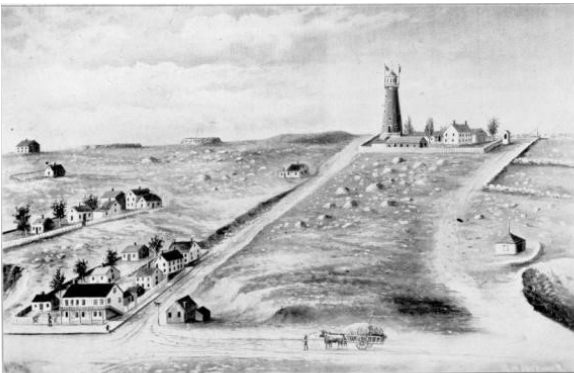


Munjoy Hill Architectural Development & Context Statement

April 2019



Development History: 1786-1866



Munjoy Hill in the Forties by Charles Goodhue
Collections of the Maine Historical Society, MMN 4144



Munjoy Hill in 1826 as drawn by Lemuel Moody
Collections of the Maine Historical Society, MMN 100727



Munjoy Hill in 1851 from the H.F. Walling Map of Cumberland County.

Munjoy Hill rises 161 feet above Casco Bay on the eastern end of the Portland peninsula. The Hill's namesake George Munjoy (c1626-1680) settled near present day Mountfort and Fore Streets in 1659. He fled Portland after an Indian attack in 1676 and never returned.

The center of activity on Munjoy Hill for many years was the Portland Observatory (1807) which served as a signal communications tower for merchant vessels. Adjacent to the Observatory was a bowling alley and the house of its founder and operator Lemuel Moody.

Although Munjoy Hill came to be the city's most densely populated and ethnically diverse neighborhood, it was one of the last neighborhoods on the peninsula to be developed. Its primary functions from the city's founding in the 1630s until the 1840s were as an occasional gathering place and a pasture for cows. Throughout the mid-18th century a group called the Munjoy Proprietors erected a system of stone walls on the hill, with a gate near the present-day intersection of Washington Avenue and Congress Street. The Munjoy Proprietors sold "cow rights" to locals for pasturing their cattle.

The cow pastures were also the site of large open-air events. The fields between the Observatory and Eastern Cemetery were popular for 4th of July celebrations, circuses, and militia musters.

Early structures on the hill in addition to the Observatory included a hospital for small pox victims, a gun house, and Fort Sumner. The fort was built in 1794 off North Street to protect the city from attacks from the west and Back Cove.

In 1796 Tukey's Bridge was built, connecting the peninsula to the mainland. Washington Avenue was laid out to connect the city to the bridge in anticipation of a residential building boom that didn't immediately materialize.

Instead, groups of structures were scattered across the hill, first near the gate to Munjoy Hill,

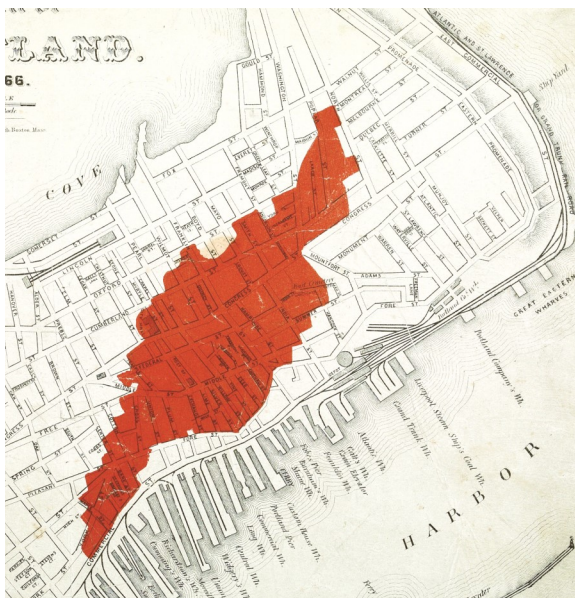
Development History: 1786-1866



Munjoy Hill in 1857 from the H.F. Walling *Map of Cumberland County*.



