

Barn Styles in Townshend, VT

This document discusses seven barn styles that are specific to the town of Townshend, Vermont: 1) English barns; 2) Yankee (gable-front) barns; 3) bank barns; 4) carriage/horse barns; 5) gambrel roof barns; 6) high-drive barns; 7) ground-level stables

English barns, derived from the English settlers are the earliest barns seen in the Vermont landscape. They were characterized by their approximate 30 x 40 foot dimension, gable roof, and pair of large, hinged doors on the eaves-side wall. These early barns typically did not have windows or ventilators and were sheathed in vertical boards, as seen in the image below. These barns were constructed until the mid-19th century.



***English Barn:** Image courtesy of Thomas Visser, *A Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings*, 1997.*

In the mid-19th century, the old barns proved too small, and farmers began to **extend their English barns**. Often several buildings were moved together, as seen in the image on the left, to create one long structure.



***Extended English Barns:** Images courtesy of Thomas Visser.*

Side-hill English barns were constructed in the 1820s and 1830s. The barn was constructed into the side of a hill to allow access to a basement level, as seen in the image below.



Side-Hill English Barn: Image courtesy of Thomas Visser.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, English barns were moved onto new foundations to form ground-level stable barns or they were reconfigured around an area to create a barnyard. Notice the complex of barns in the image below, which are organized around a barnyard.



Reconfigured English Barn: Image courtesy of Thomas Visser.

Yankee (Gable-front) barns. During the 1830s, the main door was reconfigured to the gable end of the barn, allowing a more efficient use of space on the interior.



Gable-Front Barns: Images courtesy of Thomas Visser.

Bank barns began to replace older barns in the mid-19th century. Bank barns were built into the side of the bank. The basement was accessible from the lower level, while the main floor could be accessed from the upper level, as seen in the image below. Note the configuration of the door on the gable end. The side-hill English barn has a door on the eaves-end.



Bank Barns: Image courtesy of Thomas Visser.

Carriage/horse barns. Until the 1830's on most small farms, the horses used for riding and driving carriages were often kept in the main barn along with the other farm animals. On larger farms and in villages, however, separate stables were built for riding and carriage horses, typically with space for box stalls, carriages, harnesses, grain, and hay.



Carriage Barn and Horse Stable: Image courtesy of Thomas Visser.

The Dutch **gambrel roof** became popular in the late 19th century. The gambrel roof, seen in the images below, has a shallow pitch at the peak and a steeper pitch at the eaves.



Gambrel Roof Barns: Images courtesy of Thomas Visser

High-drive bank barns became popular after the mid-19th century. These barns had a higher main drive floor than the traditional bank barn, as seen in the images below. By the late 1880s and 1890s, larger, three or four story high-drive bank barns were constructed.



High-Drive Bank Barns: Images courtesy of Thomas Visser.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, **covered high-drive bank barns** were constructed. These barns, seen in the images below, had covered high-drive ramps.



Covered High-Drive Bank Barns: Images courtesy of Thomas Visser.

During the early 20th century, **ground-level stable barns** were constructed. These barns usually had factory-made windows, modern materials, and were larger in size. The roof was usually gambrel, with a triangular extension at the gable peak, as seen in the image on the left.



Ground-Level Stable Barns: Images courtesy of Thomas Visser.

Above info quoted on UVM Landscape Changes Program: http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/dating/barns/barn_styles.php
 Images courtesy of Thomas Visser, *A Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings*, 1997.