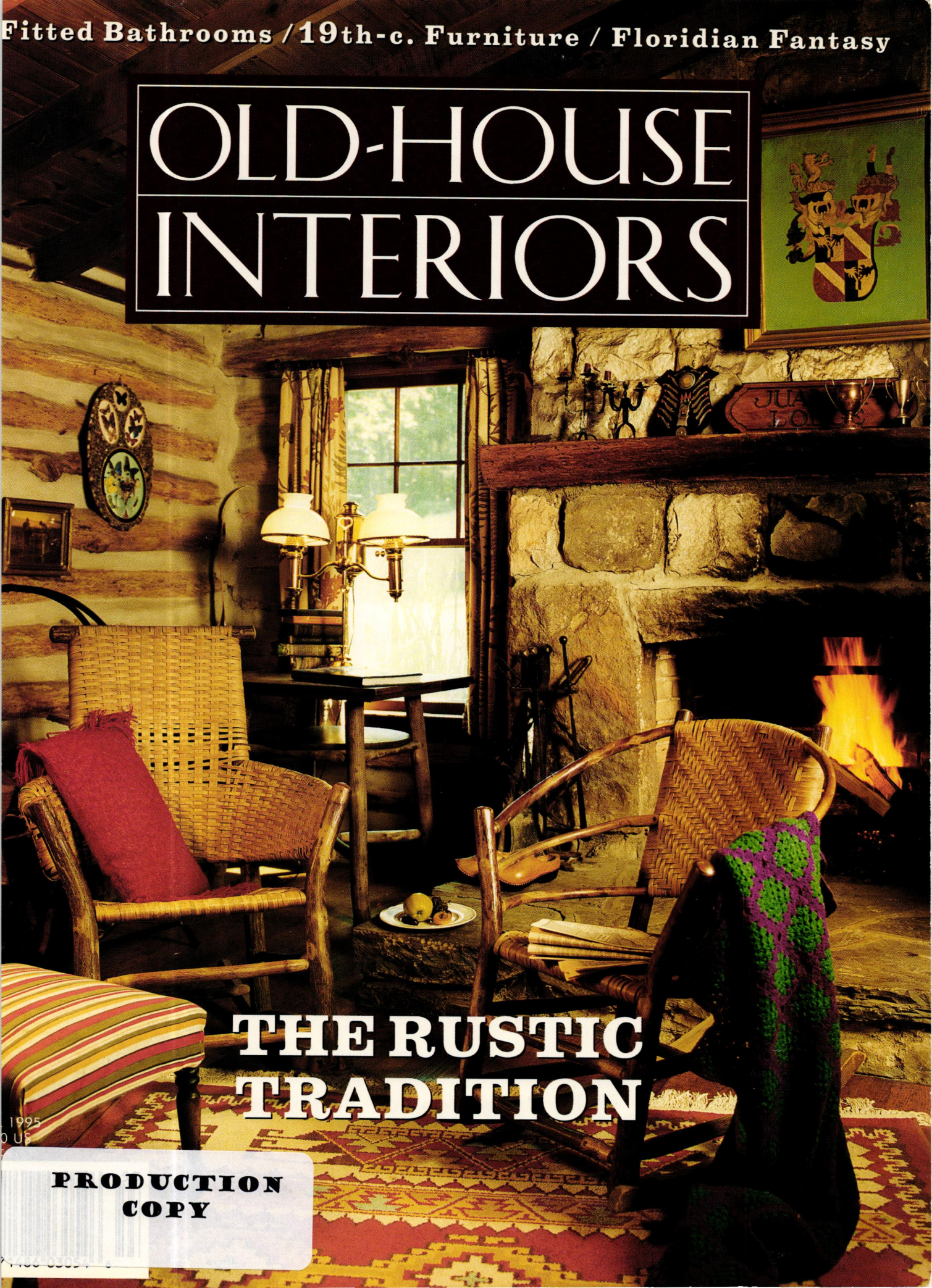


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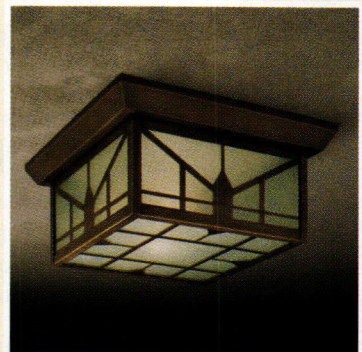
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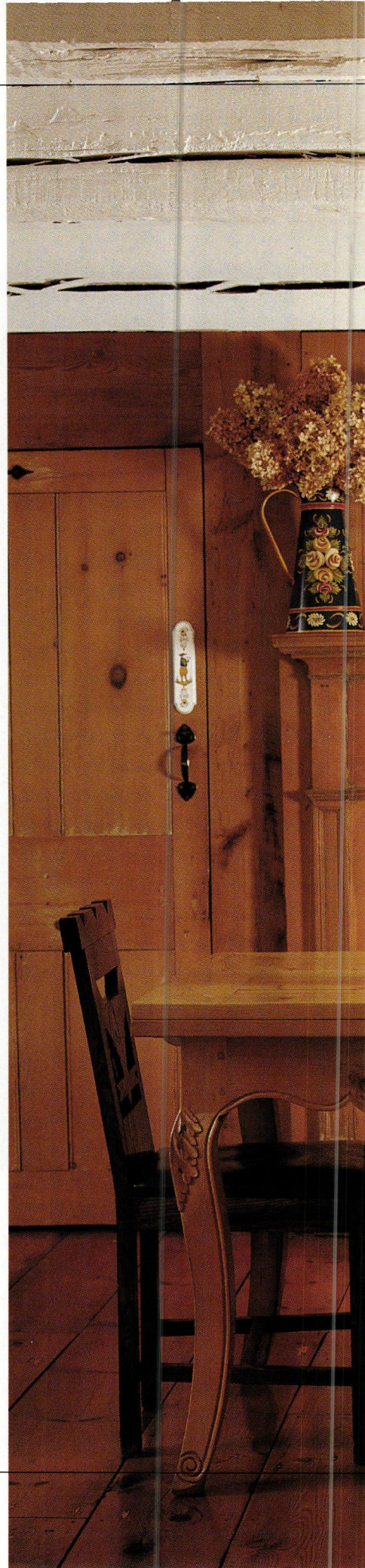
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Behind a Federal facade in old New York, the year is 1840.

ON THE COVER: *In a 1927 lakeside house in New Jersey, comfortable, collectible Indiana Hickory furniture sits undisturbed. Photograph by Scott Dorrance.*

Summer of '62

I LIVE IN GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, where the population swells almost 30% during July and August. It's a summer place. Those of us who tough out the long winter and cold, dreary



spring aren't about to leave during our ten weeks of glorious weather. For us, summer means a pleasant struggle to find that sense of "being on vacation" at home. What memories came up, though, as I looked at photographs for the Rustic-style features. The Adirondacks: summer of '62, and several summers before that ... How I love the word itself—Adirondacks—a dauntless word, like Fort Ticonderoga and Ausable Chasm, other Adirondack destinations of 30 years ago. Shivery mornings, hot afternoons, blue mountains and cold lakes and, of course, a rustic cabin with pine walls and souvenir shops selling tiny birch-bark canoes. "One cereal is enough," Dad would say at the A&P, forcing us to eat soggy Total in the morning but making up for it at night by playing Old Maid in front of the stone fireplace. Mom would fry up the smelts we'd caught ourselves, all part of the rustic experience.

Does everyone have these memories? Is that why Rustic interiors are so appealing?

I ADMIT TO SPENDING A FEW SULTRY afternoons in my office just looking at books: Harvey Kaiser's *Great Camps of the Adirondacks*, Ralph Kylloe's *Rustic Traditions*, and others. Another memory: Years ago, I lived in a big, dilapidated old house near Flatbrookville,

New Jersey, a rural and not-well-known area north of the Delaware Water Gap. But I moved back to New York City; the National Park Service eventually boarded up the house. A decade later, I wanted to reestablish my connection with the place. We found an old wooden "camp" hotel in a little hamlet on the Pennsylvania side. Furnished with an assortment of rustic pieces and turn-of-the-century cast-offs, it was no Victorian Revival inn, but an unlikely survivor. The five-and-dime floral wallpaper was faded. Camp mattresses lay on squeaking iron beds. The food was homemade.

More years went by. One hot weekend, I took my husband to see it. We got off I-80, turned around and went up the hill, past the Greyhound station/luncheonette, past untidy Gothic Revival cottages, past unmown grass and big trees. I saw the sign—Mountain House—and we pulled over.

It was gone. Not entirely; a charred corner stood amidst a scene more grotesque than if we'd come upon a dead body. Burned clapboards and personal effects, still wet from the fire hoses, lay in morbid heaps. The owner had just managed to get his two little children out of their upstairs apartment. Vandalism had taken one of the last hotels remaining from the era when wealthy New Yorkers took the train over the Kittatinny Ridge to the Delaware River and on to the Poconos.

Our memories are stored in the rooms of the past.

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All Around the U.S.A.

BOSTON, CONNECTICUT, AND New York, yes; but also Ann Arbor, rural Louisiana, and Omaha, with references to Washington State, New Jersey, and Virginia [locations in Summer 1995]. Thank you! It's about time someone did a sophisticated design magazine that celebrates life outside the New York groove (rut?).

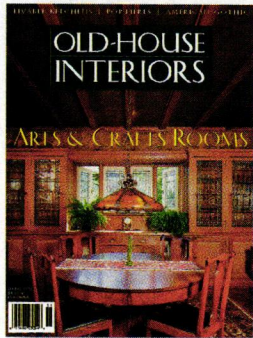
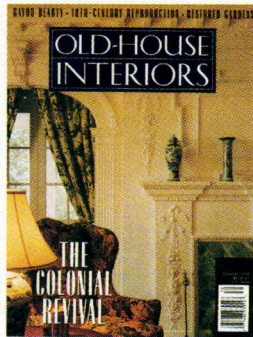
—Simon Sinclair
St. Louis

YOUR READERS MAY BE INTERESTED to know how effectively window film dovetails with Palladian and bay windows ["Window Dressing," Summer 1995]. It is a natural for undressed windows and those with minimal curtains and draperies, because it helps protect furnishings from the sun's damaging uv rays. The Courtaulds Performance Films window film, called Vista, is installed in many historic homes, including Woodlawn Plantation, Sagamore Hill, the Biltmore Estate, and San Simeon. In short, you might say that window film was "invented" for old-house owners.

—Virginia L. Kubler
Courtaulds Performance Films
Martinsville, Va.

I AM THRILLED THAT YOUR NEW MAGAZINE presents its subject material with such clarity, from the crisp text to the lucid photographs.

Regina Cole's excellent article on our Colonial Revival project



["Style in Residence," Summer 1995] conveys much of what I would say, except for one critical component. I was not solely responsible for the success of the architectural design and the construction.

In the style of the 18th- and 19th-century master builders, Classic Restorations fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation among our architects, designers, office staff, and carpenters, as well as subcontractors. The contributions of our entire team work-

ing together resulted in what you see pictured. I'm proud to be mentioned as a contributor, but I want to be sure that my teammates are also acknowledged.

—Peter E. LaBau
Cambridge, Mass.

I AM TAKING YOU UP ON YOUR OFFER TO send comments. May I start by saying overall it's a lovely magazine, with great potential.

I agree with Charles E. Fisher ["Letters," Summer 1995] that your articles are too short. There is much more to be mined in some of the subjects covered and your writers shouldn't be afraid of the minutia they will uncover. Include more details and history.

The idea of including hints on conservation is very well taken when dealing with interiors . . .

even though conservation and restoration may be covered in *Old-House Journal*.

In a more selfish vein, will there be any upcoming articles on the interiors of log cabins or log houses? There are relatively few books on the log home, especially the older ones, and the interiors of these homes reflect different styles, cultures, and incomes. Having recently purchased a 60-plus-year-old cabin made of chestnut logs, I am interested to see what else is out there.

—Eleanore Speert
New York City

Thank you for writing. This issue's focus on Rustic styles should be of special interest to you; some of the houses shown are, in fact, log construction.

—Patricia Poore

• • • • •

I AGREE WITH THE SUBSCRIBER [WHO] says "a short primer on historical design would be desirable." As an



example, the fabulous Gothic Revival rug on pages 83 and 84 of the Spring 1995 issue—an 1850s reproduction from J.R. Burrows—What a great rug! I'd rather hear more about it, and less about what David and Larry said.

—Barbara Graves
Wheaton, Ill.

Most of the Marshalls' furnishings are antique, but the Gothic-design rug is available as a reproduction (pictured opposite, below). We've had several inquiries about it, so here's more infor-

mation: the Gothic Arch pattern was designed in 1848 and comes from the historic archive of Woodward Grosvenor & Co. Ltd. of England. The traditional green shown is the original colorway. Custom orders can be placed through the exclusive American representative, J.R. Burrows & Co., P.O. Box 522, Rockland, MA 02370; (617) 982-1812.

—the editors

YESTERDAY I RECEIVED OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS—Arts & Crafts, the California Bungalow, and all the other articles were so fine [Spring 1995]. I had

to smile when I read Ms. Lazzarini's article [on] portières. The first time I heard the word was when I read *Gone with the Wind* while on a troop ship in 1943.

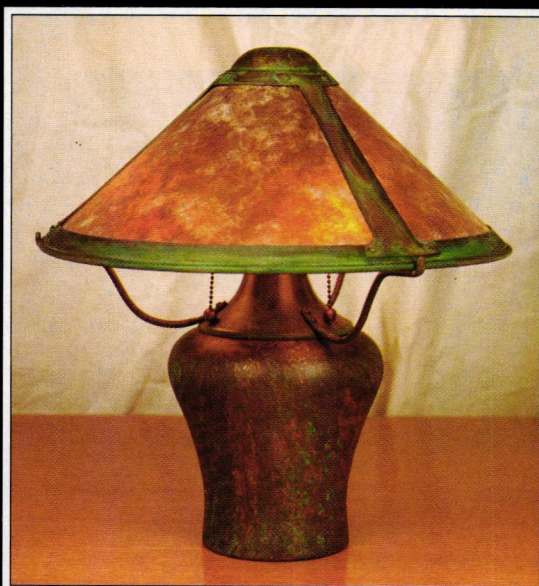
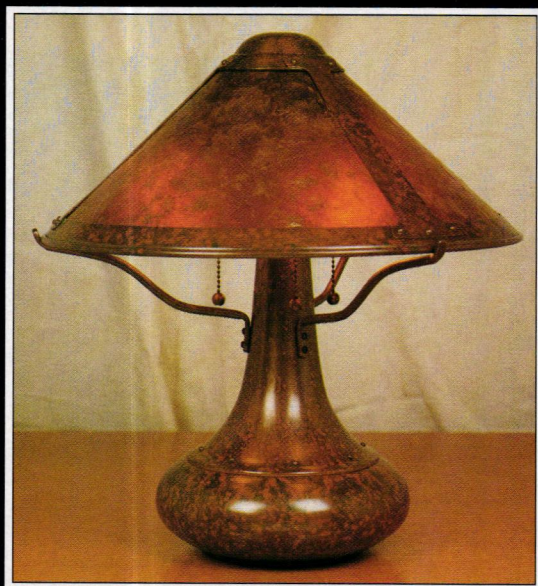
—Robert C. Betts
Dallas, Texas

YOUR MAGAZINE WAS STUNNING AND beautiful. The ads are very helpful. As you can see, I am requesting many [advertisers' catalogs].

—Mrs. C.E. Valence
Santa Clara, Utah

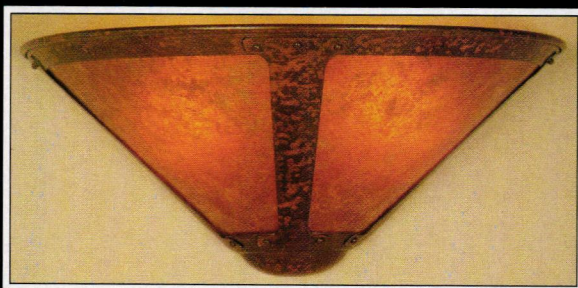
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For more information see page 102

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♥ **Handmade Shade**

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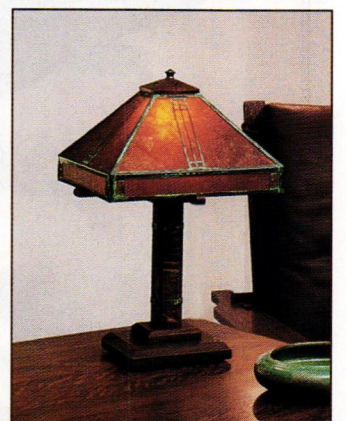
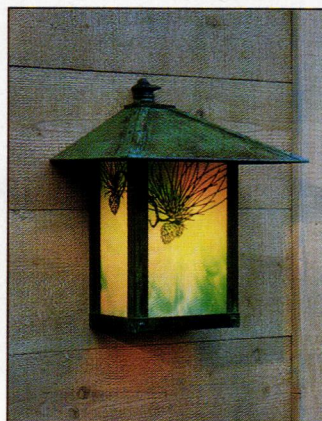
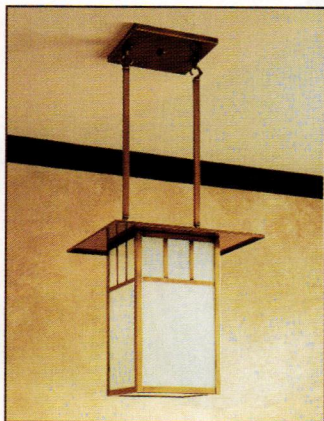
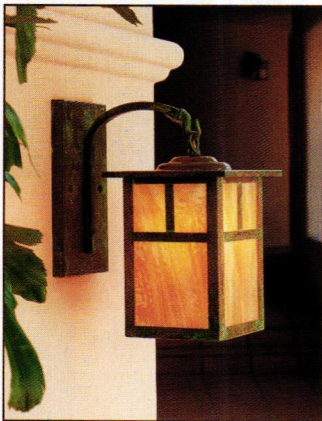
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▶ **Exotic Seating**

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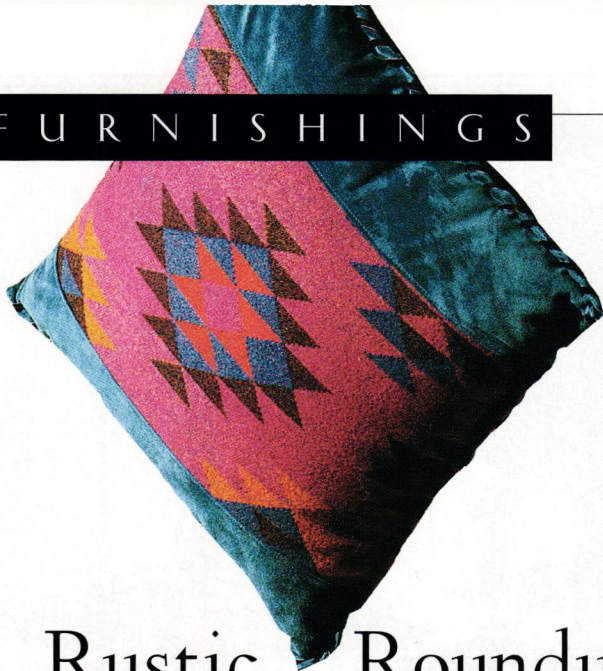
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Rustic Roundup



▶ Camp Classic

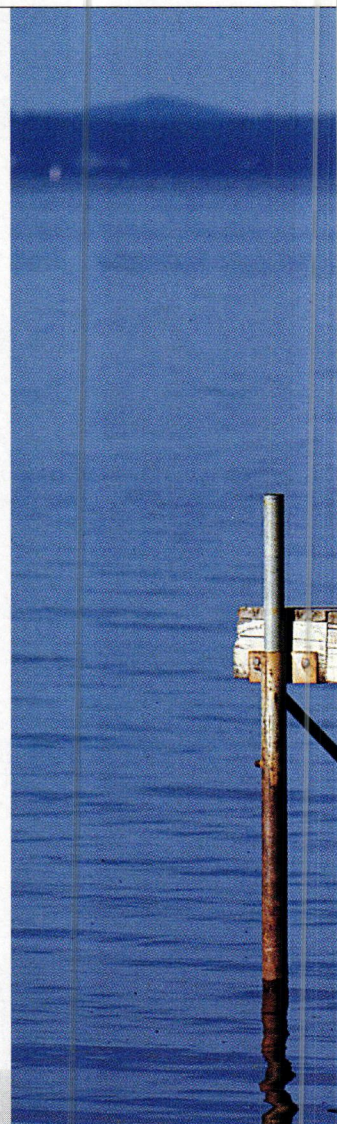
For over 150 years, Adirondack chairs with their simple lines and sturdy construction have been classic, vacation-home furniture. This folding, painted maple version is from L.L. Bean; \$135. Call (800) 809-7057.

For more information see page 102



▶ Birch Basket

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Furniture for the Bath

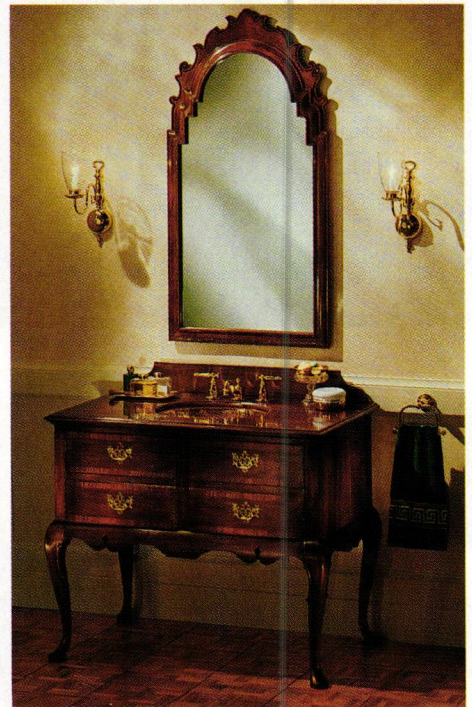
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Deco Details

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Go retro by putting a row of reproduction soda fountain stools at the kitchen's breakfast bar. The vinyl-topped, polished chrome stools come in three styles; \$139-\$200. Call Sass Products at (800) 841-2233.



For more information see page 102



Moderne Mirror

If the '20s, '30s, and '40s suit your style, check out Moderne Gallery, specializing in mid-20th-century antiques. This ca. 1925 dressing mirror is made of burl walnut with ivory inlay, onyx pulls. Call (215) 923-8536.

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A Period Interior Is Not About the TV

by Jean Dunbar

I want to create the period interior my house deserves—but I can't afford to buy furniture to hide all the modern objects. Won't the presence of TV and VCR, stereo, computer, answering machine, and even refrigerator ruin the effect?

— SUZANNE OAKES, ITHACA, N.Y.

A PERIOD-SENSITIVE INTERIOR DOESN'T have to be a museum. An interior is, first and foremost, spaces defined by surfaces. Even the finest antiques cannot give a plain room with white walls and neutral floors a feeling of history. Conversely, a room with historically accurate color and texture on its walls, floor, and ceiling feels

authentic, even when it's empty.

