

OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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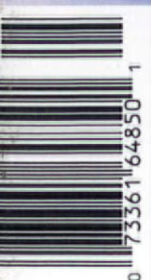
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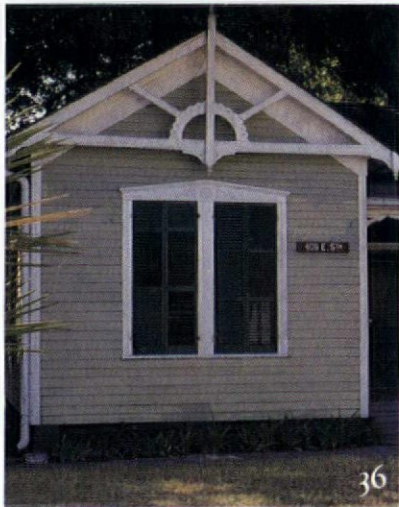
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OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

Volume XXI, Number 3



36

Houses Without Frames

A look at pre-20th century techniques for building with vertically and horizontally laid planks, and why these lesser-known — and sometimes hard to believe — houses were put together.

BY STEPHEN B. JORDAN

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Charleston Shutters/Shutter Sourcebook

After Hurricane Hugo battered Charleston, South Carolina, a variety of polyester consolidant methods were used to repair historic shutters. In Part II, a review of the stylistic history, nomenclature, and maintenance for shutters, with sources.

BY ROBERT J. ALBRECHT & KURT HABEL

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Lathe-Turned Stone

Learn how turning full-sized columns and balusters from solid stone on a homemade lathe is not only possible, but practical.

BY JACOB ARNDT

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Anything Goes II

A further look at exterior paint colors for 20th-century Romantic Revival houses, this time highlighting answers for the "stucco question."

BY JOHN CROSBY FREEMAN

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The Magic of Lincrusta

After a brief history about this unique material, decorative finisher Monnich shows how to make it masquerade as leather, metal, and other stunning surfaces.

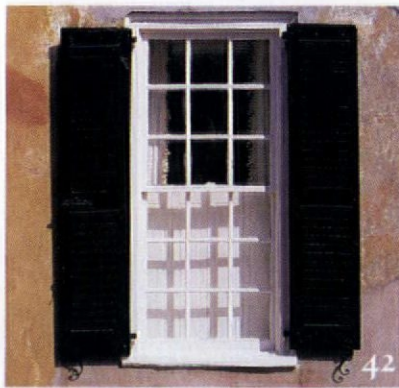
BY JONI MONNICH

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The House That Didn't Belong

When a formal Greek Revival building is wedged in a historic commercial alley, there's an old-house living mystery to be solved.

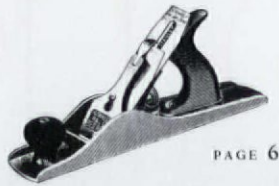
BY STEVEN JOHNSON



ON THE COVER: A shutter-lined breezeway connects this c. 1732 Georgian-style house to Church Street in the Charleston, South Carolina, Historic District. Photograph by Kelly Culpepper.

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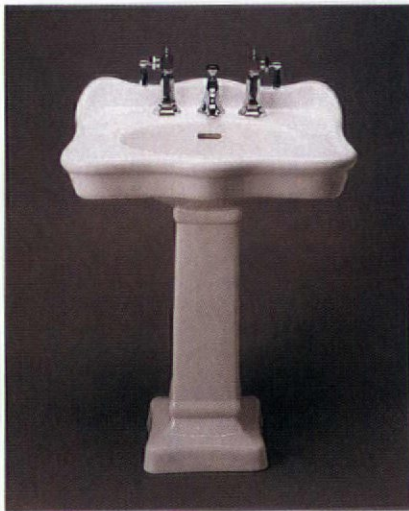
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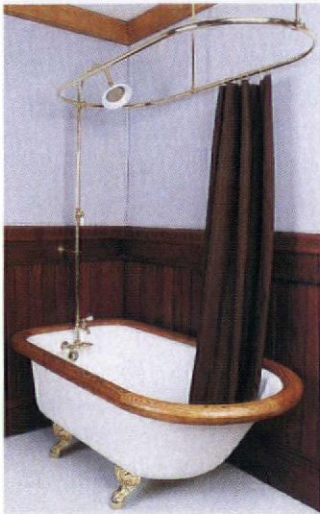
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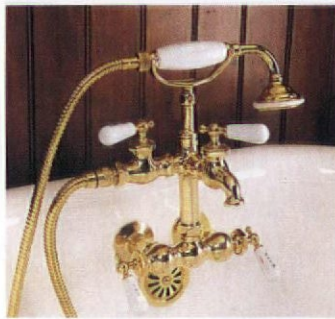
No. 704 Nouveau lavatory shown above with the No. 144 Deco faucet.



No. 805 Slipper tub shown above with the No. 423 hand-shower/tubfill unit. Brass, chrome or white porcelain feet.



No. 811 tub with solid oak ring, No. 424 tubfill/shower fitting and shower curtain ring, shown above.



No. 413 solid brass tubfill/handshower with 60" hose, shown at left.

NOTE: All Sunrise faucets are available in powder-coated solid brass, uncoated solid brass & chrome plate. Any handles may be used with any faucet.



No. 403 Classic tubfill., above.



No. 121 Widespread faucet, above.

No. 401 In-Wall shower/tubfill with center diverter shown with No. 18 cross handles. Shown at right.



No. 806 double ended tub, shown above with solid brass feet.



No. 901 Classic Victorian Pull - chain Toilet above, with solid oak seat and tank.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

"Power" Tools



SOME FRIENDS OF MINE JOKE about their favorite "power" dress shirts. We've all got clothes like these. They're high-quality sweaters or suits or dresses that fit well and look great. Because these clothes are comfortable and sharp, they give us a special edge. We wear them when we want to look our best, on a job interview, say, or a date. I've got a few "power" shirts too, and for old-house work I've got certain "power" tools.

My "power" tools are the implements I rely on to produce a job with speed and precision. They're what I reach for when I have to do the work right the first time around — which is usually the case with tricky processes or final finishes. "Power" tools don't have to be expensive or mechanized (in fact, many of mine are old hand tools) and they often look the same as ordinary tools. Yet "power" tools deliver that same extra margin of performance as a "power" shirt. As they used to say in the Western movies, they're "big medicine."

To me, a razor/utility knife is a "power" tool, especially when it has a new blade. Though designed for wallboard and carpet, this tool is so keen I use it for cutting and shaping light or thin woods, as well as scoring lines and taking out an occasional small screw. My sharpest chisels and planes are also "power" tools. Because the steel hones well they're easy to use, and because they don't dull rapidly I work more efficiently. Their effect is kind

of like wearing ten-league boots.

Another "power" tool is a top-of-the-line paintbrush. It will cut edges perfectly without any masking and spread paint or varnish silk-smooth with nary a bristle-mark. A properly balanced hammer, of course, is every-



"Power" tools — the ones with that special quality — give more to a job.

body's "power" tool. At an early age most of us realize the uncanny concentration of force and accuracy the right hammer brings to driving, shaping, or just tapping.

Not that "power" tools can't run on electricity or air — far from it. On many outdoor projects, I find my battery drill is my ever-present assistant. It bores holes, drives and removes screws, and tightens nuts; it is light, strong, goes anywhere, and never quits

on the job. The fact that it makes all these operations possible when I'm up a ladder or in an outbuilding enhances my ability to get things done. A well-tuned table saw qualifies too. A saw that is "right-on" every time makes rips that are clean and true and cuts miters that fit together at a precise angle without gaps. Moreover, it is safer to use. Fighting the work because the blade binds, or going back over a cut at close quarters to make it right, is an invitation to injury.

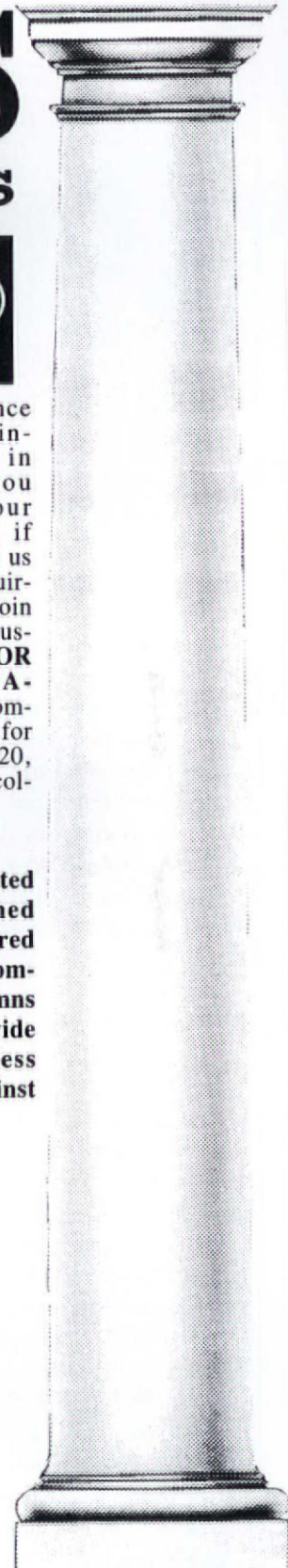
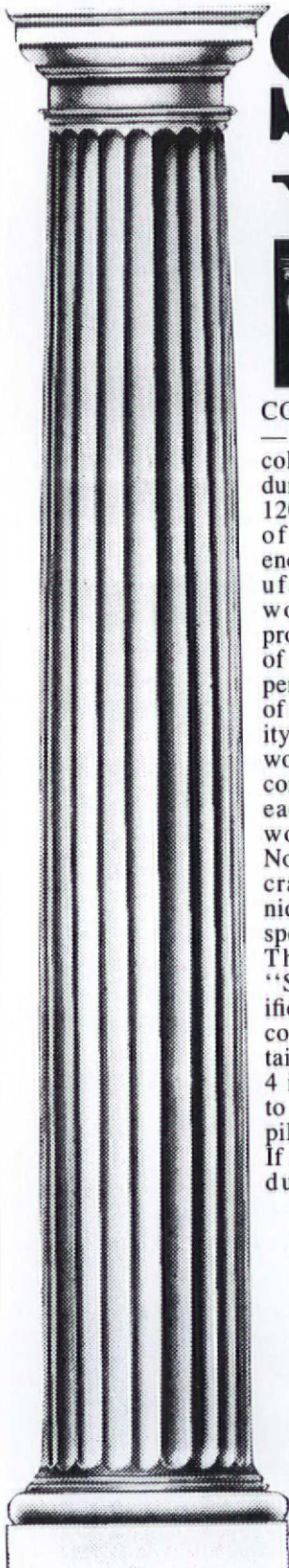
In this Techniques and Technology issue, the focus is on specialized methods for manipulating wood, stone, and paint. These three materials are found in almost every old house, but here we look at how they have been — and still can be — utilized in extraordinary ways: using planks to build houses, for example, or turning stone to make columns, or enriching lincrusta and stucco with paint.

Seeing an above-average project through to completion means developing new skills and getting the most from the materials you're working with, especially the tools. Tools that perform well not only make the job easier and produce a better product, they're essential if craftsmanship is to reach its highest levels. Take care of your "power" tools, and they'll take care of you.

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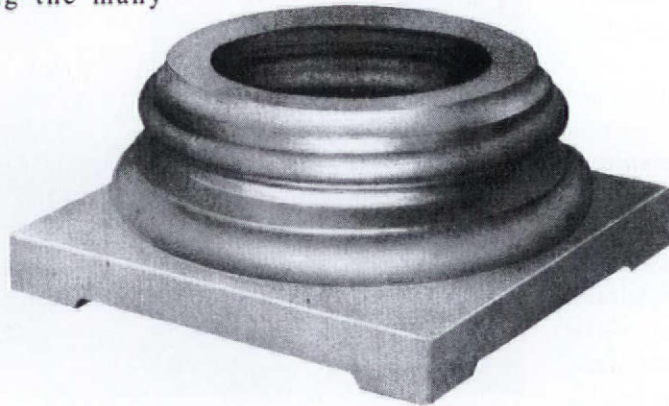
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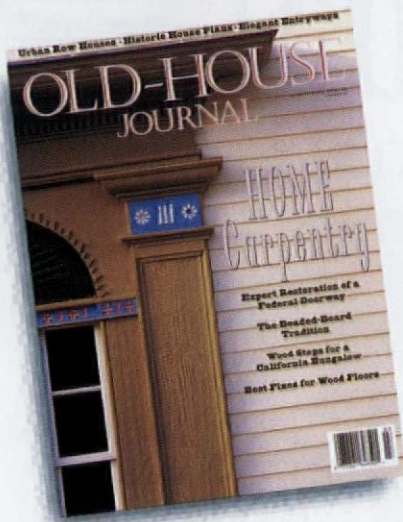
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LETTERS



Patina Preservation

Dear OHJ

WE READ WITH INTEREST THE ARTICLE "Beaded Boards" by Liz Pritchett in the March/April 1993 issue. When the discussion turned to preserving the patina, we sat up and paid attention. We have a house full of 80-year-old beadboard with some damaged boards and new woodwork additions. The old "orange" varnish has aged to a very dark orangey-brown. Stripping and revarnishing the whole interior, including the beaded wainscoting, is not a prospect we relish. [We're trying to figure out] how to keep the drudgery to a minimum — there's enough already — and still come out with uniform finishes throughout the house.

— KEN AND PEGGY LINDOW
Houston, Texas

Look for an article on blending old and new woodwork in 1994.

— THE EDITORS

Returning to Traps

I ENJOYED YOUR ARTICLE "A LESSON IN Traps" in the September/October 1992 issue. Enclosed is a photo of a P-style trap found in the basement of our old house. The top of the trap is inscribed: The Meyer Sniffen Co., LTC. It has been removed, cleaned up,

and will be reinstalled as soon as I find time to complete other repairs necessary to the waste system.

— CHUCK DIEHL
Alameda, Calif.

An Old-House Addict

I JUST RECEIVED THE OHJ YEARBOOK SET (1980-1989) with great glee and have spent the last week devouring them. (Although I was very disappointed to find that the 1983 yearbook was sold out.) Every time I hit a problem with my lovely bungalow, I turn to your excellent magazine and usually find an answer. Thanks for the help and encouragement that you give to all of us old-house addicts.

— CHRISTINE HODGSON
Edgefield, South Carolina

Kudos on Compo

WHAT A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE TO FIND composition ornament on the cover of the January/February issue. While we have always felt pride in the variety and versatility of these pieces, it is sometimes difficult to convince others.

Five years ago, we discovered many stored boxes of unused wood compo-

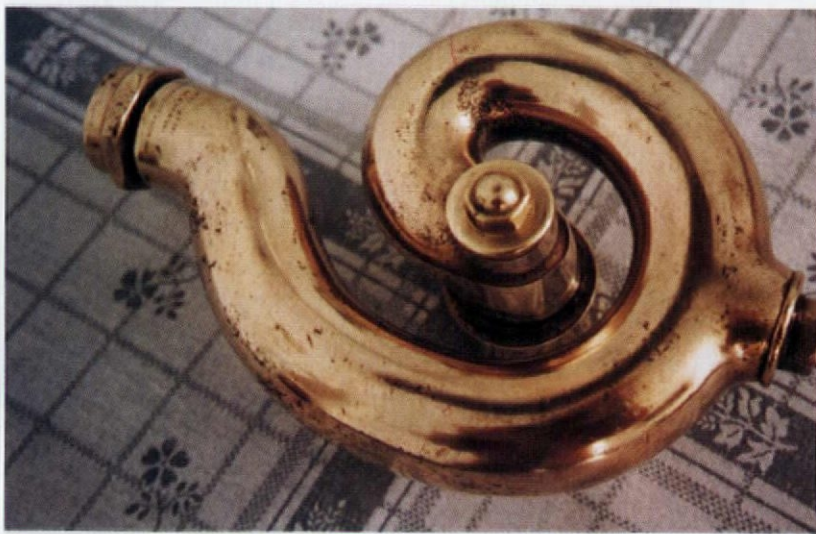
sition, which was made by John Walters and Sons in Kitchener, Ontario, during the 1920s and '30s. Since a catalog didn't accompany our find and there was little order inside the boxes, each newly opened box yielded wonders. I am still in awe of the intricate detail to be found on these mouldings.

We have seen all but one of your cover pieces. Our customers have used the stock for everything from ceiling ornaments to jewelry and Christmas decorations. So here's an addition to your suppliers list: Artefacts Architectural Antiques, 17 King St., St. Jacobs, Ontario, Canada N0B 2N0; (519) 664-3760.

— CHRIS BLOTT
*Artefacts Architectural Antiques
St. Jacobs, Ontario*

Cat Trap

WE MISSED YOUR REQUEST FOR "CAT Tales," but were struck by the cat-in-the-eaves adventure as a variation on ours. When my father-in-law died, the search for his very "scaredy-cat" Bert was fruitless. Only by moving the cat food daily was my husband, Peter, able to determine that the attic was his



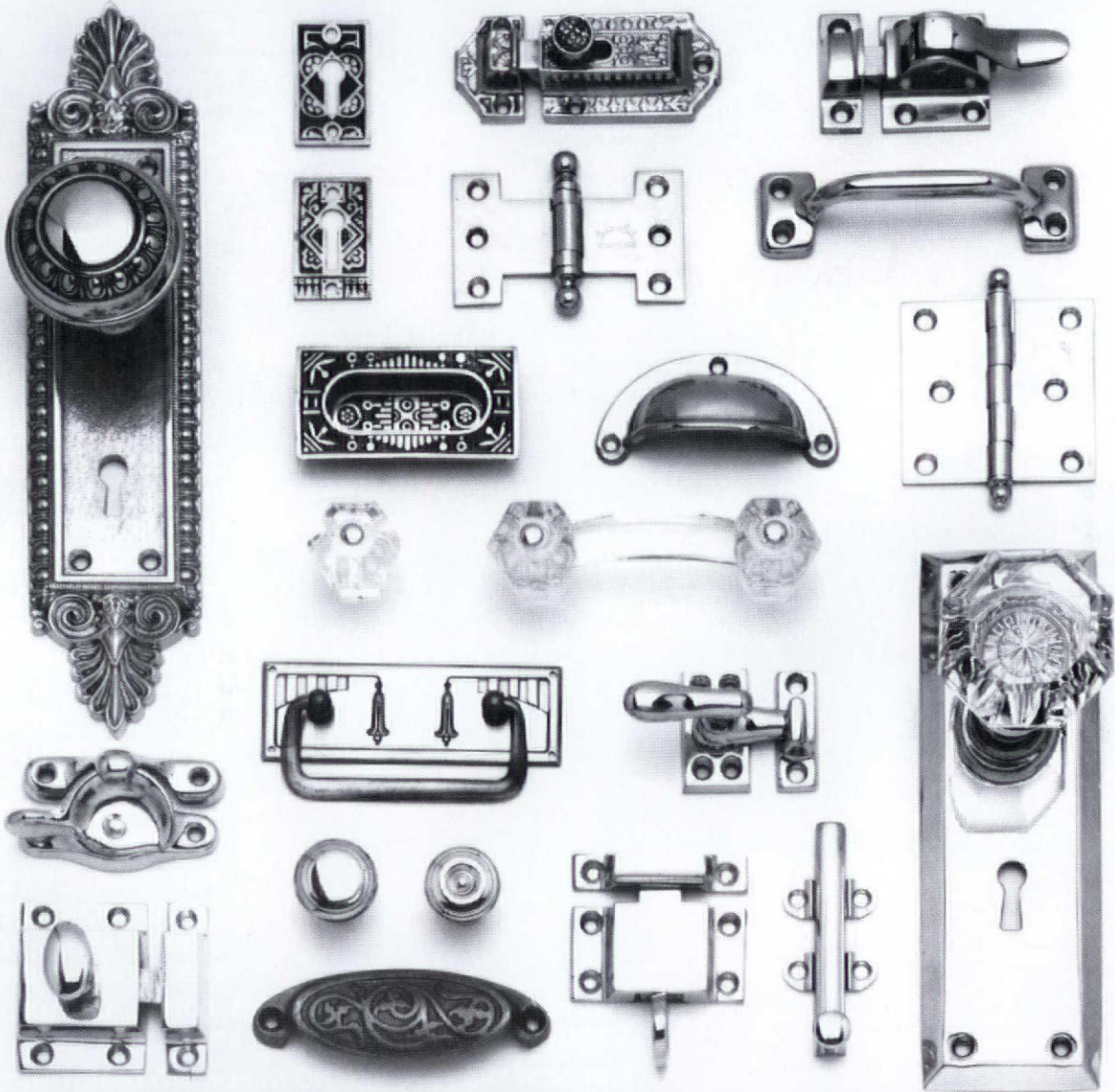
First patented in 1886, this P-style trap is still in working condition.



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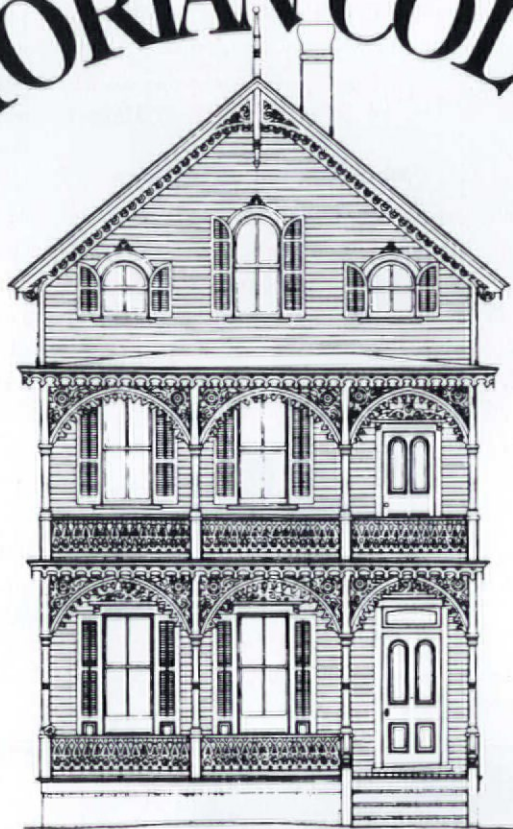
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LETTERS

home. Since his brother had agreed to adopt Bert (if he could be caught), the chase was on. Peter cut a trap door in the closet, set up a trip wire attached to the cat box, and secured all eave access. The next day, the box was tripped and the door was closed, but there was no Bert. After installing a slide bolt that went from the bottom of the trap door to a drilled hole in the floor, the line was tripped again and Bert was found cowering in the closet corner. We delivered him to his new home where, at 16, he has adjusted to a new social life.

— THERESE KLAUSER
Berwyn, Ill.

Catty Comment

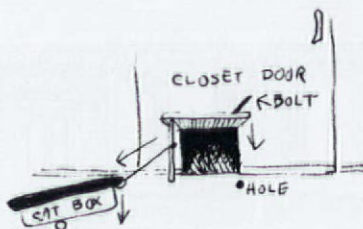
CAT TALES? WHAT IS THIS FLUFF? I subscribe to your publication for infor-

mation on old houses. If I wanted to see cat stories, I would subscribe to a pet "throw-away" magazine.

— NAME UNREADABLE
St. Louis, Missouri

Healing Peeling Ceilings

YOUR MAGAZINE IS A GREAT HELP IN maintaining my vintage 1909 Prairie-style home. The January/February



An illustration of the elaborate "cat trap" devised by the Klausers.

article on peeling ceilings was put into service when a 3' section of the entryway's calcimine ceiling fell off during heavy rains. Wind-driven rain allowed moisture into the house via a roof-mounted evaporative cooler. Using the steamer method you described, removal of the calcimine coat was completed in one day by two people. The cracks were then repaired and sanded. After using a sponge to dapple on the paint, the texture was restored. Results? Great!

— NELLE LETHERS
Riverside, Calif.

Linoleum Uncovered

IN 1987, MY HUSBAND AND I PURCHASED an American Foursquare built in 1910. We had just received the Septem-



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4. Materials used and recipe techniques.
5. Name of designer and/or architect if applicable.

Completed entries should be mailed to: THE FINISHING TOUCH, c/o Old House Journal, 2 Main Street, Gloucester MA 01930 and must arrive by Friday, June 18, 1993. Winners will be announced in the September/October issue of Old House Journal.

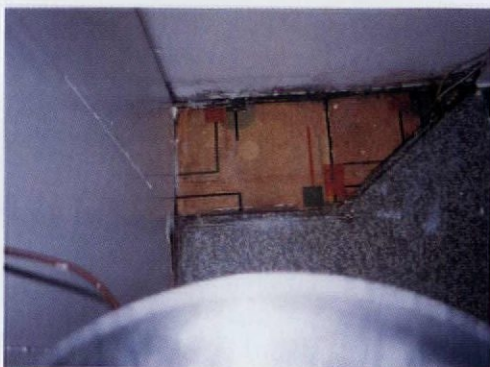
Installation can feature the wallcoverings in either a historical context or a modern adaptation. Criteria includes the appropriateness of the installation, quality of design of the restored area and finishing techniques. Installations are not limited to one room. Entries will be judged by a panel of experts including a well-known decorator, a historic interiors expert and an Old House Journal editor on Monday, June 21.

