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Gustav Stickley's Hapke-Geiger House and Noland and Baskervill's Hunton House: Richmond Architecture ca. 1915

Victoria Katsuko Carter
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GUSTAV STICKLEY'S HAPKE-GEIGER HOUSE AND
NOLAND & BASKERVILL'S HUNTON HOUSE:
RICHMOND ARCHITECTURE CA. 1915

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Hapke-Geiger House</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Patrons: Theodore and Mathilde Hapke (fl. 1899-1910)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Designer: Gustav Stickley (1851-1942)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Exterior: The Arts and Crafts Movement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Interior: The Colonial Revival Branch of the American Renaissance</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Hunton House</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Patrons: Eppa (1855-1932) and Virginia Hunton (1867-1941)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Architects: William C. Noland (1865-1951) and Henry Baskervill</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1867-1946)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Exterior: The American Renaissance Movement</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Interior: The Aesthetic Movement</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Similarities Between the Two Houses</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Porches</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................................................................................. ii

List of Figures ....................................................................................................................................................................................... v

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................................................................................ viii

Chapter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Common Floor Plan ................................................................. 28
Mixing of Styles ........................................................................ 30
5 Conclusion ................................................................................ 32
Bibliography ............................................................................... 34
Figures ..................................................................................... 40
# List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hapke-Geiger House, ca. 1912, Chesterfield, Virginia</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hunton House, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Cement house showing lavish use of half-timber as a decoration,” 1909,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gustav Stickley</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Cement house showing craftsman idea of half-timber construction,” 1906,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gustav Stickley</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rookwood Pottery Building, 1891, H. Neill Wilson, Cincinnati</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Beth Ahabah, 1902-04, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Scott House, 1906-11, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Interior, First Floor, Hapke-Geiger House, ca. 1912, Chesterfield, Virginia</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chimneypiece, Hapke-Geiger House, ca. 1912, Chesterfield, Virginia</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“The Living Room: Its Many Uses and the Possibilities it has for Comfort and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beauty,” 1907, Gustav Stickley</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“Parlor, showing confusion and chaos from over-ornamentation,” 1904,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gustav Stickley</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Eppa Hunton, III</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Eppa Hunton, II</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Eppa and Erva Hunton</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 15: Eppa and Virginia Hunton ................................................................................ 47
Figure 16: General William Payne .................................................................................. 47
Figure 17: Eppa Hunton, IV .......................................................................................... 48
Figure 18: William Churchill Noland .............................................................................. 48
Figure 19: Entablature, Palazzo Farnese, 1546 – ca. 1549, Michelangelo, Rome ........... 49
Figure 20: Entablature, Hunton House, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond .......... 49
Figure 21: Entablature, Scott House, 1906-11, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond .......... 50
Figure 22: Capital, Hunton House, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond ............... 50
Figure 23: Grotesque Frieze, Hunton House, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond .... 51
Figure 24: Entry Hall, Hunton House, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond .......... 51
Figure 25: Marcellus, Wright and Son Floor Plan ............................................................ 52
Figure 26: “We met by chance,” 1878, The House Beautiful .......................................... 52
Figure 27: “A Surprise Party,” 1878, The House Beautiful ............................................. 53
Figure 28: Pilaster, Hunton House Entry Hall, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond ... 53
Figure 29: Stairs, Hunton House Entry Hall, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond .... 54
Figure 30: Entry Hall, Hunton House, ca. 1915 .............................................................. 54
Figure 31: Entry Hall, Hunton House, ca. 1915 .............................................................. 55
Figure 32: Japanese Tapestry, Hunton Collection ............................................................ 55
Figure 33: Mongolian Invasion, c. 1904, Workshop of Kawasaki Jimbei, II ................. 56
Figure 34: Clock, Hunton Collection .............................................................................. 56
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Front Parlor, Hunton House, ca. 1915</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Front Parlor, Hunton House, ca. 1915</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Rear Parlor, Hunton House, ca. 1915</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Rear Parlor, Hunton House, ca. 1915</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Hampton &amp; Sons Advertisement</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>“Chair and Table from Cottier’s,” 1878, <em>The House Beautiful</em></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Bentwood Chairs, Hunton House</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>“Of Studie toke he moste Cure and Hede,” 1878, <em>The House Beautiful</em></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Grecian Couch, Hunton Collection</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Dining Room, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Dining Room, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Dining Room, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Dinging Room, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>“Extension Dining-Table and Chairs,” 1878, <em>The House Beautiful</em></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room, 1876-1977, James McNeil Whistler,</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frederick Richards Leyland Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Front Porch, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Eppa Hunton, IV, playing on the roof garden, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Eppa Hunton, IV, and a friend on the roof garden, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Portrait on the roof garden, Hunton House ca. 1915</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 54: Eppa Hunton, IV, reading the roof garden, Hunton House ca. 1915 ............66

Figure 55: First Floor Plan, “Cement House Showing Lavish use of Half-Timber as a
Decoration,” 1909, Gustav Stickley.................................................................67

Figure 56: Vassall-Longfellow House, 1759, Cambridge Massachusetts ..................67

Figure 57: Taylor House, ca. 1790, Roxbury, Massachusetts .................................68

Figure 58: Floor Plan, Hunton House, 1914, Noland & Baskervill, Richmond ............68

Figure 59: Kent-Valentine House, 1845, Isaiah Rodgers, Richmond, Virginia ............69
Textbooks teach architecture as conveniently divided into styles and periods, but in reality styles overlap. At the turn-of-the-twentieth century there were three major architectural and decorative movements in the United States: the Aesthetic Movement, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and the American Renaissance Movement. This thesis shows how superficial stylistic labels can be by comparing two very different-seeming
houses of the early twentieth century: The Hapke-Geiger House of ca. 1912 in Chesterfield, Virginia, based on a Gustav Stickley Arts and Crafts design, and the Hunton House of 1914 in Richmond, Virginia, designed in the American Renaissance style by Noland and Baskervill. These homes are very different from one another, but they have three major similarities: They each use an established plan with no essential connection to the building’s supposed style, they mix styles, and they have similar kinds of porches. This thesis will pursue these issues to go beyond the superficial stylistic labels and examine how the three major movements of the time are interrelated.
Introduction

Textbooks conveniently divide architecture into styles and periods. However, in reality this practice is not so simple. Styles overlap and at times can be hard to distinguish from one another. At the turn-of-the-nineteenth century there were three major architectural and decorative movements in the United States: the Aesthetic Movement, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and the American Renaissance Movement. This thesis will compare two very different-seeming houses of the early twentieth-century that show how superficial these stylistic labels can be.

