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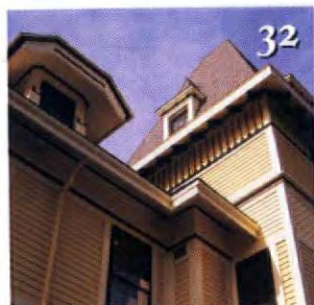
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BY JOSH GARSKOF

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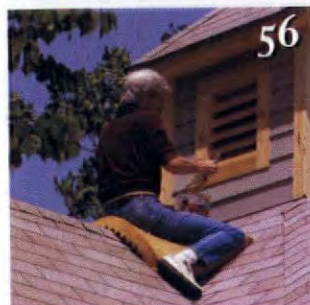


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Readers kill three birds with one stone by constructing an outbuilding that offers storage space, a garage, and a garden shed.

ON THE COVER: New Assistant Editor, Josh Garskof, spotted our cover house — an 1835 Gothic Revival in Newton, Massachusetts. Unbeknownst to him, the house had appeared in OHJ 12 years ago, long before its 14-color paint job.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE MARSEL

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Subscription service (800) 234-3797; Back issues (\$4.95 /copy): (508) 281-8803; Advertising: (508) 283-4721. We are happy to accept editorial contributions to Old-House Journal. Query letters that include an outline of the proposed article are preferred. All manuscripts will be reviewed, and returned if unacceptable. However, we cannot be responsible for non-receipt or loss — please keep copies of all materials sent. ©Copyright 1994 by Dove-tale Publishers. All rights reserved.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.



OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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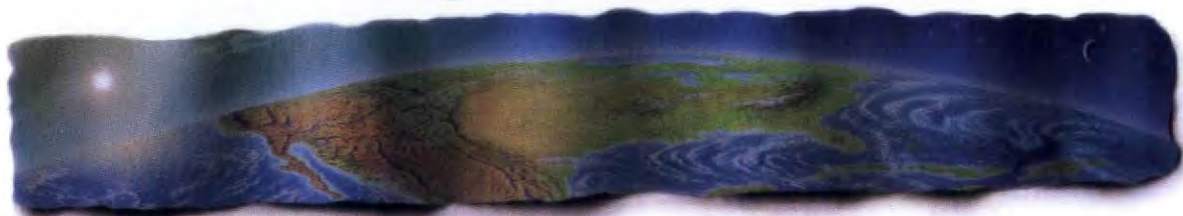
PUBLISHER

William J. O'Donnell

Old-House Journal [ISSN 0094-0178] is published bimonthly plus a special issue on Old-House Interiors in April for \$24 per year by Dove-tale Publishers, The Blackburn Tavern, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930. Telephone (508) 283-3200. Subscriptions in Canada \$34 per year, payable in U.S. funds. Second-class postage paid at Gloucester, MA and at additional entries. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Old-House Journal, P.O. Box 58017, Boulder, CO 80322-8017.

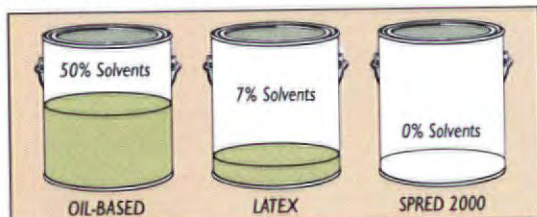
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Concern For The Environment Is Changing The Way We Live. It Could Also Change The Way You Paint.



From the simple act of recycling to the complex efforts to understand global warming, there is no denying the impact that concern for our environment will have on the way we, as caretakers of the planet, live in years to come.

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CUTTING CORNERS

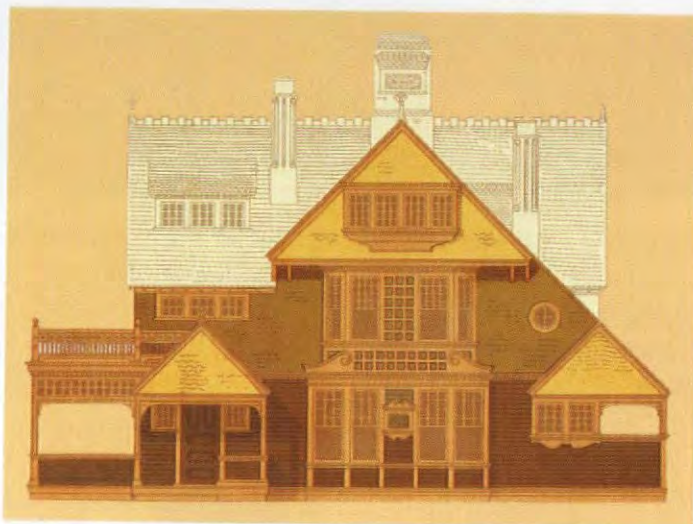


I REMEMBER WHEN I first mastered cutting corners — not bypassing the usual route on the way home, but controlling a brush so that it lays on paint right up to a line without any masking. “Cutting in” or “edging” as some painters call this technique, is valuable for housepainting, especially windows and trim work. For me, it also represents another level of workmanship, and the fact that there is more to a good job than just spanking on paint. Real painting is a set of developed skills and good practices as much as any housecraft.

Learning the skills takes time, but the practices can be assumed immediately. Here's three that helped this talented amateur to improved painting.

Prepare well. Thorough surface preparation is a lot like doing your homework before the big performance. In any paint job, prep work is a substantial part of the effort, but on the weathered wood and varied surfaces of old houses it is practically all the work, and why we focussed in on the topic in this issue. Good preparation extends the job's life, improves its looks, and saves paint.

Use the best tools and materials. The old rules-of-thumb still hold true, even with high-tech fibers and low-VOC coatings. Good brushes



Housepainting no longer requires grinding pigments or mixing oils as it did in the last century, but quality materials and attention to details are still the keys to an excellent job.

pay back their extra cost in better productivity and improved job quality. They hold more paint without dripping, meaning fewer trips to the bucket, and spread smoother than low-quality brushes. Moreover, good brushes don't come apart while you're painting, leaving bristles or streaks in the work. Professional painters consider high quality brushes an investment that will last for many jobs.

The same goes for paint. Premium paint may cost twice as much per gallon as a budget variety, but there is a reason and a payoff for this expense. Better paint contains more solids — pigments and similar ingredients — that give it color and “hiding power.” It is this part of paint that remains on the surface after the solvents have dried away. Therefore, good paint provides better coverage than cheap paint, leaving a thicker

film to stand up to the elements. It may cost more up front, but you need less, it's easier to apply, and it lasts longer.

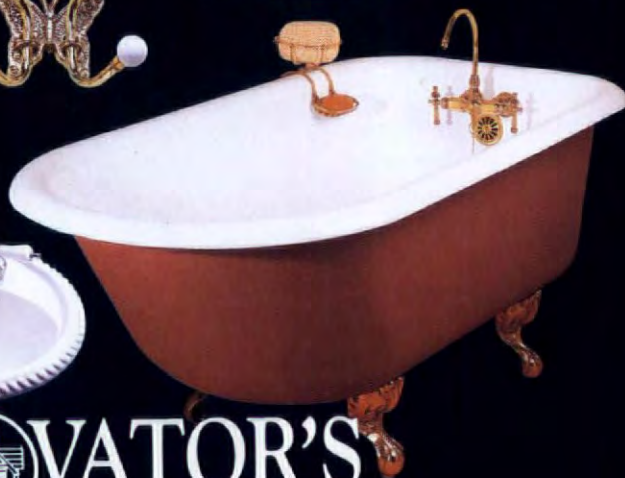
Work safely. Painting isn't particularly strenuous, but it is repetitive and potentially hazardous. Take five-minute breaks twice an hour and switch tasks often. This goes for vibrating handtools, too, such as sanders. (In industry, prolonged vibration exposure sometimes leads to “white finger disease,” a syndrome of numbness and blanching.)

Avoid working over your head — awkward for the body and a dangerous practice anytime you don't have both feet on the ground. Move so the work is in front of you.

Most important, be careful about how and where you work. Painting often mixes heights with water, electricity, or chemicals — a Molotov cocktail of forces that can cause accidents. Set up ladders and scaffolding properly, don't work in bad weather, or rush. The time you may have saved by hurrying is lost many times over when you have to correct a mistake made in haste, or worse, stop work because of an injury. Painting safety is no place to be cutting corners.

Edna Bell

A collection of bathroom fixtures. At the top is a white pedestal sink with brass faucets. To its left is a brass wall-mounted soap dish. Below the sink is a chrome faucet with white handles. At the bottom is a decorative brass towel rack with a central oval medallion and two side-mounted towel rings.

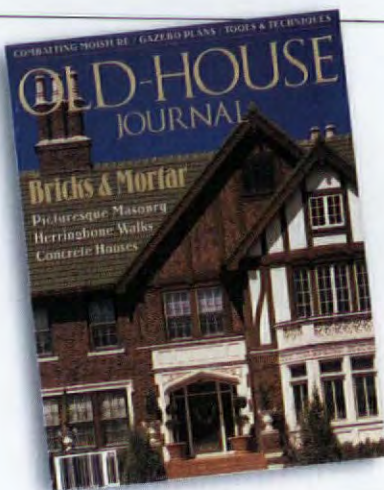


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Letters



Course Comments

I'D JUST LIKE TO ADD A BIT OF ADVICE to Gordon Bock's excellent article on rising damp ("The Short Course on Rising Damp," May/June 1994). Don't automatically assume your water problem is rising damp.

It's worth stressing again that the majority of brick and stone wall moisture problems are caused by much more obvious sources — typically poor roof or surface drainage. This water usually penetrates the wall from the side (rather than up from the footing as with classic rising damp) and is the source of many wet basements and other water problems in old houses.

Fixing or installing gutters, extending downspouts, and grading soil so that water flows away from the building are simple, low-tech, and relatively inexpensive methods that should always be tried first. This work should be a part of the building's regular maintenance anyway.

— JOHN HEWITT
Portland, Ore.

Masonry Kudos

THE MAY/JUNE 1994 ISSUE IS A KEEPER! We'll soon be moving into a 1931 Tudor that has remained in the same family since it was built. "Picturesque Masonry" made us appreciate the so-

called random brickwork and relief effects on our old house.

Owning an old house — or any house, for that matter — is new territory for us. It was a relief, as first-time homeowners, to have a guide for maintaining and repairing rustic-looking masonry. Although the skintled brickwork on our house is in good shape, in the future we're sure the tips will come in handy.

— STEPHANIE & SCOTT MATHEWS
Brookfield, Conn.

Stock Tudor

THE KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, RESIDENCE illustrated in "Stalking the Stockbroker Tudor" ("Reading the Old House," March/April 1994) is an example of "The Dorchester," a mail-order home from Lewis Manufacturing of Bay City, Michigan.

The majority of Lewis Homes were bungalows and smaller houses. However, "The Dorchester" was the premier model in their 1923-1925 catalogs. This 2,500 sq. ft. residence featured four sizable bedrooms, a large living room, kitchen, library, two bath-

rooms, sleeping porch, breakfast nook, and a sun room.

Although the catalog illustration featured a stucco house with half-timbering, the model was available in clapboards, cedar shingles, or framed for masonry. Examples are known in Detroit, Grosse Pointe Woods, Birmingham, and Bay City, Michigan. However, "The Dorchester" was not popular because of its \$5,000 price.

Homeowners looking for information on Aladdin, Lewis-Liberty, and Sterling-International Mill & Timber mail-order homes (all three companies were located in Bay City) are wel-



A page from the 1925 Lewis Homes Catalog (inset) identifies this Kansas, Missouri, house as "The Dorchester," a mail-order home in the Tudor style.

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Letters

come to send inquiries to: The Bay County Historical Society, 321 Washington Ave., Bay City, Michigan 48706.

— DALE PATRICK WOLICKI
Architectural Historian
Bay County Historical Society
Bay City, Mich.

No Stile

JOHN LEEKE'S EXCELLENT ARTICLE on "Curing Ailing Sills" (March/April 1994) unfortunately leaves the reader with the impression that one might connect stiles to sills of windows, thus preventing (perhaps with epoxy) the vertical motion of double-hung sash. Through the years, I have become convinced that the stile is the vertical side piece of the sash and is connected to the horizontal rails; the vertical piece of a window or door frame,



The S-shaped curves of the porch are a striking addition to the Cosgrove house in Colton, California.

which inevitably rots along with the sill, is the jamb.

May OHJ continue to encourage others to salvage their historic windows instead of outfitting them with vinyl replacement windows, at a great loss!

— JOHN BRUCE DODD
Layton, N. J.

Compliments on Curves

I REALLY ENJOYED THE LAST ISSUE OF OHJ with the articles on curves ("Carpentry in the Round," March/April 1994). Your articles made me appreciate the curves in our house even more. Our Victorian was built c.1880, and the curved wood was added in an extensive remodeling in 1910.

— JANET COSGROVE
Colton, Calif.

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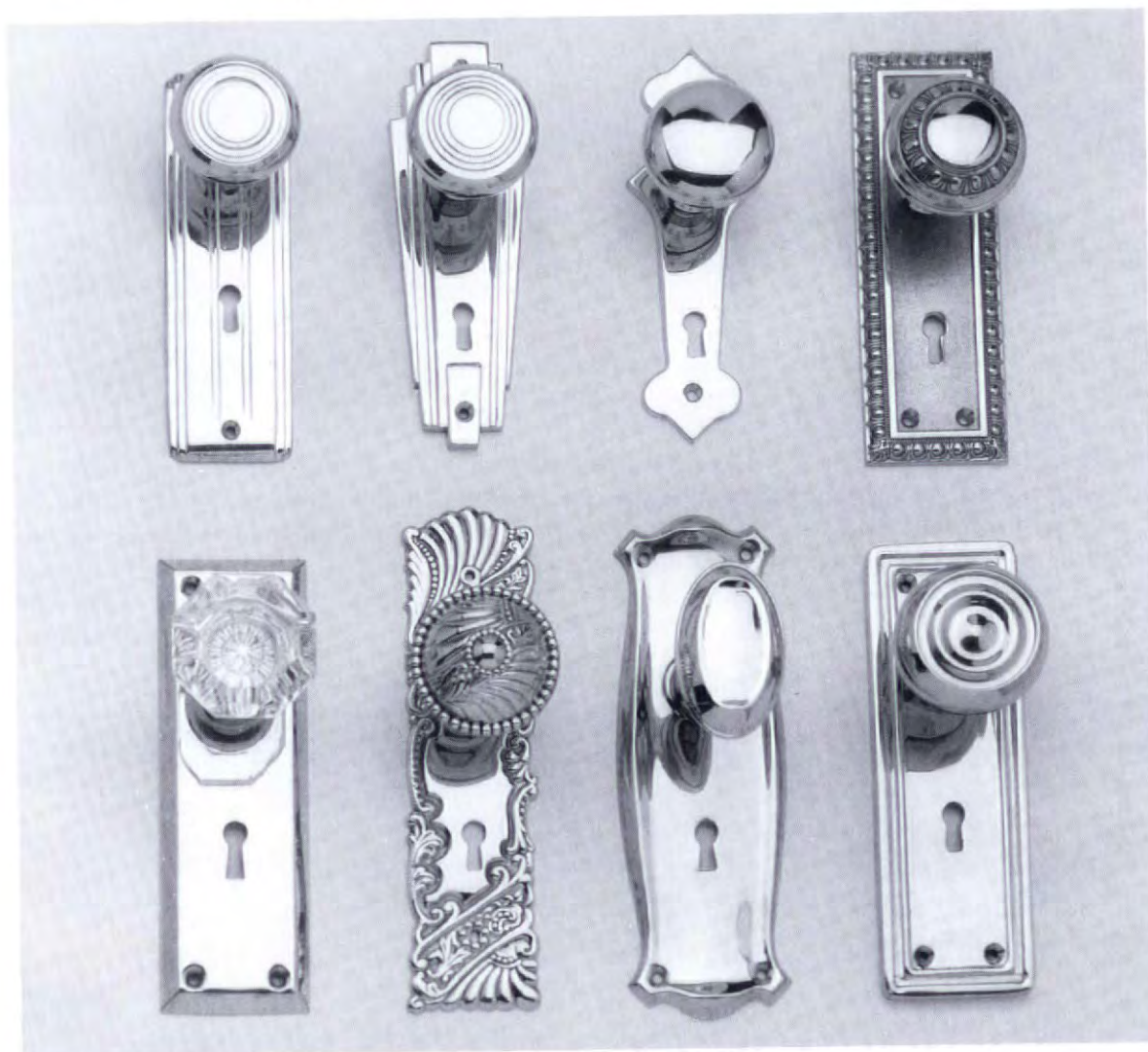
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Letters



Unconnected?

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF GOOD EXAMPLES OF Connected Farm Buildings in Maine; the back cover illustration of your March/April issue isn't one of them. That little late-19th century building isn't a farm building. However, it is probably a mill worker's cottage. I've enclosed a photograph of a Connected Farm Building from North Yarmouth, Maine. The components [main house and outbuildings] date from different periods. How-

ever, generally, it has been well-preserved and was, at one time, a genuine farm.

—THOMAS HINKLE
Portland, Maine



THANKS FOR COMMENTING ON *Vernacular Houses*. Connected Farm Buildings come in a wide range of sizes and configurations, some much humbler than the one we ran. Many are large, both in scale and number of buildings. We con-

Top: This Connected Farm Building in Harpswell, Maine, was too long to fit on the Vernacular Houses page.

Above: In North Yarmouth, Maine, Thomas Hinkle's shot of a moderately sized example.

Photography by Hannab Holmes (top) and Thomas Hinkle

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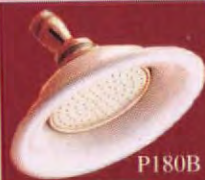
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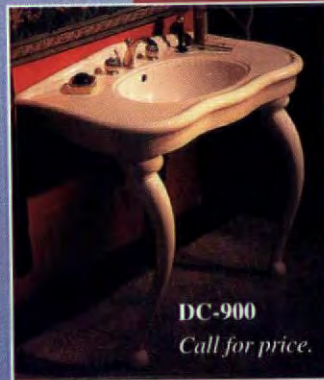
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Letters

sidered several photographs before we found one that fit on the page! Check out the Connected Farm Building, affectionately known as the "stretch limo model" (see page 12), that we had to leave out.

— THE EDITORS

Novel Search

I WAS VERY PLEASED TO COME ACROSS the brief but informative article, "An Old-House Brick Glossary" (May/June 1994). The item which particularly caught my eye was the mention of Roman and Norman brick types. At present, I am involved in researching an historical novel, and am looking for information on what was used as mortar in the 10th-century in the area that is present-day Switzerland.

I have quite a bit of material on the construction of walls, particularly of churches and the rubble-filled outer walls of fortresses, and a good collection of pictures and descriptions of building tools. So far, the major lack has been any information on materials and composition. I hope a reader finds this project intriguing enough to lend me some insights or point me at some relevant reading. As you can see, publications like yours occasionally serve as resources for a wider community of interest than homeowners.

— LUCIE CHIN
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A Call for Details

I AM PRODUCING A BOOK ON INNOVATIVE architectural details that will fea-

ture approximately 60 to 70 projects. The book will focus on artful, practical, odd-ball, high-tech, inspirational, and educational micro designs that enrich residential architecture throughout the United States.

The book is slated to go into production sometime in the Fall of 1994.

If anyone would like to submit a project for consideration, please include: (1) photographs or slides of the detail from all the relevant angles, (2) detail drawings with all materials and dimensions clearly called out, (3) a written description of the detail and what it does and how it was generated.

— DUO DICKINSON
Architect
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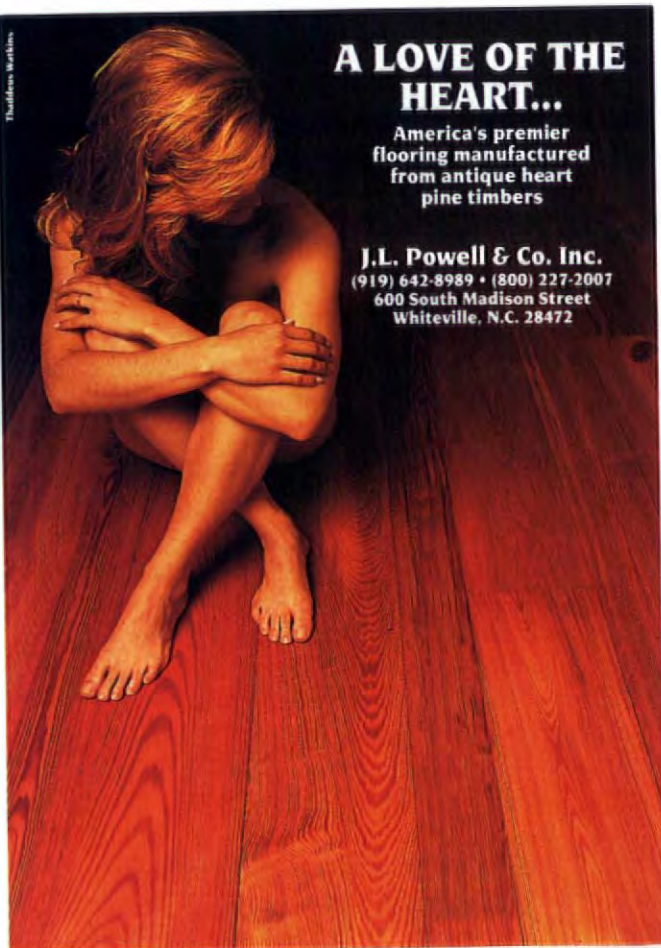
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Good Books

Here are two unique glossaries that put old-house facts at your fingertips.

