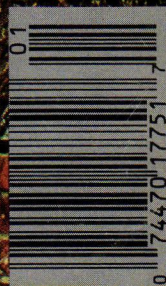


Old House Journal

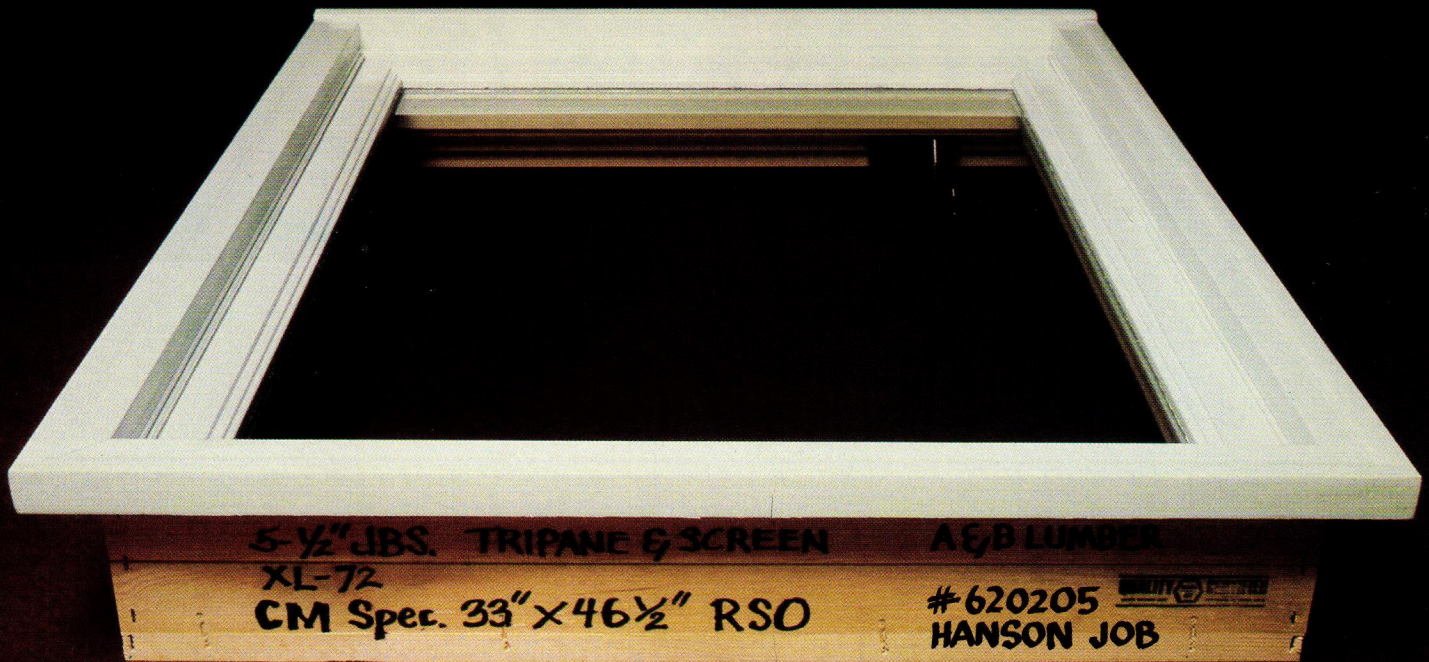
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Cover: Historic house of the early 19th century in Ipswich, Massachusetts. (Poore)

EDITOR'S PAGE

We made changes in the issue for the sake of italics. Our old daisy-wheel Courier type had no italic font, so we had to underline for emphasis, and that made lines run together. When we discovered the technology to run out our own word-processed copy on a laser printer, we grabbed it. Easier-to-read type *and italics!*

Actually, that's not the whole truth. We needed a challenge. We had taken the old newslettery format about as far as it could go. We were frustrated by its limitations and honestly felt we could produce a better product -- enhancing the old without losing its essence. Maybe a story drawn from another part of

my life will help me explain:

Four months ago, my exercise class changed into a dance class, for a short time making me furious at the instructor. In the old class I'd found something that really suited me, I'd gotten comfortable with it -- and he *changed* it.

But I'd had time to realize how special a teacher Carl is, and a little voice said, "Trust him." I left the third class bouncing on air: Far from abandoning the needs of his students, he'd *challenged* us with something unarguably better.

It's funny how similar that experience is to what's been going on at OHJ. Like the new dance class, we've set ourselves a challenge: Let's marry OHJ practicality and

warmth with better production quality. Let's take a good tool and make it more beautiful.

But ... we aim to protect the usefulness of the tool in the process. We've just come off lots of overtime, proving that value has been added, not just transferred from "content" to "packaging." I'm very proud of this issue.

