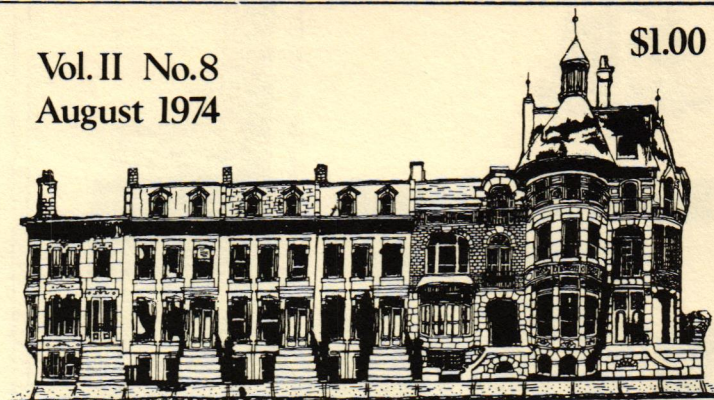


THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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Renovation And Maintenance Ideas For The Antique House



EASTLAKE



This is the first article in a new series that will explore the major design influences that shaped American architecture and home decoration in the 18th and 19th centuries.

by Carolyn Flaherty

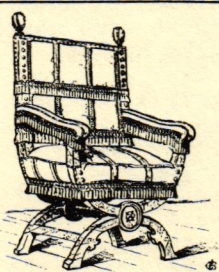
MANY AMERICAN HOUSES built in the late 1800's feature "Eastlake touches" or are known as "Eastlake inspired." This is a curious fact since Charles Locke Eastlake was not American but English and—although an architect—was best known for his designs for furniture and other domestic items. How then did all that "Eastlake" get onto all those houses?

FOR THOSE OF US WHO ARE NOT AT HOME in the field of art history, but want to know more about the old houses we love, we can only detect the Eastlake influence by tracing it back to the period that produced this amazingly popular style.

BY THE MIDDLE of the 1800's, High Victorian decor had too often become a hodge-podge of excessive upholstery topping badly designed imitations of French furniture. This furniture, curved in every possible manner, floral carpets and florid colors fought for attention with the doilies and knickknacks that rested on every surface and nestled in every niche.



Chair from the Crystal Palace Exhibition, 1851.



An Eastlake design for a chair in medieval style.

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Coming Next Month

TIPS ON STRIPPING SHUTTERS

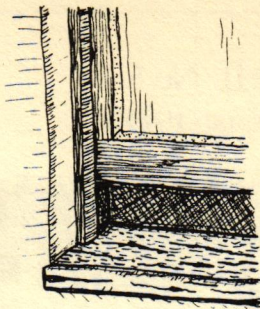
THE CRAFTS HAD BECOME HIGHLY commercialized by the middle of the 19th century. Instead of the precision given to every piece by lengthy hand labor, workshops were now equipped with steam-driven machines. The rapidly growing middle class demanded more and more articles and were willing to replace them—and often—with the latest fashion. The glued-on curlicues and excessive padding in imitation of French Rococo and the use of veneers and varnish dictated by speed of manufacture offended the discerning eye and caused a desire to return to good, honest English workmanship and style.

IN REACTION TO WHAT THEY considered the degeneration of taste, an "Art Movement" in the decorative arts began to take shape. Men like John Ruskin, architect, and William Morris, poet, painter, and philosopher, were in the forefront of the attempt to raise the standard of contemporary domestic arts. They associated art with morals and saw in the return to handicraftsmanship a vision of a new society. Eventually they went from the reformation of design directly to the reformation of people—turning to philosophy and politics.

(Continued on page 8)



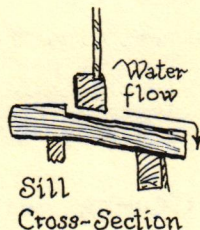
Restoring Rotted Window Sills



MANY TIMES A QUICK INSPECTION of window frames on an old house yields the verdict: "Window frames need to be replaced." Replacing window frames can be an expensive and/or time-consuming process. But in 4 cases out of 5, the verdict for total replacement is based on the condition of the sills—not the rest of the frames.

WHERE THE SILLS ARE IN SAD SHAPE, it often is possible to make restorative repairs that will extend the life of the wood for many years. It also avoids the search for woodwork that will match the original.

THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE TECHNIQUES that can be used to restore a rotted sill. All are acceptable—the choice depends upon availability of materials and which media you feel most comfortable working with. Basic principle is the same with all three techniques: You have to create a surface that will shed—not absorb—water. Therefore, all cracks and holes must be filled, and a smooth continuous surface created that tips away from the house.



ONE RESTORATIVE technique is based upon using a couple of marine products that are normally employed in boat repairs. An epoxy material—"Git-Rot"—can be used to saturate a partially rotted sill and arrest rot by encapsulating the fibers in resin. The surface can then be filled with another epoxy boat-repair product—Marine-Tex—which can be used to impart the proper water-shedding pitch. After the material dries, it can be painted in the normal manner. The main drawback of this procedure is the difficulty in locating the materials. A boatyard or marine supply store is your best bet.

THE SECOND PROCESS relies on the carpenter's old standbys: Linseed oil and putty. The procedure can be used where the major problem is cracks and holes, and where the surface itself is basically intact. Scrape away all loose material with a putty knife and wire brush. Thoroughly soak the sill with pentachlorophenol wood preservative (such as "Wood Good") to kill any rot-causing organisms. After waiting a day, saturate the sill with boiled linseed oil. Wait another day, then saturate again with the linseed oil. After another day's wait, fill all cracks and holes with putty. Wait a couple of more days for a skin to form on the surface of the putty, then prime and paint.



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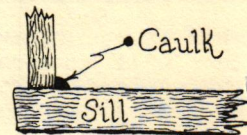
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THE THIRD PROCESS is used where the sill is badly deteriorated and the surface needs to be built up. You can use Plastic Wood—or make your own wood filler by mixing a paste of fine sawdust and a waterproof glue (such as Sears resorcinol glue). If more than 1/4 inch must be built up, apply in two or more coats and allow to dry thoroughly between applications. After final coat has dried, sand, prime and paint.

TO PROTECT THE INTERIOR of the frame from water damage in the future, be sure the joint between the sill and the vertical side members is carefully caulked. Painting the caulk after it has dried for a week—especially if it is the older oil-based type—will greatly extend its life.



Techniques For Promoting Neighborhood Revivals

The Brownstone Revival Committee has developed some definite ideas about how to preserve the character of old city neighborhoods. The key is a promotion program to attract middle-class home buyers who will renovate the old houses.

To provide a forum for the sharing of know-how from communities that have developed successful programs, the BRC is sponsoring the first national "Back To The City" Conference to be held on the weekend of Sept. 14-15 at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Themes of the Conference are: (1) Promotion; (2) Financing; (3) Preservation. For registration details write: Brownstone Revival Committee, Rm. 1825, 230 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Or phone Dorothy Kahn, the BRC's Executive Director at (212) 684-2300.

