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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995

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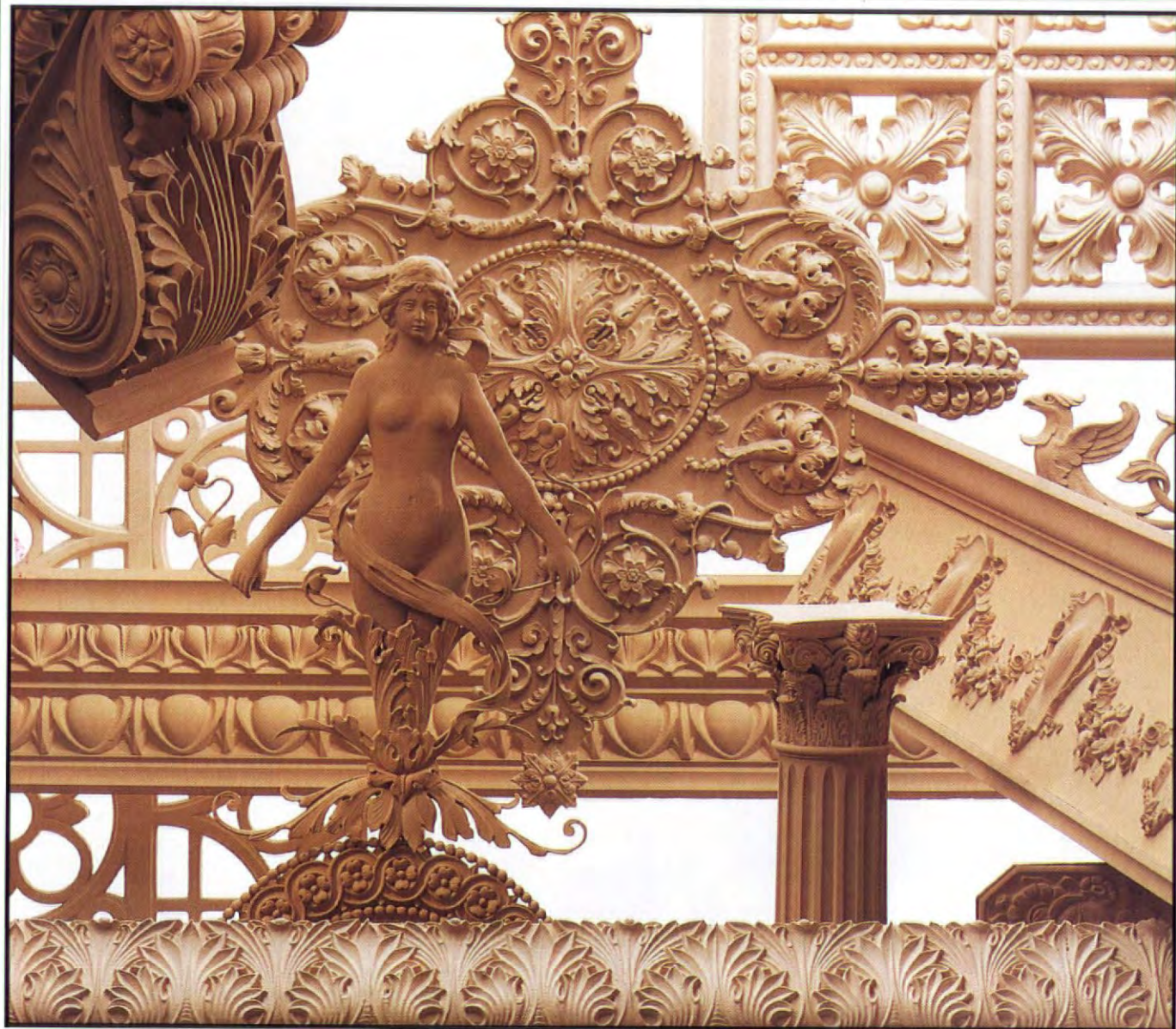


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COMPILED BY THE EDITORS

OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL (ISSN 0094-0178) is published bimonthly for \$24 per year by Dovecote Publishers, The Blackburn Tavern, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930. Telephone (508) 283-3200. Subscriptions in Canada \$32 per year, payable in U.S. funds.

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The Antique Art of Wallpaper Panelling

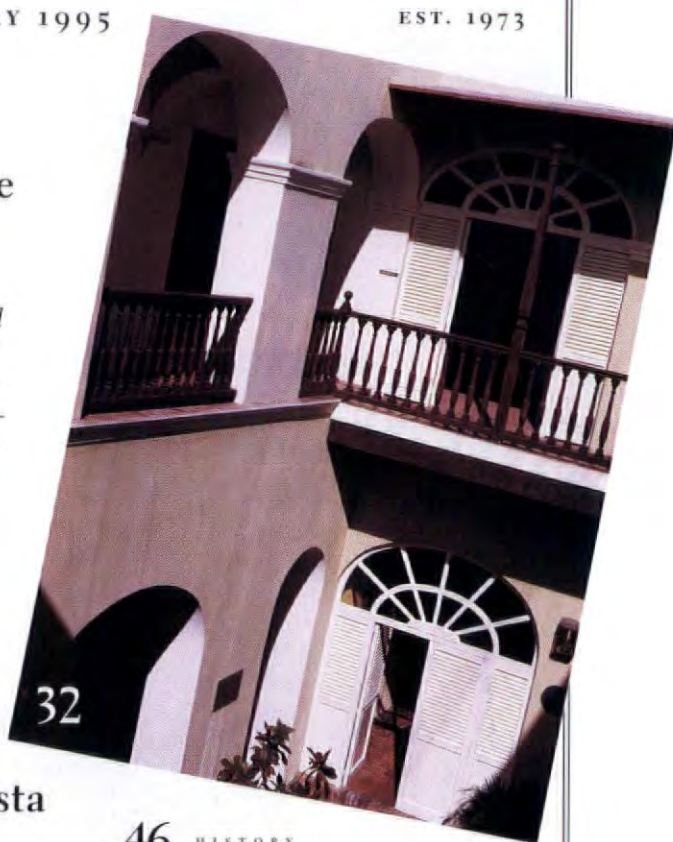
Turn-of-the-century tastemakers advocated arranging wallpapers into panels to organize and decorate the room.

BY ROBERT M. KELLY

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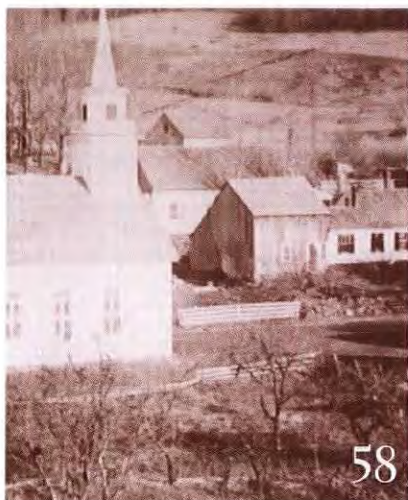
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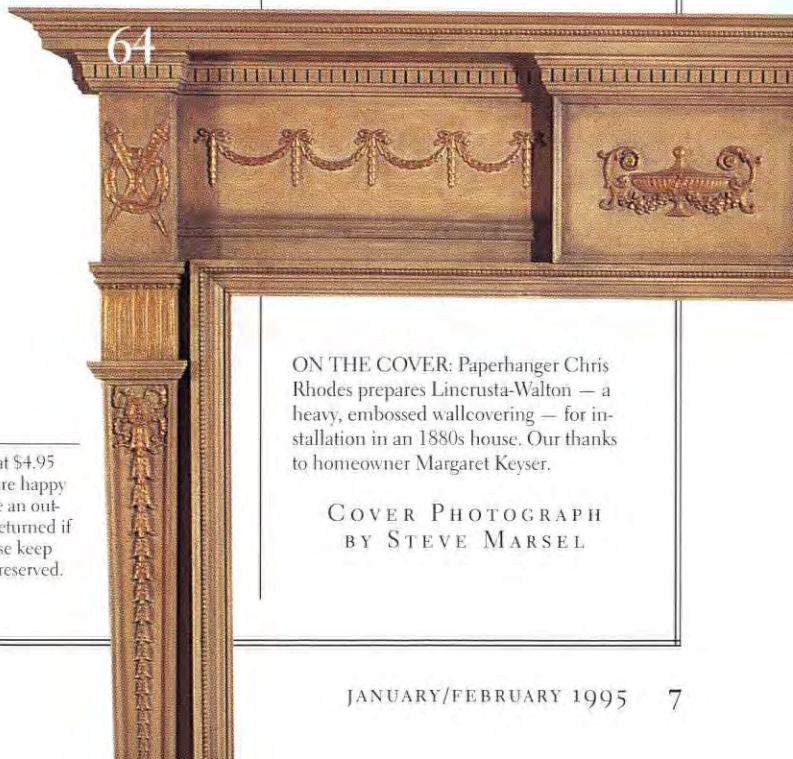
A favorite since its premier in Oct. 1981.

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ON THE COVER: Paperhanger Chris Rhodes prepares Lincrusta-Walton — a heavy, embossed wallcovering — for installation in an 1880s house. Our thanks to homeowner Margaret Keyser.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH
BY STEVE MARSEL

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You Can Read Us Like a Book

WELCOME TO 1995 AND VOLUME XXIII OF *Old-House Journal*! You'll notice some fine-tuning of purpose and design in this issue. The changes aren't startling; like *OHJ* readers, we suspect that "new improved" is often an oxymoron. The issue you hold is simply a crisper version of what we've been doing for years. The mix of old-house lore and down-to-business technique remains.

We've essentially matched the design to the editorial organization of material. For example, now there's more flexibility in the feature grid — the frame upon which text and illustrations are laid. Rather than a lot of information buried in unbroken pages of text, critical points and interesting asides are now highlighted in captions, technical illustrations, bigger pictures, glossaries, and sidebars.

When we finished this issue, with its greater use of "information bites," one editor commented that it looked more in tune with these electronic times. Ironically, though, it also looks more like manuals and trade journals of the past! The *OHJ* library contains vocational texts and turn-of-the-century carpentry magazines that relied on sidebars and captioned photo sequences to telegraph information. The "hierarchy" in presentation just makes it easier on readers (not to mention imposing a certain logic on the editors).

In short takes such as *READING THE OLD HOUSE*, the calm, classic bordered pages are unchanged. We've always been fond of our old-fashioned presentation, not only because it's elegant but also because it suits *OHJ* editorial. Modern magazines are so often a frenetic parade of appealing but unrelated items, originating with dozens of different contributors and editors. But *OHJ* is produced by a small and unusually well versed group; in its crafting, cross-overs and mini-themes often develop, which makes the bookish design just right.

What's more remarkable than any fine-tuning, of course, is *OHJ*'s consistency through the years. It's astonishing to think that, although *OHJ* started as a neighborhood newsletter, some articles and departments

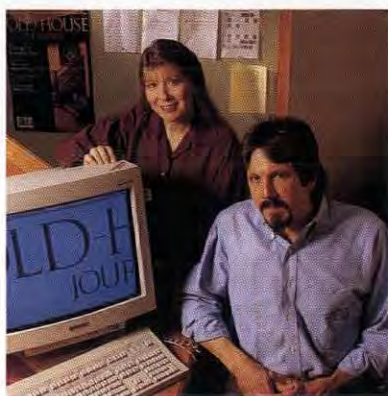
have been running steadily since Volume I. That's because the mission of the journal, as well as the general content of the text, has not wavered in 22 years.

The *TABLE OF CONTENTS* in this issue gives the debut dates of regular departments. Feature types, too, go way back. *OHJ*'s premiere issue, October 1973, included a *HOW-TO* article, an *OLD-HOUSE LIVING* story, archival art, and commissioned pen-and-ink illustrations, all familiar still. *HISTORY* and *STEWARDSHIP* features have appeared on and off since 1974; *TECHNIQUES* and *KNOW-HOW* became regular categories in 1980.

And, of course, *OHJ* has always included the arcane topic or technique — that subject about which the editors say, "If *OHJ* doesn't do it, then who will?" About a year ago, a reader told you how to lathe-turn solid stone columns. Back in June 1977, another reader provided the definitive feature on Victorian lawn fountains, complete with architectural specification drawings on a fountain's installation and pump.

Such active participation of readers is another thing that hasn't changed. Editors Bock and Poore (center) were restorers and subscribers first, as were regular contributors Randy Cotton, John Leeke, and Marylee MacDonald. Readers have always written the most active (and popular) items in *OHJ*: *MAILBOX*, *RESTORER'S NOTEBOOK*, *REMUDDLING*, *OLD-HOUSE LIVING*, and many full-length features. Even a rather obscure query last year elicited over 100 considered responses from *OHJ* readers — not unusual. That's involvement.

What else is in store? Expect bigger issues, and expanded coverage (with more art) in the popular columns *WHO THEY WERE*, *OUTSIDE THE OLD HOUSE*, and *OLD-HOUSE MECHANIC*. We'll keep fine-tuning the rest — and, as ever, we count on your communication.



Randy Cotton



OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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SHOWER PRAISE

Dear OHJ,
Thanks for "Indoor Rain: The Shower's Short History" (Nov./Dec. 1994). When I began to plan a bathroom for our master bedroom, I had images of a needle shower and wainscot. Your article woke me up like a cold shower. Clearly my 1923 Four-square would not have had such equipment. No disappointment however. The author pointed out many interesting nuances of 1920s bathrooms that will be fun to reproduce. For example, my porcelain fixtures will be all white (my house was built before the colored porcelain revolution), my tub will have a built-in skirt, and my room will be tiled. Thanks again, for steering me toward a directed, appropriate, and accurate plan.

— MEGAN T. KING
Columbus, Ohio

CHEVY HOUSES

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR EXCELLENT article about Chevy Houses ("Reading the Old House," Nov./Dec. 1994). We live in the Garrett Park development of Chevy Houses that you visited. Interestingly, very few buyers chose to purchase a Chevrolet with their house. The likely reason: auto prices were falling throughout the 1920s as mass production and market expansion took hold, and, we suspect, the price set by the developers was too high. A Saturday Evening Post ad for a 1925 Chevy

(the year Chevy Houses were first built and marketed) showed a Superior Roadster, the cheapest model, at \$495; most expensive was the Superior Sedan, at \$795. Records at Garrett Park indicate that the Chevys bought with a house went for more: \$708 to \$820. In any event, the Chevy Houses themselves sold like gangbusters, and they continue to be wonderful places to live.

— CAROL AND CHARLES SNYDER
Garrett Park, Md.

Another possible reason few Chevy House buyers opted for the car comes on is that adding its cost to a long-term

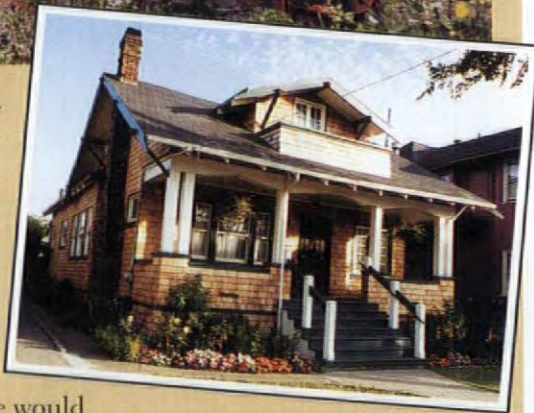
house mortgage meant paying higher interest than a separate car loan.

— The Editors

POCKET DOOR SURPRISE

WE UNCOVERED POCKET DOORS A full two years after we moved into our 1875 Queen Anne. What a surprise! I was prepping for a new paint job and noticed that the jamb had been patched and puttied down the center. My heart raced as I dug through the tool box for a pry bar. There, hidden inside, were two beautiful, panelled pocket doors. We replaced escutcheons and stops, but we really had no idea how to make them

BUNGALOW BROADSIDE



DESIGN WRITER PAUL DUCHSCHERER and photographer Douglas Keister are at work on a book about California Bungalows. They're also researching a national Bungalows book. If you think your home is a good example of American Bungalow architecture we would

like to see it. We're interested in original exteriors, as well as classic interiors such as built-ins, fireplaces, and wallcoverings. Send a snapshot and some information to: Douglas Keister, 5826 Fremont Street, Oakland, CA 94608 (510) 658-5766.

roll more smoothly. After reading "Back on Track" (Nov./Dec. 1994), we were able to level the doors and lift them over one high spot in the floor. We anticipated having to shim up the tracks, but as you recommended, we started by simply turning the adjustment screw. No major surgery was required. We're thrilled.

— JANET FOX
New Haven, Conn.

BLUE PORCH CEILINGS

IN THE NOV./DEC. 1994 ASK OHJ, THERE was a question about blue porch ceilings. My grandmother told me that they should always be painted light cornflower blue to keep wasps away. According to tradition, paper wasps (red wasps, yellow jackets, etc.) dislike building their nests on this color. In Texas, at least, this reasoning may have influenced the color choice even more than concerns about light reflection or emulating nature, which you mentioned in your response to the question. As recently as four years ago I was asked to paint the eaves of a house in the South Coastal Bend of Texas that same color, for the exact reason my grandmother stated.

— VIRGINIA APPLEMAN
Trinity, Texas

NEWEL HIDEAWAY

IN REFERENCE TO APOCRYPHAL OLD-house stories (Sept./Oct. 1994), I too have heard the one about the ivory disk set into the newel post of old New England houses. According to the tale, the ivory disk capped a hole bored into the center of the newel. When the mortgage was paid off, the document was rolled up and placed inside, and a new cap, made of silver, was put in its place. All of this was reportedly accompanied by a substantial party.

— LON A. MCPHERSON
Birmingham, Ala.

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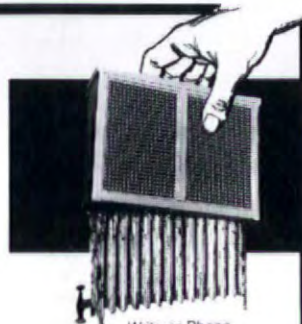
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ROOFING REACTION

THE SEPT./OCT. 1994 ROOFING ISSUE, particularly the "Wood Shingle Report," struck a chord with me because we have just replaced the original shingle roof on our 1922 Craftsman home. We considered materials other than wood shingles, but ultimately decided that, to maintain the integrity of the house, we needed



The Halls chose to retain pronounced coursing and a rustic wood look on their house.

to replace the roof using the original material. We bought #1 cedar shingles and hired a contractor who is a perfectionist. It will be interesting to see how the new roof wears compared to the 72-year-old one we removed. Although due for replacement, the old one wasn't in exceptionally bad shape, or leaking.

— MARY HALL
Missoula, Mont.

RECYCLED SLATE

YOUR INFORMATIVE ARTICLE, "SLATE and Shingle Lookalikes" (Sept./Oct. 1994) prompted me to write. We wanted to use natural slate roofing for an addition on our 1890s home. We could not afford new slate, but rather than resort to alternative materials, we were able to use recycled slate. It's not that hard to locate someone who is replacing their slate roof (try placing a newspaper ad).

The slate is probably perfectly good, but coming off for new fiberglass shingles. The shingles are usually tossed to the ground to smash. If you're willing to carry them down, they might be yours for the asking.

— CINDY NAUMOFF
Smithville, Ohio

ALL MOVED IN

IT'S BEEN FOURTEEN YEARS SINCE *Old-House Journal* featured our house in an article about house moving. We've been restoring it ever since, and, I'm happy to report, it's just about finished. Advice from *Old-House Journal* has gotten us through all these years — thanks.

— BETTY J. GALLI
Tracy, Calif.

TIMELY TIPS

ARE YOU CLAIRVOYANT? I JUST PURCHASED two 1890s mill houses in rural Georgia. Your July/Aug. 1994 issue was the first of my new subscription and you hit the nail on the head. Your



It took not only a flat-bed truck, but a barge and tug, to relocate this house 14 years ago.

cover story about painting aged wood was very helpful. The houses, vacant since the 1960s, cried out for your information on scraping, pressure washing, and prepping weathered wood. Then comes your Sept./Oct. issue and you must have read my mind. The houses both have metal roofs that need repairs, and your article about standing seam roofs was just the help I needed.

