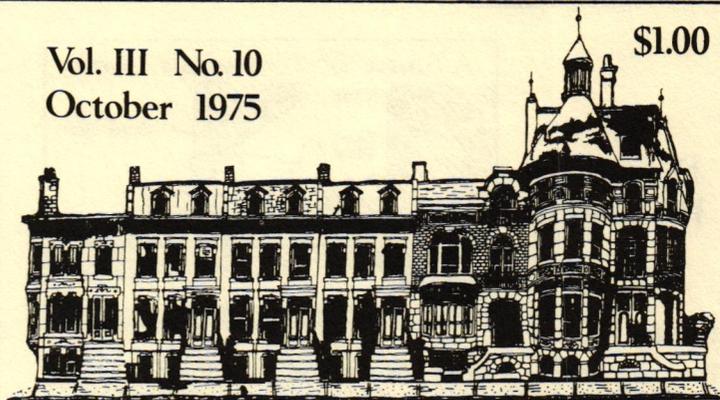


# THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

Vol. III No. 10  
October 1975

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Renovation And Maintenance Ideas For The Antique House

## Re-Creating Victorian Gingerbread

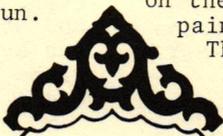
Many Victorian houses have been stripped of their exterior details by previous owners who wanted to "modernize" them. Yet it's not as difficult as it might seem to re-create much of the original Victorian character and richness. Here's how one homeowner did it.

By Jerry M. Lesandro

I HAVE HAD A LOVE OF OLD HOUSES since I was a small boy, and hoped someday to own a bit of Victorian elegance for myself. But most of the old houses I ran across were more than I could afford. When I finally found my current house, although there was little remaining of its original appearance I had faith that beneath the asbestos shingles was a thing of beauty waiting to be revealed.

THE WOMAN I BOUGHT THE HOUSE FROM told me that the house had been covered with asbestos shingles in 1950 at the cost of \$1,000. The reason given was maintenance freedom. But as far as I was concerned, this was destroying a thing of beauty just to get out of a little work. Besides, painting one's house is sort of an American tradition and it can be fun.

IN COVERING THE HOUSE WITH ASBESTOS, all the exterior trim and architectural detail was removed, including the decorative frame around doors and windows.



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### Coming Next Month

The Old-House Journal Buyer's Guide

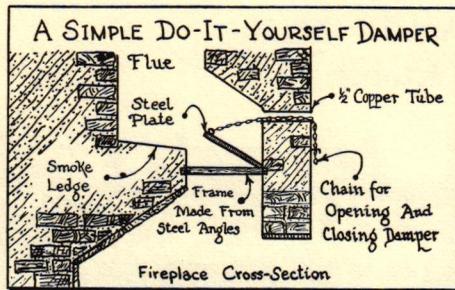
The only thing they didn't remove was the fish-scale moulding that encircles the whole house beneath the eaves. I was very lucky in this instance, for I'm sure that this bit of re-creation would have been very difficult and time-consuming. Fortunately, the shingles had been applied directly over this moulding.

**M**Y FIRST PROBLEM IN REMOVING the shingles was getting the proper equipment. A ladder I didn't consider safe; it wouldn't allow enough working space considering the tallness of the house. Luckily, I have a friend in the construction business and was able to borrow some scaffolding. I would advise anyone working on a tall Victorian house to do the same.

THE NEXT PROBLEM was what to do with the shingles after they were pulled off. I just let them fall to the ground and later collected them in boxes and hauled them away. The smart thing to do would have been to rent a dumpster; the disposal of all the trash would have been much easier. One other lesson I learned the hard way: Under the shingles was a layer of tar paper that created havoc with future paint jobs. The tar paper left marks on the house that later bled through the new paint...requiring a repainting of the house. The wood should have been prepared more thoroughly, probably using mineral spirits or washing soda to get rid of

(Continued on page 6)

## Details On Home-Built Damper



To The Editor:

The home-made damper described in Chris Hunter's article (July 1975) is exactly what we need for our fireplace. I'd like a few more details so that I can give proper instructions to a metal worker to make such a damper for us. Thank you.

Warder H. Cadbury  
Albany, N.Y.

Chris Hunter has sent along the following answers to Mr. Cadbury's questions.--Ed.

- Q: What kind of clearance between the metal, angle-iron rectangle and masonry should be allowed when taking measurements?
- A: I set the angle into the masonry as I was building the firebox, so its measurement wasn't critical. As for the plate, it has about 1/8 in. clearance all around.
- Q: How did you fasten the angle-iron rectangle to the masonry? What kind of mortar is used to seal the edges?
- A: I didn't use any fasteners; it just sits in the masonry. Conventional mortar was used throughout.
- Q: What size angle-iron did you use?
- A: Each side is about 3/4-in. wide and 1/8-in. thick.
- Q: How did you hinge the damper plate to the angle-iron frame?
- A: There's no hinge. The plate just sits in the frame and bears against one side of the frame when opening. Its weight keeps it in place when closed.

## Beware Asbestos In Taping Compounds

To The Editor:

After using wallboard joint compounds for several years, I have just become aware that at least some brands contain asbestos fibers. Sanding these materials creates a dust that can be very hazardous if you're not wearing proper eye protection and respirator. Since a number of the taping and spackling compounds that contain asbestos carry no warning, persons wishing to minimize risk should only use pre-mixed materials (the process of mixing dry powder with water creates dust) and "wet sand" dried areas using a sponge or a moist heavy-nap cloth wrapped around a backing block.

John Casson  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To The Editor:

In an article entitled "Exposure to Asbestos in the Use of Consumer Spackling, Patching and

## THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

Published Monthly For People Who Love Old Houses

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|----------------------------|--|
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"Taping Compounds" by A. N. Rohl et al (*Science*, Aug. 15, 1975) the authors point out that such compounds often contain asbestos and other biologically active substances. The authors state: "...home repair work involving use of such materials may result in exposure to dust at concentrations sufficient to produce disease."

I thought of this when reading Jack R. Cunningham's article "Re-Creating the Effect of Colonial Plaster Walls" (Sept. 1975). He mentions mixing dry compounds and sanding rough spots—both of which produce a lot of dust. According to Rohl et al high-quality dust masks should be used during all such dusty operations, as well as during cleanup.