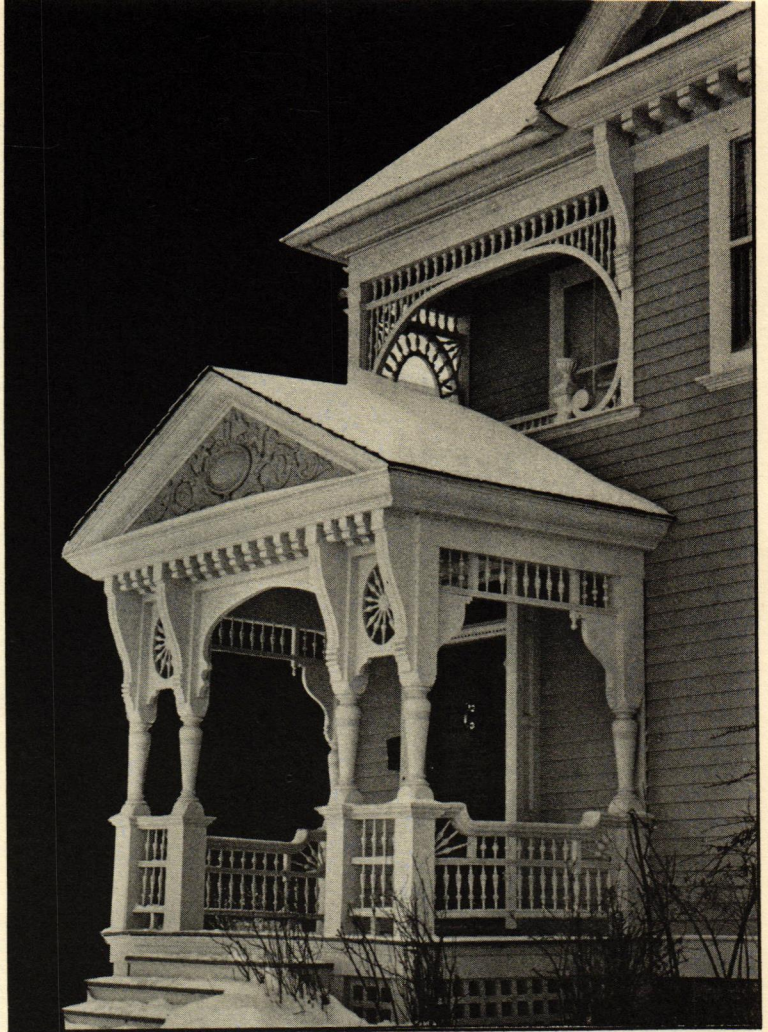
Preserving Woodworkers' Art In St. Paul

By Claire Wood

THE QUEEN ANNE STYLE of architecture, which flowered between 1880 and 1900, was a splendid catch-all...a picturesque blend of towers, textures, curves, lines and angles from diverse periods...and often crowned with virtuoso statements of the woodworker's art. On Fairmount Avenue, in St. Paul's historic Summit Hill district, a woodworker's imaginative outburst in one Queen Anne style produced the 1890 house now owned by Hugh and Anne Morgan.

FRESH FROM "A BOX APARTMENT" in Washington, D.C., The Morgans landed 2 years ago in the old section of St. Paul for reasons that are inspiring the restoration of many downtown neighborhoods across the country: Hugh could walk to work at his radio station in downtown St. Paul and the rent was reasonable. After a year's residence in a Summit Hill apartment, The Morgans found the three-storey, four-bedroom house on Fairmount Avenue and bought it in June of 1973. They are currently halfway through the restoration.

WHEN THE MORGANS first saw their house, it was covered with asbestos shingles. But because they knew it had been built as a mirror image of the house next door, they knew what to hope for. The owner of the adjacent house had apparently resisted the blandishments of the shingle salesman who had worked the neighborhood in the 1930's, and therefore



the house was still resplendent in its original clapboard and wood trim.

HUGH SAYS THE BRAVEST DEED of his life was lifting the screwdriver to pry loose the first asbestos shingle. Finding what he hoped to find—the original clapboard in reasonably good shape—Hugh set out to get the rest of the shingles off as rapidly as possible. Some of the older residents of the neighborhood, observing Hugh ripping the "new" asbestos siding from the house, were sure that their new neighbor had taken leave of his senses.



The Morgans' Queen Anne house has many Victorian neighbors on Fairmount Avenue.

HUGH PATCHED, puttied, and restored the exterior carpentry, then stripped off many layers of paint with torch and scraper. Particularly painful was the front porch. Its curves and spindles are a delight to look at—but sheer torture to strip and paint. If he had to do it again, Hugh says he would opt for disassembling the complicated structure and sending it out to be dip-stripped by a commercial stripper. As things stand, he and Anne have the esoteric satisfaction of having related personally and painfully to every

square inch of their house's exterior woodwork. (More details on their techniques for exterior restoration will appear in a future issue of The Journal.)

THE HOUSE IS NOW FRESHLY painted butterscotch, trimmed with ivory, which to The Morgans seemed to suit a Victorian mood of tintype pictures, proper parlors and high-wheeled bicycles.

INTERIOR RESTORATION has been straightforward so far, with no problems unfamiliar to old-house owners everywhere. They have applied typical restorer's ingenuity in confronting a number of situations. For example, in the course of ripping out a considerable amount of hopeless wall and ceiling plaster, they resisted the natural urge to fall to with the wrecking bar and picking up the pieces afterwards, as we more impetuous types have been known to do. Rather, Hugh and Anne covered the floor with empty cardboard cartons and simply pulled chunks of plaster down into the boxes... considerably easing the back-breaking chore of cleanup.

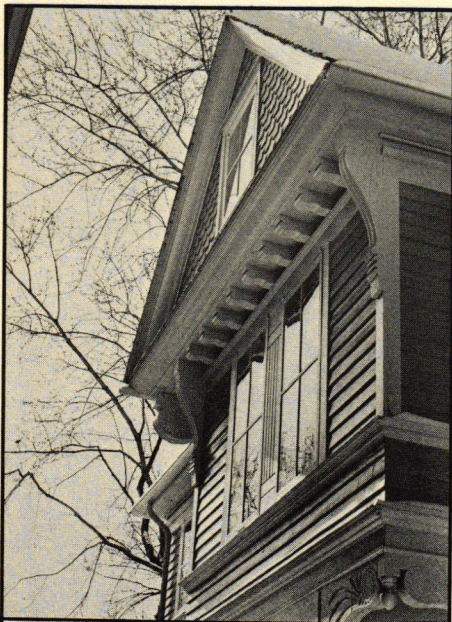
UNTIL 1949 the house was maintained by the widow of the original owner; it changed hands three more times until it was bought by The Morgans. In a renovation in the 1960's, the house was re-plumbed and re-wired, and the kitchen to the rear of the parlor had been outfitted with modern appliances prior to



A striking feature of the porch is the embossed panel set into the pediment. Although it looks like carved wood, it is actually stamped metal—undoubtedly ordered from an architectural parts catalog of the 1880's.

