

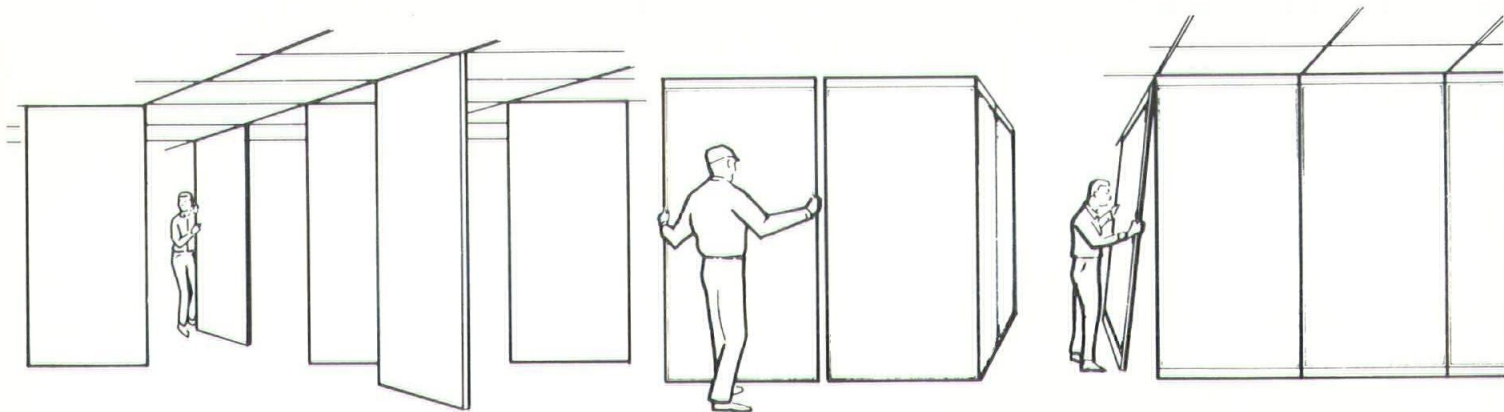


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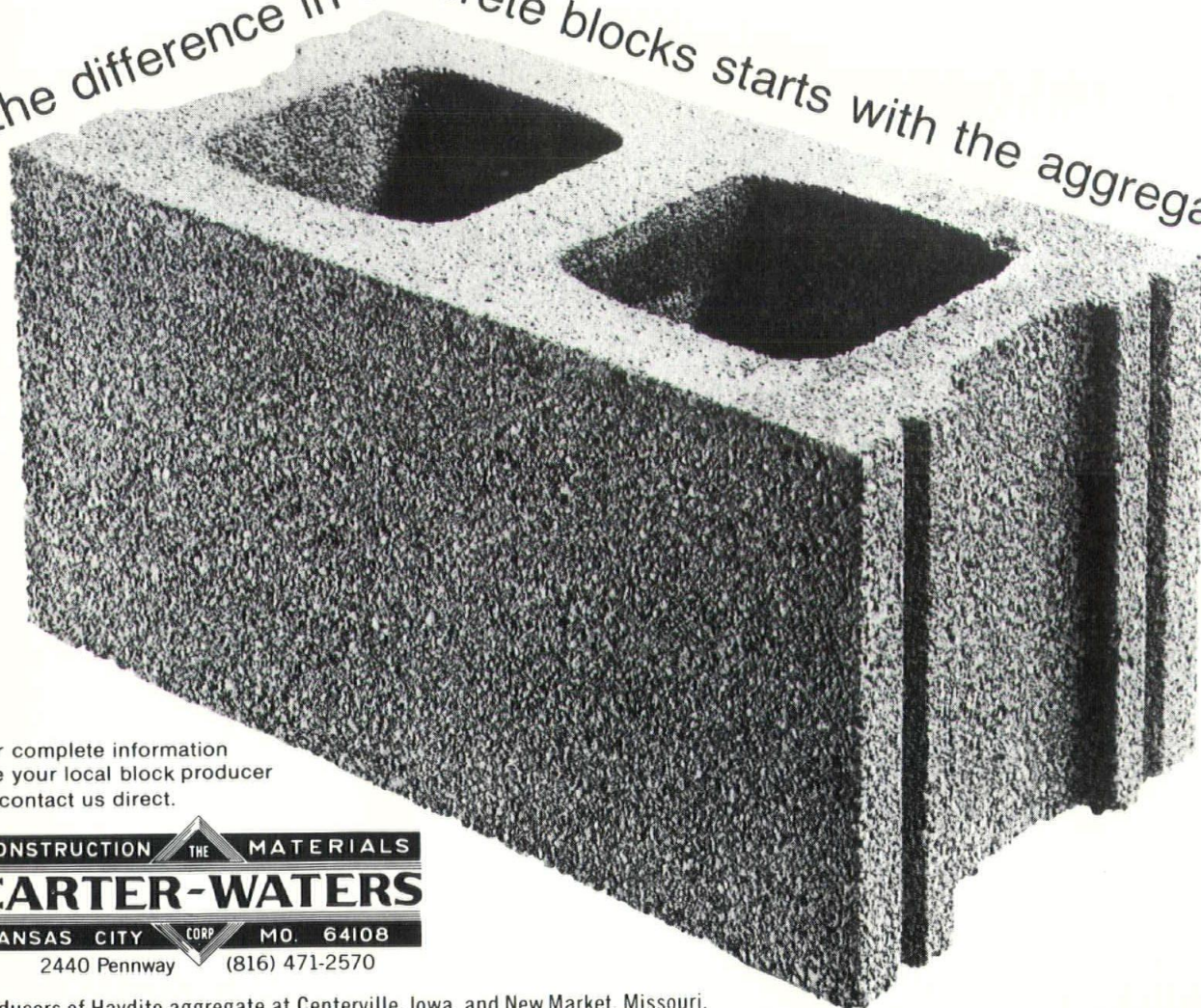
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On Historic Preservation

by Sidney K. Robinson
Assistant Professor
Design Center, ISU

Why are architects eager to work with old buildings? Some years ago that would have been a silly question. Remodeling was considered demeaning work for a professional architect. Things have changed. The state of the economy may have forced a new interest in old buildings. Maybe the Bicentennial has something to do with it. But the underlying reason is at the heart of what architects like to do. We like to work with materials just like any craftsman, and we respect a good, solid job done with fine materials.

