



The Old-House Journal

Restoration and Maintenance Techniques For The Antique House

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NEXT.....How To Restore Lampshades

Repairing A Stair At Our Old House

By Patricia Poore

Illustrations and Photographs By Jonathan Poore

EVEN WHEN A STAIRCASE is undeniably in bad shape, most of us will put off making repairs. For one thing, stairs have a mysterious hidden structure. For another, we feel sure that work will be very disruptive. This article tells how we rehabilitated a long-neglected stair right here at the OHJ offices in Brooklyn.

OUR OFFICES occupy two floors of an 1890 brownstone row-house. The two lower storeys had been converted to commercial use in a remodeling between 1900-1910. Despite major alterations, one flight of stairs remained almost intact. It was suffering, though, from all the common maladies to which old wood stairs are prone.

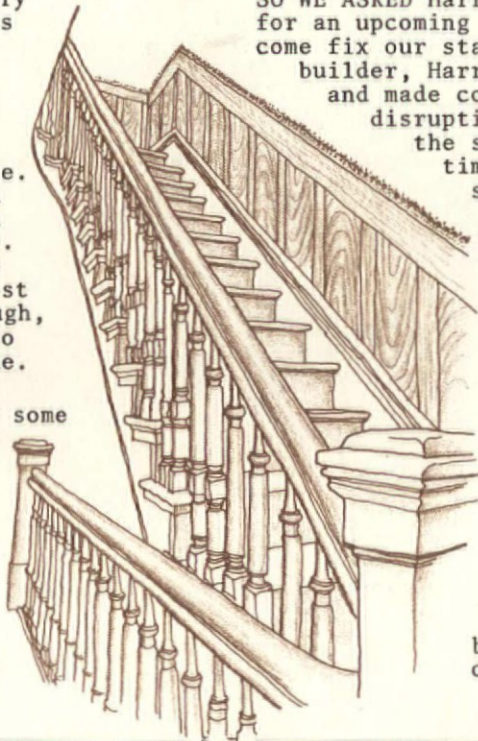
THE HANDRAIL was shaky because some balusters (spindles) were broken or missing; a poorly constructed, added-on newel at the bottom of the flight was loose. The stair was noticeably out of level...3/4 inch per foot! This remarkable sag did not inspire confidence--the stair's loud creaks and groans were downright ominous. And as might be expected

with such a tilt, the treads were pulling out of their housings on the wall string. (See photographs 1, 2, and 3 on page 44.)

SO WE ASKED Harry Waldemar, our consultant for an upcoming OHJ book on stairbuilding, to come fix our stair. A retired master stair-builder, Harry stabilized the structure and made cosmetic repairs with minimal disruption. He also explained all the steps to us, and shared some time- and money-saving hints on stair work he'd come up with during his fifty years in the trade. Even if your stair isn't just like ours, you'll find that Harry's techniques apply to almost any traditional wood stair.

WE MADE the assumption that the crazy tilt on our stair was caused by a type of differential building settlement. (The interior wood frame shrinks and "settles," while the masonry outer wall remains stable.) In our case, the wall string is attached to the masonry party wall, but the outside string rests on the sloping floor.

continued on page 44



ANNOUNCING THE 1981

OHJ GRANT WINNERS



HENRY McCARTNEY, Coordinator of the Neighborhood Conservation Program for the National Trust, was our Master of Ceremonies for the grant drawing. He picked five groups from a hat containing the names of all the preservation organizations that had participated in our revenue-sharing (group-rate subscription) program during 1981. Here are the winners:

- (1) Clinton Historical Society
Clinton, New Jersey
- (2) Preserve It Now
Fonda, New York
- (3) Historic Jasper, Inc.
Jasper, Indiana
- (4) Bedford Historical Society
Bedford, Virginia
- (5) Housing Development Authority of Orleans County
Albion, New York

THIS YEAR, 110 preservation groups participated in our revenue-sharing program by selling discounted subscriptions to their members. All of these groups made money for their preservation activities because they kept half the subscription revenue they collected.

Henry McCartney pulls the winner of a \$1000 OHJ Grant out of the hat. With him are OHJ Editors Clem Labine and Patricia Poore.

BETWEEN the revenue sharing and the five grants, the OHJ gave over \$13,000 to grass-roots preservation groups in 1981. It's our small contribution to private funding for preservation activities.

AT THE SAME TIME, OHJ gains new subscribers without dropping vast sums of money into the mail. The money ordinarily spent on direct-mail paper and postage is better given to friends whose programs spread the word about sensitive rehabilitation.

OUR REVENUE-SHARING program has been renewed for 1982. And our grant fund has doubled: We'll be giving away 10 unrestricted \$1000 grants next December! For more information on how your group can participate, call or write:

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Post-Victorian Domestic Architecture

The American Foursquare

By Renee Kahn

THE AMERICAN FOURSQUARE is probably the most common--and least understood--of all of the houses built after the turn of the century. Most architectural style books ignore it completely. The few that take note of it refer to it merely as "the box" or "the classic box." And none have chronicled the central role it played in Post-Victorian architecture. Yet this is the house--in its several variations--that is the common denominator in countless neighborhoods across the U.S.

MANY PEOPLE REFER to the American Foursquare as a "plain" house. Yet the apparent plainness belies the richness of the philosophy and history behind the style. The American Foursquare possesses the simplicity and honesty that epitomizes the turn-of-century striving for "the comfortable house." More than any other style, this house has been "home" to three generations of Americans.

THE AMERICAN FOURSQUARE appeared during the first decade of the 20th century, and its popularity lasted well into the 1920s. During this era, although the grand public architecture still paid homage to Beaux Arts classicism, the modest homes of the middle class achieved a simplicity and honesty that had not been seen for almost 100 years. Public taste was undergoing a reaction to the decorative exuberance

of the Victorian era, and was seeking a respite in humble materials and unadorned surfaces. This new-found simplicity is evident not only in the Foursquare, but also in such other house styles as the Bungalow and Prairie.

The Movement Toward Simplicity

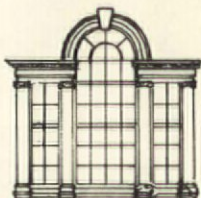
PRACTICAL as well as philosophical considerations lay behind the movement away from excessive ornament, and the Foursquare was essentially an inexpensive way to provide large amounts of comfortable living space. A 30-ft. by 36-ft. house could easily contain four bedrooms, a living room, one or two baths, and ample hallways on both floors. This is to say nothing of the spacious attic under the hipped roof, and the basement.

ALTHOUGH ITS CONTEMPORARY, the Bungalow, was chided for being "the least house for the most money," the Foursquare was quite the reverse. The square plan enabled a minimum of land, foundation, and roof to enclose a considerable amount of space. Flat unbroken walls, unadorned exteriors, turretless rooflines, and gingerbread-free porches were less expensive to build and maintain than the picturesque complexities of the Victorian era.

A Few Ornamental Details

ALTHOUGH PLAIN by comparison with its predecessors, the Foursquare was not without historic elements. Radford's "Portfolio of Plans," a popular builder's handbook published in 1909, shows a wide range of stylistic influences. Watered-down versions of Colonial Revival appears to have been the most popular, although Tudor and Craftsman styling is also quite common.

WINDOWS were one of the few building components of the Foursquare where variety was encouraged. A Palladian window could suggest Colonial restraint and elegance. Elongated, diamond-paned sashes used in combination with undivided sheets of plate glass hinted at Tudor ruggedness. Stained glass hall lights and dining room transoms were a hold-over from the medievalism of the Queen Anne period of the previous two decades.



Palladian Window

FOR WINDOW TREATMENTS, the protective shutters and heavy draperies of the Victorian era were abandoned in favor of light curtains and window shades. Awnings were a common and efficient way to screen out the summer sun. In keeping with Sullivan's dictum that "form follows function," window placement reflected the needs within the structure, rather than being purely symmetrical for symmetry's sake.



Photo: Jonathan Gardner

This American Foursquare exhibits many of the basic features: Unadorned boxlike shape, low hipped roof with dormers, porch with filled-in railing and simple Tuscan columns. The most unusual feature is that the porch wraps around two sides of the house.



THE ESSENCE OF THE AMERICAN FOURSQUARE

The basic American Foursquare has two storeys, a square boxlike shape, and a low hipped roof with broad overhanging eaves. The exterior is unadorned, relying for its impact on its shape and proportion. There is usually a porch extending the full width of the front elevation.

Most often, there is a dormer in the roof facing front; sometimes there will also be dormers on the two side planes of the roof.

Although often devoid of any "style features," sometimes a Colonial touch has been added by inserting a Palladian window in the front facade or front dormer. There might also be a neo-Classical oval cameo window next to the front door or elsewhere. Occasionally there will be a bay window or other architectural feature that breaks up the absolute flatness of the sides.

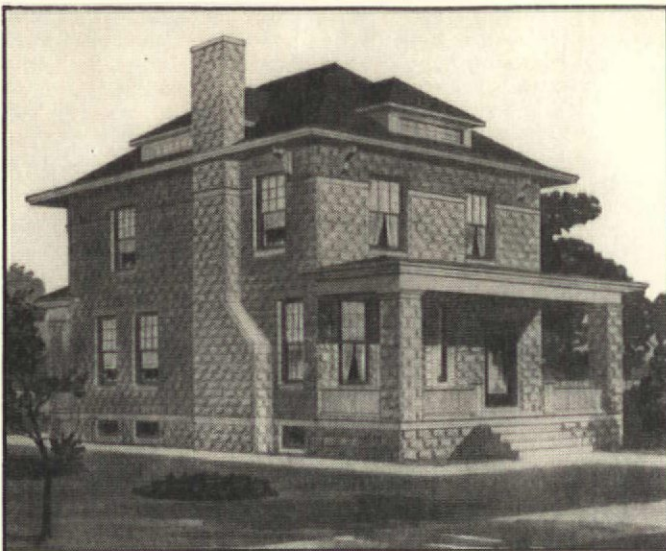
The most common siding materials are wood shingles, stucco, and clapboards. A Craftsman styling effect can be created by allowing exposed rafter ends along the eaves. An additional Craftsman touch would be a fieldstone foundation and chimney.

Exterior Materials

ON THE EXTERIOR, the Foursquare reflected the trend towards plainness and "natural" materials. The foremost spokesman for this movement was Gustav Stickley, through his magazine, "The Craftsman." Wood, the traditional American building material, remained popular, although sometimes in the form of wood shingles rather than clapboards. Stained dark, these rough-hewn shingles were meant to create a hand-crafted appearance.

CONCRETE PRODUCTS began to challenge wood as the material of choice for exteriors. As far back as 1850, Orson Squire Fowler, the developer of the octagon house, had considered concrete (or "grout," as he called it) ideal for dwellings. "Nature's building material," he called it--cheap and inexhaustible.

BY 1905, America had a well-developed technology for making concrete blocks--usually hollow for economy, insulation, and waterproofing. Although the use of concrete dated back to



Concrete became a popular building material after the turn of the century. Among the virtues cited for it were durability, fire resistance, and the fact that it was "sanitary"—resistant to rot and vermin. The concrete blocks in this 1909 Foursquare are moulded to resemble rough-cut stone.



Photo: Steven Hirschberg

Craftsman styling marks this Foursquare: Stained wood shingles on the upper storey, rough fieldstone for the chimney and walls of the lower storey. The oriel window projecting from the side is somewhat unusual, as is the asymmetrical placement of the windows.

Roman times, it was always considered an inferior material and was covered over with "finer" substances. It was logical, therefore, that when concrete blocks began to be used for houses such as the Foursquare, they would be made to look like stone. Blocks shaped like rough-cut stone became popular, as did rusticated varieties with bevelled edges.

BY 1910, however, builders began to show increased interest in stucco. Although its initial cost was slightly more than wood, it required little or no maintenance, and could be tinted delicate pastel colors when wet. Stucco was applied over a variety of surfaces, including masonry block, brick, or wood lath. At times, a lightweight metal frame, referred to as "metal lumber," was used under stucco.

STUCCO PERMITTED considerable creativity. Its surface texture could be readily varied. No two workmen applied it alike; in fact, each mason had his own "handwriting." Shapes could be pressed into it while wet, as could colored tiles or pebbles. Although many stucco-covered houses are presently painted white, a soft beige/brown appears to have originally been the most popular color.

The Porch: A Necessity

THE FRONT PORCH was considered a necessity for the American Foursquare. Most have a porch that runs the full width of the front elevation. Less often, the front porch will stop a few feet short of either side. The turned and chamfered columns of the Victorian porch were discarded in favor of paneled, boxed-in posts, or else the unfluted version of the Doric column known as Tuscan.

THE IDEAL CRAFTSMAN HOUSE

THE RULING PRINCIPLE OF THE CRAFTSMAN HOUSE IS SIMPLICITY. The central thought in all Craftsman activities is the simplification of life and a return to true democracy. Accordingly, the exterior lines of the Craftsman house are very simple and its interior divisions are few.

SIMPLICITY SPELLS ECONOMY. Elaborate ornamentation is eliminated by our method of interior treatment. Post-and-panel construction replaces useless partitions. Native woods are used liberally. The fireplace is made an ornamental feature. A Craftsman house should stand for 100 years or more without requiring repairs. In fact, for many years a Craftsman house will increase in value and beauty without impairment, and use will give to it a softness and friendliness which will constantly add to its charm.

A CRAFTSMAN HOUSE REPRESENTS NOT ONLY ECONOMY IN COST, BUT ECONOMY IN FLOOR SPACE. Not an inch of space is wasted. The general living rooms are thrown together, usually including the entrance hall and stairway, so that the whole lower floor of a Craftsman house has the effect of a great living room. Post-and-panel construction and the arrangement of pleasant nooks and corners give a sense of room division as well as a feeling of semi-privacy.

BUILT-IN FEATURES ARE OFTEN INCORPORATED TO MEET SPECIAL NEEDS. Like other structural features, built-in fittings add to the interest and beauty of rooms. They are directly related to the life of the household and make for simplicity and comfort.

—From Gustav Stickley's magazine, "The Craftsman," 1911.



Photo: Jonathan Gardner

The use of "honest natural materials"—fieldstone, stucco, and stained wood shingles—on the exterior of this Foursquare shows the impact of the Craftsman philosophy. Note the solid feeling that the large square columns on the front porch impart to the whole house.



Here is the American Foursquare in one of its most familiar variations: Shingled exterior with dormers on three sides.



Because of its small ell and the resulting complications of the roofline, this house is technically not a Foursquare. Yet you can see how the architect took the basic American Foursquare design, added Prairie-style eaves and small ells and wings, and came up with a large suburban home.

THERE WAS A PREFERENCE for slat, stick, or filled-in railings. Many of these front porches have now been enclosed and turned into extra rooms (often without adequate insulation!).

THE FRONT DOOR of the American Foursquare was in keeping with the relative plainness of the rest of the exterior. The most popular version appears to have been a bevelled panel of plate glass, with two or three horizontal wood panels underneath. Another popular door style had an elongated oval glass, bevelled and set within a delicate beaded moulding. Long rectangular panels of clear glass were also quite common.