The Morgans' arrival. Woodwork throughout the house is oak, though upstairs it has been heavily painted and waits to be stripped. All the original stained glass is intact, though sagging in a few repairable places.

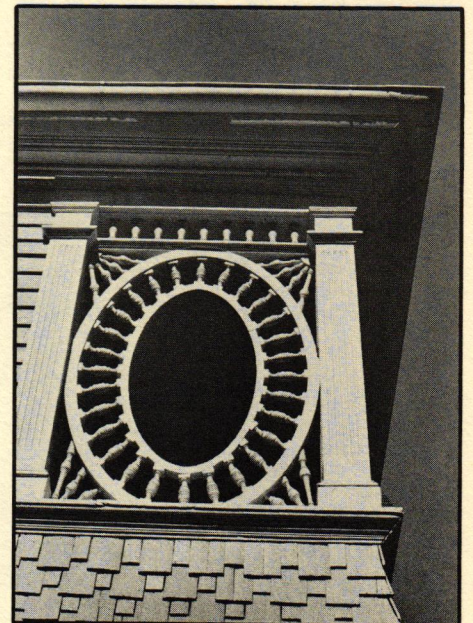
THEIR RESTORATION HAS BEEN, so far, free from serious calamities. They don't count moving day when the carpet cleaner's equipment rapped the entranceway ceiling, causing all the plaster to fall down. (After all, plaster is re-



House has brackets, clapboards and shingles in graceful combination—typical of Queen Anne style.



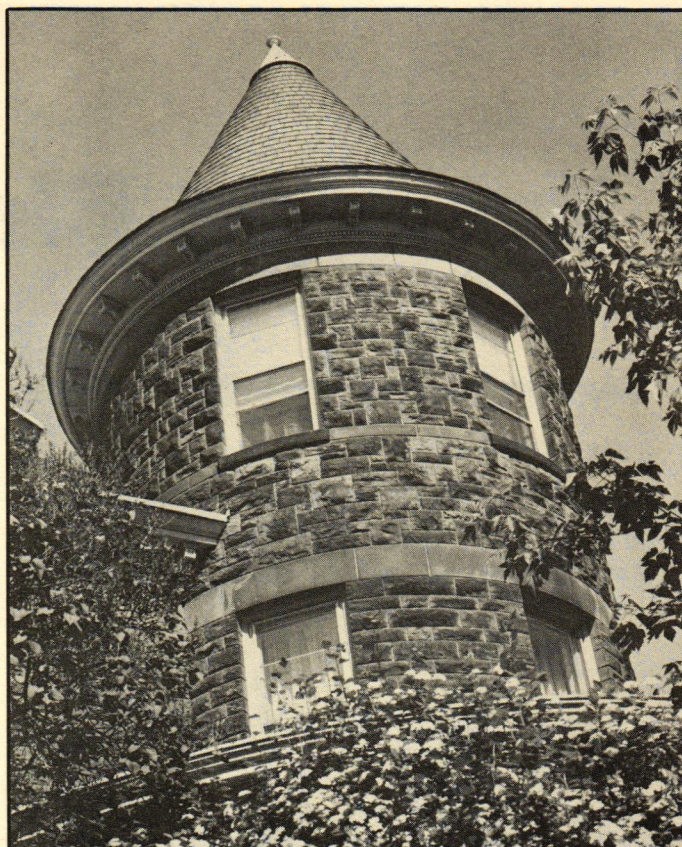
Main staircase has oak woodwork with a turned and carved newel post, plus original stained glass.



Another hallmark of the Queen Anne style: A picturesque variety of textures and shapes.



These two examples of late Victorian architecture are typical of the houses that have been attracting young home-buyers to the Summit Hill neighborhood.



placeable.) Nor do they count the time when Hugh was stripping paint on a dormer with a torch and the structure began to smoke...because he managed to climb in the window and yell for Anne who appeared with a watering can and extinguished the fire. Neither do they count the time when Hugh was climbing to a dormer on his tallest ladder wearing smooth tennis shoes...when his foot slipped and he began a sickening slide to the ground 30 feet below. His toes caught on the gutter at the last minute and saved him. But then every restoration has a few exciting moments.

THE MORGANS' approach to the house has been to divide the work into clearly defined jobs where there is an achievable end in sight. One step, one room, one operation at a time gives a greater sense of accomplishment...another hurdle overcome. The rooms as yet undone have simply been sealed off

to save heating and cleaning expenses until it is their turn.

POSSIBLY THE MOST EXCITING ASPECT of the Morgans' house is that it represents a beautiful portion of 19th century American architectural history that can be preserved without a grant or curator, but simply by the applied effort, taste and dedication of its 20th century owners.

Improved Process For Stripping Paint

SOME TIME AGO, concern about lead-containing paints led to enactment of ordinances in some cities requiring removal of all old paint containing more than 1% lead. This prompted the National Paint, Varnish and Lacquer Assn. to conduct a research program to determine the most effective way to remove paint.

After testing many paint removal techniques, the Association found that combining conventional water-rinsable paint removers with steam from an ordinary wallpaper steamer gave the best results. The procedure is as follows:

Apply your favorite water-rinsable paint remover to the surface to be stripped. Allow to stand for 15 minutes. Then apply steam through the pan of a wallpaper steamer, moving pan slowly. Follow steamer with a wide-bladed

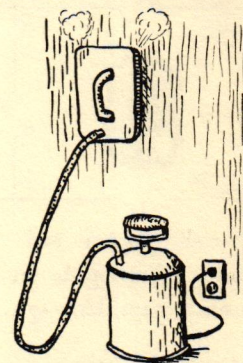
scraper. Steamer pan should contact about 1 sq. ft./min.

FOUR TO FIVE COATS of paint can be removed from flat surfaces at a rate of approximately 1 sq. ft./min. Irregular surfaces such as molding go more slowly, but the process is said to be equally effective.

THE STEAM PAN is claimed to accelerate the action of all water-rinsable removers—although some removers are more effective than others. Effectiveness seems to increase with greater amounts of methylene chloride. Testing on small patches—without using steam—will show which remover is best for your job.

THERE ARE TWO CAUTIONS: Be sure ventilation is adequate and don't use steam with removers containing carbon tetrachloride or benzene.

The Journal is indebted to Arthur Megget, AIA, for bringing this research to our attention.



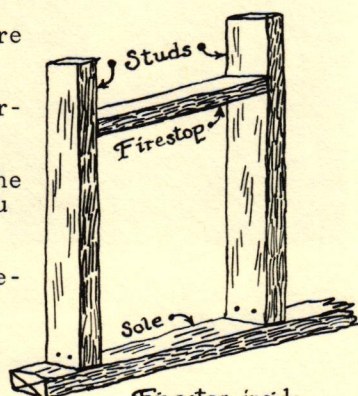
Running Electrical Wire

Part 2

By James R. McGrath

LAST MONTH'S ARTICLE dealt with methods for running wire across and through ceilings. In this installment we'll look at some of the problems encountered in running wire within walls and partitions.