Before we pursue that line of argument further, let me note the forces of necessity that apparently must be accepted, eagerly or not. New building is unbelievably expensive. We can't make cheaper buildings and still keep the rain out, or meet stricter codes to protect people from themselves. Houses can be made more available only by tinkering with how you pay the price, not with the price itself. In this situation the professional percentage charged for remodeling becomes attractive in spite of the constrictions of working around other people's mistakes, or our own, if we have arranged a kind of retainer contract. With increasing costs facing architects everywhere, re-using all or part of existing structures is an acceptable alternative. Making use of access ways, utility connections, and desirable location can save a lot of money when compared to the cost of providing all those things from scratch. (I suppose energy savings can be cited to make the case even more compelling.)



Interest in existing urban centers, which the foregoing circumstances help create, also arises from a new stage of cultural maturity. A nation two hundred years old may feel it is time to give up the innocent dreams of Eden and stop trying to build everything as if it were in the middle of a garden. The vines can be pulled off the past so it can be exposed and admired.

Further, we may no longer feel the fascination with things that sparkle and shine. We won't buy Manhattan with beads and shells, or with glass and aluminum either. As mature, civilized people, we can look back indulgently on the unlettered, but vigorous generations who pursued the new and the novel.

Higher education, especially of the historical and literary variety, has exposed us to a lot of drowsy wisdom. In the darkened lecture halls we saw glowing images of old, far away places which we dreamed of seeing some day. And we did see them at last when we grabbed our airline tickets and joined the great American stampede to the Continent. The color slides we took so easily may have stunted our sketching skills, but we brought back images, unmatched in vividness, of little towns tucked in the Italian hills. By these means we developed an extensive repertory of images based on five minutes of personal contact and a square inch of celluloid which we could slip into our mind's eye at any time, for any use, here at home.

Of course, there are some relatively old buildings here at home which we probably didn't notice until we got back from our trip. Architects now often live in them, like Mies did in his Chicago brownstone where he imagined universal spaces for other people. There are New England farm houses, lots of old brick warehouses, to say nothing of "magnificent Victorian houses" that young architects are busy fixing up. That appreciation I heard just last week for the thousandth time tells how far we are from the time when anything Victorian was a target for impassioned condemnation.

What accounts for the change in appreciation of buildings once thought too ornamental, too picturesque, too ugly? When the denunciation was first uttered at the beginning of this century, there was hope that architects could do better. Now we are not so sure. We know what a building ought to be; we just can't seem to build them that way. Our slides and our history lessons implanted an expectation of what real architecture was by looking at structures either put up by concentrations of wealth and power, or by technologically limited people who had no real choice but to use the



pure materials at hand. The barons of title or commercial plunder were pleased to use our technical specialty to give them a substantial setting. We enjoyed the opportunity to work with fine materials well wrought.

Both sides of this traditional architect-client relationship were seeking the permanence of solid matter worked with painstaking skill. Two modern architectural masters gave clear expressions of this satisfaction. Wright defined architecture as: "Man and more. It is man in possession of his earth." As architects we are in league with the powers of earth: as firm and as honest. Alvar Aalto wrote that materials speak slowly, a personification that conveys the gravity and essence of matter.

In other times, it seems this love of matter and craftsmanship was stronger. Pride in workmanship was apparently demonstrated by things like ornament. Once we hated it. Now we see it as an expression of pride and joy beyond our grasp; except as we can re-use it.

There is a whole fund of these deeply satisfying materials in old buildings. Not only that, but if we must add new facilities to old ones, a great argument for upgrading the materials in the new is to show how disrespectful it is to dress in jeans at a fancy ball. We need reasons to lift the lowest common denominator governing enclosed space to an "architectural" level. History is as good as any.

If some of this is true, it is a sad state of affairs. It is clearly like living off inherited capital and is just as precarious. It is particularly unfortunate if this attitude is used to make new buildings some kind of social transgression. I wonder how many Gothic churches would have been built in 13th century France if there had been a powerful Romanesque lobby protecting their old churches?

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The Estes House

A Private Historical Restoration

by Elaine Estes

The simple procedure of selecting a house to buy, within budget limitations and which matched definite ideas of personal taste, turned into a ten year search, a thirteen year preservation project, a financial drain, and a National Historical Landmark.

When I became aware that the brick Victorian house we now occupy was empty, I began to pass regularly and to pay more and more attention to it. Although the weeds had grown and vines covered most of the structure, I decided to see if I could look in. Around the back a door was open and I gave myself a full tour. I liked what I saw; large rooms, fireplaces, high ceilings, gypseries, cymareversa plaster cornices on parlor and living room, wood moldings, a wainscoted kitchen and decorative brackets on the curved staircase. The exterior appealed greatly to me especially the cement cast moldings over the curved shaped tops of the windows, the ornate iron fence, the little wash house in the back, the gingerbread around the porches. The house appeared to be structurally sound, it had weathered gracefully.

We had to deal several months on the price and in the interim had some experts check the foundation, the condition of the wood, the electricity, the plumbing, the heating, the fireplaces, the roof, the windows, the future development of urban Des Moines, code regulations, and everything we could possibly think of.

We did not want any remodeling done because we were buying the house for the style and charm it possessed in its existing state. We had not done any research at that time, but it was very evident that changes had not been made and we did not choose to make any that were not necessary. We did not need built-in cabinets in the kitchen because the pantry served the purpose. We did not want the ceilings lowered from 11½ feet which would have spoiled the decorative cornices, the wood molding and the balance of the door heights. We did not want the original hand-grained woodwork painted over or stripped. We did not want metal storm windows which would have required a solid block at the curved top of the window in order to fit. One must be knowledgeable and determined in order not to spoil what you have.

Now the real work set in. Clearing vines and overgrowth made the house much more noticeable from the street and we realized that the broken windows must be put in immediately and keys made for the four exterior house doors. The key styles were old and the locksmiths had to search their supply to find

the small size shaft needed for the double front door. The original key for this which is dated 1869 was the pattern. The locking system for the front entrance door offers four possibilities for locking. They were and are still operable.

We had a window glass installation company come out and replace all of the broken window panes. This should not have been done. At that time it would have been possible to have found at salvage yards old glass which would have matched the bubbly period glass in the remaining good window panes. Now it is very difficult to find really old glass, most of it has been or is being destroyed and there are fewer salvage yards and dumps, due to code regulations for junk yards.

It was imperative to get the electricity installed as soon as possible because much of the other work depended on the use of electricity around the clock, weekends and holidays. The house had not been completely wired previously. In order to wire the house so that the electrical conduit would not be exposed, the electricians had to drill into the 17 inch thick plastered brick walls, bury the necessary materials; remove floor boards and string under one floor to the next ceiling below.