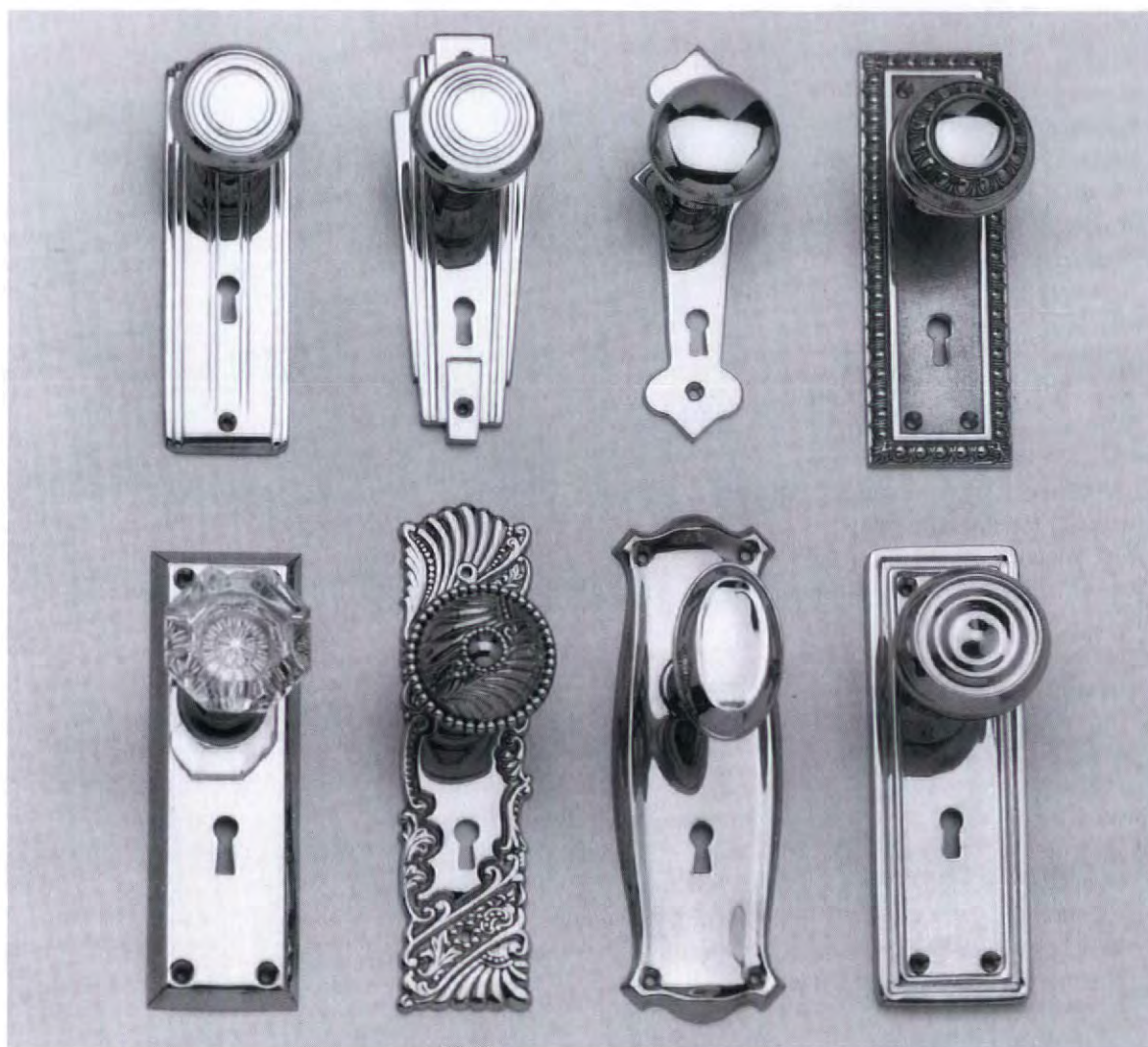
— RICHARD TURLEY
Atlanta, Ga.

RESTORATION EXPO RETURNS

RESTORATION '95, THE LARGEST ANNUAL TRADE EVENT DEDICATED TO preserving our cultural and industrial heritage, will be held Sunday through Tuesday, February 26-28 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston, Massachusetts. (The show in 1993 attracted over 250 exhibitors and 7,668 visitors.) For RESTORATION '95, the keynote address podium will be shared by Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Jacques Dalibard, Executive Director of Heritage Canada. For more information, contact RAI/EGI Exhibitions Visitor Information (617) 933-6663; fax (617) 933-8744.



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Ask OHJ

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Pitching Mansards

I am designing a Second Empire-style garage, using a photo of my grandparents' house as the model. I am not sure about the pitch on the mansard roof. Can you tell me what would be appropriate for an 1864 mansard?

— Rosalind Lee
Wichita, Kans.

MANSARDS — DOUBLE-PITCHED, hipped roofs with a nearly flat upper roof and steep lower roof — vary greatly. The lower roofs were built straight-sided, bell-shaped, concave, convex, or ogee. Pitches range from nearly vertical to about 45 degrees. A good guideline for a generic mansard's lower pitch might be on the order of four feet of rise to one foot of run.



Scale drawings from Victorian pattern-books can serve as models. (Woodward's National Architect, 1869)

Plastering Brick Walls

Previous owners of our c. 1855 Greek Revival townhouse removed the plaster from brick walls apparently not meant to be exposed.



One example of a Victorian mansard roof. The center square tower is not atypical. (Devoe Paint Co., 1885)

Judging by the marks on the moulding, the original plaster was troweled directly onto the brick, without any lath. Can this be true, and can we replaster the same way to maintain the interior space and moulding profile?

— Paula Lamblin
Mobile, Ala.

PLASTERING DIRECTLY ONTO BRICKWORK is very common because masonry makes an unbeatable base. Plaster and brickwork are both cementitious, so they bond well; masonry is extremely stable; and brickwork has the requisite rough texture. Replastering directly on the brick is OK unless there is an ongoing moisture problem. Often, plaster is removed because it has been damaged by moisture from rising damp, poor exterior drainage, missing mortar, or faulty gutters. So make sure the brickwork is dry

and free of underlying problems. (Another caveat, for restorers in cold climates: brick and plaster have low insulation values. Furring out with lath creates an air pocket that can improve the walls' weather resistance.)

When plastering directly on masonry, you must pre-wet the walls so they won't draw moisture out the plaster before it cures. One good wetting tool is a thick-napped paint roller. It may take three to 10 "coats" of water. The more porous the brick wall, the more water will be needed, but be careful not to over-wet the walls, which could temporarily close up the tiny openings and hinder proper bonding. Another good idea is to apply a modern bonding agent (such as Plasterweld, by Larsen Products Corp., 8264 Preston Court, Jessup, MD 20794; 800-633-6668) on the clean, wet wall. It will help old and new materials adhere. When the bonding agent has dried, trowel on the first coat of plaster.

[continued on page 16]



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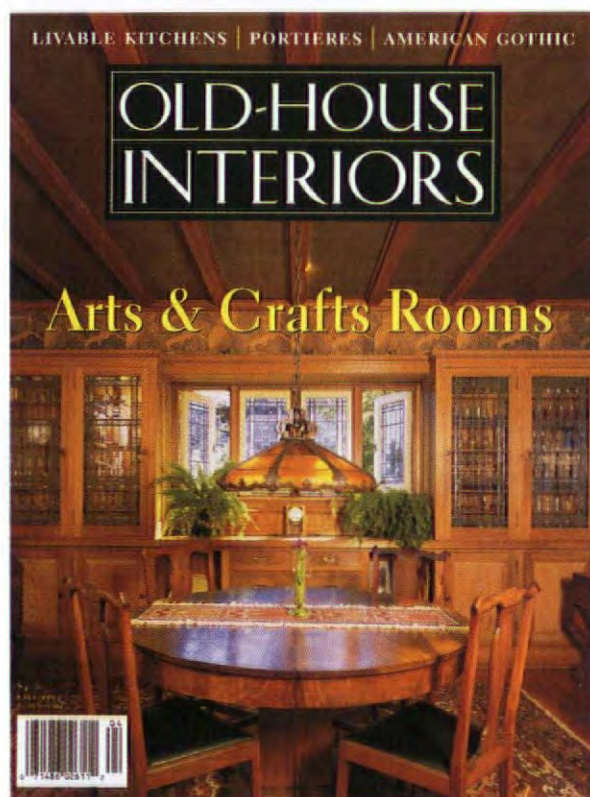
OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS is the quarterly magazine on decorating and furnishing ideas from the publishers of *Old-House Journal*. Intelligently written, beautifully photographed, this full-color magazine offers you expert advice on finishing, decorating, and furnishing period houses.

OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS includes everything inside the old house, from renovated bathrooms to carpets. It includes building elements — wainscot, doors and windows, hardware, plumbing fixtures — as well as finishes, furnishings, and textiles.

We give you beautiful photographs: lavish full-page room shots and close-up details. But we don't stop there. You'll find practical advice, plenty of background, and endless sources. Whether you're looking for an Empire sofa or push-button light switches, you'll find it in **OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS**.

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[continued from page 14]

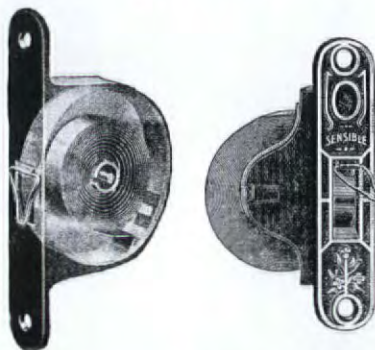
Sash Balance Variant

In a roughly 80-year-old apartment building, I recently discovered double-hung windows with counter balances I have never seen before. Where I expected to find cords or chains for the sash weights, there are metal ribbons. What are these and where can I get replacement parts?

— Bill Butler
Virginia Beach, Va.

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE FOUND A tape balance system. Often called clock-spring balances, these contraptions consist of a long ribbon, usually of steel, wound tightly around a spring-loaded drum. The unit is enclosed in a case installed much like a sash pulley. The pull of two tape balances is exactly matched to the weight of the sash.

The heyday of tape balances was probably the early 20th century, although manufacturers de-



The Sensible Sash tape balance, c. 1894.

veloped new spring balance systems well into the 1960s. Tape balances are still made by two original manufacturers in Rochester, New York: Caldwell Manufacturing Co., P.O. Box 92891, Dept. OHJ, Rochester, NY 14692; (716) 352-3790; and Pullman Manufactur-



An early electric heater, missing its screw-in heating elements.

ing Co., 77 Commerce Drive, Dept. OHJ, Rochester, NY 14623; (716) 334-1350. The systems are not only repairable, but are often a good retrofit option where old weight systems are gone, or restorers want to insulate the weight pockets.

Electric Heater, c. 1900

[Above] is a photograph of what I believe is an old electric heating unit. It is wired for 110 volts, is made of cast iron, and has three sockets for, I presume, heating elements. Am I right?

— Kimberly Birney
Mt. Clemens, Mich.

YES, YOU APPARENTLY HAVE ONE OF the first electric heaters. The units accepted screw-in elements and simply plugged into the house's new electrical main. Some even came with two power levels. The February 1902 issue of *Carpentry and Building* touted the benefits of the latest in heating technology: "The most important (feature) is that they provide pure warm air, no oxygen being consumed by them, nor are any noxious fumes given off. Their appearance is certainly bright and cheerful, and there are no ashes or dirt to be removed after their use." If the wiring is good, use large, high-intensity bulbs.

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BY GORDON BOCK AND JOSH GARSKOF

GUIDES TO HANDS-ON TECHNIQUES OR SOPHISTICATED technologies are best written by those who know the subject from the ground up. Such books contain those uncommon insights and practical tidbits of information that can only come from experience, precisely what you need for old-house work.

Richard Trethewey (of public television fame) is a second-generation heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) contractor. He is the first to admit it's not the sexiest line of work. Let's face it, many restorers are more turned on getting their mantelpieces and kitchen cabinets right than insulating pipes, calculating furnace returns, or vacuuming ducts. In *Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning: A Guide to the Invisible Comforts of Your Home*, Mr. Trethewey tries to change all that.

His book, part of the *This Old House* series, sheds light on the mysterious systems hidden in the walls, attics, and crawlspaces of old houses. Mr. Trethewey's point of view is simple: look at the entire old house and its HVAC equipment as a multi-faceted system. In other words, if heating costs are too high, or if the house is chilly, don't replace the furnace — at least not before you've made sure that the house is weathertight, the system is well maintained, and your lifestyle is appropriate (tee shirts are not in a northern winter). After reading this book, you'll be armed to make intelligent decisions when faced with breakdowns or replacing equipment.

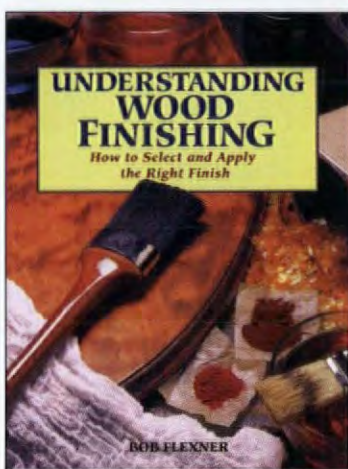
You'll also find hands-on tips, from the simple (planting shrubs in front of windows and bleeding radiators), to the more complex (cleaning a hot-water tank, installing an outdoor temperature sensor, and wash-

ing the soot from an oil burner). For fans of the show, there's also a little peek behind the scenes.

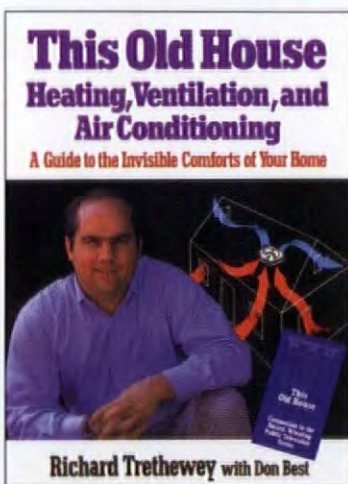
NO LESS LUCID A GUIDE TO NO LESS CONFUSING A subject — decorating and protecting wood with stains, shellacs, lacquers, and varnishes — is *Understanding Wood Finishing*. Like Mr. Trethewey's, Mr. Flexner's knowledge comes from first-hand experience; he trained in cabinet shops before setting up his own refinishing business. Also like Mr. Trethewey, he has moved on to share his expertise — through magazine articles, and now this book.

As Bob Flexner sees it, woodworkers of all levels suffer from a "fear of finishing." He's right. Old legends or blamey about finishing never seem to die; claims for today's products can sound like doubletalk (what, for instance, is "satin gloss"?). This tangle of information can leave anybody afraid they'll ruin a project with the wrong stroke of a brush. Mr. Flexner's mission is to show us that colors and coatings work via predictable chemistry. Successful wood finishing is science — not art, alchemy, or luck.

Despite a few editing flaws, *Wood Finishing* does a deft job of explaining many materials and their uses, from aniline to xylene. Each section gets right to the point, helped by sidebars, charts, and myth/fact ticklers. (The breakdown of strippers is about as up-to-date as one can be in a book.) The nature of wood is important, too (e.g., uneven density explains why softwoods can stain "blotchy"), so Mr. Flexner gives lessons in botany along with advice on removing dents and glue splashes. There's more to a good finish than mopping the wood with polyurethane.



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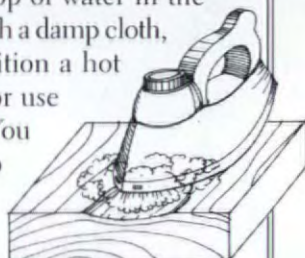
AN OLD, FOAM PAINT PAD MAKES an excellent helper for removing old wallpaper and hanging new paper. When you're stripping, use the pads to apply hot water and paper-removal solutions. Because the foam is set inside a plastic cover with a handle, the hot solution won't drip down your arms even when you're working overhead.

For hanging new paper, the paint pad is an excellent brush substitute. The foam spreads the wiping force out nicely to prevent paper tears, and it absorbs excess water and paste for easy removal. Lightly dampen the pad before use to make it slide easily over the paper.

— KORY KROFFT
Pleasant Hill, Ohio

IRONING BOARDS

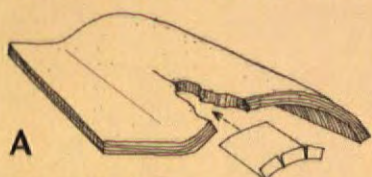
IF YOU'VE GOT A SMALL DENT IN some unfinished softwood trim or furniture, here's a way to raise it. Place a drop of water in the dent, cover with a damp cloth, and then position a hot iron on top, or use a steam iron. You may need to repeat the process a few times, and it may take a while, but the steam will cause the wood fibers to expand and fill up the dent. This works only if the wood is simply dented, not if the grain has been severed or gouged out. (Hardwood doesn't really dent; it generally sustains cell damage.) If it doesn't work, an appropriate filler may be the only repair option.



— MARSHALL YOUNG
New Orleans, La.

SPANISH TILE PATCH

ARE A FEW OF THE SPANISH TILES ON YOUR ROOF BROKEN? HERE'S how I patch mine. First cut a piece of aluminum flashing and shape it to the underside contour of the broken area, using a whole tile as a form (see below). Next wedge the aluminum in place under the damaged tile with a wood scrap and a piece of cloth.



Then coat the tile's broken edges with a masonry bonding agent (a white, glue-like product that improves adhesion between old and new materials).

Mix some mortar in a coffee can to a workable consistency. Using a water-filled spray bottle, wet the area and apply the mortar, shaping it to the contour of the tile with a trowel, a piece of wood, or with your hands (see above). Then cover with a damp cloth and let it set up. When the repair is hard, remove the wood block and cloth, but leave the aluminum piece in place for support. Sand out the mortar's rough spots and then coat it, and the aluminum, with patching caulk for a smooth appearance. Finally, paint it to match the rest of the roof. I use a ruddy-brown sandable auto primer for a base coat, and auto touch-up paint for a topcoat. Automotive lacquers dry hard and give a nice glazed appearance. "Metallic Maroon" matched my tile perfectly, but test for the right color for yours.

— JIM PETROPULOS
Wilmington, Calif.



With the patch finished, my tile is ready for painting.

BONDO SANDER

IF YOU ARE SANDING LOTS OF DE-tailed moulding with the same profile, you can make a sanding block out of a blob of auto-body patching material (such as Bondo). Place a wide piece of low-tack tape onto the trim and carefully form the Bondo to its contour. Make a palm-shaped grip or embed a handle and allow to dry. Then pull it from the wood (the tape makes removal easy). Your sanding block is ready — just attach sticky-backed sandpaper and go to it.

— JIM WEBB
Salem, Oreg.

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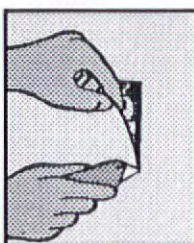
3. Apply fiberglass mat to wet surface.



4. Trim excess mat where wall meets ceiling.



5. Trim mat at baseboard and window.



6. Trim mat at outlets, switches, etc.



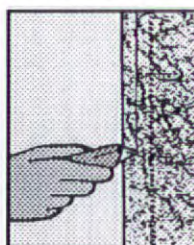
7. Apply second coat of saturant to wet mat.



8. Apply 1st coat of saturant to adjacent area.



9. Apply mat to 2nd area, overlapping by 1".



10. Cut down center of overlap (both layers).



11. Remove mat strips on both sides of cut.



12. Apply 2nd coat of saturant (include seam)

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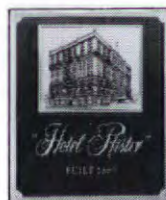


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Porch and Paint Palaver for a Stylish Italianate

BY JAMES C. MASSEY AND SHIRLEY MAXWELL

READER ANN PERSONS SENT PHOTOS OF HER 1883 brick home, built in Lewis County in the Adirondacks region of upper New York State. She suspects that its style is Italianate, but asks for more information — particularly regarding appropriate trim colors and the history of its porch.

Yes, the house is Italianate, and an especially fine and stylish example. Among its notable Italian features are the deeply projecting cornice with large console brackets and the attractive front porch, or verandah. The owner asks if it is original to the house: “The porch isn’t built straight across the front, but projects in the center . . . the roof and porch brackets match.” We think the porch comports well with the design and period of this house, so we would guess it is original. (Ms. Persons astutely searched beneath it for evidence of earlier stairs, and found none.) A pretty feature, somewhat unusual for this period, is the third-storey row of windows that engage the cornice — an allusion to classical proportion more familiar on Federal era houses like those designed by Samuel McIntire in Massachusetts.

The Italianate Style is the most free-form of 19th-century Italian styles (which include Renaissance Revival and the Italian and Tuscan Villa Styles). Earlier Villa styles, built from the 1840s on, were based on the latest revival of Italian style in England (1830s-’40s), derived from farmhouses and country villas built in Renaissance Italy. Villas feature bold massing, round windows, and *campaniles* (towers) or *belvederes* (cupolas).

