

CASTLES IN AMERICA:  
THEIR DIFFUSION INTO THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES  
DURING THE ROMANTIC ERA (1870-1930)

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By  
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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School have examined the thesis entitled

CASTLES IN AMERICA:  
THEIR DIFFUSION INTO THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES  
DURING THE ROMANTIC ERA (1870-1930)

presented by Laura Bell,

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and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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A special thanks to my family who has supported me throughout my entire school career.  
Thank you for always having faith in me.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

The Middle Ages was an era of large-scale war and ongoing skirmishes. During this time, castles were developed as a means to defend not only the nobility, but also the residents in the surrounding countryside. They were built throughout Europe to secure borders and display the power of nobility on the landscape. Centuries later, these structures were being constructed in America by wealthy gentlemen, but how did these castles diffuse in the United States? They were not built for defensive purposes, like their European counterparts, but rather to serve other purposes for their builders. What are the patterns of diffusion of American Castles during the Romantic Era, and what were the geographic dimensions of the builders' purposes for these structures?

### **History of the Romantic Era**

The period between 1870 and 1930 was a time of change in American society. The period began with the end of the Civil War era and the advent of the Reconstruction, "Robber Barons", and the Gilded Age. It ended with the Stock Market Crash of 1929.

After the Civil War, the status of the United States began to change in global terms. Politically, the United States became a world power by establishing its hegemonic position through the Spanish-American War and World War I. With the former, the United States defeated a once major imperial power. With that victory, the United States acquired additional territories and developed new spheres of influence. World War I



further established the United States' place in the world with a victory against the Central powers (Cashman 1984).

During this period, the American economy also changed drastically. With the Industrial Revolution, the country shifted from rural agrarian to urban industrial: "Between 1880 and 1900, the United States took over world leadership in industrial output" (LaFeber and Polenberg 1979: 35). Local industries became national corporations (DeNovo, et al. 1972; LaFeber and Polenberg 1979). This was considered to be an era of enormous opportunity, wealth, and materialism. There were, however, two minor depressions before the turn of the century: the panic of 1873 and the depression of 1893-1896, but overall it was an era that flourished from a strong market competition (Cashman 1984; Morgan and Wynn 1993).

The vast changes in the economy allowed for the rise of a new social group. Known as the "Robber Barons," these men were considered to be self-made: born into poverty, through innovation and determination they became some of the wealthiest men in America. This was the time of John Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, and Social Darwinism's idiom of 'survival of the fittest' prevailed during the period (Cashman 1984; Josephson 1995). These men competed not only in the world of business, but also in the realm of symbolism.

Robber Barons worked to make a place for themselves in American and European society. They needed a way to validate themselves in terms of the established Old-World upper class (DeNovo, et al. 1972; Cashman 1984; Josephson 1995). To do this, they turned to the regions and landscapes of established aristocracy. By seizing upon current cultural trends in Europe, they helped to bring these ideas to the United States, and some

of them even married their daughters to impoverished noble lines to improve their own standing in society. European culture was still popular in America, as was Revival style architecture, which showcased the castles' forms (Cashman 1984; Josephson 1995). This idealism of the European culture, especially that of the United Kingdom, was symbolic of the increasing political and economic ties between the United States and the United Kingdom.

Industrialization led to a demographic shift from rural to urban in the United States. Many of the wealthy gentlemen lived near urban areas to be close to their businesses and extend their sphere of influence. Many people were leaving the rural areas to try for the 'American Dream' that had been achieved by men like Carnegie and Rockefeller. The city was best place to try for this dream, especially urbanized areas that were well-developed industrial centers of surging economic activity (Rabinowitz 2004).

The Industrial Revolution also led to developments in transportation, which, in turn, fueled urbanization with railroads and streetcars, both of which allowed for longer commutes and sprawl. These innovations also allowed the upper class to move away from the city center, rife with pollution and poverty, to the countryside where a rural bucolic lifestyle could be achieved (Rabinowitz 2004).

Overall, the industrialization of the United States led to the development of a period with class and wealth differentiation. The rise of these self-made men, who desired to be a part of the upper class, facilitated the diffusion of the castle from Europe to the United States to provide these men with a symbol of wealth and aristocracy for their home.

## **American Castles**

American castles possess a unique landscape because they diffused from Europe. These structures were not intended for defensive purposes but were constructed as residences. These castles were either exact replicas or an eclectic mélange of Revival-style architecture that featured towers, crenellated battlements, arrow-slit windows, and stone walls.

These structures are still present on the landscape, which makes them an ideal object of study for understanding the infusion of landscape ideas from Europe and their subsequent diffusion across the American realm. Traditional cultural geographers focused on apolitical diffusion of ideas and items, but the new cultural geographers concerned themselves with how power plays out on the landscape. This study bridges the gap between these two by trying to understand the diffusion of the castles to be used as a symbol of wealth and status upon the landscape. This study also helps people understand the time period, especially the development of the ideal of the self-made man, and how this emergent group tried to integrate itself into high society through the development of a unique landscape.

Understanding how these structures diffused and examining the builders' purposes are also important from a theoretical standpoint: how does diffusion create landscapes of influence and power? Studying the diffusion of castles from Europe to America during this era will also help people to understand other diffusions that occurred as a product of the time. Also, there has been no previous study of the diffusion of castles into America, and this study helped to fill that gap in American castle literature.

This study is anchored in the literature on landscape geography, sense of place, cultural diffusion, Gothic architecture, Revival architecture, and American castles. It focused on determining how this unique landscape from Europe was adapted to America, why the builders chose the castle for their homes, and what they hoped to portray. This study also examined the difference between Gothic castles and the Revival architecture style castles, and how these castles diffused across the Northeastern United States.

This study used three different analysis tools: case study research, pattern analysis, and GIS analysis. Fifty castles were chosen from the Northeastern United States during the period of 1870 to 1930. Comprehensive data from secondary sources were collected to conduct the pattern analysis. The pattern analysis was conducted in conjunction with GIS to determine patterns of diffusion and purposes for the castles.

The data were analyzed to find categorical patterns by builder, time period, location of the castles, style of architecture used, and intended purpose of the castles by the builders. The results can be found in the analysis chapter, along with maps that illustrate the patterns found in different categories.

Furthermore, the conclusion shows an overarching tie of American castles to the nouveau riche that had developed out of the Industrial Revolution to the overall purposes of these structures and their unique landscapes. Also, the diffusion of the castles across the Northeastern United States shows a preference for certain sites and locations near urban centers.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

To understand the patterns of diffusion of American castles in the Northeastern United States and the builders' purpose behind their construction, one needs to have a solid understanding of the geographical context of the study and also to understand the architectural background of these structures. In the field of geography, the literature on landscape interpretation, sense of place, and cultural diffusion were examined to help understand distinctive castle landscapes. Was there a similar type of landscape associated with these castles? How were the castles used as a symbol? How did they diffuse? The architectural periods of the Gothic Age and Revival Period were examined to understand the historical background behind castles an example of Revival architecture. It is also important to understand what has been written about American Castles in order to understand what still needs to be accomplished from a geographical perspective.

#### **Landscape Geography**

Landscape studies encompass both the physical and cultural realms of geography. Landscapes are “a tangible, visible entity, one that is both reflective and constitutive of society, culture, and identity” (Schein 1997: 660). The concept of landscapes was first used in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as an idea of seeing the world and was closely tied to the concept of space (Cosgrove 1985). The term evolved further to the German idea of *landschafkunde*, which focused on the area or land (Sauer 1925;

Cosgrove 1985). While current landscape geographers focus on all aspects of landscape, visible or not, *landschaftkunde* focused only on what the visible eye could see.

The American landscape movement achieved a strong following under Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School. The most influential article of this movement is Sauer's "The Morphology of Landscape". According to Sauer, landscape combines physical and cultural elements and relies on observation (Sauer 1925). Sauer's movement was popular at the University of California at Berkeley, and the Berkeley school of landscapes is still in use today, but in the later part of the twentieth century there was an altering of focus on how one analyzes the landscape.

The focus in the Sauerian approach to landscape began to shift from the physical landscape to the human landscape (Lewis 1976; Lewis 1983). The cultural landscape is always in flux, always changing, and always building upon itself (Schein 1997). It has been compared to geologic sedimentary layers with the layers of culture constantly building upon the landscape (Lewis 1979). The sequent occupance of the cultures upon the landscape creates a history of the successive cultures upon the landscape. "The human landscape is our unwitting autobiography" (Lewis 1979: 6), yet parts of the previous cultures are inevitably erased. The study of landscapes also helps to illustrate the diffusion of one culture to another and their impact upon the landscape (Schein 1997).

One of the main problems with this field of study is the problem of subjectivity (Unwin 1975; Meinig 1979; Cosgrove 1985). Every person has a different set of experiences to draw upon, allowing for a different interpretation of the landscape. For example, in Meinig's "The Beholding Eye", he details how ten different people developed ten different interpretations of the same landscape. Unwin was very critical of

landscape geography, citing a need to learn how to look at the landscape objectively or focus on how it is valuable to a certain culture (Unwin 1975).

There is also the problem of how to examine the landscape, because castles in America represent multiple cultures interacting on the landscape. The original ideas of the Berkeley school do not allow for adequate examination of the mixing of these two cultures, so this study will further the ideas of the new cultural geographers, like Cosgrove and Mitchell, and analyze the effect that cultural diffusion has had on the castle and on the landscape.

Denis Cosgrove applied the new concepts of cultural geography by focusing on how power played out on the landscape. He addressed how different structures were constructed by different groups to inspire or express certain ideas of power on the landscape (Cosgrove 1985; Cosgrove 1996; Cosgrove 1998). For example, his 1998 article, “Urban Rhetoric and Embodied Entities: City, Nation, and Empire at the Vittorio Emanuele II Monument in Rome 1870-1945”, addressed the struggle between the government and the lower classes. This power struggle centered around two monuments in the city of Rome: one was built by the government to inspire unity and the other was selected by the populace to be honored. In medieval times, castles were built as a defensive landscape symbolizing the nobility’s power, but how what power struggles were evident on the landscape with the castles constructed in America?

With the construction of castles in America, there was a development of a unique landscape. Castle architecture had been imported from Europe; also castles had originally been built during the Middle Ages, so they were anachronistic. Castle sites in Europe had been chosen for their defensibility, so they had been built near water sources

and on areas of higher elevation (Toy 1985; Warner 2001). But American castles were not built for defensive purposes, so what were the builders' purposes for constructing them? How similar were the sites where the American castles were constructed to the sites that the European castles had been built?

### **Sense of Place**

Sense of place focuses on how people look at and understand the world around them. This concept ties into the ideas of landscape geography where the landscapes are examined by using peoples' perceptions of them. People work to understand the world around them by combining: experience, knowledge, emotion, and perception (Tuan 1975; Tuan 1978). Experience and knowledge are both important to knowing a place, because knowing a place allows a person to understand it (Tuan 1975). To be able to do so, one must use all of the senses, especially the sense of sight. A key idea of Yi-Fu Tuan was *epiphor*, meaning that people strive for the outreach and extension of meaning through comparison. People use prior experiences and knowledge to achieve a sense of place with a new place (Tuan 1978). By having prior experiences, knowledge and memories of a place, one begins to become passively sentimental or adverse to places, for example, a person's home is considered to be the "nurturing center" to which a person is quite attached; however, the feeling that is attached to a location is difficult to measure (Relph 1985).

These passive emotions are a product of the knowledge and experience that are tied to a place, and they are not exclusive to places that are associated with a strong emotion. People respond to all environments with feelings and thought (Tuan 1978). At



times, places can be manufactured to elicit certain emotions or memories; for example, Tuan describes architecture as a “Communal experience made into a tangible or commanding presence” (Tuan 1975: 162). This means that the construction of a structure could build a sense of community and bonding or it could create a sense of fear or awe of the current group in power (Tuan 1978).

The fourth trait, which is the perception of place, is strongly entwined with experience, knowledge, and emotion. People perceive reality, including places, as three dimensional objects, which can then be moved and understood outside of their native environment. Using prior experience and knowledge, people will still be able to recognize these objects for what they are regardless of the new environment in which they are found (Tuan 1984). People’s perception of place is not only dependent on the visual aspects of an object, but also the name of that place (Tuan 1978). Certain names will trigger memories and emotions that are associated with such a name and will alter a person’s perception of that place.

How do these four traits tie into the concept of castles in America? American castles are objects that have been moved out of their natural setting of Europe, yet people still recognize them as castles and understand the history of the structures from experience or knowledge. People also have always associated castles with the ideas of feudalism, power, romance, nobility, and even escapism. The builders of these castles were constructing a place that gave them meaning. The castle served not only as a home, but it was also the builders’ declaration of their wealth and standing. Was it the intention of the American castle builders to use this term for their residences to inspire these same

ideas in the people around them? How did the builder's desire to be perceived as part of the upper class contribute to their construction of the castle?

### **Cultural Diffusion**

Cultural diffusion is the concept of one culture having a material and non-material impact on another culture over space (Jordan 1989; St. George 1990; Rice and Feldman 1997). This means that cultural diffusion deals with the movement of people, products, and ideas from one culture to another with the overriding belief that nothing is original but has to diffuse from somewhere else (Blaut 1987). Cultural diffusion has strong ties to both landscape geographers and historical geography.

