

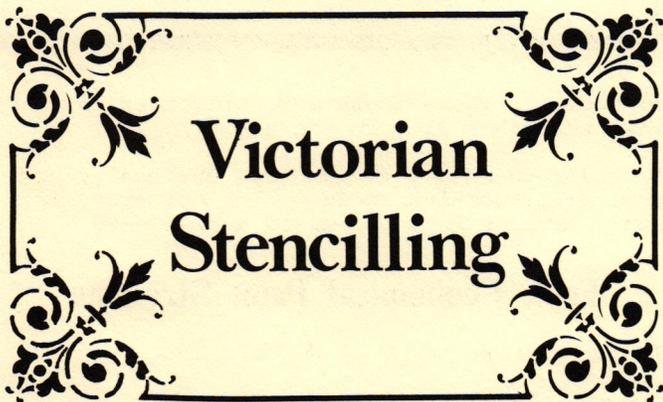
THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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Renovation And Maintenance Ideas For The Antique House

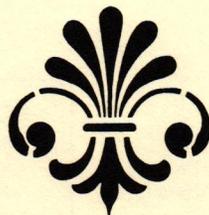


by Carolyn Flaherty

STENCILLING IS AN EFFECTIVE, INEXPENSIVE and imaginative way to decorate a 19th century house. It adds color, elegance, enhances architectural detail and is a form of decoration that was in wide use during the period.

STENCILLED DECORATION CAN SOLVE a decorating dilemma encountered by many homeowners who want to add to the life of a room, but find that Victorian wallpapers are either difficult to find or quite expensive. The large proportions of Victorian rooms also raise the cost of hanging wallpaper. But more important, the divisions of wall space (friezes, borders, moldings) and various arches and irregularities often do not lend themselves to a neat arrangement of an all-over patterned wallpaper.

STENCILLING WAS USED TO ENHANCE these very same architectural features that often are so confusing to the modern eye. And with Victorian stencilling the most important thing is where to use stencilling, not what pattern to use. The great eclecticism of the period makes it easy to be authentic, since the Victorians used decorative motifs from the Roman, Egyptian, Gothic, Moorish, and Pompeian periods with a merry disregard for what was "proper" but rather what was "fashionable" that year. So the pattern chosen to make a stencil can depend on personal taste but with



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Coming Next Month

RESTORATION OF OLD MASONRY

an eye to what motif will adapt well to the space chosen.

WALLPAPER AND STENCILLING were very often used together, typically with a large-patterned paper on the walls and a stencilled frieze and/or ceiling. This was usually too much of a good thing, and the stencilling alone can re-create the original feeling with a less cluttered effect.

DURING THE LATTER two-thirds of the 19th century, wallpaper was quite popular and inexpensive. Most Victorian walls were covered with paper or richly colored paint. There was little need to use stencilling to cover walls with an all-over pattern.

LARGE, FORMAL ROOMS sometimes had stencilled walls, but in very complicated designs. One type called for a "pounce," a stencil with punched holes. It was held against the wall and a charcoal bag applied to leave a pattern on the wall. A craftsman could then apply the paint, in designated colors, to this form, enabling many men to carry out portions of an artist's design. The final effect resembled a mural more than a stencilled wall.

ANOTHER USE OF STENCILS was to apply a "diaper" pattern. This is an elaborate floral or geometric repeating pattern, which interlaces. Often done

(Continued on page 10)

More On Finishing Floors

To The Editor:

In view of your recent series on floor refinishing, I thought you might be interested in our experiences. The floors in our 1830 Greek Revival are made of southern heart pine (which repels termites!). The floors had been stained dark brown in the late 19th century.

We removed this very worn finish by carefully sanding with a small belt sander, and using an orbital sander for the edges. We started with a coarse grit and worked our way to very fine. After thorough vacuuming, we applied a light coat of Trewax. Since the wood was old and dry, we did have scuffing problems, but this was corrected by buffing with fine steel wool. We ended up with a truly beautiful floor: All the natural coloring of heart pine (a beautiful wood), no splinters, and the mellow, low lustre finish we desired.

This is a slow, tedious, messy process, but worthwhile if you have softwood floors like ours that would be chewed up by the big drum-type floor sanders. On the plain pine floors in our 1906 wing we used essentially the same technique—but used a little stain on the floor because plain pine doesn't have the beautiful coloring of heart pine.

Mrs. A. C. Nielsen
Camden, S. C.

Keys For Old Box Locks

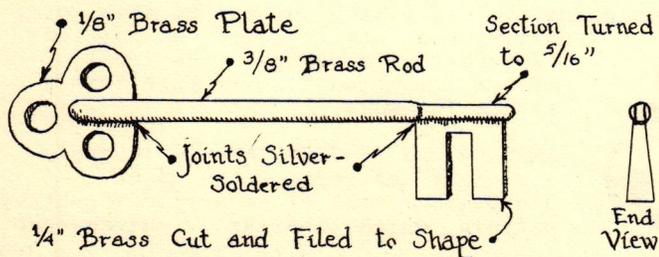
To The Editor:

Can you or your readers help me locate a locksmith who has blanks for the big brass keys that fit the old box locks that mount on the surface of doors? I could send the dimensions and my locksmith here can cut the key.

Douglas N. Clark
Lexington, Ga.

One of our readers who faced a similar problem fabricated his own key. After removing the faceplate on the lock to expose the mechanism, he turned a piece of 3/8-in. brass rod so that it would fit the lock. Both ends were slotted on a metal-cutting bandsaw (a hacksaw would work, too). The handle was cut out of 1/8-in. sheet brass, drilled for decoration, and fastened to the slotted shaft with silver solder.

A piece of 1/4-in. brass was cut and filed by trial-and-error until it activated the locking



THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

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mechanism. These teeth were silver-soldered into the other slot in the shaft.

In order to make your own key, obviously, you need metal-working tools—which not everyone has. Anybody know an easier answer?—Ed.

Fast, Economical Paint Stripping

To The Editor:

The article on stripping shutters hit very close to home. Although we didn't have shutters to deal with, we stripped most of the molding, window and door trim in my 85-year-old farm house. Chemical strippers had very little effect on the layer upon layer of paint. To speed up the process, we used lye combined with a starch thickener and painted it on the pieces.

Since we didn't use a stripping box we had to work outside...trying to stay in the shade so the sun didn't dry the lye/starch mixture too quickly. After allowing the lye to work at least 3 hours, we scrubbed it off with scrub brushes and lots and lots of water. Naturally we wore rubber gloves for protection, and also coated our arms and legs with petroleum jelly.