Every available moment I had, was spent searching for light fixtures, parts and accessories for various things, hinges, screws and nails. Many of the light fixtures could be brought from the home in which we lived. But all of the fixtures had to be available before the electricians were ready to leave. This meant constant searching and well-developed decorating plans, to have the correct lighting for each room. They needed to be in proportion to the room sizes and ceiling heights. Fixtures which had been gas, had to be wired, old electric fixtures with deteriorated wiring had to be rewired. Those antique dealers and salvage yard people whom I had not previously known became new friends and sources for supplies.

The electric company sent the best men and supervised and worked closely with all of us. They located the person they considered to be the best patch plasterer in town and hired him to cover their work. Before the wall openings made by the electrician were closed, we had the telephone company install the telephone lines so that only one opening would need to be made and no wires would be exposed.

The plumber we hired worked along at the same time as the heating and electrical men. He reused almost all of the old lead pipe, and all the existing fixtures. A half-



bath was put in on the first floor, in the one closet on the first floor, the only place such a facility could be added without destroying the appearance of the other rooms.

A new forced air heating system was installed in the hot air duct system planned in the 17 inch thick brick walls at the time the house was built.

The original interior and exterior shutters had been stored. The interior shutters were in perfect condition. These were carefully washed in the bath tub. Hanging shutters is a very tedious job. These have roman numerals carved on for matching, but not all of the windows were so numbered. Additional hinges of the proper kind were available at our trusty hardware dealer for the interior shutters. The hardware store had not been one of my haunts, but the dealer and I came to know each other by name and project. I found one who carried a large line of traditional supplies and a knowledge of the life style of the world of the past. Hinges for the exterior shutters had to be custom made by an ironsmith.

We had removed the original cascades, swags, and jabots and had them cleaned. The fragile shreds were then available for patterns. We had reason to believe that since the house had had continuous occupancy by the builder, Thomas Naylor and his daughters from 1869 to 1959, the style and fabric had not been changed too much. With the finding of duplicate materia and a retired drapery maker the interior renovation was completed.

The exterior wood trim was repaired by a carpenter from a nearby community who was willing to buy a machine to make matching parts that were missing or deteriorated. The paint was examined for the original color and a search made for historic paint sources. Finding none, the samples were taken to a company that made paint. An excellent match was made. Unfortunately, a recent attempt to match has not been as satisfactory because the company no longer has the equipment since their business emphasis changed.

We interviewed companies to sandblast the exterior. We selected the one who indicated they would use a gentle blast and tuck point where needed with mortar that would match as near as possible. They agreed not to stain the bricks, to cover the windows, to be careful of the yard and to silicone.

In 1974 the National Park Service warned not to sandblast brick for cleaning or removal of paint. Sandblasting causes irreparable damage. Do not go to the extra expense of treating masonry with a preservative or water repellent such as silicone. It has been found that such materials do little good and possibly some harm. We certainly agree that this warning should be adhered to, as we experienced problems with interior damage some years later.

A layperson undertaking a restoration or preservation activity should allow time for the study of the structure on which they will be working. Do as much research as possible about the individual building under consideration and about buildings of the same period. It helps to understand architectural philosophies and living styles of the past, in general and

specifically. Seek out information about past owners, the neighborhood, furnishings styles, social life and history in general. Remember it is best to preserve, if preservation is not possible restore, if restoration is not possible rebuild. Do not add or remove anything until you have time to research and study the appropriateness of even the slightest change. Learn the terminology. Learn to take accurate measurements. Record everything by picture and notes. We have failed to take pictorial recordings. Those we have were done by interested friends and they have been useful. Try to acquire earlier pictures of the structure and its occupants, those we have are continually very helpful.

Use the libraries as research institutions for old newspapers, local history, city directories, pictorial information, how-to-books, and magazines, printed material about furniture styles, architectural history and antiques. Join local, state and national historical organizations. Local historical societies can provide information through their membership and programs, some even have small accumulations of printed matter. State groups are involved in preservation projects and activities. National organizations offer broader perspectives for understanding the overall field. Continual involvement in the process provides new information and new opportunities to improve your project as you maintain your property through the remaining years of your life.

A National Landmark usually has only National significance and must be open to the public. A National Register site may be of only local significance and need not be open to the public. The National Register status distinguishes a building so that its significance will not escape those who are in the position to appreciate it or to cause it harm. A site so distinguished may qualify for federal matching restoration funds and is to some degree protected from federally funded projects. If the owner is involved in the grants administration of the National Register the owner must agree to comply with the National Register guidelines for the materials and methods to be used in restoration work. He may be asked to open his property to the public if enormous amounts of federal money are involved and if the building is intended for exhibition purposes. To nominate a building or structure site, district or object to the National Register write to the State Historic Preservation Office for the forms.

Hard facts and reliable sources are required to complete the forms. They are processed through the state review committee and reviewed and approved by the Washington office.

Restoration projects with which I am currently associated include Terrace Hill, Living History Farms, the Des Moines Old House Restoration group, and as a member of the Board of Advisors for the National Trust for Historic Landmarks, I have received requests for information from around the state.

What Does The Past Have To Offer?

by Todd R. Mozingo

This all too familiar question implies that our heritage is capable only of handing us something placatory like a popsicle, and that the contribution of the past is limited when compared with the present. Our past offers much more than occasional hermetically sealed historic monuments with their velvet ropes and Sunday afternoon guided tours. Historic monuments like Independence Hall or Mount Vernon are important to our history and should be preserved, but every nice old building cannot become a museum just because it has outlived its original use. Yet these buildings should live on and be preserved. Much of the pleasure one finds in his hometown or neighborhood comes from a familiarity with its townscape. To lose familiar associations is to lose one's hometown. For that reason, it is important to find a viable use for a community's greatest resource, its old buildings.

When Shakespeare said, "What is past is prologue," he was not speaking of the Historic Preservation Movement, but that phrase could well be its motto. Historic Preservation is part of the growing concern for the quality of life and the conservation of our resources in America today.

Historic Preservation is devoted to conserving the historic and cultural resources of our man-made environment. Like the ecology movement, Historic Preservation is concerned with the effects of indiscriminate change on the quality of life. The movement is not trying to halt progress. Rather, it wishes to insure that the fabric of our social and cultural heritage is not destroyed by rapid and uncontrolled change. Our man-made environment can grow while at the same time utilizing the best elements of the past, present, and future.