Many Foursquares had interiors that were influenced by Craftsman styling: Extensive use of American hardwoods for panelling, simple stenciled borders, frequent use of built-in furniture, leather coverings on furniture, and the focus on the hearth as the central ornamental element.

Interiors

ALTHOUGH Colonial influences dominated most interiors, the Craftsman style also had considerable impact. Classical symmetry was abandoned in favor of a variety of floor plans, no one of which appears to have predominated.

AMERICAN FOURSQUARES had center halls, side halls or no halls. If the stairway was off to one side, a rectangular stained glass hall window lent it an air of importance. Stairway balusters were either turned in a neo-Classical manner, or were oak sticks of the Craftsman variety. Panelled wainscoting and ceilings lent an appropriately "medieval" air, as did the highly varnished oak floors.

FURNITURE, too, was simplified, omitting the lavish pattern and ornamental detail of the Victorian period. Plain brown leather replaced heavy brocade, and eclecticism was limited to "medieval" reproductions, or quasi-"Colonial" styles.

RENEE KAHN is an architectural historian and teacher, as well as being a partner in The Preservation Development Group—a Stamford, Conn., company that consults on the restoration of historic structures.



Old-House Living...

Renovating An Illinois Queen Anne

By James A. Gray, Assumption, Illinois

WHEN I BECAME PRINCIPAL of the Tower Hill, Illinois, schools in 1979, my wife Colleen and I began looking for a house to buy. Local realtors showed us houses new and old, but everything we saw was either unsatisfactory or too expensive. We decided to start looking for ourselves, and this decision led us to Assumption, the nearest town in the next county.

ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON we came upon a large Queen Anne house that had been built at the turn of the century. The first time we saw this old house we fell in love with it, even though it had been sadly neglected. There it stood, with no paint, broken windows, and a leaking roof. Inside, the house was a total wreck. Most of the damage was caused by water entering through the roof. But nature had also added insult to injury: The house had become not just a pigeon roost, but a beehive too!

CIRCUMSTANCES COMPELLED US to live in the house while we worked on it, and so once we bought the house we moved in. The downstairs rooms were in somewhat better shape than the upstairs, and we started by organizing and cleaning that storey. But as we continued to live in the house, each room soon wound up with tools and supplies piled up everywhere. It was enough to drive us nuts.

OUR REAL WORK on the house began with the roof. It was a slate roof with a built-in tin-lined gutter around the bottom. Over the years, the gutter had gotten plugged up and all

the water had collected in it until the tin was all rusted away. The tin overhang and gutter now had to be replaced. It abutted the slate, which had begun to delaminate and was the source of many leaks. Replacing all that old slate was out of the question, so we used asphalt shingles that at least were close in color to the original slate.

Up On The Roof

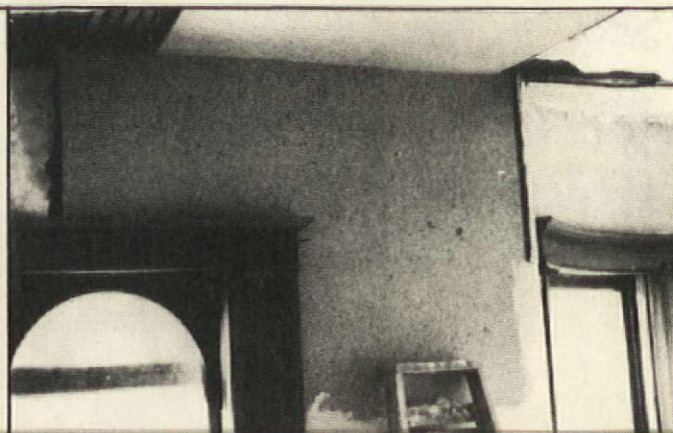
OUR WORK ON THE ROOF involved tearing off all the old slate, rebuilding the overhang so that it abutted the existing roof, re-shingling the roof, and adding new gutters. This job would have been no problem had it not been for the weather. When we were halfway through our work, it began to rain, and it kept raining on and off for the next two weeks.

TO PROTECT THE FLOORS AND CEILINGS from any further water damage, we set up at least a dozen buckets and pans to catch the water. During each rainstorm, we'd have to empty out all this water about every three hours. Getting up in the middle of the night to do this made me feel as if I were taking care of an infant. But the worst aspect of this task was the fault of the pigeons that had been roosting upstairs: The water that seeped down from the attic was ... unpleasant. Eventually, it stopped raining and we were able to finish the roof.



The Grays' living room, west view.

WITH THE ROOF at last under control, we were able to work in earnest on the downstairs rooms. We steamed off the old wallpaper from the walls and ceilings. Then we would clean out a room, replace the broken windows, and strip the floors and woodwork. (Here is a tip I learned the hard way: If you plan to strip a large area, buy a 50-gallon barrel of stripper; you'll save money.) We would then paint and wallpaper the room and move in our furniture. Most of our furniture is antique, so it looked just right in the finished rooms.



Left: Just one of the many ceiling problems. This one was in the dining room. Right: The Solar Room. Behind that particle board is a rather sizable hole.

Problems Upstairs

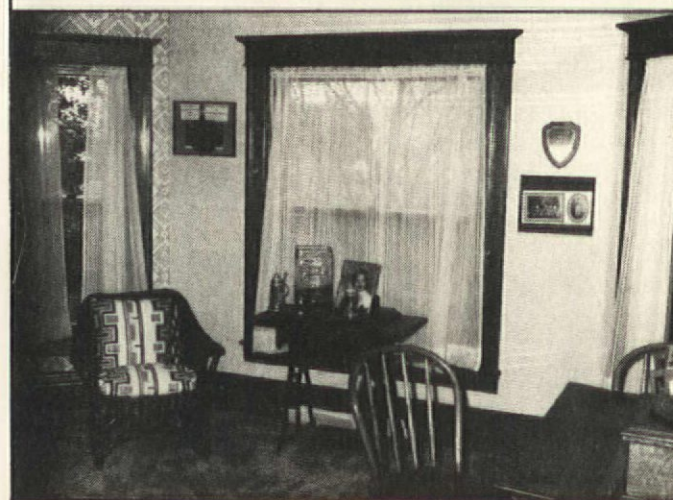
THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR WORK was the renovation of the upstairs rooms. I still hate even to think about that, so I'll start with the most pleasant memories. Before we did anything else upstairs, we stripped all the doors and woodwork. We uncovered a nice, wide yellow pine that provided a good contrast to the hardy oak downstairs. This was the best thing about working on the upstairs.

THE FIRST ROOM we worked on we called The Solar Room. It got this name because it had a section 4 ft. by 4 ft. where the wall was all but gone. You could stand in the room and look right out the wall and see the sky! So we put in new studs and then used particle board to cover this and the other holes in the wall and ceiling. (I used particle board because a person can hold and cut it without needing help.)

THE MASTER BEDROOM was in much better shape than The Solar Room. The only problem with the bedroom was that the ceiling had fallen to the floor. After putting up a new ceiling, we papered the room and moved in our furniture.

THEN WE TURNED OUR ATTENTION to The Pigeon Room. The birds had done most of their roosting here, and so the droppings on the floor had accumulated to about three inches. There was something else on the floor of this room: half the ceiling. My father-in-law gave me a number 10 corn scoop, and I just shoveled the stuff out the windows. The only health precaution I took was to limit the amount of time that I spent in the room each day. Luckily, neither my wife nor I suffered any ill effects from the droppings*. Once all that was cleared away, we fixed the ceiling and wallpapered, transforming The Pigeon Room into a study.

* For further information on the health hazards from pigeon droppings, see the following issues of OHJ: March 1981, p. 54, and June 1981, p. 137.



Two views of The Pigeon Room. Top: Prior to renovation. That stuff on the floor is the ceiling, along with a goodly amount of pigeon droppings. Bottom: After renovation. The room is now used as a study.

OUR OTHER MAJOR PEST PROBLEM was The Bee Room. From the time we began to work on the house, we had been bothered by bees. It took a professional exterminator to get rid of them. Holes had to be drilled in the floor and walls in order to spray the bees. A special poison was also placed in the holes to keep the bees from coming back. The only thing we had to do after all this was get the honey out of the house!



Top: Bees swarming at the exterior of the house. Bottom: Honey coming through the ceiling.

THE LAST ROOM that we worked on upstairs was the bathroom. It has a clawfoot tub, a wood closet with drawers at the bottom, and a rose marble basin with a foot-high marble splash-board. The only difficulty was the white woodwork, which had been painted in the old passion pink. So we stripped the woodwork and closet, redid the floor, and papered the bottom half of the walls, coating the paper with polyurethane.

THE HALLWAY ON THE SECOND FLOOR was the only area that still needed work. It's quite large, 7 ft. wide by 20 ft. long, and has a linen closet between the master bedroom and The Pigeon Room. We repaired the ceiling, papered the walls, replaced the corner mouldings, and put up an old crystal chandelier.

Adding Color

PAINTING THE EXTERIOR of the house was next on the agenda. I did all the painting myself, by hand, as well as all the preliminary scraping and priming. We decided to paint the body blue and the trim white. Painting the trim takes time, but it makes the house look so much nicer, especially if you have an older home with attractive decoration.

WE USED 30 GALLONS of blue paint, 30 gallons of white paint, and 10 gallons of grey porch-and-deck paint. I would hate to count the number of brushes or the hours it took, but the results were worth the effort. Our next-door neighbor said that he had lived next to the house for over 25 years and had never seen anyone take a paint brush to it until we arrived.



The author as painter.

THE THIRD FLOOR of the house has a finished attic and is a very unusual room. It has thirteen walls, four dormers, and four doors (three of these doors go to unfinished closet space off the main room). The top room of the tower has a small, 4-ft. entranceway. We haven't gotten to this room yet, but we plan to make it into a study and sewing room someday. You really get a thrill going to this third-floor room and looking out of the tower window--a good 30 feet above the ground--and taking in the view.

Last Thoughts

ALL OF THE WORK I'VE DESCRIBED may sound expensive, but we did most of it ourselves, and so managed to save a good deal of money. When we look at the houses we could have bought for fifty or sixty thousand dollars and compare them to what we have, we feel very fortunate. We have a double-corner lot, a house with over 3000 sq.ft. of living space, a full basement, solid oak floors and doors, fireplaces, and a large wrap-around porch. Can you imagine how expensive something like that is on today's market?

LINOLEUM

How To Repair It, Install It, & Clean It

By Leo Blackman and Deborah Dietsch

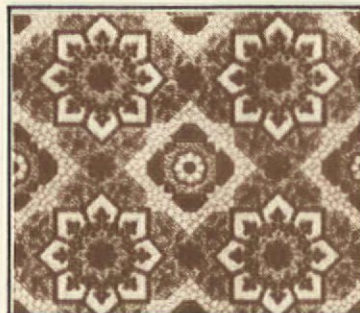
IF YOU'RE LOOKING for authentic flooring for a turn-of-the-century house, you might still find a roll of linoleum in the attic, a warehouse, or a carpet store basement. Or maybe you'll be lucky enough to come across a roll in an antique store. (I was!) Perhaps you already have an interesting linoleum pattern in place, or just discovered it under more recent flooring.

WHETHER your linoleum is newly installed, or old and in need of sprucing up, don't despair. This article will help you strip and clean linoleum, repair it or patch it, install it, and maintain it.

ALL PROCEDURES outlined in this article will work on both canvas- and asphalt-backed linoleum. Beware that all solvents suggested have a potential to damage linoleum. When applying any solvent be sure to do so selectively--you want to dissolve dirt and finish buildup, not the linoleum itself. Always follow these three rules: (1) Do a test patch in the least conspicuous corner of the floor. (2) Don't allow any solvent (even water) to remain on linoleum for an extended period of time. (3) Work on small areas at a time, rinsing and hand-drying as you go.

Repairing Linoleum

ADHESIVES, OLD WAX, varnish, shellac, and other substances which obscure the surface must be removed before repairs can be made to the linoleum. Water-soluble adhesives will soften when wet, and can then be gently scraped up from the linoleum surface. Again, keep water from standing too long on the linoleum, because the canvas backing will retain water, causing the linoleum fibers and the backing to decay. This is especially true if the resilient surface has been worn or abraded, and the jute fibers are exposed.



No. 8086

IF YOU FIND WATER won't remove the adhesive, try a stronger solvent. Be careful: While oxidized and compressed oils in the body of plain linoleum are somewhat more stable than printed patterns, both can be damaged by strong alkaline solvents. Automotive asphalt removers will dissolve asphaltic adhesives, and commercial paint strippers will soften vinyl adhesives. Also, dry ice can be used to remove foreign lumps. Wearing thick gloves, place large blocks of dry ice on the floor. After only a few minutes the adhesive, tar, or chewing gum will break off with a little pressure from a thin scraper.

(STORE DRY ICE in a non-metal container, such as a cardboard box, and be sure to ventilate it well.)

WAX IS BEST REMOVED by a commercial wax stripper. The stripper you use must not contain ammonia, which is highly destructive to the linoleum surface. "New Beginnings," manufactured by the Armstrong Co. and recommended by them for stripping wax off linoleum floors, is available at most floor covering stores. If you have a printed pattern, a coat of varnish or shellac was probably applied to seal and preserve it. (As we discussed last month, printed patterns were a surface treatment; the pattern tended to wear off under steady traffic, unlike inlaid linoleum.) Shellac can be dissolved with denatured alcohol. Some varnishes can be removed with turpentine; other varnishes will only come off with commercial paint removers. After stripping, the surface is ready to repaired.

Damaged Areas

CLEAR SHELLAC and varnish are ideal substances for repairing a torn linoleum floor. Coat the ripped edge with either one and squeeze them together. If no material has been lost, the joint should be nearly invisible.

IF A LARGE AREA of the floor has been gouged, chipped, worn through, or otherwise damaged, the restoration process is more complicated. Matching a patterned piece requires considerable skill. Also linseed oil continues to oxidize over time, causing the linoleum to become brittle as it ages; thus, prying up an old piece of flooring can be tricky. If more original material is available from matching linoleum in a hall or closet, a patch can be made. The damaged area should be cut to a regular shape, traced, and the shape cut carefully from the extra material. If extra linoleum flooring is not available, a patching compound can be used.



Polishing linoleum keeps the colors bright and makes it wear longer

YOUR FIRST IMPULSE for a linoleum patch might be to create a filler from the original ingredients--cork flour and linseed oil. Pre-polymerized linseed oil (similar to the oxidized substance), or linseed oil plus japan dryer or cobalt, can be purchased in an art supply store. However, powdered cork isn't easy to obtain. And pulverizing a scrap of old linoleum requires industrial grinding tools--certainly not a job for a Cuisinart! This home-brew has another drawback: It would not have the durability of the original, which was subjected to heat and pressure in its original manufacture.