In contrast, “Italianate” refers to houses that “have the characteristics of” the Italian style. Italianate Style refers to any house or commercial building that combines Italian-style shapes and details, however plain or exaggerated. For example, Renaissance Revival elements might be applied to a picturesque villa shape. Although the Villa styles are as-

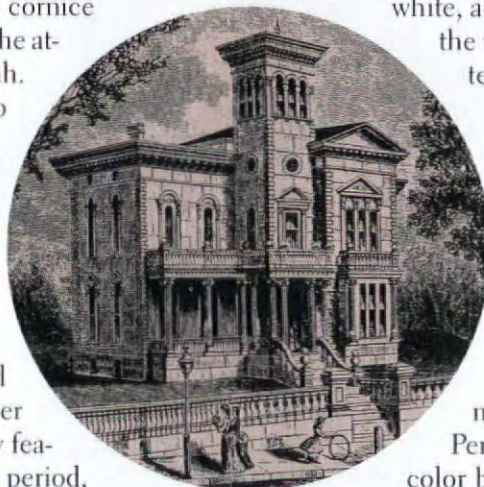
sociated with mid-century, Italianate houses remained popular through the later High Victorian period. (Edith Wharton’s novel *Hudson River Bracketed* takes place in an Italianate house, lending an alternate name to the style.)

THE OWNER ASKED ABOUT THE COLOR OF THE HOUSE trim. “All of the wood trim on our house is painted white, and the shutters are black. I believe the trim was once brown and the shutters green. Can you suggest other color schemes?”

Brown and green indeed would have been a common Victorian-era color combination, and more appropriate than black and white. The shutters likely would have been a dark, even blackish, green. Brown could mean anything from drab to greyed mocha to deep warm chocolate. Ms.

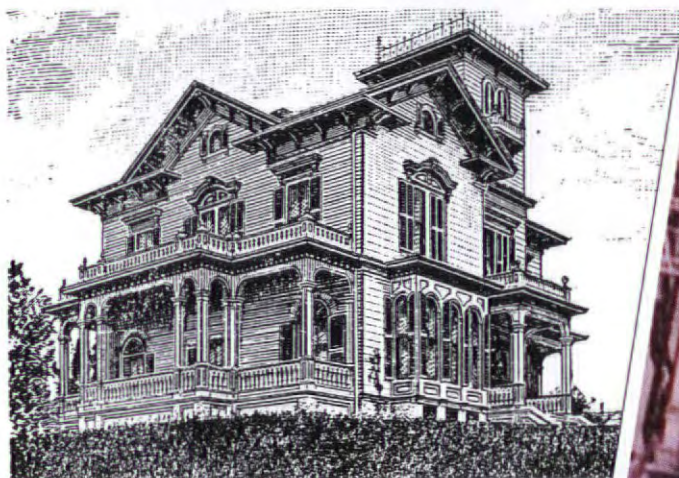
Persons may decide to restore the trim color based on historical evidence — or she may opt for an appropriate but conjectural color combination more to her liking.

First, she should scrape the trim paint in various locations to see what colors can be determined. If there isn’t enough evidence, or if she is less than delighted with the colors that were used in the past, she could look to books or a historic-colors consultant for a pleasing yet historically appropriate scheme. Italianate buildings most often wore colors reminiscent of stone: buffs, greys, olive browns. The 1883 date allows for the richer colors of the late Victorian era. The entry doors may be painted the trim color (or a deeper shade of the same), or highlighted in a complementary but not garish color. One caution: An Italianate house of this formality would not generally have been elaborately done up with complex polychrome.



THIS PAGE: Identified as the Ruggles S. Morse residence in this 19th century engraving, the Portland, Maine, landmark now known as the Morse-Libby mansion was designed in brownstone by John Notman in the Italian Villa Style.

ENGRAVING: This picturesque frame Italianate has a bay window, a *campanile*, a bracketed cornice — and an arcaded verandah strikingly similar to the one on our reader's brick house. It was built around 1886 in Lynn, Massachusetts. **PHOTOS:** Italianate details on this 1883 house include a bracketed cornice, an arcaded verandah, and prominent architraves (lintels) at window heads. Massing is broadly based on the Tuscan Villa shape, but without a *belvedere*. The house may have sported brown trim and dark-green shutters in the 19th century.





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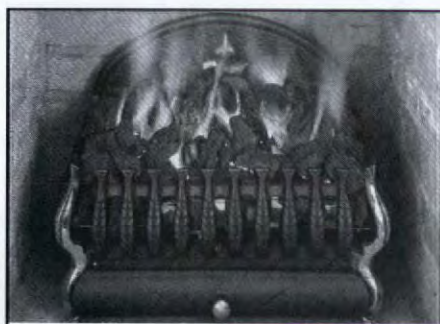
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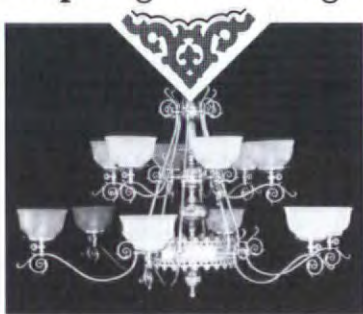
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PERHAPS THE DECIDING MOMENT CAME IN the spring of 1897, as Henry Mercer searched for a set of fireplace tools in a junk dealer's barn. Around him lay plows, spinning wheels — objects made obsolete by power machinery. In that moment, suggests historian Helen Gemmill, he recognized the discards as the very evidence future archaeologists would seek. So began his collection of everyday objects: the hand utensils and implements of farming, carpentry, metal-making, weaving, cooking, lighting and heating. Henry Mercer would go on to establish The Mercer Museum, where visitors can now view 50,000 once-commonplace objects his contemporaries regarded as junk — a collection Mercer predicted would be “worth its weight in gold a hundred years hence.”

Archaeologist, anthropologist, historian, scholar . . . those are the Renaissance-man labels biographers would pin on Henry Mercer. But, never content with academic exercise, he left a practical legacy. For example, he developed chronologies for nails, hardware, and wood mouldings, considering not only style but technology: how the building components were made. He was one of the first advocates for a systematic analysis of historic buildings, now accepted practice for architectural conservators.



HENRY CHAPMAN MERCER WAS BORN AND died in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, the county seat of beautiful and historic Bucks County. Mercer studied law at Harvard, graduating in 1879, but never practiced. The appreciation of past civilizations was his true love. He took archaeological treks to Europe, the Mideast, and Mexico, and participated on digs throughout the U.S. Still, Mercer is most remembered for work at home. His premier collection is housed at the Mercer Museum, the innovative con-

crete structure he finished in 1916.

Mercer, in fact, built three monumental structures of reinforced poured concrete: the Museum, the Spanish Mission-inspired Moravian Pottery and Tile Works (1912), and his own phantasmagorical dream castle, Fontheil (1908-1912). His home he designed “room by room, from the interior, the exterior not being considered until all the rooms had been imagined and sketched.”



Henry Mercer (1856-1930) with his Chesapeake Bay retriever Rollo ca. 1910.

At Fontheil, cement was mixed by hand and hoisted in wheelbarrows or by pulley, the ropes pulled forward on counterblocks by a horse named Lucy, later immortalized on the weathervane above the house. Mercer introduced several innovations. One was a collapsible box, a removable form which created air shafts, chases, and insulating spaces. Another was a method of creating vaulted ceilings. His innovations extended to the decorative use of the material; he “aged” patches of raw concrete, for example, by scorching it with burning tarpaper.

Fontheil was a stage-set for Mercer's vast personal collection of artifacts, historic textiles, prints, and ceramics — as well as a showcase for Mercer's tile work. While scouring the countryside back in 1897, Mercer's interest had been piqued by the pottery making of the Pennsylvania Germans. Dismayed that the craft had almost disappeared, he decided to “resuscitate one of the moribund clay shops.” Starting inauspiciously with a kiln used by dentists to make false teeth, disappointment with the results took him to the Black Forest for further study. In a few years he had perfected his techniques, establishing the still-operating Moravian Pottery and Tile Works.

Even before Fontheil was finished, Mercer began designing the concrete Tile Works, basing it on Spanish mission churches of California; but he included fan windows familiar in English manor houses, and a tiled

Built over and around a c. 1820 stone farmhouse, Mercer's dream castle Fonthill has 44 rooms, 32 stairwells, 18 fireplaces, and 200 windows, few of which are alike.



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Russian stove. As with the house, there were no blueprints, this time not even a plaster model. Rough sketches and notes sufficed, along with Mercer's daily site visits. Accompanied by three dogs, Mercer, who never owned a car, pedaled over on his bicycle, a Scots wool cape billowing behind in cool weather.

Mercer's architectural tiles were in demand not only for residential fireplace surrounds and foyers, but also for such prestigious installations as the floors of Boston's Gardner Museum and the Pennsylvania Statehouse. They were used in Grauman's Chinese Theater, in hotels in Cairo and Atlantic City, and in a bowling alley at the John D. Rockefeller estate. Mercer's interest in tiles had come at a time when the Arts and Crafts movement was at its peak.

Mercer's lifelong fascination with ancient cultures and myths now found practical application. Medieval Europe, the Aztecs, Bible stories, exploration of the New World, nursery rhymes, Shakespeare, Native Americans, the stove-plate designs of the Pennsylvania Deutsch (Germans) — all inspired the designs of tiles and mosaics.

SIX YEARS AFTER MERCER'S MUSEUM opened, Henry Ford came to Doylestown seeking ideas — as well as artifacts — for the now-famous museum he was planning at Dearborn (near Detroit). By then crotchety with poor health and railing against hot dogs and cocktails, a reluctant Henry Mercer eventually retreated to a personal sanctuary over the garage, to escape from the weekend tourists celebrating him and his curious buildings.

Mercer continued his chronology of pre-industrial arti-



Known as the Mercer Mile, three National Landmarks built by Mercer in Doylestown, Penn., are open to the public. These are Fonthill (215/348-9461); The Mercer Museum (215/345-0210); and the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works (215/345-6722). Tiles from Mercer's era are still produced and for sale by the Pottery.

facts. He published his findings in *The Dating of Old Houses* (1923), a seminal reference for decades. That was followed by *Ancient Carpenters' Tools* (1929), still considered a classic. (He also wrote ghost stories, published in 1928 as *November Night Tales*.)

At a time when fellow collectors were inclined to acquire fine-art objects and treasures of past civilizations, Henry Mercer was interested in the not-so-ancient artifacts of America. His obituary in the magazine *Antiques* said that his career "pointed toward a single goal . . . knowledge concerning the arts and crafts fundamental to the development of a civilized society."

Contributing editor Randy Cotton wishes to thank Helen Hartman Gemmill and The Bucks County Historical Society, and Fonthill Site Administrator David N. April.

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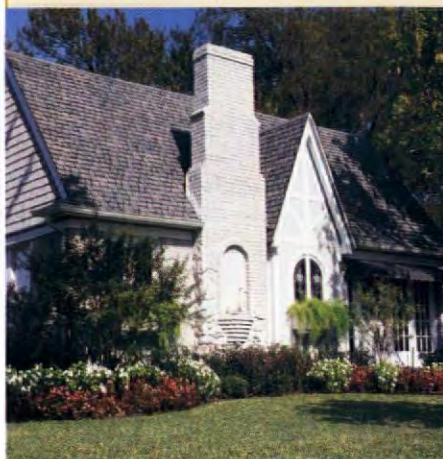
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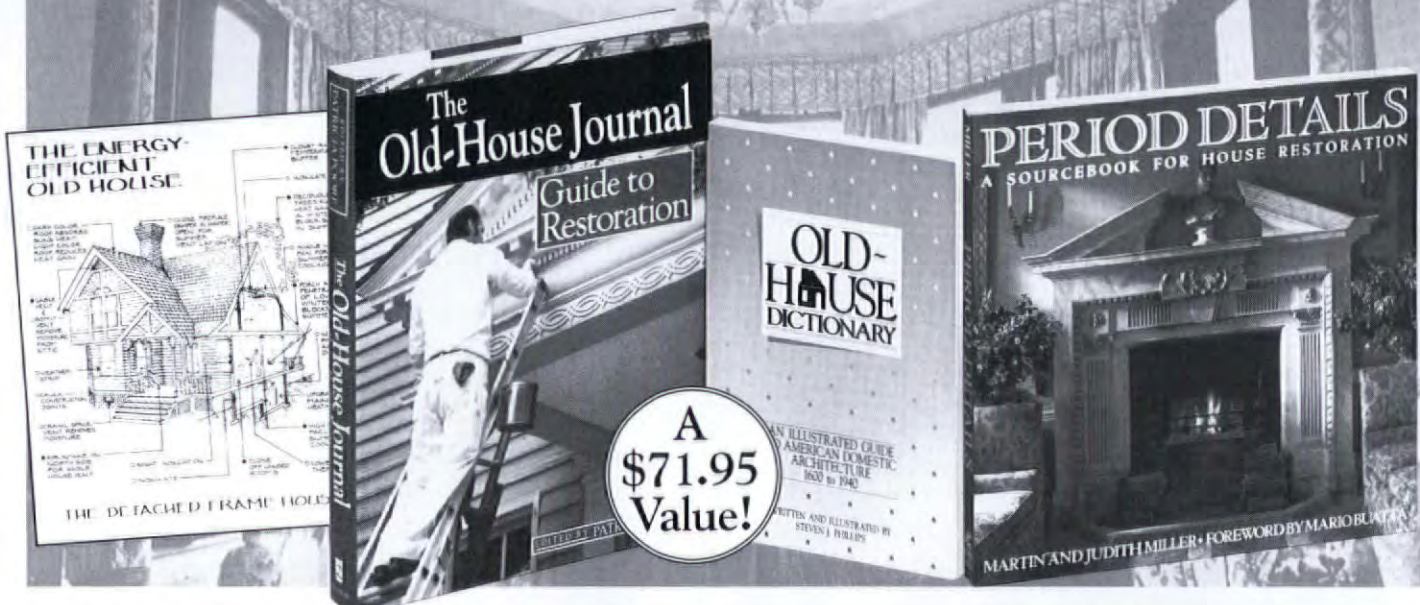


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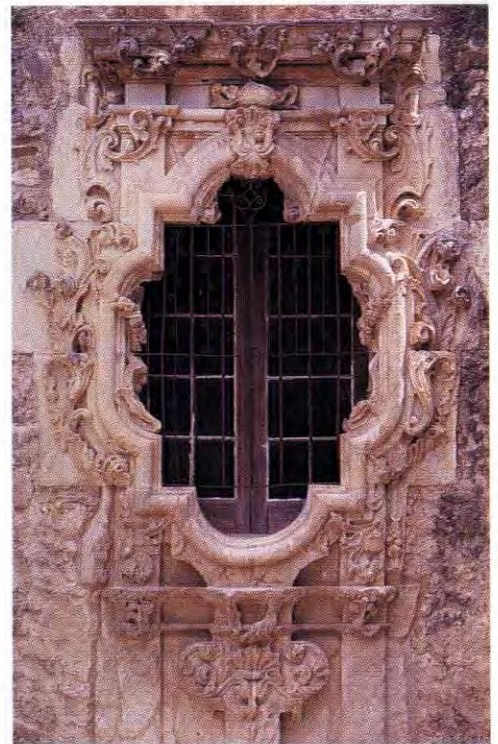
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995



THE Architecture OF THE Spanish Colonies

By James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell

SAY "SPANISH COLONIAL" AS IF IT LABELS A HOUSE STYLE, and what comes to mind are the derivative but highly romanticized tile-roofed cottages of the early 20th century. That's not our subject here. We'll look back, instead, at that style's antecedents: the buildings left to us by Spanish colonials of the 17th and 18th centuries. ¶ The architectural legacy of the Spanish Colonies is understandably less familiar than that of the English. For one thing, North America was not a Spanish stronghold. Conquest was concentrated in South and Central America, including Peru and Mexico, where population was dense and the potential for gain greatest. Less attention was paid to holdings around present-day New Orleans, Mobile, and Pensacola; Puerto Rico; and the Mexican territories of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. ¶ Second, the architecture does not exist in a concentration for easy study or labelling. Compared to the lush Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions, the territory of New Spain was vast, sparsely settled, and often bleakly forbidding. ¶ Third, domestic dwellings are rare. While the English, Germans, French, Dutch, and other Europeans set out to establish large colonies of homesteaders, Spain's intention was to extract wealth, gain converts, and ward off invasion: she built missions, churches, and fortifications.



ABOVE: Enframing the rose window of the church at Mission San Jose (San Antonio, 1768) is the famed carving of Churrigueresque ornament. **OPPOSITE:** An arcade and louvered shutters seen from the interior *patio* of a private house in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico.



A house in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. A consistent style tradition developed in the heavily Spanish-influenced city.

In Northern Florida, St. Augustine's famous star fort, Castillo San Marcos (1638-1756) and Pensacola's Fort San Carlos (rebuilt in 1783) remain striking reminders of Spanish occupation. But houses from the period are scarce and inconspicuous.

Each area of settlement, far-flung over 300 years and thousands of miles, interpreted architecture differently and developed its own idiom. Perhaps the most consistent tradition developed 800 miles offshore, in the Caribbean Island commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Unlike Spanish settlements in the continental United States, Puerto Rico sustained a major population center. The Spanish influence there was strong and direct, as the indigenous population — the Arawats — was decimated shortly after Columbus arrived.

In the Southwest, ancient stone and adobe pueblos dovetailed with the Spanish emphasis on masonry walls and indigenous building materials. Later, Eastern Anglos contributed the Greek Revival details that resulted in New Mexico's Territorial style and California's Monterey style. Wherever design ideas came from, the building's style depended upon the colonial or native hands and materials used to execute them.

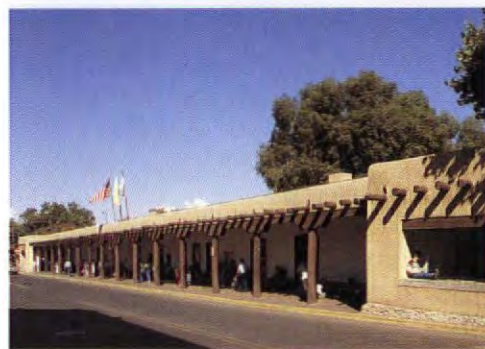
Churrigueresque ornament, a baroque style of decoration named after 16th-century architect Jose Benito Churriguera, was much admired in 18th-century Spain and Mexico. It sometimes appeared in New Spain's most grandiose churches, as did more restrained classical motifs. But such ornament is unheard-of in domestic buildings. Whether civic, domestic, or religious, Spanish Colonial buildings were usually not large, almost never over two storeys.

Common characteristics of Spanish Colonial buildings include plan, form, and masonry construction.

WHAT MOST DISTINGUISHES THIS ARCHITECTURE is a layout that turns toward a central court for safety, privacy, and a sense of the outdoors. Plans featured courtyards and small *placitas* formed by long lines of rooms on two or more sides. (If there weren't enough rooms to go around, masonry walls completed the enclosure.) Old San Juan has the best examples. Entire towns, in fact, were a single file of end-to-end houses wrapped tightly around central plazas that served as marketplaces, civic centers, and social venues. The best surviving example of the Spanish Colonial fortified town is Chimayo, New Mexico, founded around 1730.

Just as characteristic are the arcades or *portales* (long, narrow, roofed-over rows of arches and columns) that created sheltered walking and sitting areas outside, evoking the cloistered walks of monasteries. Front porches later came into fashion. In the Southwest, these were supported by rough, round timber posts decorated with carved and painted brackets at the roof. Saint Augustine, New Orleans, and Old San Juan are full of overhanging balconies.

The customary line of rooms didn't easily allow for doors between them, so access



was usually from a covered portal. In other words, it was necessary to go outside in order to move around inside. Multiple exterior doors are common. Doorways were sometimes ornate in churches (even *Churrigueresque* in elaborate cases), but they remained plain on houses. The earliest doors featured wrought-iron hardware, brought by

the *padres* from Spain. Early doors are low and constructed of plain plank, turning on pintles rather than hinges. Only a few doors of this period are carved and panelled.

Windows were few in the thick masonry walls, especially early on. Window reveals, deeply splayed to minimize the amount of light that could enter, rarely contained glass, protected instead by iron bars or shutters. As eastern civilization edged closer after the completion of the Santa Fe Trail to St. Louis in the late 18th century, that began to change. By the 1830s, windows were larger and more likely to be glazed and have wooden framing, sometimes alluding to the Greek Revival or Italianate fashion. Rare is the colonial-period house that has unaltered windows today.