Those empty—but historic—rooms have character because construction has always reflected the current taste in decoration. Today's builders use narrow mouldings, little detail, and low ceilings. They assume that walls and floors will be finished in light colors, and that most trim will be painted white. In 1880, however, builders assumed their clients would choose color-saturated walls with decorative friezes, stained or deep-colored trim, and patterned carpets fitted wall-to-wall. Therefore, mouldings in 1880

were larger, to balance the visual weight of the floor. Ceilings were high, to permit complex wall treatments. When basic assumptions from different periods mix—say, when a large room with a deep cornice is paired with white walls and neutral floors—rooms look clumsy and inauthentic. There is no particular “feel” to the room, so individual objects draw attention to themselves.

Historical ambiance, in other words, depends not on collecting period objects, but on choosing surface finishes that complement the building. If you decorate using design principles popular when your house was built, taste and architecture will match. No one will notice your television.

Start with the age and style of your house to learn about its original decoration. Your bookstore and library can help. Decorating books of the period, often available as reprints, recommend specific colors, materials, and patterns.

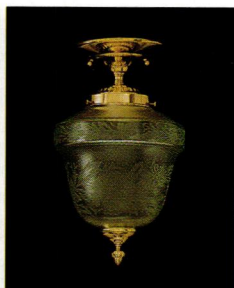
Decorative materials in “documented,” or authentic, designs are instructive. Reproduction carpeting is the anchor for historical color schemes because, until the 20th century, room colors were based on patterned carpet. Whether Brussels,

The computer terminal and drafting table in this home office are modern, but the room is of the 1890s. (Resources, p. 102.)



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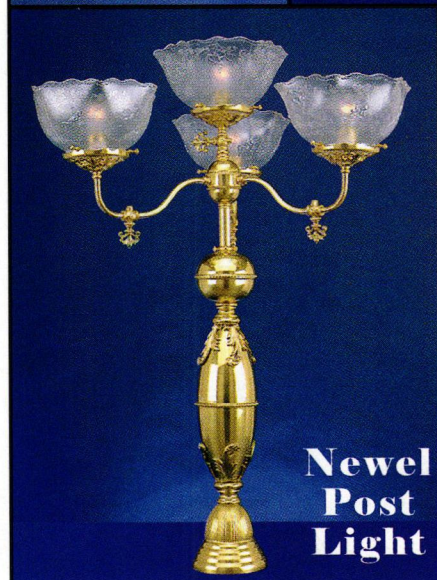
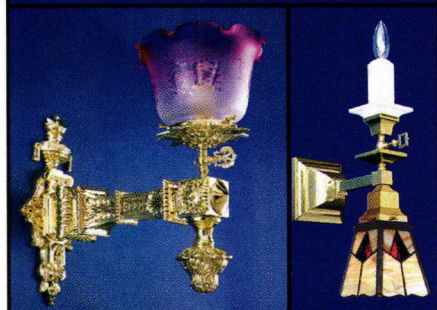
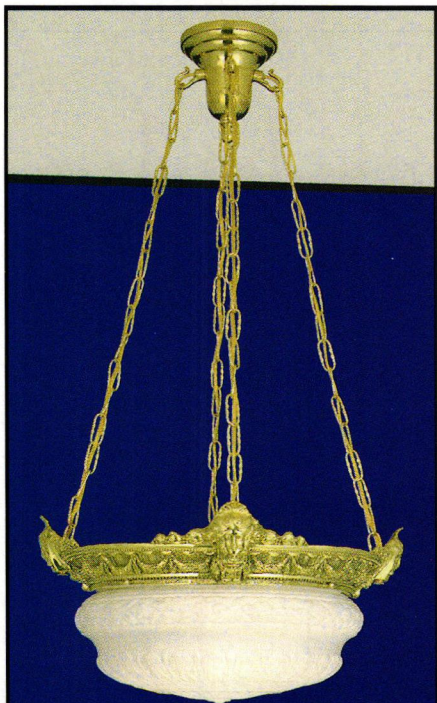
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Wilton, Venetian, or ingrain, carpeting gave a room its most intense colors (see OHI, Summer 1995). Wall color was drawn from the carpet, but lightened; ceilings were (generally) lightest of all. In fact, reproduction carpeting and wallpaper in document designs are rich sources for accurate color combinations.

Your house itself can tell you much of what you want to know. Original finishes may remain in closets and behind mouldings, or you can scrape and sand away later paint layers. Original wallpapers point to colors and style.

Old paint, original wallpapers, and friezes or borders also illustrate how colors were placed during different periods. If upper and lower wall reveal two different colors, the room had a (lower) dado and a separate (upper) wall color—and, usually, a frieze at the top. Creating similar wall divisions gives grace and authenticity to the room's proportions.

Using the period's design principles doesn't mean you ignore personal taste. If you hate blue, you need not reproduce the characteristic bright blue and brown scheme that once dressed your 1845 dining room. If, however, you choose green, it should be a pure 1845 green, not an 1885 Aesthetic green.

Old-house interiors, just like ours today, rarely contained furnishings from only one period. People inherited furniture, economized by buying second-hand furnishings, collected old things, and embraced the latest in technology. Nineteenth-century homeowners wanted—and got—the comfort of modern inventions such as fluid-burning and electric lights, heating stoves, kitchen ranges, ventilation systems, sewing machines, and indoor plumbing. And, they loved "revival" styles (Greek Revival, Moorish,

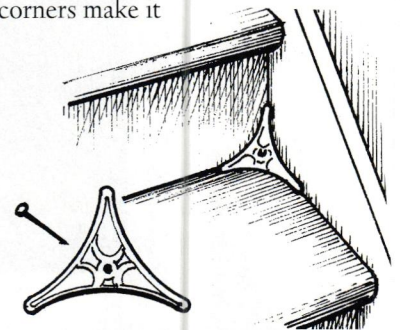
medieval, Second Empire, Old Colony, Japanesque) every bit as much as we do. As the original owners of your old house did, you can sneak modern conveniences into your interior. Do your homework and create a period atmosphere so convincing, no mere computer terminal can break the spell.

Jean Dunbar, a historic design specialist, writes and lectures about the history of modern taste and restores 19th-century interiors. (Historic Design, 108 West Preston Street, Lexington, VA 24450; (703) 463-3291.)

When I complained about the way dust and dog hair always collect in the corners of the stairs, my sister said I should get some dust corners. Was she putting me on, or is there really such a thing?

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Nailed into the corner, Victorian dust corners make very small holes in the stairs.

easier to sweep the stairs, and they're decorative to boot.

They are still being manufactured and are available from a number of sources, including A Carolina Craftsman, Anaheim, CA 92805, (714) 776-7877, Catalog, \$5; or The Renovator's Supply, Conway, NH 03818, (800) 659-0203.



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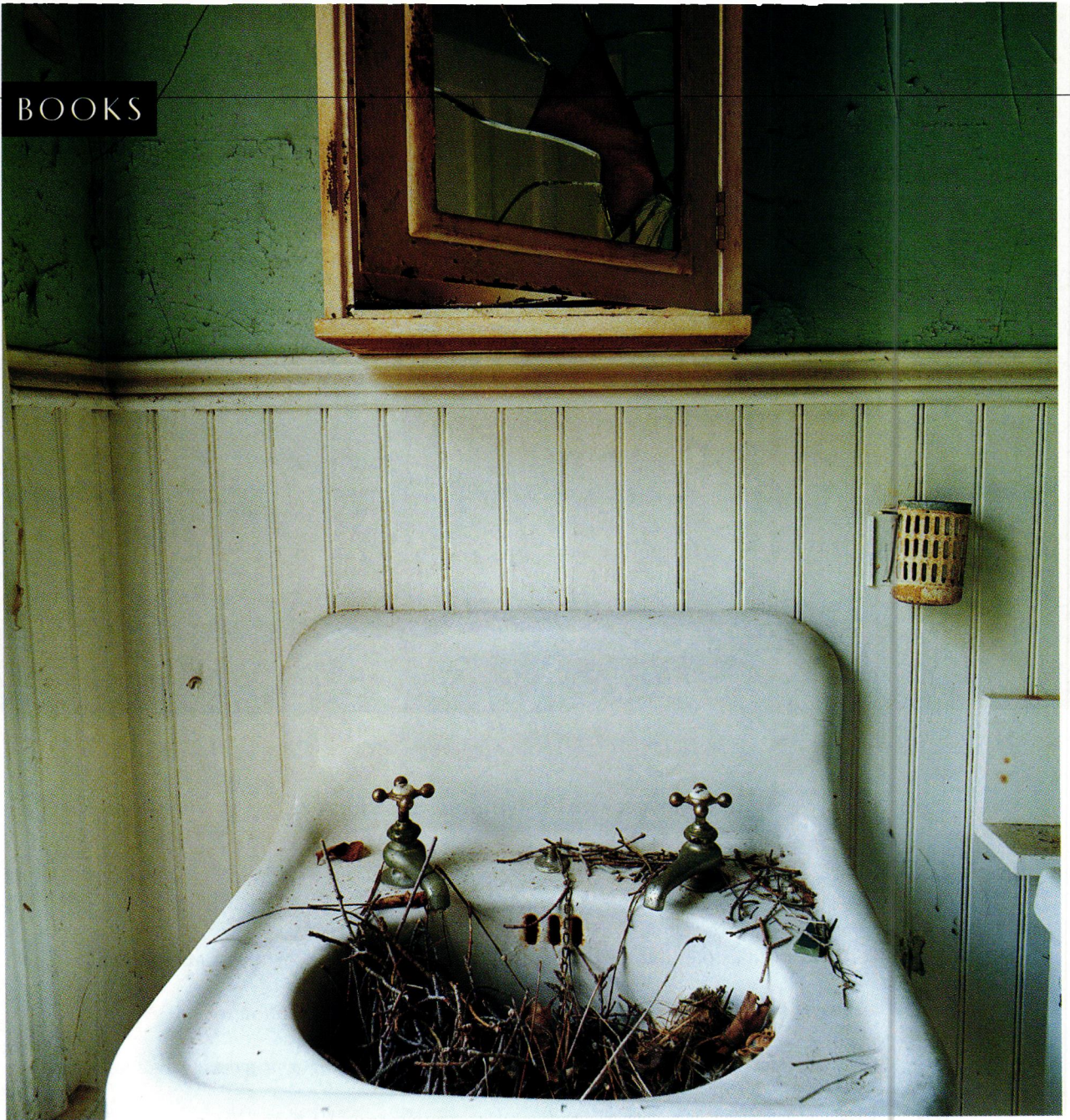


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Telltale Tatters

by Patricia Poore

YOU'VE SEEN THEM, THE MYSTERY HOUSES. They may be occupied, or they may not. This one may have weathered well, and in fact be taking guests in the summer. Another may be unkempt, even far into its decay. Unrestored, all of these retain a truthful link with the past.

Some people prefer to stumble on old houses in the "before" state: before discovery, before restoration, before any money is spent to alter the delicate link. Steve Gross and Susan Daley apparently do. With a camera, they have captured the haunting beauty of old houses. Their photographs document architecture, some of it arrest-

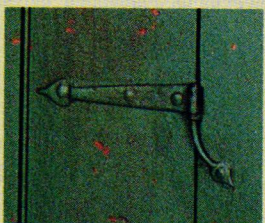
Some of us never get over the childhood fascination with exploring abandoned places—wandering through houses neglected, poverty and indifference their conservators.

ing. But that is not the point. They focus on the faded fabrics, the tattered wallpapers, the peeling paint, and the worn furniture. These things tell a story.

Steve and Susan spent over five years on this project. It began in Charleston, South Carolina, when they happened upon an old mansion in a dilapidated state. It sat in the middle of an old neighborhood, its piazzas and stately columns falling toward the street, its shutters faded and peeling, and its stucco walls cracked and pitted

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ABOVE: This room, in an 1860s Italianate in Maine, has remained unchanged at least since the 1890s. The informal reception room was created when the staircase was moved during the 1880s, an era when relaxed “living halls” began to replace the formal entrance hall. **RIGHT:** A peek inside Rancho San Julian in Lompoc, California. Built by comandante de la Guerra of the Santa Barbara presidio around 1837, it was purchased in 1867 by an Easterner with a just-after-the-Mayflower lineage who later married the granddaughter of the house’s builder. Descendants still own the ranch.

with the passage of time. They noticed a tiny sign: *RING BELL FOR TOUR.*

They used all the film they had with them to photograph rooms that had been sealed off for more than 70 years. Following the sunlight from room to room, they decided on long exposures to capture the imprints of past lives they felt lingered there. Spiderwebs, dust, and ghostly presences guard-



ed against the glare of the world outside.

Both Susan and Steve have loved “haunted houses” since childhood. “These houses possess a beauty and truthfulness more real and valuable than any replica could ever be,” they write. And so it was the lost house they sought: the neglected, the sentimental, the things too frayed and worn to use but too loved to throw away. They traveled all over the country, mostly on back roads and old highways, looking for the places protected by poverty and indifference. Sometimes, they tell us, they met with dead ends; they had arrived too late.

The couple found themselves in the company of the last of America’s old families, those persevering. They were the holdouts who did not tear their houses down, or sell them to be razed, or redecorate



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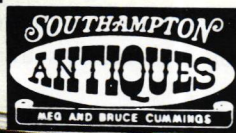
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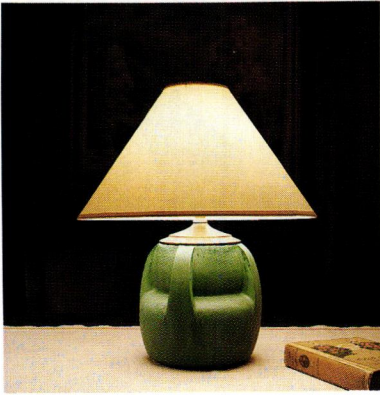
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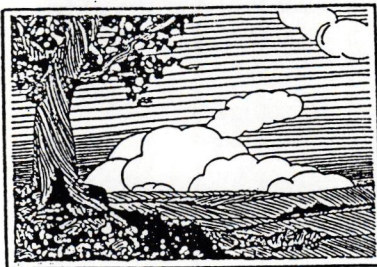
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A bedroom at Ardoyne, a 1900 Gothic Revival sugar-plantation house near Houma, Louisiana, lived in today by the great-granddaughter of the builder.

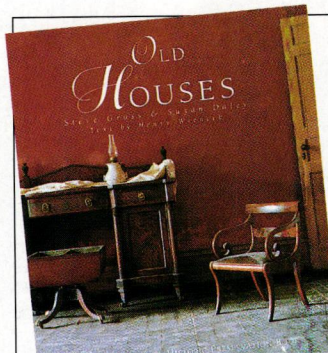
or renovate them . . . or give up. These were the people who knew that the true value of their homes lay in their histories. They welcomed Susan and Steve into their houses, at times acting as if they had expected them.

These travels resulted in the book *Old Houses*, with a text by Henry Wiencek, published by Stewart, Tabori & Chang in 1991 and about to be released in paperback. In it, 250 evocative photographs give you a wonderful sense of discovery, as if you walked up onto the porch, sure the door would be locked, only to find the knob turning in your hand. The light-

ing is true. The textures—of cracked plaster, worn upholstery, scuffed floors—are palpable.

The unassuming text tells the stories. There are family dynasties, rumors of hauntings, and tales told by the people who have lived in their

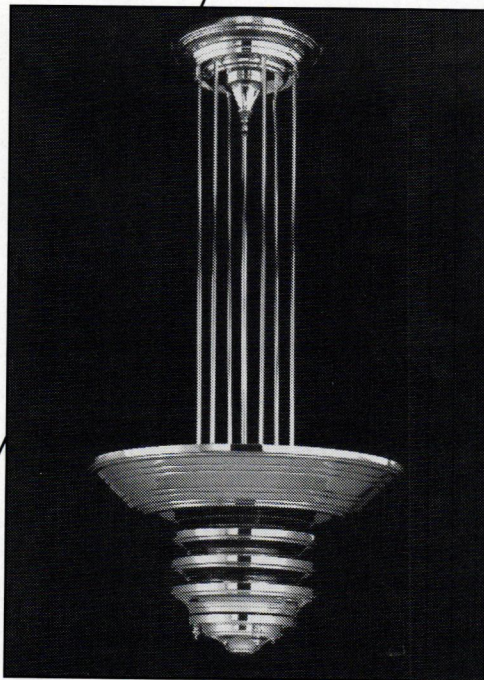
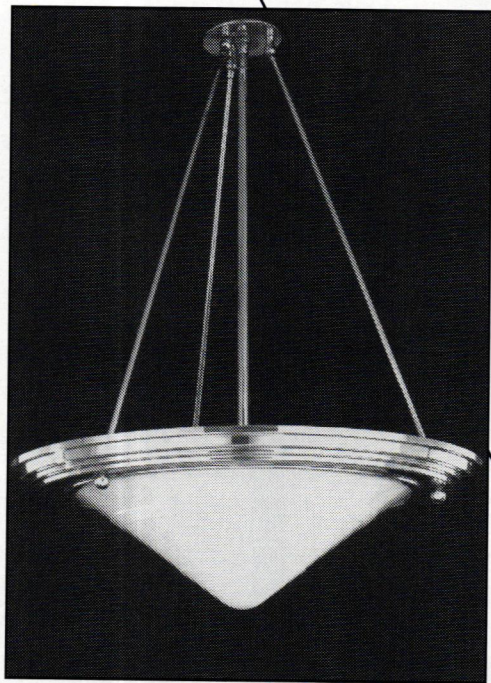
homes since birth. As you found your way to this magazine, so you will surely love *Old Houses*. ♦



Old Houses by Steve Gross & Susan Daley; text by Henry Wiencek. Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1991/1995. New softbound edition due in October, through your bookstore or from Old-House Bookshop: (800) 931-2931. \$27.50 plus \$4.50 S&H.

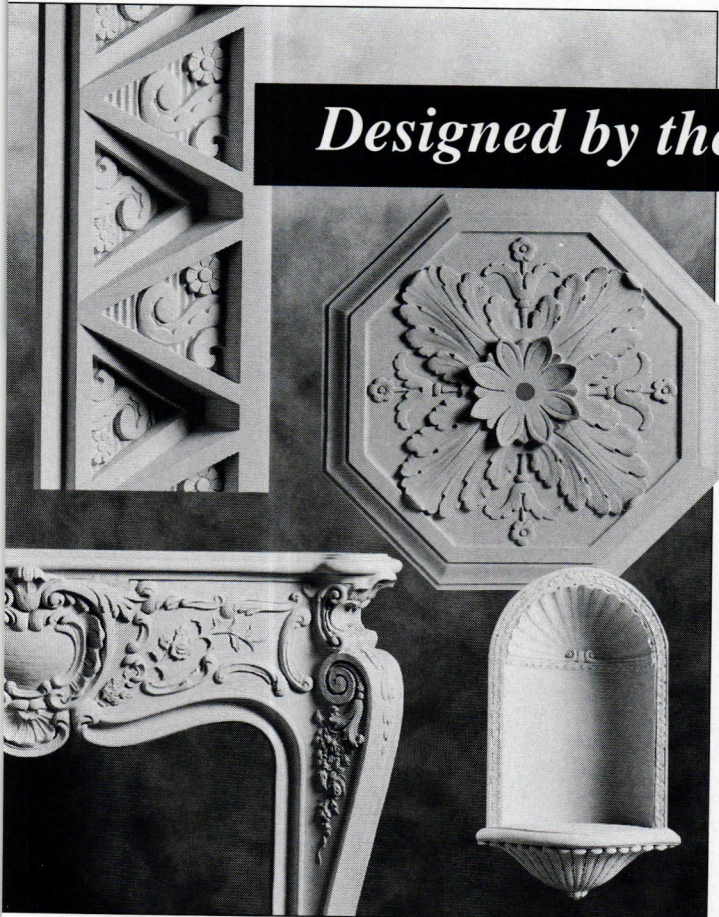
Photographers Steve Gross and Susan Daley have a studio in Manhattan. Their work includes interior and fine-art photography. Because of their old-house leanings, we asked them to photograph for us the old Riker house (pages 42-49), and sent them to Fort Lauderdale's Bonnet House (pages 72-81).

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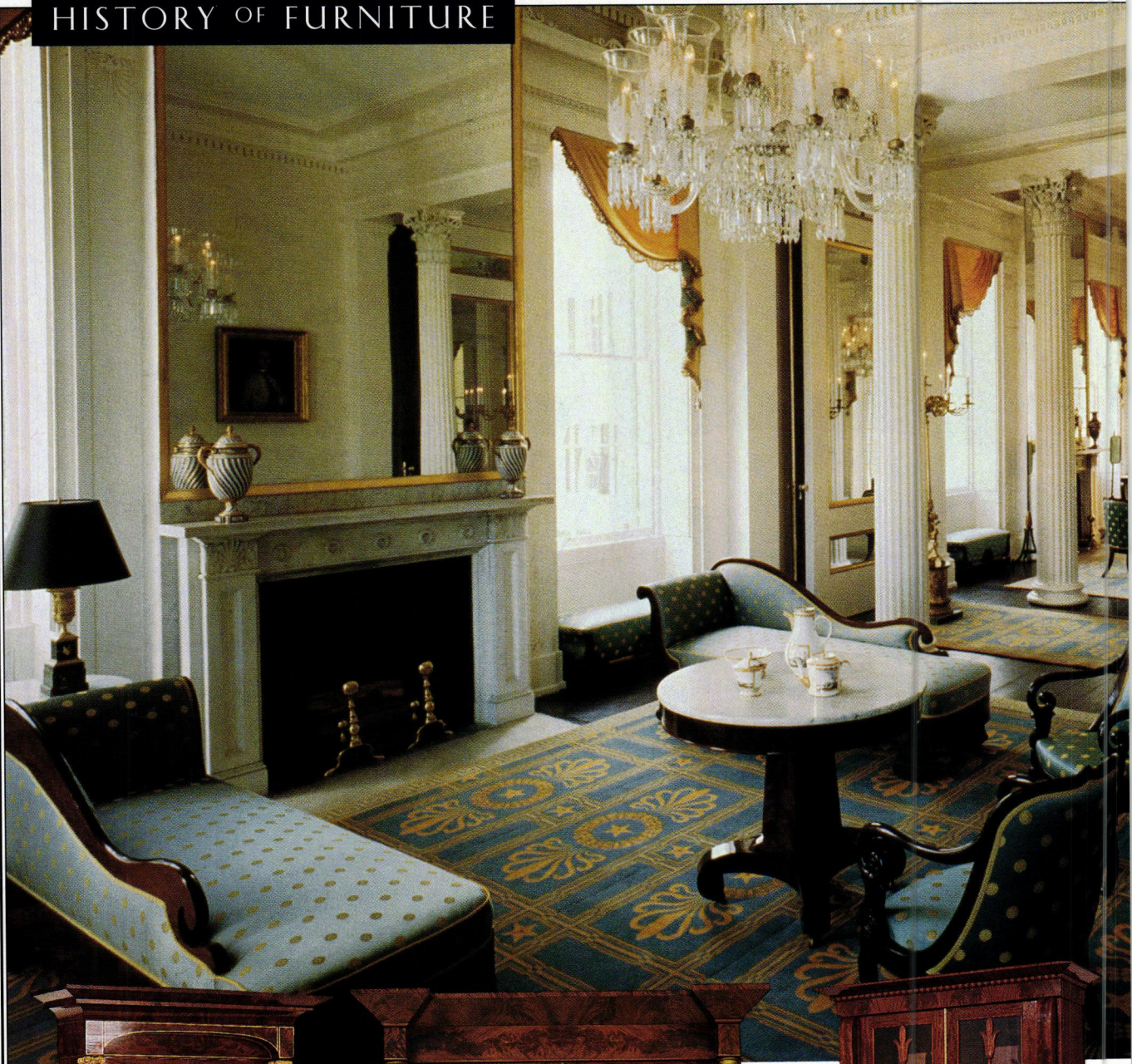
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From 1810 through 1850, the preference was for American Empire.

by Emyl Jenkins

AMERICANS BUILT SOME LARGE houses in the 1820s. In cities and villages, craftsmen and merchants were creating a rich, opulent look for that bastion of American fashion, the ever-increasing upper-middle class. While visiting from England, Mrs. Trollope caught the American scene in her often-quoted 1831 memoir. "The dwelling houses of the higher classes are extremely handsome and very richly furnished," she wrote, praising the silk, satin, and chintz upholstery, French porcelain, and stylish furniture.