A MORE SENSIBLE PATCH can be obtained by mixing sawdust with shellac or varnish to a dense consistency. Pigments can be added to this mixture to simulate the color of plain linoleum. This substance is troweled into the damaged areas and sanded smooth when dry. The surface can then be painted with oils or acrylics to match the adjacent pattern. Two commercially available products might be used in a similar manner. Artist's polymer gesso--a thick blend of paint and plaster--or vinyl spackling compound are both slightly resilient and can be sanded. They will provide a durable smooth-textured base which can be painted over.



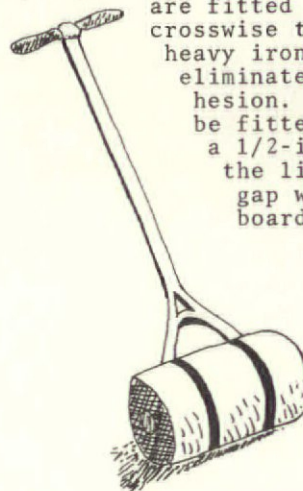
Never a complaint about linoleum that's laid like this

Installing Linoleum

NATURALLY, you won't want to put linoleum over a fine hardwood floor. In many turn-of-the-century houses, though, linoleum or carpeting was meant to be laid directly over a subfloor or an inexpensive wood floor. Let's assume you're going to install some "new" linoleum you've found. Extra care must be taken when installing old linoleum due to its tendency to grow brittle with age. Before unrolling it, make sure sure it is at room temperature or warmer to avoid cracking the surface.

LINOLEUM AND WOOD expand and contract at different rates with changes in temperature and humidity. Therefore, linoleum should not be pasted directly to a wood floor. Turn-of-the-century handbooks recommend laying linoleum in place for two weeks prior to tacking it down. This allows it to stretch, preventing any tendency to buckle or crack. The following procedure, adapted from a 1920s handbook, offers a superior method of laying linoleum.

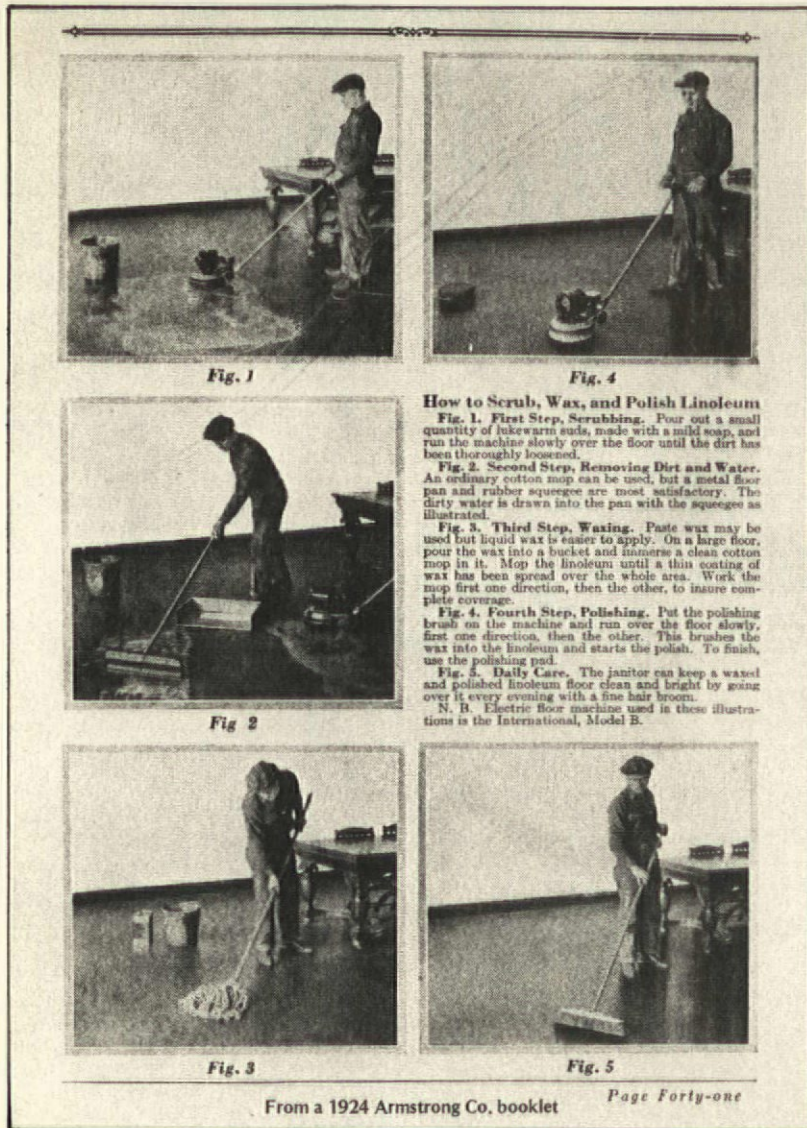
AFTER A WOOD FLOOR has been carefully leveled and the cracks filled, it should be sanded and cleaned. Strips of unsaturated deadening felt are then cut to fit the floor. A thorough coating of paste or vinyl flooring adhesive is applied to the floor with a paste spreader. As rapidly as the floor is pasted, the felt strips are fitted into position--butted crosswise to the floorboards. A heavy iron roller is then used to eliminate air pockets and aid adhesion. The linoleum should then be fitted to the floor, leaving a 1/2-inch expansion gap between the linoleum and the wall. (The gap will be hidden by the baseboard.)



Next, an area (on the felt) 4 to 6 inches wide around the baseboard and on each side of the linoleum seam should be marked using chalk. This area should be left unpasted; paste is then spread on the rest of the felt in the same manner that

it was applied to the wood floor. The linoleum strips are then fitted into place, each strip overlapping the preceding one by 1/2 to 3/4 inch. Patterns for figured linoleum should be matched and the edges butted. After being rolled to ensure adhesion between the felt and the linoleum, the overlapping edges of the linoleum are cut away with a sharp knife. These unpasted edges are lifted up, sealed with a waterproof cement, and rolled flat.

IF YOU HAVE PRINTED linoleum, you may want to give it a clear, non-yellowing protective coating instead of linseed oil. Shellac, followed by wax, is renewable but brittle. Oil varnishes may be your best bet. Some product experts suggest that exterior clear wood finishes--such as "Clear Wood Finish" (CWF) by Sherwin-Williams--can be used on linoleum without the disadvantages of linseed oil. But NO ONE recommends polyurethane varnishes because they may not bond to the linoleum, they yellow, and they are unstrippable.



How to Scrub, Wax, and Polish Linoleum

Fig. 1. First Step, Scrubbing. Pour out a small quantity of lukewarm suds, made with a mild soap, and run the machine slowly over the floor until the dirt has been thoroughly loosened.

Fig. 2. Second Step, Removing Dirt and Water. An ordinary cotton mop can be used, but a metal floor pan and rubber squeegee are most satisfactory. The dirty water is drawn into the pan with the squeegee as illustrated.

Fig. 3. Third Step, Waxing. Paste wax may be used but liquid wax is easier to apply. On a large floor, pour the wax into a bucket and immerse a clean cotton mop in it. Mop the linoleum until a thin coating of wax has been spread over the whole area. Work the mop first one direction, then the other, to insure complete coverage.

Fig. 4. Fourth Step, Polishing. Put the polishing brush on the machine and run over the floor slowly, first one direction, then the other. This brushes the wax into the linoleum and starts the polish. To finish, use the polishing pad.

Fig. 5. Daily Care. The janitor can keep a waxed and polished linoleum floor clean and bright by going over it every evening with a fine hair broom.

N. B. Electric floor machine used in these illustrations is the International, Model B.

Maintenance

NOW ALL YOU have to do is maintain your revived linoleum floor. Surface dirt on linoleum can be effectively cleaned with vacuum or mop. It should be washed using lukewarm water and a mild detergent, such as Ivory Snow, followed by a barely-damp mopping with clean water. The floor should be cleaned in small areas and dried thoroughly. Scrubbing it with harsh soaps, ammonia, or alkaline cleaning agents such as sodium bicarbonate (soda) or sodium borate (borax), should be avoided because these products oxidize the oil in the linoleum, causing it to deteriorate. Waxing and polishing a linoleum floor will not only give it a longer life, but will reduce the amount of daily cleaning necessary to maintain its glossy appearance. A non-skid paste wax is recommended; follow the label directions when applying it to the linoleum. A word of caution--the wax should be applied sparingly in a thin and even coating. Excess wax will collect dirt and darken the color of linoleum.



Cleaning Linoleum

ONCE YOU HAVE REPAIRED your old linoleum, the Armstrong Research Department suggests the following method of restoring and reviving your "historic" flooring. (Many of the following procedures can be used on "new" linoleum and any dull, dingy linoleum you already have in place.) After all surface coatings have been removed from the linoleum, coat a rag with boiled linseed oil, and apply it lightly to the floor. If the linseed oil is warmed slightly it will penetrate better and take less time to dry. The linseed oil will be sticky for quite a few hours while it dries, so the area will have to remain free of traffic during that time.

DON'T THROW IT AWAY

Although no one would have believed it ten years ago, linoleum floor covering will soon be a subject for study by decorative-arts historians. In expectation of this, we contacted Armstrong Company's Research Department, as well as several museums. But it seems no official archive is ready to commit itself to linoleum acquisition and storage.

In the meantime, the author of this and last month's articles requested that documentary samples of linoleum be sent to him. Mr. Blackman is probably more knowledgeable and enthusiastic about linoleum than any other expert, so we agreed. Readers who *do* decide to remove linoleum are asked to send a one-foot square section, and information about its age, etc., to Leo Blackman, c/o The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217. He will document and store his growing collection until a museum is ready to acquire it.

Decorative Cast Iron

Easy To Use--And Inexpensive

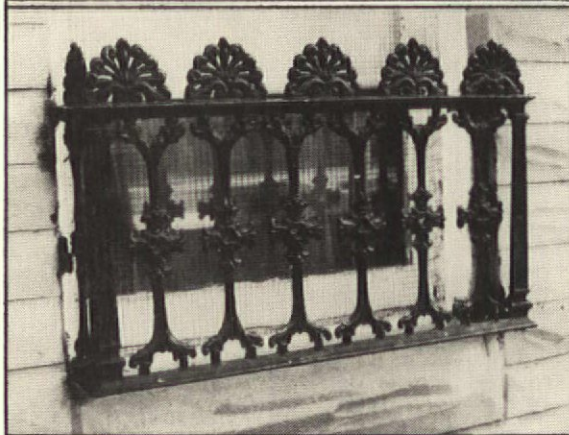
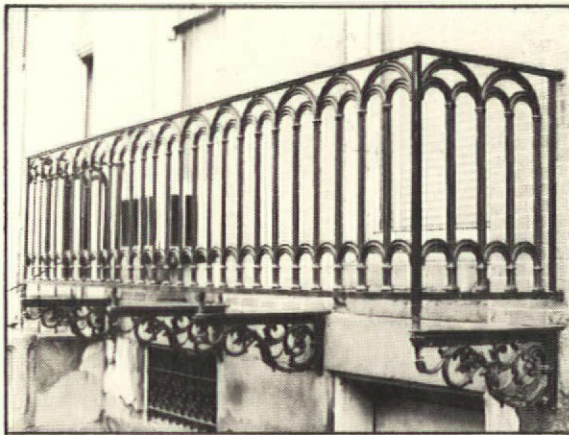
By Ron Pilling, Baltimore, Maryland

THAT "LOVELY OLD WROUGHT IRON" on homes in Savannah and New Orleans usually is not wrought iron at all. Most of those ornate railings, trellises, and balconies are cast iron--the products of a foundry, not a forge. Decorative casting reached its zenith in Victorian America and was widely used in all sorts of domestic architecture. Happily, reproducing these products today is easy. An enormous variety of castings is still available, and developments in electric arc welding technology has made cast iron assembly a simple process. Anyone with the proper tools can fabricate cast iron decorative items, and the cost is surprisingly low.

THIS ARTICLE makes certain assumptions. The first is that you've read the January and February 1981 OHJ articles on arc welding. The second is that you've learned to strike an arc and done some preliminary steel welding. Now all you need are the tools: a 220-volt electric arc welder, the proper electrodes (more on this later), at least four heavy spring clamps, four 90° steel corner braces (at least 2 inches on each side), a hacksaw with plenty of coarse blades, a hammer, and a power drill. There will also be grinding to do, and a portable polisher-grinder will make things easier. (I have found that the composition blades made for cutting metal with a circular saw work well on a portable grinder. Ask about them at a hardware store.)

BEGIN WITH a careful study of surviving cast iron architectural elements. Many cast iron products

are basically a framework of heavy steel stock, filled with castings as decoration. Look closely to determine which parts make up the basic frame and where the castings are incorporated. The frame is generally of square stock, $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. square and heavier. Some fancier pieces use ornate cast corner posts as part of the frame.

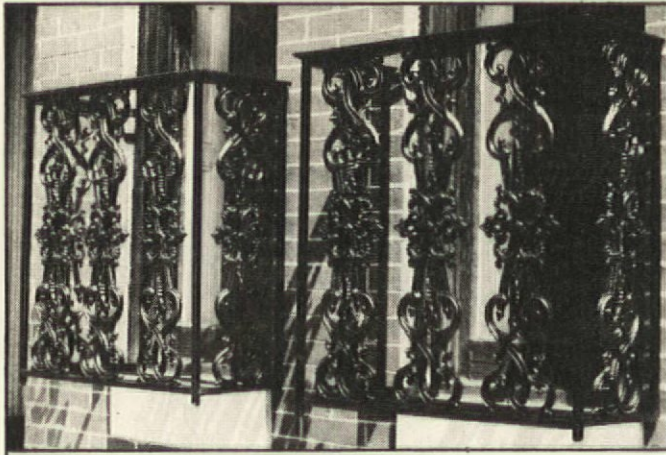


Top: This 12-ft. balcony uses 1-in. square stock for the frame's bottom and vertical pieces. The top frame piece is 1 in. x 5/8 in. Close reproductions of both the corner braces and the castings are available. Bottom: This small window balcony uses a decorative crest across the top instead of a top rail. Its corner posts are cast instead of the more common square steel. Similar castings are still available.

MEASURE THE SIZE of the frame stock, and check to see how the top of the item is finished off. Some have cresting and some have rail covers across the top. Look at the little details, like bevelled edges, that make the difference between a careful assembly and a sloppy one.

YOU SHOULD ALSO send away for the catalogs of casting houses, such as those listed at the end of this article. When they arrive in the mail, you can put your project on paper. The size of available cast elements will place constraints on your plans, so you can't proceed with your work until you know which elements you'll be using. Once you've selected the elements, you can prepare a detailed drawing of the project, with lists of each length of steel that must be cut. Starting out with such a drawing will save time and help you avoid mistakes in the shop.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED in the way of cast iron is available through the mail, and at prices so low that you won't believe it. For the window balconies used as fabricating examples in this article, the major castings cost \$9.25 each. Small finials sell for as little as 40¢ each.



Here's what the window balconies will look like when they're completed. Note how the front vertical pieces extend an inch past the bottom and are bevelled on the ends. This detail is typical of old balconies.

