

The Last of the Romans

Neo-Palladian Influences in America during the “Era of Good Feelings,” 1815–1825

Darryl T. Saunders

Ultimas Romanorum—“the last of the Romans”—was the nickname Thomas Jefferson bestowed upon Nathaniel Macon, a North Carolinian statesman of the early republic whom Jefferson admired for his staunch defense of liberty and limited government. The name or phrase might also apply to several Palladio-influenced Classical Revival structures built for men associated with Macon and Jefferson’s Democratic-Republican Party, just before the advent of the Greek Revival. These houses suggest a possible link between political ideologies and architectural preferences.

In early 18th-century Britain, Neo-Palladianism became politically associated with the Whig Party. Figures like Robert Walpole embraced the style to distance themselves from the Tory-supported Georgian Baroque. Historian Patrizia Granziera describes Neo-Palladianism in Britain as reflecting “high civic virtues” drawn from classical Greece, Rome, and the Venetian Republic. Palladio, seen as transmitting these ideals, became a symbol of this movement.¹

Similarly, in the United States, Classical Revival architecture may have aligned with Jeffersonian Democratic-Republican values. This article explores three structures built within a decade: Ingleside, c1817, in North Carolina, Frascati, c1821, in Virginia, and Edgewater, c1824, in New York. Their owners—Daniel M. Forney, Philip P. Barbour,

and Rawlins Lowndes Brown—were interconnected by politics, friendship, and shared ideals.

Jefferson championed Roman-inspired Classicism, filtered through Palladio’s work, as the ideal architectural style for the New Republic.

His vision for an agrarian society of moralistic landowners residing in classically styled villas influenced both public and private architecture.² While Jefferson’s influence on civic buildings has been widely explored, the ideological foundations of his followers’ domestic architecture deserve closer attention.

By the 1810s, Jefferson’s preferred architectural idiom began to spread beyond Virginia, finding favor among his political allies. Although the Greek Revival would soon dominate, it possessed more or less the same political and ideological

“democratic” values as the Classical Revival movement, allowing both styles to coexist and complement one another.³

Ingleside, built for Daniel M. Forney in Lincoln County, NC, is one of the earliest examples. Forney, a Major in the War of 1812 and a congressman, built a new house c1817, shortly after his marriage to Harriet Brevard, their union resulting in several children, including a son named Macon, in tribute to Daniel M. Forney’s friend and mentor, Nathaniel Macon. The inspiration for Ingleside likely came

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Houghton Hall, the seat of
Sir Robert Walpole as published in
Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus*

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CPSA Opportunities for Participation

BRYAN CLARK GREEN AND DALE HILTON, CO-PRESIDENTS

Spring of 2025 finds the Center for Palladian Studies continuing its focus on working committees and providing a full slate of programs. As always, we welcome your volunteering with us in an area you find congenial. As an *aide memoire*, committees are:

Communications and Social Media. Promote CPSA events, membership, tours, and other activities. Maintain an active social media presence, and other communications to members and potential members. Coordinate with the Publications committee regarding announcements and other materials to be included in *Palladiana*. Monitor and make suggestions for website updates.

Domestic Travel. Develop at least two trips per year. Explore partnering with like-minded organizations to develop architecture-focused travel. Trips should be a combination of day trips that do not require organized transportation, and overnight travel for which CPSA will arrange transportation and lodging.

Travel | International. Develop one trip at least every other year. Explore partnering with like-minded organizations to develop architecture-focused international travel; use partnerships for most efficient planning.

Nominating. Maintain list of potential board members and officers for both annual nominations and resignations that might occur during the year. Recommend board action to maintain engaged board members.

Programs. Develop, market, execute talks on Palladian architecture and allied topics throughout the year.

Publications. Solicit, edit, and publish scholarly articles and updates in *Palladiana*, which appears twice a year.

Scholarship, Development, and Membership. Explore and recommend the best use of CPSA scholarship funds. Increase donor base. Promote membership with enticing programming.

To join a committee, write Bryan Green: bryancgreen@gmail.com and/or Dale Hilton: dale.hilton@gmail.com.

You can also stay connected by visiting our social media sites for the latest postings:

- The Events Page on our website at palladianstudies.com
- Instagram at [palladianstudiesusa](https://www.instagram.com/palladianstudiesusa)
- Youtube at Palladian Studies in America

By way of updates, CPSA inaugurated its Zoom lecture series in November 2024, with the talk *Barboursville Reimagined* by Bryan Clark Green. Thirty people, both nonmembers and members, tuned in to this stimulating presentation. We thank Madison Spencer for participating in our series in February with his talk offering a perspective on the practice of classical architecture. In this, our first year of virtual lectures, we aim to present an online program once a quarter. Please let us know if you or a colleague have a topic that would engage our audience.

In-person programming is underway with events open to current and prospective members. In February, architectural historian Christopher Moore (visiting the US as a keynote speaker at the Williamsburg Antiques Forum) lectured in Charlottesville on

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Palladio's Double Temple

An Enduring Precedent

NOAH DUELL

Palladianism in Ireland. Similar member cultivation talks are being planned for Northern Virginia and Richmond.

