

Figure 4.1: Typical sash door of the early twentieth century, a type 2 cottage door (Morgan 1941:59).

Chapter 4

Sash Doors

Sash doors are either batten or paneled doors with inset lights. They are not usually considered to be a class of doors, but they were considered a third primary option in the nineteenth century and they have a different history than other door classes. The general history of sash doors falls into two chronological periods. Sash doors prior to the Civil War were batten or paneled doors that happened to have inset lights, often replacing the frieze panels. After the Civil War, with larger window sizes possible at reasonable prices, sash doors took on a life of their own and dominated door design for half a century. High style sash doors produced during the years 1880 to 1925 were marketed as “front doors” with associated “vestibule doors” for the highest style houses and “cottage doors” for the middle income houses. The appearance of cottage doors shifted circa 1910 from a decorative door to a type of door that blends with the Bungalow door. Other early twentieth century families of doors in the class of sash doors included doors with oval lights, French doors with its subsets of Prairie doors and other multi-light doors, and various types of plate glass doors.

Existing sash doors are rarely associated with transoms or sidelights. When a visitor knocked on a sash door, the residents could look out the lights to see who was knocking before opening the door. Another advantage of the sash door is that broken lights could be replaced with relative ease. A major disadvantage was that a thief could sometimes break a single light and reach inside to unlock the door. A good rule of thumb is that a replacement front door on a house constructed between 1880 and 1950 that does not have sidelights or a transom likely replaced a sash door.

Sash Batten Doors

The earliest sash doors in North America were batten doors with an inset light. The frequency of these sash batten doors is difficult to ascertain because so few survive either physically or in illustrations. Most log houses in the Delaware valley were re-clad either with stucco or clapboards in the early nineteenth century, and usually at that time the original batten door was replaced with a paneled door. Already by 1850, many early batten doors in the eastern United States were a century old and in poor condition. A rare survivor was a sash batten door located on the rear of the Morton Homestead in Prospect Park, Pennsyl-

vania. The sash batten door on the rear elevation was photographed at the time the house was purchased by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (Weslager 1955: 262). Since that time, the door has been replaced with a batten door without the inset light.

Another early sash door was photographed in the early twentieth century in Dutchess County, New York. The front door of the Hendrick Kip House (built 1753) was a framed batten Dutch door with a peep hole at the seam between the two vertical boards in the upper leaf. The peep hole is an oval light that is roughly centered on the upper leaf (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).



Figure 4.2: Exterior side of the sash batten Dutch door on the Hendrick Kip House in Dutchess County (adapted from Reynolds 1931: Plate 1 on an unnumbered page). The glass peep hole is called a “bull’s eye” in Reynolds’s book. The two leaves of the door have two vertical boards on the exterior.

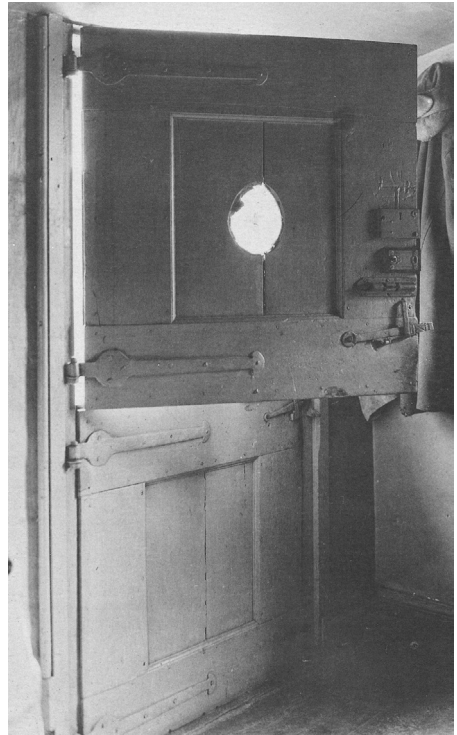


Figure 4.3: Interior side of the sash batten Dutch door on the Hendrick Kip House in Dutchess County (adapted from Reynolds 1931: Plate 2 on an unnumbered page). This is a framed batten Dutch door.



Figure 4.4: Sash batten door on the blacksmith shop in Marshallton, Pennsylvania.

The most common type of sash batten door features four inset lights, usually inside a frame, that has been inset into a batten door. An example of this type of door is shown in Figure 4.4. These doors rarely survive, and when found they are usually either on an outbuilding or serving as a basement (cellar) door. As with other types of batten doors, the age of the door may be estimated based on the number of vertical boards.

Early Sash Paneled Doors

During the years 1750 to 1850, sash doors continued to be installed in houses, even though the increased use of sidelights and transoms reduced the need for windows in the door. Very few sash doors survive from this time, but the documentary evidence for their continued use is strong. For example, a man named “E. Newell” opened a

business in New York City in 1830 selling second hand building materials. In a typical newspaper advertisement, Newell outlined nine products for sale: sashes, sash doors, bow windows, window frames, mantels, counters, gutters, panel doors, and batten doors (*Brooklyn Long Island Star*, 12/1/1830, page 4). It is remarkable that sash doors warranted second place in the list of items for sale, rather than clustering the doors in the list. The few surviving sash doors from this period mostly involve a paneled door with the frieze panels replaced with glass (Figure 4.5). An example of this door is found on the house of Chief Justice John Jay. As mentioned in the paneled door chapter, the size of the frieze panels increased as the nineteenth century progressed, and by 1830 it was common to find these sash doors with the frieze panels the same size as the lower panels on the door.

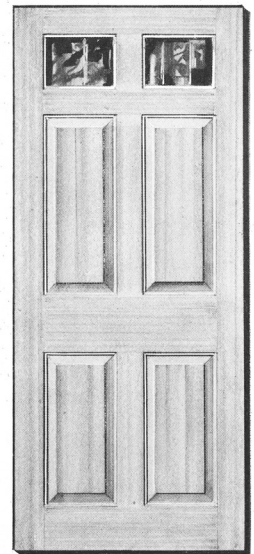


Figure 4.5: Mid-twentieth century paneled sash door that is occasionally found on a Federal style house (Morgan 1955: 43).

A type of early sash paneled door in northern New Jersey and south-eastern New York warrants mention. These doors feature oval lights placed into the frieze panels. The lights can be placed horizontally (Figure 4.6) or diagonally (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). Sash doors with oval frieze lights appear to have been installed primarily in Dutch doors, as all examples shown in earlier monographs and known to the author are Dutch doors.

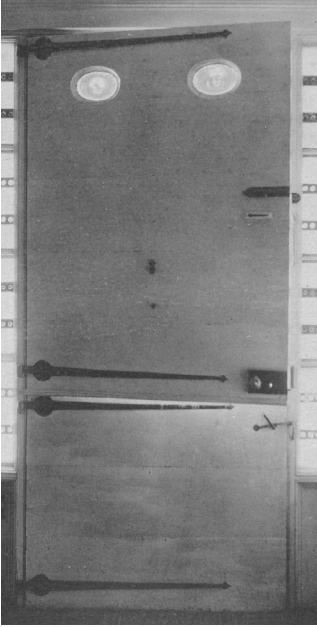


Figure 4.6: Interior side of the main entrance to the Abraham DePeyster House in Dutchess County, New York (Reynolds 1931: Plate 6). Reynolds noted in her book that the door had been moved to a different house by that time. This Dutch two-ply door features four panels on the exterior elevation of each leaf and horizontal boards on the interior.



Figure 4.7: Primary entrance of a Federal style house near Somerville, New Jersey. The oval lights in the frieze panels are installed diagonally.

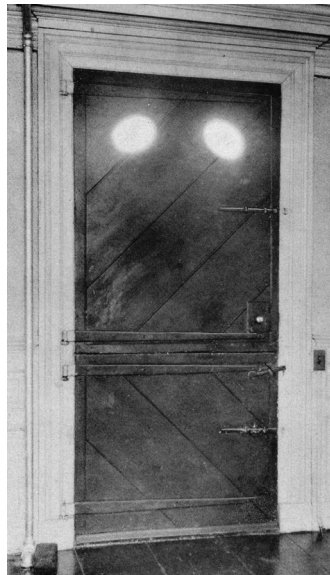


Figure 4.8: Interior side of a Dutch two-ply door in the Philip Verplanck House, built in 1768 in Dutchess County with oval lights set diagonally into the frieze panels (Reynolds 1931: Plate 8).