THE LOGIC OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION IS TWOFOLD. First, it pleases man's aesthetic nature and gives him a visible and concrete association with his past. Second, it is practical in both an economic and ecological sense.

In the aesthetic/associative realm, preservation of the built environment links us visually to our heritage. Our historic man-made resources remind us that the people who settled in Iowa had certain notions about life and their society, notions that are reflected in what they built. To lose these significant resources not only offends our sense of heritage, but also irreversibly blights our environment. While the pollution of our natural environment can usually be reversed by shutting off the source of pollutants, a building torn down is

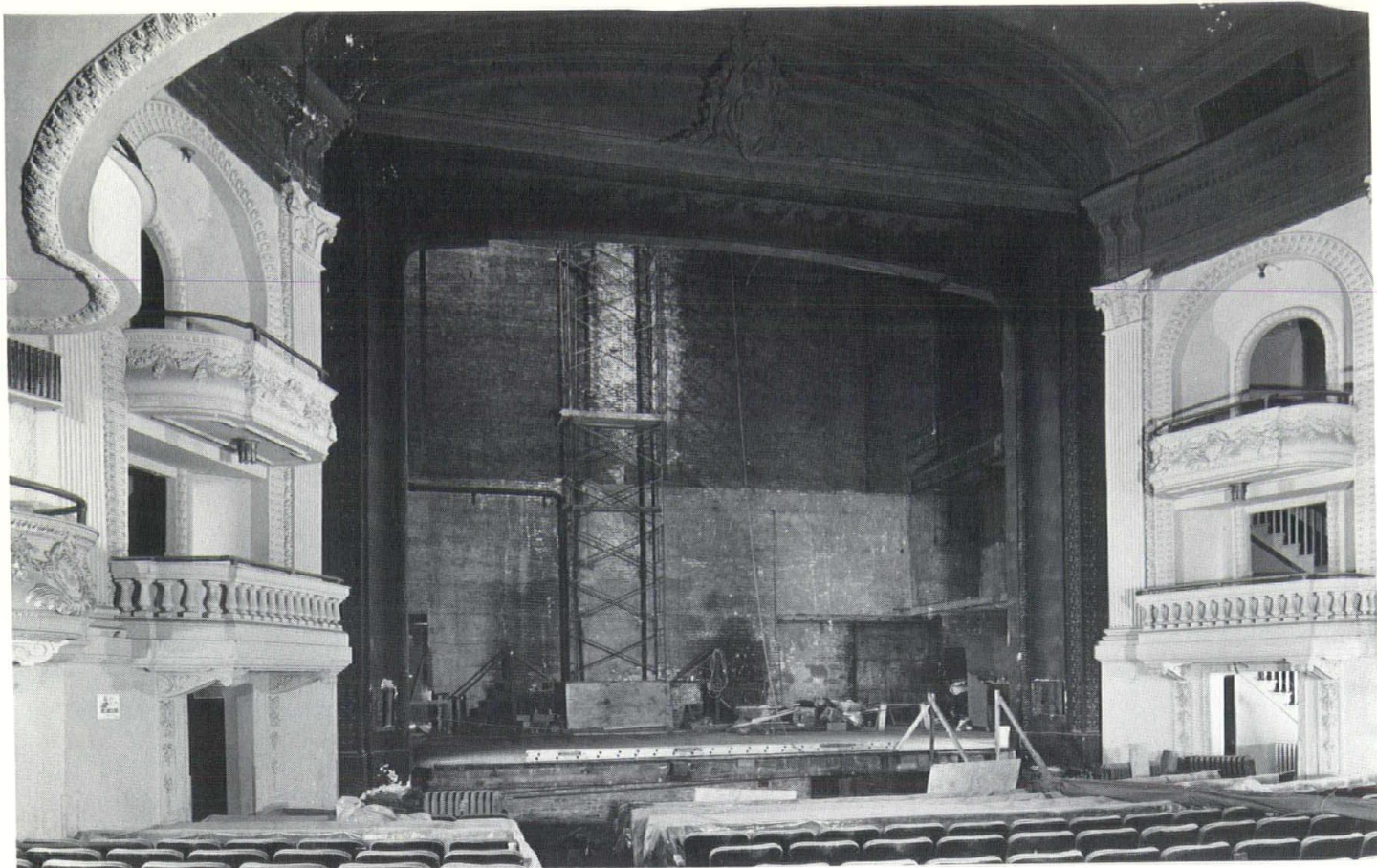
gone forever. In order to insure a high quality of life, we must seek to preserve our fragile man-made and natural resources.

In the practical realm, to preserve and recycle an old building makes good economic and ecological sense. With today's rapidly rising construction costs and growing awareness of the economic and environmental costs of energy use, adapting a sound old building to a viable new life can be a bargain when compared to tearing down the old and replacing it with a new structure.

The economics of historic preservation is a highly complex subject, for it is the economics of real estate development. The discussion of economics here is limited to a few general examples of the economic results of various preservation efforts. It seems only fitting to begin with the oldest of America's large scale restoration projects, Williamsburg, Virginia. Over the past fifty years, 90 million dollars have been invested in the restoration and development of the historic area; it is now estimated that this investment annually brings to the Tidewater, Virginia area over 100 million dollars in the form of private investment, increased local buying power, new construction, and tourism.

Similar economic rewards are to be found in non-tourist oriented projects. The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation uses a revolving fund approach. In its first seven years of operation, it spent \$1,475,238.76 for various purposes. This included the restoration of two city neighborhoods. Private investment related to restoration spending by the Foundation, but separate from Foundation funds amounted to \$16,566,000.00.

Savannah, Georgia, is one of the great success stories of the preservation movement. The preservation effort that began in earnest 25 years ago is responsible for turning around a dying town. Savannah, once an elegant southern town, had been suffering from a century long decline. The preservation program has been the catalyst for bringing new industry and business to the city as well as tourist dollars. The Savannah Chamber of Commerce calculated that every dollar spent for restoration has generated 30 dollars locally. Houses that twenty years ago could be bought for \$3,000 to \$3,500 and could be restored for \$25,000 to \$30,000 are now generally worth in excess of \$125,000. The restoration and preservation of Savannah became such a sure business investment that in recent years Historic Savannah, Inc., the local non-profit preserva-



Five Flags Theater, interior before restoration



Five Flags Theater, interior as restored

tion organization, has been able to obtain 100% bank financing for its projects.

