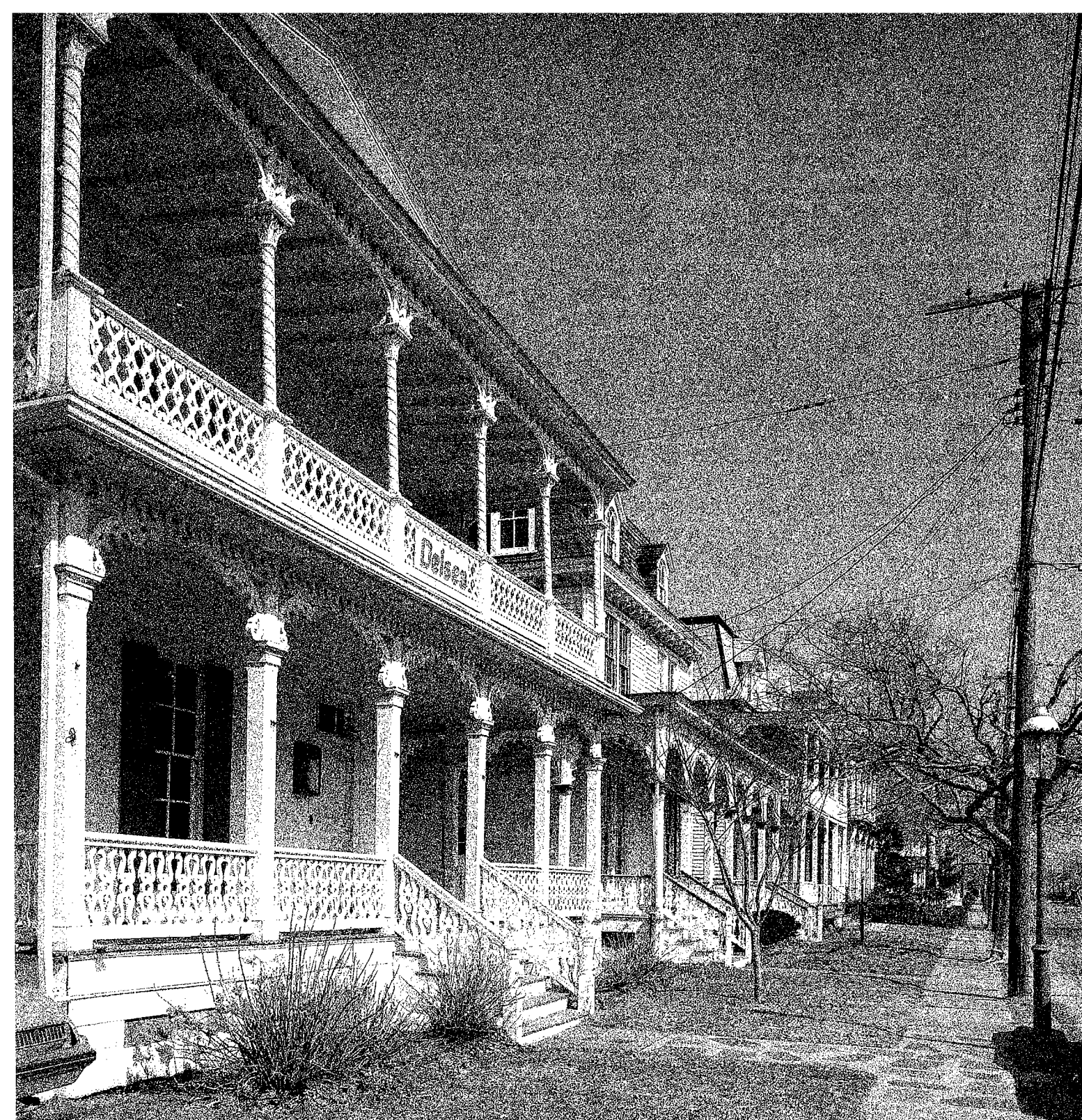


# Building Exterior

## *Entrances and Porches*



# Building Exterior

## *Entrances and Porches*

Entrances and porches are quite often the focus of historic buildings, particularly on primary elevations. Together with their functional and decorative features such as doors, steps, balustrades, pilasters, and entablatures, they can be extremely important in defining the overall character of a building. In many cases, porches were energy-saving devices, shading southern and western elevations. Usually entrances and porches were integral components of a historic building's design; for example, porches on Greek Revival houses, with Doric or Ionic columns and pediments, echoed the architectural elements and features of the larger building. Central one-bay porches or arcaded porches are evident in Italianate style buildings of the 1860s. Doors of Renaissance Revival style buildings frequently supported entablatures or pedi-

