

# Old-House Journal

RESTORATION TECHNIQUES

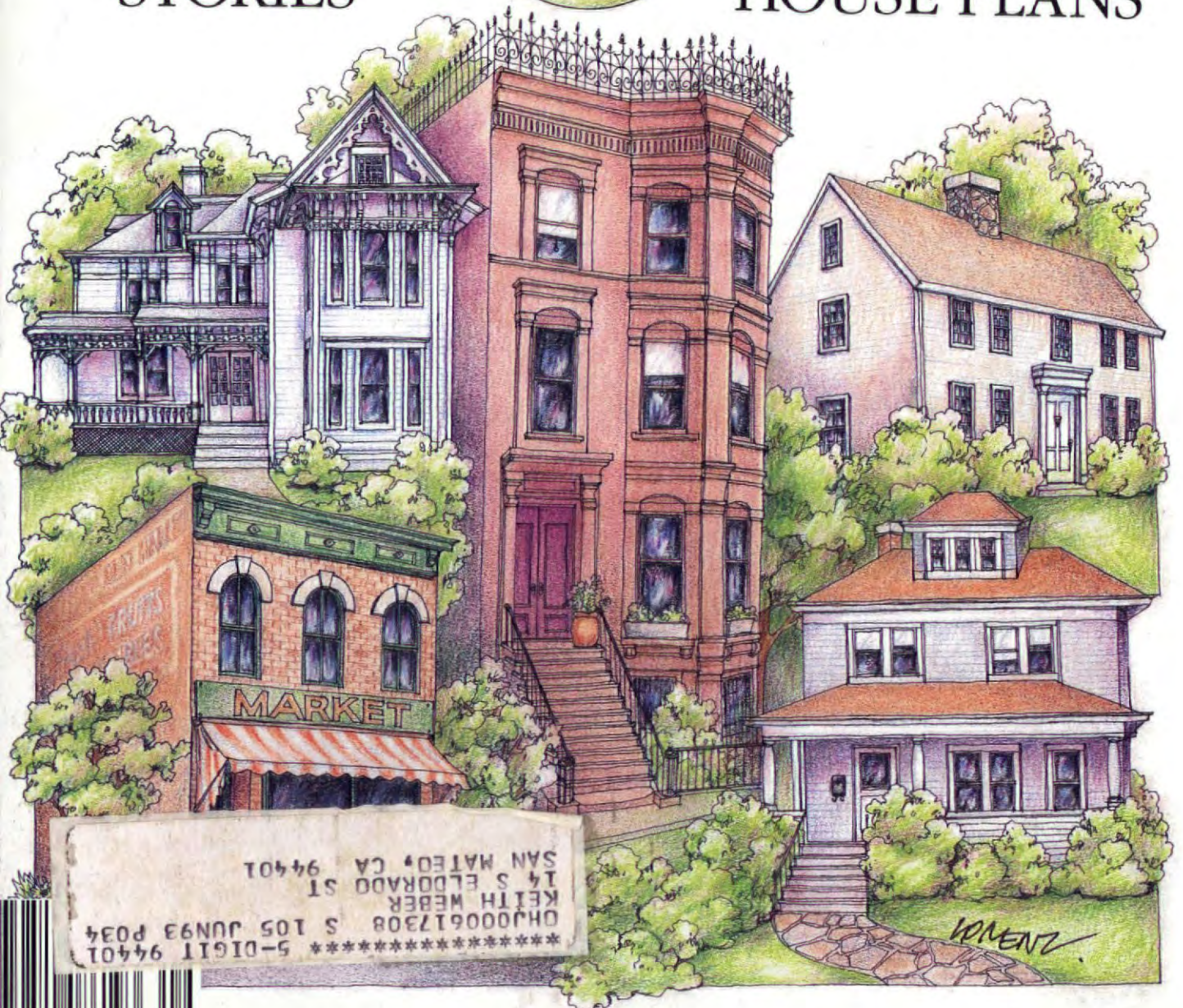
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**Y**ears ago, when I got serious about this, I already knew what it was like to live through renovation and I loved the worn spots in old houses. But I had a lot of catching up to do. All my spare time went toward giving myself an education in preservation technology: weekends spent walking across girders (no floors), nights with dry technical journals, lectures on decay. During that period, I went to rural Illinois for an intensive three-day seminar on masonry (especially why it deteriorates and how it can be cleaned). With the enthusiasm of one who has found her Career, I told my Dad about my upcoming trip. He wanted to know what the seminar was about. "The nature of dirt on masonry," I answered.

"You know, you're a weird kid, Patricia."

Well, ten years have passed and I haven't changed much. This month I got excited about radiators. ("Look at this *pile* of reader questions about radiators! Let's do a comprehensive article and answer them once and for all.") To my utter delight, the staff who've come along in the intervening years apparently have the same passion for the nitty-gritty. Some of

them also have an odd sense of humor — but let's face it, eight pages on restoring radiators could get pretty heavy if we didn't have fun with it.

This issue is vintage OHJ — and we had a great time putting it together for you. Take a break from your house project and celebrate with us!

## An Anniversary Present

"And what's the magazine about, dear?" I'm asked by every new ac-

quaintance, and always I reply, "It's about fixing old houses."

"No, it's not," protests my champion. "You make it sound like you grind out some how-to thing. It's a different kind of magazine," he assures our visitor. "It's technical but then they do ghost stories. It has humor. It has a point of view."

Never sure of what words to use, never sure of how this painfully personal conversation will be received, I can only repeat that it's about fixing old houses. "Restoration, not remodeling," I'll offer in explanation.

He is exasperated by my rag-doll answer. "I've never known you to be humble." And indeed, I'm not.

*Patricia A. Jones*

**THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL**  
Renovation And Maintenance Ideas For The Antique House

Vol. I No. 1  
October 1973

**An Old House Is A Way Of Life**

**In This Issue**

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**Coming Next Month**

REPAIRING AN OLD HOUSE

**Vol. I, No. 1, October 1973**

**NEXT ISSUE:**  
Refinishing Tubs & Sinks  
Bathroom History  
Using Wood Mouldings  
A Craftsman House  
The Gothic Revival

**The Old-House Journal**  
Restoration and Maintenance Techniques For The Pre-1939 House

Jan-Feb. 1984/Vol. XII No. 1/82.

**Rescuing A Porch Roof**

by Walter Jansen

**Vol. XII, No. 1, January-February 1984**

**Restoration and Maintenance Techniques**  
**The Old-House Journal**

October 1986/\$2.95

**Vol. XIV, No. 8, October 1986**

**The Old-House Journal**  
RESTORATION TECHNIQUES

Outside the Old House

RESCUING OUTBUILDINGS  
BUILDING STONE WALLS  
HISTORICAL PAINTS  
ROCK GARDENS

**Vol. XVI, No. 3, May-June 1988**

Vol. XII, No. 1, January-February 1984

Vol. XIV, No. 8, October 1986

Vol. XVI, No. 3, May-June 1988





This isn't a scientific reader survey because we're not particularly interested in a representative sample. We're just fishing for ideas. . . .

*What kind of article should we do that we don't do now?*

*What past OHJ article has been most useful to you?*

About the regular departments in OHJ: Restorer's Notebook and Ask OHJ have been with us since the first issue. Remuddling is in its eighth year and Vernacular Houses is in its third. In this issue, we're introducing Historic House Plans.

*What other regular departments would you like?*

*What styles of house plans do you want to see?*

Photocopy this page, fill it out, and send it to your favorite editor at the Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

**THANK YOU!**

## DOODLES

On the opposite page, you see the evolution of OHJ's cover design. What does the future hold? Go ahead, inspire us! Draw the next cover or predict the 20th anniversary issue. . . .

## SUGGESTIONS

Tell us about your dream Table of Contents for an OHJ issue:

*(house style)*

*(technical topic)*

*(decorating/landscaping)*

*(how-to feature)*

*(your choice)*





**The Cowing Mill**

Dear Editors:

It was interesting to read "The Yellow Heart Pine Saga" in the March/April OHJ. But more interesting to me was the old drawing of mills which you used. The Cowing Mill, shown in the illustration, was one of our early industries in the Village of Seneca Falls.

Unfortunately, the Cowing Mill is no more — or what remains of it is under water. The Cowing Mill and many other fine mills were once located on what was known as "The Flats" in Seneca Falls. In the early-20th century, these Flats were flooded to create the Seneca-Cayuga Canal system.

I thought your readers might be interested in this little touch of history. The Flats, by the way, were one of the first National Register nominations for the Village, acknowledging and protecting their historical, cultural, and archeological value.

— Francis Caracillo  
Planning Consultant  
Historic District Commission  
Seneca Falls, N.Y.

## Gas Lanterns

Dear OHJ,

I have attached a packet of literature that describes the most extensive line of traditional gas lanterns in the United States, which we, TrimbleHouse, manufacture under the U.S. Gaslight trade name.

We found your article [*"Streetscapes," pp. 46-55, July/August 1988*] to be very interesting; however, it appeared to minimize the use of gas lanterns as opposed to electric. The Energy Conservation Act was repealed by Congress in May of 1987 and, ever since then, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of gas lanterns for residential and roadway lighting, especially in new subdivisions and industrial tracks.

U.S. Gaslight offers to the American people a line of lights that truly create an atmosphere of serenity and beauty, equaled only by a full moon on a clear night. For locations where gas is not available, those same lanterns can be electrified to suit a customer's requirements.

— Walter P. Soboleski  
Vice President of Sales  
TrimbleHouse

[For more information, contact the Sales Office at TrimbleHouse, 4658 Old Peachtree Rd., Dept. OHJ, Norcross, GA 30071.]

## On Peel-Away

Dear Editors:

I was a little upset over the article entitled "Commercial Paint Stripping — Sub-contracting Interior Jobs," which appeared in the July/August issue.

In the first paragraph, you state that this article describes methods and materials used by stripping contractors on interior jobs. The entire portion of the article pertaining to the PEEL-AWAY products pertains only to what the product contains, where it should or should not be used, its limitations, its dangers, and that it is expensive in your opinion. Then the article continues that your quarrel (I did not realize there was a quarrel) with PEEL-AWAY is not with the effectiveness of the product but with the advertising. Any product that has already stripped 30 coats of paint in a single application warrants more than just a quarrel with its

advertising.

The PEEL-AWAY III product is mentioned as having been "used on many of the highly touted commercial jobs." I would like to know specifically what projects you are referring to. At any time and at any place I am more than willing to compare the PEEL-AWAY III product to Mr. Bix [sic] or any other methylene-chloride-based stripper. . . .

In your own judgment, PEEL-AWAY also falls down on distribution. We suggest that you have any interested party contact our office, and we will direct them to where the product is available or we will be pleased to ship on a direct basis to any individual. [See letter following — ed.] I tried calling six stores in the New York/New Jersey area for the Mr. Bix product and no one carried it. How come?

Any time that you would like to do a comparison testing of our products PEEL-AWAY I, II, III, I am available. Try stripping the tin ceiling in your office with Mr. Bix!

— Hy Dubin  
President, Dumond Chemicals  
(No. American mfr. of Peel-Away)  
New York, N.Y.

[Bix Process Systems manufactures chemicals and trains dealer-applicators. As stated in the article, their products are not sold through retail stores. — ed.]

Dear Gordon:

The materials on paint stripping arrived today. Thanks for sending so much.

I told you about my experience with Peel-Away. A couple of things I failed to note:

1) The most recent order I phoned to Dumond resulted in a promise of shipment within 4-6 weeks. I noted that the previous order was shipped in one week. The gal said, "Well, if you order through Sherwin-Williams, we will ship it out to them within 10

*continued on page 6*



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No. 152 Temple of Winds



No. 144 Modern Ionic

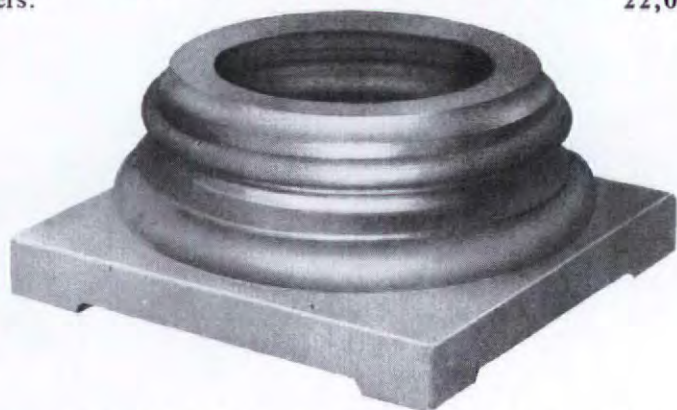
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*continued from page 4*

days." I asked her why they couldn't ship to me within the same time. She told me it just wasn't possible to promise it.

2) The Toledo Sherwin-Williams store knew nothing of any arrangement with Dumond . . . a call to the Romulus, Michigan, store resulted in assurance that they had it in stock at \$95/5 gal.!

3) I have found when using it that it is best to clean off the loosened paint and stripper by *mechanical* means and then allow it to dry thoroughly before washing with acidic water. The reason is that the wood is damp from the stripper. To wash while the wood is damp results in the suspended particles migrating into the grain to the extent of the dampness. It is nearly impossible to wash out the resulting 'whiteness.' Allowing it to dry first leaves the particles on the surface where they wash

off readily while the wood is not wet long enough to actually soak in.

— Tabb Schreder  
Toledo, Ohio

## Main Street

Dear Patricia Poore,

I enjoyed the informative articles in OHJ's Commercial Rehabilitation issue (July/August 1988). However, your Editor's Page comments regarding the Main Street Project reflect a lack of information and understanding of the goals and purposes of established Main Street towns.

Contrary to the belief that we are responsible for producing "fairytale-perfect Main Streets, all remarkably alike," our goal is to establish each town's individuality through sensitive rehabilitation of the central business district. As buildings are often of different architectural periods and styles, this restoration results in a vis-

ually diverse yet appealing mixture of our town's past.

While we strive to maintain the community's link with the past, this does not mean we should repeat obvious mistakes: i.e., a cluttered profusion of inappropriate signage, poorly maintained buildings and streetscapes, and lack of planning for the future.

Many Main Street towns have experienced new growth and have a chance for a brighter economic future, thanks to supportive business leaders, caring and dedicated citizens, and the guidelines set forth by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Main Street is about people working together to preserve their past while ensuring their future.

May I suggest that you visit a few of the Main Street towns which have been established in Pennsylvania and view firsthand how much has been

*continued on page 5*



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THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

## THE ESTATE PANEL

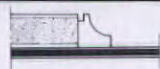


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# LETTERS

continued from page 6  
accomplished since the start of this  
program.

— Linda Mitchell  
Downtown Indiana Director  
Indiana, Penn.

## On Cobblestones

Dear Editor:

I noticed the story on OHJ's back cover concerning cobblestone structures [*"Cobblestones," Vernacular Houses, May/June 1988*]. Our company, Riverbend Timber Framing, recently finished erecting an enormous barn for the city of Ann Arbor. It is a timber-frame structure located on the site of the Cobblestone Farm in the city limits. The original farmhouse is a 19th-century structure that has a large historical heritage in the area. As you can see from the enclosed photo, it's similar to the buildings shown on the back cover of OHJ.

The idea behind the whole project was to put up a structure that would,



in some way, have a historical compatibility to the original farmhouse. With the timber frame, not only does it look true to the period — it really is! When finished, the new timber-framed barn will house a historical/visitors center, retail shops, and some office space.

I thought you folks might be interested in a project that fuses elements of the past with those of the present and still maintains structural and his-

torical integrity. This is one cobblestone that hasn't been "cobble-up"!

— Robert Zalewski  
Riverbend Timber Framing  
Blissfield, Michigan

## More About Floorcloths

Dear Patricia,

How nice to see some attention being given to floors! Mr. Cotton's article [*"The Bare Facts About Early Floors," March/April 1988 OHJ*] was most welcome and interesting. However, having extensively researched floorcloth manufacture, I would like to clarify some points.

Floorcloth manufacture began in England about 1760; by the century's end, at least 20 factories were producing them in that country. The importation of British floorcloths continued well after the Revolution. Early American-made floorcloths were the products of homemakers, itinerant craftsmen, or coach-, sign-,

continued on page 10

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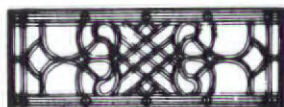
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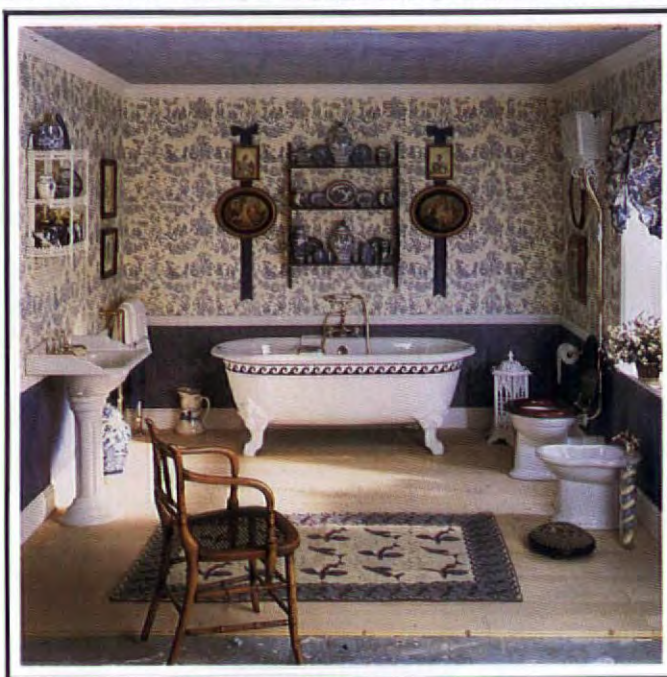


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continued from page 8



This carpet pattern illustrates the textural appearance resulting from block-printing.

or house-painters and the like. The first factory in the United States was probably established in Philadelphia in 1809.

The majority of 19th-century American floorcloths were factory-produced using block-printing. Although geometric designs remained popular, block-printed designs were generally more intricate. Imitations of encaustic-tile designs and all types of carpets were most typical. The affordability of carpets did not dimin-

ish the use of floorcloths; factories for their production were plentiful in the 19th century, and floorcloths were common furnishings in Victorian homes. They continued to be manufactured well into the 20th century, until they finally succumbed to the competition from linoleum.

— Bonnie Wehle Parks  
Preservation Services  
Sacramento, Cal.

## Complaintage

Dear Ms. Poore:

I enjoyed your July/August Commercial Rehabilitation issue greatly. But — 'signage'?

At the risk of sounding like a curmudgeon, I think words like 'signage' are to the English tongue as aluminum siding is to an old house; they are ugly, pretentious, and frightfully non-U. (See Nancy Mitford's *No-blesse Oblige* for elucidation.) To use 'signage' when you really mean

'signs' is, to me, akin to the weather reporters' annoying insistence on saying, 'We anticipate precipitation activity' when they mean 'I think it will rain.' Grafting unnecessary syllables onto a word constitutes the same sort of vulgarity as tacking a garish circular tower onto a perfectly respectable 1920s bungalow.

Look to your Strunk & White!

Nit-pickingly yours,  
Paul J. Stamler  
St. Louis, Mo.

P.S. I love you anyway.

*[My perhaps-flawed reasoning was that 'signs' were things tacked on, whereas 'signage' included names and messages incorporated into awnings and prism glass. I must admit now, however, that I can't find the word in the dictionary. Anyway, it's just a little syllable. . . . — P. Poore]*

continued on page 12

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# LETTERS

continued from page 10

## 'Commercial' Kudos

Dear OHJ,

Congratulations — we think highly of your special issue on commercial rehabilitation.

The articles are rich in information, highly readable, and much needed, as so many storefronts all around the country succumb to heavy-handed modernization.

We have chosen to assist [a town in New York] in reviving a forlorn downtown which was too hasty in tearing down many of its best buildings. The typical thriving mall is squatting nearby.

We are taking the merchants on a marathon four-hour tour, plugged into mikes and tapes, to give them hell for their past sins and to provide unbridled enthusiasm for reclaiming their architecture in the future.

If you get any desperate calls for obscure Carrara [glass] colors, we have some odious liver-pinks and curdled ivory.

Many thanks for the tremendous coverage.

— V. Romanoff & Associates  
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Ithaca, N.Y.

## A Heritage Reclaimed

Dear Editors:

The Old-House Journal has such fine readers!

Two years ago, I advertised in the Emporium to find two old homes of ancestors in Ohio. (The houses appeared in old family photos, but no one was still alive who knew where they stood.) Two of your readers wrote to help me. One sent a long list of my family tree. He told me about Caldwell's *Historical Atlas*. I



WAYNE COUNTY, OH — Near Millbrook. Can you find this house? Man pictured born there in 1886. Date of photo, 1941. I also have photo of shed/barn. Possible modest reimbursement for current photo (discuss first). Mrs. Packer, PO Box 1468, Plainfield, NJ 07061.

followed the clues, and last summer I drove into the driveways of both the old farmhouses I had advertised for — both still standing, both in OK shape! (Not only that, but the *Atlas* itself showed a picture of yet-another ancestral home.)

— Claire Packer  
Plainfield, N.J.

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## ■ RESTORER'S NOTEBOOK ■

### A Piece of Cake

Neatly repairing non-structural cracks in decorative plasterwork, painted beaded wainscoting, and painted mouldings is difficult. I found that if I used a pastry bag (also called a piping bag) and a small assortment of tips for cake decorating, I could easily lay a thin bead of spackling or compound and approximate any plaster design. The bags and tips are available at restaurant-supply stores and gourmet-equipment shops, and they're inexpensive. Practice using Crisco until you get the hang of it. Use a compound that doesn't sink, sag, or crack much, such as Elmer's Redi-Spack Lite. Bags and tips can be reused for years if they're kept clean and dry.

— Sarah Churgin  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

### Krack-Kote

I would like to suggest another product for patching plaster cracks, which wasn't mentioned in your March/April 1988 article, "The Basics Of Plaster Repair."

I have never found joint compound and paper tape to be a satisfactory patch material on plaster: The tape is brittle, adheres poorly, and is difficult to conceal. In our work on this 1927-vintage house, my father and I have had very good luck using a product called "Krack-Kote," along with "Tuffglass" fabric (an ultra-thin fiberglass). Krack-Kote comes in both an oil-based and a latex formula. Both work well; the latter dries faster.

The process is easy. Apply a layer of Krack-Kote over the cleaned crack area (don't chip out the crack). Press a piece of Tuffglass fabric into the compound with the applicator supplied and wait for it to dry. With the latex, it dries in less than an hour. Apply a second coat of the compound over the fabric, extending beyond it a few inches. Smooth,

invisible patches are easy with very little practice. Prime the patch with wall primer, and the room's ready to be painted.

— Chuck Mitchell  
Madison, Wisc.

### Smooth Scraping

There is nothing more frustrating than trying to scrape off layers of latex paint which failed to adhere properly to a surface covered with oil-based paint. I ran into this problem on a bedroom ceiling and didn't have much luck with just scraping. So I bought several rolls of cheap, pre-pasted wallpaper (the kind with plenty of glue) at a discount store. Following the directions, I cut and hung 6-foot strips and let them sit for 20 to 30 minutes. Then I ripped them off, and was delighted to see that a lot of the paint came off with the wallpaper. What stayed on was wet and bubbled; it scraped off easily with a dull razor-blade scraper. (To speed things along, have one strip sitting while you are scraping another.) The ceiling took me five hours to finish, but it was perfectly smooth — and the paint-stripping job was substantially less tiring on my arms.

— Ellyn Morrow  
Charlotte, N.C.

### A Gnawing Problem

In our old house, one of the first necessities was to replace the ancient wiring. I used Romex cable, which is used in most modern homes — but I did not anticipate the Rodent Factor!

Having already repaired it once now, I suggest to anyone who is going to rewire that they use BX cable in areas subject to squirrels and similar creatures. For an entire house, the extra cost of the materials is negligible — whereas rewiring a house can be very costly in time and labor.

— Roger S. Apted  
Milton, Wisc.



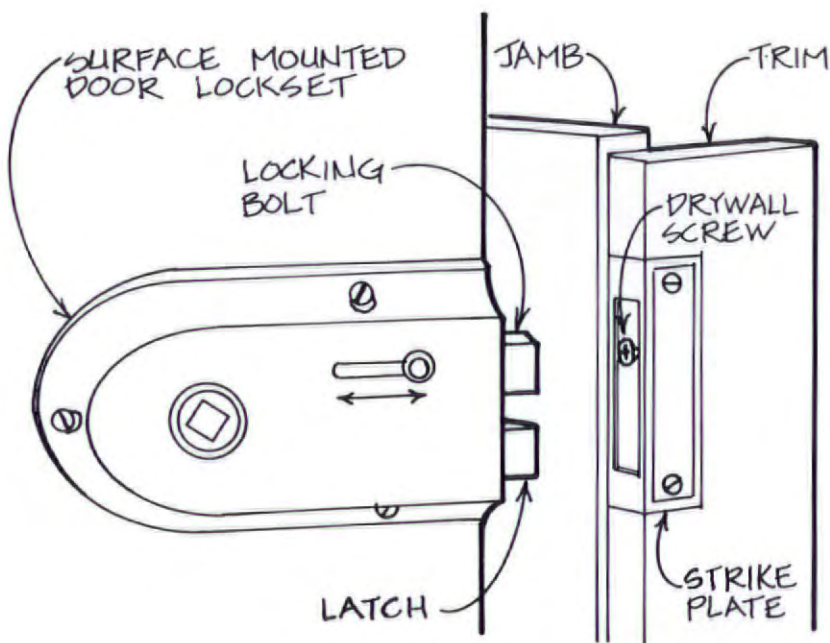


Illustration by Jonathan Poore

## Lock-proof Locks

In our old house (circa 1879), the rim locks on the interior doors caused some problems: They all functioned. That presented problems with our three children, who would delight in locking themselves inside. But we did not wish to install modern doorknobs and locks, because we desired authenticity.

The locks each have a small bolt that slides into a common cast-iron strike-plate mortise on the door jamb. I found the lock could be defeated by screwing a long drywall screw into the cavity where the bolt would normally rest when locked. (Make the head of the screw flush with the surrounding surface.)

Drywall screws, with their black-oxide finish, go almost unnoticed. Later on, they can easily be removed with no harm done.

— Roger S. Apted  
Milton, Wisc.

## Blown Gasket?

To help rescue our bathroom from the '50s-apartment-house blues, my wife bought a beautiful old brass-

and-porcelain showerhead-and-faucet set at an antique store. Relative to new-faucet prices, it was quite a bargain — if it worked. I rebuilt the faucets and large shower mixing valve. I hooked up everything, walked down 29 steps to turn on the water, walked back up to find the bathroom full of water, then *ran* down 29 steps to shut it off again. I took apart the mixing valve and found a groove where a large, round gasket evidently belonged.

Much detective work informed me that there's no way to find a gasket for a 1911 valve. Memories of repairing cars in my youth came to my rescue. The automotives department at the hardware store had a product called "Form a Gasket." I put a thin coat of it in the groove, reassembled the valve — no leaks.

If Form a Gasket doesn't work, gasket material can be purchased and carefully custom-cut to fit. (If the gap's a little big, it's better to stuff it with gasket material.) A plumber friend advised using Teflon pipe-joint compound painted on the gasket to improve its leak-stopping ability.

— Dan Miller  
Elgin, Ill.

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**Left:** The Gardellas' Stick Style Victorian. The six-sided tower on the side elevation is a little unusual, but the wooden siding and porch detail are typical.

**Below:** The new addition is evident if you approach the house from the north. "The house visible at right was built a year or so earlier (circa 1888) by the same builder," wrote Bill Gardella. "I'm told the builder kept our house for himself, leaving an extra lot vacant to preserve Norwalk Harbor views."

## Stick Style

**Q** My wife and I are novice restorers doing what we feel are good things to our well preserved 1889 Victorian-era home. Any ideas of a more specific description? Also, any comments on the addition? We hope we did a good thing for this great house.

— Bill Gardella  
East Norwalk, Conn.



**A** Your addition looks to us like it's in harmony with the rest of the house and the neighborhood. The building itself we would describe as a Stick Style Victorian. The Stick Style, always rendered in wood, was related to both the Gothic Revival that preceded it and the more popular Queen Anne that followed it.

This style is recognized by patterned wall surfaces (clapboard and shingle, as yours is); horizontal, vertical, or diagonal banding (the "stick-work"); steeply-pitched gabled roof; overhanging eaves and decorative gable treatment. Your porch spindle-work is also characteristic. The six-sided bay with its own gabled roof is somewhat unusual.

## Roof Repairs

**Q** I have a house built in 1911; it has the original cedar-shake roof with very bad asphalt shingles over it. I want to take off the old roof and put down a plywood covering and new asphalt shingles. Do I need to remove the original nailers to which the cedar shakes are fixed, or can I remove the shakes, leave the nailers, and lay the plywood over the nailers rather than directly on the rafters?

*I feel this would allow air to pass under the new roof decking, given the attic is finished with insulation and Sheetrock. But I am concerned that laying the plywood over the nail-*

*ers might not offer the same structural integrity.*

— Keith Batley  
Rockaway, N.J.

**A** Your project sounds like a typical upgrade. In such cases, the old roof is taken off right down to the rafters — shingle nailers included. The rafters then get cleaned of all nails, inspected for defects, and repaired or replaced, if necessary. Then the new deck is put on.

There is no advantage to keeping the nailers under a composition-shingle roof. The new roof should be vented at the top and bottom of each rafter bay, not across the surface.

