

HISTORIC FABRIC

The Saling House distinguishes itself in Weston, Oregon, and certainly, in much of eastern Oregon because of its stylistic qualities centered in Italianate architecture. The Saling House is a textbook example of the style containing many classic features popular in American houses through the last half of the 1800's. The style of this house is contemporary with many Italianate homes built in San Francisco and some other larger northwest cities. Pure examples of this style are not often found in smaller communities in eastern Oregon.

Unfortunately, some of the major features which distinguish the Saling House in the Italianate style are now missing due to age and resulting deterioration. The reader should refer to the historic photographs found in the Appendix of this report. These photographs will assist in understanding the essential elements which are recommended for restoration to the Saling House.

- Brackets: Historic photographs clearly show the two (2) part bracket dividing the horizontal dimension of the cornice which extended around the perimeter of the house directly under the overhang. Fortunately, there are very good templates available as are seen in photograph 24.
- Cornice Panels and Moldings: Together with the brackets, the cornice panels and molding form one of the most distinctive elements of the Italianate style on the Saling House. Photograph 24 evidences the remaining original moldings which can be used to recreate the panels of the cornice.
- Cupola: The square cupola complete with smaller brackets and cornice was removed from the building due to its substantial deterioration. The cupola was constructed on a square, flat area at the intersection of the hipped roof and was accessed by the stair through the attic for viewing the surrounding countryside. This cupola can be replicated from the historic photographs and is an essential piece of the Saling House architecture which made it very special.
- Chimneys: Several corbeled chimneys were constructed identically, penetrating the hipped roof. The chimneys served fireplaces used for heating throughout the Saling House. These corbeled chimneys, now in deteriorated condition, should be restored to their original designs (still distinct) to maintain the Italianate character of the composition.

Porches/Railings: As the historic photographs show, and as the Italianate style dictated, the porch railings and the porches themselves (including the rectangular columns) were significant in defining the scale and detail of the Italianate style. Fortunately, the porch columns and plinths serve as templates to restore the east or rear porch. The rear porch shown in the historic photographs and the second floor railings on both the east and west porches should be restored, making access to the porch roofs safe and replacing the important architectural detail to these areas.

There certainly are more minor elements of the exterior which should be restored, but the above mentioned elements are thought by this writer to be critical elements in redefining the style and completing an excellent restoration.

Fortunately, the largest percentage of detail in the historic fabric on the interior remains. That part of it which is missing can be easily replicated, including stair railings balusters, newels, door trim, base, etc.

EXTERIOR FEATURES, MATERIALS

Masonry Walls: The exterior walls of the Saling House are approximately 25ft tall, constructed of triple and double wythe unreinforced red brick masonry with a tie course at every seventh course. The tie course bricks are placed perpendicular to the length of the wall and serve to tie the masonry wall together at regular intervals. The tie courses are largely responsible for the Saling House continuing to be restorable.

The brick is consistently free of serious defects and appears to have been well made of local materials. The brick pattern uses a radiused soldier course at the head of all the upper floor windows and a segmented arch soldier course at the head of all lower floor windows (photographs 2-7, 12 and 14). This same segmented arch header detail is used over the main doors. Building settlement is concentrated at the building corners where the window openings provide a weakened plane for the masonry to fail, as is evidenced above the upper and lower floor windows in photograph 19. Photographs 14, 15 and 19 detail a specially made brick which frames each of the masonry openings. These bricks are radiused and relieved to form a gentle transition between the brick and the wood windows and doors.

As is detailed in photographs 20-24, a significant failure in the masonry system is at the mortar in the lower 4' of the exterior walls. Over time, moisture from the roof runoff, irrigation and underlying soils (rising damp) has invaded the mortar, and bit by bit eroded it, making some areas structurally unsound to the point of loss of wall integrity, as is described in the structural section which follows. The structural system which most threatens the existence of the Saling House (as is described later) is the masonry walls, which have rotated outward in some locations, nearly disengaging themselves from the second floor framing.

Windows: Besides the sidelites on either side of the main entry door (shown in photograph 12), the windows in the house are all of the same width, but employ two types of head designs as seen in photographs 2-7. The window heads in the upper

floor are full radius while the first floor window heads are a segmented radius. All the windows are vertically divided 2/2, double-hung, with wood sills. Some of the windows have been removed and are stored inside the building.

The typical exterior detailing for the window includes ogee trim between the brick and the window frame as shown in photographs 14 and 15. The thick sill is constructed of wood and let into the masonry wall. The double-hung windows are operated using sash weights counter-balanced through cast steel hardware manufactured by Hugunin Manufacturing Company of New York, patented in 1870 (photograph 25). Several locations where windows have been removed or are severely deteriorated have been covered with plywood panels, but a few are not and require covering to prevent water infiltration into the building systems.

The glazing in the windows is generally contemporary with the windows, including the glazing in the sidelites on either side of the entry door. Photograph 13 details the patterned glass which is found in several of the sidelite and transom panes of the main door. Where it is missing, this glass can be replicated from patterns taken from the existing glazing.

There appears to have been three (3) doors at the first floor level and two (2) at the second floor level in the Saling House. Photographs 4, 6 and 12 and the drawings in the Appendix show the locations of the three (3) doors on the first floor: the main entry doorway into the hallway, the door in the east wall into the parlour and the door into the kitchen from the north. The kitchen and parlour doors have been boarded up as seen in photograph 6. In the original construction, these doors were connected by a covered porch which is dotted in the floor plan drawings and seen in the historic photographs in the Appendix. What appears to be the original door in the parlour remains, however, the door to the kitchen is lost.

The two (2) exterior doors at the second level connected the hallway at the east and west ends to the balustraded porch roofs accessible at that level. The west door (still intact) provides a template for the replacement of the east door which is now boarded over.

Front Porch: One of the major, character-defining features of the Saling House is the porch balconies on the east and west elevations of the building. The east porch balcony is no longer extant, however, restoration has begun on the entrance porch on the west elevation of the Saling House (see photographs 1 and 9). This porch serves as a focus for the main entry sequence into the house. There are six (6) columns which support the roof, symmetrically placed along the entrance facade, bracketing the main entrance door. The porch floor and roof have been newly replaced as well as some columns and plinths. The porch soffit, electrical, roofing and second floor balusters remain to be completed. Photograph 18 shows the temporary roof covering penetrated by structural supports for the railing which will be erected at the perimeter of the porch roof, replicating the original. Photograph 11