To make our stripping mixture, we mixed lye crystals with just enough water to dissolve them, and then used about a pint of starch for each can of lye. (The starch holds the lye on the surface and keeps it from draining off.) The kind of paint used and number of layers determine how many applications will be needed, but in any case it's infinitely easier than scraping off chemical strippers.

Gloria Bauer Heramb
Lake Zurich, Ill.

HAVE ANY EXPERIENCES to share with other readers? Send your ideas and hints to: The Editor, Old-House Journal, 199 Berkeley Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

Romanesque Revival in the Inner City



By Claire Wood

CHRISS AND HARRIETTE HUNTER and their romantically eclectic Victorian mansion were all meant for each other. Harriette was born in Detroit, and though carried off to the suburbs as a child, knew in her bones that the city was her real home.

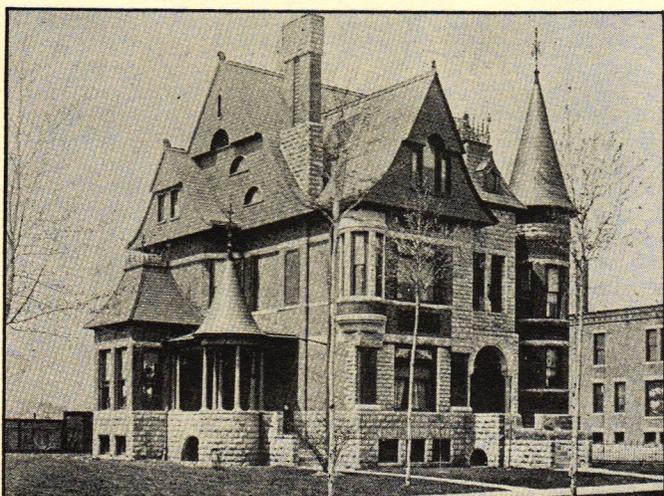
AT AGE 6, Chris was a confirmed lover of old houses. At age 8, he undertook his first preservation project: The renovation, with his father, of an ancient barn into a summer home. During adolescence and college years, Chris walked the streets of Detroit and learned its old buildings so well that when the architectural features of any house in downtown Detroit are described, he can immediately supply its street and number. Chris and Harriette met when she found an apartment for rent in a building under renovation; there were no doors, no plumbing and 41 windows were missing...but she

liked the feel of the place and she liked the landlord, who was Chris. After they were married, the next step was getting together with the house on Trumbull Street—which by that time needed them a lot.

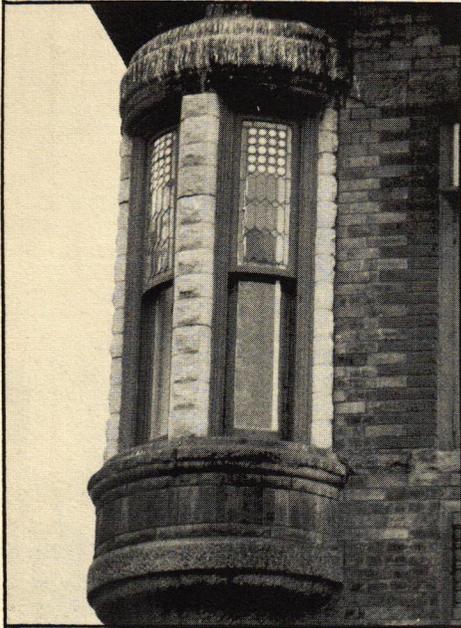
HARRIETTE ASKED CHRIS TO CHOOSE the house in Detroit he'd most like to buy and restore. He named one in a neighborhood so blighted and dangerous that Harriette blinked—and asked for his second choice. He drove her over to Trumbull Street to look at a dazzlingly eclectic Victorian mansion owned by a neighborhood church and slated for demolition. Nine days later, following negotiations so complex as to make Henry Kissinger downright nervous, the Hunters had paid \$10,500 for the place and moved in. Harriette was in a bit of a hurry because she was seven months pregnant and wanted to get the restoration launched and the baby's room finished before her first child was born. She did.

THE HUNTERS HAVE DONE ALL THEIR OWN WORK, with the exception of repair of the red slate roof, restoration of the custom-made gutters, and installation of new cornices—all accomplished with dispatch by Detroit Cornice & Slate Co. Chris—who in the other half of his life is director of programming for Maccabees Mutual Insurance—does plastering, wiring, plumbing and carpentry. Harriette, a music teacher before she became a mother, does the stripping and refinishing, wallpapering and painting... "the less exalted and more on-going jobs," as she explains it.

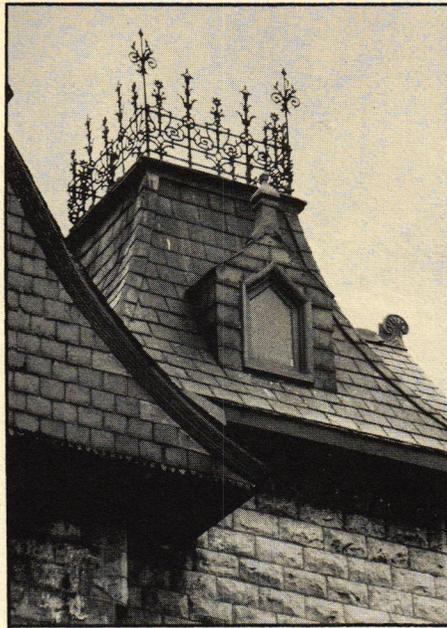
THE HUNTERS have been on Trumbull Street a little more than two years. They have spent an additional \$8,500 on restoration to date, and estimate four years and \$20,000 more before they are finished. But the house, which was "wall to wall linoleum, institutional green paint, and church hymnals" when they moved in, has begun to live again. On the 21st of February the Hunters are celebrating their designation to The National Register of Historic



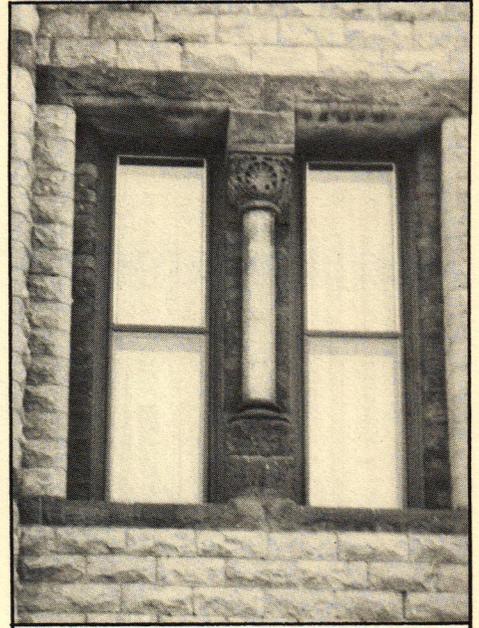
Only major architectural loss house has suffered was the removal of the side porch and conservatory—shown on the left in this 1891 photo taken when house was built.