An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture & Landscape

by Carl R. Lounsbury; Pub: Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016; (800) 451-7556; 1994; 430 pages, b&w, \$75 plus shipping, clothbound.

SUPPOSE YOUR 1733 deed states that an "undertaker" was to construct an "ordinary" on your lot. A glance into *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture & Landscape* will explain: an ordinary was a term for tavern; an undertaker was an early word for contractor.

Prepared by The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, this dense book is a dictionary for the architectural vocabulary — and, by extension, the history — of Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee in the colonial and national periods (1610s through 1820s). The 1,500 entries include detailed definitions and citations from period documents. There are more than 300 illustrations.

Not just a nuts-and-bolts description of early southern building techniques, this book also reveals a lot of social history. Lounsbury details a broad range of issues, such as methods of building slave quarters, the development of firefighting, changes in administering punishment (stocks, pillory, gaol, and gallows), and the introduction of sewers.

The glossary also illustrates colonial America's gradual departure from dependance on imported materials from England, but the continued reliance on Britain for much of archi-

tectural style and design standards. (A "Virginia House" was a crude, foundationless wood-frame structure; an "English Frame" house was a mortise-and-tenon building, and was used as a general term for well-built houses.)

As much as anything else, this glossary is a treatise in early-American linguistics. Terminology evolved with technological advances, changes in societal values, political tides, and the melting of the melting pot. Roots of construction words like "poorhouse," "bastard framing," and "joinery" come to light, and the sum total offers a peek

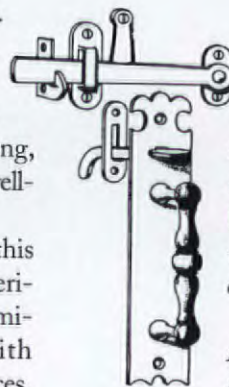
into the development of a distinctly-American English.

Even readers far from its geographical focus will find this book useful. Although not for every book budget, this scholarly glossary is a must for any reference shelf.

150 Years of Builders' Hardware: Forms, Use & Lore

by Maud L. Eastwood; Pub: The Antique Doorknob Publishing Co., P.O. Box 2609, Woodinville, WA 98072; (206) 483-5848; 1993; 119 pages, b&w; \$22.50 ppd., softcover; \$27.50 ppd., three-ring binder.

BEFORE YOU SET OUT to repair an old lock or to find period door latches for your old house, there are a few things you'll need to get a handle on. Is it a left-hand, or a right-hand door? What sort of bevel does it have? What is the back-



A Norfolk Thumb latch reproduction circa 1930.

set of the knob? Is it a rim lock or a mortise lock? Here's a catalog of door hardware that can get you started.

Maud Eastwood's *150 Years of Builders' Hardware* is a selection

of original advertisements and catalog descriptions unified into an encyclopedia of historic door hardware (pre-1960). With an extensive glossary and pages filled with easy-to-view sketches of hinge, knob, lock, and latch parts, the book serves as an excellent primer for the complex world of old-door hardware.

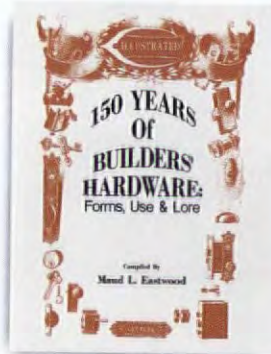
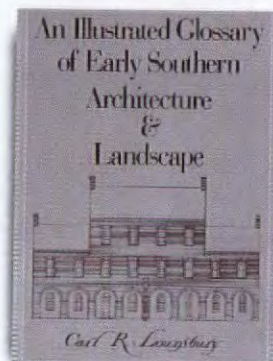
As the author cautions in the text, however, this is not a how-to manual, but a "what-is-it?" resource, providing detailed drawings and explanations about the type, elements, and comparative worth of hundreds of pieces of old door accessories.

The book's loose-leaf format highlights its practical nature: it stays open to the page of hardware you're looking at. (The author intends to print two addenda to the work that will focus on window hardware.)

Between the informative drawings and technical explanations is a light historical narrative about the development of the hardware industry. Eastwood's obvious love for the astragal joint, rim draw back lock, cottage

latch, spring hinge, and the hundreds of other items she describes, is contagious.

—J.G.



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Reading the Old House

PUTTING DUTCH COLONIALS UNDER ONE ROOF

by James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell

THE RECORDS ON OUR HOUSE are sketchy, but it may have been built in 1927. In profile, the roof looks like a gambrel, and we know Long Island was originally settled by the Dutch. Is this house an example of Dutch Colonial?

— MR. AND MRS. JOHN M. VODICKA
Syosset, N. Y.

THE REAL ESTATE AGENT DESCRIBED our house as a "1913 Dutch Colonial, Craftsman, California Mission, English Tudor." We bought it anyway. My husband and I would really like to know which (if any) of the various styles are actually represented in the house.

— KATHLEEN MURPHY
Providence, R. I.

THE DUTCH COLONIAL HOUSE, A COMMON version of the 20th-century Colonial Revival, occasionally recreates a



The front entrance, top-heavy windows, and untapered columns (inset) mark the Craftsman influence on this Dutch Colonial house in Providence, Rhode Island.



In Syosset, New York, paired windows and a gambrel roof with continuous dormer are sure signs that this is an early-20th-century Dutch Colonial.

real house dating back to the 18th-century Dutch settlements. Most of the time, however, Dutch Colonials bear only the vaguest of references to the old Dutch houses of the New York-New Jersey Hudson River Valley, and that reference is in their roof lines. Dutch Colonials are usually two storeys tall with gambrel roofs that come

down to the first floor, almost like a pent eave (see Term Notes). Second storeys appear as continuous dormers set in the roofs.

Sometimes, as in the case of the Vodicka house, there is an attractive, pedimented-and-columned entrance porch. The windows on both the first and second floors are in pairs, and often there is a side porch. These frame houses can be faced with wood siding, stucco, brick, or stone. Always, there is an end-gambrel roof with the long side to the front. That pretty much describes the classic Dutch Colonial.

Kathleen Murphy's Dutch Colonial house represents the early period of the Colonial Revival, and its generous proportions are what mark it as belonging to that phase. The house has the distinctive end-gam-



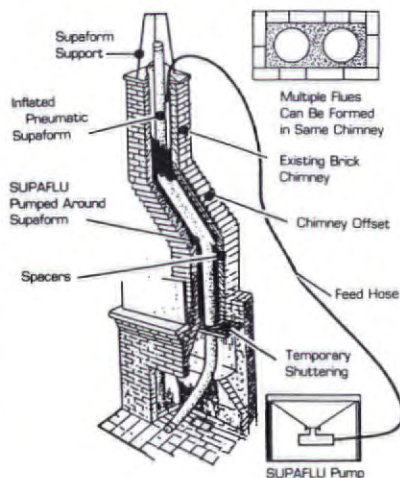
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Reading the Old House

brel roof of the Dutch Colonial and also features an extra kick at the bottom of the gambrel, which is reminiscent of genuine early Dutch houses. A recessed porch with large, untapered columns runs across the entire front.

Although it is harder to pin a single label on this house than on the Syosset example, it isn't the grab-bag of styles described by the real estate agent. We'd be hard pressed to find the Tudoriness of the house, and it definitely is not California Mission style. However, the front porch and its heavy, plain columns do evoke the Craftsman period. These large, round columns are often a standard feature for porches and, in particular, pergolas. The multiple, tall, thin windows of the living room and the front en-

trance, with four-paned sidelights are also Craftsman characteristics. Notice, however, that the original "clerestory" door — a Craftsman plank door with a small-paned window two-thirds of

the way up — has been replaced by a six-panel type. So what we have here is a very appealing Dutch Colonial with a Craftsman accent. Well worth a second look!

T E R M I N O L O G Y

Pent Roof (also Pent Eave or Skirt Roof): A short roof projecting from the second floor of a building on an inclined plane and in one direction only. It helps to protect the building by shedding water away from the first floor. When carried around the house, it may be referred to as a skirt roof. Pent roofs are characteristic of houses built from the late 17th century to the early 18th century.



Illustration courtesy of John Milner Architects

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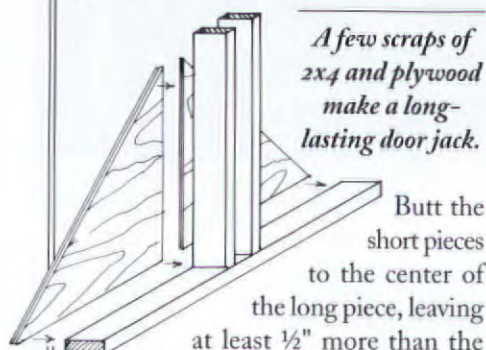
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N O T E B O O K

Easy Door Jack

WHEN YOU'RE INSTALLING HINGES or locksets on doors, it helps to have more than your knees to keep them on edge. Here's an easy way to build a door jack: Cut three pieces of 2x4 scrap, one long base and two legs.



A few scraps of 2x4 and plywood make a long-lasting door jack.

Butt the short pieces to the center of the long piece, leaving at least $\frac{1}{2}$ " more than the width of your thickest door between them. Then cut two triangles from $\frac{3}{8}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " plywood to brace the jacks. Tack — or better, screw — the plywood onto the 2x4s, and you've got a door jack you can use again and again.

— PATTY O'BRIEN
Las Vegas, Nev.

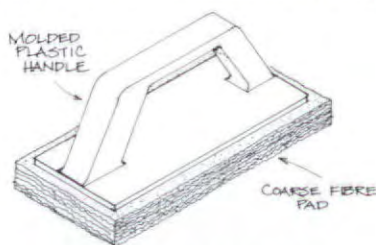
BBQ Scrubbers on Walls

AS A HOUSE PAINTER AND RESTORER, I find poor preparation of dirty or chalking surfaces is the primary cause of paint that does not adhere properly. The general recommendation is to scrub with a solution of TSP or detergent-and-bleach using a stiff brush. I find a better tool — especially for clapboards and shingles — is a grill scrubber, the kind with a coarse synthetic "wool" pad attached to a handle. These scrubbers are cheap, durable, and they can clean the face and bottom edge of a clapboard in one pass. Their light, abrasive action also helps to degloss the surface and smooth

rough spots. It's still necessary to keep a scrub brush handy for curved mouldings, and thorough rinsing afterwards is very important.

— ANDREW MASON
Jefferson, N. Y.

REMOVING WALLPAPER IS A PIECE of cake compared to cleaning the sizing, paste, and bits of paper remaining on the wall. Holes and kinks chew up sponges (bits of which stick to any remaining paste), and the sponge quickly fills with dissolved paste. After many attempts to locate a better tool, I found a barbecue grill scrubber in the seasonal section of a drug store. It comes with a molded plastic handle that makes it easy to apply pressure and keep hands dry. Dip



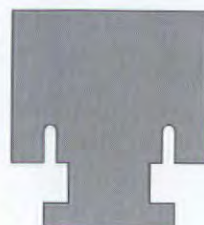
Two readers wrote us praising the multiple tasks a simple plastic-molded grill scrubber can accomplish.

the grill scrubber in the wallpaper removal solution and scrub. Then rinse with a sponge and fresh water.

— PETER R. HALE
Chelsea, Mass.

Un-Rolling Your Own

MANY TYPES OF OLD ASPHALT shingles are difficult, if not impossible, to find. I made my own by removing a damaged shingle and cutting a replacement from roll roofing of a similar color. I traced the outline



Hard-to-find shingles like this T-shaped example can be cut from roll roofing.

of an old — but intact — shingle on the back of the roll roofing using white chalk. Then, I cut it out from the back with a utility knife.

— KEVIN CULLEN
Danville, Ill.

Mark, Don't Measure

AN OLD FINISH CARPENTER taught me, "Never measure something when you can mark it." He felt that every time you measure with a ruler you give yourself two opportunities to make a mistake: one when you read your measurement and one when you transfer it to your workpiece. When I need an inside dimension, such as to fit a countertop between two walls, I use a trick he called "slipsticks." I take two pieces of scrap lumber about $\frac{3}{4}$ the width of the opening to be measured, hold them in the opening side by side, and extend them in opposite directions until they touch each wall. Then I clamp them where they overlap, and I have an exact measurement of the opening.

— JOHN ZALUSKY
Owings, Md.

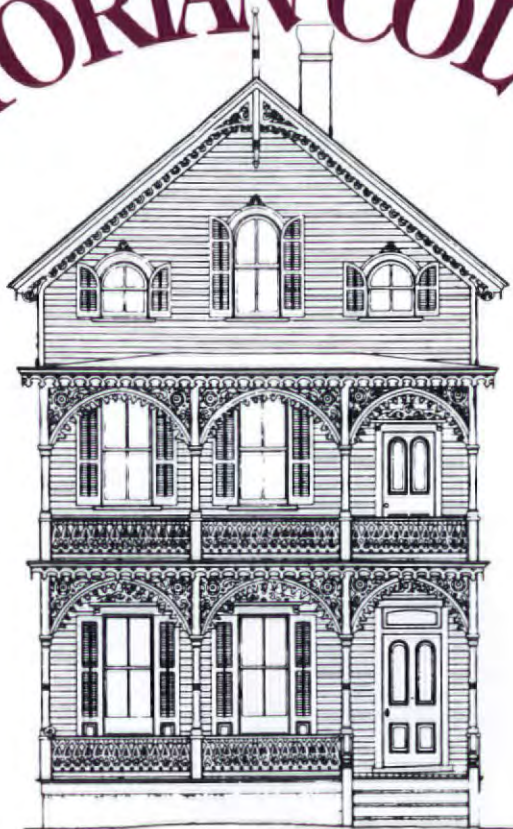
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Outside the Old House

SUMMERTIME SHRUB ROSES

by Pat Kite



PLANTING AUTHENTIC SHRUB roses is one way to make your old house as attractive and historical on the outside as it is inside. Many old-time shrub roses came to North America as the keepsakes of homesick immigrants, and these sturdy flowers went on to thrive in settlements as different as the British colonies and the Spanish California missions.

To rose specialists, a shrub rose is a plant that is neither a climber nor a bush. The remaining rose types are grouped under the classification 'shrubby rose,' which includes low-lying ground cover and tall, free-standing plants. Shrubby roses grow large and tend to be greater in breadth than in height. The first major rose hybridization occurred in 1867 (in France), but most pre-1900 varieties are considered to be antiques.

Shrubby roses are casual-looking, with a wide range of form and size that has traditionally suited them to many uses around houses. Self-supporting varieties can grow to 15' high and have often been cultivated as decorative hedges; earth-hugging types are natural ground covers or garden centerpieces. Here are some antique shrubby

rose varieties that might have been planted in your old-house yard, and that you can still buy today.

Damask

IF YOU LIKE FRAGRANCE AND YOU have plenty of room, damask roses

richly fragrant flowers appear in clusters once a year. With maturity, flowers fade to almost white. Crinkly petals open wide, with tall yellow center stamens. Leaves are gray-green.

'**Madame Hardy**' (1832) can grow to 6' high and 6' wide. Its 3", very-double, ivory white flowers have been compared to a ballerina's tutu. Good as cut flowers, they appear in June clusters, giving off a soft, delicate lemony fragrance. Surrounding foliage is a lush dark green.



'Louise Odier' (top), 'Harison's Yellow' (left), and 'Madame Pierre Oger' (right) become large bushes, often used for colorful hedging.

are best. They are excellent choices for decorative hedging because the graceful shrubs grow large and thorny. Damask roses need fairly good soil for best flowering.

'**Celsiana**' (pre-1750), reaches 5'. Large 4" warm pink, semi-double,

though a little initial support is helpful. Creamy flesh-pink flowers are shaped like rounded cups filled with petals. Color deepens in hot weather to blushing rose. Flowering is from May through early October if you arrange the canes so they get maximum sunlight. Leaves are light green.

'**Louise Odier**' (1851) has a strong upright growth pattern taking it to 5' high. A must for indoor bouquet en-

[Continued on page 26]

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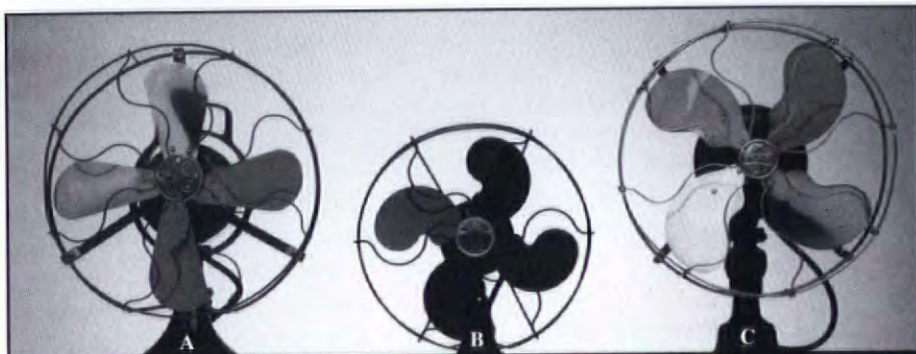


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Outside the Old House



Rosa rugosa has classic antique blooms (left) and willowy, prickly canes (right).

[Continued from page 24]

thusiasts, its very rich fragrance can perfume a room. Flowers are very-double deep pink, with lilac shading. It will bloom from early June to October.

Other Types

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF SOME MORE shrub roses that can brighten your yard palette.

Rosa rugosa (pre-1800) is a low-maintenance plant with excellent drought tolerance that thrives in seashore gardens, oblivious to sandy soil and salt spray. Another plus is its vivid fragrance, sometimes compared to cloves. One caution: the prevalent gray canes are quite prickly, something to keep in mind when choosing a planting site.

'Maiden's Blush' (1400s) eventually reaches 6' high. Perky 2" blush-pink buds and very-double flowers, with clear pink centers, appear in June. If your garden isn't always the sunniest, this old shrub rose — a variety of alba — is a good choice because it tolerates some shade. Blue-green leaves keep 'Maiden's Blush' attractive even when not in flower. The clusters have a vivid sweet fragrance, and do well in bouquets. Train single 'Maiden's Blush' plants against a wall, or use in multiples as a decorative informal hedge.

Rosa rubiginosa, also known as the eglantine rose (1551), varies be-

tween 8' and 14' high. Popular in Elizabethan England for hedges, it entered America with British colonists. Among the tallest of the shrub roses, consider *Rosa rubiginosa* for a site where you need decoration that happens to be very hardy, long-lived, and thorny. Small rosy-pink, single flowers bloom in the spring, but it's the leaves that are aromatic. There's an abundant winter crop of Vitamin-C-rich hips, used by early settlers to make marmalade and pie filling.

'Harrison's Yellow' (1830) reaches 6'. A North American native, 'Harrison's Yellow' was developed in New York and carried cross-country on pioneer wagon trains. Small double flowers, just 1" wide, are bright yellow. Foliage is bright green.

'Roger Lambelin' (1890) reaches 5'. This pleasantly scented, two-color rose is an unusual deep red with white fringe. It resembles a ruffled prom gown. More particular than the other old shrub roses, it will need good soil.

'Old Blush' (1752) can grow 1' to 5' tall. It is one of the first roses to bloom in spring and among the last to stop flowering in fall. The 2 1/2" clear pink semi-double flowers come in clusters; the more the merrier. Fragrance is light and sweet.

Growing Shrub Roses

SHRUB ROSES ARE EASY TO GROW, needing only sunlight and water. Here

are a few tips for healthy plants:

- Plant your shrub roses at least 4' to 6' apart to prevent disease and root competition.
- To create historical shrub rose hedging, train the young plants upward on metal stakes.
- Shrub roses, especially young specimens, need plenty of water. Rapid watering systems encourage shallow, weak root systems. Long, penetrating watering is best.
- Do not over-fertilize, and feed only after bloom is complete. Never fertilize during the dormant period.
- Occasional pruning is needed, but keep in mind that shrub roses with one flowering period bloom only on the previous year's new growth.

Pat Kite writes about gardening from her Newark, California, home.