Congress Street on Munjoy Hill after the Fire of 1866
Greater Portland Landmarks



Extent of the Great Fire of 1866
Greater Portland Landmarks

then along Cumberland Avenue, Congress and Lafayette Streets.

As the Hill's population increased, in 1836 City officials bought up land along the shoreline, despite public outcry at the waste of public money. Much of this area is now the Eastern Promenade.

While the Eastern Promenade was preserved for future public use, on the opposite side of Munjoy Hill tons of gravel were removed to fill in Back Cove. Moses Gould, owner of 18 acres on the Hill, formed the Back Cove Land Co. to fill and develop the mud flats in what is now Bayside.

Expansion on the waterfront was precipitated by the founding by John A. Poor of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad. Chartered in 1845 and opened in 1853, the railroad connected Portland to Montreal, Quebec. Poor also helped found the Portland Company on Fore Street in 1847 to build locomotives for his new railroad. The upsurge in activity along Fore and India Streets in the 1840s and 1850s led to a residential boom on the Hill, attracting workers from the Portland Company and railroad. Many of these homes were built in the Greek Revival Style that predominated during this period.

On the western side of the Hill, the area between Washington Avenue and North Street developed a unsavory reputation in the early 19th century. In 1849 a riot broke out in a bawdy house. During the riots one man was killed and a dance hall was destroyed by fire. This area would be mostly destroyed in a few decades by a catastrophic fire with significant impact on the entire city.

The Great Fire of July 4th and 5th, 1866 spread from Commercial Street to North Street. It destroyed 1,500 buildings and left over 10,000 people homeless. The field below the Observatory was turned into a makeshift tent-city by the Army, then replaced by wooden dormitories until permanent housing could be built.

Several early homes on the east side of North Street survived the fire including the Benjamin Noble House (1856) at 65 North Street and the double house of Eliphalet Clark and Moses Gould at 79 North Street (c1847).

Development History: 1866-1917



Munjoy Hill from a *Bird's-Eye Map of Portland* Published by J. J. Stoner in 1876



The index of a map prepared by the city Tax Assessor 1882-1884 depicts the extent of development on Munjoy Hill.

Following the Great Fire, the city's need for housing drove development on Munjoy Hill. This development was largely middle-class homes, with a few high style residences in the Italianate and Second Empire styles. A few years earlier in 1863 the city's horse drawn street car line had reached Munjoy Hill helping to make the hillside areas attractive for development after the fire. Residential development spread out from existing residential areas eastward toward the Promenade on Turner, Quebec, Melbourne and Montreal Streets, which had been subdivided 1857 and 1858.

In 1874 the Deering family heirs subdivided their land along Congress, Sheridan and Kellogg Streets. A few years later in 1879 the family subdivided additional land along the east side of Munjoy Street and the north side of Congress Street from Howard Street to the Eastern Promenade.

By the 1880s, Munjoy, Atlantic and St. Lawrence Streets were largely built out. These long streets extended between Fore to Congress and were interconnected by short streets like Sherbrooke Street or small lanes like Gilbert's Lane. To the east, a pond initially blocked the extension of several streets westward to Congress Street. The pond was located in the area generally occupied in the 20th century by the Adams School (*image bottom left*). Within the next ten years the area would be drained and developed. One block within this formerly wet area would become one of four car barns for the Portland Railroad Co. after the street car line expanded its route on the Hill from Congress Street, down Morning Street to the Eastern Prom. It then wended its way back to Congress Street along Beckett, Wilson, and Atlantic Streets. The company's street cars lines were all electrified by 1896.

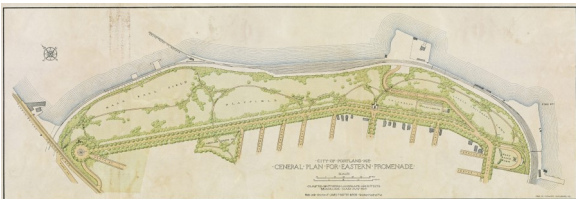
Development History: 1866-1917



Portland Railroad Company's car barn on Beckett Street.



Munjoy Hill Reservoir c1920.
Portland Water District, MMN 82239



Olmsted Brothers design for Eastern Promenade.