Small turret on second floor has windows of leaded bottle glass and interesting combination of brick and stone.



Central tower has slate Mansard roof and fanciful iron cresting. Finials are made of terra cotta.



Polished jasper column with carved capital in upper window matches Romanesque columns used in front entry.

Places by stacking the ladders and paint pots in a corner and giving a champagne reception for neighbors and other Detroit friends of old houses.

BUILT IN 1890-91 at a cost of \$13,500 for William Northwood, a prominent Detroit businessman, the house changed hands for the first time in 1903, when it became the home of

Mr. and Mrs. John J. Sullivan and their seven children. It was occupied by the Sullivans until 1957, when it was sold to the church. The house is essentially Romanesque revival, but contains such other features as a Mansard roof, Eastlake-type iron cresting and a Norman tower—all melded into a pleasing composition typical of the eclectic Queen Anne style of the late Victorian period.



Family parlor was used by the church as a sanctuary. Partitions had been built across room to house the altar; fireplaces were bricked up and mantels removed. The Hunters have rebuilt the fireplace. Leaded glass window was salvaged from demolished church and will be fit into corner window.

THERE ARE NO TWO SETS OF WINDOWS the same size anywhere in the house. Every type of decorative glass is represented: Exquisite stained glass in the over-windows of the first and second floors; elaborately beveled leaded glass over the entrance door; leaded bottle glass in the small second floor turret; and diversely patterned leaded glass in most of the third and fourth floor windows, stairway, and first floor tower.

THE STONE AND BRICKWORK is equally dramatic. White limestone and red sandstone are used in porches and foundations. Hard yellow sandstone is found in the entry arch and as lintels and sills throughout the house. The roof and gable ends are faced with red slate, and the columns in the entrance arch are highly polished jasper. Roof finials and caps are made of terra cotta, and brick throughout is a rich red, with matching tiles and specially cast bricks inset as panels between the first and second floor windows, as well as in bands around the main tower.

THE INTERIOR WOODWORK of white oak, Honduras mahogany and walnut has survived intact, although heavily painted in some areas and with several mantels missing—a consequence of the church remodeling that included the bricking up of several fireplaces.

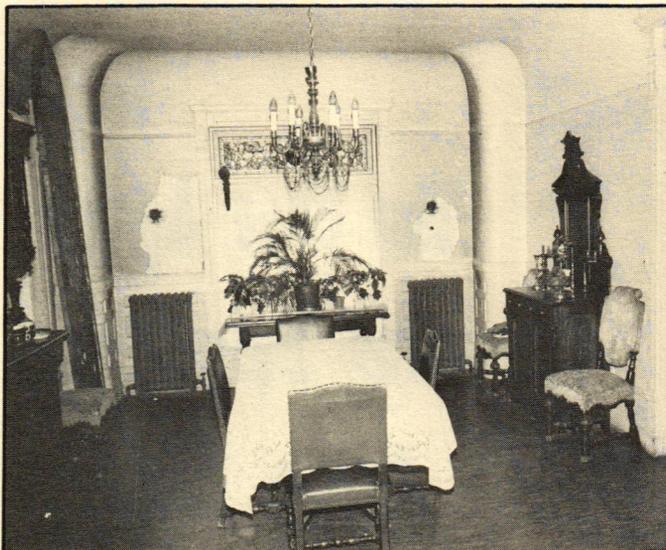
CHRIS FEELS THE MOST DIFFICULT JOB to date has been restoring the fireplace in the master bed-

room. He began with a gaping hole where the original fireplace had been, dug out the wall, relined the chimney with firebrick, laid the fireplace and set the hearth tiles. He relaid the hearth itself three times until he was finally satisfied with the results. Harriette, who was only tangentially involved with that project, finds the most difficult part of the restoration keeping their firstborn, Jason, and his new brother, Jonathan, out of the nail cans and paint remover.

ONE NOVEL PROBLEM now faced by the Hunters is how to best utilize a beautiful pair of huge stained-glass windows with arched tops (one can be seen leaning against the parlor wall on bottom of p. 4). Chris bought them both for \$5 one day when he was driving by a church demolition site in suburban Detroit and saw the wrecking crew about to use the windows as targets for practice with their BB guns.

THE HUNTERS ARE PARTICULARLY PROUD of the fact that their neighborhood, Woodbridge, is the first urban renewal area that is also a conservation district. Woodbridge is a racially mixed, essentially poor but alive and energetic place, and the Hunters—who are devoted to their community—are there to stay. While Harriette is practical about a fence and a dog as components of inner city life, she feels free to roam around at will and doesn't waste emotional energy worrying about personal safety.

AS IS OCCASIONALLY THE CASE when people commit themselves to old-house living—especially in communities just beginning the renewal process—family and friends have declared the Hunters insane. Their moving men clearly thought they were a little crazy. Harriette feels, however, that they were unduly influenced by having to move Chris' door collection; your average moving job doesn't involve transporting a couple



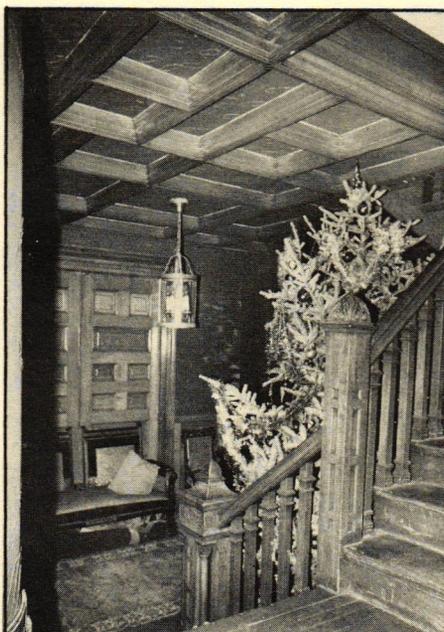
Much work remains in the dining room. The wainscotting is oak—and heavily painted. A heavy plaster moulding had been removed from the ceiling perimeter and plans are to replace it. Wiring for the sconces was added in the 1930's, walled over in the 1950's and uncovered in the 1970's.

dozen unrelated Victorian hardwood doors. These are currently housed in the garage and enjoy some local fame. When a Detroit old-house person finds a door missing, he's likely to call Chris to see what he has in stock.

BUT A VISIT TO TRUMBULL STREET today would convince even the most skeptical moving man that the Hunters are involved in a genuinely exciting adventure, rewarding not only to them but to the city of Detroit as well.



