

HOUSE TYPES IN GEORGIA



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HOUSE TYPES IN GEORGIA

In addition to architectural style, Georgia houses may be categorized by house type, such as "shotgun," "bungalow" or "plantation plain." This means the **overall form** of the house, the outline or "envelope" of the main or original part of the house, as well as the general layout of the interior rooms. Using the name of a house type rather than a lengthy description of the building lets us efficiently communicate to others the main characteristics of the house. Knowing the house type allows us to compare one house to others of the same form and can also tell us the general distribution of similar houses throughout the state. The house type can also tell us whether a house is a rare or common form and, in some cases, the historical period in which the house was most likely built.

The simplest definition of house type is the formula, **plan + height = type**. Thus two houses with the same floor plan and the same height will belong to the same type. In some cases, other architectural traits become part of the definition of the house type or of subtypes within one house type. Thus the type of roof, the location of doors or chimneys, or the kind of porch may help determine a house's type or subtype.

When determining the type of a house, consider only the **core**, or main part of the house and exclude side wings, rear service ells, later additions and attached outbuildings. Additions may be important, however, if they change one house type into another house type. For example, if a single-pen house was expanded by adding a second pen, or room, on the opposite side of the chimney, the resulting house type would be a "saddlebag". In this case it would be valuable to know that two different house types were involved in the evolution of the house, both the single pen and the saddlebag. All of the house types described below may have rear ells or side wings, either original to the main block or the result of an addition.

The type or form of a house is frequently confused with its **style**, even by experts in the field. "Style" should be thought of as the external ornament or decoration of a house, whereas "type" is the unadorned form and interior layout. Ten houses belonging to the same house type may exhibit ten different styles; ten buildings with the same style may illustrate ten different types. Thus a shotgun house, one of the most common house types in Georgia, may have been decorated with architectural details from the Queen Anne style, the Colonial Revival style, or no style at all. In all three cases, the house would still illustrate the shotgun type, regardless of the style with which it is ornamented. Confusing types with styles results in such misnomers as "shotgun style" and "Greek Revival type."

Likewise, the **method of construction** and the **exterior materials** should not be confused with house types, the overall form and plan of a house. A shotgun house may be

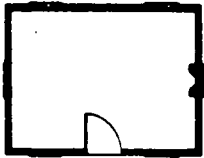
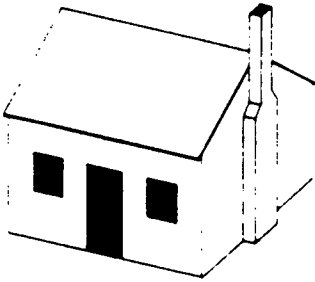
constructed of load-bearing masonry, wood frame, or logs, and it may be sheathed in clapboards, brick, vinyl siding or permastone. Regardless of the method of construction used and regardless of the exterior material, the house is still a shotgun house if it has the overall form and plan of the shotgun type.

House types should not be too closely linked with particular **historical periods**. In some cases, knowing the house type can tell you when the house was built, usually to within several decades. Most periods were marked by a predominance of one or two house types, and these popular types are unavoidably linked in people's minds with that period. In other cases, however, the popularity of a particular type over half a century or longer makes this sort of dating difficult. Sometimes in Georgia, a house type very common in the early 19th century was seldom used in the late 19th century, only to reappear in thousands of houses in mill villages in the early 20th century.

The house types described and illustrated below do not account for all the houses in Georgia. Many of the houses that do not fit easily into one of the following types have unusual forms and plans that make categorizing them difficult. Others have simply not yet been studied in sufficient detail to be recognized as members of a type. The following list does account, however, for the most common, recurring types of houses built in the state before about 50 years ago.