My new dance class is better than my old exercise class: Not only do I sweat, but I'm also learning to dance. We're confident that this OHJ is better than last month's: Not only is it practical, but also better looking. Photos improve on this paper; the type is more consistent. We'll publish more editorial pages and our artwork is of better quality. The new Products Network section lets you order company brochures conveniently, just like architects and builders do through trade journals. And the stronger cover will attract more subscribers to OHJ's conservation message.

A lot of things change for the worse. I'm confident that I know of *two* things, anyway, that have changed for the better.

Justicia rose

OHJ staff and readers have been through a lot of changes together.

[illegible]



The Old House Journal

Vol. VIII No. 12

December 1980

\$2.00

Restoration and Maintenance Techniques For The Antique House

Pattern Book Architecture

Is Yours A Mail-Order House?

NADIE YOU LITTLE is a truly unique old house, built for one particular kind of architect's design. Or your house might be one of the many that were built on speculation by carpenter-builders. If your house dates from the late 18th or early 20th century, there's a good chance it was designed for sale, being sold in whole or in part from one mail-order pattern of a factory-publisher.

THIS ARTICLE started with Dana and I, who were to offer our own mail-order house plan in the February 1980 issue. The house I chose is in New Castle, Assembly, and was designed as a "massive architect's design of a better" accompanying the story was a picture of the house. The little house from New Castle is the pattern book "The Cottage House" in the following months. We were in the company of other members who were in or knew of better-designed houses elsewhere in the U.S.

WE WERE FASCINATED BY the history of the house, by the history of pattern book houses, and by the fact that the house was designed to sell as a little house of better house owners who were

communicating with each other.

WE REALIZED THAT that many people live in mail-order houses. We realized that they have researched the history of their houses, present owners have often found them as they find, one-of-a-kind houses. And in fact, all mail-order houses are not the same. Some are of detail and fine finish, some are of a house right to build to suit or to even give it what is essentially, digitized at home in the country. The fact architect-publisher are suitable for the quality of the design and workmanship; these houses frequently are fine today and usually are still identifiable mail-order houses.

THE HOUSE I chose is a prominent mail-order house in the New Castle area. It is a 1911, built by the architect design by mail. Some before the Civil War, architectural pattern books, guided contemporary design, as pattern books were produced by the architect, among them A. J. Downing and G. L. Smith and G. L. Smith W. C. Smith.



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(cover) d on p. 1391

The Old House Journal

Restoration and Maintenance Techniques
For The Pre-1939 House

July 1985 / Vol. XIII No. 6/\$2.




Return To Awnings

by J. Randall Cotton

AR, THE ADVANTAGES OF AWNINGS -- protection from the sun, energy savings, architectural interest. The least payback, though, is intangible. Picture in your mind a typical street in an older neighborhood. Awnings just naturally splashes of color to the row of porches, shading the people who seek respite on a hot summer afternoon.

UNFORTUNATELY, modern conveniences such as air-conditioning have made awnings less common along the streetscape. But more and more old-house owners are deciding that awnings are just what they need to complete their restoration -- and cool off their homes, too! We're happy to say that awnings are still readily available in traditional styles, colors, and materials. In fact, thanks to an array of modern but compatible fabrics, they now come in a greater range of colors, and will last longer than ever before.

cont'd on p. 126

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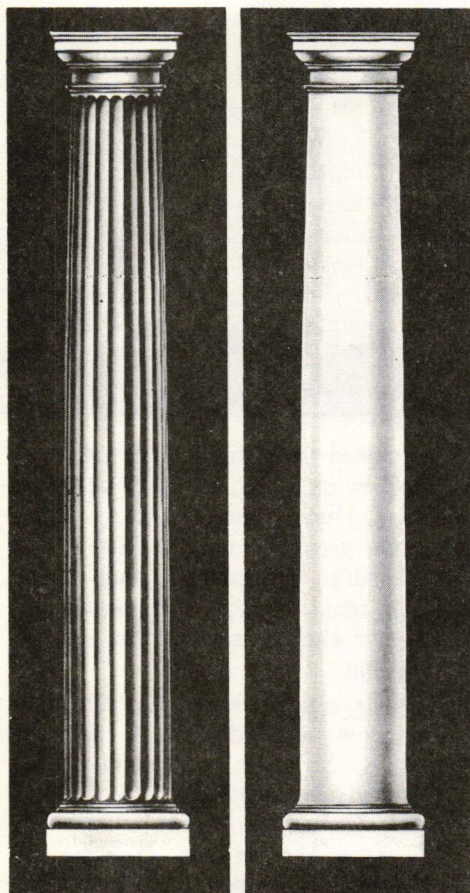
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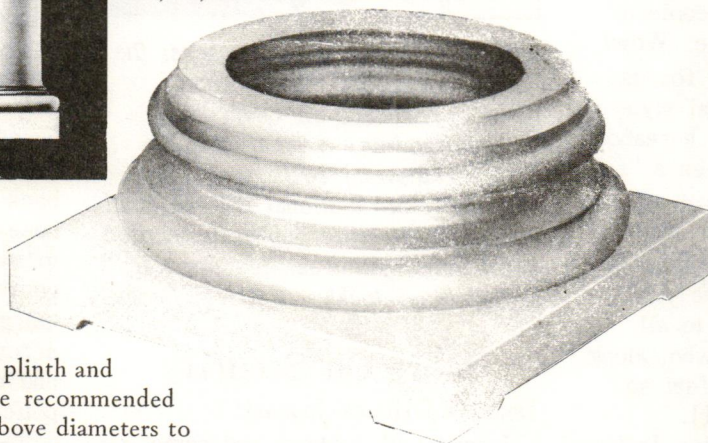
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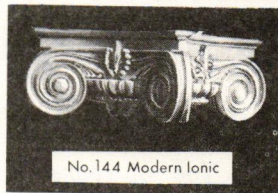
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Saltbox in San Jose?