Palladians are also enjoying an active travel year. Visits have been arranged to private homes, the latest one, Orange County, VA's Frascati in December 2024. We hope to do many more of these one-day junkets.

In April 2025, Jeffrey A. Cohen, Ph.D. (Term Professor in Architectural History, Growth, and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr College) will guide members on an intensive weekend trip to Philadelphia. Spectacular 18th century properties should delight the group whether revisiting or encountering these structures for the first time.

CPSA's annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 13 at Battersea (1768), Petersburg, VA. Date and activities will be communicated when confirmed.

Finally, CPSA is returning to the Veneto with a trip slated for September 2025 with Heritage Travel, formerly Martin Randall Travel. Sites include some of Palladio's best loved works, Villa Cornaro, Villa Badoer, and Villa Foscari, among others.

Please note that programs and trips are announced via emails to members well in advance of registration dates. Do make sure we have your current contact information and that you are taking time to read mailings and follow up using the forms provided. It is through these forms that CPSA develops a trip roster and notifies you with confirmations and updates.

Very much looking forward to seeing you at the next event! ■

Among the many design precedents that Palladio established in his fruitful life, one of the most enduring is the double temple motif. Comprising an inset or engaged portico over a wider and lower pediment, the double temple found application in no fewer than four of Palladio's six church designs in Venice.¹ Originally believed to have been used at the Old Constantinian Basilica at St. Peters at the Vatican, the design resurfaced in the Renaissance as a solution to the T-shaped basilical church form. And while its first uses were ecclesiastical, this essay will show how future architects and designers have applied Palladio's innovation to a variety of structures with great effect.

As with many of Palladio's precedents, the double temple was an innovative take on an already circulating motif. Baldassare Peruzzi used a variation in the façade of the Chiesa di Santa Maria in Castello in Carpi in 1515, as did an unknown early-16th century architect at the Chiesa di San Zaccaria in Codevigo.² Where Palladio seems to have differed was in his articulation of classicism. On the façade of Jacopo Sansovino's San Francesco della Vigna—Palladio's first use of the double temple—he “completed” the side-wings with both dentils and a raking cornice, suggesting that the lower temple could stand alone.³

Palladio would use the double temple design most famously on the monastery church façade at San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice (Begun 1556; finished by Vincenzo Scamozzi in 1610). Facing the principal Venetian public square at Piazza San Marco, the church is a world-renowned landmark that has captured the attention of



Submissions

Our deadline for the Fall 2025 issue is July 15 for images and August 1 for copy. We appreciate early submittal of potential articles of no more than 1000 words.

Images for digital printing must be jpegs at a minimum size of 350 dpi, 9-inch width. Check size by clicking on image, “tools,” “adjust size,” which will provide the dpi and width of your image.

If images are not 350 dpi/9”w, please consult with state libraries or departments of historic resources, Library of Congress, historical societies, or house museums to request high resolution images. While cell phones cameras are used by many and may be acceptable for web or other formats, the results produce lower resolution than necessary for *Palladiana*.

If you have questions, prior to submission please email katherineslaughter61@gmail.com. Send images to her and essays to Editor Calder Loth, cloth@verizon.net.



Redwood Library
Designed by Peter Harrison, finished in 1750
Photograph by William O'Connor



Herb garden and orangery at Boscobel
constructed in the early 19th century
Courtesy of Boscobel House and Gardens

many historians, architects, and artists. Between 1908 and 1912, none other than Claude Monet painted several views of San Giorgio Maggiore, during which time his wife Alice remarked that she was “happy to see Monet so impassioned, doing such beautiful things, and—between you and me—something other than those same old water lilies.”⁴

Palladio’s double temple filtered to the British Isles through English translations of his *I quattro libri*, most notably Edward Hoppus’s Andrea Palladio’s *Architecture in Four Books* (1736). Hoppus’s volume was dedicated to Richard Boyle, Lord Burlington, and contained two original variations of the double temple motif, one with a dome and one without. For his villa and gardens at Chiswick, Burlington designed an orangery in the latter style, and William Kent designed a domed Ionic Temple, both of which demonstrate how the three architects were in conversation.

Hoppus’s work traveled across the Atlantic sometime in the 1740s, where it probably served as the inspiration for the Redwood Library in Newport, RI. Designed by Peter Harrison and finished in 1750, the Redwood Library was among the earliest buildings in the Americas to draw directly from a Palladian volume. Harrison showed how Palladio’s T-shaped basilical plan could be adapted to other purposes, using the side wings for librarians’ offices and the center mass for the reading room.

The double temple proved to have some influence on American home and garden design, too. At Boscobel in New York’s Hudson Valley, States and Elizabeth Dyckman had an orangery built using the double temple in the Adamesque style, inspired by the work of 18th century British architects James and Robert Adam. North of Boscobel in Dutchess County, NY, an unknown architect and/or builder designed a double temple homestead in the Greek Revival style around 1836, which its present owners have aptly named “The Dutchess Folly.”