ONE TO ONE-AND-A-HALF STORIES HIGH

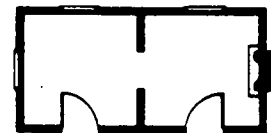
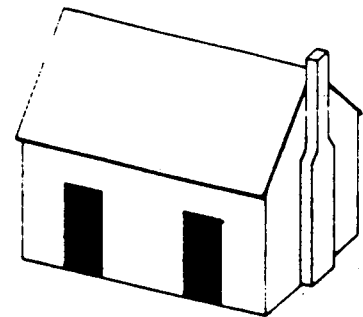
Single Pen



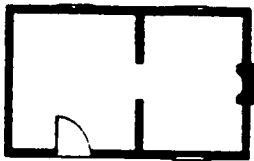
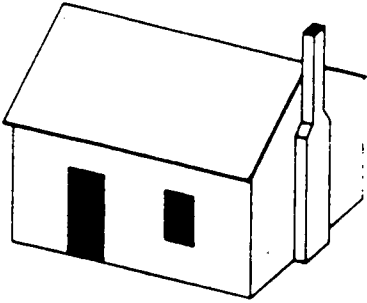
Single-pen houses consist of a single unit, either square or rectangular. The location and arrangement of the doors and windows varies, and the chimney or flue is at the exterior of one end. Usually the roof is gabled. Sometimes the rectangular version is partitioned into two rooms. Because of its small size, the single-pen house was usually enlarged by additions, so few houses of this type remain in their original form. Most surviving single-pen houses in Georgia were built between about 1850 and 1900, and, although they can be found in small towns and rural areas in much of the state, they seem most plentiful in North Georgia.

Double-pen houses consist of two rooms, typically square. As in the single-pen house, the arrangement and location of openings varies, but the most easily recognizable double-pen house has two doors in the main facade. Chimneys or flues may be located at either or both ends. Gabled roofs are the most common by far. Few double-pen houses remain in their original form in Georgia. Most of these were constructed for agricultural or industrial workers between the 1870s and the 1930s. Like the single-pen houses, the surviving double pens seem to be most plentiful in North Georgia.

Double Pen



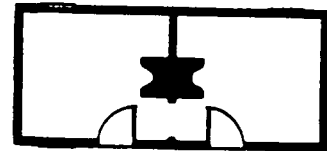
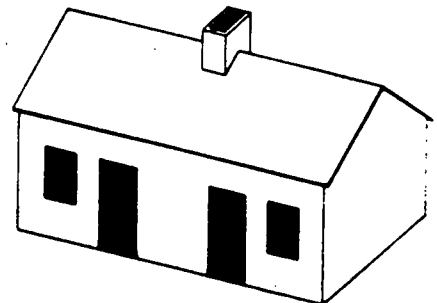
Hall-Parlor



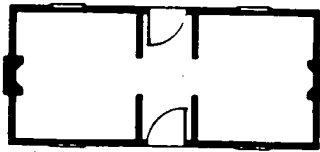
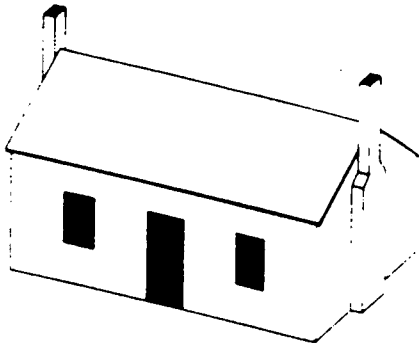
Named after two old-fashioned uses for rooms, the hall-parlor house consists of two unequal rooms. Entry is into the larger of the two rooms, the hall (not hallway), which served multiple functions. Typically gabled, the hall-parlor house is heated with one or two flues or exterior end-chimneys. Although this house type is one of the earliest found in America, in Georgia most of the remaining examples were built in the last half of the 19th century and the first three decades of the 20th. The type was adaptable and expandable and was popular for farm owners, tenant farmers and mill workers alike. Farmstead houses of the hall-parlor type are most plentiful in North Georgia, while hall-parlor houses for industrial and agricultural workers are spread fairly uniformly across the state.

One of the most distinctive and easily recognizable house types in Georgia, the saddlebag house derives its name from a central chimney flanked by two rooms, which seem to hang suspended on either side of the chimney. The rooms are usually square, and the roof is usually gabled. There are two subtypes, one with an exterior door into each room and one with a single, central door into a vestibule beside the chimney. The saddlebag houses in Georgia seem to have been built mainly in three periods, with the examples in each period strongly linked to three general settings. The earliest saddlebag houses, built in the 1830s and 1840s in rural agricultural areas, are quite rare statewide. In the last few decades of the century, saddlebags were popular for modest housing in outlying fringes of Georgia's towns and cities. Far more examples survive today from the great period of mill village construction, from about 1910 to 1930.