Dear Patricia:

I do hope that you will remember me. I am Joe Jenkins, George Washington Collector and world-weary restoration person. You folks did a wonderful article on the murals in our home in Santa Clara ["My Mural Fantasy," July 1984]. This time I write to ask a favor.

San Jose has a wonderful treasure in its "San Jose Historical Museum." This museum is actually a multi-acred property which, when complete, will be an entire little town from the turn of the century. This village is unusual in the West and is one of the finest treasures in San Jose -- otherwise known as the Heart of Silicon Valley. I specifically am involved with the Zanker House. This lovely "adult dollhouse" (28 x 16 ft.) is being installed on the grounds and will house my Washington Collection, which I am donating to the Museum. I've been given both floors to "Washingtonize," and you can well imagine how thrilled I am at the prospect. Little old Joe Jenkins will have his collection on display for, let's hope, thousands of people to enjoy in the years to come. Wow!

What I hope you can do for us is identify the architectural style of the Zanker House. Folks hereabouts have been referring to it as a "saltbox," which I am sure is an erroneous categorization.

We continue to enjoy each issue of the Journal and we love your new format. My regards to all members of your staff, who, along with you, have made me feel so close to all of you at OHJ.

-- Joe Jenkins
Santa Clara, Cal.

[Yes, Joe, of course I remember you and the Washington murals! About this new project of yours: Right you are, it's far from a saltbox.]

The house is an excellent example of the Italianate. Note its formal symmetry; overhanging, heavily bracketed eaves; the wood quoins



simulating stone at the corners; the classic mouldings on the entry door. These are all taken from Tuscan models. A small portico (since removed) could well have been original. National and regional architectural style guides have plenty of information on this popular style. Good luck! -- Patricia Poore]

More On Security

Dear Old-House Journal:

I read with interest and some alarm your article, "Old-House Security, Part One" [Nov. 1986].

I'm certain that Part Two will discuss alarm systems, but I am nevertheless appalled by your decision to publish Part One.

There is something very wrong with metal doors, huge iron hinges, thick metal lattice work, and the like on an old house, whether on the front or back. Because I have

restored four turn-of-the-century houses in a high-burglary neighborhood, I understand the fears that drive people to take the drastic measures put forth in your article. The most sensible thing a homeowner can do is install an alarm system.

I have no lock on a small kitchen window, and I don't lock my storm doors. My back door lock can be popped open instantly with a screwdriver. The house has been hit by burglars three times. Because the storm door wasn't locked and the back door was so easy to pop open, none of the burglars did any damage to woodwork or glass. I've simply gone downstairs, turned off the alarm, picked up the burglar's screwdriver from where he left it, and reported the incident to the police.

The other advantage to this method is knowing that in the event of a fire, I won't suffocate trying to find the key to get out.

-- William Gantt
Harrisburg, Penn.

[Part 2, Dec. 1986, did discuss alarm systems. While they do make an excellent deterrent, OHJ does not recommend their use as a first line of defense. -- ed.]

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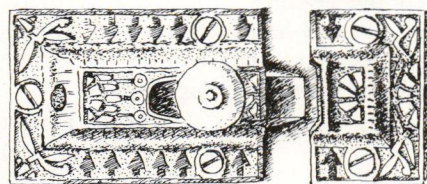
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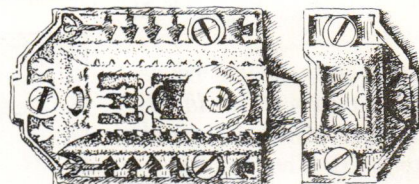
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A Painted Lady

Dear Ms. Poore:

This is just a "thank you" letter. First, for your wonderful magazine -- I have been a subscriber for four or five years and love it. Second, for turning me on to *Century Of Color*. And third, for publishing the letter from Elizabeth Pomada ["More 'Painted Ladies' Sought," May 1986].