More recently, New Classical architects have revisited the double temple for several church designs. In Denton, NE, Thomas Gordon Smith designed Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, constructed in 2000. Closer to home for many of our readers is Union Run Baptist Church in Keswick, VA, which was expanded over the past few years to include a double temple front.

In an essay for the *Cornell Journal of Architecture*, Thomas Schumacher wrote that “Palladio, ever aware of his relation to antiquity, created an architecture whose individual parts



Façade of Palladio's San Francesco della Vigna
Constructed 1564-70
Photograph by Didier Descouens

‘worked’ as they had in antiquity.”⁵ Indeed, these parts continue to work today, and these examples demonstrate how the ideals of classicism—through Palladio—have worked their way into our conceptions of leisure, enlightenment, and the divine. ■

Noah Duell is a second-year Master of Architectural History student focusing on Jeffersonian classicism. He also serves as Donor Stewardship Officer for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello.

Notes

- 1 These are San Francesco della Vigna (1564–70), San Giorgio Maggiore (begun 1566; finished by Vincenzo Scamozzi in 1610), Chiesa del Santissimo Redentore (1577–92), and Basilica di San Pietro di Castello (designed 1558, modified and executed 1594–96 by Francesco Smeraldi). See Duncan G. Stroik, “Palladio’s Debt to Venice,” *Nexus Network Journal* 21 (2019), pp. 347–357. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00004-018-00427-y>.
- 2 Both Lorenzo da Bologna and Giovanni Maria Falconetto have been variously suggested as the architect of Chiesa di San Zaccaria in Codevigo.
- 3 Stroik noted that there is some disagreement about this and argued that “[i]f one considers the earlier history of Venetian church façades, one realizes it is not necessary to interpret Palladio’s façades as intersecting or overlapping temple fronts any more than these late Medieval or early Renaissance façades.” See Stroik, “Palladio’s Debt to Venice,” 354; and the works he cited: Roberto Pane, “Andrea Palladio e l’interpretazione della architettura rinascimentale,” in *Venezia e L’Europa, Atti del XVIII Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell’Arte, Venice: Casa Editrice Arte Veneta*, 1956, pp. 408–412; and Rudolf Wittkower, “The Genesis of an Idea: Palladio’s Church Facades” in *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1949, pp. 80–87.
- 4 As quoted in Ariane Caudier, “Claude Monet in Venice, October 1, 1908–December 7, 1908,” translated by Michael Vogel, *Intermonet*. Retrieved from <http://www.intermonet.com/venice/>.
- 5 Thomas Schumacher, “The Palladio Variations: On Reconciling Convention, Parti, and Space,” *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, Issue 3. Retrieved from <https://cornelljournalofarchitecture.cornell.edu/issue/issue-3>.



The Dutchess Folly
Constructed c1836

Photograph courtesy of Nick Olsen



Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary
Designed by Thomas Gordon Smith, completed 2000

Photograph courtesy of Thomas Gordon Smith



Façade of San Giorgio Maggiore

Photograph by Till Niemann



Union Run Baptist Church, Keswick, VA
Façade constructed c2015

Photograph by Noah Duell

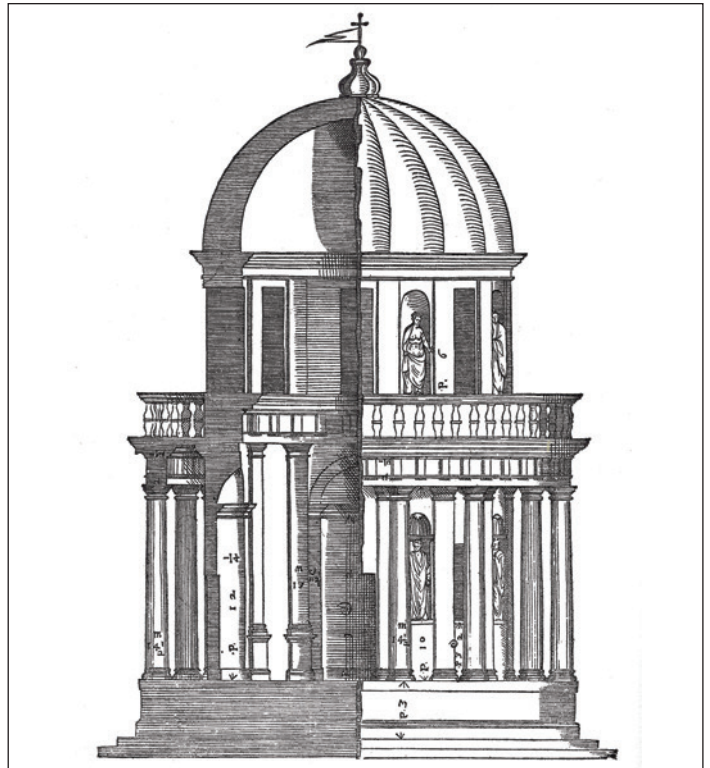
The Tempietto, Grandfather of Domes

CALDER LOTH

One of the most influential architectural works of the Italian Renaissance is perhaps the most diminutive and discreetly sited. Within the courtyard of the monastery of St. Pietro in Montorio, on Rome's Janiculum Hill, is a tiny domed structure popularly known as the Tempietto.¹ Completed in 1510, it was commissioned by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to mark the traditional site of St. Peter's crucifixion. Its architect, Donato Bramante, 1444–1514, created a novel design consisting of a dome supported on a two-tier drum, the bottom portion of which is encircled by a Doric peristyle topped by a balustrade.² The composition was likely inspired by the ancient tholos form³ and has served as the prototype for innumerable monumental domes throughout the Western World.