Today, many names describe the furniture styles of those transitional years between the 18th century and the Victorian era: Empire, Greek Revival, American or Victorian Classical, and Neoclassical. Twentieth-century scholars have written tomes tracing the inspiration for the American-made furniture of the day—from crumbling Greek and Roman temples and Egyptian shrines, to ornate French Directoire chambers and splendid English Regency townhouses.

Furniture made for the grand homes built in America between 1810 and 1850 was, like those homes, imposing and impressive. And because so much of it has survived, anyone furnishing an older home with antiques will undoubtedly find many genuine, period Empire pieces.

There seems to be a resistance

to collecting Empire furniture; it just isn't as appealing as Queen Anne, Chippendale, and Federal (Hepplewhite and Sheraton) styles. Nonetheless, one of America's most influential and wealthiest collectors has built his reputation in the antiques world by choosing the very era that others have shunned. Many collectors are beginning to heed Richard Jenrette's sagacious words:

"I chose American [late] Federal and Empire furniture for several reasons. First, these periods are contemporaneous with my six historic properties, dating from 1800 to 1840. Second, I consider this a uniquely American amalgam of French, English, and (to some extent) German tastes—all rolled into an American idiom. Third, this period was the final flowering of hand-carved American furniture craftsmanship prior to the ascendancy of machine-made furniture.

"Perhaps a fourth reason is that the 'price was right.' When I started buying, 19th-century things were far cheaper than 18th-century."

True, the rarefied best of the early Empire period—say, pieces made by New York cabinetmakers Charles-Honore Lannuier and Duncan Phyfe—now fetch five- and six-figure prices. But there is still much excellent, affordable furniture waiting for collectors who are not put off by that word "Empire."

The problem is, the label con-



It took brightly upholstered, full-blown, and richly figured furniture to fill the high-ceilinged double parlors of early 19th-century Greek Revival homes. At Millford Plantation, in South Carolina, the continuity of space and furniture is captured by the repetition of the room's bold, architectural columns along the front of the mahogany pier table. **LEFT:** According to Neal Auction Company, inch for inch, visually imposing Empire furniture may be the best buy in today's antiques market. **OPPOSITE:** **[L]** New York State parcel-gilt and mahogany bookcase, ca. 1820. **[C]** The vibrant figured mahogany used in this New York State wardrobe, ca. 1820–30, dances with life. **[R]** This mahogany secretary, ca. 1825, has a fitted birdseye maple top drawer—a secretary compartment. The hefty drawer opens and a large front panel drops down to become a writing surface.



Top Picture: Rococo Chandelier by Starr, Fellows, New York C: 1857
Center: Deer's Head sconce by Gibson Gas Fixture Works, Phila., PA C: 1890
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Steep, curving staircases captured the grandeur of the architecture born of the self-confident spirit in America between the War of 1812 and the Civil War. Both the staircase and the sitting room at right are in Mr. Jenrette's ca. 1840, South Carolina home, Millford Plantation.



tures up overblown, dark pieces, blistering veneer splitting. This isn't the whole picture!

At its best, early-period Empire furniture, ca. 1810-20, is stylish and refined. It has sweeping, grand lines and highly polished finishes and is adorned with stunning classical motifs, such as palmettes, griffins, caryatids, cornucopias, and serpents. Only the worst of later-period Empire furniture (1840-50) is somber, oversized, and starkly plain.

Between the elegant and the everyday, the gilded and the gloomy, the early and the late, exquisitely made Empire pieces date from the 1820s to 1840s.

Many people complain that Empire furniture is massive. Of course it is. It was made for enormous, high-ceilinged houses with

vast expanses of open wall space. Complementing the bolder architecture were grandiose, more masculine wardrobes, or *armoires*, massive, high-post beds, and imposing, columned cabinets.

Delicate Hepplewhite pieces perfect for Federal-era rooms looked out of place. Bedroom chests of drawers, "waist-high" only a few years earlier, swelled to become "chest-high" bureaus. In a double-parlored Empire living space, the elegant Chippendale secretary bookcase seemed to shrink; a taller, wider, and deeper Empire secretary bookcase was needed. And in the sprawling Empire dining rooms, the graceful, slender-legged, Hepplewhite sideboard, with its tier of drawers above a shallow cabinet, was dwarfed when placed between two floor-to-ceiling win-



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The wall space flanked by the floor-to-ceiling windows at Edgewater, on the Hudson River, is the perfect backdrop for the eagle-mounted *girandole*, or convex mirror, and marble-columned, stenciled, and ormolu-mounted pier table. Both the mirror and pier table were made in New York State, ca. 1815. **BELOW:** Note the sculptural aspect of Empire furniture as your eye wanders along the languid curves of this ca. 1825 mid-Atlantic *recamier*.



dows. In keeping with the sweeping scale, the new sideboards had cabinet sections so deep, they skirted the floor.

Empire pieces were made of dark mahogany and rosewood, which made them appear even heavier. Cabinetmakers of the day chose large strips of richly figured veneer—rather than solid boards—to add interest and beauty. The finest, most expensive veneers were so colorful and fiery, they were called “flaming veneer.”

With the accumulation of dust and dirt, even the most beautiful woods can lose their luster. Today it may be hard to distinguish the finely veneered piece covered with decades of built-up grime from the inferior piece. Another problem is the flaking of the veneer itself. Even though the veneer strips used in the 1830s and 1840s were between 1/8” and 1/16” thick (today’s veneer is literally wax-paper thin), over the years, the animal glue used may have dissolved when subjected to extreme moisture and heat. It can be difficult and expensive to match and replace missing veneer.

So the public’s perception—overblown Empire pieces with murky, splitting veneer—has damaged the reputation of a whole period of American furniture. It’s time to take a second look.

Good, mid-period Empire pieces have a vigorous style.

Further, not all Empire pieces are that massive. Some smaller Empire chests measure 38” to 40” wide. And many contemporary homes have cathedral ceilings and “great rooms” with a scale appropriate for the right Empire piece.

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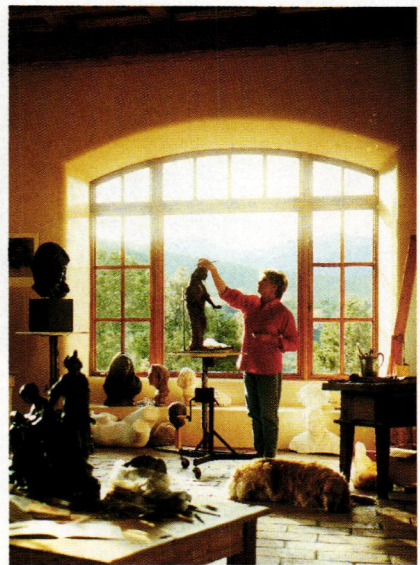
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LEFT: Functional and beautiful, pedestaled center tables helped to fill large parlors. **BELOW LEFT:** The attention to detail given to the pedestal on this ca. 1835 round mahogany center table is the work of a true craftsman. **BELOW RIGHT:** This antique skirted buffet or sideboard was made by Michael Allison.

18th-century pieces. Given the facts, you can understand Dick Jenrette's long-term love for the aesthetics, history, and grandeur of 19th-century furniture. Empire furniture is a good buy. In temperature-controlled homes, popping or splitting veneer is no longer a problem.

A HALO OF NOSTALGIC SENTIMENTALITY surrounded Empire furniture during the early 20th century. The emerging American furniture industry knew that buyers wanted the feel of the old with the clean practicality of the new.

Furniture factories churned out untold numbers of scaled-down, Empire-derived chairs, sofas, chests, and tables. Most pieces were covered in dark red mahogany veneer (by this time only 1/32" thick) and were embellished with machine-carved ornaments.

These reproductions are now entering the market through house sales and estate auctions. This furniture is now 50, 60, and 70 years old—close to becoming antique itself. It can almost always be bought at true bargain prices. It is a reasonable choice for homeowners who appreciate the Empire style, if not its size. ♦

*Emyl Jenkins writes and lectures on American furniture and decorative arts. Her most recent book is *Reproduction Furniture: Antiques for the Next Generation* (Crown Publishers). She lives in Raleigh, N.C.*

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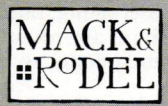
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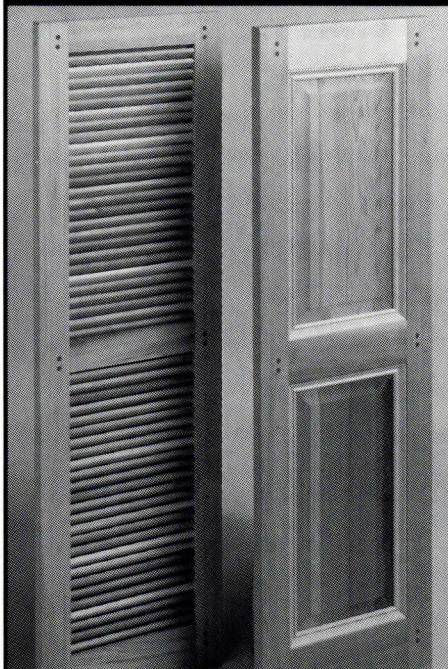
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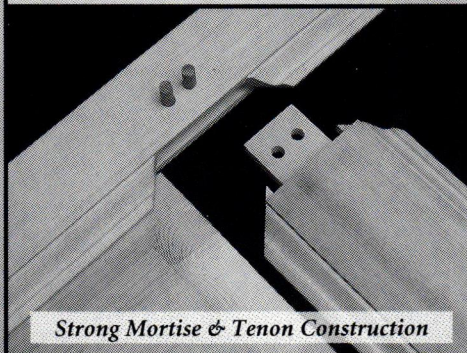
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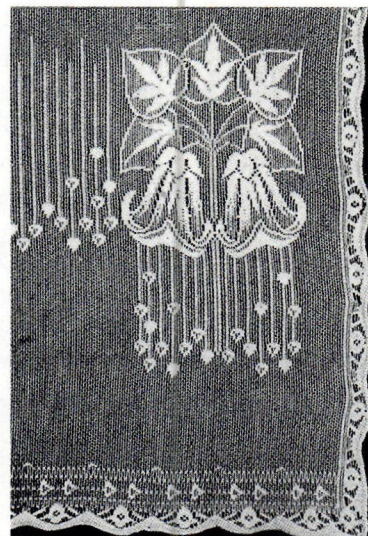


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Rustic style is back, this time for year-round homes. We're inspired by old houses in New Jersey and Arizona, and a contemporary example in the wilds of northern Maine. ¶ Join us, too, in a borough of New York, where a Dutch homestead survives against all odds, its rooms reflecting the Victorian era in a preserved colonial edifice. In Fort Lauderdale, a literal oasis of personal style reminds us that excellence is more often a credit to the owner's fancy—and talent—than to following the rules. Also, making a comeback: fitted bathrooms and architectural ornament.

From Flagstaff's Riordan House, a Louis Akin painting of a Ponderosa pine, framed in bark, on one wall of the rustic cabin room.



Against all odds, the Riker-Lent house has lasted 300 years in Queens, New York. Time stands still in this quintessentially Dutch-colonial house, where rooms reflect different eras in the house's long history.

TEXT BY LYNN ELLIOTT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY

A DUTCH SURVIVOR

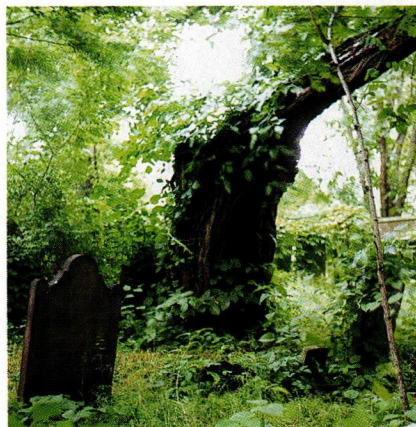
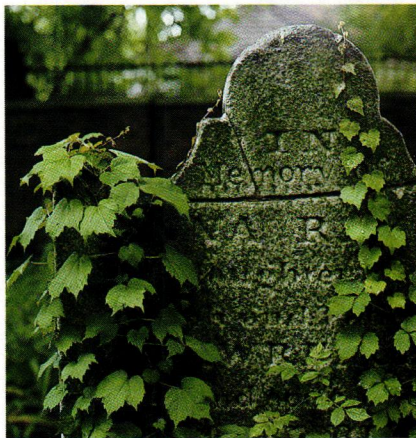


In the early 19th century, William R. Miller painted this view of the Riker-Lent house. The colonial Dutch dwelling has changed little over the years.

SCHERMERHORN STREET. DITMARS BOULEVARD. VREELAND AVENUE. Dutch-sounding street names seem to be the only surviving influence of the 17th-century settlers on New York City. Not so. Tucked away near Jackson Heights, Queens, sits the Riker-Lent house, a remnant of New Amsterdam. ¶ Built in 1656, the colonial Dutch dwelling stands on a 3/4-acre plot of land, close to Riker's Island and facing Bowery Bay on the East River. Neglected for over a generation, the Riker-Lent house would have been a footnote in Queens history had not Michael M. and Marion Smith stepped in. ¶ The Smiths began restoring the Dutch farmhouse in 1980. Michael, a publisher, bought the place from the Riker Estate. Marion, a pho-



Once layers of dark paint hid the beauty of the stairs and the mahogany railing. "It was a glorious day when we stripped the stairs," remarks Marion.



tographer, first saw the colonial Dutch house on her second date with Michael. (“Would you like to see my cemetery?” was his original, if unusual, line.) She felt an instant attachment to both man and building: “I found the man of my dreams and the home of my dreams at the same time.”

Originally, the Riker-Lent house was a one-room stone dwelling built by Abraham Lent (of the Dutch Riker-Lent family), grandson of an early Dutch settler. In 1654, he obtained a

LEFT (TOP TO BOTTOM): Returned by a Riker descendant, the missing letter ‘K’ is back where it belongs—attached to the cemetery gate. The obelisk stone marks the grave of the Abraham Riker who built the 1729 addition. Ivy drapes an ancient grave marker, possibly for one of the Revolutionary War heroes buried in the graveyard. An old, knotted tree stands witness “as one generation after another of this grand old family have been laid to rest.” **BELOW:** Recently, the patio was extended to meet the newly purchased balustrade and urns.

land grant for at least 120 acres from Governor Peter Stuyvesant. By 1729, the house was enlarged with a kitchen and a loft. Although the sequence of additions is unclear, the east wing of the house and the dormers were probably added between 1790 and 1810.

Only a few steps away is the family cemetery. A time-worn, iron gate emblazoned with the Riker name stands at its entrance. Dating from the 18th century, over a hundred Rikers, Lents, and their relatives are buried there. By the time the Smiths owned the house, the ‘K’ in the gate’s nameplate was missing. As word spread about their restoration, the owners received a heavy package in the mail. Inside was the long-lost ‘K’. Many years earlier, a descendant of the Riker family had visited the house and taken it as a memento.

The grounds extend out from the cemetery to a large cutting garden with



The Smiths discovered that the whitewashed, exposed beams in the dining room originally came from a barn that predated the 1656 house. The oldest room in the house, the dining room is more simply decorated, but not austere.





ABOVE: This doorway, leading into the kitchen, is thought to be the oldest part of the house. **RIGHT:** As part of the kitchen's restoration, a radiator that blocked the window was moved, opening up the view of the back yard.

beds of colorful flowers. The Smiths call the property "Paradise Acre," an appropriate appellation. A Victorian gazebo with decorative spandrels, put in to commemorate their 10th wedding anniversary, overlooks a lawn with a three-tiered fountain.

The main entrance still has its original Dutch (double-leaf) door, painted bright red. It leads into a central hallway with a dogleg staircase and high ceilings. This is the "new" (200-year-old) addition to the house.

No particular style dominates the interior of this 300-year-old house; every Riker generation left a mark. Marion's decorating reflects that. "I don't need pristine [furnishings]. If something's a little faded and I want it,



I put it in my house." She has incorporated family heirlooms, Riker memorabilia, and auction finds.

The attic was a treasure trove for Riker ephemera, not to mention junk. (It had not been cleaned in 100 years.) Some of the paper dated back to 1883; much of it was donated to a museum.

On the ground floor, the living room and the library are finished in the Federal style and have back-to-back fireplaces with carved mantels. Historically, living rooms (parlors) were



The 1950s fire had also spread into the kitchen. At first, the scorch marks that remained on the cabinets and a door bothered Marion, but she came to view them "as part of the house's history." Most visitors don't even notice the charred spots.





LEFT: To make the drapery for the living room, Marion combined vintage fabric with antique trim and fringe from an auction. **BELOW:** The Federal-style mantel in the dining room had to be gingerly removed, a nerve-racking process for the Smiths, before the wide-board floor could be laid.



always the showpieces of any house. To that end, Marion has filled the room with a rich display of damask-covered sofas and chairs, silver candelabras, and a ca. 1888 Steinway piano.

As they restored each room, Michael and Marion were sure that “that was the worst room in the house”—until they came to the next one. The dining room was their biggest challenge. The oldest room in the house, it was badly damaged in a 1950s fire. The exposed beams were charred and the wide-board floors had been replaced with inappropriate oak strips. So pine boards salvaged from an old outbuilding were installed. The aged wood of the mantel and paneling dominates the decor.

The dining room is adjacent to the kitchen, which was covered with Formica and linoleum, all of it since removed. They kept the old gas stove because it suited the room better than a modern one—besides, it worked fine. At an auction, Marion spotted a scrubbed pine sideboard that became the kitchen sink cupboard. The top of the sideboard was removed and replaced with tiles. Now the sideboard blends harmoniously with 100-year-old cabinetwork elsewhere in the kitchen.

The Smiths efforts have not gone unnoticed. The Riker/Ryker Historical Society made them honorary members and, most recently, they won a Landmark Preservation Award. But for the Smiths, the true reward is the Riker-Lent house itself—and preserving a bit of colonial Dutch history. ♦



The ca. 1888 Steinway piano in the living room is an appropriate touch—the Steinways, who manufactured pianos nearby, once lived at the farmhouse. The ornately carved mirror and picture frame were made by Michael's great-grandfather.

PERIOD
INTERIORS

R U S T I C

No other tradition is more evocative. A duck dances at dawn on Lake Placid. Daylight on a varnished wood staircase at Camp Santanoni reminds us that Rustic refers as much to architecture as furniture. The nature of materials is clear in a porch's posts and ceiling. All views are from the Adirondack region of New York. ABOVE: A more contemporary interpretation of Rustic in a private residence rebuilt after a fire.





REGIONAL TRADITIONS & CONTEMPORARY RUSTIC BY RALPH KYLLOE

RUSTIC FURNISHINGS ARE ANYTHING BUT NEW. ROLLING LOGS BEFORE THE FIRE, OUR ANCESTORS created the first rustic chair. Every society, every culture throughout time has had rustic furniture. The meaning and essence of the Rustic is its association with nature. However popular, the Rustic exists outside the mainstream, a slap in the face to high technology and society. The famous Indiana hickory furniture companies of this century experimented with adaptations by famous modern designers in the 1930s and 1940s, only to have those ballyhooed pieces abruptly discontinued. A posture too close to technology and the future distanced the furniture from the real meaning of rustic. ¶ There is something grotesque, mystical, playful, awe-inspiring, and occasionally evil inherent in nature. Elements within nature (and within ourselves) frighten us, yet we recognize our roots. The gnarls and twists in unmanipulated organic materials remind us of freedom and a disregard for convention that we sorely need. In the rustic, we find an opportunity to respond to the call.

Rustic is not just a furniture type, of course, but rather a statement of lifestyle. Most rustic furniture is comfortable and homey, and can be combined successfully with Mission, Shaker, Victorian, and modern pieces. The Rustic-style interior is most often associated with vacation resorts, where it gained popularity in the U.S. in the late 1800s, part of the same reaction against industrialization which fueled the Arts & Crafts Movement. The style will always be associated with the Adirondacks and the Maine camp, as well as the Appalachians and the frontier West. In truth, the Rustic appeared, in regional variations, nationwide and worldwide. It is tremendously popular again today, from New England

The Rustic interior is not complete without rustic collectibles, including fish creels, rustic picture frames, snowshoes, miniatures in twig and bark, taxidermy, souvenirs, and old camp signs.

to the Rockies and beyond.

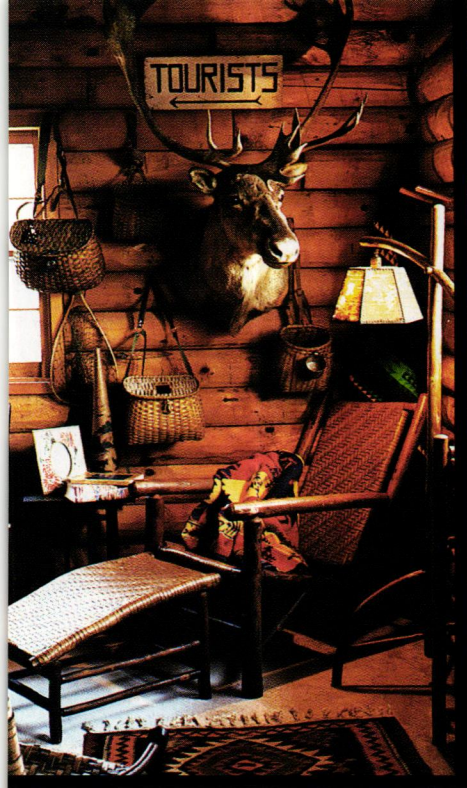
Rustic Americana can be defined as items—be they buildings, furniture, or accessories—made of twigs, logs, sticks, roots, tree stumps, or branches, and occasionally animal horns and antlers. Bark is left on many pieces, and little attempt is made to conceal natural aberrations of the material. Traditionally, rustic pieces had been made by untrained artisans and craftspeople, including park rangers, subsistence farmers, and prisoners. That is still true today, although hundreds of craftspeople are making a living on commissioned pieces.