CONTEST RULES

- Judge's decision is final.
- All travel arrangements subject to availability. Winner responsible for transportation to nearest Virgin Atlantic U.S. Gateway City. Other restrictions may apply.
- Employees of Crown Berger Ltd, Old House Journal, Virgin Atlantic or related Agencies are not eligible for entry.
- One submission per person is permitted
- Old House Journal reserves the right to print submitted material.
- Entrants must be 18 years of age or older.

LETTERS

ber/October 1992 issue when we began to remove two of the cupboards in our kitchen. Once removed, we discovered a section of the original flooring remained underneath the cupboard. Imagine our excitement at this discovery! The small portion that we uncovered looked almost identical to the photos of sample flooring that were included in the "Linoleum" article. Enclosed is a photo of what we found. This is the first time during our renovation that we have discovered any evidence of what a room might have looked like. Unfortunately, except for the woodwork being in almost original condition, there was little left to tell us about how



A c.1910 piece of inlaid geometric linoleum is uncovered behind a cupboard.

each room may have looked. OHJ consistently keeps us going as we restore our home to its original splendor.

— SUSAN LALLI-ASCOSI
Kennett Square, Penn.

Brits Light the Way

IN 1980, WE WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO find (at a reasonable price) an antique Bristol crystal chandelier large enough for the dining room. Unfortunately there was one piece missing. This was a curved, barley-twist rod with a shepherd's crook end, which is common in crystal fixtures. What made it unusual was the reverse curve in the stem — the shepherd's crook spiral curved up and inward instead of down and outward. We checked every local source for crystal parts. No one had ever seen such a piece, much less a replacement.

Last Spring, on a trip to London, we decided to spend some time tracking chandelier parts. Eventually, we

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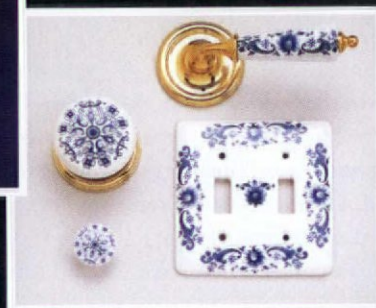
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LETTERS

were directed to George and Peter Cohn, a firm specializing in the sale and restoration of antique chandeliers. The Cohns were most helpful, but could not supply the missing piece. However, they directed us to Blue-Crystal (Glass) Ltd. This firm has made a new replacement of the missing arm using a photocopy of an original for size, shape, and curvature. The new arm is an excellent piece of work. The cost was substantial, but the investment saves a valuable antique fixture.

I believe that your readers would be interested in both companies. Their addresses are: Blue Crystal (Glass) Ltd, Units 6/8, 21 Wren St., London, WC1X 0HF England; (071) 278-0142, and George and Peter Cohn,

Unit 21, 21 Wren St., London, WC1X 0HF England; (071) 278-3749.

— WILLIAM M. WORDEN
Detroit, Mich.

Cornering A Market

IN A PREVIOUS ISSUE [JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1992], "Ask OHJ" answered a question about galvanized tin corners for cedar lap siding. Coach House in Arthur, Illinois, was the company. I contacted them and was [told] that Tool World had bought the machinery. So I subsequently made contact with Tool World.

I needed a tin corner for $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10" western red cedar siding installed with 8" exposure. Numerous calls did not produce a correct product.

I turned for help to a local lumber

yard and found that with an order of many thousands of pieces (mine was a small order of 100 pieces) the correct corners could be obtained. Should anyone need a small quantity of these hard-to-find corners contact Rick at T & S Lumber, 21600 Miles Rd., North Randall, OH 44128; (216) 662-1100.

Keep up the flow of information OHJ!

— DAVID GOLDMAN
Gates Mills, Ohio

CORRECTION: In the article "Beaded Boards" [March/April 1993], the craftsman identified as Paul Kebabin in the photos was actually Woody Scoville.



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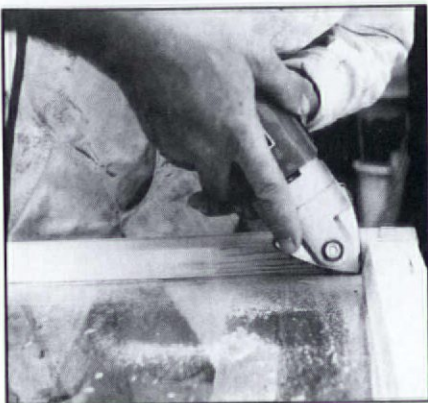
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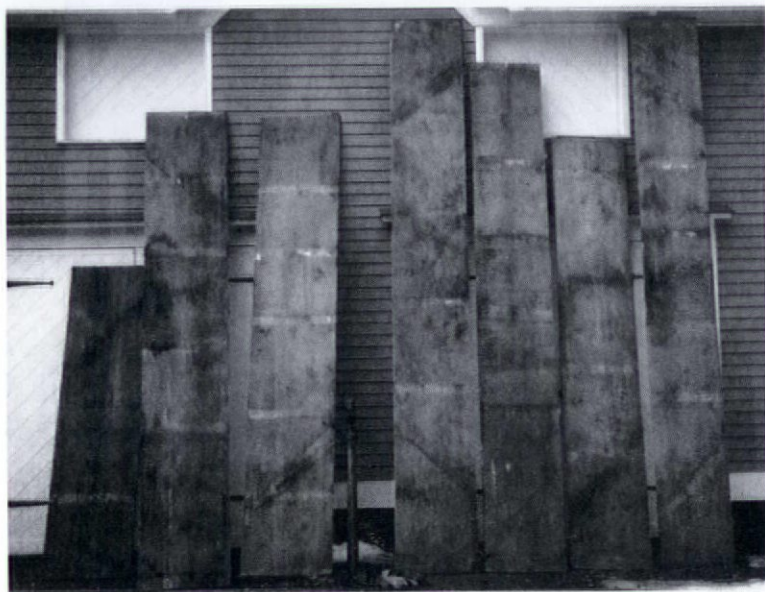
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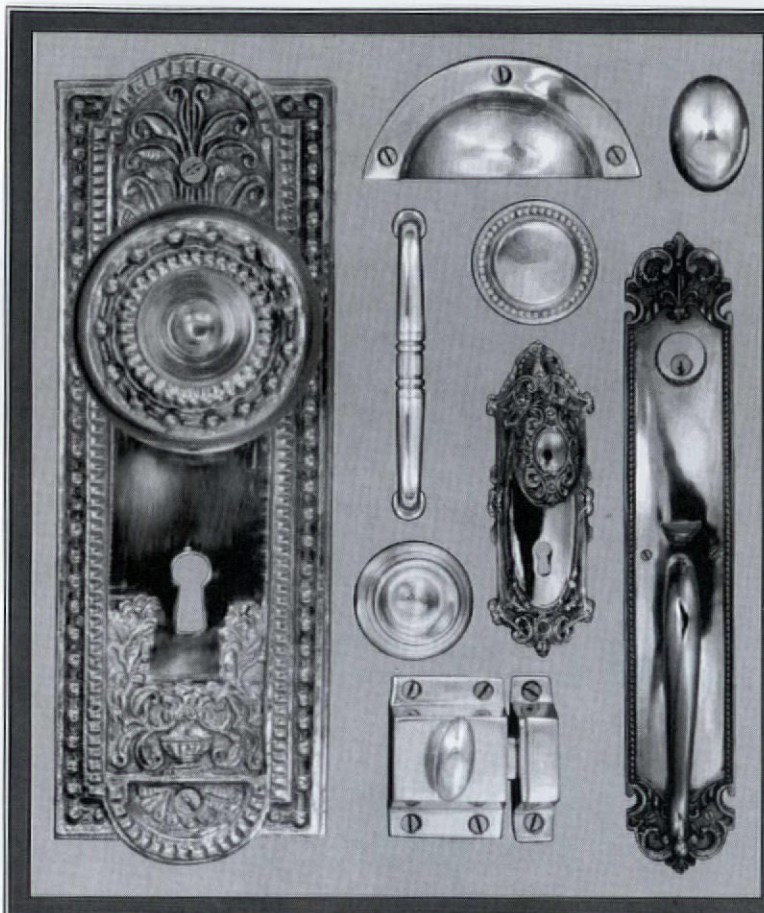
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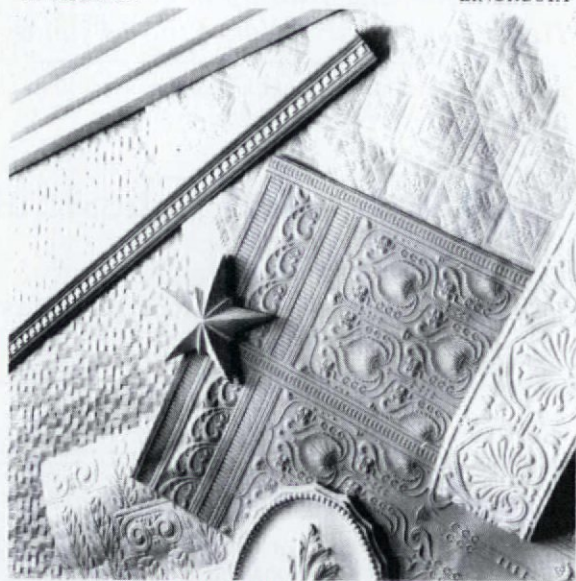
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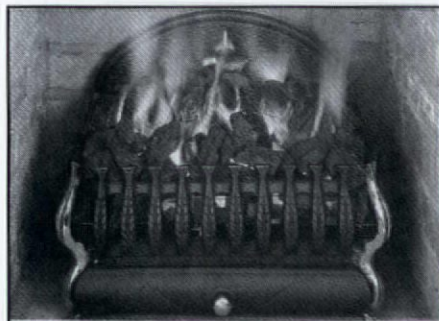
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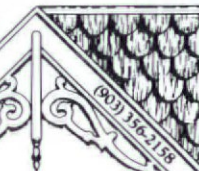
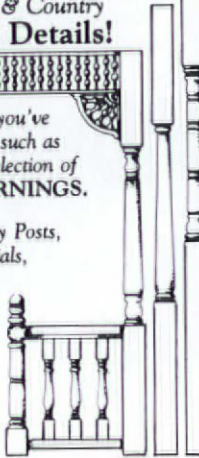
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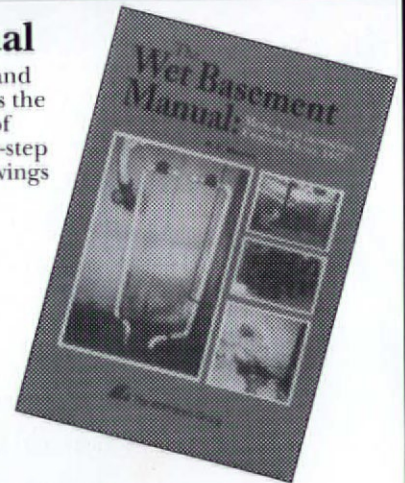
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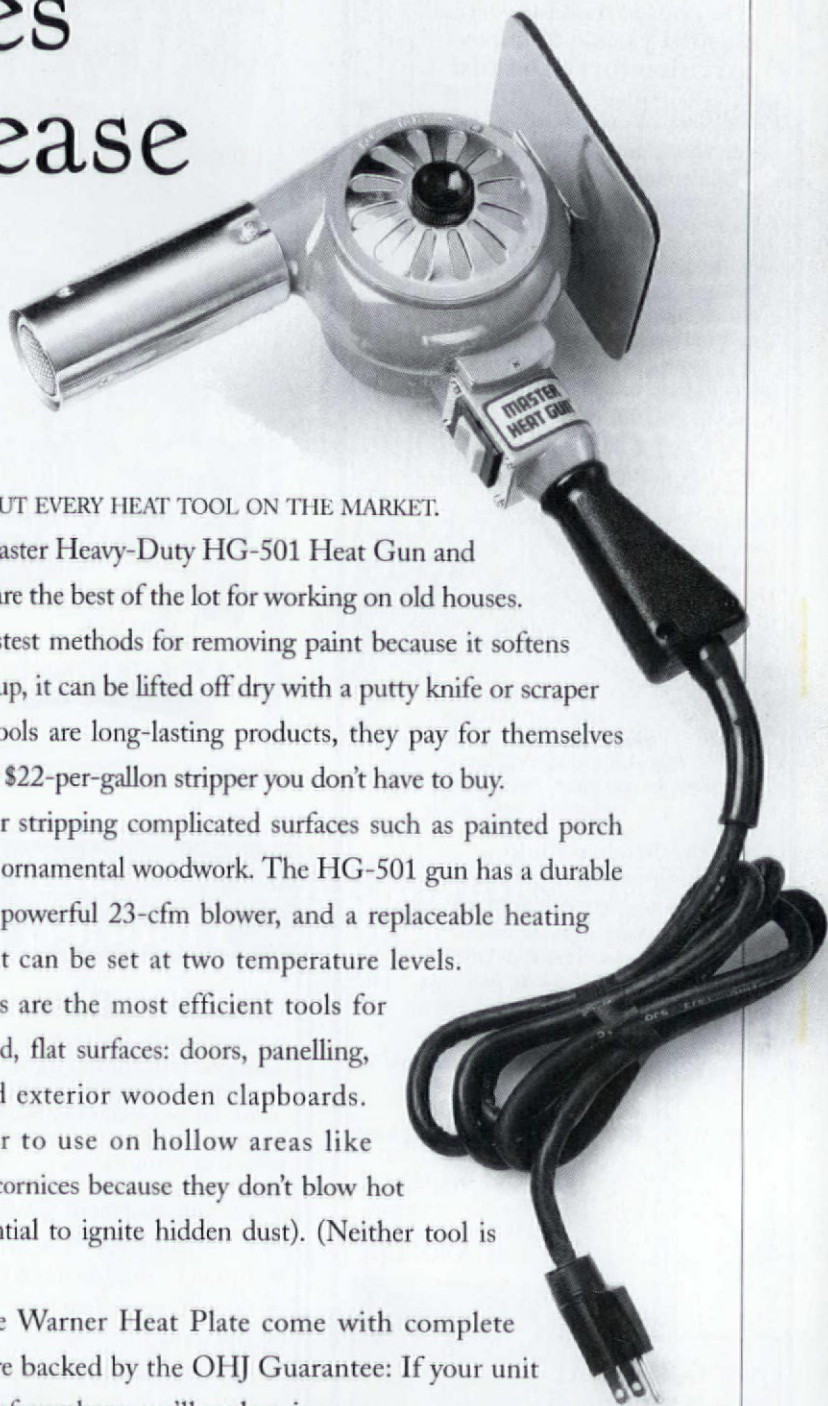
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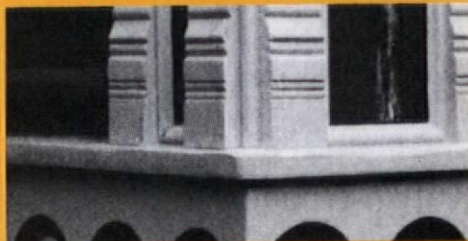
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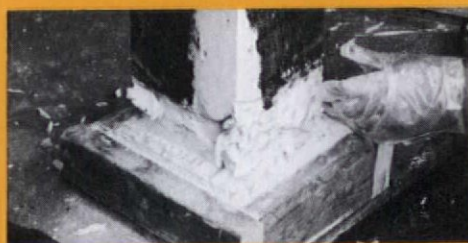
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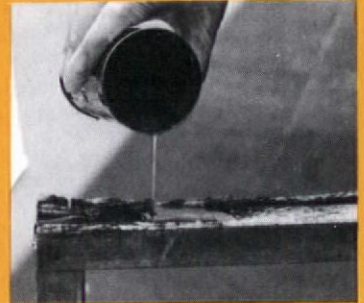
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ASK OHJ

Root Invasion

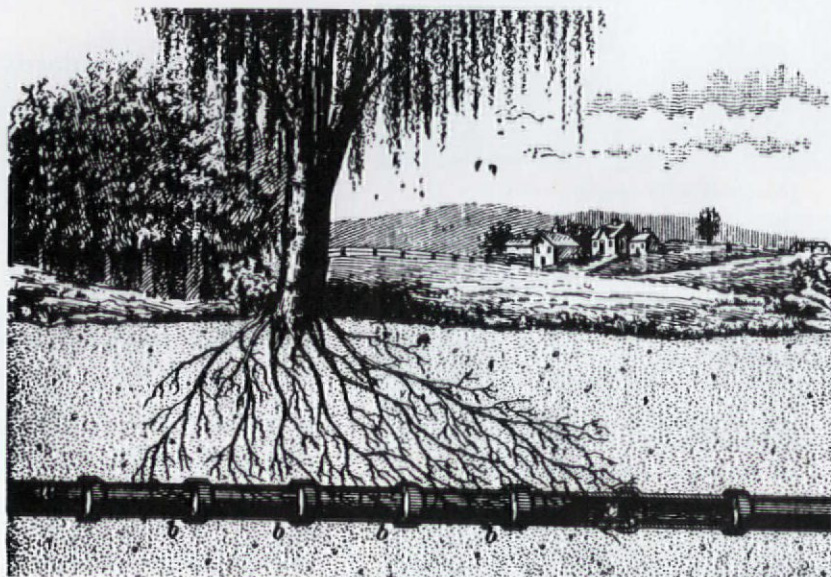
Q OUR 1883 HOME IS HAVING A sewer crisis. Heavy roots from five ancient maple trees have invaded our vitrified-clay system. We have had many sewer-rooter jobs and have flushed with a root-kill product containing copper sulfate. To our dismay nothing works more than a few months. Because sewer replacement is expensive, we are looking for alternatives. Will chemicals work if used often? Is our only other option to take our trees down?

—BOB AND LAURA KOCMOUD
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

A YOUR PROBLEM IS NOT THE trees, but old drain pipe with deteriorated cement sealing the joints. Flushing often with chemicals may keep the roots in check, but the cost and inconvenience will continue to add up. Even if the root invasion is eventually stopped, the leaky pipe can clog with sand and mud. Better to replace the earthenware pipe with PVC, which is virtually impenetrable to tree roots. Replacement runs from \$500 to a few thousand dollars, depending on the length of the line and the type of soil. If a backhoe in your yard is objectionable, the line can be dug by hand (which takes longer but costs about the same). Tree removal is expensive, too, and sacrifices the maples without guaranteeing a fix. Root growth may continue for years after the trees are gone.

Star Search

Q ENCLOSED IS A PHOTO of a star washer on the side of a late 1800s agricultural building. This is part of a rod-and-turnbuckle device. The rod extends through the building to



the opposite side and connects to an identical washer to keep the side walls from kicking out. I believe reproductions of these washers are still available, but have not been able to locate them. Can you help?

—ALLAN LOUERING
Greenland, New Hampshire

A THESE TERMINALS, ALSO CALLED wall washers, star anchors, and tie-rod ends, were part of original structural design systems used through the early 1900s. Usually cast iron or wrought iron, they were made in a variety of local decorative designs — some as elaborate as starfish — and often ornamented with initials or building dates.



*A star
and tee anchor
device.*

When used for repair, their bearing surface is not great (and therefore of dubious value on masonry buildings), but they can be very attractive. A good source for reproductions is G. Krug & Son, Inc., 415 West Saratoga Street, Dept. OHJ, Baltimore, MD 21201; (410) 752-3166. Manufacturers since

Tree roots grow towards water sources and can find their way into earthenware drain pipes through deteriorated joints.

1810, this forge uses 15 original patterns, including 5-point and 6-point stars, diamonds, circles, and sunbursts, and can also duplicate a customer-supplied piece. Their washers range in size from 8" to 20". Prices range from \$20 to \$85.

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—DONNA AYER
Rockport, Ind.

A EMBOSSED MOULDINGS ARE machine-made "carvings" that have been common in millwork catalogs since at least the

[Continued on page 24]

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ASK OHJ



The embossed cherry moulding on this door and casing are machine-made designs.

[Continued from page 22]

1890s. The manufacturing process employs heat and pressure to create a relief design by passing carefully milled lumber under a heated embossing wheel. Correct temperature is critical. If the wheel is too hot it scorches the wood; if too cold, the results are poor. Individual items, such as rosettes, are usually stamped on an embossing machine.

Often used in widths under 3" on furniture and cabinetwork, embossed mouldings offer an affordable alternative to the real thing. Since they have long been popular in Europe (where the technique probably originated), your mouldings may, indeed,

have been imported. One source for carved and embossed decorative mouldings is Bendix Mouldings, Inc., 37 Ramland Road, South, Dept. OHJ, Orangeburg, NY 10962; (800)526-0240. They supply crown and chair rail mouldings, rope and beaded mouldings, and wood ornaments and rosettes. Another source is American Custom Millwork, Inc., 3904 Newton Road, PO Box 3608, Dept. OHJ, Albany, GA 31706; (912)888-3303. They can supply the mouldings and service from custom design to on-site supervision.

General-interest questions will be answered in print. The Editors can't promise to respond to all questions personally, but we try. Send your questions to: Questions Editor, Old-House Journal, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930.



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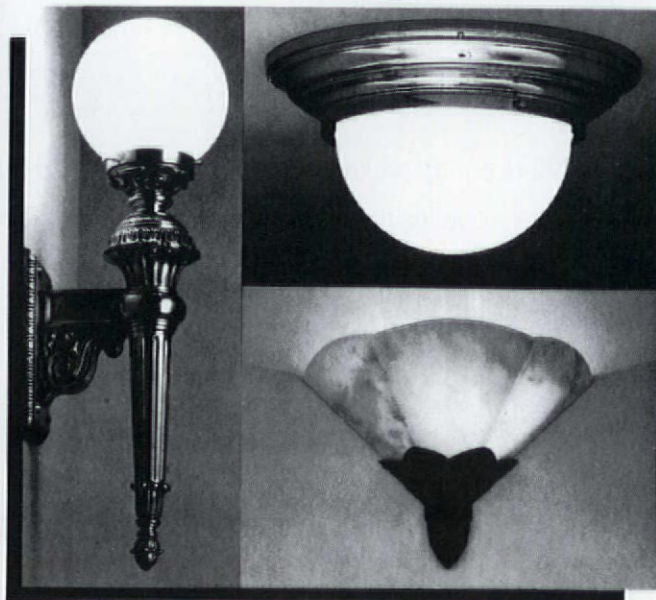
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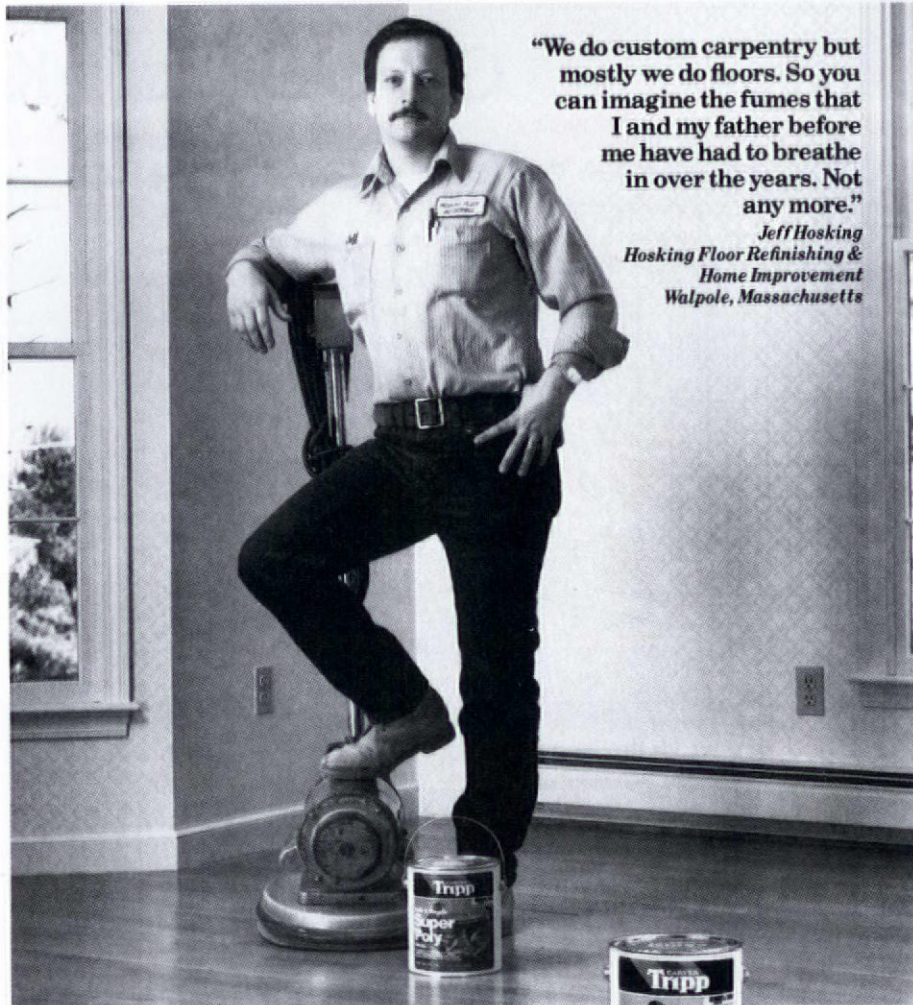
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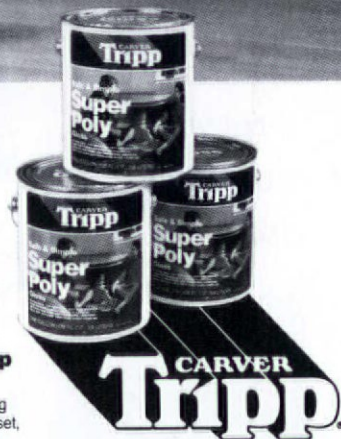
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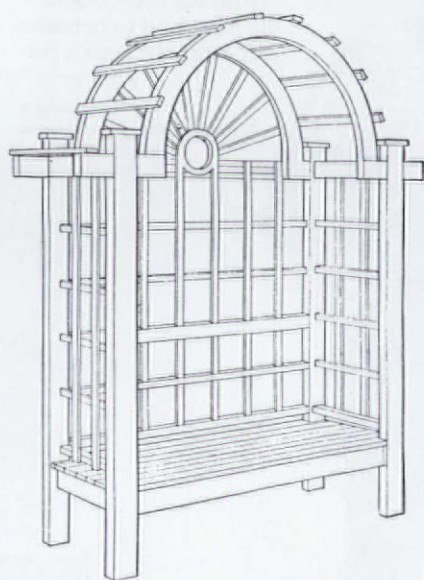
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GOOD BOOKS



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Wonderful Wooden Garden Structures

Pub: Hummer Press c/o Envision Tech, Inc., 318 W. Margaret Lane, Dept. OHJ, Hillsborough, NC 27278; (919) 732-6313; 1992, 26 pages (b & w photos and illustrations). \$18.74 ppd., softcover.

