While Newport, Rhode Island, may not have been the birthplace of shingle style, it certainly became—somewhere around the 1860s—a stronghold for an approach that would become popular in American architecture. Established as a major shipping port in the mid-18th century, Newport went on to become a fashionable destination for the wealthy and the ambitious who took a liking to enormous houses (which they referred to as cottages) which were built along the eastern shore of Aquidneck Island. Shingle Styles begins its case-study of various American structures by focusing on a lasting monument in Rhode Island, the William Watts Sherman house, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson. Built in the 1870s, the Sherman house set the standard for many of the unifying themes of shingle style: long horizontal lines created by extended roof overhangs, rows of aligned windows, and a cantilevered upper gable. The decisive change in the Sherman house, however, and the strongest element of this new architectural style, was the use of wooden shingles for an exterior wall covering rather than red clay tiles or stone. As author Leland M. Roth points out, this simple change opened up possibilities for variations in texture and surface, with the shingles cut and nailed in different patterns ... especially in the upper gables. Roth goes on to detail a total of 30 structures, including homes, clubs and lodges, churches, farms and barns, and a hotel. The story of shingle style is also told through more than 200 illustrations and photographs, mostly in color. Along the way we learn about Frank Lloyd Wright’s home and studio in Oak Park, Illinois; James and Merritt Reid’s Hotel del Coronado in Coronado, California; William Ralph Emerson’s Felsted in Deer Isle, Maine; and Greene & Green’s Gamble House in Pasadena, California. As an architectural characteristic, shingle style has its limitations. How much can be said, after all, about buildings which are unified only in their appearance of being covered entirely in wooden shingles? Roth helps to push appreciation to the next level, however, showing how the influences
of craftsman, bungalow, prairie school, and postmodern touches have helped to enliven the style. --John Russell

My Personal Review:
The book "SHINGLE STYLES Innovation and Tradition in American Architecture 1874 to 1982" is a truely exquisite book. The shingle style architecture is one of the last american architectural styles, and should be deeply cherished. The book has beautiful photographs by Bret Morgan and flowing text by Leland M. Roth. The book brings you through time, starting in the gilded age with lavish country homes, and ending in recent 1982, again displaying a lavish country home, stating the continuation of the shingle style. While reading the book you tend to have vicarious dreams of living in the later 1800s, going to the country home with the famly and walking along the beach or senic country path, with your shingle villa in the background. The book makes a fine contribution to any library, and in my library it is prominately positioned in reach of all that wish to indulge in the enjoyment of the shingle style of architecture. I strongly recomend this book, and hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

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