Italianate and Gothic Revival style sash doors

In the third quarter of the nineteenth century, sash doors were produced for two architectural styles – Italianate and Gothic Revival. One of the key features of Italianate and Gothic Revival style doors is the heavy molding, which is present whether the door is a paneled unit or a

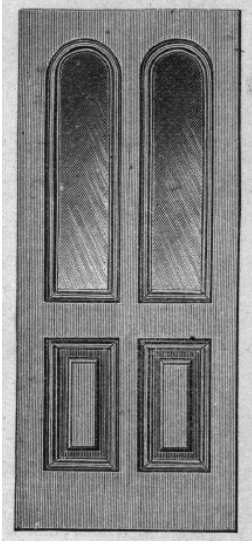


Figure 4.9: Typical Italianate sash door (Carlton Foster 1888: 35).

sash unit. Changes in glass production in the early 1850s reduced the cost of large panes of glass, and the door generally associated with the Italianate style emerged. The early examples of the door featured two tall, narrow rectangular lights, usually with arched heads (Figure 4.9). These Italianate sash doors usually featured two vertical panels below the lock rail but sometimes featured square panels. When originally installed, they almost universally featured rim locks with porcelain knobs. They were particularly popular in the latter years of the nineteenth century and remained a popular door into the early twentieth century, making their final appearance in millwork catalogs in 1911. Almost all millwork catalogs published prior to 1906 featured the Italianate sash door.

An associated Italianate door featured tall vertical lights that were each split into two or three stacked lights (Figure 4.10). This door appeared around 1860. It was shipped to local hardware stores or other distributors without the lights and without hardware. The door featured a mullion and muntins dividing the windows. Before the lights were installed, the doors were easy to carry with one hand by grasping the mullion just above the lock rail. The thick Italianate molding was dropped from the doors produced after 1875 or so, leaving a simpler door that appeared in millwork catalogs until 1917.

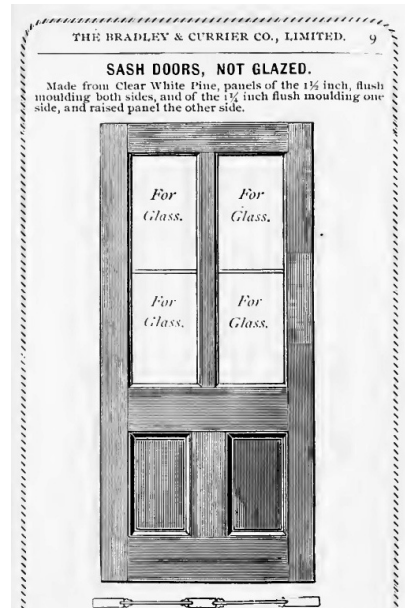


Figure 4.10: Sash door with two split vertical lights (Bradley & Currier 1889:9).

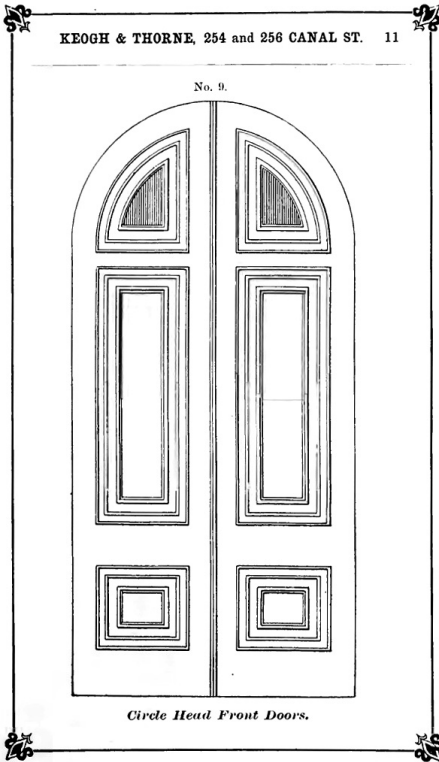


Figure 4.12: A simple "Front" door (Keogh 1873: 11).

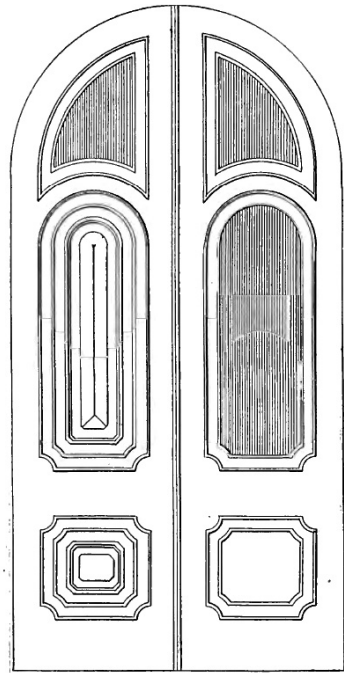


Figure 4.13: Front and Vestibule doors with clipped corner panels (Keogh 1873: 13).

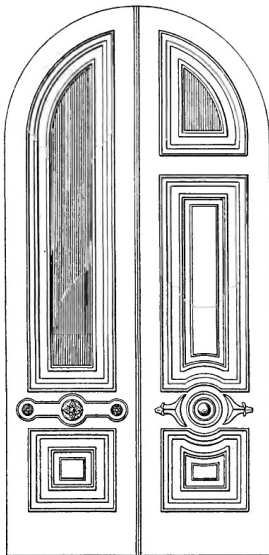
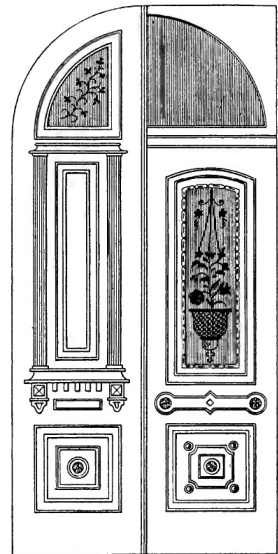


Figure 4.14 (left): Vestibule and Front door combination featuring a concentric circle decorative motif (Keogh 1873: 16).

Figure 4.15: Front and Vestibule door set with different shapes for the sets of doors (Keogh 1873: 18). The vestibule door has a half-circle transom over rectangular doors.



Front Door. Vestibule Door, With Fan-Light.

less decorative lower panel. Figure 4.14 depicts a Vestibule and Front door that includes a tall vertical light on the Vestibule door and a typical Second Empire concentric circle motif on the Front door (the same concentric circle is shown on the door in Figure 4.16). Figure 4.15 is an example of a set of Front and Vestibule doors where the inner and outer doors do not have the same shape; the Vestibule door features a semi-circular transom over the two doors, resulting in shorter, rectangular doors. The door shown on Figure 4.16 on a Second Empire style house in Pottstown, Pennsylvania includes a tear shaped light (see also Figure 4.17) as well as the concentric circle motif. A late example of a Front door from this phase found on a row house is shown in Figure 4.18.



Figure 4.16: Very stylish Front door on a Second Empire style house in Pottstown, Pennsylvania with its original casing and keystone. This door features tear shaped lights at the top, decorative panels accompanied by pressed wood motifs, and concentric circle motifs.

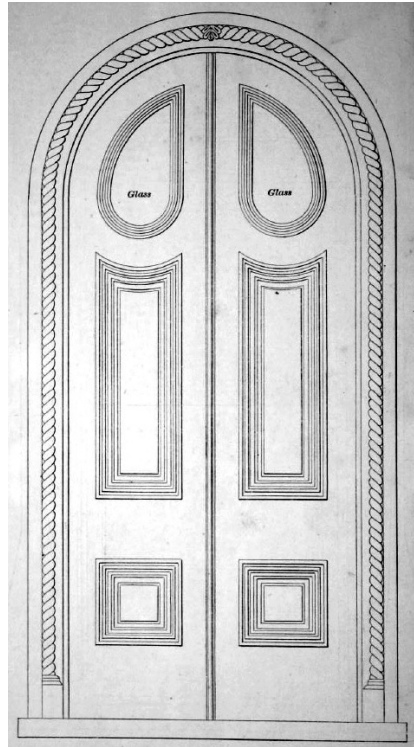


Figure 4.17: Front door featuring tear shaped lights (Dominion 1874: 80).