Fireplace in master bedroom had been removed. Chris rebuilt flue, firebox, hearth and replaced mantel.

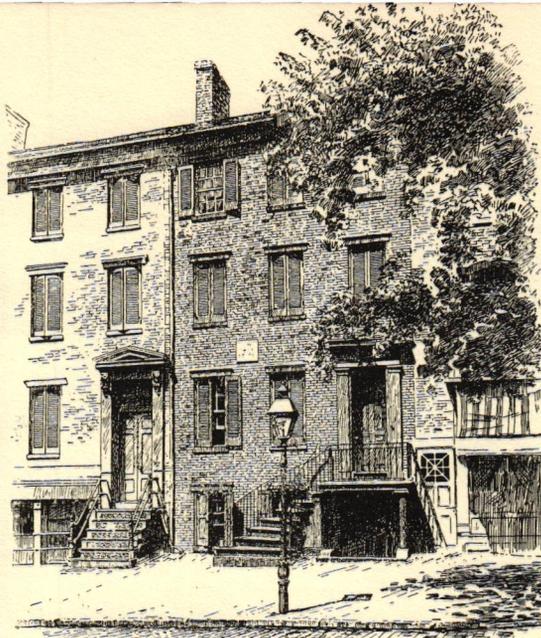


Entrance hall has oak woodwork and oak coffered ceiling. Light fixture was the only one left in the house.



Fireplace in formal parlor is being restored. Patch to the left is where Chris closed up a doorway cut by the church.

The Case Against Removing Paint From Brick Masonry



By Theodore H. M. Prudon

IN THE OCTOBER 1974 ISSUE of *The Old-House Journal* a procedure was described for removing paint from the exterior of a brick house by means of a lye stripper. Although the technique is in fairly common usage, I would like to take a critical look at the risks involved. In my opinion, the process involves risks that outweigh the small savings in the cost of cleaning.

PAINTING OF MASONRY is an old and valued technique. Originating in Europe, the painting of stone and brick was a well-accepted method in the U.S. by the 19th century. Paint was applied for a variety of reasons. A wall painted dark red with the joints pencilled in white was considered aesthetically desirable. The paint could mask rough brickwork that was never intended to be seen. And later alterations to the structure could be masked behind a similar coat of paint.

THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON for painting, however, was to reduce the permeability of such a highly porous material as brick. The paint forms a continuous film that tends to shed water.

FOR THESE REASONS, it seems obvious that careful consideration should be given before deciding to remove paint from external brickwork. When the paint was original to the structure, removal will expose a surface that was never meant to be seen—and not designed for direct exposure to the elements. Moreover, after removal of the paint, another waterproofing or coating would probably be needed. This not only seems unnecessarily costly—removing one coating only to replace it with another—but also modern waterproofing compounds are not without their problems.

THE SIMPLEST AND LEAST EXPENSIVE procedure is to replace or repair the existing paint. Scaling paint can be scraped and brushed with nonferrous brushes. (Steel-bristled brushes can badly damage the surface skin of the bricks.) If large chips are removed and the surface tends to look patchy, the edges of

the surrounding paint film can be feathered by sanding.

IF COMPLETE REMOVAL OF PAINT is deemed absolutely necessary, it should be approached with great care. The use of a lye solution—which is highly alkaline—is not without its dangers. The alkali will penetrate deeply into the porous brick and can damage surrounding materials, including painted wood trim. Lye in the brick can cause efflorescence (formation of salt deposits on the surface) or cryptoflorescence (formation of salt deposits inside the wall). Aside from the unsightly appearance of these salt deposits, the constant process of crystallization and recrystallization can seriously affect the brick and eventually cause spalling and disintegration.

THESE DANGEROUS SIDE-EFFECTS are one reason why cleaning with steam and caustic soda (lye) is generally considered undesirable today.

The Dangers Of Muriatic Acid

WHEN ANY CHEMICALS are used in stripping paint from brickwork—whether it is lye or other chemical strippers—removal of any residue is critical. Thorough rinsing with water is the least dangerous method. Too much water can, of course, soak the wall and damage interior finishings, as well as cause deterioration of embedded iron ties and wooden structural members.

TO NEUTRALIZE ALKALINE RESIDUE or remove efflorescence with strong acids such as hydrochloric (muriatic) acid is quite risky. Not only is there a chance that the acid will "burn" the brick, but also damage to the mortar joints is almost unavoidable. The soft pointing mortar—especially the lime mortar used in older structures—is highly vulnerable to acidic solutions. Disintegration of the pointing mortar will require immediate repair.

ONCE THE MASONRY IS THOROUGHLY RINSED with water, the wall should be left to dry for a sufficiently long time to be sure that no further efflorescence occurs. This should be

a minimum of several weeks. The idea that applying a sealer will stop the efflorescence is a delusion. If the efflorescence is a result of the cleaning process, the salts are coming from inside the brick matrix. If the surface is sealed with a modern waterproofing compound, the salt deposits will occur behind the surface coating. The result will be the formation of a whitish film behind the transparent coating, eventually causing failure of the coating and spalling of the brick.

THE MODERN WATERPROOFERS are themselves not without problems. The often-recommended silicones have only a limited lifespan—about three to five years—thus requiring frequent reapplication...a rather costly procedure. Coatings such as acrylics give the surface a sheen, while totally sealing the masonry. This increases the likelihood of salt build-up behind the coating.

IF PAINT IS TO BE REMOVED, the safest course is to use one of the specially formulated paint removers designed for use with masonry.

These will have a number of additives that increase the surface activity of the remover while avoiding too deep penetration into the brick and etching of adjoining materials. Moreover, if used in the form of a poultice, the chance of too deep penetration is further reduced.