In Washington, D.C., Georgetown, long known for its historic and architectural quality, has a property tax rating of three times that of the rest of Washington (1.6 million/acre vs. .53 million/acre), an obvious indication of the area's desirability. In Annapolis, Maryland, the municipal bond rating was revalued from a "D" rating to an "A" rating as a direct result of the success of the city's preservation and re-vitalization efforts in the central city.

Moving down in scale to individual buildings, the same type of economic benefits are to be had. The Old City Hall (1862-65) in Boston, Massachusetts, was adapted into office space in 1971 at a cost of \$22 a square foot, excluding the cost to complete the tenant space. The next year, the same firm executed a six-story office building with comparable finish in the Boston Government Center area at a cost of \$35 a square foot. Initially, the two buildings drew from the same general rental market, but when the leases came up for renewal, the new rents in the Old City Hall went for \$2 to \$4 a square foot higher than those in the new Government Center building.

Why do people pay these premium prices for old buildings or locations in vital older neighborhoods? It is obvious that they offer something new buildings do not — the aesthetics and associations of the past.

The events of the recent years have brought the need for energy conservation to the attention of all, and there is no better way to conserve energy than to recycle an old building. There are a number of major energy savings to be found in the reuse of an existing structure. First, the massive amount of energy expended on demolition and site clearance is saved. Second, the need for large quantities of new building material usually produced by energy intensive processes is eliminated. In their place, much craft oriented, labor intensive work is substituted. This also has a local economic benefit since a larger proportion of the total cash outlay is in the form of wages. These wages tend to be put into the local economy as opposed to sending a large portion of the invested capital out of the community to pay for the new building materials.

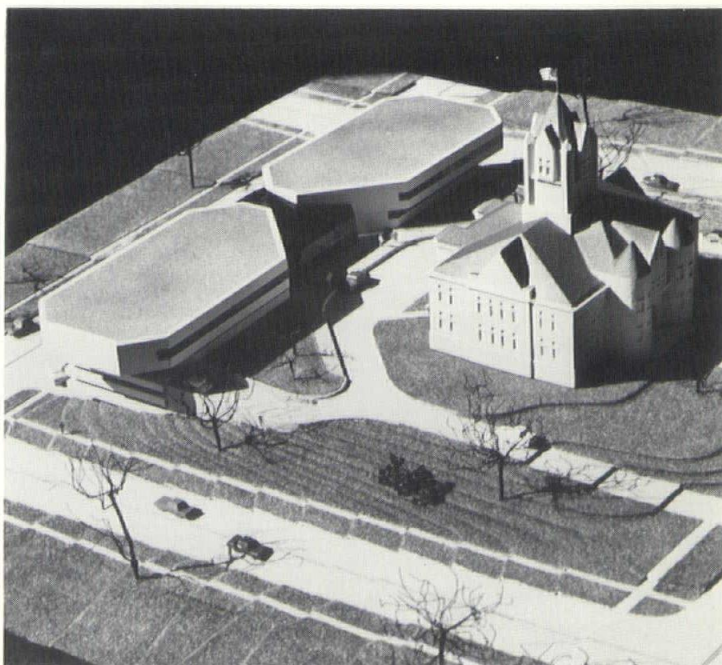
Finally, there is a substantial energy savings to be had by rehabilitating an existing urban neighborhood rather than developing a new suburban area. Taking into account all areas of energy consumption, from public service costs to transportation, a direct energy savings of as much as 26% over the life of the neighborhood can be realized. Preservation makes good dollars and sense.

IOWA HAS ITS EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE PRESERVATION PROJECTS which run the gamut from performing arts centers to branch banks. There are two excellent examples of old movie houses being adapted into performing arts centers. One is the recently completed Five Flags Civic Theater in Dubuque, and the other is the Cedar Rapids Performing Arts Center,

where the work is now in progress. In Dubuque, the 1910 Orpheum Theater was saved only days before its scheduled destruction. The basically sound structure, which had experienced numerous unsympathetic alterations, was subsequently restored to its former gilt and velvet glory and to a new life as a cultural focus of the city. This was accomplished at a cost of only \$1,140 per seat, as opposed to an estimated \$5,680 per seat for the construction of a new performing arts center. In Cedar Rapids, the 1928 Paramount Theater will soon become that city's new performing arts facility. This grand old "movie palace," which has suffered little but benign neglect during the last half century, is expected to be renovated for only \$380 per seat.

The Norwegian-American Historical Museum converted an old publishing office in Decorah into a functional, modern facility. The program included the restoration of the Victorian exterior, the remodeling of the rear exterior, and the complete mechanical and functional reworking of the interior. This was all accomplished for approximately \$25 per square foot or less than half the cost of equivalent new museum space.

What does one do with elegant old houses? They have been adapted into a number of economically viable new uses. In Dubuque, the Second Empire Style Ryan House is now a chic restaurant with numerous small dining rooms; a similar new life seems to be awaiting the Octagon House in Muscatine. In Des Moines, two Victorian mansions on Grand Avenue have been converted into successful women's clothing stores. Finally, American Federal Savings has converted a Queen Anne Revival House in Clinton into its local office, a conversion which won a design award from the Iowa A.I.A.



Model of the proposed Johnson County governmental complex, Iowa City



Norwegian-American Museum, before restoration



Norwegian-American Museum, as restored

A number of Iowa's historic old country courthouses have been renovated recently. One proposal of merit is the plan to enlarge the Johnson County governmental complex. Under this scheme, the old Romanesque Revival courthouse will be converted into a courts' center. An underground passage will connect it to a new facility set into the hillside behind, which will incorporate the balance of the county offices, the jail, and a parking ramp. Another interesting approach to housing government is the plan to convert the Creston Railroad Station into a city hall. This collection of adaptive use projects indicates there is only one real factor limiting the reuse of old buildings — imagination or lack thereof.