THE STEEL FOR THE FRAMEWORK can be purchased from any local fabricating shop or direct from a steel distributor. (Many distributors have minimum purchase amounts.) Also, most steel comes in 20-ft. lengths. It can be cut at the distributor to make it easier to transport, but if you can begin with 20-ft. pieces, there will be less waste. The total cost for the pair of window balconies shown in this article (including paint and mounting hardware) was \$158. Even if you have to buy the whole welding outfit, it will be cheaper than paying a fabricating shop to do the job.

Making The Balconies

FOR A STEP-BY-STEP EXAMPLE, let's turn to the small window boxes, or balconies, seen on this page. Each of these boxes, designed to hold plants at a window, is a frame with a front having inside dimensions of 28 in. x 28½ in. tall, and sides that are 10 in. deep. A single decorative cast panel, 7 in. x 28 in., fills each side opening; three likewise fill the front. A total of ten castings, therefore, is required. Two round rods, ½ in. in diameter, run from side to side across the bottom to support the plants. The top is finished with a cover rail, mitred at the corners. The finished boxes are held to the window frames by mounting brackets made of 1-in. wide flat steel.

THE FIRST STEP is to cut each of the pieces of square stock necessary for the frame. Be prepared to go through a lot of hacksaw blades, and don't hesitate to throw away a blade as soon as it starts to dull. Clamp the steel in a bench vise for sawing. You will soon learn that you can cut about two-thirds of the way through, and then bend the bar until the rest snaps. This proce-

sure cuts sawing time but leaves ragged ends that must be ground flat. Still, I find it is easier than sawing all the way through.

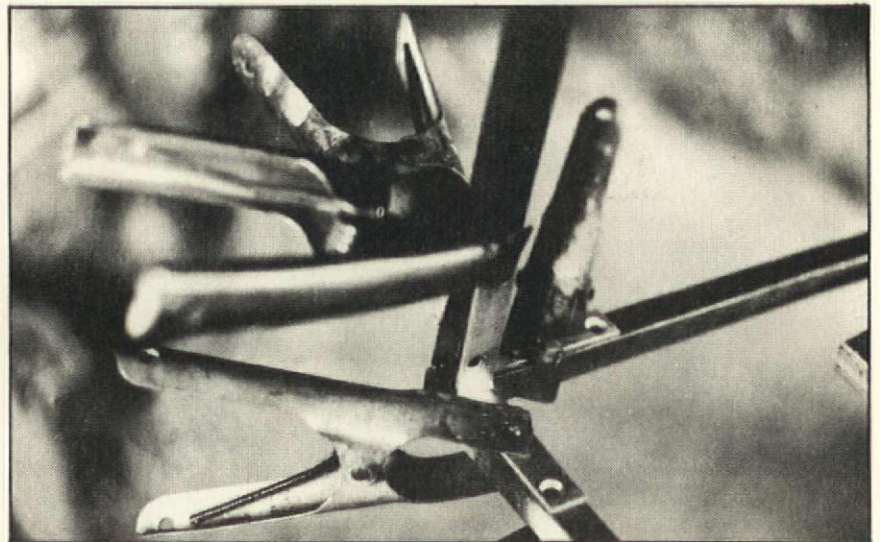
WHEN ALL THE PIECES are cut and squared, assembly can begin. You must work on a large, flat surface, or else the finished frame will never be true. (A flush door on a pair of sawhorses is a fine surface.) For the 5/8-in. stock used here, an AC setting of about 120 amps was used with general purpose electrodes, 1/8 in. in diameter. Ten of these electrodes were consumed on each balcony.

CLAMP THE BARS TOGETHER at the corners securely, using the corner braces to hold the assembly square. (See photograph below.) Attach the welder's ground clamp to the end of one of the bars. Spot welds will hold the corners together long enough to remove the braces and clamps. Be careful not to weld the corner braces to the balcony frames with these first tiny spot welds. After removing the clamps, run short welding beads at every joint of steel to steel to complete the corner.

Correcting Warps

IN ASSEMBLING THE BALCONIES, the frame fronts were put together first. Then the 10-in. deep sides were attached, followed by the two vertical back pieces. The two round bars then went across the bottom. (Round bars were preferred by Victorian ironworkers.) When the welding was finished and the corners had cooled, the frame was turned up on a flat surface and checked for flush assembly.

FOR ALL OUR CAREFUL CLAMPING, the first balcony proved to be warped. When laid face up, two opposite corners on the back were high, and the frames rocked on these corners. Installing these in a plumb window frame would have been impossible; but the problem was easily rectified.

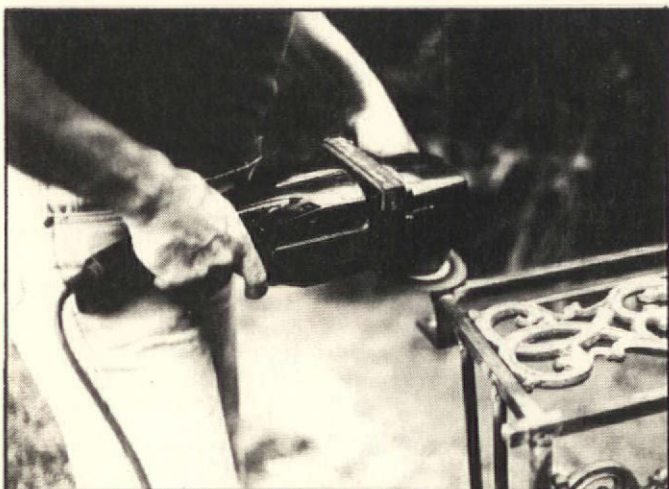


Hardware store corner braces are used to hold the balcony frame pieces squarely together for welding. The spring clamps must be strong. Here, three pieces are clamped for simultaneous welding.

TO CORRECT A WARP LIKE THIS, I always resort to cold setting. Place two bricks on a solid floor so that you can put the high corners on these bricks, off the floor. Then press down firmly and evenly on the other corners, forcing them to bend slightly. Check the adjustment by returning the frame to the flat surface, and keep pushing until the whole thing is flat. You can easily take out up to an inch of warp in this fashion.

COLD SETTING can weaken the joints, especially if the warpage is severe. But these balconies are non-structural, and I've never felt there was a problem with this procedure. If you intend to mass produce these balconies, you should clamp the sections to a jig--a rigid wooden or metal framework--and then weld them together. This method would prevent any possible warping as the metal cooled.

YOU SHOULD NOW grind the welds smooth; after the castings are in place, many of the first welds will be inaccessible. Safety glasses are a must, especially when using a portable grinder. If a joint separates during grinding, then the penetration of the weld was inadequate. Raise the amperage by about ten and do the weld over again.



Electric arc welding leaves deposits of slag and melted electrode. Here, a portable grinder/polisher with a composition metal-cutting blade is used to grind the welds smooth.

The Castings

TIME FOR THE CASTINGS that decorate the balconies. When welding cast iron, the extreme heat of the arc can cause the iron to become brittle and break. The chance of this happening has been greatly reduced, however, by the development of electrodes that are specially designed for welding cast to cast or cast to steel.

THESE ELECTRODES OPERATE at 10% less power, thereby reducing the heat produced. So set your amperage back by about a tenth. The coating on the electrodes allows them to be used on old and rusty cast iron too, with good holding power and a minimum of slag build-up. They

also spatter less than standard electrodes, making clean-up easier.

NEVERTHELESS, CARE MUST BE TAKEN when welding with cast iron. The arc must be as short as possible. In fact, it is impossible to hold a long arc with cast-type electrodes, so you may have some difficulty striking an arc at first. Do not weld continuously, and avoid beads that are longer than an inch. Let the finished weld cool slowly, and do not peen or grind it until it has fully cooled.

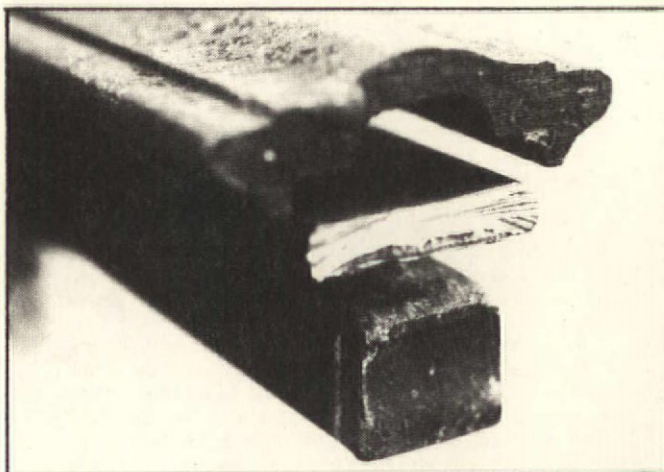
The Rail

EIGHT CAST IRON ELECTRODES were required to complete both window balconies. They are available through the foundry catalogs, but usually in large minimum quantities. Check local welding supply houses. Some have retail racks with electrodes for special jobs packaged six to a pack.

USING THE SPRING CLAMPS, hold each casting in place and spot weld it at the top and bottom where it touches the steel frame. A series of spot welds at the rear where they can't be seen by passersby will do the trick. Remember, the castings do nothing to strengthen the frame, so all the welds must do is hold them in place.

MANY OLD WINDOW BALCONIES have a rail set across the top similar to that on a fence or gate. A readily-available steel rail top was chosen for this pair. You'll find it in the castings catalogs, sold in 20-ft. lengths for about \$1.25 per foot. We needed only ten feet, and by checking local metal shops we found the right lengths among their scraps.

THE UNDERSIDE OF THE RAIL is designed to sit atop a standard 1 in. x 1 in. tube. We assembled the frames of 5/8-in. stock, so to compensate we welded a 1-in. flat bar under the rail first. We then cut the mitred corners on the rail and the flat bar before we welded them together.



The top rail is made of two pieces: 1) the decorative rail, and 2) a piece of 1-in. flat steel under it. The square rod shown would be the top of the balcony frame.



The finished balconies, complete with geraniums!

THE TOP IS STEEL, not cast iron, so we returned to the all-purpose electrode. After we ground the welds smooth, the rails were clamped atop the balconies and welded on. (You may find it helpful to use screw clamps to pull the rail against the frame top all around.)

SEVERAL COATS OF A GOOD rust-inhibitive paint will help the steel hold up to the weather. Our balconies were slightly wider than the windows, a constraint placed upon us by the

size of the chosen castings. We wanted to avoid mounting them directly to the brick because we didn't want to have to chip the edges of the brick around the window. So it was necessary to weld simple brackets of angle irons to our balconies. Screws were then passed through these brackets and into the wooden window frame. Your installation will probably have special requirements too, and may need specially-designed brackets. None of these possibilities should prove to be a problem if you use the welder and a little ingenuity. 🏠

Casting Houses

The catalogs from these casting houses will fill your head with ideas. There are flat panels of morning glory vines, oak leaves and acorns, and climbing iron roses. You'll find round iron medallions and fancy shelf brackets (like the ones used to support marble sink tops). Castings reminiscent of Gothic cathedrals, individual rails and balustrades, tiny cast finials, and cast parts for lawn furniture complete the pages. You'll recognize many as identical to old examples you've admired.

From the following list of foundries, Lawler, Fairmont, and Tennessee Fabricating have the widest selection of authentic castings. There is a great deal of duplication among their catalogs. Lawler's is the most sumptuous, but they have a \$250 minimum order. Remember that in addition to the cost per casting, you also have to pay the freight, so a source closer to home may be a savings even if their catalog prices are slightly higher. The catalogs also include lots of mounting brackets for rails and posts in all sorts of situations, and probably have ideas for a tricky mounting.

J.G. Braun Company
7540 McCormick Boulevard
Skokie, IL 60076
(312) 674-2345
Catalog: free

Fairmont Foundry Company, Inc.
3125 35th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35207
(205) 841-6472
Catalog: free

Lawler Machine and Foundry
Box 2977
Birmingham, AL 35212
(205) 595-0596
Catalog: \$5

Tennessee Fabricating Company
2366 Prospect Street
Memphis, TN 38106
(901) 948-3354
Catalog: \$2.50

Helpful Publications

Art Nouveau Architecture

Edited by Frank Russell

1980 (322 pp., profusely illustrated) Cloth.

MAGNIFICENT PHOTOGRAPHS highlight this international survey of Art Nouveau architecture embracing the period from the late 19th to the early 20th centuries. The works of many celebrated architects (Mackintosh, Gaudi, Guimard, Jeanneret, Kotera, Olbrich, Wagner, Sullivan, and Wright) in eleven principal western countries are discussed in detail. Institutional, commercial, and residential architectural exteriors and interiors are treated. This oversize book is lavishly illustrated with color and black and white photographs in addition to plans and line drawings.

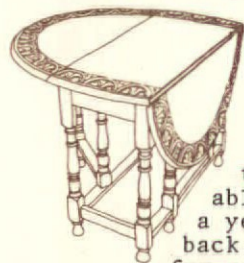
To order, send \$75.00 plus \$3.00 postage to:
Rizzoli International Publications
715 Fifth Avenue--Dept. OHJ
New York, New York 10019
(212) 397-3740

The Antique Furniture Newsletter

Clinton Howell et al.

Bimonthly newsletter (16 pp., illustrated)

ANTIQUE FURNITURE collectors, restorers, and dealers will all benefit from this invaluable reference source. Veterans and newcomers will increase their "AIQ" (Antique Information Quotient) with every issue, while learning to distinguish well-designed, quality-made furniture from inferior examples. Historical information on styles, maintenance of antique furniture, and restoration techniques are lucidly explained and illustrated with detailed line drawings. A one-year subscription is \$18 (6 issues); two-year is \$30. Also available is the "Collector's Packet," a year's subscription plus 10 back issues for \$34. Send \$2.00 for a sample copy.



Send requests to:

The Antique Furniture Newsletter
Box 524, 59 Adams Street--Dept. OHJ
Bedford Hills, New York 10507
(914) 232-8687

Furniture of the American Arts and Crafts Movement

David M. Cathers

1981 (275 pp., generously illustrated) Cloth.

STICKLEY AND ROYCROFT mission oak furniture are represented in this photographic documentation of Arts and Crafts period furniture. Aimed at the collector, this book discusses the philosophic and stylistic influences

of Gustav Stickley's furniture as well as the identifying characteristics and markings. The furniture of Leopold & J. George Stickley and Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft shops are treated to a lesser degree. Many different furniture types are pictured, more or less chronologically, to show the development of the Arts and Crafts movement. They include servers and china closets, sideboards and tables, bookcases and desks, chairs and other individual pieces. The text is illustrated with catalog reprints, magazine advertisements, line drawings, and plenty of black and white photographs.

To order, send \$19.95 plus \$1.86 postage to:
The New American Library
1633 Broadway--Dept. OHJ
New York, New York 10019
(212) 397-8000

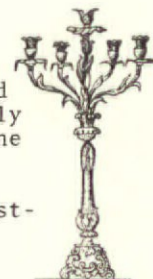
A Documentary History of American Interiors From the Colonial Era to 1915

Edgar Mayhew & Minor Myers

1980 (399 pp., profusely illustrated) Cloth.