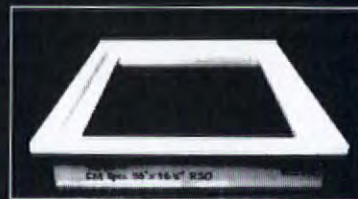


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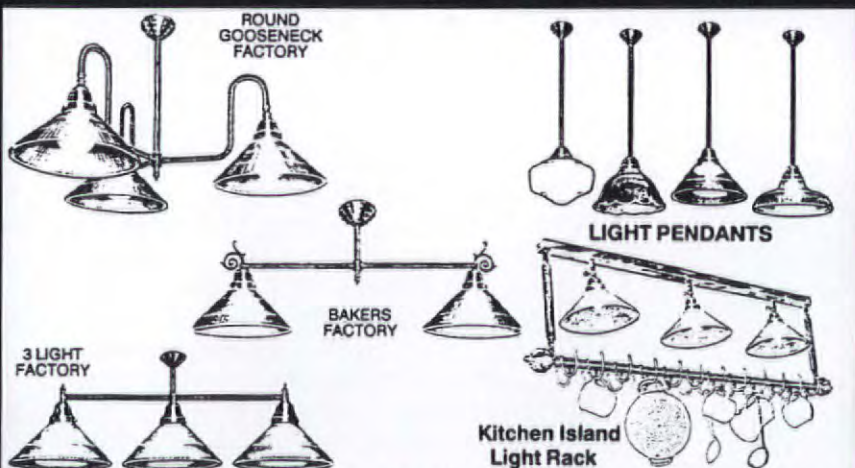
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# GHOST STORIES

Readers Share Unusual Tales  
of Old House Living . . .

**I**n OHJ's October 1983 issue, we celebrated our 10th anniversary by publishing ghost stories from readers. These accounts, unsensational yet remarkable, were solicited because we'd often heard old-house people refer to "spirits" or unexplained activity when they talked about their renovations. That article five years ago came to the attention of Dr. Karlis Osis, a psychologist with the highly respected American Society for Psychical Research in New York. A correspondence with him ensued, as he was fascinated by OHJ readers' apparently unusual response to their "guests."

For this 15th-anniversary survey, we interviewed Dr. Osis. Here is his response, in part:

"Your readers seem to take it in stride. Initially, they may be afraid, but then, if the phenomenon stops, they *miss* the ghost — which is not the general rule. You have a particular kind of people, who love the past (and who are probably also more courageous: to renovate a house really needs courage).

"One thing that intrigued me: When they, so to say, 'adopt' the new family member, it seems to quiet the phenomenon down. The stirring-up seems to come with the renovation, and that's quite common.

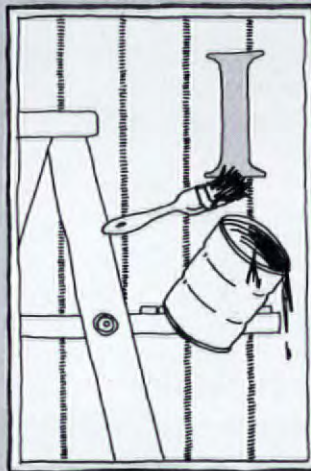
"What is the apparition? This is still largely a mystery. We could say that there is no one unique thing.

"If there is a real presence, then we have something from human personality which exists after death — and that's extremely important for understanding who we really are. That possibility, to my mind, in some cases looms large; like in some of your cases, which are collectively witnessed and they see the same thing. Then the next question is, how much of the personality is it? Is it like a little split-up of the energy? Sometimes the movements of the ghost are very stereotyped, very automatic, and it has been suggested that there is not a real human personality there, but something separate, a little fragment of some kind of energy hanging on.

"Here again, the question is, is there a real human being who died in an unfortunate circumstance, and somehow missed the bus, and stopped where he or she shouldn't be? They're stuck, like when you take a cheap flight to Spain and can't get back. What do you do? As a modern approach, we have tried in our research not to go in like a priest raging about evil spirits, but trying to understand like a modern psychotherapist, and help out.

"It impressed me that your readers befriended whoever seemed to be there, and got them to cooperate. Now that is quite different than simply to evict them, which usually does not work."

## "Hi Pop-Pop"



It's early spring and I'm stripping wallpaper in our new 1888 Queen Anne with no water, no heat, and no lights. I am alone in the house and I get the distinct impression that someone is watching me. I can't shake the feeling. I never again work at night or alone.

In the summer, I am stripping a thousand layers of paint from the fireplace mantel when I smell an unfamiliar smell: It's sweet and pungent, as if it should belong to some sort of flower. Before I can get a decisive whiff, it disappears.

In the fall, while taking a well deserved break on the sofa with my afghan, I see the distinct outline of a cat (we have three Siamese) nosing its way under my afghan. As it approaches the top, nothing emerges!

During a cold and dark winter, our then-1½-year-old son awakens from his nap. As I approach the door to collect him, I hear him say to the center of the room, "Hi Pop-Pop" (his generic name for all grey-haired men). My son and I are the only people in the house.

Our family consists of me, my husband Mike, our 2½-year-old son Adam, a dog named Mortimer, and the cats Koko, Ashley, and Ming. We're fairly sure that we have at least three less voluminous residents: a woman of undetermined age, an elderly gentleman, and a cat.

I believe that the phantom odor that I have smelled on many occasions is the perfume of a woman. I have experienced this aroma in nearly all the rooms of the house, and once just outside the door.

My son and I have both had experiences with the cat. Adam frequently could be heard in his room, giggling and laughing over the antics of "Koko," when our own cats were all visually accounted for. (I should add that when his vocabulary was limited, he used "Koko" to refer to all animals.) Other than the afghan incident, I have had two different types of experiences with the cat. Three times over a period of two days while I was stripping stairs, I was prodded on my upper arm by an insistent kitty paw. None of my own cats were present during any of these touching moments. (They won't get within a hundred feet of the aroma of chemical stripper.)

I think this ghost cat is also responsible for some more



aggressive feats. Twice while I was stripping woodwork in the library, my pan of stripper flew off the ladder. This was no ordinary overbalancing and slithering off: The pan went up before it flipped end over end to the floor. These disasters were spaced about a month apart, and both times the ladder was in exactly the same spot.

Our son is the only one to acknowledge the presence of the gentleman. Over the past year or so, he has had more conversations than I can count with his "Pop-Pop." All of these *tete-a-tetes* have occurred in two rooms: his bedroom and the room my husband and I share. These conversations are not the random ramblings of a two year old; they are directed and specific — as if we were listening to half of a phone call.

There are other things we can't explain, but which we can't specifically assign to any of our three regular visitors. For example, we spent a year debating what colors to paint our lady. (It was then dark grey with white trim.) We decided on a four-color scheme, using Sherwin-Williams Heritage Colors: Rookwood Green for the clapboards, Terra Cotta for the shingles, Rookwood Amber for the trim, and Rookwood Red for the sashes. We bought the paint and started scraping. The original colors of the house were exactly the same as the ones we chose (except the sashes were black before they were red)!

After four years in our house, we have grown accustomed to our regular visitors. But I have to admit, their visits are getting few and far between. It is my personal theory that they were early owners of our house who are just keeping up with what we're doing to their home. I interpret their decreased activity as approval of our attempts to restore *our* home.

— Nancy Raiche-Osborne  
Middletown, Ohio

## Billy



e stumbled on a listing for an imposing Victorian in the old Highland area of north Minneapolis. The realtor informed us that the house was occupied by the builder's descendant, a widow in her mid-eighties. Special arrangements were required to show the house; she would only allow it to be shown after dark.

The evening of the showing arrived and we rang the doorbell. It seemed like forever until the door was opened by a very little, elderly lady who received us with an air of formality and pride, apologizing for the fact that the house did not look its best. But to us, the dimly lit entry hall with its winding oak staircase and the 20+ foot ceiling above us was all we needed to fall in

love with the old house.

The closing went according to schedule; we signed what seemed to be a ream of documents and then handed over the check. It was ours! We would take possession on the last day of the month: October 31 — Halloween! Now, we are not superstitious folk, but always believed in not tempting fate. That night we experienced a full-scale thunderstorm which blew the covers off the traps in the basement sewer lines, shooting murky water high into the air. No trick-or-treaters that night. For some reason, neighborhood children avoided the house even during the day. I felt that the way to gain entry into a neighborhood is through its children. The house had a new owner now, and I'd find out their thoughts about the house. Everyone I questioned said it was a "haunted house." I could not agree more with the vivid imagination of young minds: It was a strange old house occupied by an old lady who lived in the servants' quarters and never had lights on in the front rooms. We would change all that.

There was one thing that seemed rather strange, which surfaced in our conversations with the owner during our visits prior to closing: She consistently referred to someone named "Billy." We later found out that Billy was her son, a war veteran who had met a tragic death in the house. It was obvious that, in her mind, Billy was still a resident of the house, because she referred to him in the present tense. We did not realize how much he was in the "present tense" until after we took up our own residency.

Within a week, marbles (the old, pre-cat's-eye variety) began to appear. They were always found in the center of rugs or traffic patterns, so as to be quite obvious. We did not bring any marbles with us when we moved in, and we brought most of the rugs with us. (We did not then have our two cats, so we couldn't blame these strange occurrences on them.) At the same time, small dirty handprints began to appear on the back hall stairway, much as if a small child was making his way from the back door up to the bathroom on the second floor. Washing these handprints from the walls did little, as they reappeared the next day. A variety of small items appeared, including Billy's military "dog-tags," a cookie-cutter with the name "Billy" scratched on it, merit badges, and a number of Catholic holy cards inscribed to Billy from nuns at the parochial school a couple of blocks away. In all, nearly 100 marbles made their appearance over a period of two years until, when investigating a corner of the attic tower, we found a cloth marble bag with a few pre-cat's-eye marbles in it. The collection we had amassed, when added to the bag, filled it to the top with no room to spare. No more marbles appeared from that time on.

Other visits from "Billy" are worthy of comment. His presence could be felt in the form of a "cold spot," often encountered without warning, both in the library and in the upstairs sewing room which had served as his bedroom (where he had died). On several occasions, doors would slam and the sound of small feet would be heard running in the upstairs hallway toward the back stairs. One evening, the drawers in the upstairs linen closet opened and closed



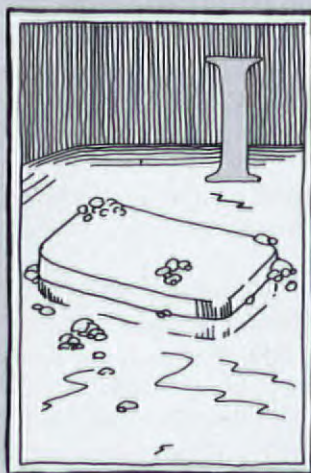
with such a racket that one would wonder if someone was throwing a temper tantrum looking for a misplaced item. The most spectacular performance occurred when a nine-foot-high pocket door, which had been jammed in the wall off its track, slid from the wall into the closed position. It has worked perfectly ever since!

Although most of the activity took place during the first two years we lived in the house, it usually coincided with projects such as moving furniture or re-decorating. It appeared as if Billy wanted to let us know that he knew what we were doing to HIS house. Almost ten years after we moved into this fine old Victorian, we finally put the finishing touches into wallpapering the last room. It was the eve of the Day of the Assumption (a Catholic obligatory holy day), and that day we received a holy card and a scapular medal. It was Billy's last visit; nothing more has appeared to remind us of his presence. Billy's mother has also passed away.

We have related the stories about Billy to friends and those interested in "spiritual presences." Interestingly, we have not been the only ones to receive a visit from Billy; friends and family staying overnight or living with us for an extended period have reported encounters with him and have found souvenirs left in their paths. Overall, Billy never did anyone harm, although we often had the feeling that he was looking over our shoulders. After all, it WAS HIS HOUSE; he'd grown up there and he'd died there. We've been told that Billy was a phenomenon known as psychic teleportation and that he manifested himself through the strong will of his mother. No changes had been made to the house since its construction; we were the first to threaten the status quo, and a cause of concern for Billy and his mother. Billy left us when he was finally satisfied we would do no harm.

— Charles W. Nelson  
Historical Architect  
Minneapolis, Minn.

## Mr. Price



bought a lovely 1916 bungalow in Pomona: leaded glass, beautiful woodwork, and a newly remodeled kitchen. But it had as many as eight coats of faded, torn wallpaper; the bathroom was a mess of '50s remuddling; and the yard was as overgrown as Sleeping Beauty's castle. For me, it was perfect. I didn't know until after I had bought it that eight families had moved in and out in the past five years. The

reason why was clear to me on my first day of occupancy.

My daughter and son-in-law had helped me move, and

spent the night in my bedroom while I crashed on the couch in the den. Over breakfast, she began to scold me for getting up and hanging pictures the night before. When I told her I hadn't gotten out of bed, she just laughed with an "Aw Mom, I heard you pounding nails."

Later in the day, alone, I passed my open bedroom door, and standing in the doorway with his hand on the door was an old man, about 70, over six feet tall, with salt-and-pepper hair, wearing a plaid flannel shirt and bib overalls. I saw him clearly but I knew he wasn't real. Then he vanished, like someone had erased him from the bottom up. For some reason, I wasn't frightened. . . .

Over the next two years, Mr. Price (as I found out was his name) made life miserable for a half-dozen people in my home. One son-in-law refused to be in the house alone even in broad daylight. A young lady who housesat for me one vacation was angry I hadn't told her about him. The sound of boxes crashing off the closet shelves kept her awake, and the closet door which stuck and was hard to open swung freely back and forth.

There was never anything out of place in the closet or anywhere else, although we were treated to the most awful crashing sounds. The sound of the huge ceiling fan smashing through the glass top of the dining room table would send everyone running into the dining room, only to discover that it was still securely fastened to the ceiling. That was a favorite trick of his. He also made the sound of a cast-iron kettle dropping from a height of six or eight feet.

Every night for weeks, I came home to find my soap in the bathroom floating in a couple of inches of water. Living alone, I started to speak to Mr. Price. Out loud, feeling like a fool, I said, "Don't do that. Soap is expensive." The soggy soap stopped. One night after going to bed, I felt 'someone' lift the blankets. I sat up in bed and shouted, "That's too close!" It never happened again.

It seems that Mr. Price, when flesh and blood, lived in the house next door. He died January 1, 1970; suicide. My neighbor told me about Mr. Price after I started asking odd questions. I asked if she knew what he looked like; she didn't, but said she'd find out from other neighbors who'd known him. That night she bolted into my house and said she was told that Mr. Price was a tall man, a farmer-type who always wore bib overalls. Then I told her what I'd seen in the doorway. She said he had been a carpenter; in fact, he had built a scaffold in the garage from which he had hanged himself. That explained the pounding sounds. She told me that sometimes when I was away for the weekend, they would hear furious hammering, like a berserk carpenter, coming from my home for up to two hours. She also admitted that they too were being visited by Mr. Price, who had a habit of being lightfingered with her husband's tools — until one afternoon her husband went into the garage and had a "talk" with Mr. Price about leaving his tools alone.

To my knowledge, I was the only person who actually saw Mr. Price, unless you count the afternoon when my four-year-old grandson, after being punished by his mother, said he was going into the back bedroom and play



with the grandfather.

Mr. Price's visits became less and less frequent as the remodeling on my home neared completion. I guess he was happy with the job I was doing and finally stopped coming altogether. I have since moved back to Indiana and am currently remodeling and restoring a 1926 beauty, but you know what? I miss Mr. Price.

Thank you for listening to my story. It all happened, and much more. I'm not a kook, but people do think you're nuts when you say you believe in ghosts.

— Joan M. Smith  
Elkhart, Ind.

## Walking in Circles



I purchased a dilapidated old house in March of 1982; it had been vacant for a couple of years since its last owner died. The house had been built in 1901, but more than that, no one seemed to know. I felt a wonderful kinship with the house from the first time I walked into it, and I wanted to know all about it. I found out that the second owner, a family named Cole, had bought the house just after it

was built and had retained ownership until 1927. The father, J.B. Cole, had been quite successful, but I could not locate any surviving member of his family.

We heard strange noises in our house, but really didn't associate them with anything other than "old-house sounds." That is, until one day when I was alone in the house and heard footsteps overhead. I thought how big that squirrel must be to make such a noise on the roof... then I realized there was a bedroom above me, not the roof. I sat petrified for a moment and listened: Someone was walking around in a circle directly overhead. After collecting myself, I grabbed a hammer and bolted up the stairs to the bedroom. At the top of the stairs, I saw the door to the bedroom standing open. I cautiously peered around the door to see... nothing. Boxes were stacked floor to ceiling in the room, just as we had placed them. I could hear no sound of walking at all.

When my husband returned from town, I told him of the experience. He looked strange and asked if anything else had happened. I said no, and wondered why he'd asked. He said that a strange thing had happened to him on the previous weekend when he had been alone in the house. My husband wears a \$5 gold piece on a chain around his neck. His hands are too large to open the clasp, so I must take the chain off for him at night — the necklace is too small to remove over his head. On the night in question, he had fallen asleep in our bedroom, and believed

he had dreamed that a small woman was hovering over him. He said he awakened himself fanning the air and shouting, "Get away." But of course no one was there and he went back to sleep. He awakened in the morning to find that his necklace had been removed from his neck and placed in a configuration on the pillow next to him, with the clasp fastened.

He had never mentioned this to me before — nor had he mentioned the fact that no matter what he did, the door to the bedroom (where I had heard the footsteps) would not remain closed. We tied a rope around the doorknob and tied the other end to a nail which had been driven into the doorsill. The next morning, the rope would be lying on the floor, all knots removed, and the door would be standing open.

Neither my husband nor I felt in any way that our spirit would harm us, and over the next couple of years, we accepted the fact that we shared our house with a "friendly spirit." Skeptics of course came to our home — but very few left as skeptics. Our spirit would perform for guests: always walking in the bedroom just above the east end of the dining room. Many dinners were interrupted by a guest racing upstairs to see who was making the noise. They always found the same thing: a neat bedroom decorated around a fourposter bed, and nothing else.

By January 1986, the restoration of our home was completed, and I was enjoying a warm fire in the study when the phone rang. The caller said he was Murray Cole and had lived in our house in the early part of the century. He wanted to meet us, so I invited him to come right over. A tall straight old gentleman in his nineties, Murray was alert and intelligent — and, I would find out, very interesting. He was amazed to see the house unchanged. As we walked through the house, he pointed out to me the room where his father had died, and also told me of how it had taken his grandfather three days to die in the master bedroom upstairs.

I guided him to "the bedroom," where he looked around but offered no comment. (I had not mentioned the spirit to Murray.) Finally, I asked him whose bedroom this had been. He said his sisters shared this room until the family moved out in 1927. Then he moved toward the doorway and out into the foyer, looking forward to seeing the other rooms upstairs... I was disappointed, but we continued through the house.

Over the next few months, we became very good friends, and I anxiously looked forward to his visits. He was happy to talk about his family, and I learned that he was the lone survivor: neither he nor his sisters had any children. Murray had two sisters, Mabel and Willoughby. Willoughby never married, but Mabel did, and it seems her marriage wasn't looked upon favorably by the family. Mabel and her husband lived a rather transient life for some time, but finally settled in central Texas. After visiting the family in Dallas, they were driving back to their new home when it began to storm. Their car skidded into the path of an oncoming bus and they were both killed instantly.

It became apparent to me that Mabel had been our

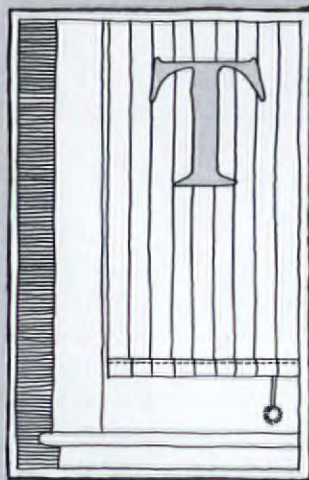


friendly spirit, living in her room all these years. I believe that she is now at rest, because since the moment Murray first walked back into the house, until this very day, we have never heard another noise or experienced an incident of any kind. I must say we miss our spirit, but are very glad she is at rest.

I never told Murray about the spirit. He and I worked on the history of the house for about a year, and on the day we applied to the State Historical Commission for a Historical Landmark designation, Murray Cole died. He was 95 years old. I do miss my friend, but am thankful to this old house for bringing us together. Is it any wonder I feel privileged to be an occupant here?

— Sandra L. Ethridge  
Hico, Texas

## Ghosts Inside & Out



The house had been donated to our organization to be developed as a museum commemorating the founders of a certain industry in a city in a northeastern state. A two-storey, orange-brick Italianate, it was built around 1850, on the site of a cemetery that had been vacated about 25 years before the house was built. The gentleman who built the house was in his eighties when he fell out of the rear-

bedroom window to his death. This window was bricked up, presumably by his heirs. Later, the builder's son fell down the stairs at his place of residence and died as a result. In the late 1950s, the grandson, who had inherited the house, fell to his death on the stairs of its central hallway. Three deaths by falling in three generations, two in this house!

My first day on the job, one of the Board members and I toured the building. She provided information concerning the organization's plans. No mention was made of any possible ghosts, although I did note a "feeling" at the top of the stairs, near the rear bedroom: no distinct fear, just a little uneasiness.

The second day, I was working alone in my office. The typewriter was situated so that I faced a wall and the entire empty house was behind me. That afternoon, I felt someone's hand on my shoulder! I jumped up and checked each room, but no one was there. "That's weird," I remember thinking, "but it must be just my imagination." I sat down again, and the sensation not only of having a hand on my shoulder, but also of someone leaning against it, occurred. Twirl around quickly — no one there! Check each room again — no one there. I finally opened all the doors to the outside (in preparation to flee!) and forced myself to work

through the day.

Thereafter, during the rest of the week, the sensation of somehow being watched from the central hallway — but not approached — was unnerving. Finally, I broached the subject to the president of the organization. He brushed off the possibility but admitted that some board members and other visitors had felt "something." He mentioned that the vice president of the organization claimed to be in touch with the ghost who lived there.

After the first few weeks, I approached the vice president and she cheerfully confirmed that there was indeed a ghost; in fact, she said his name was Edmund or Edward and that he had had some connection with the builder's family, although he was not a member. She said he was friendly and not to worry about him. Easier said than done, although I never again had the sensation of being touched. Instead, little rattles, occasional knockings, and the noise of paper being crumpled occurred frequently. On occasion, I could hear a sound like the drawers of a chest being opened and closed. The ghost seemed most excited when there were several people in the house, either workmen climbing in, out, and around, or student groups touring the building. Then the knocking and rustling increased, but were clearly audible only after the others were gone.

I also talked to some of the other volunteers who had worked in the house, and several reported an uncomfortable feeling when near the "blue bedroom"; some to the point that they hurried by and did not look that way.

Each evening I closed all the shades on the first-floor windows, and each morning I opened them. On the south side of the house, in the rear parlor, was a bay window. Every morning I became more and more convinced that when I opened this shade, there would be someone standing on the outside looking in — although why the ghost should be outside when he lived upstairs, I didn't know.

Things continued on fairly normally during the summer and fall, although the rustling-paper noises continued. An intern had been working with the organization for a while and began coming to the house to do his project. Needless to say, I was glad of the company. I jokingly referred to the ghost a few times in our conversations, but felt much more secure just having another person (a live one) around. One day I went out to pick up some lunch after a hectic morning of visitors and workmen. I was gone about half an hour. As I pulled up to the house, I noticed that the front door was closed. "That's strange," I thought, "I remember leaving that door open. Maybe the intern is gone." Just then, I saw the intern approaching me, waving his arms and loudly vowing he'd never go into that house again. He claimed that as he sat in my office, he'd heard a knocking noise in the third room. He checked and saw nothing. Then a knocking noise in the second room. He checked and saw nothing. Then a knocking noise at the door between the office and the meeting room, at which point he had fled.

A week or so later, after luring the intern back to work on a project, I sat working in the front office. (By now, my desk faced the window into the front yard.) The intern was



in the small breakfast room/office; we were separated by the large rear parlor. Neither of us talked about the ghost that morning, although I was troubled by the impression of seeing someone standing outside the fence of the property. I "saw" black shoes and pants, but when I really looked, of course there was nothing there but hedges and sunshine. After about an hour, the intern came in and said he couldn't work any longer. He was also facing the front of the property, but with a view of the side porch that entered the rear parlor on our office side. He said that he kept having the feeling that there was someone standing on the porch, but when he looked no one was there. We called our psychic vice president, who came over and ascertained that we were being visited by someone who had a grudge against a previous occupant and was, in effect, waiting for their attention. She explained that when two people sensitive to psychic phenomena are together, it will tend to attract such phenomena. We were instructed to ignore the feeling and continue to work, and the feelings would subside.

The oddest occurrence came one day when I was in the house alone. As always happens when you are in the bathroom, the phone rang. As I ran to catch the call, the screen door to the side entrance rattled hard, as though someone was opening it. "Oh great," I thought, "the phone rings and someone shows up, all at once." Grabbing the phone, I looked out the window of the door: No one there. I turned to look out the front window of the next office, to see if someone was approaching the front entrance, when I had the impression, through the window adjacent to the door, of a woman walking down the side-porch steps. She had light-brown hair in a knot at the back and a peach-colored dress. Just as quickly, the impression vanished.

Now fully intrigued by what was going on inside — and outside — the building, I summoned the vice president and she came over to the house immediately. She communicated with the inside ghost, and it appeared that, while others were frequently aware of the inside ghost, no one else had ever noted the outside ghost. Edmund/Edward was interested in "getting together" with the outside ghost, but could not for some reason. We then proceeded to "his room," where, as we sat and talked, I suddenly felt a tremendous burst of energy go through my body from the soles of my feet and out the top of my head. The psychic explained that for some reason my awareness of the two ghosts assisted them to draw on my psychic energy so they could communicate. (I don't pretend that this is an accurate explanation, just what I remember.) She then asked them to leave me alone as I was afraid, and apparently was able to extract that promise.

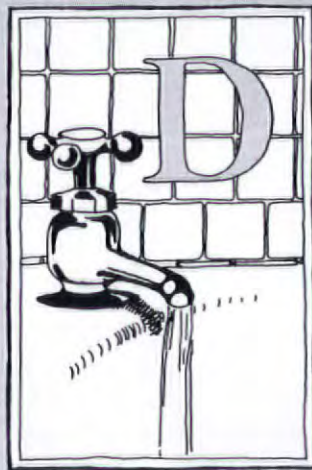
Later that day, as we discussed plans for the structure and theorized upon the location of the back stairs, the paper rustling began in the breakfast room. "You said you'd be quiet," I yelled from my office, and the rustling stopped. It began a few minutes later and the psychic said it wanted to let us know that we were correct regarding the location of the stairs — later, traces of the stairs were found under the floor that had been put up over the site of the old back

stairs.

There were several other small incidents over the months that I worked in the house. Others confided the same strange feeling; many more scoffed at the possibility. I only know how I felt in the house and that the experiences were singular, to say the least.

— Sally Bowyer Chrisman  
Hamilton, Ohio

## "Our House Has Spirit"



Despite the inconvenience of living with only one finished bedroom, we moved into our dream Victorian house one hot July day. It was in a half-finished state, making it an unbelievable bargain. We didn't notice anything right away, but once we'd settled in, we became aware that unusual things were happening which could not be easily explained away.

Our house had been rewired just prior to our occupation, so it didn't disturb us the first night we noticed that the overhead light in the living room refused to stay out — we merely chalked it up to a rotten electrician. Then we noticed that the antique table lamps were frequently on as well. I'm ashamed to admit how many times we lectured our kids on the wasteful use of electricity, while they swore they hadn't even been in the living room. We figured that our 15-year-old son had suddenly turned into a real practical joker. Record high temperatures in October meant that we didn't exactly think it funny the fifth night in a row we found the heater thermostat pegged to 90 degrees.

It was not until the holidays that we began to wonder if there wasn't something more unique about our house than just the fretwork. My husband's company closes for a week, so he was home to witness some of the strange goings-on that I had noticed during the day but rationalized away — like the time I was sitting in the parlor enjoying the sun, when I heard the water running. I followed the sound to the bathroom, where I found the tub filling with nice warm water. I turned it off, then looked to see if our son had played hooky from school to spook Mom. I even went so far as to call the school; he was still there. When I returned to the parlor the lights were on: "Damned wiring!"

My husband Ken noticed that at about 11 AM, our dog and two cats cleared out of the parlor and could not be coaxed to return until about 2 PM. When our little dog was dragged in against her will, she stayed with her tail between her legs, looking like she had been beaten rather than like her usual, high-strung terrier self. She seized the first opportunity to dash under our daughter's bed. Sometimes



the cats would freeze in place, staring as though watching some unseen visitor, and then make a mad dash under the nearest piece of furniture.

Ken and I were wrapping packages in the dining room when a light came on in the parlor. He went to check things out and turned off the lamp. Shortly after returning, he noticed the telltale glow in the parlor. Again he left and trooped back, only to have the light come on once more, before he could sit back down. This battle of wills struck me as quite comical, but Ken didn't see the humor at all. He came back self-satisfied, announcing that it was over: He'd unplugged all the lamps. We finished our packages and were about to go to bed when I was sure I heard music. Ken stumbled into the parlor to find that the stereo had been turned on, very low.

Now we were more aware that something was indeed going on. We began to notice that pieces of furniture were often out of place. Our collection of small boxes was often rearranged; not randomly, as though the cats had run across the table, but in an orderly fashion.

We changed all the locks, had the house wiring checked twice, and took the animals to the vet. But we were forced to admit that perhaps "something" beyond our understanding was happening. At first we stopped using the parlor except when we had company — we were admittedly spooked. We would glance through the door to find things moved out of place, but we had pretty much given up putting them back. When the water came on, we matter-of-factly turned it off.

We noticed a smell that sometimes lingered in the front of the house. For a long time, we credited the bush out front, but when winter came and our little bush was bare, we would still get a whiff of the aroma in the parlor and hall. It was then we decided our houseguest was a woman, and the smell was probably her stale perfume. The kids named her Victoria, in honor of our Victorian house.

Now that she had a name, she didn't seem so scary. We would address her from time to time and ask her to watch over the house while we were gone. We began to use the parlor again. She still turns on the lights, but it keeps us from having to put on a timer. The cats still shun the room at certain hours of the day, but the dog has contented herself with staying under my chair during that time.

Victoria is part of our home, like the crack in the dining room that refuses to stay patched. Not only have we learned to live with her, but we are also comfortable enough now to tell others about her. She has even proven herself useful on more than one occasion. Case in point: We put a string of sleigh bells on the front door, so we could hear her when she opened it (as she did once in a while) and one of us could go lock the door. One night, the bells rang violently and the whole house woke up. When my husband turned on the porch light, two guys ran up the street — they had been trying to break into our car. Another time, she alerted us to a burglar. Recently, a friend asked us if we'd like to get rid of her. The answer is unanimously NO.

—Jeani Zeleny  
Vallejo, Cal.



the owner had used on the interior. We planned to buy the house if we liked small-town life. The first weekend we moved in, we realized we'd made a mistake.

