

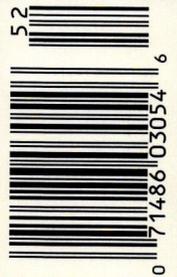
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# OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS

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PRODUCTION  
COPY

SUMMER 1995  
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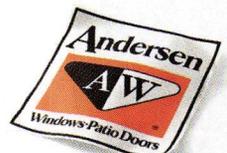
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

## 41 (Neo) Colonial

An American phenomenon comes full circle.

### VISITS

## 42 Connecticut Valley Colonial

A commercial pilot has an unlikely passion: the meticulous reproduction of an 18th-century house.

BY REGINA COLE

## 48 Upstairs, Downstairs

Living over the store, Victorian style, in Ann Arbor.

BY ANTOINETTE MARTIN

### HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR

## 54 Shadows-on-the-Teche

Deep in the Louisiana bayou, a French Colonial plantation house, built on sugarcane profits, is a legacy bequeathed to the region by its last owner.

BY LYNN ELLIOTT

### PERIOD INTERIORS

## 64 The Colonial Revival

The English Colonial Revival, already in evidence in the 1880s in the East, had a national impact on interiors.

BY PATRICIA POORE

## 70 Style in Residence

With owners, architect, and designer working together, a superb East Coast Colonial Revival house is restored in period fashion.

BY REGINA COLE

### HISTORY GARDENS

## 80 The Restoration of Montgomery Place

A Hudson River "Great Estate" blooms anew.

BY TIMOTHY STEINHOFF

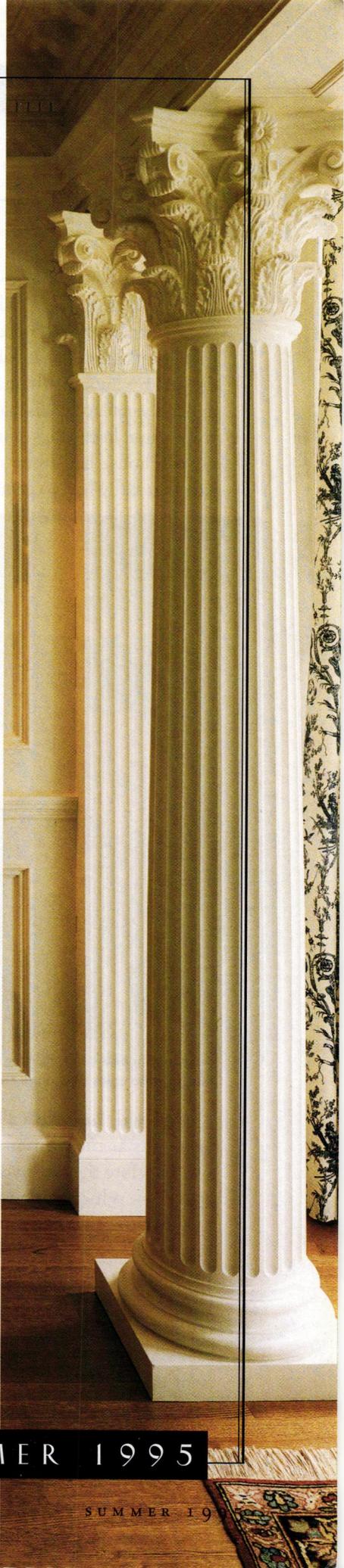
### PERIOD ACCENTS

## 86 Window Dressing

Period-appropriate dress for multiple windows.

BY SUSAN MOORING HOLLIS



- 
- 
- 8 **Editor's Welcome**  
Issue #2: It's a launch!
- 10 **Letters**  
More than just pretty pictures.
- 13 **Furnishings**  
A Nantucket bed, a Charleston bench, and Malibu tiles.
- 22 **Decorating Answers**  
Good old-fashioned wall-to-wall?
- 26 **Books**  
In the Golden Age of gardens, money was the best manure.
- 32 **Profile: David E. Berman**  
At Trustworth and Sconehege, the artist is also a restorer.
- 38 **Furniture**  
The designs of CFA Voysey.
- 92 **Before & After**  
An 1884 Eastlake Queen Anne is restored.
- 96 **Decorator's How-To**  
Custom make a floorcloth.
- 102 **Resources**  
Find it here — or send away for more information.
- 114 **Open House**  
Maintaining civility in an Omaha Italianate.

**ON THE COVER:** *A living room in an 1895 house near Boston, tastefully appointed in the Colonial Revival style. Photograph by Steve Rosenthal.*

# We Have Lift-Off

**U**NTIL YOU HAVE A DEADLINE, YOU just never know what you can accomplish. The last quarter presented three, each of them endorsed by me but ultimately none under my control! This magazine had to be launched, the second floor of my old house had to be renovated, and that baby had to come out.



**Restoration baby:** Peter Brunner Thomsen has hair the color of orange shellac.

As I said, I survived. The premiere issue was at the printer nearly two weeks before the birthday — time to spare! — which my husband and I used to move the family into a temporary rental when the unplanned renovation got away from us. All's well now, however; the baby is sleeping quietly in the new nursery that set it all off. And I did have great fun redoing the upstairs, which fairly glows because, in keeping with earlier summerhouse convention, hallway walls

and bedroom ceilings are once again lined with wide beaded boards of fir, traditionally finished in orange shellac. (Oddly enough, Peter's hair came out the same color....)

Now here we are with issue #2 of OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS. If the previous number celebrated the brilliant passion of the Gothic Revival, this one extols the ordered, classical virtues of the Colonial Revival. Other surprises await you: a "real colonial" that turns out to be a handcrafted reproduction; a surviving plantation on the bayou; an architectural garden restored.

A recent visitor to my house couldn't help notice the temporary posts where someday walls will go, the unfinished rooms downstairs and the restoration upstairs, the half-finished backyard landscape and the paint samples taped to trim. "You really do this old-house stuff, don't you?" he remarked with some surprise. I explained that the old-house stuff came before the magazines, not the other way around — and that I thought of it either as a lifestyle choice or an incurable disease, depending on how the work was going.

I'm not alone on this. Bill has a Colonial Revival; Ellen a verandahed Victorian; Jim a Greek-leaning Homestead; Becky a classic Foursquare. Lynn lives in part of a huge, turn-of-the-century inn, and Pat is house-hunting. We all have a lot of work to do. This hands-on staff was inspired by the stories in this issue, as I hope you will be, too.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Resources listings that begin on p.102 give sources for objects seen in the articles.

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# More Than Pretty Pictures?

I THINK MANY READERS would agree that it is discouraging to always see things that are beyond their grasp.... I don't care that the owner has some expensive antique crystal given to his family by the Duke of Wellington but I am *very* interested in how the ceiling looks and how the window treatment was accomplished.

What I find thin in every [decorating] magazine is an explanation of *why* things were done. A box with a short primer on [historical] design philosophy would do wonders for features. Be careful not to lose sight of the male aspect of a home. Too often, "decorator" houses look as though men never enter them.

My wife and I are moving to Vermont, into an unusual house. I'm not certain what to call it but a Free Classic Queen Anne with castellated turret may be close. We can't afford to hire a team of artisans but with a little anaglypta here and a nice piece of furniture there, we hope to give the home the warm feeling it was meant to have. Soon we'll be asking, "What shall we do with our walls?" And I'll be counting on your magazine to give me the answers.

— Donald J. Varney  
Acushnet, Mass.

I CAN'T WAIT TO RECEIVE FUTURE EDITIONS. I've subscribed to many decorating magazines, only to end up disappointed because they focus on minor details such as the arrangement of flowers on a table, instead of the

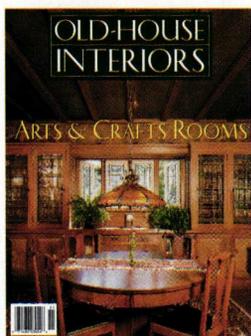


table itself. Your pictures are wonderful! I get so much: arrangement of furniture, pictures on the walls, window coverings, etc.

— Judy Peters  
Marshall, Michigan

THANK YOU FOR SENDING a copy of OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS. I think it has considerable educational potential. My initial reaction: the articles are too short. I'd like to see stronger features with more useful information. For example, you could run a feature on period picture frames — how they often reflected architectural mouldings, how to hang them appropriately, even how to deal with damage from ultraviolet light.

A pretty picture of a mantel raises the possibility of a practical article on fireplaces. Look at that leather chair near a roaring fire. The leather will crack, the lintel is at risk of catching fire, the woodpile introduces bugs into a vulnerable old house.

Useful information is still the key, although I appreciate your approach will be different from that of OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL.

— Charles E. Fisher  
Preservation Assistance Division  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C.

**I value such thoughtful comments, especially from an old friend of OHJ like Chuck Fisher. My first thought on his suggestions: the picture-frames article sounds great, but the fireplace article is about materials conservation and**

more appropriate for OHJ.

**What do readers think? The beautiful interiors, period decorating, and sources will keep coming. Do you, in addition, want technical articles on conservation? expanded historical information from archival sources? more in-depth articles to read? Send your thoughts by letter or fax: 2 Main St., Gloucester, MA 01930; fax 508/283-4629. — Patricia Poore**

• • • • •

I'M WRITING TO ASK YOU FOR AN ARTICLE on turrets. Specifically, I want an octagonal room in which to place my wonderful 1917 Heintzman grand piano. Being a musician and teacher, I can't help but feel that practicing would be even more enjoyable surrounded by beveled windows and natural light, rather than cooped up in the parlour.

— John Greer  
Truro, Nova Scotia

I THOROUGHLY ENJOY BOTH YOUR PUBLICATIONS and learn something new with every issue. But I disagree with the advice in the Spring 1995 issue. ["What should I do first?" in Decorating Answers, p. 26.] I feel that it is far more productive to select furniture first. People have favorite pieces, or have seen a fabric or comfortable chair they want to incorporate into the room.

In this line of work. I have found that there are many myths, each followed as a rule of thumb. Whose thumb is it, anyway?

— Janie N. Reeves  
Interior Consulting  
Windsor, Penn.

THE ADS ARE UNIQUE COMPARED TO those in other decorating magazines.

I found them different and useful. What an excellent issue...congratulations.

—J.D.  
Hartford, Conn.

HOW CAN THIS [THE SPRING 1995 ISSUE] be Volume I, Number 1, when it contains letters referring to an earlier issue about Shingle-style houses?

—Terry Andover  
San Francisco

**In the summer of 1994, OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL published a bonus issue on interiors;**

**most of its circulation was to OHJ subscribers. We wanted to see how the idea would play with readers, advertisers, and newsstand buyers. It played very well, so we launched a separate publication — OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS — with its own newsstand distribution and subscriber list. OHJ, of course, continues to thrive!** —ed.

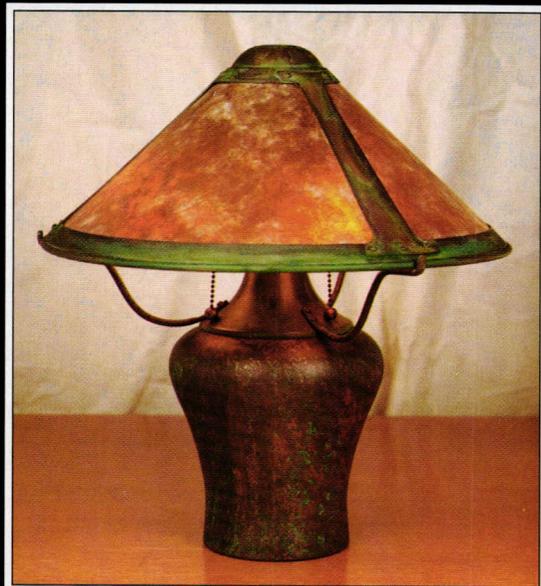
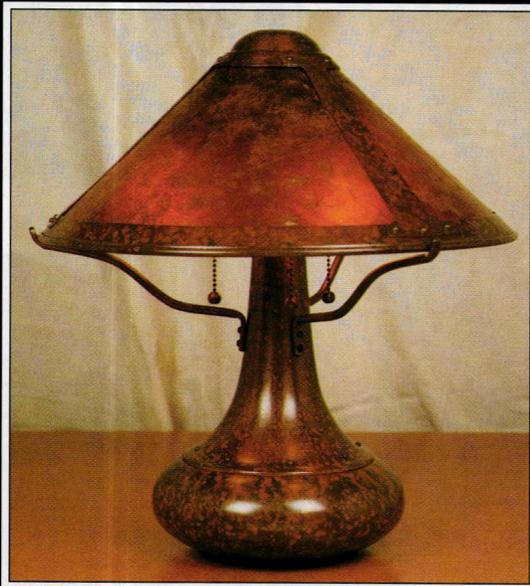
SIX MONTHS AGO WE PURCHASED AN Arts & Crafts house; the little old ladies had painted everything pink and white. My significant other is a long-time subscriber to OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL and uses that wonderful resource to keep the house upright.

When it comes to details, however, the stuff that makes it visually correct, Sam says, "Anything you want, honey." Just because I know where the car keys are, doesn't mean I was born with a knowledge of period details — or paint selection, lighting fixtures, plumbing selections, what antiques to buy at the auction. Thank you for delivering into my hands a useful guide aimed at the heart of the matter: how to make the house look right, where to get it, and how to do it.

—The West House  
Columbus, Ohio

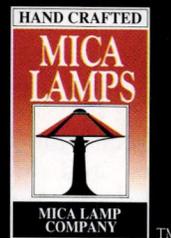
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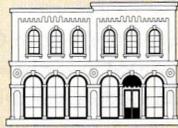


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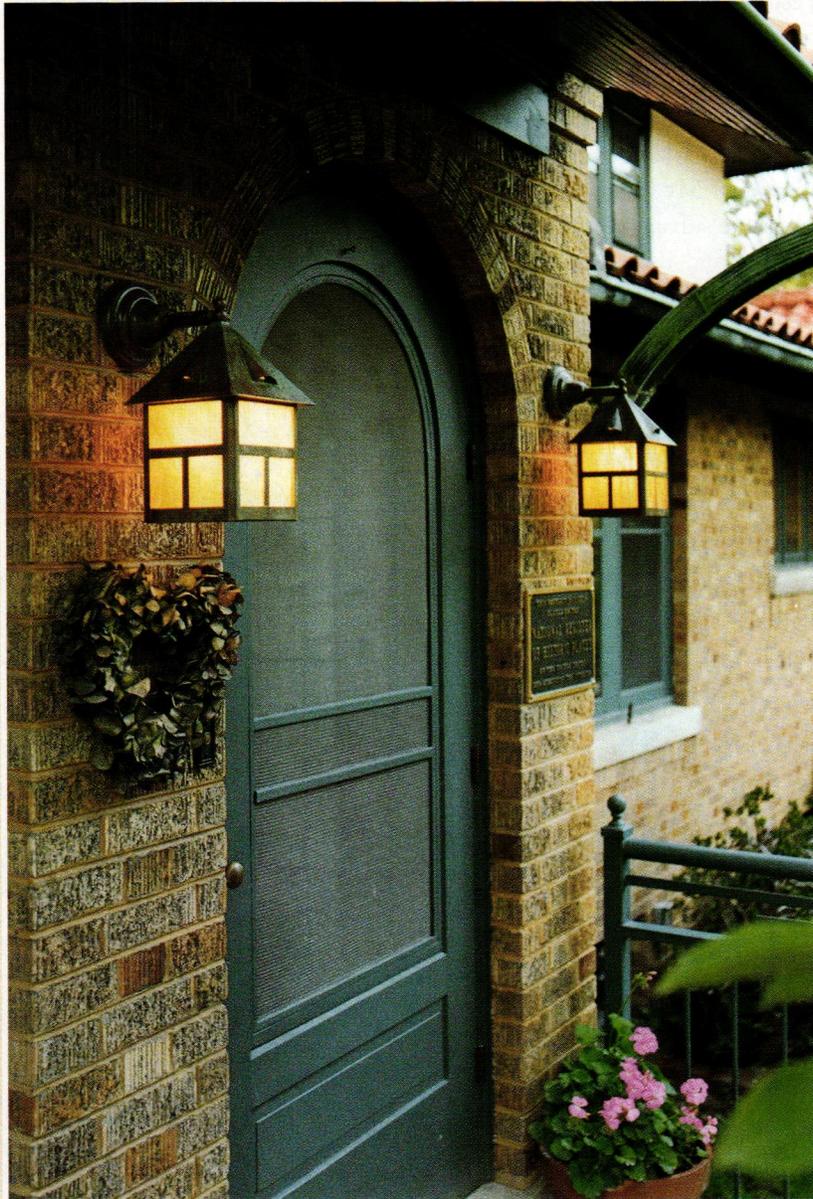
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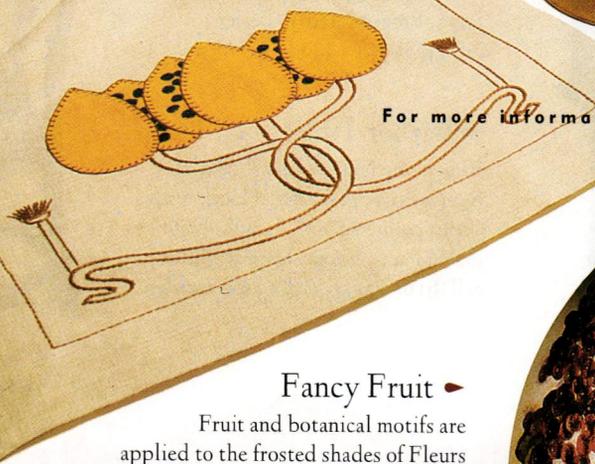
by Lynn Elliott



## A Bronze Glow

These bronze candlesticks are fashioned after a turn-of-the-century design. The poppy seed pillow and seed pod tablecloth have hand appliqués. Candlesticks, \$265 each; linens, \$185-\$210. From United Crafts; call (203) 869-4898.

For more information see page 102



## Fancy Fruit

Fruit and botanical motifs are applied to the frosted shades of Fleurs d'Allumage's lighting. The 24" tall ceiling fixtures look great in kitchens; \$850. Call (800) 669-8268.

## California Ceramics

In the 1920s, Malibu Potteries' tiles drew motifs from Islamic designs. The "Sky Flower" and "Fondom" tiles are handpainted reproductions from Venice Tile; \$11-\$40 each. Call (818) 346-7858.



# Colonial Revival



### • Tin Electrolier

Light up your Early American dining room with a handmade, 8-arm chandelier in distressed tin; \$460. From Gates Moore; call (203) 847-3231.



### • Colonial Colors

The muted hues of Old Village paints reproduce colors used by traveling craftsmen and village painters from 1790 to 1840; \$13.75 per quart. From The Stulb Co.; call (215) 654-1770.

### Bonnet Top Desk •

Paper work will get done quicker at this 18th-century secretary desk with a bonnet top and concave carved fans. Desk, \$995; Queen Anne chair, \$975. From Eldred Wheeler; call (508) 774-1390.



### • Father Time

Ring in the hours with a Colonial Revival-style grandfather clock with a split pediment and "Tempus Fugit" dial; \$1,435. From Howard Miller; call (616) 772-9131 for local retailer.



For more information see page 102

### • Triple-back Sofa

This Wakefield sofa has bold 18th-century contours, including a serpentine front and rolled arms. Made with colonial joinery techniques, it has handtied springs and goose-down cushions; \$4,320. From Chestnut Hill; call (717) 259-7502.



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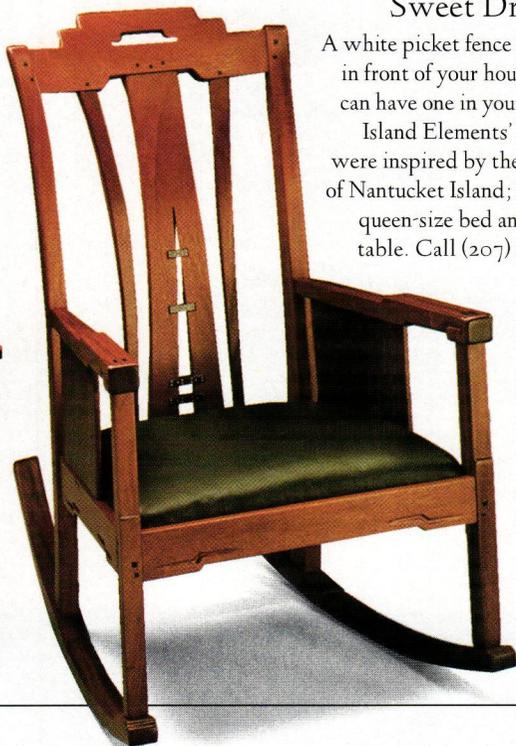
The new Meadow Collection carpets draws designs from William Morris, Art Nouveau, and Arts & Crafts textiles; \$1,499-\$5,200. From Nature's Loom, call (800) 365-2002 for local retailer.