Furniture is only one product of rustic craftsmanship. Other products include miniature canoes, picture frames, and wastebaskets from the bark of birch trees. Craftspeople built miniature sets of furniture and doll-size log cabins out of tiny sticks and twigs. Others constructed lighting,

clocks, and esoterica sold to the tourist trade. The inclusion of not only Rustic furniture but also memorabilia from our wilderness, hunting, and fishing experiences into our living spaces defines the Rustic style. Indigenous materials usually dictate the style and type of furniture made, so regional differences are quite discernible.

Northwoods Although this style is most formally recognized as “Adirondack,” for the beautiful mountain lakes region of upstate New York, Northwoods items came from wilderness areas across the Northeast. Trappers, guides, and craftsmen from Maine to the Dakotas made rustic furniture as well as extraordinary log homes to serve as guest quarters for the wealthy during summer months. Items were constructed from local materials including cedar, yellow and white birch, and hardwoods. Pieces were made from the stumps of trees, cov-





ered with sheets of bark, or adorned with twigs in intricate patterns commonly referred to as “mosaic.”

Indiana Hickory Certainly the most widespread and visible of the various types of rustic furnishings are pieces made by 10 different companies in Indiana. There, beginning in 1892, craftsmen constructed comfortable, widely sold furniture from hickory poles, abundant in the Midwest. The largest and most prolific of these companies was the Old Hickory Furniture Company (1899–1972) located in Martinsville. They offered over 125 different pieces of furniture in their 1922 catalog; production of approximately 2,000 pieces a week went on for 65 years. Their furniture was shipped all over the country and to Europe. Hickory furnishings are known for their rugged appeal, comfort, and durability. The glory years were 1899 through the 1930s.

Southern Root and Twig In the back woods of the Appalachian

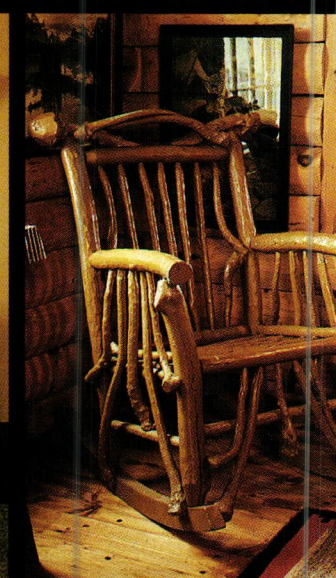
mountains, Southern builders made massive tables, chairs, rockers, and other impressive items out of the gigantic rhododendron bushes that grew there. The Southern gypsies developed hooped or circle-backed chairs and settees that are easily identified. Amish communities also developed their own styles of chairs made from young shoots of willow. Branches from willow trees were harvested, steamed, and bent into shapes that made incredibly comfortable rocking chairs.

The most impressive of the Southern builders was the Reverend Ben Davis of Mars Hill, North Carolina. Beginning around 1910, he created dining-room sets, sideboards, rockers, picture frames, and numerous other pieces. He was, in fact, an itinerant preacher who often resided at the home of a parishioner for six months or more. In exchange for room and board, he gave his guests complete sets of furniture. His sought-after pieces are stunning, each covered with hundreds of tiny rhododendron roots that he chip-carved with a small pen knife.

Three views of Rustic: a well-composed corner in the home of a collector; the patina of a beach house at Mirror Lake Inn on Lake Placid; a contemporary interior (including furnishings) by Bruce Gunderson.

Antler and Horn Antler furniture appeared in Switzerland and Scotland at the beginning of the Victorian period. In a short time, American builders also began constructing chairs and tables of antlers, or used pieces of antler as further embellishment on case furniture. Builders in both the Southwest and Chicago (remember the stockyards) began constructing chairs and tables from the horns of longhorn steer and buffalo. These items were highly regarded by a segment of society.

Western and Cowboy Cowboy may be considered a style unto itself, but it belongs to the Rustic tradition. Toward the end of the Victorian period, creative cowboys occasionally spent lonely hours making furniture that incorporated the spirit of the West and the freedom of the trail. Early pieces were often constructed



The many types of Rustic furniture, clockwise from above: Indiana hickory; applied chip-carved root sideboard by the Reverend Ben Davis; Adirondack birchbark desk, and a Southern root and twig chair; European horn and antler; and cedar gypsy furniture, characterized by the circle backs.



of lodgepole pine and juniper trees. Western builders incorporated the knots, burls, and contortions so common in Western trees.

In the 1930s, Thomas Molesworth introduced a line of furniture from his shop in Cody, Wyoming. Although it was already the modern era of the 20th century, Molesworth's furniture was an instant success. The owners of many resorts, retreats, restaurants, and private residences purchased his furniture, some of it massive. Cowboys and Indians, sunset themes, and other frontier wilderness motifs appear in his many case pieces, bedroom suites, dining-room sets, and accessories. A profoundly prolific designer, he was commissioned to design and build not only furniture, but chandeliers, door hinges, pianos, dishes, and every other amenity as well.

RUSTIC TRENDS

ASPECTS OF THE RUSTIC TRADITION ARE finding their way back into our lives and houses. Consider that, each year, more than 20,000 log homes go up around the country. Stores and mail-order dealers cater specifically to Rustic decor. New rustic-furniture builders from coast to coast are finding great demand for their art, while interior designers scramble to find sources for clients. In this wave of affection for the rustic, the style is no longer confined to vacation camps and fishing cabins. It is a choice for primary homes as well.

A sympathy between Arts & Crafts interiors and the Rustic is longstanding. These two styles are being combined today, just as they were at the turn of the century. According to reports, both Charles Limbert and Gustav Stickley visited health spas in Martinsville and saw the efforts of the



Antiques carry the usual mystique and are quite collectible. For practical reasons, some pieces are better bought new; beds, for example, were not available in the queen and king sizes popular today. Vacation furniture doesn't always weather well over 60 years. Also, certain early makers produced limited numbers of pieces, which are either very dear or residing in museums. In the U.S., perhaps 500 individuals and several companies are presently making excellent Rustic furniture. They exhibit at the large outdoor shows, including Brimfield, Mass.; Kutztown, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Springfield, Ohio; and many others. Check your regional antiques-market newsletter.

The Adirondack Museum in upstate New York has a yearly exhibit and sale for makers of new Rustic furniture. You may also wish to attend the annual Western Design Conference in Cody, Wyoming, where you'll hear experts lecture on Rustic furniture traditions, as well as see the exhibits of 25 of the best Western Rustic builders.

Adirondack Museum
P.O. Box 99, Route 30
Blue Mountain Lake, NY 12812
(518) 352-7311

Western Design Conference
1108 14th Street, #105
Cody, Wyoming 82414
(307) 587-5898

After the Old Hickory Furniture Company at Martinsville stopped making Rustic chairs, they were deluged with requests to resume production, yet the industry sat idle for 30 years. In the mid-'80s, the company was revived.

Old Hickory Furniture Company
403 S. Noble Street
Shelbyville, IN 46176
(800) 232-2275
Catalog, \$25 (to retail buyers)

hickory furniture builders there. Limbert, who had his own popular line of Mission furniture, acted as agent for Old Hickory from 1896 until 1905. And many porches of Stickley's line of Craftsman Homes (published in the *The Craftsman*) show hickory furniture.

The philosophies of the two movements were consistent. The only difference was that the Arts-&Crafts practitioners were articulate, capable of expressing their ideologies and views toward work and life in general. Rustic builders, on the other hand—simple men and folk artists—were not.

Along with escalating prices for old Rustic furniture and collectibles, the log-home boom is an indication that things Rustic have come to be regarded as classic folk art, with relevance to contemporary society. That's an academic way of saying that the Rustic touches something deep within us. ♦

Ralph Kylloe is a lecturer and author of several books and many articles on Rustic style and design, including *Rustic Traditions* (Gibbs-Smith), regarded as a leading resource on the subject. He has decorated hundreds of houses, stores, and businesses around the world. His own home has appeared in several magazines, and his personal collection of Rustic furniture has been exhibited at museums in New York City and Boston. Contact: Ralph Kylloe Rustic Gallery Antiques, Lake Luzerne Road, P.O. Box 669, Lake George, NY 12845; (518) 696-5182. He also works from Londonderry, N.H.: (603) 437-2920.

PHOTO CREDITS

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LAKESIDE RUSTIC

A 1927 vacation house in rural New Jersey epitomizes the rustic tradition: log construction, Indiana hickory furniture, taxidermy, big porches, and vacations spent outdoors.

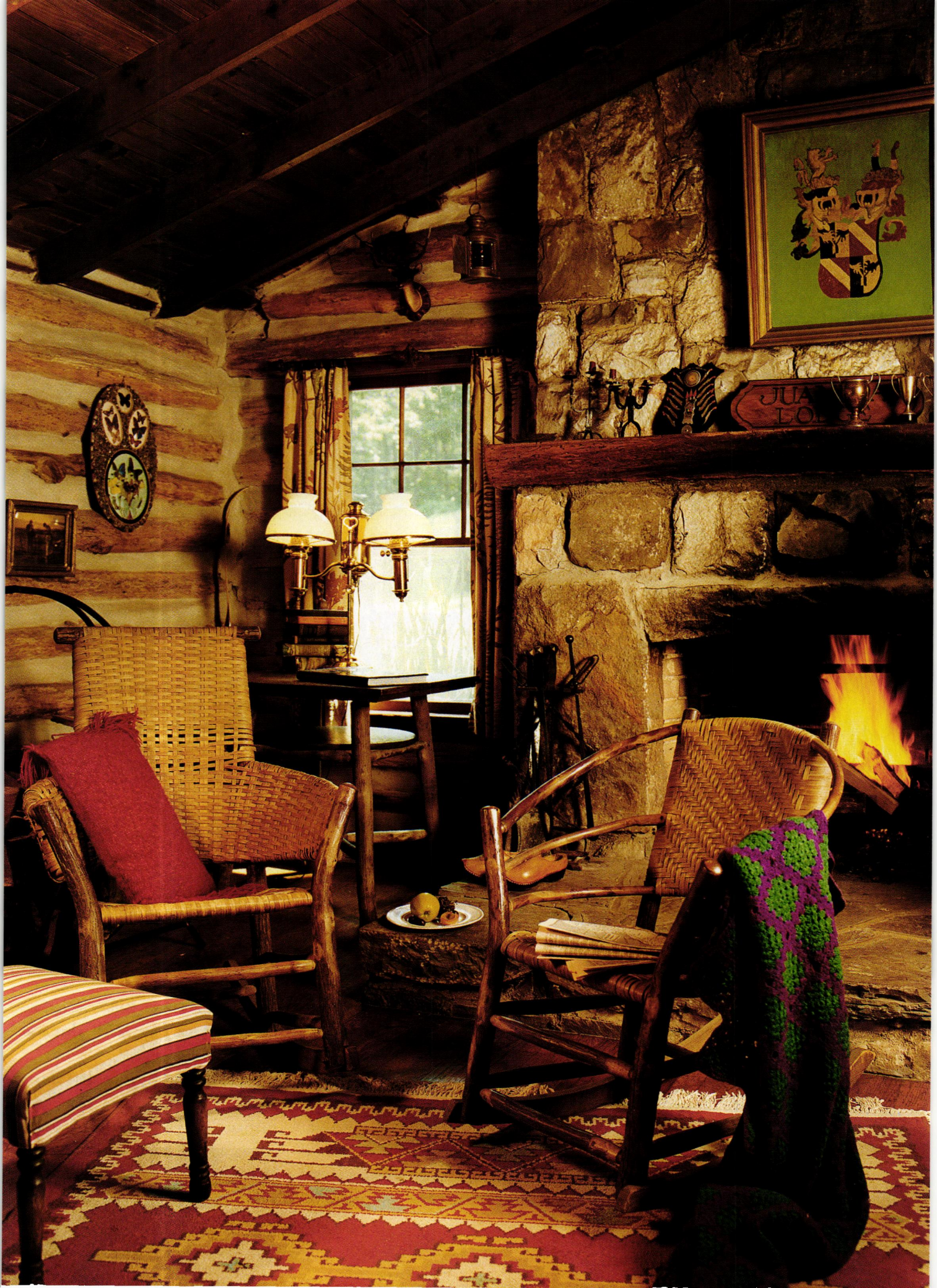
By Regina Cole / Photographs by Scott Dorrance



AMERICANS LOVE LOG HOUSES, revering them as the birthplaces of presidents, rude shelters built by brave and resourceful pioneers with nothing more than an axe. Ever since early settlers moved out of their log cabins, in fact, city folk, emulating Thoreau, have moved back in. What better way to commune with nature than from a shelter so obviously made from the surrounding trees? As wilderness vacation destinations, log houses define the term “rustic.”

One such vacation log house was built on a northwestern New Jersey lake in 1927. A man of some substance, the builder owned property in the surrounding countryside, including a hillside farm only a short walk away. But his family didn't have a place to “rusticate”—to fish and hunt, to sleep with the windows open to the breeze, to spend afternoons gazing at the sparkling surface of the lake, perhaps even to bathe in its water. And so Juanita Lodge, named after the builder's daughter Jane, was built from trunks of the native oak, with cement daubed

Since 1927, Juanita Lodge has been a place to relax and to play. The bedrooms and the verandah overlook the lake. RIGHT: During the 1930s, an attached garage became the den. Easily warmed by the fireplace, the small room is a cozy retreat.





between the logs.

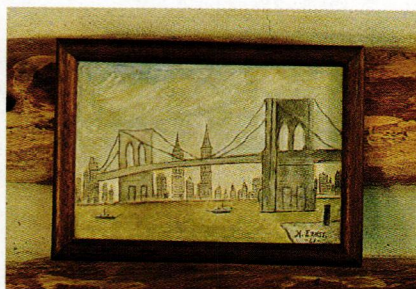
At Juanita Lodge, rustic didn't mean primitive. There was an attached garage, a fieldstone boathouse, and a small suite behind the kitchen for the butler and the maid. But the house was emphatically a vacation destination, and that's what it has been ever since.

"Daddy bought the house in 1946,"

today's owner says. "He had a collection of antique gold and enameled snuffboxes, which he sold to Henry Ford in order to buy this place. The first owner used the money to set his sons up in business." She hesitates, then continues. "Some time later Daddy stopped by at the original owner's farm to chat and to tell him how much we

all loved the house. Before he left he bought a dozen eggs. Well, that man charged him top dollar!"

The egg story has become a part of Juanita Lodge's folklore. One of the pastimes at a vacation house is storytelling, and the stories of Juanita Lodge are created, told, and retold over meals at the huge dining room table, over



FAR LEFT AND ABOVE: The 60 x 30 foot living room, with its encircling upstairs balcony, is anchored with a fireplace at either end. One of the house's stories is that the original owner's sons swung from the rafters, hand over hand, to get to the bathroom across from their bedrooms. **LEFT:** A guest with artistic leanings left a painting which shows an earlier view of the Brooklyn Bridge, not so far away (in miles, at least).

board games in the evening, and during lazy afternoons spent on the stone verandah. There are stories of parties and weddings, stories about how the first owner's sons swung from the rafters . . . and then there's the story about the house being a replica of Will Rogers's house. Disputed by some family members, its veracity is unimpor-

tant compared to the image the story conjures up: that of a large, rustic house, hospitable and comfortable, convenient to the pleasures of the out-of-doors. If Will Rogers had a log house, it would surely be just like this one.

Contrary to summer-house tradition, the original owner ordered a houseful of new furniture to fit the rus-

ticating theme; there would be no castoffs from the house in town. Today the rooms are still full of those settees, tables, chairs, footstools, chaises, rockers, and occasional pieces. A label under a tabletop identifies the collection: "A Reflection of Nature's Beauty," the faded paper reads. "Rustic Hickory Furniture Company, LaPorte,



The hickory dining room table seats 12 for meals, or it accommodates large and small groups who while away rainy afternoons with games and books. The table and dining room chairs came from the Rustic Hickory Furniture Company in LaPorte, Indiana. During the first part of this century countless summer homes and camps were furnished like this.





LEFT: The distant drone of a motorboat, a breeze lifting the curtains, and time to read before dinner—this is what a summer afternoon should be. **LEFT, BELOW:** The bathrooms open from a short hall. On the left are two rooms, each containing a sink and a toilet; on the right are a bathtub and a shower, each in their own room. **RIGHT:** Close by the screen door to the lake are fishing poles, the key to the boat, an umbrella, and mementos of past guests. One rowed out into the lake and painted the house. The picture now hangs over the hickory picket-fence desk.

Indiana. Makers of Rustic Hickory Natural Wood Furniture for Summer Homes, Lodges, Camps and Country Clubs—Inside and Out.”

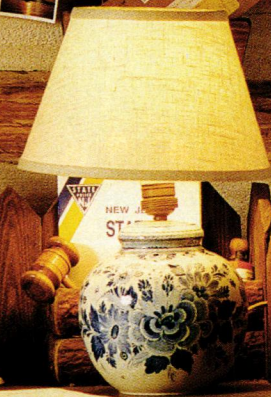
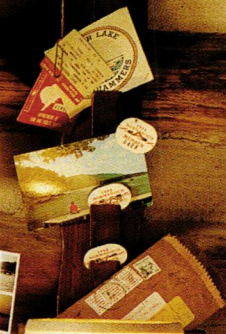
During the first part of this century, the Rustic Hickory Furniture Company was one of the two largest Indiana manufacturers of the endearing peeled-log and woven bark pieces that Americans recognize from countless “summer homes, lodges, camps and country clubs.” Another well-known manufacturer, the Old Hickory Furniture Company, is back in business today (see Resources, page 102). At Juanita Lodge, the furniture is old but solid, and immensely comfortable.

Very little has changed since 1927. The bark has worn off the oak logs. The garage became a den during the 1930s. The butler and the maid are long gone. Some of the rugs have finally worn through.

But these are small changes. The spirit of Juanita Lodge, as a family vacation house, is unchanged.

“The grandparents live at the lake, and their children bring the grandchildren,” the owner says. “Eventually the grandparents die, the grandchildren grow up, and then they bring their children to play at the lake. We come in in wet bathing suits, we use the house and don’t treat it as a showplace. And it’ll be here when we’re not.” ♦



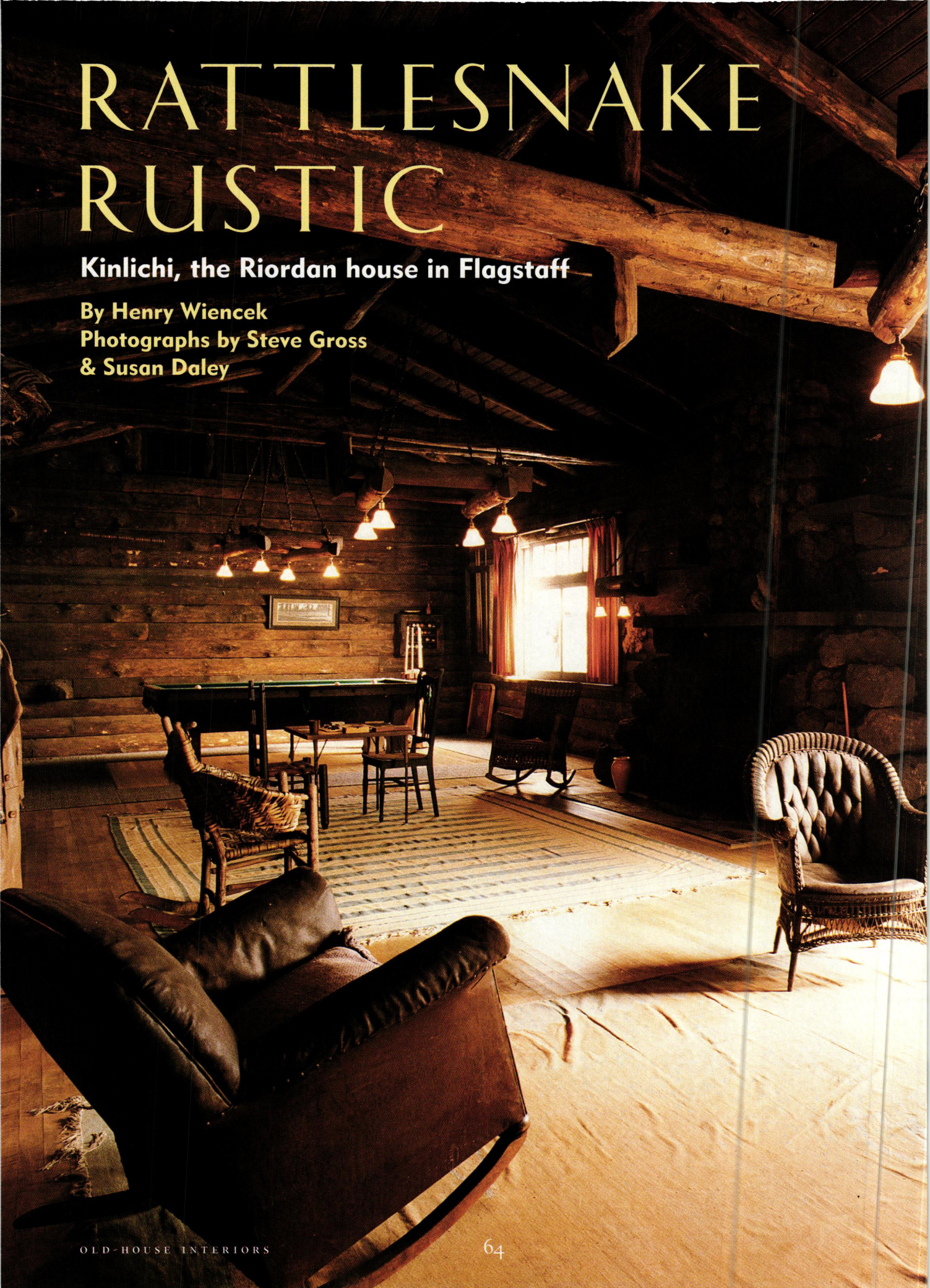


RATTLESNAKE RUSTIC

Kinlich, the Riordan house in Flagstaff

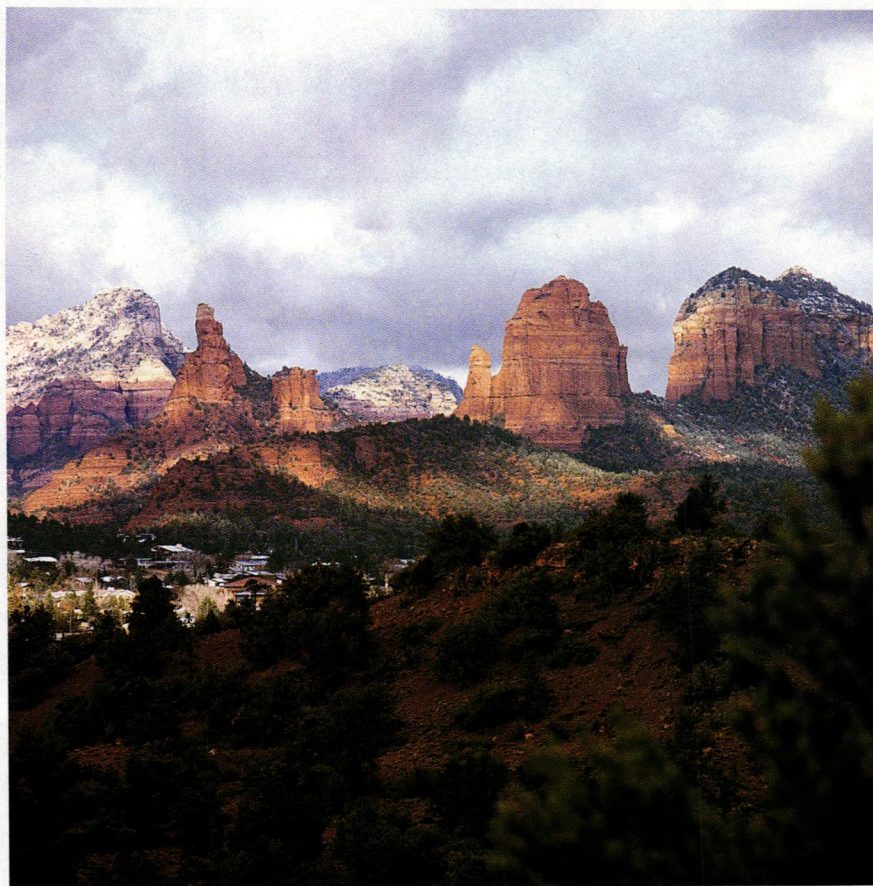
By Henry Wienczek

**Photographs by Steve Gross
& Susan Daley**





Bare wooden walls and a ceiling of peeled log beams, stonework, and iron epitomize the Rustic style, which harmonizes with the Craftsman style of other rooms. The cabin room was at the common center of this house built in 1903 by two brothers who married two sisters. **ABOVE:** Arizona's San Francisco Peaks—certainly not the Adirondacks.