THE DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION is the state agency responsible for coordinating the historic preservation activities in Iowa, and it has the following primary responsibilities: 1) to cooperate with units of state and local governments on historic preservation matters; 2) to monitor the effects of federal projects on the historical and cultural resources of Iowa; 3) to nominate sites to the *National Register of Historic Places*, the official list of properties of national, state, and local significance which merit preservation; 4) to develop and maintain an inventory of historical and cultural resources in Iowa and prepare a preservation master plan for the state; 5) to administer the Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid Program, a system of matching federal grants available to both public and private historic properties to aid in their preservation; 6) to be the source of expertise for the development of historic sites; and, 7) to aid the citizens of Iowa in their historic preservation efforts.³

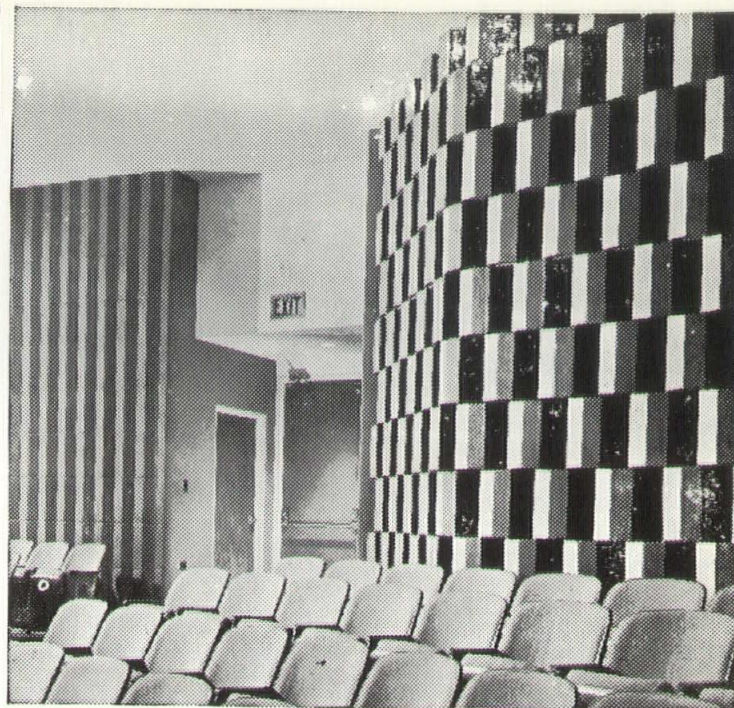
The economic and ecological benefits of historic preservation are many when a little imagination is applied, but they must not overshadow the psychological need for a visually and associatively rich environment. The past is not the property of historians; it is a public possession sustaining the whole society. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck pictures a group of Oklahoma farm wives packing the truck that will carry them to California. As they sit among their doomed possessions that will not fit, one laments, "No, there isn't room . . . how can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past?"

If the Division can be of assistance on any preservation concern, do not hesitate to contact the office:

Division of Historic Preservation
B-13 MacLean Hall
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Te. 319:353-6949

REFERENCES

- 1) *Revolving Funds for Historic Preservation: A Manual of Practice*; by Arthur P. Ziegler Jr., Leopold Adler II and Walter C. Kidney.
- 2) *Economic Benefits of Preserving Old Buildings*; conference papers; Seattle, Washington; July 31-August 2, 1975.
- 3) *Back to the City: A Guide to Urban Preservation*; conference papers; New York, New York; September 13-16, 1974.
- 4) *Preservation and the Building Codes*; conference papers; Washington, D.C.; May, 1974.



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An Architectural Historian's Experiences In Historic Preservation

Wesley I. Shank, *Professor of Architecture,
Iowa State University*

Among the most rewarding experiences in my life have been the mistakes that I have been saved from making — often saved only by sheer luck or by a vague sense of uneasiness, but saved nonetheless. Some of my experiences in historic preservation have been rewarding in this way.

In 1964, James Hilton, then president of Iowa State University, sought to obtain recognition for Farm House, the first building erected on the campus. As a result, the building was listed as a National Historic Landmark. In addition to its role in the history of the university, it had been the residence of Seaman A. Knapp, noted agriculturalist and teacher, and James F. Wilson, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, 1897-1913. The building came into the news again in the early 1970s when the university architect decided to locate a new multi-story classroom structure in the vicinity of the building, and a group of students who were protesting the location of the new structure, sought to delay its construction or to have it relocated on the basis that it was close enough to Farm House to constitute a visual impingement. The degree of impingement was finally agreed to be within tolerable limits, and the university agreed to restore Farm House. A committee of faculty members was formed to work with one of the university vice presidents to guide the work. As an architect and an architectural historian, I was made a member of this committee.

Shortly after the committee began its work I found that I was curious to know the history of the house. As I undertook a search through the reports made by the trustees responsible to the state legislature for the operation of the model farm and agricultural college, I was most surprised to discover that the exterior of the house originally looked quite different from what it now was. I could hardly believe that it was the same building. The stuccoed walls were originally brick and the roof, now covered with cement-asbestos shingles, originally had wooden shingles. The west veranda that presently served as a screened porch off the living room was simply not there; it had been added around 1910-1912. The present front porch, dating from about 1897, had replaced an original front porch with paired Victorian pillars, that ran the full length of the house and gave the building a very different appearance.

The differences in appearance between the original house and Farm House since 1910 to 1912 were enormous. How should the house be restored? Should the additions of the present century be removed com-

pletely and the original brick wall surface, roofing, and porches be replaced as they originally were? It seemed difficult to answer that question; there appeared to be a great deal more restoration ahead of us than we thought. I continued with my historic research, however, and it was fortunate that I did so, because a key fact emerged. Toward the latter years of the nineteenth century, the exterior walls of the house had been painted because the brick was soft, allowing moisture to penetrate and erosion of the surface to take place. Around 1910-1912 the walls were stuccoed so that they would be protected with a permanent surface able to withstand the weather. When our committee began to set forth its guiding philosophy, it realized that the actual nature of the wall construction gave us strong guidance. The stucco had to stay because the brick walls themselves were incapable of withstanding the weather, and we had historic experience to tell us so. To remove the stucco meant to reduce the landmark to a "self-destruct" condition. Furthermore other changes had been made to the house during the Curtiss family's residency early in the 1900s, that would require virtually rebuilding the whole interior if they were to be removed. If we were to restore the interior to its original condition, what would that original condition have been? We simply did not know; we would have had to guess or to conduct a kind of archeological examination of the fabric of the building itself that would have been all out of proportion to the financial resources available and to the historic significance of this building. On the other hand, there in front of us was the house itself, and every bit of it was genuine, the result of a succession of people having lived in it and having modified it as they needed to. The answer to our question about our philosophy came to us slowly, perhaps because it was so obvious. We should substantially keep the house as it had been after the last extensive remodeling. Thus the house could be "restored" back to about 1910-1912. We could go back that far with reasonable assurance. For the same reason, a garage built in 1926 could safely be removed. If you take a long-term view, you might say that in another two-hundred years our 1910-1912 date and the 1861-1865 period during which the house was originally built will all seem quite remote.