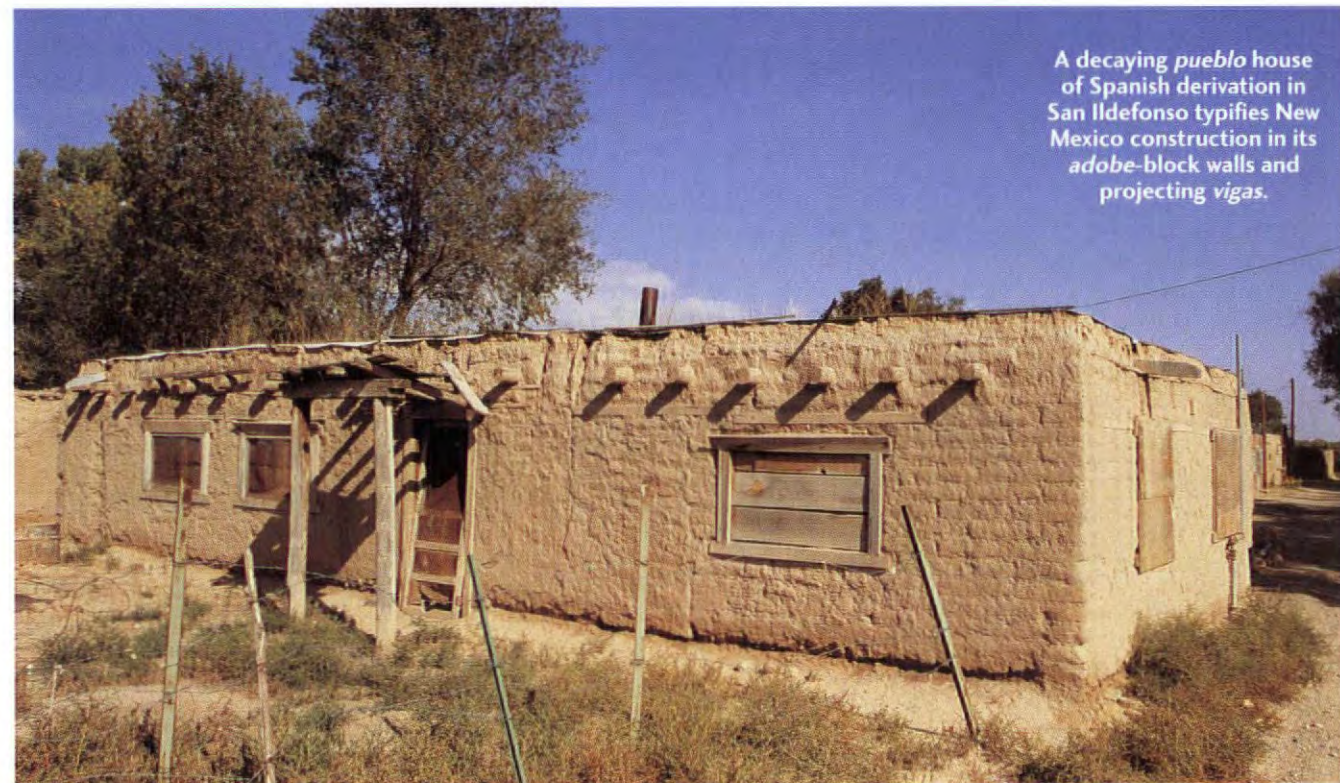
Stuccoed masonry of one sort or another was generally the rule for walls. Wood and thatch were used, if available, for some of the very earliest buildings. However, these ephemeral materials were soon abandoned for more durable and defensible masonry construction.

Roof lines might be gabled and gently sloped (as in California), hipped (popular along the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi), or flat and possibly parapeted (especially in the arid Southwest). Flat roofs actually had an almost imperceptible slope and

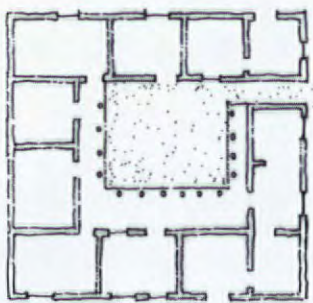


Flat roof with parapet and supporting *vigas*, or round timber beams.

PHOTOS LEFT: In Pensacola, Florida, the circa 1810 Desiderio Quina house reflects a growing English influence. Santa Fe's Palace of the Governors, 1610 with *portal* added in 1705, shows typical Southwestern *adobe* construction. It was extensively "restored" in 1909.



A decaying *pueblo* house of Spanish derivation in San Ildefonso typifies New Mexico construction in its *adobe*-block walls and projecting *vigas*.



An idealized central-court plan, with rooms encircling an arcaded patio.

a system of *canales* (internal drains) to carry runoff away from the vulnerable wall. A series of *vigas* (round timber beams) was a safe and familiar support system. Because timber was scarce, rarely were oversize *vigas* shortened (the extra length might come in handy in reuse on a future building project). Used as-is, they projected unevenly through the wall. On top of the *vigas*, the roof was built up with several layers of mud plaster and small sticks — and covered with tiles, when cost was not an obstacle.

Each region developed its own vernacular: *adobe* or *coquina*, tiled roofs and Territorial Style.

QUITE DIFFERENT INFLUENCES RESULTED IN a vernacular style for each region. Along the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi River, where control shifted from one European power to another, we find the celebrated blend of Spanish, French, and English influences, the French flavor predominant.

Masonry construction may have been the rule, but material and style differed widely. In Florida, houses were built of *coquina* (a soft local stone composed of shells and coral) or *tabby* (a limestone and oyster-shell aggregate). Builders in the Southwest favored stone or blocks of *adobe* bed-

ABOVE RIGHT: Mission San Gabriel Archangel (1812), one of the famous chain of Pacific Coast Spanish missions. **BELOW:** Typical of St. Augustine's early houses, the 1720 Arrivas House has a *coquina* first storey with a frame second level.



ded in a mud mortar and covered with mud-plaster finish. The Indians were already accustomed to *adobe*, which they laid in long strips; the Spanish innovation was to mold it with wood forms into manageable blocks. *Adobe* created thick walls; coolly insulating by day and radiantly warm at night, it was practical in hot, dry climates. But it deteriorated quickly unless protected by a good roof and frequent coats of mud or lime plaster and whitewash.

European architectural influence in the Southwest came not directly from Spain, but by way of Mexico, Spain's administrative headquarters for New World territories. We see the influence of Mexican architects and builders; their counterparts further north changed European conventions even more to suit the limited materials and less skilled labor of remote areas.

Of particular note in the Southwest are the tiled roofs so dear to the 20th-century Spanish Colonial Revival. In the 18th century, they were recognized as a practical, fireproof alternative to thatch. The rounded barrel tiles were expensive, however; sometimes tile roofs were dismantled and sold for quick cash by hardup owners.

IN TEXAS AND ARIZONA STAND THE MOST sophisticated of the Spanish Colonial buildings, those most faithful to the styles that flourished in Spain during the period. San Antonio was within relatively easy travel of Mexico City; benefit shows in several outstanding churches and missions. One is the Alamo, which had an honorable ca-





reer as a mission before it became the ruinous fort where Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie fell to the Mexicans in 1836. San Antonio's Mission San Jose has an exceptional example of *Churrigueresque* ornament, a mélange of highly sculpted curves and figural art created by Mexican sculptor Pedro Huizar, set against the otherwise blank walls of the mission.

New Mexico, less accessible than Texas, was more likely to follow the tastes and abilities of its indigenous builders. Consequently, New Mexico's *adobe* pueblos, missions, and churches show far more Indian than Spanish influence. After the American Civil War, however, the Territorial Style — a late blossoming of the Greek Revival with a distinctive New Mexican twist — became the state's popular building mode. It announces itself not only in wood trim, but also in the narrow line of brick corbelling at roof parapets and in brick trim around windows and doors. The heyday of

the Territorial Style was from the late 1860s to about 1890, but it persisted in backwaters until the Great Depression. Santa Fe's 1616 Palace of the Governors is the best-known example of the Spanish period, although not a perfect one: its long *portal*, modernized in Territorial fashion in 1878, was "restored" in 1909 to a more "colonial" appearance.

California is noted for its extant string of 18th-century Spanish missions snaking up the Pacific coast from Mexico to just north of San Francisco. During the Victorian era, the porches and balconies of Monterey Style houses were decorated with sawn-wood balusters like those of 19th-century porches across the country. In California, too, we find *haciendas*, the original ranch houses.

HOW FORTUNATE THAT THE CALIFORNIA missions, which had been abandoned after they were secularized in the late 1700s, were rediscovered early in the 20th century! Although restoration of early Spanish buildings was sometimes done to standards considered amateur by today's architectural historians, it was just in time to save an important part of our national heritage.

A new generation of Americans embraced the architectural motifs of New Spain as they headed for vacation homes or permanent houses in Florida, California, Arizona, and New Mexico during the 1920s.

View from the porch of the Leonis Adobe (1844 and later) in Calabasas, a fine example in the San Fernando Valley. **LEFT:** Spanish and Anglo influences both are evident in the 1850s Jose Navarro house, San Antonio.



Greek Revival details define Territorial Style on this otherwise typical early New Mexico house.



Corner treatments (above): Here a Neo-Grecian Anaglypta wallcovering smoothly turns a corner; an Adam frieze handles a similar change with a complementary border. A Neoclassical frieze of Lincrusta (opposite), finished to imitate tooled leather, is expertly hung above cherry woodwork.

A GUIDE TO Hanging Lincrusta & Anaglypta

THE THOUGHT OF HANGING WALLPAPER CAN DRAW GROANS from many restorers. Suggest hanging Lincrusta or Anaglypta and their knees begin to knock — after all, these Victorian-era embossed wallcoverings aren't pre-pasted vinyl paper. Lincrusta is a heavy, rigid product made of a linseed oil mixture (*lin*) with a deep relief (*crusta*); Anaglypta is a similar, lightweight embossed material made from cotton pulp. Both wallcoverings, invented in the late 19th century, are still made today and are embossed in a number of style vocabularies from Classical to Art Nouveau. So how do you hang them? First, don't let the unique qualities scare you off. Although there are a few differences due to the weight and sculpted relief, hanging Lincrusta and Anaglypta is much like installing any other wallcovering.





Transform plain ceilings into decorative masterpieces with easy-to-hang, lightweight Anaglypta.

Paste cannot be removed from bare wood, so paint existing trim before hanging. Also, whenever possible, remount painted trim after hanging and painting the embossed wallcovering.

Be Sure of Your Walls

POOR WALL PREPARATION IS OFTEN THE reason embossed wallcovering installations are unsuccessful. To assure good adhesion, see that all surfaces are clean, firm, and dry before beginning to hang Lincrusta or Anaglypta. These simple tests will help you prepare your walls correctly.

PREPARING THE SURFACE Remove any wallpaper and check painted surfaces for paint adhesion with this method:

- ♦ Cut a one-inch "X" with a razor blade.
- ♦ Firmly apply a piece of scotch tape over the "X."
- ♦ Quickly remove the scotch tape.

If there is more than a trace of paint stuck to the tape, the paint must be removed either by scraping or sanding. (Follow all precautions for lead-paint removal.) Flat paint requires additional testing. With a wet cloth, rub the flat paint vigorously for 15 seconds. If there is any color transfer, the paint must be removed completely.

Fill large cracks and gaps with a joint compound or caulk. Sand or scrape rough surfaces and completely remove any special textured finishes. Panelling and rough surfaces, such as concrete, should be lined (crosswise) with a heavy lining paper.

PRIME TIME Once smooth, wash all surfaces with a solution of 2 cups of house-

hold bleach per gallon of water and leave until dry. Then prime the walls with one coat of a wallcovering primer/sealer. Use a water-based acrylic primer specifically designed to go under wallcoverings — never use an oil-based primer.

Prepare the Wallcovering

STUDY YOUR SPACE CAREFULLY AND SELECT the wall that is the focal point of the room. Plan accordingly so that the strips of embossed wallcovering begin in the center of the prominent wall and spread evenly to the left and right corners. This ensures that the unequal corner will be inconspicuous.

Using a pencil and level or a plumb line and chalk, mark a vertical plumb line down the center of the prominent wall and measure the length of the surface to be covered.

TRIMMING Most Lincrusta designs have a selvedge edge for protection, which must be trimmed off. Using the longest straightedge available, cut off both protective edges from the back side. Follow along the guidelines embossed into the material. If you make a trimming mistake, don't worry. Caulk and paint work wonders on Lincrusta.

While most Lincrusta can be trimmed on the wall, some of the thicker patterns must be cut on the floor. The thicker patterns will be obvious after you install your first piece. Also, if the top edge of the wall is relatively level, it is easier for you to trim the tops of the pieces while they are on the floor. This will allow you to keep one piece available for lining up the pattern.

Anaglypta, however, should be trimmed across the top with a very sharp razor blade and straightedge. Remember to change blades often. If the Anaglypta resists cutting and starts to tear, make a crease in the corner with a straightedge or butter knife, then cut with scissors.

APPLYING THE GLUE Before installation, Lincrusta must sponged with water and allowed to soak for 30 minutes. Failure to soak Lincrusta can result in severe stretching after installation. Lay a strip down on top of a plastic drop cloth or other waterproof surface. Using a roller or sponge,

spread warm water on the back. Don't submerge the entire piece.

After wiping away the excess water, apply a thin, even coat of adhesive to the back of the piece to be hung. Use only a vinyl-over-vinyl adhesive. Just before hanging, apply a thin coat of glue to the wall, wiping off any excess as you proceed.

When working with Anaglypta, unroll the first strip and place it face down on a work table or board. With a paint roller or wide brush, apply a coat of a clay-based vinyl wallcovering paste evenly on the upper half of the strip. For Original or Supadurable papers, use a generous amount of paste, making certain to fill in the embossing completely. Brush the glue from the center toward the edges with outward strokes.

Without creasing the paper, fold the pasted half to the center, then paste the lower half and fold to the center. Allow the paste to soak into the product for 10 minutes. If the paste seems to be drying out before installation, coat the wall lightly with paste before hanging the strip. But don't paste the wall only! Paste only two strips at a time and never soak Anaglypta in water. Remove any excess paste from the wallcovering and surrounding surfaces as you proceed.

Hanging Instructions

WE'LL START WITH WALLCOVERINGS OR "fillings," then go on to special conditions such as dados and borders. Note, however, that the ceiling should be hung first.

FOR WALLCOVERINGS The instructions here are specific to embossed wallcoverings; you can get basic wallpapering know-how from a handyman book or a little experience.

Lincrusta: Gently remove a roll of Lincrusta from the box. Select the starting point in the pattern that you would like to place at the top of the wall. Measuring from this point, roll out enough wallcovering to cover your wall height, plus 3", and cut the strip with a sharp razor knife. Remember to cut Lincrusta from the back. Repeat this process with several strips, changing blades frequently.

Don't start in a corner and don't rely on your baseboard or ceiling line to be

level. Using the centered plumb line as your guide, position your piece on the prominent wall. Hang from the center of the wall to both corners. Then continue in both directions around the room, planning to end in the least conspicuous corner. Smooth each piece by hand from one side to the other. If any significant bubbles are trapped in the process, peel back to one side and smooth across again.

After hand smoothing, apply heavy roller pressure over the entire surface. Pay particular attention to the edges. If any spots are not sticking well, make sure there is sufficient glue. If there is enough glue, use push pins to temporarily hold down the edges.

When starting a new wall, use the piece trimmed from the corner (if it is large enough to work with comfortably). Measure the width of the strip and place a vertical plumb line that distance from the corner. Using the plumb line and the top edge of the last piece for lining up, install the remaining piece. If the new wall is severely out of line with the old one, move the piece toward the corner to fill the gap. Establish a new plumb line, if necessary, and continue along the rest of the wall.

Anaglypta: Roll out and cut a strip the height of the wall, plus 3" at the top and bottom for trimming. Mark a "T" with a

Lincrusta becomes more pliable as it becomes warmer.

Never hang embossed wallcoverings in extreme temperatures or in very humid conditions.

If Lincrusta has been stored in a cold area, never attempt immediate installation.

For the optimum drying time, make sure the room has good air circulation.

Lincrusta dados and border in an unfinished state, ready for installation.



Tools & Materials Checklist

Here's a list of supplies you will need to make your installation easier. Except for the adhesives, the checklist is almost identical for both Lincrusta and Anaglypta. An (L) or an (A) following an item means it is required for Lincrusta or Anaglypta respectively.

PRIMERS & GLUES

- ♦ Acrylic wallcover primer
- ♦ Vinyl-over-vinyl wallpaper glue (L)
- ♦ Heavy-duty clay based (not clear) vinyl wallcovering paste (A)
- ♦ Siliconized acrylic latex paintable caulk
- ♦ Mineral spirits (L)

BRUSHES & ROLLERS

- ♦ Paste brush or paint roller for the glue
- ♦ Paste bucket or paint roller pan for the paste
- ♦ Large rubber roller (or one without sharp edges) for smoothing (L)
- ♦ Soft wallpaper smoothing brush (A)
- ♦ 1/2" quality paint brush

TOOLS

- ♦ Steel straightedge
- ♦ Sandpaper or scraper for wall preparation
- ♦ Screwdriver to remove switchplates
- ♦ Razor knife with plenty of blades
- ♦ Plumb line and chalk or large level
- ♦ Stepladder

HOUSEHOLD MATERIALS

- ♦ Yardstick or tape measure
- ♦ Drop cloth
- ♦ Clean-up sponge
- ♦ Miscellaneous cloths
- ♦ Large scissors
- ♦ Pencil
- ♦ Push pins (L)
- ♦ Clear tape
- ♦ Bucket of clean water
- ♦ Large cutting surface (work table or plywood)

pencil on the back of each strip to avoid hanging it upside-down. Always keep an extra unpasted strip available for matching.

Using the plumb line as your guide, lift the top fold and smooth that half of the strip against the wall. Carefully release the lower fold by sliding the strip into position. Smooth out the wrinkles and any air bubbles with a soft wallpaper brush, working from the center to the edges. To prevent stretching, avoid holding an entire strip at the top and letting the full length dangle.



Hang the next length against the edge of the first, matching the pattern. Don't overlap or roll the seams! Instead, smooth them lightly with a brush. If the paper resists sticking, wait 10 minutes and brush lightly again, but avoid overbrushing. Let the paste dry the wallcovering into place. (Remember, it will be painted later.) Smooth gently and sponge carefully — it is better to leave some paste on the seams than to flatten the embossment in an effort to remove the paste.

Cut away the large excesses around the doors and windows with scissors, leaving a 2" overlap. Make diagonal cuts into the corners and smooth the Anaglypta into the edge of the frame. Trim with a sharp razor blade.

When you come to an inside corner, smooth the strip into the corner with a wallpaper brush and let it wrap onto the new wall. Using a steel straightedge (a plastic one won't hold the paper tightly enough) and a sharp razor blade, cut the strip its full length in the corner. If it is difficult to work with the razor, make a crease and use scissors. Carefully remove the strip from the new

wall. If it is more than 2" wide, measure its width and drop a vertical plumb line on the new wall that distance from the corner. Don't assume the new wall is plumb with the preceding wall.

Slide the remaining strip into the corner and align its outside edge with the new plumb line. If the wall is not plumb with the old, move the plumb line and strip closer to the corner to fill any gaps. It is more important to have the wallcovering aligned with the plumb line on the new wall rather than have a perfect corner fit. Trim any excess and run a narrow bead of siliconized latex caulk down the length of the corner. Smooth it with your finger to fill the gaps and immediately sponge off excess caulk.

FOR DADOS Dados are hung the same way as wallcoverings, described in the instructions above, with only a few exceptions.

Lincrusta: Open the dado box by carefully peeling the entire front off of the box (the printed side). The dado pieces will be visible and a Lincrusta border will be located on the top. If you don't trim with a wood moulding, use this border to finish your dado. Lincrusta dados are too thick to be trimmed on the wall, so make your window, door and corner cuts before hanging.

Anaglypta: Dado panels are pre-sized; unroll and cut the paper into the panels by following along the broken lines between the repeating patterns. Panels are 35 1/2" long. If you wish to shorten them, trim from the lower edge. Paste only three panels at a time.

If there is no chair rail, establish a horizontal level line at the desired height. After installing the Anaglypta, finish the top edge with a chair rail or a Lincrusta border. When you reach windows and doors, hang right over them and cut away the excess, leaving 2" of overlap.