Three years ago, my teenage sons and I tackled the job of painting our house. It had been white for as long as anyone could remember, although it has 12 layers of paint. We used propane bottles to melt the paint on the porch because I could not afford the heat gun. (It actually worked very well.) In the process, we uncovered all sorts of little gewgaws that had been buried under the paint.

It was a far bigger undertaking than we ever imagined when we started (it took two summers), but the end result was well worth it. Since its completion, several other homes in Las Vegas have also been painted in three or four colors.

I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your magazine. Incidentally, I LOVE the advertising! I have longed to have those wonderful push-button light switches, but I had no idea of how to get them until you started running ads.

-- Judee Gay Williams
Las Vegas, N.M.

[Ms. Williams' polychrome house has been selected to appear in Elizabeth Pomada and Michael Larsen's book, *Daughters Of The Painted Ladies*, to be published this fall by A.P. Dutton. -- ed.]

A Landmark

Dear Editors:

As a native of Waldo County, Maine, I was pleasantly surprised to see a former local landmark on the cover of your October 1986 issue. The structure recently made headlines at home when it was torched by the local fire department at the

request of the owner.

Thank you for using this photo on your cover, and contributing to the immortality of a charming house whose owner did not subscribe to your publication in time.

-- Carolyn W. Maricondi
Ruffsedale, Penn.

Saying Thanks

Dear Editors:

Thank you for 13 years of great reading and greater education. My first OHJ arrived December 1973, and I still eagerly await each month's copy.

The evolution of knowledge, skill, materials, and technology about our historic structures is truly amazing. A large share of thanks for this process goes to you for being a leader and motivator for the numerous interested but uneducated homeowners. I have spent ten years working on our 90-year-old house, and couldn't have done without OHJ.

By the way, the new OHJ cover looks like my National Trust magazine: attractive but not original. And tell the readers to use a 1/4" drill bit and a 3-hole pattern to drill the new mags so they can be put into binders -- works just fine.

-- Judy Pruden
Ukiah, Cal.

Poore Judgement?

Dear Ms. Poore:

I recently subscribed to The Old-House Journal. I was reading the July-August issue when I came across a picture which disturbed me.

The picture is on page 270 and is of a young girl washing her hands at a sink. The photograph is rather sweet and innocent and belongs in a family album. I feel it to be inappropriate in a magazine offering readers information about restorations and renovations of old homes.

The use of any photograph of a nude child in this magazine demonstrates poor judgement in my opinion. I do not plan to discontinue my subscription at this time because I truly believe this must have been an oversight or, as I stated above, an error in judgement. I will be disappointed if I see another photo of a nude child in a future issue.

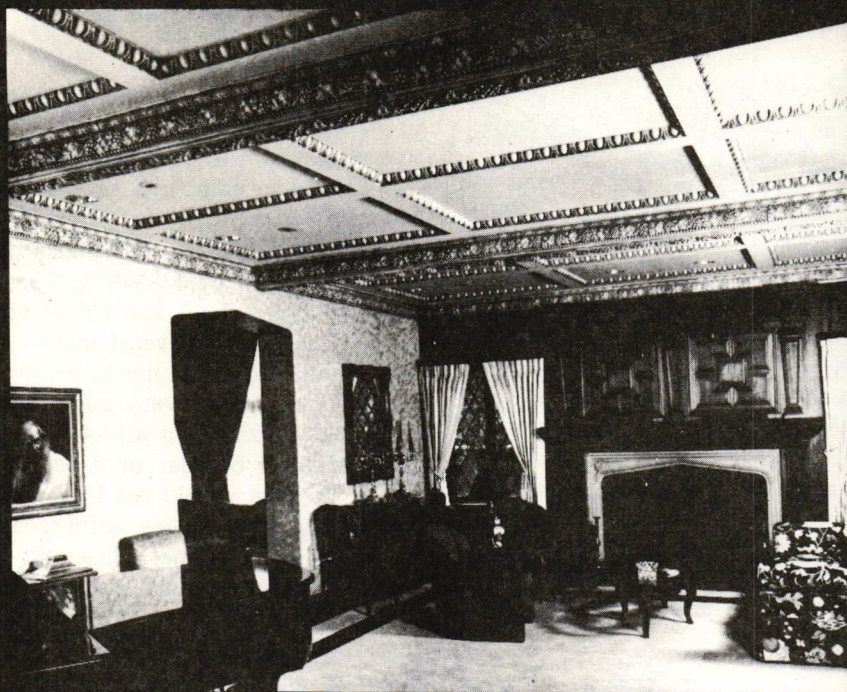
-- Ann V. Corbett
Floral Park, N.Y.

Lending A Paw....

[In response to our OHJ Catalog ad featuring Chester, Tim Judge of The Antique Hardware Store sent this photo: "My cat Fritz helping with my renovations." -- ed.]