J.J. Nissen House, 286 Eastern Promenade in 1924.

In 1889 the Munjoy Hill reservoir was built at the corner of North and Walnut Streets by the Portland Water Company. The reservoir was built to better serve customers in the East End and had a capacity of 20,000,000 gallons. The reservoir burst a few years later in 1893, killing four people and destroying four homes off Walnut Street. The reservoir remained in operation until 1970 as a water supply; today the site is a parking lot above a large underground reservoir.

In the last decade of the 19th century, wealthy local families began to appreciate the Eastern Promenade's sweeping views and began erecting grand homes opposite the City-owned green space. The residential development followed efforts begun by the city in 1878 to improve the publically owned green space. In 1890 the City acquired Fort Allen to extend the city's park space. The park and perimeter roadway became key elements in the park and boulevard system envisioned by Mayor James Phinney Baxter and the Olmsted brothers landscape firm in 1905.

Twenty-one of the thirty-three single family homes on the Eastern Promenade were built between 1888-1912 in the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Samuel D. Plummer, a Portland real estate dealer, built his Queen Anne house at 140 Eastern Promenade in 1898. The Griffin Brothers, prominent fruit dealers on Portland's waterfront, built large homes on the Promenade. Lindsay B. Griffin first built a house at 182 Eastern Prom in 1897, then built a new Colonial Revival House at 188 Eastern Prom in 1908. His brother John built a similar home at 150 Eastern Prom in 1910. One of the prominent Colonial Revival homes on the northern end of the Promenade was the 1913 residence of John. J Nissen, founder of Nissen Bakery at 59 Washington Avenue.

Development History: 1866-1917



Samuel D. Plummer House, built 1898 at 140 Eastern Promenade.



Triple deckers on Munjoy Hill.



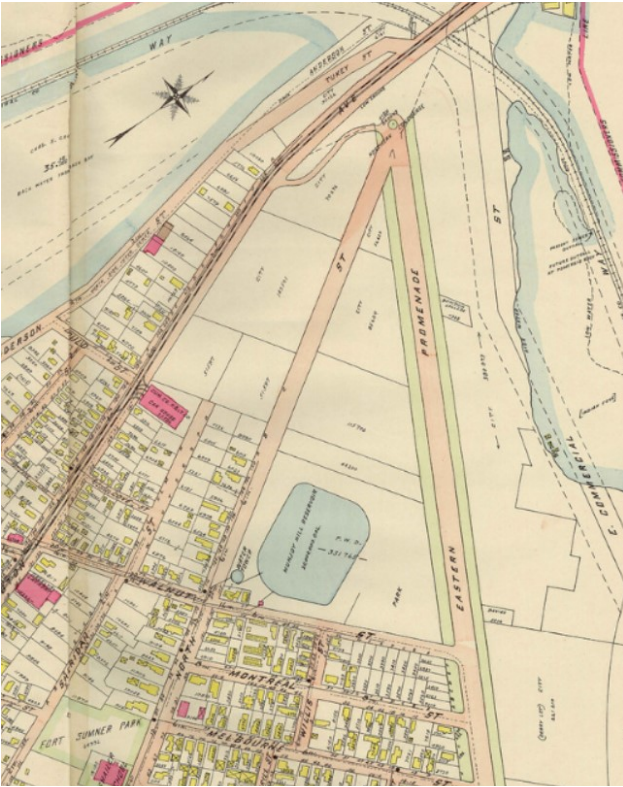
Triple deckers on Munjoy Hill.

Between 1895 and 1917 “triple deckers” or “flat houses” were built in large numbers on Munjoy Hill. They are particularly prevalent on Morning, Vesper and Beckett Streets, as well as Sheridan and Kellogg Streets. The land on Morning, Vesper and Beckett Streets was owned by the Deering and Fessenden families and was some of the last vacant land to be laid out on Munjoy Hill. The triple-deckers and the few apartment buildings built during this period were multi-family residential building types that housed the Hill’s increasing immigrant population from Italy and Northern and Eastern Europe.