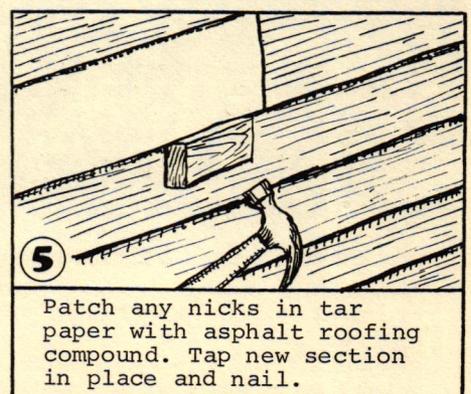
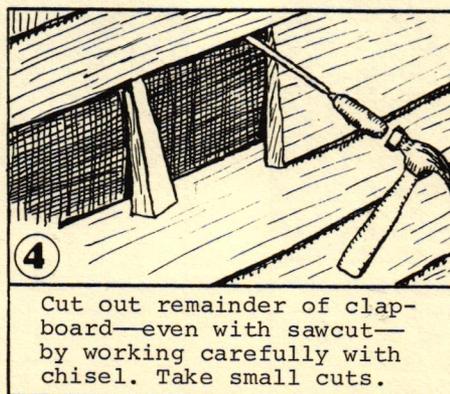
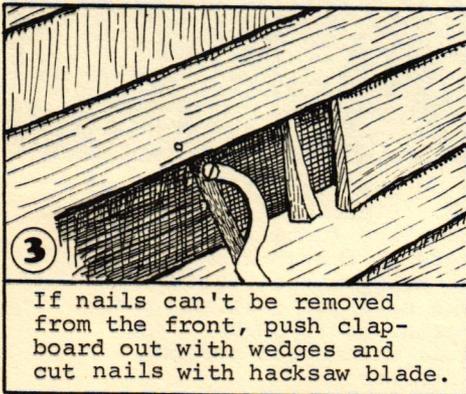
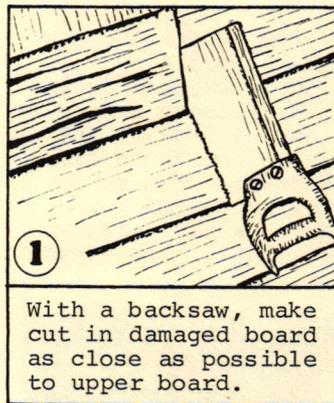
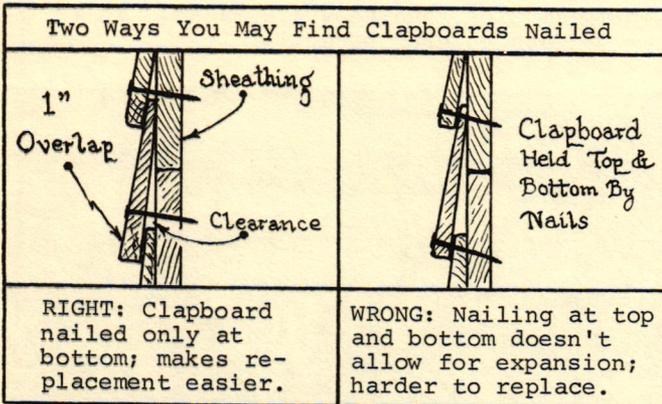
CONSIDERING the difficulties and dangers inherent in paint removal—especially with a lye solution—and considering that a new coating will have to be applied to make the wall sufficiently impermeable...doesn't it seem most logical and least costly to simply repaint?

Theodore M. M. Prudon is a lecturer in Columbia University's Graduate Program for Restoration and Preservation of Historic Architecture. He has architectural degrees from Columbia and the University of Delft and does private consulting in preservation.

Replacing A Clapboard

A CRACKED CLAPBOARD is like a cut in the skin—an open invitation to further trouble. Water entering through damaged siding will cause rot, paint failure and accelerated deterioration of the siding. Small fissures can be kept filled with putty and caulk, but there comes a time when sections or entire boards should be replaced.

AT FIRST IT MAY SEEM impossible to slip a clapboard out of the interlocking siding. The difficulty depends to an extent on the way the siding was nailed. If the clapboards are nailed top and bottom (see diagram) the nails may have to be cut as shown in Fig. (3). If you are replacing only a section, the hardest part is cutting off the last 1 inch hidden by the upper clapboard. It takes careful work with chisel and wedges so as not to split the good part. In many cases it will be easier to replace an entire board in order to avoid the problem of end cuts. Replacement board should be treated with preservative before installing.



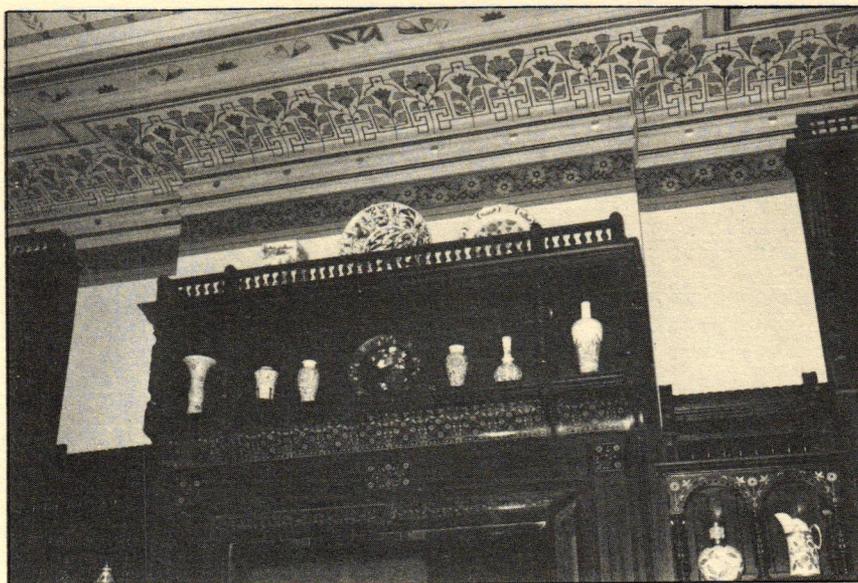
Glenview: Victorian Stencilling Restored

THE GLENVIEW MANSION is part of the Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, New York. It was built in 1876 for John Bond Trevor and his young second wife.

IT IS KNOWN as a "Centennial House" because many of its furnishings were bought at the Centennial Exhibition in 1876. While in Philadelphia, the Trevors met the famous cabinet-maker, Daniel Pabst, and commissioned him to make the woodwork and decorative features at Glenview.

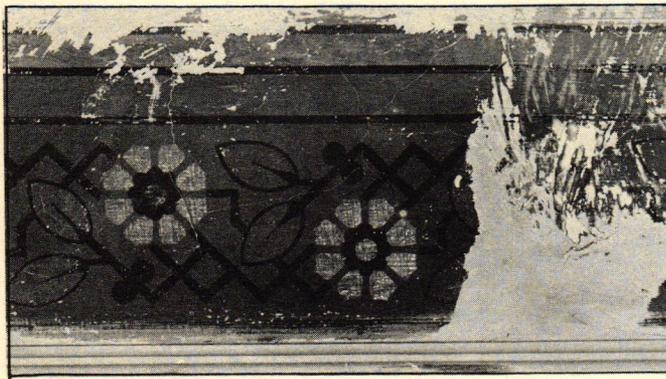
THE ENORMOUS POPULARITY of Eastlake's ideas on home decoration greatly influenced the style of Glenview. The Ebony Library's massive fireplace and overmantel has Eastlake-inspired incised decoration. These stylized motifs are reflected in the stencilled patterns of floral and geometric designs. The colors—grayed greens, greenish blues, ochred yellows, Venetian red—are the colors favored by the Aesthetic Movement in England which Eastlake popularized in America. These colors were often further subdued by the application of an umbered glaze.