The first house is the Hapke-Geiger House of ca. 1912, a rural house superficially in the Arts and Crafts style in Chesterfield, Virginia (Figure 1). The second house is the Hunton House of 1914, an urban house superficially in the American Renaissance style in Richmond, Virginia (Figure 2). These homes are very different from one another, but they have three major similarities. First, each uses an established plan that has no essential connection with the building’s supposed style. The Hapke-Geiger House has a center-hall plan with two side porches, descending from an eighteenth-century American pattern, and the Hunton House has the plan of a nineteenth-century Richmond Italianate Townhouse with a side-hall and a long front porch. Second, the houses mix styles. The Hapke-Geiger House has an Arts and Crafts exterior and interior architectural ornament from the Colonial Revival branch of the American Renaissance, while the Hunton House has an American
Renaissance exterior and had Aesthetic Movement interior decoration. Third, the two houses have similar kinds of porches. They both have porches that are used as outdoor rooms, with one that overlooks a major thoroughfare. This thesis will pursue these three issues to go beyond the superficial stylistic labels to provide insight into early twentieth-century Richmond taste in architecture and examine how the three major architectural and decorative movements of the time are interrelated.
The Hapke-Geiger House

The Patrons: Theodore and Mathilde Hapke (fl. 1899-1910)

Theodore Hapke and his wife Mathilde commissioned a house at 11171 Robious Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia circa 1910. Much of the history of the Hapke family is undocumented. What can be found in the archives and family legend, however, creates an interesting outline of the Hapkes’ lives.

The Hapkes seem to have moved frequently, so their lives are difficult to document. US Census records of 1910 show that Theodore Hapke was born in Germany in 1867 and that his wife Mathilde was born in Russia in 1880. We do not yet know when the Hapkes came to America, but their first child, Julia, was born in Nebraska in 1899. Their next two children, Louise and Gustav, were born in New York State in 1901 and 1903. It was perhaps during the Hapkes’ time in New York that they were exposed to the work of Gustav Stickley, the Arts and Crafts designer. Stickley worked in New York and became very visible when he began publishing his magazine The Craftsman in 1901.\(^1\)

By 1905, the Hapkes had moved from New York and were living in Madison, Wisconsin. While in Madison, Hapke designed, built, managed, and partially funded the Madison office of the U.S. Sugar Company. He apparently designed and built sugar beet refineries

\(^1\) For more information on the Hapkes, see US Census 1910. For more information on The Craftsman, see Mary Ann Smith, Gustav Stickley: The Craftsman, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1893), 33.
throughout America. The Hapkes’ third daughter and fourth child, Elsie was born in Wisconsin in 1906. That same year their daughter Helen was born in Missouri. In 1908 Mathilde Hapke purchased three hundred and sixty five acres in Chesterfield County. She did not move there from Missouri. The deed states that Mathilde Hapke was from Chicago, so it can be assumed that the Hapkes must have moved there after their brief stint in Missouri. By 1910, the Hapkes had moved to Chesterfield County and were running a farm. A ship manifest from Ellis Island shows that in February of 1910, the Hapke family took a ship from Bremen, Germany to New York. There is no record of their departure for Germany or how long they stayed in Germany. Nevertheless, this trip shows that the Hapkes still had ties to Germany, though it is unknown whether those connections were just familial or also political.

According to the current owner of the Hapke-Geiger House, Eugene Deschamps, Theodore Hapke was arrested for espionage during World War I. Deschamps’ grandfather, Joe Deschamps, knew Hapke and recounted this story to Eugene. According to the story, Hapke was a German spy and used the chicken farm at his residence on Robious Road as a front. Since Hapke did not know much regarding chicken farming, he went to the Carter Venable Seed Company for advice. An employee at the company, Mr. Fickie, sent Hapke to see Joe Deschamps who was a chicken farmer as well. Hapke discovered that the

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3 For more information on the 1908 purchase, see County of Chesterfield Deed Book 117, page 17. For information on their living in Chesterfield County, see US Census 1910. For the ship manifest, see “Ellis Island Passenger Arrivals American Family Immigration History Center,” www.ellisisland.org, accessed 20 April 2005, George Washington Ship Manifest, 18 February 1920, 396.
Deschamps had come to America from Belgium in 1890 and moved to Richmond in 1909. Hapke felt a connection to Deschamps because of their shared European background and told Deschamps about his work as a German spy. Shortly after Hapke left, Percy Duvall, an employee at the local courthouse, passed by. Deschamps told his son that Germans could not be trusted and then waved for Duvall to come over. Deschamps told Duvall about Hapke’s plan and soon there were two Secret Service agents working undercover on Hapke’s farm. The Secret Service arrested Hapke and some of his co-conspirators, including his brother and his uncle Fritz Vietor, in Richmond at a tobacco factory owned by Vietor.4

Documentation to confirm this fascinating account has not been found. However, there is an article in the Richmond News Leader verifying the arrest of E. Karl “Fritz” Vietor, who was the German Consul to Richmond. Vietor was arrested as a “German alien enemy at large in this district and as such, dangerous to the public safety” in July of 1917. The Deschamps have also found some physical evidence in the house. They discovered cell batteries under the bathroom floor and behind one of the walls, which may have been used for a radio that Hapke ran up the chimney to transmit information. J.J. Deschamps, Eugene’s son, has hypothesized that the Hapkes might have needed a concrete house because of their equipment.5

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4 Eugene Deschamps, Telephone interview, 12 February 2005.
5 Eugene Deschamps, Interview, 16 February 2005. For the article on Vietor’s arrest, see “Vietor Arrested as an ‘Alien Enemy’: Former German Consul Taken into Custody at Warehouse,” Richmond News Leader, 16 (July 1917): 1.
The Designer: Gustav Stickley (1851-1942)

The design for the Hapkes’ concrete house was published in the January 1909 issue of Gustav Stickley’s periodical, *The Craftsman* (Figure 3). Stickley employed several architects so it is not known who the actual architect was that created the design. Stickley was a central figure in the Arts and Crafts movement, but he was not a trained architect. He was most renowned for his furniture designs and his journal. Stickley brought Arts and Crafts ideas into the daily life of Americans across the country through *The Craftsman* magazine. He also contributed to architecture through this magazine, as a publisher and a theorist.