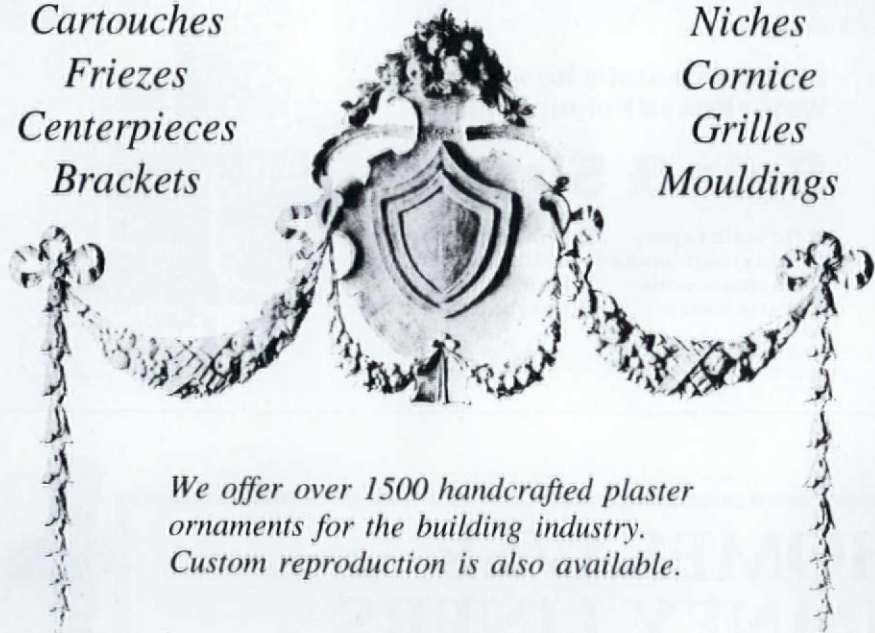
OWNERS OF POST-VICTORIAN houses, who want to add period garden structures to their landscapes, can harvest a bumper crop of design ideas from *Wonderful Wooden Garden Structures*. Printed when wooden garden structures first became popular in America, this little booklet is a reproduction of a 1926 Southern Forest Products Assn. publication (originally titled

Beautifying the Home Grounds) that contains over 200 line drawings and photographs. Lattice was an economical way to beautify gardens, so the book has acres of graceful archways, rose-covered trellises, and shaded garden houses and pergolas. A number of ornamental patterns for outdoor furniture and lattice gates and fences are also there for the picking. The illustrations are clear and simple to understand without specific dimensions (which are omitted because each design will have to be adapted to its location). *Wonderful Wooden Garden Structures* is an excellent resource for anyone restoring or creating a 1920s or '30s garden.

—L.E.

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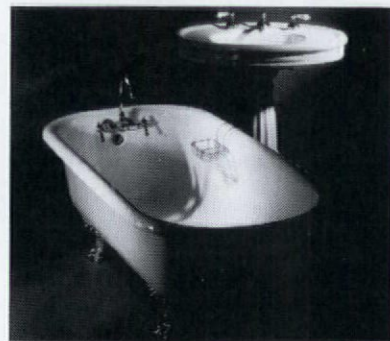
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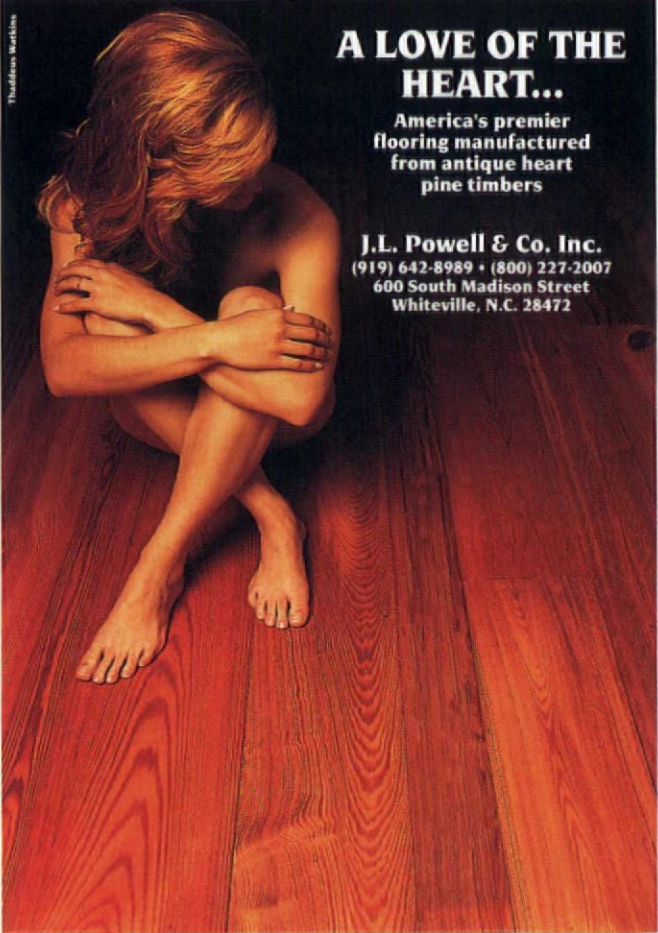
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OUTSIDE THE OLD HOUSE

Building Retaining Walls

by William W.H. Trowbridge

WHEN I MENTION TO someone that I build stone walls, they often say, "Oh, stone walls, that's a real art!" I usually reply, "Not when I do it." Calling my walls art would make Phidias or Bernini groan in their graves. Building stone walls is a skill that can be learned. Your first wall may not be particularly pretty, but if you follow a few rules at least it will be strong.

A retaining wall holds back tons of earth. This is a lot to ask of a wall so it has to be thick. The visible part is a facade, backed by and tied into a mass of rock and gravel, which does most of the job.

The enemy of a retaining wall is water, and thus must be kept away from the back and base of the wall. Freezing water expands, and if it is allowed to sit against a facing stone, it will push that stone out of place within two years. To keep facing stones in place, separate them from the earth with $\frac{3}{4}$ " stone. The fill underneath acts as both a drainage trench to protect the base stones and



a cushion to absorb the motion of frost heaves. As a general guide, have the width of backing behind the wall equal to $\frac{2}{3}$ the height of the wall. In

(left) Choose and lay base stones carefully on a bed of $\frac{3}{4}$ " stone. (below) This 19th-century foundation is falling apart because the joints all line up. Instead, each course of stones should have overlapping joints.

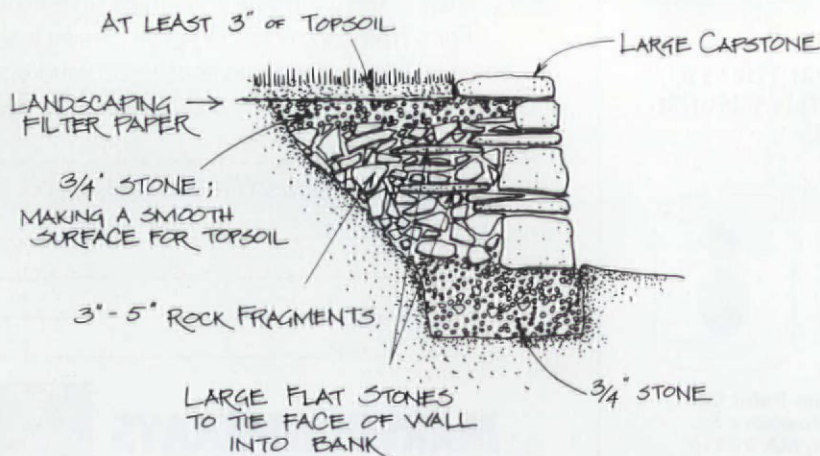


addition to using chips and debris from stone wall construction, I often order truckloads of $\frac{3}{4}$ " to $\frac{5}{8}$ " stone fragments from a local quarry to use as backing. Since the backing will be covered, color isn't important. It can be granite, limestone, traprock, or whatever is local and cheap.

Construction and Tools

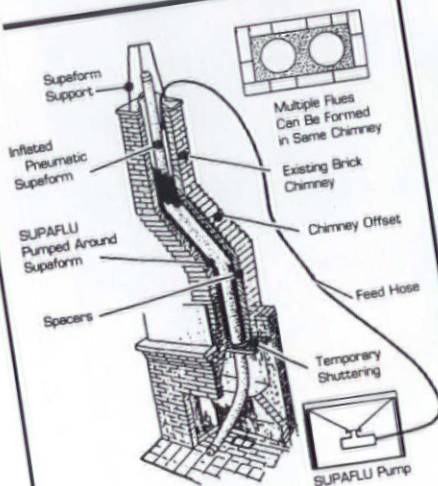
TO START A WALL, DIG A FOOTING trench 2' wide by 1' deep and fill with a layer of $\frac{3}{4}$ " stone to within 1" of ground level. Pound in stakes and stretch a line of mason's cord 6" above the ground as a guide. Line up the bottom stones carefully. These should be some of your largest stones, with straight edges in front. Lay the stones so the tops are level to each

[Continued on page 30]



Construction with proper drainage behind and underneath will protect a retaining wall from potential water damage.

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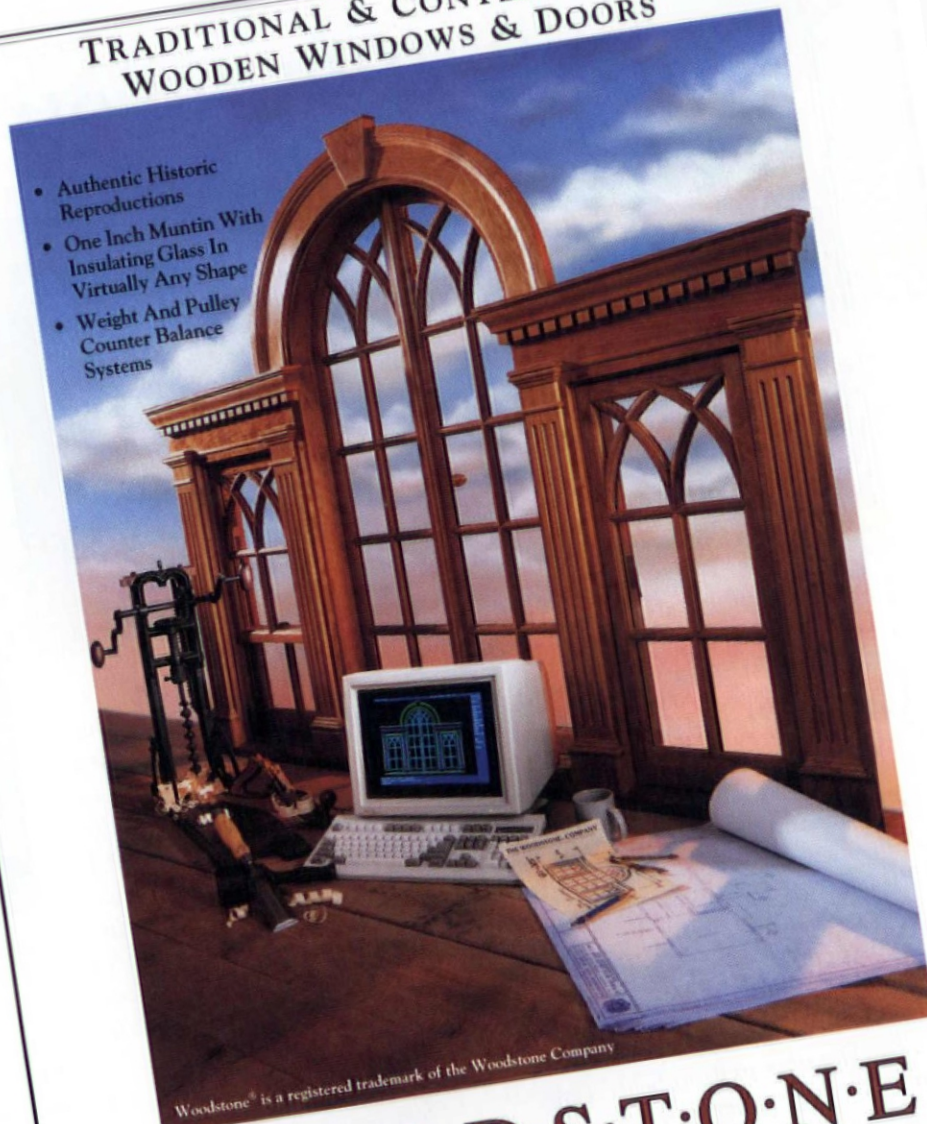
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OUTSIDE THE OLD HOUSE



A finished retaining wall, complete with large capstones and granite steps.

[Continued from page 28]

other — this will make it easier to lay the next stones across the joints. (Save some of the big, flat stones, though, for the top of the wall.) If this part of the work is done well the rest of the job will be easier, and the line of the entire wall will be neater. A very good rule to follow is: *One over two and two over one.* This insures that the wall will be tied together well.

Dry stone walls are held together by the friction between the stones. Weight upon the stones below keeps them from sliding apart, and the wider the overlapping surfaces, the tighter they hold. Wedge-shaped stones contact more surface area with the other stones around them than round or chunky ones. For this reason, broad, flat stones should be used for leveling the facing stones.

Put in a long stone every 4' or so that reaches well into the backing of the wall. This will act as an anchor, holding the face of the wall into the material behind. You might also lay some large flat stones in the backing to give the structure more unity.

Use an 8 to 14 lb. mason's sledge (a sledge hammer with a straight edge on one side) to split rocks into flat

pieces. You should also have a 3 lb. hammer with one tapered side. This is useful for splitting smaller stones to get wedge-shaped chinkers and can be used for striking a chisel. Have a brick hammer handy at all times to break up stones for chinkers and to knock unwanted projections off for a better fit. For finer work, use two chisels: one with a 2" blade (also called a tracer), and one with a point. Use the tracer for splitting a stone along the grain. Use the point for chipping across the grain or for general removal of material.

You may want to break a stone at a precise point. To direct the impact cleanly through the stone, lay it on a larger stone and strike exactly above the point of rest. This is a handy technique for smaller stones of 3" to 4" (or as little as 1" across), which would otherwise shatter unpredictably. Always



Since no one will see it, use cheap stone rather than nice fieldstone for backing. Here 5" to 8" limestone rip-rap came from a local quarry for \$25 per ton.

wear gloves and eye protection when working stone.

Finishing Touches

WHEN YOU STILL HAVE ABOUT 1' TO GO, pick out the big stones you want on top. Then start measuring other stones to get the capstones up to the right level. For the top of a wall I always try

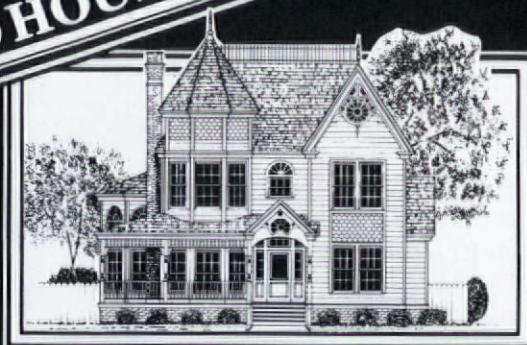
[Continued on page 32]

Fixing a Falling Wall

IF THERE IS A TUMBLED WALL ON YOUR PROPERTY THAT YOU WANT TO SET RIGHT, save yourself time and take the whole thing apart. Spread the stones out on the lawn so you can see them all, dig a 1' footing trench, and start the wall again from the bottom. If the bottom facing stones are still in good position and just the top layers need repair, dig the earth away from behind the bad stones and knock them back into position with a sledge and a block of wood. Have a trusting friend hold the block of wood against the stone to be moved and tap or smack the block until the stone is right. Refill the back of the wall with ¾" stone.

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OUTSIDE THE OLD HOUSE

[Continued from page 30]
to use stones at least 8" thick. Smaller stones on top look like leftovers.

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Large capstones make the wall more solid and gives it a sturdy appearance. They also provide good bases for flowerpots, sculpture, and sitting.

Use ¾" stone for the back of the wall as much as possible. Larger stones will allow earth to filter down, and smaller pieces might freeze as a unit. If you do use larger stones, throw in some chips to fill in the gaps.

Top off the backing of the wall with ¾" of ¾" stone. Over this lay landscaping filter paper, scribing it to fit against the back of the facing stones. The paper ensures the final layer of topsoil will not wash down among the wall stones - modern-day protection for the wall you have assembled using the same techniques as artisans from ancient times.



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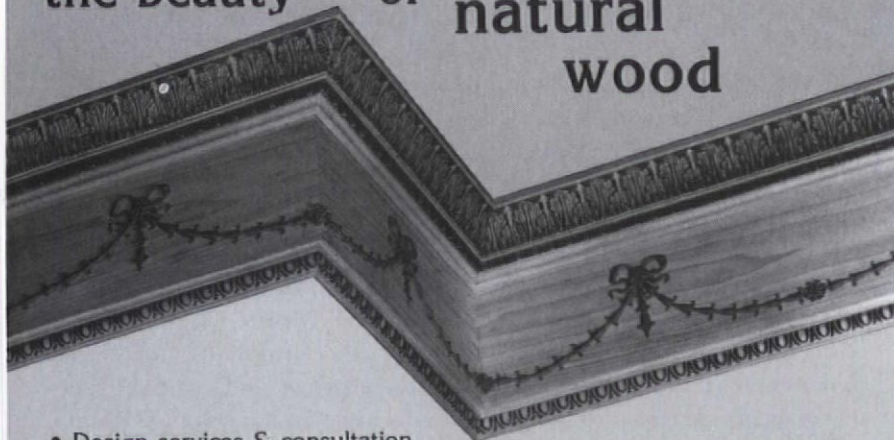
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READING THE OLD HOUSE

Is That a Cottalow or a Bungalottage?

by James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell

HERE'S A PHOTO OF A typical, well-maintained small house that the owners think of as a cottage. Yet today, as well as in the sales hype of the 1920s, such a house is also frequently called a "bungalow," or even a "cottage bungalow." The unassuming design, with its vaguely Arts & Crafts bracketed eaves and lightly clipped gable-end roofs, would look right at home in one of the many builder's catalogs and plan books of the period. But is this house a bungalow or is it a cottage?

Henry H. Saylor, whose 1911 book *Bungalows* pretty much sums up the subject, managed to think of at least ten different types of American bungalows, and the term seems to have been popularly applied to just about any house that had a front porch and was less than three stories high. To Saylor — and to us — it's the low, front-sweeping roof, the "low, snug, earth-hugging mass," and the rambling floorplan of the bungalow that distinguish the type and tie it to its Bengalese origins. It's a close call but, to our eyes, this house is a bit too vertical and too compact in feeling for a bungalow, but



A telltale sign of a cottage: This house's upright compactness.



Note the horizontal floorplan and the low-pitched gable roof on this early 20th-century bungalow.

just about right as a cottage.

It's easy to understand how the terms cottage and bungalow came to be so readily intertwined. Both are small, rather low houses (one- or one-and-a-half stories), designed to use interior space in an economical manner. Both are also meant to imply good taste at an affordable cost. Each came to national ascendancy in the early 20th century when the United States was busy building inexpensive houses for a huge and growing population.

The basic differences probably stem from the fact that the bungalow was originally designed for a hot climate, and the cottage for a colder climate. The first bungalows had to fight heat and glaring sunshine; hence the deep porches and wide, low rooflines. Although cottages often do have porches, they are clearly design extras and not necessary to the definition of the building as a type. Cottage interi-

ors are also likely to be less open than in a bungalow of the same size, with more rooms that can be closed off. This being a free country, however, bungalows may be found in Minnesota and cottages in Florida,

Perhaps we should emphasize here that neither the bungalow nor the cottage is a house style. Both are basic house types, which can be dressed up to fit a number of styles, from Prairie School to Arts & Crafts to Colonial Revival to Mediterranean. Still, the bungalow (with its ties to colonial India) suggested well-tempered exotism, while the cottage offered the traditional values of England, Europe, and early America (as embodied in the Cape Cod house). None of this late-20th-century nitpicking, however, changes the fact that in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s, "cottage" and "bungalow" were virtually synonymous in the popular mind.



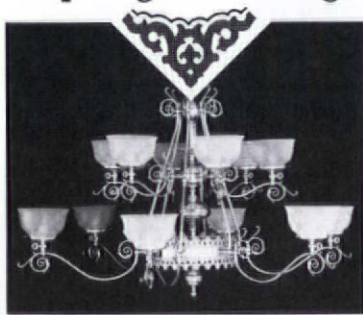
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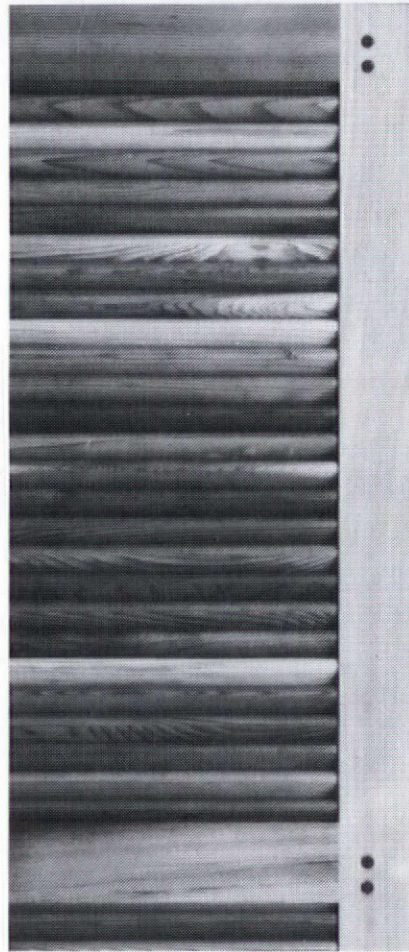
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Houses With

THE UNCOMMON TECHNIQUE OF PLANK CONSTRUCTION

by Stephen B. Jordan

MOST HOUSES BUILT OF WOOD RELY ON A TYPE of frame for structural support — but not all houses. Besides widespread and well-documented systems such as the balloon frame or platform frame (see “The Structure of Wood-Frame Houses,” March/April 1992 *OHJ*), there is the far less familiar family of building techniques that uses no true frame: plank construction. Fueled by the last century’s demand for quick, inexpensive housing, plank houses appeared anywhere there was a local source for timber and a sawmill to supply cheap lumber.

Plank house construction techniques varied widely with the builder and location, but all used planks — square-sawn lumber 2" to 4" thick and at least 10" wide — to build a wall. There were two basic methods. Vertical plank construction stood the planks up vertically like soldiers or pickets in a fence; horizontal plank construction stacked the planks horizontally like cards. Both methods are structural and could support a house without a frame made of heavy timbers or dimensioned studs.

Information on these techniques is scarce and examples are hard to find, not surprising given that the building’s shape or style is no tip-off to its construction. In fact, most old-house owners only discover their house is built with one of these offbeat methods when they begin major repairs or open a wall for insulating. For folks who’ve had such an experience, this article will try to shed more light on the nature of these interesting buildings.

Vertical Plank Construction

VERTICAL PLANK BUILDING IS FOUND IN TWO GENERAL types of houses. The most common and earliest ver-

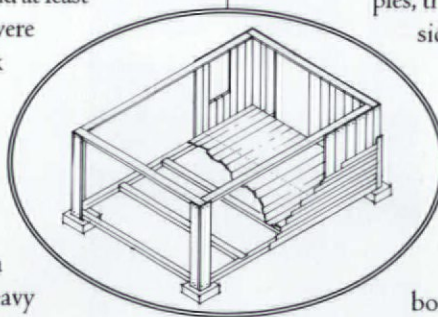
sions were used to fashion walls in hewn-timber frame houses without studs (and sometimes without braces). To such a timber frame the builder would attach wide, random-width boards, 1½" to 3" thick, that ran vertically from plate to sill through one or two storeys. From the 17th century to the early 19th century, locally milled planks were fastened to the sill and plate with wooden pegs. Later, inexpensive cut nails replaced pegs.

