

Old House Journal

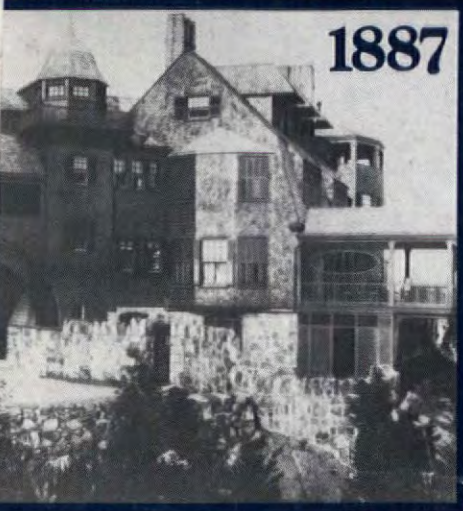
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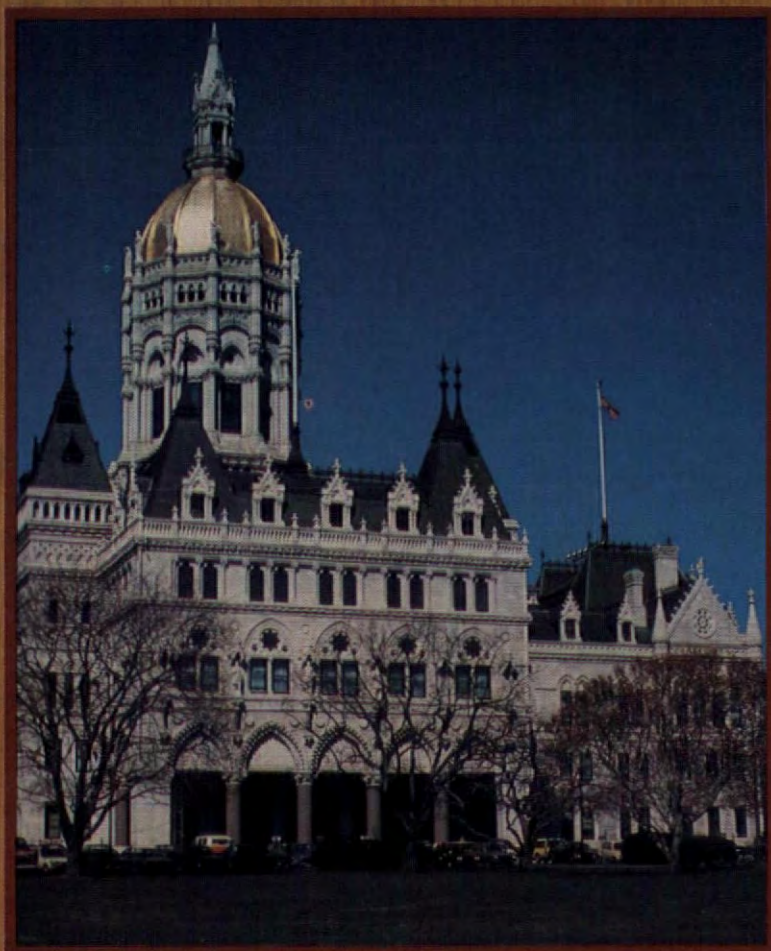


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Cover: Kragtsyde II under construction at Swans Island, Maine. Photo by Bill O'Donnell.
Inset photo of the original Kragtsyde, begun 1882 in Manchester-by-the-Sea. (demolished)

What's this all about?

We're not running an Old-House Living story this time, but I don't think you're going to miss it. Because, in its place, we have something very different and yet somehow extraordinarily similar: a story about building an old house. A story about two people re-creating a Shingle-style mansion on an island off the coast of Maine.

We didn't intend for this to happen. Before an editor went to visit, we thought of the project as peripheral to our usual editorial focus. These people, after all, aren't restoring anything. They are building; this is new construction.

We're very aware that The Old-House Journal, and even more so the OHJ Catalog, are finding their way to developers and people who live in new houses. Restoration materials tend to be top-of-the-line materials, the real thing. Things you don't find at furniture outlets or hardware stores.

Is this a trend; is this something we should be focussing on? We considered first a series on new-old houses. But the more I got into it, the more I worried there was something different here; the mind-set was often a world apart from the restoration mind-set. People in old houses — inconvenient, dirty, used, unpredictable old houses — these people had something indefinable in common. Something about retaining the imperfections. People who want a new house — a convenient, crisp-edged, clean new house, made to order — maybe they didn't think the same way. Oh, those people might appreciate tradition, might love old-fashioned styles. But they're after convenience first, don't care about ghosts.

I became wary of mixing the message to core readers. But the subject was worth covering. So I suggested we do one big article on new-old houses; one article about Victorian Revival and the return to ornament and traditional styles in new construction. Let's report it



*Jim Beyor:
(re)building Kraggsyde*

and get it over with, I thought. Not the same audience anyway.

But you never know what you're going to find. Editor Bill O'Donnell went to Swans Island to get photos of the Shingle-style house. He found a story that surprised us all. These people are old-house people after all. They're building a new house but the lifestyle and the philosophy are familiar. Hey, they aren't working for convenience, not working for return on investment, but working on a project because they believe in it. It is a life adventure.

Bill comes back from Maine and demands the whole article to tell about Kraggsyde. About Jim and Jane, and their dog, and the work. Our graphics department gets hold of it, lavishes time; the whole staff falls in love with the project and the people. Every once in a while you hear about something that touches a deeper meaning, makes you glad to get up in the morning.

So again, what's this all about? Let's put it this way: If everybody who lives in an old house subscribed to OHJ, we'd be rich. But that's not the case. Because not everybody who lives in an old house is an old-house person; certainly, not everybody who lives in an old house understands or would

care to understand what underlies the message in OHJ. If this is true, then it may also be that there are people living in new houses who *do* understand.

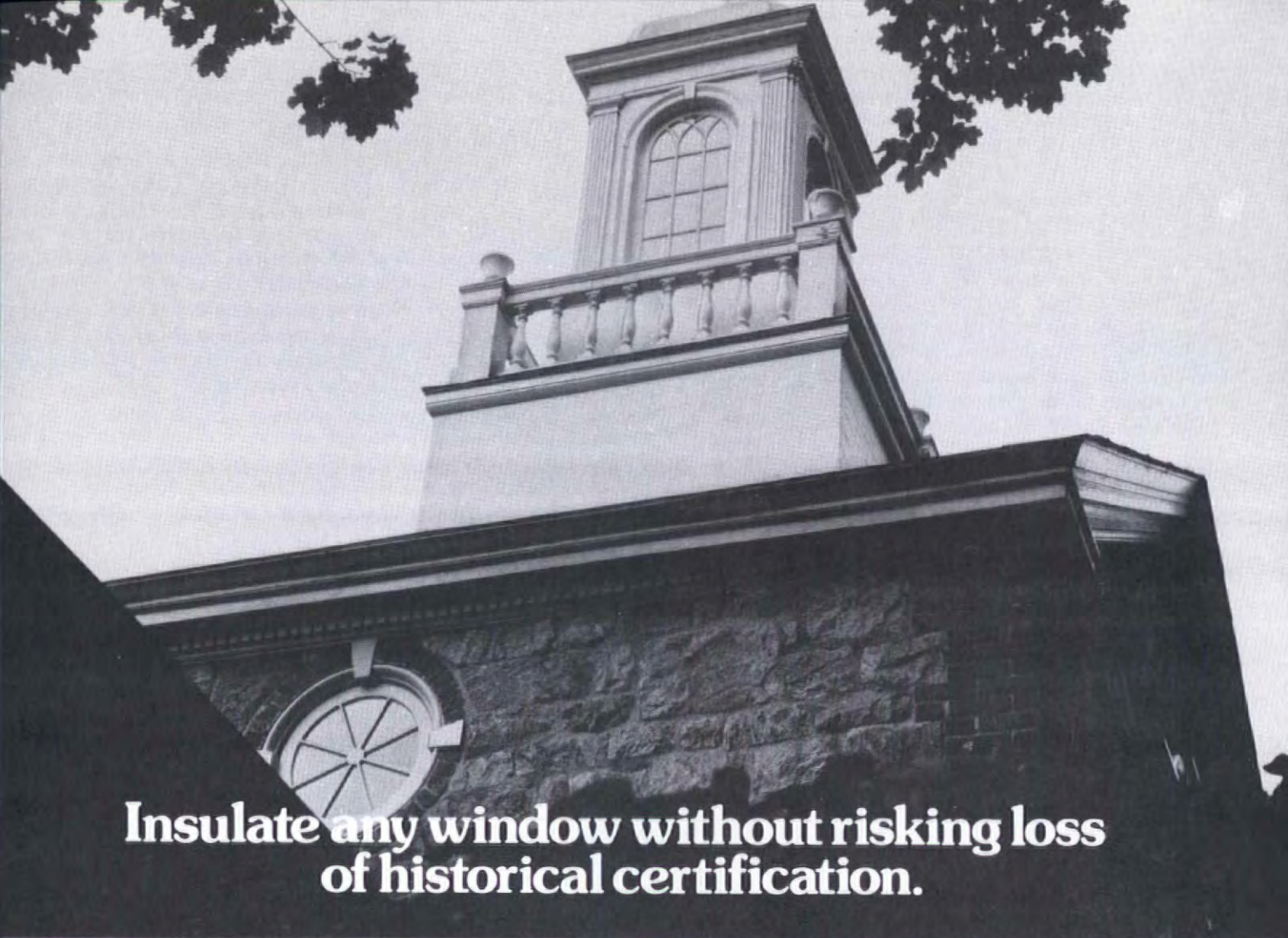
It's not just about "how to fix old houses," which is what I tell strangers who ask. Restoration how-to is merely our chosen vocabulary — a way to be useful. We could do a publication on fixing old houses that was nothing but projects, nothing but Step 1, Step 2, Step 3. We wouldn't need this editor's page, or Old-House Living stories, or Remuddling. Or the humor that creeps in no matter how hard we try to be serious; no need to give reasons. If we were totally pragmatic, we'd always describe the fastest and cheapest way to get things done (not something we're accused of often).

I think living in an old house, and The Old-House Journal, are about choices. That quality of life might be more important than "getting ahead." That long-term rewards must be considered along with the more obvious short-term gains.

No, this isn't just about fixing old houses. It's about the marriage of history, aesthetics, and practicality. About critical opinion and daring to have a consistent, considered point of view. About alternatives: Mainstream doesn't mean it's necessarily right, or the only choice. It's about being positive (action-oriented) rather than negative, it's about abhorring cynicism. It's about being modern without negating history. It's about the awareness that one always enjoys most the fruits of the hardest labor; that that which comes too easily is of little value.

Of course OHJ is a restoration manual. But for some, maybe restoration is also about the irrational pursuit of quality. Maybe it's about leaving the world a little better than you found it.

Patricia Moore



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True Tuck Pointing

Dear OHJ:

"Tuck Pointing: What's In A Name," in the January-February 1987 OHJ, stated that true tuck pointing could be done with just one exposed color of mortar, as was illustrated in the accompanying photo. This is incorrect, and this statement and photo were not from my research.

True tuck pointing requires two exposed mortar colors, as it was otherwise correctly described in the article (though I also take exception to the allegation that it is more attractive with stone than with brick). The pointing in the printed photo would be better described as "beaded." A photo of true tuck pointing appears below.



Beaded pointing has sometimes been referred to as "tuck pointing," but this misuse was just part of the confusion that obscured the original tuck-pointing meaning and led to its often-heard usage today as a synonym for repointing.

Thank you, Old-House Journal, for urging that "tuck pointing" not be used in place of "repointing." We've had enough confusion already.

— Michael Shellenbarger
Eugene, Oregon

The editor replies:

A clear definition for "tuck pointing" is hard to come by. Mr. Shellenbarger has inferred, from extensive study of the use of the term in antique texts, that "tuck

pointing" is a two-step, two-color mortar-pointing process. A beaded joint, on the other hand, is created, after a single application of mortar, by striking the joint with a tool that leaves a beaded profile.

The photo in the January-February issue was of a "tucked" joint, but in the same color as the surrounding mortar. I've seen this pointing detail (in granite) with the same-color mortar, second-color mortar, and with the tucked mortar of a finer consistency than surrounding mortar that contained medium aggregate.

The comment that it is "attractive in stonework" was in direct response to the author's subjective claim that its use in brickwork was "of questionable aesthetic necessity."

The photo included here was not used in the article because, in the opinion of the editors, it shows poor craftsmanship and doesn't do justice to the fine art of tuck pointing.

— P. Poore

Blasting Reconsidered

Dear Editors:

Thank you for the most welcome article, "Blasted! Now What?" in the January-February 1987 OHJ. It appeared just in time.

I have been in the process of buying a brick home which is approximately 140 years old. The exterior, unfortunately, has been painted and left unrepaired for what appears to be eons. I had been seriously considering sandblasting. After reading the fine article in your magazine, I am now re-evaluating my decision.

I found the article to be very informative and well researched. Also, I found J. Randall Cotton's bit of levity in the first paragraph rather refreshing. My compliments on an article well done.

I think all of us who are into the restoration of old houses have much to be grateful for by having at our disposal a fine magazine such as The Old-House Journal. The modest cost of the magazine does not compare with the wealth of information it provides. Thank you again for the "timely" article on sandblasting.

— B. Compton
Princeton, Ill.

Bungalow Memories

Dear Ms. Poore:

Thanks so much for "The Chicago Bungalow" in your January-February 1987 issue. I spent much of my childhood in just such bungalows — the homes of my friends in Oak Park, Illinois. Many of the Chicago bungalows have been remodeled in more horrible ways than the mansard-roofed one you pictured. One of my friends lived in such a remuddling: the bow front removed and replaced with a 1950s picture window, and the kitchen done in pink plastic tile. However, hundreds (perhaps thousands?) of the untouched, original articles — some still housing the original owners — can be found in such suburbs as Berwyn and the southern part of Oak Park.

You did, however, neglect to mention an important and practical aspect of the Chicago bungalow. The basement is really a "garden apartment." (The entrance is on the side of the house pictured on your back cover.) Tradition has it that a couple would buy a bungalow, live in the garden apartment, and rent the upstairs until the house was paid for; then they'd move upstairs and rent out the basement. Today, the basement apartment serves as a living space while a serious rehab is going on upstairs, or provides rental income to finance same.

Thanks for a great article!

— Andrea H. Rathbone
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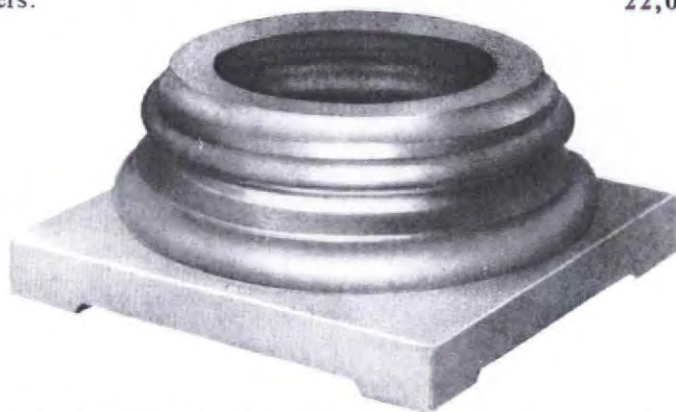
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Caveat Emptor

Dear OHJ:

Your new format is excellent. One of my pet peeves, though, is with construction-material manufacturers' marketing and advertising claims. As a professional, I have learned not to believe all that is claimed without first substantiating those claims in one way or another. I feel that I have a moral obligation to my customers to make sure that the materials and products I specify or suggest perform as advertised.

On page 13 of the January-February 1987 issue there appears an ad for Wes-Pine Wood Windows. The ad states that Low-E, high-performance, single-strength glass windows are better than Low-E insulating glass. When I read that, I had to shake my head, close and open my eyes, and adjust my glasses. Yep! That's what it says. Have one of your technical consultants try to make sense of it. The same ad also states that the Yankee Spirit window has the insulating value of a 10-inch brick wall.

The more dense a material, the less insulating capacity it contains; so much less, in the case of concrete, bricks, and the like, that they in fact become conductors, not insulators. I know you can't verify the integrity of all [advertisement claims]. But by no stretch of the imagination does a 10-inch-thick brick wall have an R value of 3.33.

Again, thanks for a choice magazine.

— Sonny Lykos
Lykos Construction
Dowagiac, Mich.

Wes-Pine Replies

Dear Editors:

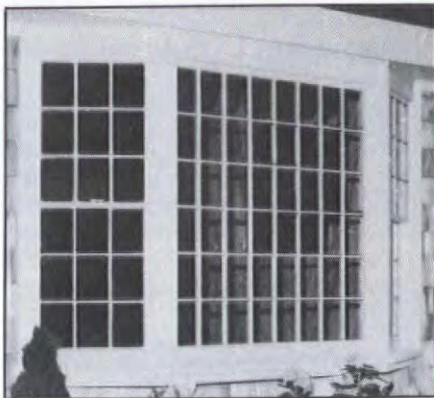
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Mr. Lykos refers to our use of a 10-inch brick wall for comparison, wherein we state that The Yankee Spirit Window™ is equal to a 10-inch brick wall. Actually, The Yankee Spirit Window™ is *better* in U and R values than a 10-inch brick wall. For calling this point to our attention, we thank him.

The future is now at Wes-Pine and we would be glad to welcome Mr. Lykos to be one of our many new customers.

— R. Yvonne Park
President, Wes-Pine Millwork, Inc.
West Hanover, Mass.

Re Research

Dear Ms. Poore,

As chairman of Toledo's historic "Old West End" house tours for the last three years, I have researched quite a few homes. Therefore, when I received my January-February 1987 OHJ, I turned directly to the article "Researching Your House History." Though I gained a lot of informa-

tion, I also have an alternative method for those who don't want to spend "six hours of examining column after column of handwritten names." Go to the library *first*.

I always head straight for the City Directories in the Local History Department. The entries are listed in alphabetical and numerical order by street address. Under each entry you will find the owners' names, occupations, places of employment, children's names (and sometimes date of birth), and any tenants living at the same address, such as a maid, relative, etc. Some directories also have somewhat of a "Who's Who" listing. Once you find the owners' names, you can look them up in this section and possibly find their business address, clubs or organizations they belonged to, etc.

In older directories (pre-1900?), the listings may be by name only; go to the earliest edition listed by address, find the owners' names at that date, and work backwards from there.

Once you have the owners' names, ask your librarian for other "Who's Who" type publications for your area. Look up the names in the card catalog for more information that may be stored in a back room. (I once found a whole folder full of newspaper articles, invoices from a company the person owned, even a catalog of "modern" plumbing fixtures that the company manufactured.)

Those who live in a registered historic house or district can ask the librarian for a "historic survey." (They're listed by address.) It can supply a wealth of information: the original owner, architectural style and features of your home, type of construction, maybe even the architect or an early photo. If the architect is listed and the firm still exists (possibly taken over by another firm), you may even be able to find copies of your original blueprints.

— Lynn A. Corlett
Toledo, Ohio

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Second Thoughts

Dear Editor:

Thanks for printing my "counterpoint" on post-Victorian interiors [January-February 1987 OHJ, p. 58]. Odd, but I wrote it so long ago that I had forgotten about it. As I re-read it, it seemed like someone else talking. In fact, I could rebut my own piece by pointing out that I'm an old-timer of 45, and who am I to play Winterthur con-noiser and tell young folks what to like and what not to like? After all, one generation's trash is another's treasure.

— John Crosby Freeman
Watkins Glen, N.Y.

No Objections

Dear OHJ:

Glad to see your excursions into post-Victorian interiors. John Freeman's article ["Counterpoint," January-February 1987] provoked

me, of course — it was biased, idiosyncratic, and subjective, but that's the point, right? Some of his phrases completely missed me — "energized by the invisible but pressurized field they occupy" — but others, like the steamer-trunk reference, were quite clever. Although I mostly disagree with him, I don't object to Mr. Freeman venting his prejudices, as long as they're clearly presented as opinion.

— J. Randall Cotton
Wayne, Penn.

Some Objections

Patty,

I gotta do it. I gotta write a Letter To The Editor.

If I understand John Crosby Freeman's article in the January-February 1987 OHJ correctly (and I'm not at all sure I do), I think he makes the point that if you look

long and hard enough, you can find some examples of really ugly post-Victorian interiors in period decorating catalogs.

He is absolutely right. Ever since early man scratched on the walls of caves, there have been ugly interiors. And ever since there have been "wish-books," there have been pictures of ugly interiors that some copywriter said were pretty.

I have to take exception with a couple of things, though. One is the impression that Mr. Freeman might have left that post-Victorian interiors were generally ugly. Some were ugly, others were very nice — the Greene & Greene bungalows in Pasadena come to mind as examples of very nice. The second thing I want to point out is that William Radford didn't introduce those Prairie-School interiors in the 1920s; he did it at least a decade earlier. If Mr.

continued on page 12

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We learned that the HG-501 was meant for shrink-wrapping plastic packaging. It was made by a Wisconsin manufacturer who wasn't interested in the retail market. So, as a reader service, we became a mail-order distributor. Since then, more than 12,000 OHJ subscribers have bought the Master HG-501.

Our Buyer's Guide makes it easy to find everything you need for your old house!



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In all, we've got 1,426 companies listed and more than 10,000 products and services. That includes products and services you won't find anywhere else: push-button light switches, iron roof cresting, classical columns, hand-blocked wallpaper, or Victorian tile. Unusual services, too: Where else but in *The Old-House Journal Catalog* will you find companies who will custom duplicate your millwork and hardware, paint your house in historic colors, repair your stained glass, and reline your chimney? And most of the companies listed sell or distribute nationally, so you can

do business whether you live in Manhattan or North Dakota.

We personally contacted each company listed to make sure that this, our largest catalog ever, is also our most accurate. Each company entry includes complete address, phone numbers, and availability of literature.

Three indexes make that wealth of information easy to work with. The first is the Catalog Index, which has been meticulously cross-referenced; if you're trying to find, say, "ceiling rosettes," it tells you that the item can be found under "ceiling medallions." The second Index lists all the product displays, where you can find additional information on specific companies. The third Index groups all the companies by city and state, so you can locate quickly and easily the old-house suppliers that are nearest to you.

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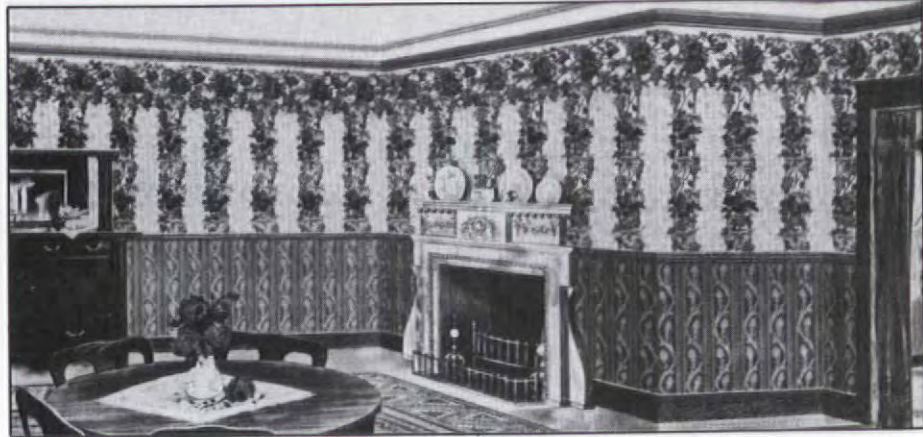
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LETTERS

continued from page 8

Freeman would spend some time browsing through OHJ's private library (a rare privilege I'm proud to have had), he would see that there are plenty of examples of fine interiors in period books; and that Radford published those Prairie-School-influenced drawings around 1910 in *American Carpenter & Builder*. (In the March 1986 OHJ, Mr. Freeman attributed some Radford fence designs to a 1921 publication; those same fences appeared in *American Carpenter & Builder* in 1911.) A self-admitted "Winterthur-trained historian of American decorative arts" should check these things out before he says that "architectural pattern-books were always a decade or two behind high-style fashion."

One more thing: Let me suggest to Mr. Freeman that metaphors involving energized, invisible, pressurized fields of Art Nouveau pat-



Would Hendrix have objected to this purple (-and-red-on-green) haze?

terns singing on a wall work best in descriptions of interiors of the 1960s. Sounds like one of my old Hendrix posters.

Love those scholars.

— Walter Jowers
Nashville, Tenn.

The editor replies:

Gosh, I love controversy.

— P. Poore

Thanks

Dear Editor:

We have thoroughly enjoyed your magazine. So many articles have pertained to our projects in progress. It's so good to know we aren't alone with our "mushrooming" problems.

— Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Boone
Louisville, Ky.

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Spalling Sandstone

Q I bought a stone house thinking that exterior maintenance would be minimal. Boy, was I wrong! The sandstone is eroding away. In the crawlspaces, the stones are smooth and rounded, as if they're dissolving. Foundation stones are spalling and flaking.

One possible solution is to dig a three-foot trench around the foundation and lay in a sheet of mineral-surface roll roofing to protect the stone from ground water. I tried this on one section, but it was a lot of work, and I'm not sure if it will be effective. What can I do? Can I have the only stone house that's crumbling away?

—William Blakeslee
Ambler, Penn.



A Sandstone erosion is common, but (judging from the photos you sent) you've got a serious problem. We'll offer some general suggestions about controlling moisture in the stone (a probable contributor to the problem), but we strongly suggest you have a masonry expert or engineer evaluate conditions on site. You may have an unusual chemical or soil condition. How do other sandstone foundations in the vicinity look? The stone itself may be inferior.

Water is the principal enemy of sandstone. To arrest further spalling, the stone must be kept dry. Because your problems are concentrated near the foundation,

you're probably correct in assuming that rising damp is a problem. Take steps to reduce ground moisture around your foundation. Sandstone is porous, so damage will continue to spread up the wall.

In one of your photos, we see a downspout that apparently dumps water right at the base of the foundation. Splashblocks are normally adequate, but with the problems you're encountering, it would be better to extend the leaders and install drywells.

Excavation around the foundation is probably a good idea, but you may have to do more than press a barrier against the stone. A foundation drain system is a good idea, backfilled with gravel to existing grade. You'd use a sandy soil to build up the ground near the foundation — ensuring positive slope away from the house. These measures won't completely stop the deterioration of the stone, but they'll slow it down.

Consolidating and resurfacing stone is a complex and technical procedure, best left to a qualified stone-repair mason. If you feel you're fairly proficient in the "trowel trades," you could attempt repairs yourself. (See "Patching Brownstone," August 1982 OHJ.)

Character Killer?

Q I have successfully installed 3/8" Sheetrock over very badly damaged plaster (lost keys, broken lath, finish-coat delamination, etc.). Recently, another contractor told a past client of mine that this is a mistake. He said I was negligent and ill-informed for choosing this alternative. (This is a non-museum house with many problems and limited funds.) Casings still project beyond the Sheetrock.

The question is this: If it is put on correctly, are there any problems, drawbacks, or reasons why this is an unacceptable alternative?

— Russ Roach
Tulsa, Okla.

A Yeah, there are drawbacks, the biggest one being that all moulding profiles will change. (That is, when you laminate drywall onto existing plaster, the wall gets thicker and so the trim and baseboard no longer stand proud of the wall.) If the mouldings are particularly deep, you can get away with it, but it still changes the room. More often, you'd have to take off and move out all the base and trim, which means extending jambs, too. This gets obvious if the woodwork has a natural finish.