Recently I visited the Daniel Nelson farmhouse north of Oskaloosa. This is a true farmhouse, built in the early 1850s and little changed during the ensuing years. The brick had been painted on the exterior wall surfaces,

and recently the Mahaska County Historical Society decided to have the paint removed by sandblasting. The red brick now looks beautiful, to be sure, but troubles have begun to develop. The brick had been painted by the earlier owners of the house for a reason; it was soft brick and it needed the protection of a coat of paint. The sandblasting process destroys the surface of brick, and that surface is harder than the inner brick, even if the brick is soft. So the brick is eroding and damp, and it needs the paint which had been removed. Our committee did not make this serious mistake with Farm House, because we had been fortunate enough to know through the history of the building the reason why its walls had been painted and then stuccoed.

To the credit of the people in Mahaska, I must in fairness mention that in other respects they have done a good job. For example, on obtaining the Nelson house they found it furnished authentically with early twentieth-century furniture. Although they had decided to refurnish the house as it might have been during the mid-nineteenth century, they recognized the value of the twentieth-century furniture in their possession, which happened to have belonged to the descendants of the original owners. This furniture was carefully set up on display in a museum building later built near the farmhouse. Our descendants will be grateful.

A particularly sorry story of supposed restoration has just come to light that deals with one of my favorite historic buildings in Iowa, "Plum Grove", the last home of Governor Lucas, first territorial governor of Iowa. The house was "restored" in the nineteen-forties, according to a recent newspaper account. This work appears to have involved an architectural forgery. The wide eaves of the house were clipped short, the front porch was removed, and the shape of some of the windows was changed, apparently to make the house follow the late Federal style prevalent in the early nineteenth century. If indeed this account is true, it indicates a profound disregard of Iowa history. Only someone who believed that the actual physical heritage of our past was worthless trash could be responsible for destroying it in order to make it into something that it never was. Forgery is the proper word for such an act, a crime against truth — or possibly a monument to ignorance.

On the other hand, however, I believe that there is a proper place for reproductions of the settings of historic past. Disneyland has attracted visitors from all over the United States and Europe as well, and rightly so. It is a magical creation of dreams and fantasies, and is valid when presented for what it is. Such re-creations as Jamestown Festival Park also are most vivid ways of conveying to people today the experience of that first settlement, as we to the best of our present knowledge believe it to have been. But these examples are reconstructions and are never passed off as the real thing. Their impact is not diminished when people know the truth.

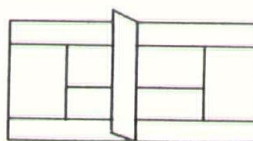
To take any real building, historically authentic until yesterday because it is the actual record, and to make it

into a Disneyland illusion or into a forgery of something that it never was, is to thumb one's nose at the integrity that the building has. It has been valid until that point simply through its having existed.

Luck has followed me so far, I believe. The Farm House is real. Its bricks are protected under the real historic stucco and its porches are real and historic, not dreamworld creations. The decisions about the house were made with care and consideration, and with gratitude I count among my accomplishments the fact that I had some part in the mistakes that were not made.

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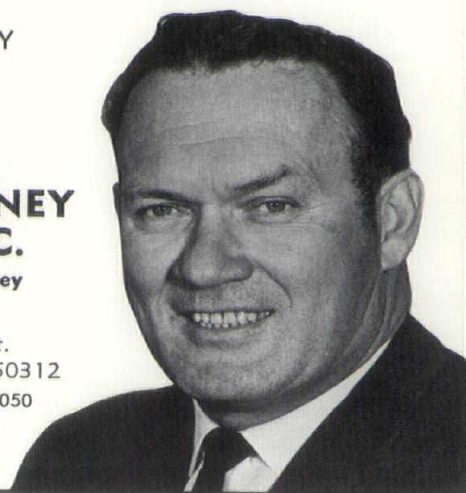
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PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

A workshop on preservation, restoration, and remodeling of historic buildings and landscape will be held on Sept. 14-15 at the Scheman Continuing Education Building, Iowa State University.

Organized as a how-to-do-it program, the workshop will provide know-how in planning, funding and implementing projects. Provided for the benefit of a 10 state region, the workshop makes available the experience of several nationally and internationally known professionals who will describe how successful projects have been researched, financed and built.

Speakers include Hugh Miller, assistant chief historical architect, National Park Service; Roy E. Graham, director of architecture; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Marion Thompson of England; Reid Williamson, Jr., executive director, Historic Landmark Foundation, Indiana; Tom Lutz, assistant director, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Midwest; and two consulting architects, Charles Peterson, Philadelphia; and Wade DuBose Burns, Atlanta.

Iowa speakers include Margaret Keys, University of Iowa; Wesley Shank, Lynnette Pohlman, and Robert Harvey, Iowa State University; Damon Ohlerking, MIDAS, Fort Dodge; and William Wagner, Des Moines.

Registration fee is \$50 with a Sept. 1 deadline. Late fee is \$55. For information contact Workshop Coordinator, Eino Kainlauri, Engineering Extension, 110 Marston Hall, Iowa State University, Ames 50011. Phone 515/294-7112.

ISU APPOINTS ARCHITECTURE CHAIRMAN

The appointment of Sanford R. Greenfield as professor and chairman of the department of architecture at Iowa State University was approved by the State Board of Regents at its July 15-16 meeting at Iowa State University.

He succeeds Wesley I. Shank, who has served as acting chairman of architecture since August 1, 1975. Greenfield's appointment is effective July 19 through June 30, 1981.

Greenfield has been director of education at the Boston Architectural Center since 1967. He received bachelor of architecture (1952) and master of architecture (1954) degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology and a master of education (1975) degree from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

He was a lecturer in architecture at the Massachusetts College of Art from 1958-67. His professional experience includes a partnership in Carroll and Greenfield Architects, Boston, 1960-73, and service as a private consultant since 1973.

The new department head received a Fulbright Scholarship for travel and study, 1954-55, and has had professional papers published in the *AIA Journal*, *Progressive Architecture* and *Collier's Yearbook*. He served as president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, 1973-74, and is a member of the American Institute of Architects. Elected to the College of Fellows in 1970, he was chairman of the AIA National Advisory Council on Continuing Education in 1972.

BOOK REVIEW

The History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

By Gordon Gray

"The past belongs not to the limited number of professional historians, teachers, architectural historians, but to anyone who is aware of it — and it grows — lives — by being shared," suggests Gordon Gray, chairman of the National Trust Board of Trustees from 1963-73, in *The History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1963-1973*, a new book from the Preservation Press of the National Trust. In detailing the growth of the leading private American preservation organization, this Bicentennial project of the National Trust also encompasses the growth of the historic preservation movement it serves.