MOST IN-WALL WIRE RUNS are related to the installation of wall switches or convenience outlets. Vertical runs of cable in walls between studs normally is quite simple. The one exception is when you encounter a firestop or horizontal bridging between the studs. (A firestop inhibits drafts inside walls and retards the spread of flames in the event of fire.) You will know that you've hit a horizontal brace if your fish wire won't pass, no matter how much you wiggle or twist it. Such a horizontal obstruction is passed by breaking open the plaster and notching the member. Exact location of

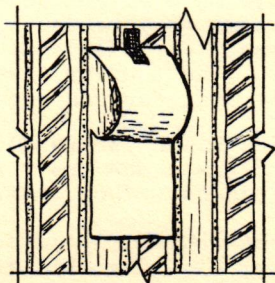


Firestop inside wall may impede vertical runs of cable.

the cross-member can be determined by noting how far the fish wire will penetrate the partition, or by dropping a weighted string into the wall.

FASTEST WAY to make the notch is to chip out the plaster with a cold chisel or an old screwdriver, then chew a channel through the lath and cross-member with a 1-in. spade bit in your electric drill. Finish the

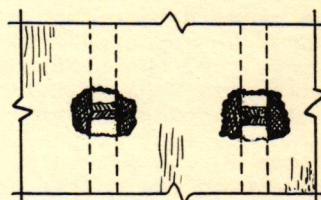
notching with a hammer and chisel. If the notch has to be made in a wall that is papered, you can cut the paper in 3 places with a razor blade, making a flap that can be lifted and held out of the way with masking tape while you work. If the wallpaper is tightly stuck to the wall, you can loosen the paste by soaking the paper with warm water. After the cable has been run and the plaster carefully patched,



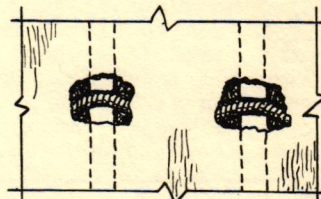
the wallpaper can be pasted back in position and the incision will be practically invisible. (If you don't have a small quantity of wallpaper paste on hand, you can use some white library paste—which is also water soluble—thinned with some additional water.)

Hiding Behind The Baseboard

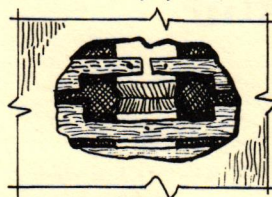
RUNNING WIRE PERPENDICULAR to the studs in a wall is a messy business at best because there is an obstacle—a stud—to be crossed every 16 in. Above the baseboard, the procedure is to break open the plaster at each stud and notch the lath and stud. Notch is made deep enough so that cable can be threaded through and stapled to the stud without making a bulge when the patching plaster is filled in. Because this process is so messy, it's obvious that you should try to get all of this type of wiring out of the way before doing any of the final decorating. When making notches in the studs, you should try to avoid breaking any



Holes are made at each stud. Studs are notched.



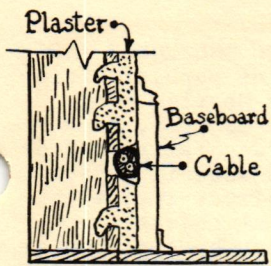
Cable is threaded through holes & stapled to studs.



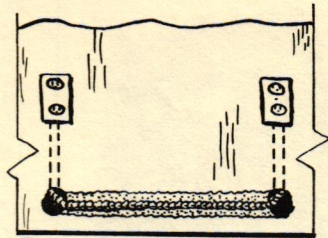
Take out two half-sections of lath using keyhole saw & chisel.

lath, as this will weaken the plaster between the studs. Careful work with a keyhole saw and chisel will allow you to take out two half-sections of lath—giving plenty of room to pass the cable and yet maintaining the integrity of the continuous lath framework.

THE PROBLEM IS GREATLY SIMPLIFIED if the plaster plus lath is at least 1 in. thick and if you have a baseboard that you can work loose. In this case, it is possible to dig a channel in the plaster behind the baseboard (use a cold chisel or an old dull wood chisel). Run cable in the channel and fasten it to the studs with BX staples, then replace the baseboard. With this procedure, you don't have to worry about breaking up a decorated wall and you don't have



Notch in plaster between lath lets cable run concealed behind baseboard.



Points on same wall can be connected by removing baseboard and making channel in plaster.

to patch the plaster afterwards. This technique can be especially useful in adding a convenience outlet on a wall when you can use an existing outlet as the power source.

THE BASEBOARD usually can be pried loose by slipping a stiff putty knife behind it; it is usually just secured to the studs with finishing nails. Don't use a screwdriver for prying—it will mar the wood.

THE PLASTER AND LATH MAY NOT BE THICK ENOUGH to allow you to make a channel sufficiently deep to bury the entire cable. In this case, you'll have to notch each stud as described on the previous page and thread the cable behind the plaster. But by working behind the baseboard at least you don't have to worry about patching the holes.

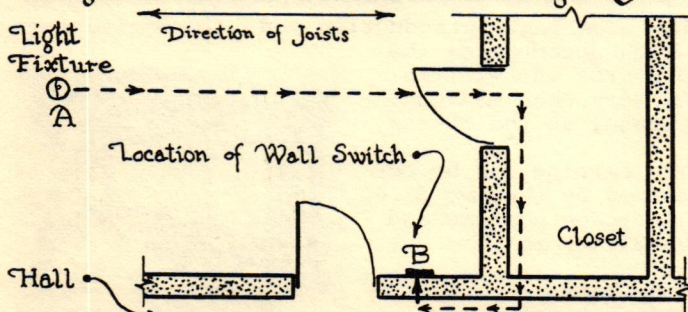
THE BASEBOARD CAN BE REPLACED with a few finishing nails, with the heads countersunk and the holes filled with putty or spackle. Any unsightly gaps between the top of the baseboard and the wall can be filled with spackle before doing any touch-up painting.

Look For The Closets

TO RUN WIRE IN A ROOM in which you are reluctant to disturb the wall plaster, you may be able to take the wire across adjacent surfaces in adjoining rooms.

CLOSETS ARE PRIME CANDIDATES. Wherever possible, the cutting and notching required for cross-wall runs should be done on the inside of closet walls. This avoids damage to finished walls—and you don't have to be so fussy in patching closet interiors.