Saddlebag



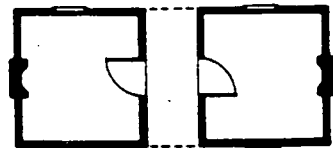
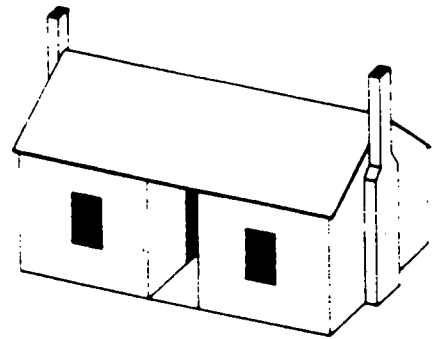
Central Hallway



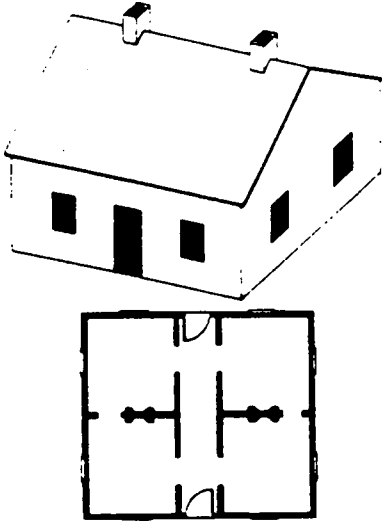
This house type has proved a favorite for Georgians throughout the 19th century. It consists, as the name suggests, of a central hallway or passageway between two rooms. It is distinguished from other types with central hallways by being only one room deep. The central hallway type most frequently has a gabled roof and exterior end chimneys on both ends. The type seems to be fairly evenly distributed across the state, appearing mainly on average-sized farmsteads and on principal residential streets in Georgia's towns and cities. Most examples of the type were built between 1830 and 1930, with clusters occurring in the periods 1840-1860 and 1870-1890.

Famous for both its picturesque name and for its distinctive appearance (when found in its rare original state), the dogtrot house has an open passage between two rooms. Like the central hallway house, the dogtrot house is only one room deep and it usually had a gabled roof and exterior end chimneys. Most frequently, the open dogtrot was enclosed at a later date, giving the house the appearance of a central hallway type. Most dogtrot houses in Georgia were constructed in the 1840s and 1850s. The geographic distribution seems to have been fairly uniform, but most of the surviving examples are above the Fall Line.

Dogtrot



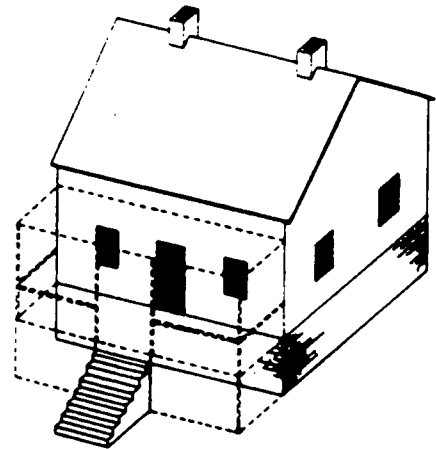
Georgian Cottage



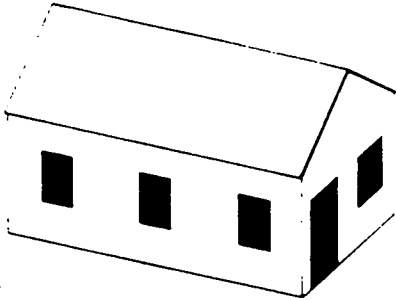
Possibly the single most popular and long-lived house type in Georgia, the Georgian cottage is named not for the state but for its floor plan, associated with 18th century English Georgian architecture. The Georgian plan consists of a central hallway with two rooms on either side. The plan shape is square or nearly square, the roof is usually hipped but sometimes gabled, and chimneys are sometimes in the exterior walls but usually in the interior of the house, between each pair of rooms. Houses of this type were built in almost all periods of Georgia's history, well into the 20th century, but the greatest concentration is between 1850 and 1890. Most surviving examples are found in the Piedmont region.

