

Restoration and Maintenance Techniques  
For The Pre-1939 House

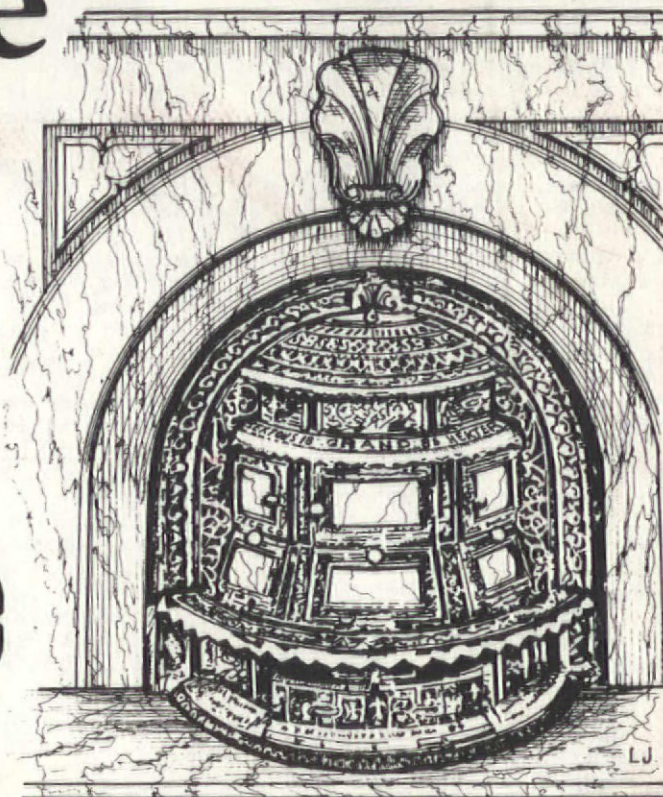
November 1984 / Vol. XII No. 9 / \$2.



# The Old-House Journal

## Restoring the Baltimore Heater

by Ron Pilling, Baltimore



IT MUST HAVE BEEN a typical Baltimore winter sometime around 1845 -- cold and damp one day, cold and windy the next. Mrs. John H. B. Latrobe refused to stay in the city, retiring instead to her family's home in Natchez, Mississippi, until spring. Mr. Latrobe had to stay in Baltimore, held by his many responsibilities as Counsel of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. While his wife was away he took the time to design the "Baltimore Heater," or, as we call it in Baltimore, the Latrobe Stove. Whether Mrs. Latrobe then began staying home in winter, no one knows.

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BUILDING A BRICK BAKE OVEN

# My Aquamarine Cave

I'M FEELING more sympathetic than ever toward all of our readers: Jonathan and I have just embarked on a new old-house project. Sometimes I get the feeling that OHJ readers think the editors live in "finished," beautifully restored houses. Not so. We find ourselves once again faced with paint-encrusted woodwork, a leaky roof, crumbling plaster--and worry. I'd almost forgotten what it was like to live amidst chaos.

IT TOOK A WHILE for our minds to open to this house. For two years, we'd been looking for a Victorian brownstone, mostly because it seemed the likely choice in this 19th century neighborhood. This house is neither Victorian nor a brownstone. It's a brick and limestone row house, one of five, built in 1911. We've since fallen in love with the generous proportions and simple post-Victorian details.

I REMEMBER the first time we saw the house. We sat on a turquoise sofa in an aquamarine living room, talking to the owner, a smart, 81-year-old lady in an aquamarine housecoat, who had loved the house for 42 years. She gave us a tour. Nearly the entire interior was painted aquamarine, over late-1920s texture finish that was poorly applied and rougher than most exterior stucco. It holds dirt, so in many places the aqua is closer to muddy grey.

HUNG ON the textured walls are sconces (mid-'30s) that look like miniature bedpans with handles, sprouting cardboard candles. (Did they have K-Mart in the '30s?) The kitchen is depressingly small--badly remodeled in the '50s. The saving grace is the stove. With bright turquoise enamel and flashy gas knobs, it reminds me of a '58 Buick. A keeper.

WELL, WE BOUGHT IT. By the second visit, you see, our imaginations had taken us past the mess. We "saw" Stickley- or Wright-inspired sconces hung on walls of subtle ochre,

mauve, and olive; oak and leather and dark green tiles (still there under the aqua); hand-painted friezes.

NOW, sigh, we're living with the reality. We're used to this, of course. We greet each new disaster with utter calm, knowing everything can be handled with time. We see no need to rush. But some days it does feel like I'm living my life in an aquamarine cave. Why do we put up with it? Because the alternative is living in a new house. And that we will never do.

BUYING AN OLD HOUSE is like falling in love, picking a career, or having a baby. It isn't a totally rational decision. It's about quality of life, a personal choice based only a little on reason, and more on emotion and intuition. An old house is satisfying. An old house is an adventure. A new house is just a roof without a past.

SO...here we go again!

*Patricia Poore*



## The Old-House Journal®

*Editor*

Patricia Poore

*Assistant Editor*

Cole Gagne

*Technical Editor*

Larry Jones

*Editorial Assistants*

Sarah J. McNamara

Doug Turetsky

*Contributing Editors*

John Mark Garrison

Roland A. Labine Sr.

*Architectural Consultant*

Jonathan Poore

*Technical Consultant*

Alan D. Keiser

*Circulation Supervisor*

Barbara Bugg

*Circulation Assistants*

Jeanne Baldwin

Garth White

*Special Sales*

Joan O'Reilly

*Administrative Assistant*

Tricia A. Martin

*Publishing Consultant*

Paul T. McLoughlin

*Publisher*

Clem Labine

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## A Saga of Old-House Devotion

by Doug Turetsky

**I**N 1907, Henry Falldorf built his family a house to last for centuries. Just 68 years later, the county government wanted to bulldoze the landmark house to make way for a new office building.

FALLDORF, who at an early age had emigrated from Germany, became a talented and well-known carpenter in Grand Island, Nebraska. He built the local courthouse, the county jail, several downtown commercial buildings, and about 100 private residences. But his own house, in which he lived until his death in 1950, was his masterpiece.

**HIS ONLY CHILD** Mela and her husband Albert Hein moved into the house after the craftsman's death. In 1967, the county government decided it wanted the property. The Heins agreed to sell, and the county promised to donate the house to the Stuhr Museum. The Heins were allowed to remain in the house until 1972; when they left, their grandson (Falldorf's great-grandson) Jamie O'Nele removed the front-door knocker as a memento. Someday he hoped to place it on his own front door.

**JAMIE O'NELE**, also a carpenter, adored his great-grandfather's house not just because it was a family treasure, but because of the unique craftsmanship that went into its construction. Unbeknownst to its former family, the museum had decided it couldn't afford to move and restore the house. So the county made plans to tear it down.

### Buying It Back

**W**HEN JAMIE and his wife Susan learned of the house's proposed fate, they were horrified. "Jamie and I felt this house represented too many generations of love and labor to just cast it aside," says Susan. The O'Neles told the county board they wanted to purchase the house, and the board agreed to an auction.

**ALTHOUGH THE COUNTY BOARD** had originally planned to spend money to raze the house, some board members saw the auction as a way to make a sizable profit. "The board chairman asked several times if we'd bid as high as \$5,000," recalls Susan.

**NOT MANY PEOPLE** showed up for the auction: representatives of several salvage companies, "a noted local remuddler," and the O'Neles. "The bid went to \$1,350 and everybody dropped out but Jamie and me," Susan remembers. "The auctioneer--who also happened to be on the county board--then said he was sure everybody would like to take a break. About a half-hour later a car pulled up and out came a lady from the auctioneer's home town. The auction immediately resumed. She bid us right up to \$5,000 and then dropped out. We got the house for \$5,100."

**THE O'NELES** were still fuming over the rigged auction when the auctioneer had some of the house's antique lighting fixtures and a pedestal sink carted out to the porch. He was pre-



*Left: The house is on the road to the O'Neles' land on the outskirts of town. Above: The house spent its first night after the move on four hydraulic jacks.*

pared to auction them off separately! Susan O'Nele raced to a pay phone and called Walt Stull, a sympathetic board member who was away at a convention in Omaha. After a brief but pointed discussion with the auctioneer, Stull prevailed and the fixtures stayed with the house.

### To The New Homestead

**J**AMIE AND SUSAN now owned the Falldorf house--but not the land it was built on. The house had to be moved to the O'Neles' property on the outskirts of Grand Island. They had to remove the entire chimney core--from roof to basement--to lighten the load. The radiators, cast-iron heating pipes, front porch, pillars, capitals, and dentil mouldings had to be moved separately as well. Every window had to be boarded up. But that wasn't all: To meet an ordinance, five feet of the house's roof had to be amputated.

SUSAN RECALLS moving the house all too well: "We had quite a drought that summer, but the day we took the roof off it started raining and it rained until we put it back on."

### The Contractor Blues

**W**ITH THE HOUSE SETTLED on its new site, the O'Neles began restoration. Since they both were busy with full-time jobs, they hired a contractor for the plumbing and electrical work. "The guy botched everything he touched," laments Susan. "Every sink leaked, he cut holes in the wrong walls and ceilings, and he used too small diameter copper pipe to supply our huge radiators. All the joints leaked, too."

BUT THAT WASN'T ALL. An inadequate expansion tank caused even more grief. After the O'Neles had fixed all the leaks, the pop-off

valve on the tank opened and filled the crawlspace with water. An electrician friend stopped by while Jamie was pumping out the crawlspace and pointed out the horrifying fact that the contractor had left bare live wires dangling from the crawlspace ceiling. Jamie had to do some work himself before any electrician would agree to touch the system.

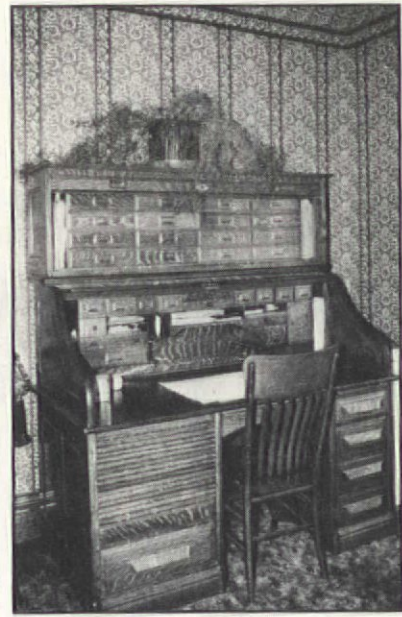
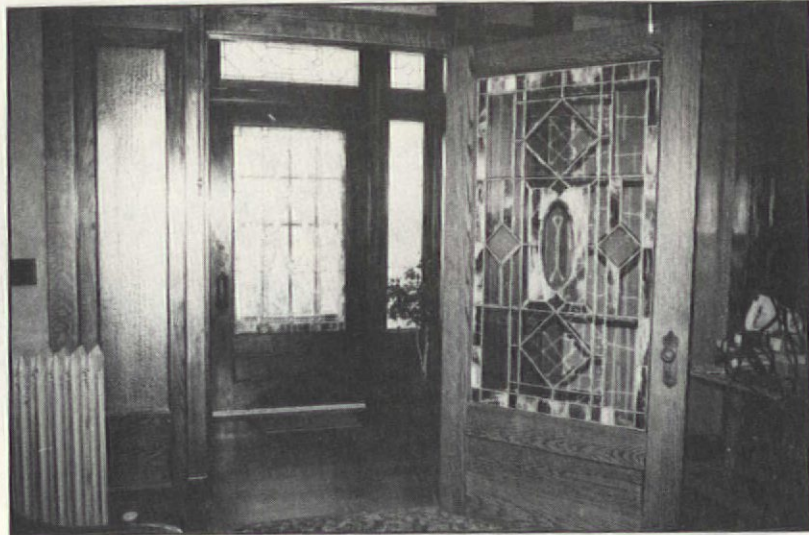
THEIR TROUBLES were not over. As they relaxed on Christmas Eve of 1976, there was a power failure. Several times in the past year the fuse on the transformer pole had blown, but the city electricians couldn't figure out what caused it. This time the O'Neles dug deeper. "After digging up half our yard we found the contractor had installed faulty underground wire," Susan recalls. The O'Neles had to install new wire from the transformer pole to the house.

IN THE SPRING OF 1978, the contractor filed suit against the O'Neles, who had withheld payment of the last \$1,300 on his bill. "In court we relayed our experiences, backing them up by testimony from workmen who finished up his jobs. In the end, the judge awarded US a settlement," Susan recalls with satisfaction.

### The House Prevails

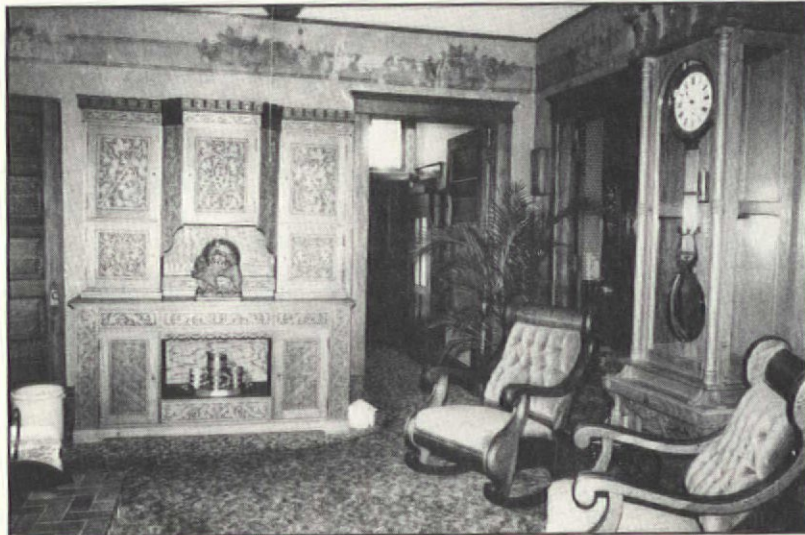
**D**ESPITE SUCH BIG PROBLEMS, the house remained a majestic Greek Revival structure. Both the house and the O'Neles' determination to restore it prevailed. Now, they were able to concentrate on painting, wallpapering, and decorating. Their inspiration came from Falldorf's handiwork.

HENRY FALLDORF'S LEGACY included intricately carved furnishings along with masterfully executed mouldings and oak doors. Many rooms had marbled canvas wallcoverings and hand-painted friezes done by a local artist at the turn of the century. The frieze in Falldorf's



*Top Left:* The glass in these doors and side-lights was completely blown apart by the tornado. After much searching, Susan found Omaha glass artist Louis Curiel who designed new glass appropriate for the house. He worked some of the original glue-chip glass into his design and rescued some pieces of glass from an old hotel that was being razed.

*Top Right:* This was Henry Falldorf's office desk. The wallcovering replaced the frieze of construction gnomes.



*Bottom Left:* The reception hall has six doors that lead to most of the rooms in the house. The sideboard, clock, and small table (partially hidden by the chairs) were carved by Henry Falldorf. That's the original stencil work on the wall.

office was particularly unusual: five paintings, connected by stencil work, depicting gnomes engaged in the construction trades.

**B**Y THE SUMMER OF 1979, the house was nearly restored. The O'Neles planted a perennial flower garden and built a circular brick path. After five years of hard work, they looked forward to relaxing and enjoying the results of their labor of love.