FOR DADOS ON STAIRWAYS Dados — whether Lincrusta or Anaglypta — installed on stairways require a little additional attention due to the angular progression. Mark a vertical plumb line at both the base and top of the stairs. Measure from the baseboard and mark the height of the dado panel on the vertical plumb lines. Make a chalk guideline by joining the two points.

To make your template, cut a dado



Either center the strip on the plumb line — or, as shown here, butt two strips alongside it. Choose whichever way will result in the strips at both ends of the wall being at least 6" wide.



After the piece is hung, trim the bottom by firmly positioning your straightedge into the corner and cutting beneath it. Use the straightedge as your cutting guide.

panel in half lengthwise. Measure the width of one panel half and cut out a piece of cardboard that matches the width and length. Place the vertical edge of the cardboard along the plumb line at the base of the stairs and follow the diagrams on page 40.

Place the template on the lower edge of the half panel and cut across the hypotenuse. The hypotenuse is the side of a right triangle opposite the right angle — in other words, the long side of a triangle. When working with Lincrusta, save this extra piece.

Hang the first half panel along the baseboard and, for Lincrusta, place the triangular piece between the top of the half panel and the chair rail guideline.

FOR BORDERS Follow the instructions for hanging wallcoverings, but keep in mind these differences and hints.

Lincrusta: Borders require two paperhangers as they must be kept straight at all times to avoid breaking. If you are hanging a piece longer than 12', cut it into two pieces for easier handling. Take care when handling shorter pieces, too, to avoid tears.

Position the border over your chalk line or other guiding edge. Smooth by hand from one side to another. Using a rubber roller, apply heavy pressure over the entire area. Place push pins the entire length to hold the border in place while it dries. After 48 hours, remove the push pins, fill

in any joints, gaps or holes with a joint compound or caulk. Clean with mineral spirits and prepare to paint.

Anaglypta: Due to the long pieces, it is important to have two people to hang the borders. Position the strip on the wall and smooth with a brush, starting at one side and progressing to the other. If any significant bubbles are trapped, peel the strip back and smooth again. Avoid joints in the middle of the wall and use push pins in any areas that resist adhering. Begin with a new strip at each corner because the walls may not be level.

FOR FRIEZES Follow the instructions for hanging wallcoverings and add these extra steps:

Hanging a Lincrusta frieze is very similar to hanging a border except that the frieze is much heavier and requires careful handling.

Because of its weight after soaking, it is impossible to hang long sections of Lincrusta friezes. Most friezes should be limited to 9'-11'. Even at these lengths, handle the friezes carefully or they may tear.

When you cut the strip, make sure your initial cut is away from the deepest embossing. Also, as with the wallcoverings, you must trim away the selvage before hanging (unless you are going to install moulding on both sides of the frieze). If any significant air bubbles are trapped, peel back the frieze and smooth it out again.

Inspect the embossed wallcoverings before pasting. Look for cracks, tears, or any imperfections which might adversely affect bonding.

For best results, handle Lincrusta and Anaglypta as little as possible prior to installation by leaving them in the rolls or boxes until ready to hang. Excessive handling can crack Lincrusta or, if bent severely, cause it to break.

FOR CEILINGS Hang the ceiling first. Prepare the Anaglypta according to the wallcovering instructions and then follow these extra steps:

Because there are no doors or windows to contend with, Anaglypta is relatively easy to hang on ceilings. Scaffolding is essential and the job requires two people — one to hold the strips, the other to position them.

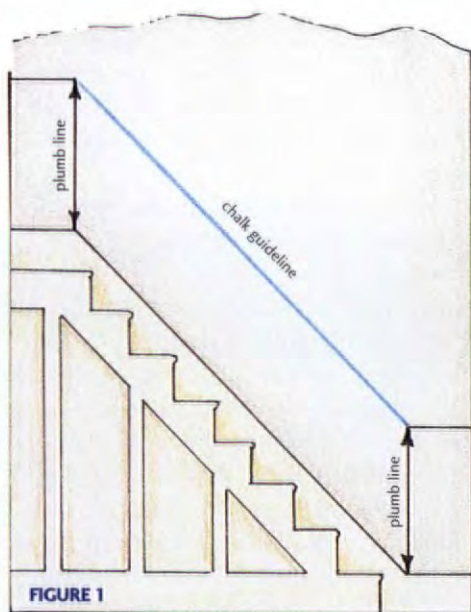
The length of a roll is 33', but the strips should be hung across the shortest dimension of the room. To avoid excessive waste, however, you may want to hang the longer dimension. Try not patch ends together when working on a ceiling. Also, if you use the same pattern on the ceiling and walls, you can match the pattern only on one wall. Choose the most prominent wall for the match.

Lift the Anaglypta to the ceiling and use a very soft brush to smooth. Always brush sideways because brushing lengthwise will stretch the Anaglypta. (If you are hanging Anaglypta Luxury Vinyls on the ceiling, the soaking time for the paste is only 5 minutes, not 10 minutes as with the other wallcoverings.)

Measure 20" from the starting wall and snap a plumb line. Line up the first strip along the plumb line, leaving a ½" overlap on the adjoining wall. Snip the corners with a diagonal. Take care not to let the paper dangle, and smooth with a brush as you

FIGURE 1 How to mark and measure a stairway: At the top and bottom of the staircase, strike a vertical plumb line from the baseboard to the height of the dado. Then make a chalk guideline that joins the two points.

FIGURE 2 Creating a template for an ANAGLYPTA dado: A piece of cardboard is cut to the size of a dado panel and placed vertically along the bottom plumb line. The triangular waste area is marked, cut off, and discarded.



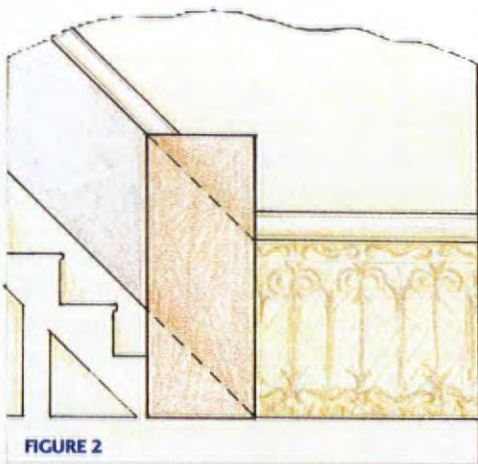
The completed installation of an Edwardian Lincrusta dado. Note how the extra triangular piece is fitted above each half panel and then finished with a length of chair rail moulding.

go. Keep your hands no further apart than 2' to assure easier application.

Trim the excess wallcovering from the walls strip by strip. On the final strip, measure to the wall and cut a piece with a ½" overlap.

The Final Steps

DON'T WORRY Don't be concerned if bubbles appear after installation. If the Lincrusta was flat when you finished installing



it, it will return to a flat position. Bubbles are due to the wetness of the glue or paint; these spots should disappear within one week. If any bubbles remain after this time, it is due to either excess glue or trapped air. To remove, puncture any bubbles with a push pin and work the air or glue out with your fingers. Roll if necessary, but only after removing the air or glue to avoid wrinkles.


It is also normal for some bubbling to occur after installing or painting Anaglypta. Bubbles are due to the wetness of the paste and paint, and these spots should disappear within several days. In the rare case the bubbles remain, they are most likely caused by trapped air and can be removed, as with Lincrusta, with a push pin. If necessary, inject additional paste into the area and brush.

After the Lincrusta has hung for 48 hours, remove the push pins and fill in any joints, gaps, or holes with a joint compound or caulk. However, you have to wait only 24 hours before painting Anaglypta. Don't be alarmed if your raw Anaglypta wallcovering looks less than magnificent. After painting, the clay-based paste and gaps in the seams will disappear.

PAINT IT After installation, clean Lincrusta with mineral spirits before paint-

ing. Lincrusta requires two coats of an oil-based (alkyd) paint. A high-quality paint brush or a half roller works well for painting. Lincrusta must be painted to protect its surface and to allow for easy cleaning. After staining, protect the finish with a coat of clear varnish. This will also render it washable.

For Anaglypta, it is easiest to apply paint with a high-quality $\frac{1}{2}$ " or thicker roller, though a brush can also be used. Use latex on Anaglypta. If you want to use an oil-based (alkyd) finish, first apply one coat of latex. Used alone, oil-based paints will raise the paper nap and won't fill in the seams adequately. Apply two coats of low-luster or semi-gloss finish because it accents the relief much better than a flat paint. It is not necessary to prime prior to painting. To make sure the seams don't show, run a joint compound into the seams with your fingers before painting. Usually this is not necessary, but can be helpful for particularly bad seams.

Lincrusta and Anaglypta are designed for special finishes such as glazing, gilding, or rag-rolling (see *OHJ*, May/June 1993). Master the technique on sample boards before you begin on your newly hung embossed wallcovering. 

The instructions in this article, endorsed by the National Guild of Paperhangers (U.S.), were compiled by the OHJ editors in cooperation with Crown-Berger Ltd., the English manufacturer of Lincrusta-Walton.

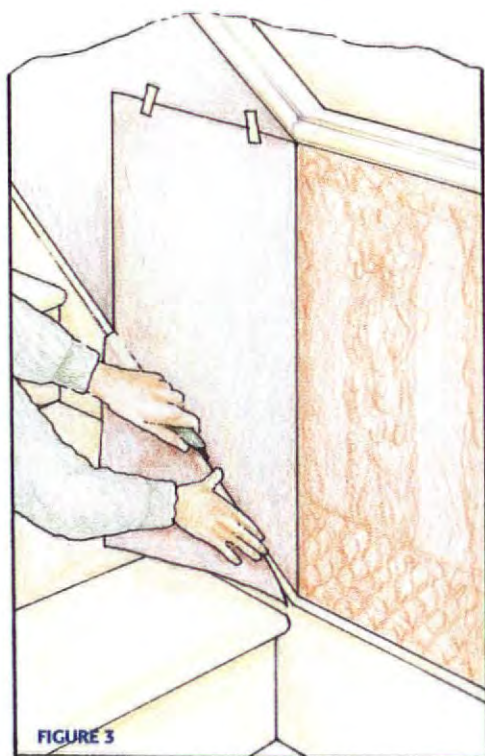


FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4

Suppliers & Resources

For a full line of Lincrusta and Anaglypta wallcoverings:

CROWN CORP., NA
1801 Wynkoop St.,
Suite 235, Dept. OHJ,
Denver, CO 80202
(800) 422-2099

STEPTOE & WIFE
ANTIQUES
322 Geary Ave.,
Dept. OHJ,
Toronto, ON M6H 2C7
(416) 530-4200

For a free instructional booklet on hanging Lincrusta and Anaglypta:

NATIONAL GUILD
OF PAPERHANGERS, INC.
136 S. Keowee St.,
Dept. OHJ,
Dayton, OH 45402
(513) 222-9252

FIGURE 3 Creating a template for a LINCROSTA dado: Again, the cardboard is sized to the dado panel. However, there isn't a waste area on top; Lincrusta panels are shorter. The bottom triangular piece is marked, cut off, and saved.

FIGURE 4 Use the triangular cut as fill for the LINCROSTA dado. The cut is placed between the chair rail and the dado panel.

The Antique Art of



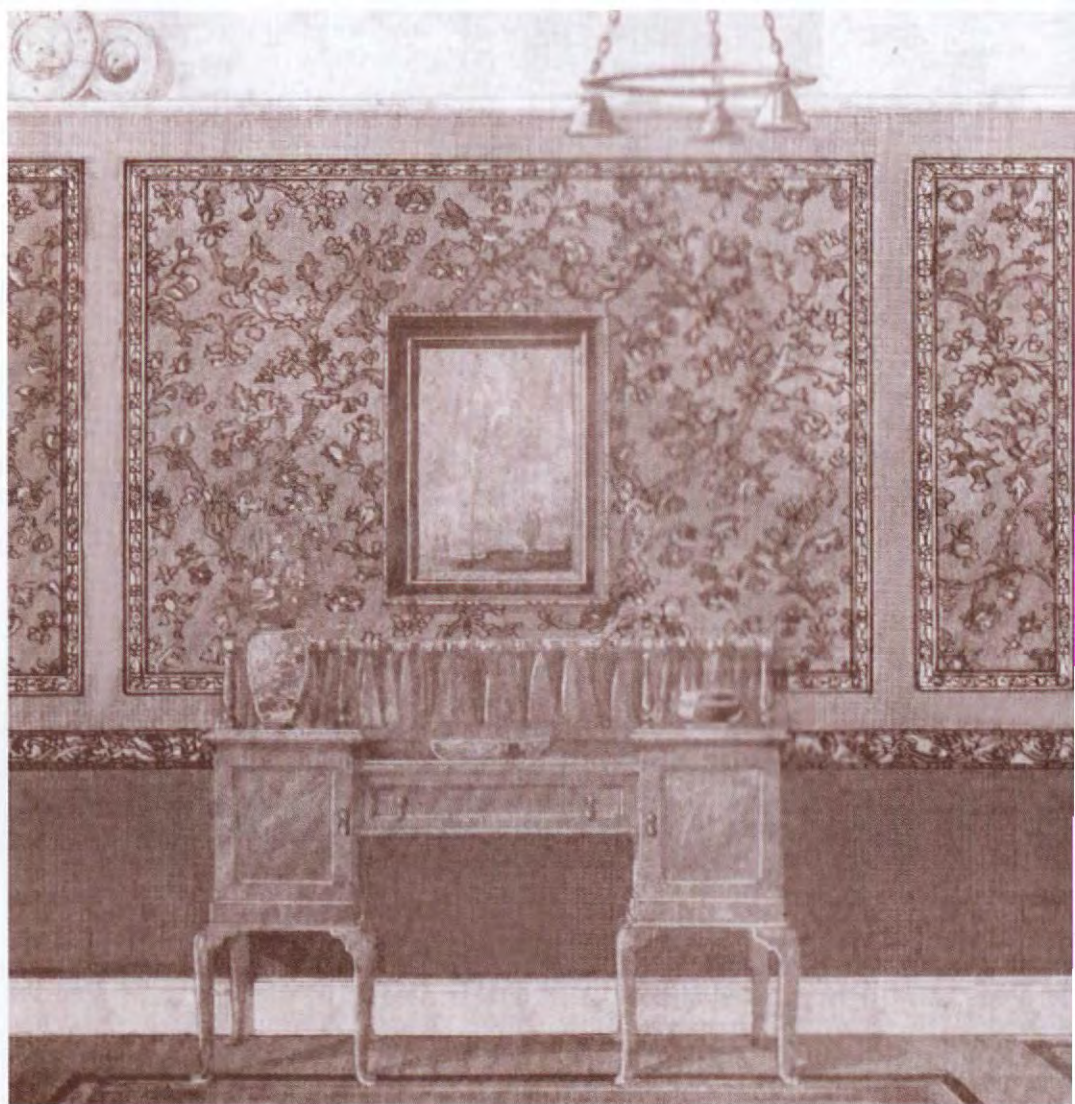
The most common corner treatments were the block or inverted square corner (fig. 4) and the angled corner (fig. 3). More elaborate designs (figs. 1 & 2) were also used. **OPPOSITE:** From *THE DECORATION AND RENOVATION OF THE HOME* (1923): the formality of this room is enhanced by the combination of space panelling and floral wallpaper with a matching border.

DIVIDING WALLS INTO PANELS with paper was a simple, inexpensive technique often used in early-20th-century houses. It elegantly integrated walls with all the architectural elements of the room. Panelling with wallpaper followed the conventions of wood panelling. It featured broad stiles, thin borders, and rectangular fields, adjusted to the size and decorative needs of a room through different colors, textures, and designs. Wall-

paper panelling can be revived today by the inspired amateur or professional paperhanger. As in the past, it is particularly appropriate for parlors, drawing rooms, and bedrooms in Colonial Revival houses.

An Enduring Style

PANELLING WITH WALLPAPER DATES TO THE late 18th century, but the use of the technique proliferated during the early 20th century. Its direct forerunner was the Vic-



— BY —
Robert M.
Kelly

Wallpaper Panelling

torian use of flock for panelling — dark, rich, and heavy borders or strips that separated panels of lighter tinted paper. The strips, called *stiles*, were edged on each side with a narrow gilt border that formed an elegant design. The panels in a room, set above the dado, were sometimes two colors (alternating with each other) or different shades of the same color.

When wallpaper panelling reappeared in the 20th century, the dado had fallen from fashion, so the panels now went from floor

to ceiling (except in rooms with picture mouldings). Many Victorian conventions continued after the turn of the century. For example, wallpaper panels still alternated with different colors. The crucial difference was in materials; with gilt borders now considered gaudy, the stiles were created with textured papers.

Wallpaper panelling was more prevalent in larger cities because skilled, professional paperhangers were mainly city tradesmen. Little research has been done on surviving rooms of this type in rural areas, however; thus, it may have been more widespread than is generally believed.

Panelling Types & Techniques

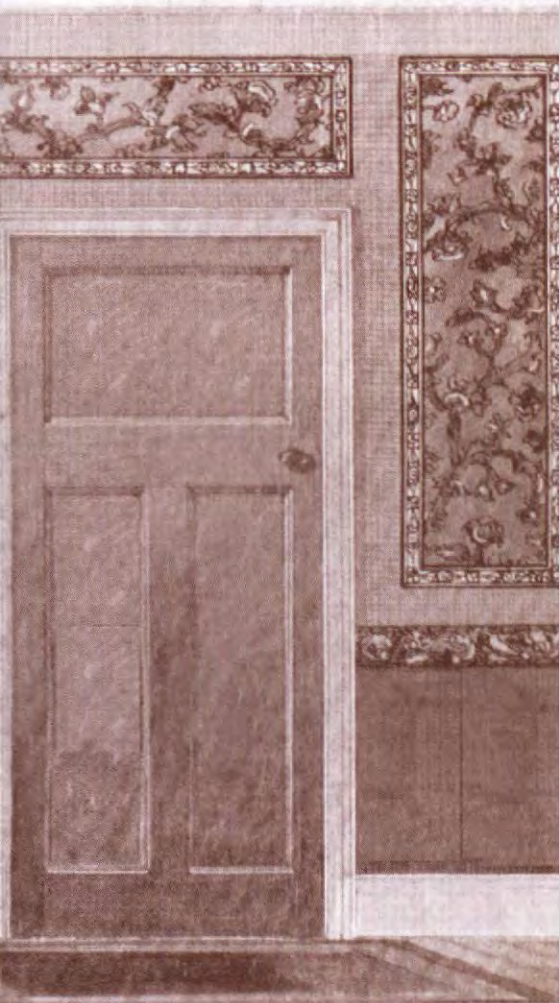
TWO DIFFERENT MODES OF PANELLING WERE recommended: space panelling and French panelling. Space panelling was preferred, especially for formal rooms with symmetrical openings. It used obstacles to form rectangles and then multiplied these rectangles on opposing walls to create a balanced composition (p. 44). A typical room might include 15 to 25 panels of different sizes. The wall that was the focal point of the room (usually by the fireplace) was laid out first. Then, the opposite wall was laid out in a mirror image. The other two walls complemented the overall design.

French panelling was the choice for rooms with eccentric openings such as dormers. Borders enclosed entire walls and went *through* obstacles, reappearing on the other side (p. 44). Sometimes French panelling required canvassing the entire room, painting it, then adding a single type of border; each wall became one large panel.

The stiles were usually 4" to 6" wide for both types of panelling. However, the actual size of the components was subordinate to the overall design of the panelling. In every manual, the emphasis is on correct proportion rather than on any given



Many wallpaper companies produced stile and band borders especially for wallpaper panelling. These ornate examples come from the Henry Bosch Co.'s 1909 catalog.



Love, Hate — & Wallpaper

The transition from dark, rich colors to lighter ones can be traced to two leading tastemakers, Edith Wharton and Elsie de Wolfe. Wharton was a certified wallpaper hater; she felt it should never be used in a serious interior, particularly not in an all-over manner. However, she did bring about a renewed respect for such classical techniques as panel-related wall decorations, specifically stucco and wood panelling. The public followed her lead by imitating panelling in any and all forms.

De Wolfe championed a lighter, cleaner look for decoration in her 1913 book *The House in Good Taste*. She was no wallpaper advocate either: "If I could always find perfect walls, I'd always paint them, and never use a yard of paper." However, her tenets of simplicity, suitability, and proportion were widely disseminated in the press. Those ideas, particularly color contrast and correct proportion, contributed to the popularity of panelling.