Sources

Select a nursery that concentrates on preserving old varieties. Among the dedicated suppliers are:

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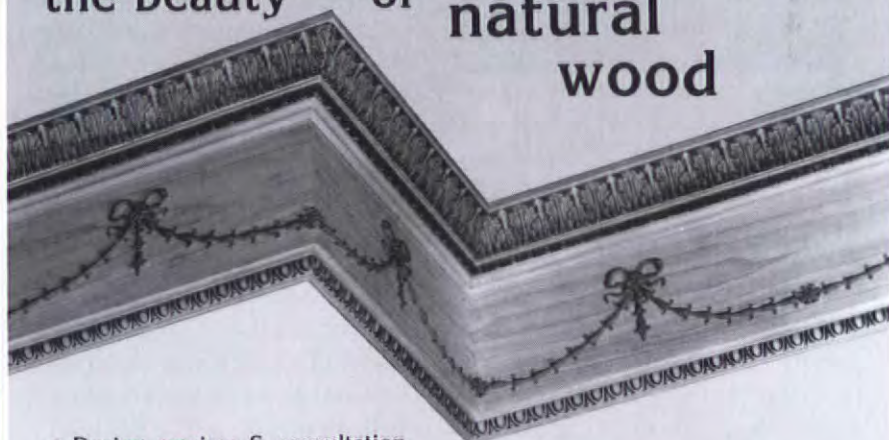
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Six-Sided Plan

■ *I would like to enlist your help in finding a possible floor plan for our c. 1858 hexagonal house. The local historical society has information about the family who built the house, but no one can tell us how it was originally laid out.*

— LOIS DUNCAN HART
Lebanon, Ohio

ORSON SQUIRE FOWLER WAS PROMOTING octagons at about the time your house was built and he seems to have fostered a similar interest in six-sided construction. Information



This hexagonal floorplan (above) offered three five-sided rooms and only had windows on three exterior walls. The text noted that the bedroom could be divided into two smaller "sleeping apartments." The Harts' 1858 hexagonal house (top) has standard, square rooms today.

about hexagonal buildings is scarce, but here's a plan we found in an 1859 text called *The House: A Pocket Manual of Rural Architecture*. Perhaps your hexagonal house was similarly designed. According to the book, a chimney sat in the center of the house with fireplaces in each room. "Such a house could be put up on the prairies or in the forests of the West for a very small sum; and we do not see how the same amount of accommodation can be more economically obtained," the book exclaimed.

Cupping Conundrum

■ *We're getting ready to lay a new porch floor. We know quarter-sawn deck lumber would be the best choice for stability and long life, but that is not an option. Since we're working with flat-sawn planks, what's the best way to lay the deck, with the grain pointing down or pointing up?*

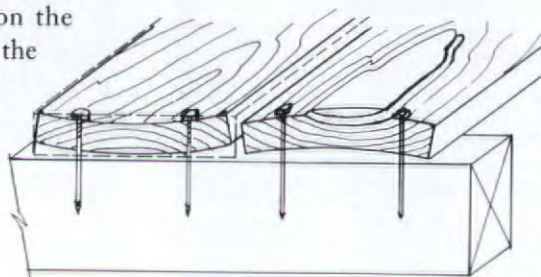
— JANE McLAUGHLIN
Madison, Wis.

THIS IS AN INTERESTING QUESTION, and a decision many restorers have to make, but one that is not definitively answered in any reference we could find. Even an informal OHJ on-the-job survey of carpenters did not yield a consensus on the issue.

As it dries, wood tends to shrink in the direction of its annual growth rings. In a flat-sawn board — especially one that comes relatively wet from the lumberyard — that shrinkage may distort the lumber so that it cups away from the center of the tree. If a board is installed "bark-up," its edges may lift, pulling nails, and creating an uneven,

foot-catching floor. The exposed bark side is also prone to "weather checks," where cracks develop between grain layers.

Nonetheless, many carpenters lay planks bark-up, saying this cupping is a necessary evil because the



A bark-up board (left) lifts at the edges, pulling nails. A bark-down installation (right) has less-offensive cupping, but often has defects on the exposed face.

"heart side" often has surface defects and is more prone to ring checks, where layers of grain pull away. They suggest using large-head ring-shank nails to anchor the boards.

On the other side of the issue, tradespeople who favor "bark-down" installation say the boards are less likely to loosen nails, do not weather check, and that slight humps are easier on the toe than raised edges. Also, because the topside of many decks tends to be drier than the underside, moisture differences may counteract bark-down wood's natural curving tendency. (It can also make things worse for bark-up lumber.)

The drawback to the bark-down approach remains, however, that the heart side tends to have less attractive grain that can split out. Most carpenters who use bark-down installa-

[Continued on page 30]

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[Continued from page 28]

tion try to avoid this problem by being extra choosy about boards. In the end, though, we'd say it should be a board-by-board judgement call. If you are concerned about cupping, stick to narrow board widths or rip wide, flat-sawn boards down so they come closer to quarter-sawn stock.

Shades of Mica

■ *I have made a number of Mission-style light fixtures for the interior of my 1920s bungalow and have used art glass for the shades. I would like to replace the glass with mica on a few of the shades, but I have not been able to find a source for mica. Do you know any vendors of mica in a form that would be suitable for my needs?*

— RON W. CHILDS
Denham Springs, La.

MICA IS A MINERAL THAT WAS COMMONLY used in glass lighting fixtures and stove-door windows in the early 20th century. Designers chose it for its varied, translucent glow, its malleability, and its resistance to high heat. The place to get mica today is through companies that make electric motor parts. The substance has never been surpassed for insulating electronics — it withstands high heat and does not conduct electricity even at high voltages.

One supplier is Asheville-Schoonmaker Mica Company (900 Jefferson Avenue, Newport News, VA 23607; 804-244-7311). They stock 18" x 36" sheets in various thicknesses, made with either a shellac binder (which has an amber color) or an alkyd binder (which is colorless). They also offer a stained mica product that is naturally tinted by foreign materials in the substance when it is mined. The company has received so many

requests from old light fixture restorers, that they offer a lamp shade kit, including mica samples, an explanatory letter, and prices.



The mica on this Arts & Crafts inspired copper sconce was easily bent to the curvature needed.

Dip-Strip Data

■ *After having four pairs of 150-year-old shutters dip-stripped with a hot-caustic tank process the new paint started to fail within six months. I'd like to know what might have happened.*

— T. PETER TAGUE
Pennsburg, Pa.

ALTHOUGH IT'S A QUICK, INEXPENSIVE method of paint removal, dip-stripping can set the stage for a variety of paint adhesion problems. Most at risk is old porous wood and wood that will be exposed to moist or outdoor environments. After painting stripped wood, the appearance of stains, efflorescence, and especially peeling are all symptoms that may stem from the stripping process. Here are four ways they can occur:

Improper neutralization — Residual alkaline chemicals can leach out of the wood, cause stains, and actively strip new paint.

Incomplete rinsing — Residual neutralized chemicals (usually salts) can leach out, forming white stains or a powdery coating much like efflorescence on masonry that can push paint off the wood.

Deep moisture penetration — Residual water from rinsing can also cause paint to bubble, blister, or peel.

Degraded wood — Dipping processes can break down the wood fiber and raise the grain, making a poor surface for paint adhesion.

The best protection is to check dipped wood before painting. Test the pH and neutralize alkaline conditions with muriatic or acetic acid (vinegar residue may provide food for mildew growth). When the wood tests neutral, check for residual salts. Wet a section with clear water and let it dry; appearance of stains or rings indicates residue.

To correct peeling paint problems, strip the shutters again, then neutralize and rinse repeatedly. Let the wood dry thoroughly in a shady area before repainting (sunlight breaks down the natural binders in exposed wood). Sand weathered and degraded wood down to bright wood and prime with an oil-based primer. A latex topcoat will hold up well to wood movement. Or, you may want to avoid paint altogether and use a solid, heavy-bodied exterior oil stain that may better resist peeling.

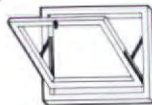
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PRIOR TO PAINT

PREPARING EXTERIOR WOOD FOR A NEW COAT

BY JOSH GARSKOF

P AINT IS NOT JUST AN AESTHETIC DETAIL, it is the first layer of protection for an old house. Left exposed, exterior wood siding and trim are no match for the ultra-violet light, water, and microscopic organisms that attack them from all around. A well-maintained paint film can shield wood so that it will last virtually forever. However, each paint job is only temporary, and all exterior wood needs routine repainting.

Without question, the most important — and painstaking — task of a paint job is the preparation. It is hard, tedious work, and there are no short cuts worth taking. Unless the surface is sufficiently cleaned, dried, treated, and primed, paint will not stick to it for long. In fact, professionals say preparation is at least 80 percent of a paint job. We've highlighted the paint prep techniques that can extend the life of an old-house paint job and help paint to protect wood.

Assess Any Defects

THE FIRST TASK IS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE HOUSE has any on-going conditions that could compromise the new paint film. Generally, paint fails for one of two reasons: the building has a moisture problem, or the surface under the paint is damaged. The house is the culprit when leaky roofing, missing gutter downspouts, or other maintenance

or design shortcomings create the high moisture levels that can quickly ruin a new paint film. Peeling and cracking paint mean adhesion problems. (See "Diagnosing Paint Failure," page 37). It only makes sense to correct building problems before moving on to prep work. Problems with the paint will be addressed by the preparation process.

Another common old house paint problem is mildew. From afar it can look like patches of dirt. Up close it looks like little spots. Mildew will quickly regrow through a new paint job if it is not killed and washed off first. Test for mildew by putting a drop of household bleach on the area. If the spot lightens, it is mildew; if not, it is dirt.

Clean the House

PAINT WILL NOT STICK TO A DIRTY SURFACE. WASH THE house's exterior thoroughly before painting. If your mildew test was positive, kill the fungus with a bleach solution: one cup non-ammoniated detergent, one quart household bleach, and one gallon water. When possible, correct the moist conditions that breed mildew. Improve ground drainage, trim back shrubbery, and repair gutters or install drip caps. Also, select a mildew resistant paint or add a mildewcide.

If you do not have a mildew problem, spray from a garden hose will rinse away dirt, flaking paint, and insect cocoons, but most old houses need a good scrubbing with soap and water. Wash grime with trisodium phosphate or house-



*A new polychrome
paint job picks out
the decorative trim
and different
materials on this
Stick-style house.*





Regular paint maintenance, like spot scraping and painting, has kept this house in good condition for more than 200 years.

hold detergent combined with hot water. Scrubbing with a stiff brush will clean away failing paint, dirt, and grease. It will also remove chalking (powdery pigment that is left on the surface when the paint binder breaks down). Chalking is a normal process for some paints, but excessive chalking can be a sign of paint failure.

Wash from the bottom of the house up, so residue does not streak down the siding. After scrubbing an area, rinse immediately before it has a chance to dry back onto the siding. Once your house is clean and free of mildew, reassess your repainting project. Until the dirt is cleaned off, it can be hard to tell just how much work is required. When your house is not peeling, but the paint seems to have lost its luster, a good washing may be all it needs (See "Power Washing," page 35).

Incidentally, if there is no paint failure, don't repaint an old house solely because you want a different color. Too many layers of paint can become a thick, brittle buildup that cracks and peels. If you hate the color you inherited, or want to design a historically accurate color scheme, wait until it's time to repaint anyway.

Beneath the Surface

TO PREPARE A SOUND AND ACCEPTABLE surface for a new coat of paint, failing paint must be removed. Scrape all peeling, bubbling, or cracking paint and areas where the paint film is weak. Test for poor adhesion by putting a piece of medical tape on the surface and then ripping it off. If the tape pulls paint away, the bond is poor and the paint must be removed. Scrape, or break away, all loose or dried out putty and caulk. Also sand scraped areas to feather edge the paint and to degloss shiny paint.

There's no art to removing failing paint, and no single method that's best for every surface — or completely safe. Putty knives and hand scrapers are convenient and effective for spot work or heavily flaking paint, although slow and manual. Hand sanding offers the most control for smoothing or reducing paint layers. Careful handling to work with the grain and avoid scoring will make power orbital sanders acceptable (disc sanders invariably leave swirl marks). Chemical strippers are proba-

Paint was left to peel on this house, leading to water damage and an extensive prep and paint job.

bly most cost-effective for removing paint buildup from complex or decorative surfaces; heat tools often produce their best results on flat surfaces.

Remember, any technique that is strong enough to lift a coating is strong enough to affect building fabric or human flesh. Do not use heat tools near thin or easily ignited materials, and never remove paint with an open flame. Chemical strippers require face and body protection, plenty of ventilation, and safe disposal. Mechanical methods (scraping or sanding) can create lead-containing dust, making personal protection important. If the prep work involves removing lead-based paint, wear properly-fitted respiratory protection, such as a fine particulate filter mask approved for use against paint dust (See "Getting Rid of Lead" July/August 1992 *OHJ*). Change filters at least daily. Collect all debris and dispose following state regulations.

Stripping all of the paint from a house is usually unnecessary and should be avoided because it can damage wood and remove a still-functioning film. If the film is peeling in some areas, but holding in others, scrape where it is weak. If major paint failure requires stripping the entire exterior, some restorers leave one location unsanded (say



Photos by Noelle Lord and Nancy C. Warner (bottom)

a 1' x 1' area) to preserve paint layers for later historical analysis. (See "Checking Out Paint Layers," page 49.)

Treat Wood Right

WOOD THAT SHOWS THE EFFECTS OF years of weathering — splitting, splintering, or even decomposing — needs special care. Sand bare, weathered wood to a bright surface (See "Dealing with Weathered Wood," page 36). Then, take the opportunity to treat all exposed wood (even new boards) with materials that will prolong its life. There are three types of under-paint wood treatments that can help protect the wood and improve your paint job, and they offer different levels of protection.

Wood conditioners are natural or synthetic oil products that can enliven old, dried out wood, much like a facial cream. The old-time, easy-to-make mixture that OHJ has recommended for years is a 50-50 mix of boiled linseed oil and turpentine (or mineral spirits). Brush the mix on as long as the wood continues to "drink" it up, and allow to dry 24 hours before priming. Some commercially available conditioners, such as Kyanol Sealer and Reinforcing Oil (Kyanize Paints, 601 South Haven Street, Baltimore MD 21224; 800-966-7634), can be mixed into the primer and spread on with the paint.

If standing water or high moisture is a concern, treat old wood with a water repellent. These wax-based products soak into the wood and add water repellency to the fibers. Keeping water out limits expansion and contraction of the boards with moisture changes, and reduces the strains on the paint film. Treat all surfaces of replacement wood pieces before installation to prevent wicking of water from behind lapped joints. The repellents also protect when the next coat of paint fails, keeping water out until the film is restored again. Like conditioners, these treatments can be store-bought, or homemade. Our favorite water-repellent recipe was developed by the Forest Products Laboratory: dissolve 1 ounce finely shaved paraffin wax in 3 cups exterior varnish,

add enough mineral spirits, paint thinner, or turpentine to make one gallon of repellent. Give butt joints and corners an extra heavy coat to protect the end grain from soaking up water.

In decay-prone areas, there are more concerns than moisture itself. Water-repellent preservatives (commonly called WRPs) are water-repellent products that contain fungicides to inhibit the microscopic organisms that cause wood to rot, as well as the discoloring effects of mold and mildew. These are recommended in extremely wet climates, and where dampness from shady areas or nearby vegetation has caused paint failure. They offer the best under-paint protection for old wood.

When selecting any under-paint product, read manufacturers' labels carefully to insure that they are paintable treatments. Some similar products are specifically designed for wood that will not be painted (especially decks), and paint will not adhere to them.

Water repellents contain a large proportion of solvents that make them volatile and flammable. The pesticides and fungicides in WRPs can be toxic. Use these products carefully, outdoors, and with plenty of ventilation to avoid inhaling or igniting their vapors. Wear protective gloves and wash immediately if they contact skin.

Primary Protection

CONTRARY TO OLD LORE, EXTERIOR primer is not designed for hiding the color of the previous coat. It is an integral part of the paint system. Topcoat paints are made with more pigment, and less skin-making binder, than primers. Priming creates the protective film on the wood. It also creates a good surface for adhesion of the weaker topcoat. Don't make the mistake of skipping the primer coat or using a thinned layer of topcoat as a primer.

As a rule, coat the entire exterior (or, at least, all exposed wood) with a quality primer within 48 hours after scraping. More time may allow the wood to weather, ruining the paintable surface you have created. However, it

POWER WASHING

Q: WE HAVE DIRT AND CHALKING ON OUR LARGE FARMHOUSE. DO WE HAVE TO SCRUB EACH CLAPBOARD BY HAND, OR CAN WE SAFELY USE A POWER WASHER?

A: *When scouring a large exterior seems a daunting task, you can consider power washing. The pressurized water, often with a TSP or mildew-killer solution, will wash grime away and remove some failing paint. (Do not use bleach in pressure washers because it can quickly destroy rubber hoses and gaskets.)*

The main problem with power washing is that it can push water into the wood, under clapboards, and between seams. That can lead to moisture buildup inside walls, and onto interior plaster walls, and can cause poor adhesion of new paint. If you decide to pressure wash, give walls good drying time before repainting and be extremely careful while spraying. It is not wise to spray up at the wall from ground level. From that angle, clapboards and shingles will not keep water out. Power wash from a ladder or scaffolding.

Power washing can also damage the wood. High pressure water can be almost as powerful as sandblasting. Be sure to select a low enough pressure to avoid splitting, checking, or texturizing your siding. When you rent a power washer, remember pressure (try under 1,000 pounds-per-square-inch for starters) is what removes dirt and failing paint; volume (roughly 2 or 3 gallons-per-minute should do) is what washes away mold and loosened debris. Machines that have adjustable nozzles are highly recommended. Hot water machines are more effective, especially if the grime and grease is really baked on, but they cost more. Collect and properly dispose of runoff materials, following local hazardous materials regulations.

does take at least 48 hours for water repellents to dry — much more in some weather conditions or when heavy coats are applied. Make sure they have thoroughly dried before priming or they may bleed through and discolor paint. Knots and stains in old wood can also bleed through. In extreme cases, you can apply a sealer over problem areas. Sealers are commonly shellac-based films that literally create a seal over areas where sap is likely to leach out. As always, wait until residue from rinsing and weather have thoroughly dried. Never paint (either primer or topcoat) in direct sunlight. The best old-house primers are oil-based because they soak in to create an exceptional film, and because they adhere well to old oil-based coats.

New oil-based paints offer a breathable film that bonds well with latex topcoats.

Tackle one area at a time and get a coat of primer on it before moving to another section so that bare wood is not left exposed for too long. This is less important when professional painters are working on a project and moving quickly, but it is vital when one or two week-end restorers may require months to finish the project. A uniform, complete primer film will seal the exterior, provide a good base for the topcoat, and distribute the force of wood expansion and contraction with moisture and temperature to avoid stressing the topcoat and causing failure.

To insure that your house has a

complete film on it before the topcoat goes on, fill all seams and gaps with a liberal dose of caulk. Use only a caulk that is labeled “paintable.” Siliconized acrylic caulks are longlasting and extremely watertight.

A Broad Brush Approach

WHEN IT IS TIME TO PAINT, BRUSH ON a quality exterior paint as soon as the primer is dry (about 48 hours), or within two weeks of priming. Make sure dew, rain, and residue from washing have thoroughly dried. If you wait longer, the primer may no longer provide a good surface for the topcoat.

The biggest decision is whether to use an oil-based or a latex paint. Traditionally, oil-based paints have been viewed as the old-house exterior paint of choice, offering better adhesion to old oil coats and a more weather-resistant film. However, environmental restrictions are making solvent-based paints hard to find (and changing their makeup). Meanwhile, manufacturing improvements are making latex paints better. Many professionals have tried latex paints over the last few years and are reporting good results. The advantages to latex paints are in its availability and its ease of application. (You don’t need chemical thinners for cleanup.)

Always select a paint system from a single manufacturer and check with sellers on compatibility of coats. Typically, oil-based paints may be applied when the low temperature is above 40 degrees, and latex paints require a 50-degree low. Be sure morning dew has dried, do not paint in the sun, and stop a good two hours before sunset.

The status of the wood will determine the number of coats needed. Two topcoats will form a thicker, and stronger, paint film, but if significant coverage is already on the building, one may be sufficient. Consider applying a second coat on the south and west facing walls, where sunshine and rain are most concentrated. Under typical conditions, a paint job should last 10 years. And after a project like this, we all want the film to last.

DEALING WITH WEATHERED WOOD



THE CLAPBOARDS AND TRIM ON OUR OLD HOUSE HAVEN’T SEEN A FRESH COAT OF PAINT IN DECADES. MUCH OF THE WOOD IS BARE, WEATHERED, AND GRAY. WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO PREPARE THE WOOD FOR PAINTING?



When wood is left without a protective film, ultraviolet rays and moisture set in motion a series of chemical changes that slowly wear it away, leaching out its lignins and extractives. Some hardwoods, most notably cedar and redwood, can last a long time without a finish if the construction was designed for weathering. But even they are gradually deteriorating. The best protection for exterior wood is a watertight paint film.

However, painting wood that has been exposed requires a bit of extra preparation. Damage to the cellular structure on the outer, weathered surface makes a rough strata. Paint cannot adhere to it. (Even new shingles and clapboards should be primed quickly, about 48 hours after they are installed.) Before painting, weathered wood must be sanded down to “bright” wood. Depending on the age of the siding, and other conditions, this can mean removing quite a bit of disintegrating wood (sometimes a full 1/8”).

Some restorers turn the weathered surface to their advantage by using a semi-transparent stain instead of paint. The same qualities that can make weathered wood difficult to paint, can make it an excellent surface to stain. The outer surface is extremely porous and will soak up the stain. This does not require major sanding. The translucent coatings offer a slight pigment that can hide defects and some uneven weathering, while still showing an unfinished sort of look. Staining does not, however, create a protective film, and multiple coats of a water-repellent wood preservative should also be applied.