The Tempietto is also noteworthy as one of the few buildings of the Renaissance to achieve published approbation from contemporary architects. Sabastiano Serlio, 1475–1554, considered the Tempietto important enough to include it in his famous treatise *L'Architettura*, 1537. However, it was Andrea Palladio who recognized the distinctive ingenuity of the design. We find an elevation of the Tempietto in Book IV of *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura*, 1570, where Palladio presented his restoration drawings of ancient temples. Palladio justified this insertion by stating: "I thought it reasonable that his [Bramante's] work should be placed amongst those of the ancients; accordingly I have included the following temple design by him on the Janiculan [sic] Hill."⁴ Palladio's conviction that the Tempietto should rank with the monuments of the Romans was high praise indeed. It was the only contemporary work, other than his own, that Palladio included in *I Quattro Libri*. Moreover, Palladio's published images gave the design broad exposure and eventually made it the inspiration for many great domes from the 17th century into the 20th century.

The grandest of all Tempietto-type domes is unquestionably Sir Christopher Wren's dome crowning London's St. Paul's Cathedral. Its enormous mass and scale may have been inspired by Michelangelo's dome for St. Peter's Basilica, but the arrangement of its elements follows the Tempietto. Wren gave a solidity to its Corinthian peristyle by placing in every fourth bay a solid pier decorated with a niche. The upper tier of the drum is somewhat compressed but is penetrated by small windows lighting the dome's inner shell. Since



The Four Books on Architecture
Book IV, Chapter XVII, p. 278

Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield, Translation, MIT Press, 1997



The Tempietto
Rome

Photograph from Wikipedia

its completion in 1711, the great dome has symbolized the pride and fortitude of the British nation.

In France, architect Jacques-Germain Soufflot provided Paris with a more faithful adaptation of the Tempietto with his dome for the church of Ste. Genevieve, built 1755–90. Following Bramante’s model, the dome has a two-tier drum and an uninterrupted peristyle topped with a balustrade. Although originally constructed as a church, the building was reordered in 1791 to become a burial place for French worthies. Nevertheless, it subsequently was twice reconverted to church use. The monumental work was officially named the Pantheon in 1885, following Victor Hugo’s internment in the crypt. With its more refined adaptation of the Tempietto, Soufflot’s dome has likely influenced more domes than Wren’s St. Paul’s.

A commanding version of Bramante’s Tempietto dominates St. Petersburg’s Cathedral of St. Isaac of Dalmatia. Encircling its drum are 24 monolithic red granite columns with bronze Corinthian capitals. Its gilded dome served as a gleaming landmark for arriving ships. The cathedral was designed by French architect, Auguste



St. Paul's Cathedral
London

Photograph by Calder Loth



The Pantheon
Paris

Photograph by Calder Loth

Ricard de Montferrand who studied under Napoleon’s architect, Charles Percier. Completed in 1858, the massive structure took 40 years to build. Whether Montferrand was directly inspired by Bramante’s Tempietto or Soufflot’s Pantheon is difficult to say. Even so, except for its materials and statues, St. Isaac’s dome more nearly replicates Soufflot’s dome, a work Monferrand would surely have known.

Thomas U. Walter gave us our national symbol with his design for the dome of the United States Capitol. The dome was part of the Capitol’s 1850s expansion, for which Walter’s design was approved. Walter’s travels in Europe had familiarized him with the domes of



St. Isaac's Cathedral
St. Petersburg, Russia
Photograph by Calder Loth



United States Capitol
Washington, DC
Photograph by Calder Loth

St. Paul's Cathedral, Soufflot's Pantheon, and St. Peter's Basilica. Nevertheless, his capitol dome more closely recalls St. Paul's than any of the other European domes he visited. The Capitol's dome, however, is more lavishly detailed, a feat made practicable by the use of cast iron, offering a lush demonstration of the material's potential.

Walter's great dome inspired designs for a remarkable collection of state capitols erected as part of the American Renaissance movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. At least 14 state capitols display colonnaded domes following the Tempietto formula in varying degrees. Typical is that on George B. Post's Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, erected 1906–17. Faced with Bethel white granite supported on a steel superstructure, it is the largest granite dome in the world. The dome echoes the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral by having four of its peristyle bays filled with solid piers decorated with blind arches. These piers serve as frames for

freestanding statues. A nod to the U.S. Capitol is the use of squat consoles serving as transition between the top of the upper drum and the crown of the dome.