The best solution, of course, is to demolish the bad plaster and replace it with a new, three-coat plaster job over wire lath. This preserves the original appearance and properties of a plaster wall. Realistically, plasterers may be hard to find and the job may be beyond the budget. (Don't assume that, however; always check it out.) When replacing unsalvageable plaster with Sheetrock, it's preferable to remove the old plaster first. This takes care of the moulding profile problem.

You put Sheetrock over the plaster. Using 3/8" was a good idea; 1/2" would have added less thickness, but defects and unevenness in the plaster beneath probably would have shown through. You undoubtedly used plenty of fasteners — important to hold the Sheetrock rigid.

To answer your specific question: If the client is happy with the way the room looks, there is no technical reason why your decision was ill-informed. We don't know what the other contractor had in mind (or why he would second-guess your decision to the client). Maybe he felt you should have removed the plaster before installing the drywall. Or maybe he's been reading OHJ too long, and is worried about your soul going to Preservation Purgatory for using Sheetrock at all.

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A Durable Bond

I have a tip you may want to pass on to your readers. We do quite a bit of drywall work and have found a way to speed up the taping and finishing procedure. Instead of using the standard procedure of three finish coats, we apply the first coat using a product called Durabond 90. It's a powdered plaster made by the U.S. Gypsum Company. The "90" indicates the number of minutes it takes to harden; the product is available from "30" to "210." We use mainly the 45- and 60-minute set, depending on the size of the job. In our area it costs about \$10 for a 25-lb. bag. Besides being fast drying, Durabond doesn't shrink as it hardens — unlike joint compound, which shrinks a lot as it dries. The only problem with Durabond is that it's very hard once it has dried, and thus is difficult to sand. For this reason, care should be taken upon application so that a reasonably smooth surface is left to be covered by one application of "topping" joint compound.

— Sonny Lykos
Dowagiac, Mich.

Knob Know-How

When the set-screws (properly called *wints*) which hold doorknobs have stripped or just worn loose, it can be hard to find replacements. But I've discovered an easy substitute.



Most hardware stores carry "Allen Head Set-Screws" in fractional inch and metric sizes, and in various lengths. Buy a selection of sizes and Allen wrenches to tighten them, or take your spindle and

knob along so you can select just the right size.

— Robin Parker
Norwood, Mass.

Gunning For Price Tags

I have found a great new use for the Master Heat Gun. Set up on its little stand, it makes short work of softening the gum on all those infernal self-stick price tags with which everything seems to come these days. Just takes a moment, and they peel right off. A swipe with a rag dampened in paint thinner finishes the job neatly. This can save HOURS if you've bought a bag of pipe fittings for a big plumbing job, or whatever. Just be careful with the fingers!

— James B. Tyler
San Francisco, Cal.

Wired For Sound

There are many two-person jobs that require communication between floors. That communication typically takes various forms of shouting and/or morse-code-tapped-on-a-water-pipe. It is also typically frustrating and ineffective.

For example, we are currently re-wiring (not to mention re-everything-else) our 1873 Second Empire residence. The runs are long: There is almost 90 feet of 1-inch EMT between the basement main electrical panel and the 100-amp, third-floor branch panel. Getting one #4 and two #3 conductors in that conduit is quite a tug. It requires a "puller" (me) and a "pusher" (my wife), working together with the precision of a rowing team. How to communicate from the third floor to the basement?

Our youngest child is an infant. We purchased a Fisher-Price "Nursery Monitor" so that we could hear her crying while we are off in a different part of this sprawling mausoleum. Hey! That's it! If

the monitor will pick up Betsy crying, it can certainly hear me saying, in a clear and authoritative voice, "Push!!!!!!!!!!" In fact, it worked just great. Another job, quickly and efficiently done.

A check of a local toy store revealed not only several varieties of "nursery monitors," but also (get this) a hands-off microphone/transmitter, built into a fireman's hat that also sports a revolving red light! Stop shouting at your spouse AND put some zest into your restoration projects. Great idea, huh?

We have been subscribers since volume one, number one. Great magazine and getting better. Keep up the good work. And I will continue to subscribe even if you don't think my tip is the best thing since canned beer....

— Edward J. Mikel, Jr.
Riverside, Ill.

Viva Vents!

While surviving Baltimore's snowstorms of January 1987, I discovered an important reason for venting the attic: Proper venting prevents ice dams from forming. I had our attic vent partially closed to save heat. The attic became warmer than the outside temperature, causing three-foot snowdrifts on the roof to melt. The water flowed to the eaves, froze, and created an ice dam two inches thick — and the runoff came into the bedrooms below. Soon after the vents were fully opened, temperature equilibrium was achieved and the melt-down stopped.

— Thomas V. Morris
Baltimore, Md.

TIPS TO SHARE? Do you have any hints or short cuts 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, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

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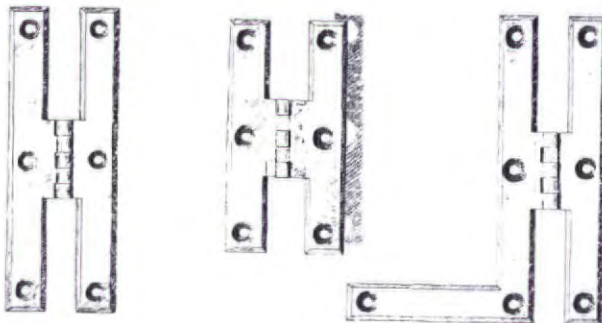


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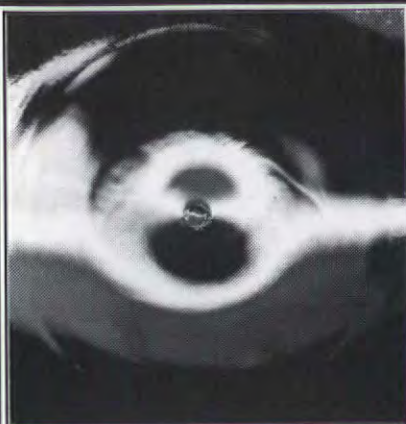
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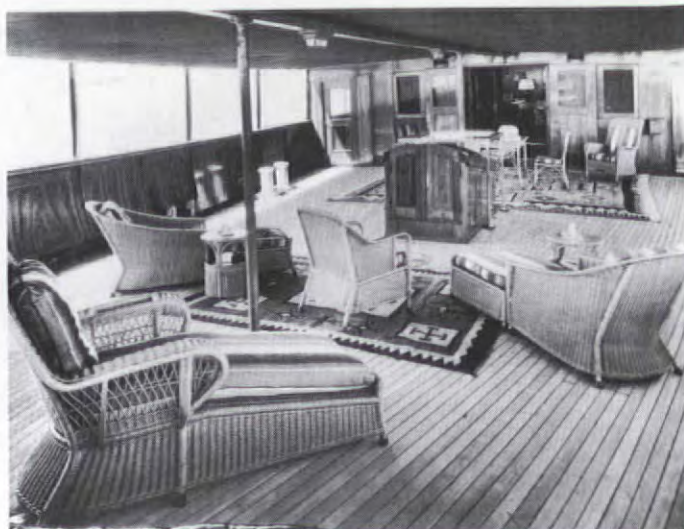
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**Gabriel Moulin's San Francisco
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The Peninsula means San Mateo County, where the wealthy of San Francisco built enormous country estates in the 1910s and '20s. Once their great mansions were complete they often commissioned Gabriel Moulin, the fashionable commercial photographer of the time, to document the property: grand foyers and parlors, stables, formal gardens, elaborate parties, even servants at work.

When Moulin died in 1945, he left behind hundreds of thousands of photographs, from which were culled the 171 plates in this book. It's a superbly reproduced portrait of a lost age, and of high-style post-Victorian interiors.

All photos are reprinted original size, 8x10. The detail is extraordinary; you can count the leaves on the bushes, the dentils in the cornices. Restorers will be particularly pleased, because the photos do not represent decorator's fantasies. Real people lived here, with Victorian survivals like fringed lampshades and personal effects like a Stanford banner in a Colonial Revival bedroom.

Also included are photos of the elegantly-dressed folk who inhabited the houses. The photo captions tell their life stories, sometimes tragic, and also describe the fates of the houses: Some have been demolished, while others, with the help of Moulin's photographs, are being restored.

**Victorian Classics of San Francisco. 50 plates with text. \$32
ppd.**

These photos originally appeared in *Artistic Homes of California*, an 1888 souvenir album of San Francisco and San Jose homes. In all there are 50 elegant examples of high-style, late-Victorian architecture, from Italianate to Queen Anne.

We realize many Victorian architecture books have been reprinted, but this one is special. It contains photos, not just plans, so you can see how actual houses looked. The high-quality reproduction reveals the tiniest details of gingerbread or cresting. Equally useful is the reprinted text, which describes interiors: woodwork, wallpaper, floor plans, furnishings. Finally, the book would have disappeared without Windgate's reprint; almost all original copies were lost to decay or the 1906 fire, so it's a venture worthy of support.



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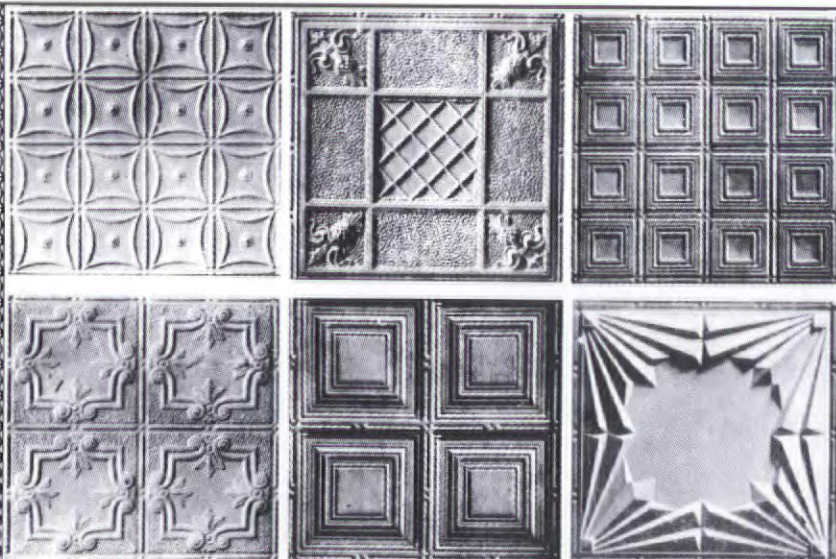
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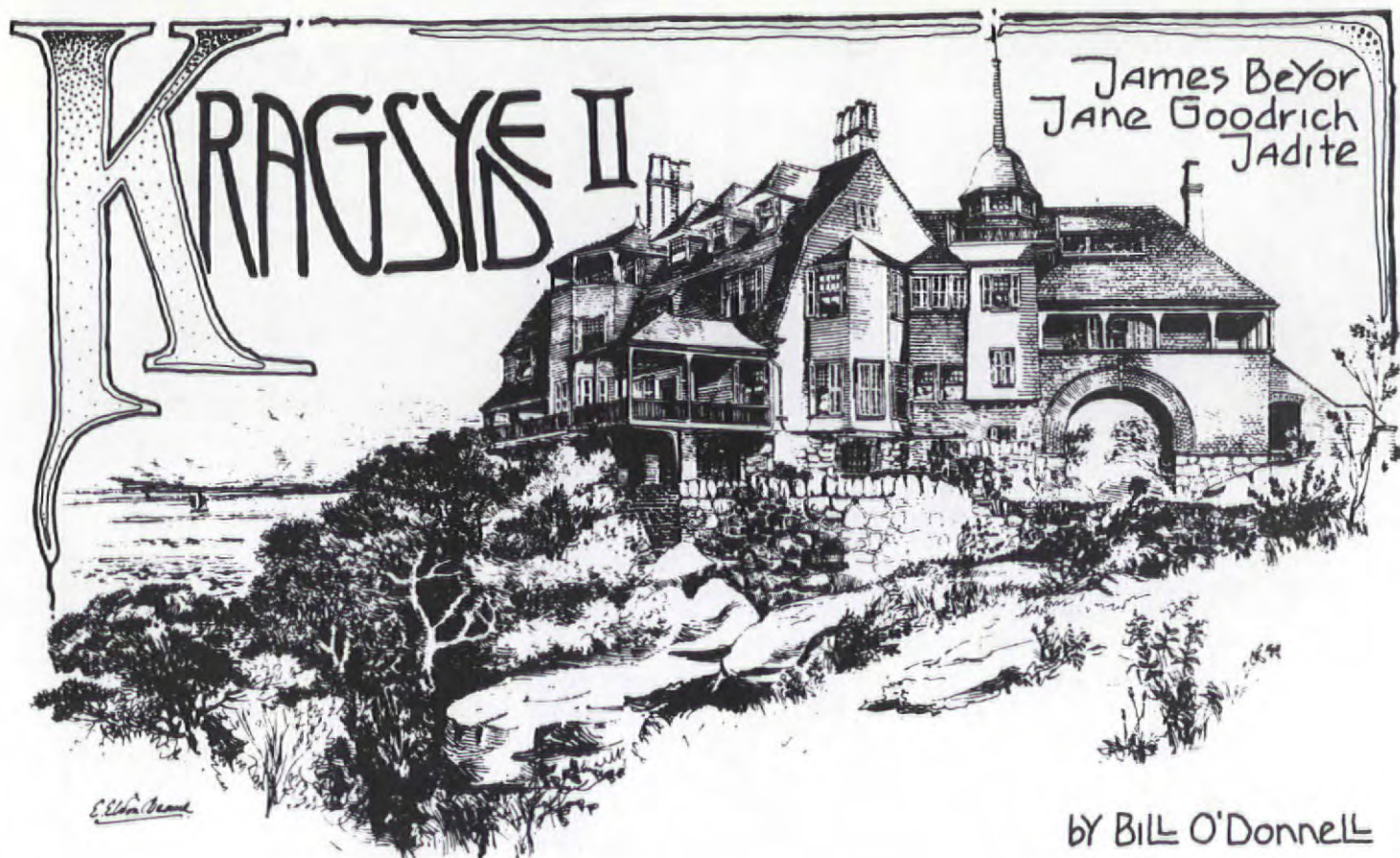
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BY BILL O'DONNELL

[what do we know of the beginning?]



Kraggsyde was built above Lobster Cove in Manchester, Massachusetts, for George Nixon Black Jr. of Boston. Construction commenced in 1882 and was completed in 1885. Architects: Peabody & Stearns, Boston.

Builders: Friend, Roberts and Hoare, later known as Roberts and Hoare. No information remains about the building of Kraggsyde; all relevant documents were likely burned in the Roberts and Hoare fire of 1894.

After Mr. Black's death (October 29, 1928), his Manchester estate was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Pierpont L. Stackpole in 1929. Sometime after October 4, 1929, G.N. Black's Kraggsyde was razed to the foundation. The Stackpoles then built a stucco house they called "La Tourelle" on the old foundation. Mr. Stackpole died in 1936. Mrs. Stackpole had "La Tourelle" torn down in 1949 or 1950.

In 1951, General and Mrs. George F. Doriot bought the property from Mrs. Stackpole with some of the original foundation still standing. The Doriot's built a modern house on the site in 1974-1975.

[and of Mr. Black?]

George Nixon Black Jr., son of G. N. Black Sr., grandson of Colonel John Black. G. N. Black Jr. was

born in Ellsworth, Maine, on July 11, 1842. The Black family has a long and rich history in Ellsworth. It is only by coincidence that Jane and Jim ultimately chose a site for "Kraggsyde II" on Swans Island — 30 miles from Ellsworth; they had searched up and down the New England coast for a suitable location. It is also by coincidence, not intention, that construction of Kraggsyde II commenced in 1982, exactly 100 years after ground was broken for the original Kraggsyde.

[so who cares about Kraggsyde, anyway?]

Lots of people — it's a very significant piece of our architectural history. Peabody & Stearns were prominent architects of the period. The house may well be the quintessential example of the Shingle Style. The grounds were laid out by no less than Frederick Law Olmsted. Historian Vincent Scully said of Kraggsyde: "[Peabody & Stearns'] one great masterpiece of the early '80s. Peabody & Stearns never again, to my knowledge, created a house of such quality."

[why are Jim and Jane rebuilding Kraggsyde?]

Jane strikes me as someone who appreciates old-fashioned craftsmanship. She enjoys history, wants to know everything about the house and the Black family. She's also very determined and patient. When she wants something, she'll get it, even if she has to wait.

Jim is a highly skilled carpenter/builder. He's an

intense, energetic, and ambitious man. He especially appreciates a challenge. At one point he said to me, "I just wanted to see if I could do it." He's also a consummate romantic. Carved into many of the beams and inscribed in the cement walls is the message, "Kragtsyde II, built for my lady Jane," followed by the date of the inscription and his signature.

Jane admired Kragtsyde in old photos and sketches. She always liked Shingle Style houses ("more livable than most Victorian houses, but they still have the formality, size, and details"). The more she read about Kragtsyde, the more certain she was that she wanted it for herself. One day she showed Jim a picture of Kragtsyde. Calmly: "Would you build this for me?" Jim's eyes widened, his mouth dropped open a bit, his fingers scratched the top of his tilted head and he understated, "Gee hon, I dunno. I've never tried anything like that before. Let me think about it." Jane came back with, "What's there to think about? You can build it, you can do anything." Shaking his head, Jim said simply, "Well, I just don't know."

Jim thought about it — as little as he possibly could, trying to get such a ludicrous if intriguing idea out of his head. Meanwhile, Jane was searching out all the information she could on Kragtsyde. She knew Jim was going to rebuild it, because she knew Jim. After several dead ends, she got in touch with Wheaton Holden of Northeastern. He gained access to the original blueprints stored at the Boston Museum and sent several photostated copies to Jane.

Over breakfast one morning, Jane asked her husband if he'd like to see the blueprints of Kragtsyde. A silence fell over the table as Jim considered her question. He was thinking, "Oh no, oh no, what am I getting into," but he said thoughtfully, "Yeah. Yeah, I'd like to have a look."

After searching for nearly three years, they found an ideal site on Swans Island, Maine. Kragtsyde II sits a little closer to the water than did the original, but ocean views are still spectacular from the top two floors. The new house is ideally suited to its grounds. To make it fit snugly between the sloping hills, Jim and Jane made one design change: Kragtsyde II is a mirror image of the original Kragtsyde. As you face the front of Kragtsyde II now, the arch is on your left; it would have been on your right in Manchester.

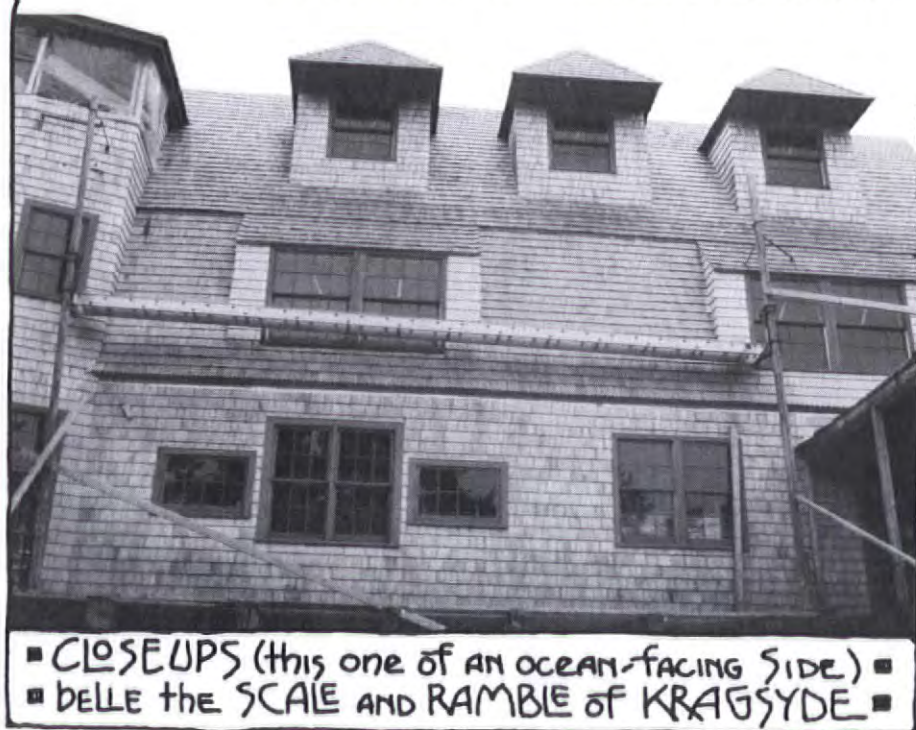
[alright, let's build it]

If you want to find affordable oceanfront property in New En-

gland, you have to be willing to isolate yourself a bit. Isolation is fine when you live in a beautiful home overlooking the water, but it's a major obstacle when you're trying to build a large house. Swans Island has a ferry. In the summer it sometimes has two. In the winter, it runs on a limited schedule, if the weather permits it to run at all. It's not a very large boat either: You can put a cement truck on it, but nothing more, and you have to reserve the time for such a large piece of cargo in advance. Getting materials to the job site can be a headache.

The island isn't a tourist mecca, either. Accommodations are virtually nonexistent. Jim and Jane started building Kragtsyde's carriage house first, so they'd have a roof over their heads for the years of work that lay ahead. While they were building the carriage house they lived in a tent, strategically pitched near the phone hookup so they could contact sub-contractors. They bathed in the ocean.

The carriage house went up pretty quickly — living in a tent is powerful incentive. To hasten its livability, Jim worked on it full time for awhile, taking a "break" from his normal routine of contracting his services to others by day, working for himself by night. Rebuilding Kragtsyde isn't a let's-use-plywood-sheathing-and-factory-built-windows job. Jim is building from scratch. The oak finishes are crafted from home-dried, rough-sawn lumber. He does virtually all his own hardwood milling, and builds every door, every window, every stair, every balustrade himself. He's even reproducing the original ornate carvings that graced Kragtsyde, like the ram's head on the carriage house pictured on page 25. When asked where he finds time to hand-craft each and every carved detail, he



■ CLOSEUPS (this one of an ocean-facing side) ■
■ BELLE THE SCALE AND RAMBLE OF KRAGTSYDE ■

responds, "I do it on the ferry ride, and late at night. I suppose I could watch T.V., but I prefer carving."

Today, the carriage house is a very comfortable base camp to return to after the day's work. The second storey is set up as a cozy apartment with all the necessities. They used to use a small woodstove as their sole source of heat, but they grew tired of thawing pipes when they'd return from a winter trip to the mainland. Rather than buy a separate boiler for the carriage house, they went ahead and bought the 350,000 BTU furnace that will eventually heat all 6000-plus square feet of Kragtsyde II. The power plant takes up a good part of the ground floor; it's an exam-

ple of overkill. Jim reports, "When it kicks on, there's a tremendous whoosh, it feels like an earthquake. It shuts down about a minute later and the place is toasty warm."

The rest of the outbuilding's ground floor is occupied by a turn-of-the-century printing press and all its accessories. In January of '86 Jane teamed up with James van Pernis to start the Saturn Press. While Jim is out earning a living as a builder, James van Pernis and Jane are printing old-fashioned guest books, Christmas cards, maps, menus, etc.*

[how do they manage?]



Jim and Jane are anything but affluent hobbyists building a folly to fill excess leisure time. They had amassed a modest nest egg through successful real estate transactions — buying an old house, restoring it themselves, and selling for a profit — but that has long since been used up. Like most of us, they make ends meet by working long hours and budgeting their income carefully. Unlike most of us, a good percentage of their income goes to pay the lumberyard.

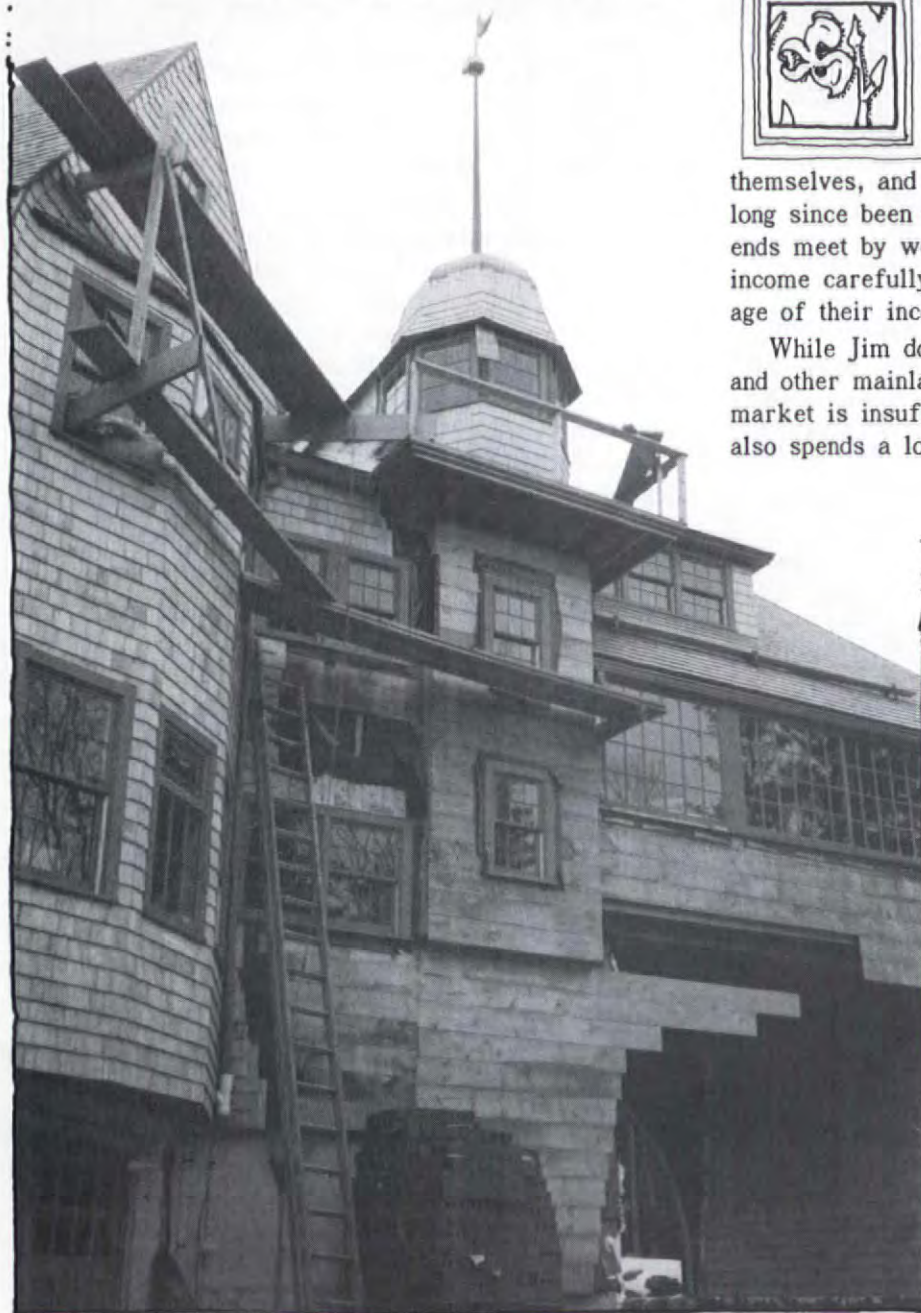
While Jim does some fine restorations in Belfast and other mainland cities, the region's rehabilitation market is insufficient to support a business. So he also spends a lot of time accommodating homeowners

who want additions on their ranch houses. This is all very time-consuming, making the construction of Kragtsyde II a strictly nights-and-weekends endeavor.

But time is something they feel they can afford to take in the reconstruction of Kragtsyde. "Everybody thinks you have to get something done immediately these days," Jim told me. "Build me a house, I want to move in next week.' If you want prefab housing, you can probably do it that quickly, but you're not going to end up with a quality home. I enjoy the process as much as the finished product, especially on a project of this scale. I like watching Kragtsyde II come together piece by piece."