In better examples of vertical plank walls, sills and plates are rabbetted, ploughed, or sometimes mortised to receive the planks. This sophisticated joinery-type attachment provided a stable wall that was flush with the timber frame. On later, less substantial exam-

ples, the planks were simply nailed to the outside of the sill and plate. After the house was framed, windows and doors were cut in and clapboards or shingles were easily nailed to the exterior wall for cladding. Inside, lath for plastering was attached directly to the planks, but in many cases wallpaper was applied directly to the bare board wall or over a layer of muslin. Partition walls inside the building were also made with planks. Since the rough cornerposts were visible and prominent, they were often encased in finished lumber and

decorated with a chamfered or beaded arris (the sharp edge where the post faces meet). Unembellished posts were painted or covered with wallpaper.

Later versions of vertical plank construction entirely omitted corner posts, relying on the planks rather than heavy corner timbers to support the weight of the structure. In this method, the plank lumber was often increased to 3" in thickness. Since heavy timber sills and plates were still part of this technique, old-house enthusiasts disagree as to how the walls were erect-



Planks alone hold up simple “box frame” houses.

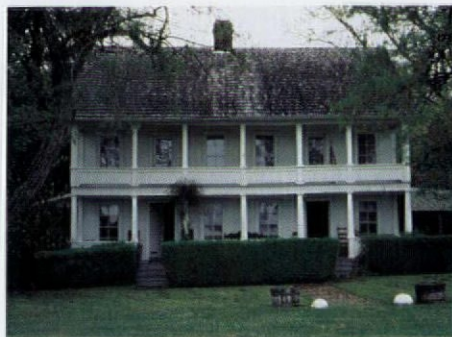
hout Frames



Lost clapboards bare the structural secret of this Ovid, New York, house: walls built solely of vertical planks.

ed. Some believe the heavy timber plate was lifted into place on the previously positioned wall. Others maintain that the entire wall was assembled on the ground and then lifted into place with ropes and poles. In support of the first method, one 19th-century pattern book author directed his readers to erect the corner planks, brace them, and then hoist the plates up to be attached.

Although this system of supporting walls and roof with planks seemingly defies all common sense and good construction practice (walls are thin and wind bracing, for example, is negligible), existing examples remain sturdy and in good repair. Standing buildings that date to the 17th and 18th centuries clearly document the use of vertical plank building throughout the northeastern United States and in Canada. However, as the population expanded West and South in the 19th century, this simple form of construction traveled not only as part of the builder's skills, but also in popular architectural pattern books and trade magazines. Among the many references to this

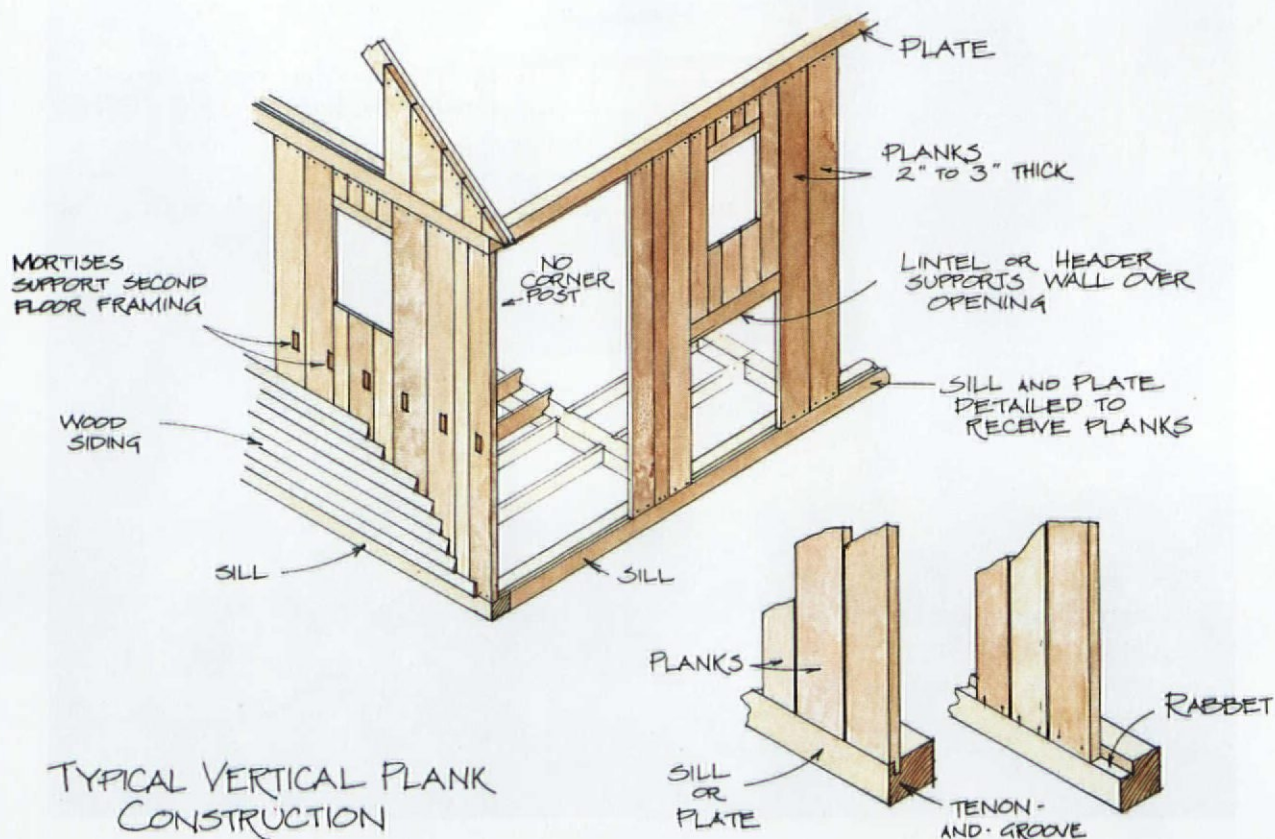


Planks in the 1856 Charles Applegate house in Yoncala, Oregon, rise as one piece for two storeys.

method were those by Gervase Wheeler in *Homes for the People in Suburb and Country* (1855). As late as 1887, George Palliser recommended the plank method for a three-room settler's cottage in *Palliser's New Cottage Homes*.

Often known as "box frame" or "boxing framed" houses, industrial revolution-era examples of vertical plank construction are noted all over the southern United States, California, and in the Pacific Northwest. Here, the

technique was popular for inexpensive tenant and farm housing. Numerous Texas examples from the last half of the 19th century, and as late as the 1930s, were constructed of dimension lumber that, unlike early eastern examples, could have been shipped in by rail. Indeed, there is evidence that whole "box frame" houses built for oil and mining boomtowns were once moved to site on flatcars. The walls of these one-storey houses were often constructed with wide 1" planks simply nailed to the faces of sills and plates (see drawing, page 36). Battens covered the joints in planks, or they used tongue-and-groove planks



with horizontal clapboards nailed to the exterior. As in the earlier northeastern houses without corner posts, southern and western examples were constructed without additional structural framing and erected in a similar manner. The technique was still viable well into this century and used as late as the 1940s for hundreds of World War II temporary buildings.

Horizontal Plank Construction

THE SECOND AND LESS COMMON type of plank construction is the horizontal or "plank-on-plank" method. A strictly 19th century technique, plank-on-plank construction depended on an abundant source of lumber and inexpensive nails. The method was simple: 1" planks sawn about 6" wide were stacked and nailed one on top of the other to form a dense, solid wall. Overlapping the boards at corners, as



Random-width planks — some the diameter of a tree — also partitioned interiors.

in a box joint, tied the walls together and added stability. Partitions were meshed with the main walls in much the same way by lapping-in alternate planks. To avoid the expense of lathing while creating a void for plaster keys, the boards were usually stacked to create an alternating or staggered pattern of one board inset and the next projecting forward in an offset. The same effect could be achieved by ordering half the lumber 6" wide and the remaining half slightly narrower. By laying up the wall with the exterior sides flush, the interior side had the same alternating pattern as in the staggered method. Although the expense of lath was saved, this method required considerably more material for the plaster rough coat.

Since an experienced carpenter was not needed to provide a complex frame, the plank-on-plank house was



Siding off, the vertical planks supporting this house without corner posts become clear. Note the joist pockets near the windows.

an excellent method of construction for the novice house builder. Furthermore, unlike heavy timber posts and beams, each unit of a plank-on-plank structure could be easily lifted and installed in place by one man and a helper.

Objections to the plank-on-plank method were the wasteful use of lumber and nails and the slow rate of erection — about one vertical foot per day. Since the many interstices between boards were vulnerable to wind and vermin, most builders recommended a rough coat of plaster or parging on the exterior wall prior to installing cladding. In addition, the system had structural problems, with walls prone to bowing and bulging.

While vertical plank construction is seen as a reasonable extension of timber frame practices, the plank-on-plank method, although similar to log house construction, is often viewed as a local oddity. This method,

Only battens were used to close in the planks of this "box frame" house near Ripley, Tennessee.



however, was endorsed by well-known authors like Orson Fowler who referred to the technique as "board-wall" construction in *The Octagon House* of 1853. Fowler's explicit instructions and commentary extolled the virtues and savings of plank-on-plank building, a technique he had used in his Fishkill, New York home. Other examples, including industrial structures such as silos, mills, and storage buildings, are noted across the northeastern United States and Ontario Province in Canada. Plank-on-plank houses pop up as far west as Wisconsin, and as far south as Texas.

Living with Plank Houses

PLANK CONSTRUCTION OF ANY BREED IS NOT INDICATIVE OF A particular architectural style. My first encounter with plank building was in a large Gothic Revival home. During an architectural survey, I was told by a retired carpenter, "That old house doesn't have any studs in the walls." The mystery

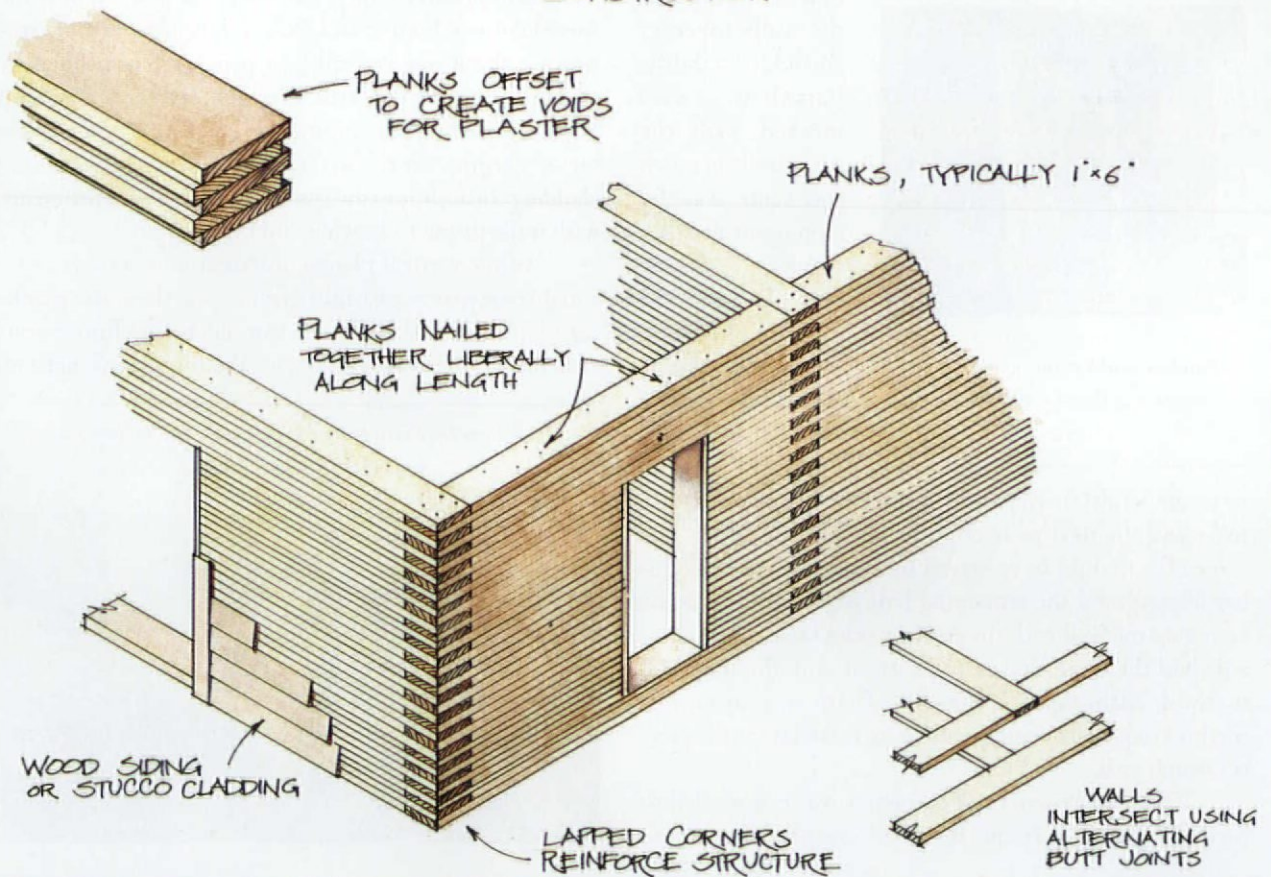


Viewed from the outside, there are no signs this 1845 Danby, New York, house is built with plank-on-plank construction.

turned out to be vertical plank construction. Later, while disassembling a timber frame house, I discovered a room that had been the original plank homestead, but was subsequently enshrouded by a stately Greek Revival structure.

Most homeowners are never aware their house is plank construction. Unsuccessful efforts to retrofit insulation or add wiring or plumbing are often the first indication the house is not built in a conventional way. Besides

HORIZONTAL OR PLANK-ON-PLANK CONSTRUCTION



the absence of a wall cavity, some clues that your house might be built with vertical planks are: 1) extremely thin (about 3") walls; 2) prominent posts in every corner; 3) wide, vertical planks visible from the attic on the gable ends. Plank-on-plank construction can be deceiving since walls tend to be closer in thickness to typical timber or stud framing. Nevertheless, gable ends visible from the attic will generally reveal the telltale stacked planks.

When asked how to insulate a plank house my usual answer is: Don't. Most methods are extremely disruptive or damaging to original materials and detailing. If insulation is added to the exterior, cladding must be removed and openings furred out to accommodate the increased wall thickness. If the roof overhang is extremely shallow, this additional thickness interferes with the original building's proportions. Adding insulation to the interior walls is also problematic if rooms are small. Precious space is lost on each perimeter because surfaces must be furred out to accommodate the insulation. Loss of original materials or details may be inevitable.

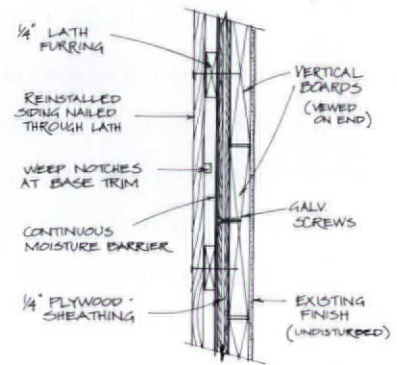
Since most heat loss is through the ceiling and leaky doors and windows, try simple measures first. For example: 1) superinsulate the attic floor; 2) install quality wooden

A look in the attic may provide clues about construction. These horizontal planks in the gable end explained the whole house.



The 1890s home (above) of short story writer O. Henry in Austin, Texas, is a handsome "box frame." Suggested improvements included adding a thin space under the siding (right) for insulation.

THERMAL UPGRADE IDEA



storm windows; 3) seal all exterior cracks with a paintable caulk; 4) apply weather stripping to doors and windows; 5) take advantage of all possible passive solar measures.

Plank houses appear in many parts of North America and, if OHJ readers' comments are any indication, are more common than previously realized. I'd enjoy hearing from anyone with further information on these fascinating buildings.

Steve Jordan is the Rehab Advisor for The Landmark Society of Western New York.

THE AUTHOR WISHES TO THANK Mary Joan Simmons Kevlin for use of her 1982 Cornell University graduate thesis, *Radiographic Inspection of Plank House Construction*. Thanks also to Philip Dole, Professor of Architecture Emeritus, University of Oregon; Bob Coffee and George Hammond, Coffee, Krier, Schenck Architects, Austin, TX; Tere Kinsey, Texas Historical Commission; Charlie Pomada of Ithaca, NY; and Norman Brown of Danby, NY. For additional reading see: *Building with Wood* by John I. Rempel; University of Toronto Press, 1980.



CHARLESTON SHUTTERS

A Study in Repair Technique • By Robert J. Albrecht

REMBER HURRICANE HUGO? YOU CAN'T FORGET it if you lived in Charleston, South Carolina. Hugo slammed into the charming old city in the fall of 1989 and ripped it apart, causing billions of dollars worth of damage. Even today, though the city looks better dressed in its new cover of slate, tin, and paint, major repair projects are still underway.

In the Historic District, most of the sturdy 18th- and 19th-century homes survived the disaster remarkably well, except for some inevitable exterior damage. One feature impressed me as testimony to these old homes' durability — their functional shutters. In the Historic District, shutters often comprise as much as 25% of a building's facade. Although definitely appealing to the eye, many shutters are far from ornamental: Some Charlestonians actually use them. The shutters provide basic security, privacy while maintaining ventilation and, perhaps most important, storm protection. Hurricane warnings are not rare on the South Atlantic coast, and no one

takes them lightly. When the warnings come, the less fortunate scurry around with ladders and sheets of plywood (if indeed any plywood is available in the face of a storm) to board up their windows. Lucky owners of buildings equipped with workable shutters simply close and bolt them from inside.

Hurricane Hugo was a storm of such magnitude, however, that many shutters were badly damaged or torn loose entirely. Justifiably proud of their historic buildings, the owners were reluctant to replace the shutters with new ones off the shelf. Some stock shutters are lighter, or not as well made. They are often unavailable in cypress (a heavy, decay-resistant softwood), and non-existent in uncommon sizes. Conversations with local joiners yielded nightmarish estimates for custom-made duplicates; at any price, first-growth cypress was not to be found.

For our project, the restoration of the shutters belonging to John Laurens, President of Preservation Consultants, Inc., we opted for repair rather than replacement. We began with an examination



Raised-panel shutters serve the dual traditional roles of protecting and complementing the variety of windows on this historic Charleston home; (opposite) No nailed-up backwards window dressing here, good construction and repair keeps these exterior shutters working.

of the shutters and found the old-time joinery to be excellent, the wood members thick and sturdy. The original-growth cypress had performed commendably for over 100 years in harsh exposure. The deterioration of the wood was actually limited to only a few areas on the shutters. As you might guess, these areas were critical — the joints,



(above) The horizontal edge of the hinge retarded drainage, and condensation behind it contributed to wood rot. When it was necessary to add to previously hardened filler (below), we roughed up the surface thoroughly with a knife or nail and coarse sandpaper.



and the attachment points for hardware. The joints had opened slightly over the decades and allowed water to seep in. The exposed endgrain of the members acted like straws “sucking” water into the wood through capillary action.

Polyester Resin or Epoxy?

AFTER EXAMINING THE OPTIONS, I DECIDED TO REPAIR THE shutters with fiberglass-reinforced polyester resin. Years ago when I first began using epoxies to restore deteriorated wood, I thought about the time in the 1950s when my father applied polyester resin over the bottom of an old canvas canoe. The canoe bounced over rocks for decades. I had often worked with polyester resins on boats and autos and wondered about the possibilities on architectural wood. After experimentation, I found that polyester resins can be used successfully; the secrets are in the proper thinning of the resin, and thorough priming with the thinned resin.

I have conducted many different types of bending and breaking tests on all types of wood repaired with polyester resin, in both extreme and mild cases of rot, and each time the results have been equal or better to the performance of wood “dutchman” repairs.

Epoxies are often used in these situations with good results. But three additional reasons weighed in my decision against them for this job. One, filler epoxies are hard to find in stock, and penetrating consolidant epoxies always need to be ordered. Two, epoxies have a long setup time. This extends the duration and difficulty of a job. Three, epoxies are more expensive, often three times as much as the polyester resins. This should not be a primary reason for choosing polyester, but is worth considering in cases where polyester will be more than adequate for the repair.

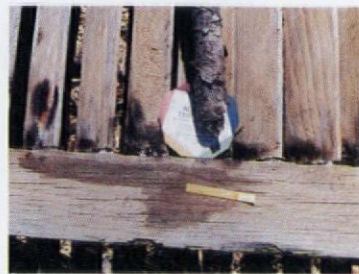
Polyester resin is readily available at most hardware, auto, and marine supply stores. Costs average \$25 per gallon for a two-part resin kit, \$15 per gallon for polyester filler (auto body putty), and \$10 per gallon for acetone (a solvent for the resin). You will also need a natural bristle brush, flexible plastic trowels (for ease of application and cleanup) and a “cheese grater” file, which can all be purchased where the resin is sold. Keep in mind that these chemicals are powerful. Be sure to handle them with reasonable care. I work in a well-ventilated area, use a dust mask when sanding, and wear rubber gloves.

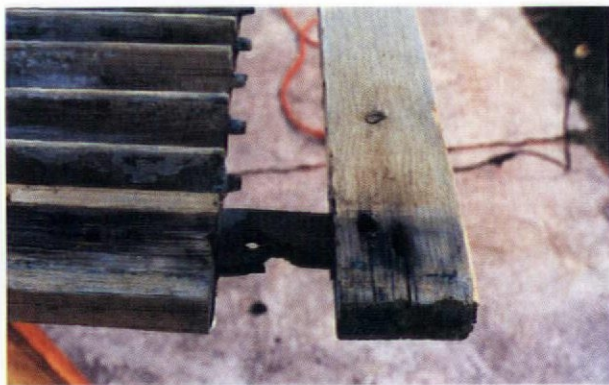
Preparation for Repairs

THE PAINT ON THE SHUTTERS HAD TO COME OFF TO SEE ALL the defects and gain access to the wood. Stripping a shutter with a century’s worth of paint layers on it is no job for elbow grease alone. We took them to a professional furniture stripper who agreed to clean them for \$25 each. We chose spray-type application rather than vat-style to minimize absorption of the stripping agent by the wood.

Residual caustic left in exterior wood will self-strip paint for years to come, so I checked the pH. (I used Alkacid™ test paper from Fisher Scientific, Chemical Mfg. Division, Fair Lawn, NJ.) Although I was told the refinishing shop would neutralize the wood before delivery to us, my first test on the returned shutters showed a strongly alkaline result of pH 10. The refinishers then offered to treat them with muriatic acid (31% hydrochloric acid).

To test pH, make a small puddle on the wood with water that has tested neutral. Then wipe the excess off, apply the test paper, and compare it to the chart furnished by the manufacturer.

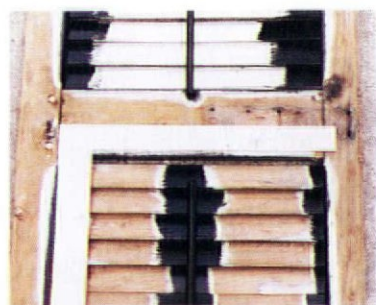




As the first step in restoring movement to stuck vanes, we tapped one side of the frame apart and gently worked the vanes out of their sockets.

After an application of ten parts water to one part muriatic acid, the wood tested acidic.

We abandoned the finishing shop to its own devices and fell back on an old home remedy: a solution of white vinegar and water. Our common sense was rewarded with a pH reading of 6, close enough to neutral (pH 7). After all the stripping, rinsing, and treating, we allowed the shutters to dry a week or two in a sheltered area. (If moisture gets trapped under new paint, it can cause premature paint failure. Re-check the pH before painting; it might change slightly as the deep moisture migrates out.)



We used a hand-held drill bit to ream the old paint out of the vane holes, and cotton swabs to prime and to paint them. This provides a smooth bearing surface and protection from trapped water.

The shutters were now shaved and showered. The first carpentry task was to square them into shape. Shutters with vanes are like screen doors: without panels or diagonal braces they tend to droop into parallelograms and can't be closed. We used a hacksaw blade to clean the joints, then carefully worked the entire shutter back to square.

Restoration with Polyester

NOW THE DECAYED AREAS OF THE WOOD WERE READY TO BE restored. The most important part was to soak the polyester as far back into the fibers and voids as possible. As it comes in the can, the polyester resin's viscosity is too thick to allow this. We thinned it 25% with acetone, and added a little more catalyst than normal to the mixture because the acetone slows hardening. (Note — styrene

monomer, "resin thinner", can be used to thin polyester resin, but it is hard to find and expensive, and will not bring the resin to the same viscosity as acetone will.) This part of the process is similar to soaking with consolidant when using epoxy and I have had excellent results using the resin in this manner.

We laid the shutter flat on a work table (no need to fight gravity) with the less deteriorated side up, and put with paper under the shutter to keep resin from sticking to the table. Using a natural bristle brush, we primed the cracks and voids with thinned resin until the wood couldn't soak up any more.

Then we switched to using unthinned resin to fill small holes and cracks. Without waiting for the resin to harden, we mixed the polyester filler and applied it to the prepared areas. We found that we didn't have to worry about bulges or irregularities; they were easily shaped with the file when the filler reached a rubbery condition before



Several vanes in our shutters had lost corners or chunks, or were cracked down the middle. We successfully "glued" cracks together, and rebuilt missing parts with the resin. We added filler and filed, again and again, until the original shape was achieved.

completely hardening. (Hardening can be accelerated with sunshine, a heat lamp, or a hair dryer.)