Sand weathered areas until “bright” wood shows.

DIAGNOSING PAINT FAILURE

Q: WE REPAINTED OUR EXTERIOR TWO SUMMERS AGO, AND THE WALLS ARE PEELING ALREADY. WE USED TOP-OF-THE-LINE PAINT AND DID A CAREFUL PREP JOB. HOW CAN IT BE FAILING SO SOON?

A: "Paint failure" is a misnomer. It is almost never the paint that fails. When a paint film lets go prematurely, it is usually caused by one of three conditions: moisture, poor preparation, or faulty application. Here's how to identify the source of paint failure.

If paint is peeling between layers, with upper coats peeling, cracking, or blistering while lower layers stay put, your problem is probably with the recent paint job. Depending on the severity of the failure, these troubles can generally be solved by scraping the failing coat and repainting.

- Insufficient washing before painting can lead to poor paint adhesion. Dirt, grime, grease, and chalking do not allow new paint to bond to lower coats. Use a TSP or household detergent solution.

- If your paint appears to be wrinkling in some areas, it could be a common problem that happens when paint is applied in direct sunlight. Sun can cause the top of the paint to dry first. When the bottom does dry, it shrinks and can cause wrinkles in the upper layer.

- Another inter-coat problem is incompatible paint films. Use primers and

topcoats from the same manufacturer and check with the seller to insure proper bonding.

- If there are many layers of old paint (say 1/16", about 15 coats), two peeling problems can result: peeling and cracking. The thick buildup can become impermeable to water. If moisture migrates through the walls from living areas, it cannot pass through the paint and can cause peeling. Also, old paint gets brittle. Contraction of new paint as it dries, and movement of new flexible paint with temperature change can crack the old coat. Often, cross-grain "crazing" means paint buildup is the culprit.

When paint is peeling down to the

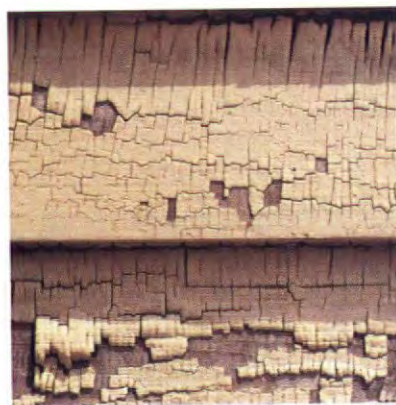


Peeling down to bare wood

bare wood, chances are your problem is moisture-related. These failures typically require more treatment before repainting.

- Water could be getting into walls from leaky roofing, problem gutters, damaged flashing, or insufficiently caulked seams in the wall. Leaking water means severe localized peeling (although these problems often occur in a number of places at once), and, if left alone for too long, rotting wood.

- Moisture can also attack your paint film from inside the living area. Modern lifestyles (notably appliances such as humidifiers, laundry machines, and showers) put a lot of water vapor into old-house interiors. Good ventilation helps control extreme humidity in houses — bathroom



Alligatoring paint

exhaust fans are essential — but the moisture will probably still migrate through walls that do not contain vapor inhibitors. The moisture can push exterior paint (especially old, built-up oil-based paint) right off the wall. Insulations that offer a vapor retarder will help prevent migration, and some specialized interior paints will also inhibit moisture movement. Using a latex exterior paint also helps, because it is more permeable than oil-based paint.

- Peeling can also occur in paint applied over damp wood. Common situations where this happens are when rainwater, or the residue from washing, are not given a chance to completely dry out of the siding. Paint won't adhere to the damp wood.

- Shrubs and vines that are allowed to grow too close to siding can also cause peeling (especially in shady areas), because they can hinder drying of the wall after rainstorms and attract bugs. Trim all vegetation away from the house.

- Insufficient priming can also lead to peeling down to bare wood. All bare wood and wood that is stripped must be given a good coat of primer before painting. Without proper priming, the topcoat binder may be sucked into the porous wood, causing the pigment to chalk or flake off.

- Alligatoring occurs when cracking and crazing is left to attract moisture. As water builds up in the cracks, it can cause major peeling to bare wood.

In all cases, the cause of paint failure must be identified and cured before repainting.



Inter-coat peeling

COLOR ACCENTS

for Romantic Revival Cottages

by John Crosby Freeman

ACCENT SHUTTERS," TO USE today's term for them, can be the most colorful details on Romantic Revival cottages of the 1930s and '40s. Fundamentally different from the Victorian and Georgian louvered shutters or solid blinds, accent shutters don't cover windows to blind them against interior solar heat gain and ultraviolet degradation of textiles and woodwork. Accent shutters are merely decorative — hence today's half-accurate term. Although they do accent, they don't shut.

If you are thinking about adding accent shutters, they should be sized to the sash — same height and half the

width. Install them over the jambs of window casings to make them look like they could pivot and cover the sash, even though they can't.

Owners of cottages in the grim Depression and war years needed some levity in their lives. Perhaps that's why accent shutters had a festive relationship to the sash of their windows. The louvered and panelled designs of the accent shutters had no affinity with the window's sash pattern and, colorwise, were treated independently. Homeowners weren't afraid to experiment with bright color combinations (see below). However, that isn't true today.

As "The Color Doctor Who Cures Color Anxiety," I provide ther-

apy for restorers who fear positive colors — yellows, reds, greens, and so on — and are obsessive about the no-color neutrals of white and gray. It's a two-step program for owners of cottages (especially those built in the 1930s and '40s), who suffer from "little house inferiority complex." The therapy begins with building self-esteem: *Never apologize for what you've got.* Cottages are chic! The second step is to empower yourself with the knowledge: *Small homes will bear a wider range of darker, brighter, or more vivid body and accent colors than bigger villas and mansions.* To paraphrase Franklin D. Roosevelt, the only thing to fear about colors is the fear of colors.



Uncommon for the period, this example links shutter and window with color by repeating the warm drab of the casements on the shutters.



Cardinal red shutters are integrated by the warmth of the cream gray body, cream trim, and thatch brown shingle stain.



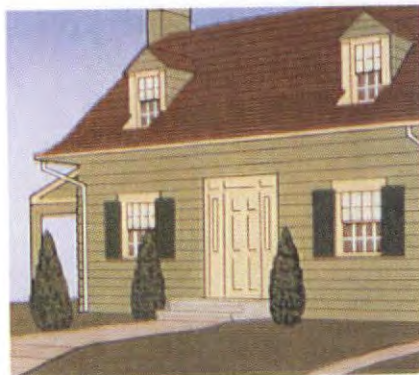
Castilian blue shutters sail in isolated splendor against white body and trim. A silver gray stain complements the shingle roof.



Here the louvers, panel moulding, and swag ornament of the dark green shutters are highlighted in teal and the ivory color of the windows.

For example, consider the Cape Cod cottage in the 1938 *Home Decorator* (right). It looks unorthodox by today's timid color standards because the orange family of colors is generally disliked. The high-gloss colonial yellow body and Spanish orange shutters, intensified by white trim and contrasted against the dark green shingle stain, is a glorious addition to any cottage cluster. A good neighbor is the apple green cottage with ivory trim, willow green shutters, and thatch brown roof.

How do you become bolder in your color choices and avoid the timid tone trap? The obsessive use of white should be treated with shock therapy. "White is an excellent exterior color," I tell homeowners. "It requires little thought, shows dirt immediately, obscures architectural details, and makes your home easy to overlook." This stuns them into a receptive state and makes them open to suggestions of soft yellows, such as colonial white, flax, straw, biscuit, ivory, or light sand. The obsessive use of gray, however, requires a probe, bluntly applied. "Gray is no-color. I can't help you until you give me gray that has an attitude," I explain. "Do you like warm gray or cool gray? Blue gray or earth tones?" Then I suggest sky gray for a blue



The color schemes of these 1938 cottages — orange (top) and apple green (bottom) — are surprising by today's less-daring standards.

gray and dove gray for a warm gray. For earth tones, I offer ashlar gray, shingle gray, stone, sand, or taupe.

This therapy relieves color anxiety and energizes the selection of trim and accent colors. A good general rule when choosing a paint scheme is to have a complementary balance between warm and cool colors. The cool blue-gray of sky gray complements browns or reds. The yellow warmth of colonial white, flax, straw, biscuit, ivory, or light sand is balanced by the yellowish green of boxwood green or billiard green. The warm gray of dove gray, sand, or taupe is beautified by the pretty blue-green of dark jade or juniper.

During the 1930s and '40s, colorful accents on shutters and trim delicately balanced the individualism of cottage households within cottage neighborhoods. Old documents, like paint brochures, remind us that the tradition of exterior decoration was not color for its own sake, but color that satisfied the architectural logic of the house as well as the personal pleasure of its occupants. It was a tradition that tolerated festive colors during fearsome times. 🏠

John Crosby Freeman is the co-author, with Patricia S. Eldredge, of the forthcoming book, Joy of Color: Romantic Interior and Exterior Colors for American Homes, 1895-1950.



Instead of white louvers, the casement should have been painted with a darker color to create a stronger link between the shutter and the window.



Dark on dark: Black frames Castilian blue on the upper and lower panels of the shutter. However, an outline of ivory softens the effect.



Diagonal shutter boards are defined by bands of willow green and moss green against a body of coral tint. The dark green roof ties the color scheme together.



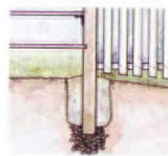
Resting against white clapboards, the vertical boards of the "outhouse door" shutters are emphasized by slate and Castilian blue paint.

FENCES —THAT— STAND

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT LEANNA

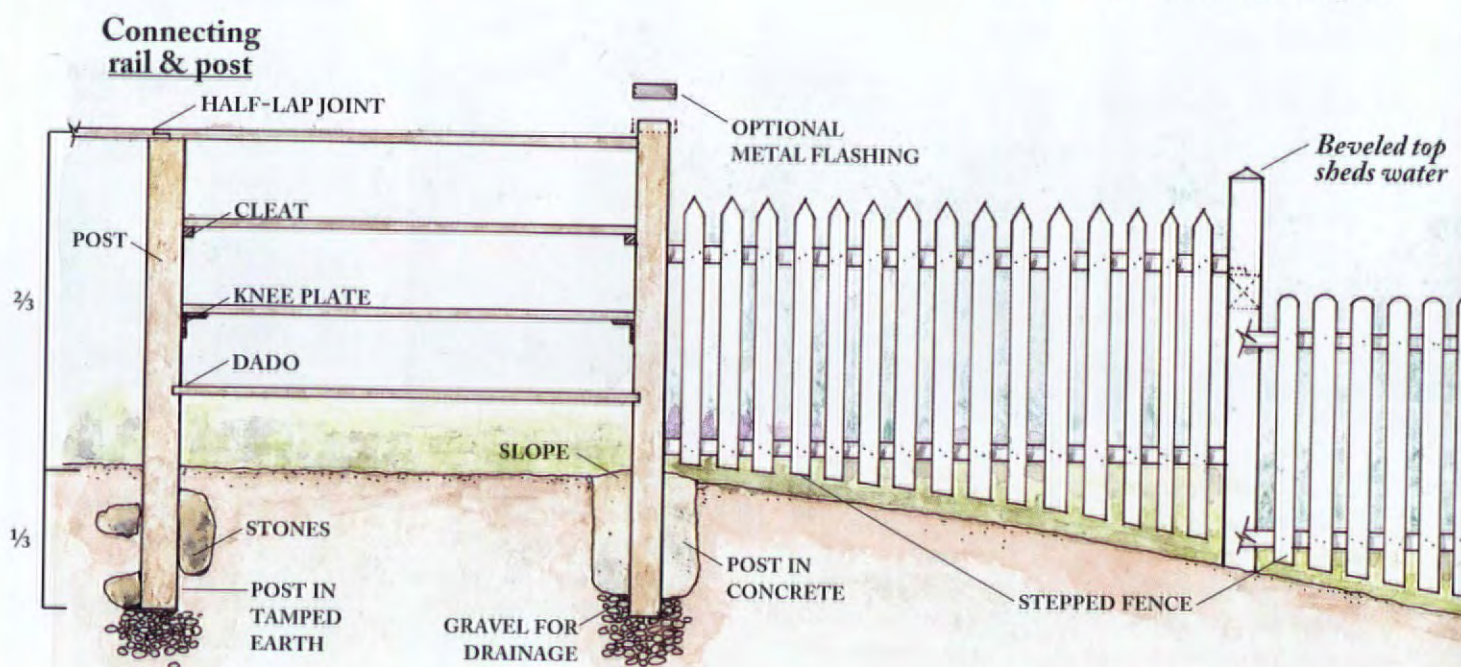
PICKET FENCES, SO THE story goes, evolved to protect lawn plantings from grazing horses. Close spacing of the pickets kept hungry heads from poking through the fence; pointed tops made it uncomfortable to reach over for a bite. The fence design, in effect, protected the yard. The same attention to functional details can protect the fence itself. Many an old house that was once banded by a parade of pickets is fenceless today because a couple hundred feet of leaning posts and rotting rails became a maintenance nightmare. Using weatherproof materials for parts and construction that sheds water is the best way to simplify upkeep and avoid the decay that dooms many wood fences to a premature end.

MATERIALS



WOOD THAT IS NATURALLY rot-resistant makes the best fence. Eastern red cedar and black locust have a long tradi-

tion in fence construction, particularly for posts, because their resins and extractives ward off insect and fungal at-



tack. Redwood, another softwood, is slightly less immune, but common at lumberyards and often used for rails and pickets. For any species it is the heartwood that provides the greatest durability. These inner cells no longer conduct water and contain decay-resisting materials. Avoid sapwood when buying fence lumber — it never lasts outdoors.

Chemically treated lumber is the most accessible wood for demanding outdoor use. The pea-green lumber stocked in every lumberyard is usually yellow pine pressure-treated at the mill with CCA (chromated copper arsenate). However, common lumber, such as Eastern white pine or fir, can be dip-treated by the user with a water-repellent preservative (see "Prior to Paint," page 32). Post ends in particular will last longer if soaked in preservatives made for this purpose.

Fasteners and hardware are the other half of the fence materials list. Hot-dipped galvanized nails and lag screws are the best of their kind for long life; electroplated or bright metal types stain immediately and rust away. Power-driven "drywall" screws are the fasteners of the '90s and, coupled with a good battery drill, are ideal for fence work. There are more varieties on the market than ever. Galvanized screws made for deck work are good; stainless steel screws sound extravagant compared to

nails, but are still affordable and the ultimate in durability. They also resist staining in cedar and redwood.

POSTS



FENCE-BUILDING STARTS with planting the posts, typically one every eight feet (the span of the average rail). If you're digging more than a few holes, invest in a post-hole digger (see "Old-House Mechanic," page 60). In average soil, post holes should be roughly as deep as $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the post. Set posts on a bed of gravel or small stones so that water doesn't pond at the bottom and rot the post end. Pack the hole with a few well-placed stones and tamped earth, plumbing the post with a level in both directions as you work. Another subtle-but-effective water detail is grading the earth on top so that it slopes away from the post.

Tall posts or sandy soil warrant setting in concrete. Make the hole diameter three times the post width to capitalize on the increased bearing surface — larger if the soil is really soft. Where termites pose a problem (in Texas, for instance), look into metal post anchors, U-shaped stirrups that mount in concrete and hold the posts above ground.

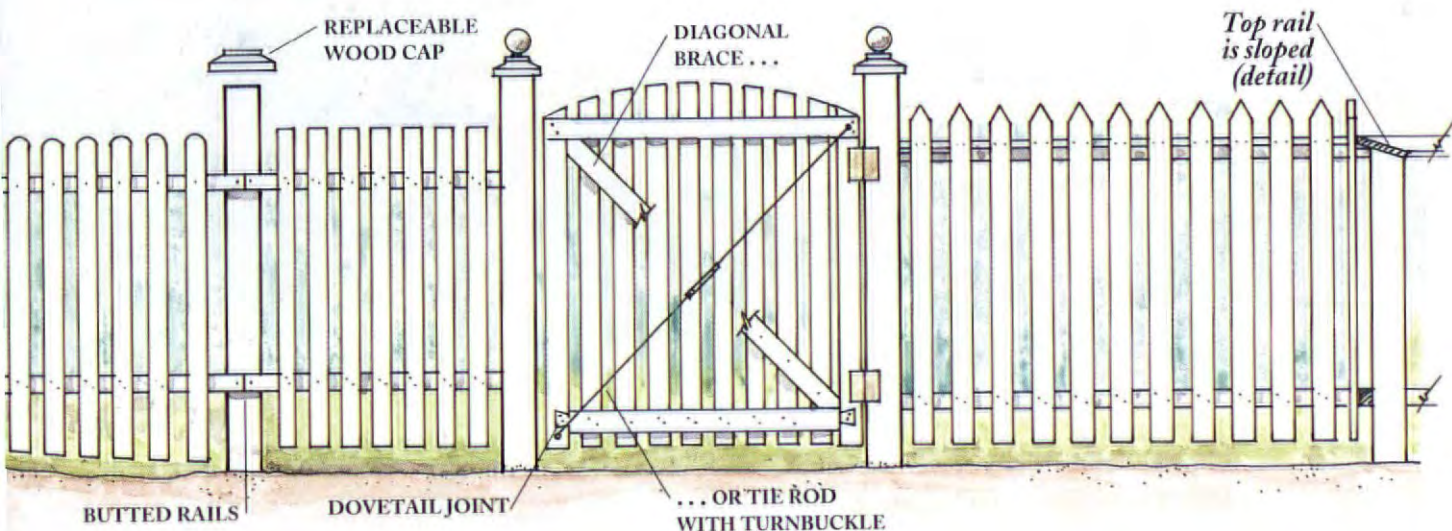
Post tops are even more prone to splitting and decay than post bottoms, and simple detailing keeps water off this vulnerable, moisture-absorbing end grain. At the very least, never leave a post top cut square and flat so water can stand. Bevel it in one direction like a shed roof so water runs off. Even better and more attractive is a four-way cut like a hip roof. A cap will prevent water from ever touching the wood — the best way to preserve the post top. Sheet metal flashing is utilitarian but effective. Decorative caps made of wood can be store-bought or shop-made and are easily renewed. If you're building a high-style fence, you may want built-up posts to increase the visual mass (see drawing, page 42). Treat all parts with a water-repellent preservative after cutting and boring, and carry the built-up finish only to grade level.

RAILS



ONCE THE POSTS ARE up, on go the rails. Fence design often determines the mounting method, but the

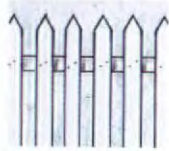
overall goal is to avoid leaving end grain exposed to weathering or weakening the posts. A continuous rail, with members butted and face-nailed to the post, is



strongest and simplest to build. Mortising the rails into the post is even stronger and brings the pickets flush.

When the fence design requires rails in-line with the posts they can be simply toe-nailed, but a better connection adds support. Wood cleats work, but look clunky on some fences. Aluminum knee plates are less obtrusive, easier to work with, and only slightly more expensive. A dado makes an excellent connection, though it can trap water. If the fence has a continuous rail that runs across the top of the posts, splice these with a half-lap joint for structural continuity and to minimize gaps as the wood moves. A half-lap is also superior to a miter where the fence turns a corner. Continuous rails themselves can be detailed to shed rain better by beveling the top edge. Angling top rails is both practical and attractive.

PICKETS



BY VIRTUE OF THEIR sheer numbers, the way pickets are installed has a major impact on the look and life of a fence. If you're making your own pickets, start with well-seasoned

lumber and dip-treat the pickets along with other fence parts. Even on a simple fence with continuous rails, picket mounting affects appearance and rhythm. Pickets on the outside of the posts run uninterrupted; pickets inside are punctuated regularly by the posts. If skirt boards are used along the bottom of the pickets, they should clear the ground by a couple of inches and not trap water around the picket ends (see drawing, page 43).