Bruce J. Bourque, Research Associate  
Maine State Museum, Augusta, Maine

## Another Approach To Pigeons

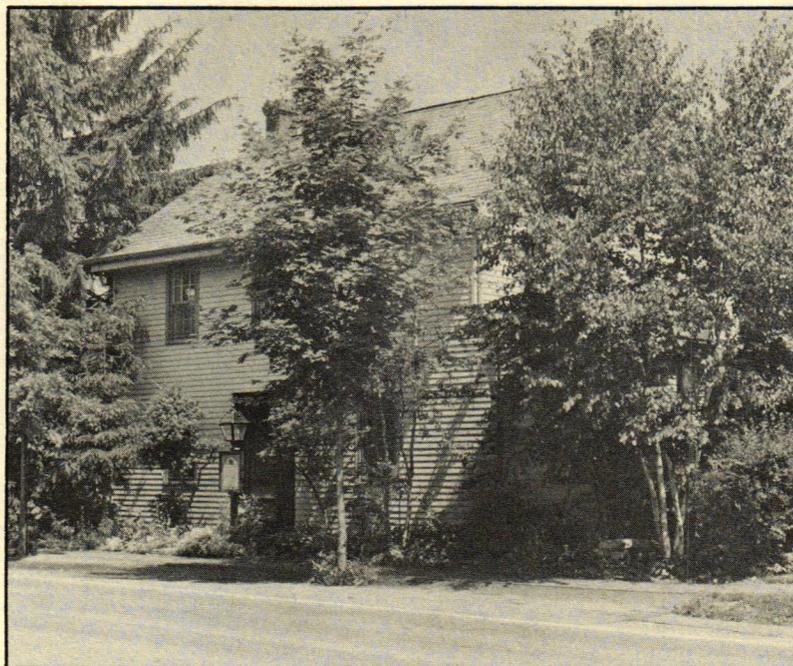
To The Editor:

We tried some of the pigeon repellents like Tanglefoot and found that dirt entrapment required them to be renewed every year. More determined pigeons would even land on a thin layer of it after a while. So when painting the cornice of our 19th-century brick rowhouse, I nailed a row of 3½-in. finishing nails every 2 or 3 inches along places where birds might land. Nails were painted with Valoil primer before being painted with the cornice oil paint color. These nails are nearly invisible from the sidewalk below—and create a palisade on which pigeons can't land. If they start perching on top of the flat brownstone window caps, I'll cut sheets of copper or aluminum and stud them with nails pointing up. Nails can be held with epoxy; such plates would have to be wired to anchors in the masonry so winds won't blow them off.

Charles Porter  
Troy, N.Y.

## An Early American Saltbox...

### The Do-It-Yourself Way



By Clem Labine

**I**T'S NOT UNUSUAL for an energetic and enthusiastic young couple to have an enormous impact on the well-being of some fine old house. It is a little more unusual when the house, in turn, has an enormous impact on the lifestyle of its young owners.

SUCH IS THE SYNERGY between the Cunninghams of Rohrerstown, Pa., (near Lancaster) and The Saltbox. Of course, The Saltbox wasn't The Saltbox when they bought it. And therein lies our tale...

TWELVE YEARS AGO Shirley and Jack Cunningham seemed to be a very ordinary young married couple. He was a salesman for a business forms company, she a housewife. In their early 20's, they were looking for a house to buy—their first. Like many young marrieds, they didn't have much money. So when they finally found the old house on Marietta Pike—all covered with white asbestos shingles—they knew it was just what they were looking for: The price was low, and the house had an apartment in it that produced a rent sufficient to cover most of the mortgage carrying costs.

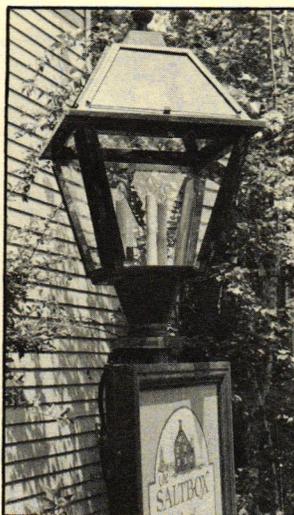
THE HOUSE WAS BUILT around 1825. But when the Cunninghams moved in, there was no way to tell its age. Besides the asbestos shingles that covered the original clapboards, the interior had been totally "remuddled" during the years, so that it was best described as "semi-Victorian, semi-contemporary." The house suited their needs, however, and things flowed along in a very uneventful way until the fateful day when Shirley lifted the flowered linoleum...

TEN YEARS LATER, Jack still recalls the day vividly: "I came home from work, and Shirley couldn't wait to show me the dirty gray boards she had found under the linoleum. My first reaction was to lay the linoleum back down and leave well enough alone." But Shirley persisted, and finally got Jack interested in helping her sand and refinish the random-width pine boards she had uncovered. The floor, cleaned and varnished, looked quite handsome...and Jack and Shirley were very pleased with themselves.

**"I** WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO QUIT while we were ahead," admits Jack. "But I came home a few days later and found Shirley peeling the 1930's flowered wallpaper off the walls to see what was underneath." At that point they both were hooked...although they wouldn't realize to what extent until years later.

AS THEY CAME TO REALIZE MORE and more the rich tradition that the 150-year-old structure represented, they set out on a re-creation on a "what-might-have-been" basis. The house had been so totally re-worked over the years that a true restoration was impossible. So they have re-made their house in a style they call "rural American country dwelling."

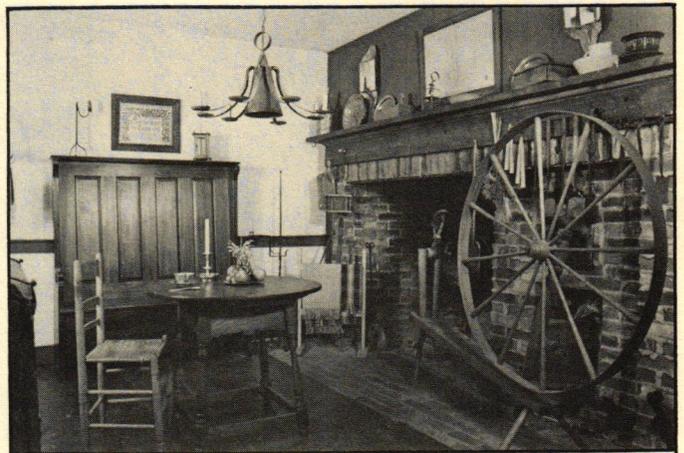
**B**ECAUSE MONEY WAS LIMITED, they used the resource they had the most of: Their own time. Jack developed an eagle-eye for good salvage material. Example: He was able to rescue the 1820's mantel that now graces their living room from an old tavern that was being demolished. And the boards for the wall that divides the living room from the keeping room came from an 18th-century



The post light in front of The Saltbox is from Jack's workshop.