Landscape geographers concentrate on how culture is altered and expressed on the landscape; some are interested in the layers of culture upon the landscape and how one can examine the landscape for the succession of cultures (Sauer 1925; Lewis 1983; Schein 1997). The main focus of these geographers is the impact of cultural diffusion in America, because the colonization of America was one of the largest mass movements of people in history spanning several centuries (Jordan 1989). Colonialism is considered to be a strong catalyst for diffusion, because Europe was considered to be one of the permanent centers of creativity (Blaut 1987; Jordan 1989).

Mapping diffusion processes is also important, because it helps to show cultural change. To map diffusion, geographers need to examine not only the movement of the castles into the area, but also the process behind it.

The main debate within cultural diffusion is the impact that the contributing culture had on the receiving culture. Some geographers believe that cultural diffusion

had a tremendous and lasting impact upon the culture. Zelinsky particularly emphasized this idea stating, “The first group able to establish a viable, self-perpetuating society in an empty land is of crucial significance for the later social and cultural geography of the area” (Zelinsky 1973: 13). Others believe the contributing culture does have an impact, but the receiving culture alters or dilutes the incoming culture (Blaut 1987; Jordan 1989). This idea ties into the diffusion of American castles, where these structures diffused from Europe, but the architectural style and the purpose behind their construction have changed.

Cultural diffusion applies to all aspects of culture including the diffusion of architecture. The majority of the literature devoted to architectural diffusion focuses on the movement of different housing types (Kniffen 1965; Rickert 1967; Rubin 1977; Fusch and Ford 1983). There are two major divisions in the housing diffusion literature in regards to the locations of the different housing types: the older works focus on the diffusion of housing types in rural areas (Kniffen 1965), but later there was a shift in focus to the diffusion of housing types in urban areas (Rickert 1967; Rubin 1977; Fusch and Ford 1983).

Within the field of housing diffusion, there are three main study areas: settlement patterns, chronology of occupancy, and cultural diffusion. Settlement patterns concern how people developed an area into a city or a town. Although the United States’ settlement patterns are young when compared to the rest of the world, these patterns can still be discerned and analyzed (Kniffen 1965).

Chronology of occupancy is the study of the history of the housing units in a certain area and understanding which housing types were destroyed to make way for

another type. There is a problem with this branch, which is that it is difficult to track the chronology due to housing units not aging uniformly and succession can occur rapidly at times, especially in cities (Rubin 1977; Fusch and Ford 1983). But primary sources can be used to address this issue by tracking the dates that each housing type or individual house was built.

The third area of study is the overarching theme of cultural diffusion with a focus on where the housing types originated, where they became popular and why (Kniffen 1965; Rickert 1967; Rubin 1977). This includes the diffusion of architecture from Europe into the United States, like the Revival style architecture, or diffusion of architecture across the United States from one region to another.

To be able to understand the diffusion, succession or patterns in this field, the researcher must be able to classify the housing type, and this is accomplished by examining the housing façade and the materials used to create the structure. The need to classify the housing types leads to two debates within the field: the defining of a housing type and the classification of hybrids. The defining of the housing type is very difficult, because architects often disagree on the definitions and characteristics of different architectural styles, so the pattern of diffusion for housing types could differ depending on which definition the researcher used. The other debate centers around the problem of hybrids, which are structures that are built using two or more different architectural styles.

These problems are evident when analyzing the diffusion of American castles, because the structures were built using the Revivalist styles, which have been altered from their earlier European prototypes. For each of the new Revival styles, there are some features of each style that are agreed upon by the architectural historians, but there

are other details that differ with each individual's definition. Therefore, to be able to classify the castle's architectural style, one needs to create firm definitions for each style. There is also the problem of hybrids with American castles, as some of the castle builders picked out their favorite features from different architectural styles for their castle. Therefore, it is difficult to classify the structure using only one architectural archetype. This requires a new category to encompass these eclectic hybrid castles.

### **Gothic Architecture**

Architecture is a vital component of analysis in cultural diffusion because it makes a significant and often lasting impact on the landscape. European Gothic architecture is key to understanding the diffusion of castles into the United States. Gothic architecture originated in England during the Early Middle Ages. Gothic Architecture can be divided into four time periods: Norman, Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular. The beginning of the castle period is difficult to determine, but the official end of the defensive castle period occurred with the advent of gunpowder in the western world. This movement was characterized by high arches, domes and cupolas, the use of columns, and the development of a flow of style from the interior to the exterior of the structure (Born 1949; Laporte 1953; Olson 2004).

Gothic architecture appears in two main forms: the cathedral and the castle. For the purpose of this study, only the literature pertaining to castles was reviewed. There is a debate on the exact origins of the castle designs, but most architectural historians agree that the majority originated in France (Warner 2001; Johnson 2002; LePage 2002). The castle followed the Gothic idea of symbolization and eventually embodied the economic,

political, and social ideas of feudalism. Like Gothic architecture, the castle went through several stages of development: residential towers, motte and bailey, concentric, and linear castles (Toy 1985; Warner 2001).

There are multiple schools of thought on the origin of Gothic architecture. One faction believes that Gothic architecture was developed in England after the Romanesque period and then transferred to France where it was refined, and then finally diffused back to England where it was considered to be perfected (Born 1949; Bradley 2002). This school assumes that cultural diffusion was already prevalent in Gothic architecture even in the beginning.

The problem with this field is the shift of this architectural style from Europe to America and trying to understand how the architectural style changed and why it became popular again despite the lack of need for such defensive structures, so one needs to examine the styles of Revival architecture to understand the changes in style and why it has become popular.

### **Revival Architecture**

The Revival Era is a complex period in American architectural history focused on the movement of European medieval architecture to the United States. The Revival Era was not dominated by a single country's style of architecture, but rather varied forms of Renaissance, Romanesque, Classic, and Gothic architecture that were altered by American architects (King 1967; Watterson 1968; Kenney and Workman 1975; Platt 1976; Wilson 1983; Lewis 2002). A subset of this movement is the development of

Eclectic architecture which was when an architect combined multiple revival styles into one structure. This architectural style had its peak in the 1900s (Watterson 1968).

Multiple theories explain the development of this movement. Some historians argue that this movement began with the first settlement in Jamestown (Forman 1946), and others argue that it had its peak between 1750 and 1938 (Adams 1957; Winter 1958; Kenney and Workman 1975; Laughlin 1980; Wilson 1983). These two peaks are separated by the American Civil War. The first peak is characterized by its greater influence on church buildings, with only a few castles being built (Addison 1938). The other period is 1870-1930 and includes the “Gilded Age,” which was a period of grand designs, and the architects at the time borrowed from Medieval and Renaissance architecture (Watterson 1968; Platt 1976). These different viewpoints all have validity with the definition of the movement, because the examined architecture does have its basis in antiquated European architecture. Each peak was distinct with each having different social groups using the architectural styles for different purposes.

The spirit of this movement was a desire to recapture the spirit of the medieval era, by romanticizing the past. “Every generation has an innate sympathy with some epoch of the past wherein it seems to find itself foreshadowed...the spirit which animates us was anticipated by the spirit of the Renaissance” (Wilson 1983: 89). This romantic surge in architecture occurred after a renewed interest in medieval history and literature (Adams 1957; King 1967; Kenney and Workman 1975; Lewis 2002). The Revival period was characterized by imagination, emotion, and the unconventional; it was a response to the rationality and ugliness of the industrial age (Watterson 1968; Hunt 1980). The strong pervasive spirit of the time was a contrived fantasy of what the Middle Ages used to be.

“Fantasy is innate to the human condition...Culture is a product of imagination and fantasy” (Tuan 1990: 443)

The problem associated with this movement is the difficulty in defining the specific type of architecture, especially when it has been altered after diffusion, as many different styles are being revived and mixed. Another problem is the ambiguous time frame. There seem to be four main peaks of the romantic revival: the colonial era (17<sup>th</sup> century), the independence era (mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to early 19<sup>th</sup> century), the Industrial Revolution (late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century), and the current era (1980-present).

The peak of the colonial era occurred in the thirteen colonies and was built by the upper-class English settlers who were trying to recreate a symbol of established nobility. The period of 1750-1820 saw expansion as new castles were built as residences for the merchants and leaders of the newly independent United States. These are found mostly in the Hudson River Valley region. The Industrial Revolution peaked from 1870 to 1930, the beginning of the Great Depression. These castles were built on the East and West coasts and were built by the old moneyed families and the nouveau riche of the era. The current era of castle building populated by those who have money and an interest in the medieval era.

### **American Castles**

The literature on American castles falls into three categories: case studies, studies of a group of castles in a certain area, and books about American castles in general. This literature often focuses on the histories of the castles and biographies of the castle builder, but none focuses on where the castles are located or how they diffused within America.



American castles can be defined in two ways: an exact or modified replica of a European castle, or an eclectic subset of the Revival Architecture with castle-like features such as towers, crenellated battlements, arrow-slit windows, and stone walls (Cavalier 1973; Handy 1998). For this study, American castles are also defined as being used for residential purposes.

The case studies of American castles involve only one type of castle and study all the aspects of that particular castle (Cogswell 1982; Edward and Stockton 1994; Strazdes 2001; Carso 2004). These authors focus on who built the castle, what they built, and why they did it, often with a strong focus on the architecture as well as the furniture and art that could be found in the home. Many of these case studies focus on the Hearst castle in California (MacShane 1964; Aidale and Bruce 1981; Gillette 1996).

The studies of a group of castles in a certain area examine the historical context of construction and who built them (Zukowsky 1979; Sweeney 1984; Larkin and Rhein 1989). Most of the authors believe that these castles were built to revive the feudal standards of their former European home. Most of these articles focus on early New England castles that were built in the Colonial era (Zukowsky 1979; Sweeney 1984). These studies focus on the group as a whole and reveal general architecture patterns, but these articles are not beneficial in understanding the specific histories of the castles, and they do not explain their diffusion.

The third category of literature is composed of books that deal with American castles as a whole (Tuulse 1958; Cavalier 1973; Handy 1998). These books are a series of case studies on castles across America and, like other case studies, focus on history and architecture. These books provide a good overview of the topic, but the analysis of is

generally superficial and generalized. Also, the case studies included in the text are unrelated to one another, meaning that the author makes no attempt to compare or contrast the history and development of the different castles.

G. Turim's "All-American Castles" attempts to delve into the diffusion of castles with the use of case studies, but he focuses mainly on understanding the difference between European and American castles and looks at the wealthy business and industry moguls who built American castles (Turim 1990). The castles in this study were built during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and Turim conducts several case studies of castles from this time period. While Turim does examine some of the reasons why castles were built during this time period, he does not adequately cover all the rationale for the movement of the idea of castles into the United States at this time.

The main problem with this literature is that these authors neglect to analyze the distribution of the castles across America. Also, they do not look at how exactly the castles diffused into and across the United States and which style of castle was the most prevalent. This literature provides excellent information on each castle or cluster of castles, but none of the literature compares multiple castles from different areas.

## **Conclusion**

How do the patterns of diffusion of American castles and the builder's purpose behind the construction fit with this literature? With the landscape geography, there needs to be a set definition of how one is going to interpret the landscape, so when another person examines the landscape using your strictures, they will understand why and how you interpreted it. This was accomplished by creating a set definition of an

American castle and using firm categories to examine each castle. This study also examined the landscapes upon which the castles were built to determine if there were any similarities. The construction of a unique landscape that was influenced by European culture was examined to understand the reason behind the development and the prevalence of castles in the Northeastern United States. Also, there was a need to examine the ideas of power on the landscape and how it influenced the builders to construct these castles.

With sense of place, there is a focus on the feelings and memories and how they relate to a location. This study assumed that although castles have been removed from their natural setting, they are still recognized as castles. Also, it looks at the reasons behind building the structure and whether or not it was tied into the symbolism of the term castle. This study also assumed that the builders built their castles as a home that not only gave them meaning, but also declared who they were, and how their castle building was influenced by a desire to be a part of the upper class.

In cultural diffusion, there is a strong examination of how an idea passes from one country to the other, but there is not as much of a focus on how these ideas spread across a country and the reasons for its distribution. With the literature that focuses on the diffusion of housing types, there is a lack of literature dealing with the diffusion of castles in America. There is also the problem of defining the architectural styles due to multiple definitions and hybrids, and in this study, there will be specific definitions developed for each of the Revival styles.

Gothic architecture's literature is quite expansive, but it only focuses on the European structures and the history of the architecture in Europe. It did not examine the

Romantic Revival in the United States, the movement of the castle to the United States was ignored, and the way that Gothic architecture was adapted and altered in the United States was also neglected.

The history of the Revival Architecture addresses how the movement occurred and some of the reasons why, but there are many problems with this topic. There is no emphasis on where exactly in the United States the Revival Era occurred, there is no set timeline for when the Revival Era occurred, and the authors also never clearly define how the architecture had been altered during this time period.

The topic of American castles is not a very expansive subject, and no one has ever focused on the distribution and diffusion of castles across the United States. Also, no one has ever focused on why there were certain concentrations of castles in certain areas. Instead, they have been more focused on individual castles or certain clusters. There is also no real comparative literature on how the architecture differed among the different areas or over different time periods.

These issues can be addressed in my main question: What are the patterns of diffusion of American Castles during the Romantic era, and what were the builders' purposes behind these structures?