Sweet Dreams ◆

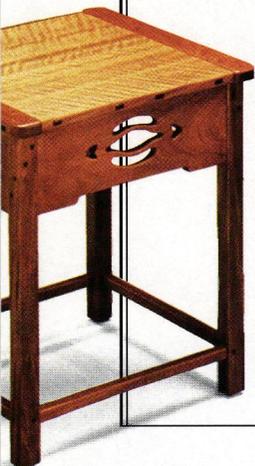
A white picket fence may not be in front of your house, but you can have one in your bedroom.

Island Elements' bed frames were inspired by the old fences of Nantucket Island; \$1,320 for queen-size bed and \$260 for table. Call (207) 293-3331.



◆ Arts & Crafts Rocker

Craftsman David B. Hellman captures the fluid lines of Greene & Greene furniture in a mahogany rocker and end table with ebony inlay; \$5,000 and \$1,250. Call (617) 923-4829.



◆ Artistic Tile

A teal and rose stylized flower ornaments this imported Art Nouveau tile from Shep Brown; \$23.90. Call (617) 935-8080.

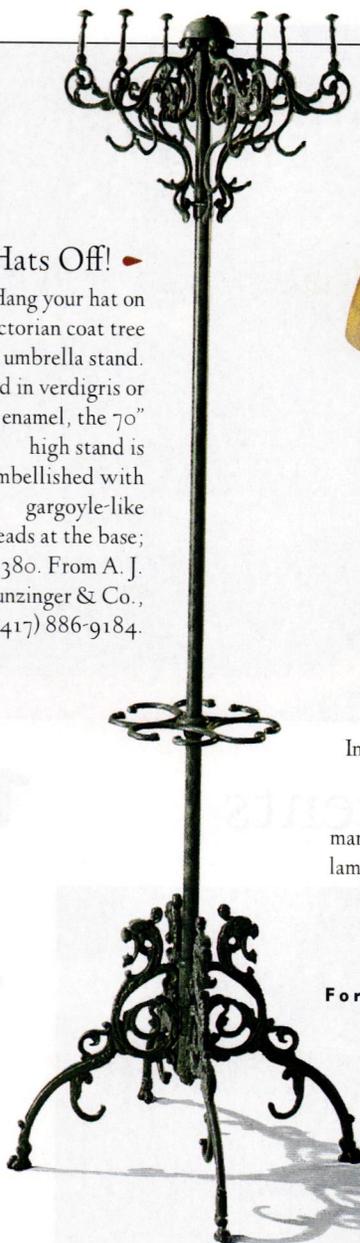


### Hats Off! ▶

Hang your hat on this Victorian coat tree and umbrella stand.

Finished in verdigris or black enamel, the 70" high stand is embellished with gargoyle-like lion heads at the base;

\$380. From A. J. Munzinger & Co., call (417) 886-9184.



### Handel Lamps

In the 19th century, the reverse painted shades and metal bases of Phillip J.

Handel's table lamps illuminated many parlors. The reproduction "Handale" lamps from Dale Tiffany come in six styles; \$200-\$300. Call (201) 473-1900.

For more information see page 102



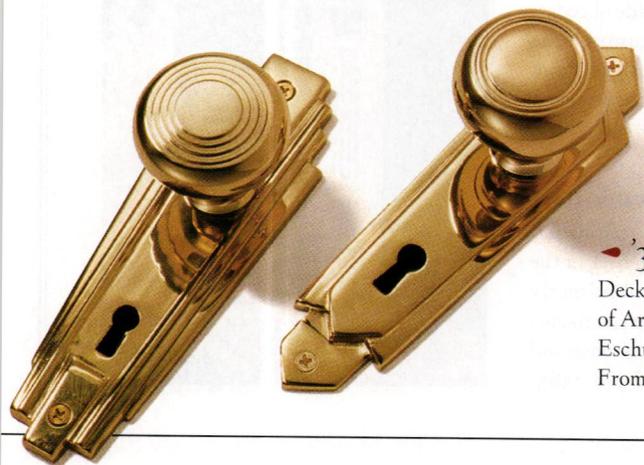
### Seaside Wicker ▶

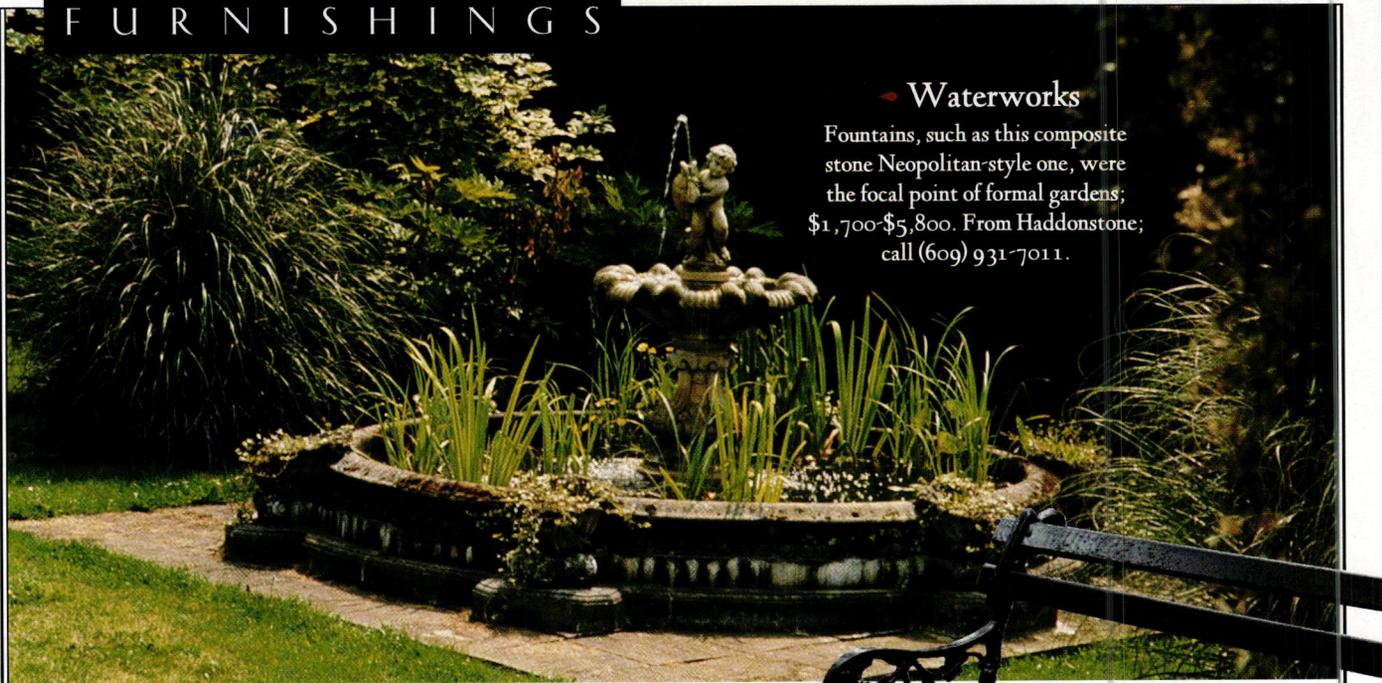
Inspired by the furniture in turn-of-the-century sea resorts, this Victorian wicker armchair is woven in colored heart of cane; \$1,100 (fabric not included). From Grange; call (800) GRANGE-1.



### '30s Style Hardware

Deck out your doors with the streamlined silhouettes of Art Deco doorknobs and escutcheons in brass or nickel. Escutcheons, \$40-\$50 per pair; knobs, \$30-\$40 per pair. From Crown City; call (818) 794-1188.





Waterworks

Fountains, such as this composite stone Neopolitan-style one, were the focal point of formal gardens; \$1,700-\$5,800. From Haddonstone; call (609) 931-7011.

Garden Accents

Garden Gazebo

Escape the summer heat in the cool shade of a gazebo, such as this modular Victorian-style one from Vixen Hill; \$3,900-\$22,000 depending upon size. Call (215) 286-0909.



Southern Seating

This cast-iron bench is a copy of the original 19th-century seats found on the Charleston Battery in South Carolina; \$225. From Charleston Battery Bench Inc.; call (803) 722-3842.

For more information see page 102



Charming Arbors

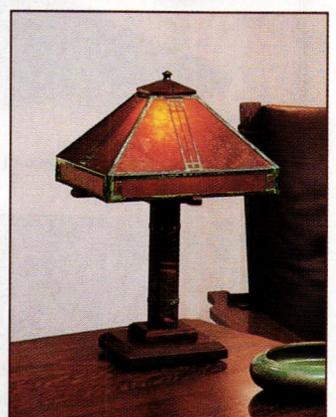
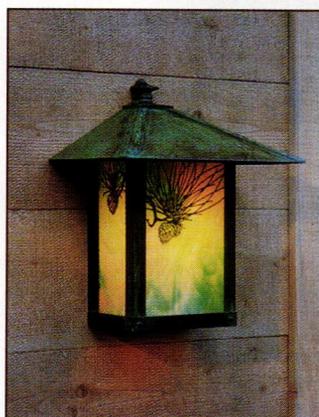
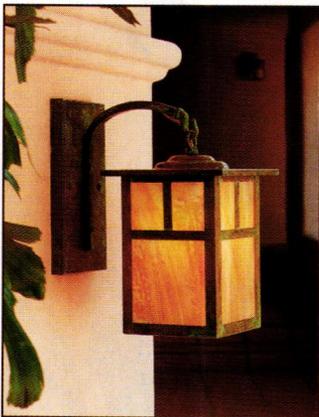
Lattice arbors with gates are a romantic passage into old gardens. Made of cedar, the arbors are custom made in a variety of designs. From Walpole Woodworkers; call (508) 668-2800.

Garden Chair

The rich verdigris patina and the lancet arch back of the Gothic Chair will blend nicely into gardens — or sun rooms; \$895. From McKinnon and Harris; call (804) 358-2385.



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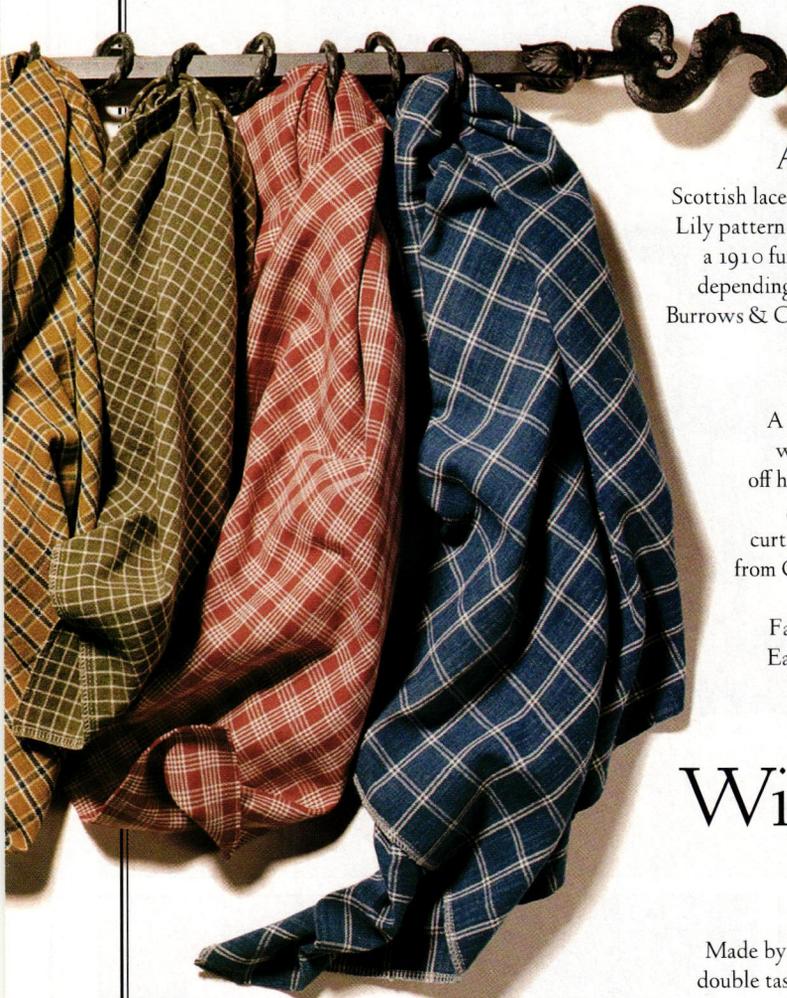
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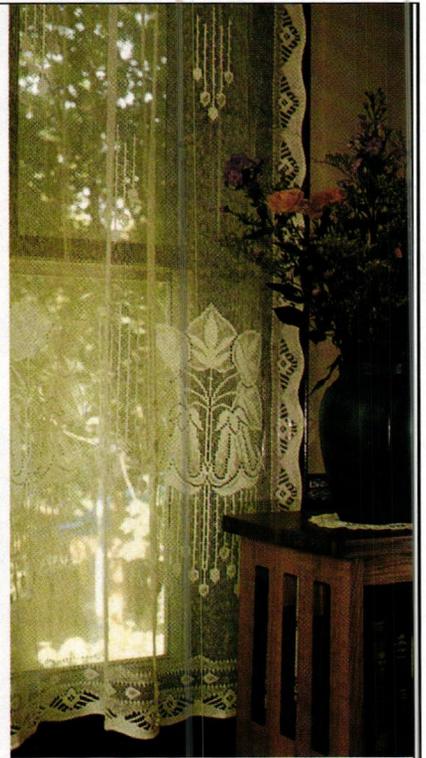


A&C Curtains ▶

Scottish lace curtains in the Meadow Lily pattern are copied from a pair in a 1910 furniture catalog; \$38-\$65 depending upon length. From J. R. Burrows & Co.; call (617) 982-1812.

▶ Check It Out

A 19th-century curtain rod with scrolled finial shows off handwoven cotton checks suitable for 18th-century curtains. Hardware (\$3-\$50) from Griffin Gate Collections; call (513) 369-0990. Fabric (\$65 per yard) from Eaton Hill Textile Works; call (802) 426-3733.



## Window Treatments

Tiebacks & Tassels ▶

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For more information see page 102



▶ Flexible Shutters

How do you treat round-head windows? The answer is curved shutters with louvers arranged in a fan shape. Prices vary. From Back Bay Shutter Co., call (617) 221-0100.



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# Good Old-Fashioned Wall-to-Wall?

by John Burrows

**I always thought wall-to-wall carpeting was thoroughly modern and a no-no for period decorating. But I've seen it in house museums and heard that it was often used in bedrooms. When is it appropriate?**

— JOAN THOMAS, BRADENTON, FLA.

WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING, RICHLY PATTERNED and colored, was found in the finest houses from the late 18th century, and in the best rooms of most American houses by the mid-19th century. Efforts were taken to cover the floor as completely as possible, as a mark of affluence. By the second quarter of the 19th century, American man-

ufacturers were producing carpet. But imports, particularly from England, remained most highly prized.

During the 1840s through the 1870s, fitted carpets were used throughout the house for the public rooms (i.e., parlors and dining rooms — with a crumb cloth under the table to protect the good carpet), and for the finer private rooms including the best bedchambers. Wilton carpet, made with a cut pile, was double the cost of Brussels carpet, finished with a loop pile. Brussels was universally popular, but the velvet appearance and richer coloring of Wilton car-

pets reserved them for the most prominent rooms of the well-to-do.

By far the most common carpets were ingrain, a flat-woven, heavy woolen cloth that was reversible. These were typically laid by the women of the house; they were the carpets most likely “taken up” during the summer. In the average mid-Victorian house, ingrains were used in parlors as well as bedrooms. Wilton, Brussels (and ingrain) carpets are woven on narrow looms, respectively 27” and 36” wide. The widths are sewn together into a “blanket” wide enough for the room. The broadloom carpet — like the broad loom — was an invention of the early 20th century.

Area rugs came into fashion in the 1880s, after English design critic Charles Eastlake wrote in *Hints on Household Taste*: “The practice of entirely covering a floor, and thus leaving no evidence of its material, is contrary to the first principles of decorative arts, which require that the nature of construction...be revealed. No one wants a carpet in the nooks and corners of a room...”

At a time when wall-to-wall carpets were purchased for nearly every room in middle-class homes, trendsetters began to take up their



**Clover Lawn, the David Davis mansion in Bloomington, Illinois, demonstrates the Victorian taste for wall-to-wall carpet. The prized Wilton carpet in the sitting room dates to 1875.**



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**Top Picture:** Rococo Chandelier by Starr, Fellows, New York C: 1857  
**Center:** Deer's Head sconce by Gibson Gas Fixture Works, Phila., PA C: 1890  
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**A richly floral Brussels carpet covers the dining room floor at Raynham Hall in Oyster Bay, N.Y. The polychrome woodwork is dark grey and highlighted with fashionable greens and reds.**

fitted carpets, to lay instead hardwood floors and cover them with individually crafted oriental rugs. Dining rooms were often first with wood floors, even when parlors and bedrooms retained wall-to-wall carpeting. Taste changed quickly: By the 1890s, hardwood floors were common throughout new houses, even in bedrooms. By the early 20th century, Wilton and Brussels carpets were sold as area rugs, and hand-knotted oriental rugs were the prevalent fashion.

*John Burrows is an architectural historian and historical-design merchant. (J.R. Burrows & Co., P.O. Box 522, Rockland, MA 02370; (617) 982-1812.)*

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— BRAD POOLE, NEW YORK CITY

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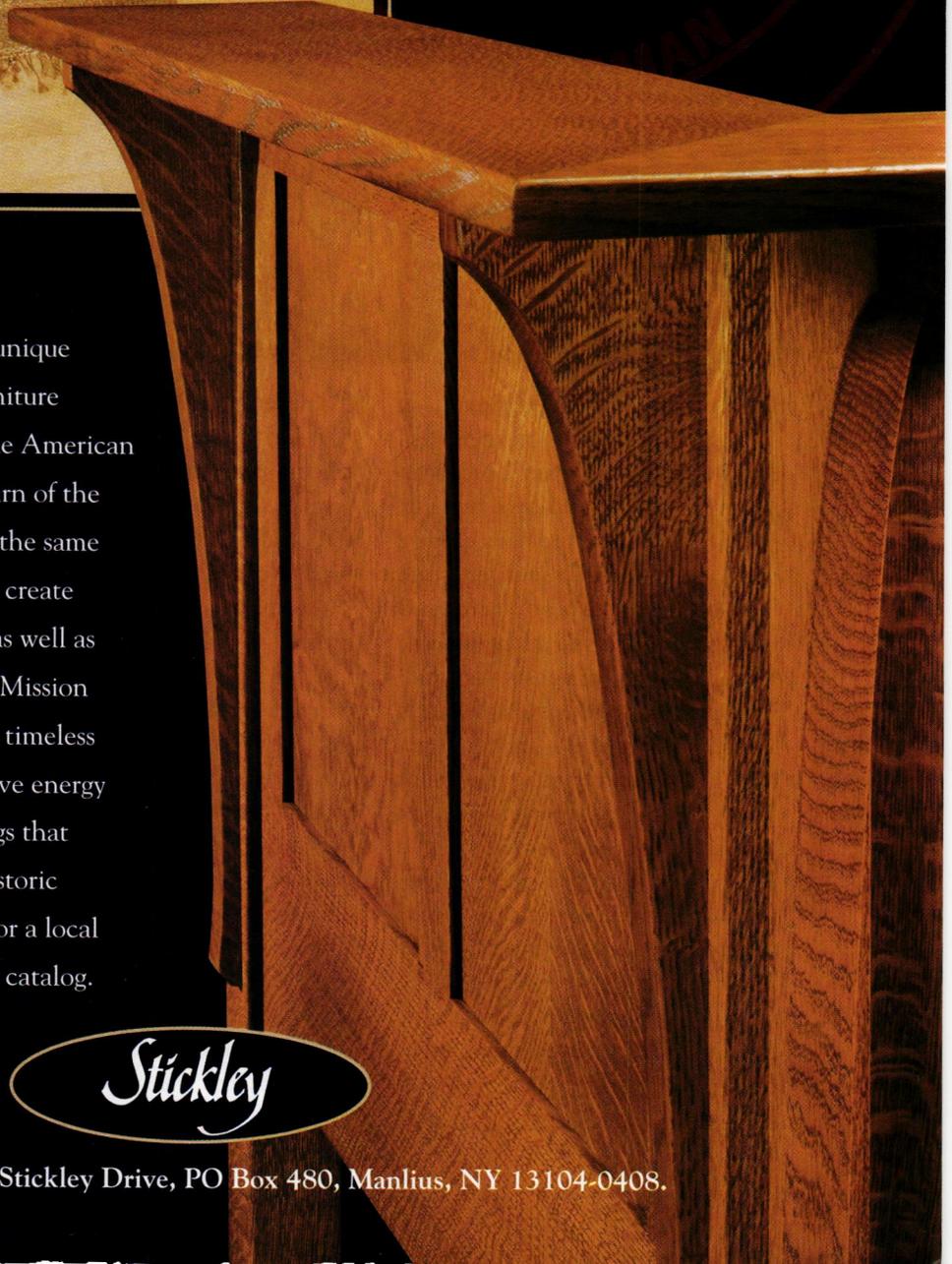
The company, Classic Accents, also sells push-button dimmer switches. They stock, as well, push-button switchplates in solid brass, chrome-finish, brown or ivory, and oak.