We turned the shutter over and repeated the whole process on the "bad" side. Doing the "good" side first cut the chance of losing resin through leakage. When some did leak out, we simply moved on to another area until the first application partially hardened. On both sides, we were sure to fill any joints that had opened from wood shrinkage over the years.


Deteriorated dowels and tenons were also successfully restored with the resin. On areas where we had doubts about the strength, we worked some fiberglass mat or cloth down into the resin during the process. We made sure to treat the exposed ends of all wood members to reduce future water absorption.

In other cases, pieces of the frame itself were miss-



Stripped shutters revealed their problem spots. On this one, standard repair attempts of plugging screw holes with wood had failed and left bores, some as large as 1/2" in diameter.

ing. The way we handled this type of repair was to construct a simple form, from posterboard and tape, in the shape of the missing part. We taped the form to the existing frame and poured the resin in, exactly like a miniature concrete pour. On large pieces we embedded one or more strips of fiberglass cloth in the resin, much like wire mesh in concrete. We found it more efficient to pour the resin in gradual stages rather than all at once.

When the resin work was complete, we let it cure for 24 hours. The final shaping was done by sanding and routing, just as if the new polyester section were wood. We primed and painted the shutters carefully, to avoid gumming up the vanes, and remounted the hardware. We wound up with a neat and sturdy job of prosthesis, worthy even of the wonderful old homes of Charleston. May they live through the fiercest winds to come. 

Special thanks to: Mr. John Laurens and all the other fine folks of Charleston.



A prime coat of thinned resin consolidated the damaged wood and provided a strong surface for the filler to adhere to.

EPOXY VS. POLYESTER RESINS

What's the Difference?

At first glance, it's hard to tell these two apart aside from cost. Epoxy and polyester are both synthetic resins: non-volatile, water-resistant, organic compounds with excellent adhesion and chemical resistance. Both are available in a variety of two-part systems for repairing wood and metal. However, they are derived from completely different chemical groups. Chemistry aside, here are their practical differences:

Cost: Epoxy resins are fairly expensive at \$40 to \$60 per gallon; polyester resins range from \$15 to \$30 per gallon.

Mixing: Epoxies must be mixed thoroughly for proper hardening. Polyesters don't require as thorough mixing.

Working/Curing Time: Epoxies have a wide range, from very fast to very slow, but tend to take longer than polyesters and often require warmer surface temperatures; most polyesters cure very quickly.

Type of Bond: Epoxies form a weld-like bond, and excel in adhesion to non-porous surfaces; polyesters form a secondary bond.

Shrinkage: Epoxies have a reputation for shrinking less than polyesters.

Flexibility and Hardness: Depending on the particular product and manufacturer, both types of resins can be formulated to provide excellent flexibility and hardness, but epoxies are available in a much wider range of formulations.

Shelf Life: Epoxies tend to have a longer shelf life, polyesters keep an average of less than one year.

Other: Epoxies generally can withstand a broader temperature range. Polyesters, however, often have better corrosion resistance.

Check with the manufacturer for specific product uses and limitations.

HISTORY • HARDWARE • HOW-TO TIPS

SHUTTER SOURCEBOOK

BY KURT HABEL



A BRIEF HISTORY

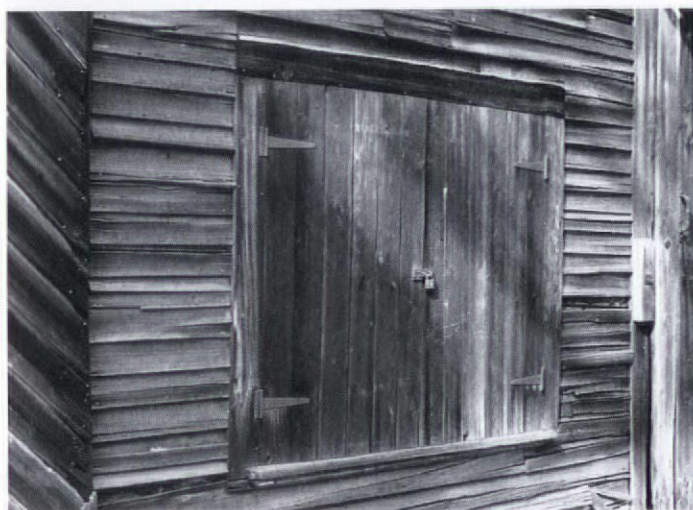
OFTEN MAINTAINED PURELY FOR DECORATION, window shutters and blinds originally served important functions. When closed, they protected house interiors from the elements and intruders. Shutters in northern climates were used primarily for extra insulation from the cold. In the South, however, blinds were designed to beat the heat. Frontier houses often had shuttered windows due to the scarcity of glass.

Early American shutters played the same role as doors and were often heavy, single-board, or bat-tent-type (made with matched boards) that could be bolted and barred. They played a defensive role longer in the Southwest, where most were hewn out of heavy boards and often chiselled with ornate patterns. In the latter half of the 18th century, panelled shutters and louvered blinds began to appear. By the 19th century, designs matched the changes in window shapes. For example, bi-folds solved the problem of covering larger windows. Palladian and round-top windows created a need for curved stiles, and pointed Gothic windows required pointed shutters.

Prior to the 19th century, shutters were custom-made



Blinds became common for second-floor ventilation, while solid shutters maintained privacy and security below.



Shutters were often homemade from several boards joined on the back by horizontal battens.

by local carpenters and cabinetmakers using hand tools. With technological advances came more sophisticated shutters. Woodworking machines made the mass-production of moveable slats possible, and blinds became commonplace to provide ventilation. For those who could afford the convenience, interior styles became popular. Shutter hardware also increased in complexity (some designs required 40 items per pair), while reducing the difficulties of opening and closing shutters.

In the Victorian era, the importance of functional shutters began to decline. Up North, better plaster, multiple fireplaces, and new steam and hot water heating reduced the need for closing windows with shutters. Storm windows could block the cold without blocking the view. Vacation homes, however, still required working shutters for off-season security. Although woven-wire screens advanced ventilation at the turn of the century, blinds remained essential for temperature control in the South.

Shutter paint colors also reflected the transition to a more decorative role. The traditional black and dark green, common during the Colonial and Greek Revival periods,



These unusual double-width blinds may have been installed to shield carpets, paintings, and delicate textiles from sunlight damage.

were replaced by a great variety of color in the Victorian era.

In the 20th century, post-Victorian houses continued to be built with shutters, but many were tacked on simply for decoration. After World War II, combination storm windows made functional exterior shutters in the North less practical, but working blinds have endured as useful architectural elements in the South.

PAINTING AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

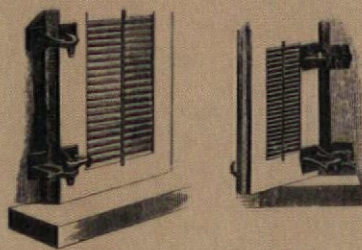
THERE'S NO NEED TO SHUDDER AT THE THOUGHT of shutter maintenance. Here are some simple tips that can save you time and trouble on a project involving one pair or 101 pairs.

- 137 Devise a system and label your shutters as you remove them. Carve or stamp the number in an inconspicuous spot, and record the number on a map of each side of the house.
- 138 Be prepared for birds, bees, and bats behind shutters. Residue on walls can indicate hiding places. Keep a can of hornet-bomb handy and note that most sprays will stain asphalt shingles. Early morning is the best time to remove inhabited shutters.
- 139 If slats, hardware, or other elements are missing, look for these pieces on the ground beneath the window, especially behind bushes.
- 140 Loose slats can be bowed back into place without disassembling the shutter. Secure with a 4d or 6d nail driven through the stile. Missing slats can be replaced with salvage from other blinds or lattice. Use a knife, coping saw, or sandpaper to shape the ends.
- 141 Helpful tools for hand-scraping slats are a carpenter's

SHUTTER GLOSSARY

137 TYPES

Shutter: A hinged or sliding system of boards serving as a moveable window cover. Can be made from a single board, a series of boards secured to battens, or panels set into a mortise-and-tenon frame. When closed, shutters block light, heat, cold, inclement weather, and intrusion.



Blinds with self-fastening hinges.

Blind: Often used interchangeably with shutter; window cover constructed with stiles, rails, and louvers (also called slats or vanes) designed to protect the window while allowing ventilation. Louvres can be fixed or moveable (rolling).

Venetian Blind: A blind with moveable slats; former name for adjustable exterior louvered shutters; usually refers to interior blinds which can be pulled up together by means of cords.

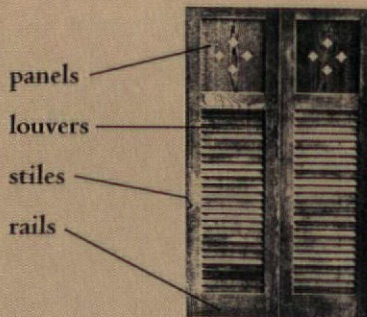
Indian Shutter: A misnomer, this term is commonly used in reference to interior panel-frame shutters, designed for privacy and insulation. Interior shutters built to fold into a recess (shutter box) provided for them in the window jamb are called box shutters.

Dutch Shutter: Shutters built in two sections (top and bottom) which operate independently.

Shutterette: A modern term for bi-fold interior blinds.

Jalousie: European term for a louvered blind. Occasionally used today in reference to interior bi-fold blinds.

138 PARTS



drawknife or an old kitchen knife with the blade stuck in a wood handle. Use an ice pick, awl, or screwdriver to pick out corners.

✚ For quick repair of loose rail-and-stile joints, square the shutter on a worktable, then drill a 1/4" hole through the joint and insert a glue-slathered dowel. Or, drill a shank hole and use a large brass wood screw then countersink and putty.

✚ Missing yoke pins can be replaced with rustproof staples driven in with needle-nose pliers.

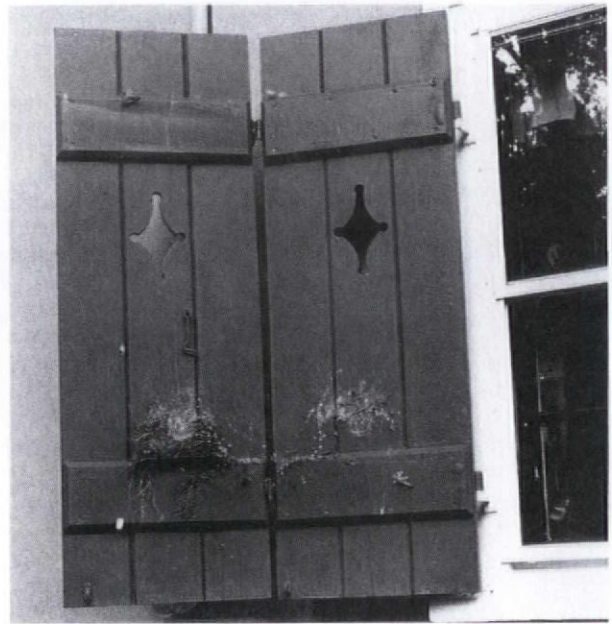
✚ To clean shutters before painting, take them to a high-pressure, do-it-yourself car wash.

✚ Prepare a storage spot for freshly painted shutters. If you lack a garage, barn, or shop space, use your lawn. Lay out a drop cloth, string a taut rope above, and lean the shutters against the line to dry. (Note: plastic tarps turn green grass yellow if left down too long. Also, avoid shutter-painting on a windy day.)

✚ For best primer penetration, mix one pint of Penetrol™ to 1 gallon of oil-based primer. Tint the primer to aid in one-coat coverage by a dark topcoat.

✚ Spraying is by far the quickest way to get paint onto fixed-slat shutters. Spray them leaning against a covered fence or stepladder. Use a dry brush to pull out drips and sags and work the paint into the wood.

✚ Paint the shutter's backside first. Start with the slat-ends



Birds and other critters often nest behind shutters.

and jab paint into the corners with a brush. This will ruin a good brush so don't use your best.

✚ For extra water protection, tack a strip of lead or copper flashing across the top rail and stile ends of the shutter. 🐾

✚ HARDWARE

Hinge: Attaches shutter to structure, or pairs of shutters to each other. Tremendous variety of styles



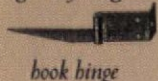
butt hinge



locking hinge



gravity hinge



book hinge



bulk strap hinge

and designs allow the shutter to pivot fully out of the window opening and lay flat against the wall, and also facilitate removal. Styles range from narrow shutter butts, to wide-swinging H hinges. Advanced shutter hinge designs include self-locking and gravity-locking features to hold the shutter in position.

Pintel Hinge: The fixed pin on which a removeable shutter leaf hangs; its mate is a pintel sleeve.

Shutter Dog, Turn, or Turn Buckle: An S or dart-shaped fastener mounted to a wall or window sill to hold a shutter open, usually attached with a lag screw or drive nail.



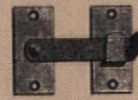
shutter dog

Blind Fast, Fastener, Holdback: A spring-like device, either a moveable latch or curley-Q wire, mounted to the bottom of a shutter which clicks onto a back catch when opened, and a sill catch when closed.



sill catch

fastener



shutter bar

Shutter Bar: A pivoted bar for holding shutters closed.

Shutter Bolt: A sliding deadbolt which locks shutters closed.



shutter bolt

Shutter Lift: A handle fixed to a shutter for convenience in opening or closing.

Shutter Worker: A crank which opens and closes shutters from indoors, often incorporating a blind adjuster which holds the shutter or blind in a fixed position.

Yoke Pin: The pin or staple which secures a moveable louver to the centerpost of a blind.

SUPPLIERS LIST

☞ CUSTOM SHUTTERS

American Heritage Shutters
2345 Dunn Avenue, Dept. OHJ
Memphis, TN 38114
(800) 541-1186
Exterior and interior; custom finishing.

Beech River Mill Corp.
Old Route 16, Dept. OHJ
Center Ossipee, NH 03814
(603) 539-2636
Exterior and interior; hardware.

The Coldren Company
PO Box 668, 100 Race Street, Dept. OHJ
North East, MD 21901
(410) 287-2082
Exterior, from original patterns; hardware.

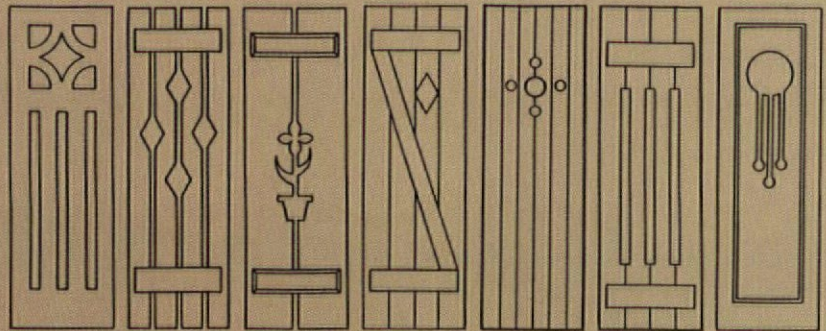
Devenco Products, Inc.
2688 East Ponce de Leon Avenue
Dept. OHJ
Decatur, GA 30030
(800) 888-4597
Exterior and interior; traditional joinery.

**Palmer Creek Hand-Hewn
Wood Products**
PO Box 3313, Dept. OHJ
Santa Rosa, CA 95402
(707) 578-0870
*Exterior and interior, using antique hand tools;
can supply hardware.*

Rem Industries
Box 504, Dept. OHJ
Northboro, MA 01532
(508) 393-8424
Exterior and interior; exterior hardware.

The Shutter Depot
Route 2, Box 157, Dept. OHJ
Greenville, GA 30222
(706) 672-1214
*Exterior and interior, all types; unfinished or
custom painted; hardware.*

Shutter Craft
282 Stepstone Hill, Dept. OHJ
Guilford, CT 06437
(203) 453-1973
*Exterior and interior; panel cutouts; unfinished
or custom painted; hardware.*



Classic blind designs from the 1930s.

Ray Tenebruso, Cabinetmaker
2842 Gaston Road, Dept. OHJ
Cottage Grove, WI 53527
(608) 839-4518
Exterior and interior; traditional joinery.

Vixen Hill Cedar Shutters
Main Street, Dept. OHJ
Elverson, PA 19520
(800) 423-2766
Exterior; traditional joinery.

Woodpecker Products, Inc.
1010 North Cascade, Dept. OHJ
Montrose, CO 81401
(800) 524-7055
Exterior and interior.

☞ INTERIOR SHUTTERS

Maple Grove Restorations
PO Box 9194, Dept. OHJ
Bolton, CT 06043-9194
(203) 742-5432
Colonial and Victorian raised or recessed panel.

Stanfield Shutter Company
3214 South 300 West, Dept. OHJ
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
(801) 467-8823
Panel and louver, fixed and moveable.

☞ ANTIQUE SHUTTERS

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(800) 274-8883
Antique and custom-made; cypress; repairs.

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West Chester, PA 19380
(215) 692-5651
Restored originals and custom-made; hardware.

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Acorn Manufacturing Co.
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Pasadena, CA 91104
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*Holdbacks, hinges, and shutterbolts in brass
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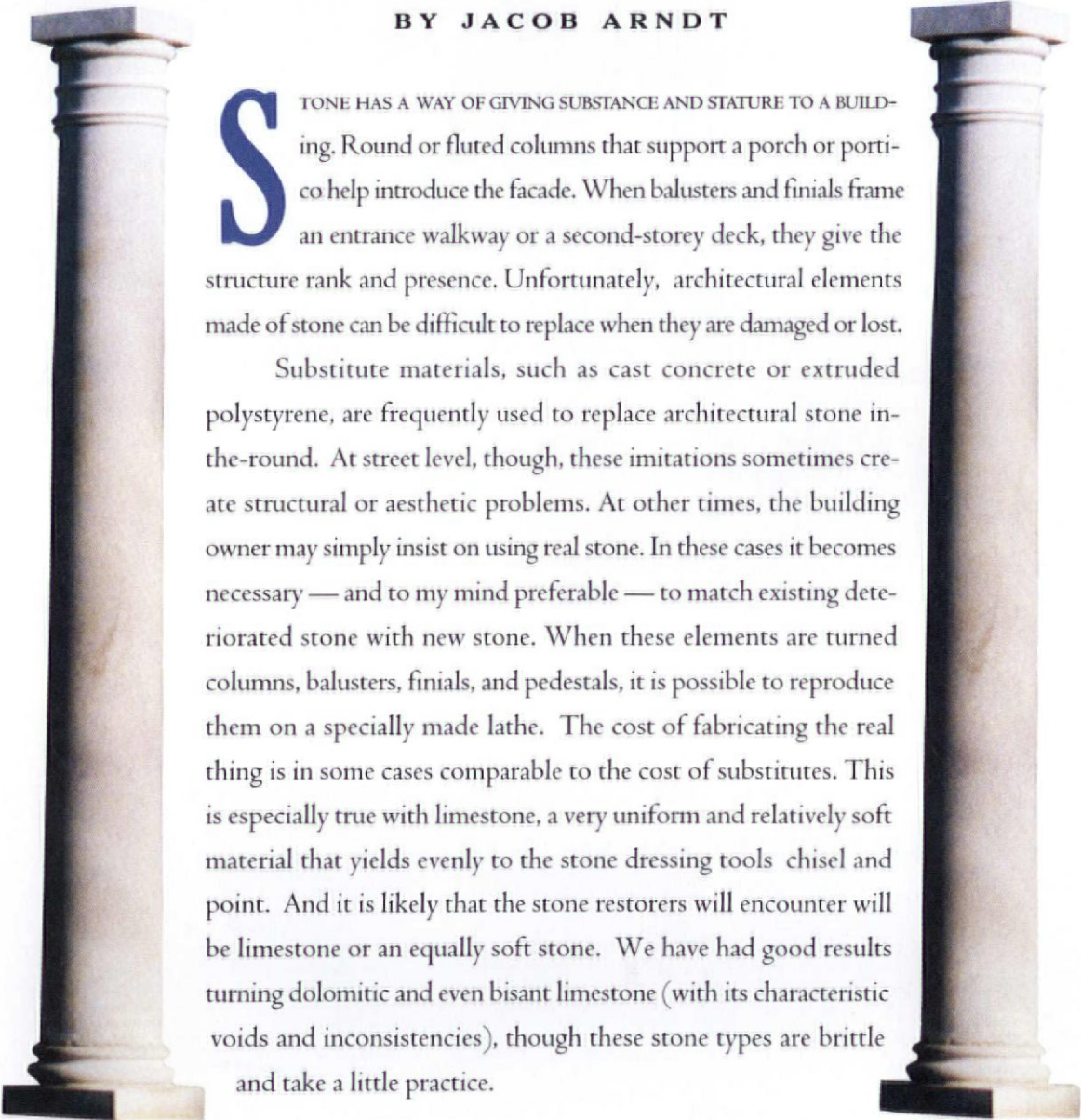
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Hinges, slidebolts; holdbacks in stock; restoration.

LATHE-TURNED STONE

Making Columns and Balusters from Raw Stone

BY JACOB ARNDT



STONE HAS A WAY OF GIVING SUBSTANCE AND STATURE TO A BUILDING. Round or fluted columns that support a porch or portico help introduce the facade. When balusters and finials frame an entrance walkway or a second-storey deck, they give the structure rank and presence. Unfortunately, architectural elements made of stone can be difficult to replace when they are damaged or lost.

Substitute materials, such as cast concrete or extruded polystyrene, are frequently used to replace architectural stone in-the-round. At street level, though, these imitations sometimes create structural or aesthetic problems. At other times, the building owner may simply insist on using real stone. In these cases it becomes necessary — and to my mind preferable — to match existing deteriorated stone with new stone. When these elements are turned columns, balusters, finials, and pedestals, it is possible to reproduce them on a specially made lathe. The cost of fabricating the real thing is in some cases comparable to the cost of substitutes. This is especially true with limestone, a very uniform and relatively soft material that yields evenly to the stone dressing tools chisel and point. And it is likely that the stone restorers will encounter will be limestone or an equally soft stone. We have had good results turning dolomitic and even bisant limestone (with its characteristic voids and inconsistencies), though these stone types are brittle and take a little practice.

*Solid limestone columns shaped as one piece
on a user-built lathe.*

Although we're accustomed to thinking of lathes as high-tech, micro-tolerance machines that cost thousands of dollars, the essentials are simple. The only special components for a stone lathe are a variable-speed electric motor, some commonly available bearings, and 1" diameter steel pins. A hardened-steel or carbide bit on a traveling tool rest does the cutting; putting a Dremel tool or deburring device onto the same rest will rout fluting details.

All of the hardware is easy to find. There is no need for three-phase electricity or other industrial-grade equipment, and you can set up near the job site or use your available shop space. Because balusters, finials, or pedestals are more likely to need replacing than columns, weight is not often a major concern. On occasions when it is, chain hoists do the trick. Chances are, the stone you'll be replacing was turned by a quarryman or rough mason on a simple device similar to the one described here.

Ordering Materials

START WITH A BLOCK OF STONE SAWN FOUR SIDES TO ROUGHLY the diameter of the original. It doesn't hurt to send a sample of the stone to the quarry so the quarrymen can extract from the area that matches best. Let them know you are turning the stone and that it must be free of fissures and other impurities. The stone for 12"- diameter columns were ordered cut at 13 1/4" x 13 1/4" x 9' from a quarry in Bedford,

Indiana, that supplies almost all building limestone. Estimate 135 lbs. per cubic ft. if ordering Indiana limestone. Your local mason or masonry supply yard should be able to tell you where other matching stone is quarried. Try your mason's supply for small-dimensioned stone. They may have 6" x 6" square stock available for balusters and pedestals, or they'll know where to get it in a timely way.

Before the square-cut stone arrives at your shop, be prepared with a suitable bench. For a 1,200-lb. column, I used 2x6 lumber for a solid work surface and doubled it up to make 4x6 legs. Then I nailed on 3/4" plywood gussets for braces. Make it sturdy. The stone turns a rather leisurely 80 rpm, but you want to feel comfortable standing next to it and working — sometimes aggressively during the initial stages — to "waste off" excess stone.

