

# PERFECT HOME

DECEMBER 1951

MAGAZINE



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# IT TAKES A WOMAN'S TOUCH



Remember "The Voice of Bugle Ann"? It was written by MacKinley Kantor, our guest editor. He started his career in the traditional reporter role, went on to become a columnist and finally a war correspondent with the British and U. S. Air forces in Europe

BY MAC KINLEY KANTOR

SHE WAS IT, she made it. Sometimes there was no money, usually there was very little money. There didn't need to be money, really, because the whole enterprise consisted of ingredients which could not be bought in any store.

To be sure, cups could be bought and tea, too. But someone had to know how to brew the tea, and how to pour and serve it with grace, and how to fetch it with courtly delight into the little living room, and place the tray tenderly upon a neat, small table.

Cats could be bought somewhere, I suppose; we never bought one. Ours always came to us in cold weather, holding up their paws tenderly and knowing somehow that they had at last found lodging where there would be plenty of milk in a warm saucer on the patched linoleum floor beside an old range — where there would be a snug box prepared for them to have their kittens in, and a strong active finger to poke at them when they wanted to play; and a happy ringing voice to appreciate their giddy virtues, and to say, "Look, Virginia! Look, Mac! See what the kitty is doing *now*."

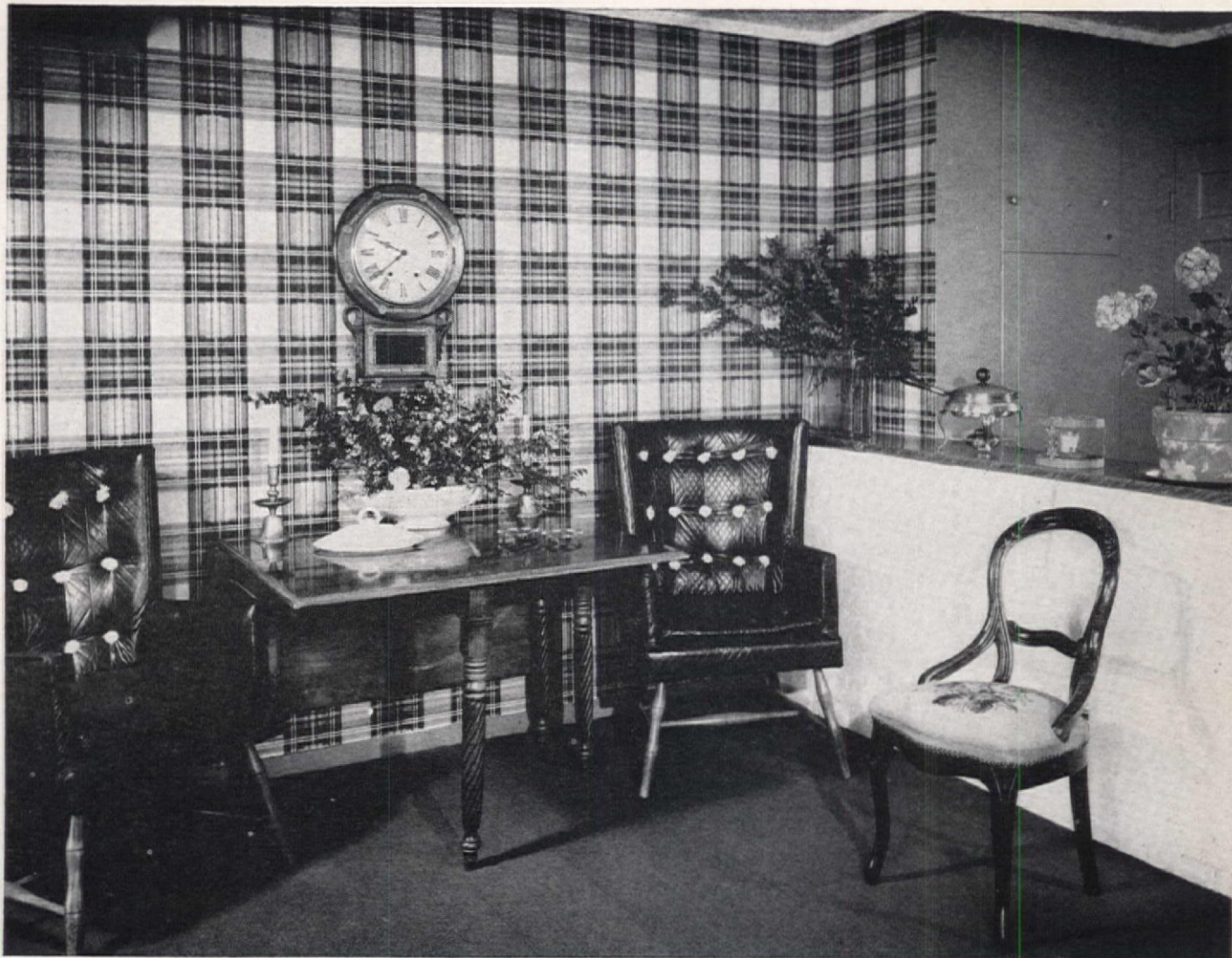
Aye, the ingredients of meat-loaf and browned potatoes could be purchased, but there had to be the art and the all-encompassing talent at serving such viands. And blankets for the beds could be bought, but not the nourishing and warming of Youth.

A shy vase of lilies-of-the-valley; the willow switch which lay ominously atop an old cupboard for necessary punishment of a bad boy when he was bad indeed; skilled wiry hands to tread across the stained keys of a crotchety piano and make it sound like Pad-erewski at a Steinway: these we had. My sister and I had a woman who makes 1718 Willson Avenue, Webster City, Iowa, gleam on the brightest pinnacle of the past, whenever we turn and look back over our shoulders.

I am fortunate that in time I found another woman who could contrive the same beauty in poverty or later plenty. Because I like to have a home and you can't have a home without having the woman who makes it so. The much scoffed-at rhymester, Eddie A. Guest, used to utter some little lines about its taking a heap of living in a house to make it home. Well and good; but I have known houses where a lot of living went on and they weren't homes at all.

No, it takes a woman. Without the right sort of woman tincturing those walls around her with her presence, home is just a place where a man goes when he is too tired to go anywhere else. I have always had a home, because I always had the woman, be she mother or wife.





## THE FRIENDLY RED HOUSE





IT'S WARM and it's welcoming — this barn-red, one-story traditional home, with its steeply sloping roof of slate-colored asphalt tiles, and the sharp crisp contrast of paper-white shutters and trim.

Let's go in, past that scalloped white window-box, through the paneled white entrance door.

Here is a far-from-tiny house. It has six full sized rooms, three of them bedrooms. And the living room is an expansive 16x25 feet (not counting the dining alcove). Yet its personality is cozy and intimate. Right from the start, visitors are aware of the warm personal touch that the owners have given this friendly red house by the work of their own hands.

A bold, plaid papered wall stretches across one end of the living room and continues into the dining alcove to bring the entire decorative theme into close unity. Stunning host chairs, designed and upholstered in quilted black chintz by the talented fingers of the owners, give striking emphasis to the simplicity of the many authentic antiques.

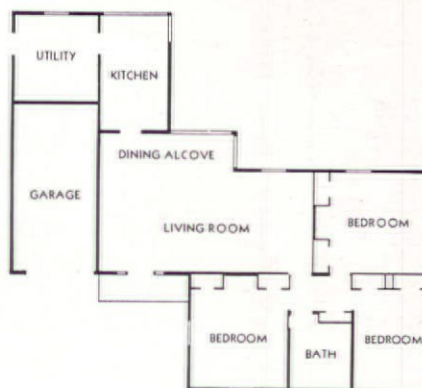
Unmistakable signs of a nimble needle are everywhere: in the be-ruffled curtains made of snowy sheeting, the chair pads quilted in sunny yellow, and the slipcovers primly tailored in colorful print.

A magnificent breakfront is the dominating feature of another wall. Along with its books, it shelters old pieces of ironstone and other treasures that tell us this home's individuality is expressed even in smallest details.

Boston rockers, in mother-daughter sizes, are an irresistible invitation to relax in the charming window corner. Planter inserts in the cabinets beneath the windows make indoor gardening a tidy occupation, as well as adding an unusual touch to the sedateness of doors hinged in antique hardware.

By the time we have reached the kitchen, we are convinced that this harmonious blending of the old and new is responsible for much of the home's warmhearted feeling. Even the laboratory air of the most up-to-the-minute kitchen equipment is softened by cupboards of mellow waxed wood and wallpaper as nostalgic as Grandma's spice cabinet.

Yes, it is an atmosphere rather than a set style that has been created within these walls; an indefinable air of familiar things made more beloved by owners who know the secret of those touches that spell "home." It holds the promise of years of good living.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOWELL WARD AND ASSOCIATES



# GOOD ACCESSORIES MAKE A GOOD ROOM

**Y**OUR walls are painted. Your draperies have been hung and every piece of your furniture is in place. Your room is complete — or is it?

A room without accessories is a room without personality. Accessories are needed to complete a mood, to give that cherished lived-in look.

*A few fine accessories are all that is needed*, a few exclamation points to add interest to the plain room, unity to the sparsely decorated place, and flair to an unimaginatively decorated area.

*Accessories should never be selected from the standpoint of use.* They should be good to look at, should complement the spirit of the room, and should be the best you can afford. This does not mean that they must be costly. A wicker basket will make just as charming a planter as will a Sevres vase. A good print will add more to a wall than will a mediocre original.