Jim also pointed out that taking time ensures that the job is being done right. "If I frame out a room and some of the lumber twists afterwards, I can take it down and start over months later. If the finishes were applied, you couldn't do

*Saturn Press, P.O. Box 368, Swans Island, Maine 04685.



SCAFFOLDS are still in evidence, here on the tower side. The back of the Arch remains unfinished.

photograph
of the
original
Kraggsyde



THE SHINGLE STYLE

Kraggsyde is among the finest examples of the Shingle Style. Its rustic shingled walls, roomy porches, rambling asymmetry, and casual interior are typical of this "first modern style" that developed during the late Victorian period.

Early examples of the style (1875-85) were designed for wealthy Easterners on Massachusetts' North Shore, in Rhode Island and coastal Maine, and in the mid-Atlantic states. These were mainly summer residences, commissioned from avant-garde architects. Interiors were uncluttered and decidedly modern compared to the typical Victorian interior: Floorplans were open, one space flowed into the next, and the core was often a baronial stair hall.

The Shingle Style recalls the medieval buildings of England and 17th-century America. Many examples have a near-crudeness of massing and substantial Jacobean chimneys. The style is related to the Richardsonian Romanesque. In fact, H.H. Richardson was a prominent architect of the Shingle Style, and many Shingle-Style buildings might be described as the Romanesque rendered in wood.

Unlike the Queen Anne, the Shingle Style was not popularly disseminated through planbooks and vernacular adaptation. Yet the style's influence on what followed was enormous. Rustic Adirondack lodges, Stickley's Craftsman houses, Greene and Greene's California Bungalows, and Prairie School houses all drew from and perpetuated innovations of the Shingle Style. It can, in a sense, be considered the "grandfather" of the Bungalow — that low, naturalistic house form with its stone and shingle exterior, grouped windows, simple but prominent woodwork, and open floorplan.

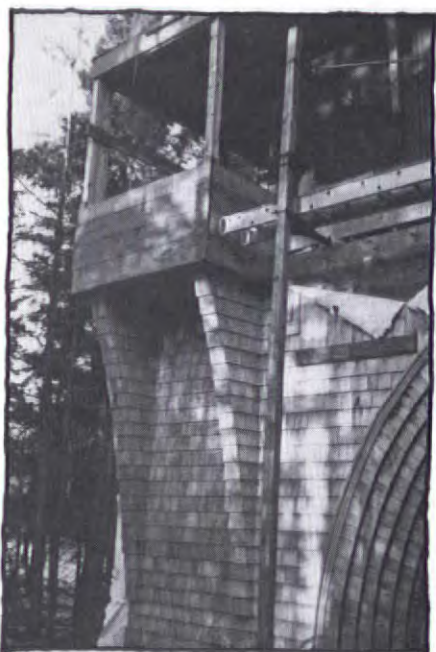
Later, the style folded into the late Queen Anne, Free Classic, or early Colonial Revival, surviving as modest, brown-shingled suburban houses (often with fieldstone first storeys) of the 'teens and '20s. — Eve Kahn

FURTHER READING

Vincent Scully — historian, lecturer, author — is credited with rediscovering and labeling the Shingle Style. His groundbreaking book of the 1950s, *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style*, illustrates and analyzes many examples. [Still in print: Yale University Press, 92A Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520. (203) 432-0960. \$16.45 ppd.] In 1974, he wrote *The Shingle Style Today*, an essay on contemporary architects working in an updated version (more-or-less) of the Shingle Style. [George Braziller, 60 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010. (212) 889-0909. \$9.45 paper, \$14 cloth ppd.] His *The Architecture of the American Summer: The Flowering of the Shingle Style*, due this fall, covers a broader sampling of the style, 1865 to 1900. [Rizzoli, 597 5th Ave., New York, NY 10017. (212) 397-3785. \$25.]

that. It also gives us time to find the right materials. We know what kind of tile we want for one of the fireplace surrounds — even though the chimney isn't built yet. By the time we get to it, we'll probably have found exactly what we want; we won't have to settle for less."

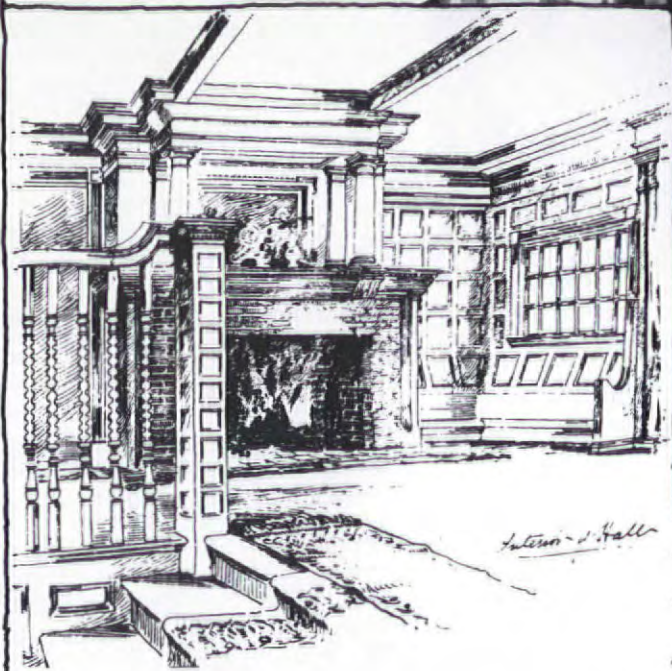
As much as Kraggsyde II is a monument to the Shingle Style and the work of Peabody & Stearns, it also stands as testimony to Jim's skill and patience as a builder. Each joint is carefully fitted to ensure tightness and longevity. No shortcuts are being taken despite the tremendous scale of the building. The subfloors are constructed of solid stock. "I hate plywood, it's unreliable. It's usually full of voids." The wall sheathing is all solid lumber, too. The structural integrity of the house is far greater than what engineering codes call for. Jane and Jim tell of going into the house during coastal storms packing winds gusting to 70 mph. "Not even a squeak, solid as a rock."



The shingle skin covers ribs beneath AN UPPER Porch

Jim's learning a lot through the process of building Kraggsyde. "I thought of myself as a pretty knowledgeable builder, but some of the features of this house require techniques that are new to me. Like framing

WHAT WAS AND WHAT
WILL BE: BELOW, ■
A Peabody & Stearns
DRAWING of the Stairhall
RIGHT, the raw interior
that will SOMEDAY ■
bring back the
ORIGINAL ■ ■ ■ ■



the tower. OHJ published their circular tower articles just as I had begun that project [March '84, April '84]. That was timely, it helped a lot. The idea of having half the rafters terminating at mid-rise into a cripple is something I might not have thought of. Framing the roof was interesting too. The library required a floating hip-roof system using 20- to 22-foot rafters to allow enough ceiling height in the porch that wraps around it. It was quite a job."

[one other thing...]

Jim used to get HUD contracts for housing renovation in Rochester, N.Y. That was in the days when revitalization meant ripping out all the stained glass windows in the name of energy efficiency, and removing oak mantels and doors because they didn't look clean or modern enough. Jane and Jim collected a lot of HUD's "trash" that will be used in Kragysde. Pocket doors, old bathroom fixtures, and salvaged woodwork are supplemented by pieces Jane and Jim have purchased from salvage yards and estate sales. They sit in Kragysde, unrestored, eliciting the old question from non-initiates: "You're not going to use that junk in here, are you?"

[some stories of adventure]

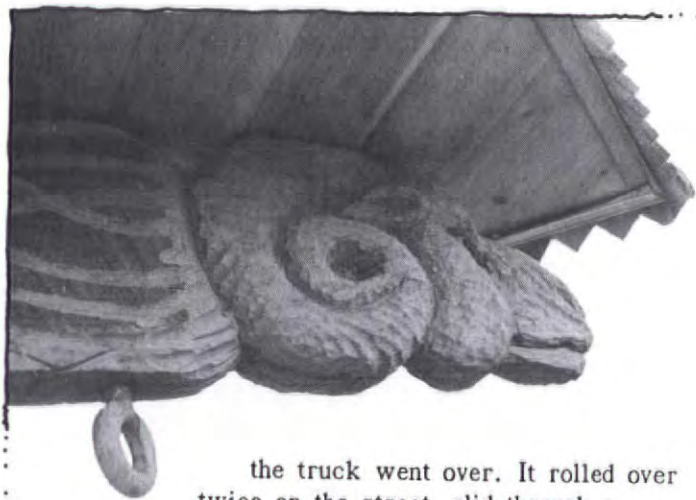


Jim and Jane's bulldog, Jadite, has borne the brunt of the discomforts of construction. Jadite's a good companion — too good for his own good. He's always at his master's side, even if his master is high upon a

scaffold. Unfortunately, he's not as coordinated as he used to be. One day, Jadite was inspecting Jim's shingling technique. Satisfied that the work was being done properly, he turned to walk away. He stepped off the plank and plummeted 15 feet to the ground.

Jim can laugh about it now. "I saw him walk right out into space. He seemed to hang there for a second with a startled look on his face — like Wile E. Coyote going off a cliff. His paws splayed out in all directions and he landed right on his gut. I called for Jane, but she ran and hid. She couldn't bear to look. I hurried down to him, and I was pretty certain we'd lost him. His face was all bloody because he'd bitten through his lip when he hit. He was making pitiful noises; the fall knocked the wind out of him and he was gasping for breath. We were getting ready to bring him to the vet when he started to regain his composure. He was a little groggy and disoriented the rest of the day, but considering the fall, he came through pretty well."

Then there was the time Jim and Jadite were transporting shingles back from the mainland. They were driving along in the dump truck with Jane following in the pickup. At the top of a hill, the truck slipped out of gear, and Jim couldn't re-engage it. Power was lost to the steering, and the air brakes decompressed. The truck began to sway violently as it gained momentum. Finally, Jim lost all control, and



the truck went over. It rolled over twice on the street, slid through a guardrail and rolled four times down a 50-foot embankment. Jim recounts, "All I saw were trees spinning round and round, and Jadite flying to and fro in the cab. He'd be on my right, then on my left, then in my lap. I tried to grab him because the glass had all broken, and I didn't want him to get thrown from the cab." Jadite and Jim walked away from that in good shape, physically anyway. Jane says, "Jadite has never really been the same since the accident. He's less trusting now."

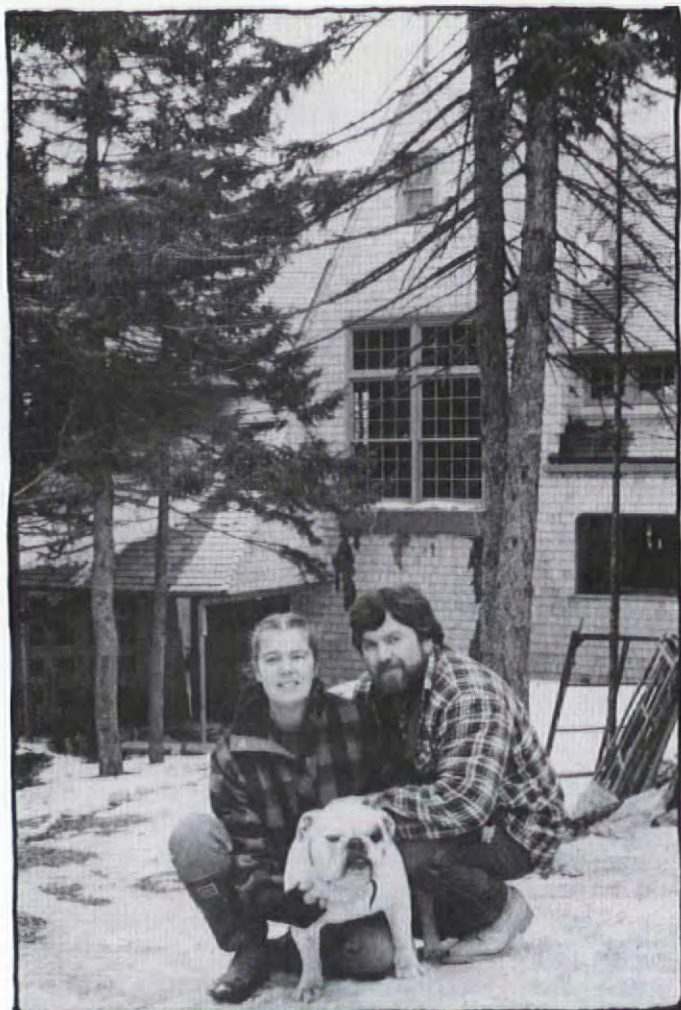
[it's not a picnic for humans, either]

Jane looks forward to each issue of OHJ.

Technical articles are most thoroughly read, but she likes to read the Old-House Living feature as well. She admits, "I have to laugh when I read, 'It was awful! We had plastic draped between our kitchen and dining room for three months, and there was dust everywhere.' I find it hard to be real sympathetic. We've been working for four years and we don't have any rooms to cordon off, and we won't for quite some time. We work regardless of the weather, too. There's no heat in Kraggsyde yet, and the weather up here can get pretty brutal. Tools just stick to your hands in the cold."

There have been some annoying setbacks, too. There's no topsoil available on the island. Gravel's available for fill, but for good dirt, you have to go to the mainland. The topsoil is inexpensive enough, but the transportation costs make it a valuable commodity. Jane and Jim had the grounds set up pretty nicely. The lawn had been properly graded, the grass was growing, shrubbery had been planted, and the driveway was all prepared for gravel. Then came some torrential rains. A stream that runs adjacent to the house overflowed, sending water cascading down the drive and under the archway. The arch looked like a covered bridge. Jim looks out over the ocean and says, "We've got a couple thousand dollars worth of dirt out there."





DEDICATION

For my LOVING WIFE JANE, JADITE our bulldogs
EMILY AND ORLO CATS, AND our CHILDREN
WHO WILL LIVE AFTER US, I build KRAGSYDE
A MAN'S LIFE Should BE FULL,
his WIFE LOVING, his pets dear COMPANIONS ♡
My WIFE raises me up,
MY ANIMAL FRIENDS BELIEVE IN ME ♡
KRAGSYDE WILL AGAIN BE the
SOURCE OF JOY it WAS 100 YEARS AGO,
J. BEYOR 1982

[but save your sympathy]

Sure, the hours are long and the work seems never-ending. But don't feel too sorry for Jim and Jane — they wouldn't trade it for the world. As they showed me through the house, the mood was serious and workmanlike. "Yes, we built each window sash... Sure, it was a real pain in the neck hauling those 12x12 timbers... Do you know how much drywalling we're going to have to do in this place?" But as I

viewed their work through my camera lens, my excitement grew. "C'mon, this must be a lot of fun. You're having a great time up here, aren't you?" I accused. Shy smiles confirmed that I'd hit the heart of it. They love every minute.

I think I know how they feel, too. As tiresome and painful as the work is, there's no question that restoring an old house is satisfying. You step back now and then and see how much closer you've come to exposing the long-hidden character inherent in the structure. In a sense, that's what Jim and Jane are doing, too, and they must feel the same way. The "existing conditions" they must work around are some old photos and blueprints. When they're done they will have re-created a lost treasure. They'll be living in a new house that's full of history.

[design changes]



While Jim and Jane are certainly building another Kragtsyde, they're not attempting a museum-perfect replica. Some of the changes reflect modern building techniques and conveniences. For example, it would be impractical to build a foundation entirely of stone as was the case in the original Kragtsyde. The concrete foundation will be faced with stone to retain the original appearance. And of course, the mechanical systems reflect modern improvements.

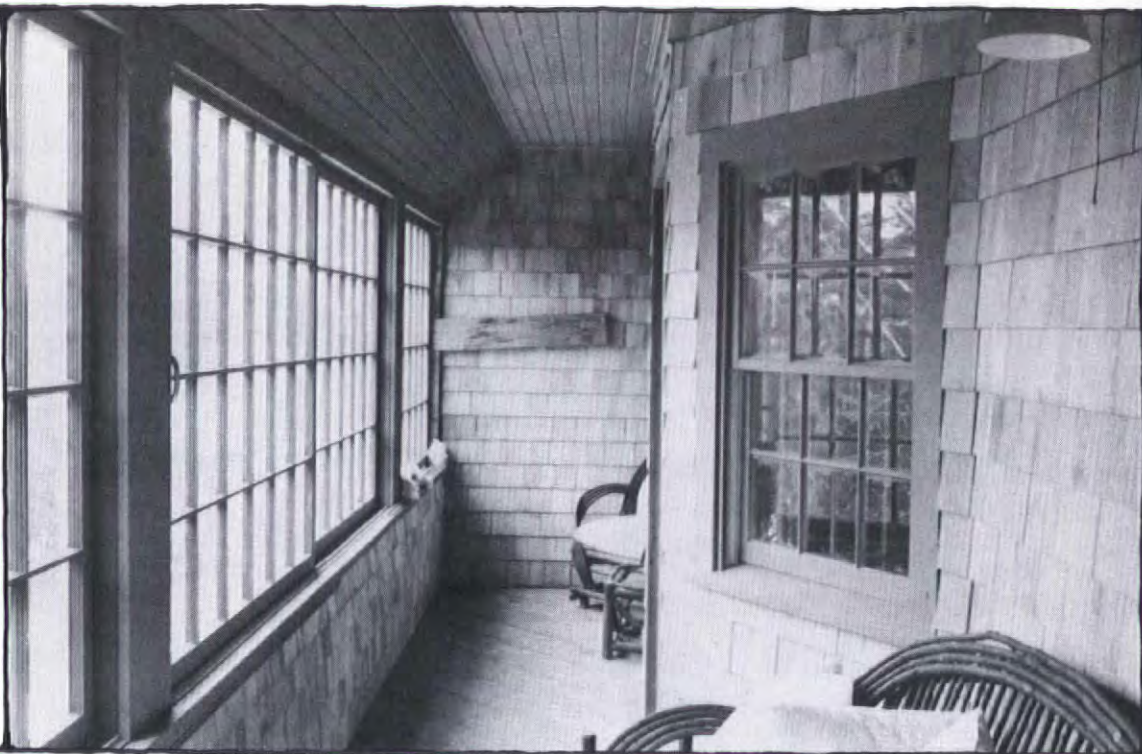
Other design modifications accommodate lifestyle differences. The original floorplans showed a "Mr. B's room," a "Mrs. B's room," and a "spare room." Actually, Mr. Black never married. His companion utilized the spare room, which connected to Mr. Black's room through pocket doors. Jane and Jim have no need for two oversized bedrooms that interconnect. But they would like a large master bath in close proximity to the master bedroom. Victorian bathrooms were little more than functional closets for fixtures. The "spare room," still accessible through pocket doors, is now being outfitted as a master bathroom, complete with high-tank toilet, cage shower, and a 60-gallon teak bathtub. Jane says, almost apologetically, "Alright, so we want a lavish bath. If future owners desire, they can easily convert it back to a bedroom."

No changes have been made that affect the original layout of interior spaces. They've built servants' quarters, a servants' stair and entrance and hallways. Yet, as Jim put it, "I don't expect we'll ever be in a position to pay someone to serve up our meals."

[what else to carry on about?]

Will Jim be able to enjoy it when it's finished? Jim's still a young man, in every sense. It's obvious that he will accomplish his greatest career challenge in just a couple of years. "What's next, Jim? What are you going to do when Kragtsyde's finished?" I probed.

INTERIOR ■
SPACES
REMAIN
UNFINISHED,
SCAFFOLDS
STAND
OUTSIDE ■ ■
BUT HERE,
A PROJECT
COMPLETED
INSPIRES: THE
GRACEFUL
CURVE OF
THE ARCH, ■
THE COMFORT
OF AN
ENCLOSED
PORCH ■ ■



"I'm not really sure," he replied. "Sit back and enjoy it, I hope. A lot of people spend their lives working towards something, anticipating how wonderful things will be after their goal is accomplished. When it's achieved, they're disappointed, it's anticlimactic. So they set entirely new goals and repeat the cycle. I suppose there's some of that in all of us, but I think I'll be able to enjoy life in this house without itching to attempt an even larger project — as long as I have Jane. Besides, I'll still have plenty to do when I get home from work. I like to restore vintage automobiles — Jaguars mostly. I have a 1947 wooden boat I'd like to restore. It's great: leather seats, burl walnut dash. Plus there's my carving and part-time inventing." (Jim holds a couple of patents for improved building materials and tools, and he's working on new designs. "The people who design tools obviously never use them.") "I'm sure I'll keep busy. If I feel I have to do something of this scale again, maybe I'll build a unique house for someone else."

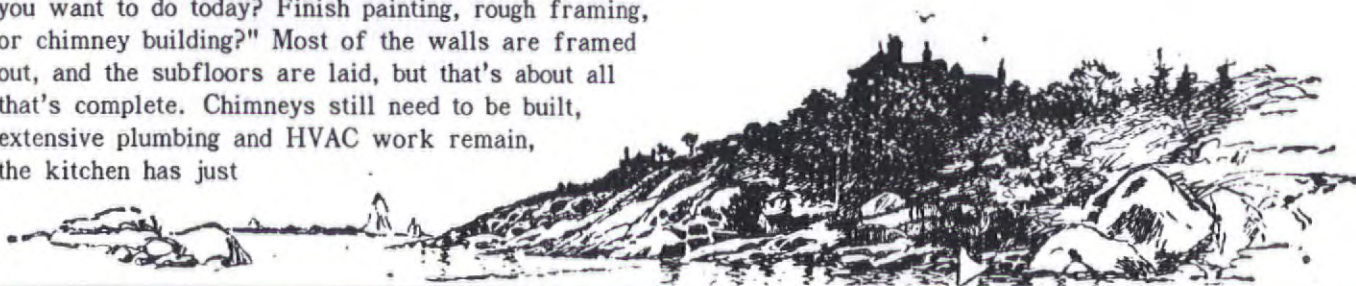
[back to the project and its completion]

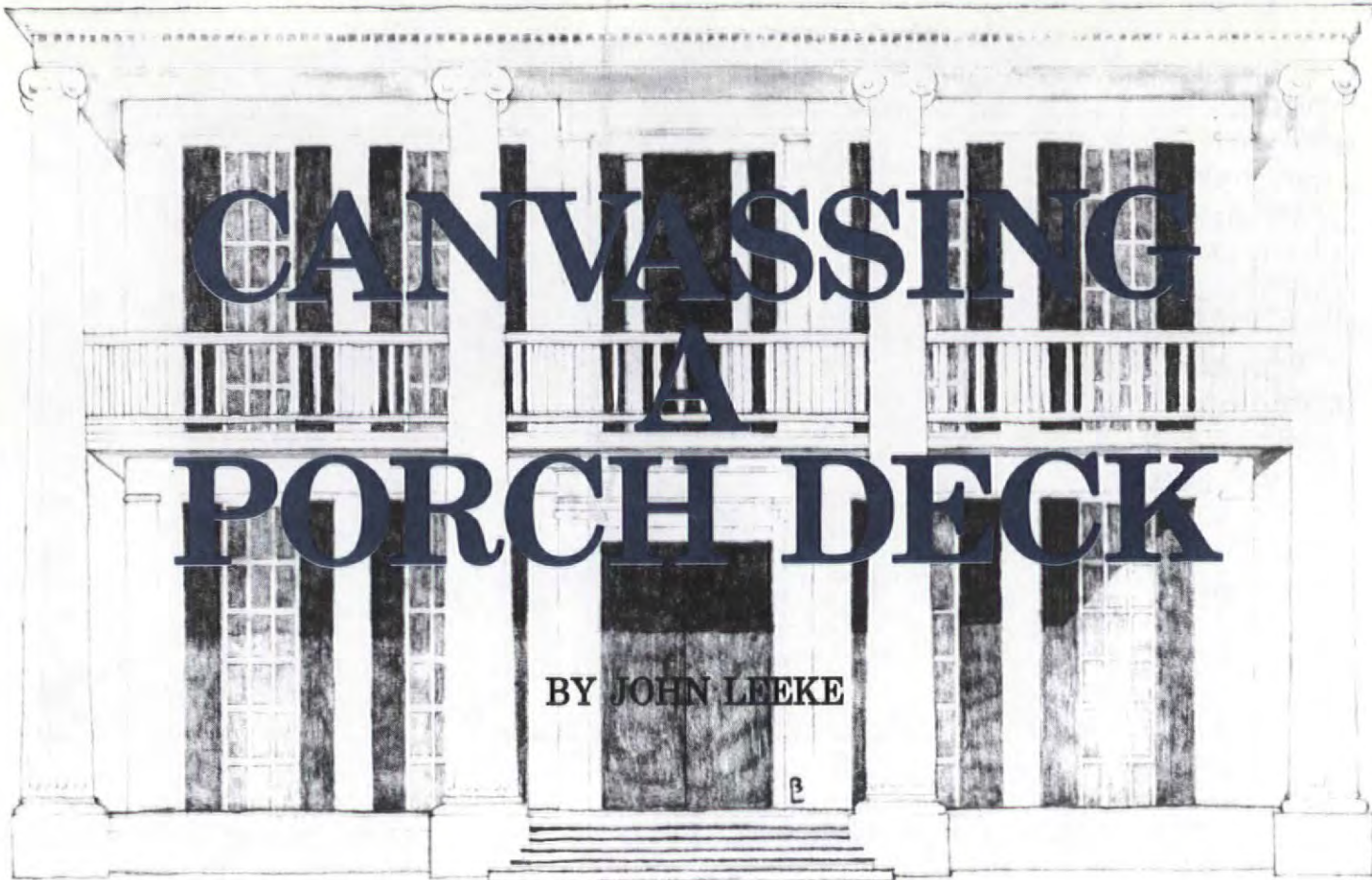
At this point the exterior is about 90% finished. Jim expects it to be complete by the end of this summer. The interior is a different story, though. "What do you want to do today? Finish painting, rough framing, or chimney building?" Most of the walls are framed out, and the subfloors are laid, but that's about all that's complete. Chimneys still need to be built, extensive plumbing and HVAC work remain, the kitchen has just

been started, and virtually all of the finishes (wainscoting, plaster — including running mouldings — and drywall) have yet to be done. Some of the drywall has been fastened, though, so the time-consuming job of hand-painting friezes and borders can be underway during construction. They predict it'll be another two or three years before the house is complete.

[so what did I learn?]

I'd thought I'd gone to Maine to take some photos of an ostentatious mansion-in-construction and interview the eccentric millionaires who were having it built for them. As the ferry pointed me back to Ellsworth, where nothing but a motel room and a six-pack awaited me, I was struck by how wrong I'd been. Jim and Jane are working day and night for love. Love of history, love of old-fashioned craftsmanship, and mostly, love for each other. It turned out these "eccentrics" were not at all unlike me. They'll be living in "new construction," but they're undeniably old-house people. I'd met two interesting people, and I feel I've made two very special friends.





A heavy canvas "floor covering" was the traditional waterproof membrane applied to flat roofs used as decks. It was also occasionally used as a seamless covering for Victorian verandahs. You still find vestiges of it on old houses, and it's referred to in old-time manuals:

"Canvas roofing has been used for years where a flat roof must be walked upon. It is light in weight, not readily broken under light traffic, long-lived and watertight when kept well painted, and not difficult to lay." — *Amateur Builder's Handbook* (1951)

I recently took on a large and somewhat complex deck-canvassing project. As an experienced woodworker and restorer, I didn't find it difficult. In fact, I think it's a do-it-yourself job for anyone who works methodically — especially if you read this article first. What follows are some pointers on preparation, layout, and materials.

The Project

The York County Courthouse, Alfred, Maine, is notable for containing the oldest continuous records in the nation. It is in the National Register of Historic Places. The Greek Revival portico on the front of the building has a second-storey porch.