IN THE 1880S, THREE IRISH BROTHERS FROM CHICAGO CAME TO THE ROUGH-and-tumble lumber mills in the Arizona Territory and made a fortune. Denis Riordan was first. After failing to strike it rich in the goldfields of California, he took the job of Navaho Indian agent at Fort Defiance in Arizona. He was soon running a lumber mill, and invited brothers Timothy and Michael to join him in Flagstaff. Eventually the younger brothers bought the mill, and married German-Catholic sisters Caroline and Elizabeth Metz. Tim and Michael decided to build a single large house for the two families—each would have a generous wing, with a large common room in the middle. In 1903 they hired the architect of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, the company that had made them prosperous, and built the house out of their own product, virgin pine. ¶ The house—called *Kinlichi*, a Navaho word meaning “red house”—has forty rooms and 13,000 square feet of living space. (Tim and Caroline would have two daughters; Michael and Elizabeth, two daughters and three sons.) Architect Charles Whittlesey designed the house in the avant-garde Craftsman style—spacious, informal, and comfortable. The exception was the cabin room, done in the popular frontier-rustic style of Whittlesey’s El Tovar Hotel at the Grand Canyon; it is furnished with cabin furniture, includ-





ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Up to date in conveniences, the house had central heating and electric lights. Tiffany & Co. made the ceiling fixtures, as well as the set of stained-glass windows with a tulip motif. • Like the rest of the house, informal and comfortable: an arched inglenook around the fireplace in the unrestored wing. • Designed by Charles Whittlesey, the architect of the El Tovar Hotel at the Grand Canyon, the house was constructed by employees of the Riordan brothers' lumber mill, many of whom were Hispanic. The Douglas fir dining table was made at the mill. Fabric covers the walls. • It may not look like a product of the late Gilded Age, yet few houses breathe a greater sense of self-confidence, properly moderated pride, and pure happiness than does the rustic mansion of the Riordans. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM:** Both wings of the house are decorated with Craftsman-influenced American Arts & Crafts furniture and finishes. Much of the furniture was made by Gustav or L. and J.G. Stickley.

including hot and cold running water, central heat, and electric lights. Stained-glass tulip windows, chandeliers, and lamps were ordered from Tiffany and Company.

The common space, or cabin room, has almost 900 square feet itself. On opposite sides of the room the families kept a billiards table and a piano, reflecting masculine and feminine pursuits. For the windows, Michael ordered "window transparencies," large black-and-white photographs on glass of Indian chiefs, Indian ruins, and natural wonders of the Southwest. They were made by Jack Hillers, the great frontier photographer who went along on John Wesley Powell's second expedition through the Grand Canyon. Fascinated by Southwest Indian culture, the Riordans helped finance Powell's archaeological digs at Walnut Creek Canyon near Flagstaff.

ing hickory and turn-of-the-century wicker pieces. Wanting brand-new furniture for their brand-new house, the couples appropriately ordered Stickley pieces, early examples which remain in the house. Frontier or not, the house had up-to-date conveniences

The Riordan House, Arizona State Parks, Flagstaff, Arizona; (520) 779-4395. Park Manager John Marvin calls this "the finest Craftsman house in Arizona"; indeed, is there a better example in the Southwest? The Timothy Riordan family wing has been cleaned and gently restored; along with the rustic cabin room, it may be toured throughout the year. (Michael Riordan's half, a time capsule of original finishes, is in need of conservation and will be open at a future date.) A phone call first is wise, and a reservation is recommended at peak times.

THE UNUSUAL PATTERN OF MARRYING siblings was nearly duplicated by the next generation of Riordans. Tim's daughter Mary and her cousin, Michael's daughter Blanche, married two brothers, Bob and Walter Chambers.

After Michael died in 1930, Tim sold the mill because no one in the family was interested in the business. The last Riordan to occupy the house was Blanche, who died in 1986, bequeathing the house and many furnishings and effects to the state of Arizona. From time to time, Blanche smelled the scent of burning tobacco and found ashes scattered about when no smokers had been in the house; and recently some have heard, echoing from the cabin room, a faint clicking of billiard balls. ♦

Henry Wiencek wrote the text of *OLD HOUSES* (reviewed on page 26), the book that introduced us to the Riordan house. He is the author of two books on American architecture (*MANSIONS OF THE VIRGINIA GENTRY* and *PLANTATIONS OF THE DEEP SOUTH*), as well as two volumes in the *SMITHSONIAN GUIDE TO HISTORIC AMERICA*.

MOOSEHEAD RUSTIC

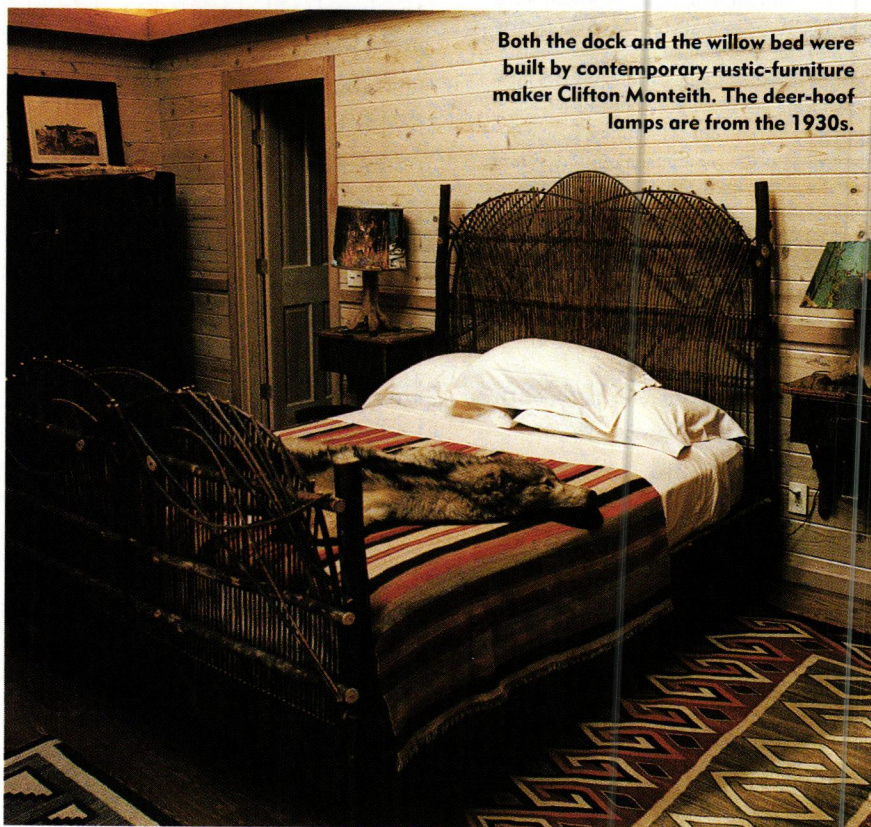
Craftsmanship in Maine

By Patricia Poore

Photographs by Ralph Kylloe

FIND MOOSEHEAD LAKE ON A MAP of Maine. It is vast, and remote; Northwoods winters come early and stay late.

But Rustic is not only a summerhouse style. Here, Navaho textiles and big fireplaces welcome the weary year-round. Appropriately, this is a place where the rustic tradition continues, in a house finished in 1991. Familiar hallmarks of the style—log beams, walls of unfinished pine, river-stone fireplaces—nevertheless combine to create light-flooded rooms that are unmistakably contemporary. Furnishings include outstanding antique examples, including a mosaic twigwork desk and an antler settee, as well as Indiana hickory chairs and mica lamps from the 1920s. Significantly, however, much of the furniture is new, not copies of anything but rather expres-



Both the dock and the willow bed were built by contemporary rustic-furniture maker Clifton Monteith. The deer-hoof lamps are from the 1930s.

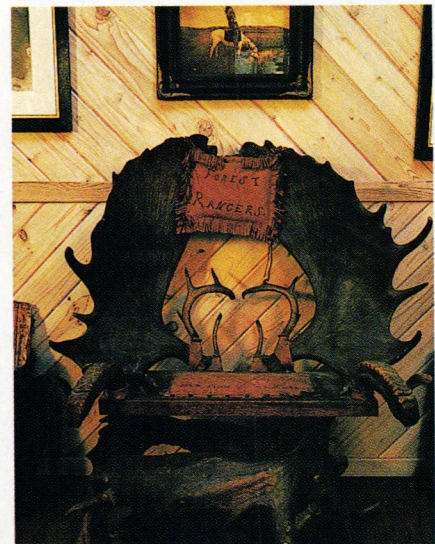
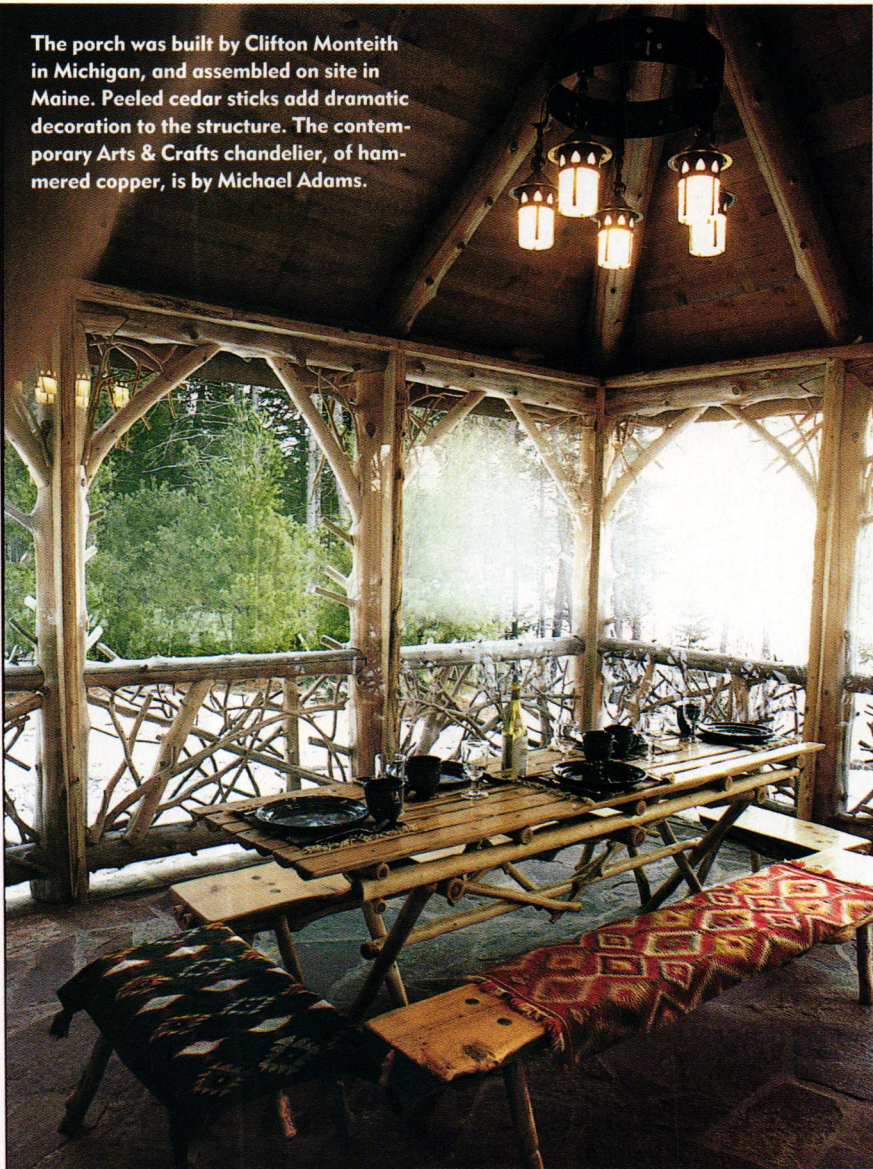


Even with its almost spare, contemporary view of Rustic, this living room sets a mood of relaxation and comfort. Throughout the house, new and antique pieces, including the 1920s Indiana hickory armchair and table lamp here, mix with Indian baskets and a few Stickley tables.

Throw pillows made from antique Navaho rugs contribute bold color and pattern.



The porch was built by Clifton Monteith in Michigan, and assembled on site in Maine. Peeled cedar sticks add dramatic decoration to the structure. The contemporary Arts & Crafts chandelier, of hammered copper, is by Michael Adams.



sions of this living style by contemporary artisans.

Several pieces are by Clifton Monteith, a rustic builder who lives in Lake Ann, Michigan. Ten years ago, he made a twig chair, supposedly for himself, but it sold immediately when a friend placed it in a gallery. So did the next one. Monteith left New York for Michigan and began making bent-twig and twig-mosaic furniture full time.

At the Maine house, Monteith worked with architect Ed Knowles on the building itself. He crafted the lakeshore dock and an entire porch back in Michigan, then disassembled and shipped them to the site, where

TOP: A contemporary armchair by Clifton Monteith and an antique lamp by Old Hickory. **CENTER:** The antique antler settee was constructed in the Canadian Rockies at the turn of the century, probably by local forest rangers. The photo behind is by Edward Curtis, famed photographer of the American Indian. **BOTTOM:** A contemporary kitchen cupboard, also by Monteith, is constructed of young willow shoots. It holds a collection of antique Dedham pottery.

he put them back together. The footprint and structural elements of the porch, as well as its connection to the house, were designed by the architect. The rustic expression is all Monteith.

• Please refer to Resources on page 102 for more information.



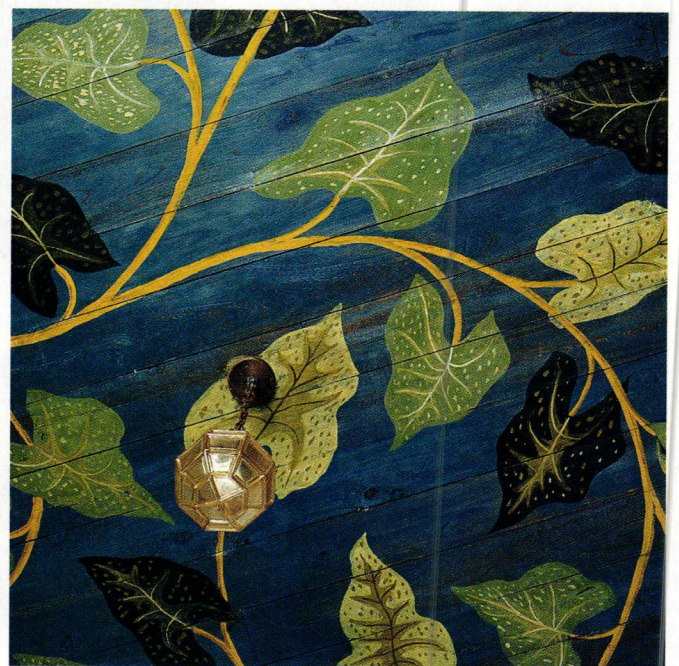
A gilded Baroque column initiated this outrageously decorative door surround. Split in half, it became two engaged columns; the ornate design was completed by the owner of Bonnet House, artist Frederic Clay Bartlett. The painting on the left, also by Frederic Bartlett, is of his son Clay. The drawing room has a floor of Ojus tiles crafted to resemble marble. Art Deco chairs flanking the mantel reflect the period of the house, which was begun in 1920 and decorated during the 1930s.



MRS. BARTLETT'S OASIS

TEXT BY PATRICIA POORE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS AND SUSAN DALEY

NOTHING ABOUT THIS SUBTROPICAL ESTATE IS TYPICAL. A balcony-wrapped plantation house, it is not of the antebellum South, but of the Art Deco era. Its interior displays not restrained classicism, but an almost manic creativity. Deeded to the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation in 1983, the property is still the winter home of its 107-year-old mistress. And it is a literal oasis: 35 tranquil acres in the midst of Fort Lauderdale's expansion.



Mrs. Bartlett's house is named Bonnet House for the bonnet lily, a yellow water lily that has grown on the property since early days. The family name is that of Evelyn Fortune Bartlett's late husband, the artist Frederic Clay Bartlett. This acreage is part of a vast land tract purchased by Hugh Taylor Birch of Chicago during the 1890s. Birch, a lifelong friend of Frederic Bartlett, was the father of Frederic's wife Helen, who died after only

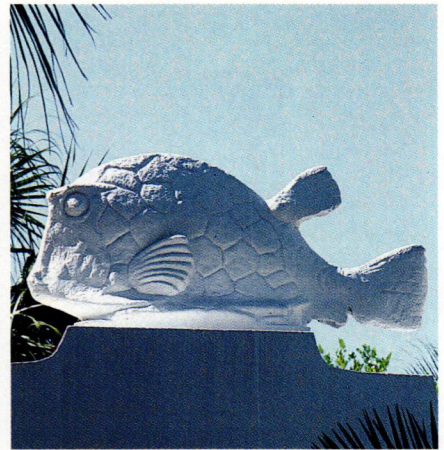
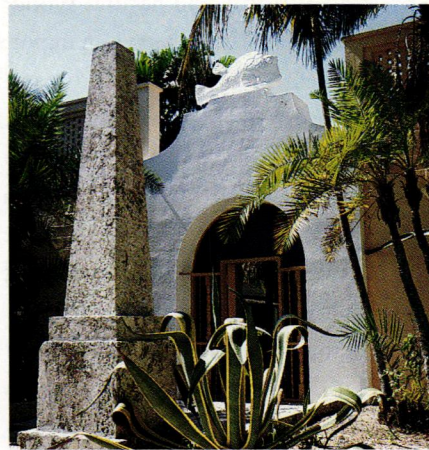
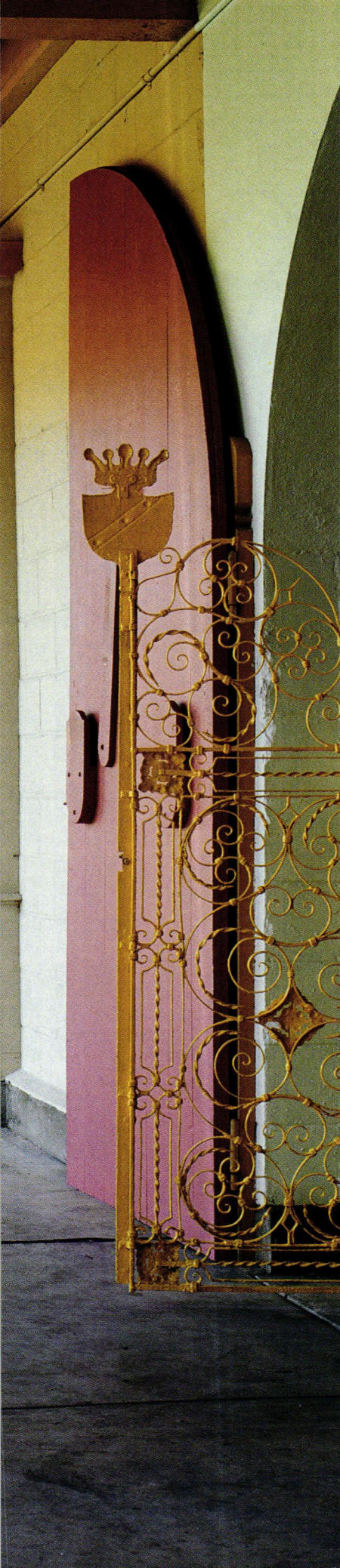
six years of marriage. It was during Frederic's marriage to Helen Birch that he designed Bonnet House, acting as architect, artist, and craftsman. Construction started in 1920. It was, even then, an eclectic and worldly place. Bartlett used indigenous materials, such as coral rock and Dade County pine, in a structure that took full advantage of modern construction practice.

Inside, too, the house has individualistic character. Frederic Bartlett

The house is a fantasy structure whimsically—and boldly—decorated by two creative people. Gild the lily? Why not? **TOP LEFT:** Elaborate shellwork and an artist's brushstrokes enliven a house filled with treasures. **TOP RIGHT** and **OPPOSITE:** The music room boasts an outstanding example of Frederic Bartlett's fanciful paintwork—on the floor. **ABOVE LEFT:** The trompe-l'oeil balustrade in Mr. Bartlett's studio delighted visiting friends, including Frank Lloyd Wright. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Freehand leaves painted on the ceiling in the west loggia (interior courtyard), next to the entrance to Mr. Bartlett's studio.