THE RESPITE WAS BRIEF. On June 3, 1980, seven tornadoes hit Grand Island and its environs. Over two thousand people were left homeless, including the O'Neles. The house took a direct hit: "The tornado took the entire second storey off plus the columns, capitals, balustrades, and portico. We walked along the pasture and river bed, finding pieces of them a mile away. All that was left was a square box with no top," Susan sadly recalls.

FEW PEOPLE find the stamina to restore a house once; the O'Neles had to decide if they could muster the energy to restore the same house twice. While the O'Neles pondered what to do, they began to have "visitors" who wanted to view the wreckage.

BUT IT WAS ONE of these gawkers who gave the O'Neles the determination to start over. "After touring the destruction she said, 'Oh, aren't you really kind of glad? Now you can have a brand new house!' Susan remembers. "I turned to her and said, 'Why would I want a brand new house? Anyone can have a brand new house. If this had been a new house there probably wouldn't be anything left at all and my family would probably be dead!'"

THE O'NELES immediately started planning the second restoration. Thoroughly familiar with the house and fast becoming experts, this time they'd do most of the work themselves. They began the next morning by putting up a new



The house after the June 3, 1980, tornado — decapitated and windows boarded.



A current photo of the house.



Above: All the furnishings in the dining room are family heirlooms.  
Below: The chair in the bedroom was carved by Henry Falldorf.



Photos by Kathy Stofer

roof with nothing more than a blown-up "before" picture as a blueprint.

### Restoration Reprise

**T**HE WORK PROCEEDED SLOWLY. Some parts of the house needed to be completely rebuilt. They wanted to be sure they did nothing to compromise the house's architectural integrity. They also wanted to salvage as much original material as possible.

THE MOST TROUBLESOME part of the second restoration was replacing the windows. The house had featured nine 4-ft. x 8-ft. double hung windows that presented an expansive view of the surrounding countryside. "I remember fighting tooth and nail with the local lumberyards," says Susan. "If I ever hear the phrase 'It's just not feasible' again, I'll scream."

MOST OF THE MAJOR outside repairs, including installing new columns and capitals, were completed by the summer of 1981. Since then the O'Neles have primarily worked on restoring and redecorating the interior. Much of Falldorf's handmade furniture was embedded with fragments of tornado-blown glass as well as severely stained by the rain. It took a year just to repair and refinish the furniture.

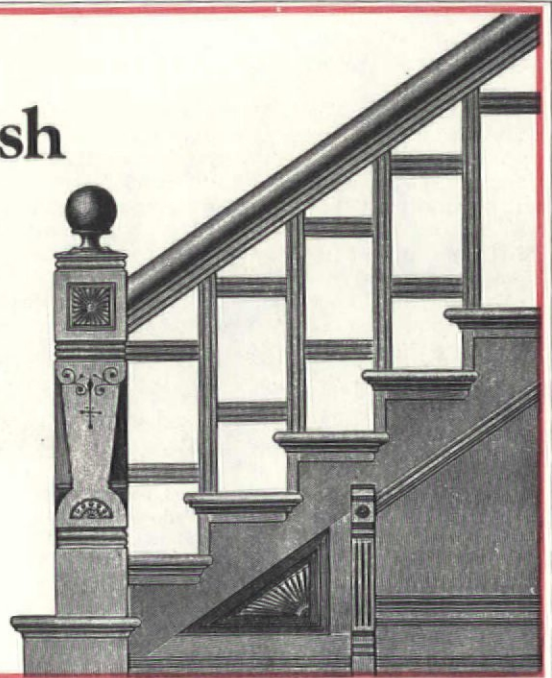
UNFORTUNATELY, the frieze of construction gnomes began to buckle and peel when the walls dried out from the rain that accompanied the tornado. Attempts to save it caused pieces to flake off, so the O'Neles were forced to remove it completely. They're donating the frieze to the archives of the local historical society.

ALTHOUGH MUCH has been accomplished since the June 1980 destruction, the O'Neles no longer see the restoration of the Falldorf house as a finite project. "I guess when you live in an old house you're never quite done," says a weary but proud Susan. While acknowledging the hard work and trauma they've been through, she insists, "We've had a lot of fun, too." 🏠

# Selecting A Clear Finish For Paint-Stripped Woodwork

by Clem Labine

*Many readers have asked us what's the best clear finish to use on woodwork after all the paint is stripped. There's an astonishing number of finishes to choose from. But once you've answered four questions, the decision is almost automatic.*



**Y**OU'VE SPENT untold weeks stripping 15 layers of old paint off the woodwork in your hallway -- including the newel and all the balusters! You've uncovered the beauty of the natural wood. Now what do you do for the final finish? For starters, approach the task with the same care that you would in refinishing a piece of furniture. After all, the woodwork is the basic furniture of your house.

THERE'S SUCH A DIZZYING ARRAY of wood finishes on the market that readers often tell us they feel unable to make a wise choice. Unfortunately, paint store clerks aren't much help; most will just recommend the product that happens to be on the shelf. Few of them have personal experience with the full range of clear finishes available.

DON'T WORRY about making a terrible mistake, however. There's no single right answer. Your selection of a clear finish for interior woodwork is less critical than that for your floors. For example, during the past 15 years, in various rooms of my house, I have used shellac, oil/alkyd varnish, penetrating sealer, and penetrating resin/oil as final finishes. All proved satisfactory, and no visitor to the house has ever noted any differences room to room.

WHAT IS CRITICAL, regardless of the finish you choose, is the way you prepare the wood BEFORE the final finish goes on. A clear finish won't hide imperfections; in fact, it will MAGNIFY them. In this article, I'm assuming that you've carefully removed all paint residue, rinsed properly to eliminate any wax that was in the paint remover, filled all holes, and sanded as required. In other words, the surface should be clean and smooth.

The rest of this article is solely about finish selection. We won't cover stains, or methods of applying finishes. That would take

a book (Ed Johnson's "Old-House Woodwork Restoration" is a good one that covers it all).

## Specify Goal And You've Specified Finish

**T**HE FINISH that's right for your job is selected almost automatically once you've determined: (1) The degree of gloss you're after; (2) The amount of time available for the work; (3) The amount of energy you want to expend; and (4) Whether the historic character of the woodwork warrants a reversible (easily removed) finish.

(1) GLOSS: Modern taste generally calls for "natural" low-luster finishes, such as that created by the penetrating resin/oils. However, your personal taste, or historical considerations, may dictate a finish with higher luster. Historically, in general, the more formal the setting, the higher the gloss. For example, in a formal late Victorian parlor you might select shellac or a traditional gloss varnish. On the other hand, for a Craftsman dining room in a 1910 Bungalow the natural-looking finish of a penetrating resin/oil would be more appropriate.

ALL VARNISHES are coatings that leave a film on the surface of the wood. Some of the polyurethanes, especially, can leave wood with a coated "plastic" look (unless they are lightly sanded after drying). The penetrating resin/oils don't leave a film, but aren't as abrasion resistant as film-forming coatings. They are less reversible, too.

(2) TIME AVAILABLE: If there's a house tour coming up and you simply must have the woodwork done in a single day, you can apply a couple of coats of sealer or quick-dry varnish. The results will be less aesthetically pleasing than if you used a more traditional finishing scheme -- but the work will be done

in time! Applying a sealer and a couple of coats of oil/alkyd varnish would require at least three days.

(3) CARE & ENERGY EXPENDED: The penetrating oil/resin finishes are probably the easiest to apply; everything is done by wiping and rubbing. There are no brush marks or drips to worry about. It's almost impossible to do a bad job. The hand-rubbed oil and/or paste wax finishes are the most time-consuming. They look gorgeous -- but require a lot of elbow grease! Shellac and varnishes require a good brush, some skill and steady work to avoid lap marks and brush marks.

(4) HISTORIC CHARACTER: If the woodwork has historic significance, a reversible, easily removed finish may be best. All finishes darken with age -- and several decades from now someone else may face the problem of re-doing your work. In my own 1883 house, for example, the original finish on the parlor woodwork was shellac. It had darkened with age, so refinishing was in order. It was so easy to strip the old shellac (with denatured alcohol) that I decided to return the favor for the next generation: I refinished with shellac. If I had used one of the penetrating oil finishes, and it went dark during the next several decades, it would be virtually impossible to remove.


HERE ARE the most common finishes that you're likely to find on paint-store shelves:

**SHELLAC** -- A natural-resin, film-forming finish derived from the Asiatic lac beetle. Comes in natural orange color and bleached (white). Not resistant to water or chemicals, but resistant when waxed. Excellent sealer for stains that could bleed into the finish.

**SEALERS** -- Used to promote even penetration of stain and finish, and to form a bonding layer between wood and the finish coat. Sealers are also used to prevent certain stains from bleeding into and muddying the finish coat. Two or three coats can be used as an inexpensive final finish.

**VARNISHES** -- Film-forming finishes comprised of solvents and synthetic resins. The more traditional varnishes are based on oil/alkyd resins, and while softer than the newer polyurethane varnishes, they are less likely to cause problems over a wide range of application conditions. Polyurethane varnish, for example, does not bond well to shellac and certain stains.

**PENETRATING RESIN/OILS** -- These contain natural oils that have been modified into resins, giving them more predictable drying characteristics than natural oils. They soak into the pores of the wood, rather than forming a film on the surface as varnish does.

**FINISH OPTIONS** are made clear on the chart. If you can't find the specific products mentioned, your dealer should have equivalents. 

## Woodwork Clear Finish Selector

IF YOU WANT...	THEN CONSIDER	SPECIAL NOTES (This generalized information should be supplemented with manufacturer's data.)	TYPICAL BRAND NAMES
A traditional low-to high-gloss finish for historic woodwork where reversibility is a factor	White Shellac	Requires a sealer (which should be thinned shellac) under first coat. Successive coats can be built up to mirror-like finish, or rubbed to semi-gloss with steel wool. Dries rapidly -- beware of brush marks. Shellac will darken over several decades, but is easily removed with denatured alcohol. Won't resist heavy abrasion; will water-spot. Easy to touch up.	Zinsser's Bull's-Eye Brand
A low-luster, natural-looking finish without the appearance of a coating on the wood	Penetrating Resin/Oil	No brushing needed; can be applied by rubbing. Wipe off excess after 30 min. Allow to dry overnight. Successive coats can be built to a semi-gloss luster. Fair amount of hand rubbing involved. Easy to touch up. Finish penetrates into wood, so there's no surface film. May darken some woods; virtually impossible to remove.	Daly's BenMatte Clear Danish Tung Oil, SeaFin Teak Oil, Deft Danish Oil, Watco Danish Oil, Minwax Antique Oil, McCloskey Royal Danish Oil, Woodcare Tung Oil, Benwood (Benjamin Moore) Scandinavian Oil
A traditional long-wearing varnish without a coated "plastic" look	Oil/Alkyd Varnish	Available in sheens from flat to high-gloss. Beware of brush marks when applying. Sealer required (can be a thinned coat of the varnish itself). Resistant to abrasion, water, and other liquids. Compatible with wide range of stains and sealers. Relatively slow drying (4-8 hrs.). Can be stripped with paint remover if it darkens over the years.	Benwood Satin Finish Varnish, Pratt & Lambert No. 38 Series (3 sheens), Valspar Chippendale (satin finish), Valspar Duncan Phyfe (low luster), McCloskey Heirloom Series (4 sheens, from flat to high gloss)

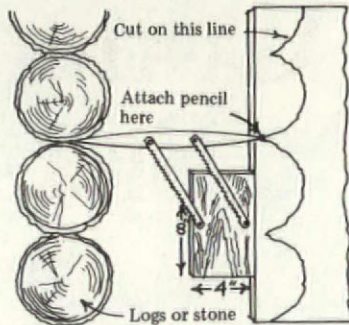


IF YOU WANT...	THEN CONSIDER	SPECIAL NOTES (This generalized information should be supplemented with manufacturer's data.)	TYPICAL BRAND NAMES
An easy-to-apply, rub-on finish with more gloss than penetrating resin/oils	Rub-On Varnish	Apply with soft cloth or hand. One coat produces a low luster; two coats a satin sheen; three or more coats a higher gloss. Easy to apply; 4 hrs. between coats. Fair amount of hand rubbing. Resistant to water and other liquids. Because it's a penetrating finish, it will be difficult to remove if it darkens with age. May darken some woods.	Hope's Tung Oil Varnish, Daly's ProFin, McCloskey Tung Oil Varnish
A finish with maximum resistance to abrasion, water, and chemicals	Polyurethane Varnish	Can create a hard, plastic look if not sanded lightly with 600-grit sandpaper after final coat. Available in sheens from flat to high-gloss. Harder and more resistant to water and chemicals than oil/alkyd varnishes and penetrating resin/oils. Beware of brush marks when applying. Not compatible with some stains and sealers. Relatively slow drying (4-8 hrs.). Prices vary widely depending on solids content. Not readily removed.	Benwood Urethane Finish (3 sheens), McCloskey Polyurethane (3 sheens), Flecto Varathane, Minwax Polyurethane (2 sheens), Insl-Thane
A fast, economical finish when durability is not a factor	Clear Sealer	Usually used as a sealer under stains and varnishes. However, two coats of clear sealer can be applied for a quick complete finish in a single day. Easy to apply. Cheaper and faster than conventional varnish or penetrating resin/oil finishes — but not as durable or water-resistant.	Benwood Quick-Dry Sanding Sealer, Daly's Benite Clear, Daly's Penelac Sealer, McCloskey Magic Sealer, McCloskey Clear Sanding Sealer, McCloskey Clear Tungseal, Minwax Natural Wood Finish
A one-day surface-coat finish with more toughness than clear sealers	Quick-Dry Varnish	A thinned coat as a sealer, followed by a finish coat, can be applied in a single day. Apply with brush or rubbing. Because it dries rapidly (45 min.-1 hr.), you must work skillfully to avoid lap marks. A utility finish — not intended for fine work. Reasonably resistant to water and wear. Can create a somewhat "coated in plastic" look.	Daly's QuickFin, McCloskey Hour Varnish, Quick-15, Benwood One Hour Clear Finish (2 sheens)
A traditional, low-luster, non-film-forming finish when application time is not a problem	Tung Oil	Most products with Tung Oil in the name are not pure tung oil. Some are thinned; others are modified with resins (see above). Tung oil is easy to apply; rub it on and wipe off excess 30 min. later. Fair amount of hand-rubbing involved. It penetrates into wood, so there isn't a layer on the surface. Slower drying than other finishes; 3-4 coats usually required. The more coats, the higher the sheen. Easy to touch up. May darken some woods. Virtually impossible to remove.	Hope's 100% Tung Oil
To completely avoid color change or darkening in blond woods	Lightener Primer/Sealer	Sealer is pigmented and looks milky when first applied. Dries to a transparent dull flat sheen with no darkening of wood color. Dries in 2-4 hrs. For final finish, apply one or two coats of compatible polyurethane or oil/alkyd varnish.	McCloskey Kwik Sand
To avoid irritation caused by allergies to petroleum-based solvents	Water-Reduced Varnish	Water-thinned acrylic varnish dries rapidly with low odor. Sealer recommended. Although it will form a satisfactory and durable finish, most craftspeople prefer traditional varnishes if petroleum sensitivity is not a consideration.	Benwood Vaquakleer Clear Finish (gloss and satin sheens)
The ultimate "soft glow," rich-looking (and labor-intensive) finish	Paste Wax	Seal wood with a clear penetrating sealer, followed by two or more <i>thin</i> coats of paste wax buffed after each application. Easy to touch up; not as durable as varnish and oil finishes. Easily removed.	Butcher's Paste Wax



## Homemade Compass

**F**IND THAT ORDINARY COMPASSES don't work very well when you're trying to scribe irregular surfaces. Here's a homemade scribing device that really does the job beautifully. The scriber itself is sawed out of plywood or masonite. A small hole is punched into one tip, and a pencil forced into the hole. You then attach two hacksaw blades or metal straps to the scriber and to a 3/4-inch, 4-x-8-inch board. The board slides against the gypboard or other material to be cut. The scriber follows the contours of any uneven surface because it's always held horizontally by the hacksaw blades. This device is quick and easy to make, and it works like a charm.