Have a hoist on an I-beam handy at the shop if you have large columns to turn. Set the bench under an overhead I-beam track for easy loading and off-loading of the finished piece between truck and bench. I-beams are so reasonably

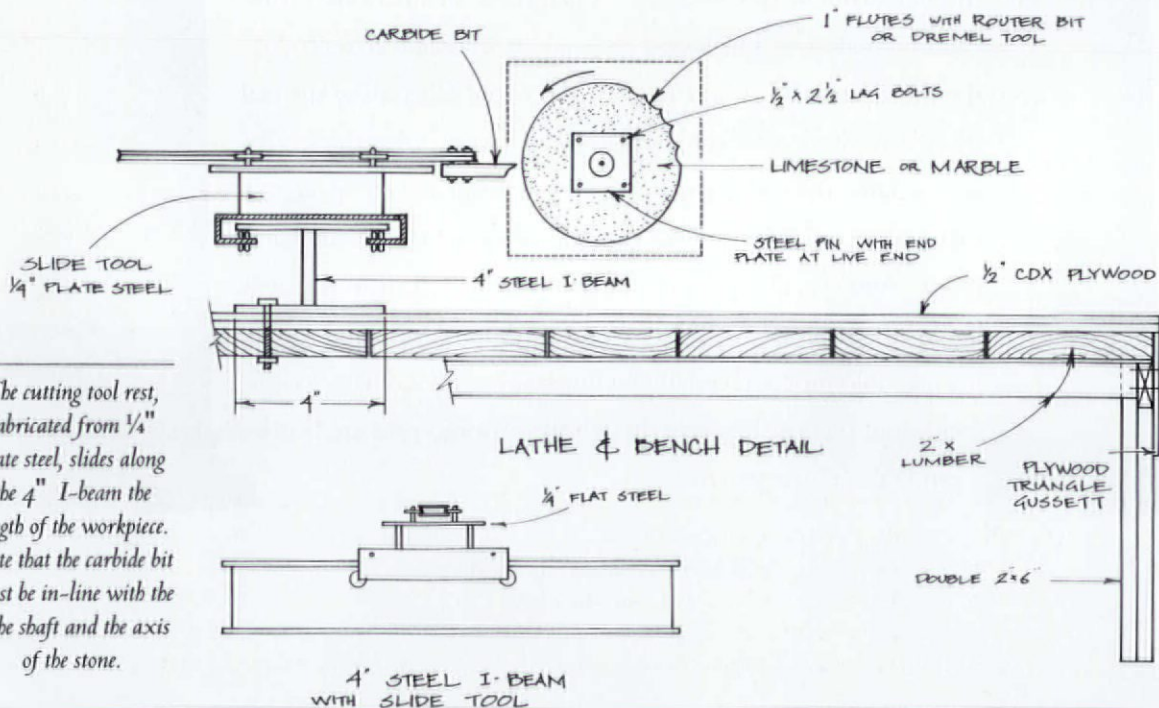
priced that you won't want to bother with other lifting and positioning devices such as a fork lift or rolling dolly.

Shopping for Hardware

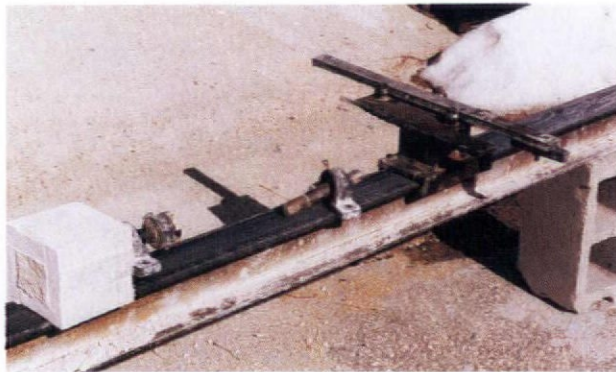
FARM OR POWER TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT SUPPLY COMPANIES will have the hardware necessary to put together the turning portion of the lathe. Study the detail of motor, steel



The drive train of the lathe: electric motor (at left in photo); right-angle reduction drive (under motor); Lovejoy coupling (center); steel shaft mounted in pillow block (right).



The cutting tool rest, fabricated from 1/4" plate steel, slides along the 4" I-beam the length of the workpiece. Note that the carbide bit must be in-line with the lathe shaft and the axis of the stone.



Details of the tool rest (bit faces camera), the I-beam slide track, and two pillow blocks with steel pins — the custom-made parts of the lathe.



The motor/coupler assembly as well as the pillow blocks must be raised to the correct height (lumber works well) for the bit to cut properly.

shaft, Lovejoy coupling, and pillow blocks to become familiar with the mechanical hardware. A pair of pillow blocks (bearings set inside of cast-iron mounts) will be needed to accommodate the 1" steel shafts that hold the stone on center at both ends. On the same shelf as the pillow blocks you will also find a Lovejoy coupling, a rubber-fingered device that acts as a buffer between the motor and the heavy stone.

Next, locate a variable-speed electric motor with about 250 ft.-lbs. of torque that turns from 12 to 80 rpm. The variable-speed motor drives the Lovejoy coupling that receives the 1" shaft. The shaft is embedded in the stone and is supported by the pillow blocks. Before mounting the motor on your bench, acquire a 4" I-beam and secure it parallel to the stone as a tool rest. The beam will be the tool guide or track for the cutting bit.

Get help from a local welder or tool-and-die mechanic to set up a rolling tool rest. This device will hold the cutting tool and allow you to slide it along the I-beam. If your mechanic is handy with welding plate steel and minor fabricating, have him do the job of fitting rollers and steel together, as in the machine shown here (see photo above). You will find that small job-shop personnel are invaluable help once they get past their bias for close tolerances and precision machining. You only want the stone to be round: basic round.

Assembling and Lining Up

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE CUTTING TOOL RESTS PERPENDICULAR to the stone at the same height as its axis. The cutting bit should be an extension of the stone's radius — that is, positioned so that it is always perpendicular to the midpoint as you slide the cutting tool along the length of the stone. If the cutting point hits lower than center, the tool

will be dragged under the turning stone; if it hits higher than center, the tool will fail to cut at all.

The height of your I-beam and sliding tool rest will be determined by the height of your stone, which is raised just enough to clear the bench and turn freely. Naturally then, the Lovejoy coupling, pillow blocks, and motor position must be high enough to give the stone this clearance —



At first, it is faster to saw and chisel off high points to achieve the rough-round cylinder (note reference circle drawn on end).

at least 9" above the bench for a 12" square column. On our lathe, the motor and pillow blocks were shimmed to height using readily available 2x lumber and plywood. It becomes apparent just how far you'll need to raise the motor and pillow blocks above the bench surface once you bore holes in the stone for the end-shafts.

Depending on the size and weight of your stone, bore holes 4" to 7" deep in each end to mount the 1"-diameter steel shaft pins. Secure the pins with cement (regular hardware-variety anchoring cement works fine) and use Acryl 60 bonding agent in the mix to improve adhesion. For the motor-driven end, weld a steel plate to the pin and anchor

that into the stone with $\frac{1}{4}$ " lag screws cemented into $\frac{3}{8}$ " holes (see drawing). When drilling holes for the pins, avoid off-center wobble by getting the pins in straight with a framing square or other guide.

Position the pillow blocks after making sure everything is in-line and parallel to your I-beam slide track. Lag-screw them into place. Turn the stone manually to make sure it is spinning freely. Then mount the motor and Lovejoy coupling, and you're ready to turn the stone.

Turning and Truing

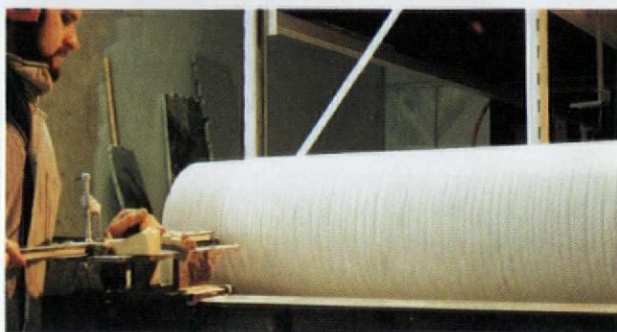
YOU MAY BE DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN THAT THE LATHE ACTUALLY does only about the last 10% of the work to make a piece round. Before you begin turning, chisel away the high spots to shape the stone into a rough cylinder — always being careful not to go too deep.

Begin the shaping process by cutting a circle template from construction paper to match the diameter of the stone you need. Then trace the circle onto one end. Imagine that circle having depth through the length of stone to form a cylinder. Snap a chalk line along the length of the stone to mark the base of the corners that you want to remove. Stay $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the finished cylinder, or where the curve begins. For your initial draft, use the 2" chisel and a hammer to waste away these 90-degree angles, being careful not to dig too deep and gouge into the round. Use the chalk lines as a reference to guide your work.

Once you have finished the first pass with chisel and hammer, the lathe can be used to mark the stone for initial round. Mark the stone with the cutting point to establish rough, then chisel some more until you're comfortable with the lathe's ability to take off the remaining waste in good time. At first your tool will strike perhaps two blunted corners, then three, then four, until you can use a wider point to take the piece to round. Initially, though, anticipate at least seven or eight passes of chiseling and then marking with the cutting point.



To create flutes, start with a saw kerf, then shape with a series of router bits ($\frac{1}{4}$ ", $\frac{1}{2}$ " , $\frac{3}{4}$ "), and finish with a 1" bit.



(top) Initially, the lathe is only used to mark the stone and establish round for the chisel work. (above) Later, the lathe is used continuously for final shaving of the workpiece to finish round.

You'll be most efficient if you ignore the lathe as a shaping tool and use it only to provide you with reference marks in the stone. Think round as you take away excess material with the chisel after marking. Be careful not to chisel too deep into the finish stock. When you have more scraping than bumping while turning the piece against the cutting point, you are ready to use the wider point and, finally, finish to round with the lathe.

Flutes, Entasis, and Ornamental Contours

ONCE YOU HAVE A ROUND CYLINDER YOU MAY NEED FLUTES, entasis (the gradual narrowing at both ends of the column), or ornamental contours for the finished piece. For flutes, mark the stone using the paper template made to establish the initial cylinder. Measure the distance across each flute on the original column and take note of the width of the rib between each groove. For 1" flutes on a 12"-diameter column, there are $\frac{3}{8}$ " ribs between grooves. The least confusing reference point is the center of the rib, so establish the distance from rib center to rib center around the column until you have them all marked in a complete circle. Make sure the center of each rib is equidistant around the column and use that line as your reference.

If your motor permits access, open the end and expose the flywheel so that you can use it as a kind of index. Note

the number of hand-turned revolutions it takes to reach the center of the next flute rib. It will save you much adjusting and measuring time if you count the exact number of revolutions per stop.

To make 1" wide flutes (grooves), first saw a kerf with a circular saw. This kerf will be the center of your flute. Set your blade depth to match the existing columns — probably a good $\frac{5}{8}$ " to give it definition. After sawing the initial kerf for each flute, set up your router on the tool rest and begin with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " router bit to open up the kerf. Next use a $\frac{1}{2}$ " carbide router bit, then a $\frac{3}{4}$ " bit, and finally a 1" bit to finish. To clean up the machine marks left in the groove, use a 1" diameter steel shaft wrapped with 80-grit sandpaper to hand-smooth the flute. Finally, use a belt sander to remove the machine marks on the flute ribs. Starting with a 12" x 12" x 9' block of stone, a 12" diameter limestone column with 1" flutes takes one man approximately three days to complete.

Be sure to finish the end of the flute detail on the column with each pass; don't plan to go back later to clean up and make them even. Remember, there are some 30 flutes in a 12" diameter column, and each complete treatment takes a couple of hours. Do not leave details for later. While you are indexed into position, finish each application.

For entasis, use a straightedge to measure the distance from maximum diameter the column tapers at the ends. Stay-



Detail work on balusters with ornamental contours is done by hand with chisels, rasps, and a grinder.

ing $\frac{1}{8}$ " from final depth, gradually reduce the ends of the column with the cutting bit, then ease off that depth as you slide the bit closer toward full diameter at the center of the column. Finish the gradual narrowing free-hand with an angle grinder, smoothing out the cutting marks and completing the entasis. Use a belt sander with 80-grit paper for the final operation.

Take a similar approach for ornamental contours in balusters. Gauge the deepest profile and give yourself corresponding reference marks on the slide tool guide. Repeat these marks at each prominent feature to match the contours of the existing balusters. In turning, the lathe point will get you to the gross depth and gross contour. Then use the wider blade and turn closer to final. In the end, experiment with files and abrasives to smooth the ornamental contours as the piece turns. Touch-up and finish work can be done with an angle grinder and belt sander.

When the time comes to install columns or balusters, it is convenient to leave the steel shafts embedded in the stone, especially for larger pieces. The steel shaft can be welded to iron I-beam headers and dropped into drilled pockets for structural stability. Also, the pins come in handy for hoisting the heavy columns into position. If capitals or plinths are part of the restoration project, the pins can be cut easily after the columns are put in place, and capitals then sandwiched into their proper position. Stainless-steel shafts should be used if they are to become a permanent part of the column or baluster.

I consider lathe-turned stone building components — pillars, balconies, pedestals, and finials — as replaceable as the informal geometric elements of early stone buildings. The comparatively small amount of extra effort required to reproduce monumental stone is justified by its contribution to the dignity and aesthetics of a structure (and the neighborhood). Furthermore, any mason who works on such a project will be excited when his skills are challenged. 🏠

Jacob Arndt specializes in historic masonry in the Midwest: Northwestern Masonry & Stone, 5025 Sheboygan Ave., Madison, WI 53705.

Once a column is finished, stainless-steel pins can be left in place to make handling and installation easier.



ANYTHING - GOES -

PART II

Exterior Color Options for Romantic Revival Houses • By John Crosby Freeman, The Color Doctor

ANYTHING GOES" WAS ONCE THE MERCHANDISING ethic of American speculative builders. In the early decades of the 20th century, they fumbled and fondled their innocent audiences with amazing manipulations of architectural history that looked "right" and were priced right to sell.

Colonial house plans of the period might be Adamized, Georgianized, Dutched, Spained, or sent South. Sometimes they were given additional flavoring from the spice shelf of medieval revival architecture: a dash of Tudor half-timbering, a dollop of Cotswold exteriorized vestibule, a pinch of Victorian Gothic oriel or bay window. A bungalow roof or a Mediterranean piazza supplied extra taste. Reversing this design process yielded bungalows that were Colonialized by Palladian windows, Adam entrances, and neoclassical colonnades. So much variety resulted in many weirdly wonderful designs, but few examples of really ugly housing.

I use the term Romantic Revival for these Anything Goes houses. Sorting out the color options for buildings with such a melange — and sometimes a muddle — of exterior elements in historic styles takes an understanding of where the builders and designers were coming from, but this can be fun. Part I featured Bungalow, Dutch Colonial, and Foursquare houses sided with shingles and clapboards (May/June 1991). Here we'll look at Spanish Colonial and Tudoresque homes that make use of stucco.

COLORFUL STUCCO

COLOR HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN USED TO SELL PRODUCTS. MEN, in particular, often resisted the notion, and Henry Ford's dictum about supplying "any color so long as it's black" is legendary. During the 1920s, however, fashionable Americans

— especially newly empowered women — voiced their joy of color in the marketplace. This forced building products during the Jazz Age to join the joyful noise of color. "The popularity of colored or tinted stucco surfaces," announced an ad for mortar colors, "is increasing rapidly." The Portland Cement Association encouraged this trend, and major paint makers promoted multicolor textured stucco effects using cement paints glazed and accented with tinted linseed oil.



Pigmented stucco promoted in a 1920s ad.

Blending glaze and accent colors on top of a ground color uses the same technique employed in "Tiffany Glazing," a finish fashionable for Romantic Revival interiors. Experimenting with today's quick-drying latex paints can produce a similar effect. In Tudoresque or Spanish Colonial homes, the major trim was stained or painted a near-black color to make it look weathered by the centuries. With this in mind, the ground color of stucco panels defined by this near-black half-timbering should be a light and slightly grayed tint of its complementary color. For example:

- Greenish-black trim is energized by a ground of pink, peach, coral, terra-cotta, old gold, or amber.
- Bluish-black trim is enlivened by a tan or beige ground.
- Deep maroon trim is excited by a green ground.
- Dark brown trim is stimulated by a ground of ochre, slate blue, or heather.

When blending, make the glaze color a slightly darker tone of the ground color; make the accent color an enriched tint of the trim color.

GLAZING EXTERIORS

BEGIN BY MASKING OFF THE TRIM PRIOR TO CLEANING AND repairing the stucco panels. In addition, seal the stucco with masonry conditioner to aid adhesion of the latex paint



The vaguely Spanish "Anything Goes" houses of the early 20th century drew on an eclectic vocabulary of Moorish, Byzantine, and Pueblo details. Along with tile roofs, stucco played a major role, especially when colored in coral tints.

topcoats. Then apply ground color in a semi-gloss or gloss latex paint to enhance its appearance in highlights. Follow the manufacturer's recommended timetable for recoating.

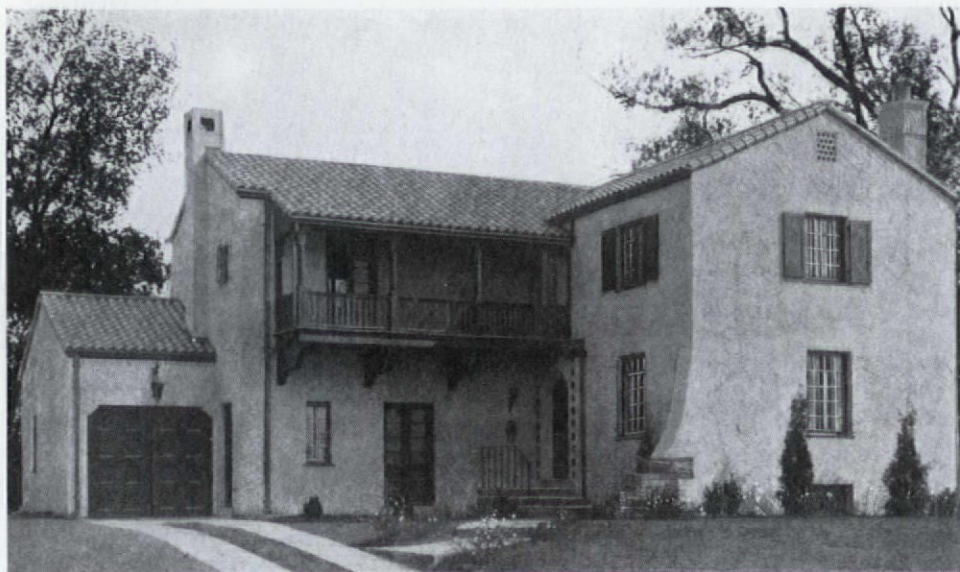
Satin finish paints are best to try for approximating the glaze and accent colors. First, randomly brush a few spots of accent color on some small areas towards the center of the stucco panel. Next, lightly load a brush, natural sponge, or wadded rag with glaze color. Apply the glaze from the outside edges of the panels towards their centers, allowing the accent spots and some random streaks of the ground color to peek through. As your applicator releases less paint, the glaze color will appear to fade towards the center into the ground color. Then, use clean, dampened cloths to wipe some of the glaze color off the lighter gloss highlights. With a clean, dry brush use a lop-sided figure-eight stroke to soften and blend the patches of color. Here's what today's quicker-drying latex paint requires:

- Don't paint in the sun or during a day that's hot and dry.
- Don't dawdle during blending.
- Don't water-down the paint. If you want to extend the wet-edge time, add latex paint conditioner (such as Floetrol by The Flood Company) available at most paint stores.

Finally, remove the masking tape from the trim and apply satin-finish paint in the near-black trim color. (Accidental flecks and dribbles on the stucco will aid the artistic effect!) The best panels will exhibit the fluidity and accidental quality of a watercolor painting. To add cunning to your hand, you might first practice this technique with watercolors on watercolor paper, followed by your paints on scraps.

THE HAPPY HACIENDA

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF THE "THE ESCONDITO," FROM the *Home Builders Catalog of 1928*, is its vast square footage of textured stucco scarcely relieved by trim. The solution starts with dividing the ground color stucco found between trim lines and outer edges of walls into smaller, amorphous areas. If the boundaries of these areas were drawn with a pencil, the wall would appear to be covered with an elegant assortment of amoebas. Each of these amoeboid shapes would then be mottled with glaze and accent colors. The glaze color always will be darkest at the edge of an architectural feature and absent or lightest in the center of a mottled shape. Spots of accent color never appear for their own sake, only to enliven an area. When done properly, the walls will look



The unbroken expanses of stucco on "The Escondito" can create a palette for experimenting with color.

bolized Spanish Colonial Revival in its homelands of Florida and California. Color illustrations of the period tend to look more pink than coral. Most stucco coral colors were tints of burnt sienna. To find them in the color selector of today's paints, look for these grayed coral colors under such passwords as "coral," "hacienda," or any

like they have been water-colored by an artist.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the least adventuresome schemes "antiqued" a ground color of ochre-based yellow, cream, ivory, or buff with a linseed oil glaze colored with an umber or sienna. Other schemes were grounded in a safe ochre, olive, or gray, and glazed with prussian blue and chrome green. The exception was stucco coral tint, which still sym-

oblique reference to the American Southwest or Spain.

The romantic balcony of "The Escondito," which also functions as a canopy of the entrance stoop, would be painted a weathered wood color. A conservative color for windows, sash, and doors was ivory. More exciting schemes used a vivid orange, blue, or green, especially for shutters and blinds. Alas, today you can't find these accent colors in the ordinary spectrum of exterior colors. Look for them in your dealer's selection of industrial maintenance coatings.

COLORFUL ROOFING

THE HOUSE-CALL FOR COLORS WAS ANSWERED FROM THE top down. "In this day of color conciousness," a 1928 ad declared, "roofs can no longer sell which are drab or colorless."



"Double-Dipped" shingles, one of several '20s products.

Makers of asphalt, slate, asbestos-cement, and wood shingles showed consumers how to emulate artistic effects with puddles of product color. You can do it today by pre-coloring wood shingles with semi-transparent stains.

Proportion the shingles among three or more colors, avoiding bleached whites. Make, say, 60% a dark color, 30% a mid-tone color, and 10% light. Don't repeat these colors below the roofline, except on shutters and the darkest awning stripe.

If your Romantic Revival home retains its original asbestos-cement roofing, you can achieve a similar effect with paint. All it takes is careful cleaning, a coat of masonry sealer, and latex paint colors in a satin sheen. Apply right on the roof.

YE OLDE ENGLISH DUPLEX

THE "GRAYSON," FROM THE HOME BUILDERS CATALOG IS A sheet-cake 24' x 33' duplex apartment house frosted with shingles and decorated with half-timbering.

Multi-colored shingles in weathered grays might be appropriate for this house's roof, but not for its walls. Here an olive brown will subdue them to a bland background for the

Stucco color suggestions for the 1930s from a Sherwin-Williams brochure: (left) sea green with verdas green trim; (middle) white with Spanish blue trim; (right) cream with tobacco brown trim.



The functional form of the "Grayson" could be brightened by selectively emphasizing parts of the half-timbering with color.

decorative half-timbering. A dark green for the major trim would also be applied to any gutters and downspouts.

To my eyes, the only fun feature is the "spectacles" effect in the half-timbering. This is created by the face boards around the double windows joined by a "nose-piece" and the curved timbers apparently linked to them. This could be subtly emphasized by painting these boards with a secondary trim color that is a slightly lighter version of the major trim color. This also makes the closely spaced half-timbering appear less ponderous.

"Painting out" the sash in the half-timbered areas stops their competition with the patterns of the boards. Paint the double window sashes the secondary trim color and the attic sash the major trim color. As for the sash below, I would accent them with a dark red to emphasize the muscularity of the window casings and insinuate their support of the half-timbering above.

The stucco ground color and glaze color are variants of the shingle color. If you are adventuresome, blend in a dab or two of the accent red with the glaze color in each panel. Consider using the accent red on the latticed sash in the shingled areas of the balusters of the porch. Use the lighter trim color of the half-timbered area as the major trim color of the porch. Use the darker trim color for the hand- and foot-railings.

I try to follow four rules when I help owners of Romantic Revival houses revitalize them with color and design:

- Find out what you've got — Scratch, pry, peek, and peel



until you have a complete catalog of its profiles, textures, and materials.

- Reveal what you've got — Remove later diseases of aluminum, vinyl, and paint.
- Celebrate what you've got — For example, your personal taste may not include face brick with many patterns, textures, and colors, but it gives a historic uniqueness to your home so try to be proud of it.
- Do the best with what you've got — There are many authentic ways to enhance architectural details, shingles, and stucco with colors. Use those that please and you will experience the sensation of responsible liberty called "Anything Goes." 🏠

John Crosby Freeman is a color and design consultant specializing in Romantic Revival buildings (1601 Sheridan Lane, Norristown, PA 19403; 215-539-3010).

SUPPLIERS LIST

Benjamin Moore & Co.
51 Chestnut Ridge Road,
Dept. OHJ
Montvale, NJ 07645
(201) 573-9600
*Historical Colors Line; contact
for nearest dealer.*

Finnaren & Haley, Inc.
901 Washington St.,
Dept. OHJ
Conshohocken, PA 19423
(215) 825-1900
*Historic Philadelphia colors;
contact for nearest dealer.*

Fuller-O'Brien Paints
395 Oyster Pt. Blvd.,
Dept. OHJ
S. San Francisco, CA 94080
(415) 761-2300
*Cape May colors; contact for
nearest dealer.*

Martin-Senour Paints
101 Prospect Ave.,
Dept. OHJ
Cleveland, OH 44115
(800) 542-8468
*Preservation Palette; contact for
nearest dealer.*

LINCRUSTA

“Want to cover your walls with the latest wallcovering or update those dingy, cracked plaster walls and especially ceilings? Then your material of choice is Lincrusta-Walton or Anaglypta.”

AS THIS PERIOD ADVERTISEMENT REMINDS us, turn-of-the-century tastemakers considered the embossed wallcoverings called Lincrusta-Walton and Anaglypta to be “utopian” materials.

Both were extremely durable, making them ideal for high-traffic areas, notably dados in offices, hallways, and dining rooms. Once finished, they were washable and therefore considered sanitary, a highly touted trait. Most importantly, their off-white raw state could be finished to resemble any number of more expensive materials, including carved wood, stamped metal, and antique plaster — even tooled and gilded Cordovan leather.