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# The Golden Age



**L**OUISE DEKOVEN SUMMERED IN Bar Harbor as a teenager; when she married Chicagoan Joseph Bowen, this Midwestern girl persuaded him to build her a cottage there in 1895. Their summer estate in Maine grew to 1,000 acres and took 36 gardeners to maintain. The Bowens invited the public — including, startlingly, guests from the hotels and boardinghouses — to their gardens “on pleasant Sunday afternoons in July and August from three to six o’clock.” Tea was served on the porch, along with raspberry sandwiches, while Mr. Bowen answered questions about the flowers. “Not really knowing any of the names,” he said, “I just memorized the Latin for two or three and used them indiscriminately — few people seemed

to know the difference.”

That describes, in an anecdote, the era that gave us the most conspicuous, and often the most beautiful, gardens and landscapes in America. It was the golden age of gardens, those years between 1890 and the second world war, a time when so many newly minted millionaires proved that “money is the best manure.” From the du Ponts of Delaware to the Huntington of California, from Minnesota’s John Pillsbury to Houston’s Ima Hogg, the people who became social legends were also the patrons of Frederick Law Olmsted and Beatrix Farrand, Stanford White and Addison Mizner. Today, their homes (when they survive) have become our historic houses and gardens, our parks and arbore-

**At Thornewood (1913), near Tacoma, Washington, the job of the “color gardener” was to orchestrate the changing display in the walled Sunken Garden.**

ta, even our wilderness reserves.

More than 500 of those remarkable estates are surveyed in *The Golden Age of American Gardens*, a magnificent labor that offers it all: social relevance, archival importance, an entertaining text — and beautiful pictures. Hundreds of period photographs gathered by Eleanor Weller leave a true and lasting impression of the gardens in their prime. Among the illustrations are 100 hand-colored glass lantern slides that have never before been published. (The slides, about 1500 in all, were collected from across the country by the Garden Club of America, and are



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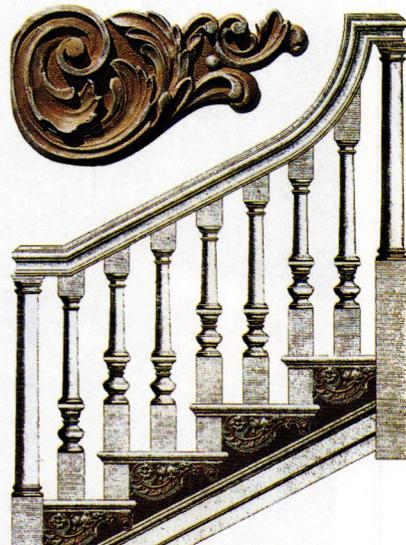


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**A rare view of a rare New York City garden captures rooftop greenery and the famous skyline in the 1930s. The rooftop is on East 51st Street.**

now available to the public in the Archives of American Gardens at the Office of Horticulture of the Smithsonian Institution.)

Mac Griswold's intelligent text is a hoot to read. It's only after you're caught up in her stories that you realize how exhaustive the research must have been. Here's the writing of someone so utterly familiar with her subject, she can offer eyewitness detail and humorous insight. While scores of anecdotes amuse you, you'll also become intimate with garden facts: planting schedules, seasonal variations, sculpture and ornament, plant selections. Even the modest home gardener has to be inspired to try something new. Yet the book transcends the garden category: it is also for travellers (who might visit these sites), for lovers of American biography, and for those who include the escapades of the wealthy in their portrait of Americana.

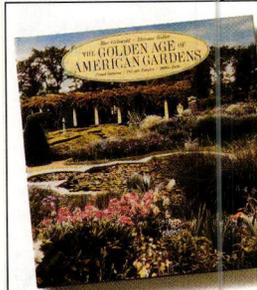
IN THEIR PREFACE, MAC GRISWOLD AND Eleanor Weller tell us how they



were moved to do this project after finding out about the glass lantern slides, "even more fragile than American gardens." Years were spent in identification, poring over not only the photographs but also hand-written reminiscences, family albums, forgotten watercolors. They came away with a sympathetic regard:

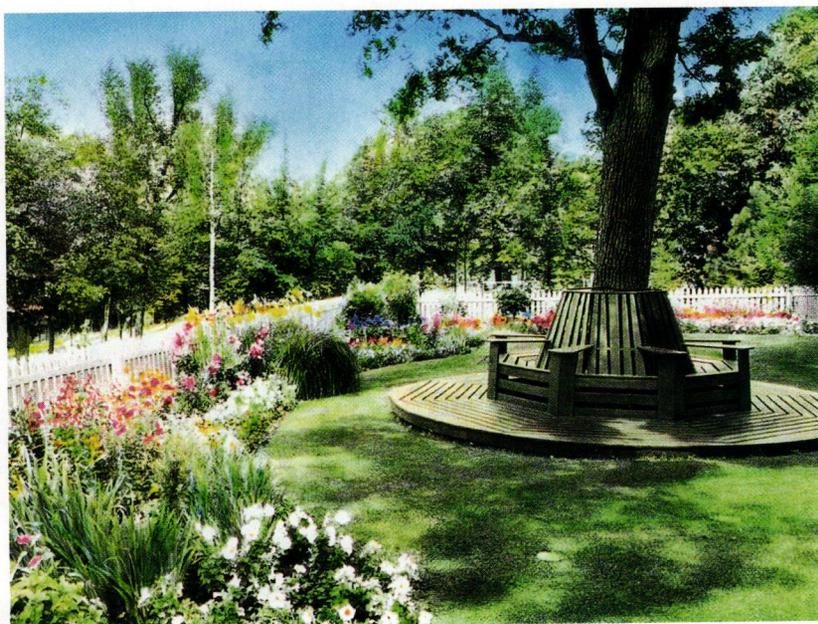
"As for the actual remains, these palaces now become convents, con-

dominiums, and asylums, surrounded by copies of Western European and Far Eastern landscapes grown up in brair and poison ivy, what is their ultimate value? They were built on the crassest piles of American loot, and the cultural history they reveal is one of frantic borrowing and adaptation of every available garden model. Yet running through their owners' lives, and implied by every casino, pagoda, and tumbling rambler rose, is a more wistful sense of appropriation: a desire to re-enter the old garden of delight. Their elaborate and often touching or hilarious masques and balls, the trees hung with apples of real gold, are expressions of what



**The Golden Age of American Gardens — Proud Owners, Private Estates 1890-1940**

by Mac Griswold and Eleanor Weller. Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1991. \$75. Through your bookstore or from Old-House Bookshop (800) 931-2931.



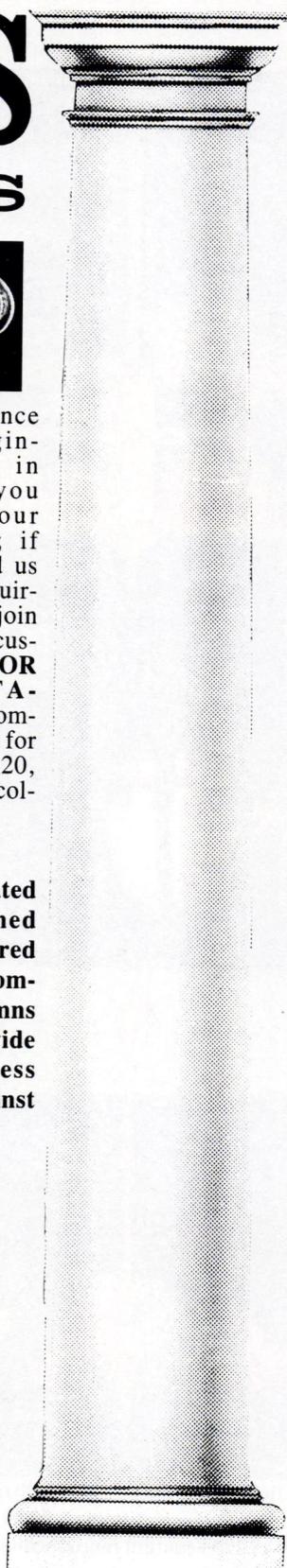
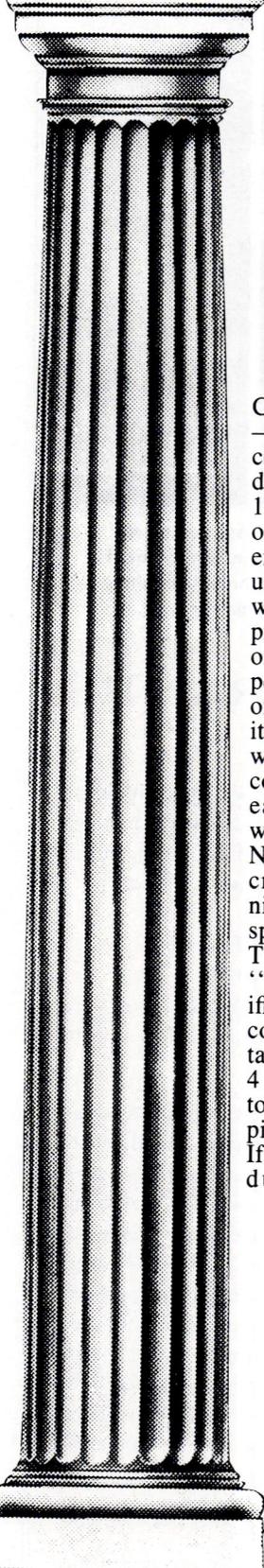
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**The bench around a white oak provided a vantage point for watching sailboat races on Michigan's Lake Minnetonka.**

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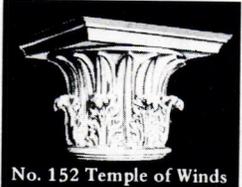


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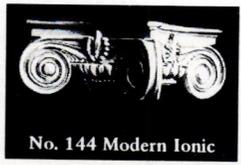
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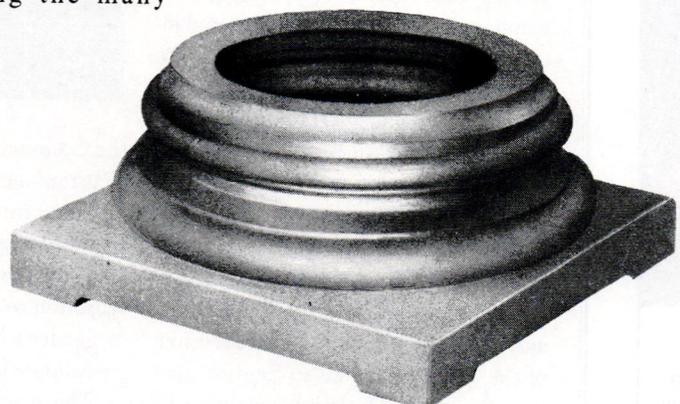
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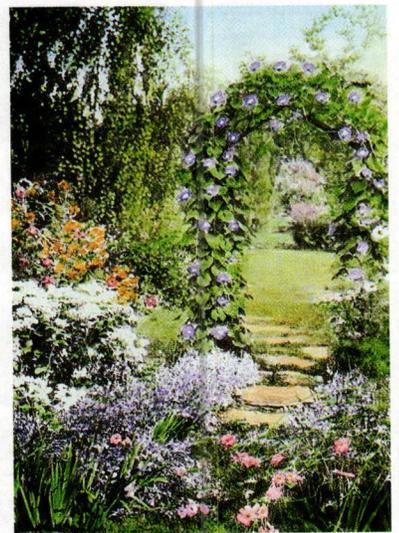


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these garden makers hoped life in the garden could mean. What also emerges . . . is how public the rich were. Over fifty years, estate garden design history reflects a general shift from conspicuous display to a desire for privacy. Gardens were transformed from showplaces to retreats. Fifty years also saw the growth of regional, truly American garden styles, and the general disappearance of stone architecture in favor of an architectonic use of plants."

Remote as such wealth may seem, the gardens of the golden age continue to inform gardening in America.

—PATRICIA POORE



The Framingham, Mass., garden of Wallace Nutting, ardent proponent of the Colonial Revival through his photography, writing, and furniture.

## MORE HISTORY GARDENS

### Nature Perfected: Gardens Through History

by William Howard Adms. Principal photography by Everett Scott.  
 Abbeville Press, 1991



THIS BOOK STARTS with the ancient world (before Rome) and ends with the Modern Movement in American landscape design: a sort of "Who's-Who, and when" introduction to the world's great gardens. Text and photographs are reminiscent of the big books required in college art-history classes. There is no new criticism or insight, but, after reading the book, you have a basic knowledge of history, philosophical underpinnings, famous names, and cycles through time.

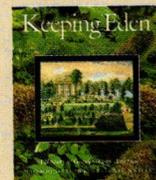
In addition to the expected chapters on Italian and French design, you're treated to an excellent overview of Islamic and Mughal gardens. A whole section of the book is devoted to English gardens (including English landscape garden design outside of England). Another entire part tours Chinese and Japanese gardens. The final part devotes 65 pages

to the New World.

There is little focus on residential gardens (other than the likes of Fallingwater), but plenty of inspiration in the photographs of beautiful places.

### Keeping Eden: A History of Gardening in America

Copyrighted 1992 by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Bulfinch Press (Little, Brown & Co.)



EACH OF ITS CHAPTERS written by a different expert, this beautiful book is an egalitarian and more-or-less chronological tour of American gardening from the Colonies to the present. Important chapters include one on 19th-century developments in landscape architecture. Meriting chapters of their own: garden traditions in the South; the city's contribution to the garden; the depiction of gardens by American artists; and greenhouse gardening.

The writers offer an overview and also personal insights; some unusual art and archival material is included along with the pretty pictures.

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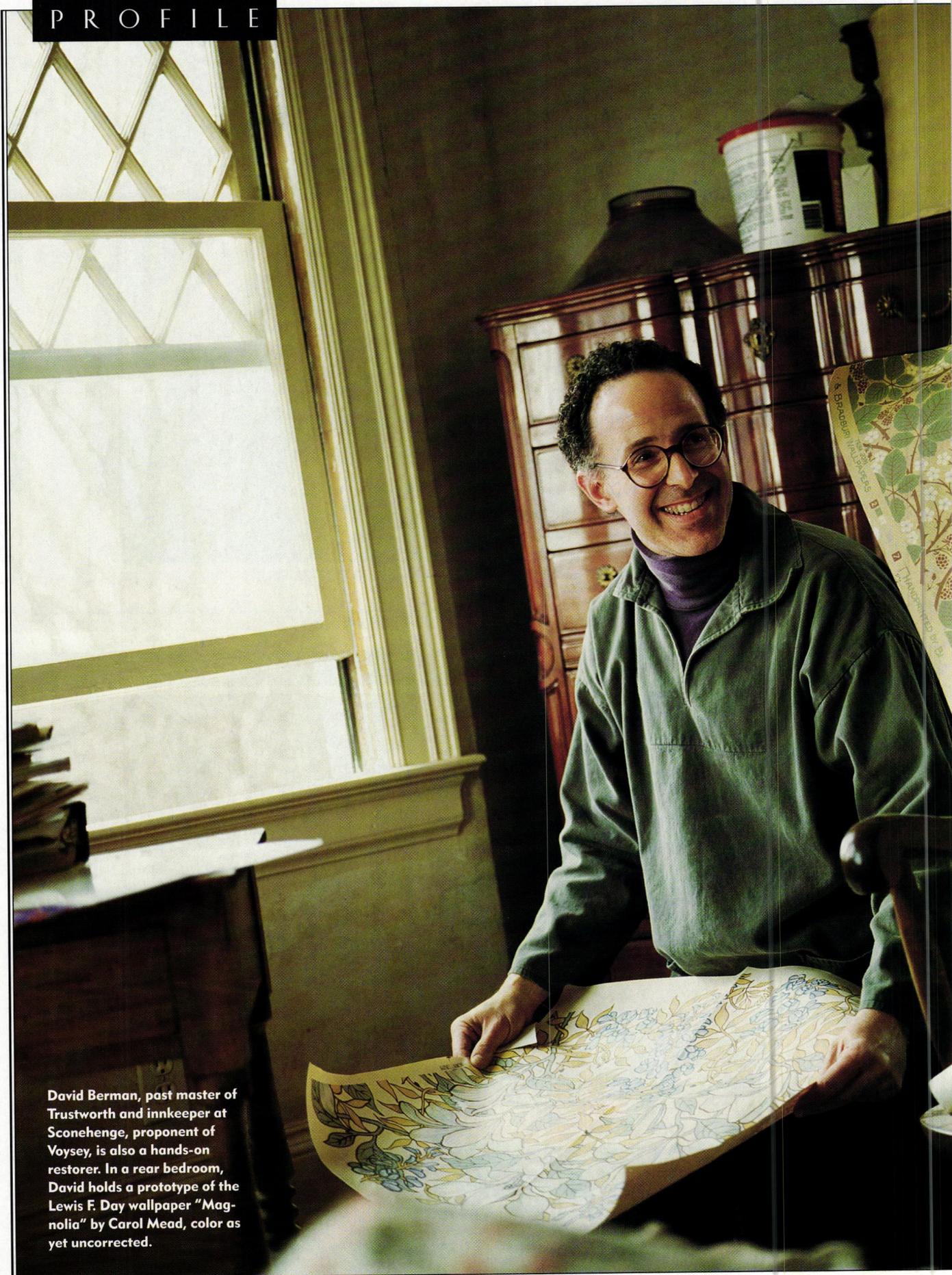
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David Berman, past master of Trustworth and innkeeper at Sconehege, proponent of Voysey, is also a hands-on restorer. In a rear bedroom, David holds a prototype of the Lewis F. Day wallpaper "Magnolia" by Carol Mead, color as yet uncorrected.

# TRUSTWORTHY TO SCONEHENGE

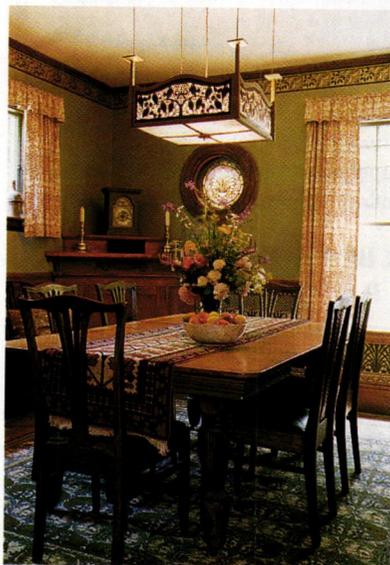
by Patricia Poore

**D**AVID BERMAN IS TELLING stories — dumpster-loads of junk, “structural wisteria” entangled with rotted porch joists, piles of chicken bones behind a radiator — when the phone rings. The machine picks up and a female voice cries out, “David, are you eating? It’s lunch time, take a break! I know you!” A friend three time zones away, in California, is watching out for a man with restoration fever.

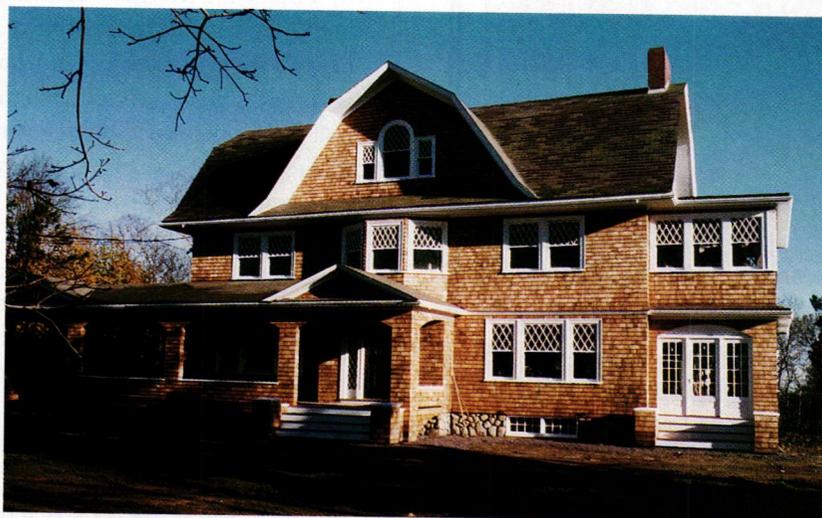
This is another side of David Berman, artist. Clients know him to have a quiet manner; his voice is measured, almost scholarly. A somewhat obscure English designer named Voysey is his passion. His work is meticulous and impeccable. Yet here he is in the midst of a whole-house

renovation, talking animatedly about grease stains and plumbing.