Since Stickley did not actually design the houses, his contribution was publishing them in his magazine and thus making them available to the general public. It is known that Stickley employed architects, but not all the designs are attributed to them. From 1902 to 1903 Henry Wilkinson, E.G.W. Dietrich, and Harvey Ellis designed homes for Stickley and their designs are signed. Ellis was the most famous architect Stickley employed. Ellis died in 1904 and thereafter Craftsman homes were no longer signed. Business records provide the names of architects employed by Stickley, but it unknown which designs they created.7

The dispersion of these Arts and Crafts architectural designs was furthered in 1904 with Stickley founding of the Craftsman Home-Builders Club. Membership to the club

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7 Smith, 55-65.
was the three dollar annual subscription to *The Craftsman* magazine. For this price, members could get free sets of house plans and access to the architectural department’s expertise. For an additional fee Stickley would modify the plans according to individual needs and for a higher charge even create designs. In twelve years *The Craftsman* published plans for about two hundred houses. The firm claimed that several thousand Craftsman homes had been built, but the actual number is unknown and today there are probably less than a hundred in existence. The houses in the designs varied in cost, furthering the spread of the movement by appealing to people of many economic classes. *The Craftsman* had a large role in the spread of Arts and Crafts architecture through its publication of designs, through the Craftsman Home-Builders Club’s inexpensive plans, and through the variety of designs.\(^8\)

The designs published in *The Craftsman* magazine followed Stickley’s Arts and Crafts ideals. His role as a theorist came through in the explanations for each design and aided in the spread of the movement. In his descriptions, Stickley emphasized the surrounding landscape: pergolas, terraces, and porches to connect with nature; the importance of the fireplace; and an open interior. These elements are important features of the Arts and Crafts home. They are part of the search for a simple architecture that relates to nature. Stickley’s descriptions point out the advantages of different architectural

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elements that were desirable in the Arts and Crafts movement and thus aided in the spread of the Craftsman idea.9

_The Craftsman_ magazine not only published designs by architects employed by Stickley, but also published designs by other architects. Some of these designs were accompanied by articles by the architects. Stickley was able to spread his ideas by choosing which architects would be represented by the magazine. He chose architects with similar ideals such as Wilson Eyre of Philadelphia (1858-1944) and the brothers, Charles Sumner Greene (1868-1957) and Henry Mather Greene (1870-1954) of Pasadena. Stickley also published articles concerning the ideas of theorists such as the English thinkers and designers John Ruskin (1819-1900) and William Morris (1834-96).10 Through publishing architectural designs and articles regarding the Arts and Crafts movement, Stickley was able to spread the movement’s ideals.

**The Exterior: The Arts and Crafts Movement**

The Hapke-Geiger House sits at the corner of Old Farm Road and Robious Road in Chesterfield County. It is based on a design by Gustav Stickley and classified as an Arts and Crafts house. There are three features that lead to this classification. First, is the attempt to connect it to nature. Following Stickley’s design, it has a long front yard and many trees around the house. The porches and landscaping connect the building with nature. Second, the integrity of materials was important during the Arts and Crafts Movement. Stickley emphasized the honesty of materials in the description of the home

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9 For Stickley’s description of the design used for the Hapke-Geiger house see Stickley, _Craftsman Homes_, 28-29.
by stating that all the wood should be stained a natural color and not painted. Third, the Arts and Crafts Movement stressed the opening up of space. The first floor has wide doorways between the living room, entry hall, and dining room. From one end of the house, someone could see all the way through to the other. The second story had transom windows to allow more light to enter the hall and open the house some more.

These three elements show that Stickley’s design for the Hapke-Geiger House is firmly rooted in the Arts and Crafts Movement, but there are other elements to consider when examining the architecture of the house. The house also combines half-timbering and concrete construction.

Concrete construction became well-known at the beginning of the twentieth-century. However, concrete had been perfected by the Romans and was used to create the Pantheon in the early second century. Yet, after ancient times, concrete was rarely used until the early nineteenth-century. After the French Revolution, there was an attempt to find more economical building materials and thus an increase in interest in concrete. In 1852-53 Francois Coignet used concrete in a chemical factory at St. Denise near Paris. In England in 1836, the Royal Institute of British Architects gave a gold medal to George Godwin for his essay *The Nature and Properties of Concrete, and its application to Construction up to the present period*. The essay discussed Roman use of concrete though the material was not yet used much in England. Until knowledge of Coignet’s patents spread to England, structural concrete was limited to blocks that were used like stone.\(^\text{11}\)

\(^{10}\) For more on Stickley’s publication see Smith, 133-135.
The use of concrete construction was not without controversy. There was much debate regarding how and in what style the material should be used. In 1878 English architects Richard Norman Shaw and W. H. Lascelles began a co-operation to create picturesque concrete buildings. *The Builder*, a British architectural periodical, criticized their endeavors for using a modern material to imitate rustic buildings. The critics felt that Shaw and Lascelles were wasting an opportunity to do something new with new materials and methods, and instead falsely imitated old materials by using such methods as “fish-scale pattern” to imitate tiling. Despite this criticism, Shaw and Lascelles received a gold medal at the 1878 Paris Exposition.\(^\text{12}\)

The twentieth-century saw the spread of concrete construction, but debates regarding the material continued. In France, Hector Guimard built the Rue Pave Synagogue with reinforced concrete in 1913.\(^\text{13}\) Auguste Perret, another famous French architect, also constructed many buildings with reinforced concrete including the Notre Dame church in Le Raincy in 1924 and the Villa for Nubar Bey in Garches in 1932. In America, Frank Lloyd Wright built the Unity Church in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1906. Wright built several concrete buildings, but he wrote in a 1928 article in *Architectural Record* that the material was lacking aesthetically. Wright was not the only architect who was concerned with the artistic quality of concrete. It was much debated and the subject of a 1907 issue of *American Architect* that published views from a symposium on ‘The

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\(^{12}\) For more information on Shaw and concrete see Collins, 43 and Richard Norman Shaw, *Sketches for cottages and other buildings*, (London: W.H. Lascelles, 1878).
Artistic Expression of Concrete.’ Professor A.D.F. Hamlin expressed that “Monolithic concrete *per se* is an ungrateful and repellent material for exterior architectural effect; it must be kept as flat as possible, the larger areas disguised or frosted by flat surface-ornamentation, and the general effect varied and brightened by accessory details executed in other materials.”

