

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE OF FRANCIS  
HENRY FASSETT IN MAINE

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Degree and Year: Master of Arts in Historic Preservation, 1998

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This thesis is a documentation of representative examples of the ecclesiastical architecture of Francis Henry Fassett in Maine. Although Francis H. Fassett was Maine's most prolific 19th century architect, to date very few buildings have been documented and little has been written about him. Fassett's ecclesiastical architecture was representative in style of his entire body of work in the areas of residential, commercial and civic architecture, and followed all the phases of American architecture which spanned the decades of Fassett's work, from the early 1840s until his death in 1908. Fassett followed national architectural trends, but his ecclesiastical designs were distinctly his own, and his clients included all of the major denominations in Maine.

The study method employed included conducting research in towns where Fassett designed churches: at libraries, local museums and/or historical societies, and the specific church's archives. Additional resources included prior research by the Fassett family, and

the several archives of the Maine Historical Society, the Maine State Museum, and Greater Portland Landmarks.

The thesis is divided into seven parts. The first part is introductory and includes a biographical sketch of the architect, a discussion of the informal school of architecture Fassett conducted from his Portland, Maine office, and a discussion of his philosophy and practice of architecture. The next five parts are documentations of twenty of Fassett's churches, organized by chronology and architectural style. Vintage photographs are used as much as possible to illustrate each church Fassett designed, and to show subsequent changes.

The final part of the thesis includes possible influences on Fassett's designs, and a discussion of the relationship between denomination, architectural style and plan form. There is also a brief discussion of the preservation ethic as it relates to the churches documented.