Sheila Shaw  
Nashville, Tenn.

## A "Fast" Stripper

**E**VERY CEILING in my 1895 house has to be scraped of latex paint and calcimine layers. I had tried TSP and hot water, sanding, and even H2OFF, with only fair results; the ceilings still were not smooth. As a last resort, I tried "Fast" Wallpaper Remover and hot water in a spray bottle. It actually zipped off. Just mix 1/2 cup Fast to 1 quart hot water, thoroughly spray a 4-x-4-ft. area, wait 5 to 10 minutes (respraying dried areas), and then scrape the area with a wide blade wallpaper scraper. Finally, wash the ceiling with a TSP solution, clean it all off, and you're ready to paint. One ceiling can be done, single-handed, in an afternoon!

Faye Lavrakas  
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

## Magnetic Dusting

**A**TACK CLOTH helps in removing the metal "dust" left on surfaces that have been steel woolled. But a lot of particles remain even after tacking, especially in moulding crevices. A quick and easy method for getting a dust-free surface is simply to pass a magnet over the surface after tacking. The compact, 12-lb.-pull Alnico magnet I bought at the hardware store works wonders and saves time. The tack cloth easily cleans the magnet when it gets full.

Ed Micca  
Bayport, N.Y.

## Special Sanders

**T**HIS IS A TRICK I've found useful when I have to refinish furniture or sand pieces of moulding. I glue sandpaper to popsicle sticks and dowels of various diameters. They can get into all the little nooks and crannies. It's much easier than working with small pieces of folded-up sandpaper. (Emery boards work well too.) If you put emery cloth or wet or dry sandpaper on the sticks, you can sand or file metal with them too.

James A. Dickey  
Iowa City, Iowa

## Curved Scrapers

**S**CRAPING a rusting, flaking, round iron handrail so it can be painted is a time-consuming, frustrating job -- if you use a straight scraper blade. The contact area is negligible. But I found some readily available metal tools which make ideal handrail scrapers. For my top rail (1-7/8-in. diameter) I used a Warner #269 combination brush, comb, and roller cleaner. The roller cleaner is a 1/3 circle cut into the blade.

MY MIDRAIL has a 1-5/8-in. diameter, so I used an Ace glazier knife #13603. (I used the same shaped knife made by Hyde, but the model number has worn off the handle.) Both these glazier knives have the circular cut-out.

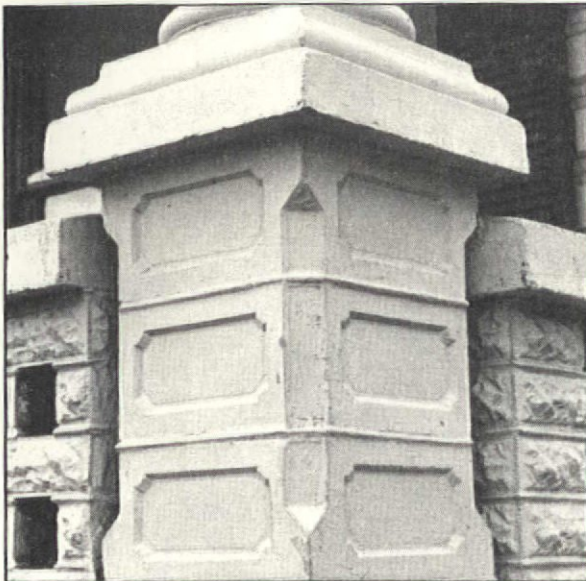


Hyde #02970 5-in-1 Painter's Tool

AFTER SCRAPING, give the rail a thorough wire brushing, apply a red-oxide metal primer and two coats of gloss black metal paint. The result is a first class -- and fast -- job.

Carl P. Klaus  
Chicago, Ill.

**Tips To Share?** Do you have any hints or short cuts that might help other old-house owners? We'll pay \$15 for any short how-to items that are used in this "Restorer's Notebook" column. Write to Notebook Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217.



# Repairing Ornamental Concrete Block

by J. Randall Cotton

**I**F YOU HAVE A BUILDING that is partially or entirely built of ornamental concrete block, there is, as they say, good news and bad news. The good news: Early concrete block was generally a durable material requiring little maintenance, so whatever problems you have will probably be slight. The bad news: If you do have serious problems, you're unlikely to find replacement blocks or anyone who has repaired ornamental block. Don't despair -- most repairs are simple. More complex masonry problems can be tackled by the adventurous.

## Preventive Maintenance

"AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION is worth a pound of cure" -- the credo of all old-house owners. Preventive maintenance of all building materials, including concrete block, saves money, time, and headaches in the long run. The preservation of block is virtually the same as for other masonry (such as brick and stone). By far, the greatest damage is from moisture in such forms as rain (especially with today's pollutants) or rising damp. Moisture damage shows up as spalling, erosion, cracking, peeling paint, or deteriorated mortar joints. Before repairing this damage, correct the source of the problem.

TO DIVERT damaging water runoff, make sure your gutter system works. Clean them out and look for leaks. If you have no gutters, roof runoff can splash back on the concrete-block walls. To alleviate splashback, reslope the grade away from the foundation and establish moisture-absorbing vegetation such as grass or myrtle.

GROUND MOISTURE in the form of rising damp affects concrete block as well as other foundation materials. OHJ's "Wet Basement" articles (June and August 1981) offer remedies for rising damp. Vines and other clinging vegetation can trap moisture against block walls; remove them if problems exist. Moisture can also penetrate at the juncture where block meets other materials such as the wood frames of doors and windows. Seal these joints with high-quality (expensive) caulk.

## Cleaning & Painting

**E**ARLY ADVERTISEMENTS for ornamental block proclaimed that it needn't be painted, which is true. As often as not, however, it was painted for aesthetic reasons, especially when used for porch or trim components. Unpainted block often had the "earthy" colors of the local raw materials from which it was made, so it was commonly painted white, a favorite color of classically-inspired, post-Victorian architecture. If your concrete block is painted, you'll probably want to keep on painting it. If it's unpainted, you have a choice: Painting might spruce it up, but leaving it unpainted will mean less maintenance -- and you can also take an offbeat pride in displaying the natural beauty of the raw concrete. Keep in mind too that most masonry doesn't hold paint well.

GENERALLY, those paints specifically made for masonry are the best choices. When painting previously unpainted concrete block, use latex (such as Thorosheen Acrylic) or cement-based masonry paints; they'll allow moisture in the concrete to escape. Cement-based paints usually come in powdered form to be mixed. They offer the best protection but are harder to apply, so be sure to follow all the directions carefully. Solvent-thinned paints, such as alkyd- or oil-based paints, are non-porous -- not the best choice for cement block, except if applied over an already existing, intact coat of solvent-thinned paint.

IF THE CONCRETE BLOCK (painted or unpainted) merely requires cleaning, follow the established procedures for cleaning masonry. First try the simplest and least expensive methods: low-pressure or slightly higher-pressure water washes, perhaps with a gentle detergent. A brand-new appearance is inappropriate -- some patina on the decorative block may actually make the cast face design stand out. Hire a professional to steam or chemically clean whatever dirt you can't wash out. Sandblasting, whether it's to remove paint or clean the concrete, is a definite NO! Nothing will destroy the ornamental designs in concrete block more effectively than sandblasting.

WATERPROOFING SEALANTS are not recommended. They haven't proven to be long lasting or effective. Put simply, they usually do no good and on occasion may accelerate deterioration by trapping moisture in the blocks.

## Repairs

HOMEOWNERS can tackle minor repairs to cracks and deteriorated mortar joints. In general, repointing techniques are the same as for brick or stone. (See OHJ, June 1979.) There is one notable difference, however: concrete block is a 20th-century product, made with portland cement. Thus, there isn't much danger of using a too-hard mortar mix (an overriding concern with old brickwork). Still, it's best to add some lime to the mix. One recommended recipe is:

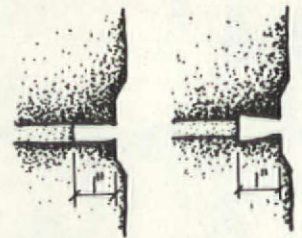
1 part cement...  
1 part portland (ASTM c150, Type I)  
plus 1/4 part hydrated lime OR  
1 part portland Type P (lime pre-mixed)  
to 2-1/2 to 3 parts sand.

THIS MIX serves as a starting point; the final mix should approximate the color, texture, and physical properties of the original mortar, especially when the concrete block is unpainted. You may need to use a non-staining white cement to get the whiteness of the original.



A failing porch foundation caused the blocks in this post to separate. The foundation should be fixed before the post blocks are reset.

BEFORE REPOINTING, cut out the old joints to a depth of at least an inch (unless the joints are particularly narrow). Use a cold chisel and then square up or key out. Brush out all loose mortar. Be sure to match the profile and joint size of the original joints, using the proper tool. Many ornamental concrete blocks were laid with grapevine or beaded joints, which form an integral part of the design.

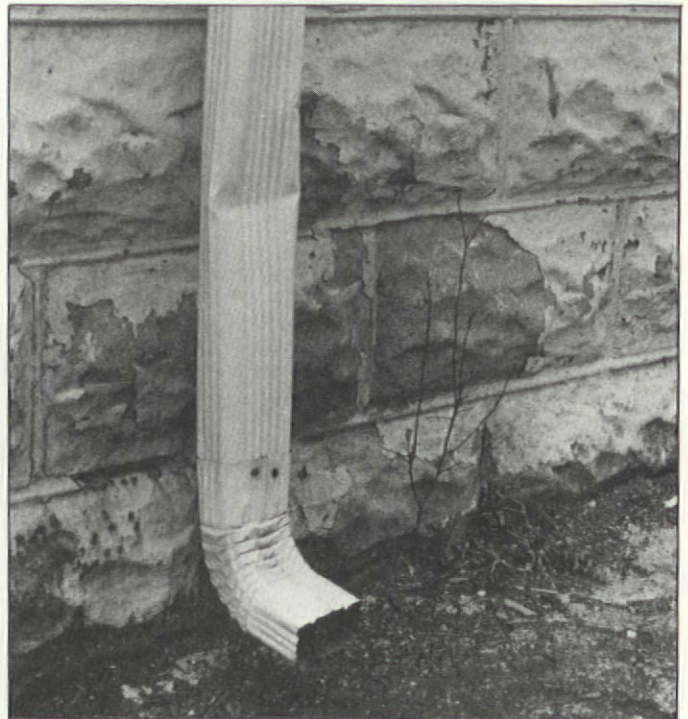


SQUARE UP JOINT OR KEY-OUT JOINT

SMALL CRACKS AND HOLES can be repaired with grout. Grout is simply a wetter version of mortar mix; it should be fairly thin and slushy. Remove all loose and crumbling edges from the crack, key out voids, and brush away debris, then fill the cracks with grout and screed off the excess.

RELATIVELY SMALL disintegrated areas can be patched either with a new concrete mix or specially-made patching materials such as Thorite. You can approximate the simple face design finishes, like rock-face, by sculpting the patching-material surface. When patching disintegrated areas, remember the following points:

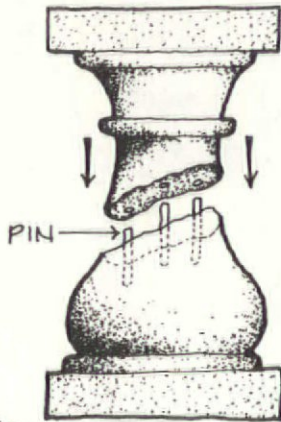
- 1) Cut out the deteriorated area to a sound surface, leaving no feathered edges and undercutting where possible.
- 2) Brush or vacuum away all debris.
- 3) Wash the area clean with water, but leave no standing water.
- 4) Thin the patching material to a slushy batter consistency.
- 5) If necessary, apply in several layers no more than 1 inch thick each.



Leaky downspouts or rising damp from wet ground can cause peeling paint and other water damage to blocks.

**PATCHING LARGE CHIPS, broken corners, or cracked balusters, rails, etc.,** requires support by anchors such as lag screws or pins. (Stainless steel or bronze will work but thermoplastic rods -- Teflon or nylon -- are recommended.) The anchor must be scored and threaded. Set the pins according to these guidelines:

- 1) Clean surfaces to be joined or patched.
- 2) With a carbon-tipped masonry bit, drill staggered rows of holes up to 1-1/2 inches apart. Depth should be about 2 inches or up to four times the pin diameter. The hole width should be about 1/8 inch wider than the pin diameter.
- 3) Clean away debris again.
- 4) Fill the holes with soupy mortar mix or epoxy cement.
- 5) Set the pins in the holes.
- 6) If you're rejoining two broken parts (such as a concrete baluster), coat both broken surfaces with epoxy adhesive and gently tap the parts together.
- 7) If you're patching a chipped corner, fill the cavity with the concrete mix or bonding material, forcing it in and around the exposed pins, which will act to support and reinforce the patch.



block. If you're extremely fortunate, you'll either find an old block-making machine to replicate the block, or you'll find salvaged blocks that match (or nearly match) your pattern. These are unlikely scenarios, of course. Most block machines have disappeared, and few building-salvage dealers stock old concrete block.

**AN OPTION** is to remove an identical block from an out-of-sight section of your foundation or porch, and use it where you need it. The removed block can be replaced with a common, smooth-faced modern block. This is, admittedly, a less than perfect solution.

**IF YOU'RE ADVENTUROUS** and have some time, why not make a mould and recast some matching blocks? From an out-of-the-way place, carefully remove an original block to use as a model. Loosen it by breaking the mortar joints with a chisel and baby sledgehammer. (After you've cast duplicate blocks, replace the original by cleaning out the void, laying down a bed of mortar and buttering the ends and top of the block with mortar, slipping it in, and tuck-pointing the joints.)