Stickley’s designs for concrete houses answered this debate by using half-timbering to relieve the monotony of concrete slabs. There were several designs for concrete homes with half-timbering in *The Craftsman*. Two such designs were the “cement house showing lavish use of half-timber as a decoration,” on which this paper focuses, and the “cement house showing craftsman idea of half-timber construction” from the August 1906 issue (Figures 3-4). Although Stickley added to the popularity of this pattern, he did not create this approach to concrete construction. It can be seen in the Rookwood Pottery in Cincinnati designed by W. W. Taylor and H. Neill Wilson in 1891 (Figure 5). The half-timbering comes from Richard Norman Shaw and can be seen in Shaw’s picturesque designs for concrete buildings. Shaw was perhaps one of the first architects to use half-timbering to relieve the uniformity of concrete slab architecture.

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The Interior: The Colonial Revival Branch of the American Renaissance

The house also incorporates another style through its interior architectural ornament from the Colonial Revival branch of the American Renaissance. In the late nineteenth century, there was a national increase in interest in classical architecture, a movement soon to be named the American Renaissance. The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 produced classical buildings by such architects as Richard Morris Hunt and the firm of McKim, Mead, and White. Hunt and McKim had been trained in classical architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.16 The influence of this exposition spread to Richmond and within a decade such firms as Noland and Baskervill began to reveal an interest in classical architecture. Their buildings, Beth Ahabah (1902-04) and the Scott House (1906-11) on West Franklin Street, exhibit a classical monumentality that is derived from such sources as the Pantheon (Figures 6-7). The American Renaissance was a national phenomenon and even the Hapke-Geiger House based on a Craftsman design was not immune.

The interior of the house is very simple, but the decoration reveals American Renaissance influence. When first entering the house, one sees two fluted columns on the left that serve as a screen separating the hall from the living room (Figure 8). This classical element is not typical of the Arts and Crafts Movement and was not included in the design published in The Craftsman. It can be seen in other homes of the time, such as the Hunton House by Noland and Baskervill. The Doric columns are more simple than the

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Corinthian columns of the Hunton House, but they are still in the American Renaissance style.

The only other ornamentation is found on the fireplaces. The fireplaces in the living room and dining room are identical (Figure 9). They have wooden mantels and white tiling. The curved supports are a simplified version of s-curve supports commonly found in American Renaissance interior ornament. It is unknown what kind of chimneypiece Stickley had in mind for this house, but from other homes found in *The Craftsman* it can be assumed that it would have been a simple flat surface of brick, stone, or tile without the wood mantel (Figure 10). In fact, in “The Craftsman’s Story” Stickley deplored the parlor of chaos with a classical fireplace and preferred simplified living areas (Figure 11). He wrote that “the purity of straight lines has replaced the jangling complexity of curves, the wall-spaces are quiet and restful.”

Classical ornament from the American Renaissance movement does not fit with Arts and Crafts ideals, but that did not deter the Hapkes from having a house built that combined elements from both. If this is due to taste or a matter of convenience is not known. For how much would it have cost for the Hapkes to attain Arts and Crafts interior ornament and furnishings in 1910 Richmond? Whatever the reason, it cannot be denied that there is a strong American Renaissance influence in the interior, though the house is classified as Arts and Crafts.

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The Hunton House

The Patrons: Eppa (1855-1932) and Virginia Hunton (1867-1941)

Eppa Hunton, Jr. was born in 1855 in Prince William County, Virginia (Figure 12). He was actually the third Eppa Hunton, but throughout his life was known as Eppa Hunton, Jr. and will be called such in this paper. Eppa Jr. was raised as an only child, for his older sister, Elizabeth B. Hunton, died shortly before his birth at little over nineteen months old. His father, Eppa Hunton, Sr., worked as an attorney, served as a Confederate General in the Civil War, and held positions in the United States Congress (Figure 13). Eppa Jr. followed in his father’s footsteps. He was graduated from the University of Virginia with a law degree in 1877 and began to practice law in Warrenton. In 1884, he married Erva Winston Payne (Figure 14). She was ill during most of their marriage and died in 1897. Four years later, in 1901, he married Erva’s younger sister, Virginia or Jincy Semmes Payne (Figure 15). Jincy and Erva were the daughters of General William Henry Fitzhugh and Mary Elizabeth Winston Payne (Figure 16). Like Eppa Sr., William Payne served as a General in the Confederate Army, practiced law in Warrenton, and was involved in state politics.18

In 1901, the same year that Eppa married Jincy, he was offered a partnership in a law firm with Beverly B. Munford, Edmond Randolph Williams, and Henry W. Anderson. The Huntons moved to Richmond and in 1902 Eppa and Virginia had their first child, Mary Winter. Unfortunately, the child was quite ill and died while still an infant. Two years later, their second child, Eppa IV, was born. (Figure 17) Eppa Jr. had a very successful career as a lawyer and businessman in Richmond and in 1914 commissioned a new house at 810 West Franklin Street.\footnote{For more information on the Hunton family, see Hunton, Autobiography, 232-5. For information regarding the Hunton House see Permit 3744, Control No. 404, Richmond City Building Permits Collection, Library of Virginia.}

**The Architects: William C. Noland (1865-1951) and Henry Baskervill (1867-1946)**

For their new home, the Huntons used the Richmond architectural firm of Noland and Baskervill. William Churchill Noland was from Hanover County, but received most of his architectural training while working for firms in New York and Philadelphia (Figure 18). From 1894 to 1895, he spent two years traveling in Europe and studying architecture. The Virginia Historical Society houses a collection of his drawings from this trip. It is surprising to discover that most of these drawings show Gothic buildings, despite Noland’s later interest in classical architecture. In 1896, Noland established a practice in Richmond with Henry Baskervill. Baskervill was from Richmond and received his Bachelor’s degree

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in Electrical Engineering from Cornell in 1889. After graduating, he returned to Richmond and began work as an Assistant City Engineer.\textsuperscript{20} Noland and Baskervill were greatly affected by the American Renaissance and the classicism is evident in their 1914 design for the Hunton House.