The Sand Hills cottage is one of the few regional house types identified in the state. It is linked with the Augusta area and consists of a one-story house on a raised basement. The floor plan of the house is two rooms deep, either with a central hallway or a hall-parlor plan. The roof is usually gabled, and chimneys are usually located along exterior walls. The height of the main floor required a prominent flight of stairs to the front entry.

Sand Hills Cottage



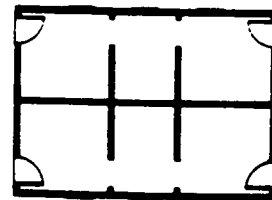
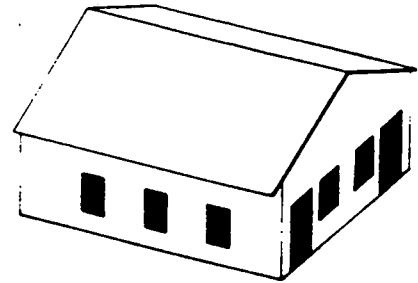
Shotgun



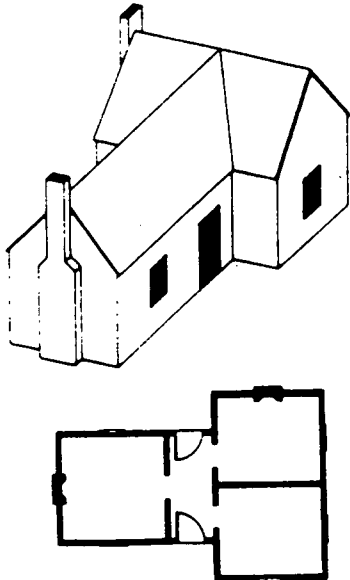
One of the better-known house types statewide in Georgia, shotgun houses are predominantly an urban phenomenon, built mainly for low-income workers between the 1870s and the 1920s. Shotgun houses are one room wide and two or more rooms deep, usually three. There is no hallway, and all doors typically line up front to back. The roof is usually gabled, but hipped roofs were also used. The shotgun house was especially popular in the larger cities of Georgia, but it may be found in small and medium-sized towns as well.

A two-family dwelling, the double-shotgun consists of two shotgun houses side by side with no openings in the shared party wall. Usually a single hipped or gabled roof covers both sections. Like the shotgun type, the double shotgun was built mostly for low-income workers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but unlike the shotgun type, the double shotgun was limited almost entirely to the state's eight to ten largest cities.

Double Shotgun



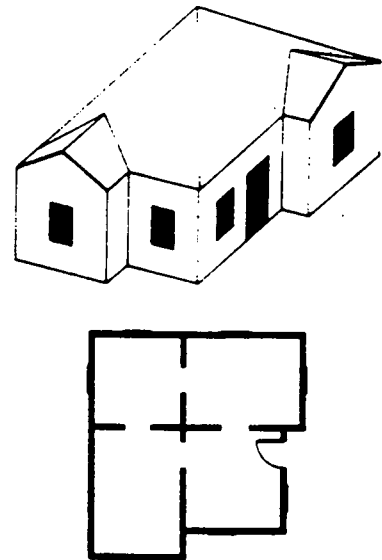
Gabled Wing Cottage



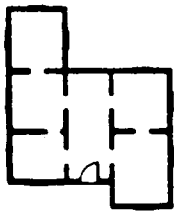
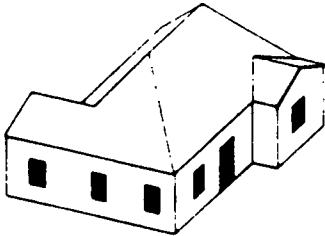
Of the late-19th century house types in Georgia, the gabled wing cottage perhaps has the most examples. In plan, it is T- or L-shaped, and it usually, though not always, has a gabled roof. Sometimes called the gable-front-and-wing or the gabled ell house type, the gabled wing cottage consists of a gable-front at one end of a recessed wing that is parallel to the facade. The front door, located in the recessed wing, may lead into a hallway or directly into the room in the wing. Fairly evenly distributed across Georgia, the gabled ell cottage was popular in both rural and urban areas and in both modest and well-to-do neighborhoods. Its period of greatest popularity was 1875-1915.