Although he reproduces period work by such luminaries as Charles Rennie Mackintosh, David has recently achieved some fame as an interpreter of English architect/designer CFA Voysey (1857-1941),

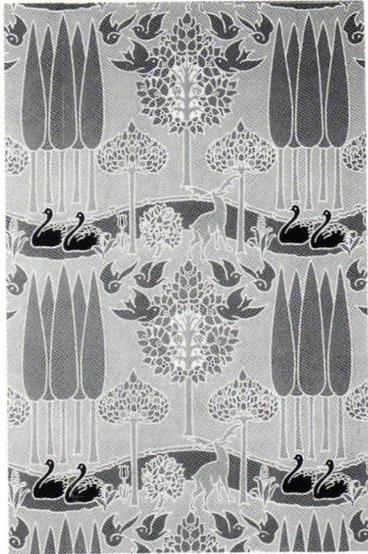


**RIGHT:** The playful but commanding chandelier is a David Berman adaptation of a Voysey design. **BELOW:** David’s big project is this house, here stripped of filth and unsalvageable plantings.



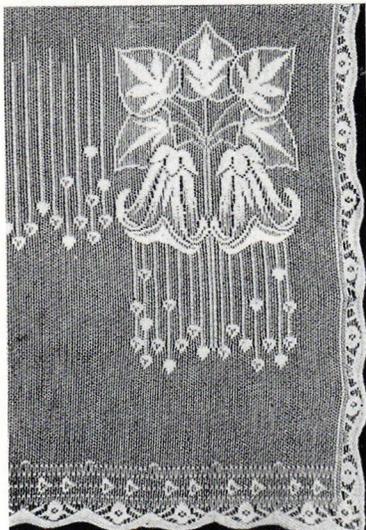
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an eccentric talent whose work is often included with his Arts & Crafts Movement contemporaries. David's business is called Trustworth Studio, named after the Shingle-style house Trustworth where he lived for twelve years. Berman's studio turns out furniture, clocks, lighting fixtures, and even needlework based on Voysey designs — all custom.

Celebrities buy his fixtures, and his sconces have been displayed at the American Craft Museum in New York City. Recent months, however, have not found him in the studio. Instead he has been attending to this abused and horrendously filthy house in Plymouth, Massachusetts, with the intention of opening a bed-and-breakfast inn. Needless to say, its interior includes a lot of Voysey.

"Voysey's designs were delightfully odd," says David, "almost childlike, although there's a sophistication and color sense that keeps it out of the nursery." Just the thing for a house, once occupied by a bank president and then a judge, that David says has always taken itself far too seriously. Not any more. Conservation has been diligent, but decoration is pure delight. Papers by Voysey and Morris, vibrant colors, allegory and love all have a place in the new scheme. The name says it all: Friends have dubbed the house "Sconehege," poking gentle fun at David's penchant for serving homemade English scones.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE DAVID FULLY OCCUPIED with this new project. With much regret he left Trustworth, which he restored and stewarded, over an unanticipated option-to-buy dispute. His stories about that special house — "a living, breathing thing" — can bring tears to a lis-

tener's eyes. Trustworth was still beautiful but sadly abandoned when he moved in. There are tales of wisteria and trumpet vine resurrected during his tenancy, long-lost garden paths suddenly found, birds perching at night in an open window to watch him work. David is grateful for the time. And he continues to follow his affections, an approach to life and career that Trustworth apparently nurtured. "There has to be magic. I want to study William Burges [medieval fantasist of Victorian England] and reproduce his furniture. Something tells me I have to do this. I know it's not commercial. I serve a narrow market."

David has been a rescuer since childhood. "I used to go to auctions and come back with things to fix. I started with phonographs, and then everything up to cars." After college he built and restored furniture, specializing at first in "Pilgrim century" pieces during his years on Nantucket. But when he moved to Scituate and Trustworth, an Arts & Crafts-period house, his focus changed. Never a fan of Mission or American Arts & Crafts pieces, David became enamored of the Edwardian cabinetmakers of the English A&C Movement. "The handwork was superb, with tight joinery and beautiful proportions and clean, almost modern design."

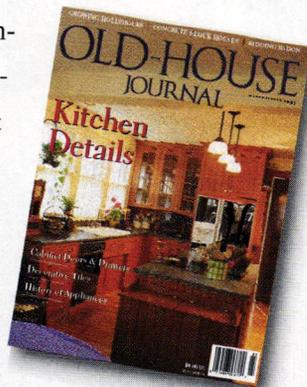
He found himself losing interest in the sloppy, distressed country look. He wanted to make fine pieces, because by then he could. His most ambitious piece to date is a one-of-a-kind media cabinet for a private client, adapted from an Aesthetic Movement mantelpiece designed by Godwin and Whistler.

David discovered Voysey among clippings from *The Studio*, an influential design magazine published around the turn of the cen-



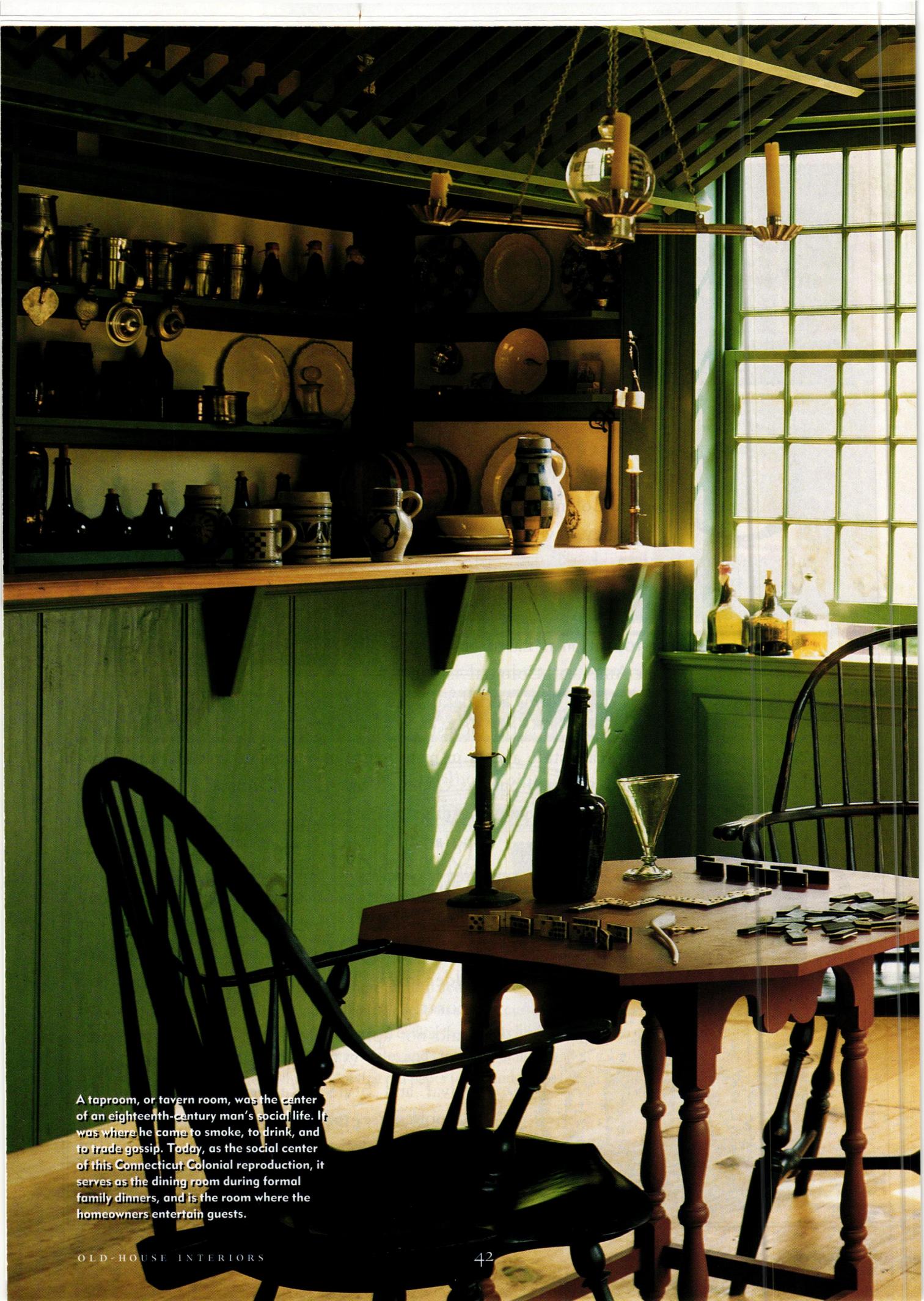
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assure good workmanship while they save you money. **OHJ** isn’t all preservation nuts and bolts. We also feature articles about landscaping, and the history of various house styles. ← Over the years, our readership demand has actually been able to persuade manufacturers to reintroduce such long-neglected items as push-button light switches and Lin-crusta-Walton wallcovering. ← We think you’ll be delighted and fascinated by our unique publication. Subscriptions to **Old-House Journal** are \$27 per year. Send to **OHJ**, PO Box 58017, Boulder, CO 80322-8017.

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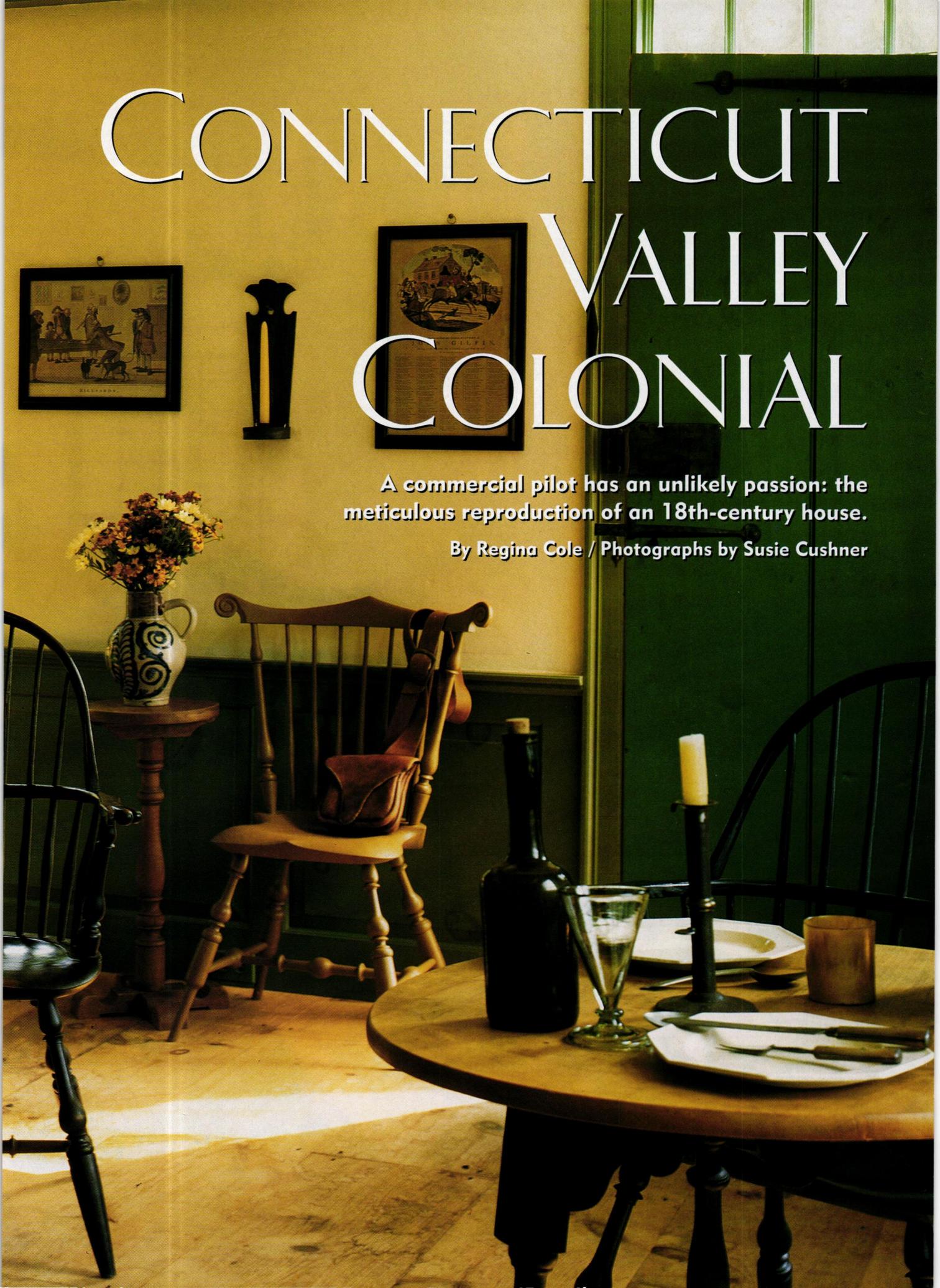


A taproom, or tavern room, was the center of an eighteenth-century man's social life. It was where he came to smoke, to drink, and to trade gossip. Today, as the social center of this Connecticut Colonial reproduction, it serves as the dining room during formal family dinners, and is the room where the homeowners entertain guests.

# CONNECTICUT VALLEY COLONIAL

**A commercial pilot has an unlikely passion: the meticulous reproduction of an 18th-century house.**

**By Regina Cole / Photographs by Susie Cushner**





**LEFT:** A sturdy trestle table is the work surface and dining area in the spacious kitchen. **RIGHT:** A view of the front hall. The handsome front door, with its four glass bull's eyes, is open. **BELOW:** Paint applied to fresh cedar clapboards that moved as they dried created an instant, if unintentional, antique exterior finish. **BELOW RIGHT:** The owners come home to the eighteenth century.

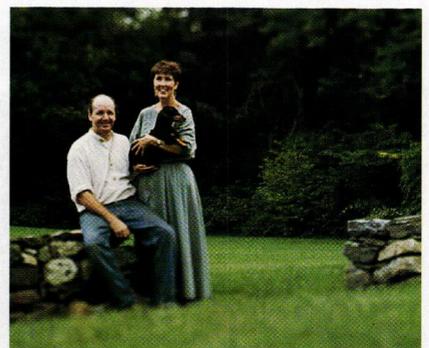
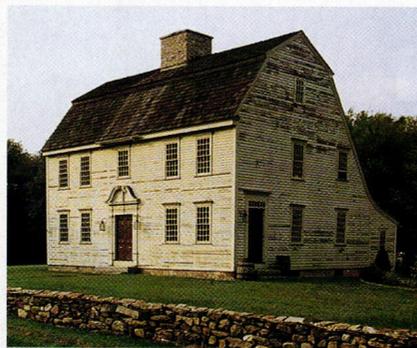
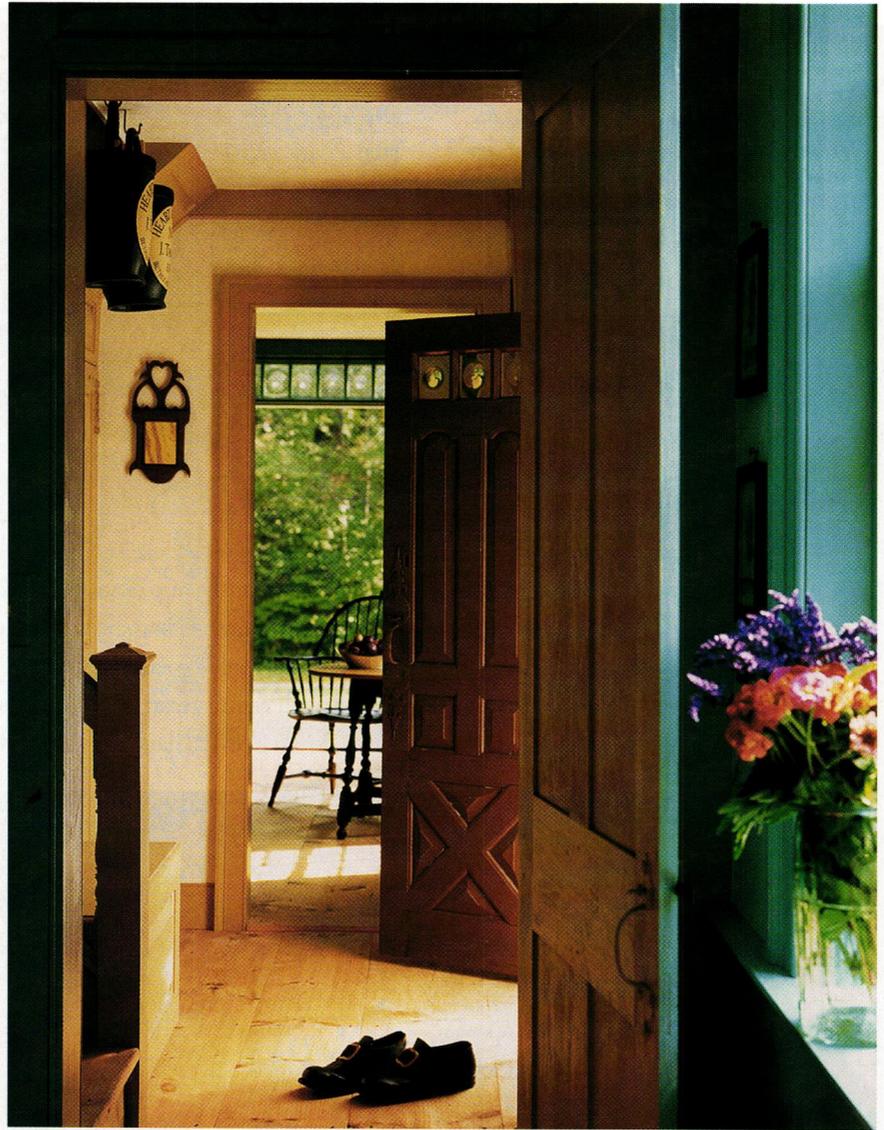
ALONG THE RURAL ROADSIDE, WELL-KEPT old houses proclaim deep-rooted civic pride. One particular home stands out in this historic Connecticut landscape, testimony to its imposing colonial presence. Solidly planted in a clearing behind a fieldstone wall, the square, simple lines and massive central chimney say that this is a house from our early, familiar history.

Well, no, it isn't. This Connecticut Valley Colonial was finished last year, not in 1750. The owner (who occasionally walks to get the mail in a George Washington cloak and three-cornered hat) is very much a man of the twentieth century, a pilot who flies commercial airplanes. "When I come home from work," he says, "I come into a different time."

When the electricity failed last Christmas Eve, he and his wife lit candles and roasted a leg of venison in the enormous kitchen fireplace: unplanned purity in a holiday celebration. The owners don't usually live that authentically, but their house would allow it if it were their choice.

The ten-year project has its seeds in an antique colonial that the homeowner occupied some years ago. "I like 18th-century architecture," he says. "It's based on classic, Greek shapes, so inherently beautiful. I like simplicity."

Appreciation led to a construction project so period authentic, he became like a man building his house in a Connecticut clearing in 1750. He started by hewing the house's massive frame out of green timbers of native



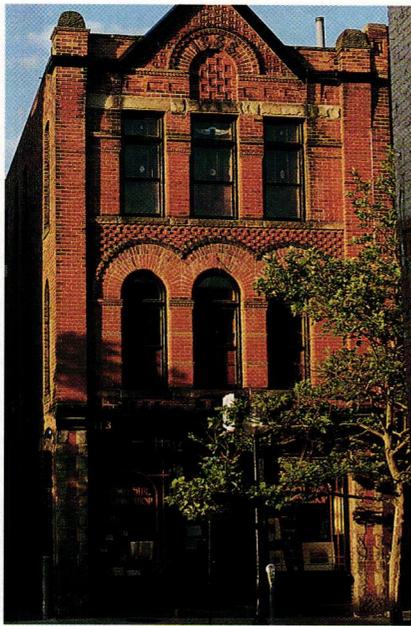
red oak with an antique broadaxe.

"Every nail in this house is hand made, most of them by a nearby blacksmith. There's old glass in the windows, and I cut every pane. Out of 700, I only broke two," he boasts happily. "Whatever I couldn't do, I wanted someone I knew to do it. That's the phi-

losophy of a colonial house — it was made by people you knew."