\textbf{The Exterior: The American Renaissance Movement}

The Hunton House has the classical monumentality that Noland and Baskervill employed at Beth Ahabah and the Scott House. Following American Renaissance classicism, Noland and Baskervill created a miniature palace or \textit{palazzo}. This can be seen by observing the details. The frieze has a motif called a fleuron, or big flower (Figure 19). The fleuron frieze was borrowed from Michelangelo’s entablature (1546 – ca. 1549) for the Palazzo Farnese in Rome (Figure 20). Michelangelo used a repeating but non-continuous pattern for his entablature. Noland and Baskervill employed this same motif in the Scott House entablature but inverted the fleuron (Figure 21).

The pilasters and columns of the Hunton House also derive from the Renaissance. They all have composite capitals, but the pilasters and columns have capitals with a floral motif, while the pillars have an urn motif (Figure 22). Buildings with two types of composite capitals such as these were common in fifteenth-century Italy. The grotesque friezes that frame the door and windows are yet another Renaissance element (Figure 23).

Noland and Baskervill continued the use of American Renaissance classicism in the interior. The house was renovated in 1946 by the architectural firm of Marcellus Wright & Son to create doctors’ offices, but the American Renaissance influence can still be appreciated, for the entryway and rear parlor retain most of their architectural detailing (Figures 24-25). These rooms can also be seen in early twentieth-century photographs from the Hunton family’s collection.

The Interior: The Aesthetic Movement

Though the exterior and the interior architectural detailing followed the American Renaissance Movement, the Huntons decorated their home with a pruned Aesthetic Movement taste. The Aesthetic Movement emphasized art in everyday household objects. The movement began in Britain in the 1860s and reached America in the 1870s. It affected all levels of society. Like the American Renaissance later on, the Aesthetic Movement was propelled to the main scene by an international exposition. The Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 exposed American craftsmen and the public to the Movement and to art objects from around the world.

One can isolate four major elements in the Aesthetic Movement. The first element was an abundance of surface pattern. Patterns were found in wallpaper, chimneypiece tiles, upholstery, draperies, carpet, and floor. The second element was the wealth of ornamental objects. Bric-a-brac filled mantels, shelves, and cabinets. The third element was Asian influence. Asian influence was found in not only objects imported from Asia,
but also in designs that adapted Asian motifs. The fourth element, still the most influential today, is the mixing of styles. This led to the dissolving of the parlor set and the principal that no two pieces of furniture need to be the same design, a treatment that is still common in households today. In a popular manifesto of the period, Clarence Cook’s 1878 book, *The House Beautiful*, this freedom is emphasized. In the illustration “We met by chance,” a seventeenth-century English-style chair just happens to meet a Chinese-influenced teak table and a Japanese scroll. In another illustration, “A Surprise Party,” a Hepplewhite card table and a Japanese lacquer cabinet come together in a celebration of art objects (Figures 26-27).22

The Aesthetic Movement led into the Art Nouveau Movement on the European Continent and the Arts and Crafts Movement in the English-speaking world at the end of the century, but the Hunton House was still furnished under Aesthetic influences more than a decade later.23

To understand how the Hunton House fused Aesthetic furnishings and American Renaissance architectural details, one must enter the house. Passing through the door of 810 West Franklin Street, one would find oneself in the entry hall. A glance around the room reveals that Noland and Baskervill continued their classical theme into the interior. The ornament in the hall is simple compared to that of the facade. The architectural decoration is confined to wooden Doric pilasters (Figure 28). On the left wall, there is a large built-in mirror with a mahogany frame matching the architecture of the hall. The

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stairway is the most ornate element of the room, with a carved mahogany balustrade (Figure 29).

The architectural detailing in the front hall has not been altered, but the furnishings are now very different. The early-twentieth-century Hunton family photographs show how the American Renaissance and Aesthetic Movement were mixed (Figures 30-31). There were several features of the Aesthetic Movement in the room. The first, abundant surface patterning, can be seen in the textiles. The floor was hardwood covered with Persian rugs, a common element during the Aesthetic period. The walls were paneled, with a floral fabric filling each panel. The Persian rugs and patterned walls were a part of a late, pruned Aesthetic Movement taste.

The second Aesthetic element, a wealth of ornamental objects, is hard to find. Some decorative elements such as the pedestal in the corner by the stair are visible. The Hunton home did not have as many decorative objects as many Aesthetic interiors, because the Huntons were using a trimmed down aesthetic taste.

The third element, Asian influence, appears on the right wall. It was a Japanese tapestry of silk and gold threads that the Huntons received from Francis Rawle Pemberton as a thank-you gift (Figure 32). Today the tapestry hangs in the entrance hall of Eppa Hunton V’s house. It is a remarkable work of art and received much praise in its day. Pemberton bought the tapestry on a trip to Japan and mentioned in a letter to the Huntons that it won first prize at some international expositions that he did not identify.24 Japanese

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24 Mary Peters Hunton, Interview, April 18, 2004.
tapestries are a side of Japanese influence that is not often discussed, but they were collected by many Americans. The great Baltimore collector, Henry Walters had such tapestry depicting a Mongolian invasion, which is now in the Walters Art Museum (Figure 33).\textsuperscript{25}

The fourth Aesthetic element, the mix of styles, can be seen in how none of the furniture pieces matched. To the left there was a stone console table with caryatid supports. On the right there was a small sofa and across from it a pier table with griffin heads carved on top of the legs. Beside the table sat a chair from the dining room set. At the back of the hall was an heirloom, a tall-case clock that the Huntons received from their parents (Figure 34). The clock has an interesting history. In 1800 James Hunton and William Payne commissioned two identical clocks while in England. During the Civil War the bottom of the Hunton clock was cut up by the Yankees and used for kettle wood, but the top was saved. The Payne clock was stored during the war, and the top shattered when the piece tipped over during a storm. The two surviving parts were reassembled by Jincy’s mother and given to Jincy and Eppa as a wedding present. The clock survives today in the possession of Eppa Hunton V.\textsuperscript{26} None of these five items match, a sign of Aesthetic Movement influence. The Huntons fused the American Renaissance and the Aesthetic Movement to decorate their entry hall.