The first evidence that all was not well happened to me as I was unpacking in the bedroom I was to use. The room, built just behind the front porch, was extremely dim, even in the afternoon. I took from a carton my old, treasured crucifix: valued deeply because it had been a gift and because of what it symbolized. I was about to hang it on the wall when I was stopped by a pins-and-needles feeling that struck my entire body. I looked down at my crucifix and was revulsed at the sight of it — I wanted to pitch it through the window. This was a very alien reaction for me. I felt surrounded by a feeling of sickness, so I resisted the impulse, and deliberately forced myself to walk to the wall and hang up my crucifix. As I did so, a closet door swung open.

I came up with numerous reasons to explain the incident logically, and tried to resume unpacking. I laid a *closed* book on my bed and turned away to put something in the dresser. When I came back to the book a few seconds later, it was lying open on the bed. I had not been near it, nor had anyone come into the room.

My mother and brother — he was spending the weekend to help us get settled — would think I was crazy if I told them what had happened; I decided to remain silent about it. I didn't know my pragmatic family members were having experiences of their own.

That first night, after I had retired and was in bed, something happened that convinced me we were not alone, that the house was "disturbed." The hall light had been left on (my suggestion) and was shining a little into my room. My bichon frise Earl was curled up against me. As I lay there, a shadow passed over the foot of the bed, studying me, but no one was there that I could see. My dog raised his head, watched the path of the shadow, and snarled. There was no object or person that physically caused that shadow. I picked up Earl and went into the living room, where my brother was camped out on the sofa. He told me he couldn't sleep. Then he completely surprised me by saying, "Jeanne, there's something wrong with this house. The feeling in here is very depressing, and I keep hearing noises."



The next few days brought a worsening of the condition. Whenever I returned to my room, the closet doors always gaped open, no matter how securely I closed them. In the middle of completing a task, needed tools that just a few minutes before were laid out in plain sight were suddenly nowhere to be found. To this day, we have not seen a bag of extension cords, a pair of pliers, and a large bag of assorted nails and screws.

I gave up trying to sleep in my room. I kept it shut all the time, moved a day bed into the living room, and slept there. My mother gave up on her room as well and slept on the living room sofa; along with the enclosed side porch, it was the only room we could tolerate.

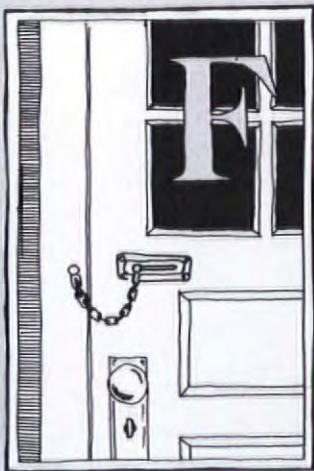
On Tuesday morning, I was awakened at around 4 AM by the smell of fresh coffee: My mother was in the kitchen. She told me she had been awakened precisely at 3 AM by a loud cracking sound coming from my former bedroom. The following morning, I was aroused from a deep sleep by a loud cracking noise coming from my room. I looked at the clock. It read 3 AM.

Ours was not a happy, companionable haunting, as I am sure some are. We thankfully found another house soon — a modern one, this time — and eventually returned to the blessedly bustling city life of New Orleans.

I did go back to the house once more: I had forgotten something and wanted it back. The house, empty, seemed far more attractive and bright than when we were there occupying it — almost as if whatever or whoever was there was glad to be alone once more.

— Jeanne Frois  
Metairie, La.

## “Gone, But Not Forgotten”



From the very first day MaryLou and I bought our 220-year-old farmhouse in Connecticut, we felt a presence, as though someone was reading over our shoulders. After we moved in, it was very quickly apparent that the house came complete with a permanent resident — and somehow, MaryLou knew it was a woman. Doors opened, closed, and sometimes slammed; things often were not where we had left them; footsteps frequently could be heard, especially upstairs in our daughter's bedroom. To us, this was a warm, joyful feeling, not at all adverse — a feeling of well being filled us.

Not everyone felt that way, however. A workman repairing the sill at the back of the house had access to the basement from outside, but the door inside at the top of the stairs into the house was locked. He wanted to get in

and tried the door. No one was at home, and the door was indeed locked. But as he tried the door, he heard footsteps coming toward him across the living room floor. They stopped at the door. He asked to be let in. No answer. He went back outside to see if one of us had come home: no cars in the drive, no open doors or windows. He couldn't get in. He went back into the cellar and up the stairs, calling out to be let in. The footsteps left the door and went back across the living room floor. The workman left — quickly.

A phone call to the previous occupants concerning several practical items such as plumbing, construction repairs, etc., ended up to be very revealing. The conversation concluded, “You do know that there is a ghost in that house, don't you?” Yes, we certainly did. They had known it during the 20-odd years they lived there, and never had a bad experience. Only once did they see the spirit. The wife, her husband, and her daughter all saw a figure come down the stairs from the second floor. At first, they thought it was a child — very small. But on second look, they saw it was an old woman, with grey eyes, dressed in grey. Then she disappeared. So it was a woman — MaryLou was right! But who was she? No one had a clue.

In researching the history of the house, I learned that it was built between 1752 and 1777 by Elnathan Knapp, and was sold father to son for three generations in the Knapp family. In 1822 Ira Knapp and his bride Thankful Barnum Knapp took over the farm from his father, Elnathan Knapp, Jr. Ira and Thankful were the last of the Knapps to live in the house. Ira died in 1871; Thankful, then 65 years old, refused to leave the house to live with one of her sons close by. She insisted on staying in her home alone, and so she did, until she was killed by a fall down the cellar steps in 1890, at the age of 85. She was buried the next day beside Ira in the little cemetery of the church they had joined in 1843, about a half mile from her home. The Knapp genealogy describes Thankful as very bright and active all her life, with grey eyes, and very small, weighing only 90 pounds. It all fit together.

Thankful Knapp is still in her house. And she is delightful. MaryLou had been missing a bracelet for several weeks, and one day she simply said, “Thankful, please help me find it.” The next morning, it was on the kitchen floor in full view. One day last winter, our daughter Lynn came home from school without her house key. She went into a pantry off the kitchen where our dogs can get in out of the weather, and tried the door from the pantry into the kitchen: It was locked and chained. She called out, “Thankful, please let me in. I'm cold.” After petting the dogs, she tried the door again and it flew open.

A great delight was to watch our cat Moby playing with Thankful. He would jump up and spin around, pawing in the air, then run full speed into another room and back, changing direction suddenly several times. He finally ran smack into a wall and sat there staring at it, as if wondering why he couldn't go through it. After pawing the wall for a minute, he took off for a doorway leading to the other side of the wall, and resumed chasing, jumping, and playing. On Sundays Thankful is not present, or is not active. Moby



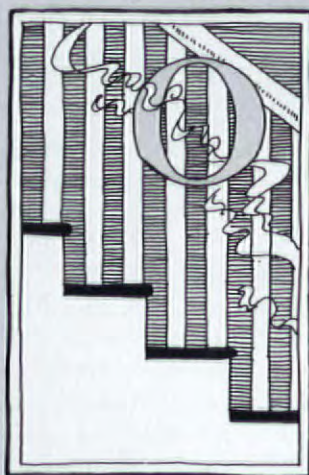
would walk from room to room all through the house, calling "Meow?" to his friend. It was a sad day for all of us when Moby died; Thankful became quiet for more than two weeks.

One other time, Thankful became quiet for several days. That worried MaryLou until we realized that it was January 22, the date Ira Knapp died. He had been ill for several days before his death 117 years ago.

We now go to the little church where Ira and Thankful were members. They are buried there, and Thankful's gravestone reads, "Gone, But Not Forgotten." She certainly isn't forgotten — in fact, she isn't really gone.

— Thomas G. Lytle  
Danbury, Conn.

## Cigarette Smoke



Our saga began in March of 1978, when my wife took me to see an old Dutch Colonial house in the Old Emerywood section of High Point, North Carolina. When we arrived, I could see that much work needed to be done: sagging roof, peeling paint, rusted wooden screens, unkept yard, etc. The inside wasn't much better. My first impression was to say, "Forget it"; however, something told me that this

house would be a great fixer-upper. We moved in on August of 1978, after making a great deal with the owner, a widow who was moving to a nursing home. Her husband, Mr. Martin, had passed away at home the previous year.

Our oldest child was the first to experience our uninited houseguest. Raymond, who was 5 at the time, would come downstairs after bedtime, saying that he had heard someone walking down the hall and wanted to know who it was. We would tell him to go back to bed, that it was just the squirrels running across the roof.

About two weeks later, I woke up in the middle of the night when I heard footsteps coming up the stairs (which were covered in linoleum, making the footsteps very loud). I thought that we had a burglar. I sat up in the bed to see who was coming up, but nobody appeared — just the sound of footsteps. My sitting-up woke up my wife, and she asked what the matter was. I told her what had happened, and she said that it wasn't a burglar but something else. She had had the same experience the night before and had stared and stared at the hallway but no one ever appeared. She hadn't told me about this before because she thought that I would think she was crazy. Now, of course, I didn't think she was crazy at all. Just to be sure, we got up and searched the entire house. Nothing was out of the ordinary.

Two more weeks passed and we had more experiences. I came home from work one day and my wife told me what her day had been like. As the children took their naps and she was watching TV in the den, she heard someone walking around in the room directly over her head (a bedroom made into an office for me). She thought someone had broken into the house through an upstairs window. She had been terribly frightened as he walked all around the room moving furniture, with those loud feet going clomp-clomp-clomp for about 15 minutes. She was frozen with fear. She couldn't leave because the children were upstairs, and she couldn't go upstairs because we had no weapons and she didn't want to confront him unarmed. She called her parents to come over and help her, and when they rushed in and went upstairs with her, there was nothing there: All was silent and nothing looked disturbed. Her parents told *her* that it was squirrels. But as she said to me, if it was squirrels, then they were built like cows and had the feet of elephants.

We soon named our friend "Mr. Martin." We learned from the neighbors that the real Mr. Martin was a heavy smoker who suffered from emphysema. It became a family joke to say, "Mr. Martin turned on the light in the bathroom again last night," or "Mr. Martin left the front door open again last night." (That front door, standing wide open on countless mornings after I've securely closed it and locked it the night before, nearly drives me crazy.)

No one in the household smokes, but it wasn't long before we noticed the smell of smoke, hanging strongly in the air when we would walk into a room or in certain areas of the yard. This usually occurred when we were engaged in a project concerning the house — it seems he would stand there smoking and supervising as we painted or hung wallpaper. I was hanging wallpaper in my daughter's bedroom one day, and someone tapped me on the shoulder. I turned on the ladder to see what my wife wanted, but she wasn't there. No one was there. "Of course," I said — why not? On another occasion, while doing yard work, the smoke smell became particularly strong. We learned from the next-door neighbor that this particular section of the yard had been very upsetting for Mr. Martin. Several years earlier, the teenager next door had, with Mrs. Martin's permission, planted a garden on this spot. Mr. Martin, then sick, was so upset that Mrs. Martin asked the teenager to take out the garden and replace it the way it was before. It was so eerie to smell freshly lit cigarettes as I worked in this spot, just as if he were standing right beside me, asking me to stop.

We now have three children and the oldest is 15. Everyone has had their own experiences with "Mr. Martin." They have all had the footsteps experiences, cigarette-smoke experiences, lights-on and front-door-opening experiences. But some have had their own unique experiences. On at least two occasions, our oldest has heard his labored, hard rasping in the den, where he died. One day we came home and found the oldest standing outside on the sidewalk. He said that Mr. Martin had been breathing again in the den with him, and he wasn't going to stay in the house



with him anymore. (It's funnier in a group; it's unnerving when you are alone with him.)

In June of 1984, I awoke in the middle of the night and actually saw Mr. Martin in the hallway upstairs. He was surrounded by a brilliant light and then vanished into the wall in the hall. My next-door neighbor had a picture of him and showed it to me after I'd told her about this experience: It matched what I had seen.

I believe that he was looking for his wife that night. (They had lived in this house for 32 years.) She had died in August of 1978.

Several weeks ago I came home from work only to smell cigarette smoke on the front porch. I am sure that Mr. Martin was there — with a cigarette, sitting on the porch on that nice spring day, enjoying the neighborhood, just as he used to long ago! We hope he likes what we have done to the house.

— Ray Hepler  
High Point, N.C.

## Della



Our Pennsylvania Queen Anne had everything: a tower, pocket doors, a tiny conservatory, and 47 windows. Our printing office occupied the first floor; a separate building in back had our printing presses and other equipment. We lived in the second and third storeys.

One night about nine years ago, I was typing in the office and noticed that the light was on in the front parlor where we displayed wedding stationery. After I finished, I turned it off and went upstairs. When my husband came home later that evening he remarked, "You forgot to turn off the light downstairs."

That was the beginning; after that night, we constantly turned off the light. It always seemed to be on. We blamed each other and our daughter; we wondered about the dog; we checked the wiring. Late one night I was standing at our bedroom window when the light came on in the parlor downstairs. I could see it shining out onto the snow below.

A few weeks later we returned home from a wedding and found a transom window open in the conservatory. The room was freezing and the plants were stiff with cold. We immediately thought of robbery until we noticed that the window-rod assembly had been positioned open and the screw tightened from the inside.

Our friends began kidding us about our "ghost," but I tried not to think about it, sure that there must be another explanation — ghosts belonged in stories and in the drafty castles of England, not in my home.

The activity continued and seemed to center around the front hall and parlor. One morning, the door connecting our office and living quarters was locked. The next day it was locked again. We checked the lock and everything was normal. I began waking up at night to listen intently to the silence. Maybe I did believe in ghosts.

The lights, locking doors, and opening windows continued for a few months. Sam, the local undertaker's helper, was in his eighties and had lived in town all his life. We began talking about the research I was doing at the courthouse, searching out deeds of past owners. I asked him if he'd known anyone who lived in my house. He chuckled and said, "I've carried a few people out your front door." He told me about two families who had lived in the house 10 or 15 years before, and then said, "When I was a boy, I remember a woman who lived here all alone. Her name was Della Davis and we were afraid of her. She used to porcelainize her face: I think it was some sort of clay-based make-up women used back then to hide their wrinkles, and it dried hard and smooth like a mask. That's all I remember about her."

I went back to my deeds and found her: Della Davis, Singlewoman. She had lived in the house for 28 years. Could she be our ghost?

A few days later, I came downstairs to work in the office, only to remember some papers I'd left upstairs. I turned to run back for them — the door that I had just walked through was locked. Clearly something had to be done. But what? I couldn't picture myself looking through the Yellow Pages under "exorcists" to banish something I only half-believed in.

In the following months I thought about Della frequently. I wondered what her life had been like and why she might be wandering about our house. Maybe she was worried about it. Perhaps if I talked to her, "woman to ghost," I could convey our deep love and respect for the house and our intention to take care of it.

Then came the fateful afternoon when I was alone in the house and I saw something waft across the front hall and vanish behind the newel post. It looked like a curl of smoke or a filmy scarf. I was terrified.

That night I sat shivering on the top step, looking down into the blackness of the hall below. I began talking to Della out loud. My voice sounded shaky and strange. I explained that we were very upset by the things that had been happening and that we loved the house and wanted to stay there. I said that we intended to take good care of the place and wanted her to know this so that she could rest in peace. Then I ran for my bed and hid under the covers.

I still feel creepy when I remember what happened after that night. Everything stopped: The lights stayed off, the windows remained closed, and the door never locked again. From that day until this.

This story is factual, with the exception of our ghost's name, which has been changed.

— Linda Bloom  
Allentown, Penn.



# RADIATORS

**C**an't count how many times we've been asked how to strip/paint/cover up an old radiator.

Historically, homeowners dealt with the decorating dilemma by buying fancy radiators, later by applying fancy painted finishes, still later by plunking covers over them. In the following 8 pages, we show you how to do the same — as well as how to paint for radiant efficiency. We show how radiator strippers steaming over that last tenacious bit of paint can take it *all* off. And we tell you what your options are if radiators have brought you to the boiling point and you're ready to replace them.

As we researched ways to cope with these homely hunks of iron, we discovered they've long been the subject of heated discussion. A wrought-iron radiator was developed c. 1870 by Joseph Naylor. (Naylor is best known for the heating system he designed in 1855 for the U.S. Capitol, which prompted one citizen to hiss that Congress already was full of hot air.) The cast-iron successors to Naylor's radiator brought central heating to American homes by the 1880s, but not without a bit of hot debate.

Victorians were obsessed with fresh air, and closing up a house to heat with radiators was considered tantamount to suicide. Heating expert Lewis Leeds, who coined the slogan "Man's own breath is his greatest enemy," attributed 40% of all deaths to stale breath and close rooms. Well! by comparison, the *aesthetic* problem posed by radiators pales. . . .



**H**ere Are The Facts: No "goody-goody" stories about how easy it is — because it's not. Instead, we'll tell you actual methods whereby girls stripped cast-iron radiators of decades of paint! (Boys have done it, too.)

These revelations may make you squeamish, but it's better to be prepared before you start a job. Heavy paint build-up obscures decorative details that would otherwise be highlighted in a new paint job. But that's not all. It also can't take the expansion and contraction of the radiator, and so large chunks of paint (often lead-based) CRACK and PEEL OFF!



## The Story of Jennie

Jennie (from a small town in the Midwest) chose to strip her radiators with the **mechanical method** — the most popular and successful way. She used a variety of tools to chip and flake the paint off dry.

First, she worked with a stiff *wire brush*, knocking off the scale that loosened easily. Then, she got out her electric hand drill (an heirloom from her Grandmother), and experimented with *power-stripping devices* such as flap sanders (strips of sanding cloth on a wheel), roto-strippers (hinged steel rods on a wheel), and a rotary wire brush. Some of these tools worked better than others for stripping the hidden spaces between columns. For the

## Thrilling Stories of Girls STRIPPING RADIATORS

whole job, Jennie wore a dust mask and goggles for her own safety (power tools, in particular, can fling wires or bristles into your eyes). Plenty of drop cloths and masking caught the debris.

One day, a man with a black moustache and thick accent told her about *tapping* the paint off. To do this, Jennie got a ball-peen hammer and broke the paint bond on tough spots by just tapping repeatedly on the radiator. This turned out to be a remarkably efficient way to break off most of the paint, so that other methods, such as vigorous wire brushing, could finish the job.

## Marriage?

"Not until I strip my 1912 Rococo Ornamental!" vowed Alice. An old-house addict at an early age and a swell girl, she chose to work with the **chemical**



**method.** Heavy masking of the wall and floor were needed to protect them from dropped globs of stripper. She used a semi-paste methylene-chloride product thickened with cornstarch to keep the stripper on the vertical surfaces of the radiator. Applying strips of saran wrap to keep the solvents from evaporating also helped. Chemical stripping worked well for softening the paint in hard-to-reach spots, but Alice needed a variety of small tools to clean out the sludge. She then labored to wash down the radiator with mineral spirits, so the new paint coat would hold. A messy and



Radiator technology didn't change much after the switch from wrought iron to cast iron around 1880. But there sure were a plethora of shapes and sizes.



Wrought-iron tube radiator, circular model c. 1870



Rectangular wrought-iron radiator c. 1870

time-consuming job; she vowed never to do it again.



### What Happened to Stella

Stella, with her bright eyes and up-turned nose, had run away to the big city where heat guns were plentiful. So she tried stripping radiators using the **heat method**. Despair entered her heart when she found it didn't work very well. The cast-iron mass absorbed the heat from the gun before it could soften the paint. (The heat-sink effect was worse in hot-water systems, where radiators were full of liquid.) "If only I had known!" she lamented.

### I'll Share my Legacy with you

the mysterious editor told Ruth and Vera. If you have reason to remove the radiators anyway (say, because you're plastering walls and sanding floors), consider stripping the radiators off-site. Vera, the shy one, had a plumber drain her hot-water system and disconnect the radiators for her. Then she had them chemically stripped at a shop that did **immersion-tank stripping** for about \$75 a unit. Ruth, who had always wanted to be an actress, undid the steam plumbing herself, but sent her units to a local firm to be **sandblasted** clean.

The words of the editor also guided the girls when it came to moving and reinstalling the heavy radiators. "Use heavy-duty furniture casters to roll the radiators" she counselled, "and you may need the help of a plumber to hook them back up without leaks, level them correctly, and balance the system. Hooking up hot-water radiators can be very tricky."



## DECORATING RADIATORS

By Stephen Del Sordo  
Historian, Delaware Bureau of  
Archeology & Historic Preservation

Ever since radiators became readily available just 100 years ago, homeowners have been wringing their hands over them. Unfortunately for the manufacturers, radiators posed an aesthetic problem. How *does* a homeowner decorate around a large lump of cast iron?

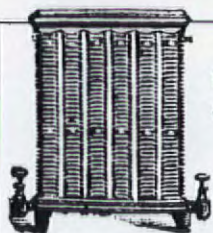
Radiator manufacturers responded like red-blooded businessmen. They made specialized radiators, such as units for dining rooms with warming ovens built into their bodies. Ornately cast models began to appear in a variety of shapes and sizes. The industry also trumpeted a variety of decorative techniques in their trade catalogs. From the 1880s until the 1920s, the most popular decorating schemes were bronzing (with metallic paints) and japanning (with japan paints or enamels). Bronzing did not lose its appeal until after 1920, when radiator covers became popular (see page 32).

Those of us with older homes love the efficiency and cleanliness of heating with radiators, but we're *still* trying to cope with their deco-

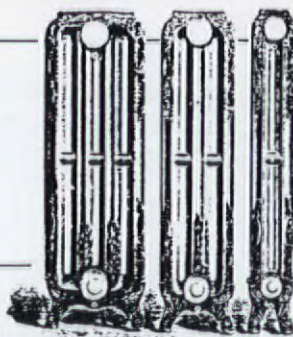
ration. Radiators and pipes often got painted the same color as the wall in the hopes that they'd blend "into the woodwork." My wife and I considered this route for the radiators in our 1910 home in Cambridge, Maryland — that is, until we started knocking off loose flakes of paint. Underneath we saw a brilliant gold color, evidence that the radiators had originally been bronzed.







**Early steam radiator  
c. 1880**



**Cast-iron column radiators, one-,  
three-, and four-column models  
c. 1895**

A trip to the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation Library in Wilmington, Delaware, turned up a 1910 catalog for the American Radiator Company, which had manufactured our radiators. The catalog also contained a section with directions for bronzing, as well as color schemes designed to highlight the ornament on the radiator. The manufacturer had even offered the bronzing liquid, dry powder, and appropriate brushes for sale by mail. Based on this information, we decided to bronze our radiators *à la* 1910.

## Bronzing Radiators

Bronzing is a decorative-painting technique using two materials: a vehicle (the oil-based bronzing liquid) and a pigment (any of several bronzing powders). Bronze powders come in a fairly broad palette of metallic tones, including silver,

gold, green, copper, orange, aluminum, blue, and purple. The powder is usually added to the liquid until it is the consistency of cream (roughly one pound of powder to one quart of liquid), then applied with a camel's-hair brush. True bronzing darkens in time as the metallic pigments oxidize.

In my research, I uncovered two separate sets of radiator bronzing directions. The American Radiator Company suggested the following:

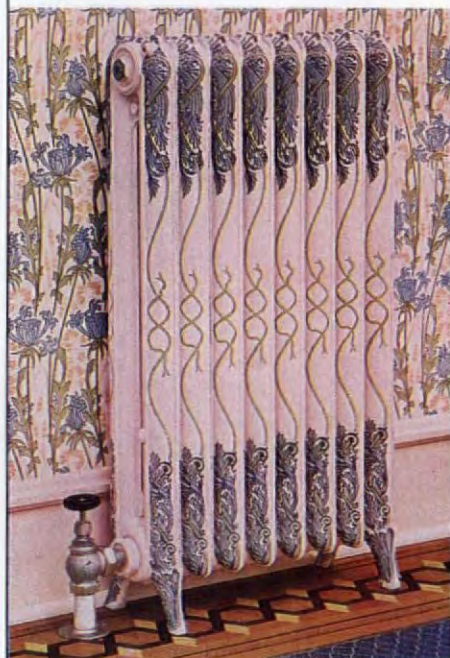
First give the radiator a coat of paint (free from oil), properly mixed so that it will stand the heat, and then go over the entire surface of the sections with bronze liquid, after which apply the bronze with ordinary camel's-hair brush. After the first coat of bronze is thoroughly dry, go over the raised ornamentation with bronze liquid, using a wide, flat brush, with which it is very easy to touch only the ornamental part and then apply bronze in different color from the first coat.



**A finished rebronzing: dark pale  
gold on a 1910 ornamental rococo.**

Among the combinations suggested:

- ☞ silver body, copper ornament
- ☞ copper body, silver ornament
- ☞ copper body, gold ornament
- ☞ blue-green body, gold ornament



**This scheme adds to "the neat,  
snappy appearance of the room"  
(American Radiator Co., 1905).**

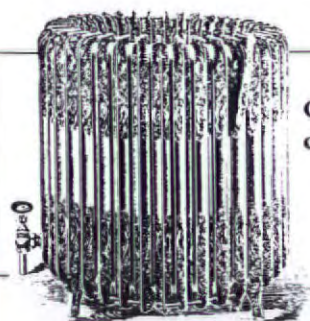


**"Painting out" the radiator by  
matching the wallpaper (American  
Radiator Co., 1905).**



**Contrasting colors "for Billiard  
Room, Theatre Lobby, Hallway . . ."  
(American Radiator Co., 1905).**





Ornamental circular radiator  
c. 1895

Although American Radiator recommended this method because it provided a better luster, lasted longer, and used less material, by 1925 they had changed to an easier technique first recommended by the United States Radiator Company:

Use a bronze primer, or if you want to finish a job quickly, give the radiator first a coat of bronzing liquid; this will dry in about twenty minutes with a gloss, covering up all the dirt and rust. Then mix the bronze powder with the bronzing liquid to the consistency of cream and apply evenly, that is, in one direction only. Always use a soft brush, as a stiff brush cuts the bronze, ruining the high finish. If bronze is applied when radiator is warm, the lustre is improved.

This procedure sounded simpler to us, and was the one we followed.

In bronzing our radiators, we first stripped off the old paint using the "tapping" method (see page 28). Then we primed the bare cast iron with a spray-can autobody primer. These primers are a good choice because 1) they hold up under the radiator heat; 2) sandable primers will hide pits in the metal or bits of left-over paint when gone over lightly with fine-grit sandpaper; 3) they are available in light grey, a color that works well under the bronzing (better than black or rust).

Next, I made up a small batch of paint in a clean bucket in the ratio of one-half pound of powder to two cups of liquid. Two cups were enough for both a seven-section radiator 46" high, and the two 9'6" water pipes. A full quart of bronzing liquid and powder usually covers 250 to 300 square feet, but not always. Aluminum bronze, in particular, requires from one-half to one gallon of liquid per pound of powder, and might cover twice the area of regular bronze. The materials, in-

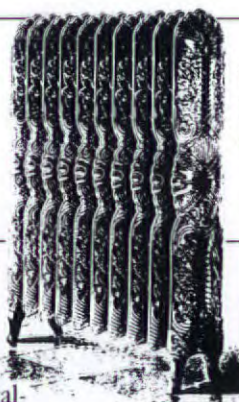
cidentally, are not cheap. Bronzing liquid runs about \$16 per gallon. Bronzing powder varies in price from \$15 for a pound of dark pale gold (the color I used), to around \$17 for new silver.

We followed the instructions from the United States Radiator Company closely. I worked with a 1½" camel's-hair brush, a curved, long-handled radiator brush, and a small, round brush (also camel) to reach the interior of each section—the hardest part of painting. The bronzing liquid/powder mixture brushes on like regular house paint, but it is important to work carefully. Always brush in the same direction to keep stroke marks at a minimum. The paint mixes thin enough (and without undissolved particles), that an airless sprayer might also work.

As an experiment, my wife "bronzed" one radiator with spray paint (Derusto's metallic finish: antique bronze color). It took two 13-oz. cans for good coverage, and 20 minutes to paint (versus over three hours for brush painting). The finish is similar to the traditional bronze radiator, and darkens as it ages. Heat didn't affect the paint, although it probably should be allowed to dry for several days before you turn on the radiator.

## Polychroming Radiators

In 1904, The American Radiator Company took the grand prize for heating and ventilating apparatus at the St. Louis World's Fair. To celebrate their achievement, they published a souvenir book on the beauty of radiators, illustrating ways they could enhance a decorating scheme. The book (somehow) overlooks bronzing, and promotes



The "Ornate"  
United States Radiator Company  
c. 1895

ideas like updating radiators with *new* ones as fashions in decoration changed! The best section, though, describes a variety of two-and three-color paint schemes for painting radiators, which highlight the ornament.


This procedure is simpler than it sounds, especially when using modern materials. Remember to choose paints (including the primer) that will withstand the heat of radiator. In addition, avoid using water-based paint directly on the cast iron. It may rust the metal, which can then bleed through the paint.

To polychrome:

- 1) Apply the primer.
- 2) Paint the entire radiator the color that you want the *ornament* to display.
- 3) Once this is dry, paint the entire radiator the *background* color.
- 4) While this coat is still slightly damp or tacky, wipe down the ornament to expose the color underneath. A cloth or sponge should serve to remove the unwanted paint, (with a little practice). The artistically inclined might also have success hand-painting the ornament in the desired color.

American suggested the following color schemes, using the first color as the foundation (the coat you wipe off the ornament):

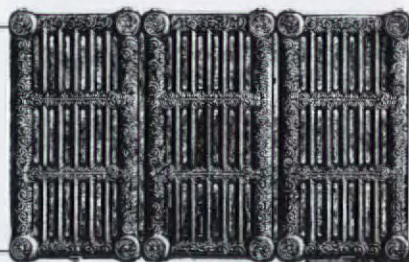
- ☞ Red, brown, and grey
- ☞ Red, olive, and grey-blue
- ☞ Yellow, old rose, and white
- ☞ Terra cotta, white, and soft green
- ☞ Blue, light olive, and plum
- ☞ Green, violet, and soft grey
- ☞ Sage, russet, and blue-green

My personal favorite from the book is the example that matches the blue floral wallpaper (page 30, bottom left). The radiator was given a base coat of white paint. Then, its ornament was painted blue to resemble the wallpaper flowers, and green vines were painted on it. 