The fifty-year-old canvas covering on the porch deck had finally worn out. Rotted holes in the canvas let rain water that collected on the porch pour down

inside the large hollow wooden columns.

Recanvassing the porch deck was only part of a larger project. I also repaired structural and water drainage problems before recanvassing. And after the canvas work, I repaired the columns.

Moisture buildup in the space between the floor and the ceiling below had caused paint problems in the past. All the layers of sealer, adhesive, and paint on the deck would again form a very effective moisture barrier and compound the problem. So I installed vents in the plaster ceiling below to reduce moisture buildup in the space.

Methods

When I pulled off the old canvas, the exposed felt roofing surface was flat and somewhat rough. I scraped away remaining old adhesive with the edge of a pine board and swept it clean.

Deck boards, adhesive, canvas, and paint work together as a system. When you carefully repair or install each layer they will perform well together. If one part of the system is weak, then all may fail. For lasting success, follow each step outlined below.

If you need to spot-repair deck boards, use boards of the same width and species. This will reduce stress on the canvas near the old boards due to shrinkage. If you're replacing the whole deck, use 2½" to 4" tongue-&-groove boards. Wider boards may cup

or warp and cause ridges that will wear through the canvas.

Old wooden deck boards still in good condition should be scraped clean and sealed with primer so they don't absorb moisture from the adhesive.

Testing Adhesives

I decided to test the adhesive because the instructions didn't mention application on a tar-and-felt (roof) surface specifically. I glued down three 4"-x-6" test patches of canvas with three different adhesives: acrylic canvas adhesive, outdoor-carpeting glue, and the traditional lead-paint paste. After two weeks I pulled them up by hand.

The carpet glue had reacted with the tar and felt to make a sticky mess. The lead paste pulled up easily. The acrylic adhesive worked so well I couldn't pull the patch off without ruining the surface beneath. I finally shaved it off with a sharp chisel.

This test gave me the confidence to go ahead without worry that the canvas would peel up in a year or two.

Laying the Canvas

I used #8 unfilled cotton canvas. I would have used a heavier weight, but this was all that was available that was wide enough to cover the porch without seams. First I spread the canvas out flat and straight in its final position to make sure it was the right size. I allowed 6 inches overlap on each end. (Even with a 40' length, it didn't shrink noticeably during laying.)

I rolled the canvas back in 18" folds from one end to the middle of the porch. Working from the middle of the stretch makes it easier to keep the canvas aligned along the edges.

To spread the viscous adhesive easily, I poured a ribbon of it in front of the folded canvas. I then spread it both ways with a brush, working it into the rough surface. Don't spread out too much adhesive — it begins to set in about ten minutes. I could work about 18" at a time across the 7' width of the porch. (On a different job, the surface of new pine boards was much smoother. I spread the adhesive with a fine-toothed trowel. Trowelling took a lot less effort than brushing.)

Next, I unfolded the canvas and laid it into the adhesive and several inches past onto the deck. A rolling pin helped seat the canvas into the adhesive and smooth out wrinkles. I didn't worry about getting out every little wrinkle. Moisture in the adhesive shrank the canvas slightly as it set, making it smooth and even.



John brushes adhesive onto rough boards.



A rolling pin smooths out wrinkles.



John pulls the canvas back to expose wet adhesive before he proceeds to the next work area.

Extra adhesive squeezed out ahead. I rolled only in the "direction of the lay," (in this case along the length of the porch) to keep the edge of the canvas aligned with the edge of the porch.

Then I pulled the canvas back to expose a few inches of wet adhesive. I did this to be sure there weren't any gaps in the adhesive when I started again with pouring and brushing adhesive. After 10' of brushing and rolling I decided knee pads were an absolute necessity for this work. After 25' I added more foam padding and wished I'd had the thicker pads from the beginning. My knees ached for days, and I vowed to take better care of them next time.

At the outer edge of the deck, I sealed the canvas to existing flashing with two continuous beads of paintable acrylic caulk. You can also protect the canvas edge from fraying in the weather by folding it under and tacking it down with copper nails or tacks. Even better, cover it over with a wood batten.

At the inner edge where the deck meets the house wall, I left the canvas loose one inch out and up from the corner. If the deck shifts in relation to the building the canvas can move without breaking the seal at the top edge or stressing the canvas.

The columns that hold up this porch are let half-way into the porch deck. I worked the canvas so it would make a water-tight seal with the fluted vertical surface of the columns. As I glued the canvas onto the deck around the columns, I cut strips on a radial pattern that met the edges of the flutes 1¼" above the deck. This let the canvas lay flat as I continued with the deck work.

Later, I returned to finish the edge against the column. I cut the long strips down to just 1" long. I then tucked the tab, plus a little more behind, forming a continuous folded edge around the column. Final-

ly, I sealed the folded edge to the flutes with caulk and fastened it with 1" copper box nails.

I talked with Mr. Meyer of the technical division at Pettit Paint Co. about the use of adhesives and paints with canvas. "The biggest failure of paint on canvas is when people don't use sealer first," he explained. Without sealer, "the dry canvas just sucks the alkyd resin out of a paint." Then the dry paint film is weak and fails prematurely by cracking. Be sure to seal the canvas with a lacquer before priming.

Materials

Canvas:

Look for canvas at companies that specialize in tents and awnings, marine supplies, or sail-making. Ask for unbleached, unsized, closely-woven "cotton duck."

Canvas is made from 22" to 120" wide and in a range of weights. The weight or thickness of canvas is measured two ways, "number" and "ounce," depending on how it is woven:

	Thin										Thick									
Number	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	00						
Ounce	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20						

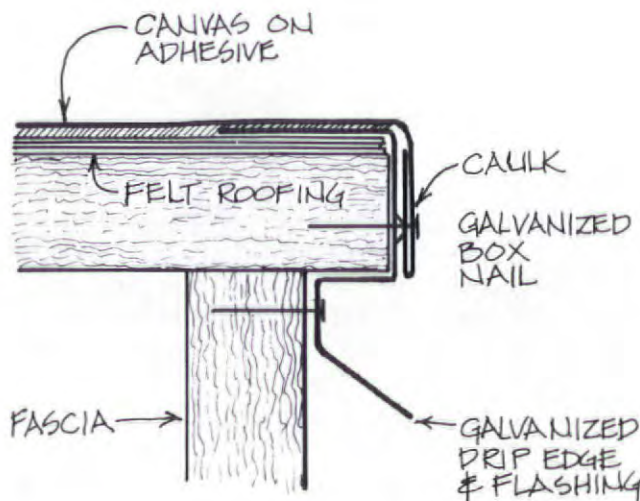
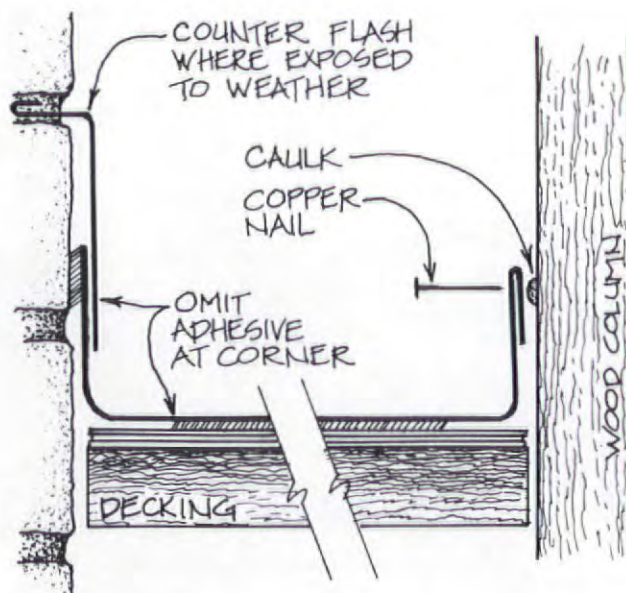
↓
 minimum thickness

(from 13 to 18 ounces)
 best for heavy traffic

Local dealers will carry only a limited selection based on their own needs. This table will help you consider the trade-offs of width, weight, and cost as you select from what is available to you.

Adhesives, primers, and paints:

It's best to stick with a single-brand name manufacturer when using coating materials. They have done a lot of development and testing so you know for sure their products work well together. I used Pettit Paint




Co. (36 Pine Street, Rockaway, NJ 07866. (201) 625-3100.) products. Call for your local distributor.

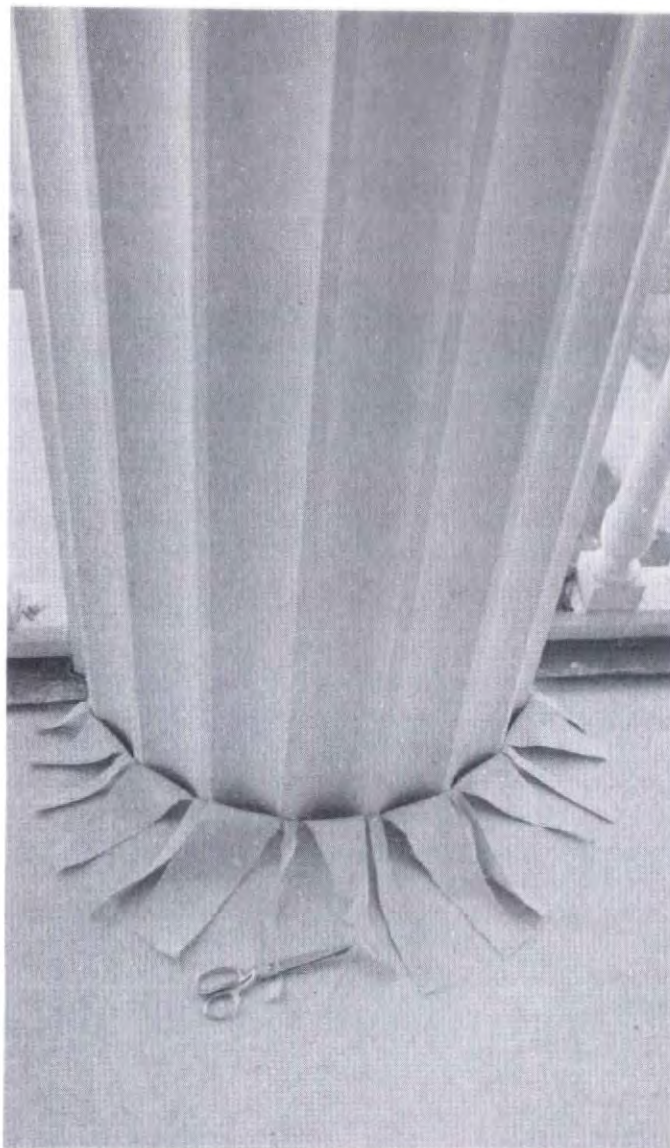
- Adhesive primer (seals new or old dry wood) — *Clear Sealer or Super Dry Sealer #012*
- Canvas adhesive (glues canvas to deck) — *Vinyl & Canvas Adhesive #7030*. Acrylic emulsion resin, water cleanup.
- Canvas sealer (seals dry porous canvas) — *Canvas Tightener & Sealer #7099*. Lacquer, lacquer thinner cleanup.
- Canvas primer (provides a base for paint) — *Vinyl & Canvas Primer #6131*. Water emulsion, water cleanup.
- Canvas paint (protects from weather and wear) — *Shipendec Paint*. Alkyd resin marine paint, mineral spirits cleanup.

Use ordinary porch and deck enamel on the canvas if you're laying it directly on wood deck boards. Porch enamel will flex with the inevitable movement of the boards better than marine paint.

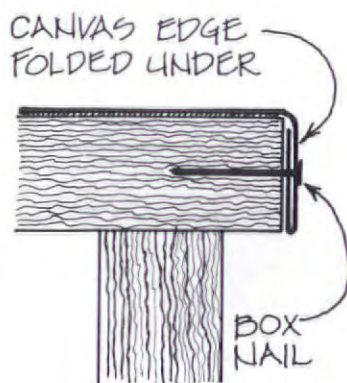
- Caulk: Acrylic latex after sealer and primer and before top coat. Silicone after all painting is done.
 - Nails: Galvanized box for galvanized flashing to wood, copper for copper flashing and canvas to wood.
- Costs:** for example, in 1983, a 276-square-foot deck cost \$632 (\$2.29/sq. ft.), of which \$365 was for materials outlay. It took me 18 hours to lay the deck.

Maintenance

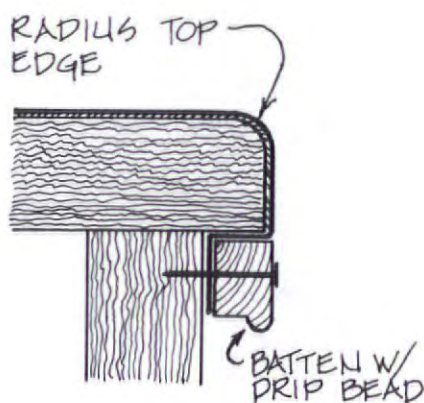
Painted canvas decks usually last from 40 to 60 years. The most likely way for a painted canvas deck to fail is when the top coat of paint cracks or weathers away. Yearly inspection for paint failure, recoating only as needed, will keep the deck in good shape. Also keep an eye on the flashings and caulked edges. 



Canvas is cut in strips to lie flat around column.



GOOD

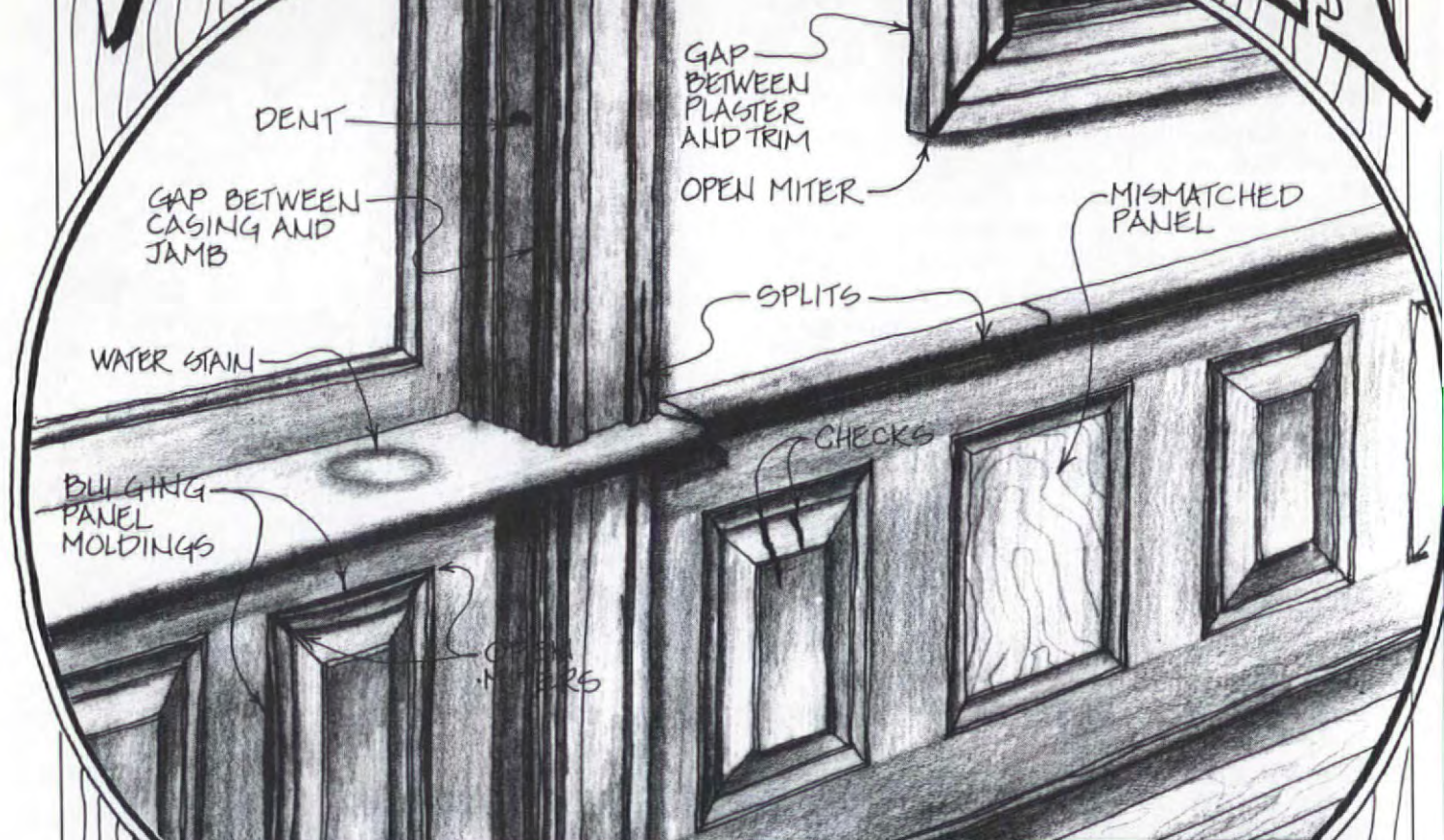


BETTER



BEST
FOR EDGE WITH
FOOT TRAFFIC

WOODWORK



• REPAIRS •

How to Remedy all the Minor Messy Problems You're Bound to Find After You Strip, to Prepare Woodwork for a Clear Finish.

BY JONATHAN POORE

This article opens with you standing in the middle of a just-stripped room. You used heat, chemicals, picks, scrapers, and sandpaper. You *thought* you were finally done. But the woodwork doesn't look good. Its color is uneven; you see water stains, cracks, bad previous repairs, missing and broken pieces and, worst of all, open joints (*still* full of paint) everywhere. The room looks shabby. Don't get upset. Nobody ever talks about it, but old woodwork *always* needs fixing before you can refinish it successfully. This article deals with basic repair of all those minor defects.

Open Joints

Gapping joints are the most common problem. Each time woodwork is painted, paint fills in the joints. When the wood goes through its seasonal expansion and contraction, joints open up

again. The more coats of paint that are added, the more open the joints get. After you strip a panel door or wainscot that had a dozen coats of paint on it, you might find gaps of up to a quarter of an inch between the moulding and the panel. (See illustration #1.)

Joints will also be open between plaster and wood, again because of paint buildup. The only place this does not happen is at end-grain-to-end-grain butt joints, because wood expands and contracts only very slightly along its length. (Primary expansion and contraction is across the grain.)

REMEDIES

Reinstallation

The best and most permanent solution is obvious — remove the moulding, clean it up, and put it back in the right place. The joint between two pieces of wood

is invariably full of paint and debris, even after it has been completely stripped. So it's impossible to just push it back into place. Sometimes you can loosen the

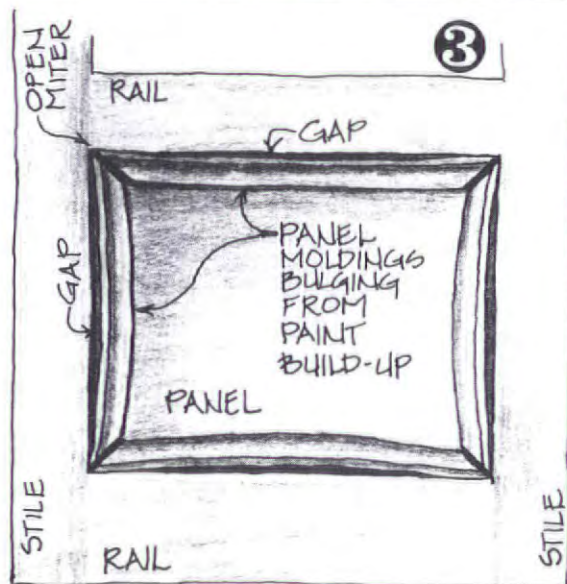
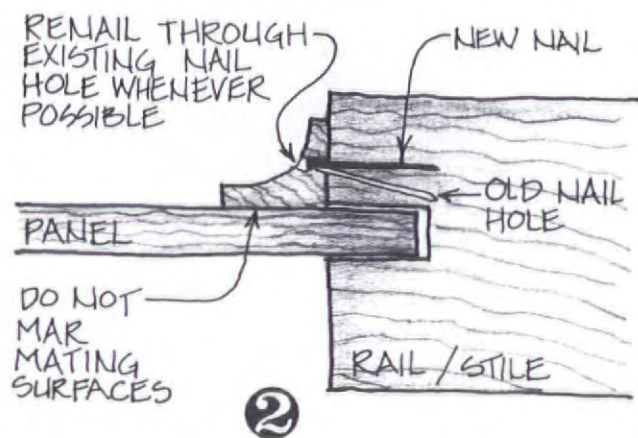
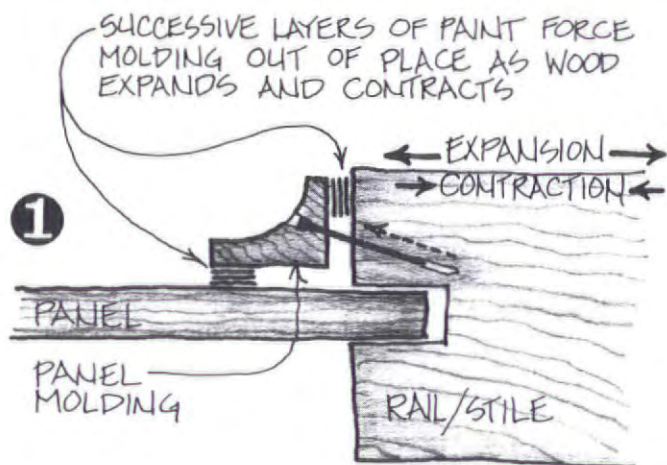
piece enough to get into the joint with a tool to clean it out. More often, though, the paint is so stubborn that the piece must be completely removed and its back-side heat- or chemically-stripped or scraped down with a chisel. To ensure a crisp, tight joint, be careful not to gouge or mar the mating surfaces.

To clean out a joint between woodwork and plaster, remove the moulding and scrape away the buildup of caulk, paint, and excess plaster before reinstalling the trim. Renail through old nail-holes as in illustration #2.

Filling

An alternative to dismantling and reinstalling woodwork is to fill the joints completely and paint them out. You're unlikely to be happy with this approach for most wood-to-wood joints; obviously, matching the color of clear-finished woodwork is difficult. But it's often an adequate solution for woodwork-to-plaster joints; fill the joint and paint it out with the same color you use on the plaster.

Occasionally, you may have to leave the hardened paint in a woodwork joint, filling voids with a resilient wood filler. Let's take a section of panel wainscot as an example. There are open joints at the miters in the panel moulding, and open



joints between the moulding and the rail or stile. (See illustrations 3 and 4.) Paint buildup between the moulding and rail or stile causes the moulding to bulge; the miters gap from paint buildup as well. Closing one joint further opens the other.

What to do? Carpenters often discard and replace the mouldings rather than fuss — but it's hard to match the patina and color of the old woodwork. Instead, you can try a combination of closing some joints and filling others. It's not possible to close the joints between the mouldings and rail or stile, and *also* close the miter joints. So decide which joint would look less noticeable with a matched filler in it. Maybe both joints should be left just slightly open and both filled. If the moulding-to-rail (or stile) joint is in deep shadow because it's recessed, it's preferable to make this the filled joint. At the very least, refasten the mouldings so they're not bulging.

Use resilient wood filler in these joints; otherwise, the joint will continue to open with seasonal expansion and contraction. Match the color of the filler as closely as possible to the wood. It's better to err on the dark side than on the light side; the joint is in shadow, and a slightly darker color is less noticeable than a lighter color. After filling, use artist's colors to "paint out" whatever traces of old paint remain. Get out all the paint you can, though; it doesn't accommodate expansion and contraction as well as resilient filler.

Cracks and Checks

Cracks and checks from uneven shrinkage occur most often in wide pieces of solid wood (such as panels) or in large, glued-up pieces (such as newel posts). Cracks and splits may also be the result of impact damage or improperly placed fasteners. Repairs can sometimes be made in place; more often, the piece must be removed for clamping. (See illustration #5.)

REMEDIES

Filling

Short, wide, jagged checks are difficult to actually close and repair. The wood near the end grain may have dried and shrunk to the point where the two sides can no longer be forced back together. It may be easier to clean the paint out of the check and fill it. Commercially available wood fillers can be used, or make up your own of white glue mixed with sawdust from matching wood.

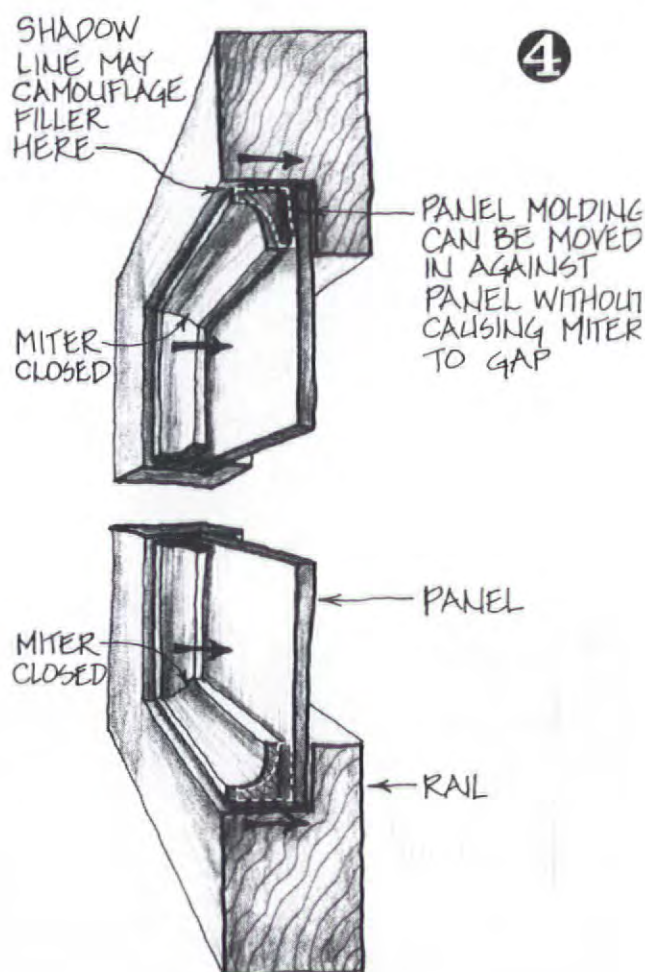
Regluing

Long cracks resulting from impact or a fastener being driven too close to the end of the piece of wood can usually be stripped of paint and debris, glued, and clamped closed. Casings and miscellaneous trim can usually be glued in place. But panels should be removed; start by carefully prying off the panel mouldings. Before regluing any splits, make sure the joint can be forced back together, remove any obstructing fasteners, and clean all old glue and paint off the joint. White or yellow carpenter's glue is fine for this repair. Preparation and clamping of the joint is actually more important than what glue you use.

Force the joint apart slightly to get the glue in. Use a glue syringe if necessary. Close and

open the joint a few times to spread the glue around. Clamp the joint closed using as many clamps as required; don't scrimp on clamps. Use blocks of wood (cauls) under the clamps to protect the wood from marring, and clean up all excess glue with a damp cloth. Glue left on the face of the wood will show up as a whitish stain through the finish. Casings, jambs, rails, and stiles can usually be glued and clamped in place, but a recessed panel should be removed for repair. Because it's a broad, flat area, it's very visible; repair with extra care.

Sometimes it's impossible to clamp a piece of woodwork in place, and it's also impossible to remove it. Get creative and wedge, tape, and/or weight the piece in place while the glue dries; the strength of the joint depends on it. Give the glue time



to set before removing the clamps, especially if there is a lot of stress on the joint (such as a split or check that took great clamp pressure to close). Overnight is best.