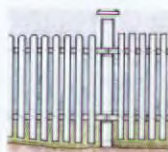
GATES



FENCES ARE PRETTY one-sided without a gate. As working carpentry, gates have to be built well to survive. Most picket fence gates are basically four-sided frames and prone to sagging because a rectangle is an unstable form. The solution is to make a stable triangle by adding a diagonal. A wood brace running from the outside top corner down will be in compression as the gate tries to sag and will hold it square. A rod-and-turnbuckle installed in the opposite direction will be in tension and will pull a sagging gate back into line. Strong frame con-

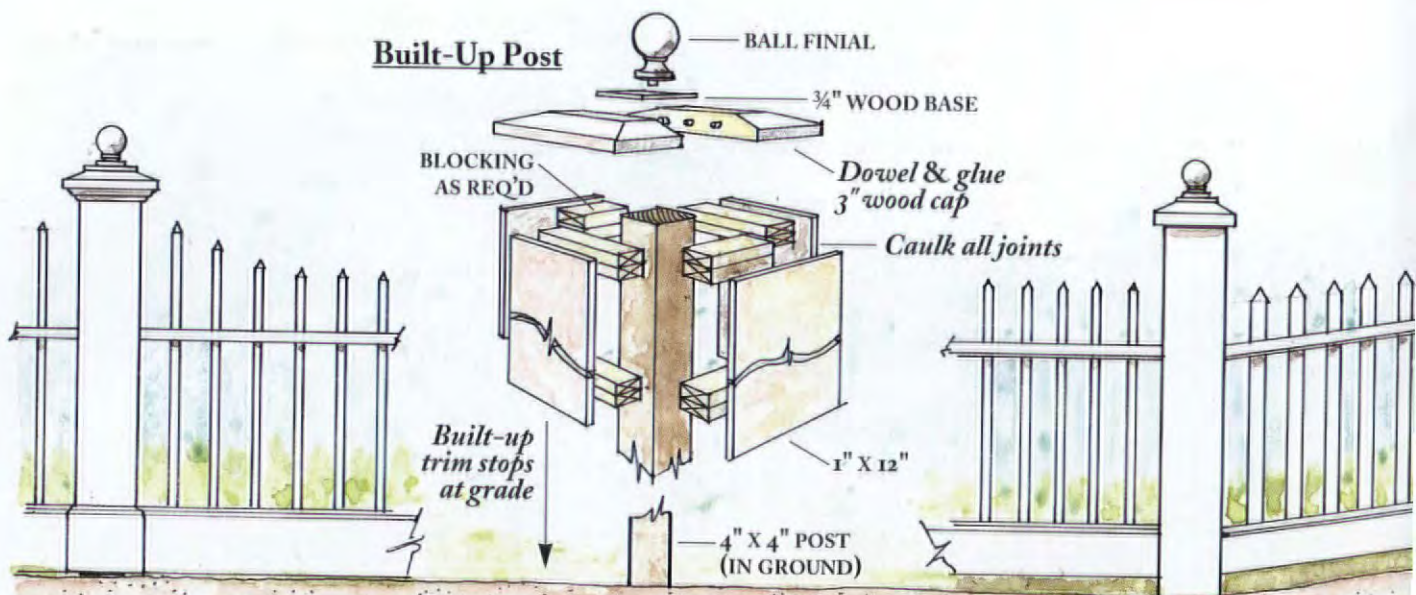
nections, such as pegged mortise-and-tenon or dovetail joints, are stronger than butt joints.

PAINT



USE HIGH-QUALITY materials for longest life. Glossy, oil-based paints are a traditional choice, but top-of-the-line acrylic latexes are also showing good outdoor durability. Opaque or semi-transparent stains are another visual option. Generally they have to be renewed more often; however peeling is usually less of a problem with these finishes.

Backprime all parts before assembly, especially hidden areas and end grain. Pressure and other treated woods can be painted if the manufacturer so indicates, but make sure both the treatment and the wood are thoroughly dry first. Use the bead test: if a few drops are readily absorbed by the wood, it's okay to paint; if they bead, the wood needs more drying time. Try completely painting pickets first on an assembly line basis and, of course, all fence painting goes better with two people — one on each side.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT FENCE FINISHES

IT'S BEST TO PAINT bare wood, and period wood fences get painted white, right? Well, maybe there's more to it than that.

One school holds that, in color as well as design, wood fences should take their cue from railings on the main house. As landscape tastemaker Frank J. Scott put it in the 1880s, "In outbuildings, fences [and] garden decorations there should be a strong similarity of tone." In practice this often means using the house trim color for the fence, a popular approach in the Victorian era as well as a century earlier. Taken a step further,

fences that have prominent rails and posts are often picked out with the trim color, and pickets get painted the body color.

Another camp says fences should be "painted out" of the landscape. Andrew Jackson Downing labeled the white or green pickets seen everywhere in the mid-19th century "often among the most unsightly and offensive objects in our country seats." For one design in *Cottage Residences*, Downing called for a "slight paling [picket] fence rendered inconspicuous by painting it dark green." The natural look was taken to its limit with ivy or Virginia creeper.

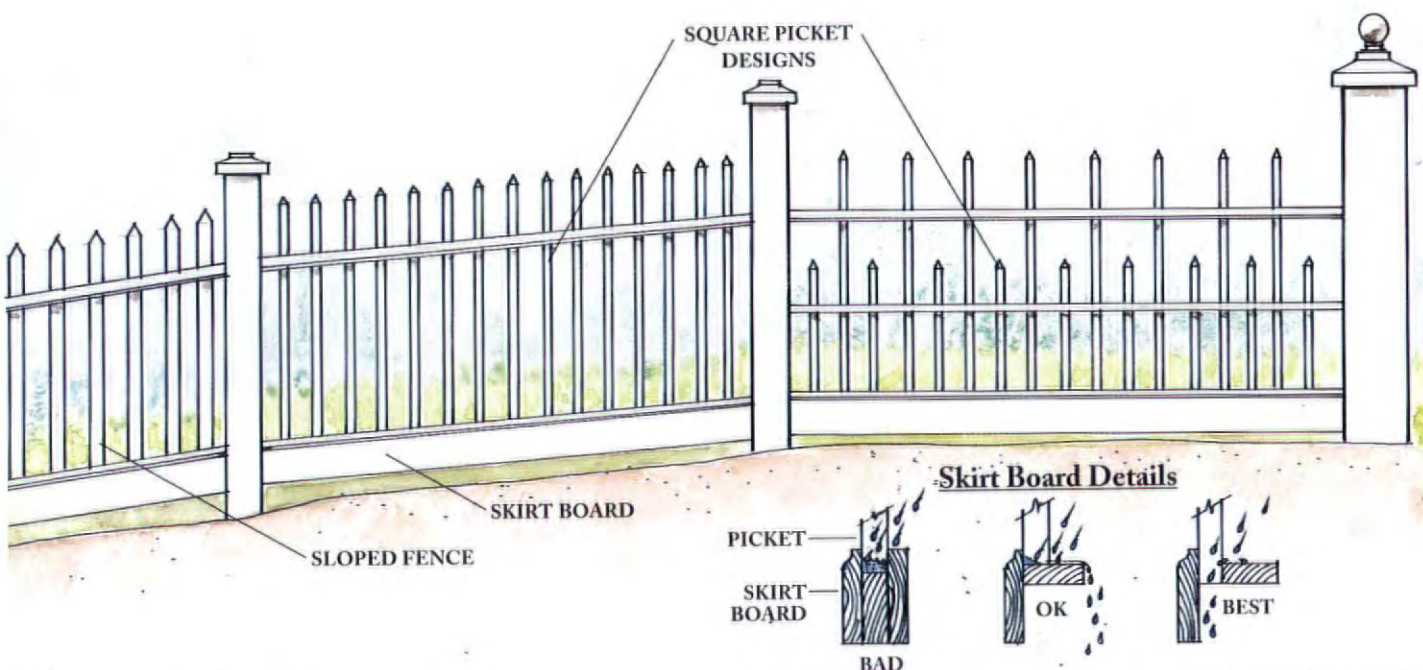


Federal-era colors mate fence and house in Salem, Mass.

The third perspective is a practical one: any finish that keeps the cost down is a good choice. This has been the argument for whitewash well before Tom Sawyer. Downing was not against it, just the glare and lack of color. He recommended a "cheap wash" tinted to a fawn color, cream color, or stone color. By the turn of this century, factory-made coatings that could go a long way, such

as Cabot's Creosote Stains, were also being recommended for fences. The translucent tones of the era were basically earthy browns, maroons, reds, or a range of mossy greens. The exception was a "light silver gray," not unlike a single coat of whitewash.

—G.B.



POKING INTO THE PAST

*Is your old house
hiding its historic
details? An
investigator
explains how he
uncovered a home's
previous lives.*

TEXT & PHOTOS BY

John Leeke

DRAWINGS BY

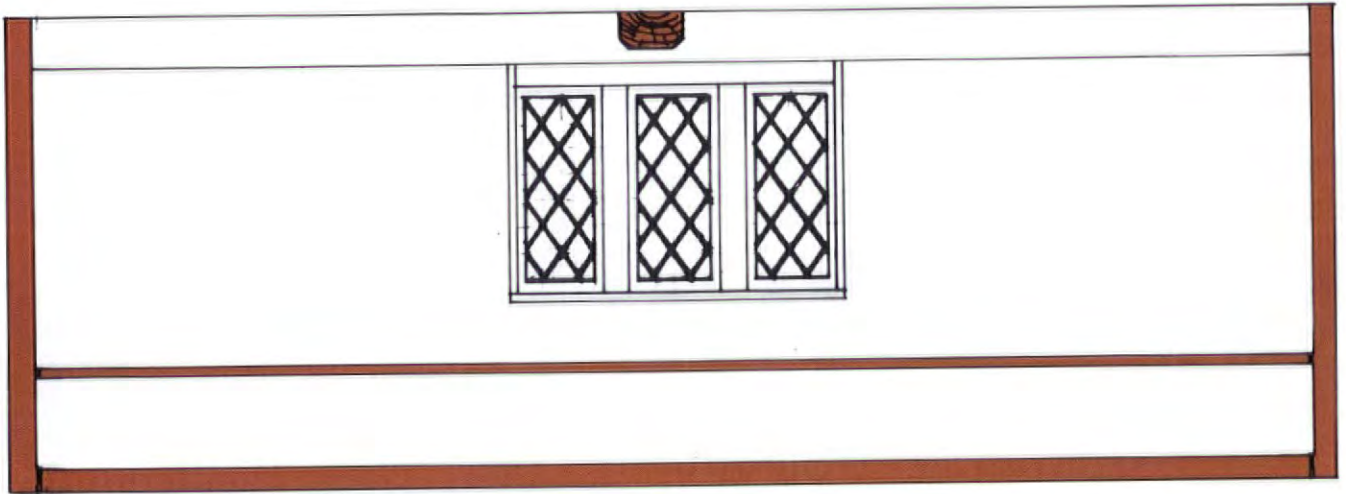
Robert Leanna

CHANCES ARE, IN THE COURSE OF SCRAPING WALLPAPER, stripping paint, or ripping away siding, you've uncovered earlier materials that hint your house once had a different look. After decades and centuries of use, change is more a rule than an exception for most old houses. The wear and tear of daily life calls for occasional repairs and redecorating. Rooms or whole wings are added or torn down as generations come and go. Today layers of changes can make an old house difficult to understand, but at the same time they form a record of the people who lived in and worked on these buildings.

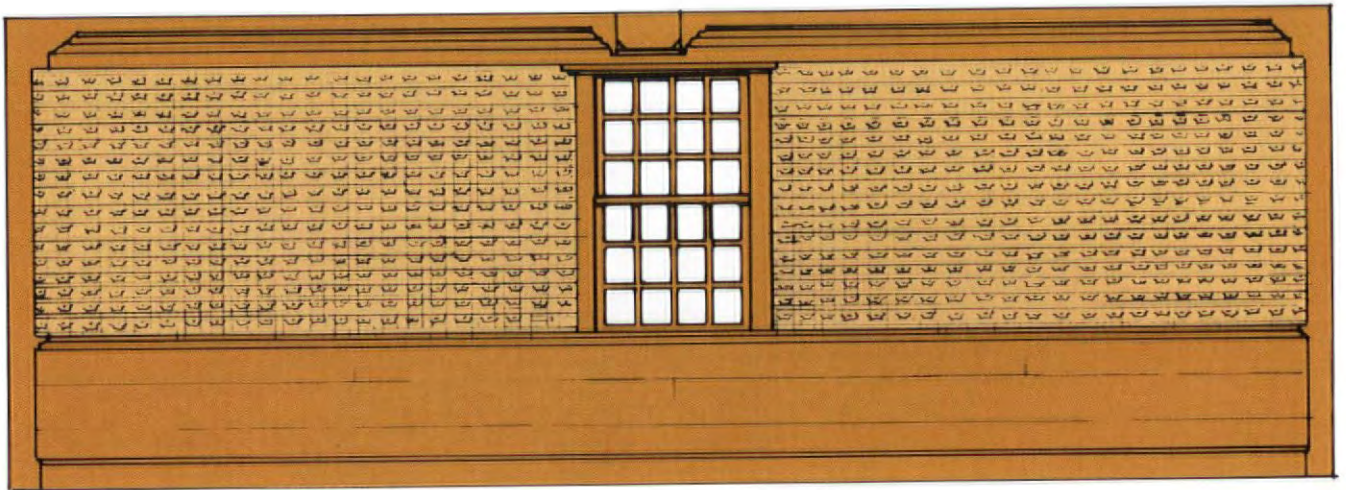
It is possible to "read" the record of a house's history by studying these layers and their relationship to each other. If you make a point of investigation before work begins you can use

the information to establish a better restoration plan. For example, if you discover a lot of compelling evidence about paints and wallpapers from a particular period in your house's history, you might decide to reproduce the decorative finishes of that period. (Investigation can also uncover structural problems that need attention before decorative work starts.)

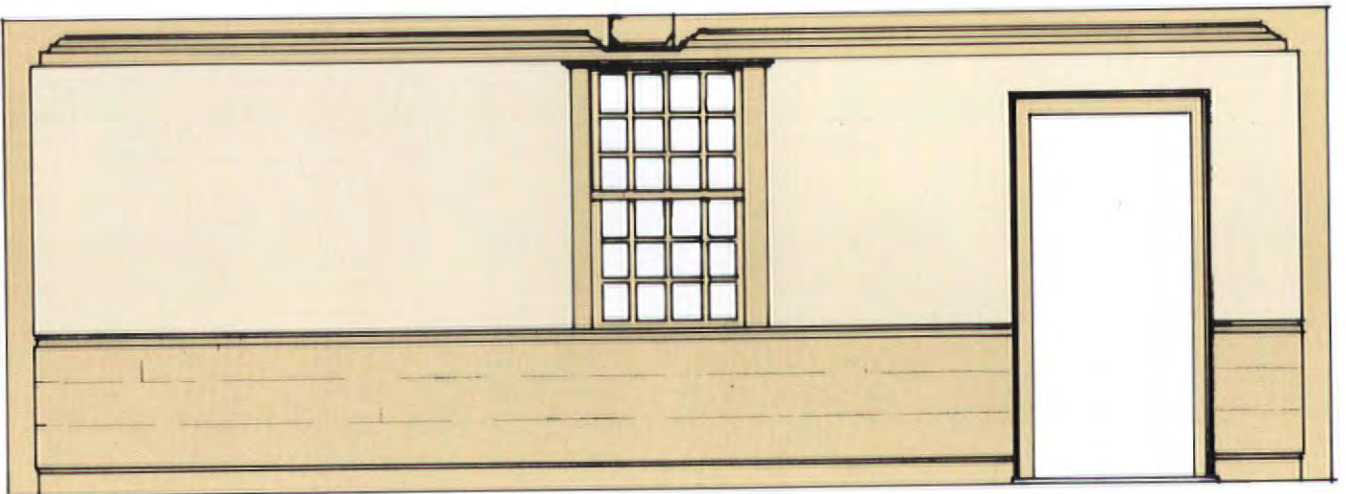
We uncovered three incarnations of a parlor wall. Originally, white plaster was only broken by a narrow chair rail (top). In the early 1800s, the window was reduced, complex cornice moulding, wood wainscot, and wall-paper were added, and the summer beam was encased (middle). Today, the Federal casings remain, yet a door has been added and the wallpaper removed (bottom).



C. 1730



EARLY 1800S



C. 1991

OLD-HOUSE INVESTIGATIONS CAN BE simple, such as looking for ghosts of old walls, analyzing layers of paint, and peering into unfinished walls in basements, attics, and closets. You can also go a step further with a process that is sometimes called “building archaeology” where small “excavations” into walls are used to find clues about the house’s past.

Actual excavations should be limited for two important reasons. First, you want to leave as much historic material intact as possible. You could completely disassemble a house and learn everything about its history, but the house would be destroyed in the process. Second, putting the house parts back together again can get expensive. The trick is to select a few particularly telling spots for your “digs.”

I used the following steps as part of a team investigating The Parson’s House, a circa-1730 Massachusetts museum building. Our discoveries will be used to create a display showing the evolution of a house through two centuries of change. The current woodwork and plaster is from the Federal period (1775 to 1825). Using a building archaeology approach, we performed dozens of excavations to help

Our first excavation was of a door casing. We liked the location because the door led to an addition and because of slight ridges in the plaster on either side of the nearby window, both of which suggested it was an area of change.

Woodwork made up of relatively short sections suffers the least damage if it is disassembled rather than cut. I first scored the paint film on each side with a utility knife to prevent a wide, jagged paint edge. Then I used my “wiggle and wedge” technique. I worked a thin putty knife into the joints, then wiggled it for several minutes, working it up and down the casing. This vibrated the casing, giving the nails a chance to loosen before I pried it off. If the casing had not come loose easily, I would have cut any old caulking with a linoleum or pocket knife and sawn off the nails by slipping a pad saw into the gap. Cutting nails is a last resort, since they can provide important clues about history. However, cut and wire nails often have to be sawn to prevent damage to the woodwork.



FIG. 3 EXCAVATING THE PLASTER

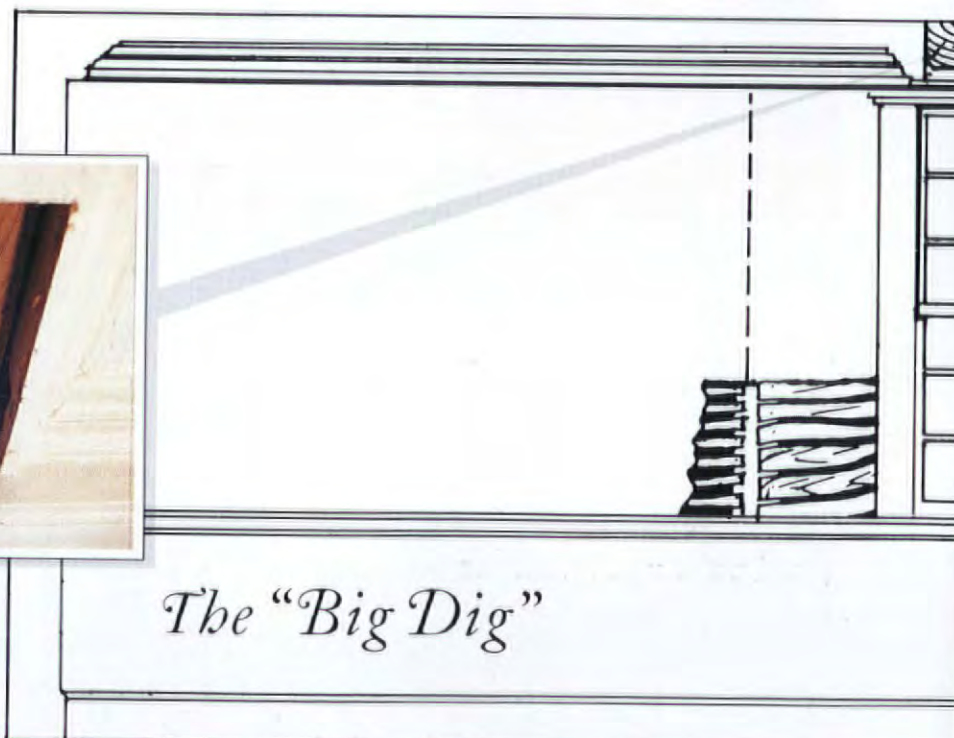
With the casing removed, we could see a fragment of Federal-period wallpaper and the edge of the plaster and thin wood lath — which seemed much older than the finish. So, we expanded the excavation by removing plaster to



FIG. 4 THE SUMMER BEAM

us understand the building’s history. Here are a few techniques we used in the parlor that could turn up data in any house.

Opening an Area of Change. First we surveyed and documented the room’s features, noting areas that showed evidence of change — where the most interesting information generally lies.



The excavation began with the door casing and moved left across the wall. First, I sawed through nails at the miter joint at the top of the casing with a pad saw (Fig. 1). Then, I carefully pried the casing off. Under the casing, we found late-Federal wallpaper (Fig. 2), which had been applied in horizontal strips sometime before the door to the room addition was cut through. Later, the paper was



FIG. 2 LATE FEDERAL WALLPAPER

the left of the door, and found thin, irregular riven lath (split directly from the log) and gray plaster with grass as a reinforcement fiber. This archaic type of plastering system was common early in the 18th century and was probably

original. A sample of the plaster was bagged and tagged. Later microscopic analysis indicated a coat of white paint, thin textile fibers, and possibly a clay-soil component. (See "Primitive Plaster," Sept./Oct. 1993).

We extended the excavation to include one of the ridges we had documented and found a transition to split-board lath and to white plaster made of lime, sand, and hair — common in the Federal period. Because of the vertical ridge in the plaster on the other side of the window, we suspected this window opening was once much wider, and began to wonder if it had been a doorway. To confirm the width of the opening, we excavated at the ridge on the left of the window. The newer lath and plaster continued to that ridge.