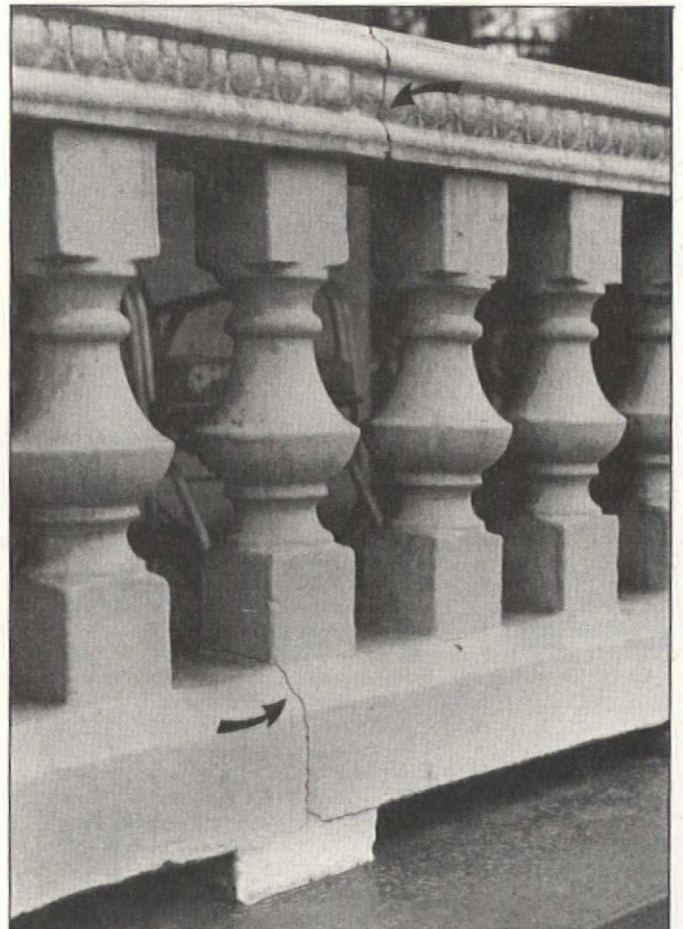
**MAKE THE BLOCK-MOULD** by building a wooden frame around the sides and bottom of the original (face up), using 3/4-inch or thicker stock. The frame should be hinged at one side corner and at the bottom. The opposite side corner should be latched, using, for example,

### Replacing Blocks

**YOU HAVE A MORE COMPLEX PROBLEM** if entire sections of block are chipped off, deteriorated, or spalled. The tricky part is matching the face design of the original



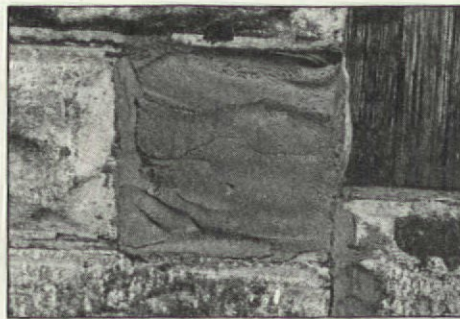
Settlement commonly causes joints to open, and deterioration starts if cracks are not filled to keep water out.



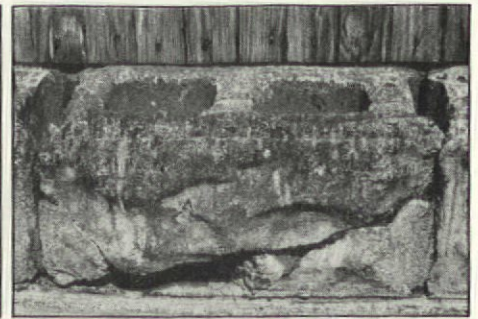
Cracks, probably caused by previous settlement, can be fixed with pins, then grouted to keep water out.



A broken corner in a rock-faced block that's a good candidate for simple patching.

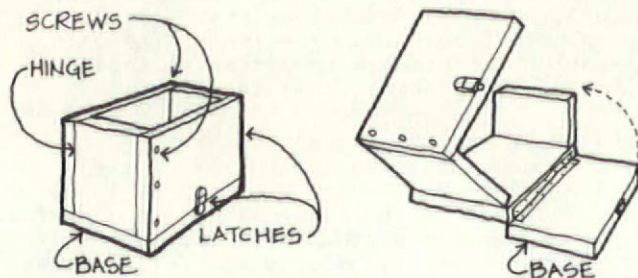


A sloppy patch job that doesn't attempt to match color or face design of the original.



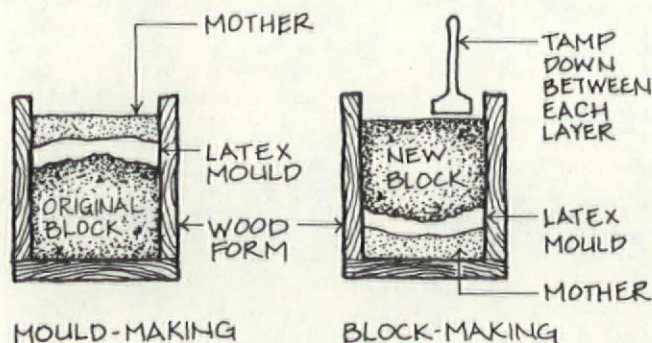
This block needs consolidation or pinning and patching — or complete replacement.

the kind of latch found on tool boxes. The top of the frame should be open, with the sides extending about 6 inches above the top of the original block.



WOOD FORM FOR MOULD

MAKE A MOULD FROM rubber latex, found at craft suppliers. The original face design should be coated with Krylon spray so it will easily separate from the mould. Brush on the rubber latex, coating all the crevices in the design. Rubber latex requires special curing procedures and should be applied in layers, so be sure to read the instructions carefully. The number of latex layers can be reduced by incorporating cheesecloth between them. The deeper the relief of the design, the more coats you'll need.



TO SUPPORT THE MOULD and prevent distortion when you cast a block, make a "mother" atop the mould. This is a layer of face-mix concrete (see proportions below), laid over the mould to a depth of about 1 inch. Do not attempt to lay down a thick layer of concrete over the latex mould, because concrete generates heat when it cures and can thus destroy the latex.

WHEN THE MOULD and mother have fully cured, they can be removed along with the original block by releasing the sides and bottom of the frame. Get ready to cast new blocks by setting the latex mould face up (nested into the mother) on the bottom of the frame, then reassembling the sides.

THE CONCRETE MIX for the new blocks should resemble that of the original as closely as possible. Experiment with different types of sand, aggregate, and proportions -- remember that your original blocks were probably made from local materials. The original aggregate could have been a variety of materials. If the original block weighs 25 to 35 lbs., the aggregate was probably cinder, shale, clay, or pumice; 40 to 50 lbs., sand, gravel, or crushed stone.

IF THE ORIGINAL face is intricate, like a scroll design, make a two-part casting with a 1-inch layer of face-mix (finer consistency) laid directly on the mould, topped by the regular mix. If the face design isn't intricate (rock-face and pebblestone, for example), just use the regular mix. For the face-mix, try approximately 1 part portland cement and 2 parts fine aggregate (sand, finely crushed stone, etc.). For the regular mix, use approximately 1 part portland cement, 2 parts sand, and 4 parts aggregate. (This formula was recommended in the 1928 Sears Catalogue.) If the original blocks were colored, add colored aggregate or mineral oxide pigments, available at masonry supply stores, to the concrete mix.

FORM THE NEW BLOCKS by layering the wet concrete (moistened just enough to create a thick batter) into the mould frame, tamping the mix down between layers. Insert heavy cardboard forms into the mould to create hollow cores for the blocks. The whole process should be done in 50-to-80-degree weather. After a couple of days the new block can be taken from the mould by releasing the frame's side panels. Wait 10 to 20 days before laying the new blocks. They shouldn't be moistened when laid. As in repointing, try to match the width and profile of the old joints. New blocks shouldn't be painted for 6 months, or preferably an entire year.

Randy Cotton recently left North Carolina for a new preservation job in Wayne, Pennsylvania. His article in the October issue of OHJ, "Ornamental Concrete Block Houses," describes the history of hollow concrete block use around the country.



## Tub Stripping

**O**UR 1871 HOUSE came complete with an oak-rimmed, copper-lined bathtub. The interior was apparently painted or tinned. What should we do to the interior and how can we protect the oak rim?

-- R. Kleinschmidt Manchester, N.H.

THAT SORT OF TUB was common in the 1890s. Because uncoated copper is hard to maintain, these tubs were often galvanized, which is probably the coating you see. The easiest thing to do is just scrub out the tub and live with it; even if the galvanizing is worn through in places, it shouldn't be too difficult to keep the tub clean. Mask the inside of the tub with kraft paper and masking tape before stripping the rim with a methylene-chloride-based paint stripper.

IF YOU WANT the galvanized coating removed, call in a porcelain refinisher or somebody from a chrome shop to remove it with a high powered acid. This will etch the copper underneath a bit, so contract for that same person to repolish the copper. Don't bother lacquering; it simply won't last. If you dry the tub with a soft cloth after each use, you can keep the copper gleaming.



OF COURSE, you could dismantle the entire tub and take it to a chroming shop to be stripped and regalvanized. Although this is the best long-term solution, prepare yourself for some sweat: The screws are probably immovable, the oak rim will be expensive to replace if you split it, and you have to haul the whole tub to and from the shop.

TO FINISH THE OAK TRIM, treat it with a paintable water repellent, then apply a marine varnish such as Deks Olje. Just like the wood on a boat, it will have to be stripped and revarnished occasionally.

## Cistern Parts

**D**O YOU KNOW who still supplies cistern parts? I'm looking for parts for my cistern pump, specifically the kind that has the chain with the water cups on them.

-- Ken Tewell Bonner Springs, Kans.

NOT LONG AGO cisterns were a common element of every household, but with the development of municipal water systems their use quickly faded. There's only one source of cistern parts and pumps that we know of in the country. You can write to him: James M. (Mike) Smith, The Anna Building Center, 201 East Vienna, Anna, IL 62906.

## Salvaged Boards

**I**SALVAGED THE INTERIOR WALL BOARDS from a local Post Office no longer in operation. They're not painted, but there are traces of some sort of coating. What is the best way to clean them and how should I stack them till I'm ready to use them?

-- John Hague Culpeper, Virg.

THE FINISH ON YOUR WALL BOARDS is probably either varnish or shellac. Try denatured alcohol on the boards first: If the finish comes off, it's shellac. If it's varnish, use a regular paint stripper. Just apply and then rub it off with a solvent (not water).

STORE THE BOARDS inside in a very dry place. Use alternate layering to allow air to circulate through the pile. Any sort of exposure to temperature changes will cause them to expand and contract--and eventually warp. The sooner you put them in place, the better.

## Pickling

**C**AN YOU PROVIDE any information on a process called pickling? I'm contemplating using this method to refinish the wide board floors in my 1860 house.

-- Richard Russell Washington, D.C.

PICKLING, also often referred to as liming, is a traditional finishing process used to accentuate wood grain. This highlighting is achieved by using two contrasting colors.

FIRST, make sure there's no paint or finish in the pores of the wood you want to pickle. Apply a basecoat of any color you wish (except white). Some people recommend using a glossy enamel, mixed with 15%-35% thinner. Make sure this basecoat is thin -- you don't want it to fill the wood's pores. Let it thoroughly dry.

THE NEXT STEP is to fill the pores with a contrasting color -- white enamel is commonly used. Let this coat stand for just a few minutes and then wipe it off with a soft cloth. If the basecoat you used was very dark, the white will give an enormous contrast. So you'll probably want to wipe most of it off. Try a test patch first. It's easy to experiment with the contrasting, or white, coat. It will just wipe off with a damp cloth.

General interest questions from subscribers will be answered in print. The Editors can't promise to reply to all questions personally--but we try. Send your questions with sketches or photos to Questions Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

ONE THING is for sure, however: The Baltimore Heater was a dramatic improvement over old coal burners, and was the inspiration for the first whole-house furnace, which was developed a few years later in Baltimore.

LATROBE'S STOVE became very popular. Manufacturers were licensed to cast and sell stoves all over the country. By 1917 the largest of these firms, Baltimore's Sexton Stove Company, had cast over 300,000 of them. Sexton continued making the heaters until shortly before World War Two, although oil heat had made them virtually obsolete. They were sold for scrap throughout the 1950s, but Latrobe Stoves were cast in such huge numbers that many survive in good condition.

**F**OR RESTORATIONISTS of Victorian homes, the Latrobe Stove, or one of the many look-alikes created a century ago, is perfect for the fireplace. It is similar to the modern fireplace stoves that have cropped up since the oil embargo (proving that nothing is new). One of Mrs. Latrobe's complaints about free-standing coal stoves was that they took up so much room. She also objected to the ugly smoke pipe that extended from a stove to a spot in the wall above the mantel. Her spouse's new stove design solved these problems and was much more efficient.

WEIGHING as much as 300 pounds, Baltimore heaters were very sturdy appliances. They had cast-iron frames, with sheet-iron bodies and firebrick linings. Many worked flawlessly for more than 50 years, and still have decades of use in them. They sat in the fireplace, extending onto the hearth no more than a foot. The heat dumped off the back of the stove rose up the chimney, was trapped with a "flue board," and warmed rooms on the second and even third floors. The coal smoke was carried by a separate smoke pipe to a point just above the uppermost flue board. It could thus heat more floor space than earlier stoves.

BESIDES being a better heat generator, the Latrobe Stove was virtually self-feeding and would burn for up to 14 hours on a single load of hard coal. The coal was poured into a "magazine" above the brick-lined firepot and fed down as the fuel beneath it burned to ash. By the time the coal reached the grate it had been pre-heated almost to ignition.

TWO SPECIAL PIPES, called "columns," fed smoke-filled air from the top of the stove in the back to the bottom, where it was recycled to the fire. (Modern stovemakers call this "secondary combustion," as if they've made a revolutionary discovery.) The columns became hot in the process, and that heat rose to the floors above.

AS WITH OTHER coal-burning appliances, the Baltimore Heater had a shaker grate with a handle that extended through the front of the stove. A coal fire receives as much as 80% of its oxygen from beneath, so the coals on the grate had to be kept free from ash. The homeowner could shake the grate while the fire was burning, and ash would fall through to the ash pan beneath. A lower door allowed the ash to be removed.



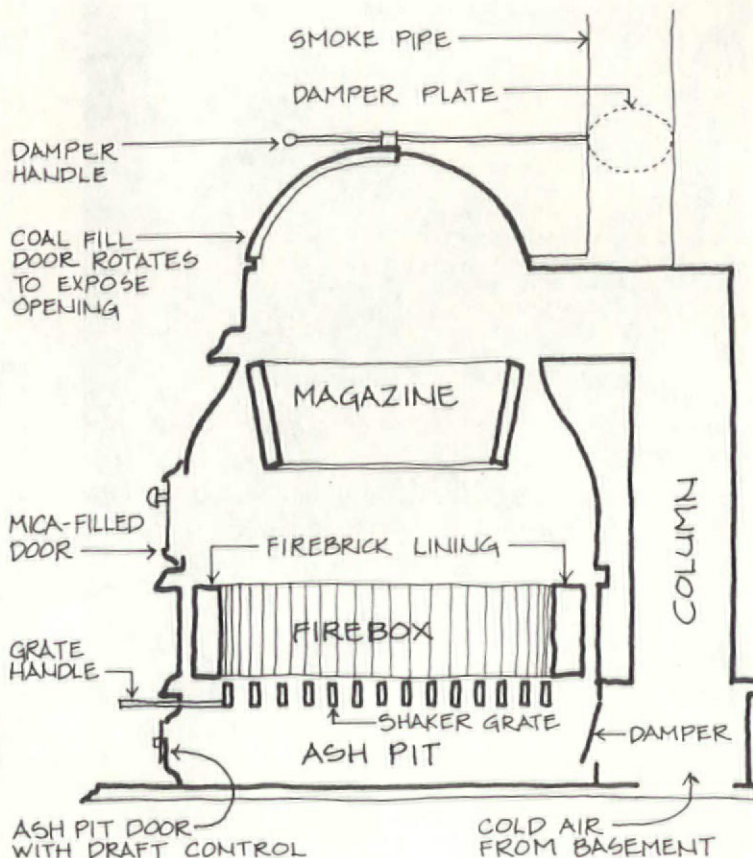
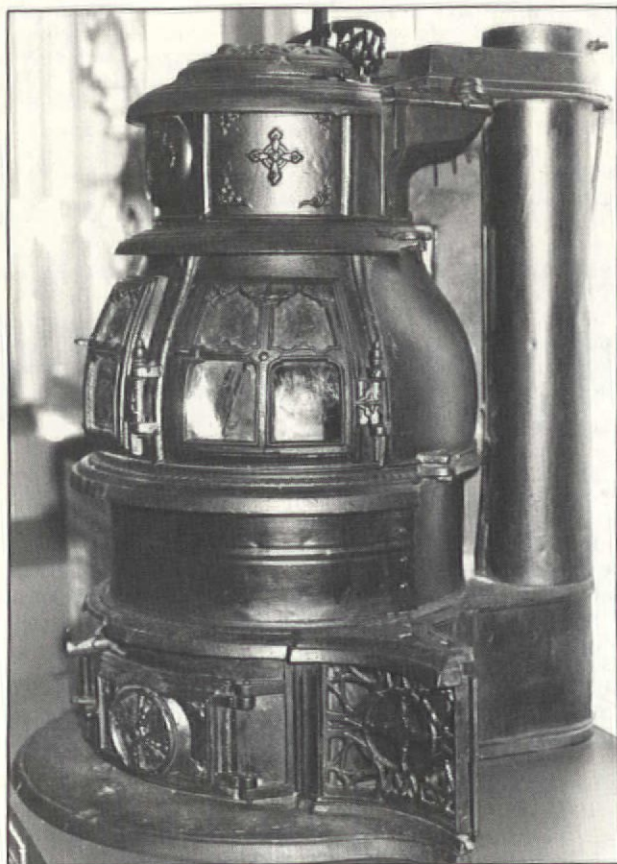
The "BRILLIANT," a small Baltimore Heater bearing the date 1869, is now on display at Baltimore's Peale Museum. This is a simple stove, without nickel-plated trim. The wide, flat metal band near the bottom is sheet metal; the rest, cast iron.