Although the name of the Queen Anne cottage derives from the architectural style with which it is frequently linked, the house type also occurs with elements from other styles or no style at all. It is characterized by a square main mass with projecting gables on the front and side. The rooms are arranged asymmetrically, and there is no central hallway--two traits that distinguish the Queen Anne cottage from another similar house type, the New South cottage. The roof is either pyramidal or hipped, and chimneys are usually found in the interior. Although not as ubiquitous as the gabled wing cottage, the Queen Anne cottage does appear in both urban and rural areas as popular middle-class housing of the 1880s and 1890s.

Queen Anne Cottage



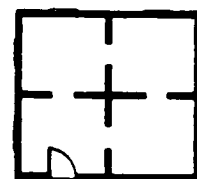
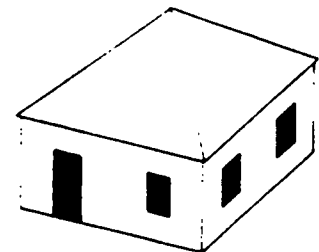
New South Cottage



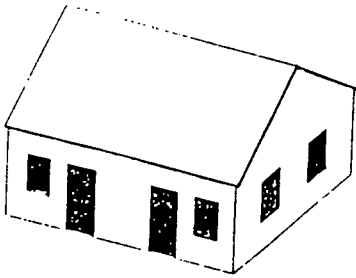
Named after the turn-of-the 20th century period of great economic growth and regional confidence, the New South cottage was a very popular house type for middle- and upper-middle-income Georgians between the 1890s and the 1920s. Although examples of the type survive statewide, in both rural and urban contexts, the greatest numbers are in a central band across the state, in the Piedmont and Upper Coastal Plain, and in the state's largest cities and towns. The New South cottage resembles the Queen Anne cottage in that it has a central square mass, usually with a hipped roof, and gabled projections. The main distinguishing trait of the New South cottage is its emphasis on symmetry, the key element of which is the central hallway plan. The central hallway is flanked by pairs of rooms, one or both of which might project forward. A pair of gables in the facade, either over projecting rooms or flush with the wall of the main mass, frequently provided additional symmetry to this house type.

One of the simplest housing forms in early 20th century Georgia, this house type consists of a square main mass, typically with four principal rooms and no hallway. The most memorable feature is the steeply-pitched pyramidal roof. Most pyramid cottages were built between 1910 and 1930. The house type seems to have been more popular in the regions between the Fall Line and the Coast and in rural sections and on the fringes of towns than in urban areas.

Pyramid Cottage



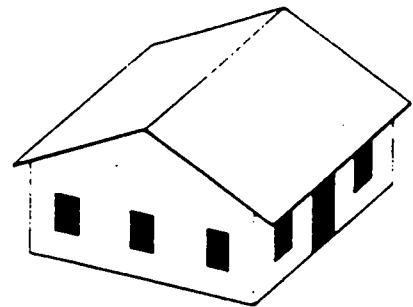
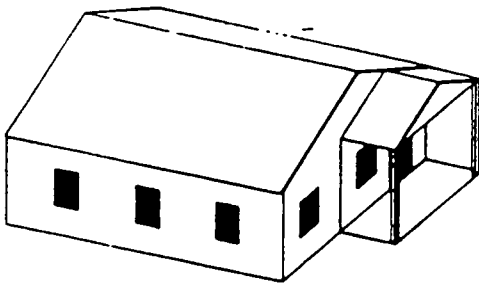
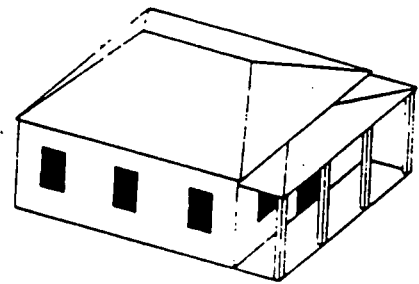
Side-Gabled Cottage