Figure 4.18: Front door from the first phase on a row house.

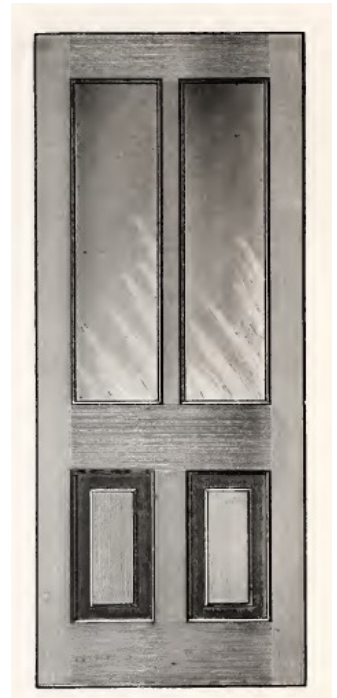


Figure 4.19: Sash door with two tall vertical lights above the lock rail. This door type seems to have been introduced circa 1890 but was popular well into the twentieth century (Paine 1891: 56).

Generic Sash Doors (1880 to 1900)

The design of sash doors changed in the final two decades of the nineteenth century, in time to be captured by millwork catalogs. Until the 1870s, sash doors were mostly paneled doors with glass replacing the upper two panels and leaving two vertical panels below the lock rail. These doors remained popular throughout the final two decades of the century. The door with glass replacing two tall arched headed panels on an Italianate door was one of the most popular of these sash doors, appearing in 11 millwork catalogs from 1869 to 1900. With the passage of time, the design of the panel and the molding was reduced, and in many of the 1890s catalogs, this door was very simple. The other popular sash door of the 1880s featured four rectangular lights divided vertically by a mullion and horizontally by muntins as mentioned earlier. Doors with two tall vertical rectangular panes above the lock rail seem to have been introduced around 1890 but were very popular thereafter (see Figure 4.19).

Cottage Doors – Phase 1 (1885 to 1910)

The earlier and more decorative phase in the history of cottage doors was produced primarily during the years 1885 and 1910. Throughout the use of the term, cottage doors were marketed to middle income earners who wanted a somewhat stylish door but not the top of the line doors (the Front and Vestibule door lines). The date of the introduction of the cottage door is hampered by the fact that no millwork catalogs were identified for the years 1875 to 1886, the longest such chronological gap. The first millwork catalog offering cottage doors was the Carlton Foster catalog of 1888. It offered nine lines of cottage doors and established a categorization that dominated the production of cottage doors into the first decade of the twentieth century. Of the nine Carlton Foster cottage doors, seven were among the top 10 most popular cottage doors of this first phase. Altogether, millwork catalogs carried 49 different patterns of cottage doors during the years 1888 to 1903. Each different pattern offered optional features that increased the number of possible cottage doors exponentially. Names for cottage doors in the first phase included presidents (Garfield, Grant, Cleveland, Harrison, Lincoln, and Washington); cities (Oshkosh, Chicago, Nashville, Columbus); states (Illinois, Indiana, Texas); universities (Oxford, Cambridge); and generic names (Queen Anne, Eastlake, Lee, Imperial). The six most popular cottage doors of the first phase provide a sufficient overview of this phase since few cottage doors from this phase survive today.

One element found in many examples of the first phase of the cottage door is a feature that was called at the time “marginal lights.” This phrase meant that small lights surrounded a larger center light, such as was found in Victorian windows. The date of the appearance of the marginal window seems not to have captured the interest of architectural historians hitherto. The first instance of the phrase “marginal window” in the newspapers.com database is for an article in a Los Angeles newspaper in the spring of 1887. The first marginal windows in a cottage door appeared in the 1888 Carlton Foster catalog. The most popular cottage doors included the regular and marginal versions, taking names such as “Grant” and “Grant Marginal.” The sole exception to the pattern was the “Cleveland” cottage door; its marginal version had the name “Queen Anne” instead of “Cleveland Marginal.”

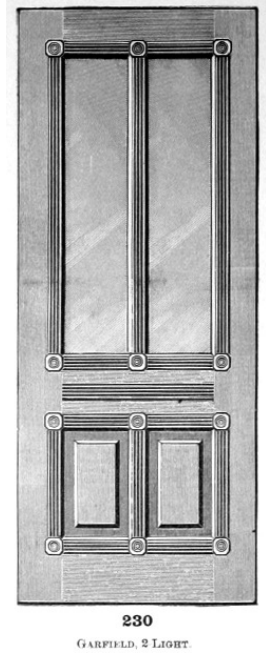
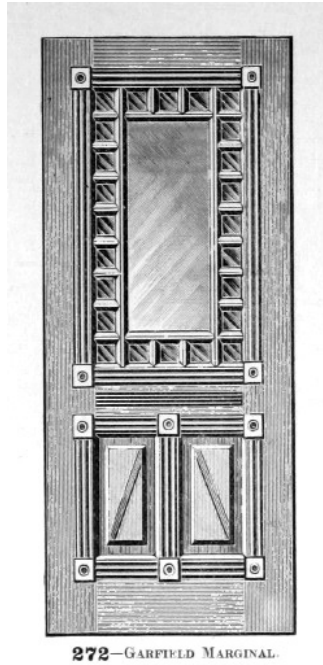
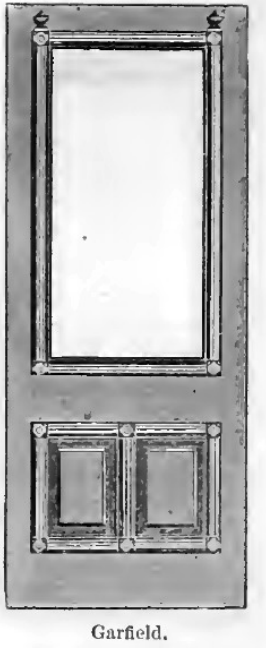
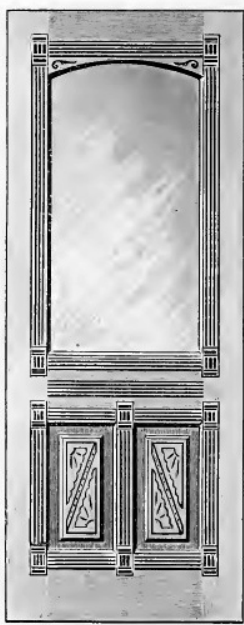


Figure 4.32: Varieties of the Garfield cottage door.

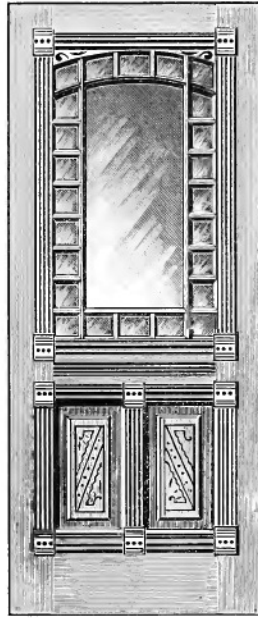
The most popular cottage door of the first phase was the Garfield door. It appeared in ten millwork catalogs in the years 1888 to 1903, the most of any specific type. Named for the martyred President, the Garfield version introduced the cottage door section of millwork catalogs in all instances except the Carlton Foster catalog of 1888 (which placed the Grant door first). The Garfield door was one of only two cottage doors of the first phase to continue in production after 1900. The general features of the Garfield door were a plate glass window above the lock rail and two vertical fortified panels below. The window and the panels were framed by fluted millwork featuring small bull’s eye corner blocks. Garfield doors were offered with a range of optional features. All but one catalog offered

horizontal scoring on the lock rail below the inset window. The window itself was sometimes offered in a two-pane version (Carlton Foster 1888:50; Paine 1893: 62). In 1891, Paine used a Garfield door to illustrate one of its designs of cut plate glass (Paine 1891: 61). The Palmer catalog offered small urns at the upper corners of the window (Palmer



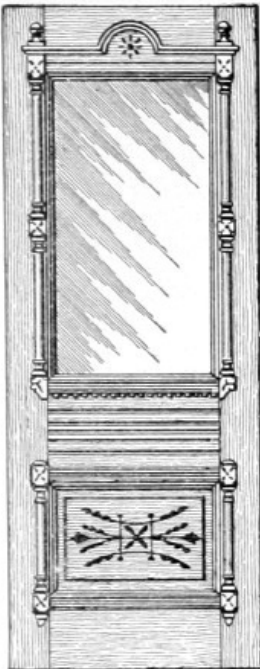


237—GRANT.