Random-width pine floor in living room is what got the Cunninghams started. Mantel and boards on wall are salvage. Pewter cabinet and side table are antiques. All else (including beams) are re-creations.



Keeping room: Walk-in fireplace was built to the Cunninghams' design. Wool wheel is only antique in photo. Wide-plank floor was laid from salvaged boards; Jack made the chandelier.

stable that had been torn down in the city of Lancaster.

ONE OF THE EXCITING THINGS about looking at The Saltbox today—10 years after the flowered linoleum came up—is knowing that just about everything you see was done by the Cunninghams themselves. The do-it-yourself approach started with every square inch of floors, ceilings and walls. (For example, Jack described his technique for re-creating the effect of old plaster walls in the Sept. 1975 issue.) The Cunninghams' handicraft extends through the lighting fixtures, furniture and primitive art that you see on the walls. And they were able to do all this while raising two children: Bryan, 10, and Kelly, 15.

"NECESSITY TRULY WAS OUR MOTHER of invention," Jack recalls. "Once we had started doing over the living room, the idea of an entire Early American re-creation came to us. But

we didn't have the money to hire the craftsmen or buy the accessories we knew we'd need. We realized that we'd have to educate ourselves so that we could use our own talents, such as they were."

BESIDES BECOMING EXPERT SALVAGE-PICKERS, the Cunninghams became avid museum-goers. "We must have visited every period room from New England to North Carolina," Jack says a trifle wearily, perhaps recalling those hundreds of miles on the road. As they gathered new ideas, they began trying to re-create things they had seen—and surprised themselves by finding skills they never knew they had. Jack eventually developed into the craftsman for house parts and fixtures—especially lighting. Shirley specialized in the decorative arts. She has become an accomplished artist (one specialty: primitive oils on board) and sells work commercially under her "S. Bradley" signature.



All modern appliances in kitchen are hidden behind period cabinetry. The trestle table was made from 150-yr.-old pine boards; frame is painted poplar. Light fixture is from Jack's workbench.



Wide plank floors and window casings in Bryan's bedroom are only features that were left from the original house. With exception of antique woodbox, all furniture and fixtures are Saltbox reproductions.

**A**MONG THE SKILLS THEY ACQUIRED along the way was a deft touch with floors. On the old wide-board floors, Jack never uses the big drum sanders; they grind off too much of the patina and character. Any cleaning that has to be done is accomplished with a hand sander or scraper. For a floor finish, Jack is a big believer in the power of boiled linseed oil. In high-traffic areas, he applies two coats of linseed oil that have been thinned with turpentine. The linseed oil acts as a sealer and brings out the color and character of the wood. After allowing the oil to dry thoroughly, he applies three thin coats of polyurethane varnish. (The secret is in keeping the coats thin.) One floor finished in this way has lasted seven years in heavy service and still is in good shape.



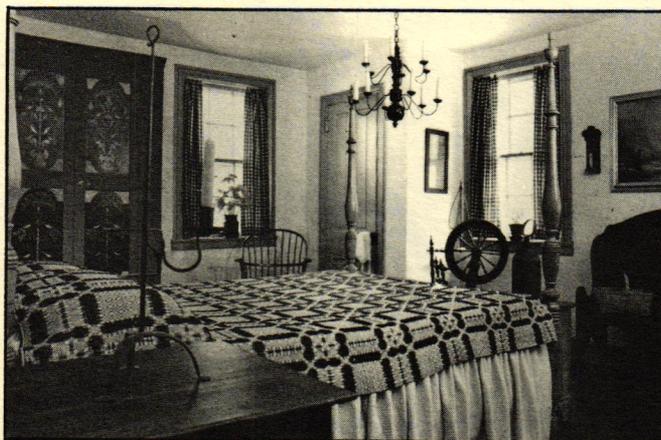
Jack's workshop and showroom—displaying many of his handiworks. His pride and joy is the 19th-century German workbench with two vises. Floor is painted mustard yellow, with stenciled pineapples.

**JACK PAINTED THE FLOOR** in his workshop showroom because the boards there are nothing special. But he used an interesting trick: He applied three coats of paint—using three different shades of mustard yellow. Thus, as foot traffic wears the tops layers away, a slightly different color is revealed, giving interesting variations in hue—sort of a subtle antiqued effect.



A primitive by Shirley: oil-on-board.

**U**NTIL ABOUT SIX YEARS AGO, the Cunninghams still regarded their house and re-creations as purely a hobby. But as more and more people saw what they had done, the Cunninghams were asked to make things for other people. It began to dawn on them that perhaps they could build a business based on their newly found skills. It was an exciting concept: To get an income while they indulged their passion for Early Americana.



Master bedroom features much of the Cunningham's own work, including the clothes cupboard (which hides their TV). It was a battered old piece that was repaired, and then decorated in Early American style by Shirley.

**FIVE YEARS AGO**, Jack said goodbye forever to selling business forms in order to devote full time to developing The Saltbox business. In addition to selling Jack's lighting fixtures, the Cunninghams have put together a network of about 30 local craftsmen who create reproductions to the Cunninghams' specifications. They also operate a consulting business, advising other homeowners on Early American restorations and decoration. The Saltbox is a perfect blend of business and pleasure!



Jack has just put together his first catalog, showing the most popular lighting fixtures and lanterns made at The Saltbox. To get a copy of this handsome 12-page folder, send \$1.50 to Jack Cunningham, The Saltbox, 2229 Marietta Pike, Rohrerstown, PA 17603.

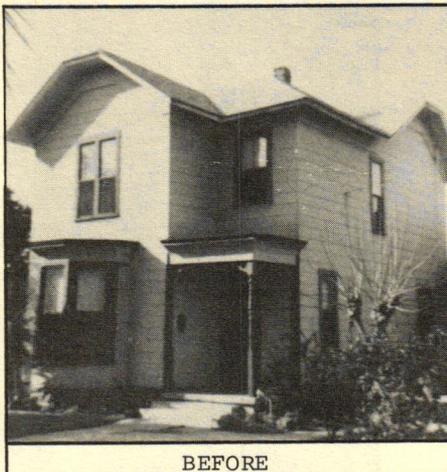
the residue left by the tar paper.