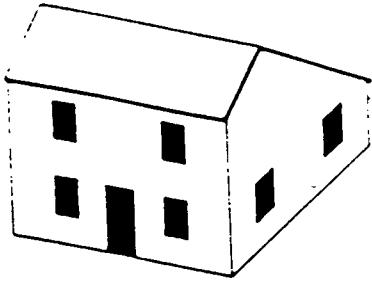
Like the pyramid cottage, the side-gabled cottage has a compact square mass consisting of four rooms without a hallway, and, like the pyramid cottage, it was economical to build. It has a more traditional appearance, however, because it has a broad gabled roof with its gable-ends at the sides. Only rarely does it have a hipped roof. The floor plan has two variants: a hall-parlor plan with a central doorway and a foursquare plan with equal sized rooms, indicated by two front doors. The side-gabled cottage was a popular workers' house type in mill villages and in small towns, although high-style examples for the well-to-do can be found. This type was most popular in the period 1895 to 1930.

Sometimes mistakenly referred to as a style, bungalow house forms are long and low with irregular floor plans within an overall rectangular shape. Integral porches are common, as are low-pitched roofs with wide overhangs. Bungalows were very popular in all regions of Georgia between 1900 and 1930, almost as popular in rural areas as in cities and towns. The bungalow type is divided into four subtypes based on roof forms and roof orientation: front gable, side gable, hip, and cross gable. The front- and side-gabled versions of the bungalow greatly outnumberhipped bungalows, while cross-gable bungalows are rare.

Bungalow



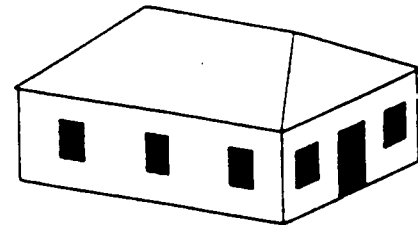
Saltbox



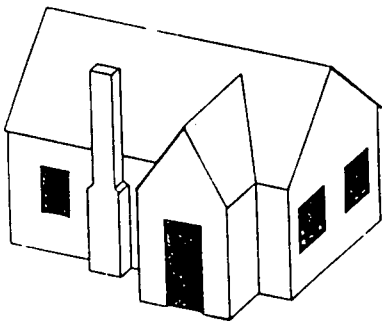
This house type is an import from New England, not a native Georgian type. It is rare in the state, limited almost entirely to mill villages, many of which were built by companies based in New England. It consists of a rectangular block two rooms wide and deep, 1 1/2 stories in the front and only 1 story at the rear. The gabled roof has a short slope in the front and a long single slope in the rear, giving the outline of a saltbox. Its period of popularity was about 1920 to 1940.

Like the temple-front cottage, this house type has a long, rectangular shape with the facade in the narrow end, but there is no recessed front porch. The hall-parlor plan is three or more rooms deep, and the roof may be hipped or gabled. The extended hall-parlor house may closely resemble several of the bungalow subtypes, described below. Most surviving examples date from the 1920s and 1930s. Like most 20th century house types, they are found uniformly across the state, in both rural areas and the outlying parts of towns and cities.

Extended Hall-Parlor

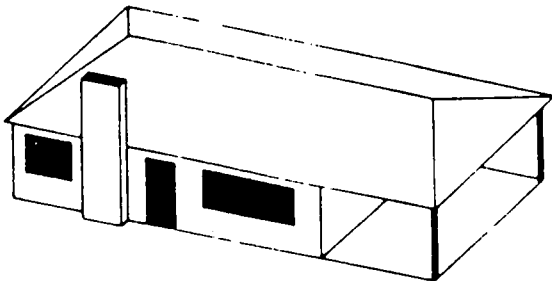


English Cottage



A picturesque house type usually found with English Vernacular Revival stylistic details, the English Cottage is most distinctive for its cross-gabled massing and front chimney. Unlike in the gabled-wing house types, the cross-gabled massing of the English Cottage is tightly held in a compact square or rectangular block, so that the front gable projects slightly, if at all. A secondary gable-front or recessed opening may mark the entry, which is near the center of the facade. Occasionally one of the front corners of the house contains a recessed porch. The rooms of the house cluster around the small entrance vestibule, which may contain a stairway to an upper half-story of bedrooms. The English Cottage was very popular among middle-class Georgians in the 1930s and 1940s on the edges of towns and in all the suburbs of larger cities.