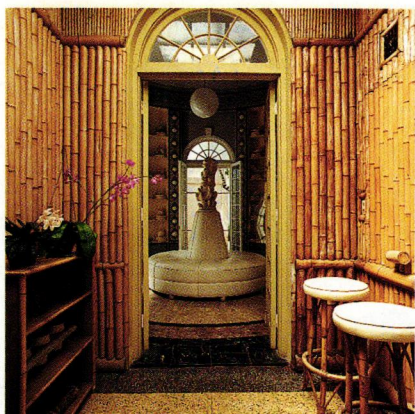
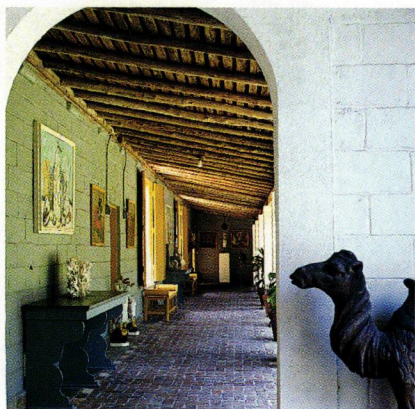


LEFT: With the addition of simple bamboo furniture, the magnificent verandah becomes an outdoor living room when Mrs. Bartlett is in residence. The faceted bays were added during the mid-1930s. **TOP:** The eastern facade of Bonnet House is reflected in the water of a lagoon dredged from a marshy, freshwater slough. **ABOVE:** Outside the gates of the main, south entrance to Bonnet House stand obelisks made of coral rock. The east entrance to the courtyard, too, is adorned with a plaster cowfish.

was a designer, painter, and muralist celebrated in his time. Although work on the house diminished after the death of his wife Helen, Bartlett threw himself into its completion and decoration after his marriage to Evelyn. An artistic spirit herself, Evelyn was coaxed by her husband to paint in watercolors

and oils. The two of them filled the house with objects of whimsy, and with decorative painting full of joy and humor.

The house itself, one room deep to allow coastal breezes to pass through, was designed for Florida living. The enclosed courtyard is sur-



FAR RIGHT: Near the residence is a circular building that houses the property's "shell museum," where seashells from around the world are displayed on curved shelves. The borders and frieze were hand-painted by Frederic Bartlett. **TOP:** Decoration surrounds a door to the west loggia; a Haitian painting hangs on the opposite wall. **CENTER:** The view down the walkway that surrounds the courtyard, seen from the west loggia. **ABOVE:** The intimate bamboo bar: subtropical Rustic?

rounded by covered walkways with painted ceilings.

Bonnet House sits just above a lagoon dredged from a natural freshwater slough. Guava, surinam cherry, avocado, and citrus trees, imported by the Bartletts and now naturalized, support a thriving environment sculpted by artistic hands from marshland and sandy dunes. Residents of the property include 50 descendants of two Brazilian squirrel monkeys who escaped servitude in a nearby nightclub many years ago. Just beyond the residence with its courtyard and studio is a complex that includes the orchid house, the bamboo bar, and the circular shell museum.

Leaving treasures to the public trust is a family trait. Hugh Taylor Birch deeded back almost two thousand acres to the State of Florida, "to preserve wildlife and natural woodland." Frederic Bartlett gave an important collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting to the Art Institute of Chicago. Now Evelyn Bartlett has assured the preservation of Bonnet House with her gift. The timeless oasis, made of imagination and love and joy, will remain.

Bonnet House, although a product of its time, is truly one of a kind. Its very eccentricity is a reminder of how critical an owner's expression is to style. In 22 years of marriage, Frederic and Evelyn Bartlett developed a style all their own, wonderfully free of trends or expectations. They appreciated talent—in the world and in themselves. ♦

*Thank you to Linda Irwin, a director of the Bonnet House, and to Jayne Rice, whose book *Reflections of a Legacy* was a valuable reference. Bonnet House, 900 North Birch Road, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304; (305) 563-5393.*







The cats are part of Frederic Bartlett's carousel collection, a wooden menagerie to go with the real one living on the 35-acre estate.

NEWLY CHIC PAST

Spring break is history now • by Sherrie Somers

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, IS CROSSING into the millenium by unearthing its history. And the master plan for the city's renaissance is under an influential guiding hand: Mayor Jim Naugle is devoted to preservation.

This vacation destination is renowned as a popular beachfront, with spectacular boating and continuing development of swank golf and tennis resorts. But Naugle looks into the future with one eye on the past.

Begin with a drive along A1A and the refurbished \$26-million beachfront: the high-amp beachfront bars are no longer dominant. Relaxed open-air bistros cast breezy music out to the Atlantic. Included in the restoration is a palm-lined promenade; at night, a neon light beams an Art Deco influence.

Preservation is the atmosphere along this ocean drive. The front of the old Lauderdale Beach Hotel remains as the facade for a hotel yet to be built. The building housing the **Casablanca** restaurant at A1A and Alhambra Street has taken on new prominence as a historic landmark. This restored site was designed by Francis L. Abreu, who came to the area during the land rush of the 1920s. Addison Mizner usually comes to mind regarding South Florida's Spanish-style architecture, but Abreu is credited with Spanish design in Fort Lauderdale. Here's a quick list of must-see sites for the history-minded traveler:

■ **The Elbo Room** is housed in a building constructed in 1938. Typical of the old beachfront, it has withstood not only horrific winds but also student pandemonium, maturing into a relaxed meeting area for vacationers.

■ **The Bonnet House** looks out to A1A and the estate's private beach.

■ **Las Olas Boulevard**, an east/west link, connects the beach with the downtown over the Intracoastal Waterway. Tall, majestic Royal Palms stand as a measure of time. And, while new construction is taking place along Las Olas (meaning "the

waves"), the boulevard identifies with developments of the '20s.

Accessible from Las Olas is **Idlewyld**, a 1921 subdivision, with elegant Mediterranean Revival architecture. **Venice Isles**, also an early subdivision and designed with "finger islands," captures the character of Fort Lauderdale's early construction.

The blocks where the high-end Las Olas shops, galleries, and antique stores are located is a place to stop, park, and stroll the shady sidewalks. (A pleasant carriage ride is also an option.) **The Riverside Hotel** exudes a '30s intimacy.

■ At the river's edge is **The Stranahan House**. Built in 1901, the house museum showcases the beauty and durability of Dade County pine, used for the interior walls. Classic frontier Florida architecture here: high ceilings, narrow windows, wide verandahs.

■ East Las Olas ends at the downtown. Not far to sw 2nd Avenue is **Riverwalk**, an ambling walkway along the banks of the New River. Here visitors will discover a cluster of Fort Lauderdale history.

The Chart House Restaurant (formerly the Bryan Homes) was originally two, two-storey structures, built by the Philemon Bryan family in 1907.

The New River Inn, ca. 1905, is scheduled for conversion into a house museum. Built with hollow concrete blocks, it was a haven for elite travelers riding the Florida East Coast Railroad, which chugged into Fort Lauderdale in 1896. **The King-Cromartie House**, also at Riverwalk, featured the city's first indoor bathroom and acetylene lighting.

■ **Fort Lauderdale Historical Society** is a greeting center for visitors, and features ongoing exhibits in addition to its archives and library. Curator Susan Gillis is a wealth of information. The Historical Society will direct you to the **Village of Sailboat Bend**, named a historic district in 1991. Many of the houses now being restored were built from 1924 to 1928. Left in disrepair, they owe their lives to Dade County pine, a lumber


impervious to termites. The revitalized area is a serene neighborhood that mixes masonry bungalows with small wood-framed houses. Healthy thickets of tropical foliage add a cool lushness to the lots. New infill construction is influenced by historical plans.

■ Being on land is only one vantage point. In addition to trolley and bus tours, many types of sightseeing boats, from large riverboats and local water taxis to small boat rentals, cruise the waterways. **Guided boat tours** mix old



and new and afford visitors another way to see the architecture of older, prestigious properties.

For more information: Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, 219 SW 2nd Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301; (305) 463-4431 (Tuesday-Friday, 10-4 PM). For general sightseeing information: Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau, 200 East Las Olas Boulevard, Suite 1500, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301; (305) 765-4466.



In a master bathroom suite, a 4' x 6' whirlpool tub is built into a windowed alcove and framed by a pilastered arch. The pale colors of the walls and woodwork lend a cool, elegant ambiance well suited to the Edwardian house.



BATHING BEAUTIES

THE FITTED BATH RETURNS

W

WHEN BATHROOMS WERE FIRST installed in the homes of the upper classes between 1875 and 1900, there was nothing to guide homeowners in the treatment of these new sanitary facilities. ♦ They did the logical thing: they treated the fixtures as furniture, while the room itself was decorated along the lines of a bedroom or a study. Function was submerged in the familiar lines of traditional cabinetry, and the result was a fitted bath. ♦ That sort of approach is back with the advent of private steambaths, whirlpool tubs, and master suites. Two examples are shown here. Their surface finishes are very different, but both are “fitted.” One, with its rich use of mahogany and brass, resembles the interior of a yacht or a cabin on the Orient Express. The other is reminiscent of a butler’s pantry or some other high-ranked service area in a late Victorian house. ♦ That large master bath is a carefully planned addition to a Greek Revival home, updated during the Edwardian era. The light color scheme and the moulding profiles echo elements in older parts of the house, while the pilastered arch, deep cornice, polished floor, and liberal use of white paint underscore its neo-

TEXT BY REGINA COLE / PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ERIC ROTH AND RICHARD HOWARD



The mouldings in the new bath were carefully matched to old woodwork in the rest of the house, as were the tall windows.

classical feel. It was important to the owners that their addition blend seamlessly, and the new fitted bath is now part of what is, overall, a very Edwardian house.

The mahogany paneled master bath is in a large Colonial Revival home; it is modeled on the very earliest bathrooms in wealthy enclaves of eastern cities. Enclosed within the rich woodwork are a very modern

steambath, a deck-mounted tub, and twin sinks. Brass fittings and a marble floor underscore the luxury-cabin feeling. This master bathroom's woodwork is in contrast with the painted trim in the adjacent bedroom, and the warm, woody feel is of great appeal to the couple who owns the house.

The generation that grew up with bathrooms like these insisted that gleaming tile represents cleanli-

ness; within a few decades into the 20th century, bathrooms looked more like laboratories or operating rooms than like staterooms. With all their woodwork, earlier bathrooms have a quaint, almost innocent quality for Americans brought up to abhor germs. Today's homeowners can have it all: modern convenience and ease of cleaning within the refined cabinetwork of a fitted bath. ♦



Behind very traditional-looking mahogany cabinetry is a modern luxury of space and convenience. The door on the left leads into a marble steam bath and shower.

COMPO APPROPOS

by Lenna Tyler Kast & Stephanie Croce

*"The three chief principles of magnificent building, viz:
Solidity, Conveniency and Ornament."*

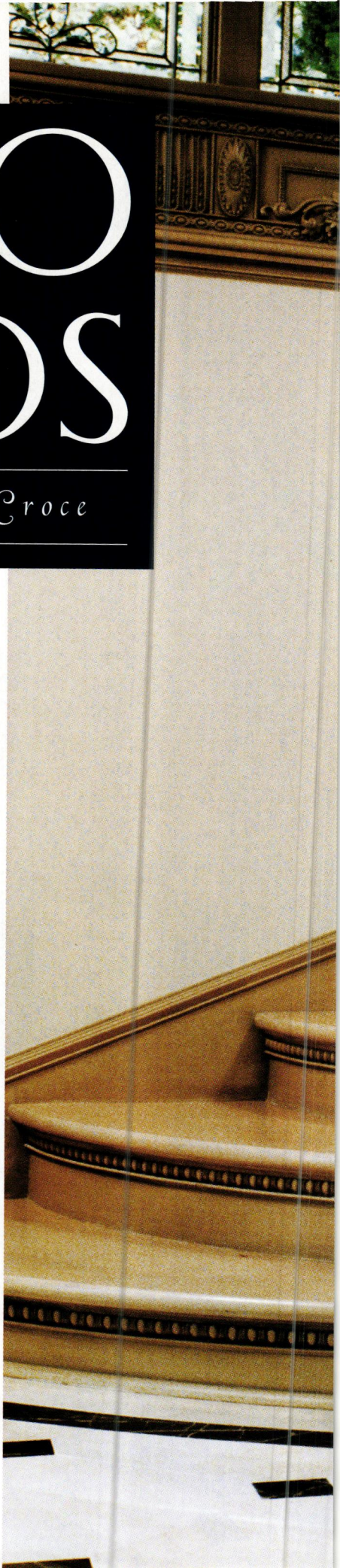
— SIR BALTHAZAR GIERBER, 1662.

LIKE THE SWIRLS OF ICING DECORATING A CAKE, MAGNIFICENT displays of intricate ornament decorate the historic interiors of the wealthy. In the living room, delicate neoclassical urns adorn a mantel. An elaborate cartouche is the focal point of a dining-room wall. Baskets of flowers and fruit accent door panels. Rococo moulding surrounds a dressing-table mirror. Many assume that this "candy for the eyes" is carved from wood or moulded from plaster—but it usually isn't. Most of these details are made from a little-known material called composition ornament.

In the late 1550s, the demand for ornamental interiors exceeded artisans' capability to produce carved details. The Italians ingeniously devised a formula for *composizione*, a doughlike mixture composed of wood by-products and animal-skin glue that was pressed into small wood moulds. As every minute detail—including the wood grain—was reproduced, the resulting ornament could be used as a replacement for carvings.

Through the centuries, composition, often shortened to "compo," came to represent an art form. Hundreds of formulas evolved for making the "bread." These recipes, handed down in a family from father to son, were carefully guarded. Each formula had its own characteristics of hardness and flexibility, but different recipes also had qualities in common—the pliability of the ornament when it was steamed and its self-bonding property. (Once steamed, compo will adhere to a surface without the use of additional glue or nails.) The ornament cured to a woodlike hardness, indistinguishable from the real thing, that would endure for

Compo is pliable enough to bend around any curve. Note the addition of the egg-and-dart moulding to the underside of the stair tread.





hundreds of years.

By this century, a change in architectural taste after World War II started the decline in the use of composition ornament; few craftspeople were left to practice this historic art form. However, a few companies continue to offer a large assortment of compo—and most are located in the United States.

For beginners in the use of compo for interiors, the real challenge is assembling the individual parts into an appropriate design.

USING COMPO

CREATING A DESIGN: First, lay out the concept for the project in scale. How do you do that? Some ornament catalogs show the parts in reduced scale. Use a photocopier to enlarge the illustrations, work out the dimensions on graph paper, and rearrange the parts until you get a pleasing plan.

For inspiration, look at period work in architectural books or a local historic house. During the 18th century, English architect Robert Adam used compo extensively in his neoclassical interiors. Composition detail often appears in 19th-century Federal, Empire, and Greek Revival interiors, and on furniture and decorative objects. Use of compo was also popular in rooms of the Rococo, Gothic, and Italianate styles. By the early 20th century, the use of ornament was more restrained, but compo was occasionally incorporated into Colonial Revival, Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts, and Art Deco interiors. Another option is for you to create an overall design based on existing details in your home.

To get a sense of how the pattern will look, tack your sketched “blueprint” to the chosen surface. Then, pick out available ornaments that closely match your original concept.



APPLYING THE ORNAMENT: Compo will bond to any sealed surface, including wood, plaster, drywall, mirror glass, metal, ceramic, or marble. In addition, it can be bent over curved surfaces without cracking, and stretched or compressed without compromising the detail.

In its raw state, the consistency of the ornament is like firm clay and it is khaki-brown in color. To activate the glue, compo is steamed on a cloth suspended over a container or roasting pan of boiling water for one to three minutes. Then, it is lifted off the cloth, pressed onto the surface, and allowed to dry. The steaming technique is easy and a small project, such as a fireplace frieze, can be accomplished in an afternoon.

FINISHING TOUCHES: Composition ornament accepts a variety of paint finishes. For the best results, use spray-on

Composition ornament comes in an extensive design vocabulary that can be used in an infinite number of ways, as illustrated on this door panel.

paints (non-water-based) because it is easier to control the amount of paint applied to the ornament, preserving the delicate details. To accentuate the relief, try an antiquing glaze or color wash. Gold and metal leaf also enhance the fine details. Matching the paint color to the lightest wood tone is very effective. Then apply a glaze or stain to correspond with the darker tones. Many other finishes are possible. ♦

Lenna Tyler Kast, owner and president of J.P. Weaver Co., has been designing with composition ornament for over 30 years. Stephanie Croce has worked with J.P. Weaver Co. since 1989, and was an assistant editor at *Old-House Journal* in the early 1980s.

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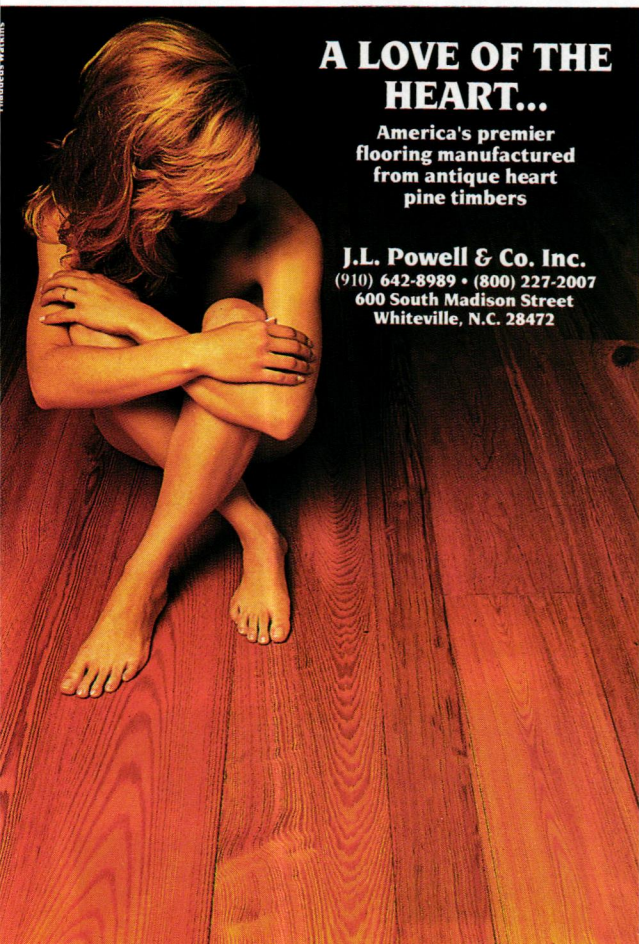
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YOU'RE INTRIGUED BY DECORATING WITH composition ornament, but the highly ornate ceilings and wall panels don't suit your house's style—or your taste. Are there simple and inexpensive ways to add touches of compo to your interiors? There sure are.

Choose an architectural element or piece of furniture that you'd like to accentuate. Historically, composition ornament embellished cornices, doors, fireplace mantels and surrounds, staircases, ceilings, walls and wall panels, chair rails, furniture, picture frames, and mirrors.

When deciding on a motif remember that your scheme doesn't have to be elaborate—one piece

might do the trick. Compo replicates thousands of carved elements in many period styles (see above), including shells, cartouches (shields), urns, wreaths, baskets of flowers, scrolls, ribbons, leaves, medallions, and festoons and swags. There are also classical repetitive linears, such as egg-and-dart, acanthus leaf, lamb's tongue, running coin, and fluting. The motif sizes vary from 2" x 2" to 10" x 10". Some are small enough for furniture; others are large enough for walls. Each piece of compo costs between \$2 and \$18, so you can pick out an element to fit your budget.

Let your imagination go when decorating with compo. Here's a few of our favorite ways to include compo in a room's decor:

■ **Mantels** Apply compo to the frieze or along the pilasters. For a Colonial Revival look, use urns, swags with ribbons, or medallions.

■ **Stairs** Embellish your stairway by running moulding directly under the tread or centering a motif on the riser (see above, right).

■ **Columns** Ornament the neck of a column (see bottom of page) or its base. Highlight the appliqué with gold leaf for an impressive effect.

■ **Furniture** Dress up chair backs with fruit, tables with scrolls, or armoires with cartouches. It's important to get an element in the right scale, so carefully compare its size with the furniture.

■ **Panels** Don't limit yourself to creating large wall panels. Combine mouldings and motifs on kitchen cabinetry; on or above doors, like a transom; or even horizontally under a wet bar, like wainscoting.

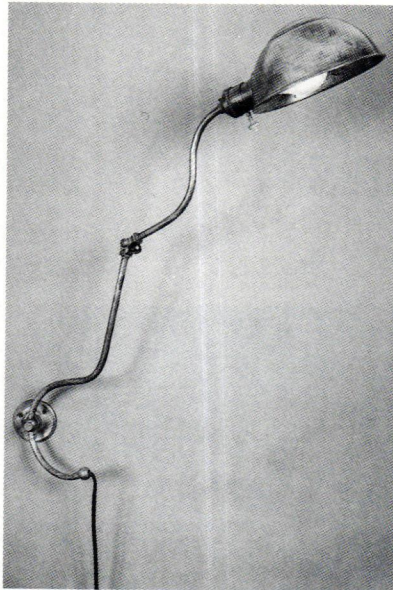
■ **Mirrors** Make plain mirrors visually interesting with borders or festoons. Spray-paint prior to bonding compo to the mirror or use gold leaf after it is fixed in place.

■ **Drapery** A novel approach is to make a custom tieback. Use a U-shaped base, such as aluminum strapping. Then steam pieces of compo in a floral pattern, attach, and decorate. Wood or metal valances can also be ornamented.

