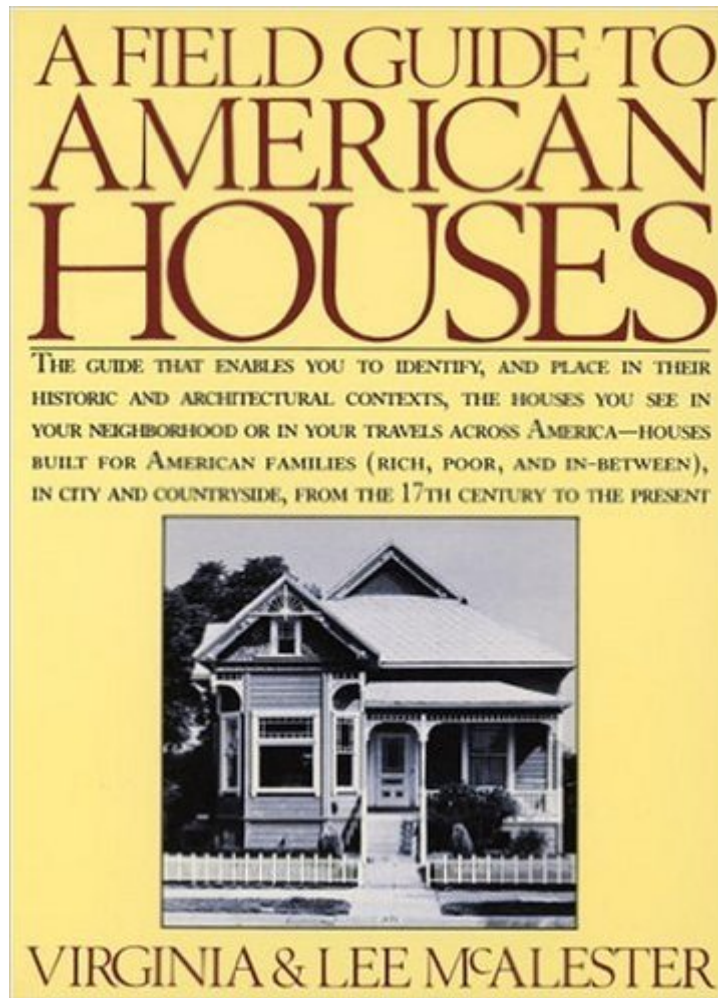


The book was found

A Field Guide To American Houses



Synopsis

The guide that enables you to identify, and place in their historic and architectural contexts, the houses you see in your neighborhood or in your travels across America. 17th century to the present.

Book Information

Paperback: 525 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (237 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #53,853 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > History](#) #33 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Residential](#) #65 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Reference > Architecture](#)

Customer Reviews

If you are an old-house fan, this book is the equivalent of a college education. Here are some reasons this book is both entertaining and useful: It starts with chapters on basic structure: shapes of houses, style of construction, ornamentation, etc. There are simple, remarkably clear drawings accompanying all this that will serve to give you a kind of 'vocabulary' to interpret houses when you run across something new (for example, a dozen different types of dormers - what are they all called?). (These involve almost entirely external elements, for detailed interiors you will need another book.) Lots of delicious historical background about how history and technological advances changed housing. For example, the authors divide folk housing into "pre" and "post-railroad" because not until railroads made building materials nationally accessible did a national set of housing styles develop. Following this, there are a series of chapters describing different styles (i.e., Victorian, Tudor, etc.), starting with the characteristic details, when and where the style is found, etc. The McAlisters do a particularly good job on regional variations; there are some remarkable maps showing the prevalence of different styles in different states. The graphics are fantastic and plentiful. The simple stylized drawings of building elements (rooflines, doorways, windows, etc.) clearly distinguish one detail from another, while the photographs make you want to pop into the car and

drive all over to see the real houses themselves. One note: there is a table, starting around p. 55, that will make the book much easier to use as a 'field guide' (i.e., driving around looking at houses the way birders look at birds).

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