Lincrusta-Walton and Anaglypta are still produced today. Only a few of the patterns are the originals, but

many new designs have a period feeling. With some practice and patience, you can create those stunning decorative finishes for your period interior. These materials, so affordable, durable, and satisfying to finish, may become your

material of choice, too! ■ LINCRUSTA AND ANAGLYPTA ARE BOTH VICTORIAN-ERA WALLCOVERINGS, AND

both are embossed in a variety of style vocabularies from Classical to Art Nouveau. But the materials

are different in composition. Lincrusta-Walton was first produced in 1877 by the

inventor of linoleum, Frederick Walton. Lincrusta is a linseed oil (*lin*) mixture with

deep, solid relief (*crusta*). This mixture of linseed oil and fillers is put through an embossing machine

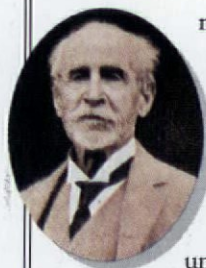
under great pressure to create the sculpted pattern. Then it's backed and hung to dry. The result is a wall-

covering touted as “indestructible” — a reputation it apparently lives up to, given the number of original examples still found (often when all else is gone).

BY JONI MONNICH



Durable, embossed Lincrusta and Anaglypta wallcoverings are purchased by the roll, unfinished.



**FREDERICK
WALTON**



Joni Monnich (above) is a professional paint decorator — and a former OHJ editor — working in the San Francisco Bay area and nationally; (510) 273-9777.



Classical friezes, applied at the top of a wall, are a popular use for Lincrusta.

Anaglypta, a similar material invented in 1887 by a Walton factory manager named Thomas J. Palmer, developed out of Lincrusta's enormous popularity. It also has a deep relief that it retains even when wet with wallpaper paste, but unlike its predecessor, Anaglypta is made from cotton pulp. The result is a lightweight, embossed material ideal for hanging on ceilings, over uneven surfaces, or even on rounded ones. A five-panel box of Lincrusta dado typically costs about five times as much as a roll (10 panels) of a similar Anaglypta dado. (For more historical background, refer to the October and November 1982 issues of *Old-House Journal*).

GETTING STARTED

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARATION AND HANGING COME WITH the material, of course; use one of the recommended adhesives. After the wallcovering has been hung, let the adhesive dry for at least two to three days before you prime. (This is especially critical with Lincrusta because its linoleumlike surface is less permeable, and drying is slow.) Prime Anaglypta with a faster-drying latex (water-based) primer so as not to raise the nap of the paper. Prime Lincrusta with an alkyd (oil-based) primer. I highly recommend tinting the primer a pale color that is lighter than your base color. This contrast will enable you to spot any areas you might have missed, especially small recesses in the relief.

After priming, apply an alkyd base coat to the wallcovering in a shade appropriate for the finish you're trying to achieve (more on this later). I recommend applying both primer and base color with a brush. Although it's more time consuming, brushing allows greater control in making sure

that the relief is completely covered, even in the recesses; otherwise, raw material will absorb the final glaze coat, leaving dark spots or an uneven finish.

Onto the fun part: choosing a finish. No hard-and-fast rules apply, so let your imagination go. Think about house museums you've visited or photos you've seen in books and magazines: Was that *really* wood, leather, metal, or plaster on the ceilings or walls? Maybe it was an imitation, a faux finish like the one you're about to create.

After you've hung the Lincrusta or Anaglypta, take some remaining pieces to use them as "sample boards." Practice with colors and techniques on these pieces until you get the desired finish. Then move onto your prepared surface. I believe that anyone can create the finishes I'll describe below. If, however, you are trying to finish a long, continuous run, I do recommend enlisting the services of a professional paint decorator. These descriptions could also serve as guidelines or inspiration for a local craftsman.

BEGINNER'S TECHNIQUES

Simulated Plaster Ornament One of the easiest finishes, this technique requires nothing more than a quality artist's brush and patience. (It's an ideal activity while you're watching TV or Bogart movies.) It's most appropriate and visually effective when used on a frieze.

First, choose an appropriate basecoat — for example, paint the background pale lavender-grey or pale green-grey for a Colonial Revival or Edwardian feeling. After the base coat has dried, take an artist's brush and carefully paint the raised areas an off-white plaster color. When this technique is used on a frieze, you don't



Simple but effective: White paint on raised areas simulates plaster decoration; the beaded swags were "gilded" with Dutch metal.

have to get the "plaster" edges exactly perfect because of the height. At any rate, you'll find that the relief makes for an easy line to follow; it's just time consuming!

For an extra touch, pick out small details and highlight them with Dutch metal powders in a wax medium. These are offered in a wide variety of colors including several shades of gold, silver, and copper. Wrap a clean rag around your finger and dip it into the Dutch metal medium. Then rub or burnish the metallic powder onto the area you wish to accent — lightly rubbing usually does the trick. Personally, I like a little unevenness so that it has an aged look.

You can simply leave this shiny surface. My prefer-

THE BASICS: HOW TO GLAZE

FIVE OF THE FAUX FINISHES FEATURED involve a glazing technique. Read the following information carefully *before* you start any of the decorative techniques.

Use good-quality 2 to 2½ inch china-bristle brushes, such as a Purdy or Hamilton. Invest a few extra dollars in your brush. Nothing makes this work more unbearable than having to stop and pick bristles out of a glazed area, leaving fingerprints behind. With proper cleaning, a good brush will last you a lifetime. Rinse the brush with mineral spirits as soon as you have finished, squeeze the thinner out with a rag — being sure to dispose of the rags properly so they don't spontaneously combust — and then wash the brush thoroughly with a mild soap and warm water, until no traces of thinner or glaze color can be seen or smelled.

After the base color has dried thoroughly, tint and mix your glaze color for the desired finish (see below for the formula). This is a two-brush process. Start by dipping the tips of the first brush's bristles into the glaze coat, just far enough to get a little bit of color on the brush. Then brush the glaze onto the embossed wallcovering, working the color into an area no wider than approximately 3 feet. Apply the brush strokes in random directions — not just horizontally or vertically. Once this is done, take the second brush and stipple the glaze-colored area. Stippling is a method of holding the brush straight up and down (perpendicular to the surface) and pouncing the glaze coat. The splaying action of the bristles moves the glaze into the crevices of the pattern and helps distribute evenly the glaze color. Stipple until all brush strokes have been removed, then move to the next adjoining section.

Glazing tips:

☛ Only a small amount of glaze color

is necessary for each section.

☛ Practice applying the same amount of glaze color to each section.

☛ Keep your wet edge ragged, not in a straight line. This will make it easier to hide seams between sections. Often you can use the pattern itself as a guide to a random edge.

☛ Work quickly. You'll need to finish and move onto the next section before the glaze sets up (begins to dry) in order to get a consistent texture.

☛ Begin work in a corner or at a break in the pattern.

☛ Don't stop work in the middle of an area. Continue until you come to a break in the pattern or a corner.

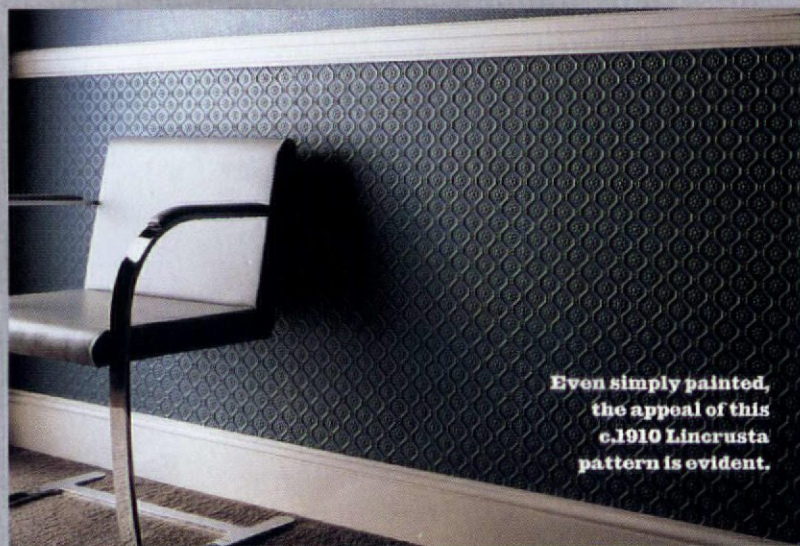
The formula:

- 5 parts mineral spirits/paint thinner
- 2 parts boiled linseed oil
- 3 parts glaze coat (such as McCloskey or Benjamin Moore brands)
- 1 part Japan drier (see suppliers list)
Colors-in-oil or artists oil in the appropriate colors

You won't need much — 2 to 3 cups of this mixture would generously glaze the walls of an 8 x 10 room. But at the same time, mix enough so that you

don't run out, because exactly duplicating the color in a second batch is tricky.

Mix the first four ingredients of the formula in a metal, glass, or heavy-duty plastic container. (Do not use a cardboard bucket.) Then add your pigment until the desired color is reached — keep checking on your sample board. Generally, for 2 to 3 cups of glaze, you'll need several tablespoons of your primary color (a medium-size tube is usually sufficient) with smaller quantities of secondary colors added to achieve just the right hue and value. Darker colors require more pigment. If you are trying to achieve a medium-dark to dark shade, be sure to start with a base color that isn't too light; make it at least of medium value. I prefer to use colors-in-oil or artist oils as opposed to universal tints. Be sure to stir frequently because the colors will separate and that could result in color inconsistency. One last tip: Of all the pigments, black is the strongest. So when trying to achieve a brown leather, for example, you might need a couple of tablespoons of burnt umber, maybe a ½ tablespoon of burnt sienna, but probably not more than a ½ *teaspoon* of black. Use it sparingly!



Even simply painted, the appeal of this c.1910 Lincrusta pattern is evident.



The primer, tinted buff, is finished with two coats of Dutch metal and an antiquing glaze.

ence, though, is to go a step further and soften the shiny effect with an antiquing glaze. To apply a glaze over the Dutch metal, first seal the metallic surface with a water-based gloss varnish and allow it to dry thoroughly. (I like to apply two coats so that I'm certain the entire surface has been sealed.) Then glaze and stipple the area with a raw umber/black glaze color. Allow it 24 hours to dry, then apply a protective varnish. Remember that for large, unbroken expanses such as ceilings, it's a good idea to call in a professional. At the very least, have a helper apply the glaze while you stipple and highlight. This way the glazed areas can be worked quickly to prevent seam lines.

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

Simulated Antique Plaster Begin with a white base coat. Mix a glaze color tinted with a very small amount of raw umber and/or black. Brush on the glaze color and stipple as described in the glazing box on p. 63. To further suggest aged plaster, wrap a rag around your finger and gently wipe the glaze off all or some of the raised parts of the pattern. This accentuates the darker color gathered in the recesses of the pattern. Allow 24 hours for the glaze color to dry and then brush on a protective coat of varnish. Rubbed- or brushed-on Dutch metal gold accents add an even greater richness.

Simulated Unadorned Leather Begin by choosing a base coat that is the lightest shade in the leather you are trying to imitate. For example, to achieve a deep, rich, red Cordovan leather, select a base coat somewhere in the range of a Chinese red to a deep terra-cotta color; for brown-toned leathers, a medium yellow-orange or a warm buff are ideal. After the base coat is thoroughly dry, mix up a glaze color. For most leathers, this glaze color will have a blend of burnt umber, a bit of black, and burnt sienna, but experiment for the shade you want. Brush the glaze color in and stipple.

After stippling, take a cotton rag (approximately 12" x 12"), crumple it in your hand, and pat the glazed surface. The rag randomly lifts off the glaze, letting the background color peek through. The harder you pat the surface with the rag, the more glaze you will lift up and the more background color you will expose. Do experiment on your sample board until you've found the result you like. Allow 24 hours drying time, and then apply a protective varnish. Your result is a textural pattern that highlights the wallcovering's embossing.

Some more tips on ragging:

- Be sure to have several rags cut before beginning your glazing project. Use the same type of rag for the entire project because different materials pick up the glaze differently, resulting in a different texture.
- Rags made of 100% cotton sheeting work well, but also experiment on your sample board with the effects of novel ragging materials, like unprinted newspaper or plastic food wrap!
- Be sure to frequently rotate and recrumple the rag in your hand so that a clean piece of cloth is picking up the glaze each time you pat.
- Pat with the rag until it no longer picks up glaze consistently. Then switch to another clean rag.



Red faux-leather dado

Simulated Gilded Leather Metallic accents can be applied to glazed and varnished wallcoverings. First, create a leather look as described above; after the varnish has completely dried, take a clean rag and dip it into a Dutch metal powder suspended in brilliantine wax (see right). Rub a small amount of the "metal" onto the area you wish to highlight. Let your finger act as a "burnisher."

Dutch metals are available in a wide variety of colors such as copper, silver, and several shades of gold. If you want to get even more exuberant and create complex metallic effects, Dutch metal powder also come in a diverse palette of other metallic colors, including blue, red, purple, and green. These vivid colors can be mixed into a bronzing liquid or wax medium.

Simulated Adorned and Gilded Leather For a really luxurious gilded leather look, apply two coats of Dutch metal paint right after priming. (I like Chromotone pale gold, but you can experiment with the effect of copper or silver as well.) Seal with a water-based gloss varnish, being sure to get the varnish in all the nooks and crannies, and allow to dry.

Stunning effects can be achieved if a rich glaze color is ragged, and then wiped from highlights, allowing base coats of Dutch metal to show through.



Then mix a glaze in your choice of color. For red leather, use a mixture of burnt sienna, burnt umber, and a little black. Create an extremely effective green leather by mixing an umber green, such as thalo or earth green, with burnt umber and perhaps a little black. Brush on the glaze color, brush-stipple, and rag. Then wrap a clean rag around your finger and wipe the glaze color off of the prominent areas you wish to highlight, leaving the gold showing through. Again, the sooner and harder you wipe with the rag, the more glaze you will remove and the more gold will show through. Try to be consistent when working on a large area. Allow 24 hours to dry, then varnish. 🏠

Suppliers List

Linocrusta-Walton and Anaglypta

For a free brochure and further information about Crown's embossed wallcoverings, contact any of the following distributors: Bentley Brothers, Louisville, KY; (800) 824-4777. The Crown Corp., Denver, CO; (800) 422-2099. Classic Ceilings, Fullerton, CA; (800) 992-8700. Steptoe & Wife, Toronto, Ontario; (800) 461-0060 or (416) 530-4200. Cody Wallcoverings Ltd., Hamilton, Ontario; (800) 668-9420 or (416) 527-9163.

Dutch Metal Paints and Powders

Janovic/Plaza, 30-35 Thomson Ave., Dept. OHJ, Long Island City, NY 11101; (800) 772-4381. Bay City Paints, 2279 Market St., Dept. OHJ, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 431-4914. These are two excellent specialty paint stores that can supply you with Dutch metal powder, paint, and wax — as well as glaze coat, brushes, colors-in-oil, and Japan drier. They are both willing to send mail-order/UPS.

Crescent Bronze is the manufacturer of "Chromatone," an excellent Dutch metal paint in a variety of metallic colors. They also produce Dutch metal powders in a large array of colors. Ask for their products at your local supplier, or call the manufacturer for the name of a distributor: Crescent Bronze Powder Co., 3400 N. Avondale St., Dept. OHJ, Chicago, IL 60618; (800) 445-6810.

Brushes

For good quality brushes, let your fingers do the walking. Call paint stores in your area to ask "do you specialize in dealing with the trade?" "do you carry thick, high-quality brushes like Hamilton or Purdy?" No luck? For distributors, call Purdy Corporation, P.O. Box 83097, Dept. OHJ, Portland, OR 97283; (800) 547-0780.

The House That Didn't Belong

SOLVING AN OLD-HOUSE LIVING MYSTERY

BY STEVEN JOHNSON



Owner Steven Johnson.

MY WIFE, ANNE MARIE, AND I ENJOY walking the back streets and forgotten alleyways of coastal towns in Rhode Island. As we walk, we take turns spinning tales about the history that was made on these byways. Part of our game is connecting stories to actual architectural details. The details can be anything — building materials, the paint ghost of a long-since removed hinge (from a stable, perhaps, or a blacksmith

shop), or the name of a street. Although pure conjecture, it is surprising how close our tales come to actual events.

During one of our sojourns in Bristol, Rhode Island, we walked up a narrow, one-way road, named John Street, that led away from the waterfront. As we wandered up John Street, an imaginative tale of drunken sailors arguing in the alley and merchants bartering over dry goods began to unwind. Suddenly, we both stopped dead in our tracks. Right in the middle of this tiny, tightly packed street of modest houses rose a four-storey Greek Revival mansion. It was complete with Corinthian columns *in antis* — that is, columns standing between *antae* (pilasters that end the projecting walls of a building). The “Big House on John Street” was a complete shock. We had come across many out-of-place, but explainable, examples of infill housing. Nothing had prepared us for this.

Searching For Clues

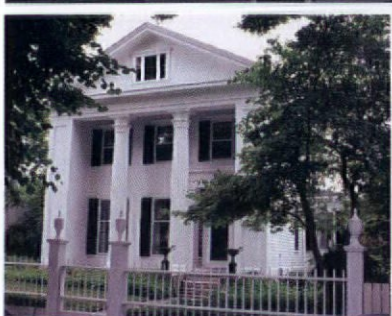
THE BIG HOUSE ON JOHN STREET HAD ALL THE MARKINGS OF an early Russell Warren design. Noted for his sense of scale, Russell Warren was a self-educated Rhode Island architect, who built a number of Bristol mansions in the classical style. In keeping with that tradition, the Big House on John Street was a well-proportioned Greek Revival-style building with an entablature doorway. Yet, despite its impressive details and symmetry of design, the house had

many glaring deviations that definitely did not show Warren’s classical touch. First, the typical Greek Revival gabled pediment had been replaced with a gambrel roof that sat heavily on the delicate facade. Instead of a wide, formal staircase, a narrow set of stairs aimlessly ascended to the entrance. Also, the building was set on a high, plain brick foundation that lifted the structure precariously above street level and out of scale with the neighborhood. Last, there was no practical reason for putting a high-style mansion on an tiny, unknown alley. We looked at each other and agreed that this house did not belong here.

We stepped back from the building trying to amend our story to explain this strange anomaly. Since Bristol was famous for moving houses all over town, we decided that the house must have been relocated. We also realized that the

The street was so small that the best view of the neighborhood was from the middle of the road.





(above) The clues were there: Notice how the utilitarian staircase clashes with the formality of the columned porch. (inset) A twin structure shows how the Big House looked before the alterations.

the Big House on John Street had just come on the market. After we bought the building, we started to collect information on its mysterious past in earnest. At our open-house events, many people stopped by to volunteer first-hand stories about previous owners. This sprinkling of hometown gossip suggested that the house had been moved and altered, but we still didn't have any hard facts.

More tantalizing clues lay in the construction of the gambrel roof addition. As the restoration progressed to the third floor, we were surprised to find that the structural timbers inside the walls were greatly overbuilt and carefully dressed and fitted. Also, everything was assembled with brass screws instead of nails. These were common building methods and materials for ships, but not for houses.

A Mystery Solved

ARMED WITH THIS INFORMATION, WE BEGAN researching the house at the Bristol Historic Preservation Society. A booklet called *Russell Warren in Bristol* yielded our first solid fact. On the back page, a map indicating all of the Warren-designed houses in Bristol included 15 John Street. The Society's curator also informed us that at the turn of the century the house had been moved to John Street by noted boat builder J.B. Herreshoff so that a hotel could be built. Then on a walking tour of Bristol, we met Elizabeth Warren, a descendant of Russell Warren. Her detailed knowledge of the town provided us with more answers. The Big House was indeed built by Russell Warren for a prominent lawyer, but it was originally located around the corner on Hope Street. After Herreshoff purchased the building, he moved it diagonally

street was too narrow for moving a building of any size. In order to get this venerable "big guy" to its current location, the entire street would have had to been moved.

On a return visit to Bristol, we decided to ask some of the locals about the house. Such a big move should have been part of the town's folklore — or so we thought. We quizzed the mailman, the neighbor watering her lawn, and even the regulars at the barbershop. Aside from the expected "It's always been there," no one had an answer. With no plausible explanation forthcoming, we left our unfinished story in the back of our minds and went home to Warren, Rhode Island, but we never stopped wondering.

As fate would have it, five years later, our paths crossed again. I was looking for a historic building to restore, and

across two lots, cleverly avoiding the narrow streets. As the house was moved to John Street, it was kept at the same level and a new foundation was built up to meet it. No wonder the house towered almost a full storey above its neighbors. The last piece of the mystery was solved at the Herreshoff Museum. Apparently, 1900 was a slow year in the boat building industry. When the house was moved, Herreshoff took advantage of the lull and put his crew to work building a third floor with a gambrel roof. This explained the unusual construction methods we found.

Finally, all the clues had come together. On July 1, 1991, we placed a plaque on the porch describing the house's history — a story with more threads than we could have spun.

RESTORATION PRODUCTS

Summer Jobs

by Lynn Elliott

For most old-house restorers, the warm months to come mean it's time to start those outdoor projects — like painting clapboards, repairing damaged siding, and replacing the roof. Before you drag out the extension ladder, take a look at a few new products.

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This breakfast nook called for a 5' radius wall, so the panels were back-kerfed on site every 2".

nails or with stainless-steel staples applied from a pneumatic tool. Depending upon the shingle style and number of rows, a panel can range in from \$17 to \$135. For information, contact Cedar Valley Shingle Systems, 943 San Felipe Road, Dept. OHJ, Hollister, CA 95023; (800) 521-9523.

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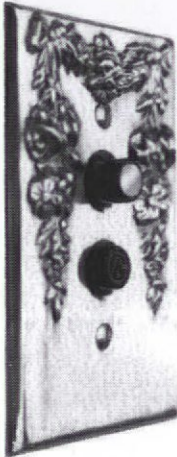


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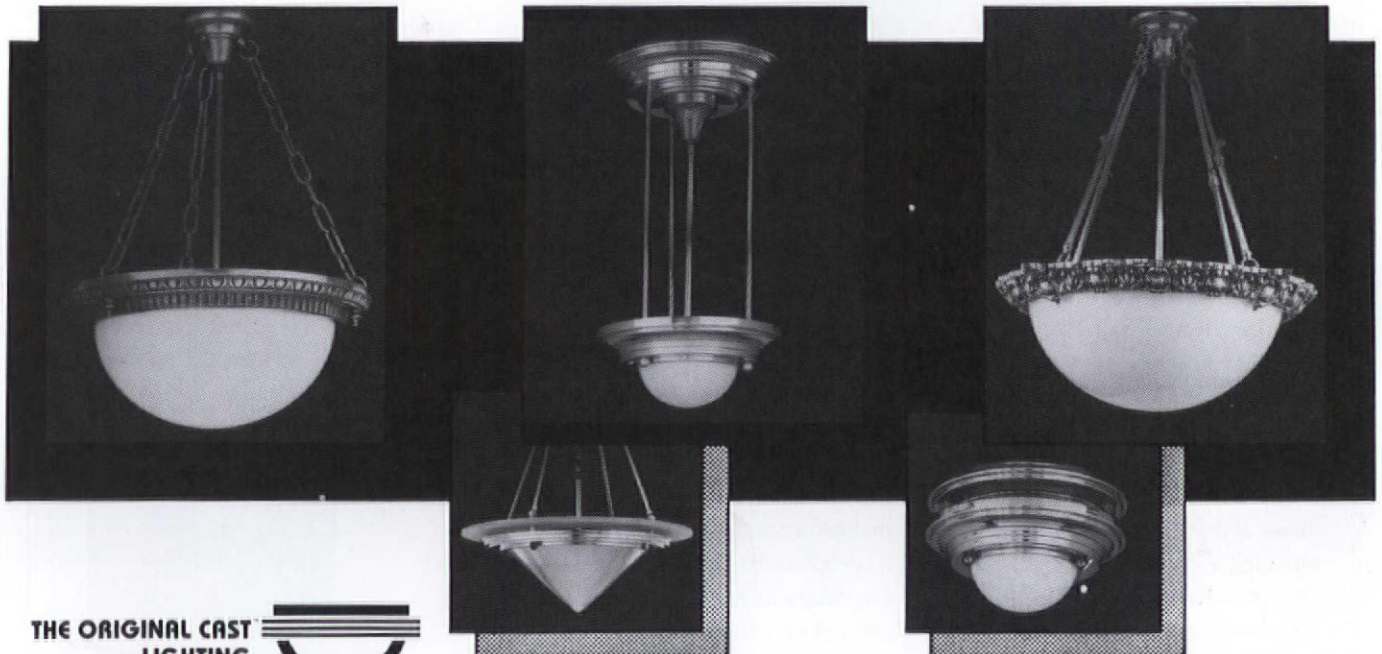
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Oops! penetrates and removes dried latex without harming finishes.

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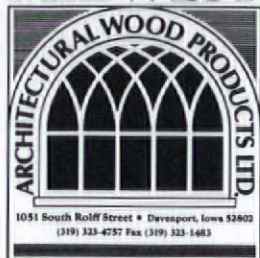
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RESTORER'S NOTEBOOK

Sky Hook

AFTER A FRUSTRATING TIME installing a ceiling light fixture, I came to the conclusion that you need three hands - one to hold the fixture and two to make the necessary connections. I finally solved the problem by fashioning a hook from stiff coat-hanger wire. I straightened it out and bent a hook at each end. By placing the small hook into one of the mounting holes in the light fixture cover, then hooking the other larger

This transformed coat hanger holds a ceiling fixture in place for wiring.

hook into the ceiling-box hanger-crossbar or other hole, you can safely suspend the light fixture from the ceiling while you make the electrical connections.