If wallpaper was held in such low esteem by the fashionable circles, why was panelling with wallpaper even considered? The answer lies in cost of materials. An emerging middle class may have yearned to hang tapestries and panel with mahogany, but cost kept these items out of reach. Wallpaper, on the other hand, was inexpensive, readily available, and already familiar.

By the 1920s and '30s, paper was no longer cheap, but its popularity was assured and production kept pace with demographic growth.

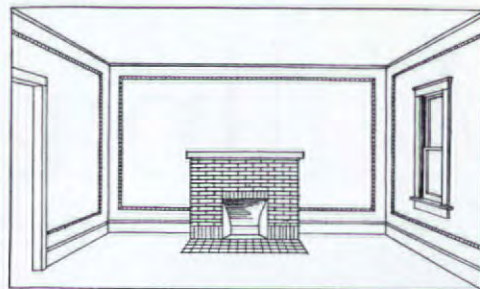
size. The guidebooks are also united in recommending a straight-across match — when the right side of a paper pattern naturally matches the left side — for both the panels and stiles. A drop-match paper (one whose patterns don't match unless aligned) would have introduced another layer of complexity. Corner treatments were dominated by the 90-degree square corner, but by reversing, or stepping back, a block or inverted square corner could be created (see p.42). A slant corner, the result of an angled stile, was another special effect.

In any case, the field paper led the show, and the stile and border would be chosen to complement it. When a suitable paper could not be found, a plain paper was installed and then painted, sometimes with a stipple brush, to achieve an agreeable texture. In 1912, noted wallpaper author A.A. Kelly advised: "The best effects are obtained from the use of simple designs and colors; diapers, stripes, moiré and canvas effects are good for the filling of the panel, while light, floral, rope or conventionalized floral designs do well for the border. For the stiles, ingrains, silk fibers and other texture papers are the most suitable, although spots, stripes and moirés ... are not inappropriate." As the period progressed, there was a tendency to use more elaborate papers for the fill — for instance, large patterns with flashy colors were noted by the 1940s.

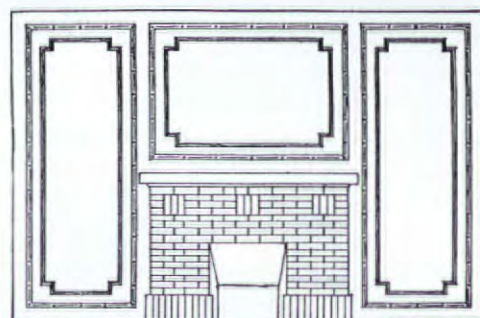
Panel Placement

PANELLING WAS MOST SUCCESSFUL IN PARLORS and drawing rooms. Bedrooms were also panelled, but a more relaxed effect was created with florals. More than one writer commented that panelling did not work easily in hallways, and small rooms caused concern because space panelling made them seem smaller, so French panelling or space panelling with borders only (no stiles) was advised. For smaller room, moirés and stripes with rope and floral borders were recommended. Diaper, trellis, or lattice patterns with larger cut-out floral borders were more usual for big, high-style rooms.

All of the decorating manuals stress the importance of knowing what furniture is going to be in the room, even suggesting



French Panelling



Space Panelling

specific sizes and locations for panels to show off the pieces to the best advantage. Often a prominent piece of furniture would have a horizontal panel between it and the ceiling, as well as two equal panels on each side. Wallpaper panelling was also combined with wood mouldings; in these instances, the moulding was always put on first, followed by the stile paper, and then the field paper. A paper border, if any, would go on last.

Since the public invariably did what it liked and not what decorators thought it should, it's unnecessary to be doctrinaire when discussing wallpaper styles. The people who used wallpaper panelling were as far from the high-style world of English oak panelling as they were from the world of two-cent wallpaper. In other words, its users fell solidly in the middle class.

A Wall Treatment for Today

PANELLING WITH WALLPAPER REPRESENTS A great opportunity to be creative with your old-house walls, particularly for 1910-1940 houses. Before panelling with wallpaper, first consider the symmetry and style of the rooms. The more formal and "middle-class" the room, the more likely panelling existed at one time. Check for surviving examples. Some traces of the panelled treatment may survive, especially if wooden

mouldings were nailed in place. Scribe lines (knife cuts) are often the result of trimming of borders in place on a wall. However, keep in mind that wallpaper, unlike other architectural finishes, is easily removed — the likely fate of most panels. Cornices or sizable baseboards of 6" to 12" wide were also features of a wallpaper panelled room. If your room doesn't have these features, this may be a clue that panelling is not appropriate, or that the mouldings have been removed.

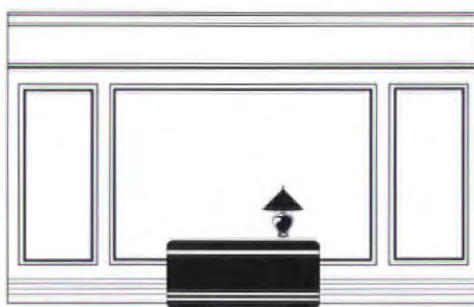
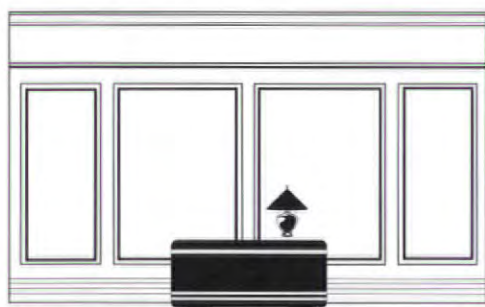
Many of the diagrams and measuring devices used in the '20s and '30s are applicable today. Because the width of the stile determines how the lines must be laid out, that dimension is a critical choice. Another important factor is the number and size of the panels. Paperhanging manuals are unanimous in preferring some variation in the size of the panels. One rule of proportion states that 3-5-3 panel widths will always be pleasing. For example, a 50" wide

central panel should be flanked by two panels of 30" wide each.

Many moiré, grasscloth, and other textured papers on the market make very effective stile patterns. If your house is pre-World War I, a low-key field is in order. For the more adventurous, try black-and-white Jazz Age fields, brown and orange tapestries, or oriental motifs in rich jewel tones. The border will be the hardest to find. During the '20s and the '30s, stile and band borders were made up especially for this panelling technique. You may have to search carefully for an appropriate small border (less than 2"). Inexpensive fabric borders (called gimp or trim) can be used as a substitute, or use wood mouldings.



Robert M. Kelly, a wallpaper consultant, edits the newsletter *Wallpaper Reproduction News* (Box 187, Lee, Massachusetts 01238). He'd like to hear from old-house owners about surviving examples of wallpaper panelling.



Incorrect



Correct

OPPOSITE: The top drawing shows French panelling, which encompasses entire walls, passing through such features as fireplaces. It works well in rooms with eccentric openings.

Space panelling, shown in the lower drawing, responds to all the elements of a room, including fireplaces, doors, and windows. The prominent wall or focal point is laid out first.

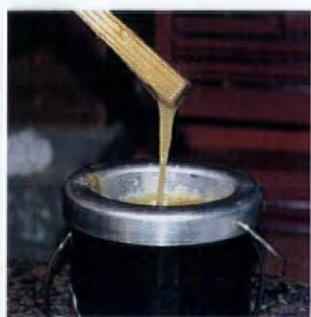
Panel Discussion

The professional literature about panelling was prolific, considering that most wallpaper installation techniques were merely handed down as trade practices. Panelling was recommended for the more formal rooms, so a sizable body of illustrations was published in the 1920s and 1930s.

English decorating manuals displayed a well-defined sense of what is bad or good about a panel arrangement, as illustrated in these diagrams adapted from *THE MODERN PAINTER & DECORATOR* (1922). In general, the English style of panelling was more formal than the American way, with a greater use of special effects such as crowns and special corner borders. But proportion of the width of the stile and border to the dimension of the panel was left to individual taste — advice echoed in most American manuals.

Gelatine Molds for Plaster Casting

by BRIAN EWING



Gelatine ready for molding should run like melted caramel (top). Electric glue pots like this have been the industry workhorses for years and are good for small jobs (1 to 8 quarts). For large jobs, you can rig up a double boiler (above) using a lobster pot and barbecue cooker bought at the hardware store.

BEFORE LATEX, SILICONE, AND SYNTHETIC RUBBER CAME ALONG FOR making flexible molds, gelatine was the only game in town. Flexible molds simplified the process of casting undercut plasterwork — subjects that are cut away on their lower part to create projections (acanthus leaves on a column capital are a good example). Until flexible molds, such features had to be cast with multi-part plaster molds. A Londoner, J. Herbert, revolutionized the trade when he cast with gelatine in 1847. It's an old, traditional technique, but a simple one. There's little on the process in print, though, so here I'll show you the steps for creating a straightforward flood mold from gelatine.

Gelatine and Its Origins

WHY BOTHER TO MAKE OLD-TIME “GLUE” molds? After all, they're not as hardy as new materials, and they take practice to get right. The answer is gelatine can still have an economic advantage over expensive synthetics. Top-quality gelatine can be molded, melted down later, and then re-used, so the cost drops with each use. Recycling the raw materials this way is environmentally friendly, too. A good, fresh gelatine mold is also very elastic and removes well from complex surfaces. (A flat one can even be bent to a radius for casting, say, curved cornices.)

The gelatine used to make molds is a natural material extracted from beef bone and hide — in old cartoons, the stuff nags were turned into at the proverbial “glue factory.” Techni-

cally, gelatine is a protein colloid known as a high molecular weight animal glue. Some grades have served for years in the furniture and cabinetmaking industry. The material is ideal for holding fine woodwork together because it's strong, flexible, and reversible (parts unglue with heat and steam). Book-



Seal the model and bearing (plywood) with shellac. The author is using a simple plaster rosette from a ceiling or wall; gelatine can be used to cast subjects much more complex.

binders use it, too. The gelatine manufactured for desserts or to coat pills is basically the same, but much purer.

In order to produce clean, sharp casts and durable molds, buy only the very best gelatine. Unfortunately, good gelatine is getting hard to find nowadays (lower grades contain impurities). Ask for high gram-strength hide glue, and test it first by melting a small batch in a double-boiler glue pot. Good gelatine will congeal readily, and it will have little odor.

Steps for Mold Making

1. MAKE SEPARATING SOLUTION.

Before you melt gelatine, you need to make separating solution so the glue won't cake and stick to the sides of the pot. Many substances have been used as separators, among them petroleum oil, chalk oil, and gum oil. To make chalk oil, add enough French chalk to paraffin oil to produce a liquid the consistency of milk. To make gum oil, dissolve 4 oz. of gum damar in 2 oz. of paraffin oil. Add 1 ½ pints of kerosene when melted, then store in a container for use later.

I like to use stearine because the ingredients are easy to obtain (double-pressed stearic acid can be bought at hobby shops that sell candle-making supplies) and relatively inexpensive. Mix stearic acid and kerosene 50/50 in a double boiler. Gently

and very slowly heat the solution until it becomes clear, then remove from the heat and let cool. Pour the solution into a container and seal with a lid. The stearine will last indefinitely in the container, but over time it will congeal. When you need stearine, scoop some paste into another container (a coffee can with a plastic lid is good), and mix in kerosene until you have a thick liquid. If the solution congeals again, add more kerosene.

2. PREPARE THE MODEL.

Your model first needs to be mounted to a smooth, flat surface, known in the craft as the *bearing*. Carpenter's wood glue will work, but the traditional adhesive is orange shellac (see at right). Once the shellac or glue has fully hardened under the model, you must seal the edges where it meets the bearing. Spread plaster or potter's clay around the joint, tapering and smoothing just enough to produce a seal. You must also seal the model so the gelatine will not stick when you separate the two. Paint two thin coats of orange shellac over the model and around the bearing, letting the shellac dry between each coat.

Next make a temporary *fence* around the model using lengths of 1x2 or 1x4 lumber, depending upon its height. Make the fence at least 1" higher than the model (to allow room for gelatine), and leave a space of ¾" to 1 ¼" around the model. Seal the



If you want to make shellac adhesive start with four- or five-pound cut. Pour the shellac into a small dish, set it afire, and burn off just enough alcohol to leave a thick paste. Then, after painting the back of the model with thin shellac for good penetration, spread the paste quickly over the model, press it down to the bearing, and let harden.



Plaster, clay, weights — anything handy — can hold the fence in place to make a flood mold. Once the joints are sealed, paint all surfaces with separating solution.



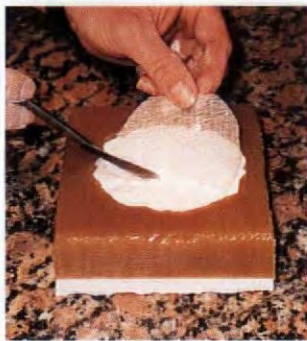
Starting at one end of the bearing, pour the molten glue between the model and the fence. Avoid trapping bubbles. Puddle leftover glue on a clean surface for recycling later.



Work all the way around the model as you separate the mold from the bearing. If the model breaks free, release it from the mold by using slight pressure on the back.



The separating solution has to be removed before the protective alum coating can be applied. Dust the surface with French chalk, then blow it clean.



Casts can be reinforced with crinoline — the stiff, starched textile used to support skirts (sold at fabric stores). Poke the crinoline down into the wet plaster, then level the back of the cast flat with a straightedge.

fence joints and edges with clay so the glue will not leak out. Use plaster of Paris to hold the fence together, and weights to keep it from moving. (I usually tie hemp fiber dipped in plaster around the fence, but bricks will do.) Paint two or three coats of orange shellac around the inside of the fence, and along the top surface. When the shellac is thoroughly dry, paint a thin film of separating solution over the model, bearing, and fence. Be sure not to leave puddles in the low areas.

3. MELT GELATINE.

Now to make glue. Paint a thin film of separating solution around the inside of a small container and fill with warm water, say, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Next, add enough gelatine for your project, then let it soak for at least one hour until the flakes bend easily. This step will permit the gelatine to melt readily. If you are setting up your own double boiler, give the gelatine one last stir to break up any lumps, and carefully place the small pot in the larger container. Top off the water in the large container so it is higher than the glue level. If you are using a self-contained electric glue pot, simply turn the unit on.

Heat the gelatine at 140 to 150 degrees until it is clear of flakes and lump-free. Stir the glue with a stick to check viscosity, and adjust the mix as necessary with either water or gelatine. This is a critical step. If the

glue is too thin the mold will not last more than a few casting cycles. (The moisture and exothermic reaction from the setting plaster will melt it.) If the glue is too thick, the mold may come out stiff. I usually look for the consistency of fresh caramel. Be sure to keep the water level in the double boiler above the glue. Adding a dash of concentrated antibacterial product (such as DOWICIDE or Lysol) at this point can ward off odors and deterioration later. When you are satisfied the glue is ready, turn the heat off and let it cool. After the final stir, let the batch sit for a few minutes so the bubbles rise to the top.

4. POUR AND UNMOLD.

You're ready to pour. When the glue has set awhile it develops a thin skin on top. Stir this skin into the glue so it melts again. Then carefully pour the glue into a pouring container. Take the container and start to pour. Stay in one place, and allow the glue to flow until the model is completely covered at least $\frac{1}{2}$ " over its highest point. Make sure the glue is between 110 and 120 degrees; if the glue is cold it will develop seams. Work slowly and steadily, otherwise the thermal shock may crack the model. Then let the mold cool and congeal for at least 12 hours, but wash tools immediately while the glue is still soft.

To remove the mold from the model,



After a fresh coat of separating solution, the mold is ready for pouring a casting. Watch for heat buildup in the plaster, and unmold as soon as it's set.



The finished cast shows all the details of the original. Check the mold face for soft spots — the result of heat, moisture, or bacterial attack — before starting another cycle.

take the fence off, then gently pry and lift the mold from the bearing. Next, slowly and gently remove the mold from the model — it should slip right off. Inspect the *face* of the mold for leftover shellac, which can be chipped off. Also remove the separating solution by dusting the mold with French chalk, then blowing it clean.

Tips on Casting

BEFORE THE NEW MOLD CAN BE USED, IT needs a coating of alum (available at pharmacies or chemical supply houses) to protect the gelatine from the setting plaster. Soak enough alum in hot water to produce a saturated solution. Allow to cool. Then apply a thin film of this solution to the mold, avoiding puddles. After the alum is dry, apply a thin film of separating solution around the inside of the mold — remember, no puddles — and you are ready for casting.

Casting plaster with gelatine molds is basically the standard procedure, with a few cautions. Apply the separating solution between each casting cycle, and after three or four cycles repeat the sequence of French chalk drier, alum protectant, and separating solution. Timing is critical, however; watch the clock. You can't leave the plaster cast in the mold any longer than

it takes to set — say, 45 minutes — or the moisture and reaction will hurt the gelatine. Try testing with your fingernail. If you can't go deep enough to produce a gouge, the plaster is setting well. Don't let the cast get too hot. If it feels warm, remove it from the mold. For the same reason, don't use slow-setting plasters (I stick to casting plaster). If you have many castings to make, don't expect to get them all from one mold. Instead, plan ahead and set up for a gang mold of four to twelve subjects at one pouring.

All flexible molds lose their shape eventually. Gelatine molds, being water-based, tend to shrink, curl, and dry out after three or four days of use. To get the maximum life put a mold "to bed" at the end of the day by wrapping it with damp blankets. When the mold has reached the end of the road, it's time to recycle the gelatine. You can melt it down for immediate remolding or dry it for storing. Cut the mold into 1" cubes and separate the them out on a frame of galvanized hardware cloth or expanded metal lath. When thoroughly dry, store in a cool, dark, dry place till the next casting call.

Ewing Plaster Restoration is located at 418 No. Marshall St., Graham, North Carolina 27253 (910-228-8022). Our special thanks to Earle and Lisa Felber for technical assistance with this article.

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A GOOD SHELLACKING

This Most Traditional Clear Finish is Often the Most Practical

BY JOSH GARSKOF



Shellac is still handmade in India. **TOP:** A "taffy-puller" stretches lac into a thin sheet. **ABOVE:** Workers scrape lac from twigs. **BELOW:** Shellac flakes, ready to be dissolved in denatured alcohol.

THE FIRST DECORATIVE FINISH TO PROVIDE clear, hard protection for fine woodwork came centuries before acrylics or petroleum products. It was shellac, a simple coating made from the secretions of a bug. Although varnish arrived on the scene in the mid-1800s, shellac was the standard until the turn of this century. It's the classic finish we associate with Victorian floors, doors, wainscots, balusters, and other exposed wood.

You'll find shellac somewhere in almost any old house. It may be the original finish hidden under layers of paint. Maybe it's still exposed, but barely recognizable because the surface is dirty or heavily crazed. No need to go "plastic," however. Old shellac finishes are easy to restore, and when the call is for a new clear finish, shellac can be a beautiful, historically appropriate choice. Modern chemistry has created harder and more resistant materials, but shellac has never been surpassed for its high gloss and glowing amber hue.

Meet the Beetles

SHELLAC'S MAIN INGREDIENT IS PRODUCED by the lac bug, a tiny insect indigenous to the Far East, primarily India. The bugs suck sap from trees and convert it into a hard, resinous material. Most lac comes from female bugs. As they lay thousands of eggs, they suck up so much sap that their bodies turn into hard, protective sacks — a lethal process. Once the young have hatched, laborers collect the material, crush it, and melt it down, removing twigs and shells from the liquefied product. (Also extracted is a crimson dye, which had great commercial value before the discovery of coal-tar dyes, but is now considered an impurity.)

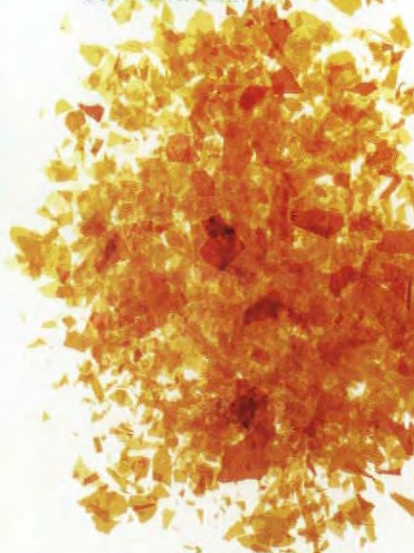
To this day, a lot of shellac is refined

by hand. As it cools, the liquid lac is stretched into sheets, a process often compared to a taffy pull. Dry sheets are broken into shellac flakes, to be stored or sold in this state for industrial purposes. (Phonograph records were once made from shellac, and it is still used in the electrical industry.) Shellac is also pre-dissolved in alcohol for ready-to-use sale. It takes about 1.5 million lac bugs to make one pound of shellac. In fact, in Hindustani *lakh* means 100,000, and so became the root of the word shellac.