Portland was a busy maritime port in the early 20th century and served as an immigrant port of entry. Portland’s primarily English population was joined by groups from Ireland, Canada, Portugal, Scandinavia, Italy, Eastern Europe, and Greece. Munjoy Hill’s close proximity to the downtown made it attractive to many immigrant families. Immigrant families settled on the Hill and often built neighborhood businesses like the Capozza brothers barber shop or Paul Blumenthal’s grocery store.

By World War I, most of the neighborhood’s residential lots were filled, however land to the west along North Street and the Eastern Promenade remained vacant.

Development History: 1917 – Present



Map of the northern end of Munjoy Hill depicting vacant land.
Richards Standard Atlas of the City of Portland, 1914.



View of the Munjoy Hill Reservoir and the Jack school beyond.
Portland Water District, MMN 94455.



View of Portland House in the distance.

By the late 1920s, although most of the neighborhood's residential lots had been developed, some lots remained vacant, particularly along North Street and the Eastern Promenade. During the 20th century infill development and construction of new institutional and educational buildings slowly filled the remaining land.

In 1929 the Jewish Home for the Aged was designed by architect Herbert Rhodes and built at 158 North Street.

Jack Junior High School was built on North Street near the Munjoy Hill Reservoir on land gifted to the city by the Portland Water District in 1943 for seventh and eighth grade students in the Munjoy Hill neighborhood. The school was later used as an elementary school. The building was closed in 2001 and replaced by the East End Community School built on the same site in 2006.

In 1947 the housing development at 304 Eastern Promenade was built on the site of homes destroyed in the reservoir flood. The development includes seven buildings on a 1.7-acre lot with parking along the perimeter of the development.

A few years later in 1950 at the corner of Eastern Promenade and Quebec Street, six multi-unit buildings were constructed on a one-acre lot. Like the other mid-twentieth century housing project on the Eastern Promenade, it is a low scale development and does not follow the traditional street pattern.

Today, the Munjoy Hill skyline is dominated by two large-scale residential buildings. The Portland House, overlooking the Fore River at 45 Eastern Promenade, was built in 1969 as an apartment building and today houses over 100 residential condominiums.

Promenade East, purportedly the first high rise condominium building in Maine, was built in 1975. The building is fourteen stories high and accommodates 80-units. Its interior has a unique layout with two floors sharing a single hallway.



Henry Homer House, 81 Congress Street (c1829) in 1924.



7 Lafayette Street (1849 - 1852) in a 1924 image.



7 Lafayette Street (1849—1852) in 2018.

Architectural styles of the Hill's residences provide useful clues to the development and history of the neighborhood. While few buildings from the Hill's early settlement remain, there are many buildings from the three major periods of construction: early subdivisions for housing for workers along the expanding waterfront (1847-1866), Post Fire development (1866-1890s) and housing for Portland's expanding immigrant population (1890s -1930). Research conducted by Greater Portland Landmarks in the early 1980s provided dates for many of the homes on Munjoy Hill.

A number of buildings on Munjoy Hill exhibit the characteristics of more than one style, either because they are transitional between stylistic periods or due to later additions. Some buildings, altered by the replacement of exterior siding and the removal of exterior features display no particular architectural style.

Early Settlement (1785-1845)

The few buildings that remain from the early settlement on Munjoy Hill are wood-framed, three-bay, side gable capes and are generally located near the crest of the hill. The Henry Homer House (c1829) at 81 Congress Street is a one-and-a-half story three bay cape that has been altered by a side addition. A slightly later example is the dwelling at 7 Lafayette Street (1849-1852).

Another altered example of an early house is located at 62 Munjoy Street. The first floor was a five-bay cape built c1790 in the Federal period. The cape was likely moved and a second floor added c1857 by builder William Hoit.

Early Subdivisions (1845-1866)

Two early subdivisions of land, one off North Street and the other off Fore Street include good examples of the Greek Revival style. These homes typically feature a strong post and lintel door surround. While most homes in this style on Munjoy Hill are wood framed, there are several brick Greek Revival homes in the neighborhood. The brick dwellings usually feature stone lintels over their windows.