The history is divided into two parts. Part I, 1947-63, surveys early preservation efforts and legislation, the founding of the National Trust, early Trust programs and acquisitions of properties and the international studies and national efforts that resulted in passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Part II, 1963-73, focuses on the unprecedented growth of the Trust, the development of Trust programs and policies, federal preservation legislation and funding, major preservation battles and other milestones achieved

and tools developed as preservation and the Trust came of age.

Informative reading for preservationists and environmentalists as well as a valuable reference for documentation of the history of the National Trust, the book is a sequel to the 1947-63 history of the Trust formative years written by David E. Finley, chairman of the Board of Trustees from 1950-62.

The History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1963-1973 may be purchased from the **Preservation Bookshop, National Trust, 740 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.** (\$11.00 plus \$1.00 postage)

The Victorian Architecture of Iowa

by Wm. Plymat, Jr.

A book about architecture by a non-architect. The author is a commercial photographer, cinematographer, and designer of advertising materials. At first glance this appears as just a picture book filled with those shots architects tell themselves that they will someday take but never do. Upon reading however, the book logically relates these pictures to the history of early Iowa. Mr. Plymat is a good craftsman with a super eye for detail.

Although the book contains many fine illustrations, no attempt was made to make it a documentation of the period. It is more out to capture the spirit of Iowa's architectural past. Plymat looks longingly at the remnants of once grand yet still proud buildings. His pictures mourn the callous disregard of elegance by present day landlords.

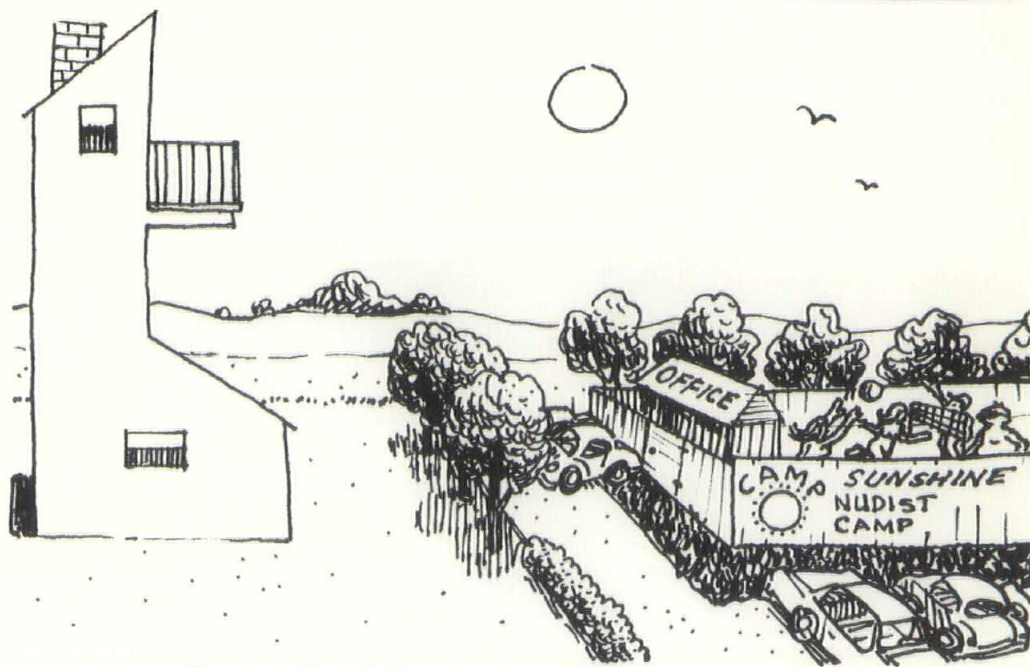
The pity of the book is that the only way Plymat's subjects will be preserved is by their good fortune to have been published. Indeed, for \$10.95 it is an inexpensive reminder of our Victorian heritage.



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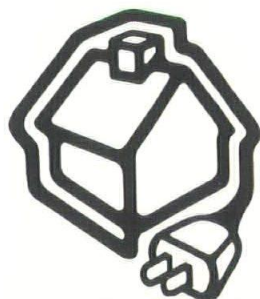
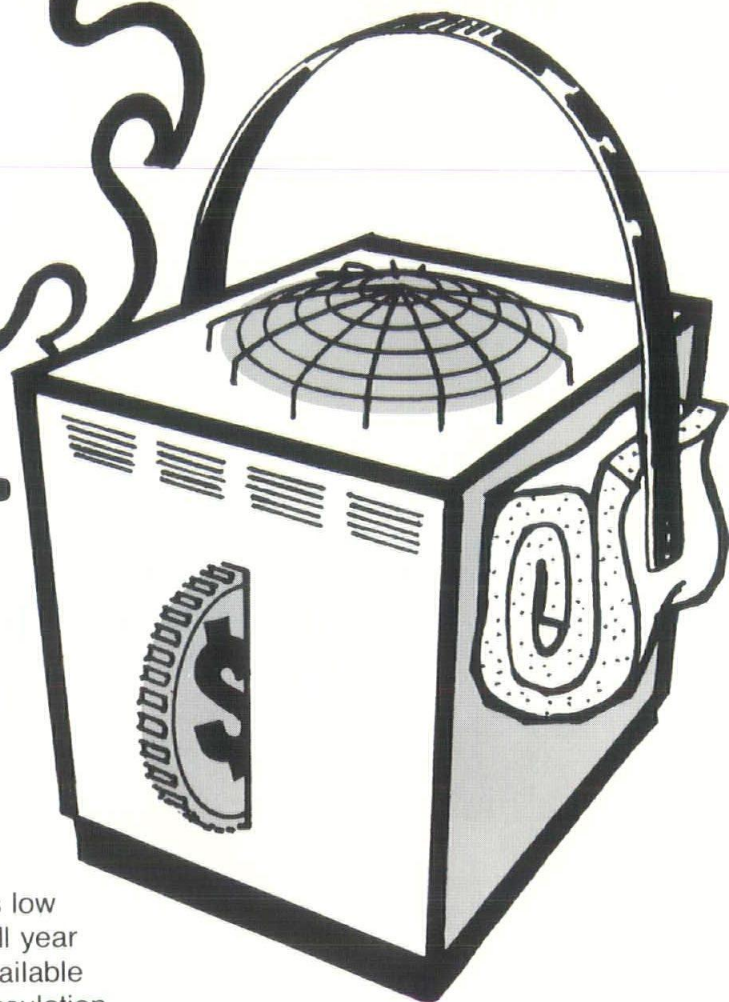
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