The Coating with Spirit

ALTHOUGH CLOSER TO BROWN IN COLOR, this product is called "orange" or "amber" shellac and is the standard found in all historic finishes. Today, you can also purchase "white" shellac, a modern, bleached version marketed for finishing lighter woods. It appears white when wet because of a wax component, but dries clear. White shellac is the main ingredient in stain- and knot-sealing primers.

Shellac forms a finish through the simple process of evaporation. When the resinous flakes are dissolved in a solvent (alcohol), they become a liquid. When the liquid is painted on and the solvent dries, the flakes interlock as a continuous resinous film. No chemical change occurs, and reintroducing the solvent at any time will soften the film. Today, this type of coating is occasionally called an evaporative finish, but the old-time name is spirit varnish — "spirit" for the alcohol, and "varnish" for a generic clear finish. The amount of flake in the solution is measured as the "pound cut" (e.g., a three-pound cut has three pounds of flake per gallon). Shellac's cut affects its look, workability, thickness, and drying time.





There are pros and cons to a shellac finish. Heat and some common chemicals (such as ammonia and other alkalies) will damage the finish. Water whitens it, and alcohol dissolves it. However, shellac has less well-known practical advantages — chiefly that it's easy to use. Shellac dries in minutes, so you're unlikely to get drips, sags, or curtains on vertical surfaces. Such speed means it can be recoated shortly after it is applied, a big help where production is important.

Shellac is also non-porous, making it an excellent sealer and moisture barrier. It has long been used as a knot sealer under paints because it keeps bleeding resins and staining extractives in the wood, where they cannot mar the surface. Shellac also keeps water out of the wood, so it is less likely to stain or change shape with increases in humidity. On porous interior surfaces, such as plaster and wallboards, it's the shellac in stain-kill primers that traps old water stains. (Coating the interior walls of houses with shellac can block moisture migration out of the

Testing: What Finish Is It?

Of the three categories of hard-coat clear finishes common in old houses, shellac belongs in the first: *spirit varnishes*. After World War I, synthetic lacquer was developed. Like shellac, lacquer is a resin (nitrocellulose) dissolved in a spirit (lacquer thinner).

In the mid-19th century, manufacturers introduced *oil varnishes*, cooking linseed oil and natural resins (such as kauri gum) together. These oil varnishes change chemically as they cure, and their solvents will not redissolve them.

Synthetic varnishes are a product of modern chemistry, developed during the 1930s and '40s. Many new synthetic oils and resins (alkyds, polyesters, etc.) and oils gradually replaced the natural components of oil varnishes.

Figuring out what sort of finish you have is easy. First, rub a bit of denatured alcohol on it in an inconspicuous spot. If it loosens, it's shellac. If there's no reaction, try lacquer thinner, which will dissolve both shellac and lacquer. (It'll wrinkle varnish, but won't remove it.) If neither alcohol nor lacquer thinner works, it's a varnish. Remove it with a commercial paint and varnish stripper.



RIGHT: These 1880s ash pocket doors were refinished using layers of both orange and white shellac to re-create the original color.

house, and it has even been used to stop infiltration of air-borne formaldehyde from problematic foam insulations.) When wood does move, as all wood does, shellac will flex without cracking.

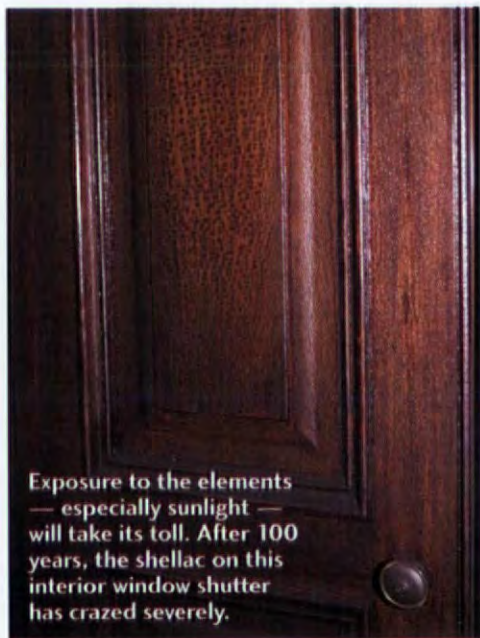
Even under transparent stains and varnishes shellac can be a help. New wood, or finished wood that has been sanded bare, often doesn't take stain evenly — a classic problem that pops up in refinishing old softwood floors. Prepping the wood first with a coat of 1-pound cut of shellac will give it uniform porosity and prevent mottled staining. Shellac makes a good, economical first coat for a traditional, non-polyurethane varnish job, too.

Perhaps the biggest advantage of a shellac finish is that it is so easily repaired.

Cleaning: Shellac Revival

Contrary to common misconception, shellac does not darken with age. (Varnish is the old finish that darkens over time.) Shellac maintains its amber hue. Of course, all clear finished wood takes on a patina because of the effect of ultraviolet light on the wood itself. Shellac may also darken from dirt. Super-hard finishes like polyurethane are more likely to repel tiny grains of sand or dust. They may scratch the surface slightly, but they tend to wipe away with cleaning. On shellac, they are more apt to get ground into the surface. This can make the finish look darker. The upshot is that cleaning or renewing your finish may lighten it up as much as stripping and refinishing with a new shellac film would.

For all cleaning and renewing procedures, test the effect on your finish in an out of the way spot first. Start with a gentle dish-



Exposure to the elements — especially sunlight — will take its toll. After 100 years, the shellac on this interior window shutter has crazed severely.

washing soap, using just the suds and wiping them away immediately. Or use a stronger cleaner, such as Fantastik. You can also try a small amount of denatured alcohol and steel wool. This will melt the surface slightly and remove built-up grime. To cover scratches or gaps in the finish or remove water marks (white streaks), you can re-amalgamate shellac by rubbing it with an alcohol-soaked pad or rag. This dissolves the finish, loosening the shellac particles so they can resettle over the damaged areas.




Restore defects or gaps in the finish simply by applying a couple of new coats, then "aging" them with a light steel wooling. Each shellac coat partially dissolves the previous coats, then the entire film re-hardens as one, thicker layer. (White shellac can even be used to touch up old varnishes and lacquer, but it will not bond with polyurethane.) Remove white streaks (water marks) by rubbing a little alcohol over the surface. You can also re-amalgamate an existing finish by reintroducing low levels of the solvent.

A Clean Finish

SHELLAC IS ONE OF THE SAFEST FINISH OPTIONS. Its resin is organic, non-toxic, and can be used for babies' cribs and toys. (In fact, shellac is a major ingredient in some candy coatings on medicines and sweets and is used to preserve and give a nice shine to fresh fruit.) Shellac does not emit VOCs (volatile organic compounds) as it dries, and it complies with the clean air regulations that limit many architectural coatings in places like New York City and California. Of course, the solvent — typically denatured alcohol — is toxic and flammable. Keep a strong flow of fresh air moving

through the work area when shellacking; an appropriate respirator (NIOSH/MSHA TC23C) is also a good idea.

Unquestionably, a modern finish may serve better on counters and tabletops, where spilled cocktails, hot pans, and wet glasses lurk. These days, on jobsites and in home centers, the words "clear finish" are synonymous with polyurethane. This rock-hard and nearly impermeable material lasts longest in tough applications, such as floors. (All clear finishes are relatively short-lived in strong sunlight or outdoors, because ultraviolet rays pass through them and de-

grade the wood underneath, causing the bond to fail.) Nonetheless, the traditional finish achieved with shellac is unsurpassed for vertical surfaces and other less-exposed woodwork. Some restorers shellac even bedroom floors, adding a protective coat of wax, for a classic Victorian shine. 

BELOW: On this maple sample, aniline dyes were added to the shellac to create colored finishes. From left to right: orange shellac, white shellac, unfinished, and with "red mahogany" and "red maple" dyes.



Shellacking: Mixing & Application

Once shellac is dissolved in alcohol, it begins to degrade. Eventually, it won't harden anymore. For generations, woodworkers' rule of thumb has been that premixed shellac has a six-month usable life. Today, some manufacturers say their products will last for years on the shelf. Check labels, talk to your seller, and look for a freshness date stamped on the can. You can test questionable shellac before using it by putting a few drops on an old jar lid. The shellac should harden overnight. If it is soft in the morning, the shellac may be old and no longer usable. For guaranteed freshness, you can mix shellac yourself.

Always mix and store shellac in a glass container; contact with metal will darken it. (Cans of pre-mixed shellac have a special lining.) Begin by putting the flakes into the jar (for faster results, crush the flakes to a powder first), and gradually add denatured ethyl alcohol, stirring regularly. (Any alcohol will work; the difference between types is how long they take to evaporate.) Keep the container sealed to prevent evaporation of the alcohol as well as contamination from moisture in the air. Never shake it, because that can lead to bubbles in your finish.

Shellac has a bit of wax in it naturally, which can cloud the finish and reduce its water repellency. To de-wax shellac, let it stand for a couple of weeks. The wax will settle to the bottom; slowly pour off the shellac. A less effective, but quicker, method is to strain shellac through a fine cloth.

APPLY YOURSELF: You can spray shellac on, and it's even available in aerosol cans, but it is not the best clear finish for spray application because it dries so quickly. If you hold the can too close, you'll get drips; too far, and you'll get a stippled effect.

At the other end of the application spectrum is French Polishing, a shellacking technique that dates back to the 16th century. In a French Polish, shellac is applied with a pad of cotton cloth and rubbed on. The circular

motion of the pad creates a glass-like surface, free of any application marks. (This is a true craft. It takes practice and instruction to get the knack.)

A middle of the road route to a great finish is brushing. Here are some professional tips:

- ♦ A thin "pound cut" is easiest to work with. Start with a one-pound cut for the first coat. Then use either a two- or three-pound cut for later applications.
- ♦ Shellac dries fast, so work quickly. Brush it out as you apply it, using long strokes. Don't return to touch up already applied areas, or you'll wreck the surface.
- ♦ Not only must woodwork be completely dry, but even moisture in the air can mar the finish with white blemishes. As the alcohol evaporates, it cools the surface and in high humidity, condensation can actually form on the shellac.
- ♦ Use a high-quality, soft, natural-bristle or synthetic brush. Keep it loaded with shellac. If it is set down for even a minute, it will harden.
- ♦ Sand out brush strokes and drips between coats, but don't sand to degloss. Even glossy shellac coats adhere well because wet shellac dissolves the lower coat slightly, allowing the resin films to interlock. (A little shellac dust from sanding between coats will be absorbed into the next coat.)



When shellacking panelled woodwork, be sure you don't glop up the joints. When possible, remove woodwork and lay it flat to finish.

How to Get Your Town Interested in Itself

BY ADAIR MULLIGAN

MY NEW TOWN LOOKED like a scene from an insurance company calendar. The honest-to-goodness New England Village had tree-lined streets, majestic farmhouses, a church, a corner store, even a town green with bandstand. Yet, it seemed to me, this beautiful place suffered from too little self-respect.

I watched in horror as town planning officials allowed the old dry-goods store (specializing in night crawlers) to be replaced by a video arcade. A few months later, at the town meeting (a small-town event I could hardly wait for), my fellow villagers ratified a long-range capital plan that included bulldozing the Greek Revival town hall and building a "real" one. This picture-perfect place, I was finding out, was not so proud of its roots.

My battle to make the town aware, and proud, of its history, undertaken with a few sympathizers, was not about restricting development, or telling folks what sorts of curtains to hang. It was about inspiring townspeople to look at the history all around them with new eyes. It took eight years to sound the wake-up call. It also took a good bit of public speaking, late-night meetings, squinting at antique penmanship, and tireless rabble-rousing. The process also involved huge personal satisfaction, and it was fun. I'd like to share my most successful strategies and campaigns.

Enlist the Schools: Too often, children think American history happened only in Plymouth and Gettysburg. Yet there is history everywhere, and teachers love to bring their subject closer to home. We got the ball rolling by bringing in artifacts from local houses for show-and-tell. Soon the teachers took over. The third grade, for example, researched and built scale mod-



Picture postcards made from historic photos of the town raised consciousness and funds.

els of buildings in our historic district.

Capitalize on Christmas: During the holidays, people are ready to embrace anything smacking of tradition. The town caught the spirit with an annual evening candlelight walk through the village. It's a night of carolling and cocoa, but it also highlights our historic neighborhoods.

Date Old Houses: We called or wrote to old-house owners to find out construction dates for a plaque program. When not one homeowner could offer a date (except a lady who insisted her early 1900s Builder's Style house was from 1812), it was clear that some work had to be done. So we held a workshop called How to Date Your Historic House; it was surprisingly well attended. The heavy volumes in the Registry of Deeds intimidated many of the participants, so it became a group effort.



Apply for Funding: Town self-consciousness rose a notch or two when we landed a federal grant through the State Historic Preservation Office. We had struggled through the application paperwork, and our hard work paid off. With the funds, we hired an architectural historian to study our old buildings. Meanwhile, we fleshed out their inner lives by researching the past resi-

My campaign to make the town proud of its past took time away from other things, like my daughter Hayden. But I did it for the children.



Mine is an old New England mill town, but it could be any old town, anywhere: a church, a main street, an interesting past.

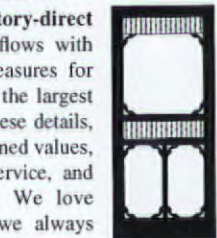
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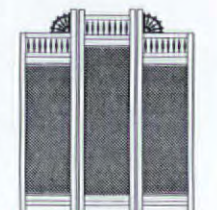
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ABOVE: The Greek Revival town hall was destined for doom, but we saved it. **INSET:** Villagers toast marshmallows over a bonfire of old junk ripped from the building during restoration. **LEFT:** All were impressed by the third grade's depiction of the oldest houses in town.

dents. A second grant enabled us to publish our study as a walking tour booklet, illustrated by a local artist. It describes fifty historic buildings, accompanied by a guide map and pen-and-ink drawings. Everyone loved it, even the Chamber of Commerce and the hospital, which hoped to use the booklets to lure health professionals to the region. We ran through the first printing in just a few months.

Start a Newsletter: Our's might have been the most effective tool in whipping up interest. It was a home-brewed affair, put together sans even a T-square and churned out on the town's copy machine. The newsletter is published each season (except, of course, Mud Season), and carries a grab-bag of articles including "Village Vignette" (the history of an old building), "Old House Blues" (a fix-it-up subject), and "Ask Alvey" (excerpts from the 1850 memoirs of a village boy named Alvah Hunter).



My well-publicized efforts gained me notoriety, if not always popularity, throughout the county.

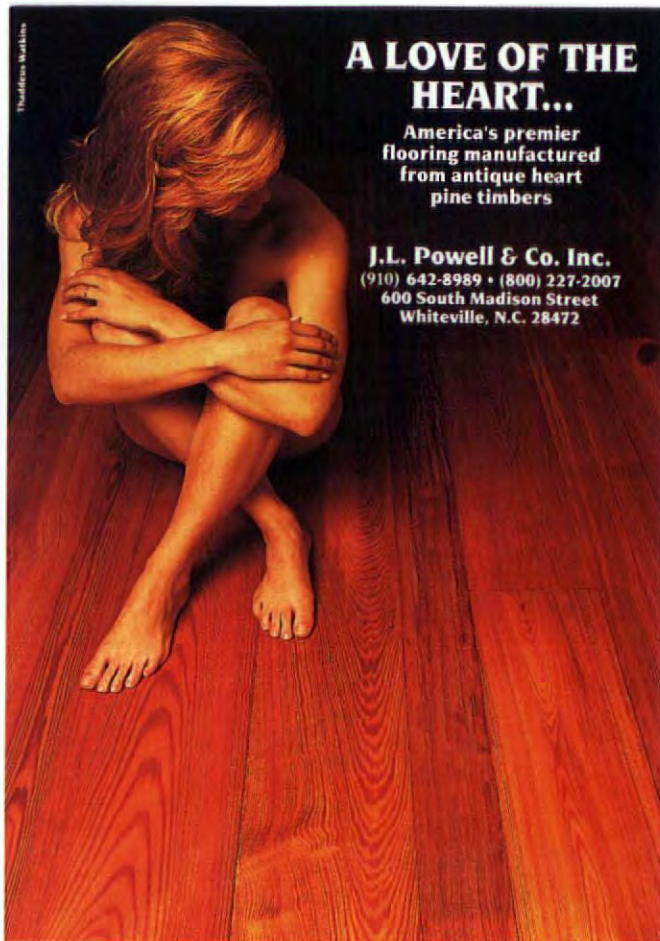
Our *coup de grace* was saving the beleaguered Greek Revival building. The selectmen got their new town hall, but as of this writing, the structure has been saved from school-board plans to use the land for a playing field. An unsinkable volunteer enlisted others to help strip wallpaper, remove porches, reglaze windows, and refinish floors to create a beautifully restored building. It is now home to the offices of a non-profit music festival.

This town now knows itself a little better. You hear the words "historic resource" in planning-board hearings, the children understand how a brick beehive oven is fired, and residents actually voted extra money for the new town hall project to exhibit the town's elaborate Victorian safe door! The town understands where it is going because it understands where it has been. It has become, in many ways, an even more attractive place to live. Perhaps some of our successes will help others develop pride in their Main Streets.

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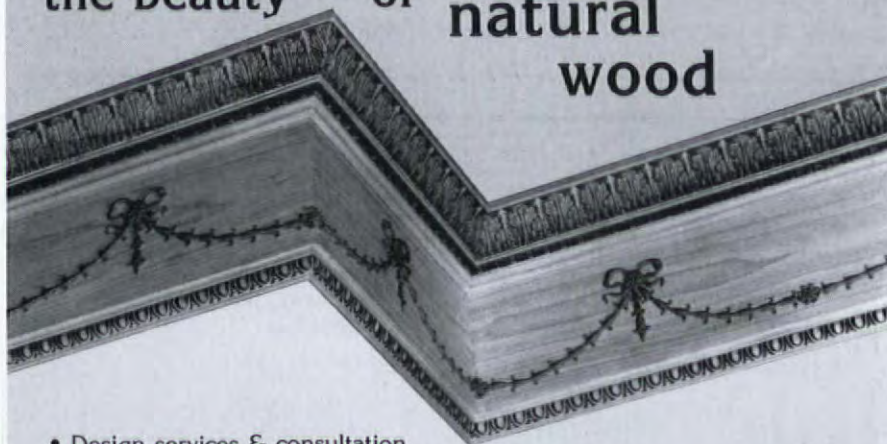
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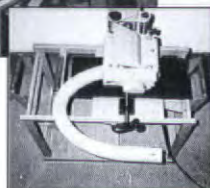
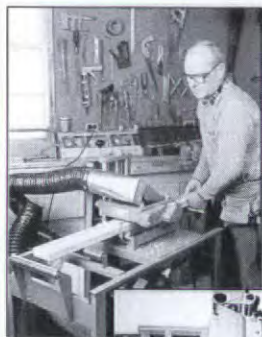
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Above: Reproduction Eastlake wallpaper traced directly from the wall. Below: With the blade of the Roof Rake, you can pull snow from the edge of your roof.

ing patterns from old-house walls, they select colors through chemical analysis and historical research. Then they print reproduction paper for the project and for their warehouse. The paper shown, Anglo-Japanese Blossom, is patterned after original paper that still hangs in the vestibule of the Cohen-Bay House, an 1884 Oakland, Calif., Eastlake Queen Anne. Manufactured in its original 18" width, it costs \$48 per seven-yard roll. Mt. Diablo Handprints, P.O. Box 726, Dept. OHJ, Benicia, CA 94510; (707) 745-3388.

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The Jorgensen Compound Miter Saw.

above the second storey. The 16' aluminum unit weighs less than five pounds and costs less than \$40. Extensions are \$9.95. The Roof Snow Rake is available at hardware stores. For a local distributor, contact Garelick Manufacturing Co., 644 Second Street, Dept. OHJ, St. Paul Park, MN 55071; (612) 459-9795.