DRAFT WAS CONTROLLED by valves in the stove's base, and the smoke pipe was fitted with a damper to further restrict the burn rate when desired. Many had up to eight doors, some with openings filled with mica. (Some suppliers call stove glass "isinglass," but it's actually sheets of mineral mica.) When the coal was red, a pleasant glow filtered through and into the room. With its nickel-plated trim, ornate cast-iron body, and sometimes an art tile medallion, the Latrobe was a Victorian work of decorative art.

**R**EPAIRING AND INSTALLING a Latrobe Stove is a more involved procedure than the restoration of a pot-belly. These heaters are so complicated-looking that it takes a stove genius to figure one out unassisted. Most old Latrobes have long ago lost their network of pipes, so it's difficult to figure out what attaches where. And they have more moving parts than a John Deere tractor, and more handles than the slot machine room at the Playboy Casino. Joe Thaler, whose great-grandfather started the stove firm George Thaler & Company in 1860, commented that the firm still owns patterns for most stoves. "We discovered that some had as many as 250 parts, and decided it would be impractical to try to cast and stock replacements."

THIS ARTICLE CAN give you the assistance you will need to get an old Latrobe up and running in your home. Familiarize yourself with the





Left: The column on the BRILLIANT's right side goes down to a sheet-metal box to the rear of the ash pit. This small stove didn't have a smoke pipe connection separate from the two columns. The right column connected directly to the smoke pipe via a collar to the rear of the stove's top. Note how the sheet metal is held to the cast-

iron casing with nuts and bolts. Large nuts and bolts hold the stacked sections on top of one another. Right: This is a typical Baltimore Heater layout. Yours may vary; the BRILLIANT, for instance, fills in the front door instead of in the top. The column here is shown as separate from the smoke pipe, as was common with most stoves.

cut-away drawing of a typical Latrobe Stove, shown here. Once you know the concept of the stove's operation, you can assess the worth of a stove in rough condition. "If a Latrobe Stove is missing a lot of parts, it will be extremely difficult to put it back together," Joe Thaler points out. "Grates, for instance, are very hard to find, and no one is reproducing something specifically for Latrobes." Several Baltimore stove specialists do stock spare parts when they can find them. They're listed on page 211.

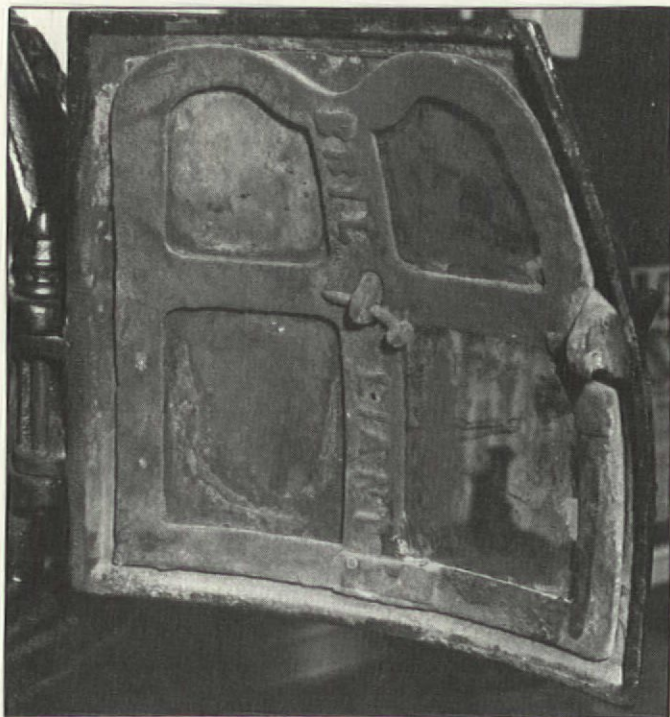
MEASURE THE STOVE CAREFULLY to make sure it'll fit into your fireplace opening. Then take an inventory of its parts. A cast-iron trim piece fits around the stove to fill gaps between the stove and the mantel edge. For some reason, these trim pieces frequently turn up without the stoves. Other stove parts aren't so easily found. Broken doors can be fixed, but missing doors make a stove nearly worthless. The lid at the top through which fresh coal is poured should be intact. Broken hinges, especially if the broken part is on the stove frame and not the door, also spell trouble for a would-be stove restorationist. Don't be too concerned about mica missing from the doors, or about corroded sheet-metal body parts. These, as well as the columns to the rear of the stove, can all be easily replaced.

THE MOST ELABORATE STOVES had nickel-plated rails on which people rested and warmed their

feet. Sexton's Grand Heater, the largest in their line, featured a tile medallion at the top, manufactured by an art pottery. If these decorative parts are missing, the operation of the stove will not be affected, but it will lose some of its visual impact.

**W**HEN THE STOVE IS HOME you can begin rebuilding. There are some repairs that almost all Latrobes are going to need. It's important to take the stove apart as far as is safely possible. Corroded bolts can be chiseled or sawn off and replaced later. Clean all the joints between stove parts with a wire brush and brush off any surface rust. As you put the stove back together with new bolts, spread a generous layer of furnace cement between the joints. This assures that the joints will be airtight. Furnace cement can be used to fill cracks between joints or cracks that do not affect the structural strength of the stove. Cement is ineffective, however, for cracks larger than 1/8 inch.

IF YOU HAVE CRACKED DOOR FRAMES, repair them before replacing the mica. They can be welded electrically, using a special electrode for cast iron. An alternate, though less dependable, method is to cement a short piece of scrap iron behind the crack, using furnace cement. Be sure the patch doesn't interfere with the opening and closing of the door.



A single stud, secured here with a bent roofing nail, holds the mica in the door of the BRILLIANT.

THE MICA-GLAZED DOORS create the genuine charm of an operating Latrobe. Each thin pane of mineral mica is held in place by an iron frame attached to studs in the rear of the door. Cut a paper pattern of the mica, fitting the pattern carefully to the door. Mica can be cut -- carefully -- with kitchen scissors.

IF THE MICA FRAME AND STUDS are intact, you are indeed fortunate. If you can keep the frame in one piece while removing it for mica replacement, you are even more fortunate. In the event that the frame is either gone or unusable, the mica can be held in place by "glazing" it to the door with furnace cement. Use the cement just as you would use glazing putty to replace a normal window, making sure the cement is not visible from the front. This is not as satisfactory a method as the original, but at worst you'll have to re-glaze the mica on occasion.

CORRODED SHEET-METAL BODY PARTS must be replaced. 24-gauge sheet metal is a good, heavy product to use, and is generally available in small sizes at stove stores. Sheet-metal parts are held to the cast-iron frame with sheet-metal screws or nuts and bolts. Use cement between joints here to assure no smoke leaks out the front of the stove.

THIS IS ALSO THE TIME to replace missing smoke columns. First determine how many columns the stove requires. Small stoves sometimes had two columns that went from the top of the stove down into a cast-iron box at the rear of the ash pit. One of these columns ran down from a collar at the stove's top, to which the smoke pipe was also attached. The smoke pipe carried coal smoke up the chimney. The damper was installed in the top of that collar. The smoke-pipe collar will have a means for the attachment of a damper plate.

LARGE STOVES like the Sexton Grand seen on the next page had two columns that carried smoke down to the ash pit and a third pipe between the columns to carry smoke up. The damper was installed in this third pipe. There will be a collar on top of the stove between the openings in the stove's case for the columns. Look for evidence for a damper plate in this collar and you'll know the smoke pipe is attached there.

TO REPLACE THE COLUMNS, measure the collars on the top rear of the stove to determine the diameter of the necessary pipe, and take the measurement to the stove shop. 24-gauge black smoke pipe is your best choice. You may need a 90-degree elbow for each column.

IF THE SMOKE DAMPER IS MISSING, purchase a stock damper at the stove store to fit the collar on the top of the stove. The damper will have a handle that extends forward so that it may be opened and closed from the front. The handle has to be long because it must reach deeply into the fireplace. It may be necessary to weld a new, longer handle onto the replacement damper plate.

ODDS ARE that the brick lining in the firebox will either have to be replaced or repaired. If all the bricks are there and are only loose or cracked, they can be relaid with refractory cement. Stove retailers carry new stove-lining brick and the special cement for installing it. Remove the bricks and scrape off the old, loose cement. Also clean up the sides of the stove casing to which the bricks adhere. Then simply lay the bricks much as you would any other brick, making sure the cement fills the gaps between bricks thoroughly.

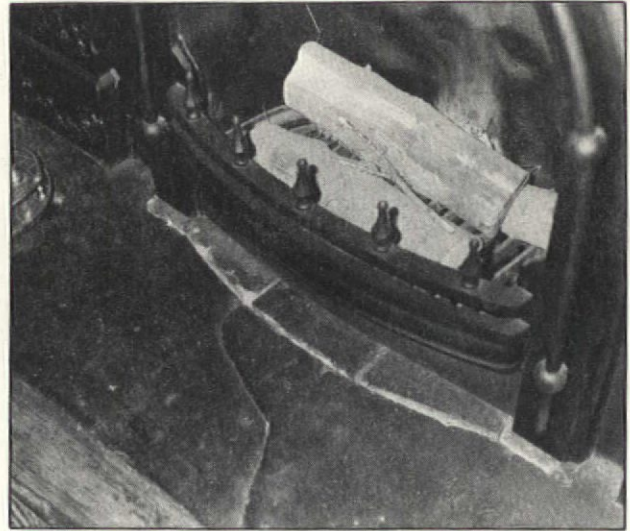
THE SHAKER GRATE must be in good shape and operative to guarantee a sustained burn. Its handle should extend through the opening for it in the front of the stove. If the grate is cracked but still appears to be strong, it's probably usable as is. If it's broken into several pieces, it will have to be welded together, using the special electrode for cast iron. It's likely that the weld will have to be repaired from time to time, because it won't hold up to the repeated heating and cooling as well as the original casting would.

REPLACEMENT GRATES can be fabricated from steel by any competent fabricating shop. Be forewarned, however, that steel grates warp and burn out faster than cast iron. A better choice, if you need a new grate, would be to check some of the stove-parts sources listed on page 211. Pot-belly stoves use round grates not unlike those required by the Latrobe. You'll have to give them the size of the grate you need; be prepared to weld a different handle onto the grate so it can reach through the front of the stove.

AT THE VERY BOTTOM of the stove is an ash pit. A wide door (perhaps two) allows the pit to be cleaned. In the doors you'll find rotating draft controls. They should fit snugly enough to control the draft properly, yet loosely enough to rotate easily. If the bottom and sides of the ash pit are damaged or corroded, the easiest solution is to make a sheet-metal liner. The metal needn't be as heavy as the sheet metal used on the stove body, because it won't be subjected to as much heat.



Left: The 'Grand Heater' was the top of the line at Baltimore's Sexton Stove Company. Note the nickel-plated filigree trim, the plated knobs, and the plated foot-rest of this restored Grand. An art tile medallion decorates the stove's crown. The filigree dome atop the



stove rotates back behind the surround, exposing the fill hole at the top of the stove's magazine. Right: See how the brick extends onto the slate in the shape of a curving stove front? The hearth of this slate fireplace was once occupied by a Latrobe stove.

**O**NCE ALL THE MOVING PARTS -- front doors, damper and grate handles, loading door, and ash-door draft controls -- have been checked, the refractory cement has dried, and the stove front is cleaned and polished, the stove front is then ready for installation. The 1922 Sexton Stove Company catalog provided buyers with directions for installing stoves and pipes. Those directions, repeated verbatim here, are still a good guide to putting a Latrobe Stove in your fireplace:

**FIRST:** Examine the flue to see if it is well-plastered and perfectly tight.

**SECOND:** Have the fireplace opening a little larger than the heater, say about two or three inches space on the sides and back; Also have the hearth level.

**THIRD:** Cut a hole in the back bottom of the hearth to the cellar (say 2 x 4 inches) and have it come directly under the inside of the sheet-iron casing and the back to the base of the heater, so that the cold air will pass between the sheet-iron casing and the body of the heater, and not outside the casing of the heater. If the cold air cannot be taken from the cellar, it may be taken from the side wall, if there be one in the rear of the heater. If the house is so constructed that the supply of cold air cannot be taken from the cellar or side wall, the heater can be set without cold air, but we always prefer getting the supply of cold air from the cellar or outside wall if possible.

**FOURTH:** Cut the hole for the register in the floor above so the lower edge of the register frame will not be any higher than the top of the washboard. When there is no washboard, let the bottom edge of the register frame be about six inches off the floor.


**FIFTH:** Make the sheet-iron flue board with a hole in the center for the flue pipe to go through; Also have it to conform to the size and shape of the flue. In making the flue board, allow two inches margin around more

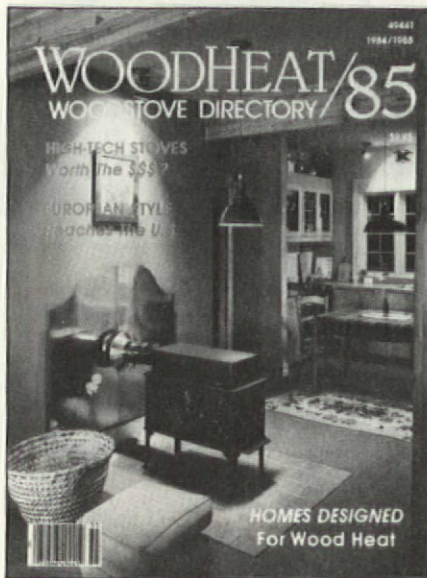
than the size of the flue, for edges to turn down. The flue board can be put in position by fastening it to a piece of wire or rope let down from the room above through the register opening so as to draw it up. Then nail it in place, about two inches above the top of the register opening; Mortar should be placed all around the edges and over the top so as to make it entirely airtight.

