

# Architectural Terms & Architectural Styles: A Supplement

Architect of St. Paul's West Side

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### Architectural Terms

**Balloon frame:** A system of wood building construction in which an exterior frame is made of long, vertical, standardized lumber, known as studs. The studs run uninterrupted from the top of the foundation to the roof, in contrast to construction methods where each floor is framed separately.

**Belt course:** A horizontal line of brick or stone that creates a visual demarcation on an exterior wall.

**Cartouche or medallion:** An ornamental oval, circular, rectangular, or square tablet embellished with a painted or carved design.

**Corbel:** A brick or stone that projects from a wall, often to support a weight above it.

**Corbeling:** An arrangement of bricks or stones on the face of a wall in which each course or row projects farther outward than the one below it.

**Cornice:** Decorative molded trim that runs along a roofline.

**Fenestration:** The exterior openings, including windows and doors, on a building.

**Gable:** The triangular area on the exterior wall of a building that is framed by two intersecting sides of a sloping roof.

**Hipped roof:** A type of roof in which each side of the building's exterior has a roof plane that slopes upward and intersects the other roof planes, resulting in an absence of gables.

**Keystone:** The central wedge-shaped stone or brick at the top of an arch.

**Kingpost:** The vertical post at the center of a triangular truss that runs the full height of a truss.

**Lintel:** A beam that spans the top of a door or window and supports the weight above it.

**Mansard roof:** A style of hipped roof in which the lower part of each roof plane is more steeply sloped than the upper part.

**Massing:** The composition of the shape and volume of a building.

**Pediment:** A type of gable with origins in Classical Greek and Roman architecture. Pediments are usually triangular but may be semicircular.

**Pilaster:** A rectangular decorative element projecting from a wall that visually echoes a column.

**Polychromatic:** Two or more colors.

**Springer:** The first (lowest) brick or stone on either side of an arch.

**Tie beam:** A horizontal piece of lumber that spans and unites two sloping rafters that meet at the top of a truss.

**Tourelle:** A small turret, often located at or near a building's roofline.

**Transom:** A window located above a doorway to let in light or provide ventilation.

**Truss:** A triangular system of lumber that provides structural supports in buildings.

**Vergeboard:** A carved decorative board attached to either side of a roof gable.

**Window hood:** A molded hood over a window or door that is both decorative and serves to protect the window or door from the elements.

## Architectural Styles

**Eastlake:** See Sidebar 1 on page 7 in the Winter 2024 issue of *Ramsey County History*.

**Richardsonian Romanesque:** A style of architecture popular in Minnesota in the late nineteenth century that arose from American architect Henry Hobson Richardson's interpretation and revival of medieval European Romanesque architecture. This style features wide, rounded arches; rough-faced, squared stones; polychromatic brick and stone; and often includes towers.

**Second Empire:** A style of architecture popular in Minnesota between the 1860s and 1880s. It is characterized primarily by use of the mansard roof and is named for the plethora of mansard-roofed buildings constructed in France in the mid-nineteenth century during the reign of Napoleon III, emperor of France's Second Republic. Other

common features are dormer windows, molded cornices, and brackets lining the roof eaves.

**Stick:** A style of architecture popular in Minnesota during the 1870s and 1880s. The style uses thin boards applied in horizontal, vertical, and diagonal patterns to a building's exterior walls, decoratively mimicking timber framing systems. Stick is also characterized by decorative truss forms and texturing, such as panels and shingles, in gable ends, as well as square-sided bay windows, brackets beneath cornices, and vertical strips of wood surrounding windows and along the corners of exterior walls. Stick style houses are often clad in wood siding, although some are brick and achieve the emphasis on horizontal and vertical patterning through the use of brickwork and strips of wood and panels applied to gables, window and door surrounds, and beneath rooflines.