Use old things in a new manner. A silver sugar bowl can hold your flowers or that tiny candlestick can serve as a paperweight. *Create fresh arrangements with familiar objects* and they will appear new.

A few fine pieces are all that your room can wear at one time. There is no other element that can become so cloying as an over-abundance of bric-

a-brac. Any room loses character if flooded with knickknacks. If your hobby includes the accumulation of many small objects, corral them in a cabinet or on shelves. Dinky ornaments make a room look spotty.

When combining accessories, avoid monotony of size, shape, or color; yet make certain that they give a feeling of unity with each other and with the room as a whole.

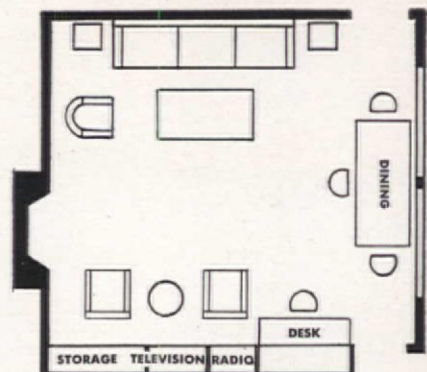
*Accessories should be changed from time to time.* One homemaker we know has two complete sets. The first of each May, down come the landscapes, china vases, crystal cigarette boxes, and all the cold-weather gear. Out come the floral prints, tiny reed baskets for cigarettes, Spartan white lampshades, and large pottery ashtrays. The room completely changes its personality. Six months later, when the light and airy rooms have lost a little of their zest, the rich floral draperies are brought out to frame the windows again. The room becomes more formal and at the same time subtly rich in warmth and comfort.

Yes, accessories add the sparkle, personality, and touch of humor on which the success of even the most tastefully decorated room depends. *Don't be afraid to do the unexpected* if you are aiming for a room with individuality.

**Do give your accessories variety of size and color and a common theme. Make certain they have size enough for an integrated grouping. Five small prints gain stature by being framed alike and used as a unit**



**Do harmonize your accessories in spirit. The eleven items grouped about this lovely pine schoolmaster's desk are all in the Early American theme. The chair is a copy of an early Connecticut Hitchcock chair**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOWELL WARD AND ASSOCIATES

## WALLS That Work For Their Living

**T**HE fellow who designed these rooms was wall-eyed or at least wall-minded. Too few designers ever raise their eyes from the floor plan to find the space within the walls. For every foot of floor there are roughly four of wall space waiting to be put to work.

Why stand bookcases, tables, storage cabinets or lamps on the floor when they can be recessed into the walls more attractively and more economically?

The room pictured here doubles its living convenience by looking to its walls for space-wise ideas like the dramatic window treatment, lower right. It contrasts pleasantly with the simple magic of the fireplace, upper left. The shadow line of the paneled overhang gives a horizontal sweep that appears to add width to the room.

The plywood storage wall is handsome as well as practical, a model of thoughtful design that makes the most of space-saving potentialities. Below open book shelves, upper right, hides a music and television center.

Each wall performs an extra task, above and beyond its space enclosing function and does it so well that the room has unusual charm and livability.









The cherry on the sundae, the trivets on the doors, each of them is the final important touch. Cover the trivets with your fingers and you'll see just how much they contribute to the charm of this kitchen



*Final Kitchen*



*New products*

#### **COLLAPSIBLE ALUMINUM AWNINGS**

Remember those old collapsible metal drinking cups? Well, we've just seen an aluminum awning that works the same way. Come sun or rain it pulls down to protect the window in true awning style but when the weather is just right it folds up accordion-wise. May be had in colors, too, in baked-on enamel. The louvered construction allows free circulation of air.

#### **GLOWING TELEPHONE DIAL**

If you have ever made telephone calls in the dark, you will appreciate a new gadget that will get more right numbers for you. It's a telephone dial with luminous numbers, and it clips onto your phone between the finger wheel and the numbered dial.

#### **OVER-SIZE MAIL PLATE**

We've found a jumbo-size mail plate for your front door. It's big enough to



A KITCHEN is like a cup of tea. It can be rich and savory or completely pallid and tasteless. It takes a real cook to give the right zest. If you doubt that, just take a look at kitchens of friends whose meals you have sampled. The good cook is a naturally creative soul whose genius touches everything in her kitchen.

Wouldn't you know that the guiding spirit of this four-way room is a woman who revels in meal planning and preparation? She spends a lot of time here and has made it so cozy that people naturally gather here to keep her company.

Every detail is both decorative and functional, and the effect of it all is to make you want to go out and plan one like it. Such a room has ideas for both a large house and a small one. No matter how inviting your living room, or your den, or your music room, your kitchen — an inviting kitchen — will always be the center of things. And if your budget is cramped, you could substitute this room for all of them.

It's a delightful setting for either food or fun, an efficient kitchen with plenty of old-time charm. It's a dining room

with a family-size round table and comfortable reed chairs. It's a sitting room where family and friends come for conversation or between-meal treats. It's a game room where almost any evening you'll find the table cleared for action with canasta or bridge in session. We might list a fifth function because in one corner you'll find a desk for untangling household accounts and menu planning.

For all of its charm, it's a completely practical room. The linoleum floor, the plastic-topped counters and the natural wood finishes are not the least wary of soap and water.

The black trivet door-pulls are decorative yet wear like the cast-iron they are. Red and white flame-proof curtains repeat a similar lacy pattern; at dusk the sun slants through them to scatter the gleam of the burnished brass planter above the fieldstone fireplace.

Come on in! The pot's always hot and you can find the way by following the staccato sounds of the kitchen . . . the whine of an electric mixer whirring through golden batter . . . the cautious click of an oven door and the sing-song voice of a boiling kettle. (If you would like to see the room in full color you'll find it pictured on our front cover.)



Winter or summer this fireplace adds color with flame or with flowers. The narrow stairway leads up to the second floor. Pictures, wrought iron, and polished metal all lend their own color and sparkle, invitation and charm

take a whole magazine yet shuts out the tiniest draft. Inside and outside plates match. You may have polished brass, or bronze, dull bronze nickel or chromium. It completely eliminates the usually none-too-attractive mail box.

#### COLORED ENAMEL DOOR KNOBS

Weep no more over the fate of brass, copper, or aluminum door knobs. If a new porcelain enamel finish wears as

well as it looks, you are going to find door knobs to match your color scheme in a very short time. They are already being made in black, white, mahogany tan, and blue. Any color may be duplicated — and they may be finished with decals or hand-painted designs such as are used to decorate ceramic finishes.

#### ROLL-ON PASTE WAX APPLICATOR

Most of us prefer the soft glowing luster of paste type wax but find liquid

wax quicker and easier to use on our floors. There is a new roll-on applicator that now makes the entire job of applying paste wax just about as simple as sweeping. The modestly priced waxer and buffer combination carries the can of wax in the applicator. You transfer the wax to the rollers and onto the floor as you push. Then slip on the lambswool buffers and polish your floor to a gleaming and longer-lasting finish — all with practically no effort!



# Our Readers Asked Us

**QUESTION:** We recently inherited a fine collection of eighteenth century paintings and mahogany antiques. The colors in our present living room are not a good background for dark wood and the gleaming gold of the picture frames. Can you suggest a color scheme that would play up the beauty of these family treasures?

**Answer:** Such elegance demands a simple background. We suggest plain Wedgewood blue walls and woodwork, a perfect complement for the gold. Your ceiling might be light golden buff. The sofa and larger chairs might be a light but slightly deeper shade of blue damask with accent chairs in dull

rose, or antique green velvet. Draperies, too, should be old gold with matching, extra-sheer glass curtains.

**QUESTION:** We have just moved into a new home with hardwood floors. All are in fine condition except that they have been waxed and rewaxed with repeated coats of dirt sealed into each new coat. Will soap and water remove the old wax or should we start by completely refinishing the surface?

**Answer:** Soap and water will get your floors clean but they may also mar the surface and raise the grain of the wood. Some soaps contain harsh alkalies that may cause the wood to

## HEAT TREATMENTS

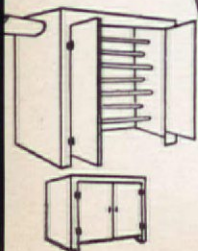
### CONSIDER RADIANT PANEL HEATING

**T**HE increased use of radiant panel heating — or radiant heating as it is commonly called — is causing widespread interest. Although the early Romans developed effective systems 2,000 years ago, only in the last few years has radiant heating become popular.

The advantages are many. Whether large panels in the floor, ceiling or wall are heated by hot water, steam, warm air or electricity, this new application of an old principle means more uniform heat. There are fewer extremes of temperature; the warm air is more evenly distributed. In general, it is also cleaner than most other types. There are no drafts. And there are no registers or radiators.

Its limitations: Separate means of fresh-air ventilation are required, and the system is not directly adaptable to summer cooling. Usually a separate system of humidification must be arranged. Although breakdowns of equipment should be rare, repair costs might be greater than in a system with accessible pipes or ducts. Users of radiant heating, however, believe the advantages far outweigh the limitations.