"I WANTED A TAVERN ROOM BECAUSE IN 1750 it would have been the center of the common man's life." He gestures around the sunny room at the front of his house. But, as authentic as the house

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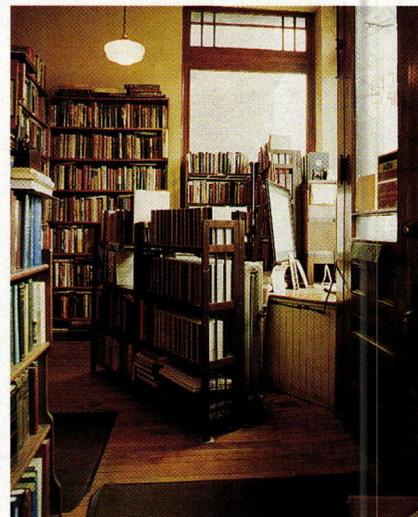
**LIVING OVER THE STORE, VICTORIAN STYLE, IN ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

SOMETIMES, AS THEY ARE READING IN THEIR FRONT PARLOR, Carolyn and Joseph Arcure will hear the voices of shoppers coming out of the bookstore below, or passersby walking in downtown Ann Arbor. Sometimes they even hear comments about their home's eclectic Victorian decor. Instead of resenting their lack of privacy, the Arcures love what those voices represent. ■ "Living over the store, right in the heart of downtown, is just as much an American cultural icon as the suburban house behind the white picket fence," says Carolyn Arcure. "In fact, it's an older, more authentic one. It's the true sense of community." ■ At least one major American institution agrees. The Arcures' two brick Liberty Street buildings are so quintessential an image of American hometowns

that they form the backdrop in a new advertisement for the Ford Aspire. ■ It was just what the couple envisioned 20 years ago, when they bought the decrepit historic building put up by John Haarer in 1888. Haarer had been a photographer who ran a "daguerrean salon" and book shop out of the ground floor of his building, and housed his family above. ■ "When we bought the building in 1975, the area was zoned commercial. We applied to have the zoning changed back to the original combination of commercial and residential uses," Carolyn explains. "After we began the effort, the whole area's zoning was changed back, so that now it again resembles a classic Midwest downtown, in use as well as appearance." ■ For a short time, federal and local funding became available to enable homeowners to do just what the Arcures had done — to save historic Main Streets. The funding availability was too late for the Arcures, but, "Once some of the legislation went into place, prices went up," says Carolyn. "But this is still something that's possible for so many of us. Not in Greenwich Village, or in downtown Boston, but in small cities all across the country." ■ Carolyn was just out of the University of Michigan when she and her husband began their ambitious project. She had no experience restoring buildings. "I just knew I loved this one," she says. She worked seven days a week at her task, hiring and supervising where necessary, proceeding by the seat of her pants the rest of the time. Many evenings, she and Joseph ate pizza for dinner late at night, exhausted, huddled by the hearth. The fireplace, lovely and not in need of restoration, served as a kind of touchstone, Carolyn says, keeping them focused on their goal. ■ In order to bring light into their living quarters, the Arcures decided to break out the ceiling in

**TEXT BY ANTOINETTE MARTIN  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT DORRANCE**

**Built in 1888, the John Haarer Building is a fine example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. BELOW: The West Side Book Shop moved in after renovation 20 years ago. RIGHT: Inside the Arcures' home above the shop, sunlight floods a central two-storey space. A burled-walnut Victorian table is paired with Regency chairs. Original pocket doors lead into the living room.**



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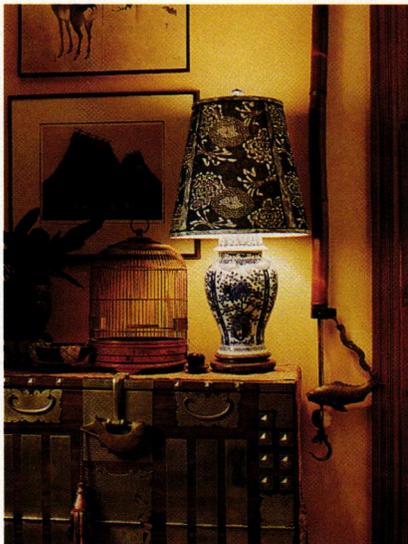


the parlor and create an atrium-like garden room.

"We had to get permission from the Historic District Commission," Carolyn explains. "They could not have been better. They felt the change was in keeping with the Victorian sense of the space."

More good news came when they learned that a professor at the university's school of architecture and design had saved the parlor's missing shutters. "That's one of the great things about restoring a building that's been neglected for so long. The original pieces are often still around."

Once the time-consuming and strenuous work of rezoning and rebuilding were done, Carolyn could finally turn to the fun part — fur-



**ABOVE:** In the living room, a Japanese etching lamp and birdcage appoint a 19th century Korean chest. **RIGHT:** The black lacquer table is Japanese; the shutters are original. **BELOW:** An antique chandelier composed of three brass herons hangs over the dining room table.

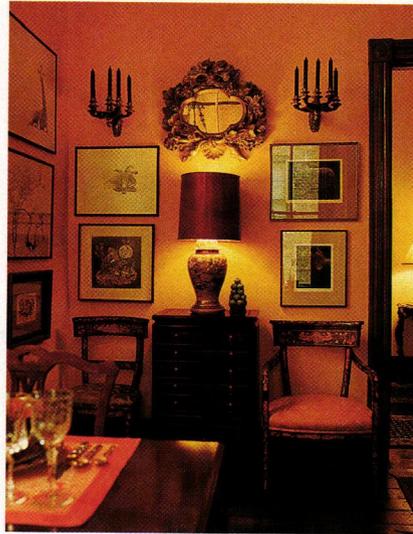




nishing her new home. She began collecting when Joseph served as an Air Force dentist in Japan during the late 1960s. The two traveled extensively in the Far East at that time, gathering experience — and beautiful pieces.

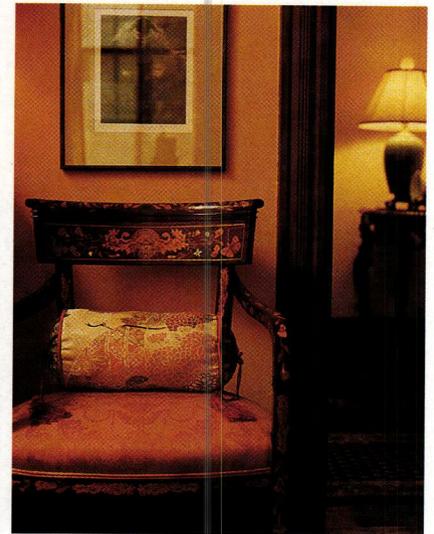
“I feel like the captain of a Yankee clipper ship,” she says, “the way they used to bring things from trips back home to fill their houses, not so much because of their value, but because of their beauty, and the memories.”

It’s a Victorian notion that our homes should be replete with objects that have meaning. Just as Carolyn speaks passionately about the greater good served when we save and reuse old buildings, so does she feel about



the things collected in her travels.

“It’s like with that samovar,” she says, gesturing to a handsome piece atop the Chinese breakfast in the din-



ing room. “I bargained for three days in a hovel in Afghanistan to get that, and when we finally settled on a price, everybody applauded. Every time I see that samovar, I think of the smile on the face of the man who sold it.”

Joseph quit his dentistry work years ago and became a photographer. Carolyn volunteers for Greenpeace and is active in support of women’s reproductive rights. She is also currently creating two new lines of beaded necklaces, one designed to celebrate the seasons of a woman’s life and the other, astrological events.

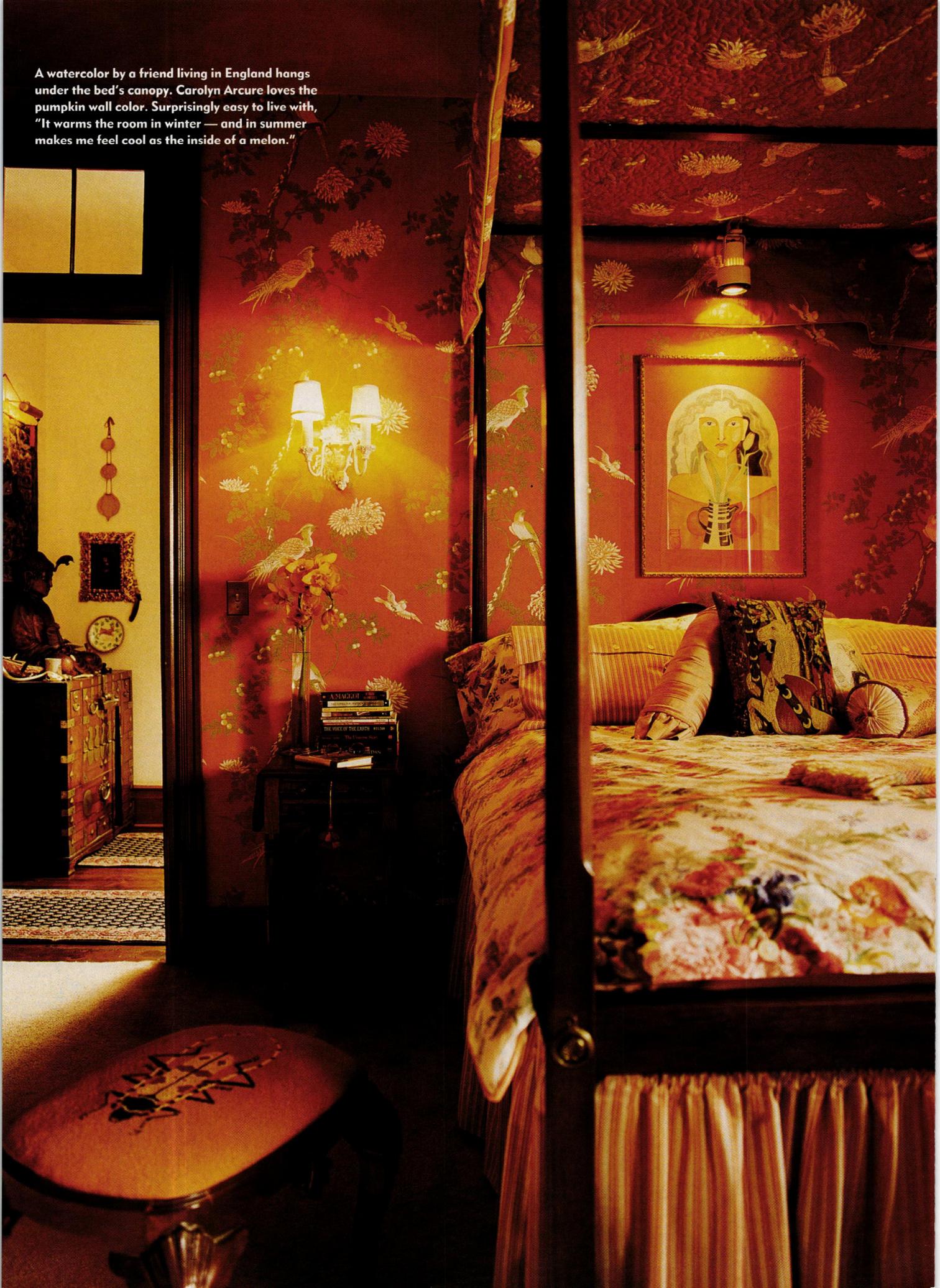
But there is still time for what the Arcures think of simply as “propagating the faith.” Often, the phone will ring and another would-be building restorer will want to know: was it worth it?

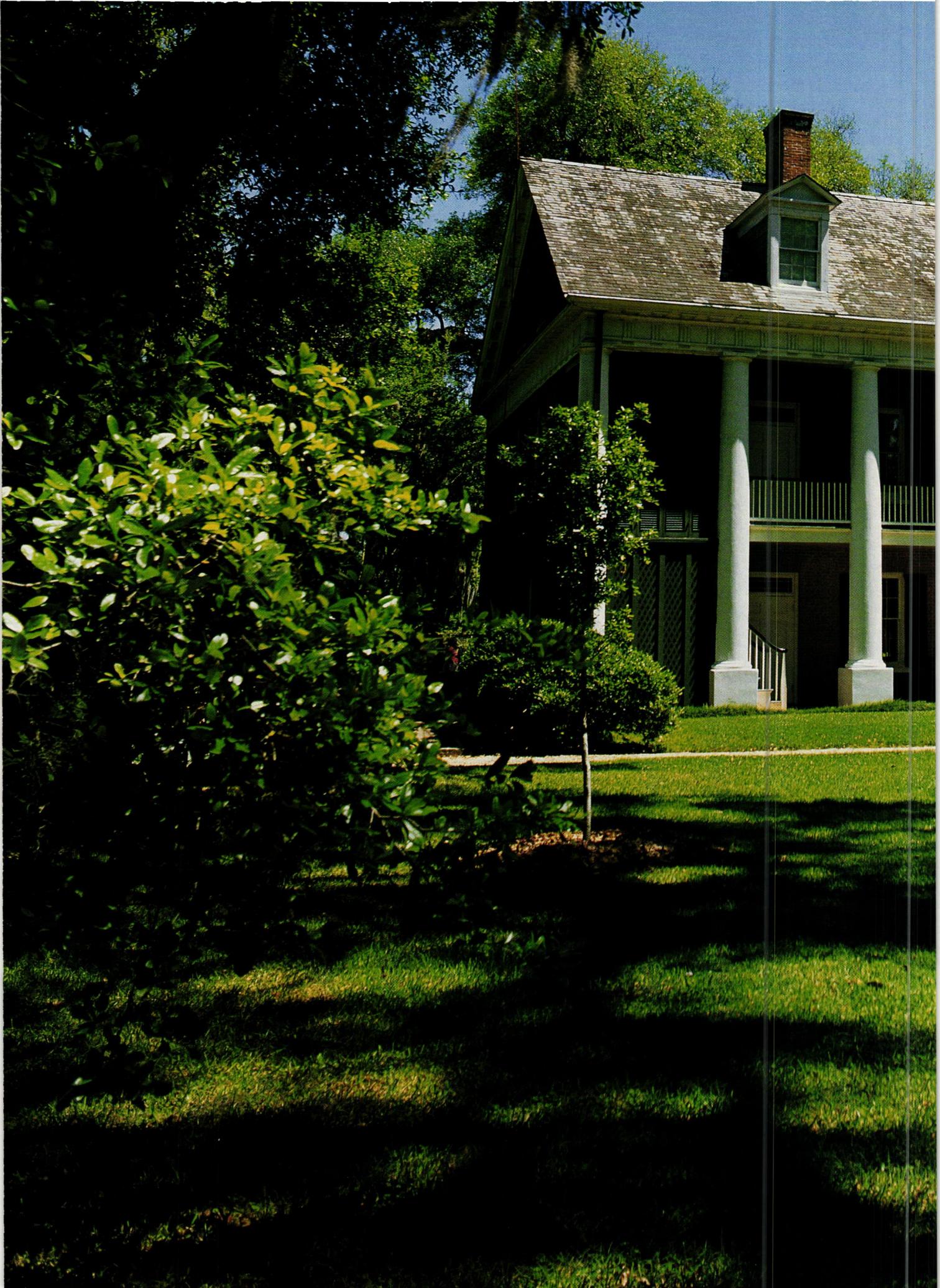
“This way of living works,” says Carolyn. “The store pays the mortgage, and we are in the midst of a living, working neighborhood. And it’s time-proven — we’ve been doing it for twenty years.” ♦



**ABOVE:** In the dining room, a pair of fine Dutch marquetry chairs flanks a silver chest from Hong Kong. The pillow is made from an antique obi fragment. **LEFT:** The kitchen has double-tiered campaign-style cupboards and an old Garland restaurant range.

A watercolor by a friend living in England hangs under the bed's canopy. Carolyn Arcure loves the pumpkin wall color. Surprisingly easy to live with, "It warms the room in winter — and in summer makes me feel cool as the inside of a melon."



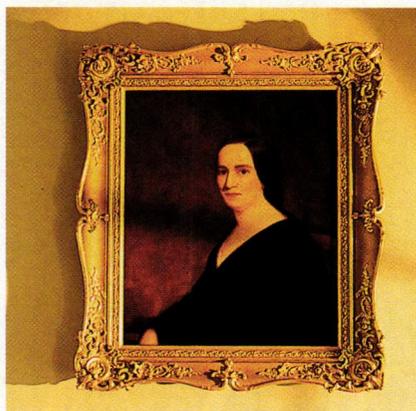




# SHADOWS ON-THE-TECHE

**Deep in Louisiana bayou country, a French Colonial plantation house, built on sugarcane profits, is a legacy bequeathed to the region by its last owner.**

**Text by Lynn Elliott / Photographs by Steve Marsel**



**ABOVE:** Portraits of William Frederick Weeks and Frances Weeks Prewitt hang above an American Empire sofa, upholstered in horsehair fabric. Black was considered the most appropriate color for fabric on mahogany furniture. The window treatments — green silk damask with gold bullion fringe — are based on the Weeks family papers and a *Godey's Lady's Book* illustration; the pressed bronze cornices are similar to tin ones found at Shadows. **LEFT:** After her husband's death in 1834, Mary Clara Weeks, shown in this portrait from the dining room, managed the plantation and raised their six children.

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND IMAGINE THE SOUTHERN Plantation. You probably see a Tara-like brick house, its classical columns rising through a two-tiered porch. The trees are swathed in Spanish moss. The air is thick with the moist heat of bayou country.

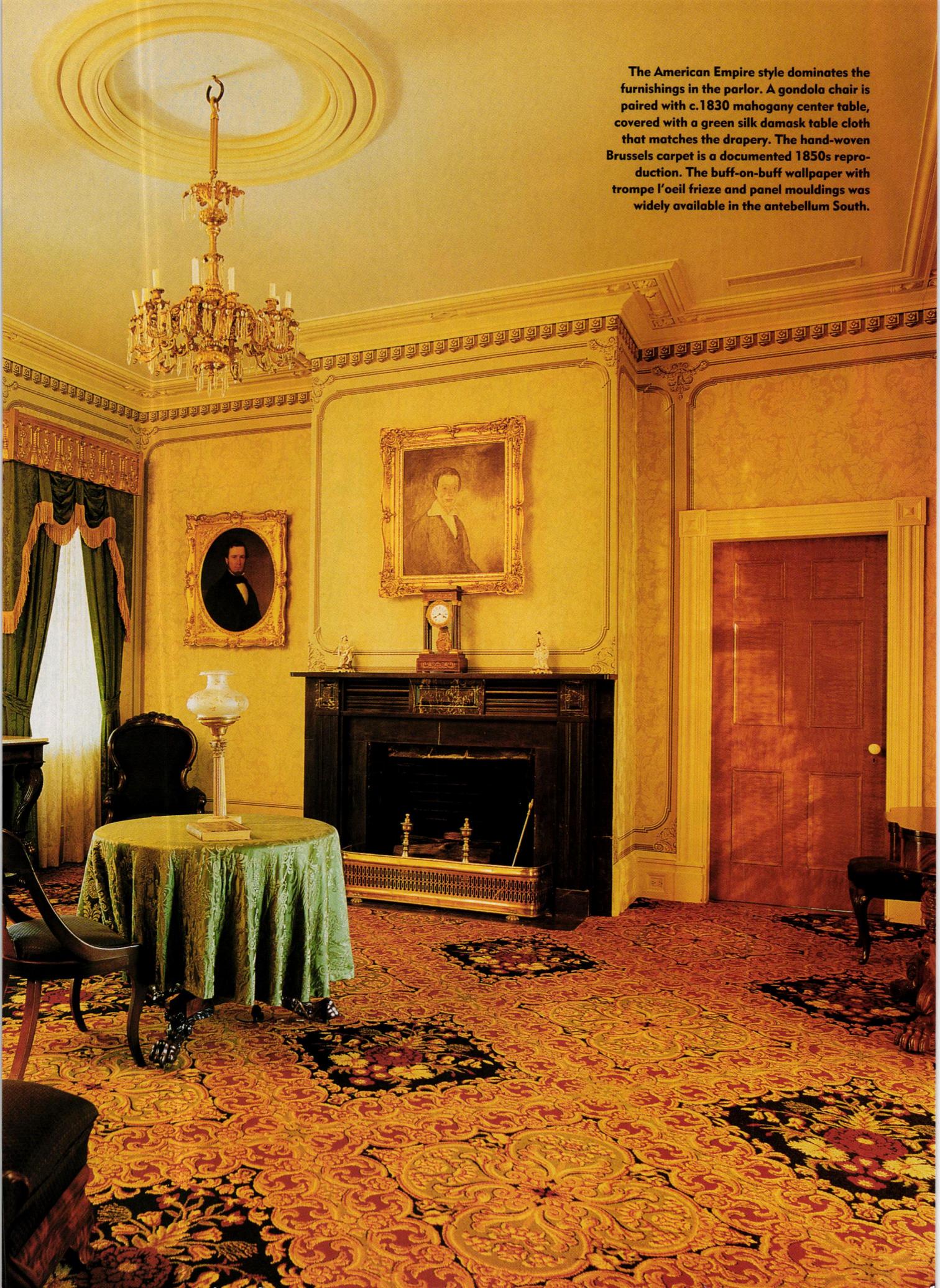
We can thank William Weeks Hall for this enduring — although not entirely accurate — picture of the “typical” Southern plantation. Hall had but one passion in his life: Shadows-on-the-Teche, his family's 19th-century homestead. Early in this century, as

part of an effort to preserve the house, he shamelessly promoted its image from Washington to Hollywood.