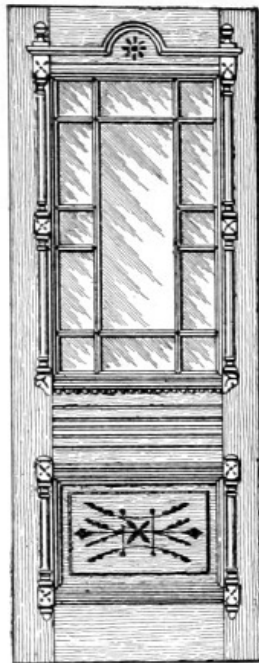


274—GRANT MARGINAL.

Figure 4.33: Popular first phase cottage doors.



253—CLEVELAND.



254—QUEEN ANNE.

1889: 28). Half of the door's appearances in millwork catalogs included a "marginal" option, meaning that the window pane featured small lights around its perimeter. The panels below the lock rail usually featured a blank field, but most of the marginal versions (and a few non-marginal versions) offered diagonal scoring in the panels. These various options of the Garfield door are illustrated in Figure 4.32.

Other first phase cottage doors bore a strong resemblance to the Garfield door (Figure 4.33). Among the most popular was the Grant door, which featured larger corner blocks with three vertical grooves, an arched headed window, and diagonal decorations on the field of the panels below the lock rail. The primary option for the Grant door was marginal lights (e.g., Foster Munger 1900: 103). The Grant door appeared in eight catalogs, three fewer than Garfield. The Cleveland door was slightly more

Doors with Oval Lights

An interesting door type featuring an oval light was offered in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Original doors of this type are relatively rare, found mostly on American Foursquare houses. The earliest millwork catalog offering a door with oval lights was the Western catalog of 1899 (pages 84 and 85). Doors with an oval light were immediately taken up by other millwork companies; the doors appeared in almost every millwork catalog until 1924, after which it was rarely offered. The final millwork catalog offering a door with oval lights was the Chicago catalog of 1929 (pages 15 and 19). Almost all original doors with oval lights have a light with a beveled pane. The oval light was installed on the rear, then a hoop-shaped piece of wood was nailed around its perimeter on the inside to hold the oval in place.

Doors with oval lights were produced with a variety of panel arrangements, and the size of the oval light also varied. The door

in this series with the most appearances in millwork catalogs had no panels at all, with the result that these doors had the largest oval light. This door appeared in 25 catalogs (1899 to 1929) and was the only door with an oval light advertised in catalogs after 1925. This door, the simplest of the doors with an oval light, sometimes featured an expressed rectangular frame around the oval, with pressed wood motifs located inside the corners (Figure 4.35).

Subsets of the door with an oval light are shown in Figure 4.36. The second most common type of door with an oval light was built with a smaller oval light and a ledge over a panel at the base. As with other late nineteenth century doors, the purpose of the protruding ledges was to hold interior wood of a veneered door in place. These doors appeared in 16 catalogs published from 1899 to 1924. In the earlier examples (like the one illustrated from 1904), these doors featured pressed wood panels with a variety of decorative shapes on the field of the panel.

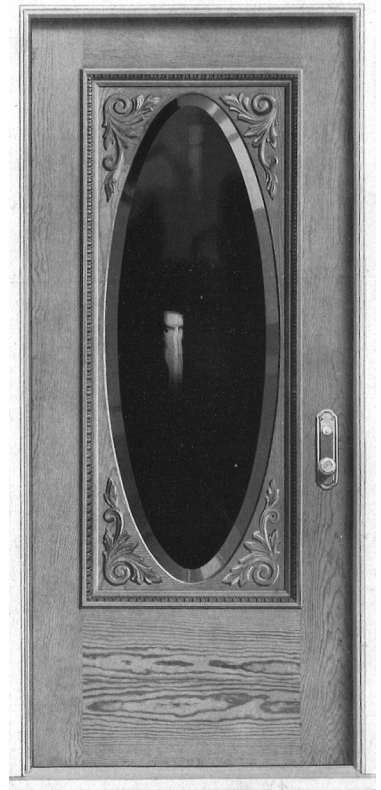
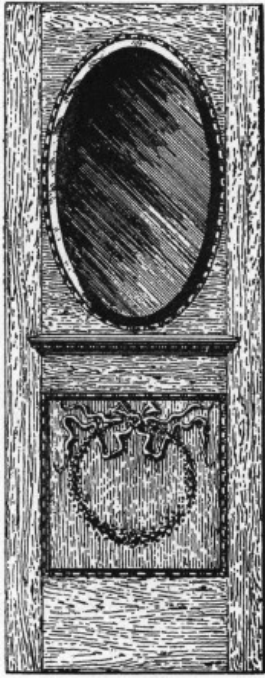


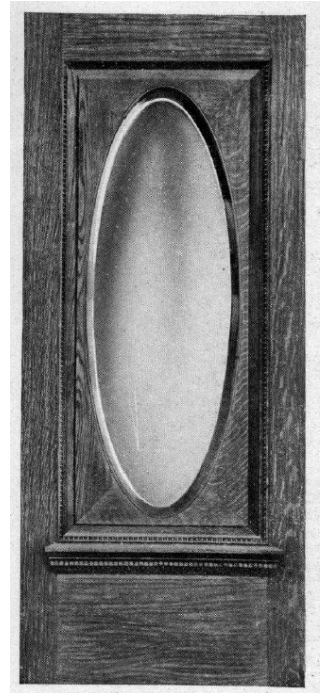
Figure 4.35: Typical door with an oval light (Curtis 1917: 14).



Radford 1904:119



Segelke 1911: 103



Hastings 1919: 73

Figure 4.36: Variants of the door with an oval light.

Scattered types of doors in this series featured more than one panel at the base, or even occasionally a panel over the oval. An early instance of this door was illustrated in the documentation associated with Patent #656,741 (1900). The patent by J.M. Leaver outlined a means of assembling a veneered door. The illustration of the door showed two Leader panels below the ledge and an elongated Leader panel below. Doors with various panel arrangements below the oval appeared in sporadic catalogs until 1925.

The final two types of doors with oval lights featured either a panel or a ledge but not both. These doors appeared in catalogs from 1911 until 1925. The oval light was slightly smaller than the doors with a single oval but larger than the doors with multiple panels. Doors with an oval light over a cross-panel appeared in six millwork catalogs: two published in 1911 and four published in the years 1923 to 1925. Doors with a ledge below the oval first appeared in a millwork catalog in 1914, but all later instances of this door in millwork catalogs appeared during the years 1919 to 1925.

Cottage Doors – Phase 2 (1908 to 1970)

The design of cottage doors shifted in the years just prior to 1910 when the earlier, highly decorative cottage doors were superseded by a simpler design. The second phase was introduced in 1908 and produced mainly in the years 1920 to 1955. These doors were used primarily on middle class houses such as Bungalows, Dutch Colonial Revival houses, and American Foursquares. Early in their history, the label “cottage door” fell from use, but the label is useful as a way to identify these doors separately from other types of sash doors. A subset of these doors is called Bungalow or Craftsman doors if the vertical panels have no expressed field. These two latter terms were in vogue during the period of production, with Blumberg and Morgan favoring Craftsman door and Chicago favoring Bungalow door. No millwork catalog applied the terms Craftsman or Bungalow to a door with an expressed field. Since the distinction is minimal, all doors in this family are called the second phase of the cottage door here.

Cottage doors in this phase are easily identifiable because they have three elements (one being optional). The light in the door is positioned just below the top rail. In many cases, the light is divided by muntins into an array of options. Below the lights is the optional ledge. At the bottom of the door, often occupying nearly two-thirds of the surface, is a vertical panel. The panel may be divided by mullions, with two panels being the most common. Early doors in this series included both paneled and veneered versions. The paneled doors are easily identifiable because the tenons of the rails extend through the stiles, but most cottage doors produced after 1920 were attached with dowels whether they are solid or veneered.