We knew we could tell if this was a doorway by looking behind the wide boards of the Federal wainscot below. There was a joint and a natural split in the boards below, so we removed this predefined section of the wainscot with-

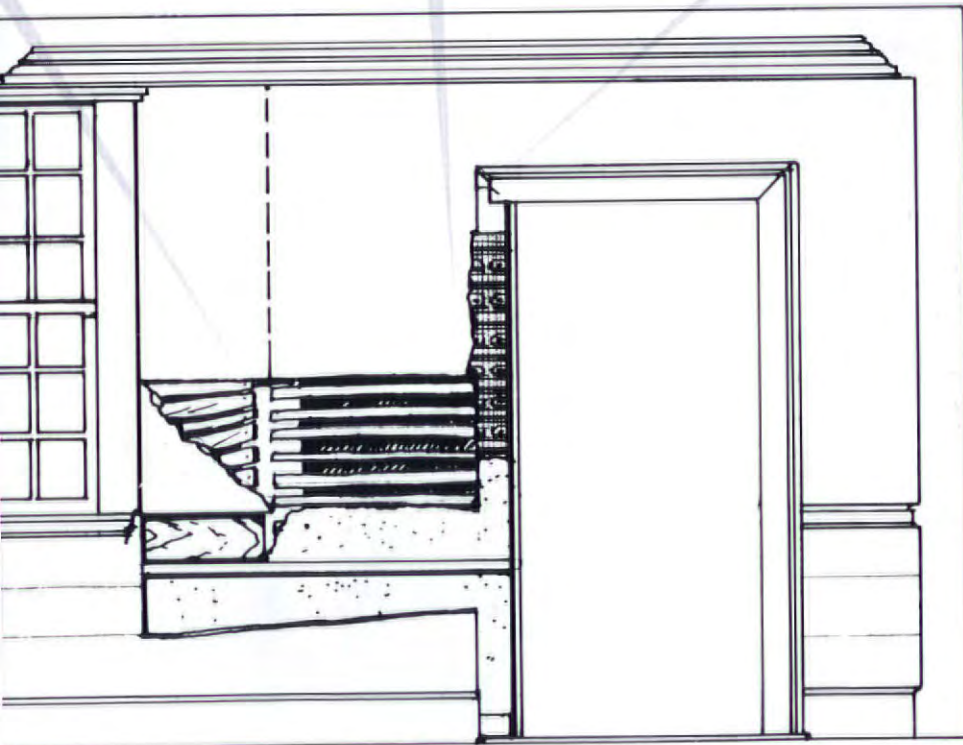


FIG. 1 SLICING NAILS

out having to saw into the boards. We found more early gray plaster wrapped around pre-Federal split-board lath below the window, indicating that the opening had not originally extended to the floor, and dispensing our notion that it once might have been a door. We determined that it had been a much wider window.

We also exposed evidence of an original decorative detail: a horizontal piece of wood with a lower beaded edge that formed part of a simple chair rail. Nail holes in the top edge indicated a projecting nosing was nailed onto the rail. The nosing must have been removed during Federal remodeling when the wainscot boards were added and the window opening was narrowed. There was no paint on this railing or on a simple baseboard, the end of which was visible over by the door casing.

Exposing a Summer Beam. We found the summer beam encased with boards and a heavy cornice of crown mouldings of the Federal period. We wanted to see if the beam was originally painted or decorated. A wide soffit board covered most of the beam, but a fine crack ran along half of the board, so we decided to cut off one end rather than risk splitting the entire board by removing it whole. I used a FeinTriangle Sander/Saw (Fein Power Tools Inc., 3019 West



removed from the rest of the wall, leaving this strip behind. Behind the ridges in the wall was a transition from riven lath and clay plaster to split lath and white plaster (Fig. 3). We determined that the transitions represent where the original window had been. The fancy chamfer on the summer beam (Fig. 4) told us it had originally been exposed.

Loosening the mantel required the wiggle and wedge technique (top). The mantel is made up of sections, which need to be carefully handled to prevent damage (bottom). An earlier fireplace surround moulding left its shadow in the paint (inset).

Carson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15204; 800-441-9878), which has special thin blades, to cut across the wood soffit board and to slice off the iron nails.

With a piece of the board removed, we could see the summer beam itself was unpainted and had chamfered edges with a fancy stop. Clearly this beam was originally meant to be left exposed, otherwise it would not have been decorated with the chamfer. We began to build a picture in our minds of how this room looked underneath the outer layer of Federal decoration: very plain with simple unpainted woodwork.

Removing a mantel. A preliminary paint layer analysis (see "Checking Out Paint Layers," page 49) told us the mantel did not have as many layers of paint as the rest of the wall. This suggested it was added at a later date. To confirm, we excavated the mantel.

I removed the mantel using the wiggle and wedge technique. Once all of the woodwork was loose I carefully pulled off the pilasters, lintel, and mantel shelf. Beneath the mantel were two coats of paint. The first was a deep blue. The top coat was a much lighter blue-green. A ghost through both of these layers indicated a $2\frac{3}{4}$ " wide moulding had once surrounded the fireplace. Square nail holes were a clue it had been attached with hand-wrought nails. This was probably a bolection moulding that had been removed when the current mantel was installed sometime before 1825. It provided clear-cut evidence of an early-Federal fireplace surround. We suspected it was very simple, without a shelf. We looked but found no evidence of what had been here originally.

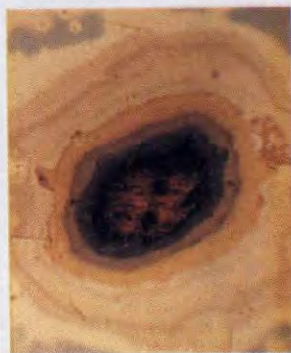
Analyzing the clues. Further paint investigations revealed that the third



Checking Out Paint Layers

Cratering, a basic field method of investigating paint chronology and colors, can reveal even more.

1. Rub an area of painted moulding with sandpaper (220 grit is good) in a small circle. Create a shallow crater to reveal the layers of paint as rings of color visible to the naked eye.
2. Use successively finer grits (400 to 600) to polish the crater, showing the layers more distinctly.
3. Moisten the crater slightly with water or mineral spirits. They act as a sanding lubricant, help control the hazard of lead paint dust, and make the colors of the layers clearer.
4. Make craters in each of the areas you're analyzing. When they clearly display the paint layers, compare how the layers of paint differ from one element of the building to another.



other. It can be possible to tell, for example, if a moulding is original to a wall, or if it was added much later, by simply counting the layers of paint.

5. Look for patterns of colors and notice where they show up in your craters. You may find them in different levels of the paint strata, offering evidence of their relative ages.

6. Once you determine which layers are contemporary, match those on plaster or siding with those on moulding to find possible color scheme links.

7. In most cases, the area can simply be painted when the room is finished. Photograph and label your craters before refinishing them, or if they are out of the way, leave them unfinished for future reference.

For more involved projects, such as our museum work, on-site specialists can study samples under a microscope and provide detailed scientific data on the finishes.

layer of paint on the woodwork, a Federal-period rich yellow, was associated with the wallpaper found under the door casing, and also was the first layer on the mantel. This suggested there was a remodeling project in which the mantel was added, the walls were papered, and the woodwork was painted yellow. Using information about the families that lived here, the physical evidence we discovered, and the chronology of historic building technologies, we were able to complete our mental picture of this room's changes.

The original c. 1730 finish scheme included large window openings, exposed timber framing, a narrow chair rail and simple baseboard on plain plaster walls. We suspect none of the woodwork had been painted. By the late 1700s or early 1800s the room had been completely remodeled with new, fancier Federal woodwork, and decorated with wallpaper and a few coats of paint. By the 1900s, new doors had been added, wallpapers were removed, and more coats of paint had been applied.


Old-house investigations. This was a museum project, designed to discover the evolutionary changes to an old

house, and even we kept our excavations limited. While it can be exciting to investigate the physical history of your house, there are negative as well as positive aspects to the excitement. At best, any investigation disrupts a part of the historic fabric of your building. At worst, it destroys historic fabric.

It makes good sense to begin with what you can find through existing openings at electrical outlets, vents, and pipes. These views into the heart of the house should be examined and exploited fully before any new openings are made. The direction of the expansion is always indicated by hard evidence. Simply wondering what could be a little further or deeper is not enough to justify the damage that is done during an excavation.

It usually does no great harm to scrape away small areas of paint or peel back corners of wallpaper. Yet you should have good reasons for removing woodwork and opening up plaster walls. Make sure that the value of the results will outweigh the damage done. Document your findings with drawings, photos, measurements, and labeled samples of exposed materials, particularly when they will be covered up again.

A physical building investigation can

be even more effective when it is coordinated with historical research into the house's builder and former tenants. These events are often a matter of public record that can be researched, helping to pin down dates of changes in the building itself. Private papers such as letters and account books, as well as old photos, can also help trace a building's history. The most dramatic physical changes in a house occur with changes in ownership and in response to the births, deaths, and marriages of the people who lived in them. The changes in your old house are the artifacts of their lives. 

John Leeke is a preservation consultant who helps homeowners, contractors, and architects understand and maintain their historic buildings. You can contact him by writing RRI Box 2947, Sanford, Maine 04073, or calling (207) 324-9597.

THE INVESTIGATING TEAM WAS ASSEMBLED BY GREGORY CLANCEY, OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NEW ENGLAND ANTIQUITIES. FUNDING WAS PROVIDED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR MUSEUM SERVICES AND HISTORIC NORTHAMPTON, INC.

FOR A YEAR AND A HALF JIM AND PAULA McHARGUE WATCHED THE PAINSTAKING RESTORATION of their fire-gutted Arts & Crafts house. The 1908 building might never have been the same if it weren't for the insurance that allowed every detail to be put back in its original condition. — When the McHargues purchased their policy, an insurance assessor visited the home and drew scaled plans, noting the Edwardian light fixtures, high ceilings, plaster walls, Craftsman paneling, and push-button light switches. When it came time to settle the claim, they got no argument about the kind or quality of construction. To help the McHargues assess the house's condition, the insurance company hired a restoration consultant as well as a job-site supervisor to oversee day-to-day construction. In the mean-

FILLING THE OLD-HO



This page: Fire damage to the McHargues' Arts & Crafts house was extensive. Fortunately their insurance covered the details of restoration (above) as well as rebuilding the fireplace to current earthquake codes. Facing page: The insurance company also paid for a restoration consultant to assess the condition of the 1908 house after the fire (top); original blueprints, and an appraisal that understood old houses, made a faithful rebuilding possible (bottom).

time, the policy covered their 18 months of rent in temporary quarters. — Although the fire took a psychological toll on the McHargues, they knew their insurance policy protected them from a more devastating financial loss. "If you've got a unique house," Mr. McHargue says, "you should look into premium insurance." Would a standard homeowner's policy do just as well? McHargue's comment is "You get what you pay for."

BY MARYLEE MACDONALD



USE INSURANCE GAP



I. NEW PROGRAMS WITH UNIQUE APPRAISALS

FOUR INSURANCE PROGRAMS, NEW SINCE 1992, ARE DESIGNED to provide the coverage you need to rebuild an old house's special features. While the premiums run 5 to 10 percent higher than standard policies, they can save thousands in the event of a loss.

One new program marketed through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, called the "Historic House Insurance Program," offers broad coverage for personal possessions and covers the full replacement cost of rebuilding the house itself (see chart page 54). Two other programs are underwritten by Chubb Insurance. The "City Home" program insures masonry buildings in major cities (Baltimore, Annapolis, Alexandria, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and New York). Tailored to the city dweller, the program covers extras such as a basement rental unit.

Chubb's "Masterpiece" program provides protection for historic wood-frame homes, homes in rural areas, and homes in other cities. Fireman's Fund offers similar coverage through its "Prestige Plus" plan that sets a goal of replacing unique architectural features with *like kind and quality*.

All of these old-house programs start with an appraisal by a person specifically trained to place a value on historic features. Standard policies send an appraiser too, but the value they place on the home is based on room count, square footage, type of construction (wood frame, masonry, or masonry veneer), and determined from a database of prices in today's new construction. In settling a claim, the company sticks to those *standard* prices and will not pay more.

In contrast, appraisers for these unique "old-house" policies know the difference between a trompe l'oeil painting and a one-coat cover-up, between a 15' ceiling (where the repair crew needs scaffolding) and an 8' ceiling where a ladder will do; between a Ludowici-Celadon ceramic tile roof and a fiber glass shingle roof. These details become part of your insurance contract.

"In one house," says Jack Taylor, Chubb's eastern appraisal manager, "we settled a case with 21"-wide pine flooring. Most mill equipment could only cut 18"-wide stock. So the company went out to mills until they found one that could do the job." If the company had used the standard appraiser's pricing book, the most the client would have received was \$4.50/sq.ft. for pine. Through their specialty pricing research, Chubb knew the cost ran closer to \$15/sq.ft. Not only was the company willing to pay the going rate, they did the legwork to find the right material.

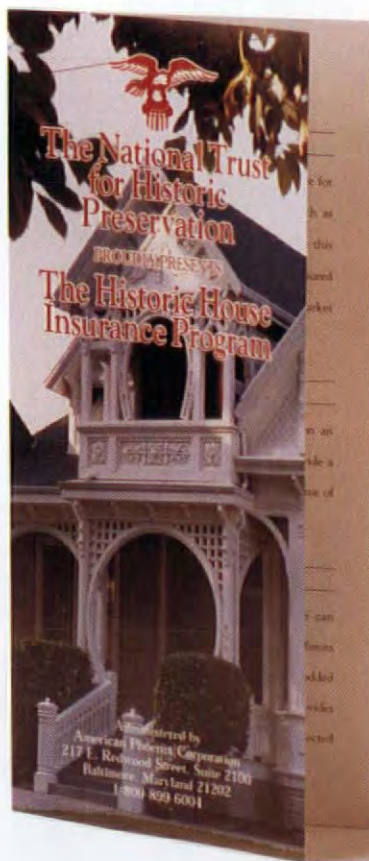
II. VALUING THE HOME

ONCE THE APPRAISER DETERMINES THE VALUE OF THE dwelling, he or she will set a price that is realistic to rebuild *in kind*. This price may come in higher than the market value of the house. However, most older homes could not begin to be replaced for just their market value.

If the company makes a mistake and recommends the home be insured for \$200,000 and it costs \$500,000 to rebuild, the company will still pay the complete cost, no questions asked. The company will, however, insist the home be *insured to value*, or they will not write the policy. Once you and the appraiser agree on the replacement cost, you purchase a policy equaling that amount. Then, even if construction costs rise faster than inflation, you're covered fully.

While this type of protection is standard in the old-house insurance plans, it's not in a standard policy. To obtain coverage like that, customers once purchased one of the following special *endorsements*: guaranteed replacement cost, extended replacement cost, or full cost replacement cost. This type of coverage used to be offered by insurers such as State Farm and Allstate as an endorsement to their standard policies (known in the industry as an HO-3). One by one, the companies dropped the replacement cost option to new customers. If your existing policy provides extended coverage, you will find it in the small print of your policy; go over it with your agent to be sure you're protected.

Even after a thorough review of standard policy, you may have difficulty settling a potential claim to your satisfaction. The person who makes the initial assessment may have an unrealistically low idea of the cost of historic materials and construction methods. The key here is to make sure the as-



essor is knowledgeable, the inventory complete, and everything is down in black and white. Your final contract and agreement should include pictures of your house and detailed notes on rare or hard-to-replace items.

III. REPLACEMENT COSTS AND CODE COVERAGE

WHAT HAPPENS IF A FIRE DESTROYS VIRTUALLY ALL YOUR home? How about a 50% loss? You might be in for a costly surprise when you discover the 80% requirement found in most policies.

A standard homeowner's policy covers your loss if the amount of insurance equals 80% or more of the full replacement cost of the building just before the loss. If the coverage is less than 80%, the compensation is reduced by a percentage. This is an incentive for the customer to *insure to value*.

What if you're almost finished with the years-long restoration project, and you haven't seen your agent in five years? You're out of luck. With a standard policy, you and your agent have to agree on the full replacement cost at the start of the policy. Then, every year, the agent must increase the value by any improvements made to the house and by

Members of the National Trust can apply for "The Historic House Insurance Program" (left), supported by various carriers. Chubb Insurance uses appraisers experienced in unique buildings for a "Masterpiece" policy (right).



BUILDER'S RISK

Insuring Against Damage During Repairs

UNDER BOTH THE STANDARD HOMEOWNER'S POLICY and the old-house policies, your homeowner's insurance covers your home while you are living in it. Builder's risk covers the property if you are living somewhere else.

Let's say your home is badly damaged by fire so you need to live somewhere else for a few months. Builder's risk protects your property against fire, wind, hail, and other hazards.

If you are living in your home while a kitchen or basement is being remodeled, your homeowner's policy covers potential losses.

No matter what kind of insurance you have, be sure to ask the builder for a certificate of insurance that covers employees for workers' compensation and general liability. Have the certificate in hand before the job starts. Your homeowner's policy does not protect the contractor or you in the event of an employee accident.

the cost of inflation. As many homeowners in the recent Oakland Hills' fires found out, their insurance didn't begin to cover their losses because their policies hadn't kept up.

Suppose your house burns to the ground. The standard policy only pays if you agree to rebuild at the same site. But with most old-house policies, you can take the money and build elsewhere, or buy another old house to restore. What you do with the money is up to you.

Maybe you have a house built in the early 1900s. A fire damages the water pipes and wiring. The city, in the meantime, has instituted building codes. If your home is damaged, you'll have to bring it up to code. In a more drastic case, let's suppose you live near the ocean. Your summer cottage is damaged, but it cannot be rebuilt unless you raise the building and put it on stilts. Or, let's say you have a house in the city with a hallway that is too narrow. If the building is damaged, you'll have to widen the hallway.

In all of these cases a standard policy will not include the *ordinance or law coverage* that accounts for these extras, unless your agent recommended this endorsement. Most likely, you'll receive a cash settlement far below the realistic cost of repairs. The new old-house policies, though, offer ordinance or law coverage as a standard part of their packages. If an architect is needed to help figure out how to make the hallway wider, the insurance pays for it. If the project is involved and needs a site superintendent, the insurance pays for it. In addition, the client is free to hire whichever builder and architect he prefers.

COMPARING THE FINE PRINT

	TYPICAL OLD-HOUSE POLICY COVERAGE	TYPICAL HO-3 COVERAGE
BUILDING		
PERILS	All Risk	All Risk
EXTENDED REPLACEMENT COST	Included	Not Included
IN-HOUSE UNDERWRITER	Yes	N/A
FULL R.C. CASH OPTION*	Yes	N/A
OTHER STRUCTURES		
% OF HOUSE COVERAGE	20%	10%
EXTENDED REPLACEMENT COST	Included	Not Included
FULL R.C. CASH OPTION	Yes	N/A
CONTENTS		
PERILS	All Risk	Named Perils
REPLACEMENT COST COVERAGE	Included	Not Included
FULL R.C. CASH OPTION	Yes	N/A
LOSS OF USE		
% OF HOUSE COVERAGE	Unlimited	20%
EXTRA COVERAGES		
LOCK REPLACEMENT	\$500	No Coverage
DEBRIS REMOVAL	Unlimited	5% of Coverage Limit
REBUILDING TO CODE	Unlimited	Not Included
BACKUP OF SEWERS AND DRAINS	Included	Not Included
INCIDENTAL BUSINESS PROPERTY	\$10,000	\$2,500 on premises/ \$250 off premises
PERSONAL COMPUTER DATA	\$5,000	Not Included
SPECIAL LIMITS		
MONEY	\$1,000	\$200
SECURITIES	\$5,000	\$1,000
JEWELRY	\$5,000	\$1,000
SILVERWARE	\$5,000	\$2,500
VALUABLE ARTICLES		
FINE ART COVERAGE	Worldwide	U.S. & Canada only
BREAKAGE FOR ALL FINE ARTS	Included	Not Included

* R.C.: REPLACEMENT COST

The Fireman's Fund plan (left) offers high limit coverage; Chubb designed "City Home" (right) for urban buildings.



IV. PERSONAL PROPERTY AND FLOATERS FOR FINE ARTS

MOST HOMEOWNER'S POLICIES PROVIDE *ALL RISK* COVERAGE for your dwelling, but only cover your personal property losses for *named* hazards — fire, lightning, and so on. Suppose you misplace an expensive diamond ring or spill paint on an oriental carpet. A standard policy would not cover these losses.

The policies designed for old houses provide *all risk* coverage for personal possessions as well as for property. The companies that underwrite these policies figure homeowners will have antiques and other valuables.

Similarly, a standard HO-3 policy limits coverage for items of *antiquity or rarity*. If your antique is damaged or destroyed you would get the *replacement cost*. That cost, however, will either be the depreciated cost, based on the item's age, or a functional *replacement cost*. You might get the cost of a new desk or a new door, but the replacement will not match the rest of the house. In contrast, the old-house policies provide replacement in *like kind and quality*. If you lose a 300-year-old door, you'll get a 300-year-old door (or a handcrafted equivalent).

People who own older homes fill them with antiques. Under a standard policy, if the total value of art and antiques is more than 50% of the home's value, most companies will not write a policy. No such restrictions apply to

policies designed for older homes. In fact, those policies cover more personal possessions than the standard policy, and don't quibble about the percentage. You can cover as little as \$1,000 worth of personal property, and there is no upper limit.

If your collections are especially valuable, consider adding a *fine arts floater* or *valuable articles coverage* to even the old-house policy. These floaters cover specific items. Make sure the agent is knowledgeable about the kinds of antiques or art you wish to insure. You'll also want a company that will work hard to recover the object. Chubb, for instance, subscribes to a computer service that searches for stolen objects. They also can help owners get the most recent prices on art and artists to make certain their coverage is adequate.