Don't limit yourself by necessarily using pieces as they come out of the mould. Cut smaller components free and integrate them into another section of the pattern. This technique allows great latitude when planning a new scheme. For example, a shell, urn, or bow can be flanked by scrollwork or by intertwining fruit, leaves, wheat, or ribbons. Each part is cut from a different mould, thereby offering unlimited options in both size and format for the final design. If you're adventurous, enhance the composition details by sculpting some of the elements

with a razor blade or utility knife to create the undercuts found in hand-carved ornament. —Lynn Elliott





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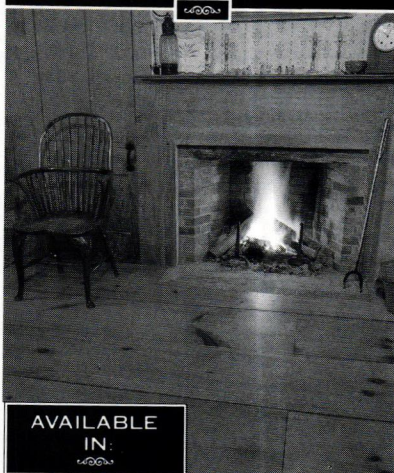
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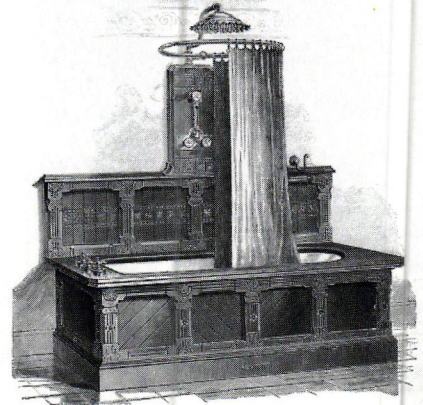
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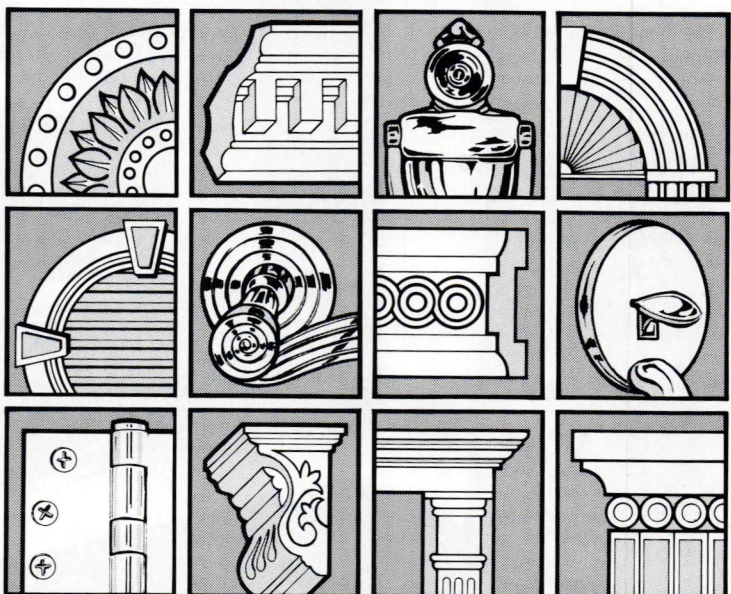
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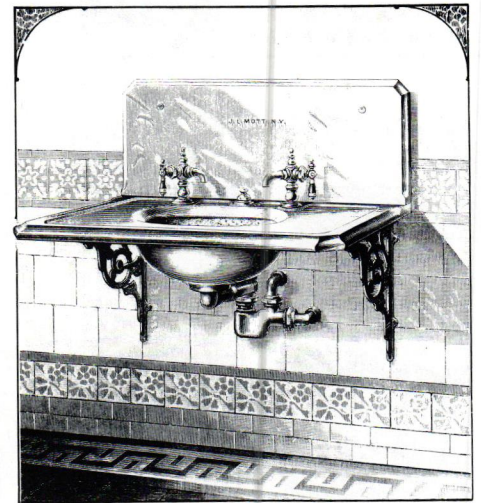
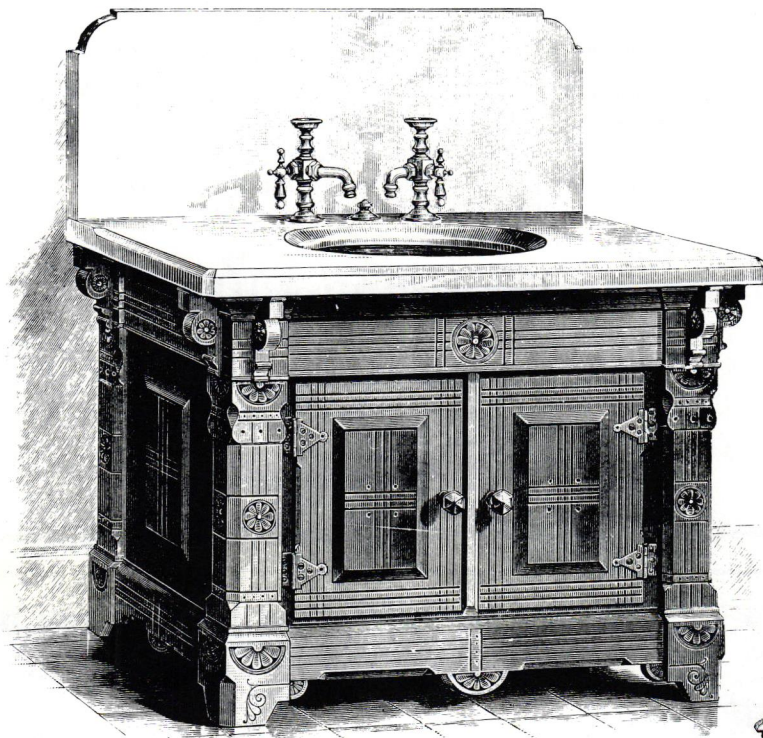
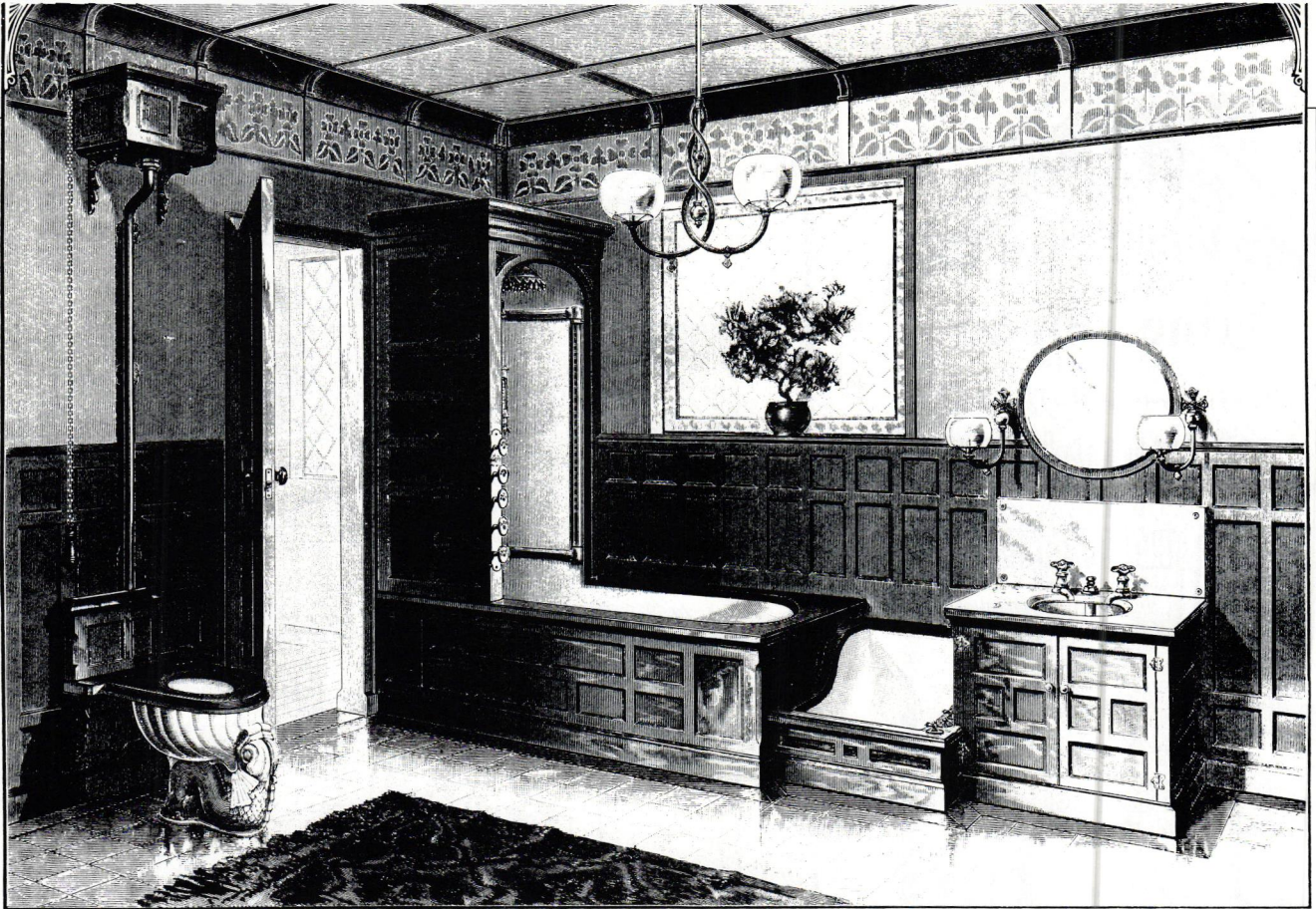
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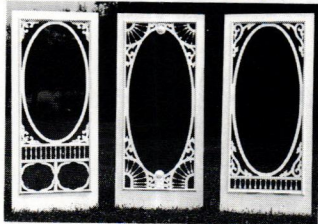
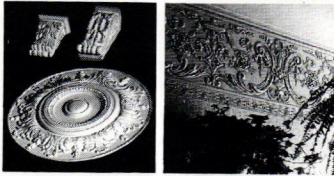
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TOP: No heavy "Elizabethan" architecture in this Aesthetic Movement suite. Historical references are more subtle. A wood wainscot is used instead of floor-to-ceiling tiles. **ABOVE:** Most plumbed wash-stands shown were essentially the same size, with only the woodwork details making them "Elizabethan," "Aesthetic," or "Eastlake." **RIGHT:** A wood bathtub enclosure, part of Mott's "Eastlake" suite. **ABOVE, RIGHT:** The open lavatory was already popular, this one with nickel-plated brass brackets. Note the handsome tile wall treatment.

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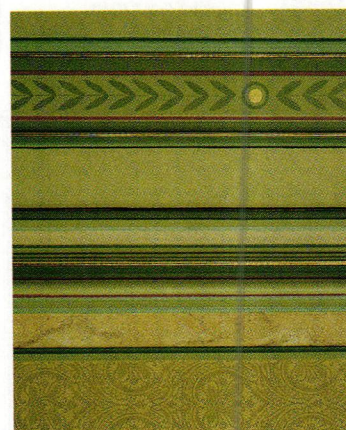
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The Art of Color Placement

EVERYONE STRIVES FOR HARMONY IN A PAINT-COLOR SCHEME. ACCORDING to the dictionary, harmony is “an arrangement of color that is pleasing to the eye.” Pretty subjective. Still, there is agreement on what pleases most eyes. And it isn’t hard to isolate the mistakes novices make most often. ¶ Both the choice of colors and where to place them pose creative challenges. There’s no substitute for artistic instinct and years of seeing what works. Nevertheless, a few basic principles regarding color *placement* can help. They won’t produce genius, of course; genius often breaks the rules. But the hints here will help avert predictable disasters. First, start simple—you’re less likely to get a rude surprise. ¶ In the photos that follow, color has been used diagrammatically, not to suggest actual color schemes, but rather to show how the proper placement of colors and values works to complement architectural detail.

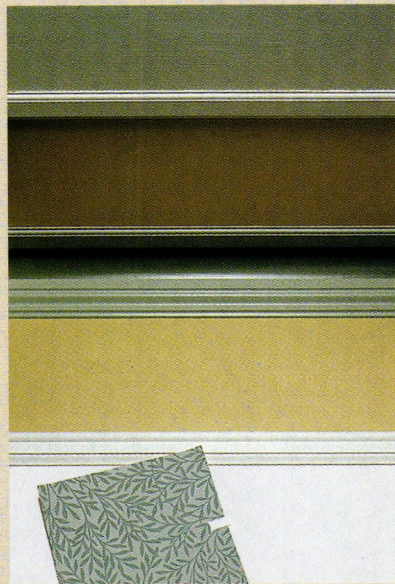


This subtly polychromed moulding, created with a number of hues and values, works because of effective color placement.



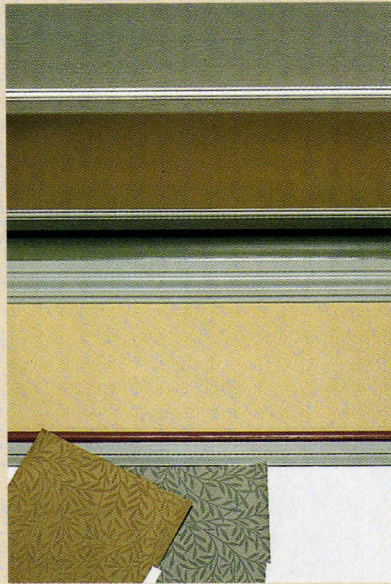
Elaborate polychroming is used as an attractive transition between the stenciled arch and the wallpapered cornice of the Brune-Reutlinger house in San Francisco.

Placing Color on Cornice Mouldings



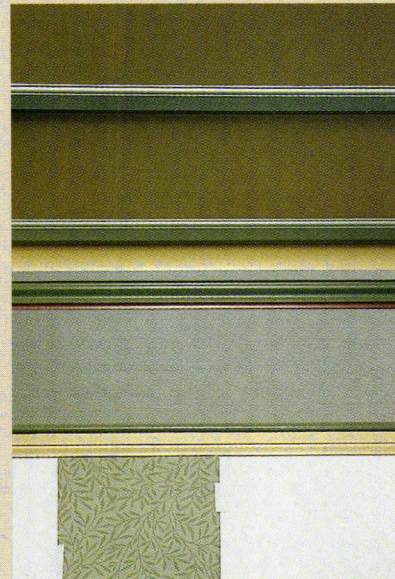
SIMPLE TRANSITIONS

The darker chrome is used in the recessed cove; a medium-value trim color abuts wall and ceiling, which will be finished with light values. Note the intermediate-value bands of grey-green between the trim colors. This is a pleasing, symmetrical treatment.



ADDING AN ACCENT COLOR

Slightly more sophisticated: the first scheme has been enhanced by the addition of an asymmetrical accent—in this case, a light trim color with a bright stripe on the picture moulding. The accent draws the eye towards the wall frieze just above it.



TREATING THE COVE

With the ceiling color carried into the cove, the ceiling plane appears to pass behind the two mouldings; visually, the cove belongs to the ceiling rather than to the wall. This treatment effectively "frames" the frieze, making it the center of interest. Moulding profiles have received the lightest trim colors, enhancing the natural play of light (on projections) and shadow (in recesses).



AN UNSUCCESSFUL TREATMENT

This example may be overdone, but it's not unusual to see mouldings "picked out" with no regard to the architecture, especially in exterior paint schemes. These mouldings are painted in high-contrast colors and stand out too prominently. It is jarring and bears no relation to natural light and shadow. Using bands of transition color softens the effect of polychromy.

Basic Principles

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR COLOR placement aren't hard-and-fast rules, but, if you're new to playing with color, these guidelines may help make your first polychrome paint job go smoothly.

- ◆ Breaks between colors enhance architectural components. This doesn't mean merely making them "look pretty," but rather using color to clarify the role of architectural elements.
- ◆ Stark contrasts render one portion glaringly prominent and detract from architectural unity.
- ◆ Use transitional colors to buffer contrasting areas. For example, say you want to use burgundy mouldings in a room with pale, grey-white walls. Transitional bands of warm grey and dusty rose between the white walls and the burgundy would soften the effect.
- ◆ Avoid excessive highlighting of small architectural elements or incising. It creates a polka-dot effect, rather than a harmonious architectural whole.
- ◆ In general, projecting elements should be painted in lighter colors and recessed elements in darker colors. Work with the architecture's natural light and shadows, not against them.
- ◆ A bright or strong contrasting accent color is most effective in small amounts; for example, as a stripe or accent on a chamfer or putty line.
- ◆ Changes of color or value should take place at changes of plane, because shadows occur naturally at plane breaks.
- ◆ In general, it's best to have darker colors at the bottom and lighter colors at the top of an architectural element. This arrangement avoids a top-heavy appearance.

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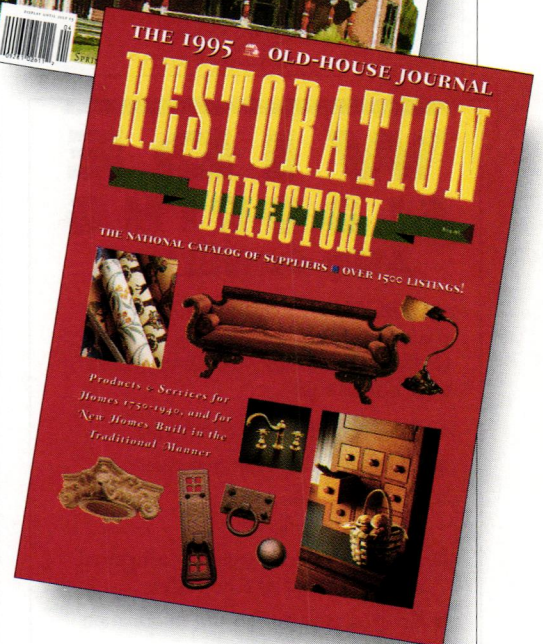
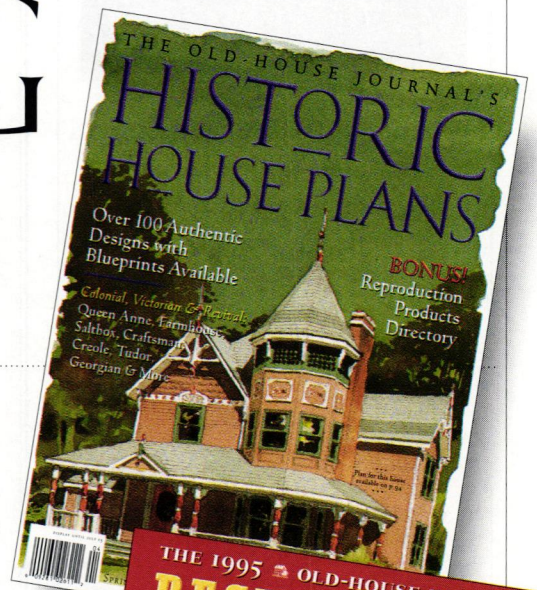
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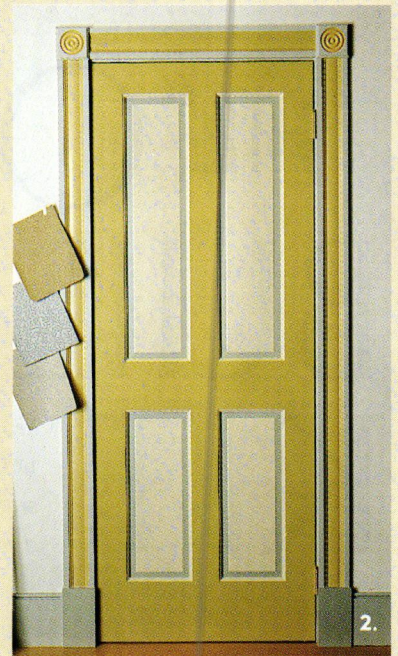
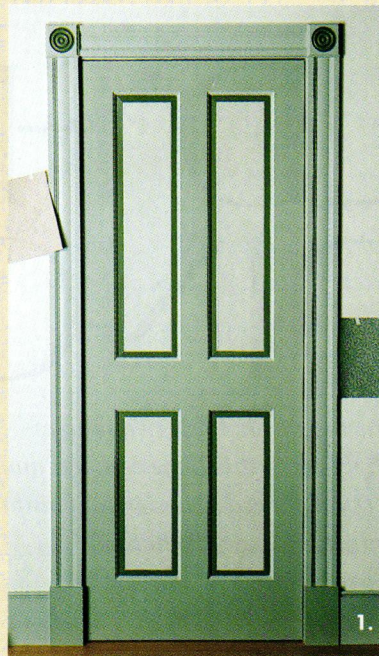
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Color Placement on Panel Doors

1. LIGHT AND SHADOW

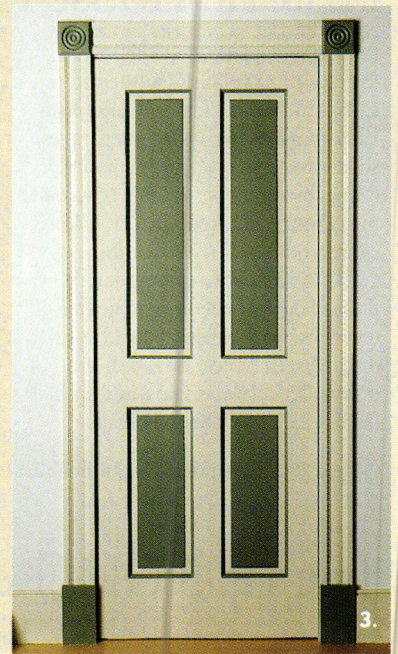
Three values of the same hue are used to enhance natural lighting, emphasizing real highlights and shadows. The lightest value is used on the raised panels and the mouldings; the darkest value is used in the recesses.

2. ADDING A SECOND COLOR

A more complex version of the light-and-shadow treatment uses two colors—and two values of each color. The second color adds more highlights, but the four shades relate closely for a unified effect.

3. TYPICALLY UNSUCCESSFUL

Someone grabbed a can of favorite-color paint and applied it to every projection. Dead wrong! It goes against the architecture. Also, the accented areas stand out in high relief, visually breaking up the door.



Practical Tips

- ◆ Caution: color intensity appears greater on a large surface than it does on a small color chip. Similarly, the contrast between two colors is greater on a large scale.
- ◆ If two adjacent colors don't harmonize, try mixing a little of paint A into paint B, and vice versa.
- ◆ Even if you're experienced, it is

virtually impossible to predict the ultimate effect of any polychrome paint scheme. Before committing yourself, paint a small section in the proposed colors and evaluate the results.

- ◆ One way to avoid too-bright colors is to stick to historic paint lines, whose colors are generally greyed.

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Furnishings

pp. 13-20

p. 13 Copper urn, weed holder, and candlesticks from Historical Arts & Castings, 5580 W. Bagley Park Rd., West Jordan, UT 84088; (800) 225-1414. ■ French hardware from Smith Woodworks & Design, 101 Farmersville Rd., Califon, NJ 07830; (908) 832-2723. ■ Brass, copper, and chrome-pressed metal ceilings from Shanker Industries, 3435 Lawson Blvd., Ocean-side, NY 11572; (516) 766-4477. **p. 14** Pennyroyal shade from Judi's Lampshades, 1495 East 22nd St., Brooklyn, NY 11210; (718) 377-7321. ■ Victorian Lace china from Muirfield, ICI Ceramics Inc., 555 Rt. 1 South, Iselin, NJ 08830; (908) 855-1100. ■ Jakarta chaise and Raffles drink cart from The John Rogers Collection, 171 Mariner Dr., Southampton, NY 11968; (516) 283-7209. ■ Tall chest with drawers from Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers, 415 Cumberland, Portland, ME 04101; (207) 774-3791. **pp. 16-17** Birch bark basket from the Adirondack Store, 109 Saranac Ave., Lake Placid, NY 12946; (518) 523-2646. ■ Adirondack chair, PH10452, from L.L. Bean, Freeport, ME 04033; (800) 809-7057. Free catalog. ■ Southwestern pillows from Pleasant Valley Pillow Co., A Division of Chrysalis Designs, 301 S. Old Stage Rd., Mt. Shasta, CA 96067; (916) 926-2629. ■ Antler chandelier from Crystal Farm, 18 Antelope Dr., Carbondale, CO 81623; (303) 963-2350. ■ Bent-twig clock and table from Clifton Monteith, PO Box 9, Lake Ann, MI 49650; (616) 275-6560. ■ Rustic miniatures from Big House Furniture, 13 Horseshoe Bend, Madison, WI 53705; (608) 833-6493. **p. 18** Belle Epoque tub from Porcher, 6615 West Boston, Chandler, AZ 85226; (602) 961-5353. ■ Flat-woven rug from Chandler Four Corners, PO Box 734, East Dorset, VT 05253; (800) 239-5137. ■ Modus console table from A-Ball Plumbing Supply, 1703 West Burnside St., Portland, OR 97209; (503) 228-0026. ■ Cabinetmaker vanity from Kerns-Wilcheck Assoc., 667 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38103; (901) 527-8430. ■ Queen Anne Vanity, #K-3085, from Kohler Co., Kohler, WI 53044; (414) 457-4441. **p. 20** Deco dressing mirror from Moderne Gallery, 111 North Third St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 923-8536. ■ Duncan chair from Pierre Count-Blandin, 200 Lexington Ave., Suite 433, New York, NY 10016; (212) 679-3106. ■ Vintage prismatic pendants from Brass Light Gallery, 131 South 1st St., Milwaukee, WI 53204; (414) 271-8300. ■ Radio City fabric

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Decorating Answers

pp. 22-24

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pp. 32-38 American Empire furniture from Neal Auction Company, 4038 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70115; (504) 899-5329.