**N**EXT CAME THE TASK of re-creating the gingerbread trim. To determine the kind of trim that had been on the house, I consulted old photographs of the area. Also, I found imprints of some of the decorative details when the shingles were removed. And by some quirk of luck, I found one of the corner pieces of gingerbread underneath a pile of wood in the backyard, even though at the time I didn't realize where it went.

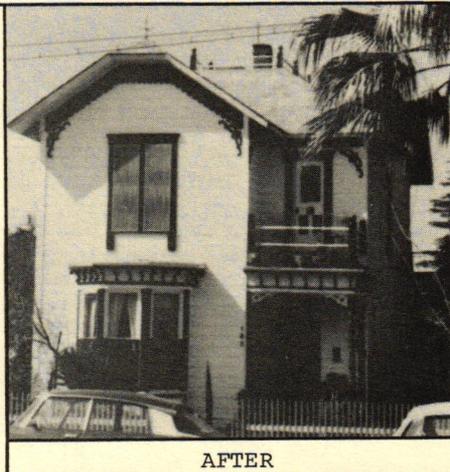
BECAUSE THESE CORNER decorations are so large, additional pieces had to be cut from 3/4-in. plywood sheets. Using the salvaged piece as a pattern, it was a simple matter to cut out more pieces using a sabre saw. The curves were pretty intricate, but with patience and a steady hand they came out quite well.

ALL NEW GINGERBREAD PIECES—and especially those made of plywood—were carefully coated with a primer-sealer on all sides and then given several coats of paint. This is done before nailing the pieces in place. Once they are up, it is a simple matter to touch up any scars made during the installation process. Painting before installation is not only easier on the painting arm—it also ensures that all sides of the wood are protected from damage by water and rot.

**R**E-CREATING THE DECORATIONS around the top of the bay window and front porch was more difficult: I had only old pictures to go by. Since the photos were not too clear and were taken at a distance, I had to use some poetic license in making up a pattern. But my design fits in well with the estab-



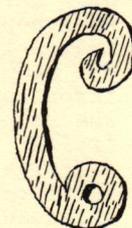
BEFORE



AFTER

Exterior restoration included ripping off the asbestos shingles and repainting, installing finials at roof peaks, creating a widow's walk atop the house, re-creating much gingerbread trim, and replacing the door and railing for the small second-floor porch over the front door.

lished theme. After drawing the pattern and making one master piece, the rest were cut from 1-in. pine with a sabre saw. I did experience some difficulty with the pieces breaking at the narrowest point, and had to repair them with corrugated fasteners. If I were doing it again, I would use 2-in. pine stock for added strength.



Bay Window Ornament

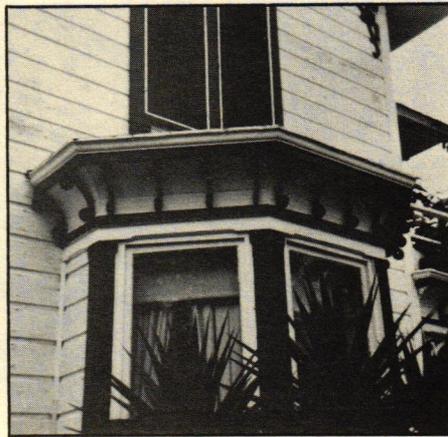
**A**BOVE DOORS AND WINDOWS, replacing the trim required only 2-in. cove moulding that is readily available at lumber yards. To create depth in this feature, two small pieces of the moulding were mitered to each end of the long front piece. After this unit was put in place above the windows, a piece of 1-in. pine was nailed to the top to function as a drip-cap. These units were made for all doors and windows. Joints where these caps butted against the house were carefully caulked. This pre-



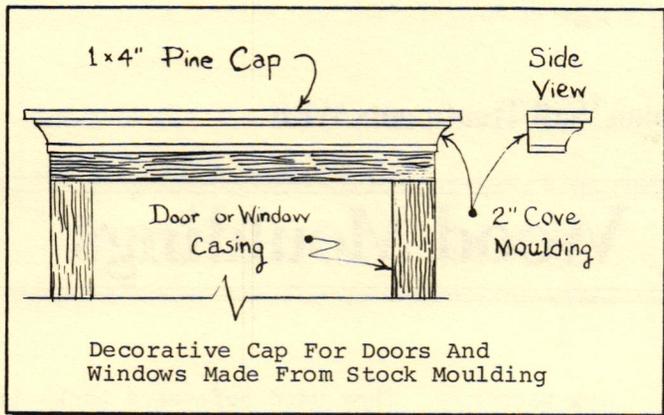
Piece of original gingerbread—found in backyard under woodpile—served as a pattern.



A re-created piece installed. The fish-scale trim under the eaves is original to the house.



Detail of the curved pieces that were restored to the top of the bay window.

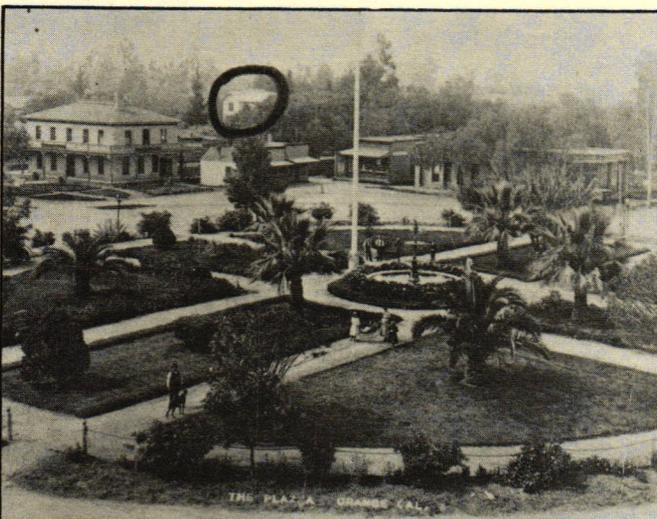


vents water from seeping behind the moulding and rotting the whole section out.

FROM VERY OLD PICTURES of the house, it was evident that there once had been a widow's walk on the top. I thought that this was a nice feature that should be put back. Since the photos were somewhat fuzzy, here again I had to re-create it as best I could.