Moses Gould and Eliphalet Clark at 79-81 North Street (1847).



Joseph Flower House at 87 St. Lawrence Street (c1852).

One of the best examples of a brick Greek Revival is the Robert Dresser House (1850-1851) at 2 Atlantic Street. The two-story building has stone lintels above the windows and a recessed entry door with sidelights. Another early example is the double house of Moses Gould and Eliphalet Clark at 79-81 North Street (1847). Like the Dresser House, the Gould-Clark House has recessed entries. The entry at 81 North Street retains its entry sidelight design. Altered by Italianate entry hoods, the Greek Revival style is evident in the building's strong gable-end pediments, the recessed brick window bays, and the stone lintels and sills at each window.

Additional brick dwellings are located at 16 Atlantic Street (1852-1853), 55 Atlantic Street (1855), 62 Waterville Street (1855) and 66 Waterville Street (1855-1857). A late example of a brick Greek Revival dwelling is the Gabriel Mark House at 74 St. Lawrence Street built in 1872.

St. Lawrence, Atlantic and Waterville Streets contain a high percentage of Greek Revival frame residences. There are thirteen examples of the Greek Revival style built between 1845 and 1855 on Atlantic Street. Nineteen Greek Revival frame dwellings built between 1847 and 1860 are located on St. Lawrence Street and nine built between 1846 and 1867 are located on Waterville Street.

The neighborhood contains examples of both gable front Greek Revival homes and side gable dwellings. Gable front dwellings are usually 2 1/2 stories, while one and two story examples of side gable dwellings are also present.

One of the most prevalent builders on Munjoy Hill in this period was William Hoit. Research indicates he was responsible for the construction of at least ten wood frame homes on Munjoy Hill in the 1850s. Most of these were Greek Revival homes, although two examples of his construction in the Italianate style are extant at 86 and 104 Congress Street.

Architecture



Ellen Moody York House, 140 Congress Street in 1924.



A Gothic Revival dwelling on North Street in 1924.



Tall narrow paired windows like these at 80 North Street are typical of the Italianate Style.

Another early 19th century architectural style is the Gothic Revival. There are few examples of the Gothic Revival style on Munjoy Hill. 140 Congress Street is the former home of Ellen Moody York, the granddaughter of Lemuel Moody and proprietress of the Portland Observatory until 1925. Her dwelling once featured ornate decorated vergeboards and drop mold window trim that characterized the Gothic Revival style. Many of the dwelling's details were lost when the dwelling was altered by the addition of a church sanctuary in the mid-20th century.

A second example of the style is located at the rear of 21 North Street. Less decorative than 140 Congress Street, the North Street dwelling features decorative verge board, steeply pitched gable wall dormers, and a projecting two story entry bay with a similarly steep gable roof and decorative verge boards.

Post-Fire Development (1866-1890s)

Most of the extant homes built in the aftermath of the Great Fire of 1866 were constructed in the Italianate and Second Empire styles that predominated during that period. Often similar in form to the gable fronted Greek Revivals homes, the typical Italianate house has more elaborate decoration and machine-made details. The details, such as brackets, were more readily available and affordable than earlier hand carved details due to new machinery technology.

Characteristic features of the Italianate style include tall paired windows, arched window openings, decorative door hoods, brackets below the roofline and bay windows.

The Italianate style predominates on Munjoy Hill. Projecting bays and door hoods are common features on both vernacular dwellings as well as more elaborately detailed homes on the Hill. The Italianate style is also found on commercial and civic buildings like the Shailer School (1880-1881) on North Street.

Architecture



Bay windows on gable front home are a typical feature on the Hill.



The Ann Freeman House on Congress Street is an early example of the Italianate Style. It is a designated local landmark.



While most Italianates style homes have a side hall plan, the Hill also has several examples of an L-plan house with a side entrance like this one at 56 St. Lawrence Street built c1860.

Brick examples of the style include the two-bay, two-story Ann Freeman House (1857) at 147 Congress Street and the three-story double house at 96 St. Lawrence Street. Both examples have hip roofs that formerly were capped by cupolas.