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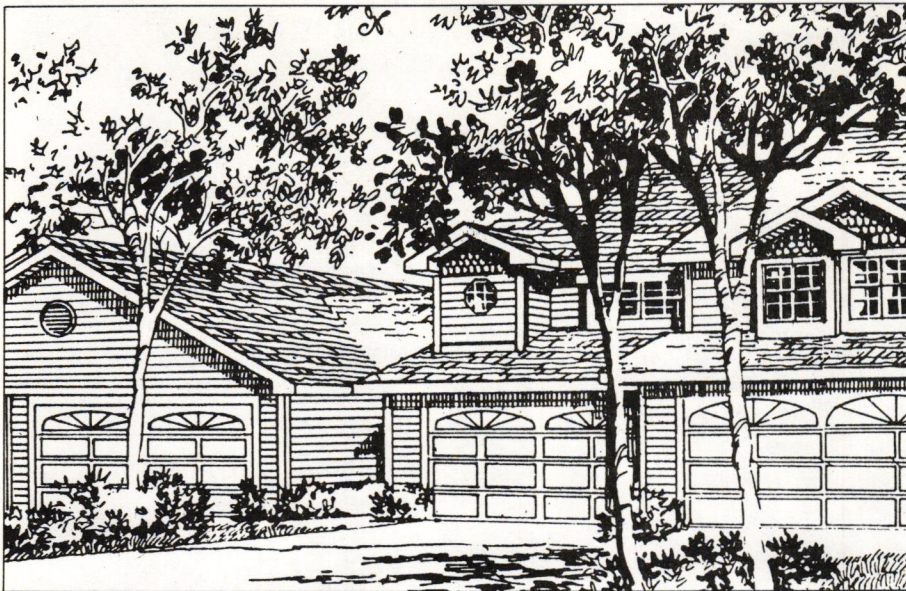
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One of the six clips sent to us by Dr. Kilbride.

The Garage Dream

Dear OHJ:

I've enjoyed your articles on garages [Oct. and Nov. 1986], as well as just about everything else in the

book. The American Dream seems to have become a 2- or 3-car garage with attached living quarters!

-- Robert E. Kilbride
Chicago, Ill.

Dog Data

Dear Patricia:

As owner and chief manual laborer of an old house, I read your magazine faithfully. As the owner and chief kennel girl to seven Siberian Huskies, I read "Beware of Dog" [Nov. 1986] with much disappointment and head-shaking.

Ms. Schultz didn't say where she got her puppy, but several statements she made lead me to believe that she was either very misinformed or not informed at all -- a less-than-reputable breeder or a pet store? Puppies should not leave their mother and litter-mates before eight weeks of age. Animal behavior studies have repeatedly shown that puppies develop major behavior patterns between five and eight weeks and pups separated prior to eight weeks often develop unacceptable temperament problems.

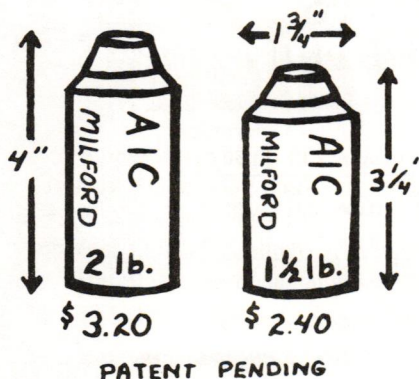
Mops, buckets, and shovels are

continued on page 10

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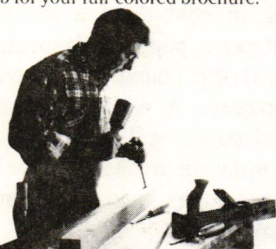
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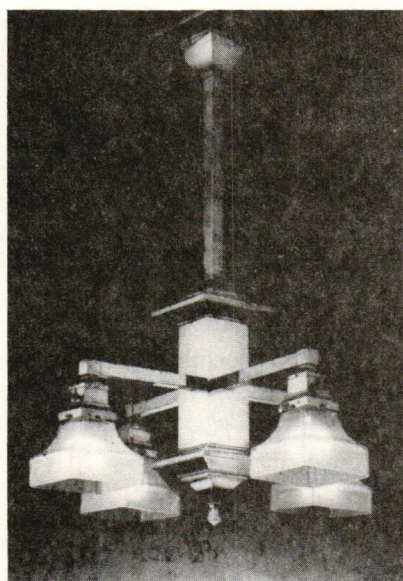
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LETTERS

continued from page 8

unnecessary implements for house-breaking an eight-week-old puppy. A reputable breeder would have sent the puppy home with a crate, and house-breaking would have been accomplished in about three days. Dogs are den animals and den animals will not soil their den. An eight-week-old puppy welcomes a quiet, secure house (crate) when thrust into a new situation without his mother and litter-mates. All puppies should be crated when left unattended. Would anyone leave a five-year-old child unattended? Why leave a puppy alone to poison himself on putty or paint, electrocute himself chewing on cords, etc.? Puppies teethe just like children -- but they can't chew anything other than their own toys if they are in a crate where they belong while they are too young to know better.