Doors in the second phase of cottage doors first appeared in a 1908 publication produced by Morgan named *The Door Beautiful*. The booklet includes five different doors in this family. Three have eight beveled lights at the top over one, two, or three panels. The other two feature Art Nouveau glass in a single light over one or three panels (Morgan 1908:7-11). The doors were immediately popular and were picked up by other millwork companies. Morgan dropped the door altogether during the Depression. After World War II, with more companies dropping their own lines of doors, Morgan resumed a very limited line of these doors (1952 to 1965). Some types of doors remained in production into the 1970s.

The mixture of window and panel options and the use of the optional ledge provided a total of 30 possible doors in this family. However, eight possible options never appeared in a millwork catalog, and eight other options only appeared in one or two catalogs. [The number of possibilities could be doubled if the optional use of a field on the panels is included, but about a third of the catalogs were not specific enough about whether the field was being offered.] The 12 most popular Cottage/Bungalow doors, each of which appeared in a minimum of five catalogs, are illustrated in Figures 4.37 through 4.39. The number of lights included one, three, four, six, or eight lights. As mentioned, the one-light and eight-light versions were introduced by Morgan in 1908. The three light version appeared in 1915, followed by the four-light door in 1917 and the six-light door in 1919. Doors with ledges began to appear in 1915 and remained in production until 1954. The number of panels varied from one to three. When the door had a single panel without a field, the panel was called an “apron” at the time. The Morgan booklet featured doors with one, two, or three vertical panels. The three-panel door remained in production until 1952, the one-panel door until 1954, and the two-panel door remained in production into the 1970s.

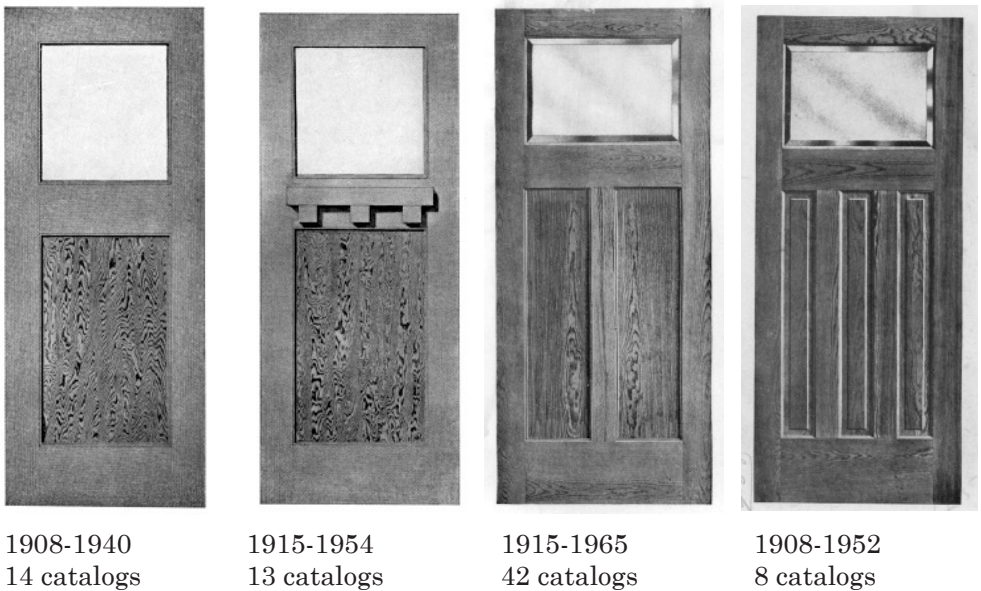
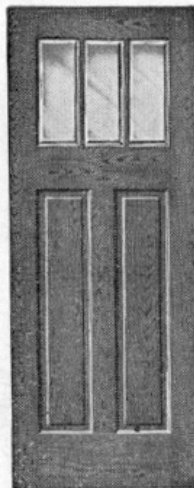


Figure 4.37: Variants of single-light Cottage doors in the second phase.



1915-1954
15 catalogs



1925-1955
27 catalogs



1917-1931
5 catalogs



1917-1956
16 catalogs

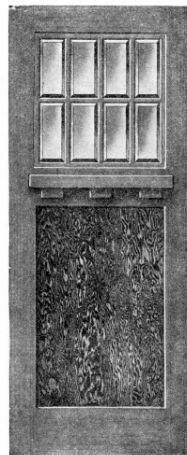
Figure 4.38: Variants of Cottage doors (second phase) with either three or four lights.



1913-1954
10 without ledge
8 with ledge



1919-1971
43 catalogs



1908-1930
9 without ledge
5 with ledge



1917-1956
16 catalogs

Figure 4.39: Popular variants of Cottage doors with either six or eight lights.

Multilight sash doors

Sash doors with multiple lights were common throughout most of the twentieth century. This particular family of doors features lights with intersecting muntins over panels. The doors in this set are organized into categories depending on the number of lights (four, six, nine, twelve, or diamond lights). Interestingly, the panel arrangement below the lights differed depending on the number of lights; the eight most common panel arrangements were not distributed equally among the various light patterns.

Four-light doors in the multilight family appeared in millwork catalogs during the years 1908 to 1972 (Figure 4.42). This door type first appeared with a door featuring a cross panel over two vertical panels, but this early door type only appeared in three millwork catalogs. The two most common doors in the set featured either two or three cross panels, both being in production from the 1920s to the 1970s. The final common door type with four lights had two vertical panels below the lights, a door that appeared in catalogs from 1919 to 1971.

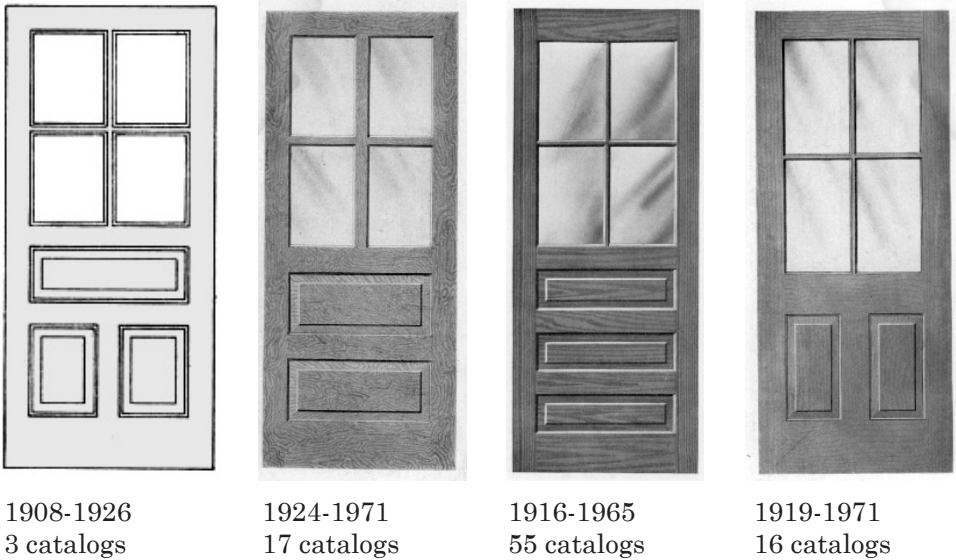
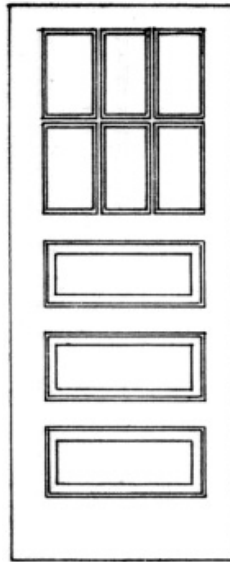
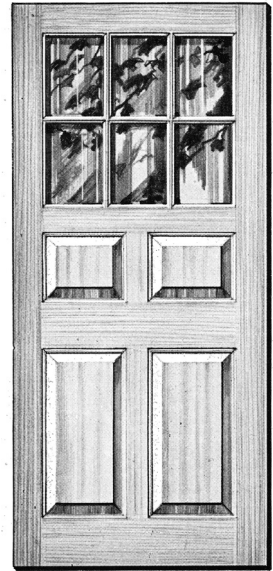


Figure 4.42: Types of multilight sash doors with four lights above panels.