Engineers differ on whether it is better to put panel systems in the floor or the ceiling. Floor installations make for warm, comfortable floors, and are best for systems using water pipes larger than one-half inch in diameter. In basementless houses, the pipes or ducts can be installed early in the construction. Ceiling installations make possible higher heat releases, hence you can install it in a house with large heat loss, without danger of having temperatures exceed a reasonable limit. And there is usually faster temperature response and less lag since there is little mass to be heated and cooled. Most users say automatic controls keep the time lag to a minimum.



Hang the laundry on the rods of this heated cabinet through which warm furnace air may be circulated bottom to top

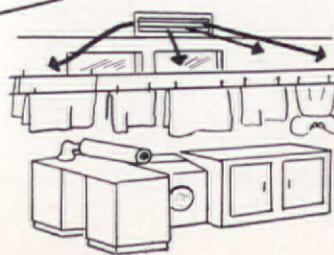
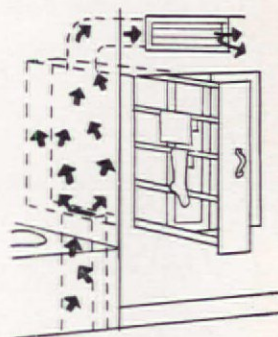
### WHAT DOES PERIMETER HEATING MEAN?

**Y**OU'LL probably be hearing more about "perimeter heating," a comparatively new term in common use in the furnace field. It has a lot of advantages, and is proving especially popular in basementless houses.

Perimeter heating means that the warm air comes into your room from ducts along outside walls — not inside walls near the center of your house as before. Usually these registers are placed below or close to outside windows, where cold air may come in. And there are more of them — possibly eight or ten in a room — instead of only one. In this way the velocity of air is less; there are fewer drafts.

Usually such systems are embedded in the slab floor and thus the pipes help warm the floor by radiant action. Baseboard heating, another popular system, is a form of perimeter heating but depends on heating a house by radiation rather than convection. The radiant baseboards are usually installed along the exposed walls of a room. They, too, make a room feel "warm around the edges." They save space, eliminate radiators, and can be installed in old houses as well as new. Both the radiant glass baseboard and the hollow metal types can be painted to match the woodwork.

No dripping hose on the shower rod when you have a lingerie dryer in the bathroom and it's much easier than running down to the laundry room to wash them



Laundry drying can be speeded up considerably by installing a large register in the ceiling of the laundry room



fume or darken in irregular spots. Use one of the new commercial floor cleaners. Many of them have a wax base. When the old wax has all been removed, give the floor several thin coats of fresh wax. Dust with a dry cloth or a soft brush and polish once a week or so. Never use an oil mop, because the oil softens the wax.

**QUESTION:** We need a sewing room. The only free space in our new home is a tiny north room labeled "den" on the blue print, and it certainly lives up to its name. The one tree-shaded window admits very little light and we very mistakenly had it painted dark green to give what we had expected

to be a snug cozy air. Would a different color scheme make this a more useful room? It is quite impossible to sew here dark as it now is.

**Answer:** Yes, a color scheme that will give the effect of sunlight should help. We suggest clear yellow walls, ceiling, and a brown rug. If you really expect to do much sewing here you might want to do away entirely with a floor covering. It's much easier to whisk threads and snippings from bare wood. At your windows hang sheer white glass curtains, no draperies. Your guest bed might have a russet or yellow corduroy spread. If possible keep your furniture in a light finish.

**QUESTION:** The bedroom of our two young daughters is just 12x14 feet. Two walls are centered by windows and there is a door in the third wall. The junior-size beds just fit comfortably side by side on the one unbroken wall. We would like to use twin beds but they would fit too snugly into the limited space. Had this been a boy's room we could have used bunk beds.

**Answer:** Twin beds would just fit along the long outside wall if they are placed foot to foot. They would be just over thirteen feet long. Shelves over the heads of the beds would be appreciated additions to keep books, bed lamps, and radio within reach.

## WARMTH IN PLACES YOU WANT IT

**H**AVE you ever boosted the thermostat in the living room, higher than you need for comfort, in order to heat Aunt Martha's bedroom adequately? Have you often found your kitchen too hot for cooking or for washing dishes?

One of the important improvements in winter comfort these days is the consideration paid to "zoned" or "sectional" heating. It is based on the sound principle that all rooms in a house should not be kept at the same temperature. Baby's room, the invalid's room, the place where much sitting and little flitting is done — these are areas that should be kept toast-warm. So should grandpa's room, the bathroom, and the conservatory. The kitchen, on the contrary, needs comparatively little heat. That goes also for the laundry, the recreation room, the den that has little heat loss, and of course the garage.

Fitting the proper heat requirements to the needs of each room is not as difficult as it might seem. Extra heat controls are needed, but they can more than earn their keep, because this intelligent distribution of warmth saves on fuel bills. Your furnace dealer can tell you more about it.

## WHAT TYPE OF HEAT YEARS HENCE?

**H**ow will our great grandchildren heat their homes? Will it be by atomic power? By solar heat? By hydro-electric power? Or will they still be using gas, oil, and coal?

Heating engineers like to speculate. Actually no one knows the answers. Those who are skeptical of atomic power point out that the elements from which such power is developed are deposits, not crops. To use them is to deplete them. Eventually — centuries hence — things like coal and oil may be in short supply.

Solar heat has its adherents, but as yet the principle is not capable of adaptation in cooler climates in competition with other methods in use today. The ingenious new heat pump — which extracts the warmth from the earth, air, or water, may hold possibilities. Its use is limited today, because of the cost of the electric current needed to operate it. Hydro-electric power shows no sign of running out, and it may be that we will build more dams to create more of it.

Improvements are bound to come. We have come a long way within the last decade or two. Remember the coal shovel, and the wood burning stove?

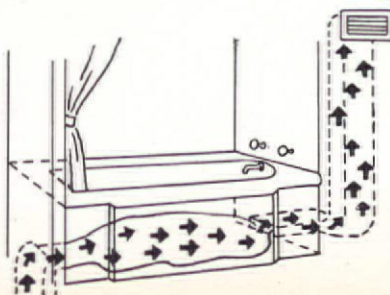
A metal lined haven for dripping overshoes, rubbers and umbrellas near the front door will certainly ease the mind of the fastidious housekeeper



## A NEATER HEATER

**Y**ou don't need to have a sprawling octopus of a furnace in the basement of your house any more. The new ones are styled attractively enough to go into most any room of the house, and there's a type for every kind of home, in fact, almost for every type of room. That's due to the new developments in modern insulation and automatic firing. Heating units — and by this we mean furnaces and boilers as well as "space heaters" that take the place of the old fashioned potbellied stove — can now mix with the family. They come in pastel colors, and they are as compact as a wrist watch.

You can now put a house furnace on an ordinary wood floor, beside an ordinary wood partition. Or you can suspend your warm air unit under a floor, in a porch enclosure, or beneath the rafters in the attic. Wall type heaters, imbedded in a wall, burn gas and connect to a special vent in the hall, require no chimney; you can have the two-way type in a partition and heat two adjacent rooms. Oil fired boilers are now so streamlined you can tuck them away under stairs. They are now making white-enameled boilers that look like refrigerators, and are perfectly at home in a kitchen, laundry or utility room. You can even put your house boiler in the garage, and keep your car warm, too. Especially popular are the new recessed electrical units that provide additional heat in bath, nursery, or a bedroom that needs extra warmth. One type of electrical radiant panel heat is available in sheets that can be applied to portable screens — so you can move them near a sickbed, or in a dressing area.

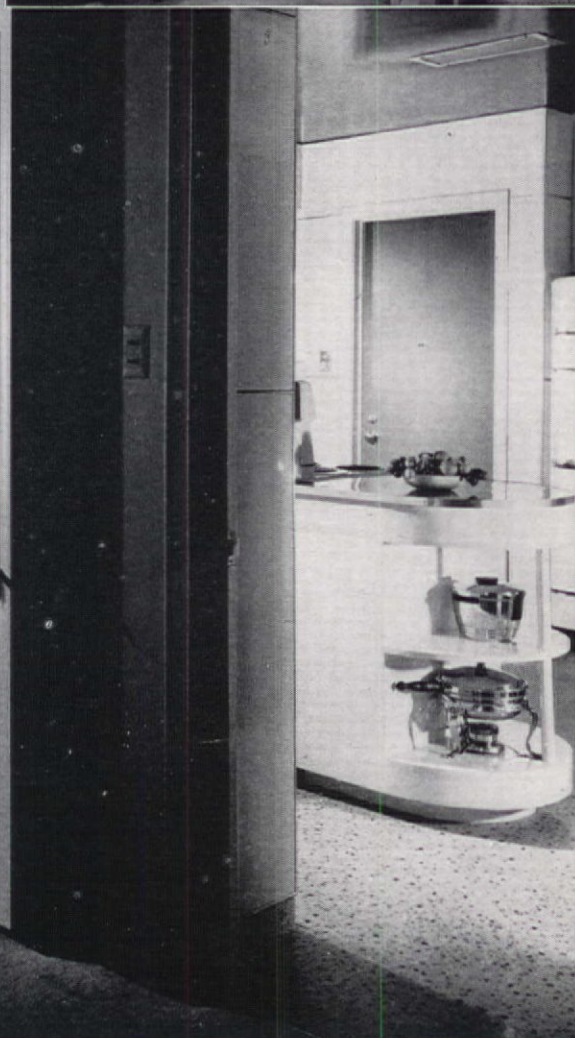


Another version of the warm tub mentioned a few months ago. Heat is routed through the hollow shell and on out



# FACE LIFTING FOR AN OLD ROOM

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT C. CLEVELAND



AFTER



**Y**OU'VE seen cotton dresses whose color has been dimmed by repeated washings. Well, this room had just about as much appeal before its new owners commenced their remodeling project. Compare these two views. It's hard to realize they are the same room.