THIS AMBITIOUS VOLUME surveys the styles of the American interior from the 16th through 20th centuries. Old-house owners, preservationists, and antiquarians will find the capsule histories of each interior style quite useful. Clear chapter headings and subtitles provide instant historical information on furnishings, lighting, textiles, wall decorations, and color schemes of elaborate as well as humble interiors. A chapter is also devoted to American kitchens, bathrooms, and heating systems. The text is heavily illustrated with photographs and line drawings.

To order, send \$45.00 plus \$2.00 postage to:
The Old-House Bookshop
69A Seventh Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11217



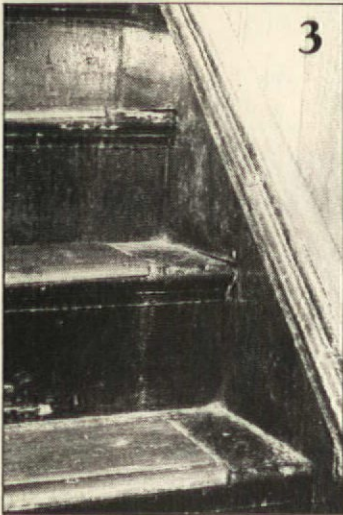
Neighborhood Organizing Kit

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1981 (50 pp., illustrated) Pamphlets.

THIS IS A SPECIAL compilation of reprints from "Conserve Neighborhoods," a National Trust bimonthly newsletter. These materials guide you through your first organizing meeting, help you recruit members, raise money, and plan community events, and even explain such fine points as working effectively with City Hall. The packet contains an organizing guide, a bibliography of useful publications, a directory of neighborhood resource groups, and a guide to organizing community events. The Neighborhood Organizing Kit is free.

Send requests to:
Conserve Neighborhoods
National Trust--Dept. OHJ
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 673-4055

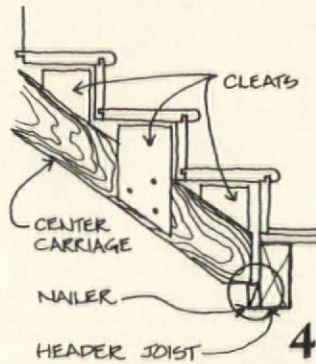




One of two things can happen. Either the wall string is pulled away from the wall, or the stair gets pulled apart, with steps coming out of the wall-string housing. The result in either case is an out-of-level stair which is awkward to use. (3)

IN GENERAL, stair problems (as separate from handrail problems) stem from three sources: differential building settlement, wood shrinkage, and occasionally poor detailing and workmanship.

As it turned out, we had all three. Settlement had caused the slope; wood shrinkage had loosened joints and wedges in the sub-structure, causing increased deflection and creaking when anyone used the stairs. After we gained access to the underside, we found that a poor structural detail was contributing to the pronounced sag, and creating a potentially hazardous condition. (4)

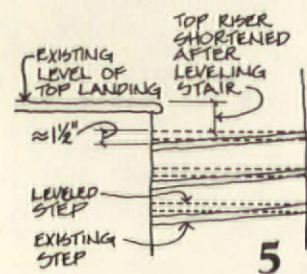


Above, retired master stairbuilder Harry Waldemar checks the level of the stair at the Old-House Journal offices. It had dropped 1-1/2 inches over a two-foot run, due partly to interior building settlement. Below, note treads pulling out of their housings in the wall string. "Wainscot" is just grained plaster.

NO REALLY satisfactory answer can be found for settlement problems. The dilemma? We wanted to level a stair in an out-of-level building. We did know the building was structurally sound. (Some fairly serious damage occurred in the remodeling 75 years ago, but stabilization work had been done when we moved in.) It had already been decided that it was impractical, if not impossible, to level the floors in the building. The question became, "To what extent should the stair be jacked up?" We couldn't have a perfect solution, so we looked for an optimum solution.

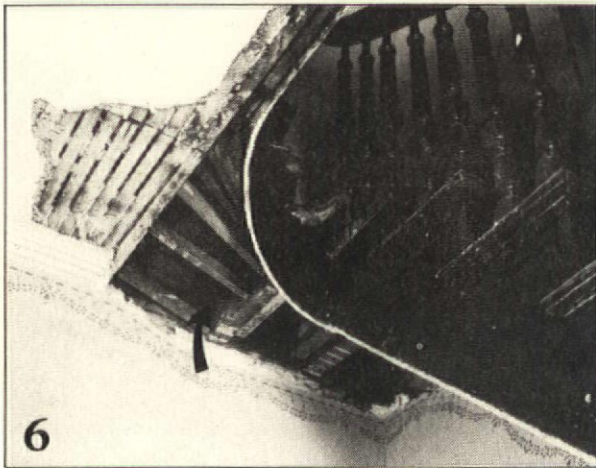


THE MOST IMPORTANT thing with stairs is that they maintain a consistent rise (height) for each step. Otherwise, walking rhythm is broken and people trip.



If our stair was leveled up completely, the height of the riser at the top step would be reduced by over 1-1/2 inches; a level stair meeting an out-of-level landing would present more of a hazard than a somewhat out-of-level stair. So we agreed with Harry's compromise:

The stair would be jacked up only until it was comfortable to walk on, yet maintained a relatively consistent rise. Then it would be made secure. (5)



6
Plaster and wood lath were removed along the entire soffit under the stair. In the photo above, the cylinder braces are revealed. Ours is a typical row-house cylinder stair, or well stair. Below, the stair is braced against the partition wall opposite it. This operation pushes the steps back into their housings.



Demolition

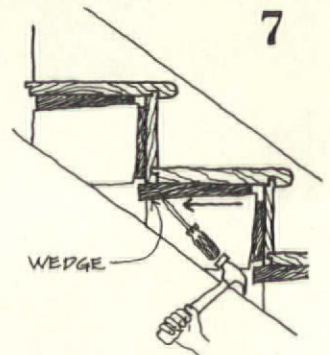
DEMOLITION WAS MESSY but simple--we removed the plaster soffit under the stair to gain full access to the entire sub-structure. The decorative plaster mouldings were first measured and recorded so they can be duplicated. A sample of each moulding profile was saved. The plaster cornice at the inside of the soffit could not practically be saved. Even if a neat cut could be made through the plaster and lath, it would leave a four-inch "floating" edge of lath and plaster that would be difficult to re-join to new plaster or Sheetrock. Instead, a

new cornice moulding will be run in place; or the moulding could be duplicated with stock wood mouldings.

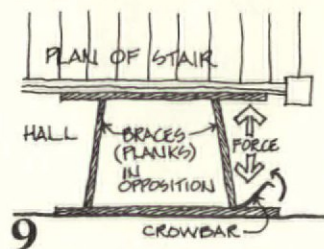
REMOVING THE PLASTER and lath underneath revealed that structural problem caused by poor original detailing. We'd seen it before in New York City: The carriages had merely been toenailed to a little nailing strip attached to the header joist at the bottom of the flight. (4) Now, the center and outer carriages were perched on the very edge of the nailing strip.

Bracing

BEFORE THE STAIRCASE could be lifted and pushed back into place, all potential obstructions to the movement of the stair as a single unit had to be removed. Out came all wedges and misguided repairs from the past. (7) Misaligned treads were repositioned. Had any treads been badly warped, they would've been removed.

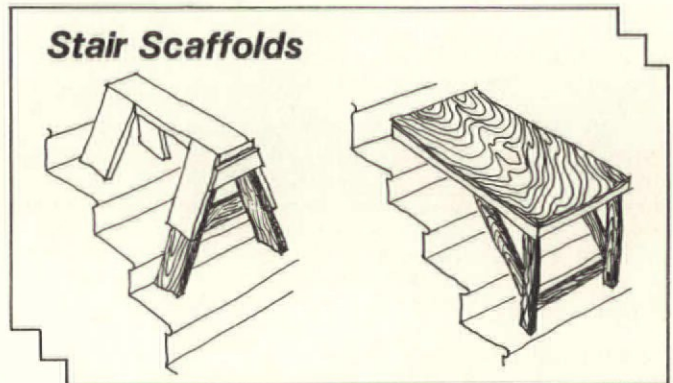


THE BRACING operation was simple and logical. Harry and his carpenter helper, Derek Tacon, had to push the stair back toward the wall, jack it up some, and then refasten the carriages to the header joist. (11) They placed a plank against the

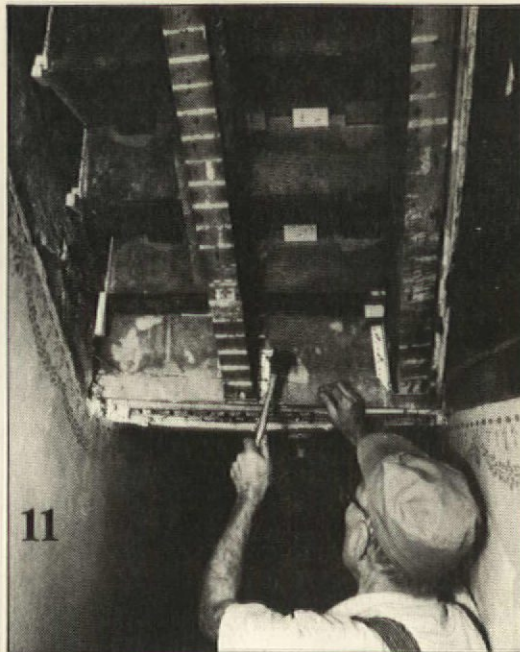


partition wall opposite the stair to distribute the load, protecting the plaster. Another plank was placed against the stairs. (8) Two more planks, cut slightly longer than the space between the stair and the wall, were placed in opposition. By wedging the planks in tighter and tighter with a crowbar, Harry forced the stair back into its housing against the masonry wall. (9)

Stair Scaffolds

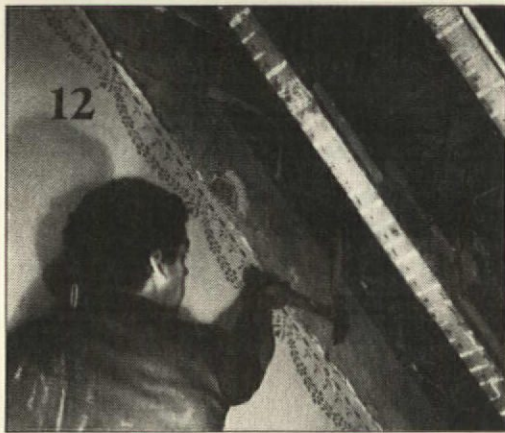


Harry uses a scaffolding set-up like the one on the left. He built an A-frame leg extension which stacks under a sawhorse. The more common stair scaffold, right, uses 3/4-inch plywood for the platform, and 2x3 or 2x4 lumber for the legs. Its height is determined by the headroom under your stair.

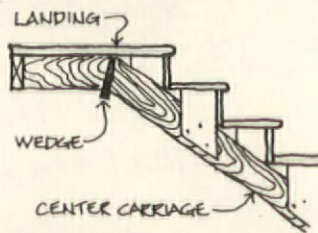


In the two photos at left, Harry solves the problem of the slipped carriages. First, the stair is jacked up a bit. A piece of lumber (we used left-over scaffolding planks) is wedged between the carriages and another plank laid on the steps below. After he drives in wedges to hold the carriages in place, he installs a metal joist hanger on each of the outside carriages. They make the carriages secure to the header joist.

Below left, Derek drives new wedges in the wall string housings.



AT THE SAME TIME, braces were placed under the carriages at the top and bottom of the flight, to push the stair back up to a more level position. (10) To hold the stair in this braced-up position, Harry drove a wedge in between the upper end of each carriage and the joists under the landing.

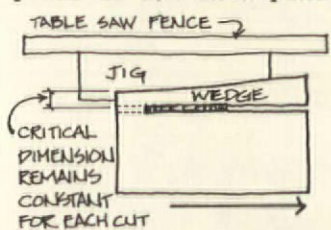


JOIST HANGERS ("Teco clamps") were used to secure the carriages to the header joist. (11) Once the carriages were secure, Harry and Derek removed the braces under the stairs. But the wall-to-stair brace had to remain until all of the sub-structure repairs were completed, including rewedging the treads and risers.

(A NOTE OF CAUTION: There's a lot of movement during all this bracing and leveling. Keep an eye on stress points, and be ready to open a joint in the string to relieve stress. Otherwise, it's possible that the string itself could crack. In our case, it was important to keep the cylinder, a weak point, from moving too much. (6)

Wedging

ALL THE WEDGES were replaced to ensure that they were tight. (Glue sticks better to new wood than to dirty, previously-glued wood.) New wedges were cut from a piece of 3/4-inch pine.



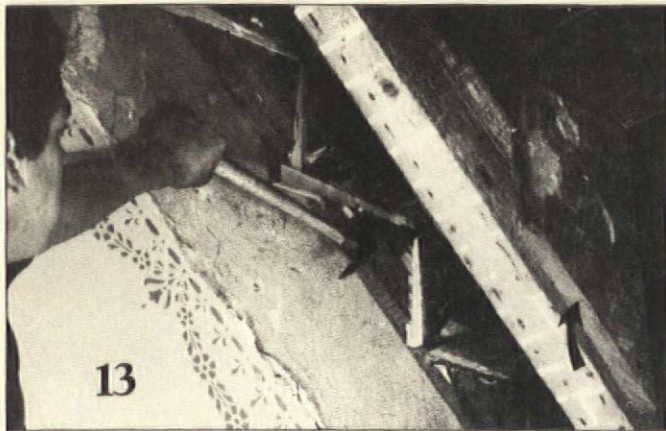
They should be cut in an alternating pattern to maximize long grain. You can set up a jig on a table saw to maintain the critical dimension of the wedges. This way, variation in length doesn't matter, because all wedges will be

driven in to the same extent, and then excess can be trimmed off.

EACH WEDGE must be glued in place. Over the years, Harry devised several tricks to save time and give him the competitive edge. One time-saver is his "bouquet of wedges." He puts carpenter's glue in the bottom of a wide-mouth container, then keeps a handful of wedges skinny-end-down. When he needs a wedge, he takes one out and spreads the glue with a scrap of wood or another wedge.



THE WEDGES are inserted from the top of the flight to the bottom, with the tread always wedged before the riser below it. The wedge must make even contact on both the surface of the step and the string. If it doesn't, the wedge won't effectively secure the step and there is a greater chance you'll split the string while driving the wedge. Hammer the wedge in until it's snug, but be careful not to apply too much force. (12) Last, a nail driven through the wedge and tread into the string helps keep the wedge in place. (13)



After gluing a wedge in place, Derek drives a nail through the wedge and tread, into the string. The wedges under each tread and behind each riser are what secure the steps in the string housings. The arrow in the photo above points to a wood cleat. Nailed to the center carriage, cleats prevent deflection of steps.

Below, the white pieces of wood are new glue blocks. The photo shows the front (outer) carriage and string, where glue blocks are doubled.