\textsuperscript{25} For more on the silk tapestry, \textit{Mongolian Invasion}, c. 1904, Workshop of Kawasaki Jimbei, II, Japan, see Walters Art Gallery, \textit{The Walters Art Gallery: Guide to the Collections}, (Baltimore, Maryland: Walters Art Gallery, 1997), 97-98.

\textsuperscript{26} The story of the grandfather clock is written on a piece of paper tacked on the inside of the clock and signed by both General Eppa Hunton and Jincy’s mother.
This same fusion took place in the parlors. From the entry hall, a visitor could go through the doorway at the right to enter the front parlor. Unfortunately, this room no longer exists. The parlor is subdivided into several offices and the ornament has been removed. But the Hunton photographs reveal how grand the spaces once were (Figure 35-38).

The parlors were decorated with American Renaissance architectural detailing. The front and rear parlor were separated by fluted Corinthian columns, but they were used as one large space. Noland and Baskervill designed the connecting rooms so that they were fluid. The rooms were richer than hall, with paneled walls containing Corinthian pilasters and matching marble mantels. The frieze, moldings, and chimneypieces were variations of Roman classical styles.

As in the hall, the parlors combined American Renaissance ornament with furnishings of a pruned Aesthetic taste. The first Aesthetic element, surface patterning, can once again be seen in the textiles. The floor, as in the entry hall, was hardwood covered with Persian rugs. The fabrics on the walls and furniture show a variety of patterns. Another important textile is the portieres that separated the major rooms. During the Aesthetic period, portieres replaced doors in reception rooms as part of opening up the floor plan.27 The Huntons' portieres were dark, with a light fringe. The curtains in the bay window were similar. These were quite simple for Aesthetic curtains, but as we have seen, the Huntons were using a trimmed down Aesthetic taste.

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27 For more information on portieres see Doreen, 136.
The second Aesthetic element seen in the parlors was the display of purely decorative items.\(^{28}\) The Hunton parlors were not filled with as many ornaments as was popular during the height of the Aesthetic period, but there were still plenty. A French cabinet in front of the bay window was filled with small artistic objects. The mantels held decorative vases and porcelain figures. Decorative objects were not in abundance in the Hunton parlors, but they were hardly lacking either.

The third Aesthetic element, Asian influence, appears in the Chinese vases placed in two of the corners behind couches. It is also evident in the Turkish overstuffed chairs. The front parlor had two such chairs and two sofas that all had tassels lining the bottom. These tassels revealed their Turkish ancestry, despite their camouflage in a variety of French-style silk patterns. Such tassels could be found on the saddlebag easy chair that was popular during the Aesthetic period and is illustrated in an 1894 advertisement by the English company Hampton & Sons (Figure 39). This type of chair also appears in the Cook’s *House Beautiful* in the illustration of a “Chair and Table from Cottier’s” (Figure 40).\(^{29}\) The Turkish chairs showed the Near Eastern influence on Aesthetic furnishings and reveal another aspect of how the Huntons incorporated a pruned Aesthetic style into their home.

The fourth Aesthetic element, the mixing of styles, shows up in the use of saddlebag easy chairs along side bentwood chairs (Figure 41). Michael Thonet, a German cabinet-maker, began experimenting with steaming and bending wood in the 1830s. In

\(^{28}\) For more on the Aesthetic movement see Doreen, 19-21.

1842 he was awarded a patent for his process of bending wood. In 1852 Thonet exhibited at the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London. In 1869, Thonet’s third patent expired and many companies began to create bentwood chairs. The Huntons’ two chairs in front of the bay window had the curved frame of bentwood furniture. They might not have been by Thonet himself, but they were definitely created using Thonet’s techniques. These chairs, with their sinuous lines, were a popular item during the Aesthetic Movement and can be seen in an illustration of a study in *The House Beautiful* (Figure 42).\(^3\)

These pieces further contrasted with an early nineteenth-century Grecian couch in the rear parlor (Figure 43). This piece originally belonged to Colonel John A. Washington who lived at Mt. Vernon. Mary Elizabeth Payne bought the Grecian couch at Washington’s sale in the 1850s and eventually passed it on to her daughter, Jincy.\(^3\)

The American Renaissance and Aesthetic Movement styles interacted a little differently in the dining room (Figure 44-47). The dining room had American Renaissance architectural detailing. All of this architectural ornament was lost in the 1946 renovation, but can be seen in the photographs. The ornament was simple. There were no pilasters, but the walls were paneled and there was an entablature over each door. The most decorative ornament was the marble chimneypiece. The dining room was very different from the parlors, with their ornate foliate scroll friezes.

The Aesthetic Movement is difficult to detect in the dining room. The doorways were filled with portieres and the floor was covered with a Persian carpet, but other

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\(^3\) For the illustration see Cook, 176.  
\(^3\) Interview with Mrs. Hunton, April 18, 2004.
elements are hard to find. Dr. Brownell hypothesizes that this is because Aesthetic Movement continued to favor sets of dining room furniture, despite the abandonment of parlor sets. In *The House Beautiful*, Cook illustrates the preference for a dining room in a drawing of an “Extension Dining-Table and Chairs” (Figure 48).\(^\text{32}\) The use of a dining room set during the Aesthetic period also appeared in the most famous of all Aesthetic Movement rooms, the London dining room designed by James McNeil Whistler for Frederick Leyland in 1876-1877 (Figure 49).\(^\text{33}\) The room, *Harmony in Blue and Gold*, is known as the Peacock room and has been moved to the Freer Art Gallery in Washington, DC, where it can be seen without its furniture. Photographs of the room with its furnishings reveal that Leyland still used a matched set of dining room chairs. In the Hunton dining room, instead of a variety of furniture, there were Colonial revival pieces. The Colonial Revival has its roots in the Aesthetic Movement and its use reveals Aesthetic Movement influence in the dining room.

At the center of the room was a large mahogany dining table of late Sheraton extraction with a paw-footed pedestal. Around the table sat four high back dining chairs. There was room for more chairs, but they stood in front of the two windows which would have been to the right of someone entering the dining room. Between the two windows was a Sheraton sideboard that would have stored some of the Huntons’ china and silver.

The Hunton House appears to be in the American Renaissance style from the exterior, but period photographs show a different story. They reveal that the Huntons decorated the interior in a late Aesthetic style. The Huntons employed a lot of surface

\(^{32}\) Cook, 251.
patterning, many decorative objects, Asian influence, and a variety of furniture pieces.