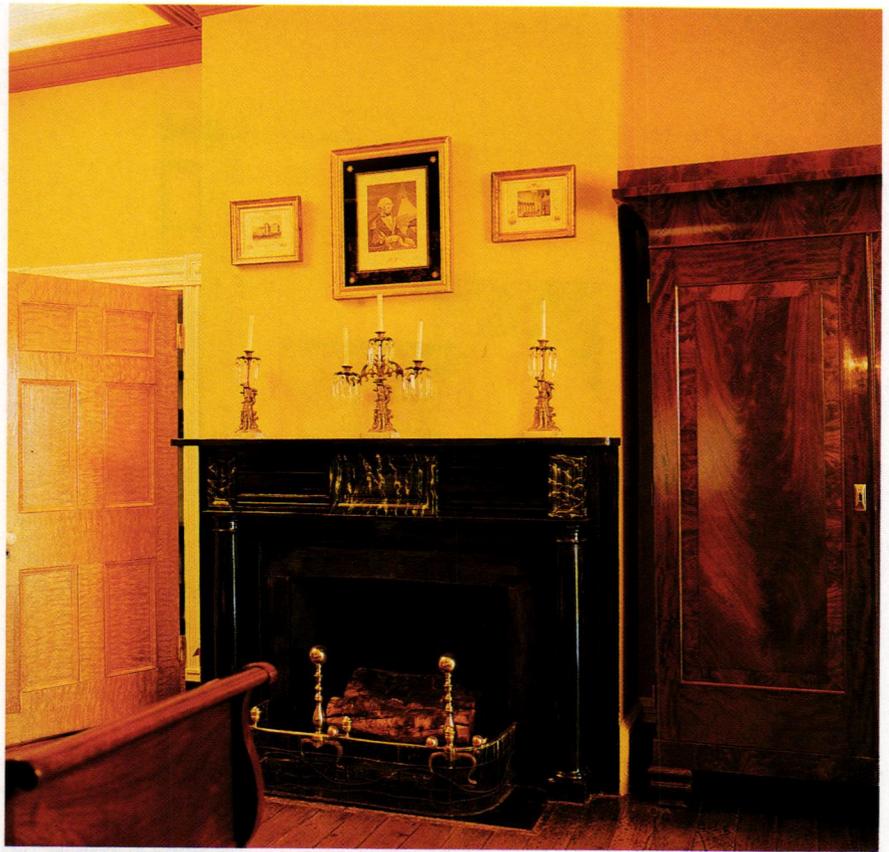
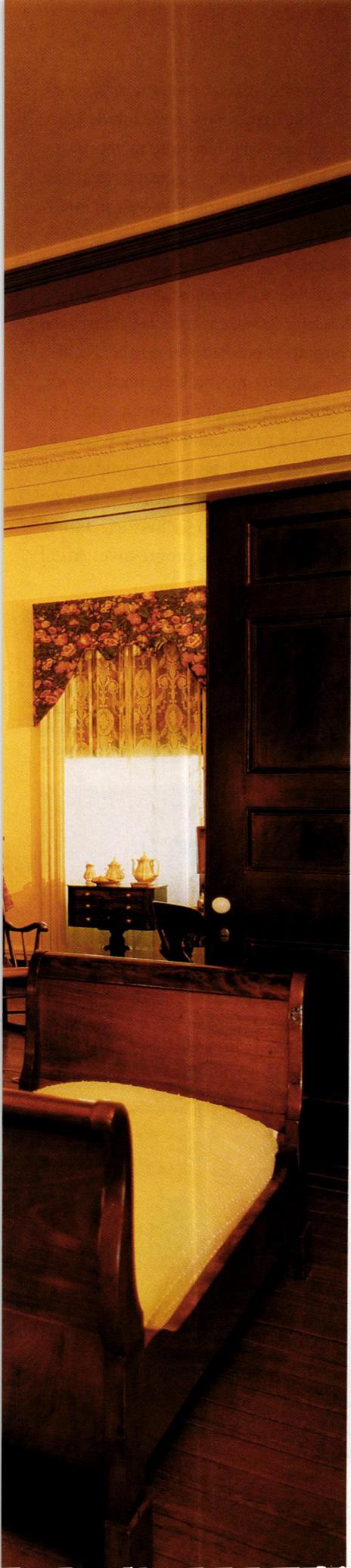
Located in New Iberia, Louisiana, Shadows-on-the-Teche is set on a narrow rise of land overlooking the Bayou Teche. The house was built in 1834 for planter David Weeks, Hall's English great-grandfather. The 1800s were an entrepreneurial time in Louisiana. In 1795, sugar was granulated for the first time. Planters searching for the right crop to grow realized sugarcane was ideal. The Weeks family invested in



The American Empire style dominates the furnishings in the parlor. A gondola chair is paired with c.1830 mahogany center table, covered with a green silk damask table cloth that matches the drapery. The hand-woven Brussels carpet is a documented 1850s reproduction. The buff-on-buff wallpaper with trompe l'oeil frieze and panel mouldings was widely available in the antebellum South.







**ABOVE:** The wood mantel and the baseboards were grained to imitate expensive black marble. The Weekses covered the pine flooring with carpeting; the Trust is locating an appropriate example for the bedroom. **LEFT:** In the master bedroom, the c.1845 tester bed with matching canopy and block-printed chintz bed hangings was handed down in the Weeks family for four generations.

large holdings, from sugarcane property on Weeks Island and cotton fields in northern Louisiana, to these 160 acres by the headwaters of the bayou.

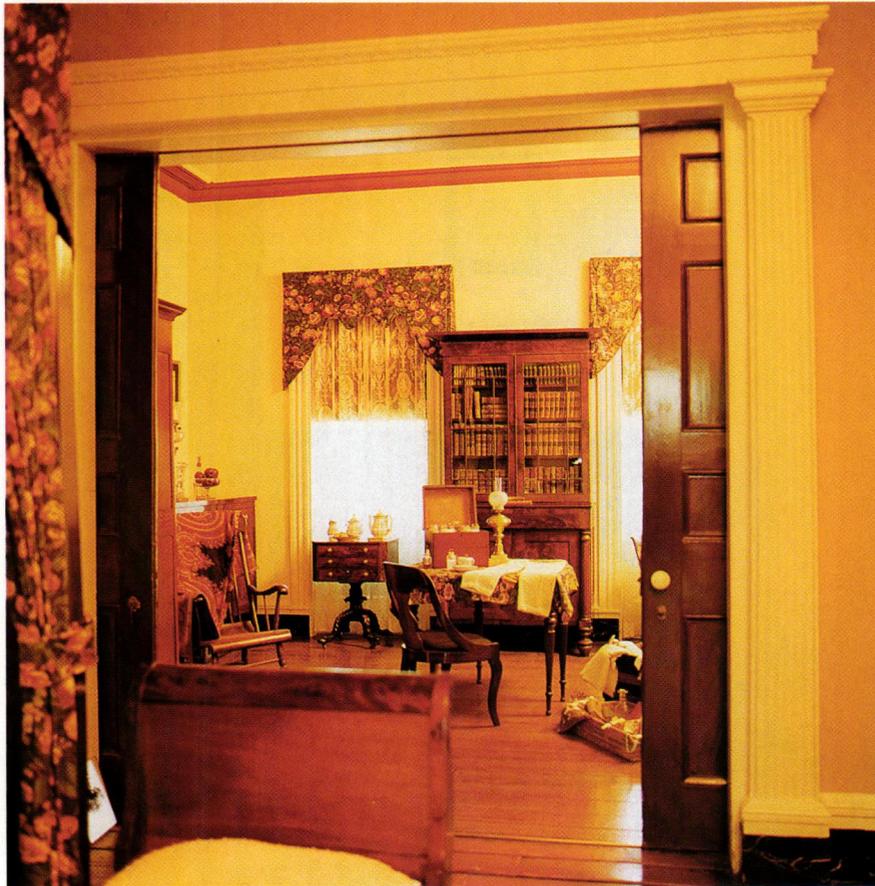
For many years, house styles in the Louisiana Territory — alternately a colony of France and Spain — remained uninfluenced by the architectural trends popular in the fledgling country it neighbored. The region retained its distinctive Creole culture and architecture until 1803, when the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory. At that time, the mostly Acadian (French Canadian) population of the Bayou Teche experienced an influx of Anglo-Americans. The newcomers

brought the latest in architecture, the Greek Revival style.

Shadows-on-the-Teche shows the influence of both cultures. Made of coral-color bricks, it is a typical French Colonial plantation house with dormers punctuating the roof, and a full-length *galerie* (porch) across the front. Its embellishments, however, are pure Greek Revival. Two-storey columns across the gallery are topped by a decorative entablature; gabled ends form triangular pediments.

Inside, on both floors, the rooms follow a U-shaped plan around a rear loggia. Three large rooms run across the front of the house; two smaller rooms or *cabinets* occupy the back corners of the building on either side of the loggia. There are no hallways. Occupants travel from room to room or via the front and back porches.

The second floor contains the main living areas, including the parlor, sitting room, and bedrooms. Only the dining



owns infrequently during his early years.

The early visits to the family plantation must have left quite an impression because, from the beginning, Hall had the preservation of Shadows in mind. Returning from Europe in 1922, he made the first of many shrewd decisions. Hall hired New Orleans architect Richard Koch (pronounced “coke”) to oversee the restoration of Shadows-on-the-Teche.

At the time, architectural restoration was just beginning to emerge. The standard practices of today were not yet widely used. So Koch’s sympathetic philosophy of preservation— leaving most of a building’s historic fabric untouched — was progressive. All of

**LEFT:** The sitting room was a hub of activity. You could read a novel from the Empire-style bookcase, play a game at the Federal-style card table, or do needlework from the inlaid and gilt-decorated sewing stand.  
**BELOW:** Located in one of the cabinets, a high-post double bed with a Louis XIV rising sun motif dominates the bedroom.

room, a double pantry, and an extra bedroom are situated on the first floor. (The kitchen was in a separate building.) The house is furnished with Empire-style pieces originally owned by the family or added by William Weeks Hall.

DAVID WEEKS NEVER SAW THE COMPLETED plantation. Ill with what was probably cancer, he traveled to Hartford, Connecticut, seeking a cure, and died there in 1834. His wife Mary Clara took over running the plantation as well as raising their six children.

The house remained in the family, but Shadows went through a long period of neglect between 1895 and 1922. Although a caretaker was hired, the climate and dense vegetation of the bayou country severely weathered the house.

William Weeks Hall, the great-grandson of David, became sole owner of Shadows at the age of 26. Hall was born in New Orleans, and had visited Shad-



The columns on the loggia, which overlooks the Bayou Teche, date from the 1960s. Eventually, the Trust plans to reproduce the brick piers and windows that originally enclosed the area.





Koch's work was documented, and most changes made were reversible.

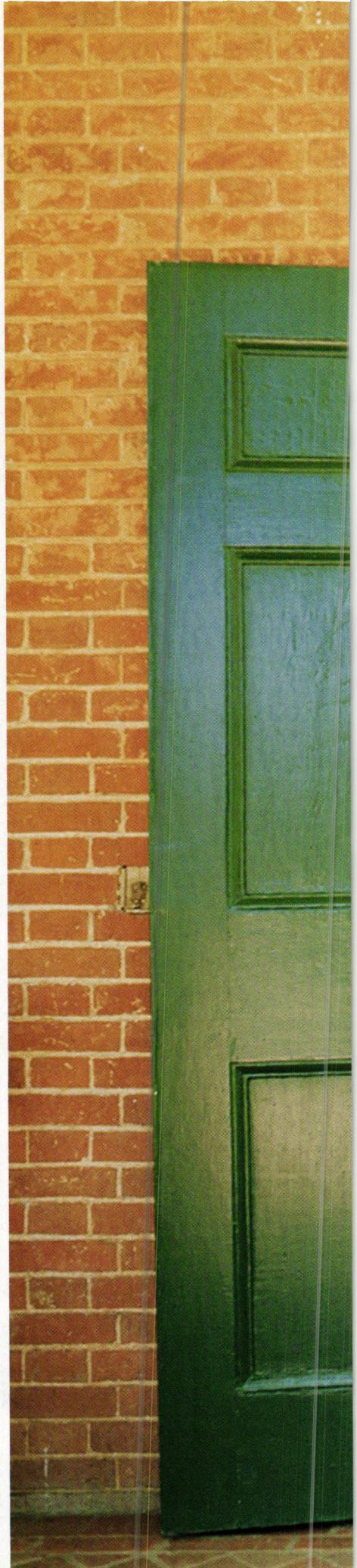
Besides the house, Hall had the forethought to preserve 17,000 documents about the house and family dating from the turn of the 18th century. Donated to Louisiana State University, these archives provide a level of documentation that sets *Shadows-on-the-Teche* apart from other regional historic houses.

In promoting the house during the 1920s, William Weeks Hall had a businessman's sense of marketing. He adopted the poetic name *Shadows-on-the-Teche* from a little-known 1908 song. Using existing live oaks and camellias, Hall enhanced the landscape's evocative atmosphere by screening the property with plantings of bamboo. (New Iberia had grown in 90 years; by the '20s, a major road was only 300 feet from the house.) Hall had traveled in sophisticated circles. His peers were the stars of the art and literary scene. Many well-

**ABOVE: Ancient oaks draped with Spanish moss inspired the lyrical appellation of *Shadows-on-the-Teche*. RIGHT: The c. 1830 mahogany dining room table — actually two tables fastened together — was purchased by the Weeks in New Orleans. It is set with "Old Paris" china and Bohemian amber-glass etched with animals in a forest scene.**

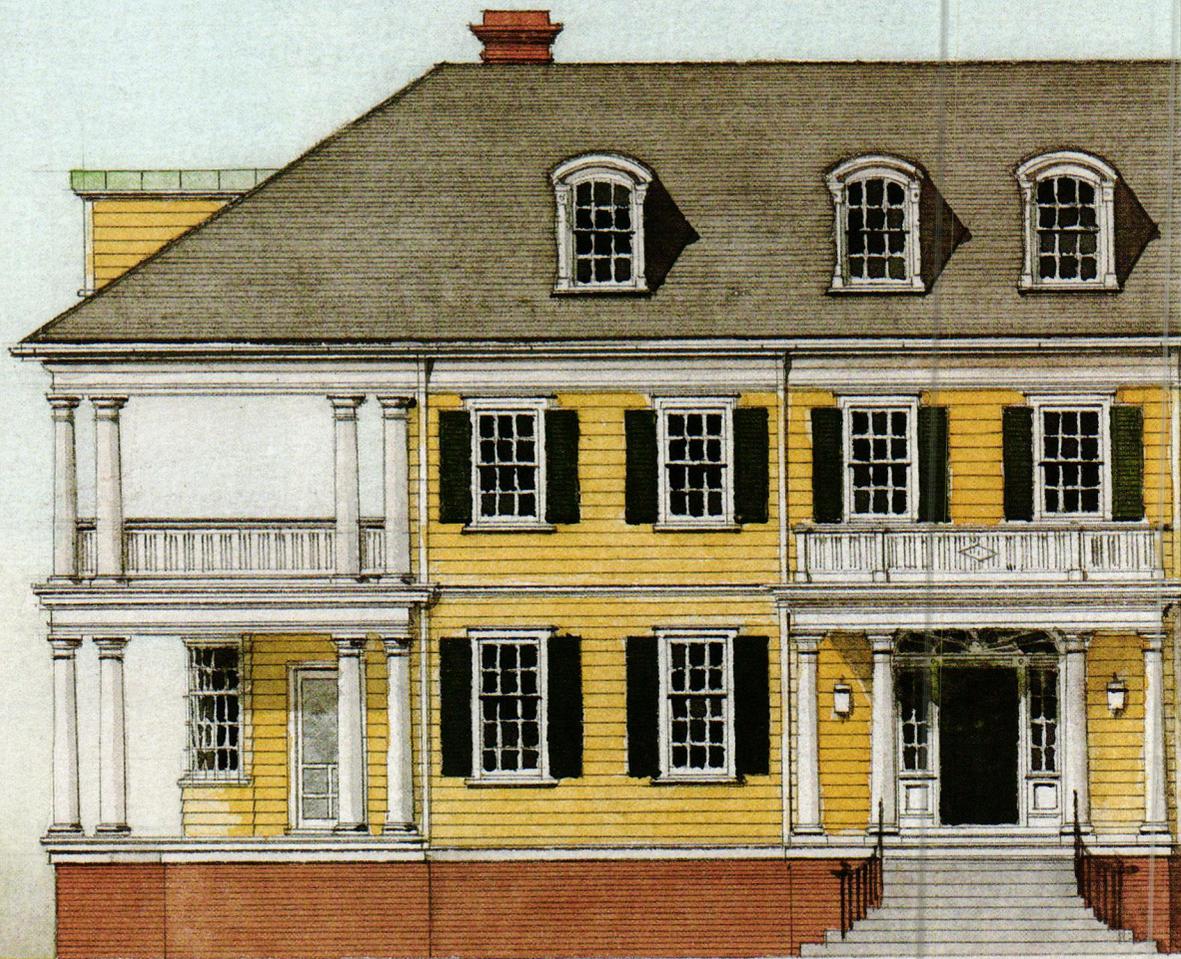
known figures visited him at *Shadows*, including Henry Miller, Cecil B. de Mille, Sherwood Anderson, and Walt Disney. Filmmaker D. W. Griffith set his movie *White Rose* there in 1923.

All of Hall's efforts were toward one goal: the preservation of *Shadows-on-the-Teche*. He wanted to leave *Shadows* to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but the Trust could only accept the property with a suitable endowment. William Weeks Hall, who had inherited only a modest trust fund, lived frugally during his last decade to save money for an endowment. A few days before he died in 1958, he learned that *Shadows-on-the-Teche* had been accepted by the Trust. ♦

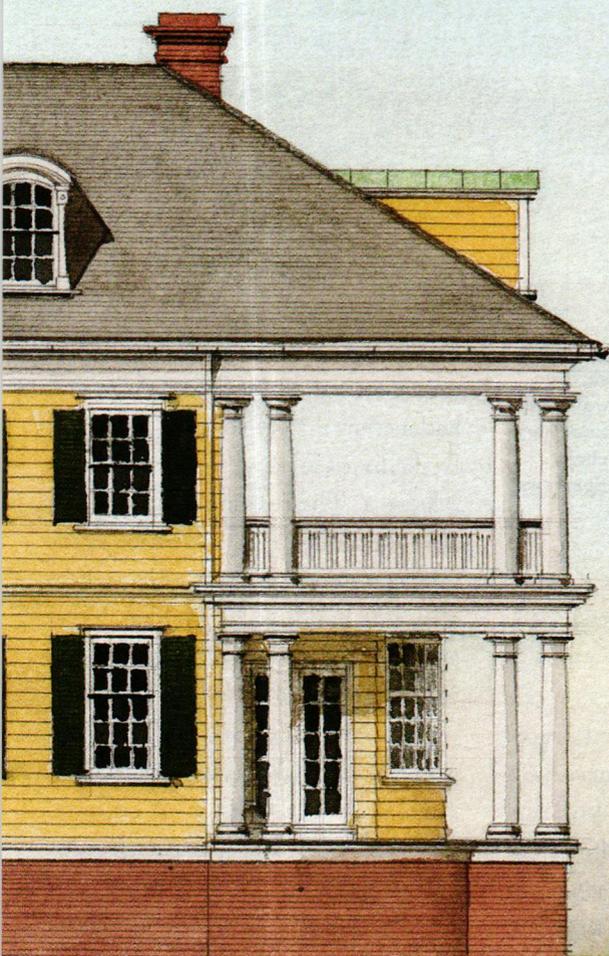




# THE COLONIAL REVIVAL



BY PATRICIA POORE  
WATERCOLOR ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY ROBERT LEANNA



ENGLISH COLONIAL REVIVAL, MORE SPECIFICALLY, is the topic here — that nostalgic style that had its roots in Victorian-era Boston and Philadelphia. More than the other colonial revivals — the Spanish, the French, the Dutch — it was felt nationally through its tremendous impact on interiors, and that impact continues almost unabated. Under the generic name Colonial Revival went every sort of replica and adaptation of styles from the vernacular to the moneyed; it encompasses, too, the revival of building elements and decorating from the Federal and even the Greek Revival periods of the first half of the 19th century.