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

This study takes a qualitative approach to understand the diffusion of castles with the northeastern United States and to understand the spatial patterns. The qualitative approach was selected because the data that was analyzed could not be measured in a quantifiable way. The patterns being measured were overall patterns and how they tied into the historical period. Due to limitations of time and resources, it was not possible to conduct interviews of castle owners or members of the surrounding community; instead, historical data about the castles were collected for analysis from secondary sources. Three qualitative analysis techniques were used: case studies, pattern analysis, and GIS analysis.

### **Data Collection:**

Case studies on the castles were developed using historical data and imagery. The data came from secondary such as books, journal articles, and various websites developed by the current organizations in charge of the castles. These websites provided general supplementary data, but were essential because of a general lack of solid data on American castles. Primary sources were difficult to obtain due to the lack of funds and time to travel to the Northeastern United States, so there is the problem of relying on the accuracy of the historical data obtained from the secondary sources. This was rectified by obtaining multiple sources for the castles to verify the data.

### **Case Studies:**

Case studies are defined by Patton (1990: 384) as, “a specific way of collecting, organizing, and analyzing data. The purpose is to gather comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information about each case of interest.” A case study enabled me to compare and contrast this study’s areas of interest to determine patterns. Case studies are a common tool for understanding cultural diffusion, especially in the area of housing. Some geographers have used case studies to examine different housing types from various time periods and then to compare the different cases to achieve an understanding of diffusion and sequent occupance (Rickert 1967; Rubin 1977). Fusch and Ford (1983) used a slightly different approach by taking two studies as main cases and then developing lower-level case studies at the block level. The use of a case study was therefore a logical way to obtain and organize the historical data for this study. The objective was to gather as much relevant data about each castle as possible for analysis.

Before the case study could be conducted, the time period and the region needed to be defined. The time periods were defined by using natural breaks. As stated in the literary review, there were four main periods of castle building in the United States: the colonial era (17<sup>th</sup> century), the Independence era (later 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century), the Industrial Revolution (late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century), and the current era (1980-present). The Industrial Revolution was selected for this study because many castles were built during this period, and these castles tended to develop in regional clusters. The years between 1870 and 1930 were selected because this time period was framed by the end of the Civil War era and the beginning of the Great Depression. Also, the castle building in

the decades before and after the selected time period was minimal when compared to the decades featured in the study.

The study area also required definition. During the Industrial Revolution, there were two areas of significant development as well as political, social, and economic activity: the East Coast and the West Coast. The East Coast had already experienced castle development during the colonial era and the independence era, so it was selected given its longer history of castle building.

The East Coast needed to be narrowed further however, due to its size. The subregion with the most development of castles during this time period was the Northeastern United States. The definition of the Northeastern United States for this study was Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont, a common definition in regional studies ( see Essentials of World Regional Geography, Fifth Edition by Hobbs and Salter).

These definitions yielded fifty castles from each of the states in the Northeastern United States, except for Vermont and Delaware. It was a sample of castles, which were selected on the basis of meeting the correct time period criteria and the definition of a castle for this study. Data was collected for all of the cases, so that they could be compared and contrasted using pattern analysis. The use of fifty castles was significant for determining patterns, because only around 150 castles were constructed during this time period, so this study addresses a third of the entire population of castles.

**Pattern Analysis:**

Pattern analysis is a method of comparing data to achieve an understanding of overall patterns. It also leads to an expanding, bridging, and surfacing of data (Patton 1990). Pattern analysis is a way of interpreting the data collected from the individual case studies by using categories to conduct the comparison.

Pattern analysis has been used by geographers studying housing diffusion. These studies used categories for time period, location, expense, facades, frames, roof styles, and building materials (Rickert 1967; Rubin 1977; Fusch and Ford 1983). These geographers compared and contrasted the different categories to understand patterns of development, diffusion, and sequent occupance.

In this study, categories were developed to help analyze the case studies and to develop an understanding of the different patterns of diffusion of castles in the Northeastern United States. The categories are: date of the construction; location; name and occupation of builder; landscape around the castle; and the architecture style of the castle.

An additional category that served as a subset in the pattern analysis was the meaning/purpose behind the construction of the castle from the perspective of the builder. This subset was included to help to understand the symbolic elements of diffusion of the castles into the Northeastern United States. The categorical data provided not only overall patterns, but the data were correlated to economic growth and cultural changes that had developed during the time period.



As stated in the literature review, a problem with prior studies in architectural and housing diffusion concerns the definition of architectural style. For the purpose of this study, definitions were developed for each type of castle architecture.

#### *Castle Architecture Definitions:*

Five architectural styles can be seen in the castles of the Romantic Era: Romanesque Revival, Gothic Revival, Renaissance Revival, Replicas, and Eclectic. These definitions have been derived from multiple sources (Addison 1949; McAlester and McAlester 1984; Craven 2007). The Romanesque Revival style consists of rough-faced square stones, round towers, and windows with rounded arches. The Gothic Revival style consists of windows with pointed arches, grouped chimneys, crenellated battlements, and sometimes clover shaped windows. The Renaissance Revival consists of rectangular shaped symmetrical facades. The roofs are flat, and the windows are thin. This style is more palatial than the other styles, but they are still castles. The Replicas are castles that have been copied either exactly or with minor modifications from any of the European countries. The Eclectic style consists of structures that with elements of any of the aforementioned styles; for example, the structure could have pointed arches with rough facing stones. It is the hybrid style that became very popular during the period.

#### **GIS Analysis**

GIS provided an additional tool to understand the overall patterns of the diffusion. This analysis effectively served as an enhanced cartographic tool with which to detect

overall spatial patterns in the different pattern analysis categories. ESRI's ArcGIS was used to develop and analyze the data.

All fifty castles were geocoded onto a base shapefile of the Northeastern United States using latitude and longitude coordinates. In the attribute table of the castle layer, the pattern analysis categories were created as new fields, and the data collected during the case studies were entered. The data in the table were then manipulated using a graduated color scale and sub-categories to develop maps showing the distribution of different characteristics of a category. This method was also used to develop maps showing the distribution of castles by decades to obtain an understanding of the pattern of development of castles over time.

GIS analysis was also used to determine the landscape around the castle, the population density during the time period, and the distinct clusters of castles. The landscape around the castle was determined by adding a water body shapefile. A two mile buffer zone was placed around each castle to determine the proximity of that castle to water.

The population density during the time period was determined by retrieving the historical census data for each decade from the University of Virginia Library's website. These data were joined with a Northeastern United States county shapefile so that the density of each county was determined. This allowed for the understanding of a population landscape in which each castle resided and to develop patterns of castle distribution.

To determine the areas that contain clusters of castles, buffers were used with a distance of twenty miles. An additional column was added into the attribute table

containing the number of castles within a twenty mile proximity to each castle. The castles' symbol were then color coded by the number of nearby castles to be able to easily detect the size and location of clusters.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results and Analysis**

The research was conducted during 2007, and the analysis was narrowed to fifty castles in the Northeastern United States for the time period between 1870 and 1930. The analysis was conducted with the use of pattern analysis and GIS analysis. Five categories were selected for pattern analysis: the castle builders, the time period in which the castle was built, the location of the castle, the style of architecture used, and the intended purpose of the castles by the castle builders.

#### **The Castle Builders:**

Although there are fifty castles in this study, there are only forty-nine builders, because Edward Searles constructed two castles: one in New Hampshire and the other in Maine, and both of the castles were named Searles Castle<sup>1</sup>. All forty-nine of the builders were males of European descent, specifically Western European countries, like the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> The following sources are used throughout Chapter 4 (Addison 1949; Tuulse 1958; Brooks 1960; Cavalier 1973; Platt 1976; Gibbons 1977; Zukowsky 1979; Gorman 1981; Maier 1983; Morgan 1983; Schuttler 1983; McAlester and McAlester 1984; Owens 1984; Snyder 1988; Larkin and Rhein 1989; Watterson 1989; Kaye and Seeborn 1990; Kerster 1990; Turim 1990; Dunwell 1991; Contosta 1992; Grimes 1992; Conway 1993; Gill 1993; Fortress on the Hudson: Transforming a castle in Tarrytown 1994; Cotton 1995; Nakreyko 1995; Khasru 1996; Baltz and Otsuki 1997; Barrett and St. Jacques 1997; Beall and McTammany 1997; Handy 1998; Kane 1998; Kelly 1998; Franklin and Franklin 1999; Masello 1999; Porter 1999; Sorgen 1999; Pettibone 2000; Paik and Rohleder 2001; Renner 2001; Ringel 2002; Castles of New England 2004; Citro and Foulds 2004; A Brief History 2005; About the Castle: the Historic Restoration of a Grand Tradition 2007; Bien 2007; Castle History 2007; Craven 2007; Gillette Castle State Park 2007; Brief History 2008; Mission and History 2008; Dupont n.d.; Freeman n.d.; History of Blantyre n.d.; Norumbega n.d.; The Story of Catholina Lambert's Castle n.d.; The Story of Grey Towers: A Great American Castle n.d.; Wickliffe: The Castle at Maryvale n.d.)

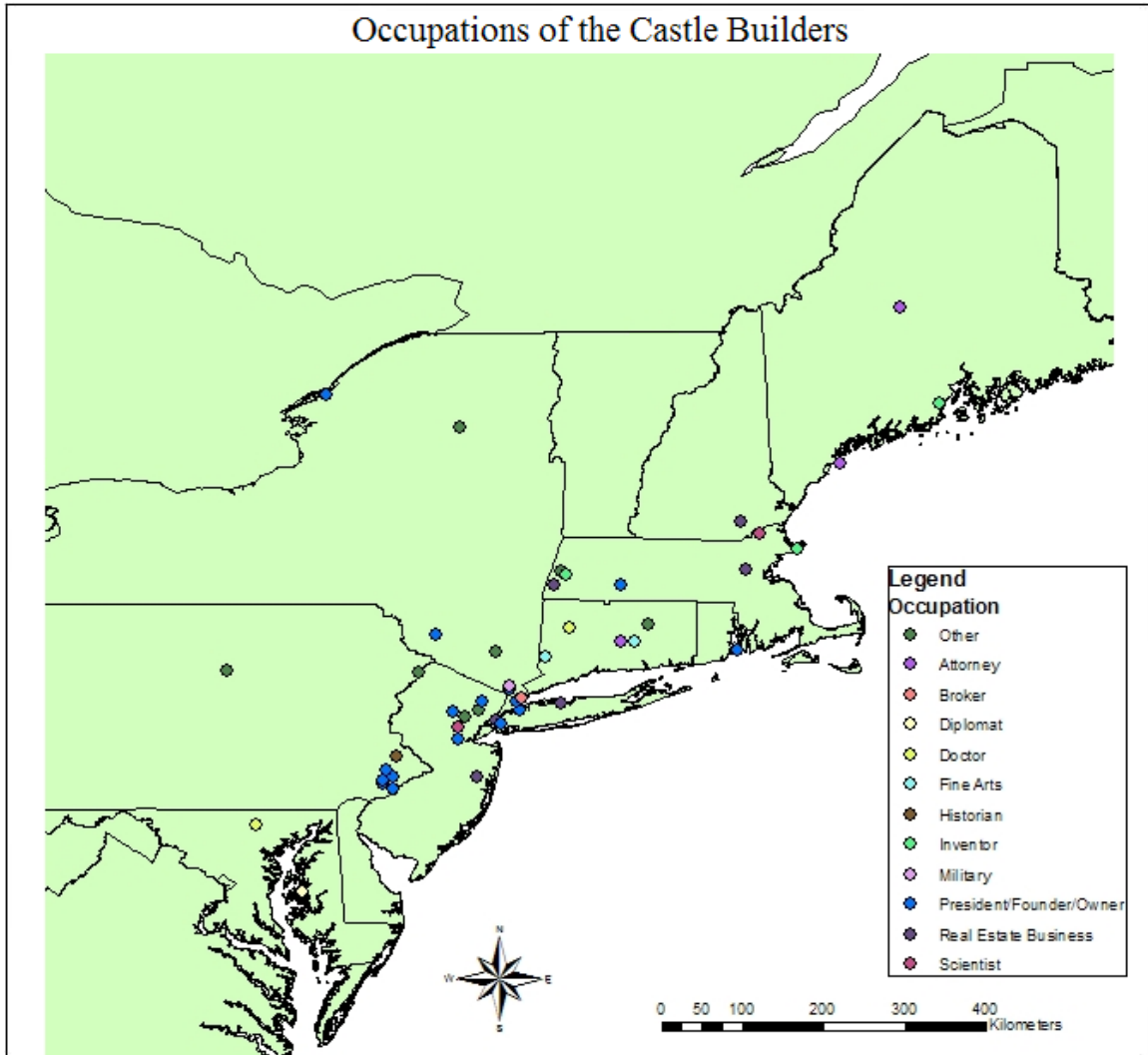


Figure 4.1: Map of the Occupations of the Castle Builders (Cartography by author)

The castle builders were of varying economic and professional backgrounds with most being built by men who either founded, owned, or were president of a company or industry (eighteen of the castle builders or 36%). Five of the castle builders were involved in real estate business brokering and developing. There were three attorneys and inventors each, and there were two each of doctors, scientists, brokers, and academics. Other occupations included were a historian, diplomat, and a position in the

military, but nine occupations were unknown. The majority of the castle builders were a part of the nouveau riche having developed their own companies or obtained a higher level of education to acquire high-salaried jobs, like attorneys or doctors. These were men who had been born into a lower class but moved into the upper class.