**SIXTH:** Draw up a joint of smoke pipe in the same manner as the flue board; Then secure it firmly in the flueboard, so it will project through about half-way above. Now join the balance of the smoke pipe securely together and pass the same up and connect it with the piece already in the flue board. Rest the lower end on a nail driven inside the fireplace just above the opening.

**SEVENTH:** Put the heater in the fireplace. Pass your hand through the opening in the top of the casing, pull the smoke pipe down and fit it securely on the collar on the top of the heater.

**EIGHTH:** Plaster around the smoke pipe where it passes through the flue board, and then put in the register, which is done with plaster of paris. Then light some paper or kindling wood in the heater. If no smoke comes out of the register, the pipe is properly put together. When heat is to be carried to the third floor, put in a flue board with a collar on top in addition to the smoke pipe hole, and on the collar place a 4-1/2-inch tin pipe, which runs to the register above; The tin pipe must, however, be placed in first, resting the lower end on a nail while you place the flue board in position.

**L**ATROBE STOVES put out a surprising amount of heat. They were the Victorian era's open hearth, for the flickering red coals behind the mica windows are as rivetting as the crackling fire in a fireplace. Once you have one heating your old house, you'll never go back to an ordinary open hearth again. 



Whether you're planning to purchase a new stove or get the best out of those you already have, the new Wood Heat/85 Directory should interest you.

Do you need a high temperature chimney flue? Probably. Is your stove installed safely? A Cornell study says probably not. Did you know that wood heaters have become up to one-third more heat efficient, and produce more heat from less wood? That you can get electricity as well as hot water from stoves and fireplaces? And that you may not be getting your money's worth from your chimney sweep?

The directory contains a good article on rating wood stoves and takes a look at the new catalytic stoves and add-ons, comparing the cost versus the benefits. I found some interesting pros and cons about hot-water heating devices, which can be added to existing stoves.

Having spent several seasons on the end of an axe handle, I enjoyed the article on various wood splitting tools (which, in turn, helped me appreciate the article on heating with coal.)

About half of the stove directory is devoted to products and accessories such as wood stoves, catalytics, cook stoves, inserts, fireplaces, chimneys, fireplace furnaces, central units, and re-lining products. Each listing contains product illustrations, manufacturers' comments and specifications, and a state-by-state listing of retailers and chimney sweeps.

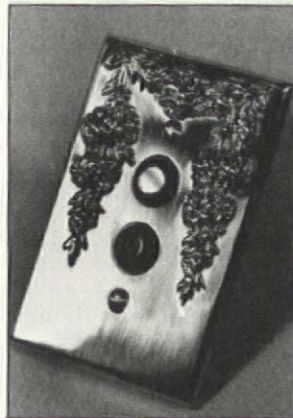
The Woodheat/85 Woodstove Directory is available on newsstands or by mail for \$5 ppd., from Woodheat/85, P.O. Box 2008J, Dept. OHJ, Laconia, NH 03247.

## Pushbutton Switches

Necessity is the mother of invention . . . and Peter Brevoort of Classic Accents has just proved the point. Unable to locate matching replacements, new or used, for old-style push-button light switches, Peter decided to manufacture them. We are happy to announce that after three years of design, testing, and production effort, push-button light switches are once again available!

Designed by electrical engineers, the new switches have modern internal workings which are not only safe and reliable but also enable the push-buttons to be operated with less effort. Application has been made for U.L. listing and U.S. Patents; the switch is rated at 110 volts and 20 amps.

There are three things I really like



about these new push-button switches. First, from the outside they look just like the old ones. Both buttons are dark brown bakelite. The top one has a nice touch: real mother-of-pearl inlay; the bottom has a company logo in old-style raised lettering.

Second, the bakelite switch box is very compact — much smaller than the old ceramic ones — which allows more room for wires. Third, the brass faceplates are quite heavy (7-1/2 oz.), cast rather than stamped. I especially liked the decorative faceplate, which has a floral garland in raised relief and a highly polished finish. There's also a plain burnished brass plate available.

The company is currently working on a push-button three way switch and nine different faceplates, including some for gang-mounting switches.

The new switches sell for \$9 each with a 20% discount for six or more (\$7.20 each). The decorative faceplates sell for \$11 each or \$8.80 each for six or more.

For more information and a free brochure, contact Classic Accents, Inc., Dept. OHJ, P.O. Box 1181, Southgate, MI 48195. (313) 282-5525.

## Brass Window Candles

Here's a gentle way to authentically decorate your windows for the holidays. For many years, we've seen small electric candlesticks and little wreaths giving off a warm glow, sometimes lighting every window in an old house.

The William Spencer Company, at the request of their customers, has created three high quality, solid brass, electric candlesticks for use in windows. For larger windows, the VH-1 model is recommended; it's 9 1/2 in. high with a 3 in. base (\$15 ea.). For windows having

narrow sills, the 8-in. high, 2-1/4 in. diameter model VH-2 is best (\$12 ea.). For a shorter candlestick still, order the VH-3, measuring 5 in. high and 2-1/4 in. in diameter (\$10 ea.). The soft light given off by these candlesticks comes from a 7 1/2 watt, clear, flame-like bulb (not supplied with the fixtures) which sell for \$.70 ea.

The shipping cost is \$2 for the first light plus \$.50 for each additional one. Their catalog of lighting fixtures and accessories is \$2. Order from William Spencer, Creek Rd., Dept. OHJ, Ran-cocas Woods, NJ 08060. (609) 235-1830.





## New Board Game

The Winterthur Museum, one of the nation's finest collections of furniture and antiques, has just introduced *Made For Trade*, an educational board

game. The game depicts a typical 18th century village.

There are four levels to the game, graduating in difficulty. The higher game levels bring players into more complicated situations such as rising from indentured servitude. You barter for authentic decorative-arts objects based on the museum's collection.

The game includes a colorful townscape board (19 in. square), 48 objects cards, 60 coins (shillings), dice and a collection of townspeople as players. The retail price is \$16.50 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling; purchase benefits Winterthur. The game is also sold to the wholesale market: (call (302) 656-8591 ext. 402.) To order the game or receive a free catalog of all the museum's gifts, write to Winterthur Museum and Gardens, Winterthur, DE 19735. (800) 441-8229.



## Latrobe Stove Repair

Here are some companies you may want to contact when restoring a Latrobe Baltimore Heater (see article on page 191).

One of the oldest stove repair companies in the country, Aetna has a large stock of antique parts plus modern stove restoration and installation materials. Aetna Stove Co., S.E. corner 2nd and Arch Streets, Dept. OHJ, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

Cumberland General Store is well known for their large catalog containing, among other things, mica sheets, furnace cement, stove polish, dampers, flue fittings and stove pipe. For a catalog send \$2.75 to Cumberland General Store, Dept. OHJ, Route 3, Crossville, TN 38555.

Bryant carries a large stock of antique stove parts and will ship anywhere. Their catalog is \$10, and they will send you free fliers. Bryant Stove Works, RFD 2, P.O. Box 2048, Dept. OHJ, Thorndike, MA 04986.

In business since 1901, Empire carries many parts for old stoves, and also has casting patterns for parts not in stock. Empire Stove and Furnace Co., Inc., Dept. OHJ, 793-797 Broadway, Albany, NY 12207.

To purchase a Latrobe Stove or have one restored, contact Dale Swavely at Dept. OHJ, 422 South Dallas St., Baltimore, MD 21231.

In business since 1860, Thaler still stocks mica and parts for old stoves. They also carry a full line of stove pipe, cement, and other stove-installation material. George J. Thaler, Inc., Dept. OHJ, 1300 East Madison St., Baltimore, MD 21205.

The West Barnstable Stove Shop, Dept. OHJ, Route 149, West Barnstable, MA 02668, restores antique stoves and sells stove parts.

## Christmas Tree Lights

Not since pre-WW II days have figurative Christmas-tree light sets been available. But to add an authentic touch to the seasonal festivities of old-house living today, Bradford Consultants has re-introduced these charming old-time Christmas lights.

According to *The Christmas Tree Book*, 'as early as 1909 figurative miniature light bulbs became available. The first were hand-made and hand-painted in Austria. They were shaped and colored to look like glass fruits, flowers, birds, and animals. Figurative lights were later made in Germany, Japan and the U.S.'



The 120v bulbs and light strings meet American National Standard ANSI/UL 588 and are designed for indoor use. The standard C 7 1/2 bulb base (candelabra) will fit existing light strings of this type.

The complete outfit of a 15-lamp string plus a spare bulb sells for \$9.98 plus \$2 for packing and shipping per order. A box of 5 assorted bulbs is \$4.45 plus \$1.45 per order. From Bradford Consultants, Dept. OHJ, 16 Homestead Ave., Collingswood, NJ 08108. (609) 854-1404.

## Christmas Ornaments

Remember all those wonderful hand-blown and hand-painted glass Christmas-tree ornaments in the shape of Santas, little buildings, animals, fruits, and toys? Well, they're being made once again by the same family of German glass blowers in Lauscha and from the same moulds that produced those ornaments from the 1860s up until WWII.

The ornaments are mouth blown into the original two-section 'mother-moulds', silvered on the inside, and individually painted on the outside. The seams and other imperfections give the ornaments their distinctive hand-made appearance. Strickfaden's, the sole U.S. importer of the Inge-Glas Collection, stocks a wide variety of these fragile ornaments (actually called Glass Figurals). The prices range from \$1.99 to \$8.50. Here are some of my favorites: chimney sweep \$8.50, Santa in chimney \$7, indian chief \$2.99, wise old beer drinking owl \$8.50, Santa in coach \$7.50, church \$2.99, and Santa in a parachute \$2.99. For each order add \$2, shipping and handling.

For a free catalog and price list write to Strickfaden's, 318 Bell Ave., Dept. OHJ, Sandusky, OH 44870. (419) 626-1964.





## FOR SALE

**CYPRESS POCKET DOORS**, 2 prs. horizontal panels 34 in. W X 102 in. H, \$400 pair. 2 prs. vertical panels (1 pr. beaded), 37 in., 40 in. W X 108 in. H each, \$475 pr. 1 pr. vertical panels w/ applied mouldings, 48 in. W X 111 in. H each, \$495 pr. Cypress Victorian porch support brackets, many sets, \$75 to \$150 each, quantity discounts. Cypress spandrel, 13-ft. sections, \$135 each. J. Leslie, 402 W. Evangeline Hwy., Lafayette, LA 70501. (318) 234-7963.

**MANTEL**, Bird's-Eye maple, Victorian. Mirror 39 in. W, 23 in. H, FP opening 45 in. W, overall 80½ in. tall, 60 in. W w/ trim for top adding an additional 11½ in. to height. Original finish, exquisite, best offer. L. Savage, No. 15956, Durham, NC, 27704. (919) 477-0658.

**ROPER RANGE**, c. 1925. 4-burner, oven & warming oven. Elegant grey & white porcelain. Also, Hoosier cabinet w/ pull-out counter and glass cabinets. Will sell separately or together for best offer. See in Newton, MA. (617) 244-9491.

**SHEETMETAL BATHTUB**, galvanized sheetmetal w/ wood panelled surround, faucets included. Any offer accepted. Put it to use before more history goes into the garbage truck. Eric Beutner, 92 Lyndhurst St., Dorchester, MA 02124. (617) 436-7241.

**20 HAND-HEWN BEAMS** approx. 8 in. X 8 in. X 21 ft. and 30 approx. 8 in. X 8 in. X 5 ft. Misc. oak studs & flooring, 2 solid walnut doors, 1 FP mantel w/ 2 side cabinets, 1 cast-iron balcony railing approx. 30 in. X 8 ft., all saved from O'Brien house c. 1875. Also 1 antique floral cooler, less air comp., approx. 6 ft. X 6 ft. X 8 ft., about 50 yrs. old. Lowell Hamilton, PO Box 56, Greenville, OH 45331. (513) 548-1174.

**PARLOR STOVE**, Cast iron, "Acme Carbon 16" from Newark Stove Works, Chicago, c. 1900. \$500. Also, gas kitchen range: 4 gas jets on left, oven & broiler on right., c. 1920s. \$100. N. Dickinson, 1715 S. Phillips Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57105. (605) 339-0445.

**DINING ROOM SUITE**, 1930s oak (burl oak accents) Jacobean-style table (leaves incorporated), 33 X 60 to 96; 1 arm, 5 side chairs; buffet, 4-drawer, 2-door, 22 X 68; china, 2-drawer, 2 wood doors w/ bottom shelf, 18 X 40; server, 2-drawer w/ bottom shelf, 18 X 40. Exc. condition, completely refinished. Photo on request. (412) 728-1582.

**OLD LOG CABINS**, hand-hewn, delivered to your site for as little as \$6,000. J. Don Rogers. (803) 877-0538.

**BEVELED GLASS MIRROR** w/ pier frame by Steiner Mantel Co. of Baltimore, approx. 89 in. H X 51 in. W, glass 54 in. X 35 in., in exc. condition. Shelf below, columns flanking, white paint easily removed from varnished tiger oak. \$200. F.O.B. Cranbury, Harvey Sachs, 29 S. Main St., Cranbury, NJ 08512. (609) 655-1642.

**WOOD STORM WINDOWS** (4), 28 in. X 63¼ in., \$10 each. Metal casement windows (9), 52 in. X 49½ in., \$10 each. 1840 mahogany window seat, \$150. Morris chair, \$95. (201) 825-7388.

**COMPLETE YOUR DEPRESSION ERA** kitchen w/ a Hotpoint Automatic Electric Stove by Edison Electric Co., c. 1925, white & working; a 1933 GE monitor top refrigerator, working, and a double sink w/ legs & wash-tub cover. Will sell separately. Serious inquiries call collect. (203) 523-9249.

**GE MONITOR TOP** refrigerator, energy efficient, works like a charm, electric, nice legs, new gasket, porcelain inside & out. 34 in. W X 26 in. D X 67 in. H. \$500 or reasonable offer. 19th-century hide-a-bed couch, Empire style, recently reupholstered. \$350. Hale-Spencer, RD 1, Voorheesville, NY 12186. (518) 765-3320.

**48-IN. ROUND TABLE**, solid oak, plus two 12-in. leaves. Hand-carved lion's head & paw legs. 6 carved spindle-back oak chairs. Includes 2 w/ arms. \$1,200 or best offer. (212) 636-5340.

**LANGUAGE OF THE FAN** traditional "Flirting Instructions" w/ 20 different messages conveyed by the fan. A very popular flirtation of all eras, pre-Civil War to the turn of the century. Ready to frame, 8 in. X 10 in., \$2 + LSASE. Complete catalog & seasonal mailings, \$2. Amazon Drygoods, Dept. OC, 2218 E. 11th St., Davenport, IA 52803.

**ANTIQUÉ STORE COUNTER**, pine, massive construction w/ glass panels in front & heavy scrollwork. 13 ft. 9 in. L X 30 in. D X 36 in. H. \$500. Bob Allison, 103 N. Main St., Mt. Airy, MD 21771. (301) 831-7162.

**4-FT CLAWFOOT BATHTUB** needs refinishing. We paid \$250 — will take best offer. (312) 642-5004 after 6 PM, Chicago.

**1847 OAK FARM BARN** and siding. Over 4,000 board ft., includes hand-hewn joists & pegs, never painted. \$2,000. Dawson. (312) 837-3800.

**PEN & INK RENDERINGS** of your home. Black & white originals also suitable for Christmas cards & stationery. Unique gift ideas. Approx. size, 11 in. X 14 starts at \$175. Jean Willems, 731 Josephine Cir., Green Bay, WI 54301. (414) 468-7228.