Following the precedent of the numerous American Renaissance capitols, the nation of Cuba undertook the construction of a palatial domed capitol in the 1920s. Designed by the Cuban architects Raul Otero and Eugenio Raynieri, and completed in 1929, the monumental structure, known as El Capitolio, rivaled any of the state capitols to the north. Its Tempietto-type dome was closely modeled after Soufflot's Pantheon dome, having an uninterrupted peristyle of Corinthian columns with an upper drum punctuated with arch-top windows set in shallow panels. The dome is supported on a steel frame manufactured in the United States. The Castro regime has since converted the building to the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment.



Wisconsin State Capital
Madison

Photograph by Ryan Wick



El Capitolio
Havana, Cuba

Photograph by Nigel Pacquette

The examples presented here are the briefest sampling of the many Tempietto domes throughout Europe and the Americas that grace religious as well as governmental and educational buildings. Look for them. Yet we wonder if the form has run its course. Will there be noteworthy versions of Bramante's masterpiece, great or small, in the 21st century? ■

Calder Loth, retired from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, frequently writes and speaks on classical architecture.

Notes

- 1 Tempietto is Italian for "small temple."
- 2 The Tempietto's balustrade is one of the earliest known uses of this Renaissance innovation.
- 3 A tholos is an ancient circular structure topped by a conical roof or dome. A tholos is usually surrounded by a peristyle or colonnade. The temple at Tivoli, traditionally known as the Temple of Vesta and illustrated by Palladio in *I Quattro Libri*, is one of the best known Roman tholos structures.
- 4 Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books on Architecture*, Tavenor and Schofield translation, MIT Press, 2002, p. 64.

Events 2025

Annual Meeting and Reception

September 13 | TBA
Battersea Petersburg, VA

Palladian Villas of the Veneto Tour

September 23 – October 1 | Heritage Travel
Registration opened December 2024

Palladiana

Continued from page 1.

from Palladio's Villa Chiericati, as published in Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi's *Le Fabbriche e i Disegni d'Andrea Palladio*.⁴ Few Americans at the time had access to such works, and even fewer had the expertise to execute Neo-Palladian designs.⁵

Ithiel Town around that time was residing in nearby Salisbury, N C, and may have been involved in Ingleside's design.⁶ Known mainly for his engineering innovations, architectural library and later Greek Revival work, Town was deeply influenced by Palladio, as

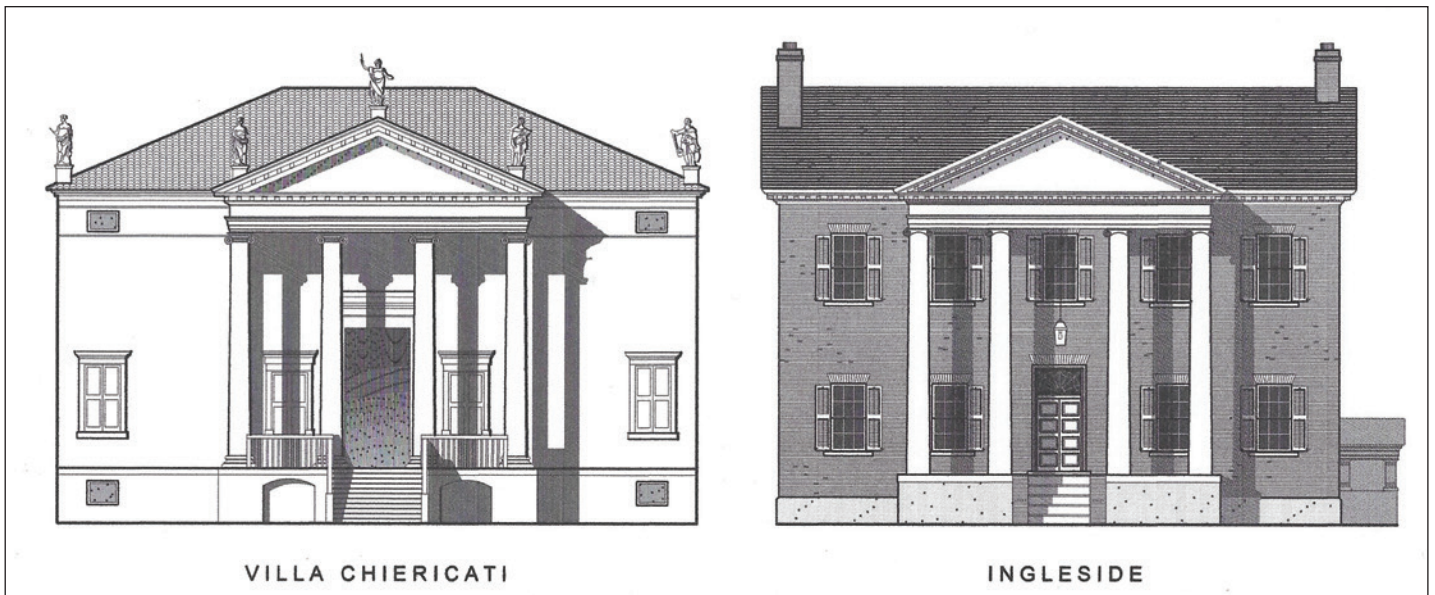
evidenced in his letters,⁷ and projects like the extant New Haven Center Church, the now-demolished Nathan Smith house, as well as his First Congregational Church in Plainfield, CT.⁸ Town's proximity to Ingleside and his pioneering use of Palladian elements make his involvement a strong possibility.⁹