Adding A Wall Switch Without Disturbing Room

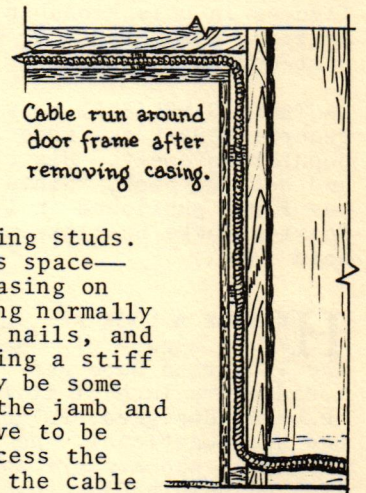


Wire is run through ceiling between the joists; then across wall in the closet and in the hall.

IN THE EXAMPLE SHOWN BELOW, it is possible to get wire from the light fixture at Point A to the switch at Point B without ever disturbing the wall plaster in the room. The procedure is as follows: (1) Wire is run between the joists across the ceiling to the interior of the closet; (2) Inside the closet, holes are punched in the ceiling plaster and a couple of joists are notched to bring wire around the door opening; (3) Wire is brought down between studs in the closet to approximate height of switch; (4) Studs inside closet are notched and cable is threaded through wall. (Bringing cable across wall rather than ceiling avoids a lot of awkward overhead work; (5) Hole is punched through closet wall and cable is brought out to hall. Depending on condition of wall plaster, wire can be brought directly across the wall by notching the studs, or cable can be taken from the closet down between the studs and down the hall wall behind the baseboard; (6) Wire is brought up between the studs to the hole made for the new wall switch.

Around The Doors

SOMETIMES WHEN RUNNING CABLE BEHIND a baseboard to avoid damage to the wall you'll run smack into a doorway. It's possible, of course, to take cable around a door by notching studs—using the technique outlined previously. This is not a suitable procedure for a decorated wall, however.



Cable run around door frame after removing casing.

USUALLY THERE IS a space of 1 inch or more between the door jamb and the framing studs. Wire can be run in this space—after you remove the casing on the doorway. The casing normally is held with finishing nails, and can be worked loose using a stiff putty knife. There may be some spacer blocks between the jamb and the frame that will have to be notched in order to recess the cable. After securing the cable in place using BX staples, the casing can be re-nailed, and the heads countersunk and filled with spackle or putty.

NO TWO HOUSES ARE BUILT ALIKE and obstructions may show up in the most unlikely places. There's no substitute for common sense in working out some of these puzzlers. In many cases, the easiest route is not the most direct route; you're better off using a few extra feet of cable to save yourself aggravation. As a result, cable runs in old houses are generally longer than what would be required to do the same job in new wiring. I always specify #12 wire on all my old-house jobs to minimize voltage drops in these longer runs.

James R. McGrath is a member of The Old-House Journal's board of technical consultants. He promises more articles for future issues on the intricacies of running wire in old houses.

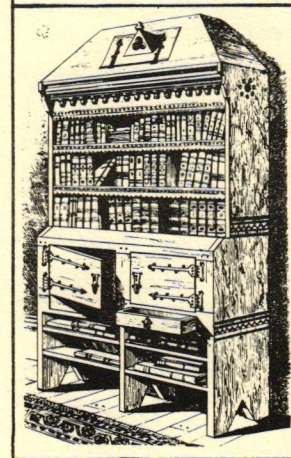
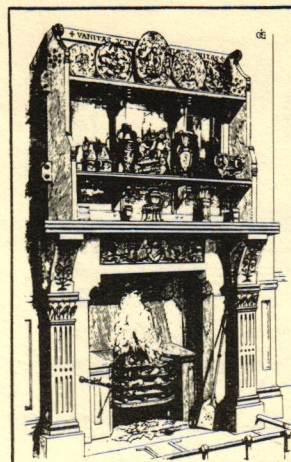
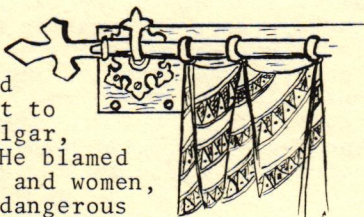
ALTHOUGH GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE really needed no reviving—it had always been nicely surviving—by now it had attained a more important place in contemporary British architecture. In 1836 the decision had been made to replace the burned Houses of Parliament with Gothic buildings. The Romantic Gothic literature of Sir Walter Scott had also created a feeling for the medieval. One of the most popular figures of the time, he himself lived in a neo-gothic house.

CHARLES LOCKE EASTLAKE published his "A History Of The Gothic Revival" in 1872. Beautifully timed! It came out at the height of the Gothic Revival movement. In it he supplied details of 343 neo-Gothic buildings from 1820-1870 and it firmly connected him in the public mind with Gothic architecture.

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS PHASE or "art movement" part of the Revival had remained a rather esoteric part of Victorian culture. The stylized wallpapers and handcrafted furniture of William Morris was far too expensive for all but a few believers. A good deal of its fame had come from the pokes that magazines like "Punch" were fond of taking. It was facetiously suggested in one issue that dust should be allowed to accumulate on the walls so that colors would be properly subdued. Cartoons portrayed the inhabitants of these "aesthetic" rooms as languid figures in unfashionable "arty" dress, bearing a strong resemblance to the "hippie" of our past decade.

EASTLAKE SIMPLIFIED many of their ideas for a general market and made the "art" movement a popular movement. His common-sense, practical and helpful book, "Hints On Household Taste" was first published in 1868. And it made Charles Locke Eastlake perhaps the first "household name."

HE TOOK A LOOK AT every aspect of the Victorian home and found every inch of it to be badly designed, vulgar, and non-functional. He blamed it all on shopkeepers and women, even condemning the "dangerous and ungraceful crinoline." What the book lacked in originality it made up in forcefulness. Drawing on many ideas, including the chunky, simplified furniture of Pugin, he laid down guidelines for a reformation.



REJECTING THE ROSES AND ribbons of popular Victoriana for Morris-type stylized designs, he declared "decorative art is degraded when it passes into a direct imitation of natural objects. Nature may be typified or symbolized, but not actually imitated."

HE CHOSE FOR HIS OWN textile designs for drapes, etc. strong classical patterns like the Greek key, diagonal stripes, or horse girth bands. His common-sense approach is typified by his recommendation of washable fabrics like cretonne and the striped cottons from the Orient. He favored curtain poles over dust-gathering cornices and valances. He liked these poles adorned with medieval ornament.

Detesting the common practice of attempting to make a thing look like something it was not, such as painting walls to look like marble, he called for the honest use of materials and rejected veneering. Today, when

it seems wood paneling (the latest shade being raspberry) covers everything from ornamental plaster to old wainscoting and threatens all but the TV screen, perhaps this principle ought to be recirculated.

DECORATION SHOULD BE LIMITED to surface ornament—inlaid wood, embossed leather and embroidery. The encaustic tile (tiles in dull, earth tones with geometric designs) met with Eastlake's approval and he promoted them for floors, the lower part of the vestibule wall, and for fireplace decoration.