The only occupation category to show a temporal pattern was that of founder/owner/president, with eleven out of the eighteen clustered between the years of 1892 and 1907. This distribution shows a very strong clustering around the decade surrounding the turn of the century. Four castles were constructed between 1870 and 1886, and three were constructed between 1917 and 1925.

Spatially, the founder/owner/presidents were located in a cluster around Philadelphia, PA, Newark, NJ, and New York City, NY with a minor cluster in Newport, Rhode Island. There were two exceptions: Boldt Castle in Northwestern NY and Kenilworth castle in central Massachusetts. The castle builders who were associated with the real estate business tended to be outliers from the main clusters with the exception of two who built on Long Island, New York. The inventors tended to be clustered in the Northeast with two being located in Massachusetts and one in Maine.

### **Diffusion over Time**

The time period selected for this study was the Romantic Era; more commonly known as the Gilded Age or the Industrial Revolution, which was the period between 1870 and 1930. The start and end dates were significant periods in United States history with 1870 marking the end of the Civil War era and the beginning of the Reconstruction

period. The Stock Market Crash of 1929 marked the end of this era and the beginning of the Great Depression.

The castles in this study were analyzed on a decadal basis to discern the diffusion across the Northeastern United States. Six (12%) of the castles were built in the 1870s, seven (14%) of the castles were built in the 1880s, ten (20%) of the castles were built in the 1890s, twelve (24%) of the castles were built in the 1900s, eight (16%) of the castles were built in the 1910s, and seven (14%) of the castles were built in the 1920s. The peak period of castle construction was between 1890 and 1909, and the peripheral periods were the 1870s and 1920s.

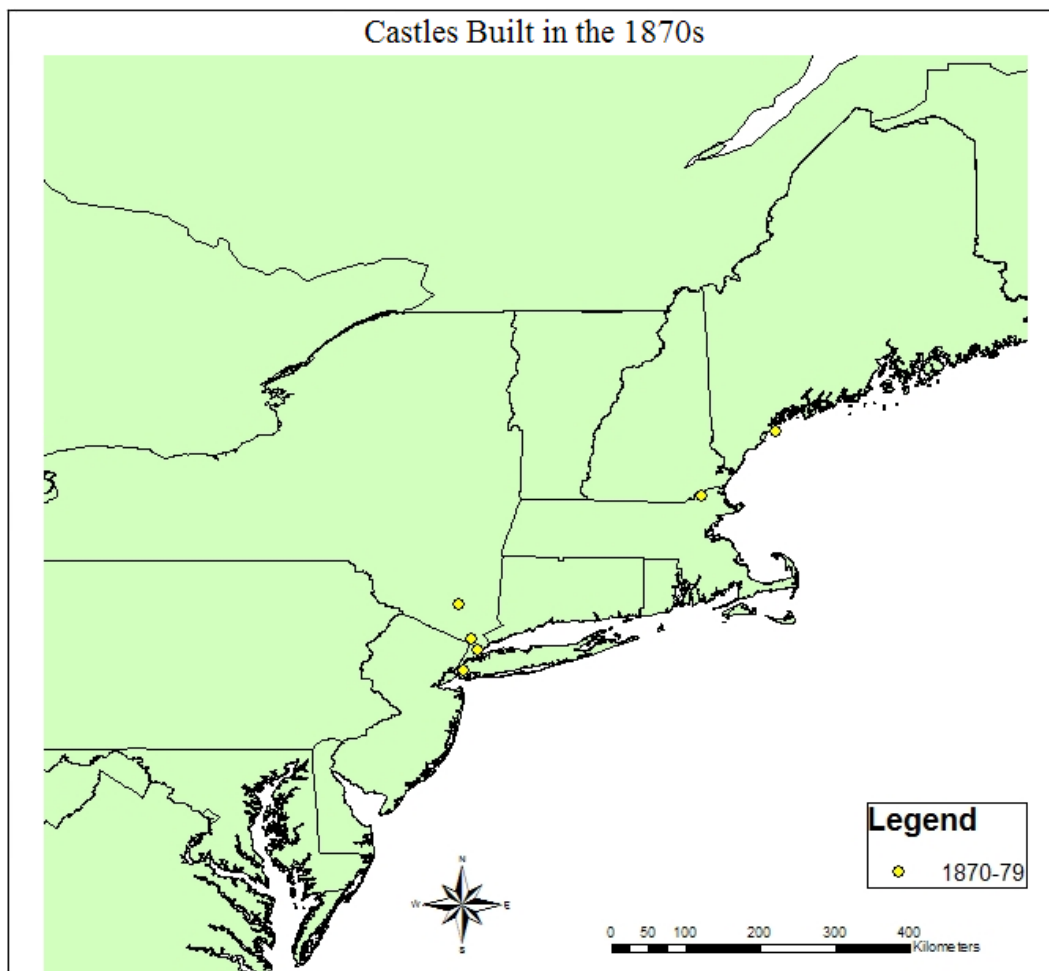


Figure 4.2: Map of the Castles built in the 1870s (Cartography by author)

In the 1870s, there was a strong cluster around the Hudson River valley in New York. Castles also developed in northeastern Massachusetts and one in the southern coastal area of Maine.

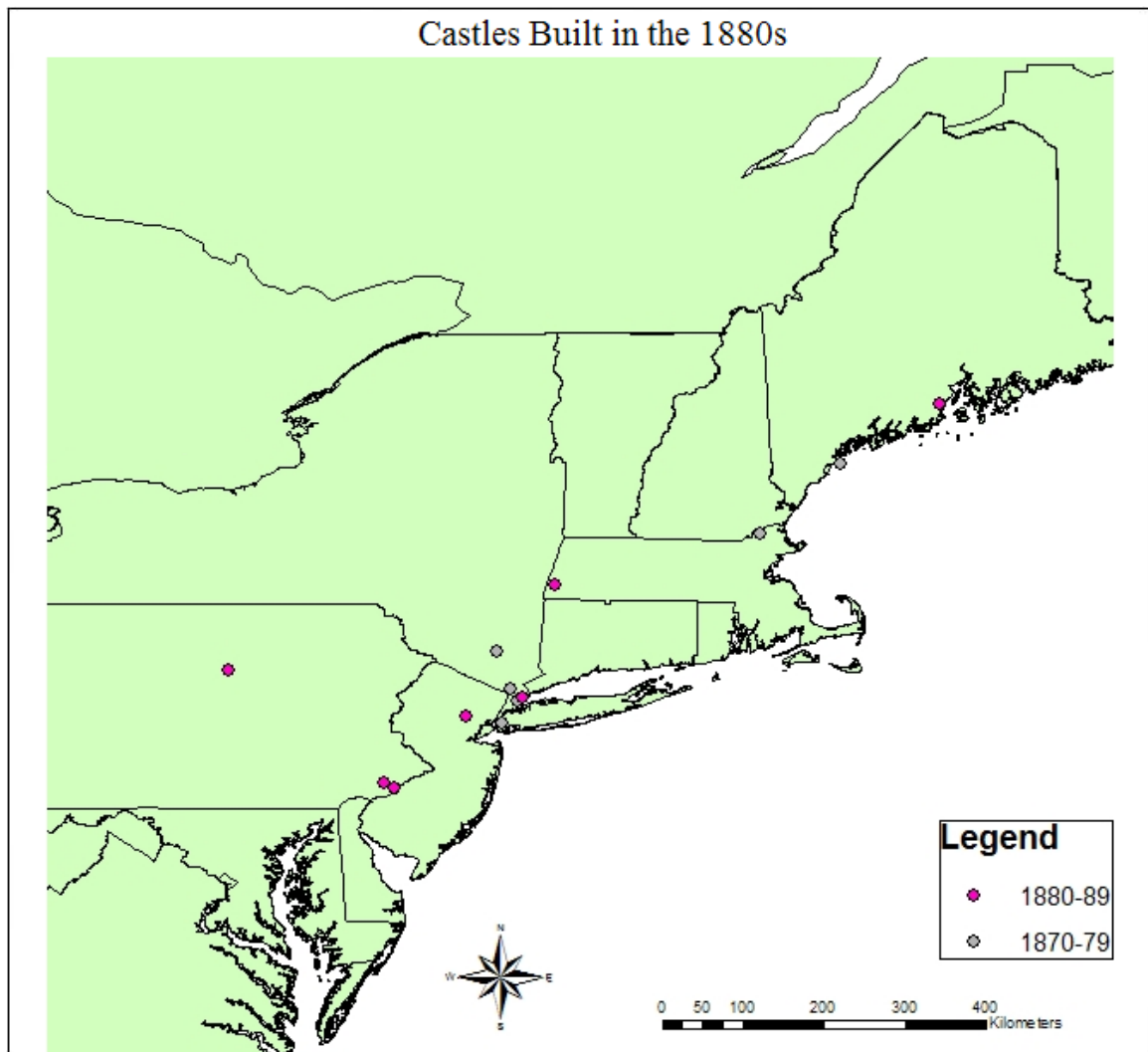


Figure 4.2: Map of Castles built in the 1880s (Cartography by author)

In the 1880s, a castle was constructed on each side of the Hudson River: one in New York and the other in New Jersey. This was an expansion from the original 1870s cluster. A cluster began in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area, as well as a castle built in



central Pennsylvania. Two other castles were built during this period with one in western Massachusetts and the other in the southern point in Maine.

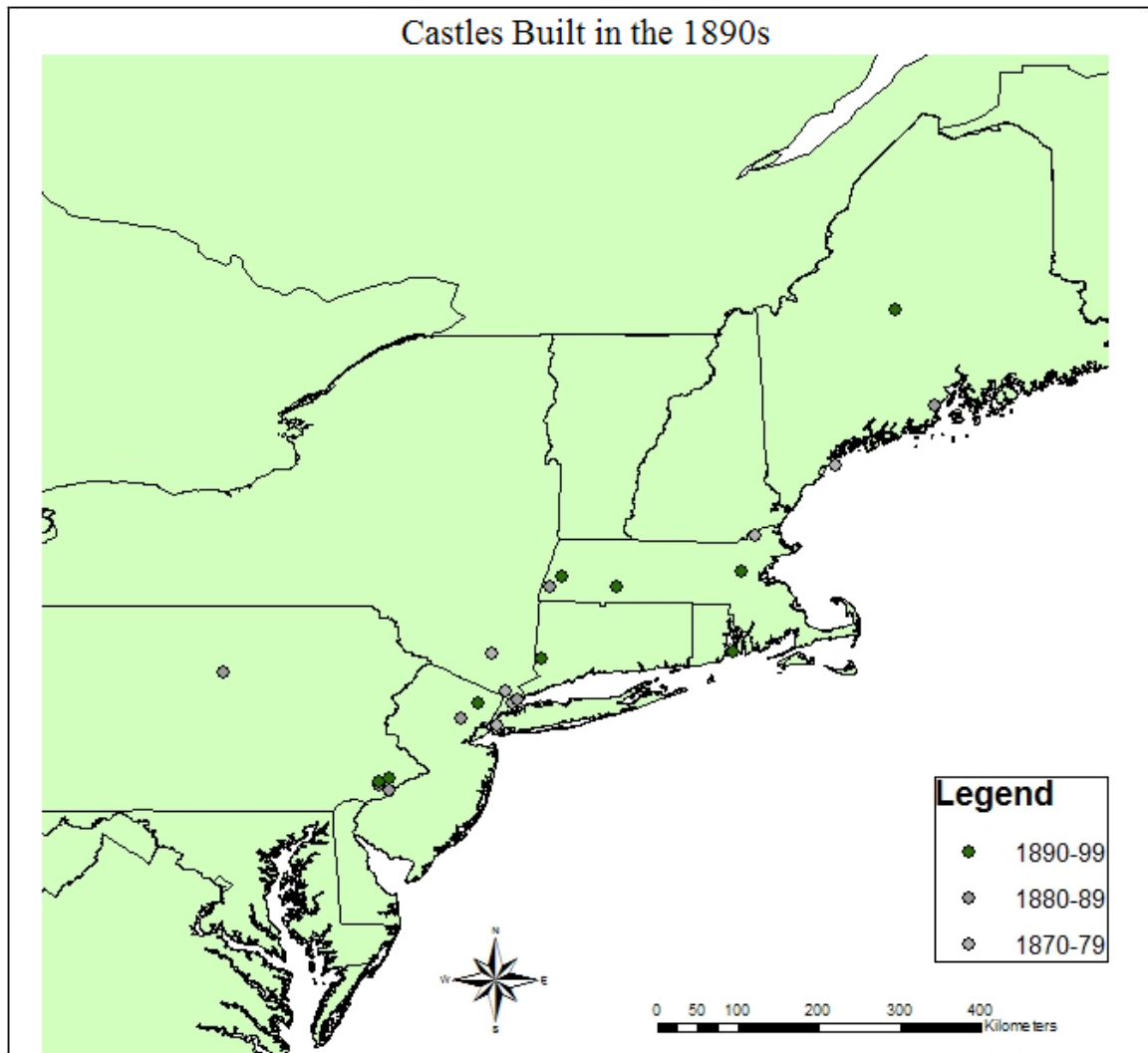


Figure 4.4: Map of the Castles built in the 1890s (Cartography by author)

In the 1890s, another castle was built on the western side of the Hudson. The final castle was built in central Maine and was the northernmost castle. During this period, the cluster in Philadelphia continued to grow, and castles began to be constructed in Connecticut and Rhode Island. There was also significant development in Massachusetts with another castle built in the developing western cluster and a castle

built towards the center of the zone. There was no activity in New York during this period.