Early examples of the gable end form are the Benjamin Noble House at 63 North Street (1856) and the Jason H Davis House at 23 O'Brien Street (1866-7).

The three bay, one-and-a-half story Cushing House at 83 Munjoy Street (1878) is an unusual example of the Italianate style on Munjoy Hill. Unlike most of its neighbors, the dwelling is set far back on its lot and has an unusual central projecting entry tower form.

A third plan type is the L-shape plan. An example of the L-plan form with side entry, usually off a porch, is the Samuel Libby House at 30 Lafayette Street (late 1870s). Like many dwellings with this form, the Libby House has a narrow gable front form with a projecting bay window on the street façade.

Two of the most prevalent builders on Munjoy Hill in this period were William H. and John Weeks. Research indicates the Weeks family built several Italianate wood-frame houses on Vesper and O'Brien Streets in the last decades of the 19th century.

Architecture



The Alfred Roberts House (1876) at 80 Quebec Street.



The Second Empire at 60 Kellogg Street retains its historic slate roof, window hoods, and corner boards.



39 and 45 North Street on Munjoy Hill in 1924

The Second Empire style shares many of the Italianate style's characteristics and was popular during the same time period. What distinguishes the Second Empire style, however, is its mansard roof form. It is another predominate style on Munjoy Hill.

Several good examples of small scale, one-and-a-half-story Second Empire dwellings are located on the Hill. The Alfred Roberts House (1876) at 80 Quebec Street and the John C. Main House (1876) at 52 Melbourne Street each have detailed woodwork over the dormers and elaborate brackets supporting the entry hood. The Mains House has a two-bay side hall plan, while the Roberts House has an unusual back hall plan and features bull's eye rosettes as a decorative exterior detail. Like the Mains and Roberts Houses, the Second Empire at 60 Kellogg Street has elaborate dormer and cornice details. It retains its historic slate roof, window hoods, and corner boards.

The late 19th century brought larger scale dwellings to the neighborhood, particularly on North, Congress and Merrill Streets. Larger two-and-a-half-story examples of the Second Empire style are present at 32, 39, 45, 96 North Street. The V.B. Fuller House (1884) at 45 North Street retains its double entry doors, bracketed entry hood, two-story projecting bays with narrow windows, cornice brackets, and dentil molding. The A.L.R. Huston House (1886) at 39 North Street retains its historic carriage house.



Swag detail on entry porch gable at 129 Morning Street.



William N. Taylor House (1895) at 64 Eastern Promenade.



Samuel D. Plummer House (1898) at 140 Eastern Promenade.

Housing a Growing Population (1890s-1930)

The extant homes built on Munjoy Hill at the turn of the century are constructed in the diverse styles that predominated during that period. The two most prevalent styles are Queen Anne and Colonial Revival.

While homes from this era located on the Eastern Promenade are often elaborate and large scale, on interior streets the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style tend to be smaller scale and follow the same development pattern as earlier homes. Many Queen Anne homes are gable front with a side hall plan, like earlier Greek Revival, Italianate, and Second Empire style homes on the Hill. Only the stylistic details have changed. Similarly, Colonial Revival homes may also have a gable front or may have a hip roof.

The Queen Anne style features a variety of distinctive patterns of decorative detailing. Spindlework with delicate porch details and lace-like brackets is one common type of Queen Anne architectural embellishment found on Munjoy Hill. Another is the Free Classic, with classical columns and decorative details borrowed in part from the early 19th-century Federal period of architecture.

Towers are prominent feature in Queen Anne dwellings and towers are present on the R. Cutler Libby House (1895) at 34 Congress Street, the William N. Taylor House (1895) at 64 Eastern Promenade, the Robert D. Libby House (1901) at 84 Eastern Promenade, and the Samuel D. Plummer House (1898) at 140 Eastern Promenade.

The John E. Farr House (1893) at 39 Congress Street is a good example of a gable front Queen Anne dwelling. The gable front projects beyond the front wall and encompasses the two story projecting window. Typical of the Queen Anne style, the dwelling features a Palladian window, multiple window sizes and styles, panel work, patterned shingles, spindlework, dentil moldings, and gable ornament in the entry portico. A unique feature of the house is the different decorative pattern of the lintels on the first and second floor window trim.