Everybody's favorite:  
The "Rococo"  
c. 1901



Multi-sectioned wall and  
steamship design  
c. 1901

## RADIATOR PAINTS



What kind of paint should you put on a radiator?

The answer, like radiators themselves, has changed in the course of a century.

In the *Housewarming Manual* (1896), author John Miller advised "All radiators will be painted or bronzed in colors of the owner's choosing." Indeed, bronzing was highly popular by the turn of the century, and for two reasons. First, metallic paint seemed appropriate for such a conspicuous (and obviously iron) device. Second, popular wisdom assumed that a shiny, metal-based coating helped radiators transfer heat.



Bronzing reigned unchallenged as a radiator paint until the 1920s, when laboratory research took a serious look

at heating efficiency. Tests at the University of Illinois and other engineering centers confirmed that radiators heat through two modes: **convection**, warming the air that circulates around the radiator, and **radiation**, the direct emission of heat energy as waves. Radiator paint, it turned out, had no effect on convection, but could seriously influence radiation. After testing many finishes on steam systems, some of the conclusions were:

- \* Radiation was only affected by the last coat of paint put on a radiator.

- \* For practical purposes, oil paints

offered the same (sometimes even more) heat transmission as an unpainted radiator surface.

- \* The oil paints tested all gave practically the same results, regardless of their color.

- \* Metal bronze paints (and galvanizing) reduced heat transmission, typically from 7.4 to 9.2 percent. The tests have been repeated and refined over the years, but the results remain essentially the same.

In light of this information, then, choosing the "right" paint for a period radiator involves deciding what role the paint is supposed to perform. Here are some suggestions:

- \* If maximum heat transfer is the goal in painting a radiator, the ideal coating is non-metallic, flat black paint. Any paint containing metal particles has the same effect as bronzing, and will compromise the efficiency of the radiator. (Metal pigments should be listed in the ingredients.) Black has a slight advantage over other colors, and a flat-finish surface radiates better than a shiny one.

- \* If an authentic decorative effect is the painting goal, a historic technique like bronzing may be fine — especially when the potential heat loss is acceptable. The drop in efficiency may not even be critical, as many old systems are over-specified for output anyway. Then again, not all radiators will exhibit a maximum reduction in heat transfer.

- \* If a compromise between the ideal heat-transfer paint and the look of bronzing is desired, non-metallic paints in shades other than black are an alternative. The true aluminum- or copper-colored bronzing would be out of the question, so a flat wall paint in, say, light grey or brown could be used to approximate their appearance. Polychroming with appropriate paints would work here, too.



## RADIATOR COVERS



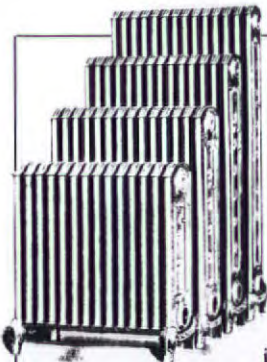
Fashion has always been fickle. Painting quickly lost its cachet when radiator covers were introduced.

While he was researching radiator decoration, Stephen Del Sordo came across the above illustration of the American Radiator Company's "Ideal Radiator Cover." By the early 1920s, even American Radiator, an industry leader in touting fancy painted finishes, had switched over to covers.

The company was not about to promote plain wooden boxes, however. Through its subsidiary, the Ideal Radiator Company, it sold high-style "cabinets" that could function as furniture. These were available in a wide range of styles, from William and Mary to Colonial Revival to Moderne.

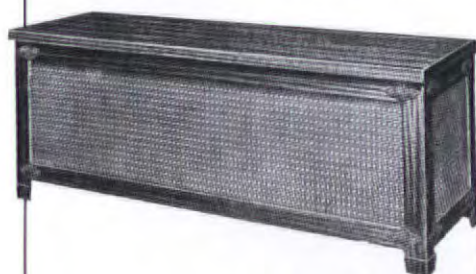
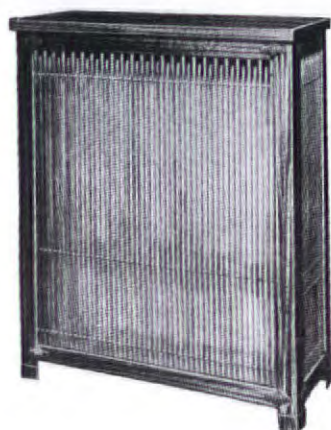
Suddenly, the radiator cover was a functional necessity. Throughout the 1920s, trade catalogs were full of radiator covers doubling as sideboards, bathroom shelves, window seats, even living room tables. A Columbia Metal Box Co. advertisement



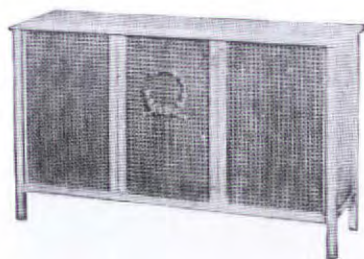


Graduated sizes suitable for under stairs  
c. 1906

pronounced gravely that its radiator cabinets could help "keep walls clean." The ad came complete with "before" and "after" illustrations of what was once an attractive Colonial Revival parlor wall "disfigured" by a naked radiator. The companion picture featured a



Variations on the basic box: Rod grille, left, perfect for the flapper era; traditional cane grille, center; fancy feet, right (Slyker Metal Radiator Furniture, 1926)



Basic box with Colonial Revival wreath (Tuttle & Bailey, 1926)



Deluxe "Grecian Grille" design (The Auer Register Co., 1926)



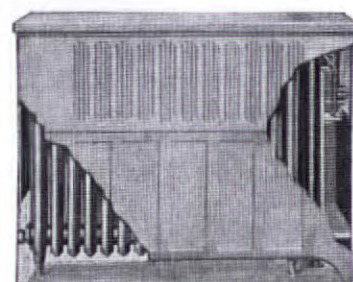
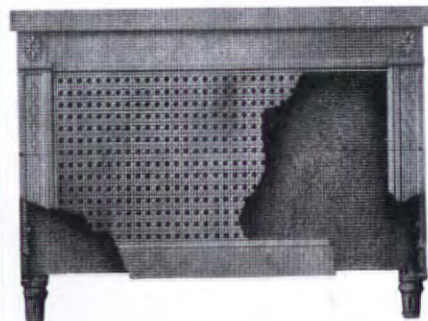
When the box simply wouldn't do: The answer for those pesky corners, left, and for bay windows, center; *haute couture* for circular radiators, right.



Ornamental flue box base radiator  
c. 1913

tions of *Sweet's Architectural Catalog*. With these prototypes as your guide, the possibilities are endless. A Tudor Revival house might call for radiator cabinets sporting a Tudor arch. . . .

As for little details like optimum heat convection, flip to page 34 for a look at state-of-the-art cover engineering in 1922.



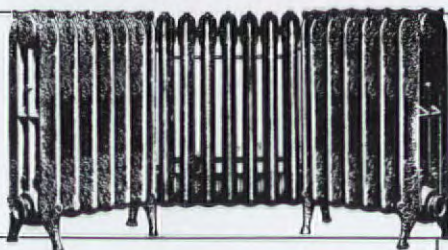
"The Ja-Nar": High-tech in the Roaring '20s (Fulton Co., 1925)







Dining room radiator with muffin warmer c. 1913



Ornamental bay window radiator c. 1906

Radiator covers have to do more than hide the metal monster; they must also let it transfer heat. Two-thirds or more of a radiator's output is through **convection**, and poor cover design can drastically cut heating efficiency. As heating researchers examined radiator paints, they also took a hard look at the covers then popular. The following guidelines for cover design were published in 1922.

Fig. 1: Radiator boxes (with screens at top, bottom, and front) reduce heat transmission from 7 to 10 percent. They perform best when the casing is at least  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the radiator, and the opening at the top is twice as wide as the one at the bottom (ideally, 10 inches and 5 inches).

Fig. 2: A free-standing screen, (the top is completely open) produces a strong air current (much like a chimney) that can even mark an *improvement* over the efficiency of a naked radiator if the screen is large enough.

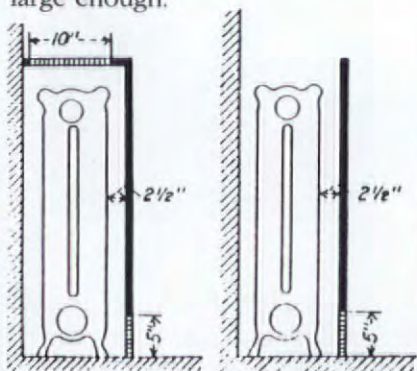


Fig. 1

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3: Flat shelves should include reflectors beneath. When the shelf is closer than 5 inches to the top of the radiator, it will begin to negatively affect heat transfer.

Fig. 4: Boxes or built-ins with shell-like tops also suffer seriously when the height over the radiator ( $d$ ) is too small (example: a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch space means a reduction of 20 percent).

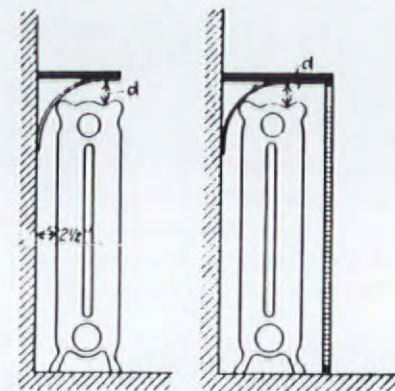


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5: A front grille partially replaced by a solid panel (with vents left at top and bottom) can compromise heat transmission on the order of 25 percent. If ( $d$ ) is under  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches as well, the reduction might reach 40 percent.

Fig. 6: Seat-type covers are very sensitive to the distance between the top of the radiator and the bottom of the seat (ideally 6 inches). At best, these covers still reduce transmission by 15 to 20 percent, and can be worse if ( $d$ ) falls below 3 inches.

These reprinted diagrams will give you a start on designing your radiator covers. Once you've picked a basic configuration, keeping in mind the heating efficiency, the style is up to you. It's as much an individual choice as any other piece of furniture.

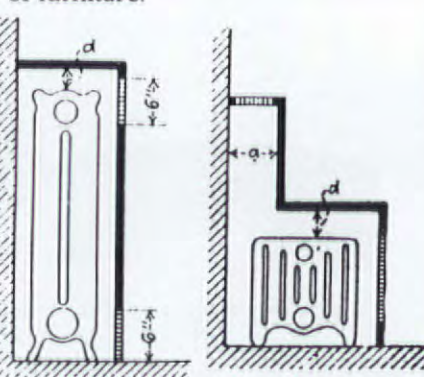


Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

## RADIATOR REPLACEMENT

Today, not many homeowners would take American Radiator's 1904 suggestion and swap radiators every few years to keep in step with fashion. But if you need to replace an old radiator, there is an array of modern designs to consider. One is the panel radiator pictured below by Runtal Radiators.

Modern designs are less conspicuous than the cast-iron models and no less "authentic" in many old houses. There were no radiators until the 1870s anyway, so fireplaces or stoves — not steam-fired behemoths — were the original equipment in these early homes.



Some simple calculations can tell you what your existing radiator's heat output is. ("Installer's Guide for Simplified Replacement of Old Radiators," available from the Hydronics Institute — see "Radiator Sources," page 35 — will tell you how to do the math.) Use this figure to determine what output you need from your new radiator. Since modern radiators yield better BTU output than old designs, chances are you'll get more warmth from less bulk — another advantage of retrofitting.





**Slim-type radiator**  
c. 1926



**"The Shirley Window Radiator"**  
c. 1906

## RADIATOR SOURCES

### Paints & Bronzing Supplies

**Johnson Paint Company, Inc.**  
355 Newbury Street, Dept. OHJ  
Boston, MA 02115  
(617) 536-4244  
(Paints and bronzing liquids and powders)

**Wolf Paints and Wallpapers**  
771 Ninth Avenue, Dept. OHJ  
New York, NY 10019  
(212) 245-7777  
(Paints and bronzing liquids and powders)



### Radiator Brushes

**American Brush Co.**  
Wellesley Office Park, Dept. OHJ  
60 Williams Street  
Wellesley, MA 02181  
(617) 235-5088  
(Long-handled and offset-handled brushes for painting radiators)

**Wolf Paints and Wallpapers**  
771 Ninth Avenue, Dept. OHJ  
New York, NY 10019  
(212) 245-7777  
(Long-handled and offset-handled brushes for painting radiators, camel's-hair bronzing brushes)



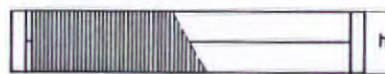
### Salvage Radiators

**Architectural Salvage Cooperative**  
909 W. 3rd Street, Dept. OHJ  
Davenport, IA 52802  
(319) 324-1556

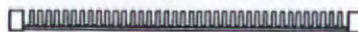
**Consumer Supply Co.**  
1110 W. Lake, Dept. OHJ  
Chicago, IL 60607  
(312) 666-6080



(Courtesy Runtal Radiators)



FRONT ELEVATION



TOP VIEW

### Replacement Radiators

**ENERJEE International**  
32 S. Lafayette Avenue, Dept. OHJ  
Morrisville, PA 19067  
(215) 295-0557  
(Swedish cold-rolled steel radiators in a wide range of styles and sizes)

**Runtal Radiators**  
187 Neck Road, Dept. OHJ  
Ward Hill, MA 01830  
(508) 373-1666  
(Heavy-gauge steel radiators in a wide range of styles and sizes)

### Radiator Covers

**Margate Custom Made Cabinets**  
1037 N. Noyes, Dept. OHJ  
St. Joseph, MO 64506  
(816) 233-4244  
(Custom wooden radiator covers)

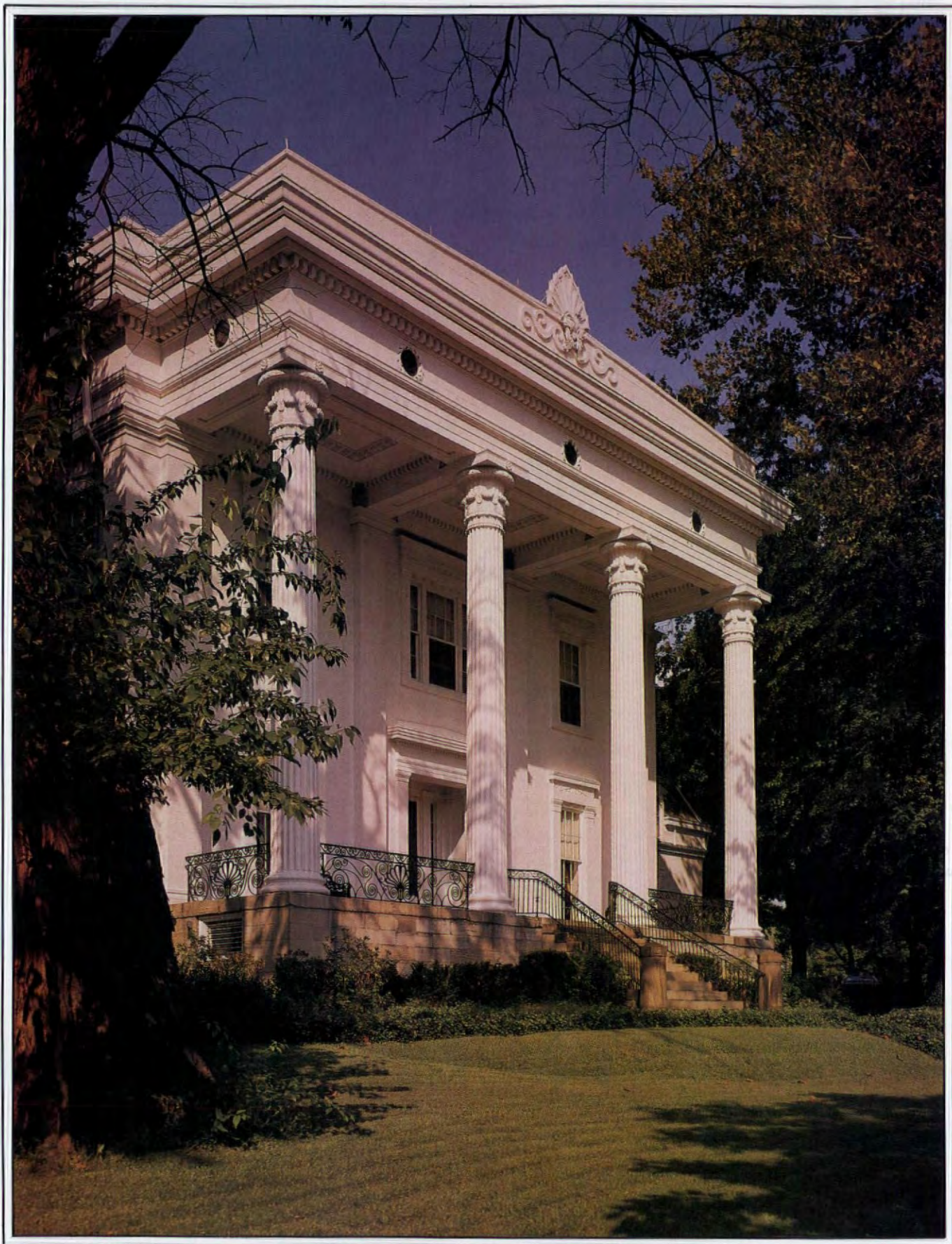
**Monarch Radiator Enclosures**  
2744 Arkansas Drive, Dept. OHJ  
Brooklyn, NY 11234  
(201) 796-4117  
(All-steel radiator covers in many styles and colors with baked enamel finish)

### Information

**Hydronics Institute**  
35 Russo Place, Dept. OHJ  
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922  
(201) 464-8200  
(Free information for consumers on hot-water heating systems)







*Virtually every variation on Greek Revival can be found in the Midwest, from academic to vernacular.  
The high-style James F. D. Lanier House (1844) is in Madison, Indiana.*



# GREEK REVIVAL HOUSES

## In the Old Northwest Territory

by James C. Massey & Shirley Maxwell

In the first half of the 19th century, Americans leapt head, heart, and hand into a long, passionate attachment to all things Greek. Caught up during this hopeful, expansive era before the Civil War in charting an aesthetic and philosophical course for their young republic, Americans read, travelled, and compared cultures as they never had before. When the votes were in, they declared themselves by an overwhelming margin to be the spiritual heirs of ancient Greece. The democratic ideals of Greece were then being reasserted in the Greek War of Independence from the Turks, reminding Americans of their own Revolution. The beauty of classical art, literature, and architecture shone more brightly than ever in the light of the archeological discoveries of the period; Greece's civilizing role in the ancient world seemed much like America's dreams for its own future. Moreover, American culture at that time was, as architectural historian Talbot Hamlin wistfully reminds us, "learned, founded in classic myth, classic literature, classic art. A culture perhaps more completely aesthetic than any American culture before and since."

Because so many new houses and towns were built during this period, it's not surprising that the predominant building style between 1830 and 1860 came to be called "Greek Revival" by later generations.

Most of the new "Greek" buildings were not intended to be replicas of ancient structures. This new architecture was perceived less as a revival than as an innovation — a

modern, national style. During its heyday it was, in fact, called the "National Style." Based on patterns taken from books by Minard Lafever, Asher Benjamin, and others, and modelled after structures designed by American architects such as Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Ithiel Town, Andrew Jackson Davis, Robert Mills, William Strickland, Isaiah Rogers, and Thomas U. Walter, Grecian-inspired buildings for public and private use sprang up in every corner of the land.

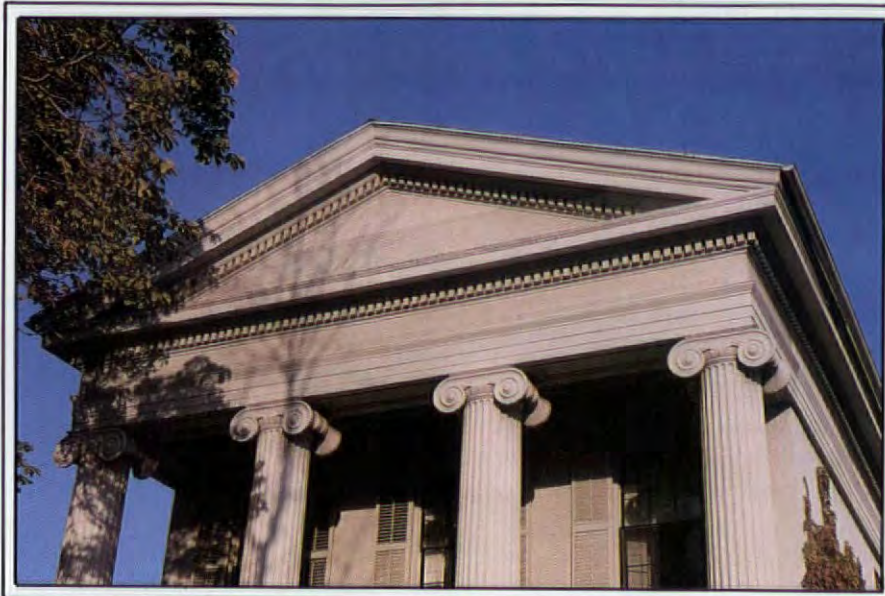
In no section of the country was the Greek style more enthusiastically adopted than in the newly developing states of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota: the Old Northwest Territory. Since virtually every kind of American Greek Revival building can be found in the region, from academic to vernacular, it provides a useful geographical focus for this article. Our illustrations are selected from these states, with the



photos: James C. Massey (except where noted)

*Midwest Greek Revivals were influenced by early Eastern examples. Andalusia (1836), left, near Philadelphia, has a "correct" Doric colonnade. The Levi Starbuck House (1838), right, in Nantucket has an Ionic entrance porch.*





*A rare Midwest example of a nearly perfect little temple: Judge Robert S. Wilson House (c. 1839), Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

exception of two eastern landmarks that serve as stylistic touchstones.

The basic model for Greek Revival architecture was the ancient Greek temple, in which a series of columns supported a horizontal superstructure, called an entablature, or a triangular pediment. In the United States, the style was based — usually rather loosely, only sometimes rigidly — on the Greek “orders,” sets of building elements determined mainly by the type of column used. The columns ranged in complexity from the Doric, which featured a fluted shaft and simple, cushion-shaped capital, through the Ionic, with a capital shaped like an inverted double scroll, or volute, to the Corinthian, with elaborately carved capitals featuring foliate decorations that might imitate almost any form found in nature, from acanthus or honeysuckle leaves (for the purist) to tobacco leaves or ears of corn (for the patriotic American). The Tuscan, a simplified Roman version of the Doric order (with no fluting on the column) was part of the American repertoire as well. The problem of correct proportions (the relationship of one part of the column or order to another) was often passed over lightly in American building practice. When the columns and pediment were set out from the body of the building, they formed a covered walk or porch called a portico.

For much of the mid-19th century, the Greek Revival style dominated new construction in every state east of the Mississippi River, as well as in the states bordering the western banks of the Mississippi, throughout the South into Texas, and in large pockets along the West Coast; there were even scattered examples in the western states. The ready availability of American pattern books, the new access to trained architects, the widespread system of internal improvements (roads, canals, railroads), and the need to house the great migratory waves that surged out of the northeastern and southern United States, as well as directly from Europe, into the Northwest Territory — all contrib-

uted to make this not just a nationwide, but a nation-making style. The major regional distinction was between the North and the South: The full-height columns extending across the entire facade of a building that have come to epitomize the antebellum southern mansion are found only occasionally above the Mason-Dixon line, while the front-gabled roof is relatively rare below it.

In the Midwest, Greek Revival building was heavily influenced by settlers, builders, and architects from New England, New York, and the South. The style, which actually began in the very early-19th century in the East, was thoroughly developed by the time it reached the Northwest Territory. Not surprisingly, the Midwest buildings lagged a bit behind eastern examples

and were, perhaps, a little less pure in conception and less sophisticated in execution.

One of the grandest and most archeologically “correct” temple-style mansions in America is Andalusia, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia. Andalusia was the family home of Nicholas Biddle, president of the Second Bank of the United States. In 1836, Biddle, a confirmed Grecophile, asked Thomas U. Walter to design an addition to Andalusia modelled after a Greek temple. Walter designed the handsome portico pictured page 37, bottom left, with a Doric colonnade around three sides. As beautiful and imposing as Andalusia is, it also illustrates some inherent difficulties in adapting the ancient-temple style for a 19th-century American house, such as how to achieve the symmetry of the ideal temple in the real residence when columns and windows inevitably conflict.



*The eyebrow windows of Shreusbury House (1849) in Madison, Indiana, are unmistakably Greek Revival.*



The Levi Starbuck House (1838) in Nantucket, Massachusetts, page 37, bottom right, is a major example of a high-style Greek Revival house without a full-height portico. Its main facade, with a small but elegant Ionic entrance porch, looks onto a side garden, while on the street side a pedimented gable end with deep, attached two-storey pilasters leaves no question as to its Grecian inspiration. Compare its academic elegance with simpler and bulkier houses of the frontier.

The porticoed-temple form was used for mansions and cottages, for tiny law offices and major public buildings such as banks, churches, courthouses, and state capitols. (An awful lot of county courthouses and state capitols were built in those years!) Most of the time, however, the portico was used only on the front of houses, and was frequently reduced to no more than an entrance porch, sometimes one storey in height, sometimes the full height of the building. The porch might even be recessed within the walls of the building rather than projected outward. Or it might be omitted altogether.

Fortunately for Americans of lesser means, the columns borrowed from Greek temples could vary almost infinitely in size, shape, number, placement, and decoration and still look Greek. They could be round or square; freestanding or engaged (attached to the building); Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian; fluted, reeded, or plain; with or without bases; squat and heavy or tall and tapered. In the Greek tradition, there was always an even number of them (generally four or six), but Americans felt free to use five when it suited their purposes. The columns could be placed in front of the building only (prostyle) or all around it (peristyle). They could be beefed up with *antae*, square columns also called piers or pilasters, at the side of the building, or with engaged pilasters almost anywhere. If there were two columns in the middle with piers at the corners, the building might be described as *distyle in antis* (two columns between posts). Frequently, a bit of architectural sleight-of-hand implied the presence of columns where there were none, as when ranks of shallow wooden pilasters were set almost flush with the surface of the building.

For formal houses, columns might be carefully modelled and meticulously proportioned, possibly with exquisitely



*Hunt-Price House (c. 1837), Maumee, Ohio:*

*A vernacular example with simple square columns and an open pediment.*



*Hays House (1837-38), Marshall, Michigan: The temple form expressed as a portico added to the gable end of a simple rectangular house.*

carved Ionic or Corinthian capitals, as in the Judge Robert S. Wilson House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, page 38, top, a rare example in the Old Northwest Territory of a nearly perfect little temple. At Shrewsbury House in Madison, Indiana, pictured page 38, bottom, the polished design for the recessed entrance was taken from Lafever's *The Beauties of Modern Architecture* (1835). Shrewsbury's architect was Francis Costigan, who trained as a carpenter in Baltimore, Maryland. Unadorned round posts and plain wooden piers served well enough for ordinary Americans. Despite its lack of "correct" detail, for instance, the Hunt-Price House (c. 1837) in Maumee, Ohio, top of the page, is unmistakably Greek in intention.





*Pratt-Wright House (1841-42), Marshall, Michigan: This charming one-storey cottage is Greek Revival at its simplest and most domestic.*

In vernacular use, the pediment also was a most versatile and economical device. Turn a boxy, gable-roofed Georgian or Federal house with its narrow end to the front, add a heavy horizontal band from corner to corner, and there's your "pediment." In the interest of economy, even the band was omitted, for deep "returns" at the lower angles of the gable gave the illusion of a full triangle. It is, in fact, the simplification and creative use of Greek ideas that best exemplifies the Midwestern spirit of the Greek

Revival.

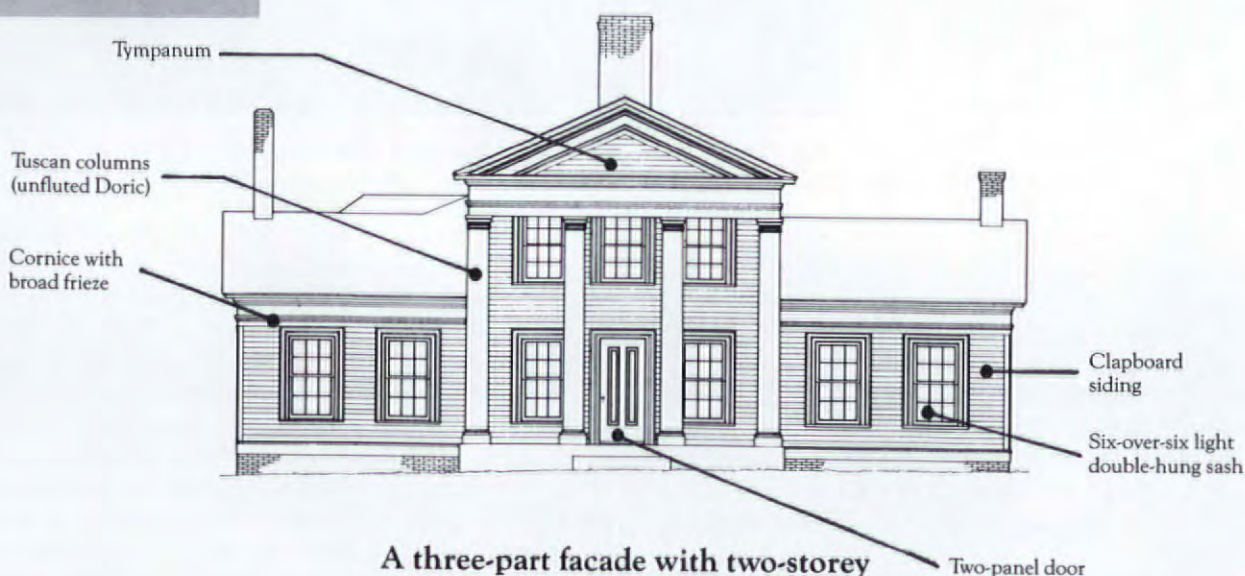
The front gable-end conferred practical as well as decorative advantages. With the narrow end of the building turned toward the street, small lots and narrow houses became considerably more usable, and the off-center entry with a stairhall at one side (the side-hall plan) became standard townhouse design. Even in the rapidly growing towns of the wide-open Midwest, such economies of scale were sometimes useful. On the other hand, even when the lot was ample and there was a full-height, full-width portico across one front gable-end, the main entrance was sometimes set under a small porch in the middle of a long side, as in the Hays House in Marshall, Michigan, page 39, bottom.

