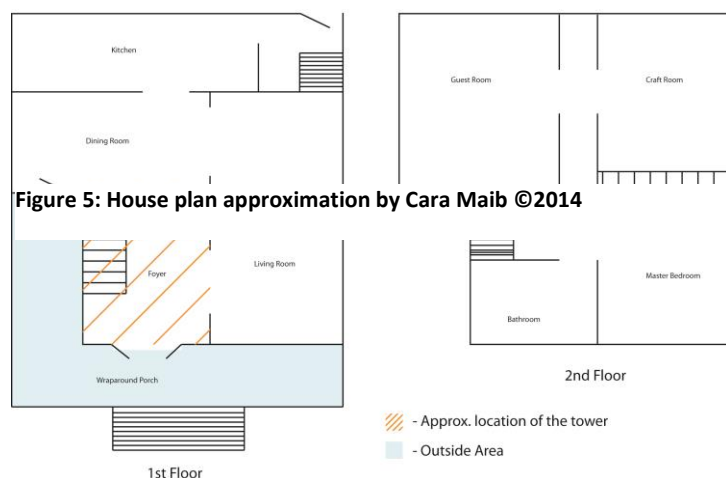


Figure 4: Remodel outline, photograph by Cara Maib ©2014

another leading into a mudroom style area. In this area are the remodeled stairs leading down into the basement, and a back door leading out onto a small porch with stairs. Figure 5 shows an approximated mock-up of the house plan, specifically the first and second floors, based on my tour of the home. This visually shows the asymmetrical shape of the home, typical of Queen Anne style homes. It does not feature the pantry, which was originally the second kitchen of the home (Kaser). This second kitchen may



have been a result of the subdivision of the home into apartments.

Stepping out into the backyard we see a garage standing separate from the home, which was the original carriage house. “There used to be buggies in there,” said Kaser, noting

another structure that had been added at a later date to extend the garage. She also pointed out

an area which had been cemented over, relating that there used to be an active outhouse in the backyard. There may have been a well there too, as wells were common in the 1890s.

Toward the end of the interview, Kaser mentioned that she had been unable to locate any proof or documentation of changes to the home's original outer structure, though she suggested the home had undergone at least three stages of change. This further leads me to believe that the remodel 'from Italian Villa to Queen Anne style' suggested on Barr's website never happened, but that this was the Queen Anne style all along, with only minor changes to the structure and unattached buildings.

For further evidence of the home's original state of being, I turned my investigation toward the archives of the Lenawee County Historical Society, where I found directories, tax records, obituaries and, as shown before, photos and a calendar, all of which continued leading to my original conclusion. Lacking the aid of an abstract of title, my first step was to determine if the home had always been labeled 717 North Broad. With the Adrian Insurance Maps of Lenawee County, I was able to identify that it had once been 73 North Broad, and had changed at some point to 717.

My second step was to go through as many directories as possible to determine the changing owners of the home over the years, and to hopefully determine an original owner. Using three separate series of directories (see Adrian City Directories, Polk's Adrian City Directories, and McEldowney's Adrian City Directories), I was able to define the following list of primary residents and their approximate dates of residency: From 1894 to 1900, George A. Treat, a carpenter, and his wife Sadie, with the address listed as 73 North Broad; From at least 1903 to 1907, Earl S. Rogers, who worked for WMH Rogers & Son Hides & Pelts; As of 1909 to 1915 George Treat and his wife moved back in; In 1917 Charles E. Frey and his wife Sadie were listed, and it was at this point in the directories the address changed from 73 to 717. Just to note,

while Sadie is an unusual name, I do believe Treat’s wife Sadie and Frey’s wife Sadie are two different women, because in Treat’s obituary in 1931, his wife is not listed as a survivor, and therefore could not have been his widow in 1917 (George A. Treat).

Continuing on, in 1921 Frank Filter (farmer) and his wife Anna are listed; From 1925 to 1929 John E. Nemire resided; As of 1932, we finally see Mr. Archie R. Numaw, a shipper for the American Chain & Cable Co., and his wife Florence; As of 1936, the name changes from Archie Numaw to Archie Mumaw and stays that way until the day he passes away in 1987, still a resident (Florence had passed in 1978, see Obituary listings in bibliography); From 1988 to 1994, Eug C. Cheetwood and his wife Oranlee, retired, though in 1993 only Ona Lee was listed (a misspelling perhaps, or a different person?); From 1997 to 1998, Greg P. Idding (attorney) and his wife Adrienne; In 1999 Michael Iddings Jr. and wife Adrienne; in 2000 Greg Iddings (with an added ‘s’, another misspelling, or perhaps a name change?) again; finally from 2001 to 2003, Dana E. Gillin and his wife Lisa, an optician. On several occasions, more than one set of names was listed, indicating that the house was converted into a multi-family apartment at one point, and then reconverted into a single-family home.