ments. Porches were particularly prominent features of Eastlake and Stick Style houses; porch posts, railings, and balusters were characterized by a massive and robust quality, with members turned on a lathe. Porches of bungalows of the early 20th century were characterized by tapered porch posts, exposed post and beams, and low pitched roofs with wide overhangs. Art Deco commercial buildings were entered through stylized glass and stainless steel doors.





#### Recommended

### *Identify, retain, and preserve*

Identifying, retaining, and preserving entrances—and their functional and decorative features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as doors, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, entablatures, columns, balustrades, and stairs.



#### Not Recommended

Removing or radically changing entrances and porches which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

Stripping entrances and porches of historic material such as wood, cast iron, terra cotta tile, and brick.

Removing an entrance or porch because the building has been re-oriented to accommodate a new use.

Cutting new entrances on a primary elevation.

Altering utilitarian or service entrances so they appear to be formal entrances by adding panelled doors, fanlights, and sidelights.

### *Protect and maintain*

Protecting and maintaining the masonry, wood, and architectural metal that comprise entrances and porches through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating systems.

Failing to provide adequate protection to materials on a cyclical basis so that deterioration of entrances and porches results.

Evaluating the overall condition of materials to determine whether more than protection and maintenance are required, that is, if repairs to entrance and porch features will be necessary.

Failing to undertake adequate measures to assure the protection of historic entrances and porches.

*A variety of historic entrances and porches is illustrated here, ranging from the elegance of a Georgian-style entrance, to the more vernacular nature of a 19th century wood porch, to the utilitarian, yet romantic Mediterranean-style loggia.*

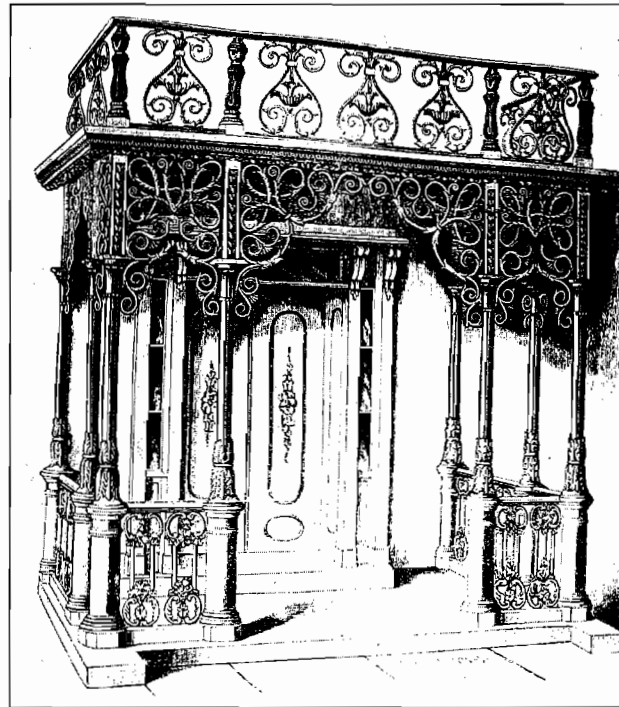
Photos: Jack Boucher, HABS.

Recommended

*Repair*

Repairing entrances and porches by reinforcing the historic materials. Repair will also generally include the limited replacement in kind—or with compatible substitute material—of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of repeated features where there are surviving prototypes such as balustrades, cornices, entablatures, columns, sidelights, and stairs.