Structural changes were limited to replacing the ornamental ceiling molding with a plain strip and to converting the blank-faced china cabinet into a combination of plant-filled niches and closed cupboards.

Our former Plain Jane is now dressed in strong dark colors; mulberry walls are relieved by a white cabinet and curtains. Broad-leaved vines in illuminated niches repeat the emerald tones of the old carpet. Chairs wear nubby fabric that blends rich mulberry, magenta, green, and gold.





# WHAT GOES OVER YOUR MANTEL?

ALL of us have seen many an excellent fireplace spoiled by a poor mantel treatment. The badly designed fireplace is rare, thanks to modern millwork styling and proportion.

The fireplace is usually the dominating feature of the room and should be played up for its size, shape or fine design.

There is no rule about how many objects may be placed over the mantel if they add to the strength of the arrangement.

Four fireplaces are shown here — one modern, one provincial, one colonial, and one early American. Two have formally balanced over-mantel treatments. Two make fine use of informal balance.

Fireplace *number one* is outstanding for quiet dignity and restrained detail. The large area above the mantel called for a powerful arrangement. The picture, though charming, lacked strength. The tall crystal candelabra were an almost perfect choice, adding height and mass without an overpowering feeling of weight.

Fireplace *number two* is French Provincial, with the graceful curves typical of this lovely style. Balance is formal. An antique barometer provides a focal point; prints and ceramic roosters direct the eye to this choice piece.

Fireplace *number three* fills one entire wall and calls on concealed lighting to add to its modern drama. A Balinese temple dancer is centered over the fire opening, and philodendron plants trail searching tendrils of green over the common red brick.

The early American example, *number four*, has an off center wood box typical of the style. This indicated the informal balance of the great black toile tray.

Remember that the fireplace should never be a spectacle but should be a dominant yet harmonious part of a room. We are aware of harmony only when we perceive disharmony or discord. If you have never been conscious of any lack of balance, organization or unity in your mantel arrangement, the chances are that it is well designed.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
LINDENTHAL, PARKER, BLONDIN, HEWITT

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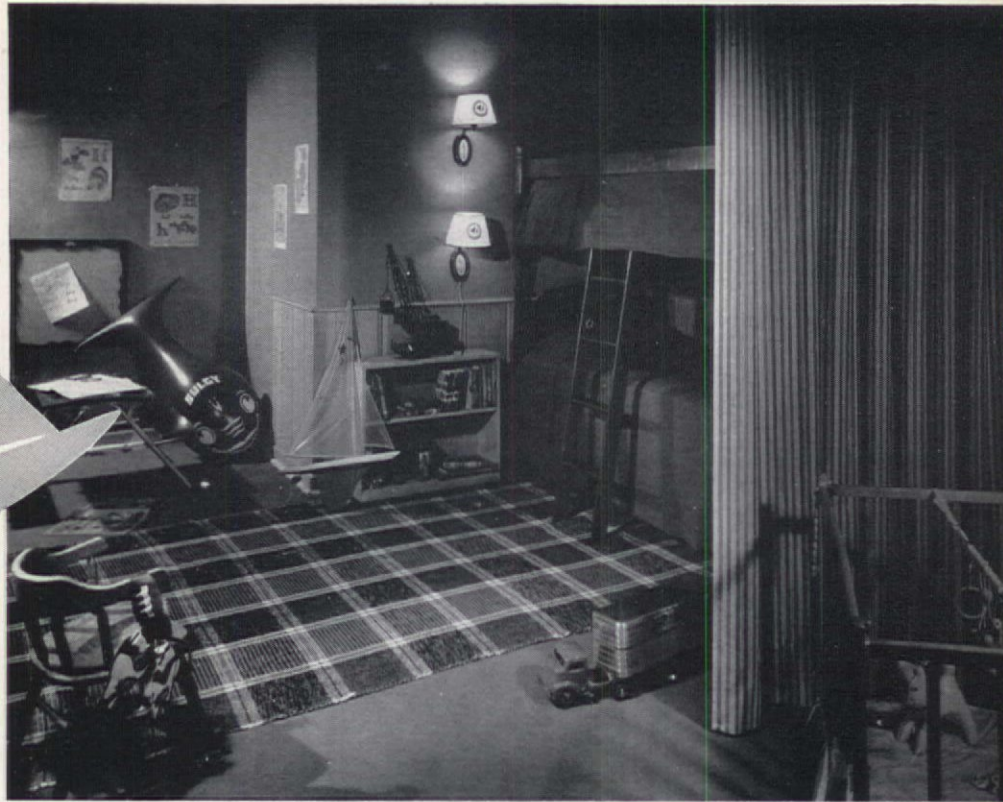
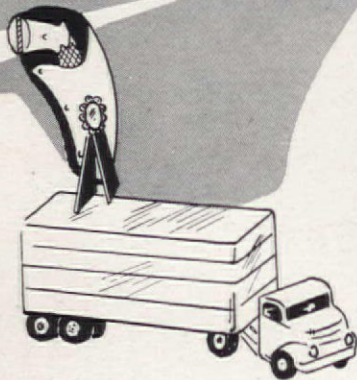
4



3



# SHIPMATES 3



On the older boys' side of the curtain, space was saved by double-decking beds (reading lamps too) and keeping other furniture down to a minimum. Wall decorations are by the occupants. The floor plan shown at bottom of page helps you visualize this space

An ingenious curtain arrangement over the spacious window in the nursery section assures easy regulation of light when baby is sleepy — and protects him from drafts too. For greater privacy between room sections, an accordion-type folding door can be used

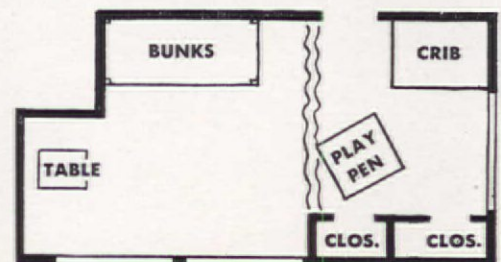


How to stow two active boys and a baby into the same quarters without crowding or inconvenience is a poser that any parent can appreciate.

The problem of the three shipmates whose room is pictured here was solved to everybody's satisfaction by a candy-striped curtain. A whisk, and the room becomes two!

The larger section of the room, of course, goes to the two older children. Double-decked bunks save floor space in this section, allowing room for rainy day naval maneuvers or trucking operations. Windows in the wall opposite the bunks provide sufficient ventilation when the curtain is drawn.

Separate rugs add to the completeness of each room; still, since their patterns and colors are identical, they do not destroy the unity of the room when the curtain is open.







The tiny bathroom window, top of page, is framed in a ruffle; window above is finished with scalloped cornice



Two-tier, stark white shutters against a cocoa brown wall repeat bold contrast of the white, natural silk coverlet and headboard

# Shutters

## Antidote for Drabness

THEY used to be called jalousies. Today they are known as interior shutters but the same treatment that framed a view 90 years ago is having a revival in both our traditional and modern-minded houses.

If you happen to know where to find some of these old louvered shutters by all means beg, borrow or appropriate them. Stripped of their old paint, you'll find them mellowed by their years and very probably fitted with their original hardware. If, however, you can't manage to fall heir to such a treasure, you'll find today's copies very fine and they have much smoother louver control. They may be left natural, finished to match your furniture woods or painted in any desired color. Modern rooms are using them

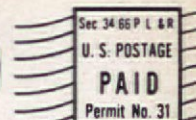
in sharp contrast or enameled to exactly match subtle wall colors. Either the old or new versions may be cut to fit your individual windows. One company advertises over 400 stock sizes.

Though they will lend the same quaint charm to your rooms they gave to early plantation homes, it took more than charm to bring jalousies back to the windows of today's rooms. We had forgotten about the air of coolness they impart to a summer setting, what fine doors they make for closets or cupboards that need ventilation, how softly they temper bright sunlight, and the sense of security and privacy they give to a lamp-lighted room. Now reminded, we're hanging jalousies of 90 years ago at today's windows.



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## NOW IS THE TIME

When you build a new home or remodel your present one, you are making a sound investment from a purely financial point of view. You are also investing in health, comfort, security, sociability, and morale.

In these days of threatened shortages, it's more important than ever for you to insist on the careful attention to detail that makes the difference between a sound job and a slap-dash one. The firms listed below have long-standing reputations for skillful workmanship, for supplying the best in materials, and for all-around fair dealing. They are your assurance that your investment in your home will bring you the most for your money.

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# PERFECT HOME

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 1951

Tolland County's Quality Magazine, published monthly in the interest of better living by

**ATTILIO R. FRASSINELLI**  
**STAFFORD INSURANCE AGENCY**

*Real Estate*

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Stafford Springs, Conn.