**CLEAR YELLOW PINE PANELLING**, new, 1 X 6 in. Center & edge bead, 176 board ft. \$350. Old 51 in. double basin porcelain/iron kitchen sink w/ legs. \$75. Pair 1870s walnut exterior doors, arched top, good condition, approx. 57 in. W X 116 in. H. \$1,000. Brooklyn, NY. (718) 638-8939.

**BATHROOM SINK**, old fluted pedestal base, oval basin, large. We paid \$225, will take best offer. Rochester, NY. (716) 352-0837.

**SASH WEIGHTS**, large quantity, several sizes. Also, 12 in. W slate strips that were used as baseboards. Habitat for Humanity, PO Box 1310, NY, NY 10009. (212) 242-0900.

**OAK WAINSCOTTING**, Victorian, w/ single bead. 2½ in. & 3 in. widths X ½ in. thick. Lengths up to 14 ft. Have total of 1,600 sq. ft. on hand. Varnished. Will cut to specifications & ship. Price negotiable, sample available. (315) 858-0315.

## INNS & HISTORIC HOUSES

**TANGLEWOOD B & B** located in Historic Mariposa, part of CA's Mother Lode, just 45 min. from Yosemite & Bass Lake. Sleep in lovely Victorian BR & sitting room setting. Enjoy panoramic view from open deck. Full breakfast. \$35 double occupancy. Tanglewood, 3165 Wess Rd., Mariposa, CA 95338. (209) 742-7851.



**HOUSE OF 7 GABLES**, 1886 Victorian B & B on Monterey Peninsula. Near beaches, Cannery Row, Big Sur, etc. Private bath, continental breakfast. 555 Ocean View Blvd., Pacific Grove, CA 93950. (408) 372-4341.

**LAMBSGATE B & B** — Restored 1816 farmhouse on 7 acres near Staunton, VA in historic Shenandoah Valley. View of mountains, pleasant guest rooms, southern breakfast served in DR or verandah. Write for brochure. Rt. 1, Box 63, Swoope, VA 24479. (703) 885-8798.

**WARM COUNTRY WELCOME** awaits you at a rural Indiana farmstead. Situated on quiet backroad in heart of IN farmlands. B & B, 1860 restored farmhouse & quaint cottage. Near Indianapolis, I-70, antique shops, The Apple Day Inn, open all year. (317) 785-2550.

**OAKWOOD INN** — Completely restored 1871 Victorian house. Landmark site listed in Nat'l Register. Gourmet breakfast included in room rate. Open year round & located in Victorian Historic District. Oakwood Inn, 411 N. Bloodworth St., Raleigh, NC 27604. (919) 832-9712.

**SPRING HOUSE B & B** in Muddy Creek Forks, PA, pop. 17. Authentic 18th-century environment features quilts, featherbeds, antiques, candlelight. Full breakfast is cooked on kitchen woodstove. Rural tranquility, near wineries, Lancaster, York, Baltimore. (717) 927-6906.

## WANTED

**VICTORIAN GILT PIER MIRROR** w/ or w/out marble console. Must be appropriate for 1863 formal parlor w/ high ceilings. Tom Weikle, 39 Princeton St., East Boston, MA 02128. (617) 567-1334; 321-1500.

**GAS HEATER/BURNER**, free-standing, Victorian style, to sit in fireplace; ornamental brasswork desired. R.A.M., PO Box 972, Marietta, OH 45750.

**IRON FENCING** for second storey porch area of 1880 Victorian home. Approx. 40 ft. necessary, 18 in. to 24 in. in height. All styles will be considered. Michael & Mary Powers, 917 S. Park St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001. (616) 345-9295.

**MOOSE, BISON & BUFFALO** stuffed heads. Please send photo, size, condition, & price. Thomas Thompson, 2112 No. D, White Pine Cir., W. Palm Beach, FL 33415. (305) 439-3779.

**SASH WEIGHTS** for 1887 Brownstone double-hung windows (2). Adriaan T. Halfhide, 380 Vanderbilt Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11238. (718) 857-4100.

**ADAM-STYLE CHERRY PIER MIRROR**, 9 ft. X 5 ft. All cherry or one side cherry, one side oak pocket doors to fit opening 8 ft. 1 in. X 5 ft. Set of pocket door sheaves, 7 in. X 3¼ in. X 27/32 in., & floor sheave track. Adam-style cherry mantel, 60 in. W. Roslyn Waletzky, 419 Sterling Pl., Brooklyn, NY 11238. (718) 622-3477.

**STONEWARE** — Jugs, crocks, etc., New Jersey origin. Write T.J. Seiple, PO Box 276, Florham Park, NJ 07932. (201) 539-4337, eves.

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

**THOMASVILLE, GA:** Christmas Candlelight Tour, Dec. 15, 6:30-9:30. 9 houses are featured as well as entertainment & refreshments. Tickets, \$3 adults, 12 & under free. Thomas County Historical Society, 725 N. Dawson St., Thomasville, GA 31792. (912) 226-7664.

**VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS TOUR** of Social Circle, GA, Sun., Dec. 16, 1-5 PM. 10 homes will be open within the Social Circle Nat'l Historic District. Advance tickets, \$8, day of tour, \$10. Historic Preservation Society of Social Circle, Box 832, Social Circle, GA 30279.

**SCRANTON: A VISIBLE HERITAGE**, a photographic exhibition explores the evolution of a city's architecture. Concurrent events include guest lectures, gallery talks, & architectural walking tours. Oct. 14 - Dec. 30. Everhart Museum, Nay Aug Park, Scranton, PA 18510. (717) 346-7186.

## FREE ADS FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Classified ads are FREE for current subscribers. The ads are subject to editorial selection and space availability. They are limited to one-of-a-kind opportunities and small lot sales. Standard commercial products are NOT eligible.

Free ads are limited to a maximum of 50 words. The only payment is your current OHJ mailing label to verify your subscriber status. Photos of items for sale are also printed free—space permitting. Just submit a clear black & white photograph along with your ad copy.

The deadline for ads is on the 5th, two months before the issue date. For example, ads for the December issue are due by the 5th of October.

Write: Emporium Editor, Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

## REAL ESTATE

**FINDLAY, OH** — "Gas Boom" classic built in 1887 on S. Main St. Brick 2½-storey Queen Anne, tall columns, gabled roof, capped tower. Features include 8 ornate FP, beveled and stained glass, 3 tower rooms w/ curved windows, oak staircase in reception hall. Tastefully restored & decorated. \$135,000. (419) 423-9648.

**ADAMS COUNTY, PA** — Well-preserved 80-year-old Princess Anne brick home located in quiet village. Large lot, wrap-around porch, 4 BR, shade trees, gracious living for \$67,500. Randall B. Inskip Real Estate, Inc./Better Homes and Gardens. (717) 334-7675.

**NEW YORK STATE** — 9 mi. Bennington, VT. Perfect living, working, selling space plus income from office rentals. Historic 1850s brick, old-fashioned storefront, 11-ft. ceilings. 9-room apartment, beautiful woodwork, floors, FP, porches, garden, off-street parking. Close year-round sports. \$59,900. (518) 686-4100.

**DODGEVILLE, WI** — 1900s Cornish Miner's Cottage, basically sound, good roof, painted regularly. Detached "summer kitchen" w/ pump in rear. On 80 ft. X 160 ft. corner lot in county seat, pop. 5,000. 5 rooms, bath, & utility building. \$18,900 cash. PO Box 146, Cottage Grove, WI 53527. (608) 839-4705.

**STROUDSBURG, PA** — 4 BR, impeccable 1830 farmhouse sitting stately amidst 2 ponds, stream, country gardens, barn, & approx. 85 acres. Full basement w/ wine cellar. R151. \$375,000. Ro Mendez Real Estate, 112 Park Ave., Stroudsburg, PA 18360. (717) 421-7775.

**EUTAW, AL** — Kirkwood (1860) on 8.34 acre estate w/ all city conveniences. Owners' restoration of this stately mansion won National Honor Award from the National Trust, as featured in Aug.-Sept. 1983 issue of OHJ, House Beautiful, March 1983. \$550,000. Original furnishings & artifacts available for additional consideration. Roy Swayze, Eutaw, AL 35462. (205) 372-9009.

**FINGER LAKES, NY** — 1800s brick farmhouse, 2 barns, 5 acres. 3 FP, wood stove in country kitchen. Nicely but partially remodeled; most original features intact. 12 rooms (plus 2 baths), largest room used as fine craft gallery. Near Geneva/Canandaigua/Rochester. \$87,000. P. Halpen, 4496 Old Mill Rd., Stanley, NY 14561.

**CHARLESTON, SC** — Romantic 1883 Queen Anne in historic district. First floor, now rental apt., w/ original woodwork. Upper unit has renovated gourmet kitchen, attic suite w/ skylights, Jacuzzi, suitable for separate B & B. Central gas heat & a/c. Charming landscape w/ fig tree. \$198,000. McBryan, PO Box 1124, Chas., SC 29402. (803) 723-2135.

**W. SALEM, OH** — Old dairy farm, late 1800s, Western Reserve house, 9 rooms on 100 acres, beautiful woods, stream, wildlife; 50 acres tillable. Huge original bank barn, never painted. Free gas. \$199,000. Mrs. James Pollitt. (419) 853-4625 evs.

**TULSA, OK** — For Lease: Charming private home renovated 1920s. 2+ BR bungalow in historic district. Ideal for responsible couple. Large rooms, hardwood floors, covered porches, outdoor living areas, privacy fenced. Available Dec. 1. Relocating, also need to lease home in San Francisco area. (918) 582-7408.

**GALENA, IL AREA** — Historic country home built for Gen. John Rawlins c. 1864, in scenic hills. Updated for modern living w/ barn & pond on 6 acres. Solar building on adjoining 2 acres. Purchase separately or together. Century 21 First Galena Corp., 310 S. Main, Galena, IL 61036.

**JOHNSTON, SC** — 100-year-old Victorian, 2,700 sq. ft. 4 BR, 1½ baths, formal LR & DR, country kitchen, enclosed back porch, wide center hall w/ French doors, hardwood & pine floors. Listed in National Register. Brochure, Derrick Realty, PO Box 486, Johnston, SC 29832. (803) 275-3234.

**GETTYSBURG, PA AREA** — Restorable basic homestead with ell near historic Gettysburg, PA. 4 or 5 BR, 3 porches, 1½ baths, pocket doors, hardwood floors, gingerbread interior. Suitable for B & B. \$49,600. Randall B. Inskip Real Estate/Better Homes and Gardens, Gettysburg, PA. (717) 334-7675.

**RICHMOND, IL** — 1920s Sears Catalogue home on fenced 2/3 acre. Stucco exterior, oak floors & staircase, 3 BR, original FP, energy-efficient with wooden storms for all 50 windows, full basement. 1860s house w/ utilities for studio/workshop also on property. Small town setting. \$94,000. (815) 678-4693.

**CHICAGO, IL** — Seth P. Warner House, c. 1869, 7th oldest house in Chicago. Listed in Nat'l. Reg. Tuscan Villa Italianate w/ 13 rooms, 7 BR, 5 baths, 6 marble FP, rare imported Italian walnut panelling. \$124,500. Anthony Granata. (312) 282-7880.



**MIDDLETOWN, MD** — Early 19th-century brick home on country road w/ wide center hall, 8 rooms, 5 FP, original mouldings, & handsome staircase intact. Unspoiled & waiting for serious restoration. 1 hour to Washington, D.C. \$82,500. Nancy Isaacs, 6642 Burkittsville Rd., Middletown, MD 21769. (301) 371-6036.

**N. ATTLEBORO, MA** — Large brick building in historic district. Winner of 1984 State Renovation Award. Skylights, oak woodwork, ceiling fans give beautiful atmosphere. Perfect for home & business. Bea Commeau. (617) 222-0648.

**LATROBE, PA** — 65-acre sheep farm, could be used for cattle or horses. Early 19th-century stone house w/ frame addition. Restored PA Bank Barn w/ massive hand-hewn chestnut beams, 10 minutes to commuter airport. \$190,000. (412) 423-6328; 834-7424.

**PEORIA, IL** — 1885 Nat'l., State, City historic districts. 11-room house plus 2-storey carriage barn on bluff near downtown. Brick street, sidewalks, driveway, & courtyard between buildings. Approx. 2,600 sq. ft. per building. Single family home, zoning allows multiple units. Carriage house exc. for woodworker, furniture restorer, car collector, etc. Owner transferred to TX. \$69,400, negotiable. (214) 733-1663 after 7 pm or weekends.

**GALENA, IL** — 1857 5-storey split-level rock house. 1.5 acres, outbuildings, new well, partially restored. Nat'l Register potential. 100 yds. from Big Platte River. \$31,500 Box 194A, Montfort, WI 53569. (608) 943-6879.

**CHICAGO, IL** — Kenwood-Hyde Park neighborhood near University of Chicago & the Loop. Roomy 1909, 3 BR, 2 bath cooperative apt. Fully renovated including all new systems. Immaculate, ready for decorating. For more details: L. Temple, 5429 South Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL 60615.

**WOONSOCKET, SD** — Beautiful 1½-storey house, 3 BR, walk-in closets. Bath has ceramic tile floor & walls. 1 room storage or den. Open oak staircase, windows w/ beveled glass, full-length glass entry door. 2-storey, tiled garage. \$32,500. John Brosnan, Box 516, Woonsocket, SD 57385. (605) 796-4538.

**DUTCHESS COUNTY, NY** — C. 1825 farmhouse treat on 5 acres. Private setting w/ waterfall & trout stream. Original details throughout: Eyebrow windows, stenciling, etc. 2 FP, cooking crane, plank floors. 65 mi. NYC. \$95,000. Lease/purchase \$10,000 down, \$650 mo. Contract to sale. (914) 896-8428.

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA** — 30 min. proximity, charming VA farmhouse c. 1860 w/ 20th-century additions on 5 acres. Some wide pine floors, 4 FP, flue for wood stove, generous rooms, high ceilings, several outbuildings. Front porch & kitchen in need of some restoration. \$159,500. Gabrielle Hall, Montague, Miller & Co., Realtors, Box 7666, Charlottesville, VA 22906. (804) 978-4049.

**CINCINNATI AREA** — Kentucky's Blackmore House, pristine 1828 Georgian Colonial in Nat'l Register featuring double parlors, Federal woodwork, dramatic 12-ft. windows, 7 FP, heart pine floors, 13-ft. ceilings, solid brick const. and 1 acre+ Huckleberry Finn setting on Ohio River. Zoned commercial, this 10-room residence is on valuable downtown property. Would make perfect tea room, theme restaurant, or executive home. \$175,000. Owner. (305) 561-2020.

**SALEM, OR** — Quality restoration on one of OR's oldest & best-preserved homes. 1858 Classical Revival. Largely original including floors, ceilings, windows, shutters, stairway. 4 FP, 2 parlors, basement. Application made to Nat'l Register. Beautiful isolated setting. \$145,000. Linda Purdy, 590 Wildwind Dr. SE, Salem, OR 97302. (503) 363-3621.

**GLEN RIDGE, NJ** — 1880 Victorian, 1 family, newly painted. 100 X 200 lot. 1st floor: foyer, LR, DR, parlor, powder room, country-style kitchen w/ pantry, laundry area. 2nd floor: 5 BR, 2 baths, outside porch. 3rd floor: 2 BR, rec room, 1 bath, storage. Cap insulation, new Timberline roof 1978, new gas heat 1981, 7 FP, NYC 15 miles. \$220,000. (201) 748-6444.