Puppies should begin training at eight weeks of age. There are

"puppy kindergartens" available through most obedience training clubs -- call the AKC for clubs in your area. Consistent behavior won't come until the dog is about 18 months to three years of age, depending on the breed and how much time is devoted to training. Don't expect a well-mannered dog at eight months if you only work with him once a week and you don't even start training him until he's six months old.

The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, Inc., (OFA) runs a Dysplasia Control Registry. The owners of dam and sire must take it upon themselves to have their breeding stock X-rayed for hip dysplasia (in most breeds, not just larger ones). The OFA reads the X-rays sent to them and rates the hip joints as excellent, good, fair, border-line dysplastic, etc. Dogs cannot be rated before two years of age. Nothing prevents the owners from breeding the animals, however. Prospective

buyers should ask for and get copies of the OFA certificates for both dam and sire *before* buying a puppy. I would suggest not buying puppies from a dam and sire rated less than "good." Unfortunately, many breeders breed animals before they are two years old.

Reputable breeders spend a lot of money trying to produce healthy dogs. When someone buys a dog, they are investing in a 10- to 15-year lifespan. If that person should end up with an unhealthy puppy that is going to cost them a ton of money, that poor puppy will probably end up at the pound. That will cost the taxpayer. A well-informed, educated buyer will be more likely to end up with a healthy, well-mannered puppy, and everyone will be happy.

-- Pam Thomas
Glen Ellyn, Ill.

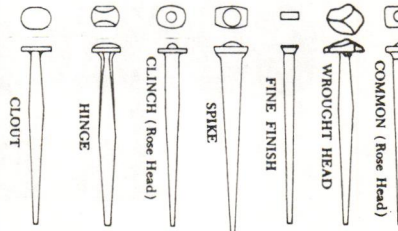
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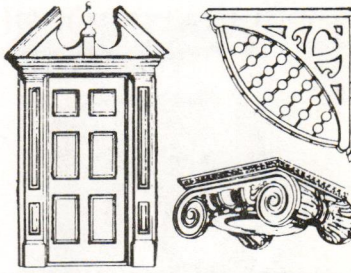
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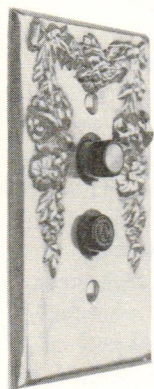
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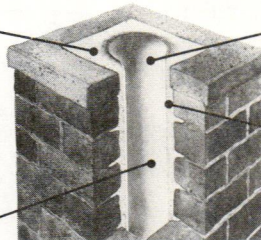
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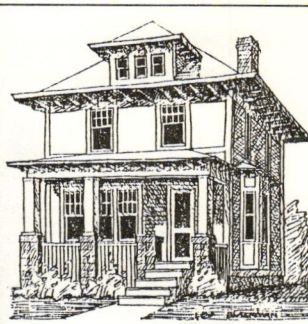
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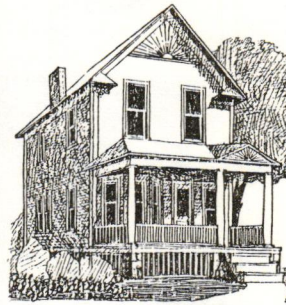
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Foursquare



Homestead

gets behind the siding. That prospect sickens me more than knowing that so many of the exterior details were lost when the siding was applied. An old photo of the house shows that five kinds of wood shingles were used on the tower.

It would take an astronomical amount of time, money, and labor to remove the two layers of siding, restore the wood, and paint the entire house. My husband refuses to consider it because of the sky-high cost of such an undertaking.

I've stripped a lot of wallpaper and found no evidence of plaster deterioration, except for one wall section which has new plaster. We keep a close eye on the gutters and on the roof. What else can we do to preserve our house?

-- Sharon K. Gilford
Danvers, Ill.

Name That House

Q Our house was built in 1900. We wonder if it is of any specific style. It has a grey slate roof and a sandstone basement. It's loaded with oak woodwork. It was yellow brick, but somebody painted it white. I've paged through many style books, but can't find a house just like it.

-- William Kolopajlo
Zanesville, Ohio

A Most houses don't fit neatly into a particular style category. By looking at its massing and details, we can instantly recognize it as a turn-of-the-century house. Look at the illustrations: Your house the general shape of a Foursquare, with a front ell that's all-American in the classical tradition, as seen in the Homestead house. The ell shape is a common variant found in 19th-century farmhouses and turn-of-the-century suburban houses. The concrete block under the porch was popular around 1900.

The house is a good one. Stone lintels, slate roof, and your oak woodwork all point to quality construction.

House Respiration

Q Our family has lived in this wonderful Queen Anne for two years. Nearly all the original interior details are intact. But I'm very worried about the exterior.