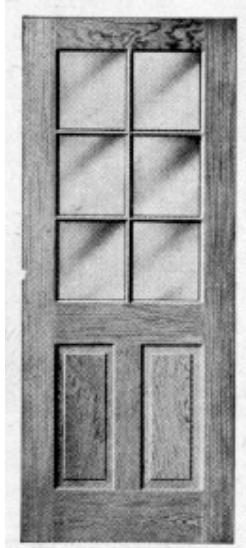
Six light doors in the multi-light set include two configurations of the lights (either two rows of three or three rows of two). The panel arrangements differ between the two types of six light configurations as much as they differ with the other door types in the multilight set (Figure 4.43). The six-light door with two rows primarily featured either three cross panels or four rectangular panels; these two doors represent 46 of the 56 doors in catalogs with this pane arrangement. By contrast, the six-light door with three rows primarily featured two vertical panels below the lights. The second most common door with this arrangement of lights featured two cross panels. These two doors represent 33 of the 39 doors with this arrangement of lights that appeared in millwork catalogs.



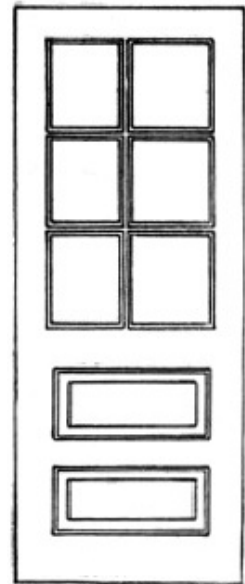
1924-1965
26 catalogs



1929-1971
20 catalogs



1920-1971
26 catalogs



1931-1959
7 catalogs

Figure 4.43: Types of multilight sash doors with six lights above panels.

French doors

The French family of doors represents a type of sash door that was particularly popular in the United States from the 1920s to the 1940s. Doors in this family consist of an outer frame with multiple inset lights that occupy most of the door surface. Doors in this family were sometimes offered as “Casement doors” in millwork catalogs. When they were introduced in the early twentieth century, millwork catalogs used the label “French door” for any door in this family, including some doors that would not be considered a “French door” today. The central door in the family, the door usually called the “French door,” features an orderly arrangement of lights (such as the 12-light or 15-light door). The second major door in the family is the Prairie door, a marginal door particularly popular in the early twentieth century.

It is unclear when the first French door appeared in the United States. The Beffel Furniture Store in Racine, Wisconsin, was built in 1913 with two French doors on the main elevation. Each door had 25 inset lights (five rows of five). An article in the local newspaper stated that the French doors featured “leaded art glass panes” (*Racine Journal-Times*, 12/6/1913, page 5). One of the first millwork catalogs to carry French doors was the Hastings catalog of 1914, which offered both the French and the Prairie door as the two options of French doors (Hastings 1914: 78). Since that time, many French doors have been replaced with doors that are more secure, since breaking specific lights in the door allows an intruder to reach in and unlock the door. French doors are historically associated with the various types of houses commonly constructed during the 1920s, particularly Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, and Bungalows, then with Cape Cod houses later. They are also found on various other houses, as they were occasionally used to replace doors on older houses. The French door is commonly found in houses of these styles as the primary entrance, as entrances into porches on the ends, and for interior doors in public spaces in the house.

French doors appeared in a limited number of types. The following discussion pairs traditional French doors with similar doors featuring panels at the bottom (“French paneled doors”). Some may believe that the distinction between standard French doors and French paneled doors is unnecessary, but separating them has some value because their dates in production vary. Both French doors and French paneled doors were commonly offered as two-leaf units, both as interior and exterior doors.

The most common type of French door was the 15-light door (five rows with three lights). This door appeared in 68 millwork catalogs spanning the years from 1915 to 1972 (Figure 4.47). This door was often marketed as a two-leaf or paired unit. Most French doors were also offered with a single panel at the bottom, but this option was rarely offered with the 15-light French door.

The French door with 10 lights (five rows of two lights) was the second most common type (Figure 4.48). It appeared in 62 catalogs during the years 1916 to 1972. An interesting feature about the appearance of the 10-light French door is that it was narrower than other French doors, and often it was sold as a paired or two-leaf door. Fourteen catalogs offered the 10-light French door with square lights during the years 1920 to 1961.

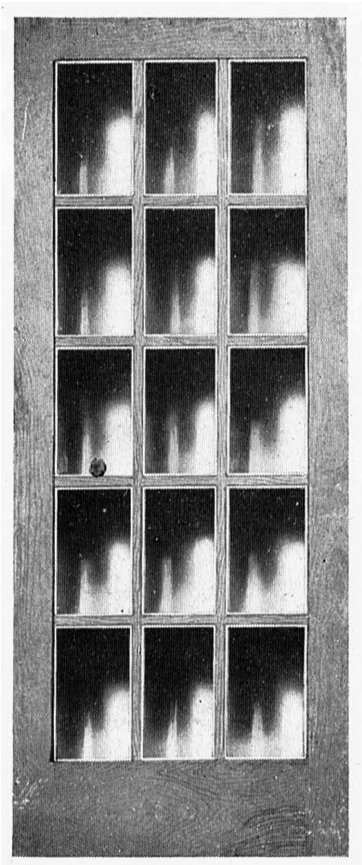


Figure 4.47: French door with 15 lights (Huttig 1920: 15).

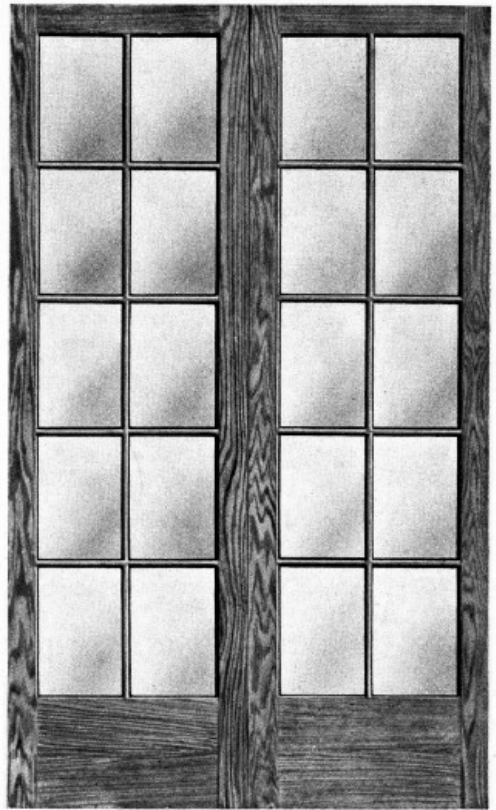
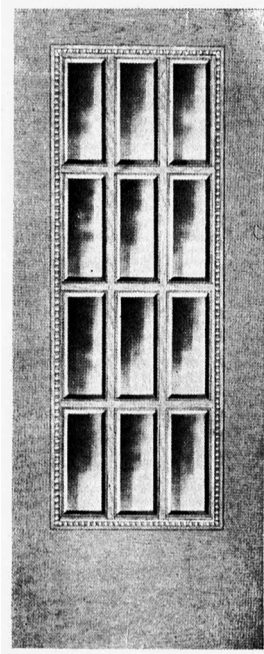
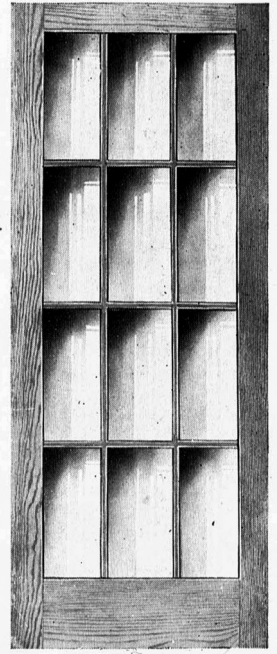


Figure 4.48: French door with 10 lights, offered as a paired set (McMillen 1924: 73).

