

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building



## Special Character

Unique looks create indelible impressions

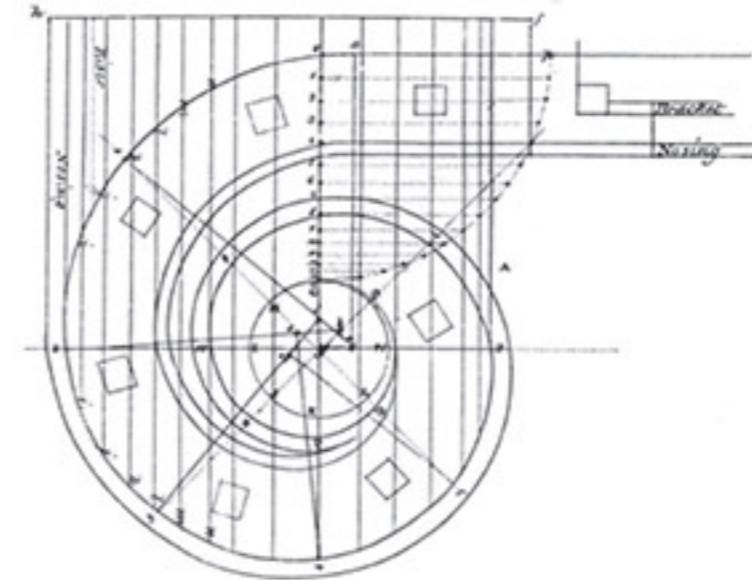
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New England's Most Inspired Kitchens and Baths