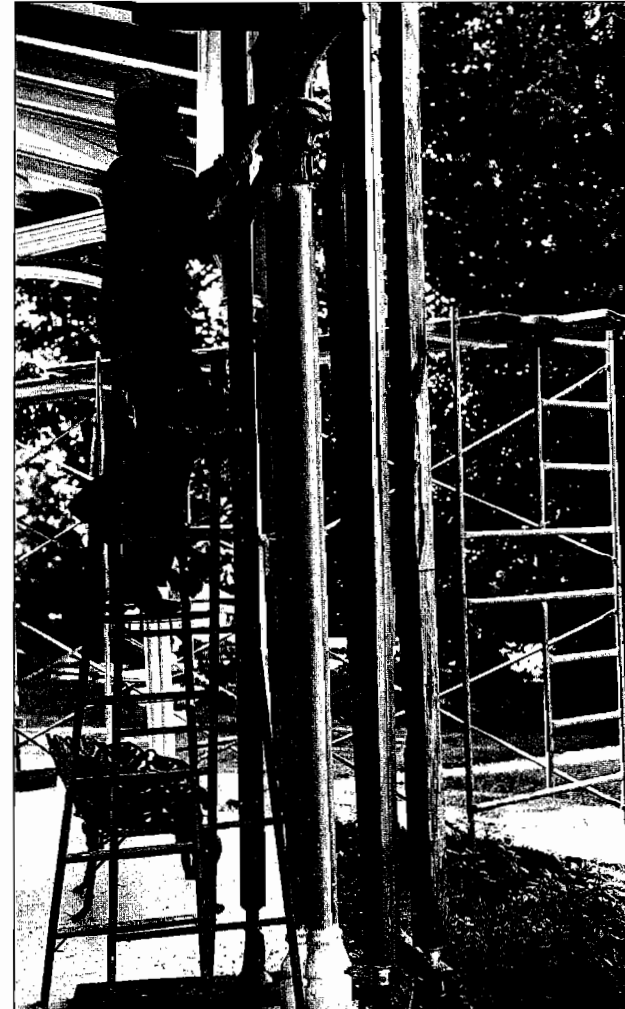
*In the 19th century some cast-iron porches could be purchased by mail, such as this made-to-order veranda which was featured in an 1870 foundry catalog.*



Not Recommended

Replacing an entire entrance or porch when the repair of materials and limited replacement of parts are appropriate.

Using a substitute material for the replacement parts that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the entrance and porch or that is physically or chemically incompatible.



*Careful inspection of porch features such as these column capitals is necessary before initiating a rehabilitation project.*

## Recommended

### *Replace*

Replacing in kind an entire entrance or porch that is too deteriorated to repair—if the form and detailing are still evident—using the physical evidence as a model to reproduce the feature. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.



## Not Recommended

Removing an entrance or porch that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new entrance or porch that does not convey the same visual appearance.

*A 1910 wrap-around porch was removed from this 1830 house during rehabilitation. Although a later addition, the porch should not have been removed because it had acquired significance over time and was thus an important feature in defining the character of this historic structure.*

*The following work is highlighted to indicate that it represents the particularly complex technical or design aspects of rehabilitation projects and should only be considered after the preservation concerns listed above have been addressed.*

#### Recommended

##### ***Design for Missing Historic Features***

Designing and constructing a new entrance or porch when the historic entrance or porch is completely missing. It may be a restoration based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.

##### ***Alterations/Additions for the New Use***

Designing enclosures for historic porches when required by the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building. This can include using large sheets of glass and recessing the enclosure wall behind existing scrollwork, posts, and balustrades.

Designing and installing additional entrances or porches when required for the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the buildings, i.e., limiting such alteration to non-character-defining elevations.

#### Not Recommended

Creating a false historical appearance because the replaced entrance or porch is based on insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.

Introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.

Enclosing porches in a manner that results in a diminution or loss of historic character such as using solid materials such as wood, stucco, or masonry.

Installing secondary service entrances and porches that are incompatible in size and scale with the historic building or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.

*This rehabilitation connected two separate porches, resulting in the creation of a large continuous porch that obscures the historic twin porch design; it is thus incompatible with the historic character of the house.*