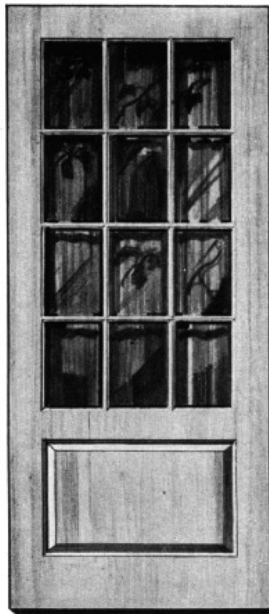
The third most common French door was the 12-light version (Figure 4.49). The version with four rows of three lights appeared in 36 catalogs during the years 1914 to 1964. The 12-light French paneled door was the most common French paneled door, appearing in 34 catalogs (1920-1964). A 12-light French paneled door with two cross panels at the base appeared in two catalogs (1936 and 1937). Another type of 12-light French door (not a paneled door) featured six rows of two lights; it appeared in two catalogs (1923 and 1924).



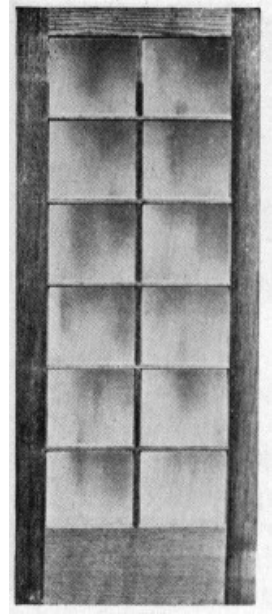
Huttig 1920:2



Huttig 1920:12



Radford 1949:22

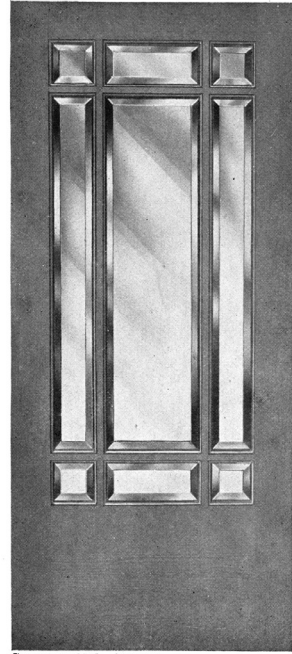


California 1923: 103

Figure 4.49: Variants of the 12-light French door.

Prairie Doors

The Prairie door is a marginal French door that was offered in millwork catalogs from 1914 to 1971. Of the doors in the French family, it was by far the most popular. The label “Prairie door” was not used in any millwork catalog; instead, the door was included in the range of offerings of French doors. The door consists of an outer frame with muntins spaced to create a large center pane surrounded by eight smaller panes. The Prairie Door was a door type that is commonly found on American Foursquare houses and Bungalows, primarily after World War I. One reason for the popularity of the door is that it provided a clear view of the outside and allowed the sun to enter the house on sunny days to help heat the interior. An early illustration of the door was published in the Morgan catalog of 1915 (page 18; Figure 4.52). The design of the Prairie door was fairly static throughout its production. Some millwork companies emphasized the center light, which reduced the size of the marginal lights, but the general pattern was retained. Altogether, the Prairie door appeared in 61 millwork catalogs. Its greatest period of popularity, however, was during the years 1915 to 1935. During these years, it was common for the Prairie door to appear multiple times in the same millwork catalog with minimal differences such as slightly wider muntins or a slightly larger center light. After 1952, the Prairie door was the only door in the French family carried in millwork catalogs, and it continued to be carried as late as 1971.



Copyright 1915 Morgan

Figure 4.52: Early example of a Prairie door (Morgan 1915: 18).

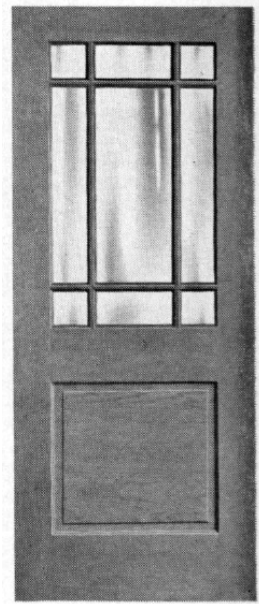
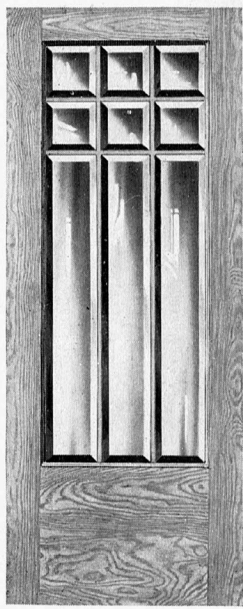


Figure 4.53: Prairie paneled door (Grand Rapids 1939: 62).

A door type that was somewhat common in the second quarter of the twentieth century was a Prairie door with cross panels at the base (Figure 4.53). Most architectural historians would not call this Prairie paneled door a “Prairie door,” but at the same time no alternative label exists for this door. The National Door Manufacturers’ Association included three Prairie paneled doors in its catalog of 1936: one with a single panel at the bottom, one with two panels, and one with a small Prairie light over three panels. Only one of the three Prairie panel doors remained in production – the one with a single cross-panel. Six later catalogs ranging in date from 1937 to 1952 offered the Prairie paneled door with a single cross-panel.

French Sash Doors

Millwork catalogs of the early twentieth century included some types of “French doors” in addition to the Prairie door that are no longer considered to be French doors. These doors appeared in millwork catalogs during the years 1915 to 1952, but their popularity was greatly diminished after 1935. None of the French Sash doors approached the popularity of the standard French door or the Prairie door. This section discusses the most popular doors of this set (see Figures 4.54 and 4.55). French Sash doors fall into two categories. The most popular of these doors featured inset lights arranged to create the outlines of a cross. This set includes two types that together appeared in 28 millwork cata-



1920-1949
18 catalogs

1917-1949
10 catalogs

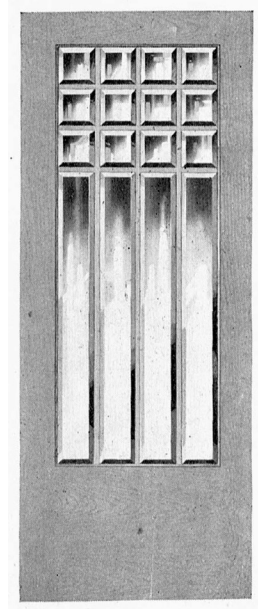
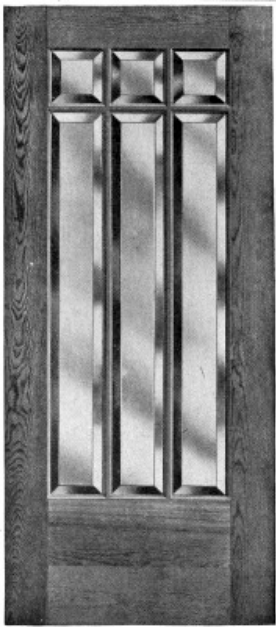


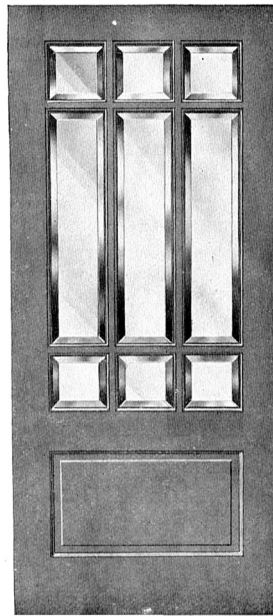
Figure 4.54: French Sash doors with a cross motif.

110 – Sash Doors

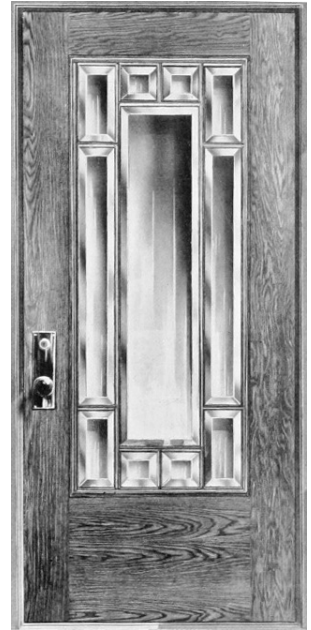
logs (1915 to 1949). The second set included doors with lights arranged in a similar pattern to the Prairie door but with some differences. The three doors illustrated (Figure 4.55) appeared in 27 millwork catalogs (1915 to 1952). In addition to these leading door types within the category of French Sash doors, 15 additional doors appeared in catalogs during the years 1915 to 1952 that did not have the popularity to remain in production.