—JOSEPH CIMAROST
Detroit, Michigan

Night Light

FOR INTERIOR PAINTING AT NIGHT, I used to rely on a collection of old table lamps and clamp lights. I'd put down my sandpaper or brush, certain I'd done a thorough job, only to see a glaring holiday (missed spot) the next day. Then I thought of adapting an outdoor floodlight to use indoors. I rigged one up and the difference was incredible. Since then, I've found it's cost-effective to buy a ready-made 500-watt Halogen light, complete with handle and stand. These are available at discount hardware stores for under \$50 (Regent Lighting Corporation is one manufacturer). The floodlight does an excellent job of highlighting details, and now I use it for added light even in the daytime.

—EMILY BEARSE
Atlanta, Georgia

Pogo Stick-Up

WHEN MY HUSBAND AND I WERE installing tin ceilings in our 1917 "Denver Square" home last fall, I became ill and could not help him finish the project. Necessity became the mother of invention, and he adapted the children's old pogo stick to finish the ceiling by himself. He lashed a wooden T-brace to the pogo stick with duct tape. The spring kept the brace tight from floor to ceiling, and made it easy to set up and move around. We'll be using it again as we tackle the upstairs hall ceiling.

— ANNE MCELROY
Littleton, Colorado



A pogo stick T-brace is easy to assemble, adjust, and move around a room.

Skinny Paper-Smoother

WHILE WALLPAPERING MY BATHROOM, I solved a tricky problem: How to get to the wall space behind the toilet and the cast-iron radiator without paying a plumber to remove them. These areas are especially prone to peeling, and neither my hands nor my usual tools would reach. I've had great success painting that kind of tight spot with

a tool called a "mini-koter." It's a frame with a 2'-long handle that holds a specially designed sausage-size roller nap. To adapt it for paperhanging, tape a clean rag around the end of the bare frame, and wrap it tightly to make a snug, soft smoother. Hang sheets of paper using a regular smoother until you get to the top of the radiator. Then use the new tool to apply and smooth the bottom section all in one motion. The result: No bubbles and great seams.

—MAGGIE LINDSTROM
Rochester, New York

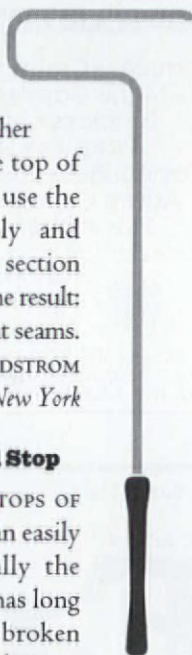
New Tip for Old Stop

ANTIQUE DOORSTOPS OF turned wood can easily be renewed. Usually the original rubber tip has long since dried up and broken off - allowing the door to bang. Buy rubber toilet seat bumpers, the kind with the rubber molded onto a steel brad. Drive them into the doorstops. They'll work as good as when they were new.

—KEVIN CULLEN
Danville, Illinois

TIPS TO SHARE? Do you have any hints or shortcuts that might help other old-house owners? We'll pay \$25 for any how-to items used in this "Restorer's Notebook" column. Write to Notebook Editor, The Old-House Journal, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930.

A long-handled paintroller with a cloth on the end can be used to smooth wallpaper in tight spots.



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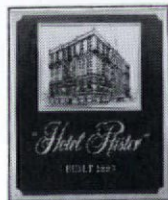
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You can order actual blueprints for all the houses featured. Plans conform to national building-code standards — however, modifications are usually necessary for your site and local requirements, so you'll probably need the assistance of a professional designer (your builder may qualify) or an architect.

For the houses shown in this issue, blueprints include:

- Foundation plan for basement or crawl space. (Crawl space plans can easily be adapted for full basements by your builder.)
- Detailed floor plans showing all dimensions for framing, plus detailed layout and location of electrical and plumbing components.
- Interior elevations are included in some plans, showing interior views of kitchen, bath, fireplace, built-ins, and cabinet designs.
- Window and door schedule.

- Building cross sections: cornice, fireplace, and cabinet sections when needed to help your builder understand major interior details.
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Other notes: (1) Plans are copyrighted, and they are printed for you when you order. Therefore, they are not refundable. If you order additional sets of the same plan within 30 days of your

original order, you can purchase them for \$15 each. (2) Mirror-reverse plans are useful when the house would fit the site better "flopped." For this you need one set of mirror-reverse plans for the contractor; but because the reverse plans have backwards lettering and dimensions, all other sets should be ordered right-reading. (3) Heating and air-conditioning layouts are not included. You need a local mechanical contractor to size and locate the proper unit for your specific conditions of climate and site.

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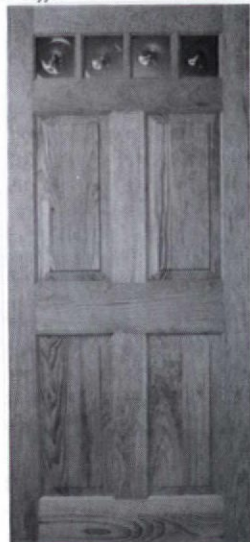
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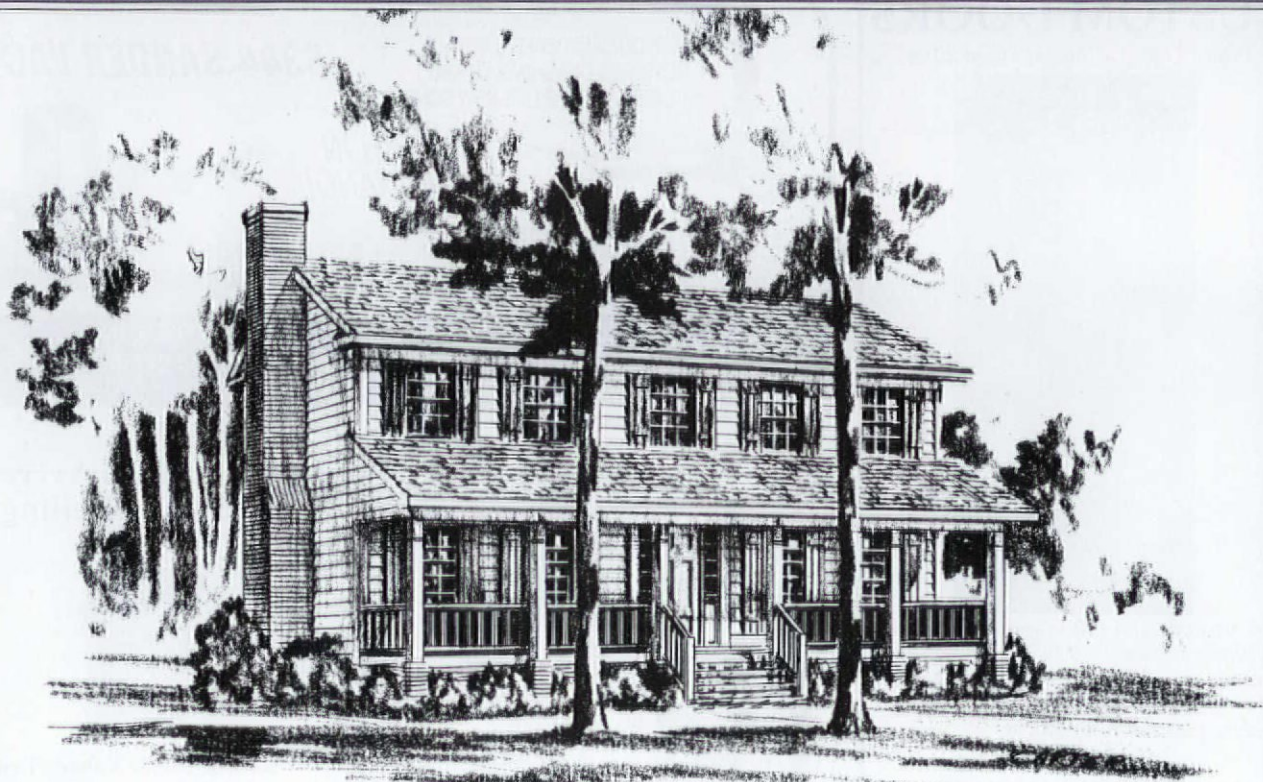
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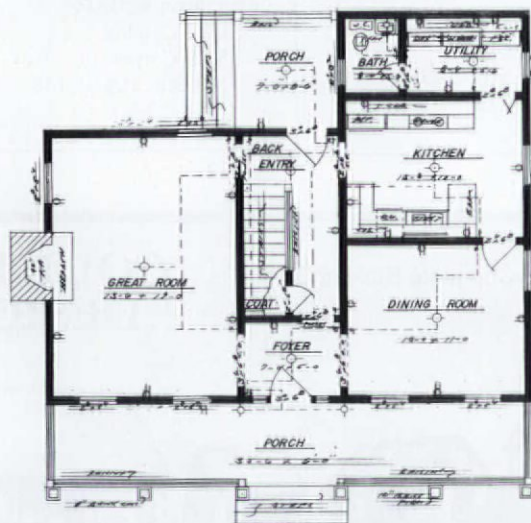


I-House Farmhouse

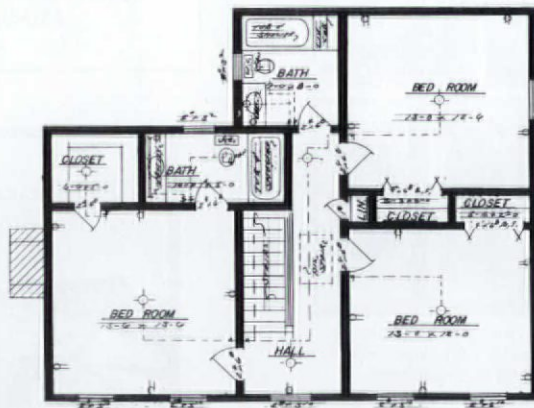
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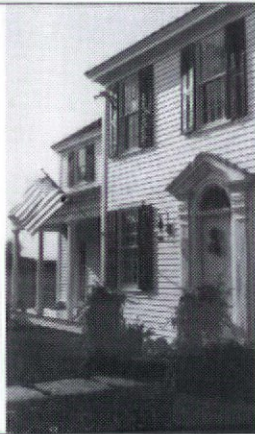
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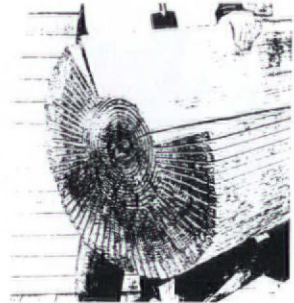
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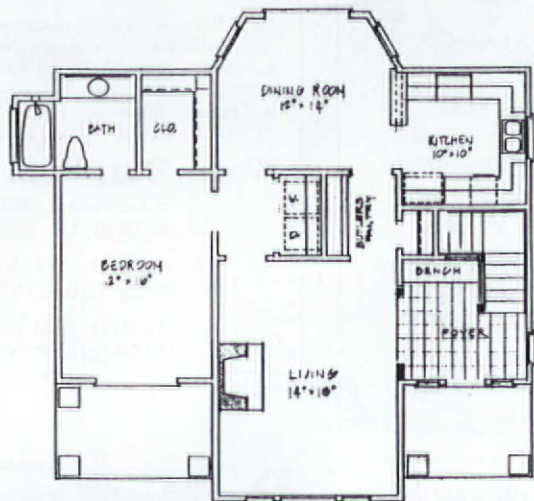
Plan: HH-04-PV

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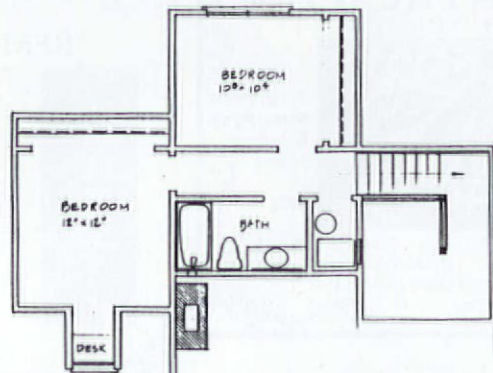
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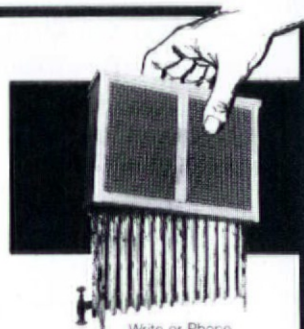
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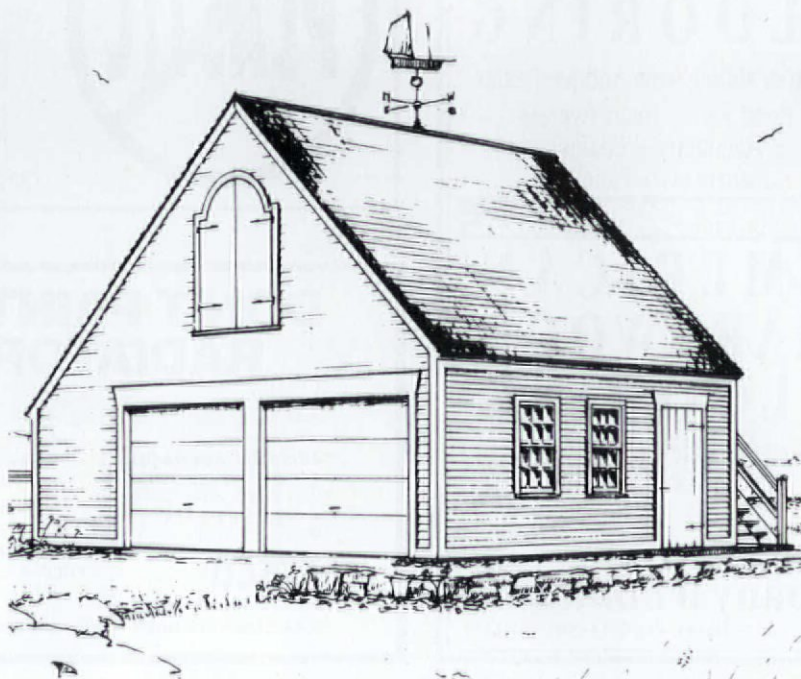
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Height: 20' (to ridge)

Overall Dimensions:

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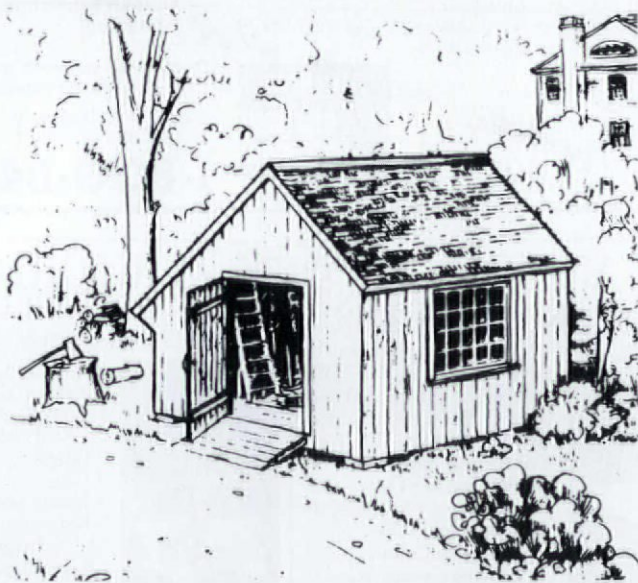
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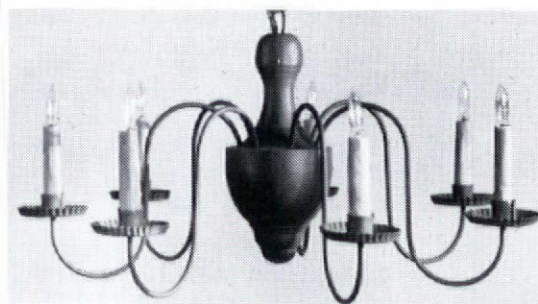
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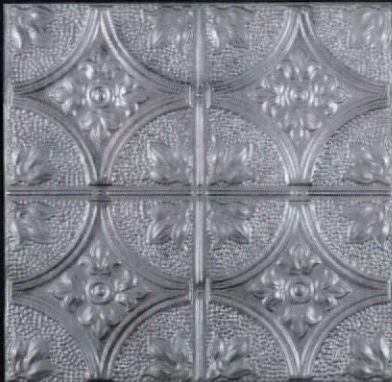
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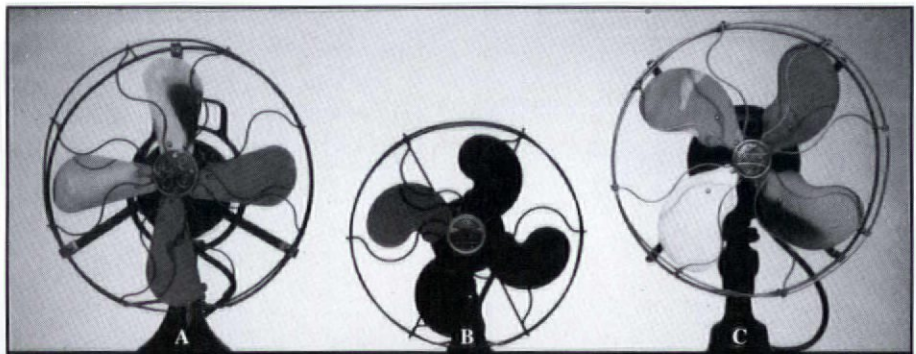
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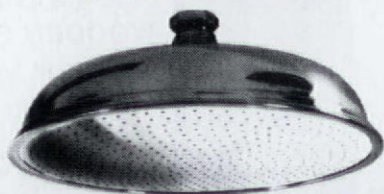
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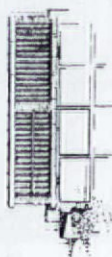
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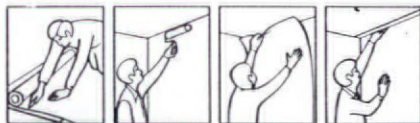
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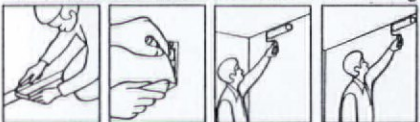


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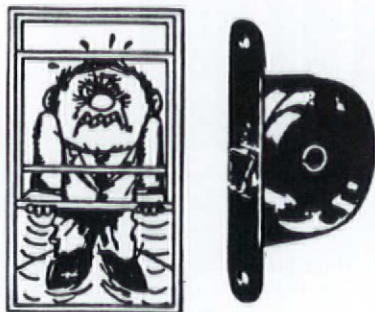
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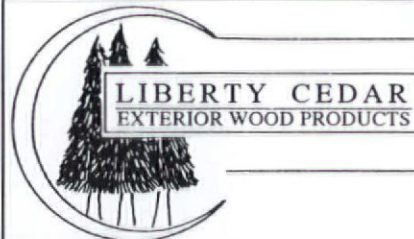


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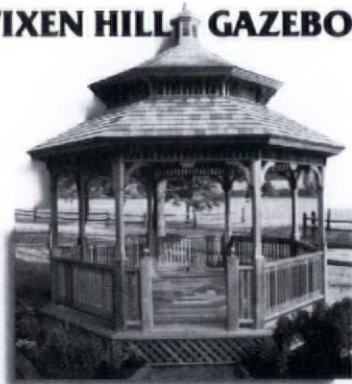
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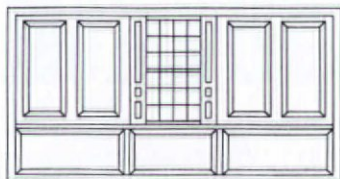
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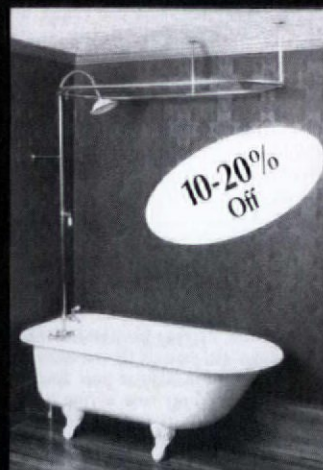
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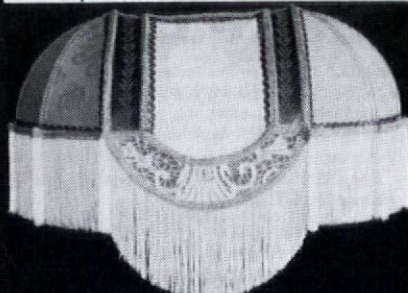
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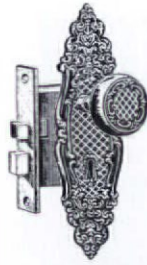
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Events

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SHEEPSHEARING FESTIVAL — May 15 in Waltham, MA. A day of family activities at Gore Place near Boston. Visitors will see blade shearing of the historic flock of sheep, sheep dog demonstrations, and a large crafts fair. Call Harriet Gordon at (617) 894-2798.

VICTORIAN HOMES & GARDEN TOUR — May 15 in Virginia City, NE. In the nation's largest landmark district, the tour will visit mansion and gardens of the Bonanza kings. Call the Fourth Ward School Museum at (702) 847-0975 or 0311.

PROMENADE THE PAST — May 15 & 16; noon - 6pm both days. Tecumseh, Michigan's 18th Annual Historic Home Tour. 7 beautiful homes, special events galore in this historic town. The Tecumseh Area Historic Society, 302 E. Chicago, Tecumseh, MI 49286; (517) 423-2374.

FAIRMOUNT TOUR — May 15 & 16 in Fort Worth, TX. The tour of the Fairmount neighborhood, located in Fort Worth's historic South Side. Refreshments, entertainment, and guides dressed in period style. Call (817) 927-8244.

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS — Deadline May 15. "Restoration '93" (Dec. 6-8 in Boston, MA). Need papers for a series of sessions focusing on the theme of "Preservation and the Real World." For a list of topics, call (617) 933-9699.

HISTORIC HILL GARDEN TOUR — June 26 in Newport, RI. Ten private gardens in the Historic Hill Nat'l Register District will be open to the public. Call (401) 848-0696 or (800) 326-6030.

GREAT AMERICAN HOME AWARDS — deadline for submission is June 30. The National Trust for Historic Preservation will recognize outstanding residential rehabilitation projects. Five categories: Interior, Exterior, Additions, Landscape, and a special category for Mail Order Catalogue Homes. For details, contact Joel Cadiz (202) 673-4283.

Classified ads in The Emporium are FREE to current subscribers for one-of-a-kind or non-commercial items, including personal house or property sales. Free ads are limited to a maximum of 40 words. Free ads and b&w photos are printed on a space available basis. For paid ads (real estate through agents, books & publications, etc.), rates are \$125 for the first 40 words, \$2 for each additional word, \$75 for a photograph. Deadline is the 1st of the month, two months prior to publication. For example: January 1st for the March/April issue. All submissions must be in writing and accompanied by a current mailing label for free ads, or a check for paid ads.

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REMUDDLING

[opinion]



Obtuse Addition

WHILE DRIVING THROUGH DENVER, COLORADO, Charles W. Cleworth became acutely aware of a certain obtuse addition and sent in these photos. Recently, an abstract post-Modern facade was superimposed on this rectilinear Foursquare with graphic results.

WIN FAME AND \$50: If you spot a classic example of remuddling, send us clear color slides. We'll award \$50 if your photos are selected. Remuddling Editor, Old-House Journal, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930.



Obviously not stylistic parallels, this concrete-sided projection and quadrilateral brick Foursquare just don't add up. Also, outlining the new roof with a tangential band of red copied from the existing window trim only underlines the architectural problem. From its jagged, asymmetrical peaks to its spherical windows, this angular attachment is squarely — or should we say geometrically — a formula for Remuddling.

Remuddling Theorem: An abstract addition (above) plus a Foursquare (below) equals a house architecturally divided.

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Vernacular Houses



The Cumberland House

A FOLK HOUSE TYPE POPULAR AS HOUSING FOR POOR FARMERS OR LUMBER mill and mine workers, Cumberland houses were built from 1880 to 1940. Found throughout eastern and middle Tennessee, they were named for their prevalence in the Cumberland Plateau region.

Cumberland houses are frame buildings identified by a single-storey symmetrical facade with two front doors and windows, a gable roof, and a porch. A typical plan consists of two rooms that share a common wall. Ell additions for kitchens, bedrooms, and bathrooms are common.

The exact origin of the two front doors is unknown. However, antecedents for Cumberland houses have been traced to the double-pen "dog-trot" and "saddlebag" log houses. Once sawn lumber became available, local builders developed a frame adaptation of these common log building forms, keeping the distinctive double front doors.

Folklore offers several explanations for the second entryway. One tale claims that the extra door was for quick evacuation in case of fire; another has it as a private entrance for newlywed children. Whatever the reasons, Cumberland houses are tangible evidence of the lifestyles of early yeoman farmers and the working class in Tennessee.

— LEO J. GOODSSELL
Nashville, Tenn.



(top) In Estill Springs, Tennessee, this typical Cumberland house is one room deep with a central chimney.

(inset) This c.1920 Cumberland house in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, has an asymmetrical facade with two front doors and only one window.