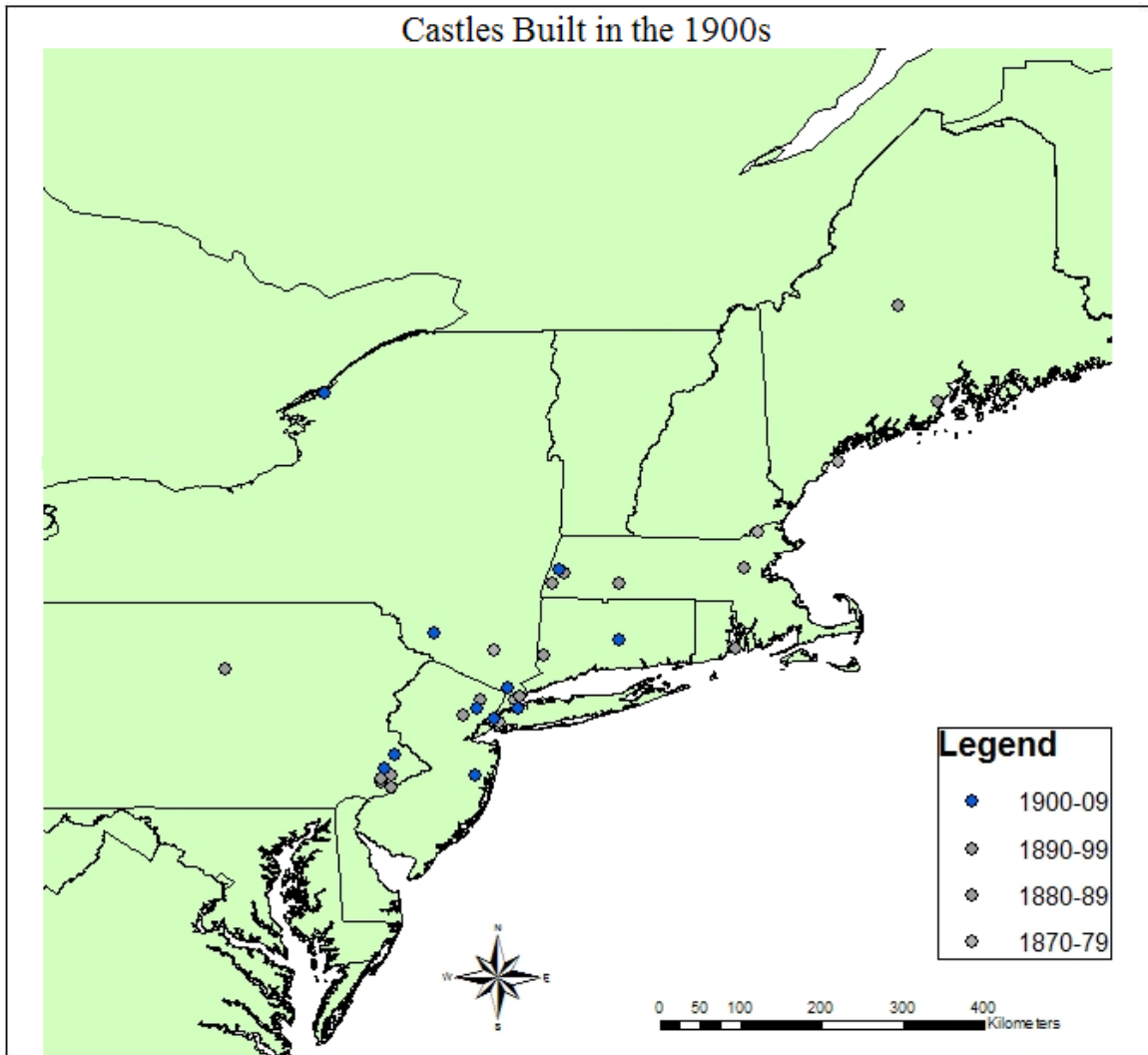


Figure 4.5: Map of Castles built in the 1900s (Cartography by author)

In the 1900s, there is a sizeable increase in the Hudson River cluster in New York and New Jersey. There is also development of castles in northwestern New York around the Great Lakes region. There were additional castles in the Philadelphia region and the western Massachusetts cluster. This was the decade when the last of the Pennsylvania

castles were constructed. Finally, there was expansion eastward in Connecticut and into southern New Jersey.

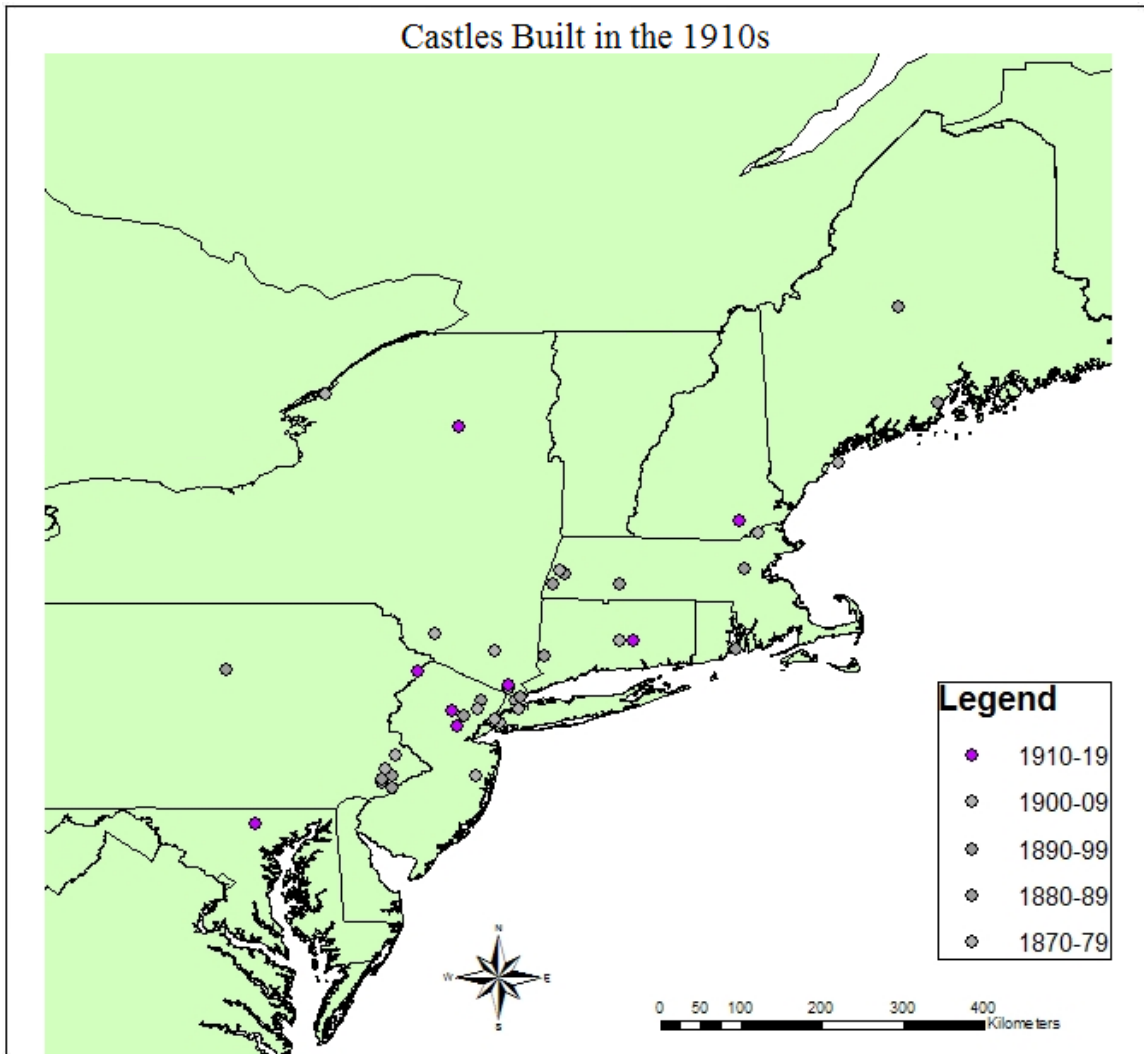


Figure 4.6: Map of the Castles Built in the 1910s (Cartography by author)

In the 1910s, there was continued development in the western portion of the Hudson River cluster, and the addition of one castle in the New York cluster. The first and only castle was constructed in southern New Hampshire, and the first castle was built in Maryland near Baltimore. Castles were also constructed in central New York and central Connecticut.

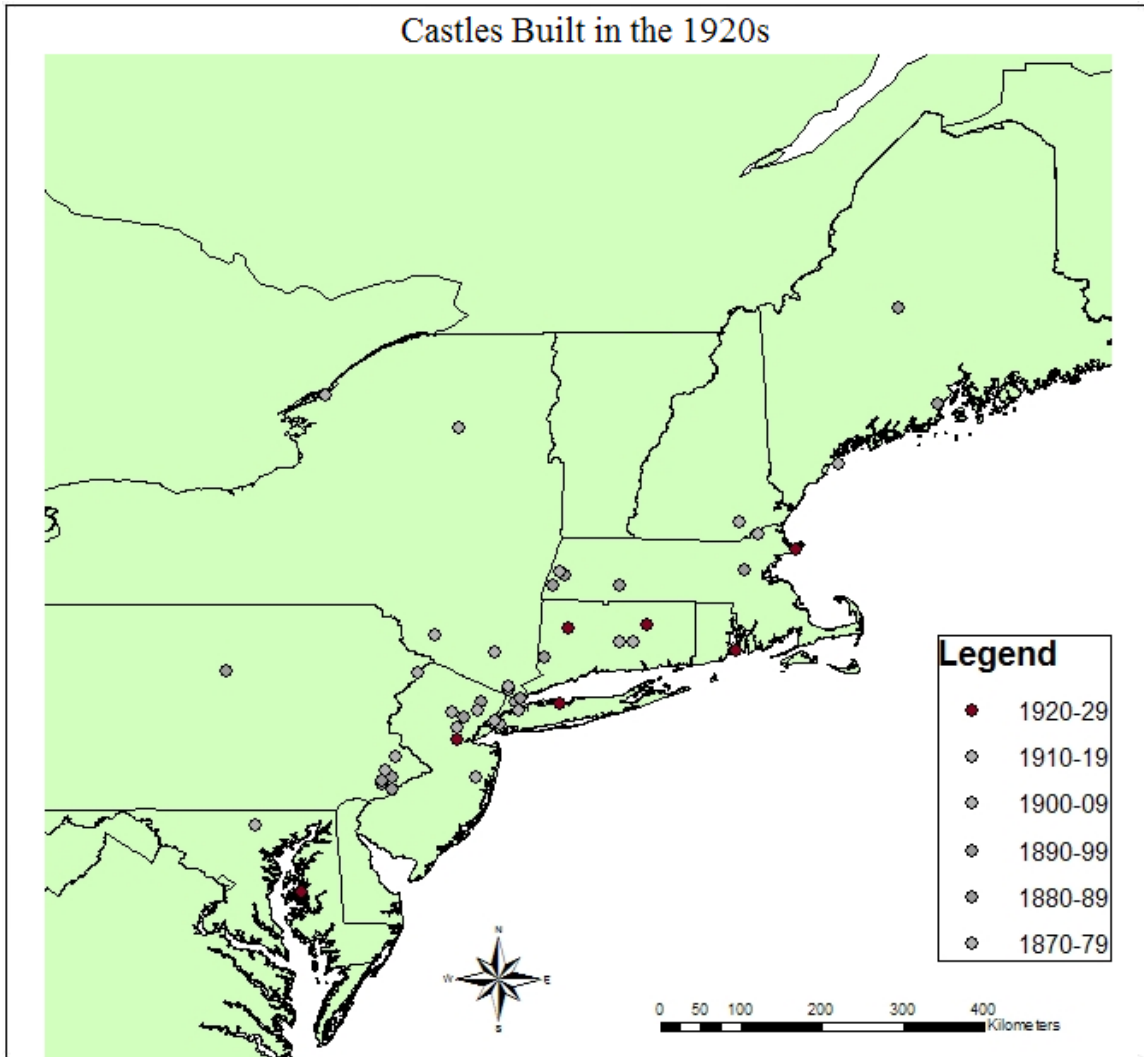


Figure 4.7: Map of Castles built in the 1920s (Cartography by author)

In the 1920s, additions were made to the New Jersey portion of the Hudson River cluster. One castle was constructed on Long Island. Castles further extended into Rhode Island, western Connecticut, and eastern Massachusetts.

### Castle Landscapes

Castles in Europe were constructed in sites that were optimum for defensive purposes. The builders would construct their castles on hills or bluffs to achieve the

higher position. They would also be constructed near a water source, like a river or lake, for both defensive purposes and the necessity of water for consumption. They would also be located near towns and in the border regions (Toy 1985; Warner 2001). But what type of landscapes were American castles constructed in? Clearly, they were not built for defensive purposes. How similar were the American sites to their European counterparts? Were the American castles built near water sources, on large parcels of land, or on higher elevations? Where are the largest clusters of castles? What density of population did the counties have where the castles were built?