1915-1941
10 catalogs



1922-1952
12 catalogs



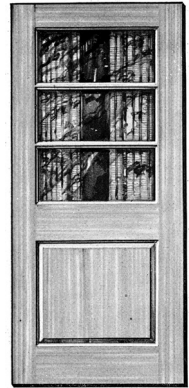
1917-1929
5 catalogs

Figure 4.55: French Sash doors similar to a Prairie door.

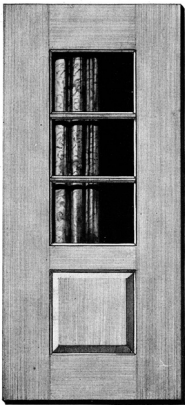
to 1958). The most popular door in the series featured three cross panels below the three vertical lights. This door first appeared in the 1924 Hughes catalog and then appeared in 22 later millwork catalogs published as late as 1965.

Sash doors with horizontal lights

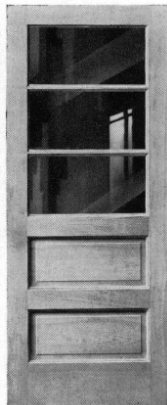
Sash doors with horizontal lights first appeared in millwork catalogs in 1925 and became a popular door type after World War II. A wide variety of these doors were offered, mostly with three lights but also with two, four, and five lights over a variety of panel shapes and sizes.



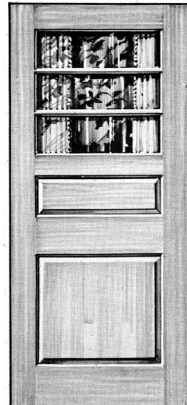
1940-1965
15 catalogs



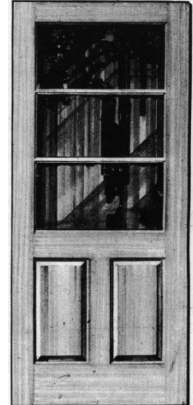
1954-1964
4 catalogs



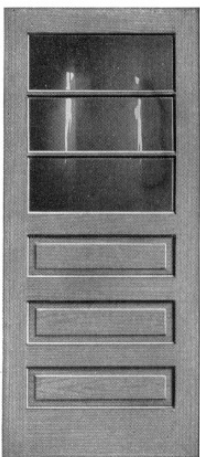
1937-1971
14 catalogs



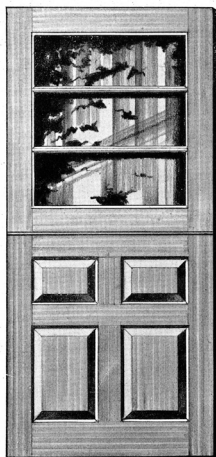
1951-1964
9 catalogs



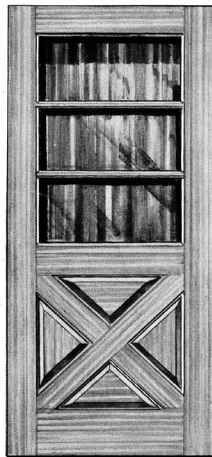
1946-1971
11 catalogs



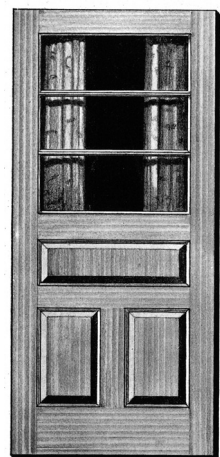
1949-1969
20 catalogs



1951-1971
9 catalogs



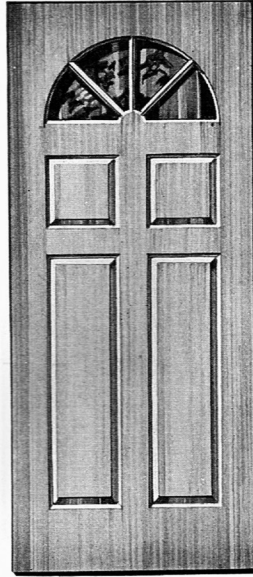
1954-1971
9 catalogs



1955-1964
7 catalogs

Figure 4.57: Sash doors with three horizontal lights.

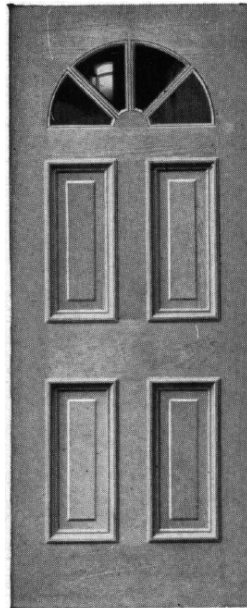
In the late 1920s, a new type of sash door appeared that featured an inset fanlight built into a paneled door (see Figure 4.61). The door first appeared in the Universal catalog of 1926 and was carried in 39 later catalogs (1929 to 1971). These doors always featured a four-light fan, with the four panes in the shape of pieces of pie. The panel arrangement was also relatively static throughout the life span of this sash door with an inset fanlight. Below the fanlight was a set of frieze panes (often square), and below these were two vertical panels. This door with the four-pane fanlight is commonly found in Cape Cod houses and early Minimal Traditional houses. In 1941, the Radford catalog offered a door with an inset fanlight that featured four panels of equal size, but this door was not carried in any other millwork catalog (Radford 1941: 76). It is unclear why the door with four equal panels below the fanlight so rarely appears in millwork catalogs. Although it is definitely the less common version, it is found more frequently than the 40:1 proportions suggested by the millwork catalogs.



1926-1971
40 catalogs



Door in Jersey
City NJ



1941 door with
4 equal panels



Late 20th c.
fanlight door

Figure 4.61: Doors with inset fanlights.

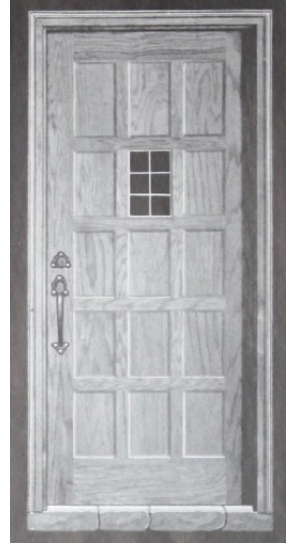
Tudor Revival doors

The family of doors designed for Tudor Revival houses was also commonly used on a type of house that was then called an English cottage. Although the doors in this set are usually called Tudor Revival doors today, the millwork catalogs usually called them simply “English” doors. Other names appearing in the catalogs for these doors were Norman and Mediterranean, and the doors were appropriate for any of the types of French, Spanish, and Italian revival styles.

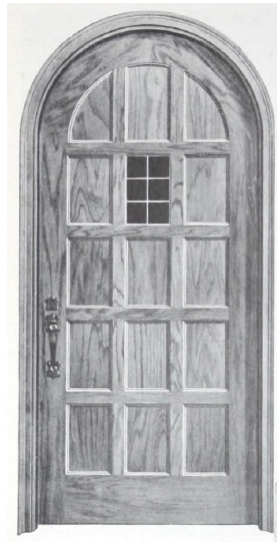
The more popular version of the Tudor Revival doors offered a small window placed among a regular pattern of panels. The most common subsets of the door are illustrated in Figure 4.64. The most common door appeared in 17 catalogs from 1932 to 1959. The other three in the set appeared in catalogs from 1931 to 1954. Interestingly, no Tudor door appeared in a millwork catalog from 1940 to 1945. The window in most of these doors was a small rectangular unit with six small lights.



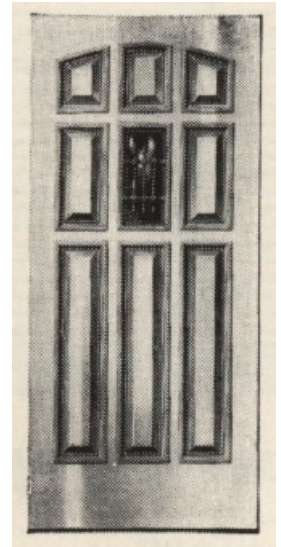
1931-1937
4 catalogs



1932-59, 1972
18 catalogs



1932-1939
4 catalogs



1934-1954
4 catalogs

Figure 4.64: Tudor Revival doors.