In the 1950s, our house was covered with white shingles, likely asbestos. In 1983, the owners had those covered with vinyl siding, backed by insulation that resembles styrofoam.

An archivist from the McLean County Historical Society told me flatly that the house can't "breathe" now. He said it may take several decades, but the house will eventually "die." He said physical deterioration takes place unseen when water

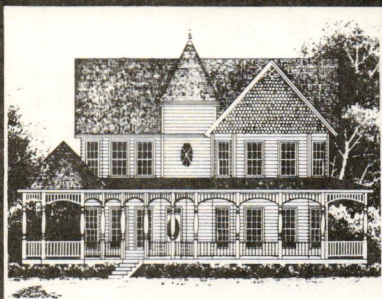
A Strictly speaking, the archivist was right, though he may have overstated the danger. Certainly water will cause damage if it gets behind the multiple layers of siding -- they'll hold it in, causing unseen rot. The trick is to keep water from getting into the wall in the first place -- always a good idea.

You're already taking steps to prevent damage. By keeping a close eye on the roof and gutters, you're lessening the chance of water entering the walls. Keep moisture-entrapping shrubbery trimmed back away from the house, ventilate kitchens and baths, and correct any conditions of "rising damp" (by making sure the ground slopes away from the house, and putting splashblocks at the base of downspouts).

Your example shows clearly that it's a wiser decision to maintain the wood exterior, rather than cover up problems.

General interest questions will be answered in print. The Editors can't promise to respond to all questions personally, but we try. Send your questions with photos or sketches to Questions Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

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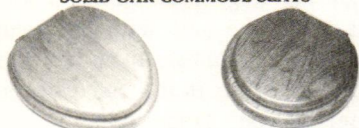
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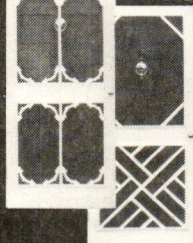
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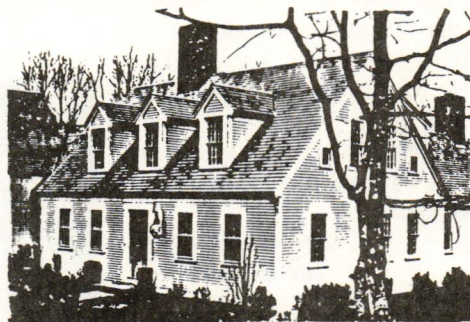
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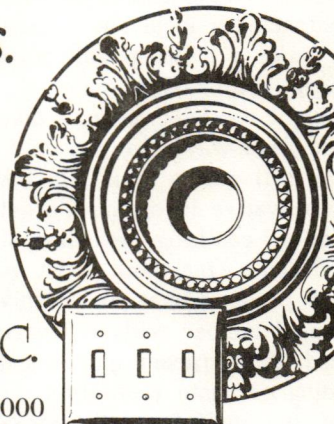
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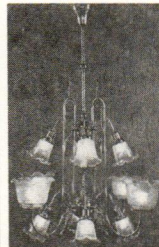
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Restoration Budget

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-- Carol McCullough
Noblesville, Ind.

Preservative Precautions

When I was treating my Southern Yellow Pine with a paintable water-repellent preservative [see "*Wood Woes*," September 1986 OHJ], I contracted a local sheet-metal shop to make a treating tank out of cheap, heating-duct material. After I brought the tank home, I discovered (the hard way) that the only thing that will seal a tank filled with preservative is epoxy. Forget any kind of caulking, including silicones. And don't even think about working with preservatives or freshly-treated lumber without wearing good, thick rubber gloves and providing adequate ventilation. Believe me, the stuff is really wicked.

-- Don Plotkin
Champaign, Ill.

Stripping Tip

Refinishing antique hinges? Try this: Cover them with non-flammable paint remover and let the paint bubble. After the paint softens, put the hinge in a vise, and take your drill with a fine, circular brass brush attachment and use it to remove the paint from the broad, flat areas of the hinge. (Wear full face protection, rubber gloves, and a long-sleeved shirt to protect yourself

from splattering stripper).

For the holes the hinge pin slips into, use a .22- or .30-caliber brass cleaning brush (the kind used to clean rifle barrels). You can fit them into your drill chuck -- it saves a lot of picky hand cleaning. Again, wear a face shield to protect yourself from stripper and broken wires.

-- R.A. Mawhinney
Monroe, Wisc.



Save That Cove

Plaster washers are great for securing a loose section of decorative plaster before patching the surrounding flat plaster. But they are not sufficient for securing long running mouldings prior to major plaster demolition.

The plaster on the walls and ceilings of our dining room was failing. There was no hope of rescuing it; it had to come down. The simple cove moulding between the walls and ceiling was in fine shape, however. We wanted to save it: Re-running it would have been terribly expensive.

Before we started demolition, I bought a bundle of common furring strips. These I secured to the outer edge of the moulding by driving 3" screws right up through the moulding into the joists. The strips of wood provided continuous support for the moulding. The cove remained intact even with all the chiseling and hammering going on around it. It's now the only original plaster in the room.