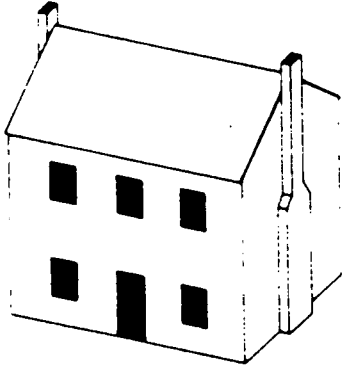
**Ranch House
Mobile Home**



Two house types of the middle 20th century that are not yet old enough to receive much attention from preservationists are the ranch house and the mobile home. This will no doubt change, however, in much the same way that historic preservation now includes bungalows. Even though additional time is needed to give proper historical perspective to understanding these forms, we can begin to try to define them as house types. The ranch house has a long, narrow, rectangular shape, with or without projections. Bedrooms are clustered at one end, the principal entry and living spaces near the center, and the garage or carport at the other end. The roof is typically very low-pitched. The mobile home also has a long, narrow, rectangular shape. Bedrooms are grouped in one end and the entry and living spaces in the other. The roof is usually flat or nearly so.

TWO STORIES HIGH

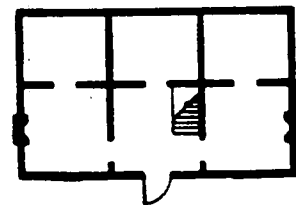
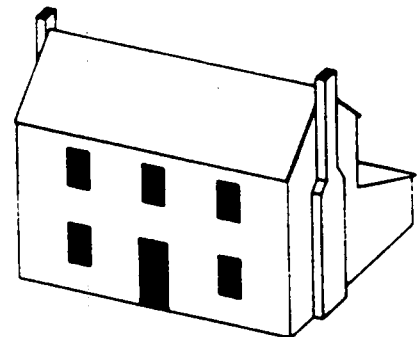
I-House



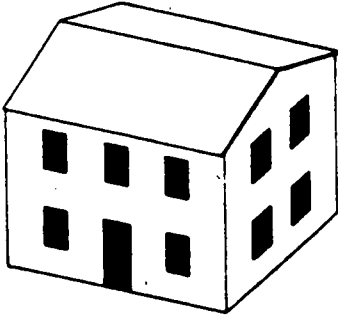
So-called because it is such a common house type in Midwestern states beginning with the letter "I", the I-house is far less common in Georgia than in other states of the Southeast. Although it appeared sporadically in Georgia throughout the 19th century, most of the remaining I-houses were built in the 1840s and 1850s, 1870s and 1880s. I-houses are one room deep and two rooms wide. The various floor plans of I-houses (all found in one-story houses as well) determine the subtype: central hallway, hall-parlor, double-pen, and saddlebag. The I-house type is comparatively rare in many areas of Georgia, as are two-story houses in general. Most of the survivors today are found in small towns in the Piedmont and Upper Coastal Plain regions, and in rural parts of North Georgia.

Georgians seem to have a special fondness for this house type, which is often mistakenly referred to as a style. One of the earliest house types in Georgia, the plantation plain is almost strictly a rural phenomenon. Most of the few surviving examples were built between about 1820 and 1850 in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain regions of the state. A plantation plain house has a two-story block at the front, with either a central hallway or hall-parlor plan, and a one-story range of rooms at the rear, consisting of either three rooms or, more commonly, a short rear hallway flanked by a pair of rooms. The rear section is typically shed-roofed, the two-story block is usually gabled, and there is most often a full-width, one-story front porch.