Cleats

CLEATS, or stepped wood blocking, on the center carriage take the springiness out of each step and also deaden the hollow sound of walking on the steps. Even after the carriages had been braced up, the cleats were not in contact with the underside of the treads (due to wood shrinkage). This caused the unacceptable deflection of the treads when people walked on the stairs. It was also the source of the groaning. (4), (13)

THE EXISTING CLEATS were easily pryed off and renailed snugly against the back side of each riser and the underside of each tread. One nail was toed into the tread, another into the riser. (Be careful to angle the nails so they don't go through riser or tread.) The cleats were installed alternating from one side of the carriage to the other. That way, the carriage won't tend to twist when load is applied to the stair.

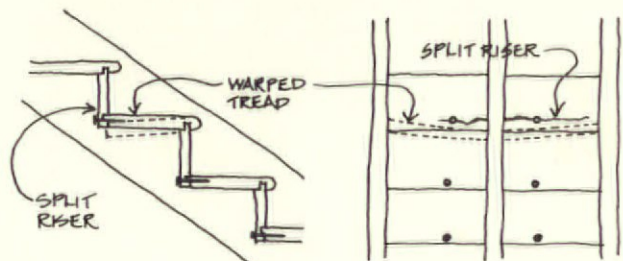
Glue Blocks

WHETHER OR NOT an old stair has existing glue blocks, Harry installs new ones at this point. These little blocks of wood were installed with a rubbed glue joint. (A glue-smear block is put into position and rubbed back and forth until the glue grabs, or resists the rubbing motion.) A rubbed joint is quite strong. Two finish nails were driven into each block to keep it in position while the glue dried. (14)

GLUE BLOCKS prevent the stair from squeaking by increasing the surface area of the tread-to-riser joint. They also provide additional strength at the joints. Note that the old glue blocks were not removed. New blocks went in next to the old ones, two per step between carriages, and two more where the steps are joined to the front string.

Nails

EACH STEP was back-nailed with 6d common nails. A nail was placed every six inches along the back side of the riser. As in all nailing operations, the nails were toed in slightly to add some strength. If a tread had sagged or warped, it would not have been forced upward for back-nailing; there's a chance the pressure of the warp would split the riser at the nail.



BACK-NAILING

GENERALLY, all of the fastening done on a stair is underneath--hidden from view. Face-nailing can provide additional strength, but it never

looks great, so should be avoided if possible on fine stairs. Harry felt that our really shaky and not terribly fine stair would benefit from face-nailing the treads, though. He toenailed two #8 finish nails into the top of each tread, down into the riser.



TO COMPLETE the sub-structure repairs, Harry drove some #10 finish nails through the front string, into the front carriage. This helped make the flight less springy. At this point in the rehabilitation, the newel and balustrade were still loose...yet the stair felt a lot more secure!

Next month: Replacing the newel, repairing the balustrade

Tough Toothbrushes

REACH BRAND TOOTHBRUSHES do not disintegrate in stripper. Anybody who knows what I'm talking about will immediately recognize the far-reaching implications of this discovery.

Judee Reel
Red Hook, NY

Restoring Marbleizing

MY 1861 SLATE MANTEL had been marbleized with brown and black paint. The paint had begun to flake off, and I felt hopeless about restoring it. But I managed to come up with a good substitute: shoe polish. It actually has the same translucent effect as glazing liquids. Using black and brown liquid shoe polish, I colored in the missing areas and hand-buffed lightly. When it was dry and hard, I followed with two applications of Butcher's paste wax for furniture (with drying time and buffing between). The final buffing brought it all to a uniform, soft, gleaming finish, and the irregularity of the paint surface is barely perceptible.

Eugene E. Smith
Philadelphia, PA

In Praise Of Heat Guns

WE OWN AN OLD PARSONAGE. The problem is that every time a new minister arrived, the people would rip off as much wallpaper as they could and then either repaper or repaint. Removing all these layers has been a tedious job. I've tried everything to no avail (although I didn't rent a steamer). I finally tried my heat gun--what a relief! No more chipping away. I used a Red Devil P.130 scraper. All I did was hold the heat gun about 3/4 of an inch away from the wall and slide the scraper under the loose end. It softened the paste and peeled it off, with no wet mess.

A useful hint that worked for you, but others should be aware of the potential fire hazard.—The Editors

Mrs. Earl M. Clark
Hillsdale, NY

Try Scraping First

THERE IS A VALUABLE paint-stripping technique that is usually overlooked: Most, if not all, of the paint can be scraped from the surface before chemical stripping begins. The more paint you can scrape off, the less gooey mess you'll have to put up with when you strip. If the surface was initially varnished, then all of the paint can be scraped

off a flat surface with a sharp scraper. If the surface was initially painted, then all the paint will never come out of the pores. (Such a surface was probably designed to be painted--so it should remain painted.)

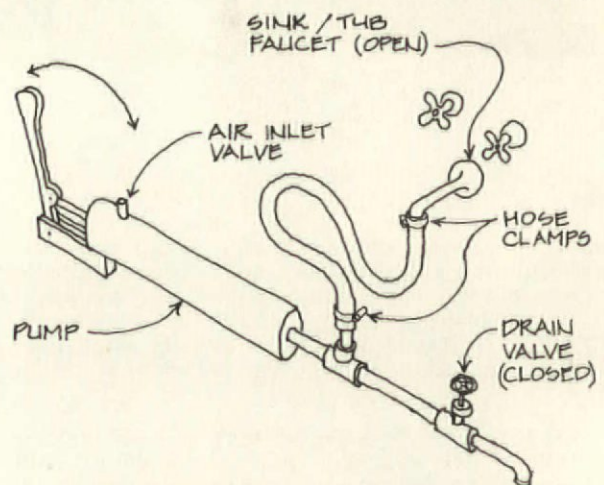
THE SCRAPER IS THE KEY. The longer the handle and the sharper the blade, the better. An old Stanley scraper with handles for both hands and a sharpenable blade has been invaluable for me. (If there are grooves to be scraped, then you can buy curved scrapers or else grind your own contours.) With some patience and muscle, I was able to scrape off three coats of paint from our oak wainscotting. All that was required afterward was some light chemical stripping to remove remnants of the varnish.

Dan Miller
Elgin, IL

Clear Your Pipes

HERE'S A GOOD WAY to clear rust out of your pipes. Make or borrow the set-up pictured below. Attach the rubber hose with a hose clamp to the ailing plumbing fixture. Close the drain valve on your set-up and open the supply line of the sink or tub you're working on. Pump the pump--this forces air into the supply line. Leave the supply-line valve open and open the drain valve. The water in the supply line forces out the air; in a water-hammer effect, it also forces out some of the accumulated particles. Repeat the procedure several times until the water flow improves.

J. Cheydleur
College, AK



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.

Restoration Products News

Stencils

With stencils from Adele Bishop, Inc., you can create your own floorcloth or stenciling—charming and personalized touches in your house restoration. Stencils are sold with a complete instruction booklet and drawn on Mylar (two patterns are pre-cut). Clear Mylar is available for those who would like to create their own design. Stenciling brushes and paints are also offered.

Three sets of stencils (copied from the Shelburne Museum in Shelburne, VT) were used to create the design shown here. Each set is \$15.95. A color catalog (\$2.00) shows the various patterns stencilled on walls, floors, furniture, and fabric. Adele Bishop, Inc., PO Box 557, Dept. OHJ-8, Manchester, VT 05254. (802) 362-3537.



Carbon Filament Bulb

Finally—a source for old-fashioned carbon filament light bulbs. Until now, these have been very difficult to find. The glowing filament gives a special period touch to antique and reproduction lighting fixtures. The *Phoenix* bulb is an authentic recreation, manufactured in the U.S., and distributed by Bradford Consultants. A clear bulb with a carbon loop filament, it's available in 8-candle power (for signs and low-wattage lights), and 16-candle power (for wall fixtures, chandeliers, and table lamps). It operates on standard 120 volts, has a standard medium base, and works with a light dimmer. The bulb, which is said to last

“forever,” has a three-year warranty and is \$4.50 (quantity discounts can be arranged). For more information, write to Bradford Consultants, 16 E. Homestead Ave., Dept. OHJ, Collingswood, NJ 08108. (609) 854-1404.

A Variety Of Imports

Increasing the humidity in your house can help make it feel warmer. Litchfield House imports porcelain radiator humidifiers from England. The *Horizontal Bow Front* (10½ in. x 5½ in. x 2 in.), designed for horizontal radiators, is \$26. The *Vertical Bow Front* (11 in. x 5 in. x 1 in.) is \$24 and used for vertical radiators. Both styles hang over the radiator; they come in nine printed patterns, and plain white.

This company also imports English porcelain door furnishings. The designs are hand-stencilled onto heavy china and

finished with a ceramic glaze. Patterns, as well as solid black or white with gold trim, are available on fingerplates, door and cabinet knobs, and florets (key hole covers). Complete sets for both sides of a door cost about \$45.



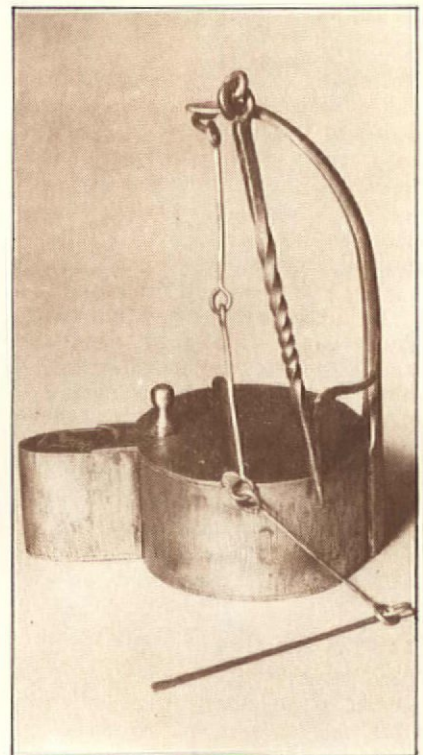
Litchfield House is also selling six cast-iron firegrates, for coal or wood. These are lost-wax castings of 18th and 19th century British originals and range in price from \$120 to \$600. Free brochures are available on each line, so specify your interest when writing: Litchfield House, On-The-Green, Dept. OHJ, Sharon, CT 06069. (203) 364-0236.

Iron Betty, Etc.

There has been a resurgence in blacksmithing in the last decade, but Newton Millham's hand-forged work goes beyond the usual assortment of fireplace tools. Many of his designs are copies of 17th-, 18th-, and early 19th-century hardware.

A specialty seems to be unique lighting devices, such as an adjustable spring trammel candle holder (\$50), and pipe or ember tongs which were used to light a pipe with an ember from the fire (a 1740s design—\$225). He also has a good knowledge of early door, sash, shutter, and gate hardware. Prices range from \$2 for an 18th-century sash pin (with leather strap) to \$140 for a 12-in. spring latch with cast brass knobs.

Millham's ironwork can be custom forged according to measured drawings, copied from an existing piece, or taken from old builder's guides. He does offer a catalog of finished pieces, which can be reproduced or used as inspiration for your own ideas. (Allow six to twelve weeks for delivery.) Send \$1.00 to Newton Millham, Blacksmith, 672 Drift Rd., Dept. OHJ, Westport, MA 02790. (617) 636-5437.



Iron Betty (\$110)
mid 18th-century design

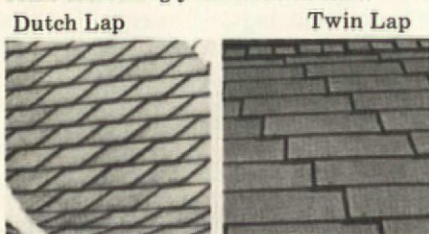
Roofing Materials

With spring just around the corner, this might be a good time to think about replacing or repairing your roof. Some materials listed here are superior to modern roofing in appearance or longevity; some have been around since your house was built, but are hard to find today.

Prices for roofing materials are usually given in dollars per square. A square is the amount of material needed to cover 100 sq. ft. with the customary lap.

Asbestos

If you need to replace the roof on your turn-of-century house, asbestos shingles could be especially appropriate. Supradur, one of the only companies in the country producing mineral-fiber shingles, is best known in the restoration field for their slate-like replacement shingles (*Supraslate*). They also produce *Dutch Lap*, *Twin Lap*, and *Hexagonal*—shingles that immediately bring to mind turn-of-century houses, and that have become increasingly difficult to find.



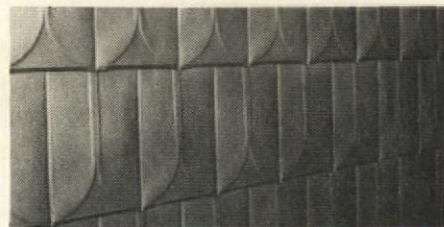
These special-order shingles are made of asbestos fiber embedded in cement. Price is about \$60 to \$84 per square. (The cost of asphalt shingles begins at about \$30 per square, with heavier weights costing up to \$80 per square.) Supradur's mineral-fiber shingles cannot rot, have a class A or B fire rating (depending on the shingle), and they have a 30-year warranty against shrinkage and warping. Thus they're a good investment, besides being unusual. The *Twin Lap* comes in a variety of colors, the *Dutch Lap* in black and in white, and the *Hexagonal* in charcoal black. For a free brochure and the location of a dealer, write Supradur Manufacturing Corp., 122 E. 42nd St., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10168. (212) 697-1160.

Metal Shingles

Metal roofing tile is fireproof, lightweight, long-lasting, and attractive. It's as historically appropriate as more expensive roofing materials in many circumstances. For more information about care and installation see OHJ March 1981.

Conklin Tin Plate & Metal Co. has been producing a fine line of metal roofing for over 100 years. The single pattern they offer is available in 28 gauge galvanized steel, copper, stainless steel, and micro-zinc (a "self-healing" rust-proof alloy). Micro-zinc roofing is available for \$341.38 per square and terne for about \$182 per square. Send \$3 for a brochure that describes the materials, accessories, and installation: Conklin Tin Plate & Metal Co., PO Box 2662, Dept. OHJ, Atlanta, GA 30301. (404) 688-4510.

Berridge Manufacturing Co., a large producer of modern metal roofing, also stocks three Victorian patterns. The *Victorian*, *Classic*, and *Fish-scale* shingles are available in copper, terne-coated stainless steel, and Galvalume (a "self-healing" aluminum-zinc alloy). These shingles can be shipped unfinished or with a choice of twelve baked-on finish colors; the factory finish has a twenty-year guarantee against peeling, cracking,



and fading. Galvalume costs about \$125 per square, depending on the distributor and your location. For a free brochure and the name of a dealer in your area, contact Berridge Manufacturing Co., 1720 Maury St., Dept. OHJ, Houston, TX 77026. (713) 223-4971.

Well known for their metal ceilings, W.F. Norman also produces a line of metal roofing from original patterns. Several patterns are available in galvanized steel (\$109 to \$203 per square), or copper. For a free brochure, write W.F. Norman, PO Box 323, Dept. OHJ, Nevada, MO 64772. (417) 667-5552.

Terra Cotta Or Clay

Clay or terra-cotta tiles have a class A fire rating and an average lifespan of 75-150 years. This type of roofing usually brings to mind Spanish Revival houses, but there are many more tile designs besides the barrel-shaped Mission tile. The classic flat interlocking terra-cotta tile is one such style.