I WAS ABLE TO SALVAGE POSTS (from a house that had been torn down) for the four corners of the widow's walk. I also used them for the small second floor porch. I was fortunate because the age and style of the posts closely matched the woodwork on my house. For rails, I simply used 2x4's. The widow's walk is reached through a trap door in the attic. The area on top is approximately 8 ft. x 16 ft. and provides a delightful place from which to view the surrounding neighborhood.

THE OLD PICTURES also showed that a door led from the second story to the balcony. Why it was removed, I'll never know. Here again, I was lucky to find a door of the same period with stained glass. With the balcony completed to match the widow's walk, it now has an elegant access door that does it justice.



The Lesandro house is circled in this photo of The Plaza, Orange, Calif., taken about 1890. Of all the buildings in the photo, Lesandro's is the only one still standing.

COLOR OF THE HOUSE seems to have always been white, with the trim being many different colors. I decided to keep it white and paint the trim a chocolate brown. Happily, two other old houses in the same area underwent exterior restoration after my house was done. People pass the house now and remark that they had never noticed it before—even though they had been going by it for years. When that happens, you know all the effort was worth it!

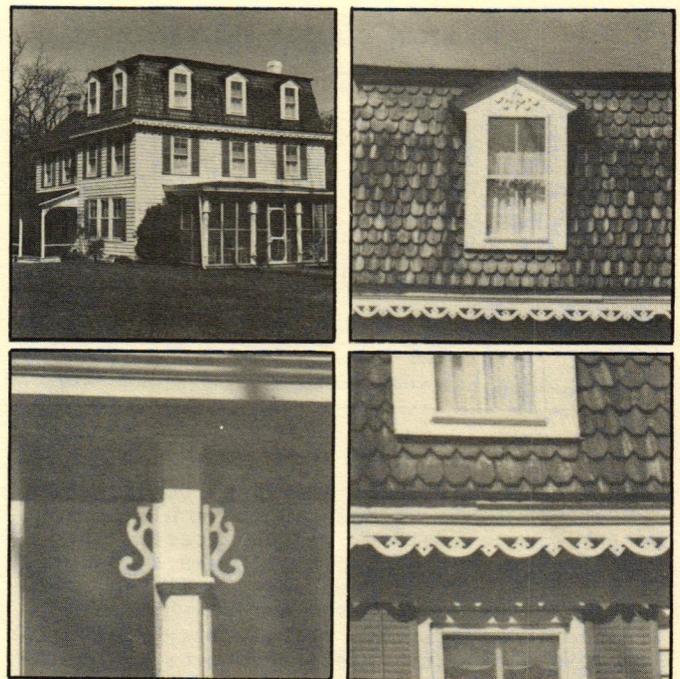
Jerry Lesandro is one of a rare breed: A fifth-generation Californian who was born in Los Angeles. This California pioneer heritage has stimulated his interest in preservation, which includes numerous historical society activities.

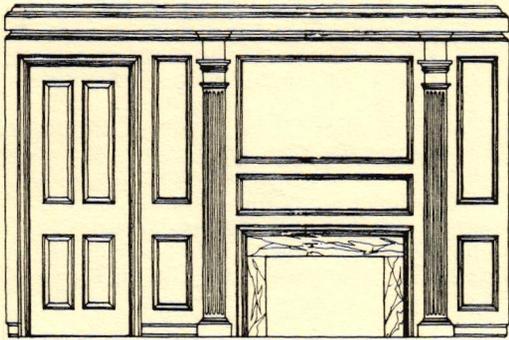
## 17-Year-Old Restores Sawn-Wood Ornament On Family Home

INTEREST IN RESTORATION isn't confined to the over-30 set. One of The Journal's youngest readers, 17-year-old Peter Romano of Pitman, N.J., has sent along an account of a gingerbread restoration he has just completed on his family's home.

THE LINE OF CUT-OUT GINGERBREAD along the eaves was original to the house and is still intact. However, a 1913 photograph showed that the porch was also decorated with elaborate sawn wood ornament—which had long since disappeared. Guided by the old photo, plus study of a similarly ornamented house across the street, Romano laid out a new pattern for the porch ornament. He cut the pieces from exterior-grade plywood, and nailed them in place.

TO COMPLETE THE DESIGN, Romano also added some sawn wood applique above the windows on the dormers in the Mansard roof.





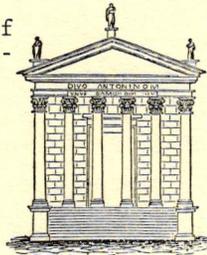
## Early American Wall Treatments With

# Wood Mouldings

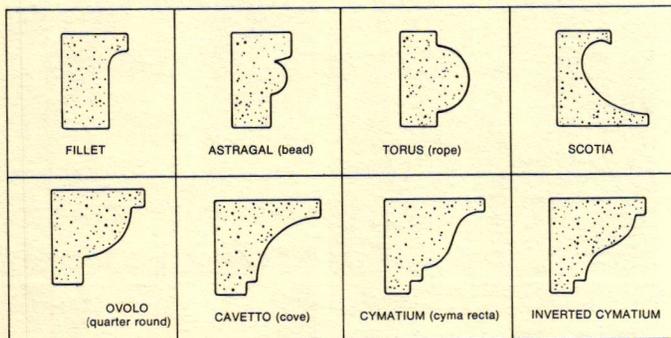
**W**OOD MOULDINGS OFFER AN AUTHENTIC, easy and inexpensive way to restore and create period decoration. Stock wood mouldings can be used for exterior or interior architectural detail or for smaller projects like picture frames or furniture finishing. Mouldings form an essential part of the house—window caps, sills, door frames, etc., and they protect walls and doorways from wear. But the use of decorative mouldings can also add exciting authentic period accents to houses that have been stripped down—or plain houses that never had much decoration to begin with.

**H**ISTORY'S MOST BEAUTIFUL MOULDINGS were originated by the ancient Greeks who designed them to embellish classic architecture. The ancient Greek designers first used mouldings to divide surfaces into small parts, to create interest and variety and to produce highlights and shadows.

WHILE THE FREE-FLOWING beauty of the Greek mouldings distinguished their architecture, the Romans also made important contributions to modern profiles. Using mechanical tools and compasses, the Romans simplified and reduced the variety of patterns originated by the Greeks.