Plantation Plain



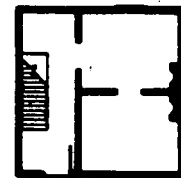
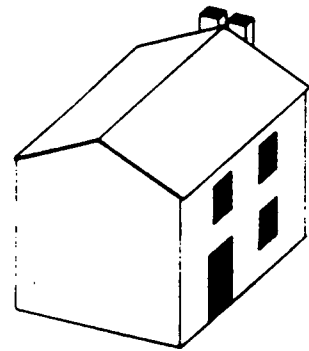
Georgian House



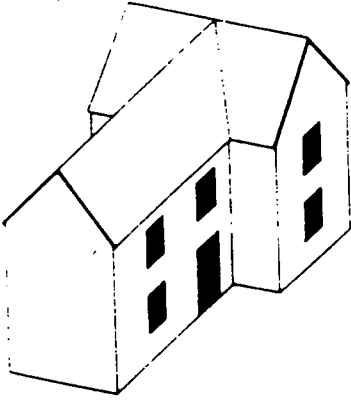
Except for its two-story height, the Georgian house has all the characteristics of the Georgian cottage. Although the two-story house is less numerous than the one-story cottage, particularly in rural settings, it too was popular from the first decades of the 19th century well into the 20th century. Most examples of the type, however, were built in the periods 1850-1860 and 1900-1930, chiefly in the larger towns and cities.

Named after the location of the hallway at the side of the house, this house type is relatively uncommon in Georgia. The hallway normally contained the staircase, and the house was usually two rooms deep. Because of its narrow facade, the side hallway house was especially suitable for urban housing. Most examples of the house type were built between about 1820 and 1850 in the oldest cities of the state, particularly in Savannah, where it is the most common house type, and Augusta. There are three subtypes: the row house, an attached single-family house which shares a party wall with one or two other houses; the Savannah house, detached with a raised basement; and the Augusta house, detached without a raised basement.

Side Hallway



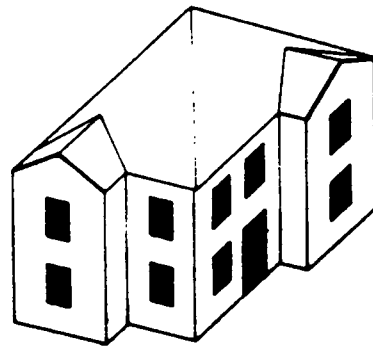
Gabled Wing House



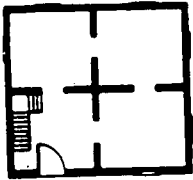
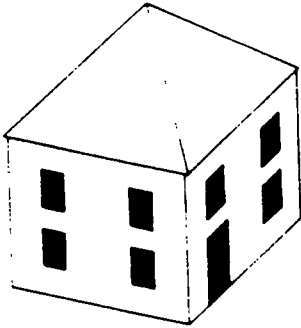
This is the two-story version of the gabled wing cottage. T-shaped and usually gabled, the gabled wing house type is far less common than the gabled wing cottage. Most examples were built in the last quarter of the 19th century for well-to-do occupants, more often in Georgia's towns and cities rather than its rural areas.

This house type is the two-story version of the Queen Anne cottage, and except for the height, the traits of the two types are identical. Both house types were popular in the 1880s and 1890s, although far fewer Queen Anne houses were built. While the Queen Anne cottage appeared in both rural and urban areas, the two-story version was almost limited to residential neighborhoods of Georgia's towns and cities.

Queen Anne House



American Foursquare



A very popular house type nationwide in the early 20th century, the American Foursquare was recognized as a separate type only within the last ten years. In Georgia, the type appears mostly in urban settings, occasionally in rural areas. The American Foursquare, consisting of a cubical mass capped by a pyramidal roof, was reputed to provide maximum interior space for the cost. There are four principal rooms on each floor; one of the front two rooms typically serves as the entry and stairhall. The American Foursquare was popular for only about 15 years, between 1915 and 1930.

Largely because it is a product of the American suburbs in the 1950s, the split-level house type is not yet on many preservationists' lists of preservable resources, but, as in the case of ranch houses and mobile homes, this situation is likely to change. The split-level house consists of three levels, two of them stacked and the third to one side, raised above the lowest level but below the highest level. The main doorway is near the center, in the middle level, and a garage is typically in the lowest level.

Split Level