Ludowici-Celadon is a major manufacturer of clay roofing tiles used in restorations. A variety of stock tiles are available; they will also do custom reproductions. They offer several flat tile styles: *Americana*, which has a rough hewn texture; *Williamsburg*, which resembles a wood shingle; *Classic*, a flat red tile that would be appropriate for the English Revival styles; *Lanai*, a textured brown tile; and *Norman*, a red/black mottled tile with an earthy, rustic look.

These tiles are hard-fired and have a low permeability. Their promised water absorption is less than 3% of their weight, enabling them to withstand freeze-thaw

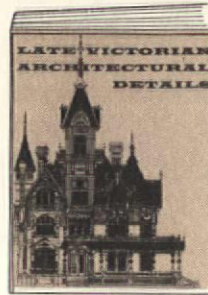
cycles. Most tiles are available in several colors, with prices ranging from \$198 per square for a very plain interlocking tile to \$949 for the top-of-the-line *Norman*. For a free brochure, write Ludowici-Celadon Co., PO Box 69-OHJ, New Lexington, OH 43764. (614) 342-1995.

Besides offering four patterns of clay roofing tiles, High Brooms has recently become the American importer of Keymer tiles. These flat clay tiles are handmade by English craftsmen and have been available in Canada for several years. Three finishes are offered: dark or medium antique (a mottled-weathered look), and red. They have a water absorption of 5-11% and require a minimum 40° roof pitch. The average cost is \$500 per square. A free brochure is available from Mr. Tom McGrath at High Brooms, Suite 403, 24 Mount Vernon St., Dept. OHJ, Boston, MA 02108. (617) 720-1729.

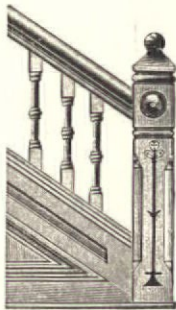


Designs For 19th Century Details Useful A Century Later

ONCE UPON A TIME, in the late 19th century, there was a Rand McNally catalog that served as a blueprint for the projects of woodworkers across the land. Homeowners, architects, and builders would choose from this widely-circulated book of details, and local millwork shops would reproduce architectural elements based on those designs.

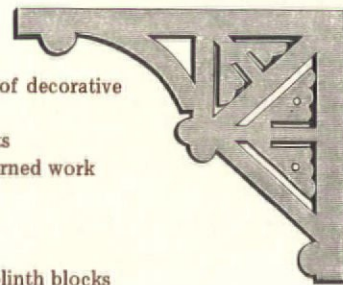


A CENTURY LATER, skilled woodworkers wishing to re-create authentic interior and exterior finish for late 19th century and turn-of-century homes are also able to turn to these vivid pages out of history in this reprint edition, "Late Victorian Architectural Details."



Included in this volume, with 1,200 detailed engravings of decorative woodwork and glass, are designs for:

- doors
- sash
- blinds
- mouldings
- stairs
- mantels
- embossed glass
- brackets
- newel posts
- wood drapery
- gable ornaments
- window frames
- etched glass
- beads
- store fronts
- scroll & turned work
- balusters
- verandas
- cut glass
- corner & plinth blocks
- screen doors

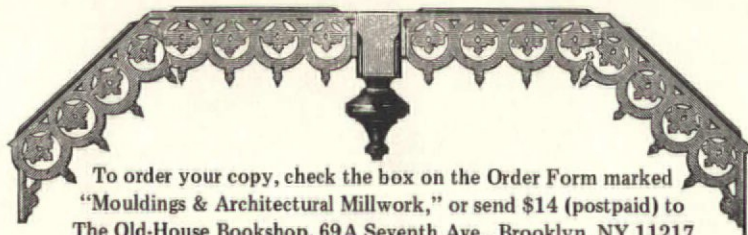


As part of a catalog used coast-to-coast, these designs transcended regional peculiarities and spread a uniform taste in architecture across America. Those of us who thought carbon-copy architecture originated with fast-food restaurants and motel chains will be fascinated to see these century-old prefab predecessors. Nevertheless, even though these architectural elements were prefabricated, the quality of design and craftsmanship was far greater than usually found today.



In history, styles do not roll over and die as soon as something new and different comes along. So it is not surprising that this book, originally published in 1898, contains designs from the 1870's and 1880's. It is also not surprising that a hundred years later these enduring styles are still in demand as homeowners rejuvenate their time-worn buildings.

*288 pages. Quality softbound, sewn binding.
\$12 + \$2 for UPS shipping & handling.*



To order your copy, check the box on the Order Form marked "Mouldings & Architectural Millwork," or send \$14 (postpaid) to The Old-House Bookshop, 69A Seventh Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217



The Old-House EMPORIUM

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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 15th, two months before the issue date. For example, ads for the December issue are due by the 15th of October.

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

WANTED

HINGES that let door rise as opens to clear rug. Recently imported from England by bankrupt mail order house. John G. Teichmoeller, 8505 Hill Street, Ellicott City, MD 21043.

HOUSEPLAN COPIES & photos of Victorian homes & buildings wanted by artist to provide accurate reference for architectural paintings. Richard E. McNatt, Jr., 20905 Little Bear Creek Road, Woodinville, WA 98072. (206) 481-0568.

SALVAGED CEILING TIN. Write with description, amount available, & price to Joy Huttar, 188 W. 11th Street, Holland, MI 49423.

BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

TAX LAND SALES—Notices of sales are not widely posted, but they are available. Richard Brauer has assembled addresses for authorities of all 50 states and 3000+ counties. All addresses are available for \$36; any 4 states, \$8. Material is copyrighted and has a money-back guarantee. Write to Richard Brauer, Box 882, Chatsworth, CA 91311.

THE BUILDER'S DICTIONARY: The definitive architectural dictionary of the 18th century (originally published in London in 1734). This unabridged republication is available in 2 volumes, sewn and hard-bound. \$40 per set, ppd. The Foundation for Preservation Technology, 1511 K Street NW, Suite 1005, Washington, DC 20005. (703) 323-1407.

REAL ESTATE

TURN-OF-CENTURY HOME in Atlanta, GA. Expansive 6-bedroom home with 8 fireplaces, French doors, heart pine floors, and great room with gourmet's kitchen. Garage in back. Quiet street 10 minutes from downtown. Needs minimal work. \$61,000. Chris Phillips, 1280 Metropolitan Ave. SE, Atlanta, GA 30316. (404) 577-3918.

1816 HUDSON RIVER COLONIAL on 10 acres near Poughkeepsie. Living room with adjoining library, front parlor, dark-stained wideboard and parquet floors. Country kitchen with original coal stove, also 2 self-cleaning ovens and all modern conveniences. Den with woodburning stove, new baths. 10-box stall barn with water & electricity. Paddocks, pasture, easy access to riding trails. Many outbuildings. \$164,500. Canterbury Agency, 281 New Hackensack Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

CIRCLE HOT SPRINGS RESORT on 50 picturesque acres. Charming 22-bedroom hotel (1930), Olympic-size pool. Jacuzzi baths. Rustic cabins and homes. 4500-ft. airstrip. 139-degree temperature springs at 386 gallons per minute. Garden, greenhouses. Equipment, vehicles, airplane. Potential for geothermal energy, health resort, group retreat, skiing, tourism. \$1,760,000. (907) 456-6832. Alaska.

OLD HOME, TEXAS. Highland Lakes. 5 rooms. Original part built around 1900s. Interior and exterior restoration needed. Back-to-back fireplace. To be moved to new location. Write Rob Veteto, 500 North Avenue M, Marble Falls, TX 78654. (512) 693-2853.

SPRING LAKE, NJ: Converted carriage house. Near downtown historic area and ocean. Living room, cathedral ceilings, dining room, track lighting, oak and wideboard floors, 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 30-ft. den, custom built-ins. Master bedroom suite with fireplace. 3 bedrooms on first level with fireplace. \$150,000. Marge Harvey, 412 Brighton Avenue, Spring Lake, NJ 07762. (201) 449-6428.

1895 QUEEN ANNE. 9 rooms, 2 baths. 3500 sq. ft. of Victorian elegance. Large rooms, 11-ft. ceilings, beautiful windows. 3 circle windows, 2 beveled plate, 1 ornately carved. 2 stained glass windows, 1 centered over living room fireplace. 4 fireplaces. PO Box 601, Mexico, MO 65265. (314) 581-1084.



RALEIGH, NC: 1842 home on 2.75 acres, perfect for family farm and horses. Move-in condition with 3+ bedrooms, heart of pine floors, 4 working fireplaces. The Senator Jeffreys home in the National Register. Contact Peter Rumsey, Bacon & Co., PO Box 17905, Raleigh, NC 27612. (919) 782-5502; 828-6318.

RESTORATION SERVICES

EXPERT HELP for old-house owners (and owners-to-be): historical research, full preservation and architectural services, design for restoration and alteration, technical assistance. Professional help can improve results & save costly mistakes. Allen Charles Hill, AIA, Historic Preservation & Architecture, 25 Englewood Road, Winchester, MA 01890. (617) 729-0748.

STONE MASONRY—Building restoration, rebuilding, repointing of stone buildings, steps, walls, fireplaces, etc. Consulting. Brownstones. NYS Historical Association and NYC Parks Dept. references. Have trowel, will travel. William H. Parsons, Jr., & Associates, 19 Eagle St., Cooperstown, NY 13326. (607) 547-9639. In Darien, CT, (203) 655-2607; in New York City, (212) 868-3330.

PLASTER RESTORATION—Restoration of historical and ornamental plaster; interiors, coves, mouldings, walls, ceilings, and medallions. Custom reproduction of medallions, brackets, and architectural pieces, cast exterior elements. High quality, historically accurate work. Excellent references from private individuals and museums. Russell Restoration of Suffolk, (516) 765-2481. New York metro area.

ANTIQUÉ MOULDINGS reproduced in maple, oak, walnut, cherry, or softwood. Some antique mouldings in stock. Send us a tracing of moulding for price quote. Turnbull's Custom Mouldings, Box 602, Sumner, MI 48889. (517) 833-7089.

ORNAMENTAL RESTORATION—Plaster detail restored, including mouldings, cornices, medallions, and decorative bas relief. Missing ornaments replaced; custom designing available. Exterior wood restoration, deteriorated & missing elements restored or replaced. Geoffrey Kaslof, Ornamental Design Studios, 1715 President Street, Brooklyn, NY 11213.

CABINET & FURNITURE MAKER. Restoration specialist. Design & construction. Free estimate. 7 year's experience in Park Slope, Bklyn Heights, & Manhattan. Portfolio & references available. Douglas Ross, (212) 499-5152.

RESTORATION, REPAIR, & custom reproductions in hand-forged iron, brass, bronze. Complete line of builders and household hardware, security hardware, strikers, grill guards, structural supports, braces. All work to your requirements. Catalogs \$3.50. Steve Kayne, (OHJ), 17 Harmon Place, Smithtown, NY 11788.

SCULPTURE FOUNDRY will provide restoration, repair, machine work, duplication of original or contemporary brass, bronze, & iron decorative components and sculpture. Write Greensboro Art Foundry, 1201 Park Terrace, Greensboro, NC 27403.

WIDE PINE OR OAK flooring and paneling. Shiplapped boards, feather-edge clapboards, and natural weathered (grey) board. Free brochure available. Carlisle Restoration Lumber, Rt. No. 123, Dept. OHJ, Stoddard, NH 03464. (603) 446-3937.

WOOD RESTORATION & preservation: Reproductions of all types of wood architectural elements—doors, windows, curved work, wainscoting, frame & panel, old-style kitchen cabinets. Alta Woodworking, Flowerfield Industrial Park, St. James, NY 11780. (516) 862-8022. Contact Steve Sama for work on Long Island and New York metro area.

FOR SALE

FOR SALVAGE immediately from five 19th-century commercial buildings: decorative cast iron staircase; 20 ft. metal storefront; 20 metal arches and sills; 3 sections metal cornice, approx. 70 ft. with corner, 20 ft. and 35 ft.; 2 large wood warehouse doors; metal ceiling, approx. 20 ft. x 40 ft. Items available free. Removal costs borne by salvager. Contact Marlys Svendsen, City of Davenport, 226 West 4th Street, Davenport, IA 52801. (319) 326-7765.

4 WOOD PANEL DOORS. Require stripping; \$25 ea. Boston, MA, area. Evenings, (617) 965-1504.

GENUINE OLD-HOUSE DETAILS: Victorian screen doors, 1848 etched glass floral sidelights, panelled doors, pendant brackets, beautifully milled interior woodwork, turned porch railing, window architraves, etc. For illustrated listing, send \$1, creditable toward purchases, to Restoration Treasures, Box 724, Coopertown, NY 13326.

COMMERCIAL FURNITURE-STRIPPING equipment. Flow-on tank, chemical pump, jet-spray hose, fans and gloves. Used for 3 years. Original cost \$1500 but selling for \$350. (516) 671-1632.

AMERICAN MAHOGANY BAR, turn of century, in Classic Revival style. Includes bar front, back with 3 mirrors, and end doors. 2 1/4 in. o.d. backtrail. The back includes cabinets and drawers. Overall dimensions: 7 ft. deep, 11 ft. high, 20 ft. long. All wood construction is dressed and matched; color, dark reddish brown; lacquer finish. Priced at \$20,000. Don Wiginton, 3414 Lyons Road, Austin, TX 78702.

PORCELAIN SINK with beveled marble top, matching skirt & backsplash, c. 1900. Original brass faucets included, \$250. Also 4 ft. diameter wagon wheel with 14 stained glass panels inset between spokes, \$650. Trade offers also considered. 128 McKiernan Drive, Folsom, CA 95630. (916) 985-7584.

2 MAHOGANY MANTELS, hand carved, excellent condition. One with leaded window curio cabinet on top. A. F. Apel, RFD 1, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. (207) 228-4178.

OLD-HOUSE PARTS—24 decorative wood brackets from Italian style house. Brackets are 22 in. long, 19 in. high, 3 1/4 in. wide. \$20 apiece or trade for turned porch posts and spindles. (216) 948-3817, evenings.



BRADBURY & BRADBURY WALLPAPERS offers by advance sale a 19th-century Peacock Frieze. The 21 1/4 in. tall frieze will be brightly polychromed and sold by subscription for \$8 per yard. The deadline for subscribing will be the end of March. Inquiries should be addressed to John Burrows at B & B Wallpapers, PO Box 155, Benicia, CA 94510.

VICTORIAN TICKET BOOTH, solid cherry. 8 ft. tall with triple glass panels. Art Deco mirrored back bar & matching front bar. Marble base Hotel-Front Counter with brass hardware. Many other architectural & display counters available. Contact Ken Reed c/o Reed's Recycle Shop, 401 North Main St., Royersford, PA 19468. (215) 948-4871.

POST OFFICE BOX FACES. Antique brass, excellent condition, brushed & lacquered, patented 1896, 1903 & 1911. Originally in private postal station in Chicago hotel. \$11 plus \$2 postage each. Order of 4 faces gets 10% discount. John McClure, 773 Lucerne Circle, Ormond Beach, FL 32074. (904) 672-7454.