Telephones: 300 J-1 — 300 J-2

*In cooperation with these outstanding Tolland County firms (see back cover)*

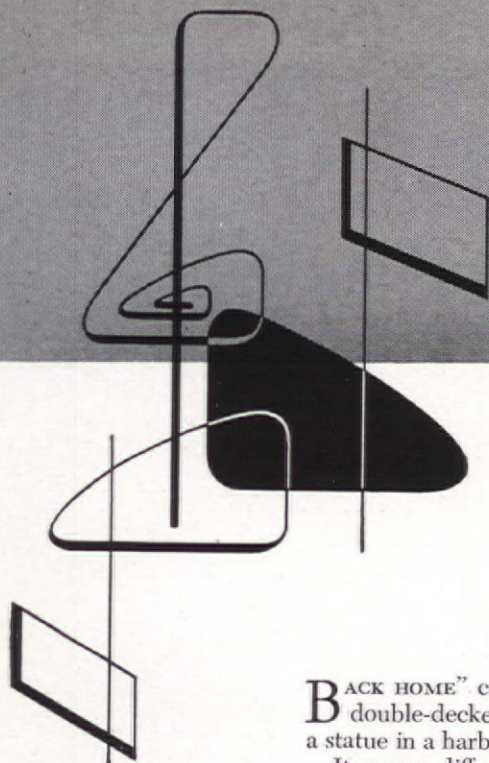
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## BACK HOME

BY MEREDITH WILLSON

**B**ACK HOME" can mean a fried egg sandwich at the Chicago airport at 2 a.m., a double-decker bunk in the dormitory, a roomette in a transcontinental train, or a statue in a harbor.

It means different things to different people, this familiar phrase. But mostly, it spells familiar, satisfying experiences which you like to recall.

Rini and I own a small segment of this planet, with a house on it and a few worldly possessions on the inside of this house. That's the first definition of "back home" to us. We worked hard for all that stuff. We picked it out; we made the payments on it. We have been supremely happy in that house. We love it!

But "back home" also means other things. The nostalgia of other days . . . the rich spring black, the lush summer green, the warm autumn red, and the glistening winter white of our home state of Iowa.

Or we feel momentarily "back home" when greeted by the friendly waiter at the third table from the door in the Chicago airport. Or we say "back home" with a relieved sigh . . . and mean it . . . to the smiling elevator man in the hotel where we stay for one week every couple of years. Or "back home" it is with eyes alight, from the deck of a ship rocking in New York harbor. And again to the tired string of a hammock on the summer cottage porch, with its swarm of tiny gnats around the screen, and its view of the small lake off there through the trees. Yes, you say to yourself, you're back home, just as you say it to the gang at the office two weeks later.

Then Sunday you go to church.

You know from the sound of the babies in the back pews that there's going to be some baptising and some joining today. You can tell from the worried angle of the choir-leader's head that several of the tenors didn't show up. And the flowers, so beautifully arranged, remind you guiltily of the ones you meant to drop off yesterday afternoon.

The Call to Worship begins and "Love Divine" is the processional hymn. You'll sing louder as the choir, giving you moral support, gets nearer to your pew. Reverend Hogue reads the Lord's Prayer just right, pausing according to the meaning of the words, instead of at the end of each line, like some.

Now "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" rises around you and you join in with confidence, join in with the words and the tune you could never forget, and you find that you're really "back home" at last. You are "back home" in the richest way of all.

*Meredith Willson*

Meredith Willson has been entering our homes via radio for so many years that most of us consider him an old friend. This talented orchestra leader possesses a rich, warm humor that is delightful

If this dining view and the charming exterior on our cover pique your curiosity, turn the page to see the complete house as photographed by Max Tatch





FOR THE

*Simple life*



With shake roof and combination of used bricks and redwood this house fits comfortably into a frame of six gnarled oaks and a mountain view



TAKE weathered bricks — russet and coral from years of sunlight and rain — and use them to give sweep and balance. Take redwood siding that shares the same warm colors of the bricks, and use it vertically to give dignity and height. Put them together in a design that snuggles affectionately to Mother Earth. If you're skillful, you'll end up with a home as inviting as this.

It spells the simple life . . . graciously. No pretense. No sensational effects. Yet from the friendly Dutch door to the sprightly yellow trim, it has a serene homespun quality.

Don't expect formality inside. Everything makes for ease. It's a cheer-and-contentment place with all the simple, homely things; a pipe and footstool, a clock that strikes and flowers on the window sills.

The list of rooms reads: living, dining, utility and two bedrooms, den, kitchen, dressing room and bath. The dining room is an all-purpose room and the heart of family life. It's large with its own fireplace and a bleachers'-seat view of the kitchen. Only a wide service bar separates the two rooms. There is a rustic heavy-beamed ceiling and the pegged-oak floors are covered with large, old-fashioned braided ovals. Warm apricot burlap curtains hang beneath full print ruffles.

The bright gleam of a copper hood attracts the eye to the unusual corner fireplace, that is backed up by a similar one in the den. The living room has a spacious fireplace and great windows.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAX TATCH

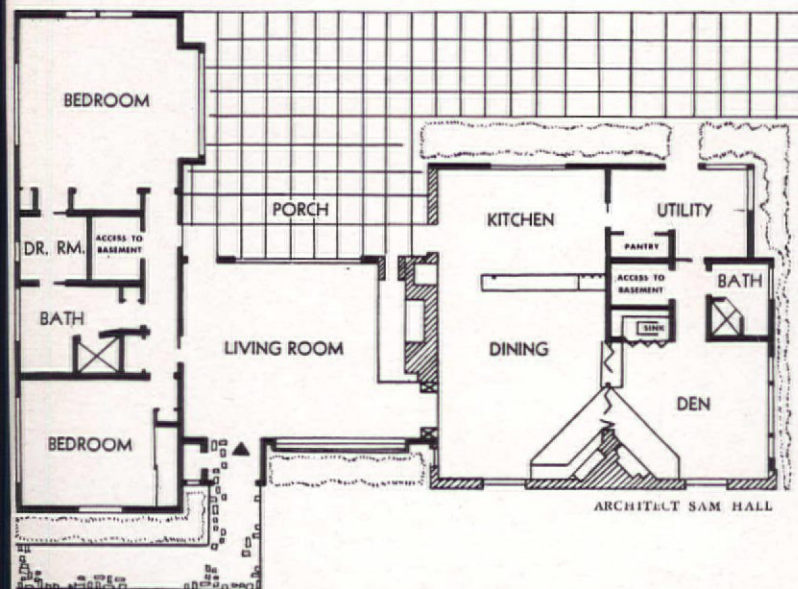


Modern honey-toned maple pieces Elend with older treasures in the master bedroom. Colors are green, aqua and brown with one wall to match the floral chintz

Old bricks used throughout the house for fireplaces and for partitions have through wear, efflorescence and the elements become richer in colors and texture



The bookshelves between rooms are patchworks of color with bright book jackets and a roguish quartet of toby jugs to help guard the top shelf



The plan points out the unusually complete separation between the living, sleeping and service areas. It also shows the large porch and the terrace







THERE was not much really *wrong* with this room. It was neat and comfortable. But it lacked charm. There was no unity, no drama, no feeling of restfulness.

And so, with a little paint and a minimum of carpentry, the owners set about to transform it. We call it skin-deep remodeling, because most of the modernization was done with paint.

The first move was a re-arrangement of several pieces of furniture to provide unity. As you can see from the photograph in the in-set, the dining table seemed marooned between the two doorways. So it was moved to form an attractive grouping by the fireplace. Because the two doorways formed distracting views into the bathroom and the kitchen, movable screens were placed in the gaping openings. To make the wall between the doors more interesting, a full-length bamboo screen was used, highlighted by a dramatic painting of a dragon. The chest that had been by the fireplace was placed under it for visual support.

Then came the paint. The ceiling, in natural redwood, was kept as it was, but the light walls were treated in a deep leaf green. The same dramatic tone was used on the new screens, blending them into the room. Even the new shadow-box frame on the painting by the fireplace, got its coat of deep leaf green.

The effect now is delightful. This room has a cohesion, a smartness, that is both restful and interesting, as photos show.

The table changed places with a chest to make a more interesting fireplace arrangement. The blonde wood contrasts with the green wall

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MORLEY BAER

## SKIN-DEEP REMODELING



**BEFORE**

The dining table seemed ostracized between the two doorways, and from the room you could see into the kitchen and the bathroom. Now see what was done