In frame-and-panel construction, the panel "floats" to allow for seasonal swelling and shrinking of wood. If you make the mistake of gluing or nailing the panel itself in place, it will probably crack with the next change of season. The panel *moulding* holds the panel in place, covering the joints, and still allows it to move freely. (See illustration #4.)

Dutchman

Finer cabinetwork or woodwork may be worthy of a wood patch or dutchman when a split can't be closed up in conventional fashion. Cut long, slender, tapered shims on a table saw. The wood used should ideally be the same age, species, and grain orientation as the piece being patched.

Using only that portion of the tapered shim which fits the split exactly, coat both the shim and the split with a thin layer of glue and press the shim into place. Clean off excess glue with damp cloth. Leave the shim a little proud of the surface so that it can be trimmed with a sharp chisel and sanded flush after the glue dries. (See illustration #6.) When done properly, the patch will be nearly invisible.

Warpage

When architectural woodwork is bowed or twisted, a few well placed fasteners will usually bring it back in line. Make sure there is something solid to nail to before driving any fasteners.

REMEDIES

Toeing the nails will make them hold better. A large, heavy profile moulding might resist straightening if nails only are used. Use one or two wood screws. Carefully pre-drill and

countersink the screw in a location where you're sure there's good fastening. Plug the hole with a wood plug cut from the same species and grain orientation. A plug-cutter is an inexpensive item available from most

well-stocked hardware stores. (See illustration #7.)

Warped or cupped *panels* can't be nailed back in place. Remove the panel and place it on a warm radiator, concave side up. Put some damp rags on the panel and leave it for a few days. (See illustration #8.) Weight down edges if necessary. Another solution is to lay the panel cupped side down on damp ground in bright sunlight and weight the center.

Damaged Veneer

Doors and other paneled woodwork are often veneered. Sometimes even door and window casings are veneered. A burl section is usually a clue that a veneer is present. Even the best veneer can blister and delaminate, especially when exposed to moisture. Loose or blistered veneer can be reglued easily; damaged sections can be replaced.

REMEDIES

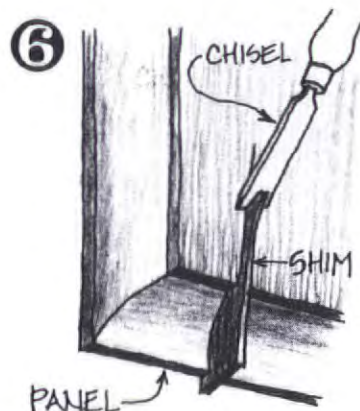
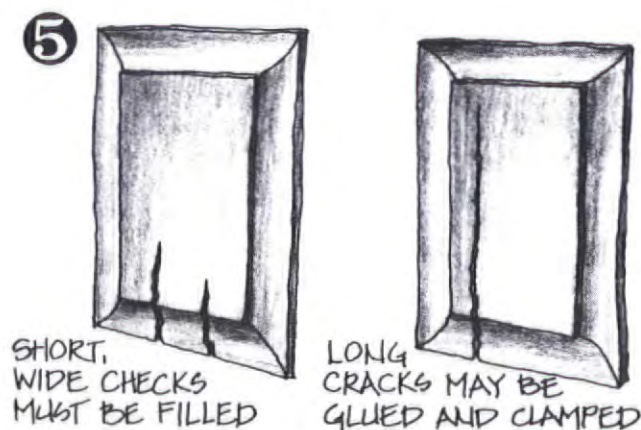
Regluing

Slice open a blister parallel to the grain. Work some white carpenter's glue under the veneer with a flexible knife, press the blister flat, clean up excess glue, and weight or clamp the piece until the glue sets. Be sure to separate your cauls or weights from the veneer with a sheet of wax paper so they don't get glued to the veneer. (See illustration #10.)

To reglue veneer edges, first pry up the loose part slightly with a putty knife. Check exactly how much is loose and remove all the old glue, along with any paint or finish which might have seeped under the veneer. Reglue the veneer as described above.

Patching

If a section of veneer is badly gouged or missing, it may be necessary to cut out the bad section and replace it with new or salvaged veneer. If there are no spare doors or other woodwork with matching veneer, consider taking some veneer off an inconspicuous area such as the back of a closet door. Try to match the color and grain figure. Cut out the new or salvaged piece first. (Try moisture, heat, or a combination to loosen the veneer.) Do not cut out a neat rectangle or other regular shape as this will only accentuate the patch. Instead, cut in an irregular shape which approximately follows the grain figure. (See illustration #9.) Use a straight-edge to make a series of short,



straight-line cuts. Using the patch piece as a template, trace the shape onto the area to be patched and cut out the damaged area. Cut out the damaged veneer carefully. If you make a neat cut, you'll have no filling to do after patching in the new piece. Glue the patch in place as described above. Sand flush as required.

Mismatched/Missing Pieces

This is the most complex area of woodwork repair, and covering all the possibilities and techniques would fill a book. Here are a few hints and high points.

REMEDIES

1. Comb the cellar, attic, and outbuildings for spare pieces to match, or to adapt.
2. Trade highly visible mismatched pieces for good original pieces in low visibility areas. Example: Take the good wainscot panel from behind a radiator and put the poorer quality piece in its place.
3. Grain (with paint) the mismatched replacement piece to match the surrounding wood.
4. Make a new piece to match, using the same wood species. Be sure the patch has the same type of grain (cut); that is, don't piece flat-sawn lumber into a quarter-sawn moulding. Use salvaged wood rather than new, if possible, because it is difficult to duplicate the patina of old wood using stain. Selective staining can be used to blend old with new if necessary.
5. Have a millwork company make up a new piece to match — but be prepared to pay a large set-up charge even for a short run of material if there's any decorative profile to be cut into the wood.

Scratches, Gouges, and Dents

Now we're getting into the finer points of woodwork repair. This is the work to be done after the more major repairs described above, and just before putting on

the new finish.

REMEDIES

Sanding Scratches

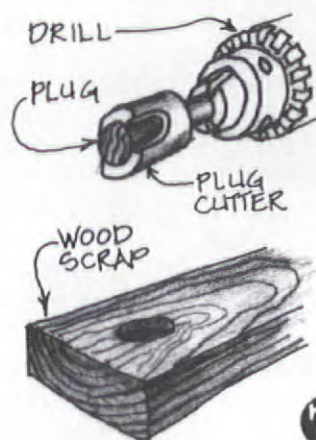
A scratch is a defect that can be sanded out, whereas a gouge must be filled or the piece replaced. When sanding out a small scratch, be aware that the sanded area will end up looking lighter than the surrounding area because the patina or aged color of the wood is being removed, exposing fresh wood underneath. Selective staining can be done on this spot to blend the color. Also be aware of whether what you're sanding is solid wood or veneer. It doesn't take much to sand right through veneer.

Filling Gouges

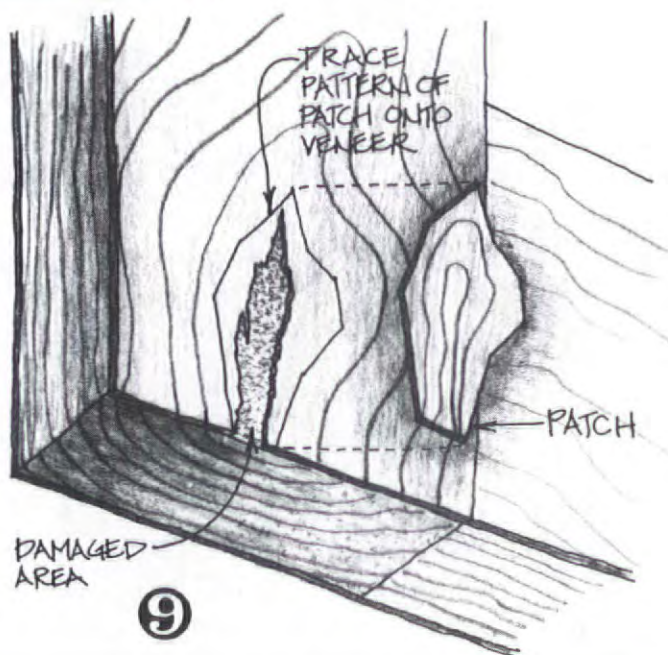
A gouge may be filled with one of many different products. For such minor imperfections as small gouges and nail holes, linseed putty or glazing compound can be tinted with universal tints or with the sediment from the bottom of a can of stain. For larger areas where a level surface is essential, a sandable filler should be used. There are several categories of sandable fillers.

1. Water-mix wood putty comes in powder form and is mixed with water, as the name implies. It is easiest to tint by mixing powder pigment with the putty when it's still a powder. It has a fair amount of resiliency, but poor moisture resistance.
2. Solvent-based wood fillers harden by solvent evaporation. Plastic Wood is an example of

this type of filler. Solvent-based fillers are a little more difficult to sand than other fillers, and they require solvent instead of water for cleanup. Adhesion and moisture resistance are good, but



7



9

shrinkage is a problem. You can overcome some of the drawbacks associated with shrinking by building up deep areas in several layers. Solvent-based fillers are not tintable, but they do come in a variety of pre-mixed colors. As with any filling or staining task, test for a proper color-match on a scrap piece first.

3. Acrylic latex wood fillers (such as Elmer's Professional Wood Filler) have been developed recently. This type of filler has

better adhesion, moisture resistance, and flexibility than water-mix wood putty. Again, deep voids should be filled with several applications to avoid excessive shrinkage.

4. Two-part polyester fillers such as Minwax High Performance Filler are similar to auto body filler. The Minwax filler has excellent adherence, is moisture resistant, exhibits minimal shrinkage, and takes stain well. But because it's a two-part filler, it's a bit more time-consuming to mix.

Steaming Dents

A dent is different from a scratch or a gouge in that the wood fibers are not torn or

missing; they have just been dented in (compressed). More often than not, a dent can be lifted out using a steam iron and a moistened cloth. You'll have more success lifting a dent out of softwood than out of hardwood. The moisture will, of course, lift the grain slightly, but once the wood dries, the area can easily be sanded smooth again.

Stains, Discolorations

Many stains are impossible to remove entirely. But they can be considerably lightened. The most common type of stain is a water stain. These stains are usually dark grey and show up strongly even through the darkest pigment-

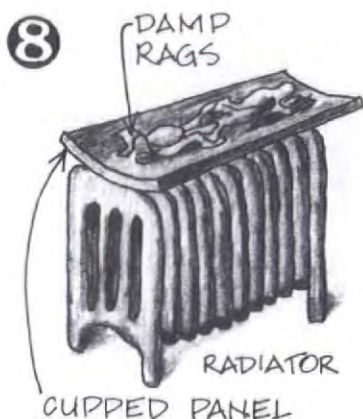
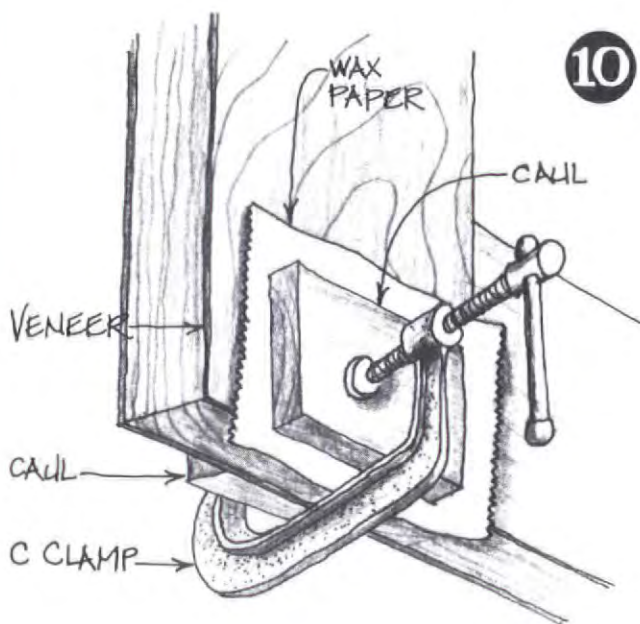
ed stain you'd consider applying to the wood. Discoloration is commonly found where a partition or other element that had been abutting a piece of woodwork was removed. The wood that had been covered will have aged a little differently, creating a slightly different color patina. This also happens where some portions of the wood have had a finish and others have

to keep the bleach working on the stain, rather than spreading to the surrounding area. Rinse with plenty of clear water, allow to dry, and sand smooth.

Oxalic acid comes in crystal form and is available from most hardware stores and pharmacies. The crystals are dissolved in warm water to form a saturate solution. Keep adding water until there are just a few crystals still undissolved on the bottom of your container. Now you have the strongest possible solution. Rinse with clear water after applying the acid. Oxalic acid will lighten water stains and it will also take most of the color out of the wood, making it difficult to blend the bleached area back into the surrounding woodwork. Unless you are especially adept at blending and controlling wood stains in small patches, it's advisable to bleach an entire surface and then use stain to bring it to a consistent color.

A & B or two-part wood bleach is normally available at a well stocked hardware store. This type of bleach is used to achieve a consistent color tone in the wood. The A part is the bleach, and the B part is the neutralizer that stops the bleaching action. The longer the bleach is left on, the lighter the wood gets. A & B bleach is suitable for blending wood with uneven patina as described above. Use the bleach on the selected areas that need lightening. Some stain blending may be required to blend the bleached area with the rest of the wood.

(REFER TO THESE RECENT
ARTICLES: REMOVING
WOODWORK, JUNE 1985 OHJ,
AFTER YOU STRIP,
BEFORE YOU FINISH,
JAN./FEB. 1987 OHJ)



not. If additional applications of chemical stripper don't lighten a stain, then the next step is to bleach the area. There are several different products with which you should experiment when faced with the task of bleaching-out discolorations.

REMEDIES

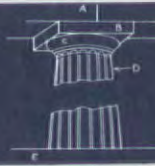
Household bleach can be used to lighten water stains. The best results will be obtained by making a poultice with paper towels



Ionic
Column



Pilaster



Doric
Column



Corinthian
Column

GREEK REVIVAL

BY RENÉE KAHN

The first of America's great Romantic revivals wore classical garb. Yes, Greek and Roman architecture had influenced buildings in this country for almost a century, but it was a classicism filtered through the Renaissance and Palladio. Thomas Jefferson's efforts to create a "national style" based on the architecture of the Roman Empire fell upon deaf ears. It was not until the wildfire spread of Greek Revival a generation later, that classicism truly took hold.

Although ancient Greek architecture attracted interest throughout Europe, the first example of revival was a garden temple on an English estate in 1758. By the early-19th century, London abounded in versions of Greek temples; by the 1820s, the "Greek Mania," as it came to be known, had spread to the United States. Every area that underwent development from 1820 to 1855 was, at one time, decidedly "Greek."

The enthusiasm for Greek Revival had both archaeological and political roots. Discoveries in the latter half of the 18th century had made Pompeii and

Herculaneum household words.

Greece, however, remained relative *terra incognita* until two Englishmen, Stuart and Revett, published several volumes of measured drawings of the Acropolis, depicting the then-almost-unknown grandeur of the Parthenon and its neighbors. These books, *The Antiquities of Athens*, provided a definitive resource for architects and builders. Lord Elgin's daring rescue of the Parthenon pediment sculptures, coupled with the intensely pro-Greek sentiments of poets such as Byron and Shelley, contributed to a passion for all things Hellenic.

Here in America, the example of ancient Greece touched political and social heartstrings. The rage for Greek temples swept all else before it. A visiting English architect commented that everything here had become a Greek temple, from "the privies in the back to the State House." Ancient Greece, the first democracy, was idealized by the new republic. And contemporary Greeks were then struggling for independence from the Turks.



Natchez, Adams County, Miss.

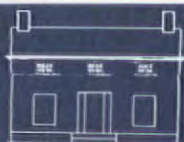


Union Springs, N.Y.



Natchez, Adams County, Miss.

Frieze
Windows
With
Grille



Incomplete
Cornice
Return



Frieze
Windows
Without
Grille



Portico

Sentiment alone could not account for the rapidity with which the temple mania spread. Other forces were at work. At the close of the War of 1812, this nation embarked upon a period of enormous expansion. Immigrants filled the cities and fueled the great migration west. By 1820, the country was ready to build homes for these



Brookville, Jefferson County, Penn.

newcomers, and the Greek Revival style lay conveniently at hand. New cities emerged, bearing Greek and Roman names: Athens, Troy, Sparta, Syracuse, Attica, Rome, Elmira, and Corinth. Social critics of the period commented upon the incongruity of the crude American frontiersman in his temple-style house, noting wryly that from their porticoed entryways, these rather un-godlike new citizens looked out on mud-covered streets where pigs foraged for garbage.

So archaeological discoveries and political sympathy gave impetus to the Greek Revival. Technological innovation made it possible. Although modified timber-frame construction was still in use through most of the period, steam-driven machinery provided a variety of mass-produced ornament. Lacking the delicacy of hand-made Federal ornament, these elements more than made up in quantity what they lacked in finesse.

Although there were few trained architects in America, and not a single school of architecture, enterprising carpenters and masons appropriated the title. Few Americans even considered hiring an architect

anyway; they merely copied a nearby house that they liked, adding a few details of their own. Decorative elements were taken from any of dozens of builder's pattern-books that circulated widely during the early-19th century. Pieces could be copied by any skilled carpenter or simply chosen from a catalog. A mix-and-match attitude developed,

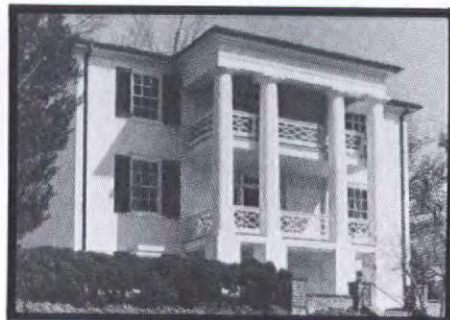
which explains the numerous, free-wheeling variations of the supposedly rigid Greek Revival format.

The most popular and widely-used patternbooks were by Minard Lafever and Asher Benjamin. Lafever, a Brooklyn architect, entitled his books *The Modern Builders Guide* and *The Beauties Of Modern Architecture* (he considered the Greek Revival 'modern'). Lafever's works, published in the 1830s, were among the best of the guides, although they were rivalled in popularity by the work of Benjamin, a shrewd Yankee carpenter who began publishing in 1797. Benjamin's earlier books show no Greek orders or details, but by 1830 he had become a fervent convert. He explained the style's popularity by noting that it was an easy way to show off: Its bold details could be seen from a distance, and it afforded a great deal of spectacle for very little money.

Although the popular builder's handbooks disseminated the Greek Revival style, its importance was established by the few professional architects of the day. Benjamin Latrobe, an Englishman, "brought the Parthe-



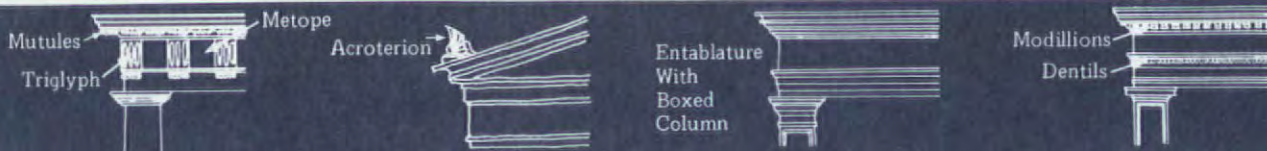
Chicago, Ill.



Staunton, Virg.



Luray, Virg.



non to America in 1799" with his masterpiece, the Bank of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. In residential architecture, the firm of Town and Davis set a remarkably high level of taste. Ithiel Town, a noted engineer and inventor, joined the talented designer Alexander Jackson Davis to create widely copied structures in the Greek, Gothic, and Italian Villa styles.



Natchez, Adams County, Miss.

Another innovation, especially in smaller homes, was the off-side doorway. This departure from classical symmetry allowed a narrow three-bay house to have an adequate parlor; the traditional center hall created rooms on either side that were too small to be usable. Builders of the period were also quick to note that the three-bay,

gable-to-street house used less street frontage, and suited narrow city lots.

Characteristics

Although we tend to think of Greek Revival as a gabled temple with giant two-storey colonnades, the houses of the period actually came in all sizes, shapes, and degrees of luxury. The gabled house with its massive portico was the *sine qua non* of American Greek Revival, but the most common examples looked more like traditional colonial boxes with a few Greek details pasted on.

The innovation of the period was turning the gable end to face the street. This gives a pediment effect which could then be extended forward to rest on a classical colonnade. More modest adaptations still had the gable face the street, but eliminated the colonnade in favor of a small, two-columned entry porch, or a flat front with no porch at all. A triangular pediment could be simulated at minimal cost with the judicious application of strongly moulded cornice trim; pilasters could represent the more costly columns.

Although we tend to criticize Greek Revival architecture for its rigid emphasis on symmetry, the style actually brought on more variation in plan than in previous periods. "L-" or "T-" shaped arrangements were common and anticipated the asymmetry of later Romantic revivals.

Patternbooks and mass-produced ornament created a good deal of homogeneity throughout the nation, but some regional preferences can still be discerned. Every area has its own unique variant of the style; usually one not borrowed from any patternbook, but instead the vernacular expression of a local carpenter.

The Greek Revival had a major impact upon the great plantation houses of the Deep South, where you find many extraordinary examples of the style. Southern builders often eliminated the gabled pediment in favor of flat or hipped roofs. Giant colonnades dominated the facades and even side and rear elevations. The prevalence of the portico indicated the influence



Toulon, Ill.



Genesee County Vill., Mumford, N.Y.



Waukegan, Ill.



of earlier colonial French and English houses with their attached galleries and verandahs.

Columns

Oliver Smith's 1854 patternbook *The Domestic Architect* gives careful instructions as to the ideal dimensions of a classical column. He suggests that the height of a Doric column be nine times its diameter; Ionic, ten; Corinthian, twelve. Fluting, characteristic of Greek columns rather than Roman, was desirable, but it was often unaffordable. Less expensive and highly popular, although not classically accurate, were "boxed" rectangular columns with paneled sides.

Although the standard American version of the Greek temple is "prostyle," meaning it has a row of columns in the front, "amphiprostyle," with columns along front and back, was even more coveted. The ultimate, however, was "peripteral," with columns on all four sides. Just like the Parthenon.

Fenestration: Doors and Windows

Even the most conservative and simple Greek Revival homes were distinguished by their front doors, as in the Georgian and Federal eras. Solid-wood mouldings in a rectilinear arrangement, suggesting the fundamental column-and-architrave (post-and-beam) construct of Greek architecture, replaced the delicate arched transoms and leaded sidelights of Federal homes. Front



Woodville, Wilkinson County, Miss.

doors were either single or paired, and featured anywhere from one to eight panels, with four the most common. In a popular variation, the entry door was set back several feet from the front wall of the house, with paired, free-standing columns placed in the plane of the front wall.

Real Greek temples, of course, did not have windows, but their obvious necessity in Greek Revival houses posed no philosophical problem to enthusiastic proponents of the style. The six-over-six, double-hung window of the Federal era remained popular. In some cases, a six-over-nine configuration was used on the lower storey, to go with higher ceilings in the parlors. Later, improvements in glass-making technology made possible larger panes of glass, as in the two-over-two, double-hung windows popular in late Greek Revival and Italianate houses.

The three-part Palladian window of the Georgian era passed out of fashion. But the elliptical gable window of the previous era remained popular: Its elongated shape fit neatly into shallow Greek pediments, as did the new rectangular gable window with its narrow horizontal and vertical muntins.

Small, horizontal windows below the roofline were also new with this style. These "ear to the ground" windows were used to light the attic storey. (Other names for them include eyebrow, frieze, or entablature windows.) They were frequently covered with a



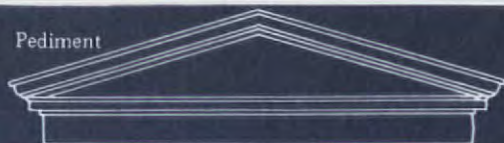
Vic. of Springfield, Ill.



Vicksburg, Warren County, Miss.



Galena, Ill.



pierced wood or cast-iron grille of characteristically Greek design, with acanthus, anthemions, or frets.

Windows were generally framed more simply than doors, although heavy trim boards were used to emphasize them more than in Georgian or Federal years. Ornament was usually restricted to the window crown, or cresting, and

featured fretwork or anthemions. Decorative panels gave tall parlor windows the appearance of reaching the ground. Shutters were commonplace on both windows and doors.

Cladding & Cornices

The most common cladding for Greek Revival houses was narrow clapboard, but flush boards were also used on the front. These flat, wide boards could be gessoed and scored to resemble blocks of marble.

Brick was another standard material, and sometimes it too would be stuccoed and scored to look like stone. Communities which had access to marble or stone quarries often used the real thing, especially as mechanical equipment made the work less costly.

Although a colonnaded portico on the front of the house was preferred, most homeowners settled for pilasters or simple cornerboards. Non-masonry versions of the style, however, relied on a strongly emphasized sillboard to further define the walls.

Elaborate cornices were among the most decorative



Eutaw, Ala.

elements of the Greek Revival house. Heavy moulding framed the entire pediment; in vernacular versions, it was left incomplete along the bottom. One or two wide boards beneath the cornice represented the architrave and frieze of a Greek temple. The lower band, the architrave, was often divided into three horizontal rows; the

upper band, or frieze, was left plain or divided into triglyphs and metopes, in traditional Doric manner. The wide frieze board was often pierced by those narrow, horizontal, "ear to the ground" windows. This wide board also defined the triangular gable, and in many cases featured a row of small dentils.

Hipped or flat roofs were frequently hidden from street view by low panelled parapets ornamented by Greek motifs. Post-1850 versions of the Greek Revival have large, curvilinear brackets under overhanging cornices, influenced by the Italian Villa style.

Interiors

The delicate proportions and profuse trim of late Georgian interiors gave way to plain, bare walls with bold Greek-derived details. Walls were not papered, but painted in flat, "marble" tones; plastered walls replaced dadoes and wood panelling. The main rooms now opened to one another, the transition indicated by pilasters or a pair of free-standing Ionic columns.

Ornament was often reserved for the high parlor



Vic. of Red Banks, Marshall County, Miss.



Port Gibson, Claiborne County, Miss.



Springfield, Ill.



Fluting
(cross-section)



Fluting

Fluting
(cross-section)



Reeding



Reeding
(cross-section)

Illustrations by Colin Skidmore

ceiling with its heavy plaster cornice. A full entablature bordered the parlor wall, and a band of plaster frets decorated the ceiling. Interior doors were panelled, and enframed by wide mouldings. More lavish homes had doorways with anthemion crestings. Wide mouldings were reeded or fluted, with square wooden corner blocks.



Enterprise, Clarke County, Miss.

American Empire furniture, French-inspired, replaced previous English styles; "archaeological scavenging" for style precedents brought Greek, Roman, and Egyptian motifs. Imaginary animals from ancient legends — griffins and sphinxes — turned up as pedestals and sofa arms. Chairs bore an undeniable resemblance to ancient Greek vases. Greek crosses and lyres decorated all manner of furniture.


Colors

The architects of the early-19th century drew their ideas from books which depicted the glories of classical architecture in black and white. These illustrations were close to fact, as the bright polychrome, which we now know once decorated ancient structures, had long since weathered away. The pure white plaster casts of ancient architectural elements, used for exhibit and study, became associated with antiquity. Thus, white paint was thought appropriate for anything classical, resulting in the long, happy reign of white houses with green shutters.

The bright white prevalent today was not always the choice, however. Rather, a range of delicate "marble" tones was used: creams, greys, off-whites. Trim was almost always pale, frequently another hue or shade of white. This whiteness fad was deplored by later critics. A.J. Downing, the leading proponent of the Gothic Revival

movement that superseded the Greek, preferred the soft greys, browns, and greens of nature. He claimed white was "unsuitable and in bad taste." But it was hard to envision a temple in another color, so white remained popular throughout the Greek Revival era.