Colonial Revival house at 188 Eastern Promenade.



Colonial Revival house at 150 Eastern Promenade.



Colonial Revival apartment house at 164 Eastern Promenade.

The Colonial Revival style on Munjoy Hill is represented in a wide range of residential building types: large-scale single-family homes, small-scale single-family homes, and on triple decker buildings.

Two excellent examples of the Colonial Revival style are the John W. Griffin House (1910) at 150 Eastern Promenade and the Lindsay B. Griffin House at 188 Eastern Promenade (1908). Both dwellings have a hipped roof with a barrel roof dormer, but one has a full width porch and the other has a central portico. Both have a symmetrical façade and entry door with flanking sidelights that is typical of the Colonial Revival style.

Enoch Richards (1854-1944) was one of the most prolific builders on Munjoy Hill. He built at least sixteen houses on the Eastern Promenade and Beckett, Vesper, and Moody Streets. He built single-family homes, two-units and triple decker apartment buildings in both the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival Styles.

The Colonial Revival Enoch C. Richards Apartment House (1903-1904) at 164 Eastern Promenade features a distinctive element Richards used on many of his buildings--large brackets to support an deep overhanging roofline. This detail is also present on his former home at 162 Eastern Promenade, his triple decker building at 45 Quebec Street and four triple decker buildings at 88-96 Vesper Street.

While most buildings from this turn-of-the-century period of construction are Queen Anne or Colonial Revival, there are other styles present on Munjoy Hill as well, including Folk Victorian, the Shingle Style and Beaux Arts Style.

Folk Victorian architecture has simple detailing inspired by Italianate and Queen Anne Styles. The small home at 100 North Street (1873) has a simple gable roof form, a jig saw cut balustrade, and brackets window hoods typical of the Folk Victorian style.



The Emma Fuller House (1892 at 50 Morning Street.



The Emerson School under construction in 1898, above. Collections of the Maine Historical Society, MMN 20355. The Emerson School today, below.



The Emma Fuller House (1892) at 50 Morning Street is a Queen Anne dwelling that exhibits some characteristics of the Shingle Style, including its strip of three windows in the front gable end, shingled pent roof, and shingle clad brackets supporting the projecting gable end.

The Henry F. Merrill House (1898) at 5 Eastern Promenade was designed by John C. Stevens and John H. Stevens. Colonial Revival in style, it also has elements found in the Shingle Style, including the recessed shingle window in the gable bay, the Palladian window, and the shingled exterior siding that unifies the irregular form of the house. Its porch with Ionic columns and decorative cornice detailing are typical Colonial Revival details.

Although not a dwelling, the Emerson School at 13 Emerson Street is an example of the Beaux Arts Style. Built 1897-1898, it was designed by Frederick Thompson in the Beaux Arts Style as an elementary school serving the Munjoy Hill neighborhood.

The Munjoy Hill neighborhood includes many triple decker apartment buildings. The triple decker is a residential building type that provided a greater number of units than early examples of multi-family housing on Munjoy Hill. It proved to be a critically important housing type to provide for Portland's growing population at the turn of the century. The building form is generally three stories high with one family unit on each floor, usually with a rear porch.

One street largely defined by its row of triple-deckers is Vesper Street. The land on Vesper Street wasn't developed until the late 1880s after being owned for many years by the Deering family. Enoch Richards, a prolific builder on Munjoy Hill, built five triple-deckers on the west side of Vesper Street 1896-1899.



An Italianate Triple Decker Building at 101 North Street



An example of the shingle bay form of triple decker buildings.



This apartment building on Morning Street has a similar form and features to a triple decker building, but has a single building entrance.

One of the most ornate triple-deckers on Munjoy Hill is located at 101 North Street. It was built in 1887 by Moses Gould, a prominent real estate developer who lived at 79 North Street. A similar triple-decker, but somewhat altered, is located at 98 Cumberland Avenue, near the Hill's only four-decker at 106 Cumberland Avenue and a brick triple-decker at 102 Cumberland Avenue.