**COASTAL NC** — Main highway. Restored 100-year-old landmark country store/gifts & fancy foods. 2-storey frame w/ additions. 2nd floor w/ 2 BR apt. w/ private entrance. Barn/garage, 3 outbuildings, approx. 2 acres. L.M., 208 Wedgewood Arms, Greenville, NC 27834.

**CHELSEA, VT** — 19th-century farmhouse, barn, buildings on 100 scenic acres. Land, half-cleared, half-treed, slopes south. Great views, stream, fruit trees, near Green Mtns. 3BR house, 4-stall barn. 6% financing available. \$95,000. Stephen Bowen, 58 Welch Rd., Brookline, MA 02146. (617) 734-5721.

**CORNISH, NH** — Sylvanus Brandt built this 1785 center-chimney Cape for his bride. Original 3 FP, beehive oven, panelling, & wideboard floors. Newer features include roof, storms, insulation, & tasteful restoration. Located on 14 rural acres 20 miles south of Dartmouth. Agent Jill Edson. (603) 542-7766.

**WASHINGTON, NC** — Historic landmark home. Exc. condition. LR, DR, 4 BR, 3 baths, full 3rd storey attic, basement w/ workshop, large, modern kitchen, upstairs kitchenette, screened back porch & deck overlooking landscaped yard & river. Original gas lamps & brass hardware imported from England. \$180,000 Brawag Co., 210 N. Market St., Washington, NC 27889. (919) 946-7151.

**SOUTH CAROLINA** — 1919 Victorian house, 4,400 sq. ft., restored in 1979. 5 FP, central heat & air, 4 BR, 3½ baths, hardwood floors, original dentil moulding thru-out. Cedar shake exterior, storm windows, insulation, slate roof, wet bar, modern kitchen. Rental unit & cook's house in rear of property. Located in small village. \$130,000. (803) 577-6376.

**COASTAL ME** — Gracious Victorian in Millbridge. Home/business, small inn possibilities. Double parlor, formal DR, large kitchen, 4 BR/more, FP, water views, garage/loft, mudroom, cement basement, many antique features. Asking \$69,000. Ron Gallant, United Farm Realty. (207) 546-2195, 546-7264.

## RESTORATION SERVICES

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## BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

**WALKING TOURS** — Self-guided Architectural Tours of Cape May, NJ. Guidebook features 126 illustrated points of interest, street maps, and more. A must for visitors to this national landmark Victorian seaside resort. \$6.95 plus \$1 postage (NJ res. add 6% tax). Bric-a-Brac Bookworks, Box 887, Forked River, NJ 08731.

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# opinion... Remuddling of the month



**W**E OFTEN STRESS the effects of a single remuddling on an entire neighborhood. Not only are poorly rehabilitated buildings eyesores, but they can also make property values in their area drop. This month, a subscriber from Illinois tells the story.

DEAR REMUDDLING EDITOR:

PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED yet another example of what man can do to his own created beauty. What we have here is a simple yet cozy Greek Revival Vernacular house which was stripped of its beauty in two stages.

INITIALLY, the horizontal clapboard was replaced by vertical siding (only in front) and the house was "updated" with the usual aluminum windows.

THE DENOUEMENT came when the house's original character was completely ignored by placing over the porch a "mask" of vertical cedar



The remuddled Greek Revival in Rockford, Illinois.

siding, an awning roof, stock windows, outside electrical work, a new entrance, and a cement stoop to accommodate a small commercial enterprise. The original house is gagged by this new facade.

INCLUDED ARE A VARIETY of other small Greek Revival houses in the area which have so far escaped the same treatment.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Jack W. Miller, MD  
Rockford, Illinois

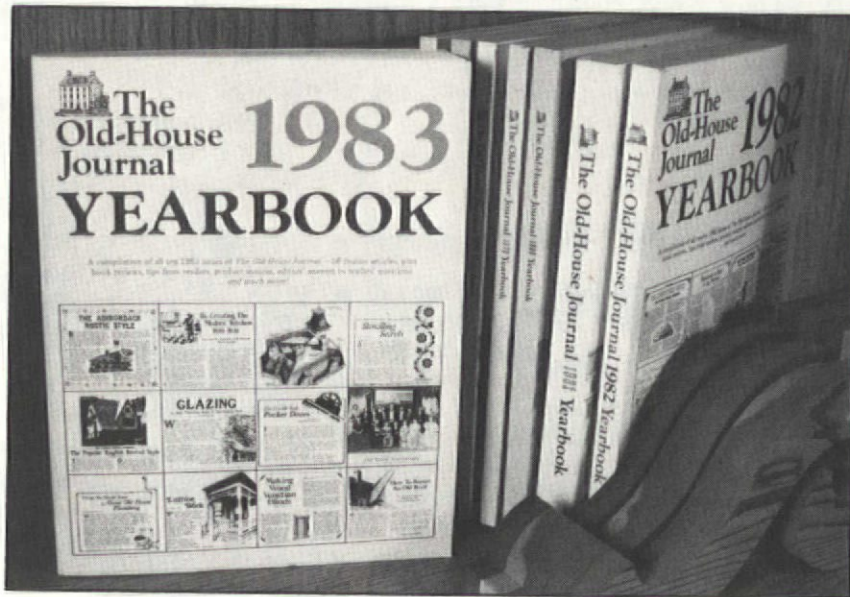


Other Greek Revival houses in the neighborhood, while not perfectly restored, have not fared so badly.



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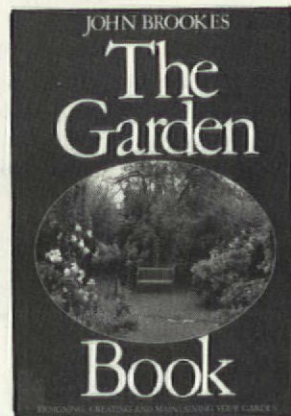
# NEW BOOKS FOR OLD-HOUSE PEOPLE

## The Garden Book *by John Brookes*

It may not be about historical gardening, but this book is such a superb piece of work that we had to bring it to your attention. It's a quality, oversized hard-cover, overflowing with gorgeous, full-color photos and drawings. But it's more than an exceptional design achievement; this book is the best, most thorough work in its field (and we've seen dozens of them). It covers the entire range of garden styles, tells you how to plan, construct, and maintain a garden, how to choose and use plants — from flowers to trees to grass to vegetables. This book is the ultimate, whether you're looking toward setting up your own garden, or want to give a breathtaking gift to someone special. 288 pages, hardbound.

Order No. 54

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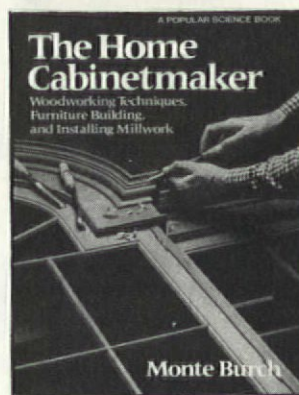


## The Home Cabinetmaker *by Monte Burch*

OHJ's Administrative Assistant Tricia Martin and her husband had to build some cabinets for their home, and they asked a carpenter friend to recommend a good book. He told them about this one, "the book to buy when you're buying only one." It starts right at the beginning, discussing wood, fasteners, glues, and clamps. Then, on to basic cabinetry techniques: joints, case construction, cabinet doors, drawers, shelves, legs & frames, veneering. Later sections cover finishes, glass & plexiglass, installing millwork, planning a workshop, selecting tools, and more. Other books may be stronger when it comes to design ideas, but none are better at teaching cabinetmaking and finish carpentry. 543 pages, hardbound.

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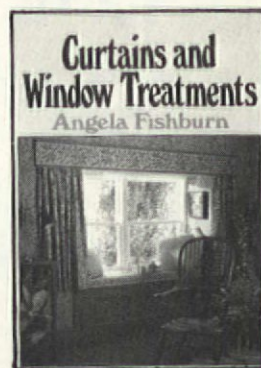


## Curtains And Window Treatments *by Angela Fishburn*

Newer houses can sport cafe curtains, neo-colonial ruffles, or Venetian blinds, but what do you do with the windows of an old house? Few people can afford — or really want — museum-quality drapery and wood valances. This excellent book covers all the practical and appropriate choices for old windows. It begins with broad categories: window styles; tracks & fittings; color, design, fabrics; tools; seams & stitches; linings. Then it examines specific types of curtains and the techniques for making them. You'll learn how to estimate & cut fabrics; make French pleats; design & construct pelmets; shape valances, swags, & tails; build roller blinds, Roman blinds, festoon blinds; and more! 120 pages, hardbound.

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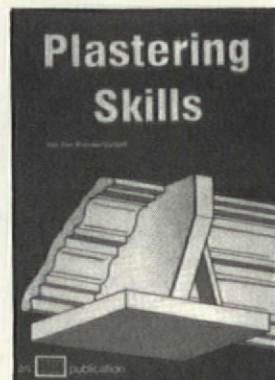


## Plastering Skill *by F. Van Den Branden & Thomas L. Hartsell*

In April of 1984 we offered a limited number of British plastering books. The demand far exceeded our supply, and we had to return over 700 checks! As we said then, the best plastering book was long out of print — until now. We went to American Technical Publishers and persuaded them to print a new edition of their outstanding book, in conjunction with The Old-House Journal. It's now available exclusively through OHJ, and it's the book you've been searching for. Designed as a textbook for vocational schools, the book will explain all the basics of plastering, and take you right up to running decorative mouldings and making special finishes. 543 pages, softbound.

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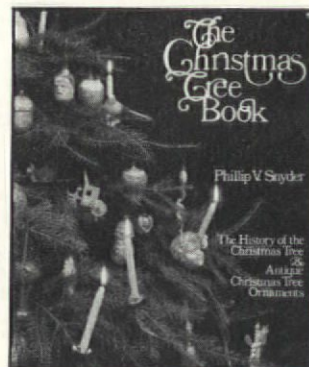


## The Christmas Tree Book by Phillip V. Snyder

Have plastic, assembly-line Santas and soulless aluminum trees been robbing you of the Christmas spirit? Well, don't despair: This book will transport you back to a time when Christmas was a true celebration of joy and love. It's an illustrated history of Christmas trees and their decorations — and what illustrations! Full-color photos and charming old engravings enliven every page. The delicacy and originality of these rare antique Christmas tree ornaments would warm the heart of the meanest Scrooge. They'll give you dozens of ideas for turning a ho-hum Christmas into an event you'll remember all year long. 176 pages, hardbound.

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## ALL-TIME FAVORITES

### *Century Of Color* by Roger Moss

This book is the most comprehensive and practical guide available to authentic, historically accurate, exterior paint colors. It features 100 color plates — from "plain" Victorian and vernacular Classic houses to showcase homes. There are also Affinity Charts, with 200 color combinations diverse enough to stimulate everyone's aesthetic taste. As a special bonus, the book comes with a large color chip card displaying the 40 colors of the Sherwin-Williams authentic paint line, Heritage Colors. 108 pages, softbound.

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### *Paint Magic* by Jocasta Innes

All the traditional decorative painting techniques are spelled out, with step-by-step instructions on how to adapt them for contemporary tastes and needs. Dragging, sponging, rag-rolling, color-washing, glazing, stenciling, stippling, japanning, gilding, graining, tortoise-shelling, spattering — if you don't know what each of these is and how to do it, here's the book for you. 120 full color photographs, plus dozens of explanatory drawings. 237 pages, hardbound.

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### *A Field Guide To American House Styles* by Virginia & Lee McAlester

This intelligent, fully researched book is much more than just a pocket manual or a coffee-table book. It comprehensively covers the regional variations of more than 300 years of American vernacular architecture: Folk, Colonial, Romantic, Victorian, Post-Victorian, and Contemporary. Over 1200 illustrations, from rare old-house photos to drawings that pinpoint details of windows, doors, cornices, and more. 526 pages, softbound.

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### *Modern Carpentry* by Willis H. Wagner

This is the best-selling carpentry textbook in the country, now in a fully revised and expanded edition. It has easy-to-understand, up-to-date information on building materials and construction methods. It tells you the WHY behind every job, clearly explaining the planning and sequencing of a job. It will enable you to handle the tasks you thought you could never attempt: framing a deck or porch, repairing or adding foundations, laying a hardwood floor, and more. 592 pages, hardbound.

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### *Building Your Own Kitchen Cabinets*

by Jere Cary a Fine Woodworking book

Prefab kitchen cabinets are often unattractive, and semi-custom cabinets can be very expensive. But you can build your own cabinets, if you're a do-it-yourselfer with basic carpentry skills — and you have this book. Straightforward instructions and over 150 illustrations cover every step of the job, from basic kitchen organization to constructing and installing the cabinets. Also included are estimating costs, buying hardware, selecting different woods, and more. 144 pages, softbound.

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### *Victorian Architecture*

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This comprehensive guide to Queen Anne, Eastlake, Gothic Revival, and Italianate houses of the 1870s and 1880s contains thousands of architectural pattern drawings: cornices, brackets, windows and window caps, bays and dormers, doors, scrolls, sawn ornaments, stairs, mantels, newels, porches, architraves, fences, ironwork. Also included are floor plans, elevations, and perspective drawings. 178 pages, softbound.

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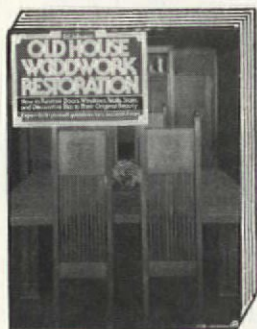
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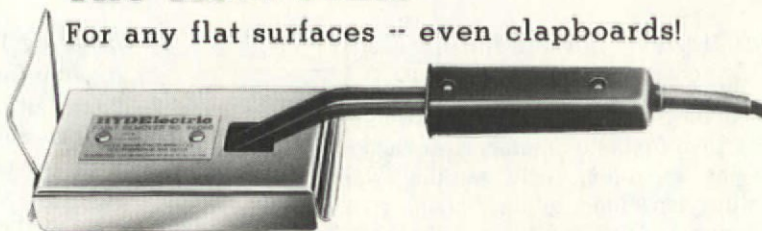
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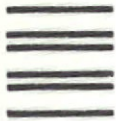
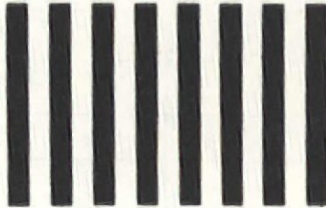
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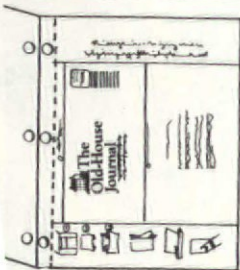
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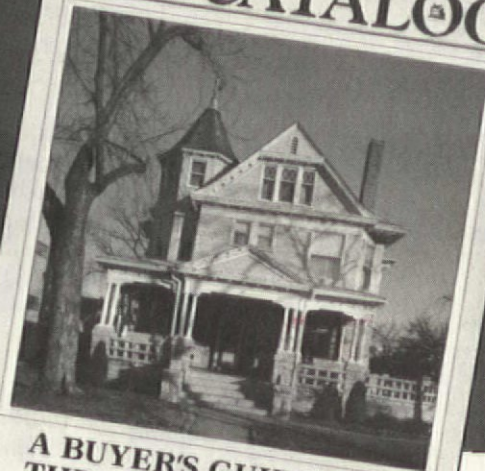
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