The pedimented gable-front style, particularly when combined with a deep front porch, proved especially felicitous for one-storey houses. The Pratt-Wright House, a "cottage temple" also in Marshall Michigan, left, is small, but dignified as well as charming.

Rooflines ranged from rather low, wide gable to hipped to nearly flat and often topped by a wooden parapet decorated with a Greek key or other appropriate ornament or a balustrade.

## READING THE OLD HOUSE

### BROWN AUGUSTINE HOUSE c. 1834 New Carlisle, Indiana, vicinity



**A three-part facade with two-storey central pavilion and portico flanked by one-storey wings**

Source: HABS  
J.C. Massey, '88



Brick was always a popular building material, and for important buildings, stone was employed whenever possible. There were many sources of good limestone in the Midwest, and it was used widely for lintels and sills on brick buildings. While early fire codes sometimes discouraged the use of wood for residences in town (as in Madison, Indiana), they may have caused the proliferation of wooden residences just outside the city limits. Certainly wood was a frequent — and aesthetically pleasing — choice. According to contemporary accounts, most of the time wooden buildings were stark white with bright-green shutters. False finishes were commonly used to simulate more expensive materials, and flush wooden siding or brick walls were often stuccoed and scored to resemble stone. The Judge Robert S. Wilson House is stuccoed brick, and the Gibbs-Warner House of Maumee, Ohio, right, has flush wooden siding that suggests stone walls. Even Andalusia's portico, for all its impressive feeling of heft, is made entirely of wood, right down to its grey-and-white painted "marble" floor.

If columns and porticoes were optional features, it is rare to find a Greek Revival house without an impressive

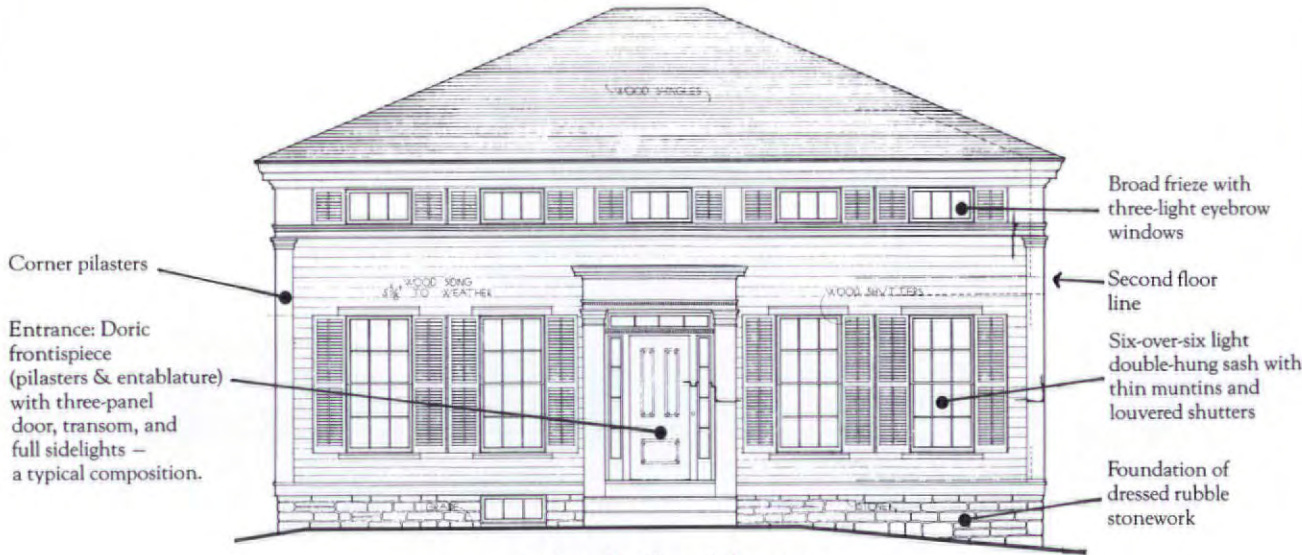


*Gibbs-Warner House (c. 1838), Maumee, Ohio: A Federal "modernized" with Greek Revival details, including gable-end pediment and corner pilasters.*

doorway. Even comparatively simple treatments like the one in the Dennison-Green House in Plainfield, Illinois (see illustration below), have an impact. Multipaned transoms, sidelights, paired columns, and pilaster trim were common. The doors themselves were either single or double, with anywhere from one to six panels.

Early Greek Revival windows were six-over-six or nine-over-nine with thin muntins; as technology made larger panes of glass possible, they were usually comprised of

# **DENNISON GREEN HOUSE** **Mid-19th century** **Plainfield, Illinois**



**A simple Greek house  
 1½ storeys, with Greek  
 details, pilasters, and  
 doorway with frontispiece.**

Source: HABS  
 J.C. Massey, '88



two large panes. Windows were frequently floor-length, or nearly so, and wooden panels often filled in between the bottom of the window and the floor. Almost a cliché of the Greek Revival period are frieze windows (also known as "eyebrow windows"), small horizontal windows set in a row under the cornice and often covered by a decorative wooden or iron grille. Although the arch was not used by the Greeks, Americans were very fond of elliptical windows, which fit handily in odd spaces, such as the shallow tympanums (triangular inner spaces) of pediments.

Greek Revival ornament could be as elaborate as taste and money allowed, or as simple as circumstances demanded. But it was always bold — a deliberate contrast to the delicate Adamesque lines of the Federal period, which after the War of 1812 had begun to seem rather abhorrently British. Look, for example, at Andalusia's massive frieze. Its Doric decoration isn't complex, and it certainly isn't subtle. But it is impressive. The same is true of the Gibbs-Warner House in Ohio, which has even less ornament. In fact, much of the flavor of Midwestern Greek Revival comes from the few Greek features pasted on an otherwise plain house.

The heavy, flat, rectilinear surfaces of Greek Revival decoration also suited the technology of the Industrial Revolution. Greek keys and other Greek Revival ornament could be mass-produced with modern tools such as the scroll saw, and the development of efficient rail and water transportation made it easy to get the ornament to frontier areas.

Not all ornament was blocky, however, for this was the

era in which it became possible to produce cast, rather than wrought, ironwork. Foundries abounded in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and fine cast-iron window grilles, roof crestings, and porch railings were widely used.

On balance, it hardly seems surprising that so versatile a style, and one that satisfied the emotional needs of so many people, should have lasted for so long. Indeed, it never has completely disappeared from the American scene. Probably the most enduring legacy of Greek Revival is the gable-front house, the standard form of the 19th-century American farmhouse; it was also a predominant form for detached city houses in the Midwest and the Northeast until well into the 20th century.

Still, it's the nature of styles to come and go, and Greek Revival had heavy competition from the Gothic style even before the Civil War. After the war, picturesque and revival styles of other times and places finally loosened Greek Revival's grip on the American imagination.



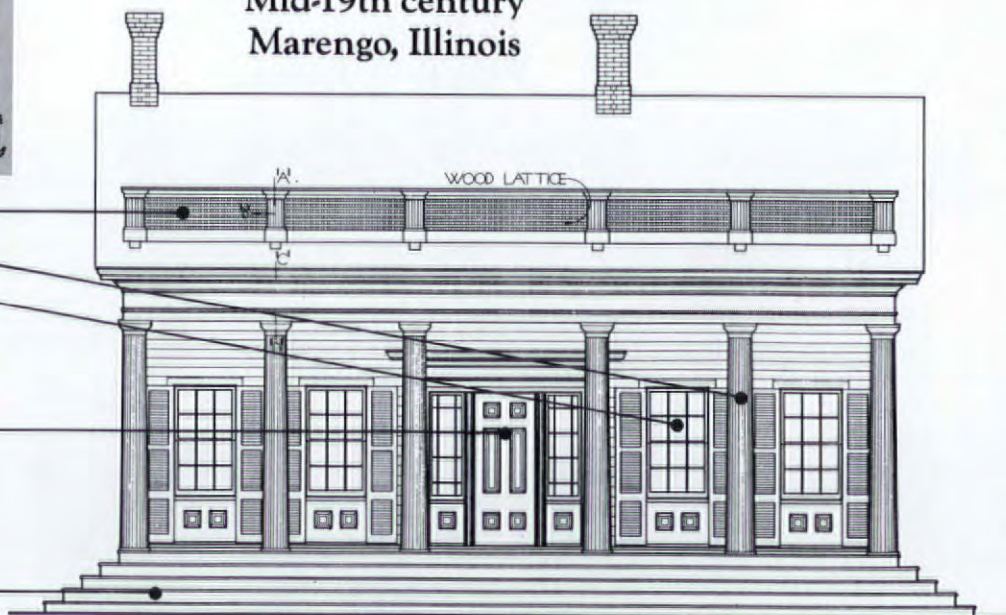
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 Newcomb, Rexford. *Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.  
 Peat, Wilbur D. *Indiana Houses of the Nineteenth Century*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1962.  
 Skjelver, Mabel Cooper. *Nineteenth Century Homes of Marshall, Michigan*. Marshall, Michigan: Marshall Historical Society, 1971.

## READING THE OLD HOUSE

### ANSON ROGERS HOUSE Mid-19th century Marengo, Illinois

- Balustrade
- Doric columns
- Six-over-six light double-hung sash with moulded panel below and full-length louvered shutters
- Entrance: Six-panel door, sidelights, frontispiece with pilasters (hidden behind columns)
- Podium



A small Greek Revival house with a Doric porch-portico and balustrade on a podium. Note that an even number of columns is standard, to provide balance for entrance and windows, though odd numbers can be found.

Source: HABS  
J.C. Massey, '88



# PILLAR TALK



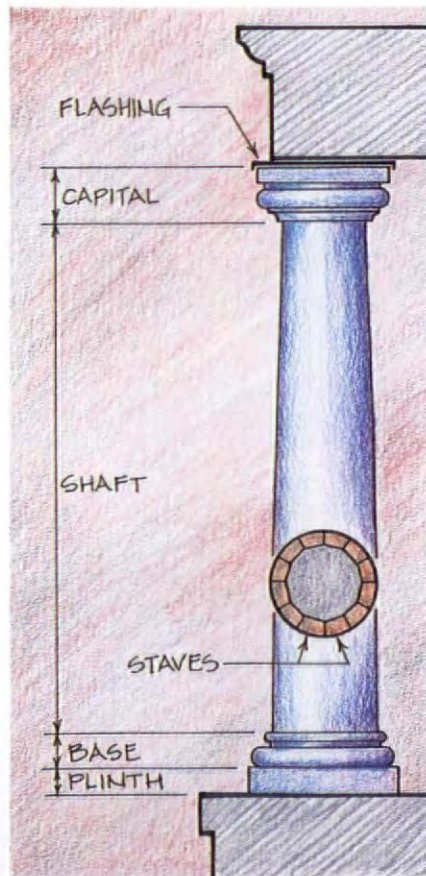
## Restoring Columns

by Barbara B. Ryan

**E**ven before we bought the 18th-century manor house that became our bed-and-breakfast inn, it was obvious that one of the four large portico columns was in trouble. The bottom quarter of its 19' length was rotted, and the staves ranged from partially unglued to totally sprung. Wire strapping betrayed an earlier, not-at-all expert repair (and told us the problem had been around for a while).

For years, rainwater from the portico roof had been running down the pillar. The downspout mounted to the side of the shaft had done a poor job of diverting water from the base; leaks in a faulty gutter elbow (enclosed in the porch roof) had started rot inside the column. Lack of ventilation in the shaft contributed to the damage. The three companions to this "worst case" also looked bad, with their plinths losing paint in large peels that revealed shredded, spongy wood.

So what did a couple of city-bred Yankees know about the care and feeding of plantation-era columns? John Leeke, writing in the October 1982 OHJ, had convinced us that column *repair* is often better than replacement — but how were we to decide whether we had passed the point of no return? We wrote to him describing the conditions and sending photographs of all eight of our sick columns; the



Jonathan Moore

four large ones on the major facade, and four fluted six-footers on a side porch. He advised us that repair might be possible on all but the large "worst case" column, and offered to work with our repair crew if necessary.

We considered bringing John from Maine to Durham, North Carolina, but then we learned about Dickinson Restorations. This 11-member firm had masterminded restoration projects for several landmark properties in the Raleigh-Durham area, and had received Historical Preservation Society awards. We decided to turn our problems — and John's counsel — over to Dickinson.

Todd Dickinson corroborated John Leeke's judgment. Many of the turned bases and square plinths showed signs of advanced disintegration and were not worth the time to repair. After examining the exterior and drilling shallow holes to test interior conditions, he advised us to replace the worst column, along with one base on the front portico and all bases on the side porch. Replacements were ordered from A.F. Schwerd.\* The plinths specified were cast-aluminum models that stand on small feet — the bottom half of a system for ventilating inside the columns.

\*For more information on Schwerd and other related suppliers, see Restoration Products, page 68.



## SIDE PORCH

As we waited for the replacement parts to arrive, work started on the small side porch. First, Todd's four-man crew balanced 4×4 timbers vertically on hydraulic jacks, and carefully positioned them under the roof lintel. By jacking an inch or so, they were able to lift each 6' shaft from its base, and make it easy for two men to angle each column out from under capitals and porch structure.

Once the columns were down, the crew began consolidating and filling with epoxies. Epoxy *consolidants* are syrupy liquids specially formulated to penetrate dry, decayed wood. Strength is restored once they harden. Epoxy *filler* is a paste that can be formed to fill a hole or build up a shape. Two-part fillers are formulated by the manufacturer to produce a good working consistency when they're mixed, and are popular for most do-it-yourself applications. Restoration professionals often custom-make their fillers by thickening liquid epoxies with powders such as microballoons (microscopic glass spheres) or Cab-O-Sil (a silica-based thickener). This process requires careful proportions, though, and the use of a filter mask to avoid lung contamination from the thickeners. Epoxy-treated wood is very resistant to moisture, and if used correctly, will also protect adjacent wood. (See the accompanying article.) Instead of applying consolidant (Abatron's Liquid Wood) to the surface of the punky, termite-weakened wood, the men drilled shallow holes and injected the product many times into each hole. This allowed it to penetrate the end grain and saturate the wood.

Each column was kept wet with the solution for two or three hours, and applied as fast as the wood soaked it up. Consolidant was also added to the end grain at the bottom

of each column, where it was wicked up through the damaged areas. Although this method is not recommended for beams or lintels in tension or carrying a shear load, Todd reported that it works well for the compression load to which porch columns are subject.

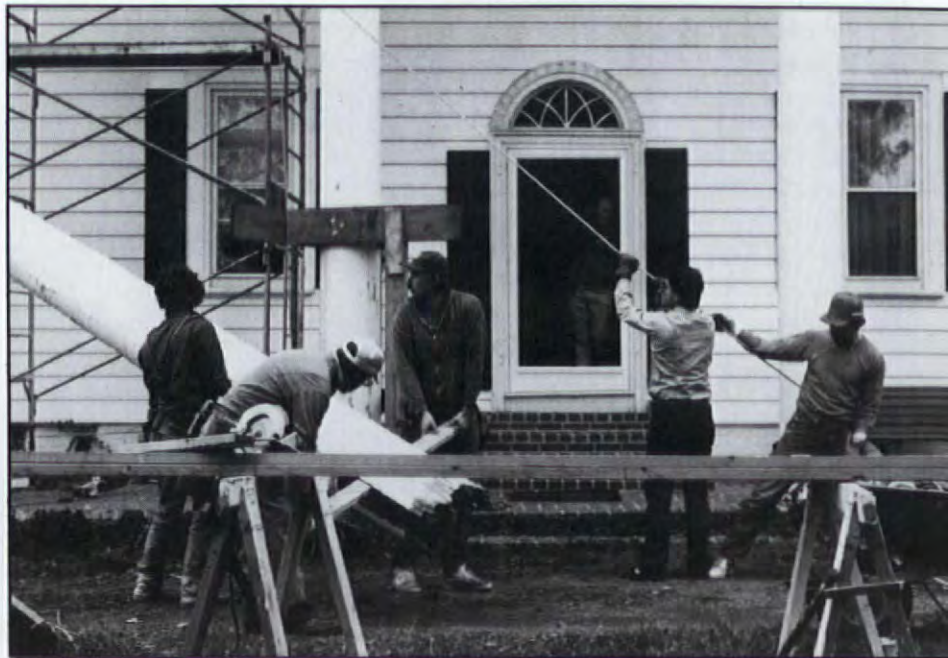
Next, holes and termite cavities were repaired using Abatron's Wood Epox, a white, two-part, epoxy filler. After curing, this filler remains soft and relatively flexible (like wood), and will not loosen or fall out (as might a rock-hard automotive filler meant for metal). Epoxy filler also adheres well to consolidant-treated wood, making solid patches.

The capitals on two of the small columns also proved to be soft, so the crew consolidated them in the same fashion as the shafts. Damage had apparently resulted from more water running off the porch roof, so Todd devised flashings of sheet lead (3/16 in.) to cover the projecting top edge of each capital. Lead was chosen because it is long-lived, easy to work, and won't stain (as copper might).

The porch lintel runs in a single, solid piece across the top of each column; it made venting through the porch roof itself impossible, so the crew installed louvered aluminum vents 3" from the top of each shaft. This completed the airway started with the new plinths, and allowed trapped moisture to escape from the column interiors. Finally, they applied a coat of latex primer and two coats of latex finish paint. (See sidebar, next page.)

## FRONT FACADE

The removal process was repeated for the huge, worst-case column on the front facade. After setting up a shoring-type scaffold on the masonry porch floor, protective blocks were positioned under the lintel and the porch roof was




**Removing the "worst case":** Plunge-cutting the shaft makes room for a 2×4 handle. Then, by rigging with a block-and-tackle, the entire column is lowered to the ground.



jacked up. Next, the shaft was plunge-cut with a chainsaw, and a 2×4 was inserted completely through it as a handle. Then a rope was tied to the top quarter of the shaft and run back to a block attached to the scaffold. Once on the ground, the shaft fell apart like a bundle of sticks.

Installing the new column went smoothly. The crew measured three or four times before cutting the new Scherdt shaft, and when it was positioned on its base and plinth, its 19' length was perfect. The capital (which had stuck to the porch lintel when the column was removed) was found to be soft and punky in two of its three sections, so Todd sawed, planed, and generally sculpted matching new pieces from pressure-treated stock.

The other three columns needed only raising, so neither taking them down nor shoring up the porch was necessary. Instead, the crew bolted 2×10s to the bottom of each shaft to provide lifting points. Then, using three 10-ton hydraulic jacks, the columns were gently raised by these "triangles" — porch roof and all — and the round bases were pulled out from under them. Had our capitals been some moulded composition material, we couldn't have risked crushing them with this jacking technique. But they were wood, and able to bear both the force of the columns being lifted from below, and the resistance of the porch roof pressing from above. Once in the air, both columns and bases were reconditioned with the same epoxy techniques used on the side porch.

The entire project took about three weeks. The last phase was the slow job of stripping heavy paint buildup all the way back to the wood. Now our columns are good for at least 30 years. Of course, the perfect paint job on columns and porch make the nearby fanlight and window trim look tired, so another project is looming. That, after all, is the joy of owning an old house. 

# PAINTING COLUMNS

by John Leeke & Todd Dickinson

A major reason for painting the exteriors of columns is to prevent water from penetrating (and rotting) the wood. However, paint also has to function as an important path for water vapor to escape from the interior of the column. Water vapor passes through different types of paint with varying degrees of difficulty. Latex paint lets vapor pass freely. True linseed-oil paint is not quite as permeable. The more common alkyd-resin paints are even less permeable and marine paints block vapor very effectively. Primers are designed to be the interface between wood and the top paint coat (holding the two together). They are not meant to have water-repelling qualities on their own, and will also function as a path for water vapor.

Heavy paint buildup prevents vapor from escaping, and this leads to problems. When moisture levels inside the column are too high, paint will crack or peel down to bare wood. Deterioration of the wood follows if the moisture imbalance is not corrected. The (unpopular) solution is to remove all the paint and start again with the proper coating.

Since humidity levels vary throughout the country, the best paint for columns will vary also. Down South where humidity levels are high, a very permeable coating is needed to allow vapor to move out of a column. Use a primer with two coats of latex. Areas like New England have only moderate humidity. Columns here can get adequate vapor transmission (and will have more protection from exterior water) with a less permeable coating. Use a compatible primer (such as oil) with two coats of linseed-oil paint. For an arid region, such as the Southwest, yet another coating combination might be indicated (such as one with a minimum permeability). Test paintings are always worthwhile because paints that are permeable enough to let vapor out may also let in too much water. Finding the right balance, though, will reduce maintenance and add years of life to a column.



*Three four-foot 2×10s bolted to each column (left), provided a triangular lifting jig for the hydraulic jacks. Electric heaters dried out the column interiors while the bases were patched and consolidated.*



# BIG COLUMN REPAIRS

by John Leeke

**To accompany the preceding case history, John Leeke provides technical notes and photos from similar projects**



***Paint failures tell their own story: Peeling down to bare wood indicates excessive moisture.***



***Alligatoring and cracking indicates the paint film is too thick. The remedy is to strip and repaint.***



***Vertical cracks indicate loose and open wood joints beneath the paint — movement is the culprit here.***

Big columns — those over 18 inches in diameter or 20 feet tall — are complex wooden structures that require special attention. Repairs make good economic sense, as complete replacement costs are high. However, you can expect a return on your investment of money and effort only if the repairs will have a long life. In this article, I'll show you how to make effective repairs that will last.

## EVALUATING COLUMNS

Movement and moisture cause columns to fail. Moisture penetrates in several ways: Flashing at the capital may be deteriorated, or the deck of a second-floor balcony may drain into the columns. Failing paint on column exteriors lets rainwater saturate the wood. Backsplash from the roof often attacks column bases from above; rising damp from masonry foundations invades them from below.

Movement, either at the entablature or the foundation, can break columns apart. This kind of movement can be very slow, taking place over many years. Sometimes, stresses build up and release suddenly with dramatic, serious consequences (say, the crushing of a base). More often, column parts just move slightly, adjusting to new positions.

A third reason why columns fail, of course, is lack of regular, effective maintenance. The key to successfully evaluating columns is to look for the underlying causes of problems before jumping to conclusions about what should be done.

Often a thin shell of sound wood covers a seriously decayed area. Tap the suspect area with your knuckle or a screwdriver handle and listen for a hollow sound that differs from the surrounding area. (If the shell is thick, though, the sound won't give you a clue, so more invasive methods will be needed to find the extent of the decay.)

"Probe with an ice pick to find soft, decayed wood. Jab the pick into a wood surface at an angle and pry up a small section of the wood. Sound wood will separate in long fibrous splinters, but decayed wood will lift up in short, irregular pieces due to the breakdown of fiber strength" (National Park Service).

Drill a hole with an auger bit and brace. Damp chips indicate the obvious, while wood that is dark but dry may have been very wet at one time. Look for more decayed wood nearby.

To check the alignment of columns, sight down the row of plinths or along the edge of the porch decking, or stretch a chalkline. Look for sections that are higher or lower than the rest.

Do the same for the capitals above, but be careful on ladders. Sometimes a good view is available from the upstairs of a neighboring house.





photos: John Leeker

Look for cracks in the foundation that indicate movement, possibly breaking up base parts between the joints.

## COMMON PROBLEMS

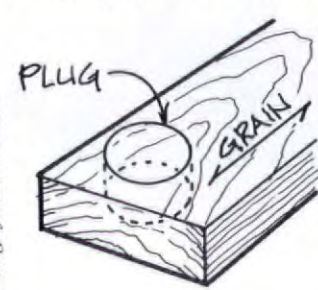
**Decay in bases and plinths:** The most common problem, always caused by excessive moisture. The moisture may be rising up through masonry due to hygroscopic action, or dripping down from above. Either way, the source must be eliminated. A moving foundation may be breaking up base parts, leaving gaps at the joints that let water run in. Stabilize the foundation before proceeding with column repairs. Add ventilation to the columns to help keep them dry inside.

**Loose or open stave joints:** These are almost always caused by movement. Correct poor foundation and structural conditions. The glue in the stave joints may have failed due to moisture, so stabilize by regluing or doweling.

**Woodpecker holes:** Why did the birds make the holes in the first place? Usually, they were after insects, and the insects were probably there because the wood was very moist. Resolve all moisture and insect problems before you fill the holes. Woodpecker holes are likely to be 1½ inches in diameter or larger.

## WOOD PLUG REPAIRS

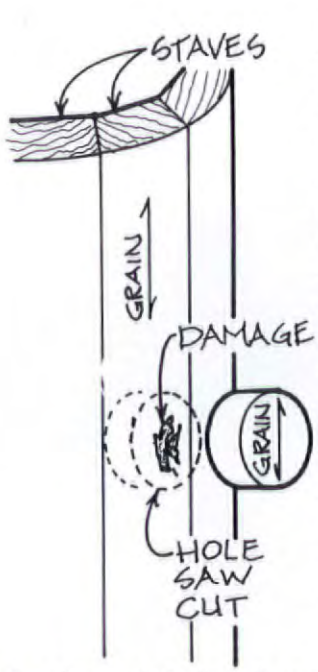
Small holes (1 inch or less) are most effectively repaired with epoxy fillers. For those greater than three-quarters the width of a stave, it's best to replace a whole section of the stave. Use round wood plugs, though, to fill holes between these two sizes, say, those made by woodpeckers, or any up to 2½ or 3 inches in diameter.



drawings: Jonathan Poore

To prepare the column for a wood plug, even-up the hole to a slightly larger diameter with an electric drill and hole saw. The result should be a hole with fairly smooth, straight sides (not undercut).

Next, using a sabre saw or bandsaw, make a plug out of wood the same species and thickness as the column shaft. To match the expansion and contraction of the surrounding wood, the grain of the plug



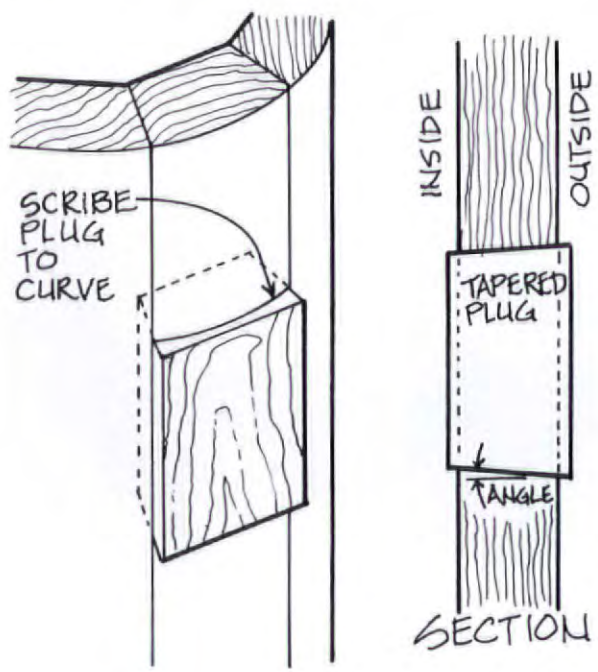
the plug in its hole with weatherproof glue, checking grain direction. After the glue is set, trim the face of the plug flush with the surface of the shaft.

must go in the same direction as the area of the column it's set into — otherwise, the joint between the two may fail. Turn the plug blank to a very slightly tapered shape on the screw-point chuck of a lathe (dressing the sides on a sander works too). Use a sample hole as a guide, and taper the plug so it will stand slightly higher than the surrounding surface when it is fit snugly in the hole.

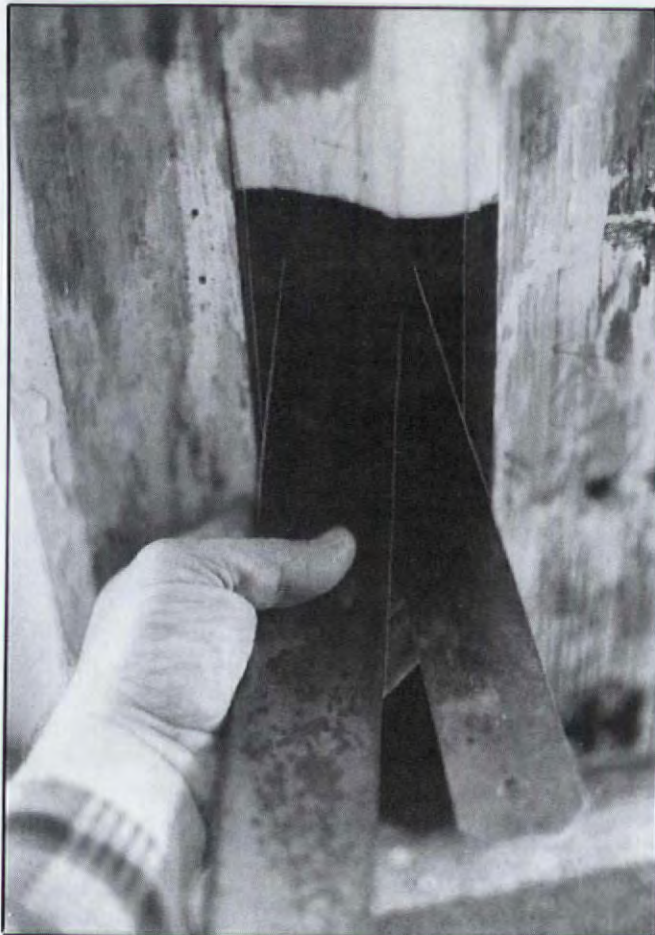
Closeness of the final fit depends on the type of glue used. With gap-filling glue (like epoxy) a close fit is not critical. A non-gap-filling glue (like formaldehyde-resorcinol) requires a close fit. Glue

## REPLACING STAVE SECTIONS

Repairing woodpecker holes near the top of the shaft, or decay at the base, often means replacing stave sections. In removing damaged sections, first determine where decayed wood ends and sound wood begins by using the auger-bit technique. Then saw across the grain of the stave with a keyhole saw or sabre saw until your cut meets the stave joint on each side. Make the cut at a slight angle as shown in the drawing.