HIS LOVE FOR STURDY, SIMPLE (relatively speaking in the late Victorian era) and functional furniture, unvarnished instead of French polished and made with basic structural pegging in-



EASTLAKE-INFLUENCED AMERICAN FURNITURE

The Hudson River Museum has an excellent catalog of Eastlake-influenced furniture manufactured in America. Among the many pieces are The Wooten Patent Desk, a large, ingeniously-designed desk crammed with pigeon-holes, racks and files popular with 19th century business men. There is also actress Lillian Russell's ebonized cherry wardrobe with Japanese-inspired marquetry.




The excellent introduction and informative text which accompanies the pictures was written by Mary Jean Madigan, Curator at the Museum.


The catalog can be obtained by sending \$5.00 (includes postage and handling) to:

Judy Matson
Hudson River Museum
511 Warburton Avenue
Yonkers, N. Y. 10701



stead of glue, sprang from a desire to revive good, honest craftsmanship. Although the illustrations in his book were Gothic, he said in the preface to the second edition "It is the spirit and principles of early manufacture which I desire to see revived, and not the absolute forms in which they found their embodiment." However, his strong medieval predilection was evident in the design motifs he chose for his own illustrations:

 Gothic crosses
  trefoils
  quatrefoils

 A series of holes in a circle



He also liked an individualized crocket and finial. The crocket refers to the carved decorations on the edges of a gable or arch. The finial is an ornament crowning a spire, gable or arch.

Classical fluting, stylized flowers incised in wood, and carved borders in geometric shapes were used in his illustrations for furniture.

HE NOT ONLY BELIEVED IN FORM-FOLLOWING-FUNCTION, he thought it should be stressed. He adapted medieval and Renaissance ironwork in hinges,



knobs and studs that declared their purpose dramatically on a piece of furniture. The drapery rods and poles atop metal beds had imposing finials reminiscent of medieval spears. It was one of the most easily imitated aspects of his designs, and a chunky piece of hardware or ironwork with spear-type motifs became a popular "Eastlake touch."



LEAVING NO INCH COVERED, he deplored the excessive carpeting covering Victorian floors. The scrolls and ribbons horrified him even more. He once referred to "horticultural rugs and zoological hearthrugs" in utter disdain. Replace with quiet colors and small, geometric patterns or oriental "Turkey" rugs of a square shape and leave a parquet border around them.

HIS ZEAL FOR TOTAL REFORMATION led him to recommend or design metal beds, lighting fixtures, and even jewelry and cutlery.

Impact In America

THE BOOK HAD A STRONG IMPACT in England, but its effect in America was startling. A media marvel, it had four English editions and six American. He stopped short of being the Jacqueline Susann of his day in that technology precluded a movie version.

HIS DIRECT TONE AND COMMON-SENSE

attitude appealed to the American personality and Eastlake's good, solid English name, easy to pronounce, was a blessing after all those years of imitating those fancy "Louis" styles.

THE BOOK WAS GIVEN TO PROSPECTIVE BRIDES as a solution to all their foreseeable problems. It became for many a simple "bible" with which they could tell right from wrong. The words "artistic" and "inartistic" replaced "fashionable" and "unfashionable." Harper's Bazaar reported, "Suddenly the voice of the prophet Eastlake was heard crying in the wilderness, 'Repent ye, for the Kingdom of the Tasteful is at hand!'"

AND SO AMERICANS WANTED EASTLAKE FURNITURE. Of course, there wasn't any. There were just a few illustrations in a book everybody was buying. But the demand was now there and the supply soon followed.

MANUFACTURERS QUICKLY HAD A LINE to offer of furniture "after Eastlake." Unfortunately, the term blanketed every article manufactured that looked different from former products. Some good quality furniture was produced,

adapting many of the real Eastlake principles. But anything slightly chunky, slightly Gothic, or with a geometric detail or two was accepted as Eastlake or even "East Lake" as was often featured in advertisements. In fact anything that purported to be in improved taste became known as "Eastlaked."

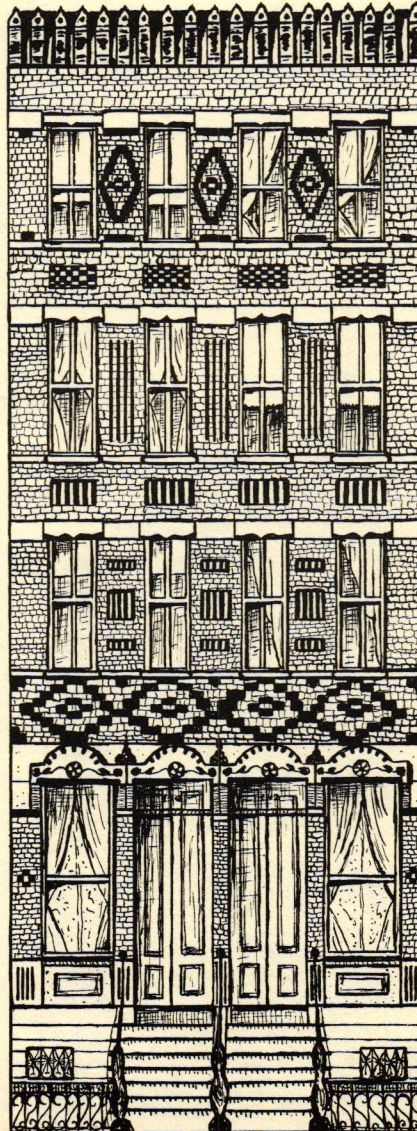
Eastlake's Disavowal

IN THE 1878 EDITION he found it necessary to defend himself: "I find American tradesmen continually advertising what they are pleased to call "Eastlake" furniture, with the production of which I have had nothing whatever to do, and for the taste of which I should be very sorry to be considered responsible."

THE GREAT POPULARITY OF THE Eastlake style was not without criticism, nor was it unanimously accepted by other members of the design and decoration establishment. Upholsterers in particular were in a snit over the prospect of an unpadded fad.

A MODERN VERSION OF THE TYPE OF criticism "Hints On Household Taste" received, in typical words, is found in "The English Interior." Referring to Eastlake's Turkey rugs, "golden oak horrors" and geometrical tiles, the author called them "pieces of calculated hideousness."

IN A LIVELY BOOK ABOUT THE Victorian period, "Victoria Royal" the author, Wellman, labels her



chapter on Eastlake "Friar Eastlake's Grocery Gothic." While being rather harsh on poor Mr. Eastlake, she makes an interesting comment, perhaps expressing the reason why he is often considered by experts to be merely a popularizer and not an original force. "He made the mistake of believing that the only possible future design could have lay in the past." After the Eastlake fad went out of fashion, the very name "Eastlake" became an epithet of reproach. This was unfair to a man of sincere principles whose reputation suffered mostly from bad imitation.

Our Square And Circle

EASTLAKE WROTE ONLY one other book after "Hints On Household Taste." Not a best-seller, it was called "Our Square And Circle." First published under the pseudonym Jack Basel, it was a charming autobiographical sketch. In it he recounted his disappointment over his lackluster career in the National Gallery of London. His uncle, Sir Charles Lock (to the eternal confusion of historians—there is no "e" on the end) was a famous painter, art historian, and first director of the National Gallery.