Using GIS analysis, the major water bodies of the Northeastern United States were analyzed using buffers of different sizes to determine the number of castles within a specific distance from the water source. The water sources that were analyzed were major streams, rivers, lakes, and the ocean. In Europe, castles were always quite close to water bodies, so the first buffer zone was developed within one mile of the water bodies. Twenty-two castles were within the one-mile buffer zone around the water bodies. Additionally, a second buffer was developed to analyze all of the castles within two miles of a water body and ten additional castles were included in this parameter. Of the water bodies analyzed in this study, the most significant river as far as castle clustering was the Hudson River at the border of New York and New Jersey. Five castles are located on the New York side within less than one mile of the Hudson River. Many of the castles located within one mile of a water source were within the New York and New Jersey clusters, as well as the Pennsylvania cluster. The other castles were located in the periphery on the borders of either the ocean or the lake. All of the summer homes located in Newport, Rhode Island, were also located within one mile of the ocean. With a large

number of the castles being constructed near a water source, there had to have been some overarching reason for this placement. Since these castles were not built for defensive purposes, the situation of American castles near water sources was probably for aesthetic reasons.

With the size of land parcels, it is difficult to determine the amount of land devoted to certain castles from lack of historical data and the change of the landscape due to new developments. It is important to note the size of land parcels, because these castles were not for defending the countryside, so a large parcel of land denotes a desire for grandeur or seclusion, while a castle with a smaller parcel denotes a desire for an emphasis of status or convenience. Using historical data, four castles had very large plots of land: Searles Castle in Massachusetts had a large plot of land with a wall surrounding it; Hidden Valley Castle had 340 acres; Rochroane Castle had 37.5 acres; and Drumm Moir Castle had 52 acres.

Elevation is also difficult to determine due given that several of the castles no longer exist, so it is difficult to determine the exact position of each. Once again, changes to the landscape could also result in a change of elevation of the surrounding area. Relying on historical sources, there were three different castles with different references pertaining to the development of that castle upon a higher elevated area than the surrounding countryside: Gillette Castle, Kenilworth Castle, and Craig-E-Clare. Each of their histories made specific mention of the fact that they were constructed in an elevated position so that they could be seen from a distance. One history mentioned that the castle builder constructed a hill for his castle. Elevation can be a mark of seclusion versus grandeur as well: a high elevation could have denoted a builder looking for

seclusion with the high elevation being a hindrance to people trying to access the location. A higher elevation could also have been selected because the builder desired a site that people could see from a distance.

Another way of analyzing seclusion versus grandeur is the density of the population per square mile of the counties in which each of the castles were found using historical data from the census bureau. The castle that is located in the county with the smallest density is Norwood Castle in an area with four people per square mile, and the castles located in the county with the largest density are Ballytore and Druim Moir with 6,271 people per square mile. Fourteen castles have a density of less than 100 people per square mile, yet twelve castles have a density of over 600 people per square mile. It appears that the majority of the owners built their castles in areas of less than 300 people per square mile (twenty-seven of the total), and twenty castles were built in counties with a density of 300 or more per square mile.

Clusters were examined to determine sites that were popular to the castle builders, and also to determine the more “peripheral” of the castles. Clusters were determined by creating a buffer of ten miles around each castle to determine how many other castles were within that radius. The number of castles in a cluster ranged from zero to six. Of the fifty castles, sixteen of the castles had no castles within the ten mile buffer. These castles are scattered around the Northeastern United States, but they are generally around the perimeter. There is a line of these castles that surrounded the different castle clusters that extend through the center of the Northeastern United States.

The smallest clusters range from one to two castles within the buffer zone. Seven of the castles have one castle within their buffer zone, and ten have two within the buffer.

These clusters can be found in Northwestern New York, Newport, Rhode Island, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut.

The medium-sized clusters range from three to four castles. Four of the castles have three castles in their zone, and four of them have four castles in their zones. These clusters can be found in three main cluster areas: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, New York City, and Newark, New Jersey. The clusters of New York City and Newark are close enough to be considered one large cluster.

The largest clusters range from five to six castles. Eight of the castles have five castles in their zone, and only one of the castles has six castles. These castle clusters can be found in the three main cluster areas as well.

These clusters are significant, because it shows the sites that were considered by castle builders to be suitable for their structure. It also adds to the ideas of seclusion versus grandeur, because the majority of the Grand Residences were located in the three main cluster regions to be close to where they worked as well as be able to show off their residence. It also shows that some of the castle builders did not mind having other castles within a certain distance of their own castle. It illustrates that many of the castle builders wanted a site that was a distance away from the city, but not so far that they could not commute back and forth on a regular basis.

### **Revival Architecture:**



During this period, there were five main styles of popular Revival architecture: Renaissance, Gothic, Romanesque, Eclectic, and Replica. The key to understanding the diffusion of the different types is to understand the patterns of who built the castle type, when, where, and its diffusion.

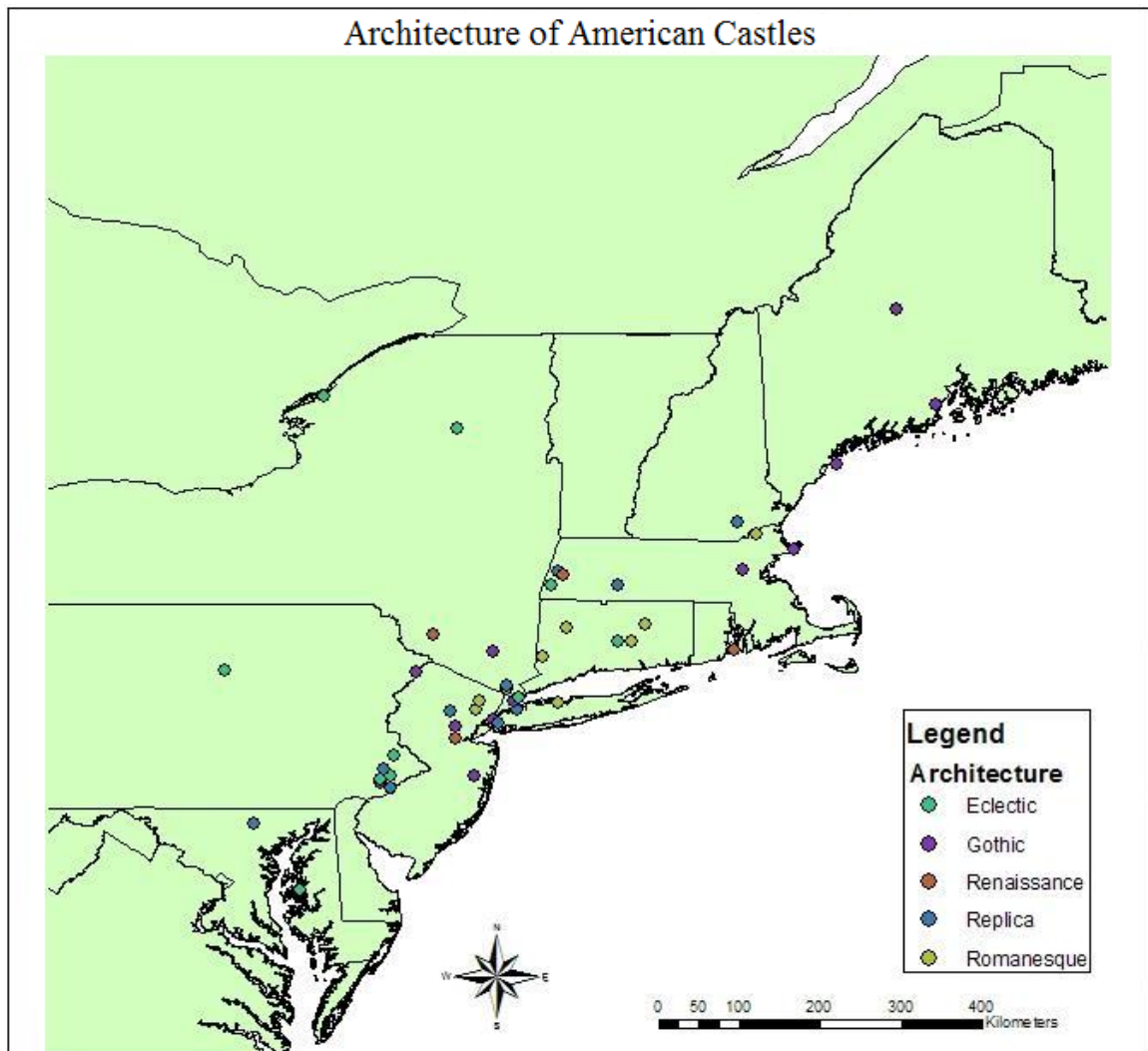


Figure 4.8: Map of the Architecture of American Castles (Cartography by author)

The first and smallest style is the Renaissance. This is the style that has the least in common with the castle archetype, but nonetheless shares some qualities. It consists of rectangular shaped symmetrical facades with flat roofs and thin windows. Only four

castles were constructed in this style, but three out of the four builders had the occupation of founder/owner/president. They were built in New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. These castles were constructed in the latter part of the Romantic Era with the first constructed in 1893 and the last two in 1924 and 1925. The starting point of this movement was western Massachusetts and it spread through New York to New Jersey, finishing in Rhode Island.

The Gothic Revival was the largest of the five movements with fourteen castles constructed in this style. It consists of windows with pointed arches, grouped chimneys, crenellated battlements, and at times clover-shaped windows. There is no sizeable majority as far as the profession of the castle builders, but two of the builders were attorneys, two were inventors, two were involved in real estate, and two were owner/founder/presidents. Three of the castles were built in the early part of the 1870s, seven between 1885 and 1900, three between 1909 and 1913, and finally one outlier in 1928. These castles had a large cluster around the New York/New Jersey border, as well as a strong influence along the seacoast with two constructed in Rhode Island, one in Massachusetts, and all of the castles in Maine. The development of this style began in the New York cluster and in southern Maine. The movement continued to develop in Maine during the 1880s, and it diffused into Pennsylvania. The diffusion into Maine ended in the 1890s, and the first of the Gothic castles were constructed in Rhode Island and eastern Massachusetts. The turn of the century saw diffusion into New Jersey and additional development in New York. The last Gothic castle was constructed in eastern Massachusetts in the 1920s.

The Romanesque Revival style encompassed a fifth of the total castles in this study. It consists of rough-faced square stones, round towers, and windows with rounded arches. There are really no patterns in the professions of those who built these castles. Two of the castles were built in 1875, four between 1899 and 1905, and four between 1919 and 1926. There is a strong cluster in the New York and New Jersey clusters, as well as a strong presence in Connecticut. The diffusion of this style occurred in two different locations: northern Massachusetts and the New York cluster. From the New York cluster, the castles spread into New Jersey and Connecticut. In the 1900s, construction continued in New York and New Jersey. Finally in the 1920s, there was further development in Connecticut and one additional castle constructed on Long Island, New York.

The fourth style is the Eclectic Style, and it encompassed a fifth of the total castles in this study. The Eclectic style consists of structures that consist of elements of any of the aforementioned styles. A third of these were constructed by President/Founders/Owners. There is a noticeable cluster in Pennsylvania with one each in the Massachusetts and in the New York cluster. The rest of the castles are scattered throughout the periphery. These castles were generally built around the turn of the century with nine out of the ten constructed between 1885 and 1910. The other castle was constructed in 1922. The eclectic movement began in the main New York cluster, and then spread in two directions: a northeastern path through Massachusetts and a southeast path to the main Pennsylvania cluster. From Massachusetts, the diffusion spread to Connecticut, and there was further diffusion from the New York cluster to the

northwestern portion of the state. Finally, there was further development in Pennsylvania with diffusion into Maryland.

The final style is that of the Replica Style, and it contained eleven out of the fifty castles in this study. The Replicas are castles that have been copied either exactly or with minor modifications from any of the European countries. Over half of these builders were founder/owner/presidents, and the others were random. These castles were constructed in every decade except for the 1920s. There is a strong cluster in Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, as well as two castles in the Massachusetts cluster. The diffusion of the Replica style began in New York during the 1870s and spread into the Pennsylvania cluster. From New York, this style spread into central Massachusetts during the 1890s. The 1900s saw further development in these three areas, and finally in the 1910s there was diffusion into central New York, New Hampshire, Maryland, and New Jersey.

**Purpose:**

European castles were constructed during a time of turmoil and mass warfare during the Middle Ages, so they served as a defensive structure. They were also designed as homes for the nobility who commissioned the castle. Yet the development of gunpowder made castles obsolete in terms of its quality as a means of defense. So what was the purpose behind the construction of the castles in the Northeastern United States nearly four hundred years after the end of the Middle Ages?

There are eight main purposes of construction of castles during the Romantic Era: Retirement, Love, Family, Assassin, Summer Home, Art, Charity, and a Grand Residence.

Four of the castles were constructed for retirement purposes by men who generally wanted to have a secluded place away from society. Three of these castles were built away from the main clusters in Maine and Connecticut; the other was constructed near the main Pennsylvania cluster. These castles were constructed during 1871, 1886, 1900, and 1919.