Beginning subtly, with colonial motifs grafted onto Queen Anne houses in the 1870s, it became, in its idealization of a mythical past during the 1910s, '20s, and '30s, a style unto itself, clearly distinguishable — in hindsight — from its antecedents. (So pervasive was its influence, it even produced some early 20th-century “restorations” of true colonial buildings, overly tidy and too-much improved, which since the 1970s have been recognized as Colonial Revival period pieces — or undone and reworked according to better scholarship!)

By the 1890s, the Colonial Revival style was in evidence across the country. Some houses built in late 1880s and '90s are a bewildering anachronism of Victorian massing and room arrangement with colonial detail: Palladian windows, garlands and swags, Doric columns. More faithful examples followed. These truer replicas had not only detail but correct form — rectilinear shape, hipped roof, symmetry — as well as pediments, fanlights, and dentilled moulding.

Much has been written about the social significance of the Colonial Revival, especially its importance to descendants of colonial settlers threatened by massive immigration by Italians and Slavs. But it was as relevant to the children of immigrants as it was to the old

**The Colonial Revival didn't necessarily stick to pre-Revolutionary War buildings for inspiration. This competent neo-Federal hunk of a house — bigger and more self-conscious than its antecedents — was built in 1911 in Cape May, N.J.**



**With its neo-Georgian woodwork painted high-gloss white, the house is obviously Colonial Revival. The parlor decoration (ca. 1900) would have been considered so, as well, even though only the chair in the center is actually a revival piece. Striped wallpaper was used in both "colonial" and French rooms. Gone are Victorian "art units"; instead, pictures hung directly on walls are arranged with classical symmetry. Note the 1870s side chair reupholstered in chintz. American orientals cover most of the floors. NOTE: Interior views are after period photographs in *The Tasteful Interlude* by William Seale.**

guard. Colonial motifs were "American," and a "colonial" house meant instant assimilation. The Colonial Revival was the most successful of post-Civil War attempts by architects to settle on a style of American National architecture.

The biggest reason for its adoption, however, may be the simplest: it is appealing. The proportions of good Colonial Revival, its classical motifs, its lightness as compared to Victorian styles — these attributes made it a classic style. Many would agree still with what *House Beautiful* said in 1899: "The fact that colonial designs in furniture, especially, are among the most restful, graceful, and

artistic yet produced, makes it probable that the liking for them is genuine and lasting."

**T**HE REVIVAL OF MOTIFS FROM the colonial past may have begun with the restoration of the tower of Independence Hall in 1827. But the movement proper can easily be traced to the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, after which architects went off to sketch what was left of Early New England. The East Coast upper crust commissioned summer houses that were immense elaborations of small, wood-shingled New England homesteads — a movement later christened

the Shingle Style, which, though it was a variant of the Queen Anne and had medieval English roots, was really the first Colonial Revival style in America. The real momentum came after the Columbian Exposition at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, where all-white buildings by McKim, Mead and White celebrated classical architecture.

Early houses with colonial background were hard to tell from Queen Anne and Free Classic. A colonial room in 1885 was still picturesque and irregular.

Early revival houses, and later ones with mixed vocabularies, have been called transitional and Neo-Colonial (OHJ 1984). The best description of the tasteful transitional interior may be "Old Colonies Style," a charming forerunner to the Colonial Revival that mixed in Aesthetic Movement and Arts & Crafts furnishings.

**Under the generic name Colonial Revival went every sort of replica and adaptation of styles from the vernacular to the moneyed; it encompasses, too, the revival of building elements and decorating from the Federal and even the Greek Revival periods.**

Odd combinations of motifs — halves of spinning wheels used as chair backs — were called Colonial Revival, as was fantastic furniture that mixed up motifs from any and all 18th-century styles (adding 17th century details, as well). One new passion that continues today was the interest in antiques, collected as a symbol of the return to good taste after 1876. Still, people continued to prefer newness, and Colonial reproductions were produced with a vengeance that continues to this day.

Academic architecture demanded study of the past, and soon scholarship was better. By the time Colonial styles were popularized at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, they were more competently interpreted. Replica houses were few, but now even the interpretive ones showed some degree of fidelity to the Georgian vernacular in their floorplans, narrow center halls, and square rooms. Eastern architects selected regional colonial motifs such as overdoor pediments, wooden balustrades, and Georgian mantels; thus was a New England vocabulary extended to a formal Colonial Revival style nationwide.

IN INTERIOR DESIGN, COLONIAL REVIVAL surpassed even the French Louis styles prior to the first world war. For most people, it was an affectation more than it was historically accurate; only the wealthy clients of decorators got actual period rooms. The familiar stage-set Colonial appeared early on: the rocker, the Windsor chair, the dressing table set with an antique shaving glass.

But even die-hard Colonial

Revivalists were not that interested in accuracy; after all, they were borrowing motifs from a narrow field of the richest colonial citizens. The Revival imitated only fine houses; rustic objects may have been placed as icons, but in general the rustic colonial was ignored.

**A**T THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, rooms with well-placed antiques were stripped of clutter, and simplified by the use of one paint color and one fabric pattern. The very Victorian center table was pushed into a corner. Chip-

pendale-style chairs and a neoclassical mirror were brought in. Wallpaper was lighter in color; florals on pale backgrounds and stripes were most popular. Ceilings were usually left unornamented.

By the 'teens, interior light had changed with electricity; any dark corners remaining were swept clean and colors get brighter. Even the middle class was adopting bareness and restraint.

Most of the major furniture styles of the 18th and early 19th centuries — Chippendale, Queen Anne, William and Mary, Sheraton, Hepplewhite, and American Empire — were revived by 1900. Some pieces were fairly accurate reproductions, although no Revival furniture maker was above mixing the best of different styles. A Pilgrim sub-

**English Sheraton-inspired reproduction furniture fills this ca. 1900 attempt at a true period room. Paintings atop busy wallpaper, different upholstery fabrics, and the cluttered curios indicate lingering Victorian taste. But the paper's light background is typical of the Colonial Revival.**





“When I first saw the house, it was a mess,” recalls architect Peter LaBau of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, firm Classic Restorations. “But there were good bones, and a beautiful site. And there was that great central hall, facing south. When the new owners saw all that light and space, they also saw the house’s potential.”

“My husband and I have lived in a series of houses built from the mid to the late 1800s,” the owner explains. “We became interested in that period. We wanted to bring back a home.”

“Fortunately we had the plans for a 1940s renovation,” says her husband. “So we could undo what had been done.”

It took nearly three years of careful, collaborative effort to restore the 8,500-square-foot house. The result is a comfortable family dwelling that shows off its good Colonial Revival bones while showcasing a magnificent art collection from the same period as the house itself.

When the new owners decided to buy this aging beauty, they began to collect works by The Ten, members of the turn-of-the-century Boston School. These were artists who painted in the revolutionary new style of American Impressionism. Throughout the house hang works by Sargent, Whistler, Benson, DeCamp, Hibbard, and Hassam, among others. During the restoration,

**As in the rest of the house, the blue and white fabric used in the living room is in scale with the large rooms. This rococo pattern repeats every 30 inches. OPPOSITE: The great central entrance hall, more than any other space in the house, proclaims that this is Colonial Revival.**

rooms were decorated with the display of specific pictures in mind.

“Because the paintings are so important, the house was wired to illuminate the pictures. Now the ambient lighting at night is very important, very beautiful,” says Hollis.

The restoration is so effective because all elements of the house are brought together into a coherent whole. Each part — the art, the furniture, and the interior design —





When the doorways between the double parlors were rebuilt to their original pocket door size, the rooms again took on their graceful proportions. The grand piano was bought for the house in 1900. **BELOW:** A coffered ceiling, warm wood, and a handsome copy of an Arts and Crafts cabinet bring a period feeling to the study. **OPPOSITE:** Sycamore paneling distinguishes an elegant dining room.



expands on the house's late-nineteenth-century roots.

During several interior renovations, wide doorways had been closed in. "It was just like archaeology to replace what had been there," says Peter LaBau. "And there were surprises — we would find things right where I was going to build them. We knew that the doorway between the twin parlors was too narrow. When we began to tear out the walls, we found that there had been pocket doors."

"When those pocket doors were opened up, the axis in the house started to work," says Susan Hollis. "The most important thing about a house like this is the scale," she points out. "This is a big house. It's not that there are so many rooms, but the rooms themselves are big. In the dining room, for instance, the damask pattern on the windows repeats every seventy inches. And the hand-blocked yellow and white wallpaper in the hall, that is a big pattern. By the way," she adds, "when we ordered the paper for the front hall, it was the first time in nine years that the English wallpaper company used those blocks."

The square central hall that Peter LaBau so liked says Colonial Revival more than any other room in the house. Running the entire depth of the house, it forms a central axis off which are twin formal living rooms, a sitting room, a study, and the sycamore paneled dining room.

The dining room is an interesting feature of the restoration. Whereas all the woodwork in the living room, including the flooring, was built new during restoration, the dining room's sycamore woodwork was mostly intact.

"It's an unusual material around here," says LaBau. "But we were able to locate sycamore that matched."

That sycamore paneling, accord-



Secretary of State and Minister to France during the administration of Andrew Jackson. At that time, the estate gained national prominence as a trendsetting example of architecture and landscape gardening: Edward's second wife, Louise Davezac, sought the assistance of the architect A.J. Davis to remodel the house in the fashionable Classical Revival style. Their association continued from the early 1840s until 1870. In addition to the

remodeled mansion, Davis designed a coach house, a farmhouse in the Italianate style, and a fanciful Gothic Swiss cottage — buildings that remain in their original settings.

The landscape received the same careful attention as the house. Even before the remodeling, a great Gothic conservatory designed by Fredrick Catherwood was constructed to the east of the house. The nurseryman, gardener, and influential author

A.J. Downing, a neighbor from nearby Newburgh, assisted in the design of the complex garden filled with sculpture and the latest in both hardy and tropical plants. Downing wrote two extensive articles on Montgomery Place in his popular monthly *The Horticulturist* during the 1840s. His nursery also sold the family many trees and shrubs.

Extensive landscape additions were made during the period between the World Wars by John Ross Delafield





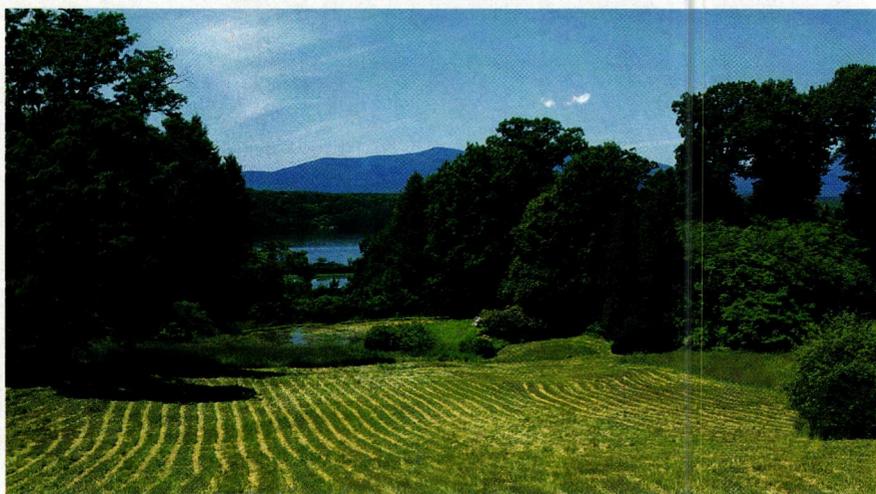
**ABOVE:** Looking east from the North Pavilion, added by Davis in the 1840s during the transformation of Montgomery Place from a simple Federal block to a model of the classical revival. **LEFT:** The Rose Garden is surrounded by several dozen Livingston Roses — actually *Marquise Bocella*, a.k.a. *Jacques Cartier*, a hybrid perpetual introduced in 1842. **OPPOSITE:** The Rose Garden, 1929, utilizes hybrid tea roses in segregated bands of color.



and his wife Violetta White, who inherited the property in 1921. These gardens, created as linked compartments or “garden rooms,” are screened from the 19th-century romantic landscape. Fortunately, the Delafields were aware of the historical value and artfulness of the earlier landscaping.



**ABOVE:** The Ellipse, 1930, is an elliptical garden surrounded by tall hemlocks. Although it is more shaded than intended, the lily pool is resplendent in summer with tropical waterlilies, calla lilies, papyrus, and red taro. **RIGHT:** With its panoramic views of the Hudson and the Catskill Mountains, the West Meadow is a rare surviving example of the kind of American romantic landscape Downing so admired in his 1840s writings. **OPPOSITE:** The Herb Garden as seen from a 75-foot-long perennial border.



Montgomery Place was purchased by Historic Hudson Valley in 1985; research and restoration continue. Historic vistas of the river and mountains have been reopened, woodland trails marked by Edward Livingston restored. The romantic 19th-century landscape is a living painting of ancient trees, including an avenue one-half-mile long leading from the estate gates to the mansion, and trees artfully grouped in expanses of turf.

The 20th-century gardens planted by the Delafields were replanted from their original plans. Documentation came from hundreds of galvanized plant labels found on the property, as well as an extensive horticultural library with many annotated texts, notes tucked amidst their pages. ♦

TIMOTHY STEINHOFF is Curator of Horticulture for Historic Hudson Valley, which operates six historic properties. Tours of Montgomery Place, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., are held April through October, and during the first two weekends in December. Call (914)758-5461. KEN DRUSE is the author of *The Natural Garden* (Clarkson Potter).





**ABOVE:** Central and side windows are unified with swags caught to a flat valance with rosettes. The gold fabric echoes the formality and repeats the color of the wallpaper. **LEFT:** In this Louis C. Tiffany-designed room, window treatment starts below the decorative stained-glass. **OPPOSITE:** Floor-length draperies hang from a curved brass rod in a Victorian turret room.

cotton or silk in slightly more formal rooms, a linen or cotton print with Craftsman woodwork — constructed so they are not terribly full and hanging only to sill height, may be hung by small rings or gathered directly on a brass or iron rod. If a valance were used, it would have typically run across the width of the bay, even when each window got its own side panels. Early 20th-century valances used in bays look very skimpy to our eyes; they could be as short as six inches.

**MULTIPLES** DOUBLE OR GROUPED WINDOWS may be found in a formal or informal setting. Unlike Palladian and bay windows, grouped windows look truly unfinished without curtains of some sort. A simple treatment for a double window consists of sill-height cafe curtains shirred onto brass rods mounted inside the casing of each window, the whole surmounted by floor-length draperies of heavier fabric, which will close over the pair from the sides. There might be a valance or not, depending upon the style of the room.

Windows with transoms or decorative top sections (stained glass or diamond-paned, for example) should be dressed below the decorative portion. In general, the top portion should be left uncovered. Here it is inappropriate to use a valance of any kind. ♦



# A Study in Aesthetics

by Lynn Elliott

**T**HE BLACK MANSION IN SOUTHERN New Jersey had seen better days when J. Garfield DeMarco bought it in 1987. Since its construction in 1884, the facade had been altered numerous times — dormers were missing, the porch was enclosed, and the clapboards were covered in aluminum siding. Fortunately, archival photographs showed the original exterior had Eastlake detailing, so an accurate restoration could begin.

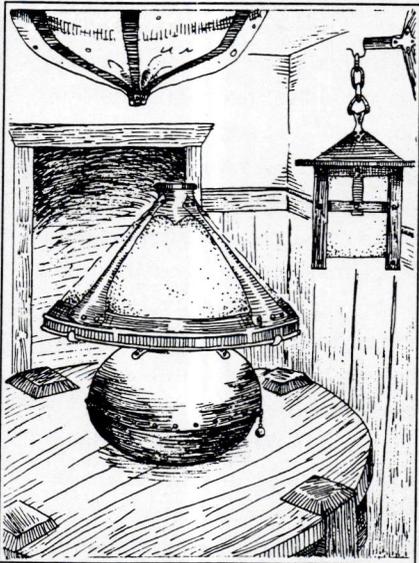
Inside, however, even fewer original architectural elements had



**ABOVE:** When the work began, the study was a characterless room with few clues as to the original interior. **SHOWN HERE:** Period wallcoverings, carpeting, and antique furniture turn the study into a visually exciting — and historically appropriate — space. The curtains of silk, velvet, and cotton bands were adapted from Aesthetic Movement drapery patterns.

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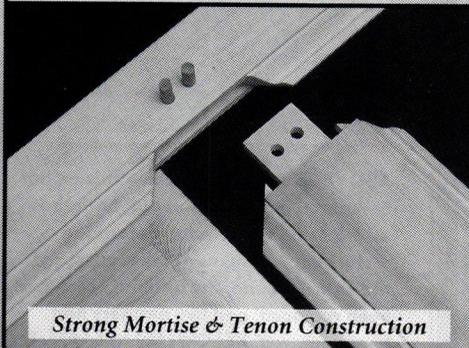
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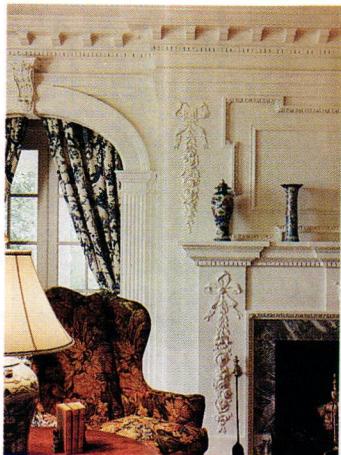


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# Custom Make a Floorcloth

by Lynn Elliott

**B**RAIDED RUGS AND AXMINSTER CARPETS AREN'T YOUR ONLY OPTIONS for colonial-era floor coverings. Floorcloths — canvas “rugs” painted in imitation of fine flooring or carpeting — were favored in the 18th and 19th centuries as colorful and inexpensive alternatives. When it came to their design, imagination reigned. Itinerant artists and creative housewives painted designs freehand or blocked out marbled geometrics; stencilling caught on by the late



**ABOVE:** When cutting the canvas, add an extra foot to each dimension to allow for shrinkage and the 1" border. Buy heavy cotton duck canvas that is free of wrinkles. **RIGHT:** Once finished, the floorcloth can be used just like an area rug — in hallway, kitchen, or in front of the fireplace. The circle design stencil for the floorcloth was adapted from a quilt motif.

1800s. • You, too, can master the technique for making a floorcloth. All you need is canvas, paint, and a ventilated work area. And patience: this isn't a quick weekend project. The built-up layers of paint and varnish on the floorcloths require lots of drying time. The results, however, are well worth the effort.





### Prepping Techniques

TO START, CHOOSE A PIECE OF HEAVY COTTON duck canvas that isn't wrinkled. (Wrinkles cannot be ironed out and will ruin the final effect.) Decide the size of the floorcloth and then add one foot to each dimension. For example, if you want 2 x 3 floorcloth, cut a 3 x 4 piece. The extra foot allows for the 1" border and

any shrinkage that occurs during the priming stage. After the raw canvas is cut, brush off any debris, hair, and dirt before priming.

Priming is the most crucial step. It protects the canvas and levels up the weave. Give the topside (the smoother side) two coats of primer; the bottom needs one coat. Use a latex-based primer and paint fast

Special thanks to Naomi Schalit of Pemaquid Floorcloths (Old Head Tide Store, Alna, ME 04535; 207/586-5444) for her hands-on demonstration. See Resources on page 102 for more information on the furnishings.

**TOP:** Choose a ventilated work space, such as a garage or barn, where the floorcloth can dry undisturbed. When priming the canvas, neatness doesn't count. The trick is to get the paint on quickly, working from the middle to the edges. **BOTTOM:** Apply two or three coats of a base color. Pick a neutral shade that will complement your stencil pattern.

because the canvas shrinks quickly. (If you're working on a large piece, ask a friend to help.) Start from the middle and work to the edges. Allow each coat to dry completely.

For the base coat, use a flat latex paint that has been thinned with water to the consistency of heavy cream. Paint the canvas with two or three coats so that the grain is covered. Allow it to dry, and then sand the topcoat with 220-grit sandpaper. [Continued on page 100]

### Helpful Hints

- ◆ Have these materials on hand before you start:
  - a straightedge
  - a framing square
  - 220-grit sandpaper
  - a lint-free cloth
- ◆ Make sure your work area has plenty of ventilation.
- ◆ Use store-bought stencils or cut your own from quilter's plastic, which is sturdier than mylar.
- ◆ Before trying a room-size floorcloth, beginners should make one the size of a small area rug.
- ◆ Large floorcloths shrink more than small ones, so leave 1 1/2' extra for each dimension.
- ◆ Making a floorcloth for under a table? Measure 6" beyond the back chair legs. Chairs catching on a floorcloth will damage it.
- ◆ When varnishing, don't wear wool or fuzzy fibers.
- ◆ Remember the varnish will deepen the stencil colors.
- ◆ Carpet tape keeps corners from curling up.