V. REDUCING RISKS AND PREMIUMS

COMPANIES INSURING OLDER HOMES take a critical look at the kinds of risks that can cause losses. For instance, they've found that city houses close to fire departments may have a lower

fire risk than isolated houses on rural sites. This makes premiums for city homes extremely competitive.

When appraisers visit a home, they may recommend changes to lower risk. In a house with knob-and-tube wiring, they may suggest electrical work. On a rural home, they might suggest installing a hydrant on the property.

To reduce the risk of theft, the company may recommend an individual sensor on a valuable painting or a motion detector. Adding sophisticated fire-prevention and anti-theft systems can save as much as 20% on premiums. Furthermore, raising the deductible from the standard \$250 to \$1,000 or even \$10,000 can lower the premium in high-value homes.

VI. CHOOSING AND STAYING WITH A COMPANY

AS A FINAL STEP WHEN SHOPPING FOR INSURANCE, CHECK the carrier. Make sure the company that stands behind your policy is financially sound. Three rating agencies rank the financial stability and claims paying record of insurers. These agencies are A.M. Best (ranked on a scale of A++ to F), Standard & Poor's (AAA to CCC), and Moody's (Aaa to C). You can find ratings in the local library, or ask your agent to provide them. The policies mentioned in this article are sold through independent insurance agents.

Insurance is sold by two kinds of companies — "agency companies" and "direct writers." Agency companies work

through independent insurance agents who handle policies from a variety of underwriters. These underwriters are large holding companies that assume the risk and settle claims. In this case, the agent writes the policy, but the underwriter provides the cash in case of a loss.

Companies that are direct writers sell the policies, carry the risks, and settle claims. Allstate, State Farm, and Nationwide are direct writers. These companies spread their risk by signing up huge segments of the market—new houses less than 30 years old. Spokespersons for these companies indicated they could not provide true replacement cost coverage for new customers.

Once you have purchased your insurance, review the coverage every three years. Make sure the value of your personal belongings is adequately covered. Look at the value of your house. Perhaps you've invested a sizable amount of money in your home since you purchased the policy. No matter which policy you choose, Lois Shapiro, administrator for the National Trust's program, advises you to "make a video of your home and possessions and put the video in a safety deposit box at your bank."

When you're young and healthy, insurance agents are eager to sell you insurance, but as you age, the premiums rise and agents are less interested in your business. Perhaps the same is true of old houses. However, with the new programs designed for historic buildings, at least you can protect your property and give yourself added peace of mind.

Marylee MacDonald, a former building contractor and long-time restorer, is a professional technical writer and preservation consultant based in Evanston, Illinois.

INSURANCE PROGRAMS

HISTORIC HOUSE INSURANCE PROGRAM

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Administered by American Phoenix Corporation
217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 2100, Dept. OHJ
Baltimore, MD 21202
(800) 899-6004
Contact Lois Shapiro for details.

MASTERPIECE AND CITY HOME Chubb Group of Insurance Companies

Personal Insurance Division
15 Mountain View Rd., Dept. OHJ
Warren, NJ, 07050
(800) CHUBB-08
Contact Ross Buchmueller for details.

PRESTIGE PLUS Fireman's Fund

Contact an independent insurance agent.



THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE HOUSE

W

E ARE AVID COLLECTORS OF antiques and assorted "stuff." It overfills the ten rooms of our 1895 Barber cottage in downtown Jonesboro, Arkansas. Typical of the Victorian era, our house has only one original closet under the staircase, and two small jack-legged closets that were added in the 1920s. After buying the house in 1973, we eventually restored everything except for one room upstairs, which we wanted to transform into a sitting room/reading room. The hold-up was the mountain of boxes and piles of mementos covering the floor. We were also in the process of creating a landscape plan

A SOLUTION TO THE OLD-HOUSE LIVING PROBLEM OF EXTRA SPACE

**BY CAROL AND
MICHAEL DOUGAN**

and needed a garden center on the grounds. It quickly became clear to us that an outbuilding was the solution to both storage problems.

When the original owner, John Vernon Bell, built the house from a pattern book, he constructed three outbuildings on the property — a potting shed, a two-hole outhouse, and servant quarters. By the time we bought the house, only a trace of the servant building's brick foundation remained. A primitive one-car garage, built sometime later, had also vanished. These long-gone structures were the initial inspiration for our outbuilding to come, but we needed

a design that would incorporate all of our storage requirements and still blend in with our beautiful "painted lady."

WE BEGAN TO RESEARCH VICTORIAN outbuildings, but found very little written on the topic and even fewer survivors in the real world. We looked everywhere we traveled. If most tourists went down the main streets gawking, we looked in the backyards and down the alleys. Most of the time we found a situation similar to ours — well-restored houses with modern carports in the back.

Our break came in the town of





Charleston, Missouri, where, across from the courthouse, stands a fine yellow brick Victorian with a functioning carriage house out back. While we photographed the building for our records, a horse stuck his head out of a window. Horses were not a part of our plan, but a two-story carriage house with a cupola could be. The first floor had enough space to park our car and pot our plants. With four gables, the second storey had ample storage space for our debris. It could also be painted in harmony with the house and, when set into our garden plan, would make an estate of our house and grounds.

Armed with photographs, we approached an architect friend with experience in historic buildings, and he drew up some blueprints. Finally, the project was taking shape and we were excited by the possibilities — perhaps overly so. The more we looked at the plans, the more we added! Since we had water already, why not make the interior more convenient? So a half-bath went in. Then we added an on-line water heater to the large laundry sink. How about keeping the pipes from freezing? Into the wall went an electric heater. The location, number, and size of cabinets, shelves, and counters went through

It took a dose of courage for the painter to climb up on the gables. The cupola's trim was finished in "Renwick yellow," which matches one of the paint colors on the main house.

many changes. By the time we were done, we were able to use the carriage house in any season. After the plan was complete, we began the search for a contractor willing to take on the project. Few contractors like this type of work. Most were unaccustomed to dealing with the many odd angles, such as the gables, on our outbuilding. Only two had the courage to look at it, and only one



“IT QUICKLY BECAME CLEAR TO US THAT AN OUTBUILD

gave us an estimate. He came with favorable recommendations, so the cry was “full steam ahead” to construction. However, our enthusiasm quickly wilted upon discovering we had to get a variance from the city zoning code. After a few annoying delays, the planning board granted the variance, and we were moving again. We cheered at the sight of a shovel and sawhorses in the side yard.

OUR FIRST PROBLEM WAS FINDING the sewer. The old city engineering maps for the historic part of town weren’t accurate, and preliminary digging failed to unearth the line. One of the crew suggested washing marshmallows down the line to see where they came out. We dropped pecans sprayed white (a substitute for marshmallows) down the main house’s sewer pipe, but instead of appearing on our street, they turned up blocks away. No help there. Unbeknown to us, the crew decided to look for the line where the old map showed

it — using a backhoe. Carol looked out an upstairs window just in time to see the machine tear through the daffodils and bury the spring vegetable garden. Yelling for the backhoe to stop, she went down the stairs and out the door in record time. When the sewer line was finally unearthed, it proved to be long abandoned. (We did find a large serving spoon from the “Shrivan,” an establishment we have yet to locate.) Finally, we discovered a live sewer line in the back of the property, which ac-

tually ran down a former alley and underneath an adjacent house.

AS WORK GOT UNDERWAY, SPECTATORS lined the streets and sidewalk. “What is it?” and “Who is going to live there?” were the two most common questions. The building is not historically correct in every detail. It sits on a concrete slab, and the windows are energy efficient, but its style is historic and matches the house. The second storey has four gables and a vented cupola. It took two tries for the contractor to build the gables, and he worked on the angles at home all one evening.

Keeping the exterior as authentic as possible was difficult because we had to avoid conspicuous modern equipment. For example, if the sewer stack



(Top) After two attempts at making the gables, the carriage house finally takes form. (Left) Built from one of George Barber’s planbooks, the Dougan’s 1895 Queen Anne sports a polychrome paint job.

The backhoe rumbled through the flower and vegetable gardens to no avail — the elusive sewer line was abandoned.

had gone straight up, it would come out through the cupola. Routing it sideways brought it out at a less visible location. Window screens were mandatory and metal ones most practical, but at least the black color is subdued and matches the wooden screens on the main house. Likewise, a modern garage door was a necessity, but we chose a model with windows at the top and lots of trim for decorative painting.

When the basic structure was closed in, we surveyed the results and decided to add some more Victorian features. We had our contractor design simple brackets and bought some gable decorations, too. Then we tackled the gable shingles. Patterned cedar shingles grace the gables on the main house. We



eral times and, in our opinion, still needs some fine-tuning.

Originally, we had designed the storage loft to be unfinished. The building didn't deserve that, so we painted

wanted a garage, a potting room, and a storage loft. We got that, but we are stunned at the beauty of the carriage house. It has enhanced the value and appearance of our property greatly.

ING WAS THE SOLUTION TO OUR STORAGE PROBLEMS."

wanted to duplicate them on the carriage house, but we were unable to find affordable fancy-cut stock shingles. Once again, the contractor came to the rescue by setting up his saw and cutting them himself. The patina of aging cedar is beautiful, so we decided not to paint the shingles.

The paint presented our next problem. We had repainted the main house in historically accurate colors in 1987. It was obvious that the vertical and horizontal siding of the carriage house should be "Renwick yellow" and "Rook amber" respectively. But then what? We drew some rough sketches (really rough, as we both have no artistic talent), pulled out a box of Crayolas, and experimented with terra cotta and clay tones. The color scheme of the doors changed sev-

it, put up trim, and added carpeting. We can even use it for overflow guests. The indoor color scheme became increasingly more complex, and the outbuilding became more than a storage building.

The carriage house has achieved our original goals and much, much more. We

Our sensitivity to historical accuracy has produced a flood of interest and compliments about the carriage house. Perhaps the most telling comment has been heard more than once: "The carriage house looks like it has always been there."

The completed carriage house: The shingles on all four gables are copies of the originals on the main house. The brackets are extra Victorian embellishments.



FENCE MENDERS

by Gordon Bock

FENCES MAY BE THIN, BUT they're usually long — sometimes miles long — so fence-mending gear has to be practical and portable. Not surprisingly, specialized tools have continued to appear just to make this manual work easier and more efficient.

Setting out posts is undoubtedly the toughest job. The trick, of course, is not to dig any more hole than you need, but still be able to excavate soil from a small-diameter cavity. Diggers and augers evolved to meet these challenges with an amazing variety of ingenuity.



Standard two-handle post-hole digger.

The most popular is the **post-hole digger**, a large gizmo with two handles. To use it, drive the digger into the ground (breaking tough sod first), pull the handles

apart to grab a clump of earth, then withdraw it from the hole. The watchword is not to bang your fingers when you bring the handles together to open the jaws again. These devices cost about \$45 and won't go through stones, but they beat any shovel.

The **earth auger digger** probably ranks a close second in appeal and uses a different principle. Two cutters mounted on one shaft bore through the

Iwan's earth auger, a design that is still in production.

ground by turning the T-handle. The cutters on some models are adjustable to alter the size of the hole or clean clogged material. Again, wear gloves to prevent blisters.

The list doesn't stop here. A third digger type has a lone blade hinged to a single handle. A lever attached to the handle manipulates the blade for excavating the hole almost like a steamshovel bucket. Other tools are hybrids, marrying digger and auger or adding a stretching tool for barbed wire. Most are sold through farm supply retailers.

Another hybrid is the **fencing tool** — made for wire fence not self-defense. Developed in the last century as the Great Plains were being settled, these combination tools are basically large pliers hinged with a lap joint that creates a wire cutter. Grafted to one side is a hammerhead for driving staples and nails; on the other side (or at the tail of a handle) is a single claw or pick for pulling them. Fencing tools vary in design and are still made by specialty handtool manufacturers.



When you're out tool shopping pick up a **tamping bar**. You'll need some muscles to do it, too, because a really effective tamper is solid steel and big — usually six feet long. The business end of the bar can be blunt, mushroom, or chisel-shaped for both tamping and digging.

When it comes time to



paint fences, try a modern innovation: a **painter's mitt**. Designed for metal fences, spindlework, and similar hard-to-brush objects, these products are yet another double-duty tool that attach the wooly nap of a paint roller to a big mitt, the kind of hand protection one might wear anyway for such work. Mitts are inexpensive (about \$4), reusable, and easy to use by simply "caressing" on the paint. They do make shorter work of a long painting project.

The fencing tool combines pliers, puller, hammer, cutter, and pincer all in one.



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RESTORATION



*Above:
The four-chime
"Craftsman
Rose" doorbell
is made of oak with
hand-carved rose.*

*Left (from top to
bottom): Somerville
Red, Buckland Blue,
and Hawthorne Yellow
historic paint colors.*

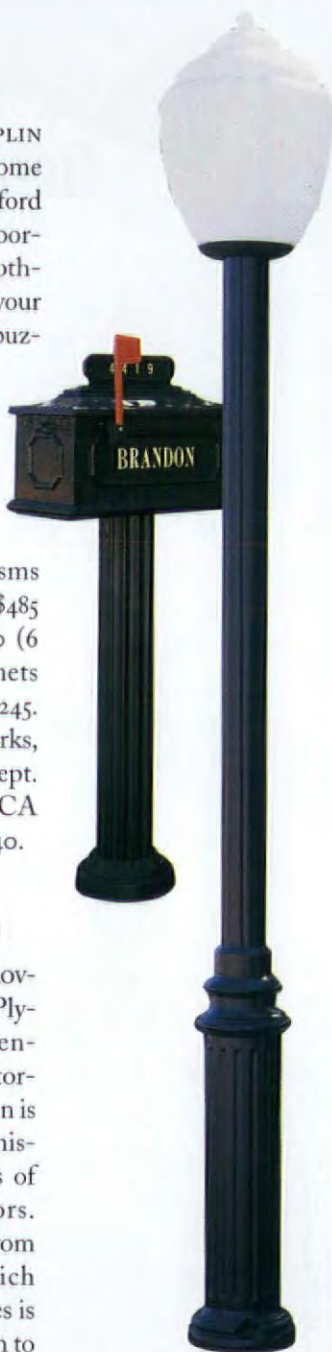
Chime In

FROM A SCOTT JOPLIN rag to "Home, Home on the Range," Oxford Chime Works's doorbells play more soothing melodies than your typical electronic buzzer. The doorbells come in Victorian, Craftsman, and Prairie styles with handcut 32" to 48" tube bells. The doorbell mechanisms range in price from \$485 (3 chimes) to \$710 (6 chimes); the cabinets are from \$125 to \$245. Oxford Chime Works, P. O. Box 665, Dept. OHJ, Ridgecrest, CA 93555; (619) 446-1040.

Period Paint

WITH NAMES LIKE PROVIDENCE OLIVE and PLYMOUTH BROWN, Benjamin Moore's Historical Color Collection is as much a tour of historic towns as it is of period paint colors. Based on samples from old homes, the rich palette of earthtones is suitable for late-18th to 19th-century houses.

Check your local paint suppliers or call (800) 826-2623 for a dealer.



*The mailbox and
streetlamp are made of
cast aluminum and
come in black, white or
verde finishes.*

A New Post

WANT TO SPRUCE UP your 1910 streetscape? Try single-post streetlamps with acorn shades from Brandon Industries. They also carry period-style mailboxes, such as the Estate Mailbox. The streetlamp costs \$200; the mailbox is \$100. Brandon Industries, Inc., 4419 Westgrove Dr., Dept. OHJ, Dallas, TX 75248; (214) 250-0456.



*Ready for action: A
restored 1920s General
Electric fan.*

Cool Fans

BEAT THE SUMMER HEAT with a vintage fan! The Fan Man has a collection of antique fans that range from the 1890s to the 1940s. He will also repair and restore that old G.E. you found

PRODUCTS

by Lynn Elliott



Show your house's true colors by having paint chips analyzed.

analysis services vary. Frank S. Welsh, Historic Paint Color Consultant, 859 Lancaster Ave., Dept. OHJ, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010; (610) 525-3564.

in the attic. The Fan Man, Inc., 1914 Abrams Parkway, Dept. OHJ, Dallas, TX 75214; (214) 826-7700.

Color Consultant

ARE YOU A STICKLER FOR details? Frank S. Welsh, a historic paint color consultant, will uncover the original paint scheme for your historic home. The paint analysis service uses microscopic and microchemical techniques to determine the authentic color. Most projects require on-site visits from a professional. However, there is a step-by-step guide, called the Paintpamphlet, for homeowners who want to take their own samples to be sent for analysis. The Paintpamphlet costs \$5; paint

Pick your period: (from left to right) the Springfield, Arts & Crafts, and Clifton screen doors.

A Step Above

SPIRAL STAIRS NOT ONLY save space, but in kit form, they can also save money. The Iron Shop offers reasonably priced, 3'6" to 7' spiral stair kits in red oak and metal. If you want to splurge, check out the high-end Victorian One model. The spiral stair kits

range in price from \$400 (metal) to \$4,000 (cast-aluminum Victorian One). The Iron Shop, P.O. Box 547, 400 Reed Rd., Dept. OHJ, Broomall, PA 19008; (800) 523-7427.

Screen Style

KEEP OUT THE MOSQUITOES in style this summer with screen doors from The Old Wagon Factory. The hardwood screen doors come in gingerbread Victorian styles as well as geometric Chippendale and Arts & Crafts styles. Standard door sizes are 32" x 80" (or 81") and 36" x 80" (or 81"). Custom sizes are available.



The top-of-the-line Victorian One spiral stair kit comes in cast aluminum with a verdigris finish.

The standard screen doors range in price from \$292 to \$419. The Old Wagon Factory, 103 Russell St., P. O. Box 1427, Dept. OHJ, Clarksville, VA 23927; (804) 374-5717.



Fence Finery

IMPRESSIVE FENCING and driveway gates in original and reproduction designs are a specialty of Fine Architectural Metalsmiths. The period metalwork — from Colonial to Art Deco — is hand forged in copper, brass, bronze, or stainless steel. Patinating and goldleafing

round or square designs with eight styles of cap and base rails and three types of piers. They are available in 18 standard colors and are shipped ready for installation. The balustrades range in price from \$140 to \$187 per ft. Dura Art Stone, 8175 Wells Ave., Dept. OHJ, Newark, CA 94580; (909) 350-9000.



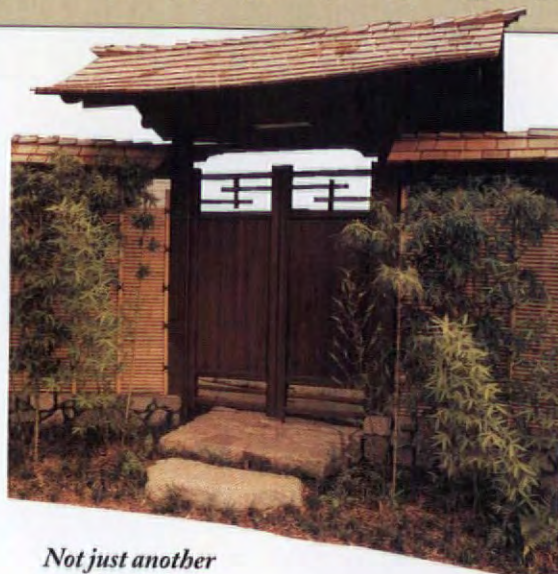
are available. Fine Architectural Metalsmiths, PO Box 30, Dept. OHJ, Chester, NY 10918; (914) 782-5332 or (914) 651-7550.

Pier-less

CLASSICALLY STYLED, cast-stone balustrades from Dura Art Stone are affordable replacements for formal period landscapes. The balustrades come in six

The restoration project of a 19th-century fence included the recasting of missing "acorn" pieces and the reproduction of the Vitruvian scrolls.

As replacements or new additions, make cast-stone balustrades part of your classically styled 19th-century landscape.



Not just another picket fence: A Japanese gate (above) and a detail of a Tudor-style pergola (right).



Outdoor Artistry

WEST COAST BUILDER Joseph Wood of Wood^S Shop considers his fences an art form. Drawing upon an extensive vocabulary in historic design, he creates distinctive landscape structures in styles from Tudor to Japanese. All projects

are custom. For information, contact Wood^S Shop, 9209 Harness St., Dept. OHJ, Spring Valley, CA 91977-4211; (619) 462-9663.