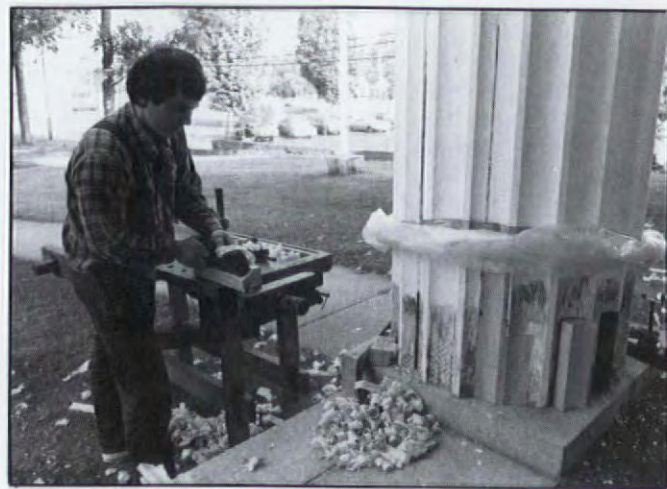


**Above:** An angle copier — improvised from two straight edges and a clamp — is a big help when replacing stave sections. Maneuver the straight edges so that they mate with the angle of the “walls” in the opening.

**Below:** The next step is to remove the copier and transfer the measurement to the new stock. (Be careful not to move the straight edges while working.)



Next, prepare the joints of the adjacent staves. Old paint and putty must be cleaned off to expose fresh wood without changing the angle of the surface. Existing splines or tongues in the staves may also have to be trimmed even,

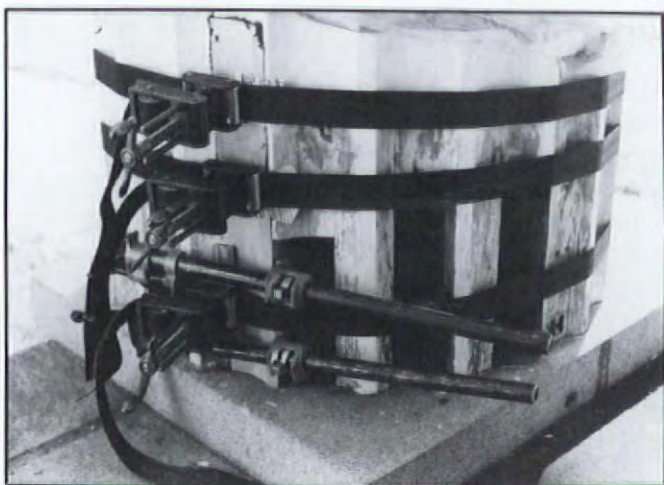


to mate with the new repair piece.

In making replacement stave sections, use wood stock that matches the column in species and end-grain orientation (for the same reasons outlined above). Measure the angle of the adjacent stave joint surfaces with a tool comprised of two pieces of sheet metal and a C-clamp. Then transfer the angle to both ends of the stock. Plane the stock down to form a new stave with a cross section that corresponds to the transferred angles, leaving just enough wood so that the block is slightly too large to fit. Next, cut off both ends to the correct length with the same slight angle used to cut out the decayed section. Again, make the stock just a little oversize.

The result should be a block of wood beveled on all four sides. Test fit the block into its opening and trim the sides until the face of the block seats nearly flush with the highest outer surface of the column.

While the block is still in place, scribe both ends with a pencil to match the curve of the shaft surface. After scribing, take the block out again and plane the face to match the curve of the shaft surface. Leave the surface a little proud of the end grain-scribe marks.



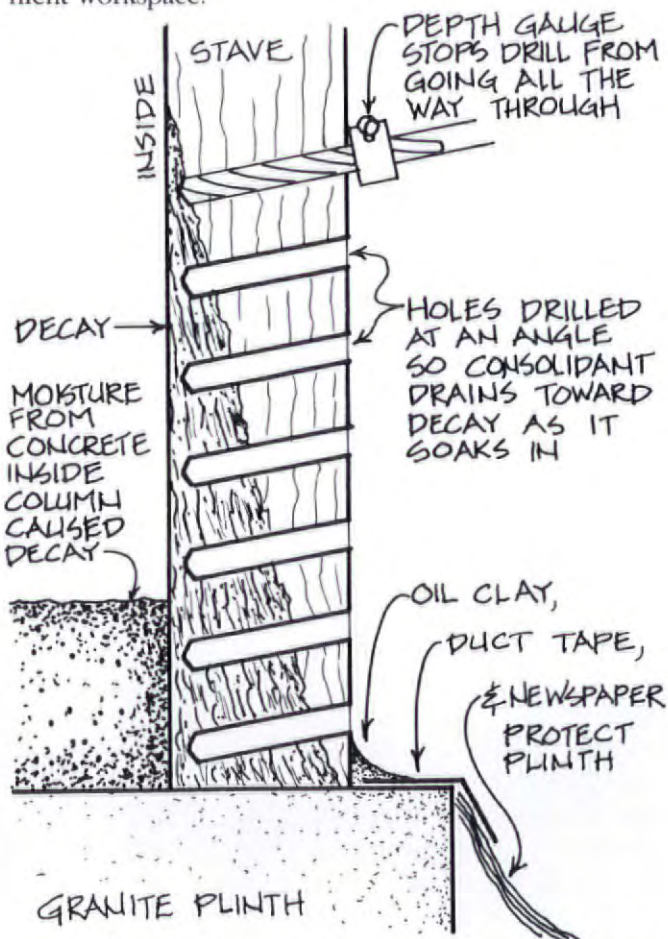
Once the block is shaped, it can be clamped in place with weatherproof glue. After the glue is set, the face of this new stave section can be finish-trimmed with a hand plane so that it is level with the surface of the shaft.





## STABILIZING DECAY WITH EPOXY

Treating decayed wood in big columns often can be a tricky assignment because the subjects of repair must remain in place. Not only does it complicate finding ongoing decay in hidden interior areas, but it also means repairing the columns without the luxury of moving them to a convenient workspace.



Consolidating decayed wood with epoxies is a technique well adapted to working on stationary columns. If not applied carefully and effectively, however, consolidants can actually *trap* moisture, causing further decay. The decayed

wood must be completely dry to its full depth when consolidating or the epoxy will merely form an impervious shell. This shell then holds moisture in the wood where it still causes (now hidden) damage.

To work successfully, consolidants have to penetrate the fiber of the wood. Specific applications vary from job to job, but often run along the following lines:

- 1) Drill holes (between  $\frac{1}{8}$ " and  $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter) in the decayed wood to expose the end grain — the best avenue for the wood to absorb consolidant. Close spacing of holes (perhaps as close as their own diameter) is a good way to ensure complete saturation.
- 2) Keep holes filled with liquid epoxy consolidant, fed from hair-dye bottles, saturating the wood until no more is soaked up.



*This column shaft is ready for the application of consolidant. The newspapers (and a seal made from duct tape and artist's oil-clay) protect the granite plinth from seeping epoxy.*

- 3) Check for complete penetration of the consolidant by drilling a hole into the treated wood (or cutting out a small section) before the epoxy hardens. Examine the wood to see whether or not it has been saturated.

- 4) Mix epoxy filler in small batches with a putty knife and use to finish the repair. A plastic funnel and wooden dowel used like a syringe works well for applying the mix to fill the holes. Considerable pressure can be developed with this method to force the filler into the honeycomb-like spaces of the decayed wood.



*John Leeke, a contractor and consultant who lives in Sanford, Maine, helps homeowners, contractors, and architects maintain and understand their early buildings. (RR 1, Box 2947, Sanford, ME 04073. (207) 324-9597.)*



# ROOFING OVER THE ROOF

## A curatorial approach with practical advantages

by Russell Gilmore



*Old cedar shingles and nailing strips are visible in the attic. Over-roofing preserved the historic materials.*

**T**o protect an artifact, you bring it indoors. In this article, I suggest that sometimes we should view worn-out house features not as materials to be renewed, however sympathetically, but as resources to be preserved for future historians and archaeologists.

When June Finer and I bought our 18th-century stone house outside New Paltz, New York, we realized that we would soon need a new roof. The T-lock asphalt shingles covering an earlier cedar-shingle roof were at the end of their days. One of the house's most attractive features was its pristine attic, with hewn rafters secured by "tree nails." To preserve its unaltered condition, the new roof must not alter the attic's appearance. Therefore wooden shingles would have to show between those rafters. The solution seemed obvious: install a *new* cedar-shingle roof.

However, even sympathetic contractors said that attaching shingles to the original oak nailing strips would be difficult and expensive. Most wanted to rip off the old roof layers *and* the nailers, and lay plywood on the rafters to take the new shingles.\* That approach would have left us with a plywood attic.

And admittedly, there were drawbacks to a wood roof, even one laid on the original nailers. The house is so heavily shaded by old maples that all but the most enthusiastic wood-roofers admitted some sections wouldn't dry adequately. Soon we would have a crop of picturesque but destructive moss. We planned to heat with wood, and I recalled what splendid kindling cedar shingles (even damp ones) had been for my grandmother's cookstove. (Fire-retardant wooden shingles are available but are expensive and have a considerably shortened life expectancy.) We decided on an approach that would both preserve the attic interior and give us a tight and safe exterior: a roof over the roof.

\*Editor's note: It is generally recommended that wood shingles be installed on open nailers — not plywood decking — to allow them to dry out and deliver a reasonable life of 30-plus years.



Our contractor came to us fresh from putting an overroof (raised on 2×4 furring) on another old stone house. That house had had a standing-seam metal roof to which someone had stuck foam insulation; replacing the metal would have meant sacrificing the insulation. (We went to see the house. Its attic looked like some vast and sinister confection.) The new roofing material was GAF's Timberline fiberglass-asphalt shingles, laid on plywood. These high-quality shingles do not truly simulate wood but, as an *Old-House Journal* article has suggested, their random spacing, color, and shadow lines give the general impression of a shingle roof.

This unusual approach — preserving worthwhile but worn building fabric by covering it — had appeal for me. I had seen it before, the result of both accident and design. I had shared the delight of a historical architect when he and I came upon a section of mid-19th-century shingles still intact under the altered roofline of the oldest house on Brooklyn's Fort Hamilton. I knew that William McMillen was putting a replica wood roof over 18th-century shingles discovered as he restored the Voorlezer house at Staten

Island's Richmondtown Restoration. During the creation of the museum I direct, which is located in an original stone flank battery of Fort Hamilton, I myself had purposely covered an 1820s floor on the advice of a historical architect. The herringbone-pattern brick, too rough for our use, remains under three inches of dry sand and a replica floor.

So on to practical considerations: Would the old framing support a third roof over the T-locks and the cedar? Yes; most codes allow up to three roofing layers. More to the point, the closely spaced and substantial rafters and straight roofline showed that the strength was there. We were grateful to the prudent Dutch and Huguenot couple who had overbuilt the house. With our contractor, we drew up a plan (see the drawing on the next page).

While the contractor and two carpenters laid down 19-foot 2×4s on 30" average centers, I pried up T-locks in horizontal strips on each side of the roof and along the peak. These sections were removed to guard against condensation beneath the asphalt should the vapor barrier at ceiling level in the second-floor rooms prove inadequate. I made no effort to remove all of the T-locks, as it would



*This c. 1880 photo probably depicts the cedar-shingle roof that the author found preserved under the T-lock shingles. (Note that the house is already more than a century old in this photo.) The door on the gable side is a "mow door" through which grain sacks would be thrown from a wagon into upstairs storage. The dormers described in the article are on the back of the house.*

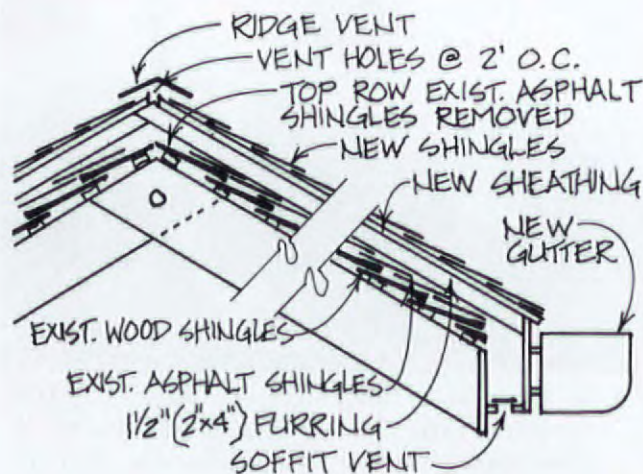




**The black T-lock shingles were new when this photo was taken in the 1940s. (The mow door has been replaced by a window.)**

have been a staggering task and they were a better surface for the furring than the cedar roof. Besides, after hearing several contractors remark how difficult T-locks are to find today, I wanted to preserve some of these obsolete asphalt shingles as well. A century hence, they may be counted the most noteworthy filling in the sandwich.

To encourage air circulation beneath the new layer and to keep a "cold roof," we installed a ventilated soffit and a full-length vent at the peak. The soffit has an inconspicuous single row of lengthwise slits backed by brass screen. The peak vent is of brown aluminum supported by hard rubber forms modified slightly to ensure a better fit on the steep pitch. We intended that the roof vent suggest the peak boards of early houses in our area. The design compatibility succeeds yet, like the roof itself, is different enough from the originals to avoid any charge of counterfeit.



As we covered the old roof, we replaced crude dog-house dormers from the 1930s with shed dormers. We researched their design by studying stone houses in several parts of Ulster County, New York. Everywhere, members of the old-house fellowship invited us to crawl through their attics to take measurements and photos. As a basic model, we settled on the late-18th-century dormers of the Osterhoudt house near Kingston. A good approximation came from using 12-inch shiplap pine lengthwise on the outside and vertically inside. William McMillen of Richmondtown made the nine-light casement windows. June and I finished the dormer interiors with a white primer and then a mixture suggested by Billy — one that closely matched original whitewash without its tendency to rub off on clothes: equal parts of mason's lime and white portland cement, a dollop of Elmer's glue, and enough water to thin the resulting product to the consistency of paint. We even swallowed hard and coated over new hand-wrought window hinges since, according to Billy, early farmers didn't bother to cut in around hinges.

Our roof is a careful compromise with the 20th century. As an aside, familiar to all OHJ readers, let me say that our planning was thorough, but we did not avoid the predictable travail and trauma of major work on an old house. Everything stopped for two months while the contractor recovered from being thrown by a horse — a suitably archaic accident, as he pointed out. We got through it all with the help of a complete set of Old-House Journals, and Billy McMillen, whose knowledge of early Dutch structures is encyclopedic. I recommend that combination to anyone attempting a similar job.

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## For further information



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William McMillen, Richmondtown Restoration, 441 Clarke Ave., Staten Island, NY 10306. (718) 351-1617.

GAF-Timberline Roof Shingles, 1361 Alps Rd., Wayne, NJ 07470. (201) 628-4124.

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**A** new department debuts with this 15th-anniversary issue of OHJ. We've looked at the historic-house plans available from designers and architects around the country, and hand-picked those that are the most authentic, attractive, and buildable. Coming up in this regular feature: early New England houses, mid-Victorian cottages, 1880s fantasies, Southern-states vernacular, turn-of-the-century homes, and more. And, in response to frequent reader inquiries, we're also developing our own OHJ plans for post-Victorian houses such as Foursquares and Bungalows.

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

# HISTORIC HOUSE PLANS

For the houses shown in this issue, blueprints include:

- **Foundation plan** for conventional crawlspace. (Can be adapted to basement plan by your builder.)
- **Detailed floor plans** showing all dimensions for framing, plus detailed layout and location of electrical and plumbing components.
- **Interior elevations** showing interior views of kitchen, bath, fireplace, built-ins, and cabinet designs.
- **A window and door schedule.**
- **Building cross sections:** cornice, fireplace, and cabinet sections needed to help your builder understand major interior details.

- **Framing diagrams** that show layouts of framing pieces and their locations for roof, first and second floors.
- **Energy-saving specs**, including vapor barriers, insulated sheathing, caulking and foam-sealant areas, batt insulation, and attic exhaust ventilators.

Why order multiple sets? If you're serious about building, you'll need a set each for the general contractor, mortgage lender, electrician, plumber, heating/ventilating contractor, building permit department, other township use or interior designer, and one for yourself. Ordering the 8-set plan saves money and additional shipping charges.

Other notes: (1) Plans are copyrighted, and they are printed for you when you order. Therefore, they are *not refundable*. If you order additional sets of the same plan within 30 days of your original order, you can purchase them for \$15 each. (2) Mirror-reverse plans are useful when the house would fit the site better "flooded." For this you need one set of mirror-reverse plans for the contractor; but because the reverse plans have backwards lettering and dimensions, all other sets should be ordered right-reading. (3) Heating and air-conditioning layouts are not included. You need a local mechanical contractor to size and locate the proper unit for your specific conditions of climate and site.

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# A BARBER DESIGN

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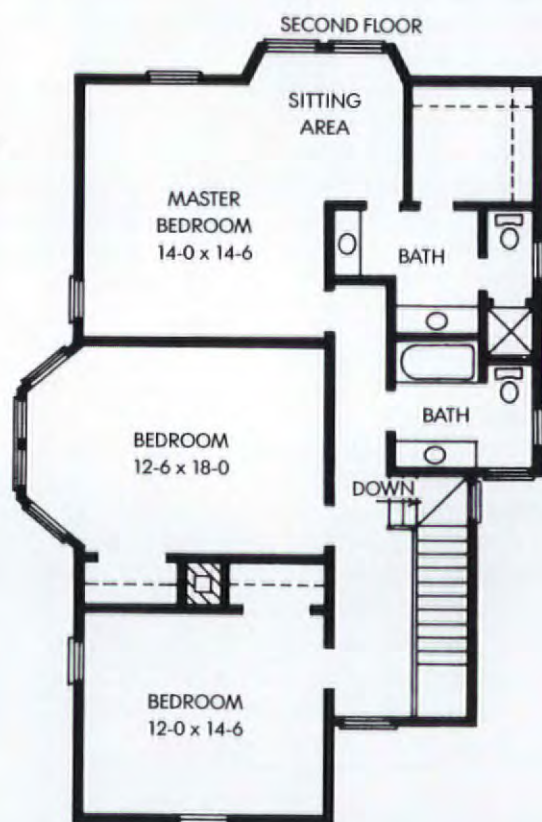
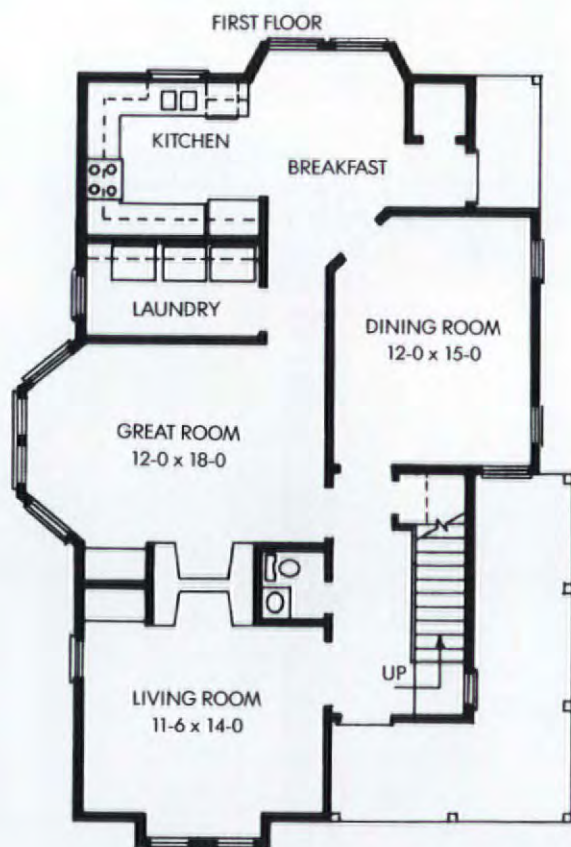
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SECOND FLOOR	1210
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	9
SECOND FLOOR	8
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	34
DEPTH	48

Students of Victorian planbook architecture will recognize that this is a gently adapted design from George Barber's Cottage Souvenir of 1890. The designer points out that it's an excellent choice for a narrow lot. Like all Barber houses, this one has

lovely exterior woodwork details and, on the inside, a beautiful staircase with a stained-glass window on the landing. Note also the gracious master suite with sitting area, double lavs, and storage.





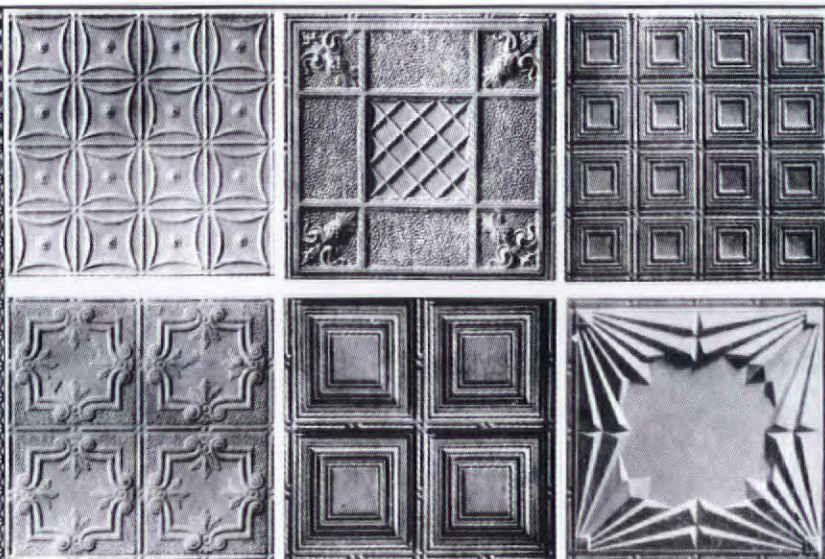


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By Ron Ziel and Richard B. Wettreau

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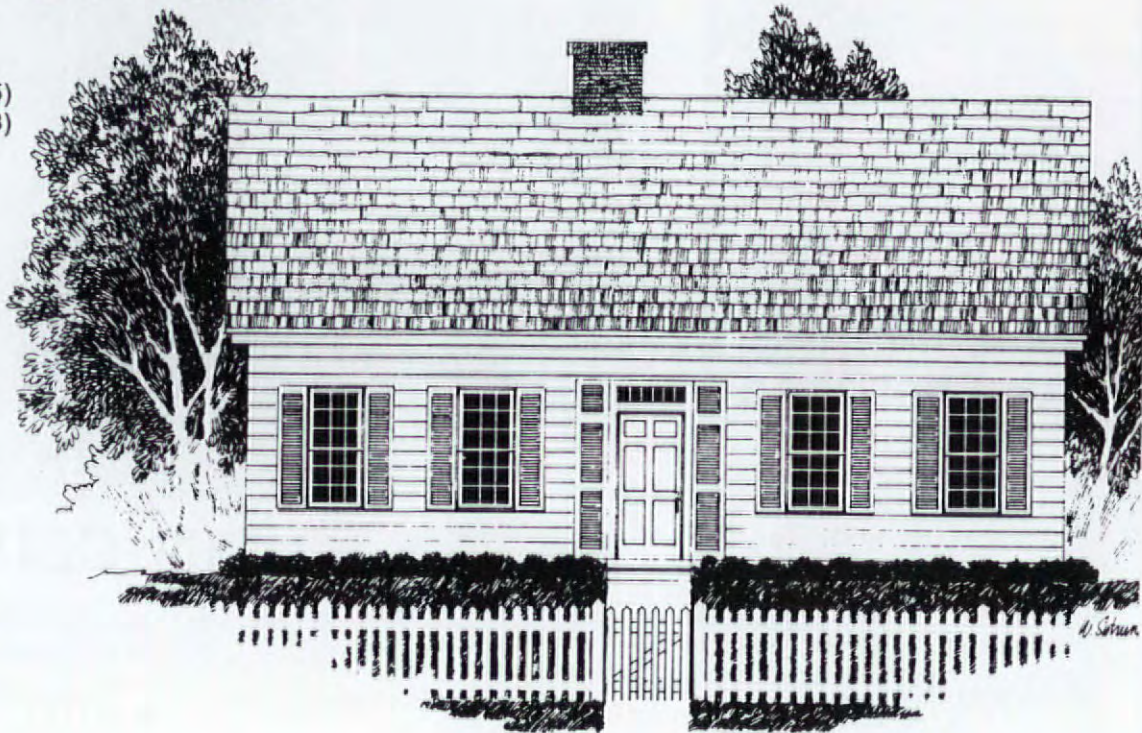
Plan #E-02A-HR.

Cost: \$250.

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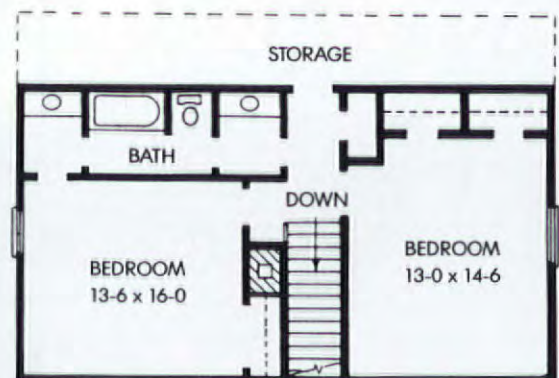
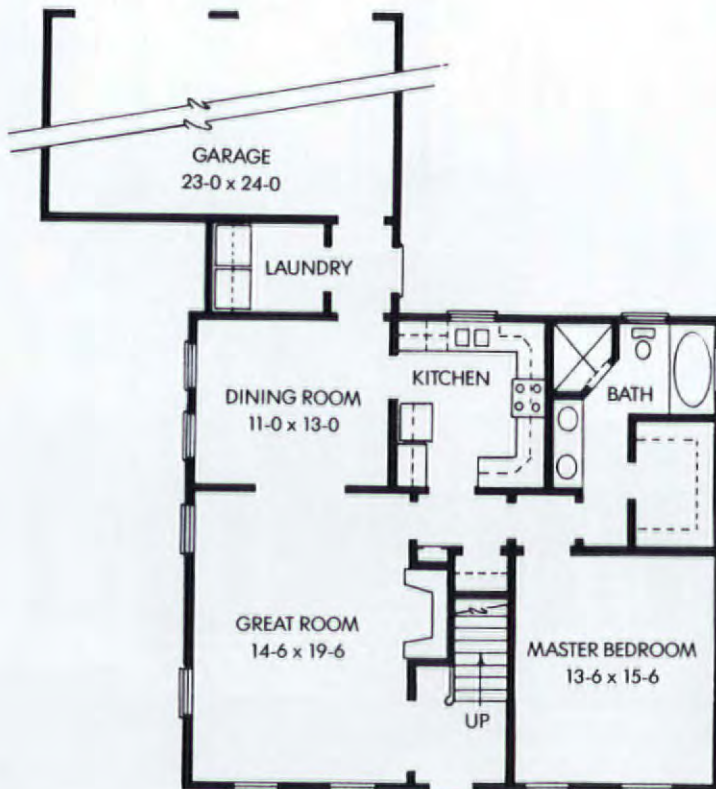
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SQUARE FOOTAGE	1914
FIRST FLOOR	1231
SECOND FLOOR	683
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	9
SECOND FLOOR	8
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	46
DEPTH	65



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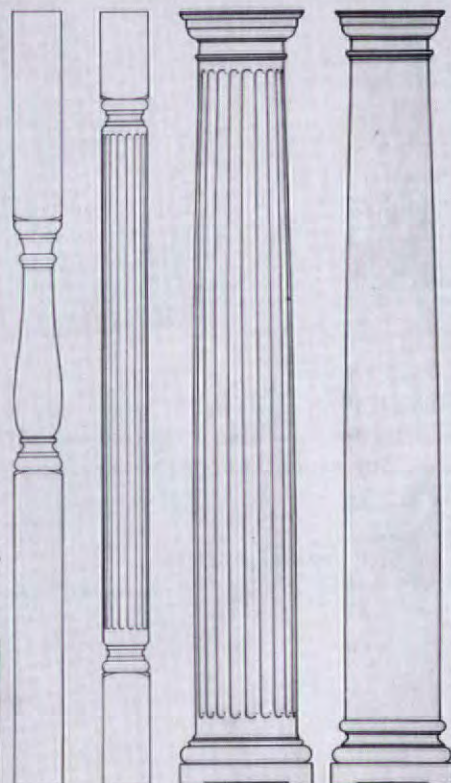
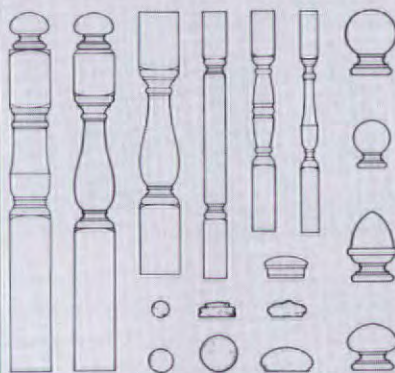
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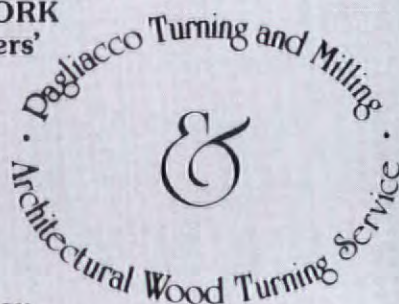
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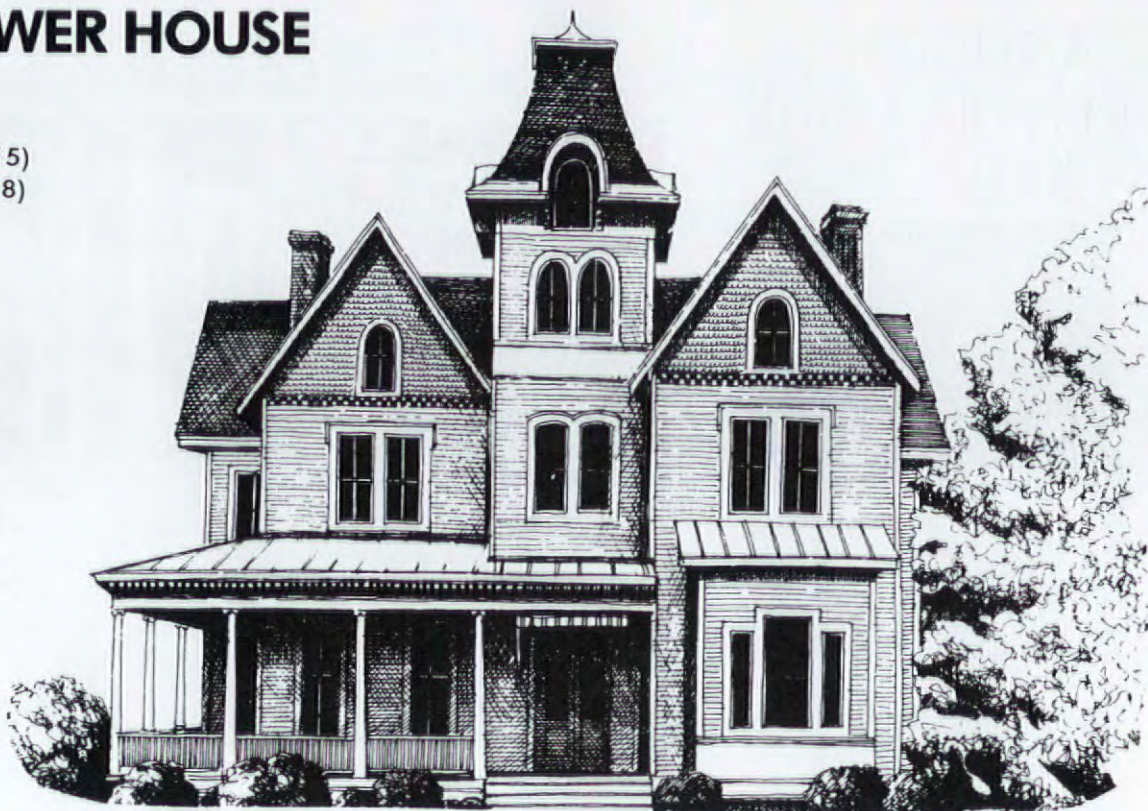
Plan #V-01A-HR.