This is as far as the directories went within the Historical Society, at which point I can only add the current owners to the list as of July of 2014, Jennifer Kaser and her husband, Morgan (Kaser).

Through this fairly comprehensive list, however, I was able to decipher that the original owner was likely George A. Treat. This is backed up by City of Adrian Tax

NAME OF OWNER OR OCCUPANT	DESCRIPTION	VALUATION		TAXES	
		Assessed	Exempt	Property	Other
George Treat	Parcel lot 1 blk 1 Town lot 1, both add and all of lot 2 blk 20 lying E. of Center from blk	75		75	
Thomas Charles	House & lot on Farmer add	500		500	
Treat E.B.	Parcel lot 1 blk 10 & 1/2 corner blk & add 12 2	75		75	
George Treat	Parcel lot 202 add 1st	1000		1000	
Walter H. H. H.	Parcel lot 210 add 1st	700		700	
Thomas Philip	Parcel lot 211 add 1st	400		400	

Figure 6: Photograph of City of Adrian Tax Records from 1894, showing George Treat as taxpaying owner. Photo and graphic with circle by Cara Maib ©2014

Records, listing him as the tax-paying owner back as far as 1894 (See Figure 6). In addition, there was no listing for him in the previous record from 1892. I was unable to identify any earlier owners through either the tax records or the directories, so I can make a fairly logical assumption that the home was built in the 1890s, not in the 1860s. It should be noted, however, that I was unable to identify any earlier residents of 73 North Broad prior to 1894 because it wasn't until that year that directories started offering the option to find a listing by the address. So, previous to that, as Treat was listed at a different location in 1890 (the next previous directory available to the 1894 edition), I was unable to identify who lived at 73 North Broad, if it even existed.

I was also able to figure that the only reason I can define for the naming the home "The Mumaw House" is that the Mumaws were the longest residing owners of the building, regardless of the name change from Numaw to Mumaw. Mumaws were indeed there from at least 1932 to 1987, a grand total of at least 55 years and, if the house was built in the 1890s as I believe, they



Figure 7: Hart-Cavallero House, Italian Villa located at 430 Dennis Street, built in 1856

resided at that house for approximately 46 percent of the total existence of the house as of 2014, far longer than any other resident to date.

To give one more brief comparison to cement that this home was never an Italian Villa, please take a look at figure 7, a well-

defined brackets



Figure 8: E. L. Baker House, Queen Anne located at 414 Dennis Street, built in 1896.

Italian Villa home with brackets beneath the eaves and a definitive Queen Anne porch and decorative

the Mumaw House can

rounded tower, and figure 8, structure, featuring the same L-shaped spindles as the Mumaw House. Visually, really only be compared to the Queen Anne effectively.

On the assumption that my conclusion of an 1890s origination is correct, here is a little background information on that decade in Adrian, to give you an idea of the era in which this home was built. Known as ‘the Gay 90s’ even despite the “second worst depression in American history”, it featured the fall of the railroad industry in Adrian, and the rise of the woven wire fence industry (Lindquist, Chapter 6). One of the first African-American baseball teams was sponsored in 1894 as a result of this, originally known as the Page Fence Giants, and later became known simply as the Page Giants when Page Fence dropped their sponsorship of the team. Also, in “a major campaign to attract and keep industries” in Adrian in 1891, the Adrian Land Purchasing and Improvement Company was formed to purchase hundreds of acres of land to sell to raise money “to help factories get started.” Sadly, the depression hit during the second year of this campaign, and the company was forced to sell off the lots at \$10 to \$20 each. Economic development didn’t stop there, though. Despite the state of the economy, Treat still erected a grand house, which still stands today.

The Lima Northern Railroad came through town by 1896, and by the end of the decade, several new manufacturers had settled in the town, including Gibford Manufacturing, Clough and Warren (a piano making firm), the American Screen Door Company, and Ladd and George Lewis (a knitting mill company which made fleece-lined children’s underwear) (Lindquist, Chapter 6). One major name to come out of the decade was Elmer Smith, who was hailed by the *Chicago Times-Herald* in 1896 as “the chrysanthemum king” for his development of so many new varieties of the plant. By 1890, he had 14 greenhouses with approximately 20,000 feet of room for his cultivations.