The Huntons did not follow one style in their home, but commissioned the building in one style, while furnishing it in another.

33 To see a photograph of the Whistler dining room see Doreen, 122.
Similarities Between the Two Houses

The Hunton House and the Hapke-Geiger House seem like very different homes. The Hunton House was based on the American Renaissance architecturally and the Aesthetic Movement in furnishings. The Hapke-Geiger House was based on the Arts and Crafts Movement in exterior architecture and the American Renaissance Movement in interior architectural ornament. However, though the homes appear to be different, they have three fundamental similarities. First, the houses use porches in the same manner. Second, they both have older American floor plans. Third, they both mix styles instead of following one style consistently. These three similarities show that style is ambiguous and cannot be studied in isolation. Many elements cross stylistic boundaries and cannot be attributed to a single style.

Porches

The first similarity between the houses is that they both use porches in a very common American manner. They both have porches that are used as outdoor rooms including one that overlooks a major thoroughfare. The Arts and Crafts Movement emphasized a connection to nature and thus porches were very important to the movement. Stickley mentions the purpose of each of the porches in his description of the design used to build the Hapke-Geiger House. However, such uses can hardly be classified as
exclusively Arts and Crafts. Porches were common in other movements of the time, especially as outdoor rooms. This can be seen by comparing the Stickley House and the Hunton House.

Both houses have a porch viewing a major thoroughfare. Stickley specifies in his description that “the house faces directly southeast and at the west end is a terrace, covered with a pergola, which commands a view of the main road,—a busy thoroughfare that is usually thronged with carriages and automobiles.” In the Hapke-Geiger House, the porch overlooks Robious Road which in 2005 is a four-lane divided road. Though it was not always this large, Robious was still a busy road in the early twentieth-century. The Hunton House also has a porch facing a major road; the long front-porch views West Franklin Street. In fact, many of the houses on West Franklin Street had porches facing the street for major events such as parades. Such porches were important in Virginia during the hot summer months. They served as outdoor rooms where the residents could enjoy cool summer nights and the occasional breeze. A photograph of the Hunton House front porch shows many chairs that allowed the Huntons to sit on the porch and watch the happenings on West Franklin Street (Figure 50). The porches were also shaded to make them bearable during the day. The Stickley house had a pergola, or a trellis covering, and the Hunton House has a roof with a balcony above it.

Both houses also had other porches that served as outdoor rooms. The Hapke-Geiger House had a dining porch on the right side. Stickley specifies that it is to be used for this purpose. Stickley wrote that “this porch is connected with the dining room by
double French doors so that in summer it can be used as an outdoor dining room, especially as it will be protected all around with screens. In winter the screens will be replaced with glass so that the porch may be used as a sun room or as a breakfast room on mild days.35 The screens were for summer to protect the food from insects, and the glass windows were for winter to protect the residents from the cold. The Hunton House does not have a dining porch, but Hunton family photographs show that the roof garden was used as outdoor rooms. The roof garden was a playground and had exercise equipment. However, it was also used to entertain guests, much like a parlor. It was even used for quiet reading and contemplation, as a study would have been (Figure 51-54). The Huntons also had another type of outdoor room, a sleeping porch. Sleeping porches were a popular feature for Arts and Crafts homes, but they were also popular for other styles. The idea of having porches and terraces to be close to nature and have a healthier life style is a phenomenon that crossed many stylistic boundaries.

Common Floor Plan

The second similarity between the two houses is that they both have older American floor plans. The Hapke-Geiger house uses a center-hall plan with two side porches, while the Hunton House uses a side hall plan with a long front porch. Once again the houses do not prescribe to a stylistic formula, but instead use an element that was common to many periods.

34 Stickley, Craftsman Homes, 28.
35 Stickley, Craftsman Homes, 28.
The Hapke-Geiger house has a center-hall plan with two side porches, descending from an eighteenth-century American pattern. The first floor is symmetrical with a center hall and staircase (Figure 55). On the left is the living room and on the right is the dining room. Both rooms have a porch that connects the room to the exterior. The floor plan is not perfectly symmetrical, because the living room extends the length of the house and there is a kitchen off the dining room. However, in the plan published in *The Craftsman*, there is a study off of the living room and the plan is more symmetrical with two rooms on each side of the central stair hall.

This Hapke-Geiger center-hall floor plan became common in the early twentieth-century and can be traced back to the eighteenth century. The Vassall-Longfellow House in Cambridge Massachusetts built in 1759 with the porches added in 1793 and the Taylor House in Roxbury Massachusetts of circa 1790 both use this floor plan (Figure 56-57). The side porches were outdoor rooms in a world without air conditioning. Both homes are from the classical tradition, but their floor plan would become a very common element in many different styles. The open interior and the porches fit with Arts and Crafts ideals, making the floor plan easy to adapt to Arts and Crafts homes. The floor plan was also used in the American Renaissance Movement as can be seen in the Scott House by Noland and Baskervill. The symmetry of the central hall plan with two side porches was perfect for homes in the classical tradition. The Stickley design picked up this popular floor plan and

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took advantage of its simple arrangement, but, its use in other movements at the time show
the overlapping of styles and the way that some elements can pertain to very different
ideals.

By contrast, the Hunton House uses the traditional side-hall plan with a long front
porch (Figure 58). This plan was used in Richmond Italianate Row Houses. The plan had
a side hall with two parlors back to back and a long front porch. The first Richmond
Italianate House, the Kent-Valentine House designed by Isaiah Rodgers in 1845 had this
plan (Figure 59). The house has been remodeled and no longer has the same plan.
However, old photographs of the façade reveal the plan for the entryway stood on one side
and windows on the other. A long porch ran across the front of the house. The Hunton
House also similarly had a hall on one side, two parlors, and a long porch across the front.
There was a difference. The Hunton House has a bow like many Richmond Italianate Row
Houses. Though the Hunton House and the Hapke-Geiger House look very different, they
both followed well-established American floor plans.