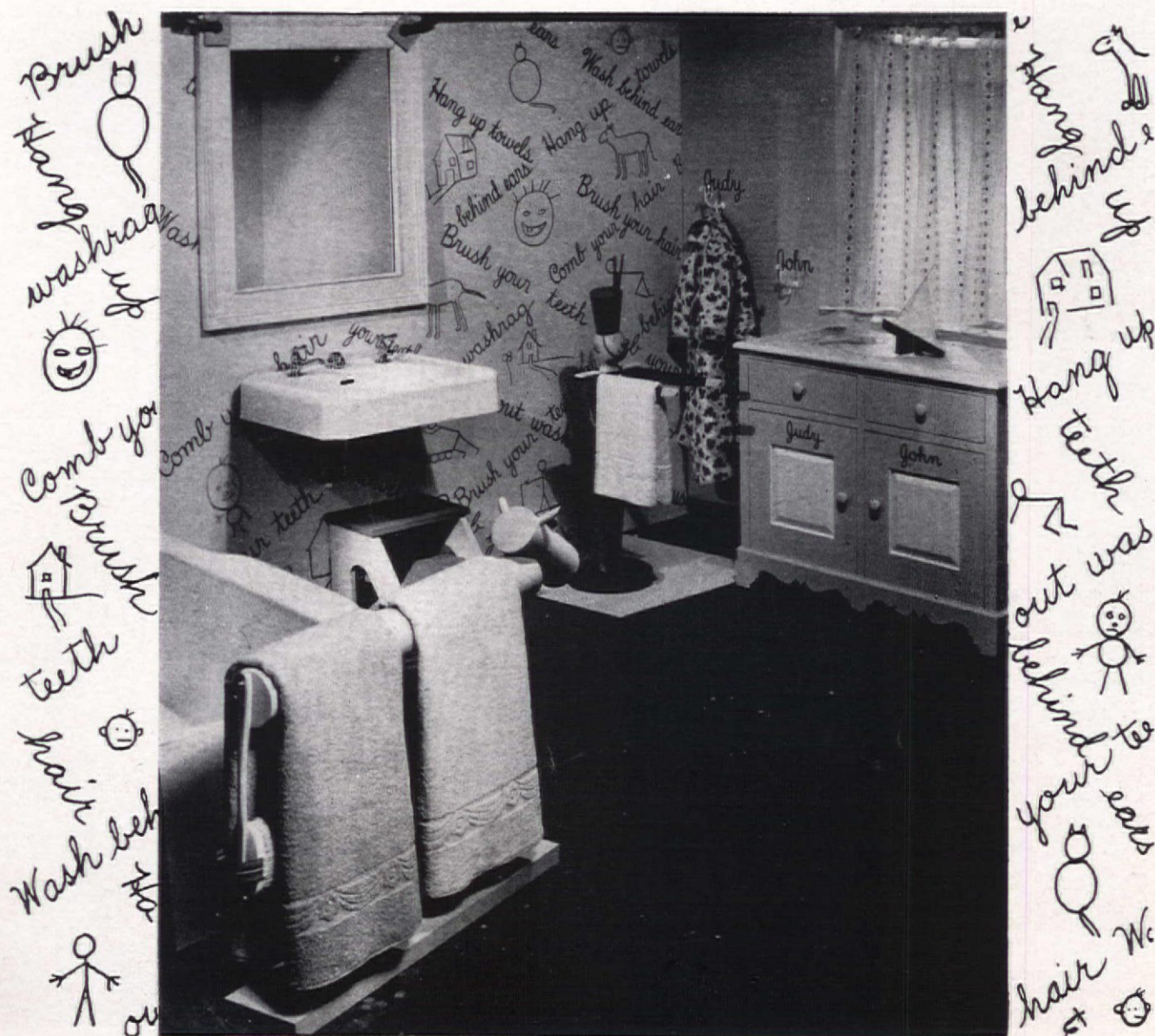
**AFTER**



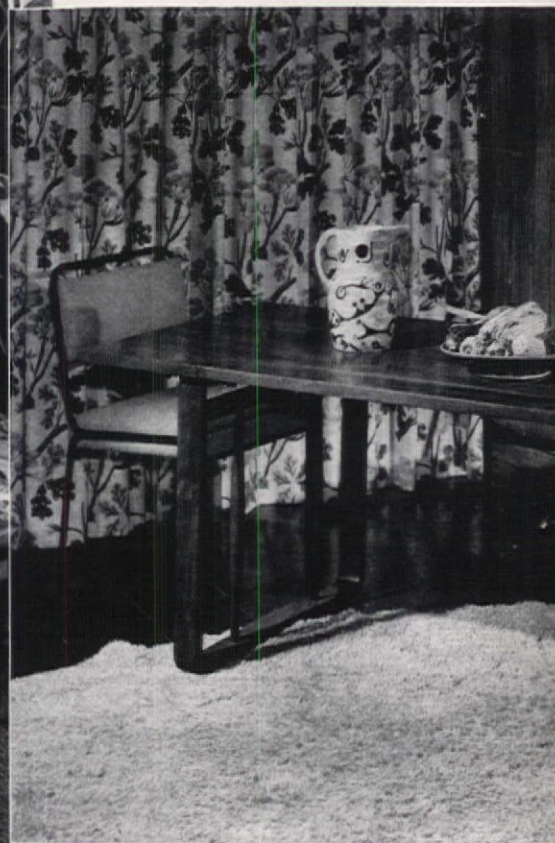
MOPPETS and mothers, too, will approve of this very special bathroom. It's John's and Judy's very own and makes soap and water time a real treat for these tender twigs. The floor is rough-and-ready linoleum in a shade of blue that is never troubled by splashes. The walls are fresh and appealing in light blue washable wall fabric. Their interest doesn't end with their practical qualities. Oh, no, Mother dipped a brush into the brightest shades she could find and wrote a few reminders right on the wall. "Brush your teeth" . . . "Comb your hair" . . . "Don't forget to wash behind your ears." Each order is lettered several times right where it can't fail to be seen.

There's one, too, that says "Hang up your towels" and just to make that one more exciting, a jaunty wooden soldier with his arms outstretched stands stiffly at attention beside the wash basin and a tired dobbie with bath-brush tail waits in his tub-side stall for a load of bath-size towels. An old commode was resurrected from the attic, painted two shades of blue and neatly halved for Judy and John. Even wall hangers for their robes are neatly labeled so there will be no confusion. They were installed at just the right height for stubby arms. The red, white and blue steps under the wash basin bring young Jumping Jacks closer to the water. A well-lighted mirror shows up missed smudges on even the tiniest faces.

## A BATHROOM WITH KID APPEAL





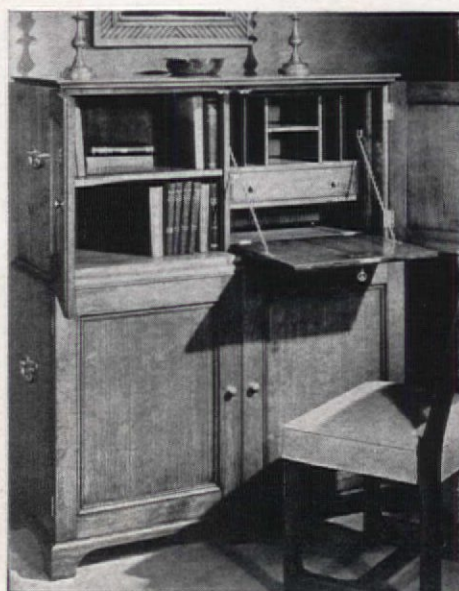


◀ Coffee table in front of the convertible sofa completes a friendly corner in which you may greet your friends in a convivial setting. Opened, above, table grows into dining table.

At the dinner hour turn down the hinged top of this chest. It becomes a table for six. The two long drawers have a six-drawer-effect front.



This versatile two-tier chest is adaptable to many rooms and uses. It is equally useful as sideboard, record cabinet, or chest for storage.



Lift the top to convert this traditional table to a vanity. The center section, especially designed for cosmetics, is partly covered by glass.





BY BRUCE ALLEN

# Convertibles

**Y**ou may not need to add that extra room to find the much-needed living space you've been looking for. With today's new ideas in convertible furnishings, a quick flick of the wrist sometimes can do the job. Just like magic, the handsome sideboard becomes your best dining table, the coffee table suddenly grows up and seats ten for dinner, and the buffet is as much at home in the living room as in the dining room.

So, if it's space savers you're looking for, watch for some of the new pieces of furniture created by modern designers. Look at these we've pictured. Every one has a dual purpose, and they may suggest an idea to solve your problem.

Ideal in concept, these new creations are functional, filling a definite purpose in your home, and at the same time adding to the beauty and charm of gracious living.



This regency server is at home in dining or living room. Drawer fronts are finished in crotch mahogany — the top pulls out to provide a handy serving tray for refreshments ➤

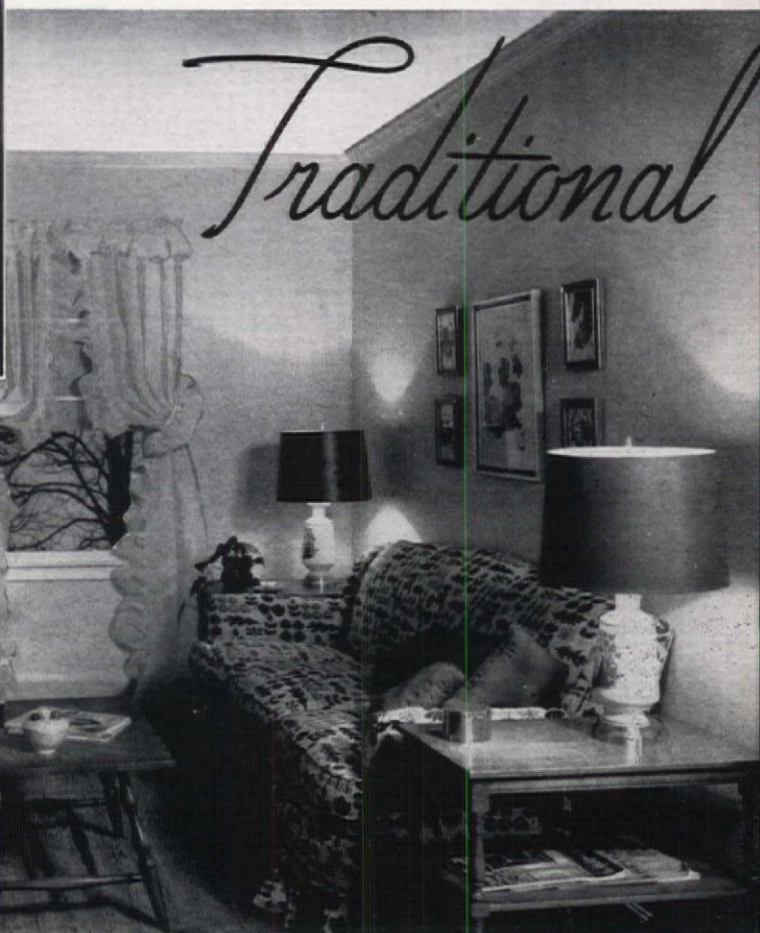
"Domino" coffee tables with multiple uses. Tables may be placed side by side for a coffee table of any length or arranged to fit any area







Two rooms . . . two pleasing ways to decorate them. One for the modern-minded and one for the lover of tradition





SOME like modern, some prefer traditional. Modern or traditional, the fundamentals that make a comfortable, attractive room are the same — well-styled furniture, harmonious colors, generous use of fabrics, and accessories that point up the style's charm.