The End

Many reasons have been given for the demise of the Greek Revival style. Its confining plan and insistence upon architectural fidelity, combined with growing interest in a variety of other Romantic architectural movements, were probably the most likely culprits. Its influence, however, lasted as long, if not longer, than any other architectural movement in our history. Even more long-lived was the vernacular gable-to-the-front house, which survived as the standard form of the 19th-century American farmhouse. The post-Victorian Homestead House and its Tri-Gabled Ell variant, both with street-facing gables, also bear traces of Greek Revival's influence. Greek Revival persisted, in a variety of guises, well into the 20th century. 



Aberdeen, Monroe County, Miss.



Richmond, Virg.



Selma, Ala.



GREEK REVIVAL



Watkins Glen, N.Y.

Fifty years ago my university-professor father left the Ived Tower for the Country Life and fulfilled his manorial ambitions with a derelict Greek Revival house in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. (*photo bottom left*) On family drives through rural New York and New England our car frequently slowed to a crawl, or came to a halt, in front of a Greek Revival house, even if we had seen it dozens of times. To my father, a Greek Revival house was like a station of the cross. We admired with humility and genuflected with our minds.

Ah, but there are no heroes in your own hometown. Someplace else has to be better than what you've got. Besides, who wants to talk like a hick praising small-



Watkins Glen, N.Y.

BY
JOHN CROSBY FREEMAN

town houses in big-city places?

I grew up, went to graduate school and learned architectural history, which rendered me useless except for inflicting it upon students for the next seven years. I knew the architecture of Ancient Greece, yet sometimes I failed to connect it with the charming curiosities I'd grown up with.

These are photos I snapped locally. Look at the one below center. "Elegant" is not a word one would use; it has a gut-busting, two-storey bay on the side with a wide belt and cornice echoing the thick entablature on the front. Looking at it, my favorite word for Greek Revival comes to mind: "capacious." Greek Revival houses are not Virginia Slims. They are Victorian Pats.

That's it — that's why the style is an orphan. They are not Colonial, despite the confusion evidenced

A PERSONAL ODYSSEY



Owego, N.Y.

in the name of the temple-style motel above center. They are Victorian — early Victorian, unornamented, not gingerbread darlings. Capacious and simple, Greek Revival is the style that arrived between eras.

Look at the Doric gem top left; despite what builders' guides said, most builders spaced their columns to least interfere with doors and windows. The example at lower right is set against one of the cata-racts that plunge into the glacial valleys of the Finger Lakes region. This one is truly romantic.

So return home, Odysseus. You might find Greek Revival that will surprise you. I did.

John Crosby Freeman



Vic. of Watkins Glen, N.Y.



Watkins Glen, N.Y.



Montour Falls, N.Y.



How to place small orders for cast-iron parts

By
GARTH PAGE

It is surprising how many cast-iron pieces there are in an old house. A wood- or coal-burning stove is often the most obvious, but there are also door stops, old-fashioned flat irons, muffin pans, hot-plate trivets, fireplace grates and accessories, old basket-style light fixtures, and railings. There are also cast-iron parts in antique cars, garden benches, fence parts, and sculptures.

For those of you who will need some casting done, this article will 1) tell you how to find a foundry to do the job, and 2) explain what you can do to make the process easier. First, you should have an idea of what actually happens at a cast-iron foundry.

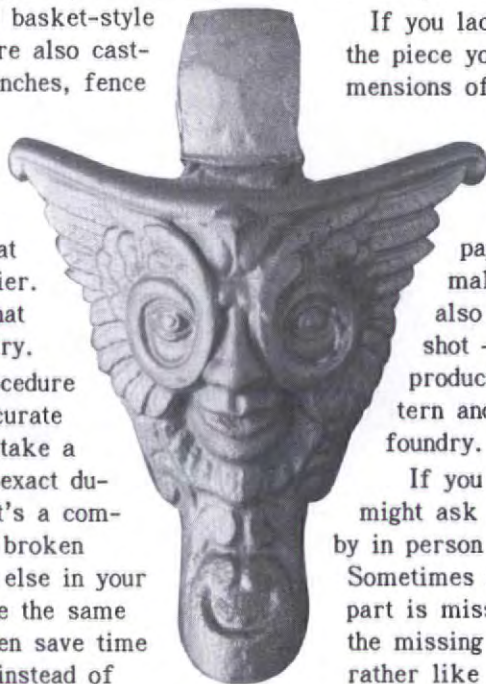
Whatever the piece, the basic procedure is the same. A foundry needs an accurate *pattern*, a model from which it can take a mould. Your best bet is to bring an exact duplicate of what you want made. If it's a common part, but you've lost one of the broken pieces, see if you can find someone else in your neighborhood or town who might have the same part all in one piece. Customers often save time and money by using a similar piece instead of

fabricating a new model. For instance, someone once brought in a claw-shaped, cast-iron leg from an old bathtub; after we cleaned it up, we simply used that one for our pattern. (Recasting it cost \$12 to \$15.)

If you lack the exact part, give the foundry the piece you do have along with the exact dimensions of the part (as near as you can come).

A photograph of the item, or a good drawing by an architect or a draftsman, is also helpful. Of course, if you have the original papers describing the piece, you should make copies and send them along. It's also possible — although this is a long shot — that the company which made the product still has a copy of the wooden pattern and would be willing to lend it to the foundry.

If you live near enough to the foundry, you might ask if their pattern-maker could come by in person and look at what you had in mind. Sometimes if only a small piece from a large part is missing, the pattern-maker can fill in the missing piece with Pattern-Build (a material rather like plastic wood) or auto-body filler.





A pattern-maker can re-create a missing piece from a model, or make a unique casting to your specifications.

Then it can be used as a whole pattern.

All of this assumes that you want to replace a pre-existing piece. What if you want a completely new item, such as a large cast-iron kettle? Simply tell the pattern-maker the dimensions; depending on the size of the piece and the intricacy of the pattern, the price for such a casting can range from \$25 to \$150. Of course, many foundries already have stock patterns for such items.

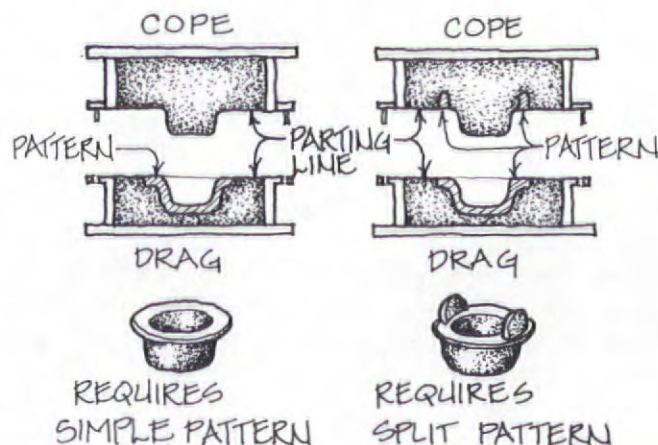
Pattern-making from scratch is a skill akin to fine cabinetwork. A pattern-maker has to have an impressive array of woodworking tools, featuring scroll, table, and band saws. For enduring patterns, he uses mahogany or maple; for a limited run, pine is sufficient (and easier to work with).

Once the foundry has a pattern, whether made from scratch or otherwise, they use it to make a sand mould. The sand, although it looks black, is called *green sand*. It is very fine, similar to beach sand, and is mixed every day in 900-pound batches with baronite (flour with clay as a bonding agent) and about 3 gallons of water. When the sand is the right consistency, it holds together like a snowball.

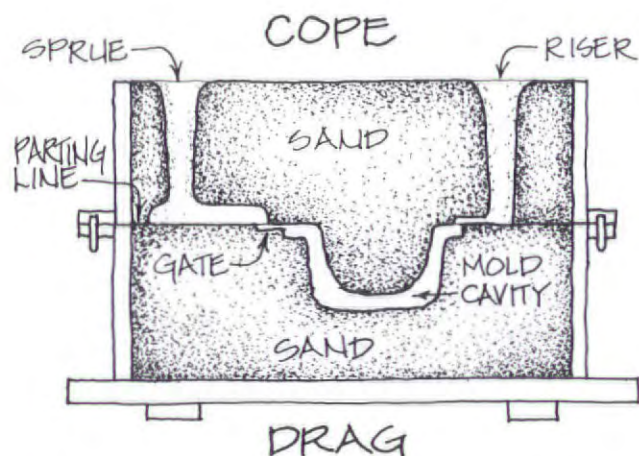
Most patterns have to be made in two pieces; the moulds are made in two parts that are then fitted together to make the whole. The top part of a mould is called the *cope* and the bottom is the *drag*. The

drag is usually rammed with sand first, then turned over. (It still holds its shape even upside down!) Then the cope is rammed. The pattern is attached to either side of a board, so that when a side is removed and the cope and drag put together, there is an entire pattern with no board in between.

Anything can be cast, from a tiny quarter-pound



After the pattern has been made, it's used as a model around which the mould is formed. Most moulds are split at a parting line; the top half is the cope, the bottom is the drag.



Molten iron is poured into the sprue. The iron flows through the gate into the mould cavity that is formed by the cope and drag. One or more risers hasten cooling.

hinge to a mammoth thousand-pound gear. The larger the piece, the more complicated the patterning becomes. But even a relatively simple, small pattern — a hollow apple shape, for instance — requires some planning. To start with, it isn't just an apple-shaped pattern. A *gate* must be added to the original pattern. This is a narrow opening in the cope side, which leads to a broader kind of lake for the molten iron.

Before pouring the iron, a hole, or *sprue*, is punched with a brass tube known as a *sprue cutter*. It is through the sprue that the iron is finally poured. Because cast iron shrinks 1/8 inch per foot when it cools, there has to be extra iron available to flow into the shrinking areas. Through a combination of mathematics and guesswork, the metal-casters figure out the gates needed for a particular shape and density.

When more than one is required, a *runner* is used outside the main pattern area to connect the gates.

We once cast a 910-pound gear for the Standard Packaging Company in Sheldon Spring, Vermont, and to accommodate the shrinkage, we required quite a few *risers* (masses of iron connected to the casting, which allow the metal to cool). The gear itself is a fascinating piece of history: It holds wooden insert teeth so that if something jams up, the teeth will strip out instead of ruining the entire casting. The original machine was built in 1911 and is still working.

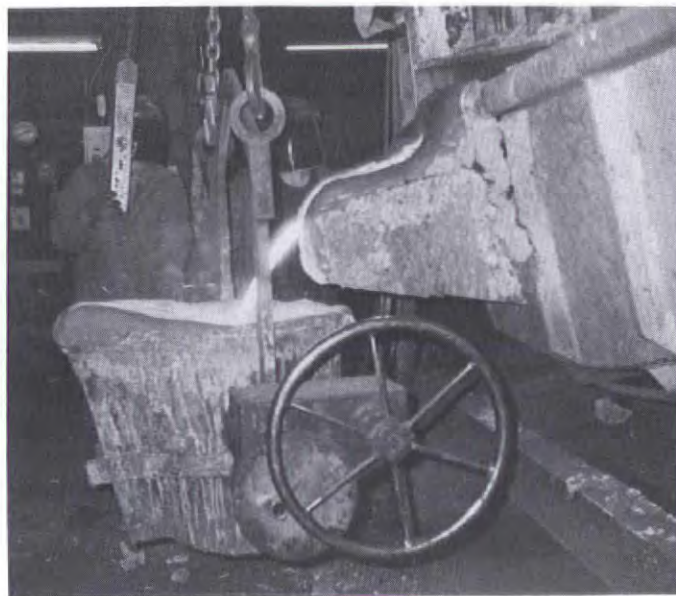
Most of the work is done by hand. Usually within a half-hour of a pour, depending on the size of the piece, the mould can be taken apart. Then the *shakeout* begins. With a small hammer, as much sand as possible is knocked off. The casting is then sent to the cleaning unit, where the sandy residue is sand- or shot-blasted away, and then on to the snagging room, where the gates and risers are cut away from the casting. Often, on smaller pieces, they can just be broken off; heavier gates and risers, however, have to be removed with cutting wheels. The piece is then ground down — there is usually extra material, or *flashing*, at the parting line between cope and drag — and examined for defects.

That does it for most pieces, unless more matching or painting is required. Many people prefer to paint their own pieces. Wood stoves are usually treated once a year with stove black by owners.

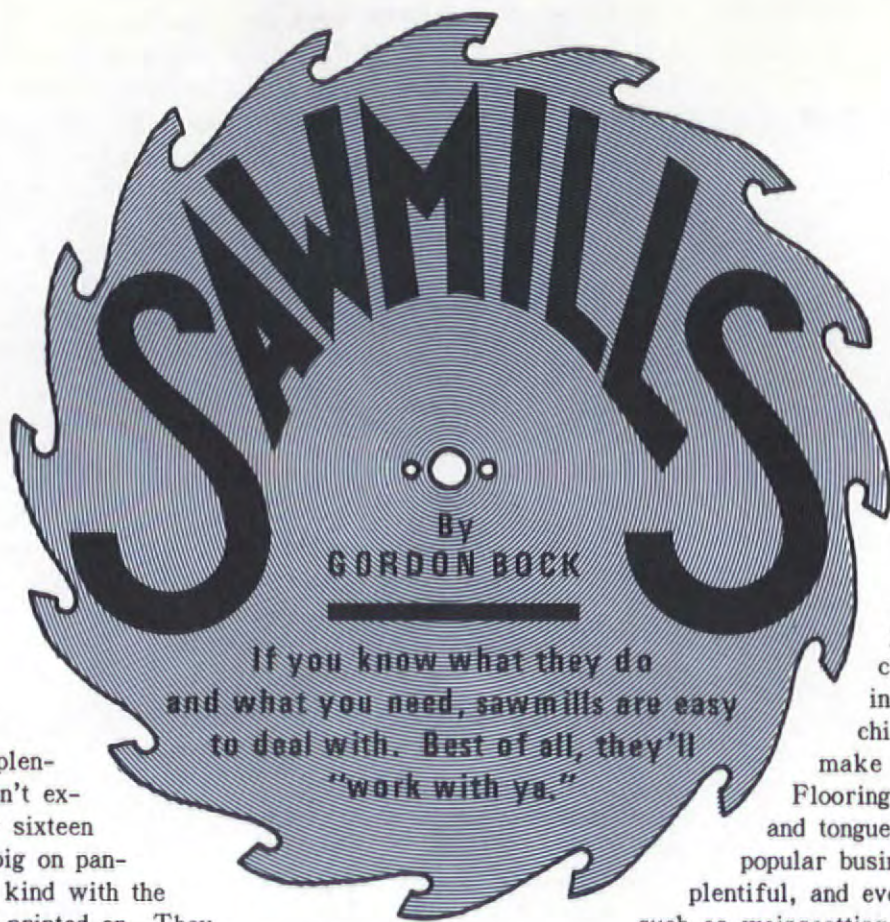
I hope this has answered some of the questions you may have had about how a foundry casts iron. After some shaky years brought on by the energy crisis and competition from overseas, foundries are beginning a comeback in America, as more and more homeowners and businesses realize the flexibility and staying power of cast iron.



Green sand before mixing with baronite and water.



Pouring molten iron into the sprue.



The home center lumberyards really do have their place, I guess, particularly if you like what passes for today's building materials. They always stock plenty of lumber, but don't expect to buy any over sixteen feet long. They're big on paneling, especially the kind with the photographic "grain" printed on. They sell flakeboard too — great for that traditional look of pressed wood chips and glue. Anytime I've got tricky carpentry on an old house, though, I always wind up on a country road somewhere, buying studs and boards from a guy in overalls who makes them himself. For my money, when I need *real* lumber, I go to a sawmill.

Old-house carpentry demands just the kinds of products that sawmills specialize in. First among these is rough lumber, that is, lumber right off the saw blade. Rough lumber, unlike most lumber sold today, does not have its surfaces planed down paper-smooth, and as a result measures its full dimensions. For example, a 2x4 measures two by four inches, versus 3½" by 1½" for the planed version. More often than not, houses over sixty years old are framed with rough lumber, and repairs or alterations to this kind of building are a lot simpler with lumber of the same gauge. For instance, wall studs and ceiling joists of planed lumber have to be furred out (built up) to match the existing rough. Working with new rough lumber eliminates the furring problem. It is also the best solution when trying to match existing rough-sawn boards in rustic applications such as board-and-batten siding or a planked floor.

All sawmills cut rough lumber, but they also can be goldmines for milled products such as siding, flooring, and paneling. Most will saw simple sidings such

as flitch (Adirondack), but some also manufacture more complicated styles like clapboard and log cabin if they have the machinery and market to make it worthwhile.

Flooring, both wide plank and tongue-and-groove, is a popular business where lumber is plentiful, and even specialty items such as wainscoting can be found.

Sawmills can also end a search for odd or unusual lumber. Given enough notice, most are willing to saw logs to out-of-the-ordinary dimensions, or cut stock that is extra long or extra wide (as for a planked floor). If trim on the house you're working on is of a unique local wood (say, butternut) a trip to a sawmill may be the only way to obtain more.

Sawmills are also a more economical way to buy lumber. For many products, you "eliminate the middleman" (wholesalers and lumberyards) and save the markup, especially if you buy in quantity. At the very least, you're bound to get better wood for your money, even when prices are competitive.

Finding a Mill

So where and how do you buy from a sawmill? The first step is picking the right kind. Wood-product giants like Weyerhaeuser and Georgia-Pacific operate gargantuan high-volume plants that supply most of the construction lumber market. These mills restrict themselves to certain types of production, say, pine solely for pressure-treating, or just plywood. The place for offbeat lumber purchases is the smaller, *random-length* sawmill.

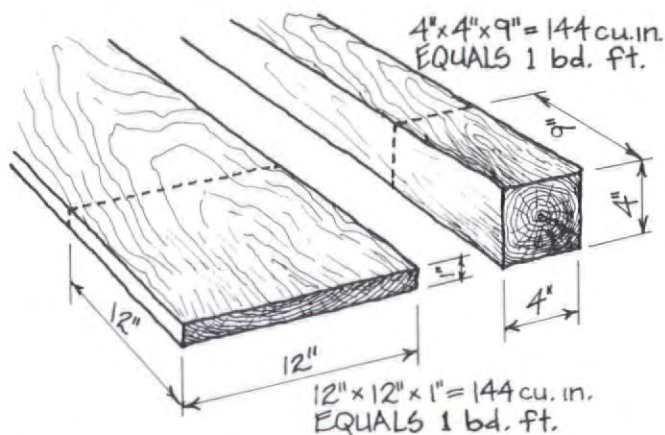
Random-length mills spring up anywhere timber is plentiful enough to support a business. So-named because they saw lumber from trees of all sizes, they are the producers of rough lumber for heavy construc-

tion like concrete forms and scaffolding. They also saw hardwoods such as oak and maple to become anything from shipping pallets to furniture. A random-length mill can be a full-time operation employing 20 or more sawyers, or just a strictly-on-weekends operation of a farmer with an old engine and a spinning blade. They can be the kind of enterprise where you see a son and father (sometimes a granddad) working side-by-side. They're easy-going places that try to accommodate. "We'll work with ya," one owner told me, "we kinda hate to turn anybody down. You never know who you might be buying logs from."

Speaking the Language

Before buying from a sawmill, though, you've got to know how they sell their wares. The basic unit for pricing is the *board foot* (Bd. Ft.). One board foot is 144 cubic inches of wood, or a block one-foot long, one-foot wide, and one-inch thick. To come up with the cost of a board, figure the volume in inches, divide by 144 to get board feet, and multiply by the price. An eight-foot long 1x12 is eight board feet of lumber, and at 40¢ per board foot will cost \$3.20. So too will a twelve-foot long 1x8 or 2x4.

Rough lumber is always sold by the board foot, and so is planed or any custom-milled lumber made from it. Millwork and moulding, though, are normally



sold by the linear foot (L. Ft.): length x price/foot. Flooring and interior paneling are commonly calculated for the square foot of coverage (Sq. Ft.). If the floor of your room is 10' by 15', the mill will provide you with enough material to cover 150 square feet, but they will encourage you to order about 10% more to account for waste.

Sawmills base the price they charge you on their cost to buy timber. Board-foot prices vary according to the species of the tree, with scarcer, very desirable woods like cherry or walnut commanding high prices. There is also usually an extra charge for lumber



A random-length sawmill may appear uninviting at first glance. But you'll find the operators friendly and accommodating.

LUMBER GRADING

Sawmills and lumberyards might sort their lumber into several specialized grades if they sell to a particular wood industry, but in an all-purpose business there are generally up to four grades:

FIRST AND SECOND (FaS): This is top-quality wood. It has the highest percentage of clear wood per board face (up to 91%). Both sides of a FaS board are graded (one less strictly), so this will be a nice board on both faces. Defects are at an absolute minimum.

SELECT: Grade requirements here are almost as tough as for FaS, but apply to one face only. A select board looks great on one side, but will have knots and defects on the other.

NO. 1 COMMON: More knots and blemishes are allowed in this grade (66% minimum clear surface), but these are still pleasing boards. Common lumber is graded on the worst face, so the other side is usually better. Many boards in an order will approach the quality of select.

NO. 2 COMMON: The next step down (50% minimum clear surface). This lumber is still structurally sound, but unrefined in appearance. (For comparison, No. 3 Common is used for boxes and pallets.)

Not everyone uses all four grades, and many outfits combine FaS and Select. There is also an unofficial grade in some areas, FaS one face, which is FaS on one side, No. 1 Common on the other. For a study in grading, get a rule book for \$3:

National Hardwood Lumber Association
P.O. Box 34518 Memphis, Tenn. 38184

Northeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association, Inc.
4 Fundy Road Falmouth, Maine 04105



"Eyeballing" a board shows how straight it is (note crook).

lengths over sixteen feet, and widths over ten inches. Bigger trees are harder to find and cost more to the mill. Additional operations like edging and surfacing fall under *milling charges*, and are also billed on a board-foot basis. Larger orders, though, are usually entitled to some sort of a break, and may get part of the milling expenses thrown in. If you are in an area blessed with several sawmills, by all means shop around, but be skeptical about quotes that are much higher or lower than an average. Lumber is a well established industry where everyone knows the market, and figures that sound too good to be true probably mean someone misunderstood your order.

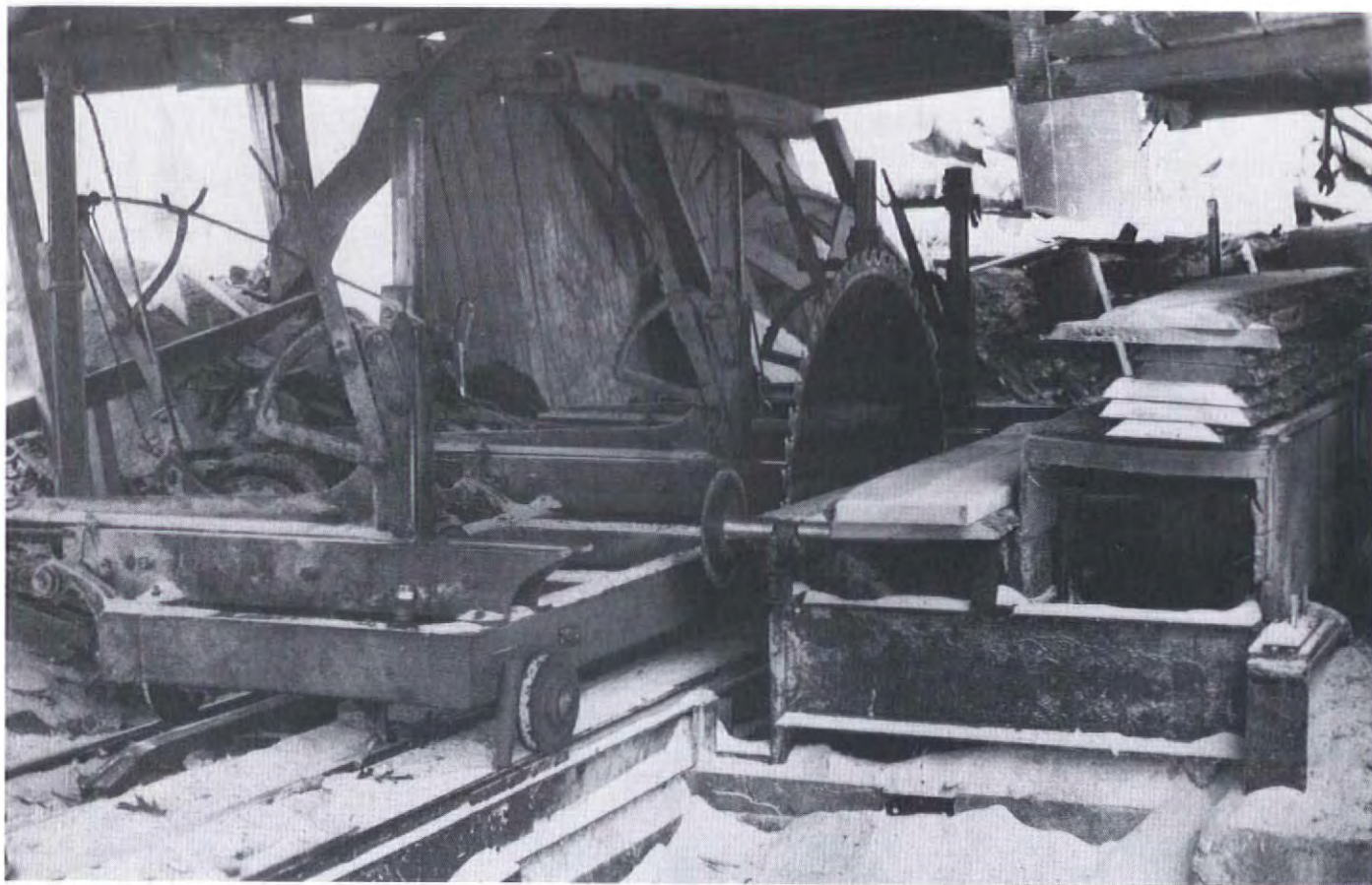
In addition to pricing, it's also a good idea to be comfortable with how sawmills season lumber. Sawn timber can be bought either *green*, *air-dry*, or *kiln-dry*, with green lumber coming from freshly cut trees, right off the saw blade. Green lumber has a high moisture content, and will shrink and change shape as it dries. It is usable green only in very rough carpentry, such as animal pens, and is most often dried by the purchaser. Air-dry lumber is stacked to dry in the open air, is stable, and is fine for most projects. Kiln-drying is the best method, usually reserved for furniture woods and paneling. Not every mill kiln-dries lumber, but most air-dry it, and all will sell it to you green.

A word about grading. Sawmills with a big-enough business grade lumber by its quality, with each category defining how much *clear* (knot- and defect-free) lumber a board has. Grading rules are a tricky mix of judgment and mathematics, and change through different regions of the country. It isn't necessary to know them, though, just be familiar with terms like *common*, *FaS*, and *select*. (See box.)

Doing Business

Now, once you've decided to investigate a sawmill, what's the best way to approach them? The same way as with any other business, really. You can call on the phone first for prices, but I like to do business in person and look at the operation as well as the lumber. Some pointers:

- ★ Pick a good time to go. Some mills prefer to handle small orders when they're not busy sawing. That way, they're not "down" the man who is answering questions in the yard. Saturday mornings are good.
- ★ Approach someone who looks like he's in charge. I'll open with a line like: "Hi ya, I'm looking for some rough one-inch pine, about thirty boards. You folks saw any lumber like that?" I mention "thirty boards" to suggest the potential size of my order — in this case small.
- ★ Talk over specifics, and look at some lumber. If the wood must be almost perfectly clear, say so early on. That way, nobody's time will be wasted. If they




Inside a small, random-length mill. The carriage at left guides the logs through the blade.