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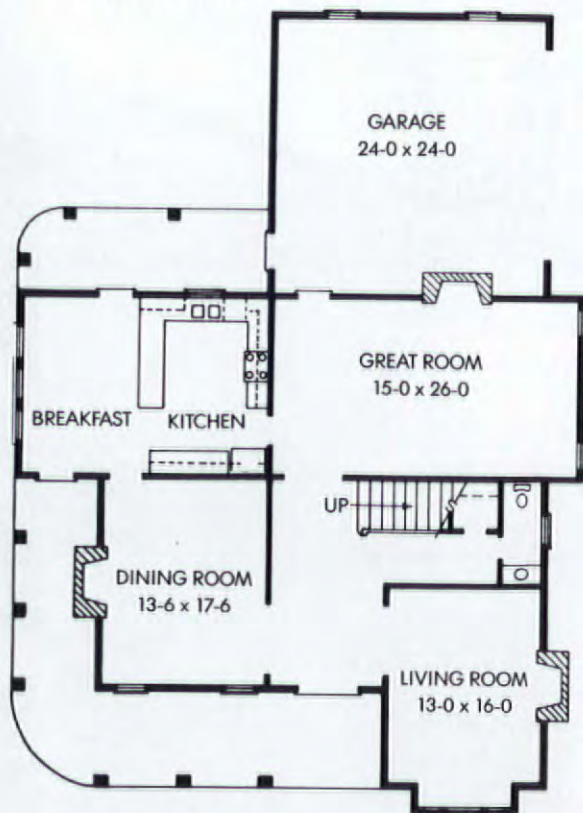
SQUARE FOOTAGE	3500
FIRST FLOOR	1582
SECOND FLOOR	1912
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	10
SECOND FLOOR	9
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	48
DEPTH	68



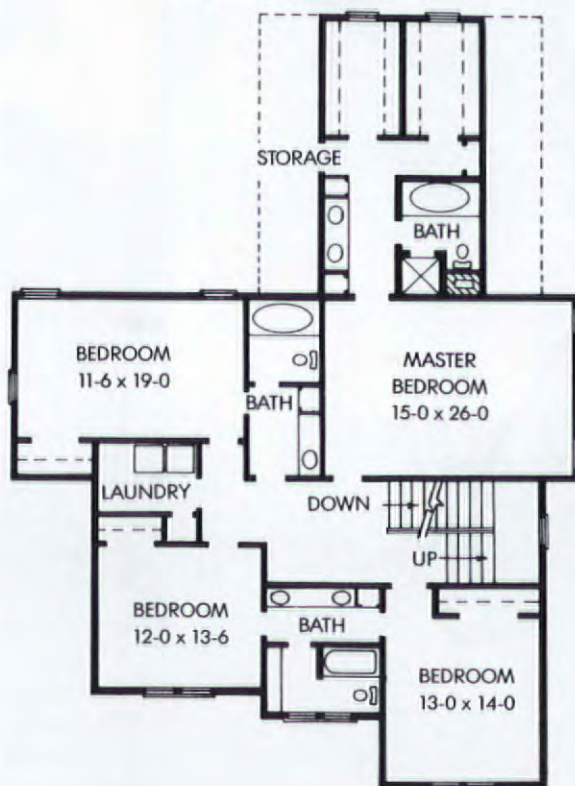
This is the only plan we've come across for a High Victorian tower house. It's a close reproduction of an actual house in Mississippi; although the floorplans have been updated, the house

retains its old-fashioned foyer and stair hall. The blueprints show how to add an additional stairway to the tower, and they give details for finishing its high-ceilinged, third-storey room.

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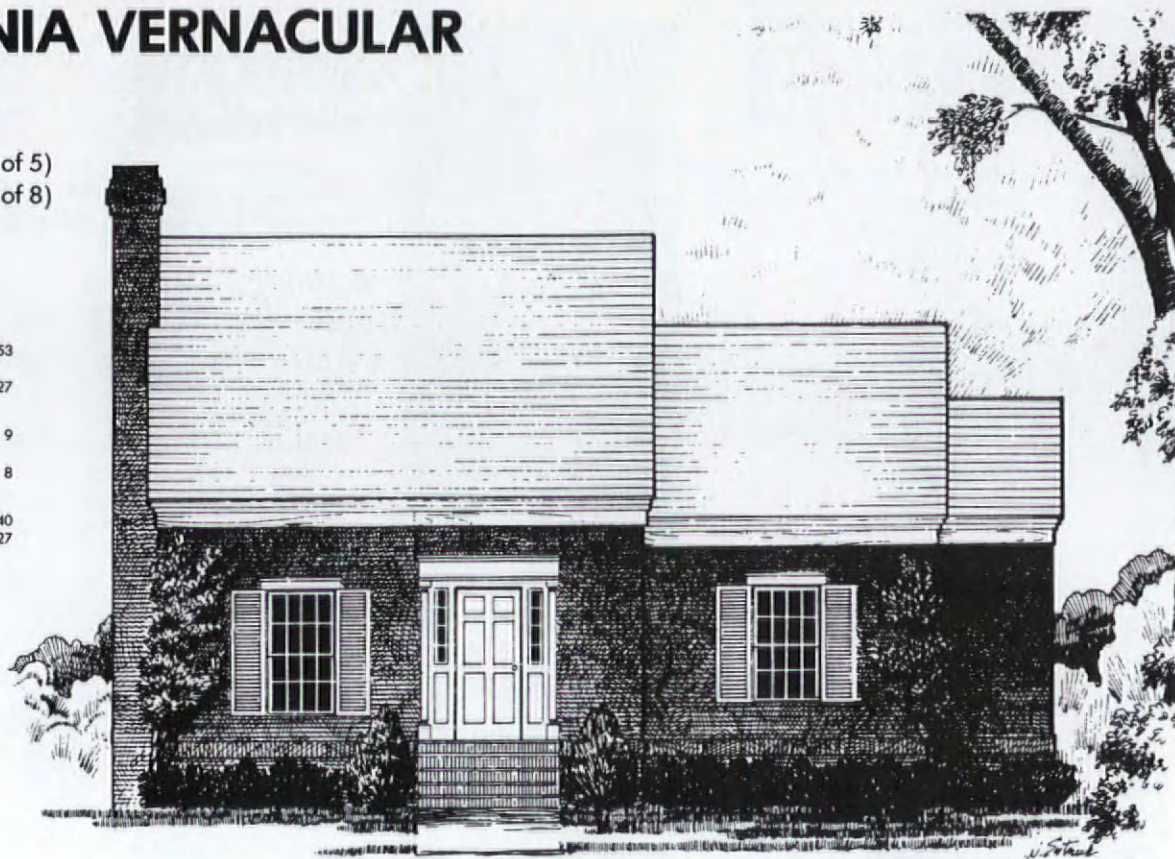
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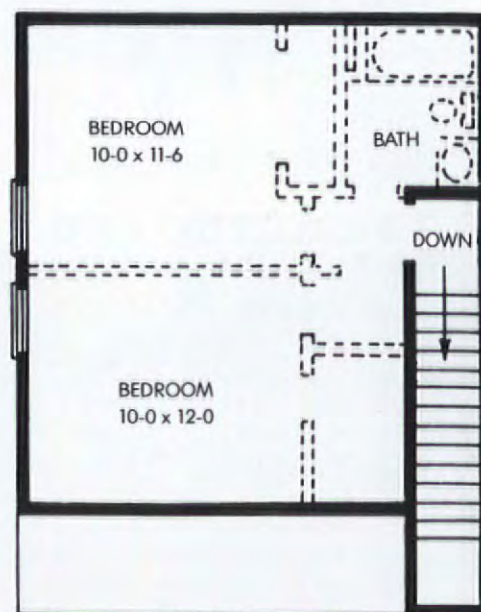
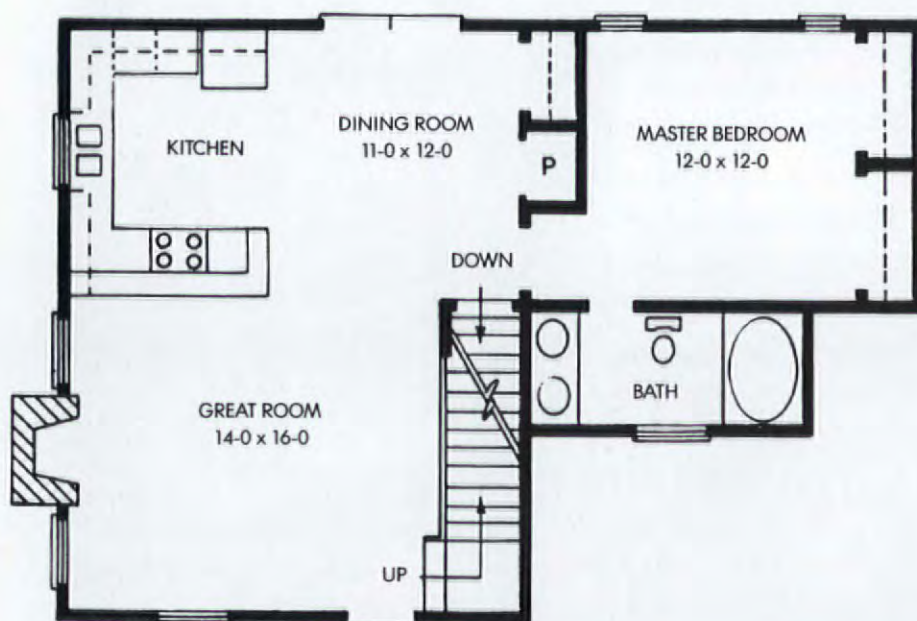
\$285. (set of 8)

SQUARE FOOTAGE	
FIRST FLOOR	853
OPTIONAL SECOND FLOOR	427
CEILING HEIGHT	
FIRST FLOOR	9
OPTIONAL SECOND FLOOR	8
OVERALL DIMENSIONS	
WIDTH	40
DEPTH	27

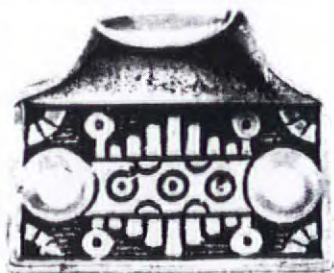


Reminiscent of early Virginia architecture, this house is many of the things not often found in today's house plans: brick, under 1500 square feet, and pleasingly vernacular. The second-storey bedrooms can be left unfinished when the house is built, and

the plan still works well. Note the two separate closets and two lavatories in the master suite. A built-in china hutch in the dining room is included on the plans.







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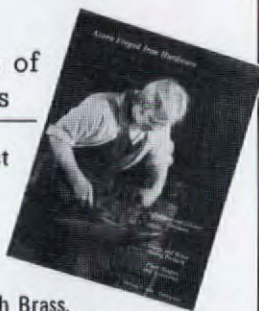


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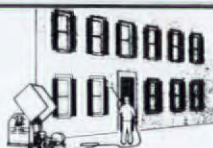
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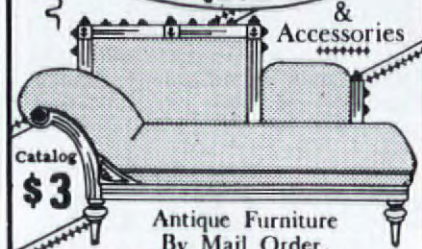
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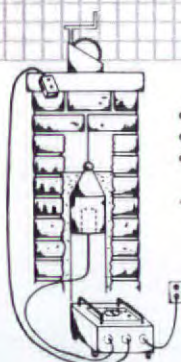
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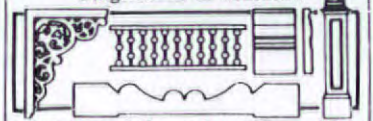
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*Brownstone owners take note: Our first review takes a look at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities' new pamphlet on brownstone care.*

*The last two reviews take a look at the first of Bantam's "American Design" books. While this new series is similar to the "Style" series published by Clarkson N. Potter (for example, Japanese Style, reviewed in March/April 1988 OHJ), the emphasis is on architecture as well as interior decor, and lots of historical context is provided. Due out this fall are two more, The New England Colonial and The Town House.*

## Brownstone: An Owner's Care and Repair Guide

by Sara B. Chase and Kim Lovejoy. 20 pages with black-and-white photographs throughout. Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) Conservation Center, 185 Lyman Street, Waltham, MA 02154. Softcover, \$3 ppd.

Brownstone is a sandstone that was quarried in the Northeast beginning in the 17th century and used widely on the facades of public and commercial buildings and rowhouses in the latter half of the 19th century — most notably in Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts, Hartford, Connecticut, and New York City (see back cover). As most brownstone owners know only too well, brownstone is a less than ideal building material. It's porous and spalls easily.

This SPNEA pamphlet has some good material on the different brownstones, plus tips on how to prevent spalling. It briefly covers the various repair options, from patching to replacement of stones, and the pros and cons of each, including relative costs. However, if you're looking for specific information on how to do the work, you'll have to look elsewhere.



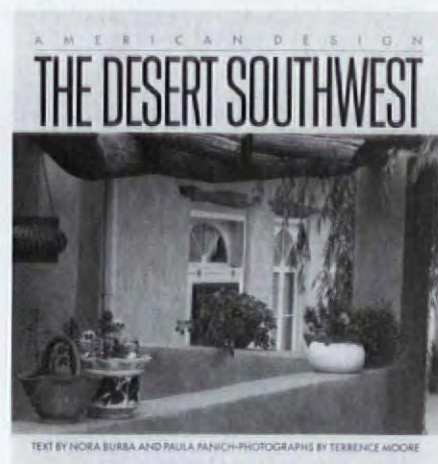
## The Farmhouse

by Chippy Irvine. Photographs by Dennis Krukowski. 242 pages with more than 250 color photographs. Bantam Books, 414 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016. Hardcover. \$36.95 ppd.

This book's handsome photos make you want to run right out and find a country house. And — surprise — the text's insightful, too.

Organized geographically, *The Farmhouse* describes how regional climate and lifestyle influenced design; the Northeast's harsh winters, for instance, called for saltbox houses that hugged the ground. Seventeen chapters on individual farmhouses — from a rustic dog-trot house in Alabama to a Victorian cattle ranch in San Simeon, California — contain not only architectural insights but also family histories. Befitting the subject, satellite structures, from chapels to icehouses, are included as well. What's more, a useful list of sources — craftspeople, antiques dealers, etc. — is appended.

For the most part, these farmhouses have been treated well by their inhabitants. Additions have been sensitively done, and furnishings reflect the period.



## The Desert Southwest

by Nora Burba and Paula Panich. Photographs by Terence Moore. 246 pages with more than 250 color photographs. Bantam Books, 414 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016. Hardcover. \$36.95 ppd.

Like *The Farmhouse*, *The Desert Southwest* focuses on individual dwellings — this time in New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and California. The photos are, if anything, even more striking than the ones in the companion volume. And the underlying philosophy, that architecture in the region has traditionally been harmonious with the desert environment and should continue to be, is commendable. So is the list of sources that concludes the book.

In many of the homes, Native American and Spanish influence are quite evident. Be forewarned, though, that these houses are not all old. Four, including a converted Territorial-style storefront, a Victorian Adobe, and a Mexican Colonial townhouse, are interesting period homes. Five are 20th-century dwellings dominated by architectural motifs from the past. And six are unabashedly modern interpretations of traditional Southwest designs.



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REVIEWED BY  
JANET MARINELLI

## Your House

Perhaps after looking at the historic house plans section that premieres in this issue (see pages 53-60), you wish you had an architect's rendering of your own home. If so, you should know about Michael Insetta, an artist and OHJ reader who's been doing architectural drawings for years for Heritage Technic Corp. in Ridgewood, N.J., and other firms.

"I come in," says Insetta, "measure, and draw a scale architectural elevation of someone's house. The drawing is done in pencil on vellum. I also do floor plans, and combination elevation-and-floor plans just like the ones done years ago." (A photographically reduced version of Insetta's drawing of his own house is



at left.) Depending on your house and the amount of detail you want, the price is \$300 and up.

Insetta's more fanciful architectural creations in ink and colored pencil have been exhibited widely in the New York area. These drawings depict architectural complexes combining such incongruous details as Gothic dormers, Venetian tilework, factory facades, stairways leading to nowhere, and buildings cantilevered precariously into space. They've been compared to the paintings of Bosch. Insetta also works with M.T.I. Painting in Ridgewood, N.J., on color schemes for historic homes.

You can reach him at Box 504, Dept. OHJ, Mt. Tabor, NJ 07878; (201) 625-2348.

## Wood Treatment

OHJ reader Bob Sliwa recently tipped us off to a product called John Conrad's Fine Wood Treatment, which cleans, moisturizes, and rejuvenates old wood, from antique furniture to stripped moulding. He said it was "too good to be true."

We called Paul Peshkin of The Painted Lady Antiques in Chicago, a distributor of John Conrad's Fine Wood Treatment, who told us the product is named after its manufacturer, the owner of one of the country's largest furniture restoration shops (and a man who shuns publicity). According to Peshkin, Fine Wood Treatment penetrates deep into wood, emulsifying decades of wax and dirt, which can then simply be wiped off the surface.

Although it cannot penetrate urethanes and acrylic polymers, it will work on most other finishes, including old-fashioned ones like caseins and gesso, without harming them. What's more, the product contains no

petroleum distillates; it's hand-made of non-toxic herbs, spices, and pressed nut oils. The stuff isn't cheap, though; a one-quart container costs almost \$20.

For more information, contact The Painted Lady Antiques, 4712 West Diversey Ave., Dept. OHJ, Chicago, IL 60639; (312) 282-5116.

## Traditional Litterbaskets

In the July/August OHJ, we told you where to get litterbaskets compatible with historic downtowns. Wouldn't ya know, the issue was barely to press when we discovered another source of one of the earliest styles, the metal-mesh receptacle.

Upbeat, Inc. of St. Louis sells the \$99, 52-gallon trashcan pictured at right. It's constructed of hot-dipped, galvanized, expanded metal mesh with rolled-up edging for safe handling. Six vertical braces add durability.

Call toll free, (800) 325-3047, for a copy of Upbeat's free catalog.





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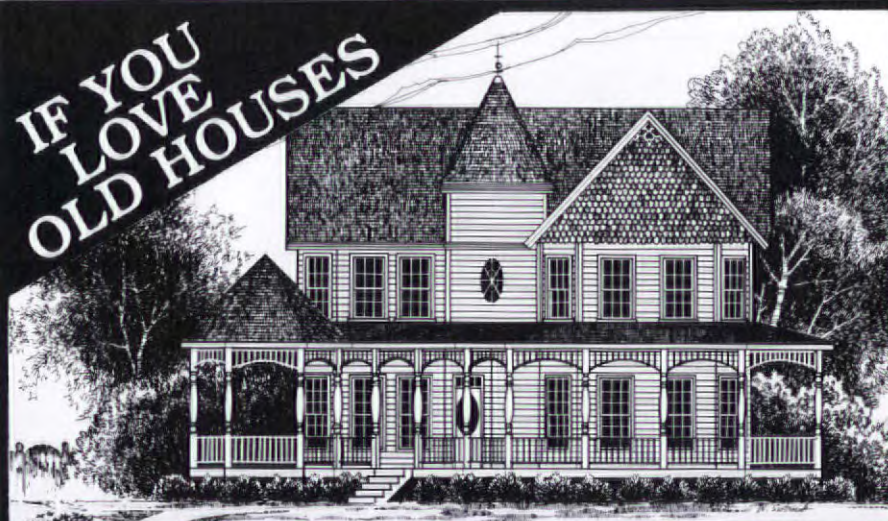


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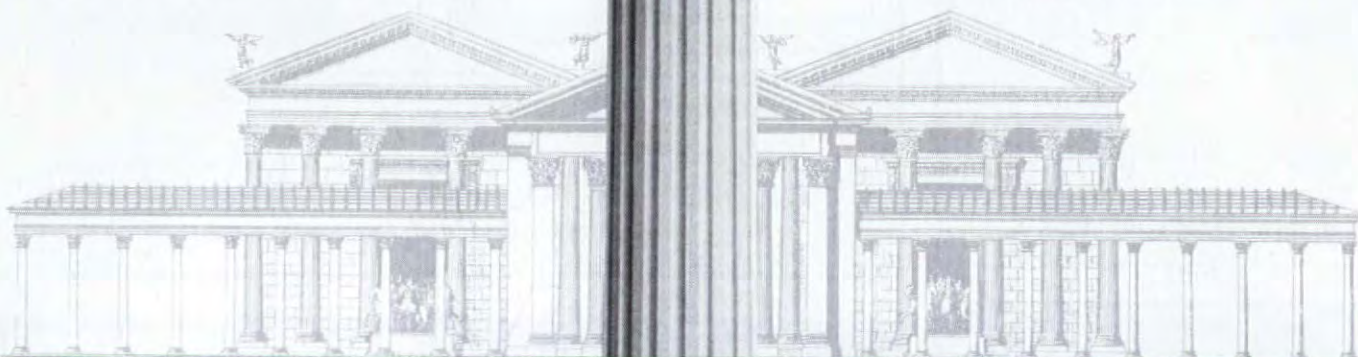
How do you decorate a Greek Revival house?

For faux architectural effects, you could use wallpaper columns, like the one from Zuber at the center of the page. It comes in 9 colors and costs \$120. Zuber also sells papers that simulate marbleized dadoes, as well as frieze papers suitable for Greek Revivals, but you'll need an interior designer to order them for you. Zuber, Inc., 979 Third Ave., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10022. (212) 486-9226.

Gear Stores sell a trompe l'oeil column kit. It consists of a base and capital (\$40 for

the set), designed to be used with "Colonna" wallpaper as the column shaft (12¼" wide; \$20/yd.). Several colors are available. Gear's Neo-Classic wallpaper book also includes marbleized and ashlar papers and friezes with dentil and egg-and-dart designs. Contact Gear, 127 Seventh Ave., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10011, (212) 645-8000, for the store nearest you.

A column paper and coordinating frieze from Thibaut's Catalina Collection would work in a simple Greek Revival cottage. It comes in 3 colors and can be found at most retail wallpaper stores. The paper costs \$28.95 a roll (each roll covers 36 sq.ft). The 7"-wide frieze paper is \$6/yd.

**Columns & Capitals**

If the wooden columns on your Greek Revival are falling apart and need to be replaced (see "Pillar Talk: Restoring Columns," page 43), the following companies can help:

**American Wood Columns**

913 Grand St., Dept. OHJ  
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**John Leeke, Woodworker**

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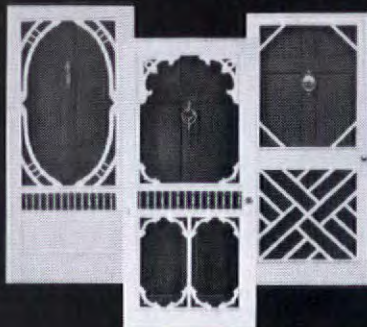


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## Victorian Tulips

Fall is bulb-planting time — so we asked landscape historian Scott Kunst, who was digging around for antique varieties of that perennial favorite, the tulip, to report back to us in time for this issue. After all, planting your Victorian carpet bed with late-20th-century tulips is a little like furnishing your Greek Revival house with futons. . . .

5 *Tulipa media fanguinea albiviridis*.  
Apple blossom Tulip.



Tulips have changed a lot since their arrival in Europe from Constantinople in 1559. Even 100 years ago, tulips looked quite different from the ones we see poking up each spring today.

Fortunately, a few pre-1900 tulips are still available from mail-order bulb merchants. Seven are described below in the glowing terms of old books and nursery catalogs. (No hyperbole intended — these varieties have withstood the test of time!) The abbreviations with the description of each variety refer to the mail-order nurseries that sell the bulbs.

6 *Tulipa Candida* (sunt rubentibus viridis).  
Bluish coloured Tulip.



## VICTORIAN TULIPS

### 'Keizerskroon' (1750)

(C, IGE, S, VE)

"Bright shining red, broadly edged with deep yellow, magnificent for any purpose." (*Bulbs and Tuberous Rooted Plants*, C.L. Allen, 1893)

### 'Couleur Cardinal' (1815)

(C, IGE, S, VE)

"A splendid bedding tulip, having a most unusual dwarf and rigid habit . . . a rich dark red, with a vivid crimson feather on the edges." (*Bulbs*, Allen, 1893)

### 'Prince of Austria' (1860)

(C, S)

"A warmly fragrant, bright orange-scarlet tulip . . . splendid in pots, fine outdoors, and highly attractive." (John Scheepers catalog, 1929)

7 *Tulipa bulbifera*.  
Bulbous stalked Tulip.



### 'Van der Neer' (1860)

(C, S, VE)

"Dark purple flower of a most brilliant tone and splendid shape." (Stump & Walter catalog, 1933)

### 'Pink Beauty' (1889)

(C, DJ, IGE, S)

"Large and artistically formed, vivid pink flower, carried on a strong, erect stem . . . remarkable brilliance and beauty." (Scheepers, 1929)

### 'Clara Butt' (1889)

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its wonderful form, strong habit, and excellent color. The large flowers . . . are clear bright pink tinted with salmon-rose [and] show a deep blue base." (Burpee catalog, 1925)

### 'Peach Blossom' (1890)

(C, DJ, S, VE)

"A lovely bright rose-pink attractively flushed with white. Very large and double." (Burpee, 1925)

### Key to Suppliers:

C = C.A. Cruickshank Inc.  
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Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4P 2M1  
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DJ = De Jager Bulbs  
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South Hamilton, MA 01982  
Free catalog

IGE = International Growers  
Exchange  
16785 Harrison, Dept. OHJ  
P.O. Box 52248  
Livonia, MI 48154  
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S = John Scheepers Inc.  
RD 6, Phillipsburg Rd., Dept. OHJ  
Middletown, NY 10940  
Free catalog

VE = Van Engelen Inc.  
Stillbrook Farm  
307 Maple St., Dept. OHJ  
Litchfield, CT 06759  
Free catalog

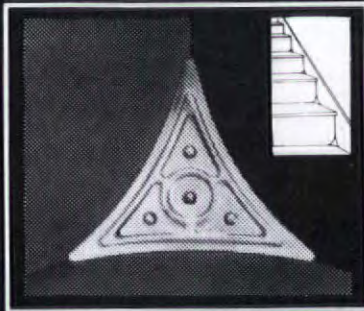
— Scott G. Kunst  
Old House Gardens  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

8 *Tulipa fanguinea luteo fundo*.  
The blood-red Tulip with a yellow bottom.





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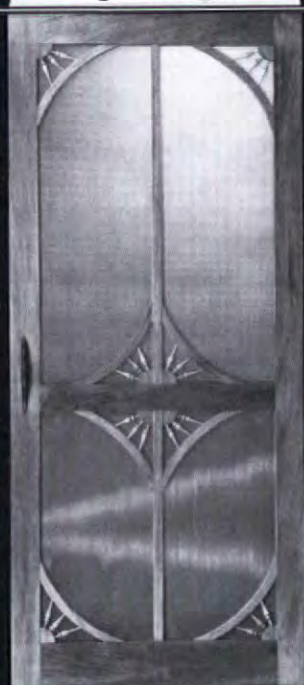
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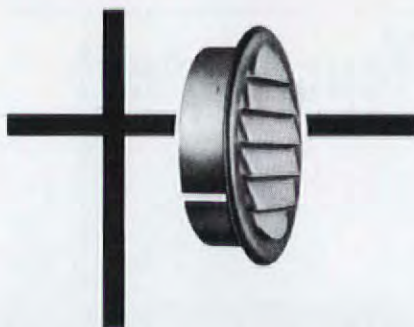
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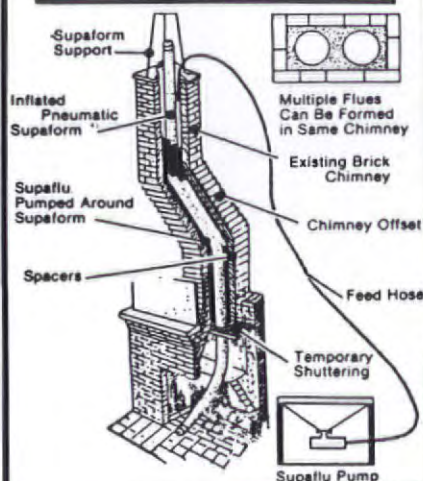
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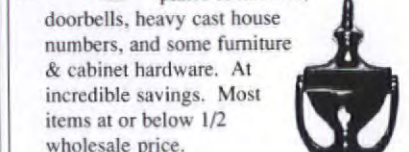


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CALAVERAS COUNTY, CA — 1885 Victorian in Central Sierra foothills. 1900 sqft., no remuddling. Also a guest house, workshop, carport, and a magnificent 2750-sqft. redwood barn. All on 0.9 acre approved for commercial zoning. \$225,000. Joe Gult, Martin Realty. (209) 754-1913.