The bedroom-sitting rooms illustrated are almost identical. One has been furnished with fine Early American maple pieces, the other in toffee-toned, modern walnut. Old or new, they both offer a serene background for today's living.

A single color theme and an air of spaciousness were the two aims in decorating the modern room. It was done in shades of brown, from the deep chocolate of walls and dividing shelves to the light beige of the cotton rugs. Blending into this monotone background are toffee walnut furniture and a brown and beige bedspread in a

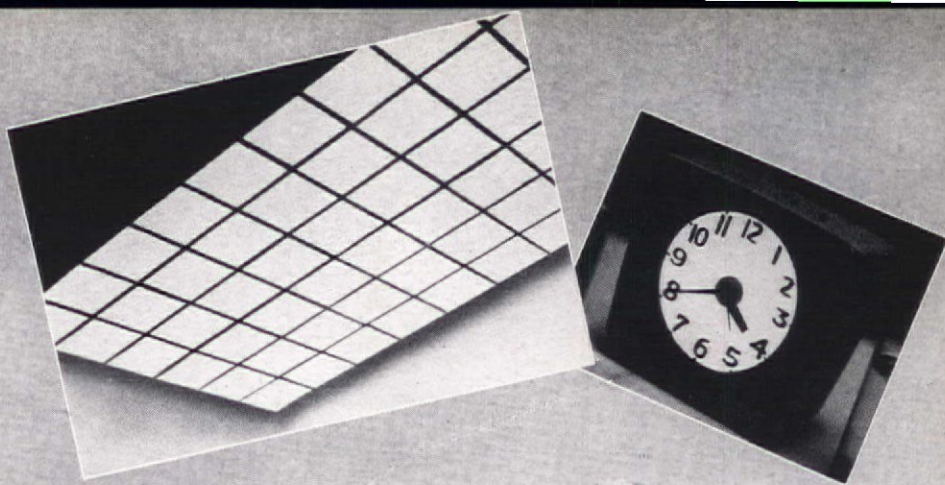
*We Want...*

wonderfully rich, copper flecked fabric. This flash of copper is repeated in canyon-red chairs.

Colonial maple furniture against a canary-yellow background gives the traditional room a gay and larger look. Modern fabrics and colors blend happily with traditional furniture in the leaf-patterned print of the sofa, in the simple terra cotta lamp shades, in the yellow tweed of the arm chair and the pale green textured cotton rugs. This delightful blend of modern and colonial is felt again in the airy Swedish motif of the tiered bedroom curtains. Their rich rosy terra cotta is repeated in the quilted bedspreads and in copper accessories.

Tiny round pillows are used on the bed, chairs, and sofa to make furniture appear larger in proportion, a trick that in turn makes the whole area seem much more spacious.

Yes, some like the clean lines of modern and others prefer the enduring loveliness of traditional. Take your choice — but stick to the fundamentals that make charm, if you would have background designed for serene living.



## THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

SEE that glowing ceiling up there? Or those clock dials, those radio dials, the lighted risers on the carpeted steps, the luminescent house numbers?

This is not frosted glass over an incandescent bulb or a fluorescent tube. This is an entirely new way to produce artificial light!

This new lighting principle is called "electro-luminescence." In effect, it uses the glass itself as a light source, instead of a filament or a glass-enclosed luminous gas. The sheets of glass which you see pictured actually produce the light because they have been coated with the newly developed phosphor-dielectric film and aluminum. As a result, the whole pane of glass glows with light.

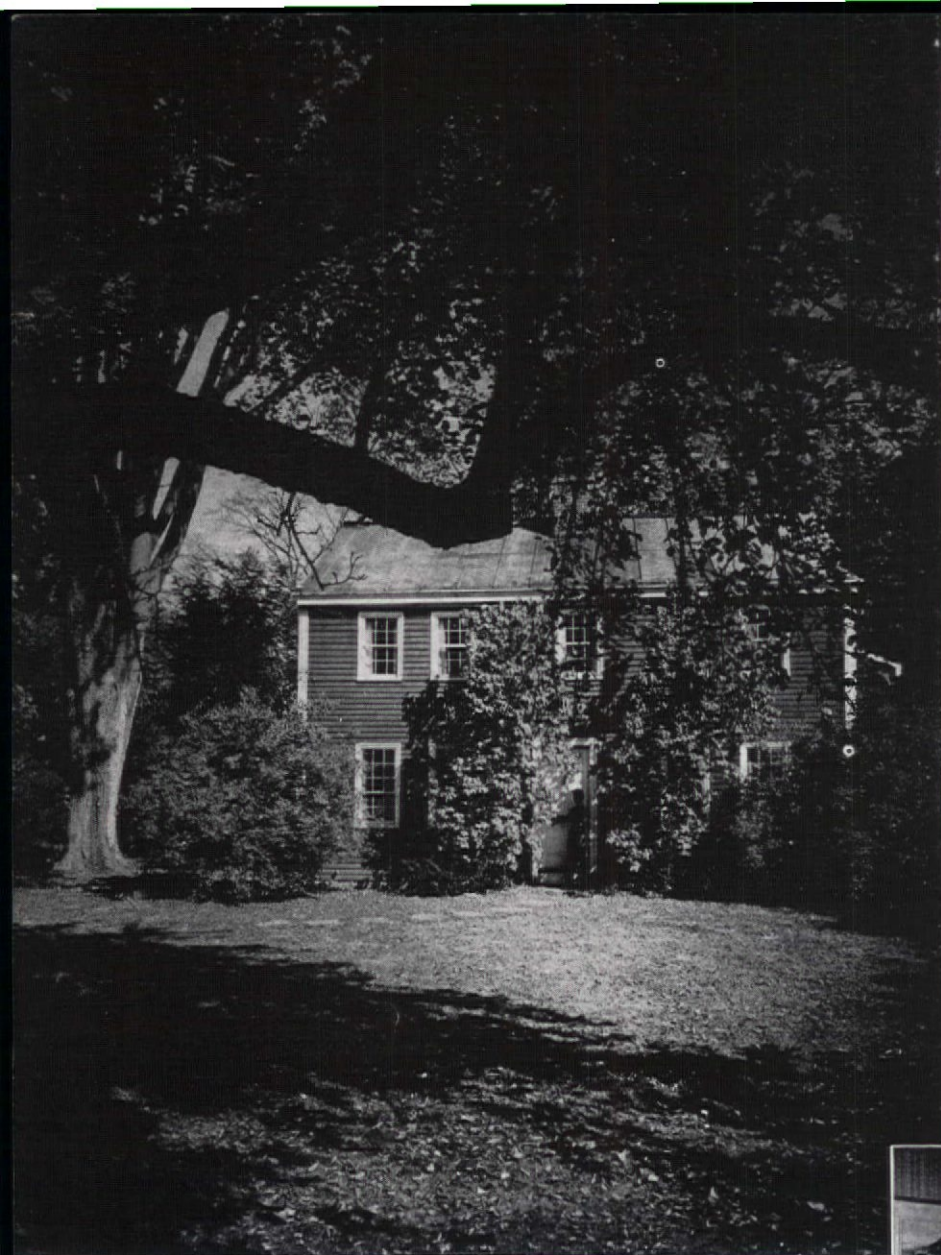
It is predicted that this new idea in lighting will have a fine future as a means of low-level illumination and to help us see objects in the home that need extra lighting — such as switchplates, tables, signs, radio and clock dials, step risers and sides.

The cost of this new light is startlingly low. Small areas can be lighted 24 hours a day for as low as only a few cents per year. Even a large 4' by 6' panel, with transformer to build up brightness, will consume less energy than a 25-watt bulb.

The first applications of the new principle to come on the market will be in a brilliant green, but it is expected that it will soon also be produced in yellow, light blue, and white.







PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEARBORN-MASSAR

IMAGINE actually living in this house 150 years ago. Thomas Jefferson's campaign for the presidency of our turbulent new nation was just drawing to a successful conclusion when this house was built. The venerable oaks under which it now stands were not yet man-high and Indians in braids and blankets were familiar sights along the surrounding wooded trails.

It took an architect to spot the ageless charm beneath the neglected exterior.

There is little left of the original structure. The exterior walls and a few central partitions were the only things not removed, added or replaced. The three new fireplaces are shown in these pictures. All windows, the foundation and most of the interior walls are new.