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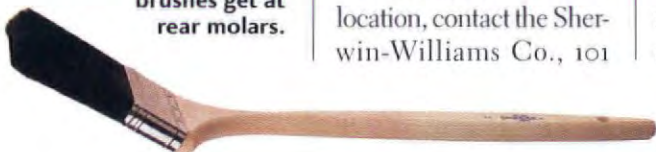
PRODUCTS by Josh Garskof

— system is literally cooking with gas. York's Triathlon powers both functions from a single energy source, natural gas, with breakthrough benefits in efficiency and economy. Old-house owners will appreciate the potential for lower operating costs — as much as 50% below those of conventional heating and cooling equipment — but there's also a space advantage in housing both plants in a single package (about the size of a large heat pump). The system costs between \$7,000 to \$8,000, plus ductwork. For a list of distributors, contact York Heating and Air Conditioning, P.O. Box 1592, Dept. OHJ, York, PA 17405; (717) 771-6418.

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A radiator brush paints hard-to-reach areas, much like angled tooth brushes get at rear molars.



stores, the tool is a must for lots of old-house interior paint jobs. It has a long, angled handle that reaches hard-to-paint areas. Sherwin-Williams' quality radiator brush is made from 100 percent China bristle with a nickel-plated ferrule. It costs \$19.99 and is available at their retail stores. For information or a store location, contact the Sherwin-Williams Co., 101



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Two fasteners from Hope's casement window hardware catalog.

HOW TO ORDER OUR PLANS

Mail-order plans have a long history in shaping the residential architecture of the country. Of the thousands of house plans available today, few exhibit good design and a grasp of historical proportion and detail. So, in response to requests from OHJ readers, the editors have "done the homework": We've hand-picked plans. In each issue, we offer the most attractive, authentic, and buildable of the historical designs, from all periods of American architectural history. Let us know what plans you're looking for.

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:

- 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.

- May include foundation plan for basement or crawl space. (Crawl space plans can easily be adapted for full basements by your builder.)

Why order multiple sets? If you're serious about building, you'll need a set each for the general contractor, mort-

gage lender, electrician, plumber, heating/ventilating contractor, building permit department, other township use or interior designer, and one for yourself. Ordering the 8-set plan saves money and additional shipping charges.

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

If you would like information on ordering more than 8 sets of the same plan, please call our Customer Service Department at (508) 281-8803.

(2) Mirror-reverse plans are useful when the house would fit the site better "flop." 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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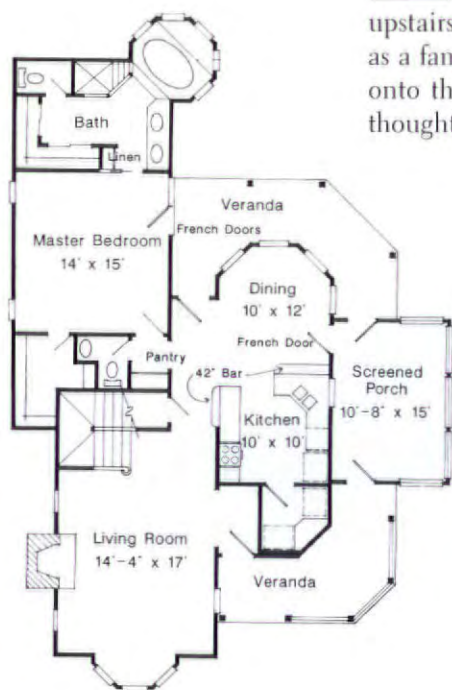
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first floor

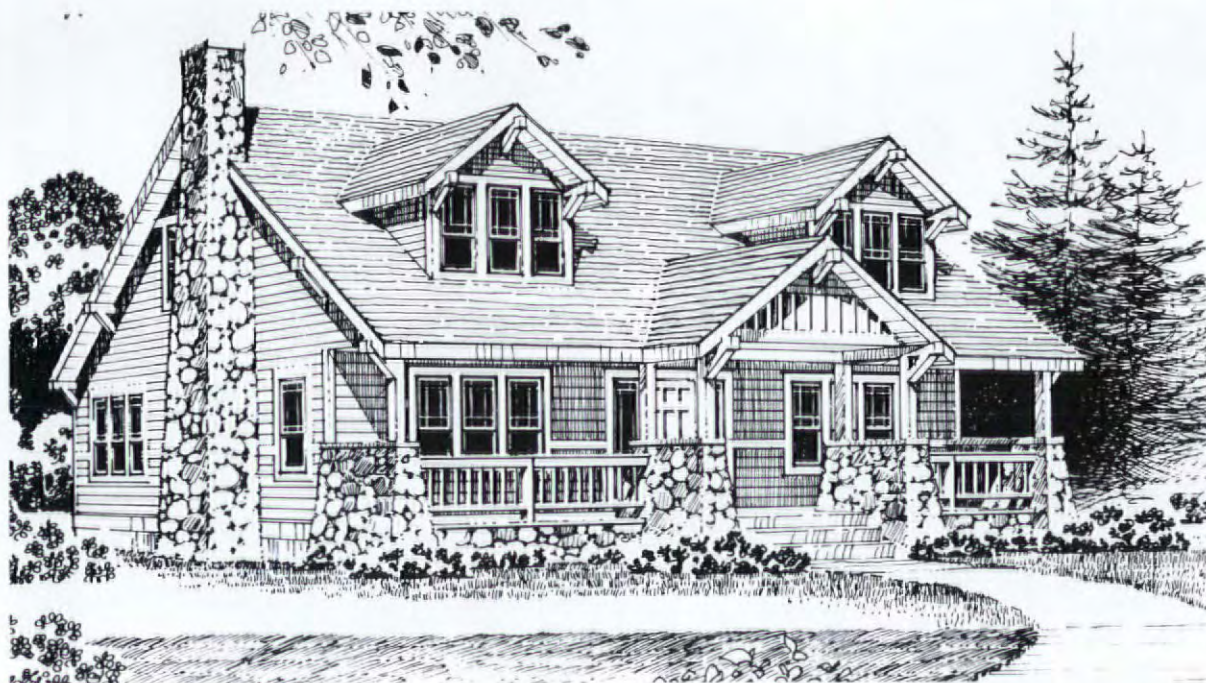


second floor

Plan LG-17-VI

Cost.....	\$230
Set of 5.....	\$290
Set of 8.....	\$330
Bedrooms.....	3
Bathrooms.....	2 1/2
Square Footage.....	2,071'
First Floor.....	1,236'
Second Floor.....	835'
Ceiling Height	
First Floor.....	9'
Second Floor.....	10'
Overall Dimensions	
Width.....	40'4"
Depth.....	62'10"

CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW

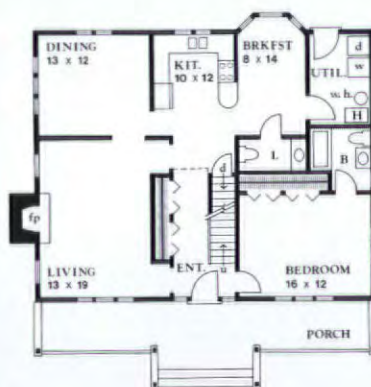


DISTINCTIVE ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS LEND authenticity to this Craftsman-style house. Note the large dormers with wooden bracket detailing, the expansive front porch with front gable and fieldstone piers, and the large fieldstone chimney. Inside, bedrooms are located on both floors, al-

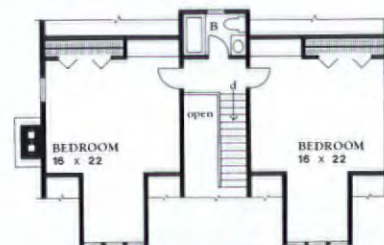
lowing the upstairs to be closed off, if desired. The first-floor master bedroom is spacious and neatly tucked away from the rest of the house. A large living room features a centrally located fireplace, and the kitchen sits conveniently between the dining room and the breakfast area.

Plan PP-04-PV

Cost.....	\$230
Set of 5	\$290
Set of 8	\$330
Bedrooms.....	3
Bathrooms	2 1/2
Square Footage	2,030'
First Floor	1,295'
Second Floor	735'
Ceiling Height	
First Floor	8'
Second Floor	8'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	43'
Depth	42'

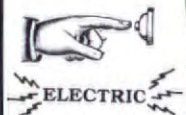


first floor



second floor

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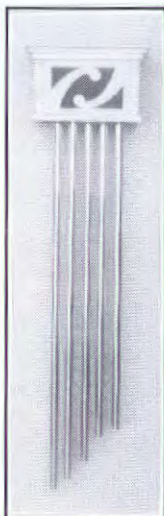
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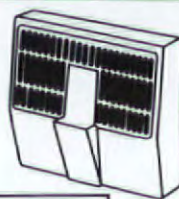
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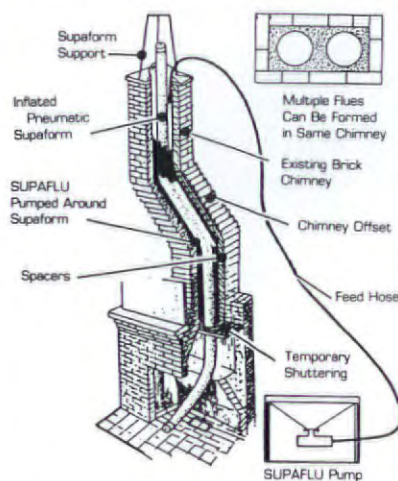
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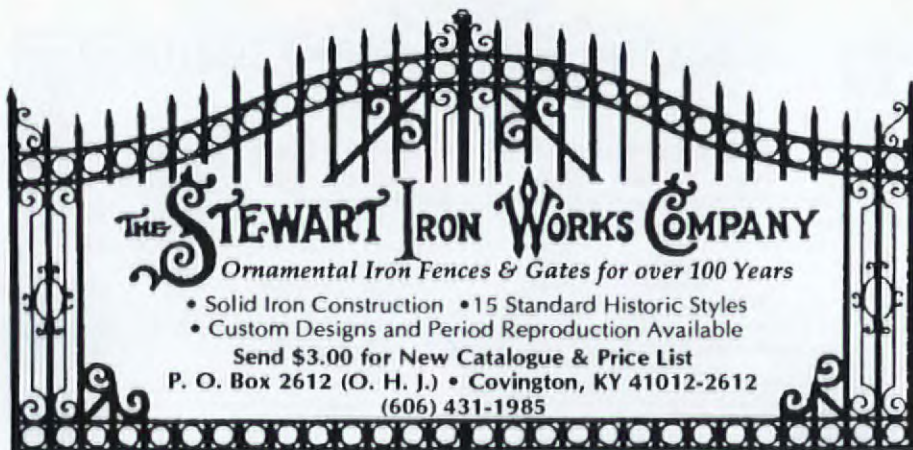
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Real Estate

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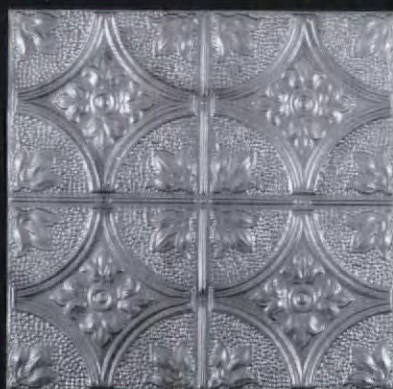
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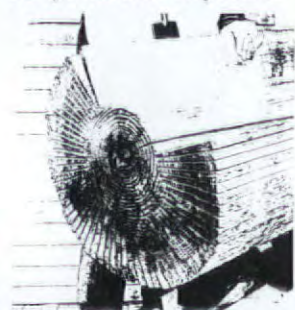
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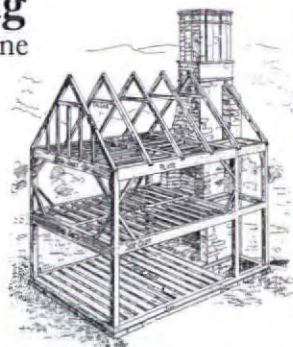
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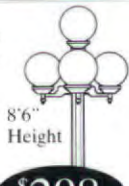
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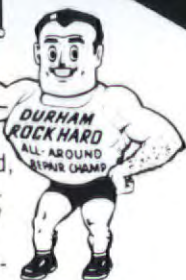
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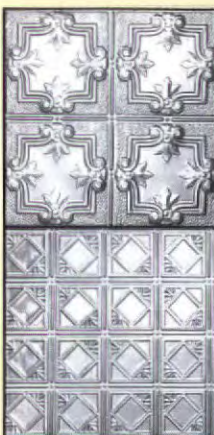
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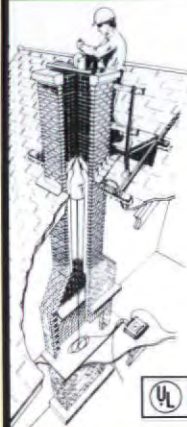
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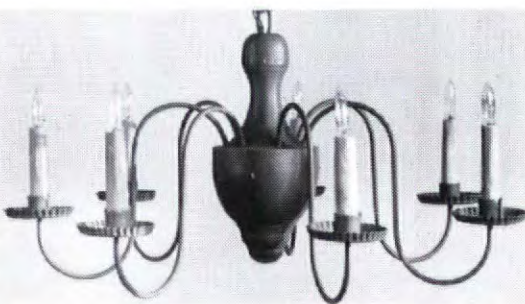
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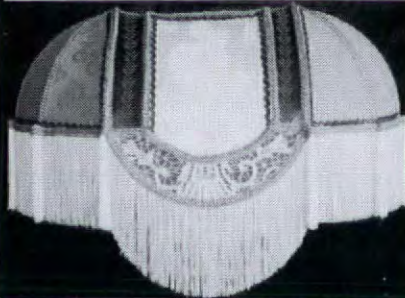
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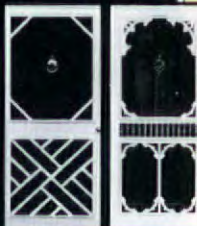
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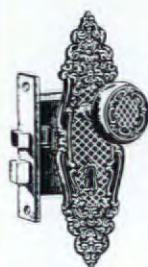


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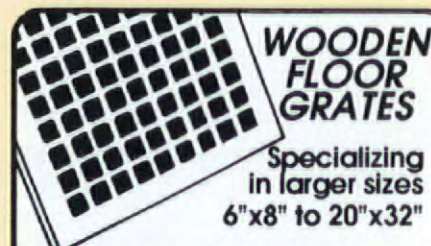
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REMUDDLING

OPINION



Mutating Mansard

LIKE GLACIERS AND VIRUSES, SOME REMUDDLINGS APPEAR STATIC AT A GLANCE; HOWEVER, THE CAMERA records that they actually grow and shift in nature as time goes by. A classic case is this duplex Second Empire in Telford, Pennsylvania.

Both sides matched when the house was built, but by 1990, when Carol Birkland snapped it, a Jekyll-and-Hyde transformation was already underway (above). On the left side, heavy-handed re-pointing with white portland cement has altered the brickwork, and the front windows have been converted — one into a door. On the right side, roofers did their best to obscure the mansard, inserting a skylight. The paint's a different color too, split right down the steps.

As luck would have it, Joseph Dille documented the same house again in 1993 (inset). Three years later, the metamorphosis had largely stopped on the left side (thanks to more sensitive ownership), but the right bay is now sided over and the porch has lost all decorative features. As the saying goes, nothing endures but change.



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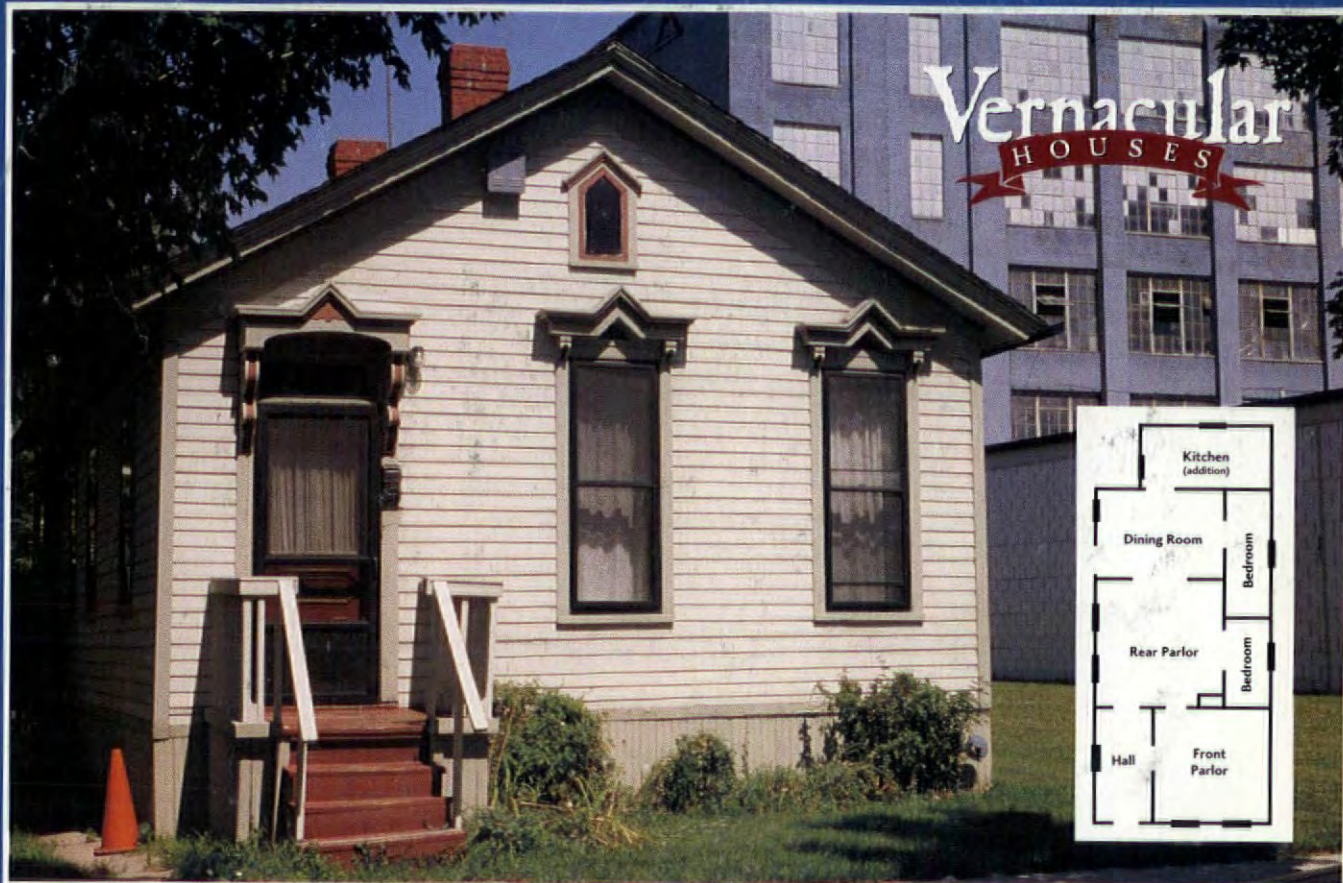
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Vernacular HOUSES



MICHIGAN'S CORKTOWN COTTAGES

DETROIT'S OLDEST NEIGHBORHOOD is Corktown, named for the Irish from County Cork who, after the opening of the Erie Canal, migrated from the coastal cities of Boston and New York in the late 1820s and 1830s. These immigrants built workers' housing, locally known as Corktown Cottages, in the area west of downtown.

Corktown Cottages are similar to shotgun houses — gabled-front, one-storey buildings on narrow lots. Unlike those evocatively named vernacular houses, however, Corktown Cottages aren't laid out with a straight shot from front door to back. Instead, the floor plan is dominated by two parlors, front and rear. Neither parlor is the full width of the house, which allows for a small hallway at the entrance and two narrow bedrooms in the back. The rear parlor would also



TOP: Half of this Corktown Cottage's 50' wide lot remains undeveloped. **INSET:** Inside, the compact floor plan has two 7'x9' bedrooms. **ABOVE:** Architectural details from pattern-books ornament many Corktown Cottages, as in this example.

lead into the dining room, and kitchen additions were eventually built.

Most Corktown plots were 50'

wide by 130' long. Frugal homeowners favored the long, narrow house plan because the cottages were often constructed on only half of the property. This left the remaining half to be sold or developed in the future.

After the 1860s, the largely German population preferred grander homes in different styles, such as Italianate and Queen Anne. Nevertheless, the simple workers' cottages continued to be built. The original Corktown Cottages (also called Irish Cottages) were often embellished with gingerbread to keep up with their more modern counterparts. Approximately ten pre-1860 Corktown Cottages survive today, along with a handful of late-19th-century examples.

— STEVEN PALMER
Corktown Citizens
District Council
Detroit, Michigan

OLD-HOUSE
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY DON PRICE;
FLOOR PLAN BY DEBORAH GOLDSTEIN.