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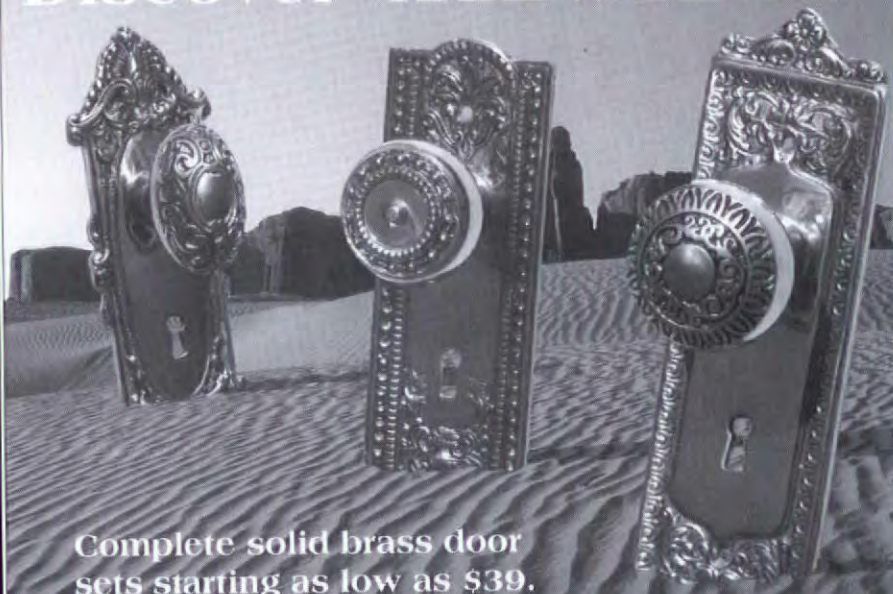
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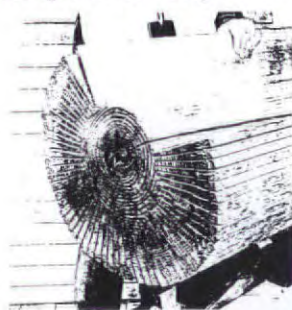
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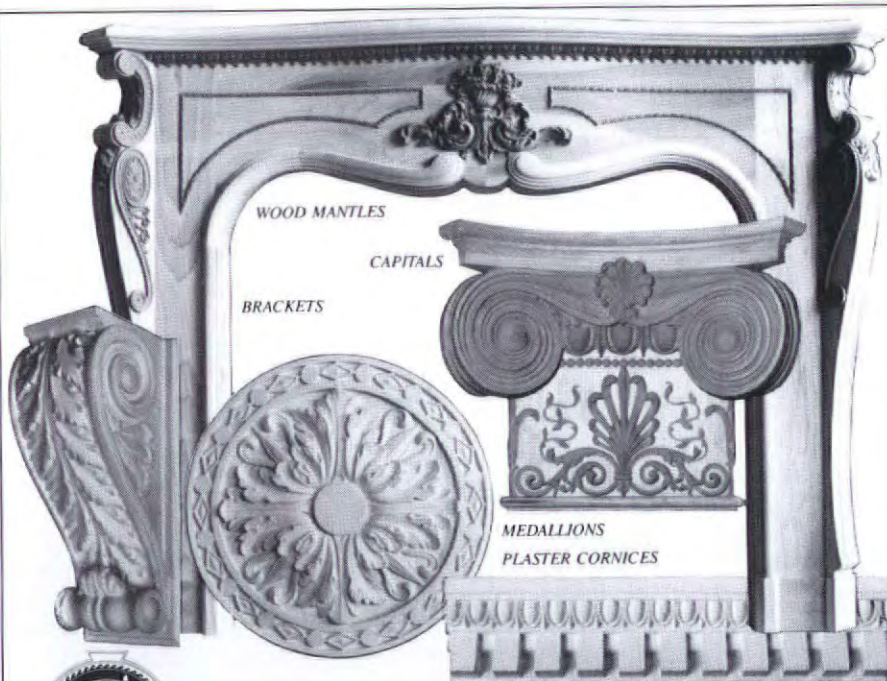
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You can order actual blueprints for all the houses featured. These plans are designed to conform to national building-code standards. However, the requirements of your site and local building codes mean you'll probably need the assistance of a professional designer (your builder may qualify) or an architect.

For the houses shown in this issue, blueprints include:

- Foundation plan for basement or crawl space. (Crawl space plans can easily be adapted for full basements by your builder.)
- Detailed floor plans showing dimensions for framing. Some may also have detailed layouts and show the location of electrical and plumbing components.
- Interior elevations are included in some plans, showing interior views of kitchen, bath, fireplace, built-ins, and cabinet designs.
- Building cross sections:

cornice, fireplace, and cabinet sections when 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, where noteworthy, are included, such as 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

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Other notes: (1) Plans are copyrighted, and they are printed for you when you order. Therefore, they are not refundable.

If you order additional sets (over 8 sets only) of the same plan within 30 days of your original order, you

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

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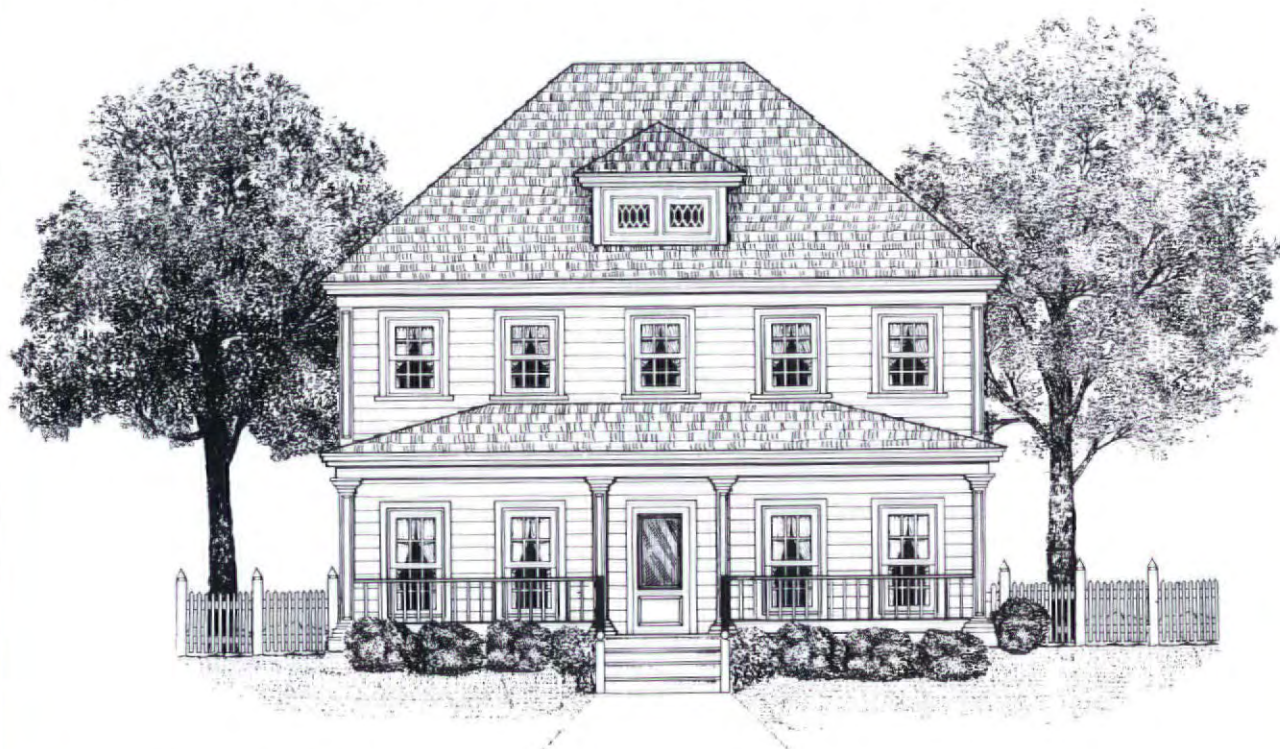
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first floor

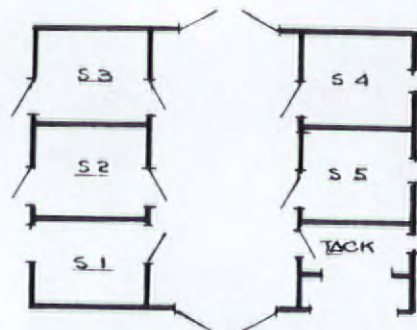
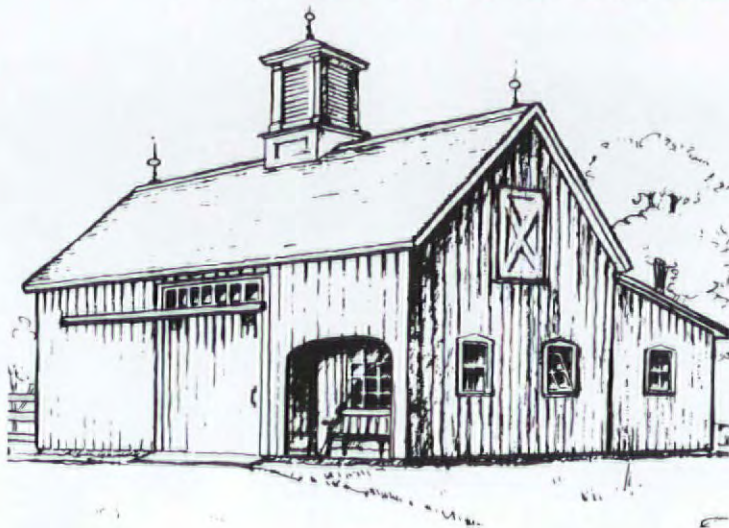


second floor

Plan HR-50-PV

Cost.....	\$230
Set of 5	\$290
Set of 8	\$330
Bedrooms	4
Bathrooms	3
Square Footage	2,398'
First Floor	1,224'
Second Floor	1,174'
Ceiling Height	
First Floor	9'
Second Floor	9'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	34'
Depth	59'

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WHETHER YOU WANT TO TIE-UP HORSES OR HORSELESS CARRIAGES, this Traditional Stable has all the authentic exterior details, such as the vertical-board siding, hay loft door, and cupola, appropriate for an outbuilding on a farm or a large estate. Inside are five generously sized stalls, a tack room, and two hay lofts. However, this plan can be modified to be a garage and/or workshop.

Plan CD-17-GA

Cost\$60

Shipping\$3.50

Square Footage1,200'

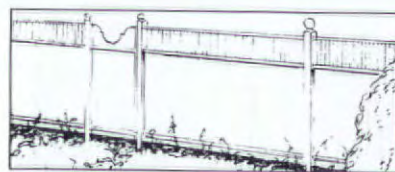
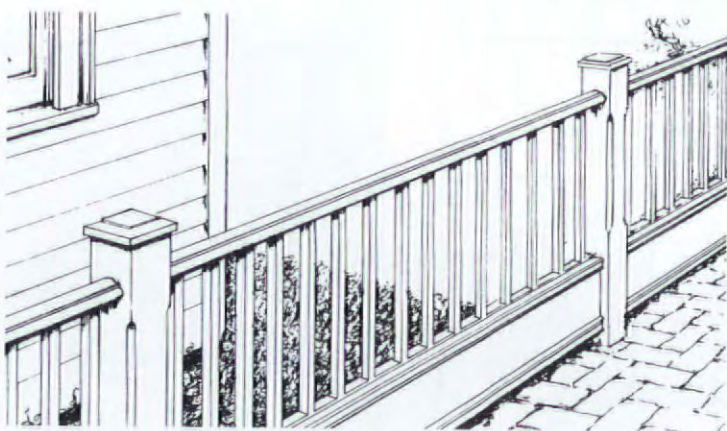
Height
(to ridge).....24' 9"

Overall Dimensions

Width40'

Depth.....30'

PERIOD PICKET FENCES



Plan CD-18-AD

Cost\$25

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Dimensions (depending upon design)
.....3' to 9' high

FOR THOSE WHO DREAM OF OLD HOUSES WITH WHITE picket fences, this collection contains layouts for the components you'll need to build your own. There are eight styles of square and round picket fences, four open-

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Real Estate

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CA — Victorian-style (Queen Anne) 4300-sq.-ft. home, miles from those pesky earthquakes. Has full basement, large attic, 10-foot ceiling, hardwood sliding doors (8 ft) and beautiful oak staircase. Interior totally finished with hardwood. Eleven rooms plus 3 baths. Wraparound porch (120 ft) plus turret. Includes 2.97 acres with avocados. Please call (619) 726-0243 or write to 3005 Via Puerta Del Sol, Bonsall, CA 92003. \$680,000.

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BETHEL, ME — 18th-century, updated historic large home/bldg/land located in small N.E. town; prime tested 4-season business location, 3 mi. to ski resort, approved inn, dining, varied retail. Ideal for retired executive. \$270,000 cash, bal. \$150,000, low owner financing. Write owner, P.O. Box 954, Bethel, ME 04217.

EAST MAINE COAST — Rare historic house for the unusual person. 1920 ship chandler's National Register Greek Revival 12-room house. Period furnish-

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ings. Museum quality. Original family. Barn with carriage and sleigh. Three photos: \$1.25. \$275,000. (207) 733-2576.

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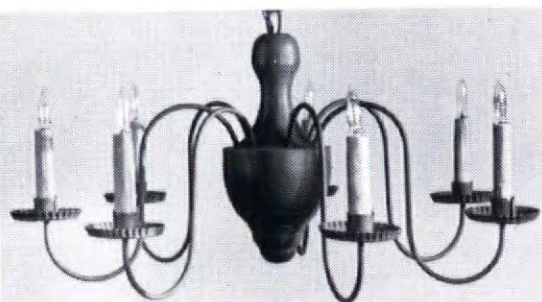
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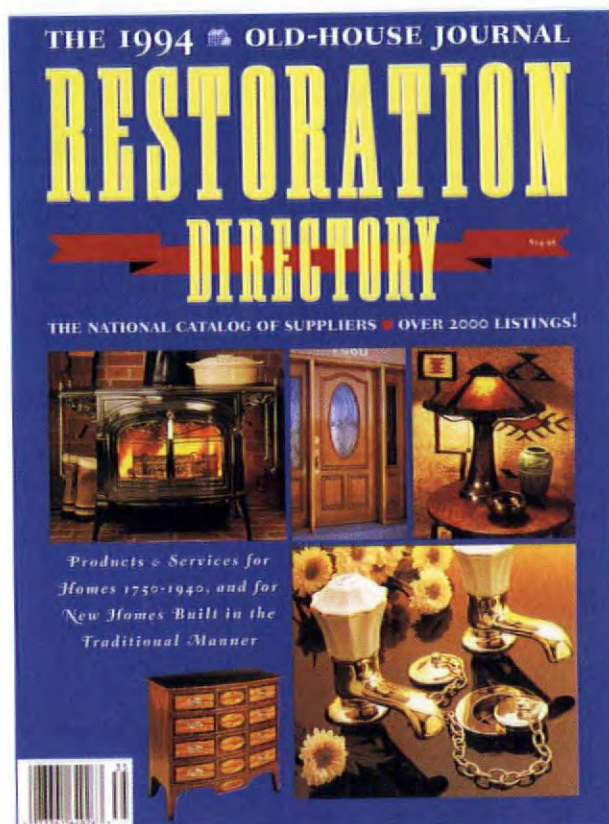
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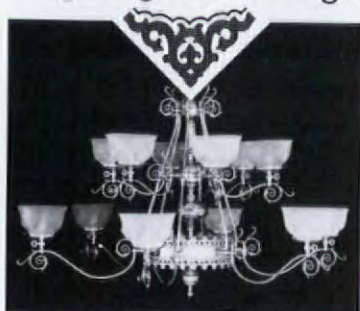
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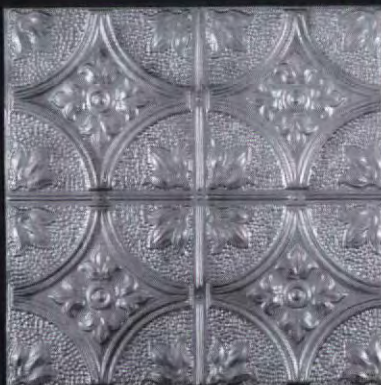
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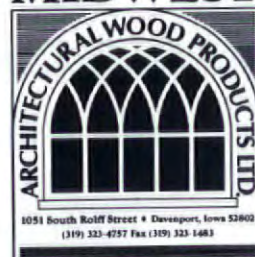
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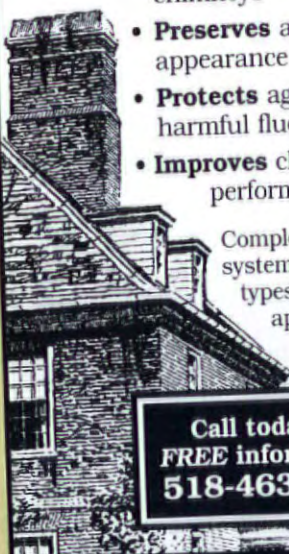
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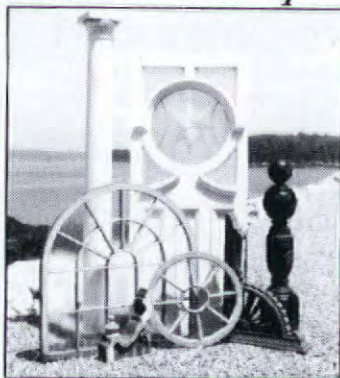
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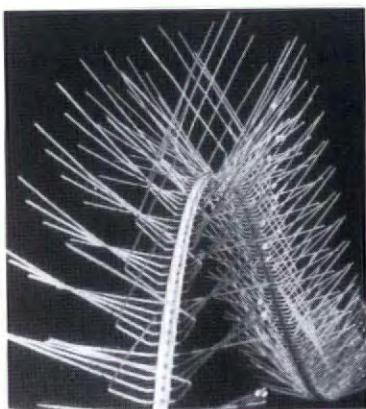
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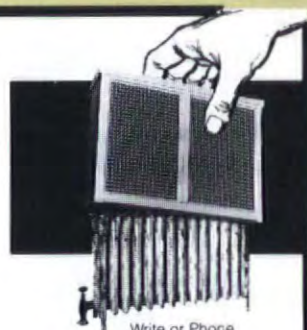
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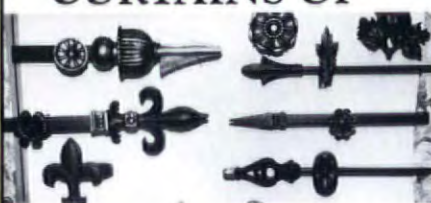
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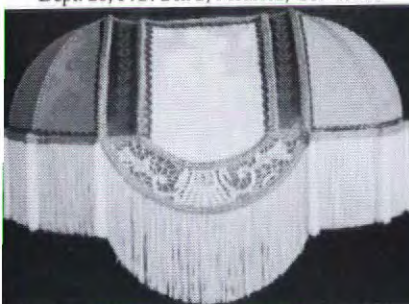
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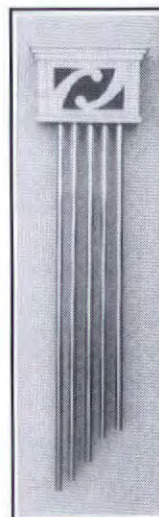
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INCOGNITO Architecture

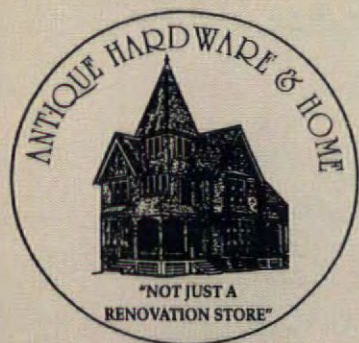


LIKE GUESTS AT A COSTUME PARTY, THESE TWO buildings have gone to great lengths to conceal their true identities. Both wear large two-dimensional masks that present stylistically altered views of who they are.

Disguised as a Victorian row house, this Denver, Colorado, home (top) is really a rather plain 20th-century bungalowoid building. Its false Italianate-style face (inset) has two windows and a door that lead to ... well, only to the other side of the paper-thin facade.

The San Jose, California, home (left) is dressed in different garb — sort of a modernist veil. From the photo, we can't tell much about the original building. An old bay window peers through the only opening that remains in the thick stucco shroud, like a single vision hole in a ghoulish Halloween get-up.

We can't help but wonder if the costumes will come off when the masquerade is over.



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THE CANALSTONE HOUSE OF WESTERN NEW YORK

FROM 1817 TO 1825, AS the Erie Canal was constructed, "free" stone from the excavation was used to build a large concentration of Canalstone Houses in Lockport, New York. This free stone or canal quarystone came from the solid rock of the Niagara escarpment, which was dynamited in order to continue the canal on to Buffalo. Large cranes removed the stone from the channel and piled it along the banks of the canal.

As construction of the canal and the elaborate lock system progressed, many Irish and English stonemasons in Lockport took advantage of the free stone to build temporary housing, which they often sold



Itinerant stonemasons built the Canalstone Houses in Lockport, New York, in popular early-19th-century architectural styles, such as Greek Revival (top) and Italianate.

to settlers before continuing along the canal route. Other masons chose to settle in the area and prudently used the

abundant local resources to build Federal or Greek Revival Canalstone Houses. In constructing these homes, the canalstone was dressed, and the walls were laid using a mortar made of clay, sand, gravel, and lime in both rough and refined courses.

Devastating 19th-century fires, canal expansion in the early 1900s, and finally, 20th-century urban renewal, all contributed to the loss of many historic stone structures in the area. However, at least three homes built from canalstone still exist in the Lockport area and efforts are underway to document the histories of these architectural treasures.

— ELLEN M. PLANTE
Youngstown, N.Y.