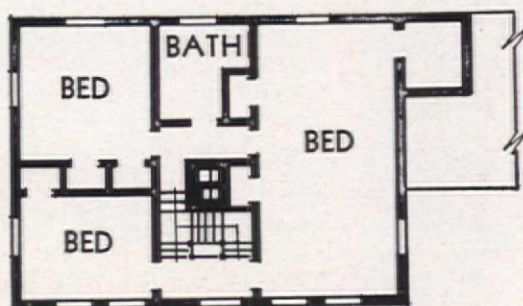
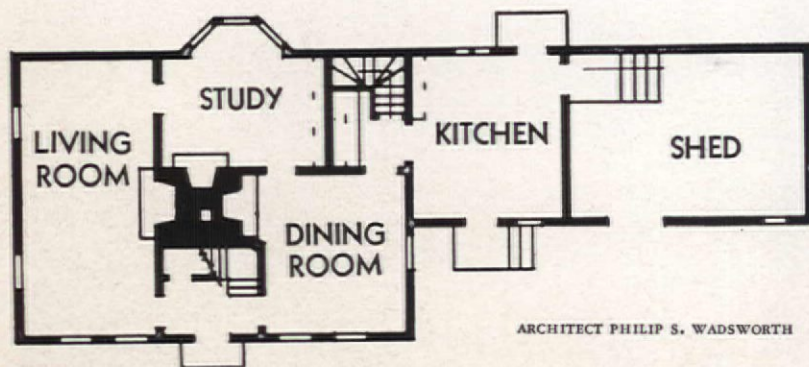
The original house used olive green paint glazed with rich red for all interior walls. This color has been repeated on the walls of the study. Bookcases are lined with crimson.

Spode's "Blue Tower" china set the decorating theme for the dining room. Walls are covered in royal and white "Willow" patterned paper. One wall is paneled in wide white boards. Still further changes are in line for this home. They include more and larger windows wherever they can be introduced without spoiling the spirit of the architecture, enlarging several rooms and adding both a porch and another much-needed bath.

Under tall oaks stands a friendly home whose generous touch of tradition gives it quiet grace and dignity. Sincere lines could not be hidden by an advanced state of disrepair. The original spirit was always in mind when making changes



## IT'S 150 YEARS OLD



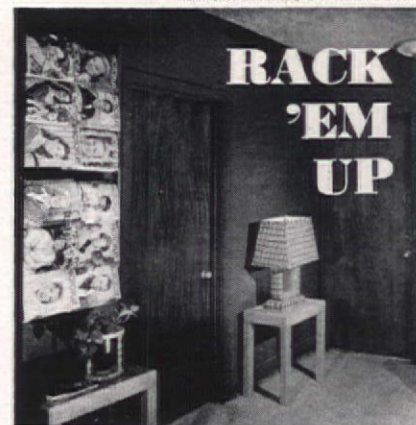




No indecision in the colors used in the study . . . deep olive green glazed with vermilion



Here there is charm rooted in days and ways now gone, made livable by modern revisions. The willow pattern paper of the dining room keeps the spirit of the orient trade alive



If your magazines are guilty of disorderly conduct, sentence them to the rack. It's a good way to keep them from lolling untidily wherever a reader drops them.

Of course, you'll need a bit of human co-operation; therefore, you should make the racks as easy to use as the two shown on this page. Both are structurally simple and either is suitable for any room that permits a measure of informality.

The wall rack consists of slender uprights and wafer-thin but sturdy crossbars that are held a few inches from the wall. Magazines are racked merely by opening them near the middle and dropping them over the bars.

The door rack, held in place by a few screws, lets magazines stand upright on narrow ledges. The door gives support at the back while dowels keep magazines from tipping forward.







PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAX TATCH



THE window shade started it. Fresh and white, it hung on the outside of the nursery door. Raise it and you could keep a guardian eye on the tiny mite in her quiet crib inside the room. Pull it down and you shut out the world during naptime.

Mother thought first of painting baby's version of the old "Do not disturb" sign directly on the cloth shade. Then as paint brushes will, this one started to wander. First, it trailed a few glittering stars between the words and spotted some over to the adjoining wall. Then just for fun it traced a couple of bluebirds.

Into the nursery went the roving brush and before it stopped, every piece of furniture was bright with color. The quiet sky-blue ceiling was awink with stars above the crib and the "many angels" of the old prayer guarded head and foot of the tiny bed.

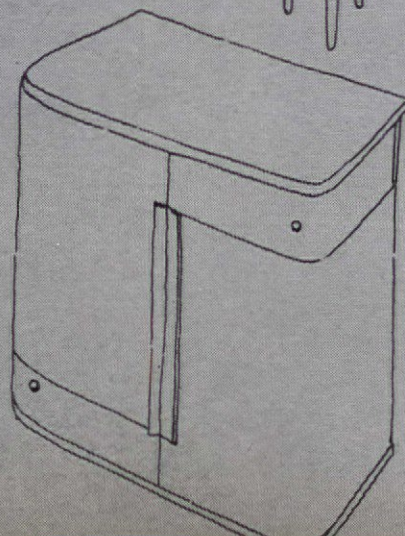
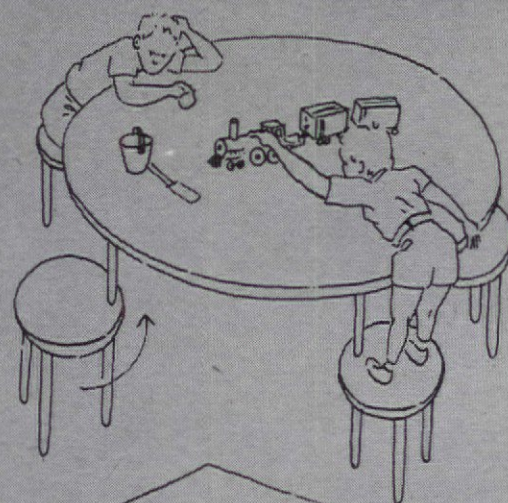
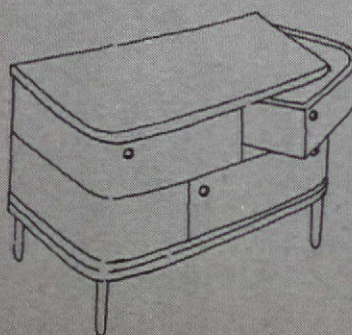
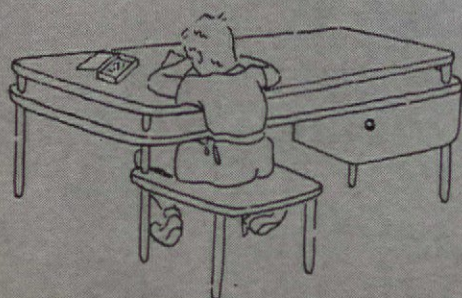


## MANY ANGELS WATCH DO KEEP

## FURNITURE CAN BE FUN

THERE'S no doubt that these new tot-size units have more than functional value. A table is fine but just think how much more exciting it is when, in "merry-go-round" fashion, it whirls its own bright chairs out into sitting position. A cupboard becomes a Pandora's box for the treasure-minded when it, too, swings out easily to receive its load. This strictly kindergarten-age furniture is scaled to suit abbreviated arms and legs.

The accompanying sketches explain how the pieces look and how they are used. The dowel hinges are particularly wear-proof and the bright-as-butterfly colors are, so the designer says, an inducement to keep order in the nursery.





PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMERICAN FURNITURE MART



## This Refrigerator's By The Sofa

Now that we have tables that turn into beds, radios that look like bookcases, and pictures that are really movie screens, it's no wonder that some enterprising designer finally turned his genius to the problem of a refrigerator for the tiny house or one-room home. Wonderful though it may be, the usual gleaming white refrigerator becomes, because of its size, the dominant feature of a room. Here is one that defies you to discover it. A console chest faced handsomely with bleached mahogany holds more than two cubic feet of refrigerator space and two ice cube trays. Alongside there is room for a small stock of canned goods and fruit. When the two drop leaves are raised they form a beautifully grained table 66-inches long.

You can't beat the storage problems for inspiring good ideas. To storage walls, storage cabinets and storage closets in basement and attic, you can now add this idea for a storage hallway. This is a large corridor adjoining two bedrooms and just around the corner from the front entrance. Two wardrobe closets, a bank of twenty-one drawers and twelve feet of overhead cupboard space take over the storage needs of most of the house. To give the hallway daytime illumination there is a high window above the drawers. A plant pocket recesses pots along the window line and a blind drops down to cover the recess at night.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT C. CLEVELAND

## Park Your Storage Problem In The Hall





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## SET YOUR COURSE

Perhaps you've heard the story of the ship's captain and the chief engineer who got into an argument over the difficulty of their respective jobs. To settle the matter they agreed to switch: the captain went into the engine room and the engineer took over the bridge. In an hour the captain appeared on deck, sweaty, grease-stained, frustrated. "All right," he called to the engineer, "I give up. She's stalled and I can't get her to go."

"Of course not," the engineer admitted sadly. "She's been aground for the last 45 minutes!"

Home owners will readily appreciate that story's application, we think, because they know the disaster that can result from an inexperienced person's undertaking a repairing or remodeling job.

Each of the firms listed below is a leader of many years standing in its field, offering you the best in craftsmanship and materials, in know-how and economy. They are accustomed to co-operating with one another, with the community as a whole, with individual customers.

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