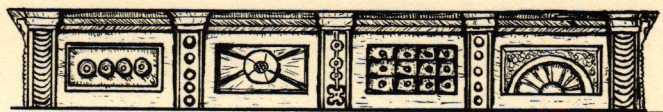
CHILDLESS, he had taken a deep interest in his nephew's education. The younger Eastlake had begun as an architect and had then turned to painting. For a short time he was a roving correspondent for "Punch." He ended up as an administrator, like his uncle, and served in his later years as head of the National Gallery. All of these fields proved disappointing except for interior design and the fame that "Hints" had brought him.

IN "OUR SQUARE AND CIRCLE," written in 1895, he refers to the mid-century period as "that terrible time when our homes were at the mercy of the upholsterer." And, reflecting on his missionary work among the tasteless, "Heaven save us from a return to that phase of ugly conventionalism, of life-less ornament, of dull propriety and inartistic gloom!"

Eastlake On Houses

THOUGH HE SHARED THE BELIEF OF Ruskin and others that a house should be similar in style in both interior and exterior and, if possible, be designed by the same person, he designed few houses and none after "Hints."

ONE OF HIS BASIC principles was that function should be visible and even stressed. This was also an element of the Queen Anne style—having the structural members visible and even ornamented. Since Eastlake espoused this principle for his furniture designs along with his preferences for lines rather than curves—the early Queen Anne style that featured linear arrangement of timbers is also known as "Eastlake."



THE DECORATIVE PANELS illustrated above were created by house builders who thought they were following Eastlake's admonition (regarding furniture) to reduce non-essential carving and restrict it to inlaid panels. These panels (often found between windows, under eaves or between ornamented timbers) were further meant to reflect the Eastlake influence by using stylized flowers and sun motifs or geometric designs.

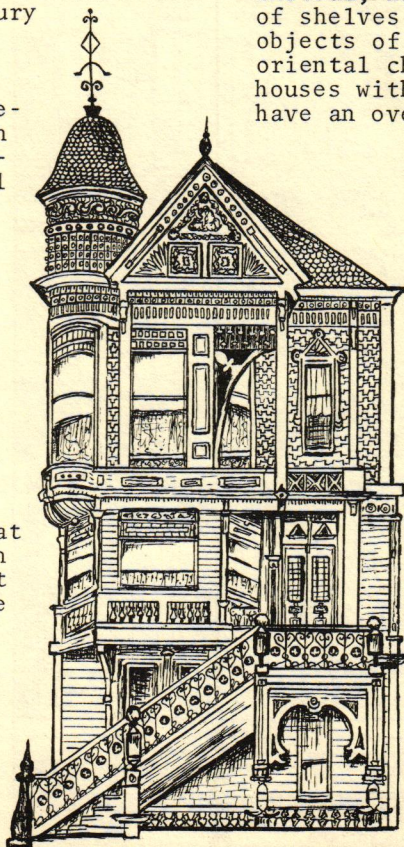
THE USE OF POLYCHROMATIC color is often associated with Eastlake. He popularized the use of soft, earthtone shades for his interiors. So a house painted in a quiet shade with its borders, features in decorative panels and structural ornaments picked out in compatible shades is often thought of as "Eastlake influenced."

TERRA COTTA was one of Eastlake's favorite materials. He liked it for decorative elements of all sort, and his own house was nicknamed "terra cottage." Like the Queen Anne style in England, a red brick house with geometric designs picked out in terra cotta is another "Eastlake" house.

ONE OF HIS MOST POPULAR INNOVATIONS was the overmantel. It was designed by Eastlake in an effort to reform the homemaker's habit of placing gewgaws all around the parlor. Instead, Eastlake recommend a "little museum" of shelves over the fireplace to hold only objects of quality such as the blue and white oriental china of which he was so fond. Many houses with exterior Eastlake influences also have an overmantel built in over the fireplace.

San Francisco

IN SAN FRANCISCO, Eastlake and the gold rush building boom coincided. Since most of the city's housing was built in the same period as the Eastlake popularity, it is a goldmine of Eastlake influence. The style is considered one of the main types in the city. It is often referred to as Stick/Eastlake because of the visible timbers. Very like the eclectic Queen Anne style in the rest of the country, San Francisco's houses have more geometrically arranged boards and paneling and less of the graceful curved shapes associated with Queen Anne around the rest of the country. In the great surge of building of so many highly individual houses, almost anything that isn't specifically Greek or Italian does seem to have found a convenient label in "Eastlake."

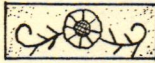




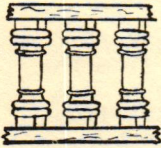
MANY SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY have houses built in 1870-1890 period that conform to Eastlake's "basic principles" or which have geometric detailing that is commonly referred to as "Eastlake touches." Some of the following are clues to architectural details that are often attributed to Eastlake's influence:

■ Ornamental iron with medieval motifs, especially iron cresting on roofs and balconies.

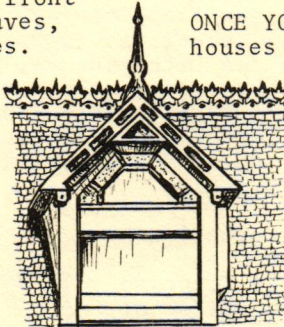
■ Decorative incised stylized flowers or geometric patterns on lintels or the front of a building.



■ A gallery effect of spindles on the outside of a house—in front of a window or under the eaves, using baluster-type spindles. This echoed the gallery (a railing around the edge of a table, cabinet or shelf) that was a popular element of Eastlake-influenced furniture.

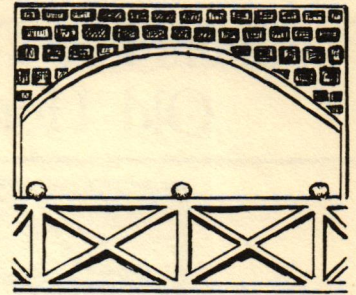


Many of these elements are also found in the interiors of an Eastlake-influenced house. For instance, the incised flowers on a brownstone front



will be found inside on the woodwork over doors and windows.

■ The arrangement of sticks in a geometric pattern on a porch or as a gable decoration is often thought to be Eastlake in inspiration.

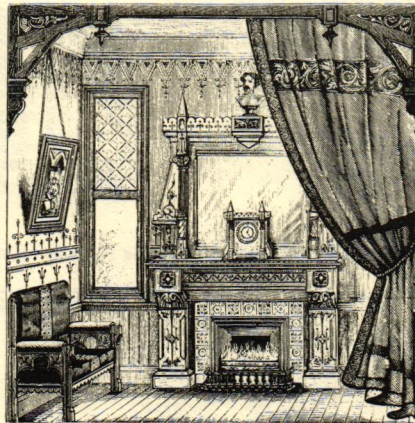


In the gabled dormer illustrated below, the Eastlake influence shows in the geometric pattern on the eaves, the iron cresting on the roof, and the use of a finial ornament topping the gable. Also, colored glass was used in the window, reflecting the popularity of stained glass in an Eastlake house. Daylight was still considered vulgar in the late 19th century.