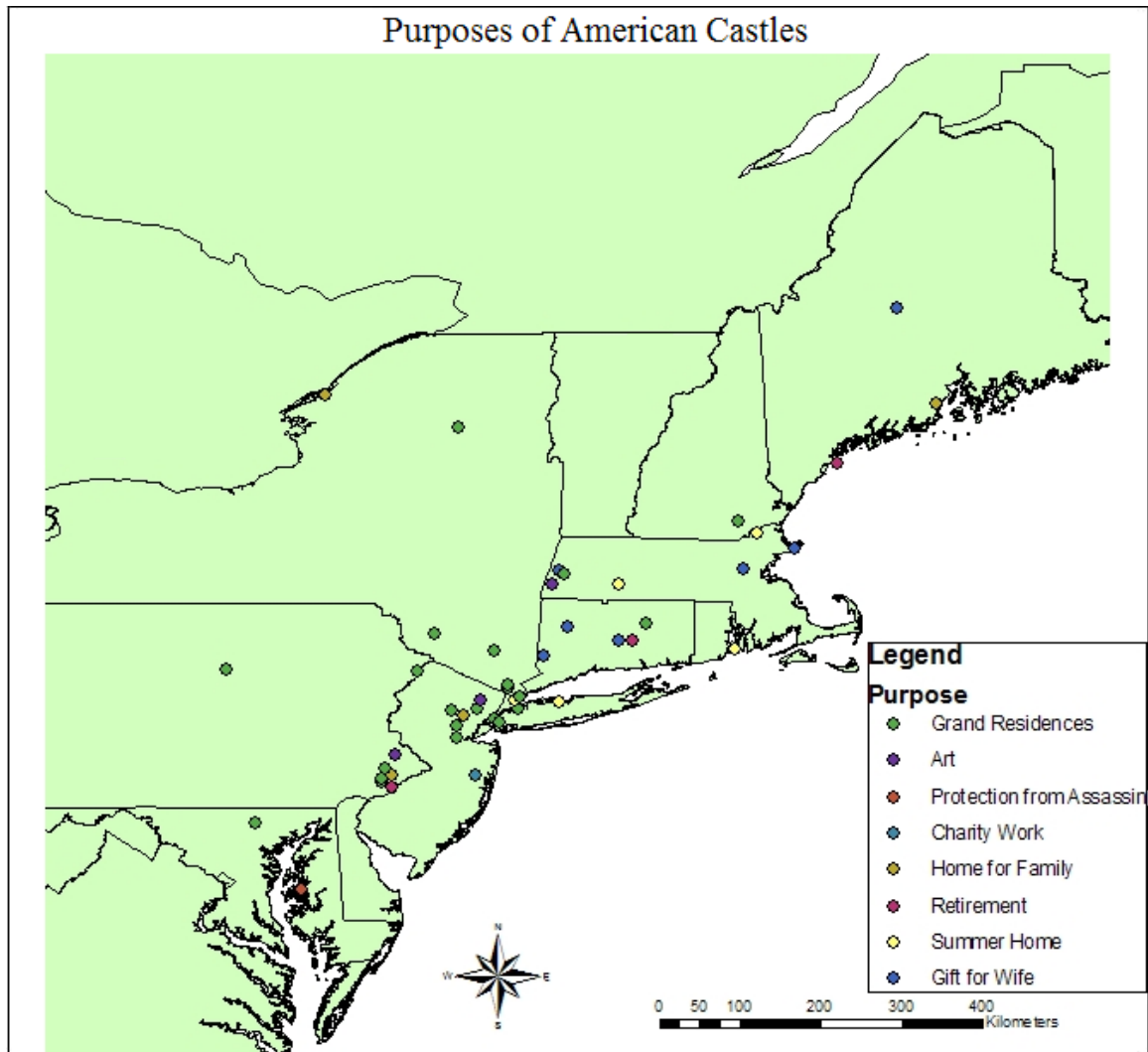


Figure 4.9: Map of the Purposes of American Castles (Cartography by author)

Eight of the castles were constructed as gifts from a husband to his wife. All of the castles that were constructed for love were built along the periphery of the study area

and were not a part of any of the major clusters. One castle was built in northwestern New York, one in central Maine, three in Connecticut, and three in Massachusetts. These castles were mostly constructed between the period of 1890 and 1904 with six of them constructed during this time. The other two were constructed during the 1920s.

Four of the castles were constructed by men as homes for their families, often to replace a former family home that had been burned down. Two of the castles were built in the main clusters of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and the other two were built in the peripheral areas of Northwestern New York and Southern Maine. All four castles were constructed between the period of 1885 to 1906.

One castle was constructed by a United States diplomat who believed that someone was trying to kill him, so he developed a castle in which he could protect himself. This was Pink castle, which is located in the southeastern portion of Maryland, and it was constructed in 1922.

Seven of the castles were created as summer homes for the builder and/or their families. Three out of the castles were constructed in the Newport, Rhode Island area, which had become a very popular location for summer residences after the turn of the century. Two out of the other four were also constructed away from the medium clusters of Massachusetts, and the final two were constructed within the main New York cluster. Two of the castles were constructed in the 1870s, three were constructed during the 1890s, and the last two were built 1920s.

Three residences were constructed with the intention of displaying art and other artifacts that were collected by the castles builders, generally during their travels around the world. Two castles were built in the main clusters: one in Pennsylvania and the other

in New Jersey. The other was constructed in the smaller cluster of western Massachusetts. All three castles were built between 1886 and 1908.

One castle was constructed by Jasper and Rachel Lynch with the intention of hosting charity functions. This castle was Forest Castle in New Jersey, and it was constructed in 1900.

Finally, twenty-two of the castles were constructed to be Grand Residences for the castle builder. These castles tended to be clustered in the three main clusters, but were scattered throughout the study area. These castles were constructed throughout the entire time period with the first constructed in 1870 and the last in 1924.

### **Cases:**

The following five cases are meant to show the variety behind the construction of these castles. These castles were constructed by various people with a difference in architecture and purpose, but there was an overall pattern behind their diffusion into and across the Northeastern United States.

#### *Gillette Castle*

Gillette Castle was built in 1919 in East Haddam, Connecticut by William Hooker Gillette. The castle contained twenty four rooms over fourteen thousand square feet, and it was located on one hundred and eighty four acres. The castle was constructed in the Romanesque Revival style using native granite. The castle took four years to be constructed and cost more than one million dollars.

William Hooker Gillette was an actor who played the original Sherlock Holmes in productions across the globe. He was considered to have a grandiose and eccentric

personality, and the castle helped to reflect these impressions. He selected a slightly secluded area where he could retire, but yet he chose the highest point in the Connecticut River Valley atop the highest of the Seven Sisters, which were a series of hills in the area. In honor of the hill, Gillette originally named the castle, the Seventh Sister. Gillette helped to design the castle and constructed an art gallery for the works he collected from his travels and also designed the entryway to optimize his entrances (Cavalier 1973; Zurcher 2002).

The castle is still in existence and is owned by the park service of Connecticut. It has been converted into a museum, and the original grounds have been retained. The castle is officially known as Gillette Castle, rather than Gillette's designation of the Seventh Sister, and is a part of Gillette State Park.

### *Lambert Castle*

Lambert Castle was constructed in 1892 in Paterson, New Jersey by Catholina Lambert. The resulting castle was seventy feet high, and it was constructed out of brownstone from local quarries. This castle was constructed in the Romanesque Revival style with Warwick Castle used as inspiration, but it was not a replica.

Catholina Lambert grew up in England, where he was a delivery boy and visited Warwick Castle frequently to make deliveries. He immigrated to the United States in his teens, and eventually became the owner of large silk firm. Lambert remembered Warwick from his youth, and he wanted to create a castle of his own to house his art and also as a residence for his wife. He even named it Belle Vista after his wife, Isabella (Cavalier 1973).



After Lambert's death, he was buried on the castle grounds, and it remained in his family for a few years, but was sold to the city of Paterson by Lambert's son, Walter. It was eventually converted into a museum, and it is still in existence today.

*Hammond Castle:*

Hammond Castle was constructed between 1925 and 1928 in Gloucester, Massachusetts by John Hays Hammond, Jr. It was built on eight acres and has sixteen rooms. The castle was constructed in the Gothic Revival style. The castle even had a recreated village square near the castle that was constructed out of materials from 15<sup>th</sup> century French houses. The total cost of the castle after its completion was half a million dollars (Beall and McTammany 1997).

Hammond was the son of a wealthy engineer and spent time in England in his youth, and he saw many different styles of castles during his stays in the countries. He became an inventor and during his lifetime created over eight hundred inventions and developed four hundred and thirty seven patents with notable advances in remote control. He developed his castle for two reasons: one was as a present for his wife and the other was to display his art collection. He decided to name the castle, Abbadia Mare or Abbey by the Sea. It became the family home, and Hammond even had a special room in the castle for him to work on his inventions (Cavalier 1973; Pettibone 2000; Ringel 2002).

Hammond lived out the rest of his life in the castle, and after his death, he was buried on the castle property. The castle was converted into a museum that highlighted his art collection as well as his inventions.

### *Boldt Castle*

Boldt Castle was constructed in 1904 in the Thousand Islands Region of Alexandria Bay, New York by George C. Boldt. The castle was built on Hart Island as part of an eleven building complex. The castle was built using stone from Boldt's own nearby quarries, and it was a replica of a Rhineland castle. The structure is six stories with ninety rooms.

George C. Boldt was born in Prussia as a son of a merchant. He immigrated to the United States in his teens and eventually became the president of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. He frequently visited the Thousand Islands area with his wife, Louise, and he decided to build a castle for her for Valentine's Day. He used the castle from his homeland as inspiration. Unfortunately, the castle was never completely finished, because Louise died one month before the castle's completion date, and George did not have the heart to finish the project (Cavalier 1973; Barrett and St. Jacques 1997).

The castle remained vacant and abandoned for a few decades until it was bought by the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, and it has been rehabilitated into a tourist attraction into the area.

### *Tarrytown Castle*

Tarrytown Castle was constructed in 1910 in Tarrytown, New York by General Howard Carroll. The castle was a latter addition to the series of castles constructed before the Civil War that overlooked the Hudson River Valley. The castle consisted of forty-five rooms and was a replica of Castle Linsmore, a Norman Castle in Scotland.

Howard Carroll was the son of a Civil War General, and he decided that he wanted to build a grand residence that would fit in with the other residences in the region, so he commissioned Henry F. Kilburn to design him his castle. To enhance the European feeling of the castle, Carroll imported the furnishings from Germany. Carroll lived in the castle until his death, and the castle is now a bed and breakfast (Cavalier 1973).

These case studies are a sampling of the castles from this study. The five castle builders from these case studies had very different professions, but four out of the five came from families with little money. All five have very different purposes behind their construction, and they were built in different locations. Two of the castles were built in the main cluster corridor, two in smaller clusters, and one in the periphery. These castles were also a sample of the different styles of architecture with two having Gothic style architecture, two having the Romanesque style architecture, and one was Replica.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

American castles were a significant product and symbol during the Gilded Age and the Industrial Revolution. It was a time of the restructuring of the social strata with the formation of new classes amid the industrialization.

The castles would not have existed if it had not been for the men who had built them. These men were all of European descent. The vast majority of the castle builders were the nouveau riche, “the new money.” Many of them had either immigrated to the United States with little money or had started off from middle-class backgrounds and became founders, presidents, or educated men: doctors, lawyers, and financiers. Almost half of the castle builders were men who had founded, owned, or were president of their own company.

These were men who felt the need to establish themselves in society and develop social ties. These men wanted a home that not only would help to display their wealth, but also cement their position of power. These men selected an established symbol to be a residence that has long represented nobility, authority, wealth, and power in Europe. They selected the castle to establish and cement their position in society.

Most of the presidents and founders constructed their castles near major population centers, like New York City, Philadelphia, and Newark. It is significant that the main diffusion and construction of the castles occurred around the turn of the century during the height of the Gilded Age and the Industrial Revolution.

In terms of the overall diffusion, the Hudson River Valley was key to the beginning of the development around New York City and Newark. There was already prior castle development in the valley region, and with New York as one of the main centers of economic and social development in the United States, it was a prime starting point for the diffusion of castles.

The core regions of Philadelphia, New York City, and Newark saw the most continuous development and provided outlets to smaller cores and on to peripherals. The smaller cores had sustained development as well, but on a smaller time scale and not with as large of development as the core, and the peripherals only saw minimal development of castles with construction limited to only a small portion of the period.

The choice of the site of the castles negotiated the demands of seclusion and grandeur. The Grand Residences were built with grandeur in mind, but castles with other purposes tended to be constructed in more secluded areas. Most castles were near water bodies, which provided both seclusion and grandeur. Water also added an aesthetic element to the landscape of the castle. The most significant water body for castle building was the Hudson River Valley. Over five castles were built in this area throughout the period. Elevation can contribute to seclusion or grandeur as well, because it can either be quite noticeable to the rest of the landscape or it can make the castle inaccessible.

The biggest variations in siting a castle between seclusion or grandeur can be found in the size of the plot and cluster in which the castle is located. The builders who were seeking grandeur tended to build their castles on smaller plots of land so as to be seen more easily by their neighbors. Castles on larger plots of land tended to be built by

those seeking seclusion, because a larger plot of land meant that no one lived near them and it would take time to get to their homes.

The clusters are indicative of the debate between seclusion and grandeur. The grand residences tended to be in the larger clusters with the majority of this type located in clusters with four castles or more. The castles built for other purposes tended to be located in the smaller clusters and in the peripheral region or sometimes sporadically located in the main core. Large clusters signify areas that were considered to be pleasing overall to the castle builders. They contain many of the most desired site qualities.