HANNIBAL, MO — 3 miles from Mark Twain's boyhood home. Beautiful farm; 240 acres; grain, pasture, woods. Historic Greek Revival, 2-storey brick, restored & modernized; "Way of Life"; includes some original furniture. \$375,000. Joan Meyer, (314) 221-8400; Plowman and Associates, Inc. (realtor), (314) 221-7700.



JIM THORPE, PA — The American Hotel (1848), landmark in Old Mauch Chunk Historic District. Contains restored Victorian restaurant/bar, ice cream parlor, 50+ rooms, parking lot. Restoration started. Only major hotel to serve 400,000+ tourists annually. \$495,000. Rehrig Associates. (215) 826-4822.



MILTON, NH — Gracious Victorian New Englander with exquisite workmanship throughout! Many special features like the beautiful wainscoting and chandeliers in formal DR, parquet & hardwood floors, lead-glass windows, wrap-around porch, and more make this a rare find. The possibilities are endless! \$173,900. Dan Gabriel, R.E., Main Street, Milton, NH. (603) 652-9601.

ORANGE COUNTY, NY — 100-year-old, true center-hall Victorian, 5,000 sqft. living space on 3.09 acres of farmland. Mountain view in background. Wrap-around porch, 3 FP, 7 BR, 2 baths, 2 kitchens, 2 LR, DR, library, pantry, huge walk-up attic. Suitable for home/office or B&B. Needs work but move-in condition. Great investment. \$189,900. (914) 744-2979 after 7 PM.

MADISON, NJ — Beautiful 3-bedroom, 1½-bath Victorian, lovingly restored, on ¾ acre in Morris County. Wrap-around porch w/ fretwork. Original woodwork & details throughout. Entry foyer w/ etched glass door & oak staircase. Refinished HW floors & corner FP. Exterior recently painted in heritage colors. 30 miles west of NYC. Walk to train & shopping. \$255,000. (201) 966-0124.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — Restored 1876 picture-book Italianate Victorian. 9 rooms w/ 2 baths. Morning room overlooks lovely garden. Located in the Alamo Square Historic District; within walking distance of the financial district. \$450,000. (415) 567-3263.

SARATOGA COUNTY, NY — Victorian mansion, working B&B/romantic restaurant. 5 BR w/ ceiling fans, 5 full baths, 2 half-baths. 4 working FP, library, entrance hall w/ winding staircase, wrap-around porch; stained-glass windows throughout. Restaurant kitchen fully equipped. Antique furniture included. 6-room apt, 3rd floor. Perfect. Your own business in the Adirondacks. \$350,000. (518) 696-2861.

GLEN COVE, LONG ISLAND, NY — Turn-of-the-century Shingle Style w/ wrap-around porch, sensitive restoration, new electric, 50% new plumbing. 3 BR, 1½ baths, LR, parlor, DR, period EIK w/ restaurant appliances. New laundry, study, & sewing room. Excellent wood throughout w/ oak mantels. Mahogany built-ins, original casing & wainscoting. Many perennial beds, brick walks, & organic vegetable garden. Within 30 miles of NYC. \$289,000. Jack or Andrea Donnelly, (516) 671-0405.

LAKEPORT, CA — Beautifully restored Victorian church. 4,000 square feet. Spacious living quarters on lower level; charming unbroken space, 18-ft. ceiling on middle level. Redwood walls, cathedral ceiling, spiral staircase to loft on upper level. Excellent location close to lake in center of town. Zoned residential/commercial. \$239,000. (415) 547-4672.

HUTTO, TX — Restored Queen Anne. Kitchen appliances all Thermadore, Sub-Zero. Original heart-pine wainscoting, surrounds, flooring, double FP in living & formal dining rooms. 2 BR, 1½ baths, side entry parlor (or third BR), central A/C, heat. 25 wooded acres. 25 minutes from Austin. (512) 846-4825 or (713) 980-1390.

ROCK ISLAND, IL (Quad-Cities) — Charming, restored 8-room Victorian (1899) in Broadway Historic Area. Beautiful oak front stair, maid's stair, pocket doors, cherry WB fireplace, 1½ baths, marble sink, 4 BR, many mature trees. Insulated, new furnace, plumbing, & wiring. Local preservation award. (309) 794-1696.

BOONTON TWP., NJ (Morris County) — Colonial Revival farmhouse, circa 1876. Walk to NYC commutation, stores, parkland. 2 BR, 3rd BR/den, LR, DR, kitchen, screened porch, 1½ baths. Wide-pine floors, fieldstone FP. New heat, HW, ceramic-tile bath. (201) 299-2844.

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TIFFANY WINDOWS wanted for restoration of 1902 home. Large sizes OK. Also Tiffany mosaics. Call Allen Michaan, (415) 521-4189.

CAST-IRON RADIATORS for carriage house c. 1910, 3' x 4', decorative. Will consider slightly different dimensions & non-decorative styles. Also bar for same period carriage house, with or without back section; 12' ideal, will consider 10'-15' length. Call or write Howard Shore, PO Box 702, Tuxedo Park, NY 10987. (914) 351-5507.

EXTERIOR DOOR for 100-year-old Victorian home. Needs to be 36" x 96" and hinged on the right when looking from outside. Colleen Murrin, 14 South Crawford, Fort Scott, KS 66701. (316) 223-3084.

COMBINATION WOOD/GAS STOVE, preferably with wood-burning section on left. P. and J. Lawler, South Nyack, NY 10960. (914) 353-0534, evenings.

ENTRY DOOR, 36" x 96", with window light; oval preferred but anything interesting would be accepted. David Brooks, Hurd Manor, North Berwick, ME 03906. (207) 676-2241, anytime.



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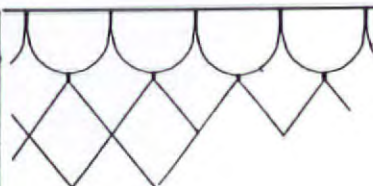
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ACORN-STYLE GLASS GLOBES for Novalux lamp posts (as shown on pages 53-54 of July/August 1988 OHJ). D. Watson, 539 Stanton Avenue, Baldwin, NY 11510. (516) 868-9793.

ARTISTS (2) YOUNG! With lots of talent are looking for vintage Victorian home in Westchester County. Will pay cash, \$150,000 range. Principals only! Ask for: Marty, (212) 869-1300, ext. 269, day; Sharon, (914) 739-3572, evenings.

OIL BURNER PARTS for out-of-business Timken heater. Circa 1940s? Chamber, lifter, & slinger especially. Cummings, 300 Central, Hatboro, PA 19040. (215) 675-4675.

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FLINT STREET INNS — Two lovely early-19th-century homes, on an acre of century-old trees. Old-fashioned, charming bedrooms w/ antiques & collectibles. All private baths, air-conditioned, & some w/ fireplaces. The Inns provide wine, bicycles, & local restaurant menus. Full Southern-style breakfast, featuring home-baked breads & iron-skillet biscuits. Rates: \$50 single, \$65 double. Rick, Lynne, & Marion Vogel, Innkeepers. Flint Street Inns, 100 & 116 Flint Street, Asheville, NC 28801. (704) 253-6723.

BOSTON — Spacious 1894 Queen Anne B&B offers six guestrooms in Victorian garden suburb at southern edge of city. Continental breakfast, parking, subway to downtown, \$50-\$70. The Emma James House, 47 Ocean Street, Boston, MA 02124. (617) 288-8867.

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ELEVATOR: oak, Sedgewick, residential 2-seater, complete w/ counterweight, tracks, operating mechanism. Set up for access between 2 floors, could be extended easily to 3 floors. Presently in an 1885 Victorian mansion; installed approx. 1915. Manual operation. Best offer — can arrange removal and delivery within 300 miles. (518) 885-9862.

LUDOVICI ROOF TILES, approx. 3,000 sqft. Installed 1907 on a house designed by Guy Lowell; removed 1985. \$300 or best offer, FOB Wareham, MA. Send SASE for color photos to Jack Churchill, 48 Kent St., Brookline, MA 02146. (617) 734-2398.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS, stripped and painted: oak mantel (\$150), pine Greek columns (\$50-\$150), fretwork (\$175), and doors (make offer). Call Lisa or George, (201) 432-5583.

OAK WAINSCOT: 54 running feet of stripped, recessed panel wainscot (c. 1880), complete w/ cap & apron mouldings, baseboards, and filler sections, all in excellent condition — \$2,200. Oak door casings w/ crown tops from the same room — \$50 each. Also 6 recessed-panel doors, 8 raised-panel doors, 4 oak transoms, 2 leaded-glass panels, 18 sections of iron elevator cage. Manhattan, call weekdays, (212) 838-2525.

GAZEBO, unique, oak, post & beam. Hexagonal, 16-ft. diameter w/ arched wind braces. Photo available. Call (802) 649-1557.

BEAUTIFUL OLD EMPIRE DRAWER KNOBS — 2" diameter, one set (6) possibly sandwich glass, \$30; one set (6) swirled glass, large, \$30; one set (8), sandwich, \$40. Leo Dulberg, 307 W. 24 St., Lumberton, NC 28358. (919) 671-0072.

PICTURE & WALL MOULDINGS, turn-of-century designs. Never installed, original condition — used to separate wallpapers from ceiling. Photo, price list, & specifications w/ your SASE. Lawrence Stine, 2717 Collingwood, Toledo, OH 43610.

OAK FLOORING, 24 x 40 sqft.; maple flooring, 24 x 40 sqft.; oak panel doors, frame, trim; cherry panel doors, frame, trim; 2 oak fireplaces. All from turn-of-century home. Walter J. Pitts, 2404 Shoreline Hts., Sterling, IL 61081. (815) 626-3086.

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AUTHENTIC 16TH-CENTURY OAK LINENFOLD PANNELLING, about 200 sqft. Call or write for details: Dr. J.W. Senders, Keneggy West, Columbia Falls, ME 04623. (207) 483-4009.

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MASON & HAMLIN PARLOR ORGAN, c. 1885. Handsome, tall, black walnut case with original finish; instrument fully restored, wonderful sound, \$1200. Also big steamer trunk with original deco-style fabric lining, drawers & hangers, \$40. Both stored on Long Island, NY. Michael Hendron, (703) 371-1860.

1920S QUICK MEAL GAS STOVE, grey and white porcelain. Beautiful, one-owner \$195. Jeanne Wright, 730 Garland Street, Lakewood, CO 80215. (303) 233-5108.

HEWN POPLAR LOGS, approx. 500 L. ft., 4" x 12", from a 1 1/2-storey log house 22' x 18' (uniform thickness & width), over 100 years old. \$4 per L. ft. Must take all. Also 4 cast-iron grills, 14" x 10" (3 w/ louvers), octagon-&-small-square pattern, \$125. I also have wormy chestnut for panelling or wainscoting. Kermit R. McCartney, R3 Box 288A, Buchanan, WV 26201. (304) 472-8484 or 472-6391.

ITALIANATE CAST-IRON BALUSTRADE (14 balusters & railings, no newel posts); Eastlake pier mirror frame, 114" x 41", needs work. Best offer. Brooklyn, NY, (718) 857-3813, evenings.

SCREEN DOOR, wood w/ cut-out designs in corners & center, 35" x 78". From Victorian house. \$75. Trenton, NJ. (609) 396-8401.



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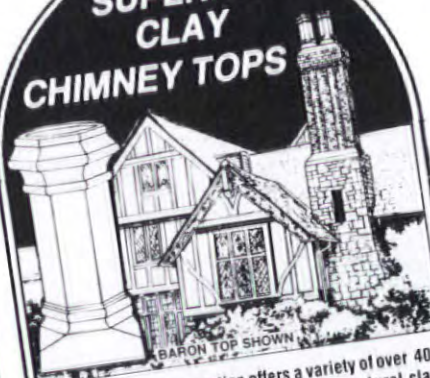
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## MEETINGS & EVENTS

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS** has its annual symposium in Philadelphia, September 15-17. This year's theme will be "Form, Function, & Fantasy." There will be a trade show, lectures, and demonstrations by top turners. For more information, contact AAW, PO Box 982, San Marcos, TX 78667.

"COMPOSED ORDER: The Architecture of Alden B. Dow," a National Conference & Exhibition, includ-

ing historic house tour. October 6-8, in Midland, MI. Contact Carol Coppage, Northwood Institute Alden B. Dow Creativity Center, Midland, MI 48640. (517) 832-4478.

**5TH ANNUAL PENN'S COLONY FESTIVAL,** one of the nation's premier colonial-style crafts markets, will be held on 2 consecutive weekends, Sept. 24 & 25 and Oct. 1 & 2, in Prospect, PA. For more information or to register, contact the Penn's Colony Festival, 1635 El Paso Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15206. (412) 441-9178.

**39TH ANNUAL FALL TOUR** of Historic Galena Homes, Sept. 24 & 25. The tour is continuous from 9 AM to 5 PM; tickets are \$9 for adults, \$4 for students (ages 11-17); children under 10, free. Contact the GalenaJo Daviess County Chamber of Commerce, (815) 777-0203, or the First Presbyterian Church, (815) 777-0229.

**MAIN STREET AUTUMN TOUR OF HOUSES** will be held in Jackson, TN, on October 15 & 16 from 1 to 5 PM. Five homes will be on the tour this year. There will be a minimal admission, with proceeds going to POEMS (Preservation of East Main and Surroundings). Contact the Southwest Tourism Association office in Jackson, (901) 668-9400.

**EVALUATION OF HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE,** Sept. 28-Oct. 7, at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. Through a combination of lectures, workshops, & field exercises, this course examines the theory & practice of the evaluation of historic architecture. Topics include survey & research methods; principles of evaluation; stylistic analysis; preparation, application, and analysis of inventories. For information, contact Joy Davis, Coordinator, Cultural Resource Management Program, Division of University Extension & Community Relations, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2, Canada. (604) 721-8462.

**ANNUAL DOORS TO THE PAST, A Walking Tour** of Historic Iowa Homes, will be Sept. 17-18 & 24-25, from 10 AM to 4 PM. Fee is \$6 for the weekend. Tickets will be available at the Sherman Hill Association Office, 1706 Woodland Ave., Des Moines, IA 50309. (515) 284-5717.

**CONSUMER CULTURE & THE AMERICAN HOME, 1890-1930,** will be the annual conference at the McFaddin-Ward House in Beaumont, TX, held on Oct. 27-29. McFaddin-Ward House, 1906 McFaddin Ave., Beaumont, TX 77701.

**THE PULLMAN HOUSE TOUR** will be held on October 8 & 9 from 11 AM to 5 PM. Advance tickets are \$8; \$7 for senior citizens and groups of ten or more. Door tickets are \$10 and \$8. To receive the advance-sale discount, checks or money orders should be made payable to Historic Pullman House Tour and mailed to Hotel Florence, House Tour, 11111 South Forrestville Ave., Chicago, IL 60628. For additional information, call (312) 785-8181.

**THREE WORKSHOPS** are scheduled to be held at the Florida Solar Energy Center in Cape Canaveral, FL, for those interested in photovoltaic-system design, installation, operation, procurement, & sales. Registration is open (though limited) for Oct. 4-6 and Dec. 6-8, 1988; March 28-30, 1989. Tuition fees, \$150. Contact Program Coordinator JoAnn Stirling at (407) 783-0300.

**8TH ANNUAL COUNTRY FAIR** in Ellicott City, MD, Saturday Sept. 17, 10 AM to 5 PM. (Rain date, Sept. 18.) Admission is free to this event sponsored by the Howard County Dept. of Recreation & Parks and Historic Ellicott City, to benefit historic preservation. Festival features juried exhibits of country crafts, scarecrow making, pumpkin painting, craft demonstrations, music, food, & entertainment, at the Ellicott Mills parking lot on upper Main Street. For further information, call the Recreation Bureau at (301) 992-2483 (TDD 992-2323).

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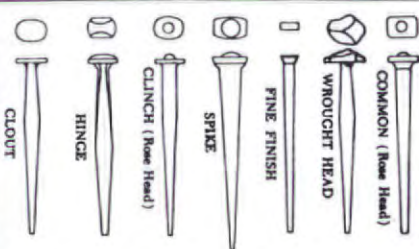
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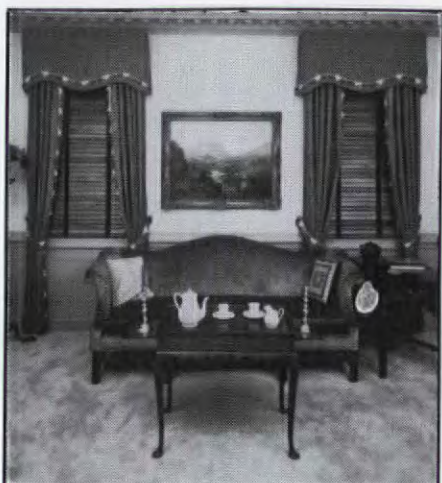
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## THE EMPORIUM

**THIRD BIENNIAL DESIGNER SHOWCASE** to benefit the Northshore Jewish Community Center, will be held at Brightside, a large Victorian home in Swampscott, MA. The talents of 40 interior and landscape designers will be showcased. October 10-30, Monday-Friday from 10 to 3; Sunday, 11 to 4; Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday evenings, 7-9. Fee \$12; \$8 for blocks of 20 or more. For more information, call Nancy Fromson, (617) 631-8330 or 599-0322.

**8TH-ANNUAL GHOST WALK** in Portsmouth, VA, on Oct. 28 (rain date, Oct. 29). Based on the Jack-the-Ripper Walks in London, the Walk takes spectators on a guided tour past the haunted houses and mysterious creaking mansions of Olde Towne, a 20-square block, 500-building area in the Nat'l Register. For additional information, contact Linda Joyner at (804) 393-2366 or Doris Leitner at (804) 399-5487.

**PAINTING & DECORATING COURSE** beginning Sept. 12 is offered in Asheville, NC. Send letter or resume to Lowell Smith, Dean of Continuing Education, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, 340 Victoria Road, Asheville, NC 28801. (704) 254-1921.

**"LIVING WITH YOUR OLD HOUSE"**: Conference on Sept. 17 in Burlington, NJ. Following presentations about research & dating techniques, sensitive modernization methods, landscape design, and interior decoration, participants can consult the panel of experts about individual concerns and tour several local homes. Call Preservation New Jersey, (201) 359-4557, for information.

**2ND ANNUAL OLD-HOUSE RESTORATION EXPO** will be held on Sunday & Monday, Oct. 9 & 10, in Victorian Cape May, NJ, as part of a Victorian Week celebration scheduled for Oct. 7-16. For more information, contact Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, PO Box 164, Cape May, NJ 08204. (609) 884-5404.

**INNKEEPING SEMINARS**: Comprehensive 2-day seminar offered bi-monthly in Michigan and Florida for prospective B&B owners. Topics include inn acquisition, financial analysis, marketing, operating strategies, & more. Tuition: \$295 per person; \$450 per couple; discounts available. Contact Innkeeping Consultants, c/o The Park House, 888 Holland Drive, Saugatuck, MI 49453. (616) 857-4535.

**ARCHEOLOGICAL WOOD SYMPOSIUM** will be held at the 196th National American Chemical Society Meeting in Los Angeles, CA, on September 26-30. Topics include treatments for dry & waterlogged wood, weathering & protection, gluing of archeological wood, and long-term storage & display. For further information, contact Dr. Roger M. Rowell, USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53705.

**ANTIQUES CONFERENCE WEEKEND**, Oct. 28-30 at Old Sturbridge Village, MA. The program is geared toward collectors of all levels of expertise. Speakers will present practical information on buying and preserving antiques. Advance reservations are necessary. Contact Visitor Services, Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566. (508) 347-3362.

**MARSHALL HISTORIC-HOME TOUR**, Saturday, Sept. 10, 9 AM to 5 PM & Sunday, Sept. 11, 10 AM to 5 PM in Marshall, MI. The Home Tour is celebrating its 25th anniversary with 14 structures and 7 private homes. Tickets are \$8 in advance; \$10 day of tour. Contact Public Relations Director Charlotte Bonato at (616) 781-9747 for more information.

**ARCHITECTURAL-HISTORY STUDY TOUR** of Portland, OR, & the Willamette Valley, Sept. 6-11. Contact David Bahlman, Executive Director, Society of Architectural Historians, 1232 Pine St., Philadelphia, PA 19107.

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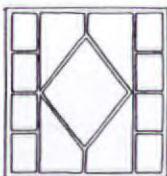
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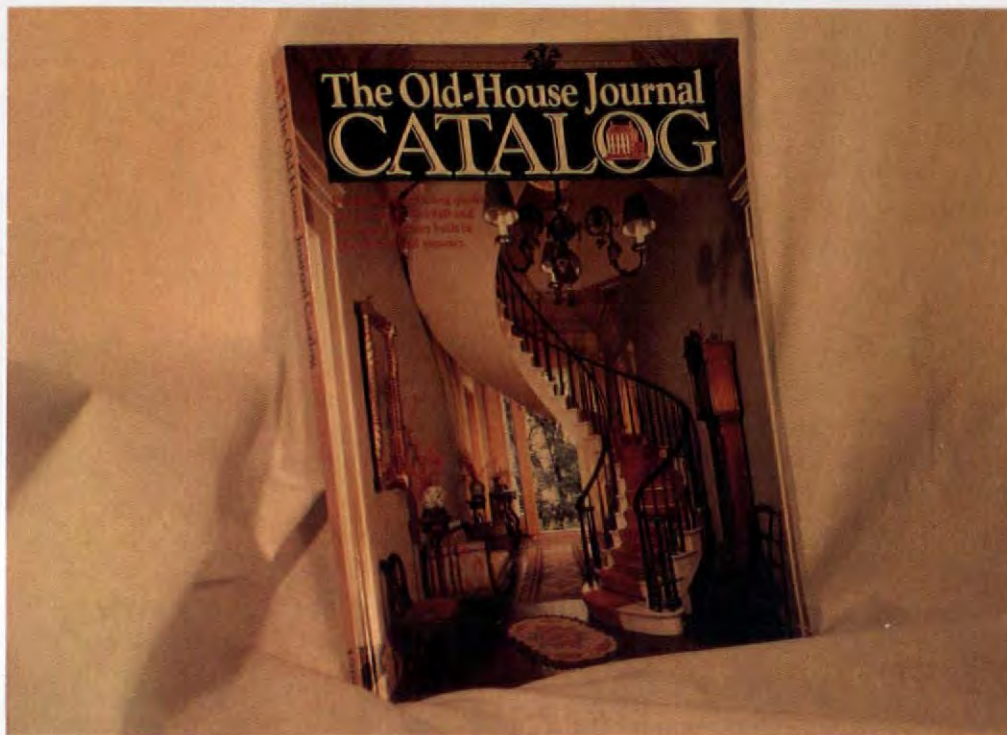
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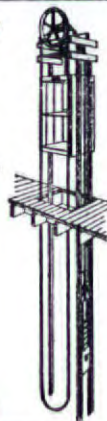
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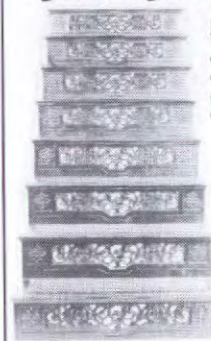
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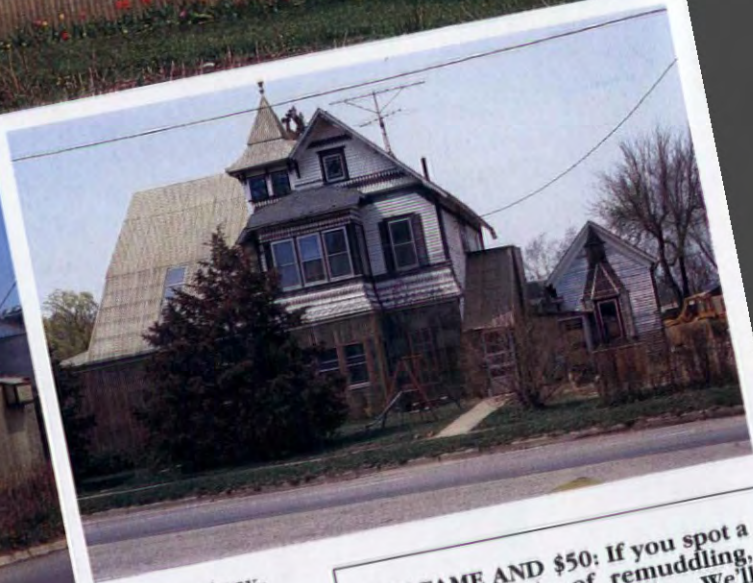
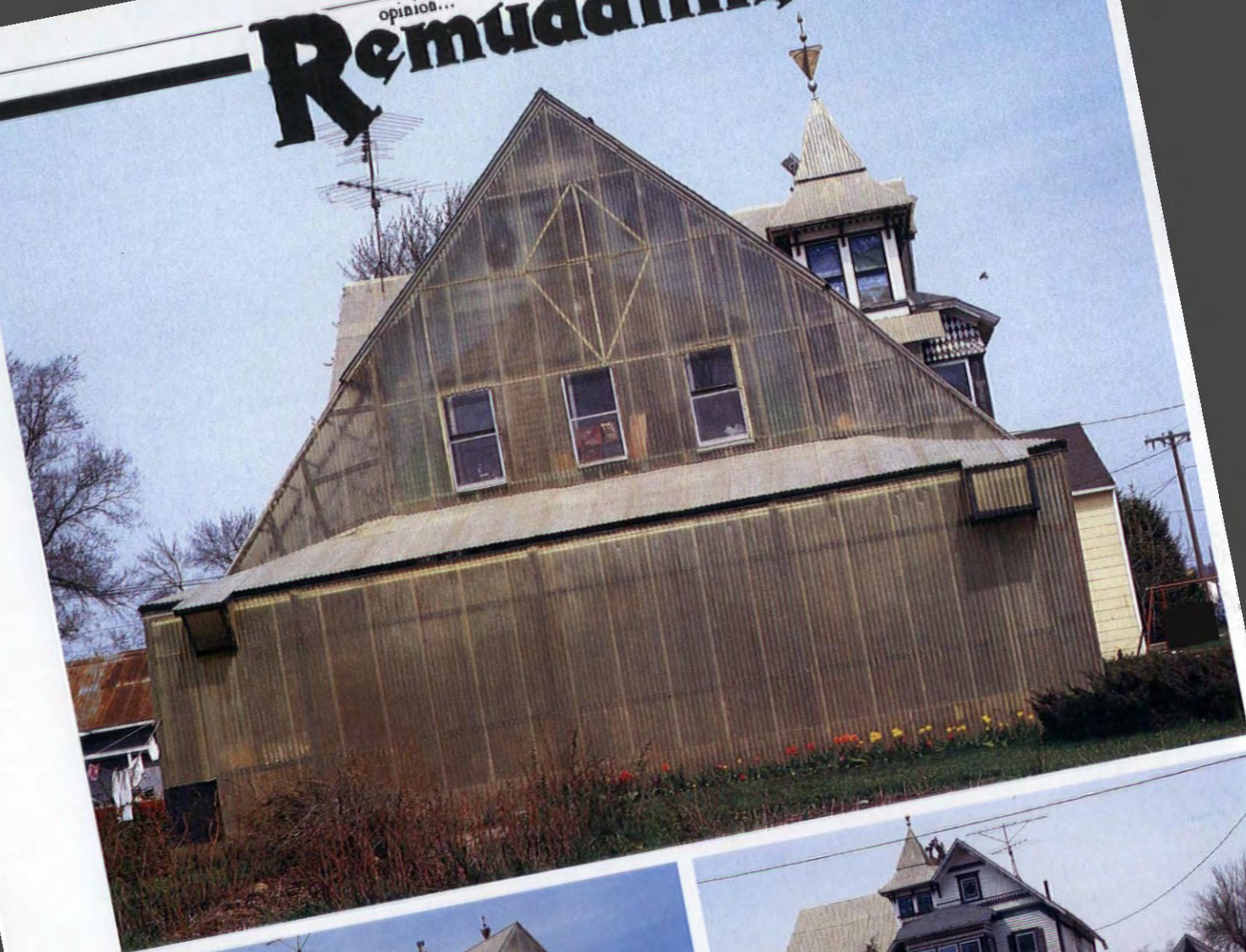
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# opinion... Remuddling



**D**avid Russell of Minneapolis sent us these remuddling photos: "My wife and I frequently drive past this house in Pine Island, Minnesota. (The area boasts a number of beautiful homes from the late 1800s.) The house features translucent, corrugated plastic which masks the exterior of the building." Frankly, we're baffled: What was

the intention? Is it simply an inexpensive way to graft on more living space (a greenhouse or gallery?) to the original structure? Or is it supposed to provide some unique thermal or solar-energy benefit? One thing's for sure — little benefit has been given to the architectural character of the house, or to that particular streetscape in Pine Island.

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

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## Vernacular Houses

**C**alled brownstones because their front facades are veneered with a brown sandstone, these Victorian row houses were built from Chicago eastward. But nowhere was their architectural impact felt like in New York City — and nowhere in New York do they define neighborhoods like in Brooklyn.

Pictured are brownstones in Park Slope, a historic district boasting uninterrupted rows built after the Civil War and until 1900. The brownstone is a builder's vernacular. Tall, somber fronts belie on-spec opulence inside: high-ceilinged parlors, walnut pocket doors, plaster mouldings, and marble mantels. The plan is famous for its long, narrow rooms: The width is usually 20, 18, 16 — sometimes only 12 — feet across. Outside, griffins and consoles and cherubs are carved into the sandstone.

Social significance belongs to the stoop, the masonry steps that are a transition between private house and public street. The doorway under the stoop once served as the service entrance for these houses without alleys; guests were taken up to the parlor. (Now we stoop-sit.)

The brownstone revival, long established now but once the domain of urban pioneers, was the genesis of the newsletter that grew into this magazine.

— Patricia Poore  
Editor, *Old-House Journal*  
Brooklyn, New York

photos: Daniel Dutka

# BROOKLYN BROWNSTONES



The Old-House Journal