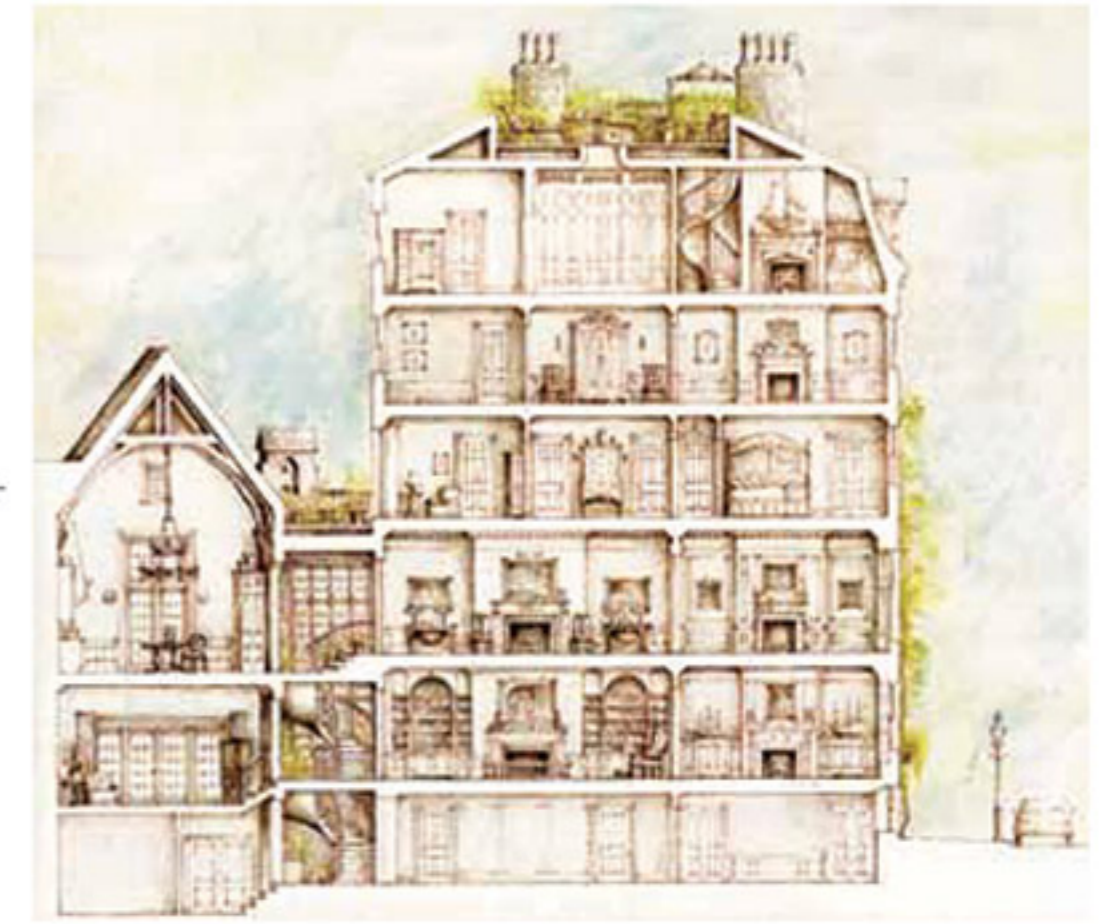
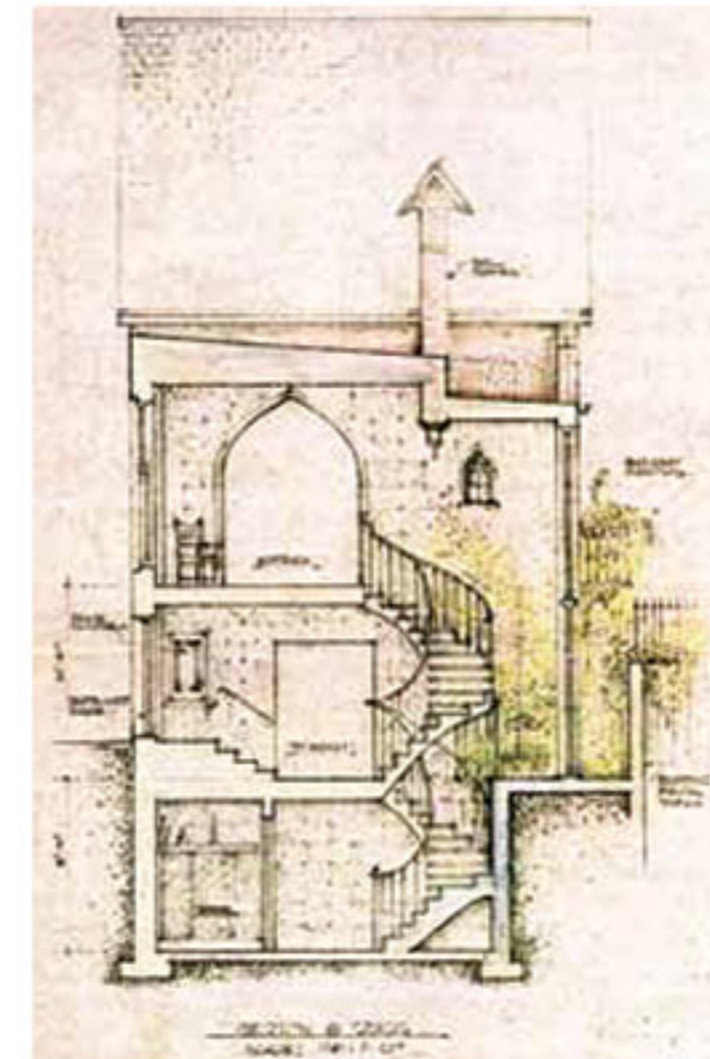
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SKETCH PAD Design ideas in the making



Spiral stair from Asher Benjamin's *The American Builder's Companion* (1806)



GARY SLOAN

Throughout years of practice on historic Beacon Hill, we have learned much from the neighborhood's many townhouses of varied size and age. One particular design feature is a recurring theme in both restorations and new construction: the curved staircase. Time and again it has proven the most efficient and elegant shape to connect one floor with another. No two historical spirals are alike; in this they resemble seashells and reflect craftsmen's skills, passed on through the generations. We tend to prefer "ultimate spirals," which float lightly, without visible attachment to the wall, and are unencumbered by overly ornate balusters. Although we draw inspiration from the work of the Federal period (circa 1785–1825), we freely modify details to suit our clients' personal preferences and the overall character and era of their homes. The staircase shown here was designed for a townhouse on Boston's Louisburg Square, which formerly housed a convent. The spiral connects the main part of the house with what was once a chapel and is now a lofty kitchen and TV room.

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