Frascati, built for Philip P. Barbour in Orange County, VA, was designed by John M. Perry, a master builder who worked closely with Jefferson. The house's west elevation features a portico closely



Ingleside, c1817, Lincoln County, NC

Photograph by Darryl Saunders



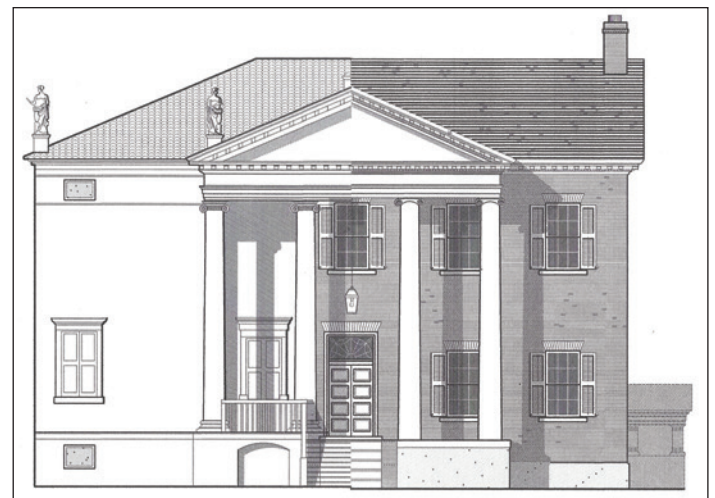
Villa Chericati and Ingleside
Drawing by Darryl Saunders

resembling Palladio's Villa Emo, reflecting the influence of Jefferson's architectural library and ideals. Barbour, a congressman and advocate of agrarian republicanism, shared Jefferson's reverence for classical virtues and was influenced architecturally by him, further evidenced by the nearby Barboursville, which Jefferson himself designed for Barbour's brother, James, and which was completed by 1822.¹⁰ Interestingly, Philip P. Barbour and Daniel M. Forney were housemates, sharing a boarding house with Nathaniel Macon and other Democratic-Republican Senators and Congressmen in DC.¹⁰

Frascati demonstrates how Jefferson's circle perpetuated his architectural vision. The house not only embodies Neo-Palladian principles but also signifies the political and philosophical alignment between its builder and Jefferson.

Edgewater, built for Margaretta Livingston and Rawlins Lowndes Brown in Barrytown, NY, exemplifies Neo-Palladianism's northern adaptation.¹² Brown, a South Carolinian by birth, had a connection to Daniel M. Forney of Ingleside through his service in the War of 1812, and connections to Ithiel Town through Yale alumni networks.¹³ Edgewater's hexastyle Roman Doric portico, highly unusual for American residences of the time, may have drawn inspiration from a portion of Palladio's Villa Gaetano Thiene, as published by the aforementioned Bertotti Scamozzi.¹⁴

The attribution of Edgewater's design has traditionally been ascribed to Robert Mills, but stylistic and circumstantial evidence points to Ithiel Town.¹⁵ Town's growing presence in New York by 1824 and his affinity for Palladian elements lend credibility to this hypothesis. The



Villa Chericati and Ingleside
Drawing by Darryl Saunders

house's distinctive portico foreshadows Town's subsequent work, such as the Samuel Russell House, 1828–30, in Middletown, Connecticut.

Edgewater was later purchased by Robert Donaldson of North Carolina, whose wife, Susan Gaston was the sister of Alexander Francis Gaston. Gaston, in 1834, purchased Ingleside from Daniel M. Forney, thus highlighting the interconnectedness of the two houses and their builders.¹⁶ These structures, along with Jefferson's own works in Albemarle County, represent some of the finest expressions of Neo-Palladianism in early 19th-century America.

However, not all Classical Revival houses aligned with Jeffersonian politics. For example, Elmwood in Monroe County, WV (masonry work and plan attributed to William B. Phillips) was built for Federalist Hugh Caperton. This diversity suggests that while Jefferson and his followers popularized Classical Revival architecture, its adoption extended beyond strict political boundaries.

The Classical Revival houses of the Early Republic reflect a complex relationship between politics, philosophy, and aesthetics. Men like Forney, Barbour, and Brown used architecture to express their



Villa Emo
Photograph by Calder Loth



Edgewater
Barrytown, NY
Photograph by Darryl Saunders



Comparison of Palladio's Villa Thiene, left, and Edgewater, right
Drawing by Darryl Saunders

Jeffersonian ideals, drawing inspiration from Palladian models that symbolized civic virtue and democratic values. While not universal, this association underscores how deeply Jeffersonian thought permeated the cultural and architectural landscape of the time. These “last of the Romans” stand as enduring monuments to the political and philosophical currents that shaped the early republic. ■

Darryl Saunders is an historic preservationist with over a decade of experience. Since 2021, he has been actively restoring Ingleside, the Classical Revival home featured in this essay. His work and lifestyle are deeply intertwined: When not restoring historic properties, he travels the East Coast, exploring and documenting architecture of the Early Republic, and sharing discoveries on Instagram at @thefederaltour.

