

SIMPLICITY AND ELEGANCE MAISON ALPHONSE-DESJARDINS ARCHITECTURE

The quintessential visual symbol of the origins of savings and credit cooperatives in North America, Maison Alphonse-Desjardins is an example of Neo-Gothic architecture.

According to historian and ethnologist Michel Lessard, the “villa’s” house plans came from “one of dozens of U.S. house model catalogues available in the Saint-Lawrence Valley after 1850. [...] A home similar to Maison Alphonse-Desjardins can be found in the 1867 catalogue of New York house plan editor J. E. Woodward.” Other, almost identical examples can still be found in Lévis today.

The Gothic Revival style movement began in England in the mid-18th century. Maison Alphonse-Desjardins features the style’s purely aesthetic decorative elements, such as lace woodwork, steep gables, the main one of which is adorned with a finial, and a wide porch. It’s delicate, white exterior is contrasted with green shutters symmetrically placed next to single-hung windows.

In Canada, at the time the house was built, neo-gothic homes were given Victorian accents, such as asymmetrical forms, architectural elements providing depth and bay windows.

Maison Alphonse-Desjardins has stood the test of time. By comparing old and recent photos, it becomes clear that the home has retained its architectural integrity since it was built in 1882.

