

IRON STOOP RAILINGS
OF THE GREENWICH VILLAGE
HISTORIC DISTRICT
1825-1865

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Overview: The goal of this presentation is to discuss several distinct styles of iron railings in the Greenwich Village Historic District from 1825-1865.

Dating Buildings by their Iron: A building may be earlier than its ironwork, but seldom later. Iron patterns in the Village can be dated in some cases with as low as a 2 year margin of error simply by looking at the design. This fact generally allows the viewer to easily determine the latest date that a building could have been constructed.

Influences: Ironworkers not only followed architectural pattern books, but they also were influenced by other decorative arts of their period.

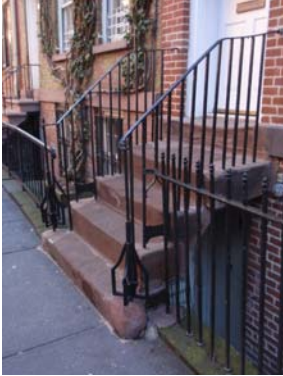
Wrought vs. Cast Iron: “Wrought” refers to iron that is shaped by being beaten while heated. “Cast” refers to iron components made in molds. Most railings are a combination, but as the nineteenth century progressed, cast elements dominate.

Examples Chosen: The examples below focus on the West Village and represent the most common forms. Around Washington Square and towards the East Village, there are more unique and grand examples; however, they cannot all be represented in a short overview.

Themes of the Paintings: Themes presented in the New York stoop paintings of Andrew Jones include

- Admiration for the ironworker’s craft
- Understanding of aging artifacts as witnesses to time, connecting us with the past
- Portrayal of the stoops and railings as the “ruins” of old New York, ravaged by time
- Depiction of change through the metaphor of light - as the sun changes through the day and with the seasons
- Creation of historical documentation of our moment in time
- Transformation of historic material into contemporary art

LATE FEDERAL 1825-1830



51 Barrow Street (1826)



291 West 4th Street (1827-28)



260 West 11th Street (1826)



8 Grove Street (1829)



329 West 4th Street (1827-29)

Newels: simple spindle with brackets at base, rectangular openwork iron posts, independent torchers on pedestals

Stoop Railings: partial or full bands of scrolls, trellis patterns, round spindles, medial disc bosses, bootscrapers, acorns, occasional Gothic references

Fences: round spindles with acorn finials, scabbards, anthemions, and spearheads

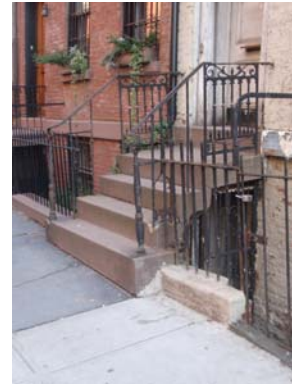
EARLY CLASSICAL 1831-1835



112 Washington Place (1832)



56 West 10th Street (1832)



136 Bank Street (1833)



56 Bank Street (1833)



124-28 Washington Place (1834)

Newels: Openwork iron basket urns on pedestals, simple turned posts

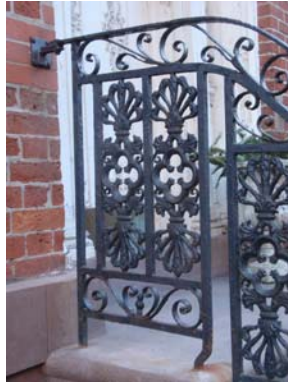
Stoop Railings: Full or partial bands of scrolls, round spindles with medial disc bosses, anthemion finials, acorns, bootscrapers, scrolled handrail terminus, wrought lyre motif

Fences: round spindles with large and small anthemions, acorn finials

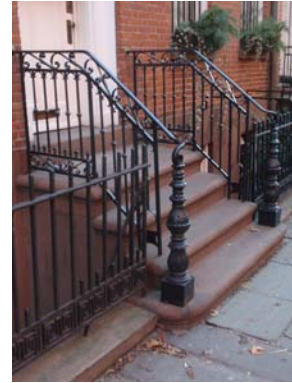
HIGH CLASSICAL 1836-1840



75 Horatio (1835-36)



25 Bethune Street (1836)



130 Bank Street (1836)



828-830 Greenwich Street (1838-39)



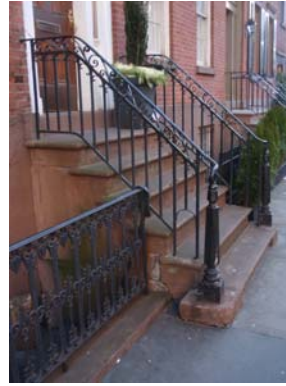
333 West 11th Street (1838-39)

Newels: elaborate cast iron posts, wing walls, half height spirals on pedestals, torchers on pedestals
Stoop Railings: Full bands of scrolls sometimes with rosettes, panels of anthemions paired over egg and dart wreaths, bootscrapers, both square and round spindles, occasional Gothic elements
Fences: square spindles, bands of scrolls and Greek key frets, anthemion finials, cast midline bosses

THE PLAIN STYLE 1840-1843



321 West 12th Street (1841)



310 West 11th Street (1841)



55 Bank Street (1842)



111 Bedford Street (1843-44)

Newels: full height spiral with tulip or fluted post and urn finial, faceted post

Stoop Railings: bands of scrolls or none, square or round spindles, cast midline bosses or none, triple spindle over square fret motif, spiral handrail descending with spiral

Fences: square spindles, obelisk finials, Greek key fret

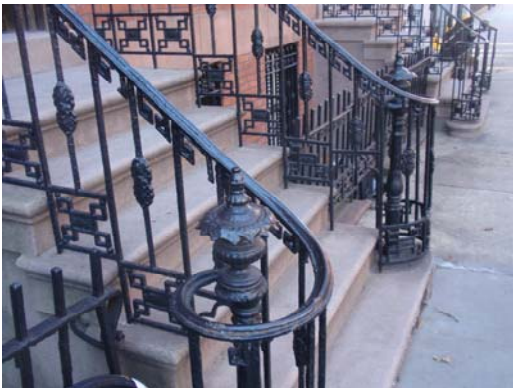
LATE CLASSICAL 1844-1848



28-32 Bethune Street (1844-45)



339-341 West 12th Street (1846-47)



95-97 Barrow (1847)



79-81 Jane Street (1846-47)

Newels: Full height spiral with tulip, fluted, or ropetwist post with urn

Stoop Railings: Greek key under the handrail, midline double palmette boss, Greek frets at base, 2 spindles per step, square spindles some diagonal, Gothic or leaf form sprockets

Fences: Similar to stoop railings, but with obelisk finials

GOTHIC REVIVAL

1845-1848



4 Charles Street (1845-46)



11 Charles Street (1847-48)



52 Jane Street (1848)

Newels: full height spirals with tulip post and urn, independent multi-sided newel post
Stoop Railings: Gothic arches under handrails, Gothic frets, sprockets
Fences: Cast panels of Gothic arches

ITALIANATE 1848-1865



74-80 Jane Street (1855)



241-243 West 11th Street (1851)



290 West 4th Street (1860)



57 Charles Street (1866)

Newels: full height spirals with cast panels and post with ball urn, independent multi-sided posts with ball urns
Stoop Railings and Fences: Cast panels with arched tops, baluster-form uprights