ONCE YOU START PICKING OUT "EASTLAKE" on old houses it's hard to stop. And you can't help but wonder how they got there. Did the owner, architect or carpenter-builder read Eastlake and try to duplicate a principle? Or did they see a popular decoration somewhere and copy it? Or a grand house they liked and wanted one as much like it as they could have? No one can really know the answer and so it is truly an old-house mystery story.

A Valuable Handbook Of... Late Victorian Decor

THIS BOOK INCORPORATES the original "Hints On Household Taste" by Charles Locke Eastlake. All his principles concerning "honest use of materials and frank expression of structure" is found here in his inimitable, forthright style, and his own illustrations. The text has been slightly abridged to make room for "The House Beautiful" by Clarence Cook.



influenced by Eastlake's principles, he designed furniture of great originality which was integral with his architecture. Much of his domestic furniture has not yet been discovered and exists only in photos such as those found in this volume.

"THE EASTLAKE" by art critic Harriet P. Spofford follows. Written in 1877, she discussed the Eastlake effect. She liked his principles but found some of the furniture "too solemn for the trivialities of daily life."

THIS SECOND SECTION, written by the American critic of fine and decorative arts for Scribner's Monthly in 1877, coins the phrase "House Beautiful" and describes the ideal American house. Although strongly influenced by Eastlake, he espouses a more mixed decor and his illustrations are not only of American furniture but others such as Dutch and Bavarian that he deemed proper for his own New York brownstone. Using the same approach as Eastlake—starting with the hall and going through the house—he is more patient and takes into account such items as the effect of muddy boots on the House Beautiful.

THE LAST GOODIE offered, short but not sweet, is the pungent comments of Russell Lynes on the Eastlake phenomenon. He explains why "Here was a chance not only to redecorate but to be saved at the same time."

A SELECTION OF ILLUSTRATIONS OF AMERICAN Eastlake-inspired furniture ends the volume.

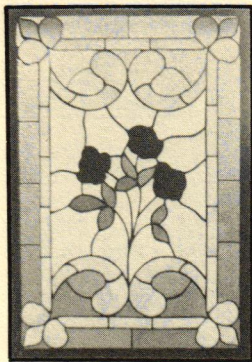
BECAUSE THIS BOOK is so important to the owner of a Victorian house, The Old-House Journal—in special arrangement with The American Life Foundation—is pleased to offer this hardcover book directly to The Journal's readers. To order "Late Victorian Decor," send \$8.00 (which includes postage and handling) to:

A SHORT, ILLUSTRATED ESSAY on the famous American architect of the late 1800's, Henry Hobson Richardson, follows. Though in-

The Old-House Journal—Reprint Dept.
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Products For The Old House

Stained Glass

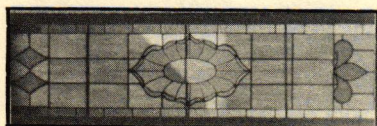


LUMPKIN STAINED GLASS in Huntsville, Ala., creates stained glass panels from your designs. They also locate and sell old stained glass windows and can also supply beveled glass.

Prices seem reasonable. The panel shown above, for example, was made in the Lumpkin shop; it measures 22 x 32 in. and sells for \$195. Although its only outlet is in Huntsville, the company has been able to serve customers over a wide geographical area. Owner Wayne Lumpkin says he has encountered little problem with breakage in shipping windows long distances. Each panel is crated and sent REA Express. Crating and shipping add to costs—depending on crate size—but Lumpkin says these additional charges don't add unreasonably to the cost of a window.

Wayne Lumpkin has one piece of advice for people who are considering purchase of a stained glass window: You don't have to install a whole new frame and sash. Very satisfactory—and economical—results can be obtained by making a stained glass panel that will just slip into the existing sash, right behind the clear glass pane, holding the new panel in with brads.

Lumpkin will quote on your stained glass requirements. Send your sketch (include dimensions) and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Lumpkin Stained Glass, 2513 Washington St. N.W., Huntsville, Ala. 35811.



A Treasury Of Victorian Houses

THIS BOOK IS subtitled "A Treasury of Lesser-Known Examples." The houses are lesser-known because they are not great public buildings or mansions and because no one before has put together the excellent words written about them by Clay Lancaster or shown them in beautiful photographs like Edmund V. Gillon.

The houses are wonderful to look at in their rich Victorian variety of details. The styles and details pop right out at you when you read Lancaster's informative comments below the pictures. They tell about the inspiration of the architecture, compare a house with others mentioned so that you can spot the differences and similarities, and note alterations on the original.

The introduction by Clay Lancaster is a brilliant, concise essay in praise of Victorian architecture and it makes the complex historical and social currents that affected 19th century architecture understandable and interesting.

"Theirs was an architectural vo-

cabulary full of meanings to which our eyes and ears have become insensitive, and of which our minds have become ignorant."

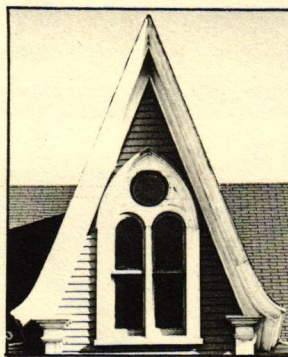
After reading Lancaster's words and looking at Gillon's pictures—our eyes and ears can no longer be ignorant or insensitive.

The houses range from some sophisticated ones built from designs by architects who followed a plan or from a pattern book to simple structures distinguished by the decoration of a local carpenter.

The more than one hundred houses pictured are from the Eastern seaboard, most from New England and others from New York, New Jersey and Canada, and all built in the last three-quarters of the 19th century.

The book is paper-bound and of good quality—for instance, the binding is sewn rather than glued. The pages are large (11x10) and the pictures are almost the full size of the page.

"Victorian Houses" \$3.50 from Dover Publications, 180 Varick Street, New York, N. Y. 10014. --C.F.



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The faded "For Sale" sign had a bold red "Sold" nailed diagonally across its front.

The sign was a jolt for those who had taken the Old House for granted. The Old House (it was said as if "Old" were the house's surname) had been on the market for four years. It was common knowledge in town that no one would buy it. No eye saw the stately beauty beneath the peeling paint. Rather, all that was perceived was the history of its previous owners... unhappy years ending in an acrimonious breakup.

The car rolled slowly past the Old House, the driver viewing his new acquisition with a glow of anticipation. His bearing was straight, his face strong, open and honest. The town would take to him.

Later it would not be recalled whether it was the informative publication on his dashboard, or some other reflection on his impeccable taste. But in years to come he would always be referred to as The Old-House Colonel.