The author would like to thank Christina Rae Butler, Calder Loth, and Rhodri Windsor Liscombe for their assistance in preparing this essay.

Notes

- 1 Patricia Granziera, *Neo-Palladian Architecture and its Political Association: The Contribution of Venice to Eighteenth-Century British Art*. *Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 13, 2004 pp. 155–56. Granziera discusses in detail the connections between Whig politics and Neo-Palladianism in Britain.
- 2 For more background on how Jefferson’s political ideologies influenced his architecture and both public and private structures in Virginia, see Calder Loth, “Jeffersonian Temples of Justice” <https://www.classicist.org/articles/classical-comments-jeffersonian-temples-of-justice/> and Loth, “Louisa County Palladianism,” *Palladiana*, Spring 2023.
- 3 Indeed a host of structures from the 1810s to the 1830s display a sophisticated blend of Neo-Palladian and Neo-Greek elements. Some of the best examples can be found in the South Carolina work of Robert Mills. Many of his courthouses, churches, and residences are a harmonious blend of Palladian forms with Greek Revival details. Examples of this can be seen in the First Baptist Church in Charleston and the Ainsley Hall House in Columbia SC. Referring to Mills’ First Baptist Church, one architectural historian states: “The First Baptist Church prefigured the Subtle recreation of South Carolinian Palladianism he was to achieve in those public and domestic commissions he completed after returning to the state in 1820.” (R.W Liscombe, *Altogether American: Robert Mills, Architect and Engineer, 1781–1855*, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 91). This “South Carolinian Palladianism” lingered well into the 19th century, with architects such as the talented Edward Brickell White (1806–1882) successfully blending Palladian and Greek Revival elements.
- 4 Scamozzi’s four volume set, initially published in 1776, is believed to have contained the first engraving of the Villa Chiericati, a structure while designed by Palladio was not featured in I Quattro Libri. Scamozzi’s books did make their way into American collections. Robert Mills is known to have owned a copy (see Waddell & Liscombe, *Robert Mills Courthouses and Jails*). Ithiel Town possessed the largest architectural library in America in the early 19th century, which included many volumes written in Italian and French. He likely owned a copy of Scamozzi’s treatise.
- 5 Notably, alongside Houghton Hall, several structures mentioned in this article—such as the Villa Chiericati, Ingleside, and Frascati—incorporate the eustyle type of intercolumniation. This sophisticated feature was utilized by Jefferson in Pavilion V at the University of Virginia but is otherwise absent from his work. Interestingly, Edgewater does not employ eustyle spacing, which is typical of the Roman Doric order. Incorporating eustyle spacing in this order would necessitate adjustments to the number of triglyphs placed between the columns.
- 6 Ithiel Town’s design and construction of a lattice truss bridge near Salisbury, NC, in 1818 has been well-documented. The author is currently conducting research into Town’s career while he was living in the Western Piedmont of North Carolina and has identified several additional structures that Town was likely involved with. Town resided in North Carolina from approximately 1817 to 1824.

