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The Irish House of Parliament Palladianism, a neoclassical style of architecture influenced by the work of a number of 16th-century Italian architects. The style was named after its creator Andrea Palladio. It is in particular associated with the phase of British Isles architecture from the 18th century, when there was a revival of interest in Palladio.

Palladio's famous treatise *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (The Four Books of Architecture) has had a significant impact on the architecture of the western world. Palladio's works are recognised by their obvious features based on symmetry, simple lines, and proportion that inspired by classical architecture from ancient Roman. Palladian buildings were widely known by some distinct features such as wings placed on the sides of buildings, principal rooms elevated above a basement, the use of pediments and classical orders. Sir Edward Lovett Pearce The Palladian style was introduced to Ireland in the 1720s. (Architectural Styles + Periods, available from: <http://dublincivictrust.ie/dublins-buildings/architectural-styles-periods>, accessed 13 January 2018) Sir Edward Lovett Pearce (1699-1733) is a very important and one of the most pioneering Irish architects at that time. He has also become the first great exponent of Palladianism in Ireland.

He designed a lot of country houses which the Palladian style was most used in in Ireland. Some of his famous works include Castletown house in County Kildare, Bellamont Forest in County Cavan, and Bishop's Palace in Cashel, County Tipperary. However, his best-known work is The Irish House of Parliament in County Dublin. The Irish House of Parliament" The Colonnaded

piazza of the Dublin Parliament House is the most powerful and original classical design ever realised in Ireland.

Indeed it is arguably the most accomplished public set piece of the Palladian style in these islands. The first purpose-built bicameral assembly in Europe, its scale and magnificence vividly evoke the confidence and sense of purpose of the 18 century Dublin Parliament, while the potency and sophistication of its form establish Sir Edward Lovett Pearce as an architect of the first rank." (Casey, *The Buildings of Ireland Dublin*, 2005, p. 380)The Parliament House designed by Edward Pearce is the first building in the world built with an intention to be a two-chamber legislature. The form of the edifice is a semi-circle.

(Bank of Ireland Broacher, p. 3) It is located at College Green, occupies nearly an acre and a half of ground. The two Houses of Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords were both placed in the building. The construction of the buildings began in 1729 by Sir Edward Lovett Pearce and the foundation stone was laid in February. The colonnade was completed ten years after by Arthur Hobbs in 1739.

The building underwent extensions twice. The first was the East or Lord's Extension in 1785 by James Gandon, the beautiful east portico entrance to the House of Lords was added. The second was the West Extension of the Commons in 1787, Edward Robert Parke designed and built the west entrance into Foster Place. 1800, Irish Parliament was extinguished by the Act of Union and the building was sold to the Bank of Ireland in 1803. After that, it was remodelled by Francis Johnston for the Bank of Ireland in 1804.
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ExteriorThe initial design of Edward Pearce's is only part of the existing structure, this consisted the central section of the building, the forecourt with grand Ionic colonnades and a central portico.

The building is south facing. The main entrance was beneath the central portico and the giant colonnade of the Ionic Orders extending around the three sides of a quadrangular recess. The walls are of granite stone, rusticated below and ashlar above, while the columns and entablature are of Portland stone.(Casey, 2005, p. 382) The apex of the pediment figures was embellished with the statues of Hibernia flanked by Fidelity at the right and Commerce at the left. These figures were added by Edward and John Smyth for the Bank of Ireland in 1809. The colonnade is now flanked by quadrant screen wall with engaged Ionic columns. These are the result of successive extensions.

On the east side of the building, there is another portico that gave a separate entrance to the House of Lords. Instead of Ionic columns of the main entrance, the east portico is supported by six splendid Corinthian columns. The difference of the styles is said to be in accordance with the request of the Peers, who wished the entrance of the House of Lords to be recognisably different from the main entrance. It is also considered that the mixture of the two styles, Ionic and Corinthian, would produce a richer and altogether more exquisite effect. When designing the eastward extension, James Gandon faced a very difficult problem which was that Pearce's colonnaded forecourt was a hellishly hard act to follow. At the end, Gandon successfully connected his design with Pearce's colonnade by a curved

astylar screen wall, with a rusticated plinth and blank round-headed niches above.

There was no Ionic Order on the screen wall at that time, the Ionic Order we saw today was added later. This screen wall is of granite like the rest of the building. The apex of the east portico is also adorned with three statues by Edward Smyth, respectively represent Justice, Fortitude, and Liberty. On the other side of the building, another entrance into Foster Place was added during the westward extension. The facade of the west extension designed by Robert Parke consisted a five-bay rusticated arcade and above it were three central niches flanked by sash windows, and the center was screened by an Ionic portico. (Casey, 2005, p.