THE EIGHT CLASSIC SHAPES



**T**HE BEAUTY of early American housing was attributable as much to the moulding as to any single feature. In many cases, the mouldings were the carpenter's own signature. There were thousands of houses built in early America by craftsmen from Europe who were trained in Renaissance architecture, noted for the revival of the more graceful Greek mould-

ing patterns. They used reference books like Andrea Palladio's Four Books of Architecture which was based on his careful measurements of ancient Roman ruins. These books were the architect's guidelines to the rules of classical proportions.

**M**ANY COLONIAL ARCHITECTS were ignorant of the fundamentals of architectural drawing but were masters of improvisation and American Colonial became a unique style.

WOOD MOULDING DESIGN in early America was free and graceful. Craftsmen, no longer bound by the limitations of stone, adapted quickly to the rich, free-flowing designs allowed by the flexibility of wood.

THE EARLY COLONIES lacked trained wood finishers to cut and apply wood panelling and moulding. As a result, wealthy colonists rushed to import skilled "joyners and woodcarvers" from England. They began the tradition of elegant woodwork found in many colonial homes.

THE GEORGIAN STYLE, which dominated American building in the 18th century was known for its rich and elaborate woodwork and trim and mouldings were essential to the style. The later Federal style used lighter and less elaborate woodwork trim.



**C**LASSICAL MOULDINGS were again revived in 1820 with the advent of the Greek Revival style. Although wood panelling went out of favor for interiors, doorways, windows and mantels were ornamented with mouldings.

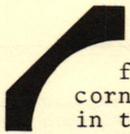
THE ELABORATE WOODWORK of early America was produced with simple tools. Moulding planes were hand-carved from wood blocks, with the metal blade wedged into position. A carpenter's tool chest might include as many as thirty such planes. Planes shaped for fashioning the wide, intricate crown mouldings were too heavy to be carried to the job site. They were found only in large woodworking shops where one or two apprentices would help pull while the master craftsman guided the cutting blade. Or, if no woodworking shop was nearby, carpenters often improvised by using several basic "hollow and round" planes to eventually shape a complete moulding.



Hand Planes  
Shaping A Moulding

## Basic Profiles And Uses Of Wood Mouldings

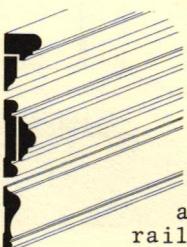
There are hundreds of mouldings available in many shapes and lengths. Many have very plain, modern profiles and are usually labelled "ranch." But there are also hundreds of traditional shapes. Here is a sampling of the kinds of mouldings available and the places they are ordinarily used. The richness of traditional woodwork often comes about by using varied combinations of these shapes.



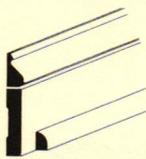
**COVE:** Often called a cavetto, it is a moulding with a concave profile and is used at ceiling cornice corners. Small coves are very useful in trimming out windows, doors, etc.



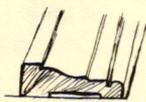
**CROWNS/BEDS:** Most often used where walls and ceilings meet. Crowns are always "sprung" (beveled off to better fit a right angle joint). The smaller beds are either sprung or plain.



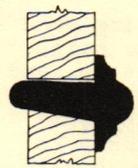
**CHAIR RAILS:** An interior moulding usually applied to the tops of dados or wainscoting. Originally used to prevent chairs from marring walls, it is used today as a decorative element in dividing walls between wood and wallpaper or paint. Chair rails come in many traditional shapes and can also be combined with other mouldings for added interest.



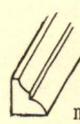
**BASE CAP/BASE/BASE SHOE:** Applied where floor and walls meet, forming a visual foundation. The decorative base cap is also a versatile panel moulding.



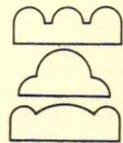
**CASING:** Used to trim inside and outside door and window openings. Chair rail and panel mouldings can be added to casing to add detail and width for Early American treatments.

**ASTRAGAL:** There are two types; the Flat Astragal (top) and the T-Astragal. The Flat Astragal, which in classic Greek architecture was a bead around a column below the cap, is used for decorative purposes. The T-Astragal is attached to one of a pair of doors (for instance, French doors) to keep one from swinging through the opening.



**GLASS BEAD:** Also called glass stop, cove and bead, putty bead, glazing bead and staff bead. Used to hold glass in place and many small projects like picture framing furniture trim.



**SCREEN MOULD:** A small mould which covers the seam where screening is fastened to the screen frame. Also an excellent shelf edging.



**QUARTER ROUNDS/HALF ROUNDS/ROUNDS:** Quarter rounds can be used as a base shoe, inside corner moulding or to cover any 90° recessed junctures. Half rounds can be used to create reeded pilasters. Rounds are most often used as closet poles.



**LATTICE:** Originally used in trellis work, this small, plain moulding has many uses. An interesting one is to use small pieces of the lattice to make dentils for a ceiling cornice, mantel or pediment.



**BATTEN:** A symmetrical pattern used to conceal the line where two parallel boards or panels meet. Also used for exterior vertical board-and-batten siding.

WP/Series numbers do not accompany any of these patterns because the number varies with the size of the moulding. For instance, a 5/8" x 5/8" quarter round is WP 107 and a 1/2" x 1/2" quarter round is WP 108. An excellent reference book to guide you through the lumber yard is published by the Western Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers. It is a moulding pattern catalogue with WP numbers and sizes available listed for every shape. To order, send \$1.00 to Western Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers, P. O. Box 25278, Portland, Oregon 97225 and request W/P Series Moulding Patterns.



**B**Y MID-19TH CENTURY the Industrial Revolution began to bring about a standardization of wood mouldings. The high-volume runs of this machinery soon replaced the carpenter's hand-crafted profiles.

WHILE MECHANIZATION HAS made possible the manufacture of thousands of profiles and sizes, most are still based on the curves and planes of the eight basic patterns shown on page 8.