STENCILLING WAS A PERFECT MEDIUM for the flat, sharply delineated patterns espoused by Eastlake. The appeal of these subdued decorations was in their vast difference from the conventional representations of flowers and foliage and the bright, harsh colors so fashionable in the previous decades. The very flatness of the stencilwork increased the stylized effect of the patterns and replaced embossed plasterwork on ceilings, borders and friezes.

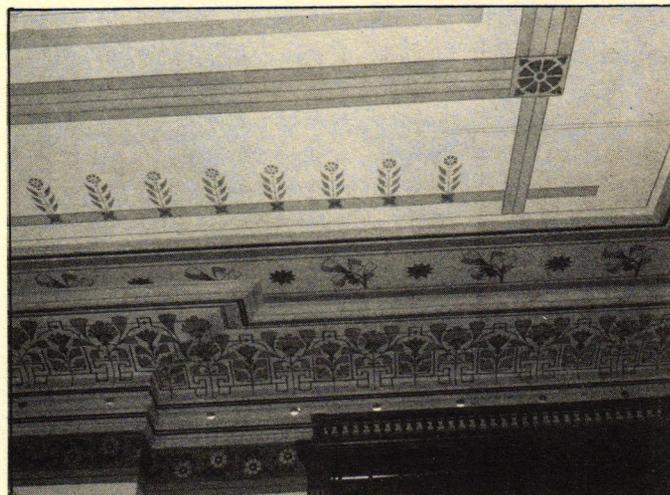


WHEN THE RAMBUSCH DECORATING COMPANY, of New York City, undertook the restoration of Glenview, they had only old photographs of the Library and the Drawing Room to give evidence of the original stencilling. The walls and ceilings had been painted over many times.

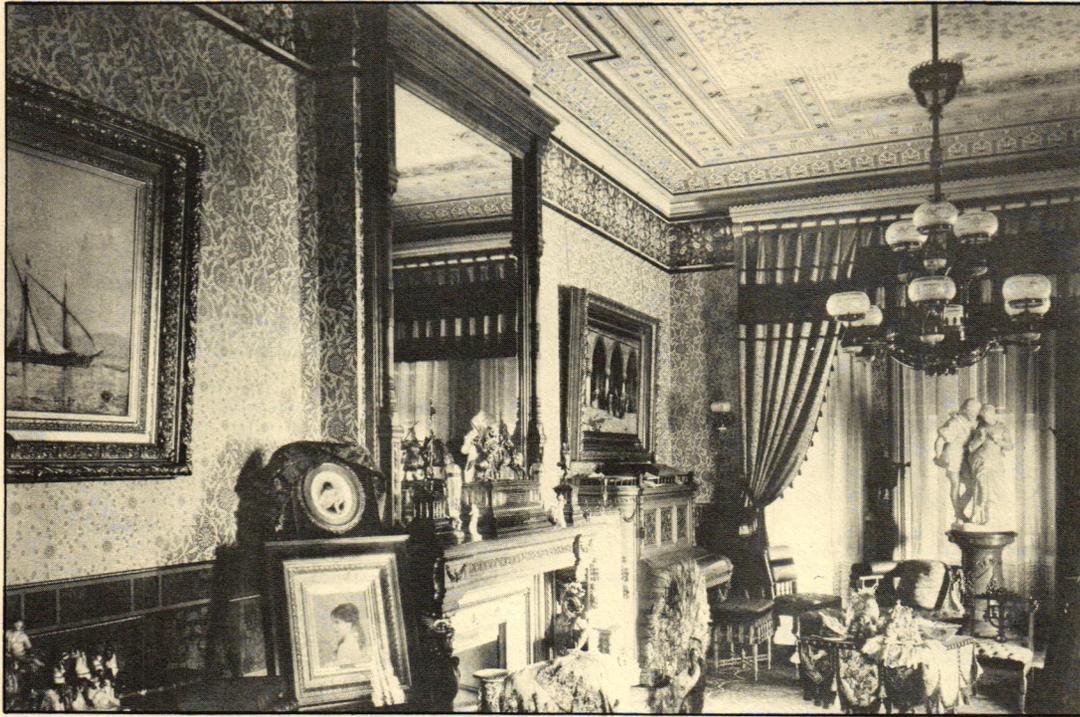
THE EBONY LIBRARY, now completed, was the first room to be restored. Workmen uncovered a portion of each part of the complicated stencilled patterns, traced the designs and made the stencils for use in the restoration. Because of the intricacy of the designs, most of these stencils are "multi-stencils"—meaning there are quite a few stencils made for each design. One for each color is generally used, and they are matched by a key portion on each stencil.



Section of frieze (lowest band in above picture) as it looked when workmen uncovered it. It has been restored in its original colors—black lines and gilt petals on a deep, brick red background.



Another view of the stencilling in the above picture. Starting from the bottom, it shows the frieze (detail at left), gold leaf stars on the cornice molding, and stylized flowers on the cove and ceiling panel, all on gray-green backgrounds. The main ceiling is white with striped borders and flowers.



The restoration work in progress in the drawing room of Glenview is being greatly aided by this photo taken in the 1890's. The walls were covered with wallpaper, but from the frieze to the ceiling, all other decorations were stencilled. The Rambusch workmen are uncovering patterns, making stencils, and reproducing the original paint colors. The room will soon be restored to its High Victorian elegance. Picture is from the Hudson River Museum.

THE VESTIBULE, not at first thought to have any stencil work, was found to have an all-over geometric design of circles inside squares, with geometric borders and frieze, incorporating a great deal of gold leaf in the patterns.

A DETERMINED WORKMAN uncovered the designs by taking a floodlight and holding it up to the ceiling. He was then able to see small ripples in the paint which repeated across the ceiling, thus giving him a clue as to where to look for the pattern underneath the many layers of paint.

THE HUGE, WAINSCOTTED HALLWAY has a large frieze pattern in subtle, almost-pastel colors above sage green painted walls. Above the wainscoting, a stencilled flower in a darker shade of green runs in a horizontal line.

THE DRAWING ROOM, shown on this page in progress, will be completed soon and the dining room will be restored next. Already, in a square on the ceiling, a spectacular polychromatic bird on a gold leaf background has been uncovered.



Howard Zucker, of Rambusch, has uncovered enough of the lotus flower design in the frieze to make a stencil. After removing 5 or 6 layers of paint with paint remover, until a trace of pattern appears, he then sands with very fine wet and dry sandpaper.