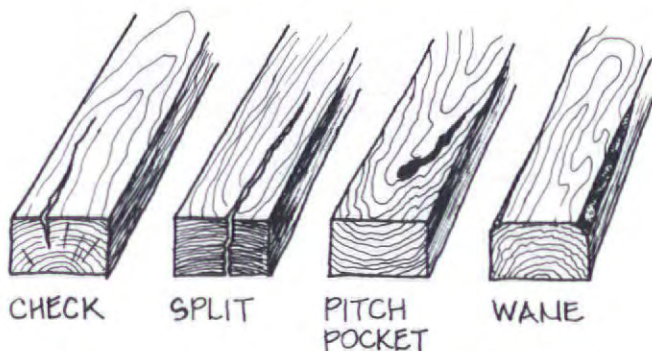
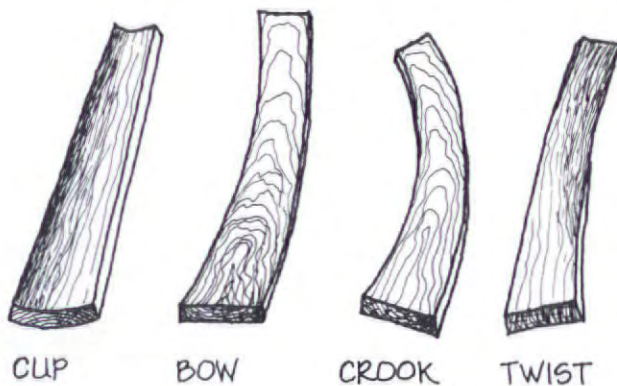
don't have what you need, ask where they think you can find it — most sawmills have their specialties, so "competitors" are usually willing to refer you to one another.

★ Place the order if he's got what you want or can saw it. When I'm taking the order with me, I help load the lumber, sorting it as we go. You might be able to arrange delivery. Not all mills will deliver, but they usually know someone to do the trucking.

★ Always bring a tape measure, pad and pencil, and maybe a calculator. While most companies are honest, you can't always rely on the mathematical aptitude of the fellow you're dealing with. And you may find you need to do some figuring on quantity or lengths.

How do you locate a sawmill? Sometimes it takes a little digging if you haven't noticed one from the road. State forestry departments and lumber-manufacturer associations may have listings, but smaller mills are frequently overlooked in these surveys, or don't bother with the paperwork to get themselves recorded. The best places to look are the services advertisements in local newspapers or bulletin boards at lumberyards. Asking around at a lumberyard or building supply house pays off well, too. The longest I've ever spent looking for a mill was sixty-five minutes — five for the directions, and an hour to hear the life story of the gas-station owner who gave them to me. 

LUMBER DEFECTS



REPRODUCTION furniture SOURCES

As a follow-up to "Furniture & Architecture" in the March-April 1987 OHJ, here is a selected list of companies that make period-furniture reproductions. It's not comprehensive, of course; there's no room to include every cabinetmaker, and we haven't listed major national brands. (See also the OHJ Buyer's Guide Catalog.)

ENGLISH, "TRADITIONAL," EARLY AMERICAN, "COUNTRY" LINES: STOCK

The Bombay Company
Box 79186, 5678 Bl. Mnd. Rd., Dept. OHJ
Fort Worth, TX 76179/(800) 535-6876
English, traditional reproductions. Mahogany finished; affordable prices. Free catalog. In TX, (817) 232-5650.

Cornucopia, Inc., At The Appleworks
PO Box 44-OHJ, Dept. OHJ
Harvard, MA 01451/(617) 772-0023
Country primitive & Early American furniture, handmade. Settees, rockers, Windsor chairs, dining tables, hutches. Catalog, \$2.

Furniture Traditions, Inc.
PO Box 5067, Dept. HJ1
Hickory, NC 28603/(704) 324-0611
Early American, traditional, country, formal English, French furniture. Catalog, \$3.

The Seraph
PO Box 500, Route 20, Dept. OHJ
Sturbridge, MA 01566/(617) 347-2241
Country sofas, wing chairs from \$695. Hand-crafted frames. Catalog, \$3.

Simms & Thayer Cabinetmakers
PO Box 35 OH, Dept. OHJ
N. Marshfield, MA 02059/(617) 826-7221
Signed authentic reproductions of American country furniture: tables, hutches, cupboards, beds, chairs. Catalog, \$3.

Western Reserve Antique Furniture Kit
Box 206A, Dept. OHJ
Bath, OH 44210
Shaker, New England, Pennsylvania Dutch furniture, accessories; kits or assembled. Also custom kits. Brochure, \$1.

Yield House, Inc.
Rt. 16, Dept. OHJ
N. Conway, NH 03860/(800) 258-4720
Quality pine and oak furniture, finished or in kits. Traditional, Early American, Queen Anne. Free catalog. In NH, (800) 552-0320.

18TH-, EARLY-19TH-CENTURY: CRAFTSMAN-MADE

Michael Camp
636 Starkweather, Dept. OHJ
Plymouth, MI 48170/(313) 459-1190

Peter Franklin, Cabinetmaker



Authentic replicas of 17th- and 18th-century furniture, hand-crafted. Period methods and woods. Beds, chairs, tables, desks, chests, cupboards. Catalog, \$3.

Chapin Townsend
PO Box 628, James Trail, Dept. OHJ
W. Kingston, RI 02982/(401) 783-6614
Handmade, authentic reproductions of 18th-century American furniture. Pieces are chosen for aesthetic and historical importance. Brochure, \$2.

Johns Congdon / Cabinetmaker
RFD 1, Box 350, Dept. OHJ
Moretown, VT 05660/(802) 485-8927
Fine cabinetwork in period styles. Authentic reproductions or original period designs. All work done by hand; all solid woods; fine brass hardware. Photos and references to serious inquiries. Catalog, \$3.

Ephraim Marsh
PO Box 266, Dept. 93, Dept. OHJ
Concord, NC 28026/(704) 782-0814
Adaptions and reproductions of 18th-century furniture. Mostly moderate in price. Wood chips and fabric samples upon request. Catalog, \$2.

Peter Franklin, Cabinetmaker
1 Cottage St., PO Box 1166, Dept. OHJ
Easthampton, MA 01027/(413) 527-2127

*The Hitchcock
Chair Co.*



Hand-crafted reproductions of Windsor chairs. Techniques and tools would be familiar to an 18th-century furniture-maker. Also custom reproductions of 18th- or early-19th-century pieces. Catalog, \$2.

James Lea - Cabinetmaker
Harkness House, Dept. OHJ
Rockport, ME 04856/(207) 236-3632
Hand-crafted reproductions of 18th-century American furniture and Windsor chairs. Prices comparable to commercial reproduction furniture. Catalog, \$3.

Mario Rodriguez Cabinetmaker
419 Manhattan Ave., Dept. OHJ
Brooklyn, NY 11222
(718) 387-6685
18th-century furniture hand-crafted with techniques of that period. Also, restoration. No literature.

18TH- & EARLY-19TH-CENTURY: STOCK

Stephen A. Adams, Furnituremakers / W.H. James Co.
Mill Hill Rd., Box 130, Dept. OHJ
Denmark, ME 04022/(207) 452-2444
Handmade Colonial reproduction furniture, including Windsor chairs, rockers, and benches; banister back chairs, tables, highboys, blanket chests, china cabinets, pencil-post beds. Catalog, \$3.

The Bartley Collection, Ltd.
747 Oakwood Ave., Dept. OHJ
Lake Forest, IL 60045/(312) 634-9510
Authentic Queen Anne and Chippendale style furniture reproductions, either hand-made or kit form. Many are exact copies of 18th-century originals. Hand-crafted from solid Honduras mahogany and Pennsylvania cherry. Price range: \$65 to \$1,600. Free catalog.

Vulpiani



Cohasset Colonials

643X Ship St., Dept. OHJ
Cohasset, MA 02025/(617) 383-0110
Reproductions of early American furniture,
both kits and assembled. Shaker, Queen
Anne, Chippendale, country. Catalog, \$2.

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

PO Box C, Dept. OHJ
Williamsburg, VA 23187/(804) 229-1000
More than 2,500 examples of fine furni-
shings approved by the Colonial Williamsburg
Foundation as authentic reproductions,
adaptations, and interpretations of an-
tiques at Williamsburg. Catalog, \$8.95.

Habersham Plantation Corp.

PO Box 1209, Dept. JR
Toccoa, GA 30577/(404) 886-1476
17th- and 18th-century country colonial
furniture reproductions, hand-crafted
from pine, oak, and cherry. Includes tables,
beds, chairs, sideboards, and chests. Sold
through 200 dealers in U.S. Catalog of com-
plete collection, \$10.

Historic Charleston Reproductions

105 Broad St., Box 622, Dept. OHJ
Charleston, SC 29402/(803) 723-8292
Reproductions of 18th- and early-19th-
century pieces from historic Charleston;
sales generate royalties to further pres-
ervation of Charleston. Catalog, \$7.50.

Hitchcock Chair Co.

PO Box 369, Dept. OHJ
New Hartford, CT 06057/(203) 379-8531
Manufacturers of high-quality American
traditional designs — crafted in solid maple,
ash, and cherry — including the popular
Hitchcock chair. Catalog, \$1.

Shaker Workshops

PO Box 10280HJ, Dept. OHJ
Concord, MA 01742/(617) 646-8985
Reproduction Shaker furniture kits and
accessories. Showroom is at Old Schwamb
Mill, Mill Lane, Arlington, Mass. Catalog, \$1.

Winterthur Museum and Gardens

Dept. OHJ
Winterthur, DE 19735/(302) 656-8591
Furniture, textiles, and decorative acces-
sories representing the "Golden Age" of
American design (1740-1815). Available on
museum grounds and at dealers through-
out the U.S. 3 mail-order catalogs: Gift and
Garden Sampler, \$2; Winterthur Gift Cata-
logue, \$2; Winterthur Reproductions, \$10.

**EMPIRE, GREEK REVIVAL, COTTAGE,
EARLY VICTORIAN**

Craftsman's Corner Woodcraft Collection
4012 NE 14th St., PO Box AP, Dept. OHJ
Des Moines, IA 50302/(515) 265-3239

Magnolia Hall

Kit reproductions of Cottage-style desks,
bookshelves, cabinets, chairs. Free
catalog.

Lewis Mittman, Inc

214 E. 52nd St., Dept. OHJ
New York, NY 10022/(212) 888-5580
Reproduction furniture in various styles, in-
cluding high-style Empire and Greek Reviv-
al chairs and Victorian chaises longues.
Through decorators; catalog, \$15.

Prospect Hill Antiques

Prospect Hill Rd., Dept. OHJ
Georges Mill, NH 03571/(603) 763-9676
Cottage-style furniture reproductions.
Good quality, reasonably priced. No cat-
alog; stop by, write, or call.

VICTORIAN**American Furniture Galleries**

PO Box 60, Dept. OHJ
Montgomery, AL 36101/(800) 547-5240
Two widely-known lines of Victorian re-
production furniture, Carlton McLendon
and Capitol Victorian. All pieces hand-
crafted from solid Honduras mahogany.
Available at retail dealers throughout U.S.
and Canada. Brochure, \$1.

Artistic Woodworking, Inc.

163 Grand Ave., Dept. OHJ
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043/(313) 465-5700
Will reproduce Victorian furniture from
drawings or photos. Also, furniture resto-
ration. Free literature.

Davis Cabinet Company

Box 60444, Dept. OHJ
Nashville, TN 37206/(615) 244-7100
Victorian, American Traditional, English,
French, and Oriental furniture. The Lillian
Russell Victorian Collection is the oldest
collection in continuous manufacture in the
U.S. Brochure, \$2.

Kimball Furniture Reproductions, Inc.

1600 Royal St., PO Box 460, Dept. OHJ
Jasper, IN 47546/(812) 482-1600
Authentic 19th-century Victorian and
French reproductions, hand-carved from
solid Honduras mahogany. Sofas, chairs,
tables, and dining room sets. Free
brochure.

Craftsman's Corner**Magnolia Hall**

726 Andover Dr., Dept. OHJ
Atlanta, GA 30327/(404) 256-4747
Hand-carved, mahogany Victorian re-
production furniture. Also accessories,
brass and oak and Louis XIV pieces. Large
selection of whatnot stands and curio cab-
inets. Catalog, \$1.

Martha M. House Furniture

1022 So. Decatur St., Dept. OHJ
Montgomery, AL 36104/(205) 264-3558
A large mail-order source for Victorian re-
production furniture. Hand-carved solid
mahogany pieces; tables with wood or Car-
rara marble tops. Sofas, chairs, bedroom
and dining furniture. Catalog, \$2. Catalog
of lamps, pictures, other accessories, \$2.

TURN-OF-CENTURY OAK**Craftsman's Corner Woodcraft Collection**

4012 NE 14th St., PO Box AP, Dept. OHJ
Des Moines, IA 50302/(515) 265-3239
Oak turn-of-century antique reproduc-
tions in kit form: classic oak roll-top desk,
swivel chairs, file cabinets, barrister book-
shelves, dry sink, bookcase, chest of
drawers, night stand, steamer trunk, small
tables, and accessories. Grand Rapids,
Cottage pieces. Free catalog.

Prospect Hill Antiques

Prospect Hill Road, Dept. OHJ
Georges Mill, NH 03571/(603) 763-9676
High-quality, reasonably priced, solid wood
chairs that are accurate replicas: turn-
of-century oak "pressed-back" side & arm
chairs (three styles), oak hoop- and
spoke-back kitchen chairs, "country"-
style pine ladderbacks, child's rockers.
Call or write for more information.

POST-VICTORIAN**Arkitektura**

PO Box 210, Dept. OHJ
Princeton, NJ 08540/(609) 683-9654
Beautifully crafted reproduction furniture,
originally designed by Eliel & Eero Saarinen
in the 1920s-'30s: \$1,750 to \$15,000. Free
literature.

Fifty/50

793 Broadway, Dept. OHJ
New York, NY 10003/(212) 777-3208
Specializes in reproductions of pieces by
early-20th-century architects. Call or
write for more information.

Vulpiani

8 Bridge St., Dept. OHJ
Florida, NY 10921/(914) 651-7331
Early-20th-century-style furniture (Stick-
ley, Wright, Hoffman, Mackintosh, Greene &
Greene); also provide consultation, render-
ings, original designs. Color brochure, \$2.

Cornucopia Inc.

POST-VICTORIAN I · N · T · E · R · I · O · R · S ·

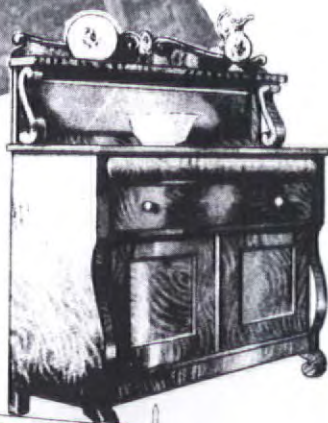
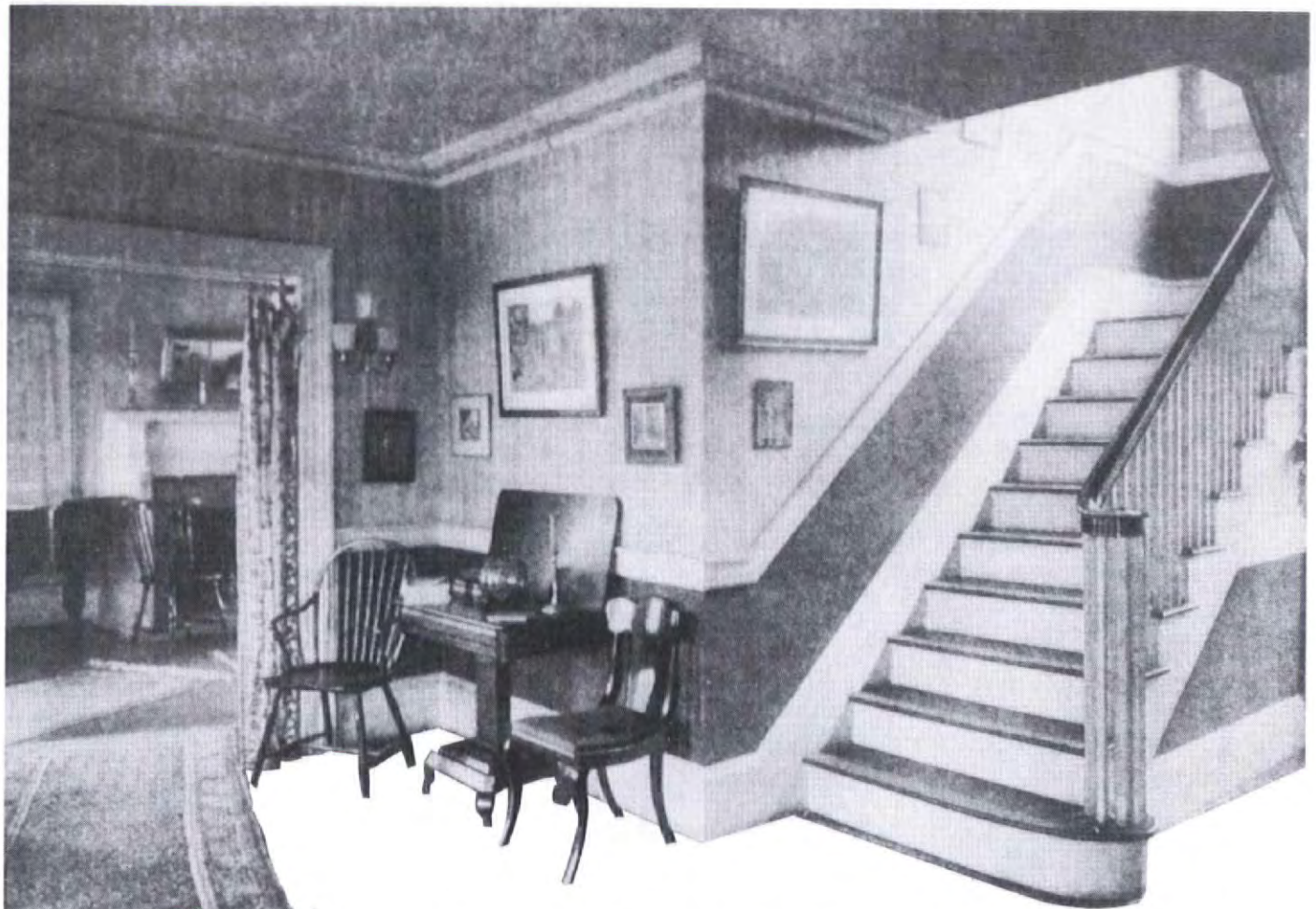


BY EVE KAHN

America's obsession with things colonial dates back to the 1850s, when novels like *The Scarlet Letter* romanticized the Puritans. The Colonial Revival interior made its appearance late in the 19th century; the originals were then almost

Above: A Grand Rapids company used this illustration of middle-class comfort in a c. 1900 ad. The massive furniture would probably have been called "colonial" at the time because of its classical details, particularly the desk at the rear of the room.

Left: A c. 1916 sideboard with Sheraton-inspired proportions has decidedly 20th-century hardware and narrow, plain legs.

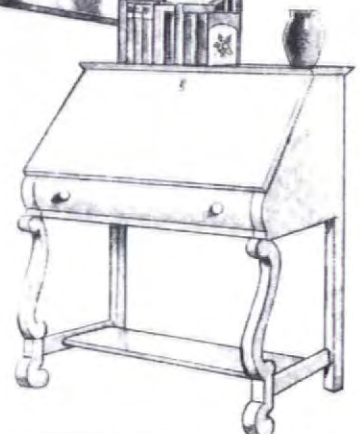
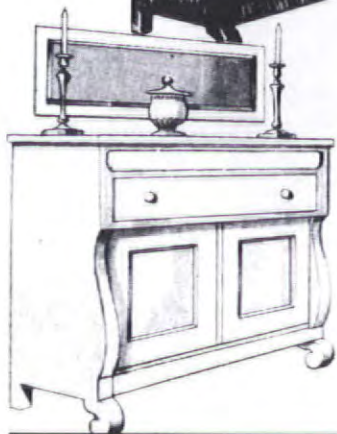


two centuries old, so the time had come for a revival. The originals were finally being restored by architects who, newly respectful of the old, copied and interpreted colonial motifs in new construction. Added to that was a reaction against the fussiness of Victorian decor. And the Colonial Revival also addressed the country's long-standing longing for its simpler, agrarian past.

The fervor peaked after the

Above: A c. 1910 Colonial Revival hall, with standard colonial stair, has several of the ever-present scatter rugs. Note that the picture wires are not visible, an innovation that came in the 20th century; before this, pictures hung from a picture rail on long, visible wires.

Left & Right: Two examples from a 1916 decorating-advice book show some of the ways in which late-Victorian furniture was updated.



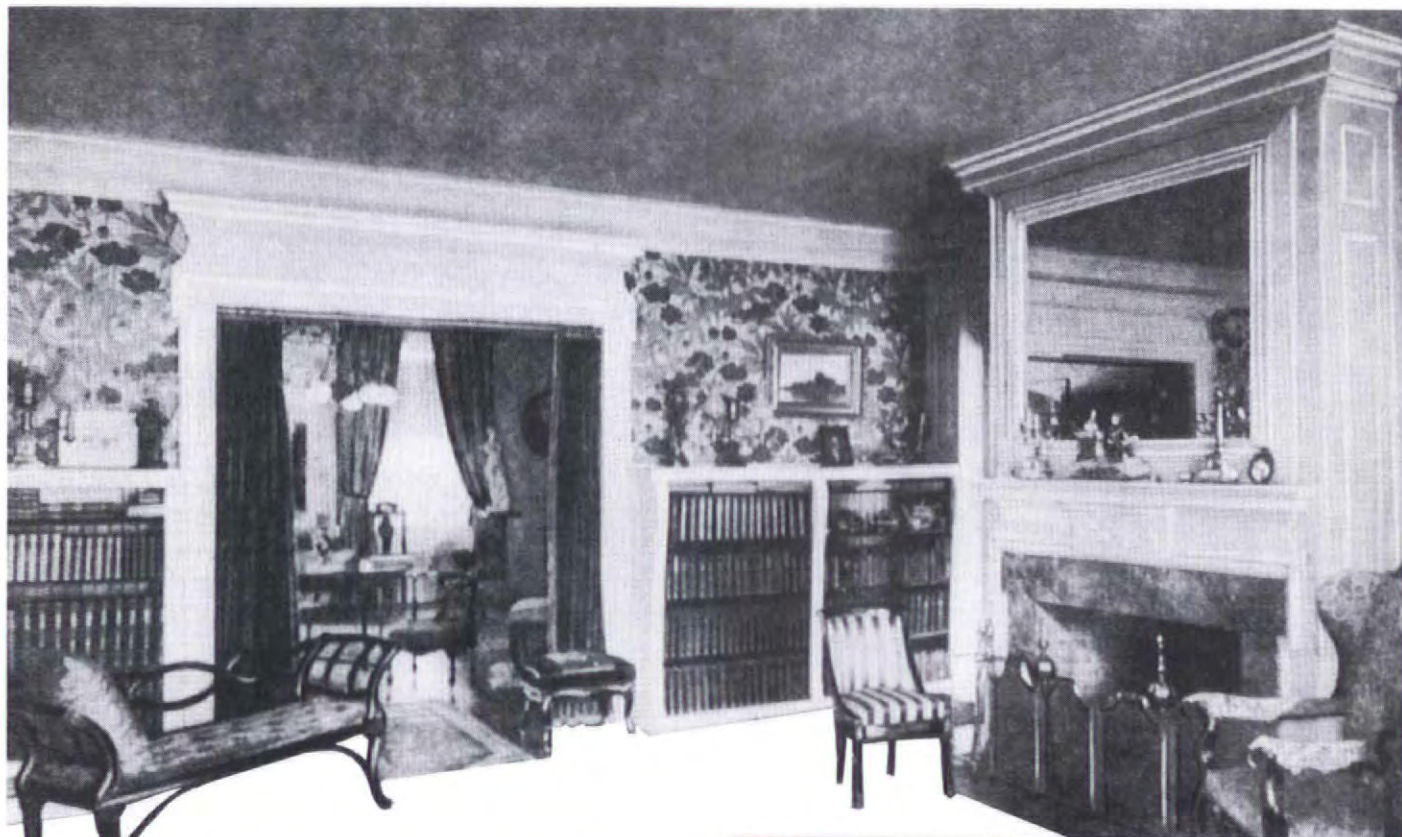


celebration of America's centennial in 1876. Early Colonial Revival houses appeared in the 1880s; the style, in various incarnations, is still being used today.

Between 1890 and 1915, as now, the degree of fidelity to colonial originals varied widely. Some houses closely followed colonial floor plans, with narrow center halls and square rooms. Others maintained the broad halls and irregularly-shaped rooms of the Queen Anne house; a classical pilaster or Federal mantel provided "colonial" style. (Rooms with a free mixture of classical details — pilasters, columns, dentilled cornice — are also known as Free Classic.) Simple, painted colonial woodwork was sometimes used, but in the early days, woodwork was often left unpainted and given a high-gloss varnish.

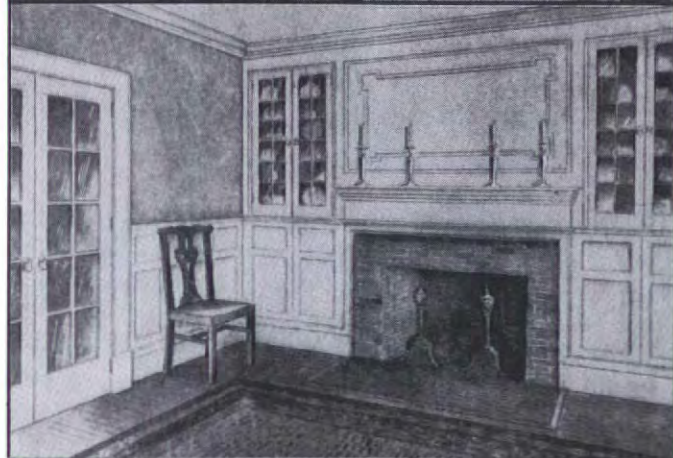
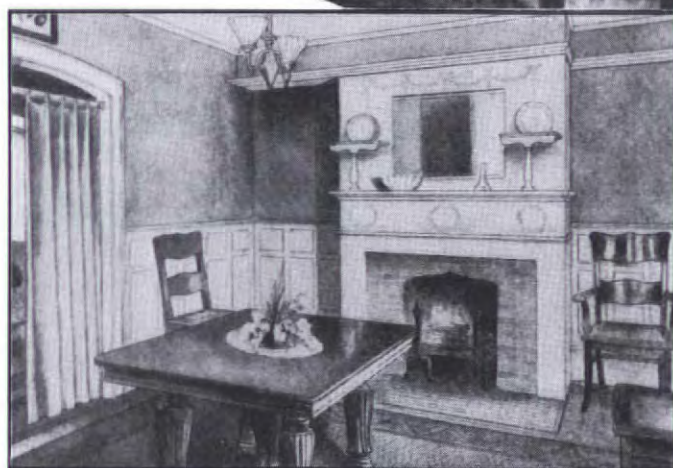
Above: Sheraton-inspired reproduction furniture fills this early (c. 1900) attempt at a pure period room. The paintings atop busy wallpaper, the different upholstery fabrics, and the cluttered curios indicate lingering Victorian influence, but the wallpaper's light background is typical of Colonial Revival.