383) The most remarkable decision made by Parke in the west extension was that he created a free-standing curved colonnade of the Ionic order, intended to connect Pearce's design. However, this irregular arrangement was unpopular. This western Ionic colonnade was filled in with a curved wall by Francis Johnston when remodeled the building for the Bank of Ireland, thus it is in the same form with that built on the east facade. At the same time, an engaged order, Ionic Order, was also added to the eastern curved screen wall, giving the final appearance that it has today. The appearance of the building exterior is remarkably harmonious and united even it went through a few time of constructions by different architects. InteriorAlthough the building is magnificent, its plan seems somewhat arbitrary. The building has a staggered outline.

The principal axis starts from the main portico design by Pearce leads through the Court of Request and an inner rectangular vestibule to the octagonal Commons Chamber at the center of the plan. The remaining three sides of the Commons Chamber was surrounded by a wide corridor form composed of square domed top-lit compartments, which provided an additional entrance to the Commons Chamber and access to the rooms around the perimeter. (Casey, 2005, p. 384) The House of Lords is at the south-east end of the Commons, it was placed off the main axis. The unusual relationship between the Lords and the Commons Chamber on the plan is the most striking part. Generally, many parliamentary buildings where both houses meet in the same building, equality is distributed to both house or even sometimes the upper house is given a more important place within the building.

However, in the Irish House of Parliament, the House of Commons has a more predominant position than the House of Lords. The House of Lords Pearce's entire central sequence of rooms has been lost, only the corridor and the House of Lords survived. The interior of the House of Lords remains the same as when it was built. It is a tripartite space made up of the Bar, the House, and the Throne. It's also a dual entrances space that can be entered from the west through the Bar or from the east through the Throne. The House is the principal central volume, it was designed to accommodate 120 peers, seated upon wool-sack and benches.

The House has a wooden wainscotted plinth with half Corinthian columns above it and paired pilasters framing niches at both ends of the side walls.

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On the north wall, there is the grand Jonesian timber chimneypiece carved by Thomas Oldham. Above the chimneypiece, there is the tapestry King William at the Boyne while another tapestry Siege of Derry was hung on the south wall. Both two of these famous 18th-century tapestries are the work of Thomas Baillie of Dublin.

The Throne is in an apse at the eastern end while the Bar, a low square barrel-vaulted space, is in the opposite end. The walls in the Throne and the Bar were covered in oak panels with round-headed niches and doors set between Ionic oak columns. The ceiling in the House of Lords was beautifully coffered in three different shapes, which are diamond shapes in the Throne, square in the House, and octagonal in the Bar. As the building has an irregular outline, it largely relies on top-lighting. The House of Lords is lit by three high thermal windows at each end, and the rest of the walls were painted in white to reflect the sunlight. The interior and the furniture in the Lords Chamber used a lot of oak and wool-sack which represent the success of economic and wealth. The Chamber used by the Peers to have some public ceremonial or parliamentary sessions is altered since the Parliament sat, and is now used as a historical Chamber for student and visitors, and also used to hold some functions or ceremonies. The House of CommonsThe House of Commons was destroyed by a fire in 1792 so Pearce's design of the Commons Chamber was lost.

Pearce's original design was an octagonal chamber with a shallow stepped Pantheon-like dome. A colonnade of Ionic columns, paired at the angles of the octagon, screened the upper spectator gallery and supported the

coffered dome. The long walls were expressed as a blind arcade with taller arched entrances on the four principal sides of the octagon. Like the House of Lords, the brightly lit interior of Commons Chamber was also filled with oak wainscoting and green velvet upholstery. Though re-roofed after the fire, the entire Commons Chamber was redesigned and dismantled during the conversion of the Bank of Ireland to meet the exigencies of the Bank. It is now used as the cash office of the Bank. Conclusion Pearce's innovative design was widely studied by many later architects.

For examples, his top-lit corridors were replicated by the Viceregal Apartments in Dublin Castle and his grand colonnade forecourt was used by the British Museum in Bloomsbury in London. What is most striking is Pearce's design was even brought to Washington D. C., where his plan of the octagonal House of Commons chamber was studied and influenced the design of the United States Capitol building.

The former Irish House of Parliament is undeniably one of Ireland's grandest structure of all time.