DRIVEWAY GATES—12 ft. high, massive and decorative iron. \$8500 for the pair. Also French doors, 15 lite/glue chip glass, 60 in. wide x 80 in. high. Per set \$200; 25 sets available. (613) 526-1818.

RESTORATION ITEMS and accessories (corner cupboards, oak mantels, doors, etc.) available at reasonable prices. Philadelphia area. Please call (215) SH8-0186 or (609) 365-2517 evenings.

ANTIQUE HARDWARE, c. 1910. Porcelain, glass, brass, other metals. Ice box locks and hinges, hooks, door and cabinet knobs, drawer pulls, doorbells, locks of all kinds, sconces, more. Also antique tools. Odd Hardware, 76-16 Jamaica Ave., Woodhaven, Queens, NY 11421. (212) 296-0163. 9-6 daily.

WAINSCOT, solid walnut. 68 lineal ft., 3 ft. high. Chamfered panels are set in 3/4 in. thick stiles and horizontal runners. Consists of 5 lengths, none shorter than 13 ft. List of lengths and photo will be sent on request. Asking \$3000, less shipping. A. De Groot, 720 East Harrison Street, Wheaton, IL 60187. (312) 668-6311.

PARLOR GRAND for a grand parlor. Ivory, mahogany, carving, scrollwork add up to more than the sum of their parts in this beautiful and rare mid-19th century parlor grand made by C. Kurtzmann of Buffalo, NY. Hate to sell, but doesn't fit in my small parlor. Reasonable. Details, (304) 422-1147.

CURTAIN TIE-BACKS. 8 pair silvered ("mercury glass") with pewter ferrules. Mid-19th cent. \$40 per pair. Also lightning rod weather vane, late-19th cent. 2 ft. cast brass and iron filigree arrow with bohemian glass vane on tall copper spiral with silver-plated spear and glass globe. Excellent condition, \$295. C. Wilson, 383 North 19th Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011.

18 PANELLLED DOORS, 8-9 ft. high, some grained-oak pattern. Oak tongue-&-groove wainscotting, 150 ft. All from 1870s Nebraska courthouse. Doors have solid oak surrounding trim. Doors plus trim, \$350 ea. Wainscotting \$20 per ft., plus freight. Quantity price negotiable. H. Richardson, 700 McDonald Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. (707) 528-7802.

PAIR OF VICTORIAN MIRRORS, originals from an 1835 NYC townhouse. 12 ft. floor-to-ceiling, with marble stoops. Ileana Hoffman, (212) 362-4797.

METAL CEILING—Approx. 16 2 ft. x 8 ft. sheets. In dubious condition. Come and get it (located in Park Slope, Brooklyn). Call Mr. Warner, (212) 371-1900.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA will hold its 8th Annual Summer Seminar in England. Sessions are from July 10-30. Topics include "Development of Architectural Styles," "John Nash and the Growth of London," and "Victorian Painting." Tours of significant buildings and monuments in London; day excursions include Oxford and Surrey. Completed applications must be received by March 10. To receive an application form, send a SASE to Victorian Society in America, East Washington Square, Philadelphia, PA 19106. For further information, call Johana Natarella at (215) 627-4252.

17TH ANNUAL Eufaula Pilgrimage of Homes and Churches will occur April 1-4, Thursday through Sunday. Antique Show and Sale will be held April 2-4. For further information, contact the Eufaula Heritage Association, PO Box 486, Eufaula, AL 36027. (205) 687-3793.

HISTORIC URBAN real estate investment workshop. Analyzes investment opportunities in historic property provided by 1981 Economic Recovery Tax Act & explores acquisition, finance, rehab, maintenance, management, & sale of old buildings. Brochure available. (Reading, PA: 3/19-21, 4/23-25; Cape May, NJ: 5/29-31, 6/4-6.) Registration, \$175. B.J. Wiswesser Wagner, Architectural Restorations, 44 North 10th Street, Reading, PA 19601. (215) 929-5032.

Join OHJ Editors In Jonesboro, Tennessee

A Century of Surface Decoration, 1820-1920

April 22-23-24

Come learn about interior paint colors, wallpaper styles, graining, stenciling, and marbling in lovely Jonesboro—Tennessee's oldest town. (A perfect vacation for old-house people) OHJ Editors Clem Labine and Patricia Poore will be joined by Bruce Bradbury, a colorist, wallpaper historian, and manufacturer of hand-printed wallpaper. Malcolm Robson, a fifth-generation decorative painter, will also be on hand to explain graining and marbling techniques.

Lectures cover the history of wall & ceiling decoration, techniques and applications, sources, case studies, and prepara-

tion of plaster surfaces. In addition, there will be hands-on workshops to teach you how to stencil, grain, and marblize.

Participation is limited to 125 people. Fee for 3-day course & workshop materials is \$80 for an individual; \$140 for a couple. (Travel, lodging, & food not included.) Contact the Jonesborough Civic Trust, P.O. Box 180, Jonesboro, TN 37659. Phone (615) 753-5281 or 753-2224.

Co-sponsored by the Jonesborough Civic Trust, Appalachian Regional Bureau of Government, Appalachian State University, & The Old-House Journal.

Enclosed \$ _____ for _____ Reservations. *registration package will be sent*

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Why would over 8,000 OHJ subscribers buy The Master Heavy-Duty Heat Gun?

Faye Spidell of Eugene, Oregon, restores old houses in her spare time. Here's what she said in an *unsolicited* letter about the Master Heavy-Duty Heat Gun:

"I read each issue very carefully and have used quite a few hints from the Journal. The nicest thing, though, was being able to buy a heat gun. This last house had built-in bookcases, large windows, an archway between the living room and dining room, and the original cupboards, which had been moved to the back porch/utility room. They all look lovely now, but I tell friends that there are at least two acres of woodwork in the house. I could have never done it with a

chemical paint remover. I have not been so pleased with any tool I've bought!"

Laura Lee Johnston, a homeowner from Long Island, New York, said this about the Master gun:

"Your heat gun is just what we needed to attack our heavily paint-laden newel post. It can't be removed (it is probably holding up the house!) and the thought of using chemical removers on it and coping with the mess has deterred me from getting to it since we moved in."

Patricia and Wilkie Talbert of Oakland, California, are the OHJ subscribers who first told us about the Master Heavy-Duty gun:

"We wouldn't be without it! Interestingly, the more coats of paint, the better the gun works! The heat-softened paint film tends to lift off intact out of cracks and crevices, rather than being dissolved and soaked back into the wood as often happens with liquid removers."

Faye Spidell, Laura Lee Johnston and the Talberts are no special cases. Over 8,000 OHJ subscribers have purchased the Master Heavy-Duty Heat Gun. And the raves keep coming in.

We sell this heat gun because it's the best one money can buy. It makes your job a lot easier . . . and minimizes inhalation of dangerous methylene chloride vapors, given off by most chemical removers.

The electric-powered heat gun softens paint in a uniform way so it can be scraped off with a knife. A small amount of chemical remover is suggested for clean-up and tight crevices, but the heat gun takes care of almost all the work.

In addition to minimizing chemical use, another important safety feature is a lower operating temperature than a propane torch or blowtorch. Thus the danger of vaporizing lead is eliminated, and fire danger is greatly reduced, too.

(Precautions should be taken when handling scrapings from lead-based paint and caution should be observed with wall partitions that contain dust.)

The HG-501 is an industrial-gauge tool. That means it isn't cheaply-made or cheaply-priced. But paint remover is going for \$12 to \$20 per gallon . . . so if you use the Master Heat Gun just a few times, it pays for itself.

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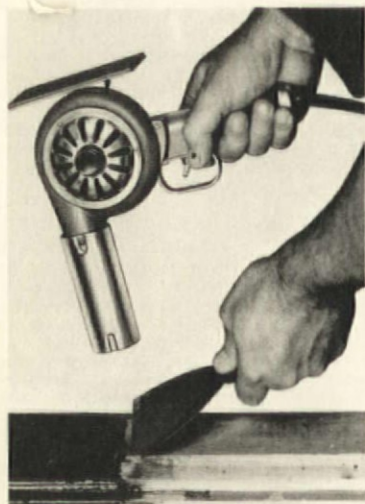
What it will do:

• The Master Heavy-Duty HG-501 Heat Gun is ideal for stripping paint from interior woodwork where a clear finish is going to be applied.

Use the heat gun for stripping paint from:

- (1) Doors (2) Wainscoting (3) Window and door frames (4) Exterior doors (5) Porch columns and woodwork (6) Baseboards (7) Shutters and (8) panelling.

• In addition, the Master heat gun can be used for such purposes as thawing frozen pipes, loosening synthetic resin linoleum pastes, and softening old putty when replacing window glass.



What it won't do:

The heat gun is not recommended for:

- (1) Removing shellac and varnish;
- (2) Stripping paint on window mullions (the glass might crack from the heat);
- (3) Stripping the entire exterior of a house (too slow);
- (4) Stripping Early American milk paint (only ammonia will do that);
- (6) Stripping exterior cornices (could ignite dust or animal nests inside).

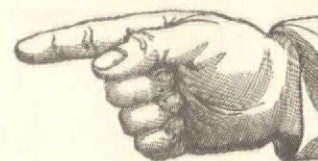
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The Old-House Journal Guarantee: If your heat gun should malfunction for any reason within two months of purchase, return it to The Old-House Journal and we'll replace it.

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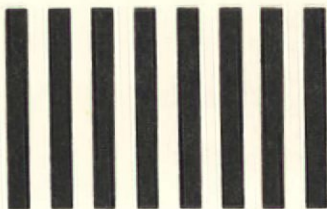
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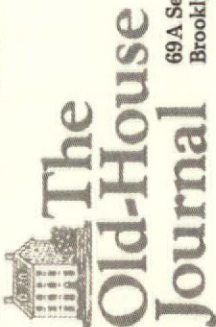
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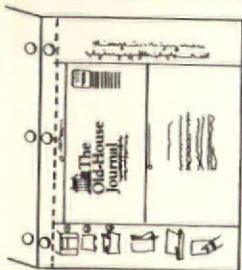
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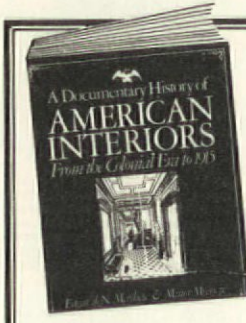
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This new illustrated work is comprehensive and well-organized, and its subtitles make it simple to find specific information on decorative elements of each style. *American Interiors* details period furniture, floor coverings, pictures and mirrors, textiles, wall treatments, architectural details and ceilings, and color schemes.



Text and pictures also cover ornamental and functional accessories, such as brass, ceramics, glass, iron, pewter, silver, tin and wooden ware of each style.

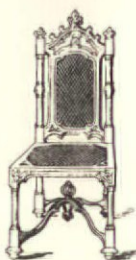
241 black & white photographs and drawings plus 32 full-color plates enliven the text and add visual perspective to this documentary.

First-hand source material for *American Interiors* includes pattern

books, diaries, estate inventories, period advertisements, surviving artifacts, paintings and drawings.

Reflecting an evolving America and the massive transformation of family life, interiors became a place of social and cultural sharing. Styles covered in this evolution are

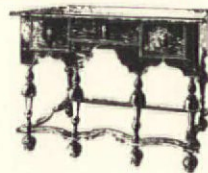
- * Early 17th Century
- * Late 17th Century
- * Queen Anne
- * Chippendale
- * Federal
- * Empire
- * Victorian Classical
- * Spanish Southwest
- * Gothic & Elizabethan
- * Rococo



- * Renaissance Revival
- * English and French Revivals
- * Colonial Revival
- * Tiffany
- * Eastlake
- * Rustic
- * Romanesque
- * Exotic Styles
(such as Oriental, Pompeian)
- * Mission
- * Art Nouveau
- * The 20th Century Look

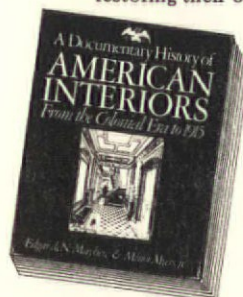


Section and topic titles make it simple to look up a subject, such as lighting, ceramics or brass, for any of the styles. In addition, there are two major appendices: one on American kitchens, bathrooms and heating systems, and another on museums with major American furniture collections. There is a four-section bibliography that covers pricing, decoration, regional studies, and additional picture resources, as well as an Index.



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Opinion...

Remuddling

— Of The Month —

scriber, is the fate that befell the once-handsome fieldstone wall shown in the photos:

"Over the strong objections of her youthful painters, who had just finished painting the trim and stone facing of her home, the owner ordered that her multi-colored fieldstone wall and entryway be spray-painted a stark white. In a few brief hours, this beautiful wall, which previously

blended into the surrounding environment, was transformed into a startling white eyesore to shock the senses of every passer-by. The only saving grace is that we currently have about a foot of fresh white snow on the ground, allowing the wall to blend into its surroundings once again—at least until spring."

FORTUNATELY, this work is reversible. Given time, Nature herself will strip the white paint and re-establish the harmony between the wall and its surroundings.

Submitted by: Roger E. Childers
Minneapolis, Minn.

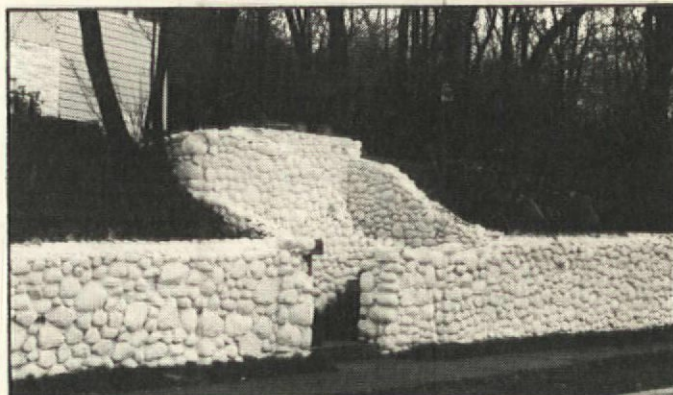
WIN FAME AND \$50: If you spot a classic example of remuddling, send us a clear black & white photo. We'll award \$50 if your photos are selected as the monthly winner. The message is more dramatic if you also send along a picture of a similar unremuddled building. Send your entries to: Remuddling Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.



BEFORE: This handsome fieldstone wall blended neatly into its surroundings. And then the painters came along...

NORMALLY, the remuddling feature deals only with harm done to old houses. But this month's "winner" raised such an interesting issue that we couldn't resist it—even though it deals more with the environment than with an old building.

FIELDSTONE was an especially popular construction material in the early 20th century. Fieldstone walls, foundations and chimneys fulfilled the Craftsman ideal of "honest materials honestly expressed." By using natural materials in a man-made construction, the builder achieved a harmony between the natural and built environments. Here, in the words of an OHJ sub-



AFTER: Painted white, the wall now looks like something made out of leftover styrofoam packing beads.



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