The triple decker at 82 Beckett Street is a good example of a shingled bay style with a bracketed cornice and Italianate details. Particularly striking is its unusual curved brackets at the entry door. It was built in 1891 by Charles W. Cushing, a carpenter who lived at 87 Munjoy Street.

The Colonial Revival triple-decker at 129 Morning Street has a curved three-story bay, unusual on Munjoy Hill where most bays are segmented. The dwelling was built in 1908 for Edward L. Dame, who also owned the more traditional triple-decker next door at 125 Morning Street.

The triple decker is a more dense form of housing than early examples of multi-family housing that was built on Munjoy Hill. It was critical to house Portland's growing population at the turn of the century. In addition, the development of multi-family apartment buildings allowed for greater density in the neighborhood and accommodation for lower middle class residents. One example of a large apartment block is the building at 119 Morning Street, built circa 1926 for the Albert family and formerly known as the "Cleevesland".

The brick apartment building at 55-57 Morning Street, formerly known as the "Raymond Apartments" is an example of a housing type built to accommodate a greater number of units than the multi-family residences and triple deckers on Munjoy Hill. It was built c1912 for Samuel D Plummer and owned for many years by his family. Samuel D Plummer (1858-1917) was a real estate dealer who lived in a Queen Anne house at 140 Eastern Prom in 1898 on land he bought from the Deering heirs in 1897. He later built two apartment buildings at the rear of his house on Morning Street on the remainder of the land he purchased from the Deering family.

Visual Character of the Hill



Munjoy Hill is largely a neighborhood of wood framed dwellings.



Gables, bay windows, and raised stoops are common.



On many blocks, narrow lots contribute to a consistent streetscape.

Although Munjoy Hill exhibits a variety of architectural styles and residential building types, including single-family, multi-family, triple decker and the occasional apartment building, there are a number of shared building characteristics that serve to unify much of the neighborhood and give it its own identifiable visual character.

First and foremost, the neighborhood is distinguished by its dense development pattern. Buildings occupy narrow, deep lots and are closely spaced. With few exceptions, mostly on the Eastern Promenade, buildings are of modest scale, ranging from 1 ½ to 3 stories. Most dwellings are wood-frame construction with clapboard exteriors; the occasional brick building breaks this predominate material palette. Buildings generally have small footprints, with their narrow, usually gable, end facing the street. Most houses are two or three bays wide, often with a projecting one- or two-story front bay. Projecting front entry vestibules are also common.

Most houses sit above a high brick foundation, with a raised stoop and flight of exterior stairs leading to the main entry. Entries are typically located on the street façade and are generally shifted to one side, although there are examples of primary entrances on the side elevation. Most buildings are set back a short distance from the sidewalk, allowing for a shallow front yard. Driveways, where they exist, occupy much of the width of the lot's side yard.

Just as the scale of houses on Munjoy Hill is generally modest, so too is the architecture. Most of the houses, with the exception of those facing the Eastern Promenade, are vernacular expressions of the various architectural styles popular at the time of their construction. The very large number of Italianate buildings throughout the neighborhood, with their tall vertical expression, gable end facing the street, bracketed entry hood, and projecting bays, lends a certain consistency to the blocks.

Visual Character of the Hill



Unique porch details can differentiate a typical gable front dwelling from its neighbors.



Vernacular dwellings often feature a few character defining details, like a entry hood or tall narrow windows, that help identify these dwellings as Italianate.



Streetscapes like this on North Street, depict the typical rhythm created by vertically orientated facades .

Color photography by Greater Portland Landmarks

Certainly, there are some blocks within the neighborhood (Moody Street, for example) that do not follow this typical development pattern. There are also houses that do not exhibit the common building characteristics described above. These are, however, exceptions rather than the rule on Munjoy Hill. That is why later developments such as MacArthur Gardens, which features several separate-but-related brick buildings set back from the street within a campus-like setting, do not feel sufficiently integrated with the neighborhood.

Munjoy Hill is often described as “friendly” and “approachable”. While there are no doubt many factors that contribute to this reputation, the neighborhood’s distinct visual character is key among them.