- 7 Quotes from letters discussing Palladio and Palladian architecture written by Ithiel Town to his architectural partner, Alexander Jackson Davis, are covered in “A New Era in My Life: Ithiel Town” *Abroad* by R.W Liscombe *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Mar. 1991).
- 8 Center Church on the Green in New Haven was designed and built by Town between 1812 and 1815 in partnership with Asher Benjamin. While the structure itself is a mix of different stylistic influences, including Gibbsian Baroque, the entablature of the church features a frieze utilizing bucrania as metopes, an element more commonly associated with Neo-Palladian architecture.
- 9 Several other factors indicate Town’s involvement in the design of Ingleside and other structures in the Western Piedmont. Jacob Stirewalt, the carpenter/builder to whom many of the finest structures of the Western Piedmont have long been attributed, was connected to Town. Stirewalt’s son, John would move to New York in the early 1830s to study architecture and work under Ithiel Town and his architectural partner, Alexander Jackson Davis. Another local builder in the Western Piedmont and a partner of Jacob Stirewalt, Samuel Lemly named his son Ithiel Town Lemly, suggesting extremely close ties. Town’s arrival in the Western Piedmont coincided with an immediate and radical transformation of the local architecture with structures shifting from heavily vernacular to up-to-date by national standards, seemingly overnight.
- 10 Belko, William S., *Philip Pendleton Barbour in Jacksonian America: An Old Republican in King Andrew’s Court*, University of Alabama Press, 2016. On pages. 23–24, Belko discusses both the influence of ancient Roman society and government on Virginians during the Early Republic and its impact on Barbour personally.
- 11 Anderson, Richard Clough, *Diary and Journal, 1814–1826* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964), pp. 72–73.
- 12 American or New World Neo-Palladianism, as expressed by large domestic structures featuring classical porticoes, is an architectural idiom perhaps best utilized for villas in rural or semi-rural settings. The nature of the concentration of wealth in towns and cities in the North perhaps did not allow this idiom to be expressed in the same way that was utilized by the largely agrarian plantation society of the South. One cluster of Neo-Palladian influenced structures in the North can be found in Southern Connecticut, which coincidentally is where Ithiel Town lived and worked before moving to North Carolina. Some of these structures include the Timothy Bishop House and the now-demolished Nathaniel Smith house, both in New Haven, and the Florence Griswold House in Old Lyme.
- 13 Major Daniel M. Forney of North Carolina had been Lowndes Brown’s superior officer in the 2nd Artillery. National Archives, Record Group 94: Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, Series: Letters Received, Brown, Lowndes, Year 1814, Folder Number: 4733. As a member of the Yale Class of 1806, Brown would have certainly known several men connected to Ithiel Town. These included the author James Fenimore Cooper. Another member of the class of 1806 was Nathaniel Chauncey, who would write a letter of introduction, which Ithiel Town used with the American-born architect Henry Roberts, who was living in England in 1829 when Town visited that country. Rawlins Lowndes Brown and Margaretta Livingston were married in 1819 by the Rev. John Henry Hobart, who had consecrated Ithiel Town’s Trinity Church in New Haven, and who also co-authored a pamphlet with Town regarding the church.
- 14 Edgewater’s Doric hexastyle portico, lacking any American precedents, is likely modeled after the portico in Andrea Palladio’s designs for the Palazzo Thiene, which was published in Bertotti Scamozzi’s books of Palladio’s work (libro II plate XXX). Hampton Plantation near McClellanville, SC, is perhaps the first American house with a hexastyle portico (1793). George Hadfield’s Arlington House followed this model, and was likely the first American house of the 19th century with a hexastyle portico. If Edgewater is by Town, it is almost his response to his friend Hadfield’s Arlington House. Both houses take the same hexastyle format, yet the handling of the details couldn’t be more different.
- 15 The attribution of Edgewater to Robert Mills, based on stylistic evidence was first proposed by William Nathaniel Banks and published in *The Magazine Antiques* in June 1982. While well-reasoned and supported by the fact that both Mills and Brown were South Carolinians, perhaps more evidence points to Town’s involvement in the design of Edgewater than Mills. Aside from the aforementioned connections that the builders had to men who knew Town, there is just as much stylistic evidence that points to Ithiel Town as the architect. Rhodi-Windsor Liscombe, the Mills’ biographer and architectural historian who has published several books on Mills as well as a well-written article on Ithiel Town, supports the attribution of Edgewater to Town.
- 16 Anderson, Jean Bradley, *Carolinian on the Hudson: The Life of Robert Donaldson*, The Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Raleigh, 1996. In this well-written book, the author explores the connections between the Donaldson and Gaston family, Edgewater, Ingleside, and the connections to Alexander Jackson Davis, Ithiel Town’s architectural partner.

Howard Burns

1935–2025

As this issue was going to press, the world of Palladian scholarship lost a giant. Through his research and writing, as well as his mentoring of generations of scholars, Howard Burns has had an enormous impact on the understanding of Palladio's architecture. With a global legacy spanning Harvard, Vicenza, Cambridge, London, Venice, and Pisa, he joined the University of Virginia's Venice program on several occasions. Through his former students and leaders of the program, Cammy Brothers and Maddalena Scimemi, his passion for architecture was passed to another generation. We hope to include a more extensive discussion of his life and work in an upcoming issue of *Palladiana*. ■



Howard Burns with Students at
Villa Rotonda
Photograph by William H. Sherman

Charles Allan Brown

1957–2025

With regret, *Palladiana* has learned that historic preservationist C. Allan Brown died January 23, 2025 following a long illness. Allan was a prominent landscape historian. During his career, he produced research reports on numerous historic sites including Poplar Forest, Montpelier, Menokin, and Gunston Hall. He contributed two lead articles on the architecture of Charleston's Miles Brewton House for *Palladiana* (Fall 2023 and Spring 2024). Alan received a MLA from the University of Virginia School of Architecture, where he completed the certificate program in historic preservation, then directed by the late Mario Valmarana. ■



Miles Brewton House
Charleston, SC
Photograph by Calder Loth

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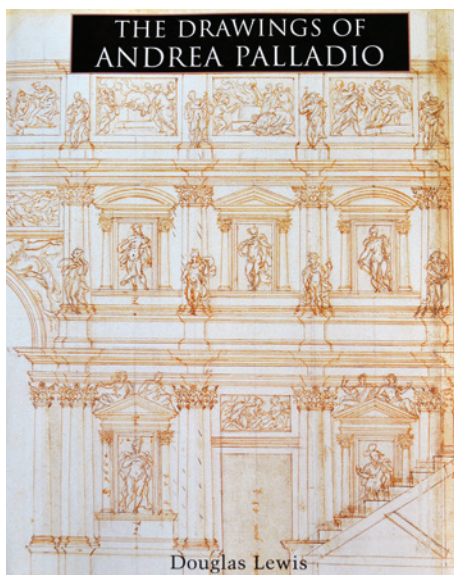
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