Left: An interior-design textbook of 1910 illustrated this transformation of a Victorian room.



Most of the major furniture styles of the 18th and early-19th centuries — Sheraton, Hepplewhite, Chippendale, Queen Anne, William and Mary, and American Empire — were revived by 1900. Some pieces were accurate reproductions, and others mixed historical styles or incorporated modern motifs borrowed from Art Deco.

The transition from Victorian to colonial decoration was awkward. Victoriana survived, often painted, reupholstered, or stripped of ornament (see illustrations, p. 55). Wallpaper was lighter in color; florals on pale backgrounds and stripes were most popular. Ceilings were usually left unornamented, and friezes as well in most houses, though better houses had crown moulding (see top photo, p. 56). And Colonial Revival rooms were not immune from those ubiquitous scatter rugs that filled all post-Victorian interiors. Accessories, including paintings, porcelain, and knickknacks, were kept to a minimum in most stylish houses.



Above: Plentiful painted woodwork characterizes this c. 1910 parlor. The striped chair near the fireplace may be a c. 1830 original, brought from the attic and reupholstered when the taste for American Empire returned. Certain details of the room — paintings over wallpaper, rugs that clash with the paper, portieres (doorway curtains) — were soon to fall out of fashion.

Right: A transformed parlor from 1910 indicates the ascetic simplicity that Colonial Revival could attain.

For Dropped Ceilings



OHJ doesn't usually recommend dropped ceilings, but sometimes they're unavoidable — e.g., if there's no place

else to install heating or plumbing pipes. If you're in such a predicament, you can avoid the "acoustical" look with Above View's handsome Art Nouveau, Victorian, and classical ceiling tiles.

The pieces fit a standard 2x2 grid. Made of a patented plaster composition, they come in white for \$15-20 (depending on quantity), more for other finishes: 1300 colors, *faux bois*, *faux marbre*, simulated gold, silver, or brass.

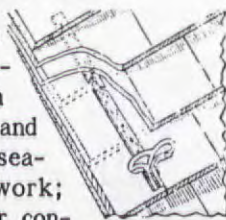
Above View, 241 E. Erie St., Dept. OHJ, Milwaukee, WI 53202. (414) 271-4477.



Snow Guards

I know, it seems funny to be thinking about snow in May. But spring and summer are the season for roofing work; while you or your contractor are up on the ladder, you might as well install snow guards.

These clever gadgets prevent ice dams in your gutters and keep snow from falling off the roof. The Roof Center sells 20 varieties, from \$1 copper wires to \$9.50 bronze eagles. (These make great ornaments in any climate.) The company also makes snow rails (horizontal poles attached to the roof by brackets), has offices in Maryland and Virginia, and sells nationwide by mail. Roof Center, 5244 River Rd., Dept. OHJ, Bethesda, MD 20816. (301) 656-9231.



Classic Clapboard

Radially-sawn clapboard was used for some 200 years because of its durability, warp resistance, and ability to hold paint. But after the early-20th century, the technology for making it all but disappeared.

Bill and Mayra Donnell did much research to revive the technique, also known as quarter sawing. In the process they came up with some old tricks — some of their machinery dates from the 19th century — and some new ones: Their clapboards are both exactly uniform and up to 8 feet long, standards which old clapboard couldn't meet.

The process is relatively simple. A blade, running parallel to the log, slices out thin wedges (shown below) which are then smoothed on a 19th-century clapboard planer, trimmed, and cleared of imperfections. The board is then graded as



#1 quality (for fine restoration or high-quality new construction) or #2 (has a few knots and irregularities, fine for repairs because it blends with old clapboard). Prices per 100 sq.ft., stock sizes, are \$210-\$255; custom sizes, \$260-\$360. A brochure is \$1. Donnell's Clapboard Mill, County Rd., Box 1560, Dept. OHJ, Sedgwick, ME 04676. (207) 359-2036.

Fragile as Iron

Daniel Hurwitz describes his ornamental ironwork with terms like "hot riveting," "collaring," and "fire welding." But when you see his work, you'll scarcely believe



such hard-sounding words could create such delicate pieces. In fact it's hard to imagine how something as intractable as iron was curved and rippled into such airy shapes.

He does both restoration and new work, all custom (he recently restored the gates at the White House's south entrance). His specialty is gates (up to \$15,000) and stair rails (about \$600 per linear foot). All pieces are made entirely by hand.

Daniel is happy to ship, will travel to install, and sends out a free flyer. Daniel Hurwitz, General Delivery, Dept. OHJ, Brownsville, MD 21715. (301) 293-1168.



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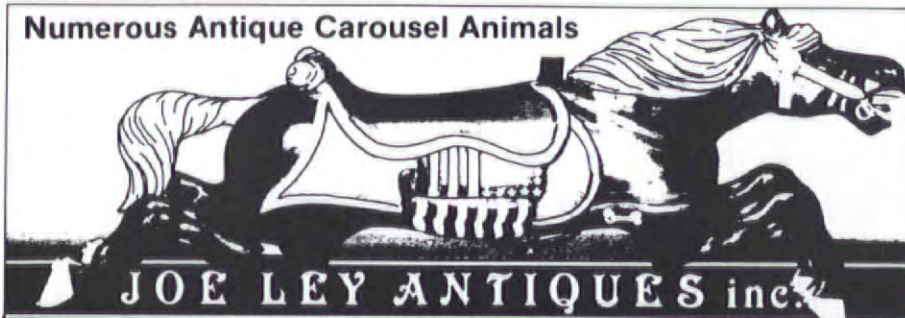
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Brochure: 50 cents



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(718) 643-0990 Ask for Greg Hodgman

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Fancy Floorcloths

Some people think canvas floorcloths were the poor man's alternative to rugs. But historically they

turned up in elegant homes like Mount Vernon and the White House. Olde Virginea Floorcloth & Trading Co. offers numerous designs in their \$2 catalog: florals, Orientals, imitation tiles and quilts, plus custom work. Prices range from \$60 for a hearth cloth, \$360 for 3x12, to \$1296 for 9x12.

Expect to wait 4 to 6 weeks for your order: the canvas has to be primed, hand-painted with oils, and seasoned. The company also makes pencil-post beds (\$925 for basic twin or full, more for larger sizes or custom) and old-fashioned silhouette portraits (\$11 for single profile, \$40 for wedding couple). Olde Virginea Floorcloth & Trading Co., PO Box 3305, Dept. OHJ, Portsmouth, VA 23701. (804) 393-0095.



Staten Island Crafts

The folks who demonstrate historic crafts at Richmondtown Restoration, Staten Island, N.Y., are not there just for show. Everything they make is for sale; visitors can take home handsome, historically accurate pieces at a modest price.

Staten Island Advance



Gary O'Brien's baskets (\$8 to \$200) carry everything from strawberries to eggs to oysters. They're made of wood splints, sliced and smoothed with antique tools, and remarkably durable: People

at Richmondtown kick them around, fill them with debris, and hose them off, with no adverse effects. Gary's catalog, \$3.50, tells the history of wood-splint baskets.



William McMillen makes tin housewares (canisters, coffeepots, trays), accessories (boxes, dust pans, basins), and lighting and heating

devices (sconces, lanterns, roasting



oven). A small tray is cilling several rooms starts at \$750. David both restores old work and designs original work in historical styles.



Pre-1850 Artistry

David Wiggins likes any kind of decorative painting, as long as it was created before the Civil War. "Anything after that, I don't care for," he says. Which is why, if you hire him to put stencils or murals on your walls, don't expect Eastlake or Morris: Folk landscapes or stencils and classical motifs are his specialty.

Murals cost up to \$10,000; sten-

\$10; sconce, \$20; oven, \$265. An illustrated price list is free.

Besides making footwear for the site's many interpreters, Chris Schreiber reproduces, practically stitch for stitch, leather-covered boxes and trunks (\$150 to \$375), fire buckets



(once used to pass water to combat a fire, \$100), and cartridge bags (for c. 1750-1850 soldier costumes, great carrying cases; \$50 to \$100). Shoes cost \$150 - \$175, boots \$250. Chris has no brochure.

Richmondtown's potter Stephen Nutt reproduces redware (brick-red pottery with yellow or cream designs) made or used in New York, 1750 - 1850. Prices are between \$7.50 (tavern mug) and \$40 (large jar). An illustrated price list is free.

All craftsmen can be contacted in person (it's a lovely place to visit in spring) or by mail. Richmondtown Restoration, 441 Clarke Ave., Staten Island, NY 10306.



His taste for the past comes from his uncle and father, twin brothers who pioneered house restoration in post-World-War-II New Hampshire. (Continuing the tradition, David's brother Gerard is also a decorative painter). And David was a folk-art dealer in the '60s, which further helped him develop what he calls "a real familiarity with old ways." David Wiggins, RFD 2, Box 420, Dept. OHJ, Tilton, NH 03276. (603) 286-3046.

CLASSIC RUMFORD FIREPLACES

“
We must never forget that it is the
room that heats the air, and not the
air that heats the room.”

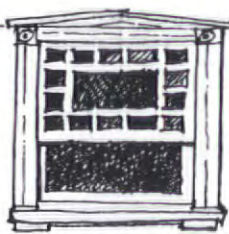
Count Rumford, 1798

Tall and graceful, the all masonry Classic Rumford fireplace is shallow to reflect more heat into the room. And the throat is streamlined to require less air to carry away the smoke. More heat and less air means more comfort and efficiency.

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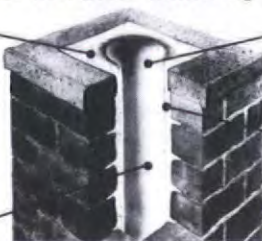
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with 6. Fotia also produces classical capitals, ceiling medallions, and brackets, \$400-\$600, and does custom work.

Through architects and designers; illustrated catalog is \$5. Fotia Stone, 979 3rd Ave., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10022. (212) 319-3131.



Not Just Victorian

Florence Schroeder, owner of Victorian Collectibles, doesn't live in a Victorian house. Instead, she's covered the walls and ceilings of her 1950s ranch with her company's spectacular reproduction wallpapers. All are documentary copies of 19th- and early-20th-century designs and, she reassures non-Victorian owners, "they'll look great in any house."

To match the papers, the company makes borders, rugs, fabrics, tiles, moulding, floorcloths, and murals. A \$3



literature packet includes illustrations of room settings because, Ms. Schroeder says, "It's important to see how these things look when they're put together." Victorian Collectibles, 845 E. Glenbrook Rd., Dept. OHJ,

Milwaukee, WI 53217. (414) 352-6910.



Stair Parts

Every day, as I walk to work, I pass stoops that look just like the

one pictured — except the cast-iron newel posts are gone, or the balusters have rusted out.

Steve Dorrien, a Brooklyn restoration craftsman, has mastered an inexpensive way to replace these missing parts: casting fiberglass-reinforced resin. He stocks several newel posts and one baluster and rail. Prices for posts are between \$550 and \$600; balusters, \$85; 4-ft. handrail section, \$150. He will travel and do custom work.

Steve has also found that the resin can substitute for missing pieces of embossed metal ceilings. Dorrien Restoration, 155 Garfield Pl., Dept. OHJ, Brooklyn, NY 11217. (718) 965-0847.

Victorian Vanity

This attractive vanity cabinet has a "country Victorian" look, reminiscent of Cottage furniture of the late 1800s. (For more on the topic, see "Furniture & Architecture," page 39, OHJ Mar/Apr '87.)

The unit comes with a wood (\$400-\$600) or marble top (\$300 more). It will soon be available with a solid marble top (no hole for a sink) for use as a washstand or nightstand; it would look great with an old bowl-and-pitcher set. A full catalog of the company's bathroom furnishings is \$1. Heads Up, 133 Copeland St., Dept.

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The entire company consists of Chris Christou, his son John and daughter Valerie. It's the kind of place that doesn't advertise or put out a catalog, relying on word of mouth among tradespeople. But they're happy to work with homeowners, either over the counter or by mail (UPS). George Taylor Specialties, 187 Lafayette St., 4th fl., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10013. (212) 226-5369.

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between \$500 and \$1700. Brochures are free. Union Metal Corp., PO Box 9920, Dept. OHJ, Canton, OH 44711. (216) 456-7653.

Deco Lawn Chairs

Our readers who own Art Deco or International Style homes (all five of you, right?) should know about these chairs. French architect Rene Herbst designed them in 1924, and they'd make great deck or lawn furniture.

It's hard to appreciate the full effect in black and white: The tubing is black or chrome, the rubber cords are bright red, blue, yellow, or green. The side chair is \$548 black, \$590 chrome; adjustable lounge chair, \$1155 black, \$1200



chrome; the armchair's price has not yet been determined. The company sends out a free color flyer. JG Furniture Systems, Dept. OHJ, Quakertown, PA 18951. (215) 536-7343.



Bayou Chairs

"My grandmother had them!" has been almost every OHJ staffer's response to these Bayou chairs. Flanders offers 6 colors: red, pale green, lemon yellow, pink, white, and blue, sold through Conran's and other stores. Suggested retail is \$49. Flanders Industries, PO Box 1788, Dept. OHJ, Fort Smith, AR 72902. (501) 785-2351.



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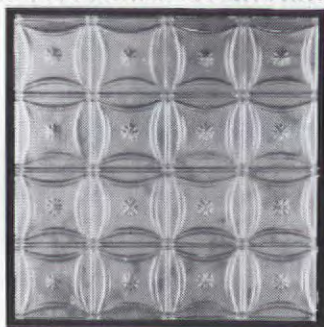
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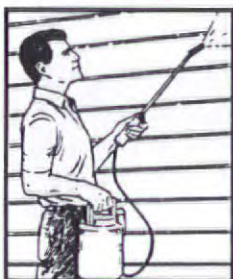
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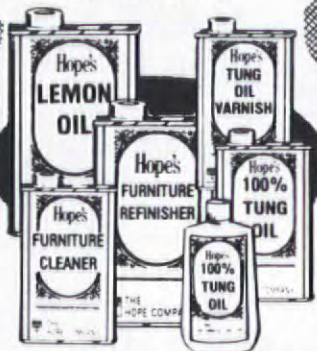
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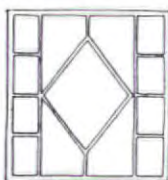
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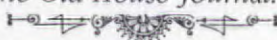
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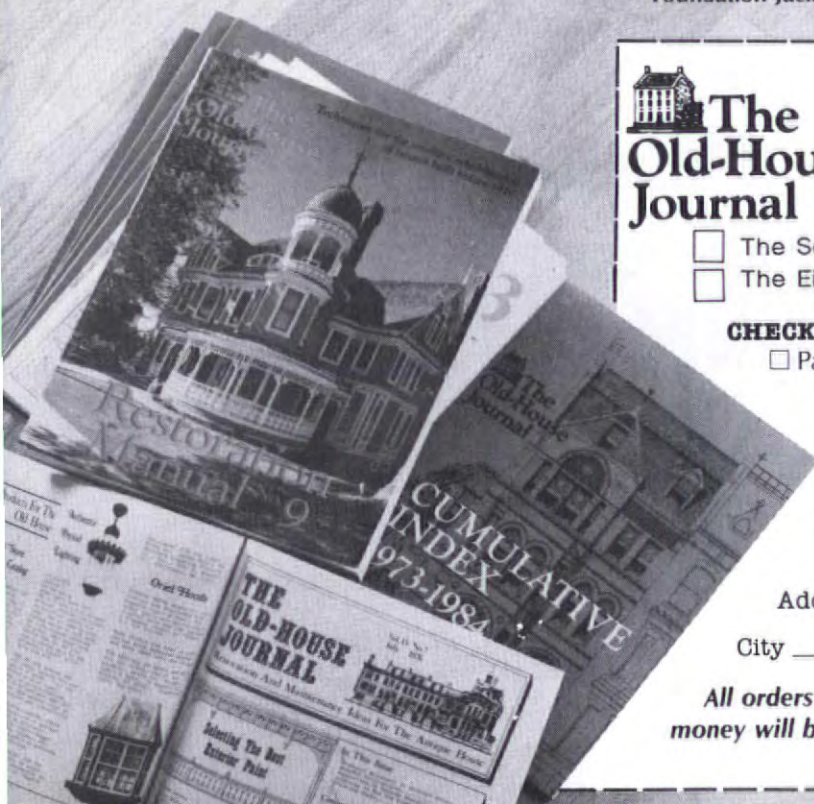
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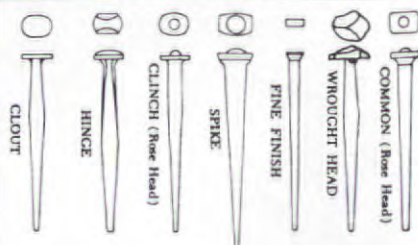


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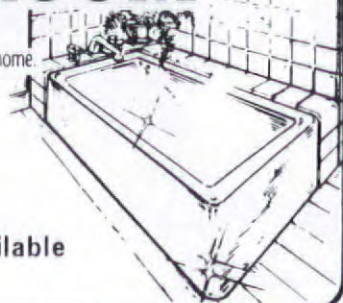
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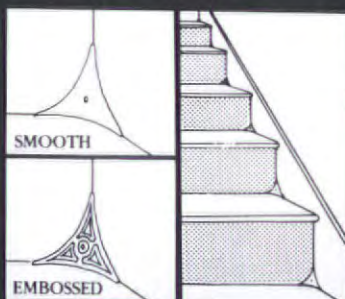
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111. Medallions & Mouldings — Lightweight polymer medallions and cornice mouldings are based on authentic designs — but are lighter and easier to install than the plaster originals. Free brochure. McHugh/Rollins.

128. Metal Ceilings — Using original dies, this company produces richly ornamented metal ceilings in turn-of-the-century patterns. Includes center plates, borders, corner plates, cornice and filler plates. 72-p. catalog. W. F. Norman. \$3.

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167. Interior Insulating Windows — Attractive custom-fitted acrylic interior panels preserve historic exterior while stopping cold and drafts. Easy to remove & clean. Phone estimates: 804-231-2964. Free flyer. Thermo-Press Corp.

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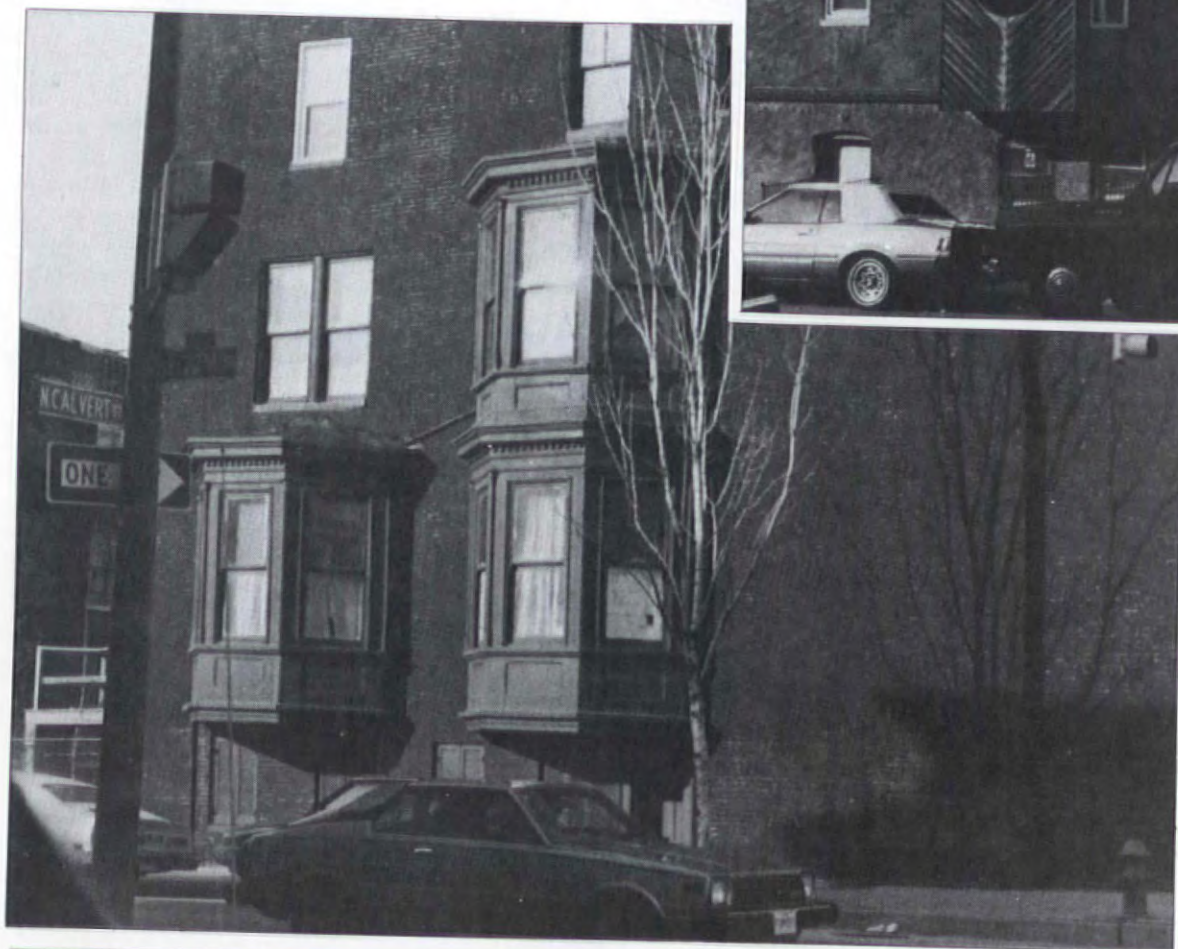
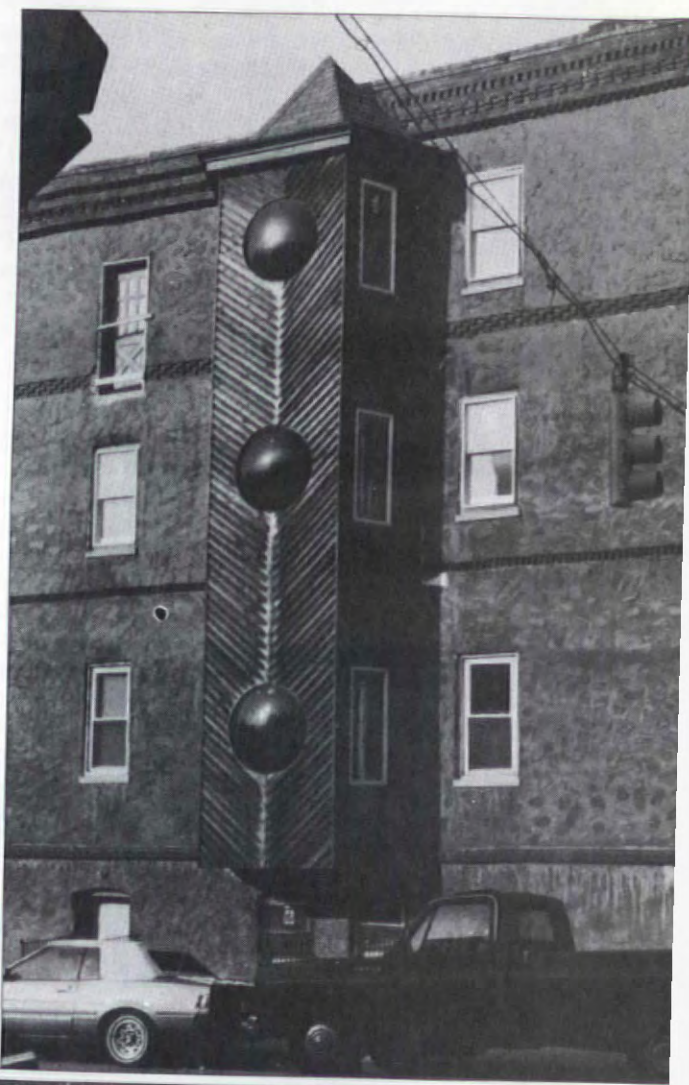
opinion... Remuddling

OUTRAGEOUS O · R · I · E · L

"An instant classic!" announced our production editor as he passed this award winner to me. A typical 19th-century oriel window has been wrapped in diagonally-laid boards and pierced by what appear to be huge bowling balls (bubble skylights, pressed into dis-service, is our guess). Below, a similar building nearby — in a less altered state.

Rosalie Ann Figge Beasley of Leonardtown, Maryland, submitted the photos, taken in Baltimore, with the comment, "Every time I drive by I think about how awful it looks."

— E. Kahn



WIN FAME AND \$50:
If you spot a classic example of remuddling, send us a clear black & white photo. We'll award \$50 if your photos are selected. The message is more dramatic if you send along a picture of a similar unremuddled building. Remuddling Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69 Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

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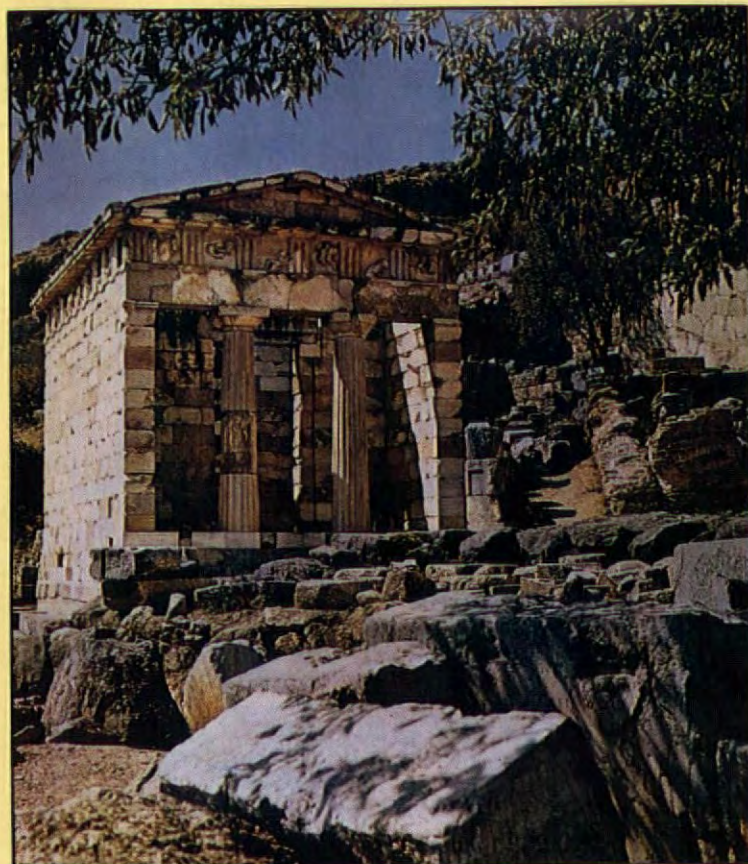
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Delphi

GREEK REVIVAL

(Or the case of the numskull professor)

After learning the architectural history of ancient Greece, I taught it at a university. Often I would take a short-cut down Temple Street in Owego where I was mystified by this little charmer, with its pair of Ionic columns flanked by pillars. On passing it I would grumble, "Numskull country builder! Foolish rural economy!"

Then one day the walls in my mind collapsed and I saw the connection with one of the most famous buildings of Antiquity—the Athenian Treasury at Delphi. Like the little temple on Temple Street, it is a small building. The configuration is called "distyle-in-antis," meaning "two columns located between extensions of the sidewalls, or antae." In fact, the sidewalls of the house don't extend, but the box pillars make it look like they do when viewed head-on.

I was the numskull, not the local builder. I had forgotten my promise to students that the architectural history of Europe can be learned from Victorian houses in the back streets of North America.

—John Crosby Freeman
Watkins Glen, N.Y.

More on Greek Revival in this issue.