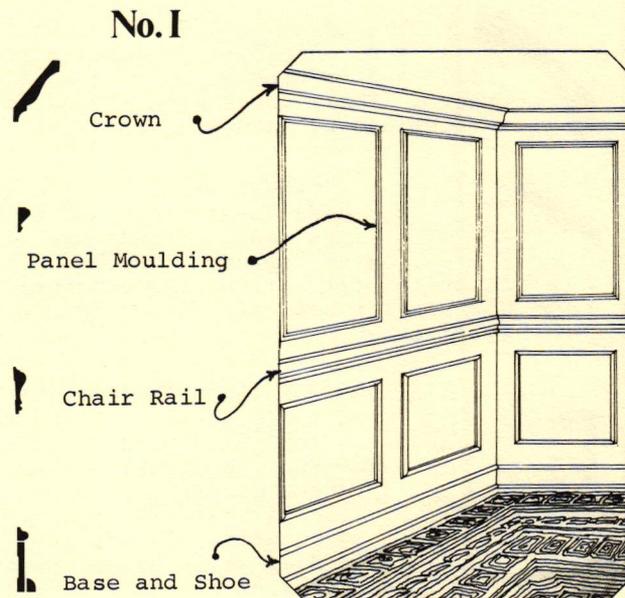
WITH SO MANY PATTERNS AND SIZES from which to choose, chaos would have resulted without a standard numbering system. Although no one knows precisely when the first numbering system was formulated, it probably was as early as 1880. Since then, the standard numbering systems have progressed from an initial "4000 series" through a five, seven and 8000 series. In the 8000 series, for instance, today's WP 93 cove was formerly designated "8052."

**T**HE WP/SERIES MOULDING PATTERNS was introduced in 1957. The WP/series is the Western Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers industry standard for high-volume or "stock" wood moulding items.

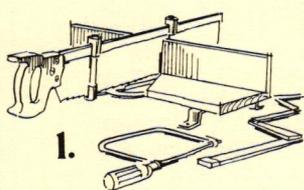
ALONG WITH THE ESSENTIAL elements of a house—drip cap, window and door stops, casing, base, hand rail—there is an enormous variety of decorative mouldings available at local lumber yards and building supply centers. They can be used to restore or create sophisticated traditional interiors, exterior doors and architectural features. A familiarity with the kinds of mouldings available also enables the do-it-yourselfer to use them for many smaller projects like making picture frames, enriching furniture, or transforming a flush door to a period design.

## Early American Wall Treatments

**T**HE CHARM OF EARLY AMERICAN INTERIORS in the 18th and early 19th centuries resulted from the combination of simple, well-designed furnishings against a visually interesting background. A great deal of attention was paid to proportion and detail in wall treatments. These architectural details can be approximated with stock mouldings by using them to divide wall spaces in the Early American style. Four examples are given below, along with the kinds of mouldings used. Many other moulded patterns can be substituted or added for variety and richness.

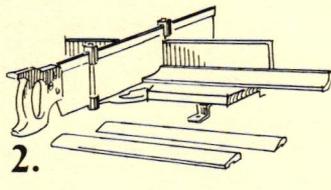


### Tools Needed For Working With Wood Mouldings



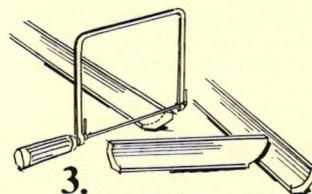
1.

1. **TOOLS:** Basic tools and materials for working with wood are a mitre box and saw, coping saw, carpenter's rule, hammer and finishing nails. Inexpensive wood mitre boxes can be bought for around \$5. The more expensive metal kinds can be rented.



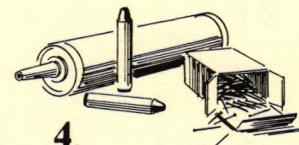
2.

2. **MITERING AND JOINING:** The first step in this basic moulding carpentry operation is to set the mitre box saw at 45°. Then trim each of two mitering members at opposite 45° angles. When joined, the two pieces form a tight, right angle.



3.

3. **COPING:** If coping is required, set the moulding upright against the mitre



4.

box backplate, positioned as it will be installed on the wall. Trim at a 45° degree angle. The remaining profile serves as a guide line for the coping saw which is used to trim away the wedge at another 45° angle. The profile should fit perfectly against the face of the adjoining moulding.

4. **INSTALLATION:** When installing wood moulding with standard finishing nails, countersink the nails about 1/16 in. and fill holes with a colored putty stick. Panel adhesive may be used to apply mouldings, but care should be taken to properly align the moulding before allowing the adhesive to contact the panelling.

## No. II



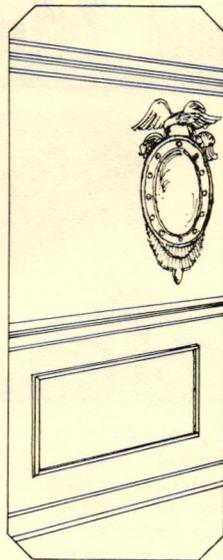
Combination base and crown moulding



Base moulding topped with cap moulding for use with wainscoting



Base moulding with shoe



**A**FTER THESE PLAIN WOOD MOULDINGS have been applied, there are many inexpensive ways to finish them to enhance the effect of Early American wall treatments.

MOST WOOD MOULDINGS are softwood; therefore a natural finish (staining and varnishing) will only produce a mediocre result. If the look of wood is desired, graining, an authentic Early American method of decoration, is the answer. (See *The Old-House Journal*, June, 1975, for specific instructions on how to grain.) It is also a good way to match mouldings applied to a hardwood surface—windows, doors, furniture.

TO PAINT WALLS AND WOODWORK is entirely in keeping with Early American tradition. Colonial walls were generally painted all one color. The effect this produced, however, is not so easy to re-create today. Pigments, ground in oil, were made from natural substances: dirt, plants and berries, animal blood, and rust. They produced strong colors—and variations in texture and hue.

TO RE-CREATE THIS EFFECT, first select a paint from one of the manufacturers specializing in authentic Early American paint colors. They have simulated the odd, often-grayed, but strong and positive colors used in the 18th century. Painted walls can be waxed for a more aged and subtle effect. Or they can be antiqued by applying glazing liquid or varnish to which an amber or sienna pigment has been added.

WITH ALL-OVER PANELLING like the kind in Fig. 1, the lower portion from the chair rail down is often antiqued, while the upper wall portion is left with a plain finish.

**I**N THE FEDERAL AND GREEK REVIVAL periods, represented by Figs. II and III, white and pastel shades were fashionable. The upper wall can be papered or painted in light but contrasting shades and the portion below the chair rail painted in a white or cream color and waxed or antiqued for richness.

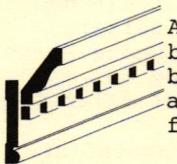
FIG. IV is kind of wall division that looks well painted in two or more shades or colors or papered in the panels. To obtain an elegant and formal look, the long rectangular mouldings can be marbled or gilded.