Jim Geraghty is priming the ceiling. The stencils have already been made and are ready to be applied. The tan paint is a few shades darker than the final coat will be—the way to prime when painting with colored paint.

How To See Glenview

Anyone wishing to see the magnificent stencilling at Glenview can visit:

The Hudson River Museum
511 Warburton Avenue
Yonkers, New York 10701

Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10-5
Sunday, 1-5, Wednesday eve., 7-10

The Museum may be reached by the Penn Central Railroad. It is a short walking distance from the Glenwood Terrace stop.



(Victorian Stencilling—Cont'd from page 1)

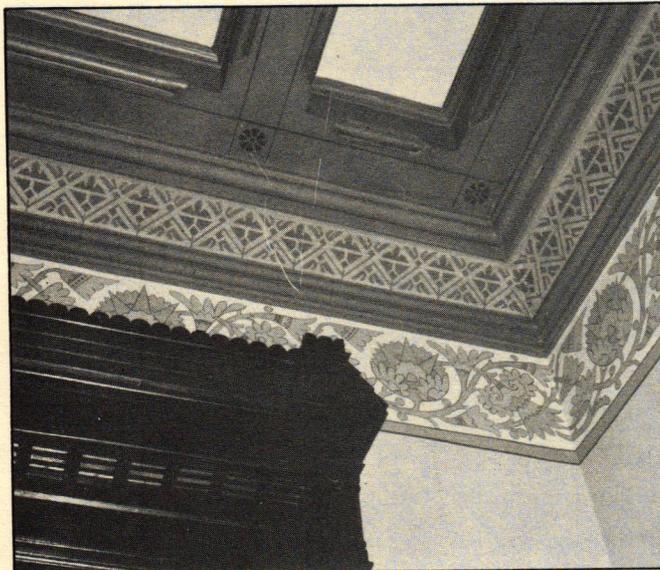
in gold leaf, these small patterns require great precision in matching.

THESE ELABORATE WALLS cannot be reproduced by a person not trained in the craft, and so it is more profitable to focus on the areas where the homeowner might wish to use stencilling in conjunction with painted walls.

► **FRIEZE:** The decorative band at the top of a wall. There is usually a cornice molding at the top of the frieze. If there is no architectural frieze defined by moldings, a decorative border can be stencilled to give richness to the room. A frieze is generally 1 ft. to 2 ft. deep, so a large pattern should be used for the stencil.



► **COVE:** A large concave molding between the ceiling and the cornice of a room. The cove was often stencilled in Victorian homes, alone or in combination with a frieze. A flexible stencil paper—such as simple brown paper—is needed to bend to the shape of the cove. This is a portion of the room that is often a problem when painting the room. Do you paint it the same color as the ceiling, or the same color as the wall? Ornamented with stencilling, it becomes an attractive transitional feature instead of a problem wall space.



This detail from a corner in the hall at Glenview shows a stencilled frieze above a painted wall, a painted cornice molding, and a geometrically stencilled cove. The decorative wood beams on the ceiling are painted in a Sienna-brown shade with lines and flowers stencilled in Venetian red.



This is a portion of the ceiling in the dining room of the Sanford-Covell House in Newport, R. I. Above the aqua-painted walls, the ceiling is stencilled with abstract floral motifs in the "Pompeian style" in pink, blue and shades of brown. Photo from The Society For The Preservation Of New England Antiquities.

► **CEILING:** Borders, lines and designs stencilled on a plain ceiling can give it a richness that is lacking if it does not have ornamental plasterwork. Stencilling also distracts the eye from the lumps and oft-covered cracks common to many ceilings. Small ceilings, as in vestibules or hallways, were often stencilled in all-over patterns.

► **WIPE-LINE:** The beginning of the wall, right over the wainscoting or dado, was called the wipe-line because the housekeeper would eventually get a dirty smear from dusting the top of the panelling. To camouflage this smear, a small pattern was often stencilled above the projecting wood. For further practicality, the pattern was usually glazed over with a varnish, dulled with an ochre or umber tint. Stencilling above the wipe-line can be a striking decorative note either as the only pattern on the wall or in conjunction with other stencilled parts of the room. A small pattern, with a bold outline, is needed here. A single flower, a Gothic cross or trefoil, or a French fleur-de-lis are good designs for this space.

TO SEE IF YOUR HOUSE ORIGINALLY had stencilling, you can do a little detective work by using the technique described for the Glenview restoration to see if some old stencilled patterns might show up. They can be traced and made into stencils.

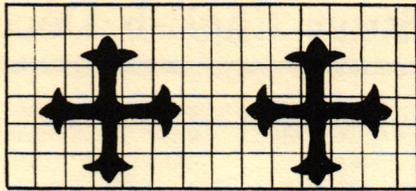
ALTHOUGH THERE ARE FEW RECORDS left of the stencilling done in the Victorian era, designs can be found in many places that fit in character and period—and have the sharp outlines required for a good stencil pattern.

HOUSES BUILT IN THE FIRST HALF of the 19th century, particularly the Greek Revival type so popular, were decorated with classic motifs, particularly Grecian. Any strong, simple outline of classical origin makes an effective





Enlarging A Gothic Cross Pattern



To enlarge or reduce a pattern, trace the pattern and then make the grid over it. The squares of the grid can be any size, 1/2 in., 1 in., etc. Make a second grid with squares bigger or smaller by the desired size change. Then transfer the pattern free-hand, square by square. Finally, you can cut out the pattern, shellac or otherwise make the paper paint-repellent, and you have your stencil.

stencil. The later Victorian houses, more eclectic and ornate, leave even more room for personal taste and imagination. Gothic ornament, stylized or conventional foliage, and various geometric designs are authentic and appropriate.

A RICH SOURCE FOR PATTERN INSPIRATION is fabric. Old fabrics in quilts, drapes, etc., or reproduction fabrics provide many adaptable designs. China, antiques, books and magazines will provide many ideas.

AN IMPORTANT FACTOR in making a stencil is the ties. The ties are what hold the pattern together on the stencil—the portion in the design not cut out. Some stencils, like the one shown in the grid, have a simple enough design not to need ties to keep the stencil from falling apart. Others boldly show their ties, as on page 1, declaring that the pattern is a stencil. The ties can also be part of the pattern itself, as with the veins of leaves. Or, the ties can be painted in free-hand if desired.



TECHNIQUES FOR VICTORIAN STENCILLING are the same as for Early American stencilling. (See Jan. 1975 issue.) Two additional suggestions: (1) For larger spaces, a small roller with a very sparse amount of paint, will give a good, even effect, and (2) For very small spaces, paint can be applied with a small piece of velvet cloth wound around a finger.