A Dutch Survivor

pp. 42-49

Most of the antique furnishings in the Riker-Lent house are from Tepper Galleries, 110 East 25th St., New York, NY 10010; (212) 677-5300. ■ Wide-board floors in the dining room, kitchen, and hallway from Peter Von Uchtrup, 18th Century Furniture, D-7 Sugar Loaf Sq., Sugar Loaf, NY 10981; (914) 469-5159. ■ Gazebo from Michael Cavaliere, 31-11 23rd St., Astoria, NY 11106; (718) 726-0049. ■ White picket fence from Schiano Bros., 138-27 247th St., Rosedale, NY 11422; (718) 723-2212. ■ Shutters from Shuttercraft, 282 Stepstone Hill Rd., Guilford, CT 06437; (203) 453-1973. ■ Screen door from Cumberland Woodcraft Co., 10 Stover Dr., PO Box 609, Carlisle, PA 17013; (717) 243-0063. ■ Kitchen cupboard curtains from Rue de France, 78 Thames St., Newport, RI 02840; (401) 846-2084. ■ Tiles for sideboard from Country Floors, 15 East 16th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 627-8300. ■ Peasant ware in the kitchen and push plates in the dining room from Quimper Faience, Sarah D. Janssens, 141 Water St., Stonington, CT 06378; (203) 535-1712.

The Rustic Style

pp. 50-55

Galleries specializing in antique Rustic furni-

ture can be found from Black Mountain, N.C., to Bozeman, Mont. Author Ralph Kylloe, whose address is listed in the article, operates a gallery and search service. He is also a decorator in the style, and a lecturer. His books include *Rustic Traditions* (Gibbs-Smith, 1993), available from Old-House Bookshop, (800) 931-2931. Also *A History of the Indiana Hickory Furniture Movement* (1995), available from Rustic Publications, PO Box 669, Lake George, NY 12845; (518) 696-5182. ■ Over 500 artisans are working in the rustic tradition today. For sources for new Adirondack, bent-twig, hickory, western, or antler furnishings, contact Dr. Kylloe or Old-House Interiors. ■ Indiana hickory furniture: see p. 56 below.

Lakeside Rustic

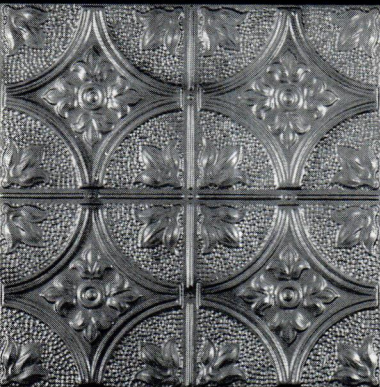
pp. 56-63 The furnishings in the New Jersey lakeside house are antique, but Indiana Hickory furniture is available today from the following manufacturers: Flat Rock Furniture, PO Box 65, Waldron, IN 46182; (812) 587-5871. ■ Old Hickory Furniture Co. Inc., 403 S. Noble St., Shelbyville, IN 46176; (800) 232-2275. ■ Tiger Mountain Woodworks, PO Box 1088, Highlands, NC 28741; (704) 526-5577. ■ A number of books about log houses are still in print, or have been reissued. *American Log Homes* (1986) by Arthur Thiede and Cindy Teipner and *The Log Home Book* (1995), also by Thiede and Teipner, are lavishly illustrated to show how versatile this kind of house construction can be. Both are published by Gibbs-Smith in Layton, Utah; (800) 748-5439. ■ *Texas Log Buildings: A Folk Architecture* (1994) by Terry G. Jordan is a well-researched piece of scholarship that traces log construction to its earliest European roots. The photographic details of old-construction techniques are especially useful. The publisher is University of Texas Press, Austin, Tex.; (800) 252-3206. ■ *How to Build and Furnish a Log Cabin* by W. Ben Hunt is subtitled "The easy-natural way using only hand tools and the woods around you." It has been reprinted from the original 1939 edition, and it is still an excellent guide, from houses to fences to bird houses. The publisher, MacMillan, is at (800) 257-5755. ■ Another classic is William Wicks's *Log Cabins and Cottages*, which was first published in 1920. Now available from Homestead Publishing, the book focuses on fundamentals of construction and site selection. Call (307) 733-6248.

Moosehead Rustic

pp. 68-71

Bent-twig and mosaic furniture, and cedar-stick structures: Clifton Monteith, PO Box 9, Lake Ann, MI 49650; (616) 275-6560. ■ Contem-

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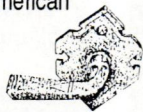
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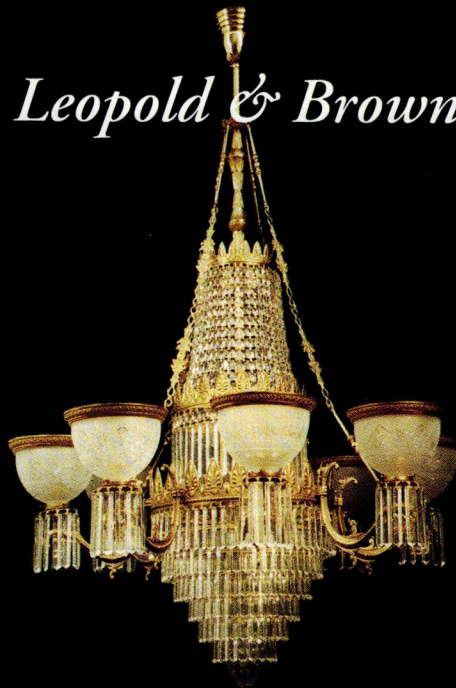
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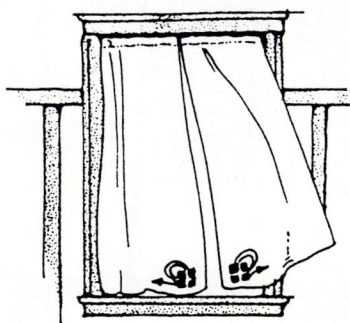
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porary Adirondack Rustic furniture: Barry Gregson, Charlie Hill Rd., Schroon Lake, NY 12870; (518) 532-9384. ■ Hammered copper Arts & Crafts chandelier by Michael Ashford, V. Michael Ashford, 6543 Alpine Dr. SW, Olympia, WA; (360) 352-0694. Send \$8 for catalog. ■ The architect is Ed Knowles, 127 West 56th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 247-4459; the firm specializes in large residential projects.

Bathing Beauties

pp. 82-85

pp. 82-83 Woodwork designed by Classic Restorations, 95 Jackson St., Cambridge, MA 02140; (617) 492-1603. ■ Tub: Pearl Baths Luxury 64, available at Splash, 244 Needham St., Newton, MA 02164; (800) 696-6662. ■ Kohler "Antique" faucet and spray fixture, available at Splash, see above. ■ Paint: Benjamin Moore custom mix. ■ p. 84 Cabinets: Kochman, Reidt and Haigh, 477 Page St., Stoughton, MA 02072; (617) 451-0459. ■ Baldwin white porcelain drawer pulls from Splash, see above. Countertop is white Carrara marble 12" x 12" tile from Aldrich Stone, 525 Providence Hwy., Norwood, MA 02062; (617) 762-6111. ■ Floor is white Carrara marble with black granite diamonds from Aldrich Stone, see above. ■ Faucets are Kohler "Antique"; Splash, see above. ■ Ceiling Heat lamp: Nutone, available through showrooms. p. 85 Cabinetry designed by Classic Restorations, see above, and fabricated by Kochman, Reidt and Haigh, see above. ■ Floor is white Carrara marble inset with Empress green marble diamonds, available through Aldrich Stone, see above. ■ Countertop: Empress green marble from Aldrich Stone, see above. ■ Wall-mounted brass towel rods are by Dornbracht, available through Splash, see above. ■ Faucets are by Harrington, through Splash, see above. ■ Drawer pulls: Baldwin Hardware Corp., 841 E. Wyomissing Blvd., Reading, PA 19612; (215) 777-7811. ■ Steamist Steam Shower and Century Steam Door: available through Splash, see above.

Compo Apropos

pp. 86-90

An extensive selection of composition ornament and instructional videos are offered by J. P. Weaver, 914 Air Way, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 500-1740 or in New York at (516) 549-7586.

Decorator's How-To

pp. 96-100

p. 97 Neoclassical wallpaper in Jasper colorway from Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers, PO Box 155, Benicia, CA 94510; (707) 746-1900. ■ pp. 98-100 Builder: Paul McPherson, 3 Stanwood Terr., Gloucester, MA 01930; (508) 281-1387. Painter: Cedric Hill, 56 High St., Gloucester, MA 01930; (508) 281-3946.

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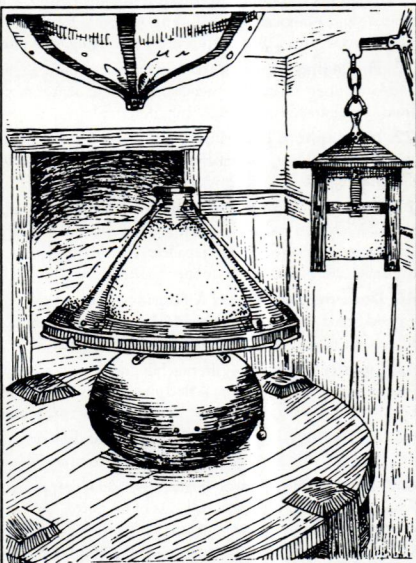
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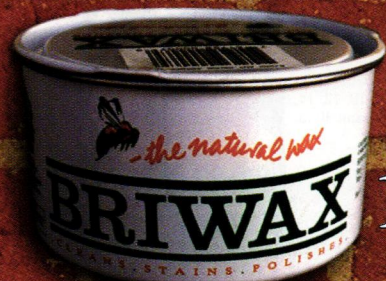
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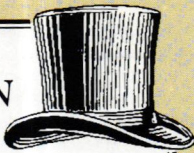
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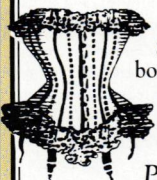
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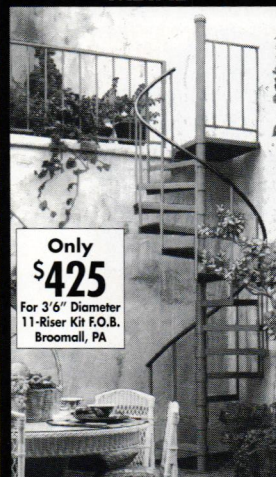
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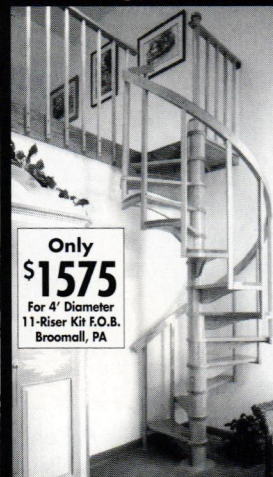


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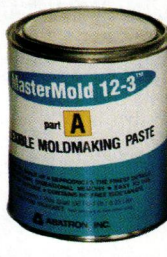
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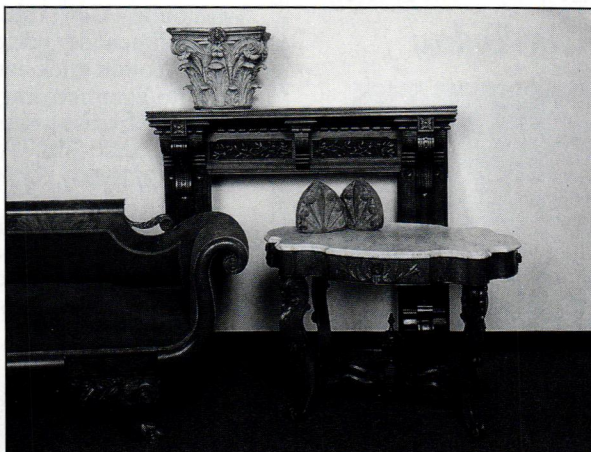
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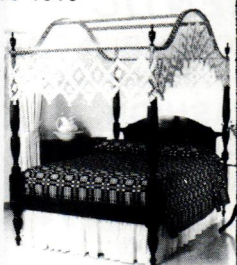
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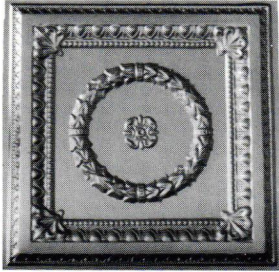


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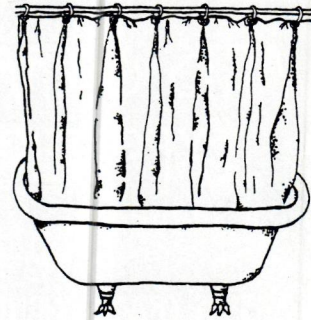
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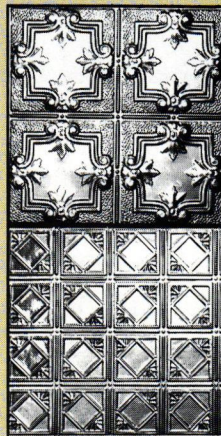
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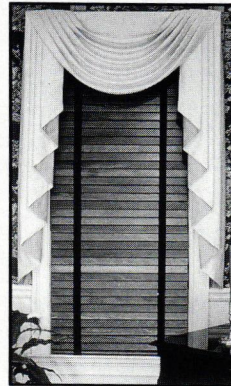


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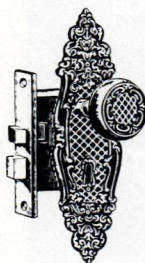


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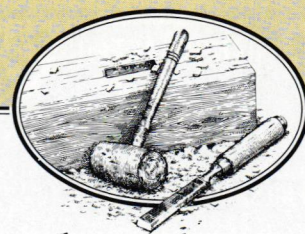
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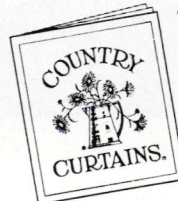
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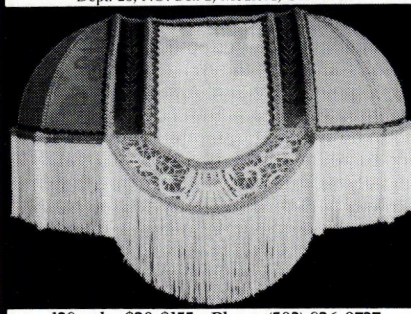


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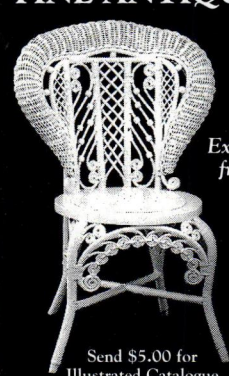
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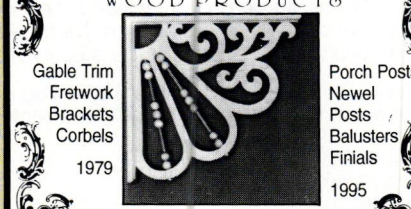


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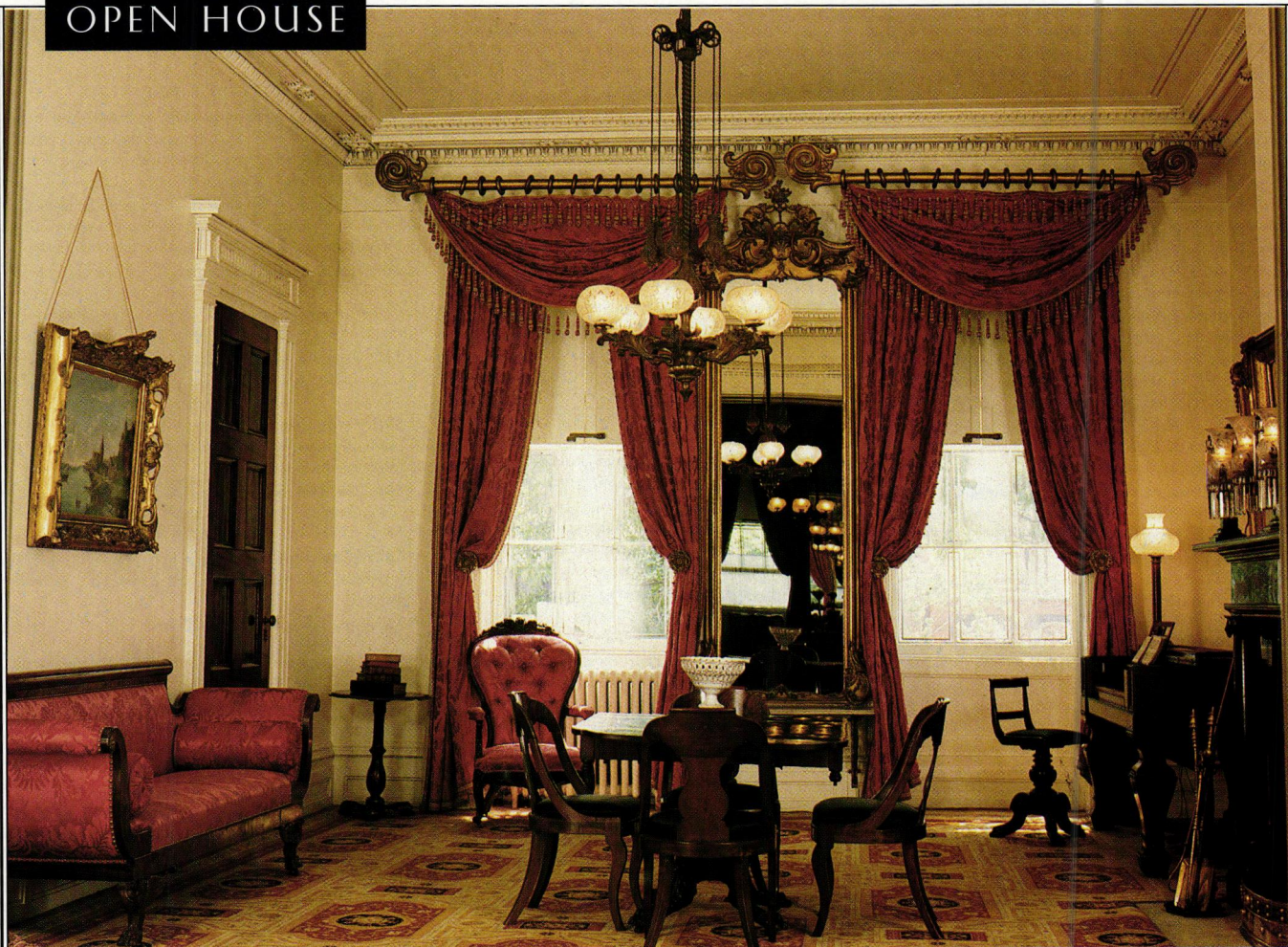
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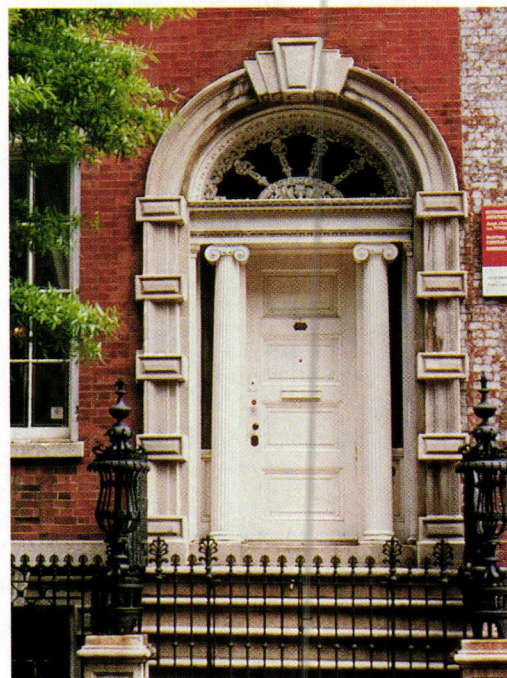
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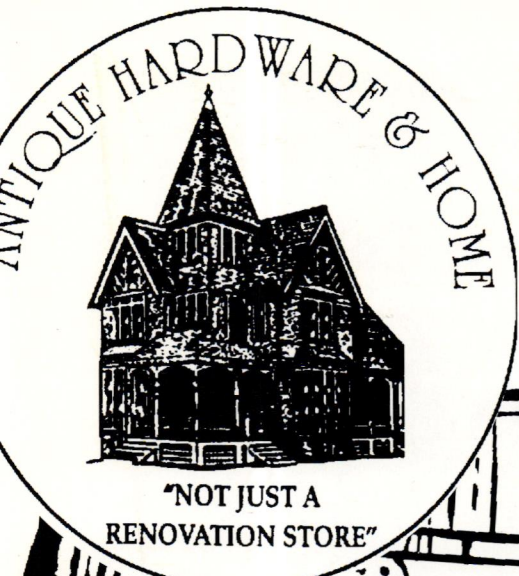
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YOU COME UPON THIS 1832 FEDERAL IN NEW YORK CITY, WHERE CHANGE is inevitable yet this house retains the ornamental plasterwork, Phyfe chairs, and general ambiance of its intact Greek Revival interior. Furniture, clothing, and family memorabilia remain, offering the visitor a rare glimpse of New York ca. 1840. For over a century, the building was home to the Tredwell family, purveyors of marine hardware at South Street Seaport. They apparently didn't throw anything away. ¶ A public museum since 1936, the New York City Landmark is once again open after extensive structural repairs, necessitated by the demolition of an adjacent edifice. The Merchant House Museum, located on Fourth Street between Lafayette and the Bowery, is open Sunday through Thursday from 1 to 4 P.M., with guided tours on Sunday. Call (212) 777-1089 for information and seasonal events. ♦



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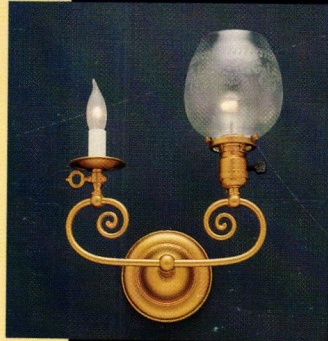


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