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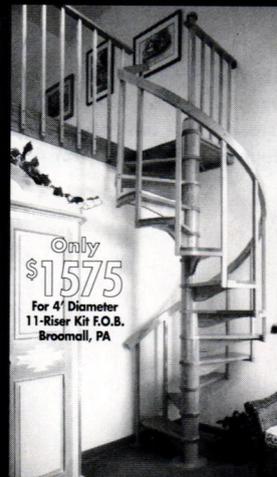
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**Marking the Border:** Using a framing square, measure a 1" border in pencil. (Leave extra for the hem.) Make sure it is the same width on all sides. With chalk, draw a crisscross through the center of the field as a guideline when stenciling.



**Stenciling:** Use oil colors thinned with equal amounts of turpentine and Japan dryer. Have a lint-free rag handy for wipe-ups. Stencil from the middle of the canvas, adjusting the space between pattern repeats (see *Decorator's How-To*, Spring 1995).



**Painting Technique:** With a small amount of color on your brush, paint inward with a tapping motion from the outside edge of the stencil. Wipe off the stencil each time it's moved. Also, apply the border by lightly tapping. Allow to dry for 48 hours.



**Mitering the Corners:** With a razor blade or utility knife, miter the corners of the floorcloth. The two sides of the miter aren't the same — the width side is angled less than the length side — to prevent overlapping when it's turned under.



**Hemming:** Flip over the canvas and crease along the 2" hem with a heavy blunt instrument, such as an unopened can. Apply white glue under the hem; wipe off any excess. Turn the canvas over and weight the hems down. Let it dry overnight.



**Varnishing:** Touch up spots that have been damaged in the hemming process. Let dry. Use an oil-based varnish to finish the floorcloth. Apply 8 to 10 coats of varnish and allow each coat 24 hours drying time.

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AND SERVICES, INCLUDING ORDER NUMBERS AND CATALOG PRICES, MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE. OBJECTS NOT LISTED ARE GENERALLY AVAILABLE, OR ARE FAMILY PIECES OR ANTIQUES.

## Furnishings

### pp. 13-20

**p. 13** Poppy seed pillow, seed pod tablescarf, and bronze candlesticks from United Crafts, 127 West Putnam Ave., Ste. 123, Greenwich, CT 06830; 203/869-4898. ■ Grape motif lighting from Fleurs d'Allumage, Rt. 2, Bedford Corners, NY 10549; 800/669-8268 or 914/666-5205. ■ Malibu tiles from Venice Tile, 24425 Woolsey Canyon Rd., #12, West Hills, CA 91304; 818/346-7858. **p. 14** 8-arm chandelier, #12B, from Gates Moore, River Road, Silvermine, Norwalk, CT; 203/847-3231. ■ Old Village paint colors, #1209 Antique Yellow, #1216 Cabinet Makers Blue, and #1205 British Red respectively, from The Stulb Company, PO Box 1030, Fort Washington, PA 19034; 215/654-1770. ■ Bonnet top secretary and Queen Anne side chair from Eldred Wheeler, 110 Newbury St., Danvers, MA 01923; 508/774-1390. ■ Grandfather clock, #610-502 Esquire II, from Howard Miller, 860 East Main Ave., Zeeland, MI 49464; 616/772-9131. ■ Wakefield sofa from Chestnut Hill, 511 W. King St., East Berlin, PA 17316; 717/259-7502. **pp. 16-17** The Meadow Collection carpets, "S.T. Coleridge," from Nature's Loom, 32 East 31st St., New York, NY 10016; 800/365-2002 or 212/686-2002. ■ Sconset bed and Shimmo table from Island Elements, RR 1, Box 7, Mt. Vernon, ME 04352; 207/293-3331. ■ David B. Hellman, American Arts & Crafts Furniture Maker, 86 Highland Ave., Watertown, MA 02172; 617/923-4829. Slides, \$4. ■ Art Nouveau tile, Nouveau Black #4115BP, from Shep Brown Associates, 24 Cummings Park, Woburn, MA 01801; 617/935-8080. ■ Victorian coat tree from A. J. Munzinger & Co., 1454 S. Devon, Springfield, MO 65809; 417/886-9184. ■ Handale lamp from Dale Tiffany, 6 Willow St., Moonachie, NJ 07074; 201/473-1900. ■ Wicker armchair, #IF61, from Grange, New York Design Center, 2nd floor, 200 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016; 800/GRANGE1 or 212/685-9494. ■ Art Deco hardware from Crown City Hardware Co., 1047 N. Allen Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104-3298; 818/794-1188. **p. 18** Garden Accents: Neopolitan fountain, #C370, and medium pool, #C4M, from Haddonstone, Ltd., 201 Heller Place, Bellmawr, NJ 08031; 609/931-7011. ■ Gazebo from Vixen Hill, Main St., Elverson, PA 19520; (610) 286-0909. ■ Bench from Charleston Battery Bench, Inc., 191 King St., Charleston, SC 29401; (803) 722-3842. ■ Arbor and gate from Walpole Woodworkers, 767 East St. (Rt. 27), Walpole, MA 02081; 508/668-

2800. ■ Gothic chair from McKinnon and Harris, P.O. Box 4885, Richmond, VA 23220; (804) 358-2385. **p. 20** Meadow Lily lace curtains from J.R. Burrows & Co., P.O. Box 522, Rockland, MA 02370; 617/982-1812. ■ Scrolled curtain rod and rings from Griffin Gate Collections, 1310 Pendleton St., Studio 220, Box #47, Cincinnati, OH 45210; 513/369-0990. ■ Checkered cotton fabric from Eaton Hill Textile Works, RD 1, Box 970, Plainfield, Vermont 05667; 802/426-3733. ■ Tiebacks from Scalamantré, 37-24 24th St., Long Island City, NY 11101; 718/361-8500; to the trade. ■ Curved shutters from Back Bay Shutter Co., 16A Garfield Circle, Burlington, MA 01803; 617/221-0100.

## Profile: David Berman

### pp. 32-38

For information on New England Artisans Guild, contact John Burrows, PO Box 522, Rockland, MA 02370. ■ Sconehege Bed & Breakfast, Plymouth, MA. 508/746-1847. **p.32** "Magnolia" wallpaper from Carol Mead, 434 Deerfield Rd., Pomfret Ctr., CT 06259. 203/963-1927. Catalog \$5. ■ Raspberry Bramble paper, apricot series, from Bradbury & Bradbury, PO Box 155, Benicia, CA 94510. 707/746-1900. Victorian binder \$10; A&C collection \$4. **p.33** Chandelier from Trustworth Studio, PO Box 1109, Plymouth, MA 02362. 508/746-1847. ■ Rug is Morris's "Poppy" pattern, from J.R. Burrows, PO Box 522, Rockland, MA 02370. 617/982-1812. **p.36** Stair runner is Morris's "Tulip & Lily" pattern, from J.R. Burrows; see above. ■ Hall paper is newly interpreted Voysey design "The Stag," from J.R. Burrows; see above. ■ Voysey-design clock, barometer, high-back chair, and pierced sconces from Trustworth Studio; see above. ■ Stair-hall paper, bottom, (from Biltmore's walnut bedroom), from Historic Homes of America collection, Book I: Richard E. Thibaut Inc., 480 Frelinghuysen Ave., Newark, NJ 07114. 201/643-3777. Brochure \$1.

## Connecticut Valley Colonial

### pp. 42-47

**pp. 42-43** Paint on wood trim is "Raleigh Tavern Green," Williamsburg Paints by Martin Senour; call Colonial Williamsburg Fdn., 800/446-9240 for a dealer near you, or write P.O. Box 3532, Williamsburg, VA 23187. ■ Reproduction Windsor chairs by Peter Franklin, 1 Cottage Street, P.O. Box 1166, Easthampton, MA 01027; 413/527-4004. ■ Tables by Alan Pease, Country Bed

Shop, Box 65, Richardson Rd, Ashby, MA 01431; 508/386-7550. ■ "Macaroni" Prints and botanical prints from Colonial Williamsburg; see above. ■ Blue-and-white pottery are Westerwald (German antique). **p. 44** Pewter plates by Karl Kennedy at Colonial Casting Co., 443 So. Colony Street, Meriden, CT 06451; 203/235-5189. ■ Red plates by Steve Nutt at Yankee Redware Pottery, Staten Island, NY 10314; 718/273-6815. ■ Brewster chair by Craig Farrow, 70 Seminole Rd., Watertown, CT 06795; 203/274-6203. **p. 45** Front door custom built by Hap Shepherd, Maurer & Shepherd Joiners, 122 Naubuc Avenue, Glastonbury, CT 06033; 203/633-2383. ■ All door hardware by Charlie Euston, Woodbury Blacksmith & Forge Co., P.O. Box 268, Woodbury, CT 06798; 203/263-5737. ■ Nails by Douglas Schlicher, Woodbury Blacksmith & Forge Co., see above. **p. 46** Paint on wood trim in front parlor is "Banister Blue" by Ox-Line, call California Products Corp., 800/225-1141. ■ Bed kit by Cohasset Colonials, 10 Churchill Rd., Hingham, MA 02043; 800/288-2890. ■ Wing chair by Alan Pease; see above. ■ Candlestand kit by Cohasset Colonials; see above. **p. 47** Heart and Crown chairs and dropleaf table by Alan Pease; see above. ■ Shell cabinet carved by Lou Beausoleil, Earendil Co., 381 Summer St., Plantsville, CT 06479; 203/628-5205. ■ Salmon paint color in shell is Benj. Moore Regal Aqua Glow #1305. Yellow is "Colonial Yellow" by Kyanize. ■ Botanical prints from Colonial Williamsburg; see above.

## Upstairs Downstairs

### pp. 48-53

**p. 49** Couch by Henredon; through showrooms. ■ Shawl from Liberty of London. ■ Rug from Tadross and Zahloute, Birmingham, MI. ■ Ginger Jar Lamps from Newton Furniture, Inc., Ann Arbor, MI; 313/662-3445. **p. 50** Diningroom chandelier from DuMouchelle Gallery, Art Galleries Co., 409 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48226; 313/963-6255. ■ Fabric on chairs by Calico Corner. ■ Rug from Marshall Field's. ■ Silver is Georg Jensen's "Scroll." **p. 51** Loveseat, upholstered chair, and ottoman by Sherrill; through showrooms. ■ Chinese rug from K.C. Lee, Kowloon, Hong Kong. ■ Carved celadon on mantel from Ginsong Kim, Newcastle, PA. ■ Striped fabric from Calico Corner. ■ Needlepoint designs on pillows are by Maggie Lane; through retail outlets. ■ Candlesticks from International Silver, "Prelude." ■ Silver bowl by Georg Jensen. **p. 52** Kitchen rug by Couristan: "New Jamestown." ■ Cupboards by Quaker Maid. ■ Pottery from Smithsonian. **p. 53** Wallcovering by Greff: #8072 "Birds and Chrysanthemums" in Tobacco Pink. ■ Bed is Bartley

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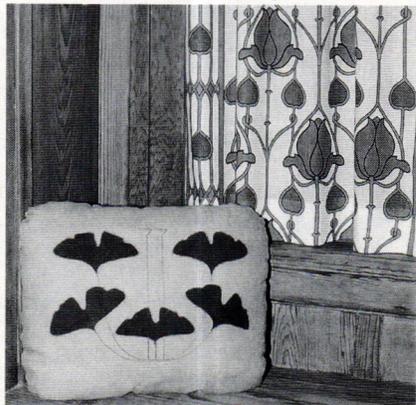
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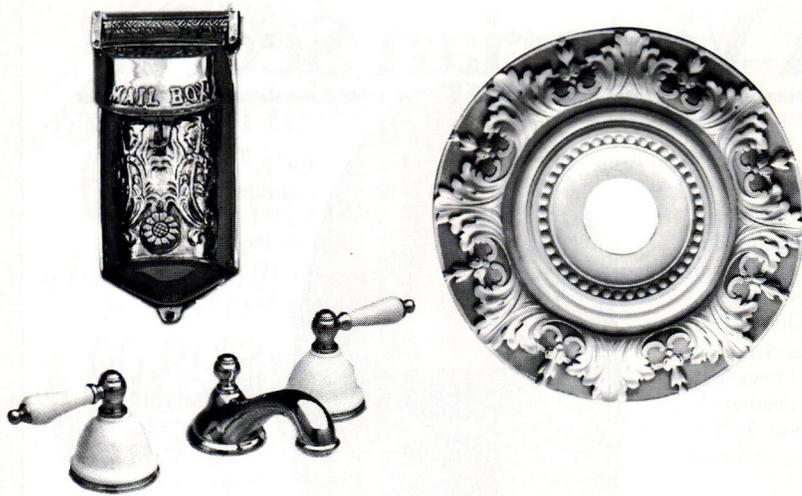
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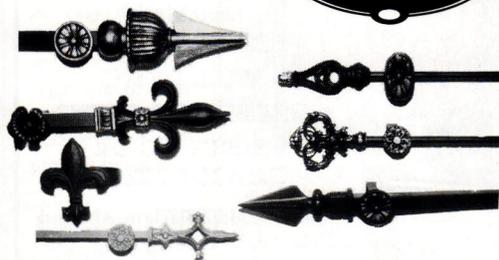
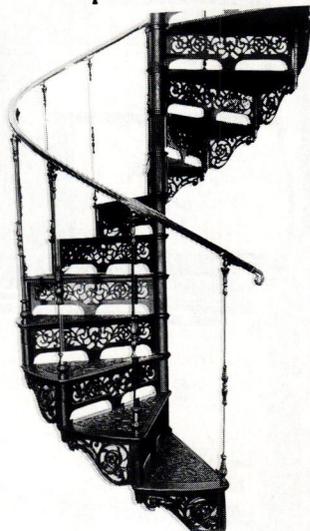
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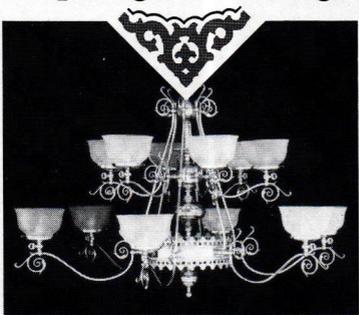


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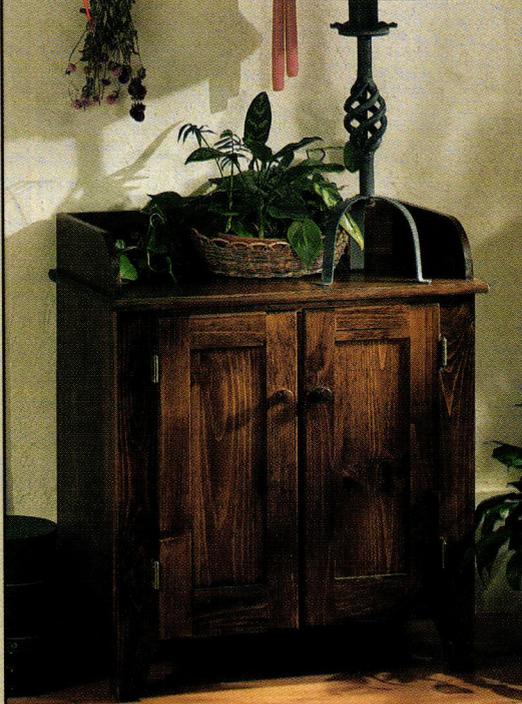


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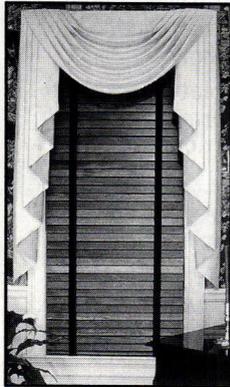
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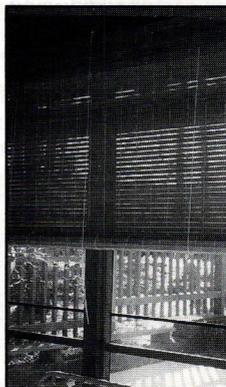


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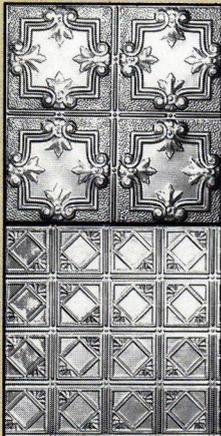


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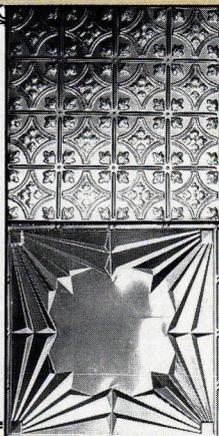


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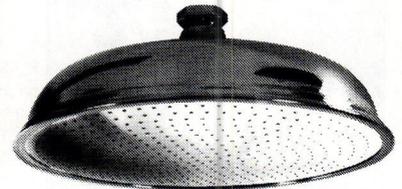
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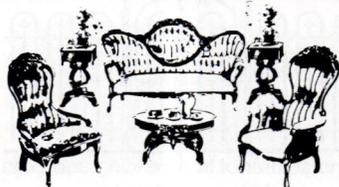
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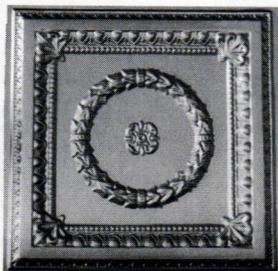
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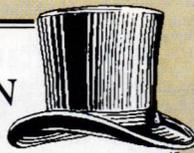
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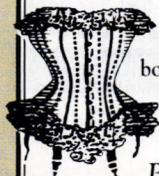
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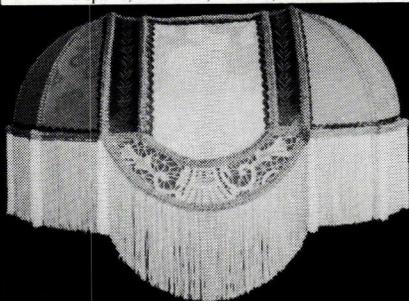
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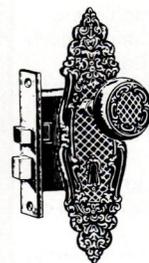
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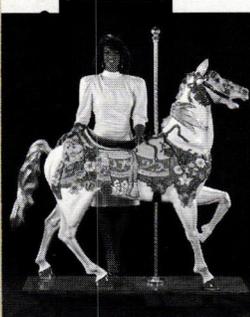
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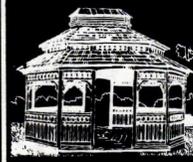
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# Omaha Italianate

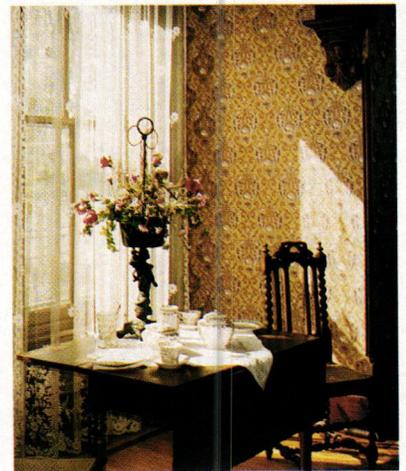
**I**N 1878, WHEN DOUGLAS COUNTY, Nebraska, was on the edge of a vast frontier, General George Crook, Commander of the Department of the Platte, had a home built by soldier labor on the grounds of Fort Omaha. Today the brick Italianate house shows how an Indian fighter and his family maintained the civilities of the time, right down to the separate men's and ladies' par-

lors on either side of the front hall.

Upstairs is the President's bedroom, where Presidents Grant through Cleveland slept when they visited the fort known as the "Gateway to the West." Omaha served as the base for soldiers fighting the Indian War, and again for those who protected the crew constructing the Union Pacific and the Northern Pacific Railroads.

Built as a government dwelling, the house is rather plain. But the pine woodwork was grained to look like oak or mahogany — intended, no doubt, to offer the visiting dignitaries a touch of elegance on the frontier. ♦

**WHAT:** General Crook House, Historical Society of Douglas County  
**WHERE:** Fort Omaha, PO Box 11398, Omaha, NE 68111. (402) 455-9990  
**WHEN:** Open year-round, Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm; Sunday 1pm-4pm



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