Mixing of Styles

The third similarity between the two houses is that they both mix styles. The
Hunton House combines the American Renaissance Movement in architectural detailing
and the Aesthetic Movement in furnishings, while the Hapke-Geiger House combines the

Period: Being photographs and measured drawings of Colonial work with text. (U.P.C. Book Company,
1923), plate 73-74.
37 Laura Carr, "Creating the Kent-Valentine house: a history of change, 1845-1995," Master’s Thesis,
Virginia Commonwealth University, 1995. See also Mary Wingfield Scott, Houses of Old Richmond,
(Richmond: The Valentine Museum, 1941), 235-7.
Arts and Crafts Movement in exterior architecture and the American Renaissance Movement in interior architectural detailing.

Noland and Baskervill followed the American Renaissance Movement when they built the Hunton House. They used classical elements on the façade such as columns, grotesque friezes, and entablatures. They continued this into the interior with pilasters and classical chimneypieces. The Huntons however, followed the Aesthetic Movement when decorating their house. As we have seen, the Huntons had an abundance of surface patterning, the shelves and mantels were filled with decorative items, the Huntons had Asian pieces, and they followed the principle of having furniture pieces not match.

The Hapke-Geiger House also combined two styles, but in a different manner. Instead of just contrasting architecture with furniture, the house combined different styles in exterior and interior architecture. The exterior followed Gustav Stickley’s design for an Arts and Crafts home. The interior has architectural detailing from the Colonial Revival branch of the American Renaissance. The exterior uses porches and a long yard to create a connection with nature. The interior has little architectural detailing, but the little it does, the columns in the entryway and the chimneypieces are designed in the Colonial Revival style. The two styles are combined in a seamless manner and appear fluid to a person entering the house.
Conclusion

Styles are not always as clear cut as textbooks teach us. The Hapke-Geiger House and the Hunton House demonstrate how styles overlap and can be combined in a single structure. The two homes have three similarities in the manner they use architecture. First, each uses an established plan that is not connected to its supposed style. The Hapke-Geiger House has an eighteenth-century American center-hall plan with two side porches and the Hunton House has a nineteenth-century Richmond Italianate Townhouse side-hall plan with a long front porch. Second, the houses use porches in a similar manner. They both have porches that are used as outdoor rooms, including one that overlooks a major thoroughfare. Third, the two houses mix styles. The Hapke-Geiger House has an Arts and Crafts exterior and American Renaissance interior architectural ornament, while the Hunton House had American Renaissance architecture and Aesthetic Movement furnishings.

During the early twentieth-century in Richmond, the American Renaissance Movement, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and the Aesthetic Movement all had a presence. However, they were not isolated. The Hapke-Geiger House and Hunton House have shown us that they were combined with each other and other popular elements such as floor plans. To call one house one style is not possible, for all the different elements must be taken into consideration. This does not mean that stylistic terms have no use.
Stylistic terms are necessary to create order and allow the discussion of architectural history. However, structures such as the Hapke-Geiger House and the Hunton House show that it is important to realize that stylistic terms must be used with care for buildings do not always fall into one stylistic category.
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Figures

1. *Hapke-Geiger House.* ca. 1912, based on Gustav Stickley design, 11171 Robious Road, Chesterfield, Virginia. (Photograph by author.)

2. *The Hunton House.* 1914, Noland and Baskervill, 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph by author.)


6. *Beth Ahabah*, 1902-04, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Watercolor by Maria Rabinky.)
7. Scott House, 1906-11, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph by Jennifer Watson.)

8. Interior, First Floor, Hapke-Geiger House. ca. 1912, based on Gustav Stickley design, 11171 Robious Road, Chesterfield, Virginia. (Photograph by Author.)
9. *Chimneypiece, Hapke-Geiger House.* ca. 1912, based on Gustav Stickley design, 11171 Robious Road, Chesterfield, Virginia (Photograph by author.)


12. Eppa Hunton, Jr. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mrs. Mary Peters Hunton.)


18. Photograph of William Churchill Noland. (IMG 07007, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia.)

20. *Entablature, Hunton House*. 1914, Noland and Baskervill, 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph by Jennifer Watson.)
21. Entablature, Scott House. 1906-11, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph by Jennifer Watson.)

22. Detail of Pillar and Column Capitals, Hunton House. 1914, Noland and Baskervill, 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph by author.)
23. Front Entrance of the Hunton House. 1914, Noland and Baskervill, 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph by author.)

24. Entry Hall, Hunton House. 1914, Noland and Baskervill, 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph by Jennifer Watson.)
25. *First Floor Plan, Alterations to 810 West Franklin Street*. Marcellus Wright and Son, Architects, 1946. (Permit No. 33460A, Control No. 2409. Richmond City Building Permits Collection. Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.)


28. *Detail of Doric Capital in the Entrance Hall, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph by author.)
29. Stairs, Hunton House Entry Hall. 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photography by author.)

30. View of the Entrance Hall from the main Entrance. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
31. *View of the Entrance Hall facing the main Entrance.* (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

32. *Japanese Silk and Gold Tapestry.* Collection of Eppa Hunton V. (Photograph by author.)

34. *Grandfather Clock.* c1800. Collection of Eppa Hunton V. (Photograph by author.)
35. *View of the Front Parlor Facing the Entrance, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

36. *View of the Front Parlor Facing the Fireplace, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
37. *View of the Rear Parlor Facing the Fireplace, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

38. *View of the Rear Parlor Facing the Piano, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

41. *Detail of Bentwood Chairs, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

43. *Grecian Couch*. Collection of Eppa Hunton V. (Photograph by author.)

44. *Dining Room, Hunton House*. 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
45. *Dining Room, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA.
(Photograph courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

46. *Dining Room, Hunton House.* 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA.
(Photograph courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
47. *Dining Room, Hunton House*. 810 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA. (Photograph courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)


50. *Front Porch, Hunton House*, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
51. *Eppa Hunton, IV playing on the roof garden, Hunton House, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia.* (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

52. *Eppa Hunton, IV and a friend on the roof garden, Hunton House, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia.* (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)
53. Portrait on the roof garden, Hunton House, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)

54. Eppa Hunton, IV reading on the roof garden, Hunton House, 1914, Noland and Baskervill, Richmond, Virginia. (Photograph provided by courtesy of Mary Peters Hunton.)


58. *First Floor Plan, Residence for Mr. Eppa Hunton Jr.*. Noland and Baskervill, Architects, 1914. (Permit No. 3477, Control No. 404. Richmond City Building Permits Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.)