AS FOR COLOR, future issues of The Old-House Journal will have articles focusing on colors used in the early 19th century, Early Victorian, Mid-Victorian, Eastlake period, and Late Victorian periods.



Helpful Publications You Can Send For

Victorian Stencil Patterns

This is a collection of Victorian stencil patterns culled by Edmund Gillon from a German magazine published in the late 19th century for decorators and architects. The 133 different patterns in black and white are fairly complicated for the do-it-yourself stenciller, but they are a good source of inspiration and adaptation. A sturdy, paperbound book, "Victorian Stencils" is \$2.00, plus 35¢ postage and handling, from Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick St., N. Y., N. Y. 10014.

Early American Catalog

The Sturbridge Yankee Workshop offers a catalog of over 1,000 items of furniture and accessories which they sell by mail. Some of the items are authentic reproductions from the Old Sturbridge Village Restoration, although the workshop is not a part of the Restoration. They offer a good selection of craft and how-to-do-it books. Unfortunately, there is also a clutter of cutesy mail order items headed by a deluxe johnny seat with a brass eagle. But there are enough good items, from reproduction paint and hardware to lighting fixtures, to make it a catalog worth having. To receive the catalog, send 50¢ to The Sturbridge Yankee Workshop, 625 Brimfield Turnpike, Sturbridge, Mass. 01566.

Film About Ornamental Plaster

The Gallier House in New Orleans has a film on making ornamental plaster cornices which is available for rental. The film, "The Decorative Cornice," comes in a long and short version, but both illustrate the basic principles of the craft. The movie was made while ornamental plasterwork was being restored in a building and shows the actual fabrication of the castings and run-in-place mouldings. A movie on cast and wrought iron is also available. These films are excellent for workshops, courses and lectures. The movies can be rented from: Gallier House, 1118-32 Royal Street, New Orleans, LA 70116.

"The Decorative Cornice" 5 min., \$10

"The Decorative Cornice" 20 min., \$25

"Ornamental Ironwork" 6 min., \$10

The prices are for a two-week rental period and include postage and handling. All films are in color, with sound, and 16 mm. Payment should accompany order.

Victorian Decoration

Victorian furniture, lamps and upholstery fabric is featured in the Martha M. House catalog. Order form and price list are enclosed along with a form for requesting sample swatches of tapestry, brocatelle, brocade and velvets. The catalog is \$1.00 from Martha M. House, 1022 So. Decatur Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

18th Century English Decoration

Products For The Old House

Buttermilk Paint

Milk paints have a long tradition in the U.S. For the early American painter away from population centers, drying oils, varnishes and commercial pigments were scarce and expensive. So he turned to milk as a vehicle and earth colors or brick dust for pigments. The end result, when used on furniture and interior woodwork, was a very distinctive and subtle flat effect...much different from today's heavy film-forming paints.

Now Turco Paint & Varnish Co. has introduced a new line of buttermilk paint reproduction colors. These water-based paints do not contain milk, however, so they have a shelf life as long as any other conventional paint. Diluted 50-50 with water they become more like a stain than a paint. The unique character of these paints is especially apparent when applied to raw wood. The paint sinks in and give a soft effect—quite unlike an opaque paint film that sits on top of the wood.

Available in seven colors (such as "brick dust" and "raw muslin"), these new Turco reproduction paints are now at dealers. Or you can get a color card and technical details by sending 50¢ to: Buttermilk Paint, Turco Paint Co., 212 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

Period Wood Mouldings

Have to replace some architectural woodwork in your house? Or planning a fancy cabinet-making project? You'll find that there is an amazing amount of accurately produced period mouldings available in a variety of woods. There's a 32-page catalog that illustrates hundreds of different historically authentic designs, along with photos that show how they can be used in cornices, chair rails, etc. For catalog, send \$1.00 to: Driwood Moulding Co., P.O. Box 1369, Florence, S.C. 29501.

MOST BOOKS ON THE English architectural style of the 18th century have dealt with the more permanent elements of the house—plasterwork, furniture, etc. This book focuses on the more transitory aspects of decoration like the use of color, style in upholstery and drapery, and the arrangements of furniture in a room.

"No fashion is meant to last longer than a lover" goes the Horace Walpole maxim. The changing styles of the period (actually 1660—1830) are explored with the use of letters, diaries, and instructions to servants, giving an understanding of why fashion changed as well as how.

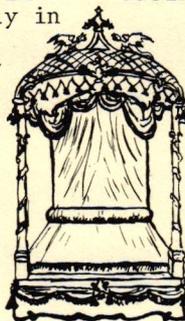
English decoration is of considerable importance to the history of American decoration. So many American homes, particularly the more expensively furnished, were decorated in the English manner not only in the pre-Revolutionary era but right through the Victorian period. This is a book for rather specialized tastes, however. About "country houses," it concerns only really grand estates. The English use the words "country house" much the same way they use the term "public schools"—

to mean quite the opposite of what such words bring to the American mind. The great houses illustrated include the ancient Knole, Clandon and Ham.

The illustrations of these beautiful rooms is what really makes the book worth its higher-than-average price of \$30. There are 50 color plates of incredibly elegant rooms, and at least 200 more illustrations of rooms and details, including drawings from the designs of Chippendale and Adam.

In addition, there is a great deal of practical information, particularly on painting and gilding. But the real interest, particularly to decorators and restorationists, is the examination of the role of the decorator and the upholsterer and how they developed in this classical period. When the price of upholstery and fabric was many times the cost of good cabinetmaking, the upholsterer held an important and very different role than he does today.

"English Decoration In The 18th Century," written by Fowler and Cornforth, is \$30, plus 85¢ postage and handling, from Pyne Press, 291 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, N. J. 08540. --C.F.



The Old-House Journal Subscription Story: "Friends"

Enclosed is my \$12 for a one-year subscription to The Old-House Journal.

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199 Berkeley Place, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11217

"Friends," he muttered, sitting amidst the rubble, under the glare of a single bulb dangling from the ornate plaster ceiling medallion.

"What good are they?"

He had plenty to party with, some to travel with, but none who would help with his newly purchased old house. They had come up with countless house-warming plans, to be sure. But at present, the house was too much of a disaster to even consider that. His musings were interrupted by the doorbell. He rose absentmindedly, stepped gingerly over the warped doorsill, peered through the vestibule and saw . . . nobody. "Darn kids!"

He opened the door, glanced up and down the block, and only then noticed the copy of the Old-House Journal at his feet. A note was attached to it.

"This will help you a lot more than we ever could." And it was signed: "Your friends."

Moral: Be a friend in need. Give The Old-House Journal. We'll send a certificate identifying you as the benefactor.