Castle architecture spread throughout the region with different styles having different spheres of influence and different decades in which they became popular, but the main similarity between all the styles of architecture is that they began in New York City. This once again highlights the importance of New York City as one of the main centers of economy, society, culture, and adaptations of European culture.

Different castle styles gained popularity with certain categories of builders. The most significant group is the founder/president/owner category, because they were the largest collection of builders. These people favored Renaissance, Replica, and Eclectic styles for their castles. The Renaissance style was the least castle-like of the five, but it was very popular among the aristocracy during the Renaissance era. The castles were palatial in nature and grand to behold. Only four castles were constructed in this style, but three out of the four were constructed by the founder category.

Those who built in the Replica style were noted for their tours of Europe, where they would have been exposed to many styles of castle architecture. They also would have been exposed to the fact that the current European trend was the construction of

Revival architecture. These men wanted to be like their European counterparts and build their own symbols of aristocracy. Often, these men would find a castle that fascinated them and hired an architect to recreate this castle. Some of the founders were born in Europe, and they did not emigrate until they were in their teens, so some of the castles would be replicas of castles that they remembered from their youth.

As for the Eclectic style, many of these castle builders also traveled to Europe and saw many different styles of architecture. These gentlemen took parts of different styles and combined them for a unique castle structure that was highly personalized. These castles still looked like the European symbol, but the Eclectic style provided the builders with their own unique structure that set them apart.

The Gothic and Romanesque styles were also important, but were not desired by those in the president/founder/owner group. Instead, they were popular with many other professions and were constructed throughout the region. The president/founder/owner group may have eschewed the Gothic style, because of the prevalent use of this style in Catholic cathedrals. Both of these were revivals of older styles of European architecture, and they remained fairly true to the originals.

In terms of purpose, almost fifty percent of the castles in this study were constructed as Grand Residences. These structures were built throughout the period and tended to be clustered around the three main core cities. Also, the profession that was most likely to construct these residences was the founder/owner/president category, so it is significant that they built near the core. These men wanted their residences to be seen and admired by other people. They wanted to cement a place in upper society, and so used the castles as a symbol of the European aristocracy and power towards that goal.

Castles constructed for other purposes: art, charity, love, assassins, summer homes, retirement, and family tended to be constructed in the periphery. Castles built for family, love, and art were also mostly constructed around the turn of the century, which was when the Gilded Age was in full swing, so there was more money potentially available to new members of the upper class for these extravagant structures.

Overall, the diffusion of castles into America was the development of a unique landscape. In Europe during the Middle Ages, castles were developed as a defensive landscape that was generally relegated to more agrarian areas. The castles in America were an entirely different style of landscapes. They were not defensive in nature, rather they were a product of the rising industrial and urban society. These castles were generally very close to or located within cities, so they were an urban landscape. They also featured many of the current amenities available in the industrial society. These landscapes were also a way of showing the wealth and power of the nouveau riche.

In the end, these castles were built for myriad reasons by a diverse yet similar group of men. These castles were a product of the times, when men could rise from the lower or middle class to the upper class. Ties to Europe were still strong, so it was only reasonable to assume that these new members of high society would want to emulate members of the European aristocracy. Castles have been for centuries a symbol of wealth, power, romance, and nobility, and these American castle builders wanted to revive that symbol in a new landscape for their own purposes.



### **For Future Research:**

This study focused on the diffusion patterns of castles in the Northeastern United States between 1870 and 1930, as well as the castle builders' purposes behind their construction. Almost half of the castle builders intended for their castles to be Grand Residences and that served as symbols of European aristocracy. But how successful were these castles as symbols? A potential study could focus around the perceptions of the people who lived near the castles to analyze how successful the castle builders were with their intended impact. Did the people who lived near the castle view it as a symbol of wealth, power, and European aristocracy?

Another direction that future study could take would be to examine how the diffusion and purposes of the castles in a particular region differed throughout the different castle building peaks. Different periods would potentially have had different core regions and castle builders of different backgrounds. For example, this study's castle builders were mostly of the nouveau riche, but the peak that occurred after 1760 had castle builders who were men of lower nobility trying to reestablish the European society and echelons of power in the New World. There could also be a difference in architectural styles preferred by the castle builders or in the locations in which they were constructed.

Additionally, one could conduct a comparative study of the Northeastern United States with another region and examine the differences in the diffusion and purpose between the two. For example, the West Coast was another area of significant castle development during 1870-1930 with California the focus of the core region, but there was not as much development in the periphery. The men who were building the castles on the

West Coast were similar to the castle builders in the Northeast, but they may have had different stylistic influences. Also, the castle development in this area was minimal before the Romantic Era, so that may have affected the development of the castles in the area.

Also, one could work to understand the class conflict of the times and examine why New York City, Philadelphia, and Newark were the main centers of castle construction, but cities like Boston did not have any castles constructed near them. Finally, one could also examine the reason why the majority of the founder/president/owner category avoided the Gothic Revival architecture style, and explore the connection of that style to the construction of Catholic cathedrals.

## Appendix 1-Professions of the Castle Builders

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Fine Arts	2	4%
Doctor	2	4%
Attorney	3	6%
Inventor	3	6%
Diplomat	1	2%
Real Estate Business	5	10%
Scientist	2	4%
Military	1	2%
President/Founder/Owner	18	37%
Broker	2	4%
Historian	1	2%
Other	9	18%
Total	49	100%

## Appendix 2-Diffusion of Castles over Time

	State	CT	DE	ME	MD	MA	NH	NJ	NY	PA	RI	VT	Total	%
Decade	1870s	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	6	12
	1880s	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	3	0	0	7	14
	1890s	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	2	2	0	10	20
	1900s	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	6	2	0	0	12	24
	1910s	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	0	0	0	8	16
	1920s	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	7	14
	Total	5	0	3	2	7	1	8	14	7	3	0	50	100
	Percentage	10	0	6	4	14	2	16	28	14	6	0	100	

**Appendix 3-Density of the Counties in which the Castles  
Resided in People per Square Mile**

People per Square Mile	Number	Percentage
Under 50	5	10%
50-99	9	18%
100-199	6	12%
200-299	7	14%
300-399	3	6%
400-499	2	4%
500-599	2	4%
Over 600	12	24%

# Appendix 4-Castle Clusters

Size of Cluster	Number	Percentage
0	16	32%
1	7	14%
2	10	20%
3	4	8%
4	4	8%
5	8	16%
6	1	2%

## Appendix 5-Purpose of the Castles

Purposes	Number	Percentage
Retirement	4	8%
Gift for a Wife	8	16%
Home for the Family	4	8%
Protection from an Assassin	1	2%
Summer Home	7	14%
To display Art	3	6%
To host charity functions	1	2%
Grand Residence	22	44%

## Appendix 6-Location, Construction Dates, and Builders of Castles

Castle	Date Built	City	State	Builder
Aborn	1920	Ellington	CT	Henry Aborn
Gillette	1919	East Haddam	CT	William Hooker Gillette
Hearthstone	1899	Danbury	CT	E. Starr Sanford
Hidden Valley	1921	Cornwall	CT	Walton Martin
Saint Clements	1902	Portland	CT	Howard Taylor
Beckett's	1871	Cape Elizabeth	ME	Sylvester Beckett
Norumbega	1886	Camden	ME	Joseph Stearns
Norwood	1890	Sebec Lake	ME	Willis E. Parsons
Maryvale	1917	Brooklandville	MD	Walter F. Wickes
Pink	1922	Tunis Mills	MD	Glenn Stewart
Blantyre	1903	Lenox	MA	Robert W. Patterson
Hammond	1928	Gloucester	MA	John Hays Hammond Jr.
Kenilworth	1895	Holyoke	MA	E.C. Taft
Lord's	1897	Waltham	MA	Rufus Lord
Searles	1886	Great Barrington	MA	Edward Searles
Shadow Brook	1893	Stockbridge	MA	Arson Phelps Stokes
Winnekenni	1875	Haverhill	MA	James R. Nichols
Searles	1912	Windham	NH	Edward Searles
Forest	1900	Lakewood	NJ	Jasper and Rachel Lynch
Glynallen	1917	Morristown	NJ	George Marshall Allen
Kip's	1902	Montclair	NJ	Frederick Kip
Lambert	1892	Paterson	NJ	Catholina Lambert
Moldenke	1910	Watchung	NJ	Richard Moldenke
Boldt	1904	Alexandria Bay	NY	George C. Boldt
Castle Gould	1904	Port Washington	NY	Howard Gould
Cedar Lawn	1875	Irvington	NY	August C. Richards
Leland	1870	New Rochelle	NY	Simeon Leland
Litchfield	1910	Long Lake	NY	Edward Litchfield
Osborn	1885	Mamaroneck	NY	Charles Osborn
Paterno	1909	Manhattan	NY	Charles Paterno
Rochroane	1905	Irvington	NY	Melchior S. Belthoover
Roe-brewster	1870	New Windsor	NY	
Tarrytown	1910	Tarrytown	NY	Howard Carroll
Ballytore	1885	Wynnewood	PA	Isaac H. Clothier
Fonthill	1908	Doylestown	PA	Henry Chapman Mercer
Grey Towers	1892	Glenside	PA	William Welsh Harrison



Lindenwold	1900	Ambler	PA	Mattison
Woodmont	1892	Gladwyne	PA	Alan Wood Jr
Beachbound	1895	Newport	RI	William Burden
Castle Edward	1913	Lake Hopatcong	NJ	
Merriwood Castle	1924	Highland Park	NJ	John Seward Johnson
Beacon Towers	1875	New York	NY	Vanderbilts
Craig-E-Clare	1907		NY	Ralph Wurts-Dundas
Dark Island Castle	1906	Alexandria Bay	NY	Frederick Bourne
Lowery Castle	1926	Middleville	NY	Marklove Lowery
Druim Moir	1886	Philadelphia	PA	Henry H. Houston
Emery House	1889	Williamsport	PA	Richard Emery
Cliffwalk	1899	Newport	RI	Charles Lippett
Seaview Terrace	1925	Newport	RI	Edson Bradley
Vanderpoel	1885	Summit	NJ	Ambrose Vanderpoel

## Appendix 7- Architectural Style and Purpose of Castles

Castle	State	Purpose	Architecture	Current Use
Aborn	CT	Grand Residence	Romanesque	Private Residence
Gillette	CT	Retirement	Romanesque	State Park
Hearthstone	CT	Wife	Romanesque	Owned by town
Hidden Valley	CT	Wife	Romanesque	Private Residence
Saint Clements	CT	Wife	Eclectic	University Owned
Beckett's	ME	Retirement	Gothic	Vacant
Norumbega	ME	Family	Gothic	Hotel
Norwood	ME	Wife	Gothic	Private Residence
Maryvale	MD	Grand Residence	Replica	Universtiy Owned
Pink	MD	Assassin	Eclectic	???
Blantyre	MA	Wife	Replica	Hotel
Hammond	MA	Wife	Gothic	Museum
Kenilworth	MA	Summer Home	Replica	???
Lord's	MA	Wife	Gothic	Private Residence
Searles	MA	Art	Eclectic	University Owned
Shadow Brook	MA	Grand Residence	Renaissance	Burned Down
Winnekenni	MA	Summer Home	Romanesque	Owned by town
Searles	NH	Grand Residence	Replica	Private Residence
Forest	NJ	Charity Work	Gothic	Demolished
Glynallen	NJ	Grand Residence	Replica	Burned Down
Kip's	NJ	Grand Residence	Romanesque	Office Building
Lambert	NJ	Art	Romanesque	Museum
Moldenke	NJ	Grand Residence	Gothic	Burned Down
Boldt	NY	Wife	Replica	State Park
Castle Gould	NY	Grand Residence	Replica	State Park
Cedar Lawn	NY	Grand Residence	Romanesque	Demolished
Leland	NY	Summer Home	Gothic	University Owned
Litchfield	NY	Grand Residence	Eclectic	Private Residence
Osborn	NY	Grand Residence	Eclectic	Owned by a Club
Paterno	NY	Grand Residence	Gothic	Demolished
Rochroane	NY	Grand Residence	Romanesque	Burned Down
Roe-brewster	NY	Grand	Gothic	Private Residence

		Residence		
Tarrytown	NY	Grand Residence	Replica	Hotel
Ballytore	PA	Grand Residence	Gothic	Church
Fonthill	PA	Art	Eclectic	Museum
Grey Towers	PA	Family	Eclectic	University Owned
Lindenwold	PA	Grand Residence	Replica	Owned by St. Mary's
Woodmont	PA	Grand Residence	Eclectic	Church
Beachbound	RI	Summer Home	Gothic	Condo Community
Castle Edward	NJ	Grand Residence	Gothic	Burned Down
Merriwood Castle	NJ	Grand Residence	Renaissance	Office Building
Beacon Towers	NY	Grand Residence	Replica	Destroyed
Craig-E-Clare	NY	Grand Residence	Renaissance	Owned by a Masonic Lodge
Dark Island Castle	NY	Family	Eclectic	State Park
Lowery Castle	NY	Summer Home	Romanesque	Vacant
Druim Moir	PA	Retirement	Replica	Private Residence
Emery House	PA	Grand Residence	Eclectic	Private Residence
Cliffwalk	RI	Summer Home	Gothic	Demolished
Seaview Terrace	RI	Summer Home	Renaissance	University Owned
Vanderpoel	NJ	Family	Gothic	State Park

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