REMEMBER, when you are proportioning the room for the division of wall space, that 18th century chair rails were placed approximately one-third of the way up the wall. Originally used to protect walls from damage by furniture, the chair rail was applied at about the height of the average chair. And since people were much smaller then, so was the average chair.

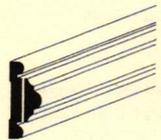
THE OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL wishes to thank the Western Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers for their advice and cooperation in the preparation of this article.

IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE, *The Old-House Journal* will present a variety of ways to use wood mouldings to give an Early American appearance to interior and exterior doors, mantels, furniture, etc.

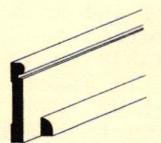
## No. III



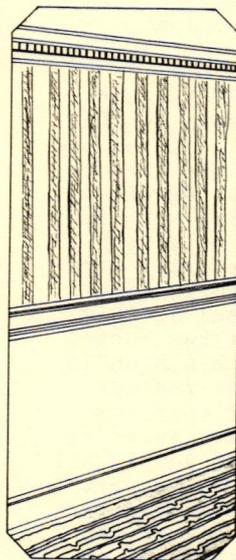
A three part combination cornice: base, crown, and dentils made from a lattice



Single pattern Chair Rail with an Astragal added



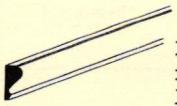
Base and shoe (this type of shoe is interchangeable with a quarter round)



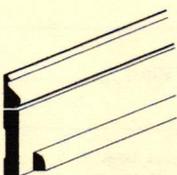
## No. IV



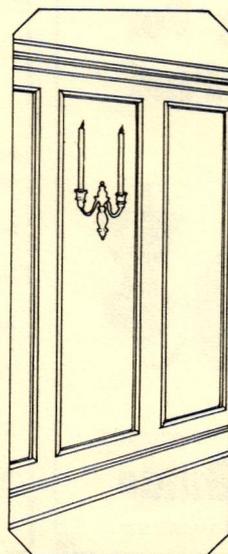
Complex cornice made up of: crown, lattice, square, cove, and base



Panel mouldings form full-length rectangles



Base cap, base, and shoe



# Products For The Old House

## Rubber Tools For Wood-Graining

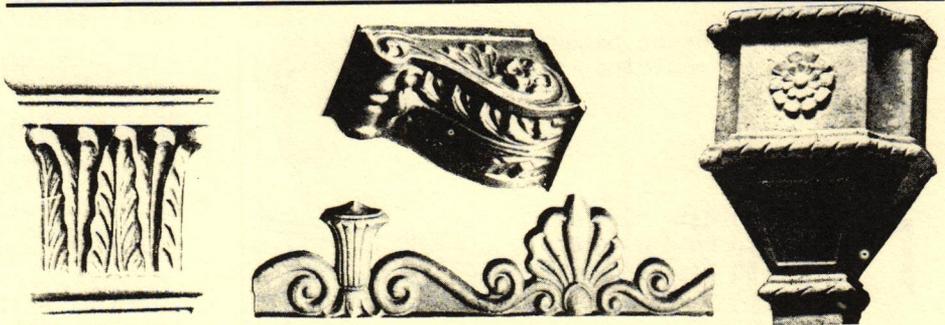
**G**RAINING is a painted imitation of wood. One of the simplest and fastest ways to grain is with the aid of combs or rubber grainers.

THE BROOKSTONE COMPANY offers a kit containing two grain applicators similar to the kind used by painter-decorators for decades. One side has rubber teeth for making straight-grain patterns, and a swirl on the other end for stamping on the heart growth pattern.

THESE GRAINING DEVICES are particularly useful for areas like baseboards, hallways, floors--jobs you want to do quickly and not spend a great deal of time on with brushes, rags and steel wool.

FROM THEIR Catalog 121A, Fall 1975, of Hard-to-Find Tools, order C-3097.3, Wood-graining kit, from: Brookstone Co., Peterborough, N. H. 03458. The price is \$5.95. Catalog gives price of \$1.35 for shipping orders under \$10.00. It is worthwhile getting their catalog and ordering a few other items at the same time.

# Stamped Metal Ornament



**I**N WILTON, CONN., there's a truly unusual company—one that takes a genuine pride in the preservation of traditional metalworking crafts, especially the art of hammering. As a result, they turn out some unique and beautiful works in all types of sheet metal: Galvanized steel, (tinplate), copper, lead, zinc, etc.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST is that this company—Kenneth Lynch & Sons—now has all of the old tools and dies of the former Miller & Doing Co., Brooklyn, N.Y. Miller & Doing supplied much of the sheet metal cornices and other exterior ornament for 19th century buildings. Now that much of this exterior metalwork has rusted away, Kenneth Lynch & Sons is the only source for replacement metalwork for cornices that the editors are aware of. Kenneth Lynch would supply all of the stamped ornament parts to a local sheetmetal contractor, who would do all of the assembly and installation on site.

AMONG ITS OTHER CAPABILITIES, the company has the tools for making lead gutters and leaders, and the facilities for restoring them. They also have many hundreds of molds for making cast stone.

IN ADDITION, the firm makes weathervane parts and stampings, using century-old tools and molds. Among the patterns: Eagle, rooster, running horse. All parts are ready for assembly, which requires soldering.

THE COMPANY ALSO manufactures tin ceilings; it stocks many brass parts for chandeliers. They will also do custom hammerwork.

THE COMPANY'S 128-page catalog is an amazing assemblage of the metalworker's art. Although the firm normally sells to contractors and architects, they have agreed to make catalogs available to The Journal's readers. To get a copy, send \$3.50 to: Mr. Kenneth Lynch, Sr., Kenneth Lynch & Sons, 78 Danbury Rd., Wilton, Conn. 06897.

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**HISTORY OF THE GOTHIC REVIVAL**—Complete unabridged reprint of the 1872 classic by Charles Locke Eastlake. Text traces development of Gothic style in England. 31 full pages of engravings of Gothic structures—many now demolished. Informative introduction by Alan Gowans puts Eastlake and Gothic Revival in historical perspective. 439 pgs., paperbound, sewn binding. Published at \$5.95, now available at \$4.75 (postpaid) to Journal readers. Order from: American Life Foundation, Watkins Glen, New York 14891.

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