This decade also saw Adrian’s first non-partisan newspaper published, by publisher-editor D. W. Grandon, who said his paper would be “for the people” (Lindquist, Chapter 6). His newspaper also brought in the city’s first typesetting machine. While this prospered, however, a

great fire nearly took out the Masonic Temple in 1893, a grand Second-Empire style structure, along with all the businesses within it. Thankfully, the building was able to be restored, although with a new roof. Another major result of the 1890s was the advance of the telephone business, to include the Adrian Telephone Company, founded in 1897, with “500 subscribers by 1899.” They merged with the Bell Telephone Company, which had been founded in 1877, in 1910, to become the Lenawee County Telephone Company.

War was declared against Spain over Cuba near the end of the decade in 1898, during which “we were fighting to free Cuba from Spanish rule” (Lindquist, Chapter 6). Adrian soldiers were mobilized and sent, but they didn’t arrive until the war was already over. Following that, however, another war emerged by 1900, in which the U.S. took control of the Philippines from Spain. There were both deaths and injuries of Adrian soldiers in that war.

On a more academic note, the 1890s saw the establishment of St. Joseph Academy in 1896 by the Dominicans in Adrian, “under the leadership of Mother Camilla Madden,” a private academy for girls (Lindquist, Chapter 6). Adrian College also added a new building that decade with the support of local businessman David Metcalf, and appropriately named it Metcalf Hall.

In terms of architecture, this decade saw “about two dozen houses” built, among which were several Queen Anne homes, such as the Mumaw House (Lindquist, Chapter 6). Cultural diversity also began to flourish in the 1890s, with the introduction of the *Afro-American Directory of Adrian, Michigan* in 1895, and the arrival of other social groups, including Italian-Americans for the first time. There was a rise of labor unions in this decade, though they were largely unsuccessful in their talks, resulting in mass job loss. Women’s employment improved during this decade, however, with many women able to find work outside of domestic service, such as at canneries and dressmaking shops, in which they could learn a trade.

So there you have it, all of the details that define The Mumaw House as a Queen Anne style home built in the 1890s, as well as information about the decade to give you a look into the era in which the house was built. Having listed multiple architectural characteristics of the home typical of Queen Anne style, completed an interview with the current owner, and investigated the historical evidence to back it up, I find unilaterally that the Mumaw House could not possibly be labeled an Italian Villa, nor could it have been built in the 1860s.

Bibliography

“Adrian Insurance Maps of Lenawee County” July 1908 and August 1916. *Sanborn Map Co.*

Broadway, N.Y. Print.

“Archie R. Mumaw”. Obituary. *The Daily Telegram*. 3 Oct. 1987. Print.

“City of Adrian Tax Records”. Ward 2, 1894. Print.

“City of Adrian Tax Records”. Ward 2. 1892. Print.

“F. Mumaw”. Obituary. *The Daily Telegram*. 17 Feb. 1978. Print.

“George A. Treat”. Obituary. *The Daily Telegram*. 13 Mar. 1931. Print.

Barr, Peter. "19th-Century Adrian Architecture - Italianate and Italian Villa Style." *19th-Century*

Adrian Architecture - Italianate and Italian Villa Style. 3 Dec. 2007. Web. 22 Nov. 2014.

<<http://web2.sienaheights.edu/personal/pbarr/italianate.html>>.

Barr, Peter. "19th-Century Adrian Architecture - Queen Anne." *19th-Century Adrian*

Architecture - Queen Anne. 3 Dec. 2007. Web. 22 Nov. 2014.

<<http://web2.sienaheights.edu/personal/pbarr/queen-anne.html>>.

Chapin, Henry H. “Adrian City Directory: 1890-91”. 1890. Print.

Kaser, Jennifer. Interview. September 23, 2014.

Lindquist, Charles. "A170.717.1.9" and "A170.717.1.8". Photographs taken for the Lenawee County Historical Society 1997 Calendar. Adrian, MI: Lenawee County Historical Society, Inc., 1996. Print.

Lindquist, Charles. *Lenawee County Historical Society 1997 Calendar*. Adrian, MI: Lenawee County Historical Society, Inc, 1996. Print.

Lindquist, Charles. *Adrian: The City That Worked, A History of Adrian, Michigan, 1825-2000*. Adrian, Michigan: Lenawee County Historical Society, 2004. Print.

McAlester, Virginia, and A. Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984. Print.

McEldowney, J. R. "J. R. McEldowney's Adrian City Directory" Series from 1894 - 1900. *The Times and Expositor*. Print.

Polk, R. L. and Co. "Polk's Adrian City Directory" Series from 1903 – 2003. *R. L. Polk & Co.* Print.

Walker, Les. "American Homes: The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture". New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 2002. Print.