-- Robert Simmons
New Orleans, La.

Bucket Brigade

The five-gallon buckets that joint compound is sold in are sturdier and more useful than any cleaning bucket commonly available. They're so easy to clean after the compound is used up, because joint compound is water-soluble. I don't know why anyone throws them away.

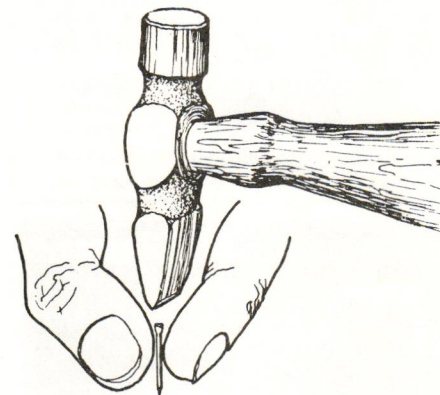
I've got a collection of about 30 buckets, and most of them are in use: storing plastering tools, filled with patching plaster (much neater than bags), used as a stepstool, etc. They're great for slaking lime or boxing paint for a large painting job. Best of all, they stack inside each other, so they won't run you out of your workshop.

-- Margaret Scola
San Francisco, Calif.

If I Had...

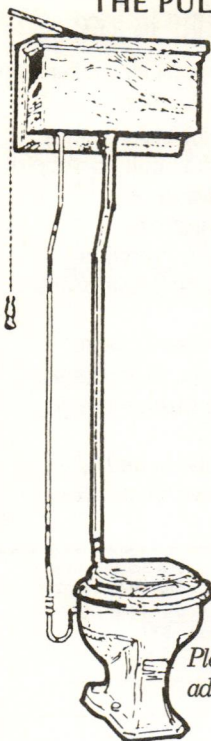
Ever hear of a Warrington hammer? One side of it looks like a regular hammer; the other side is wedge-shaped. It makes the usually painful task of starting small brads a lot easier. Tap the nail with the wedge side to get it started, then flip the hammer to drive it in. Sure beats hammering your fingernails.

-- Dave Weinstein
New York, N.Y.



TIPS TO SHARE? Do you have any hints or short cuts that might help other old-house owners? We'll pay \$25 for any short how-to items used in this "Restorer's Notebook" column. Write to Notebook Editor, The Old-House Journal, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

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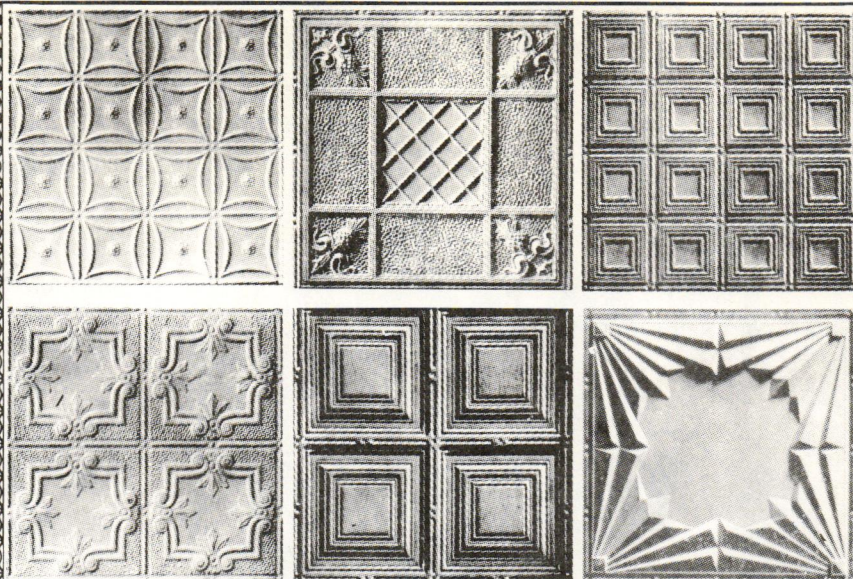
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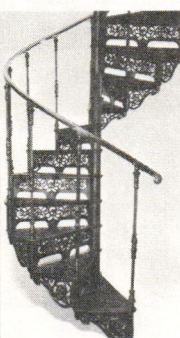
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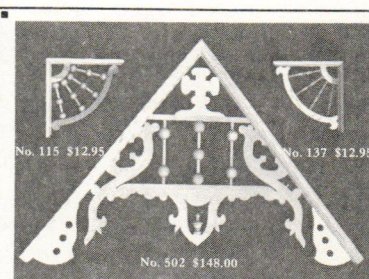


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After signing people up, your group remits just \$7 from every \$14 you've taken in ... sharing the revenue 50-50 with OHJ. So if you enroll 30 members and friends, your group keeps \$210.

Revenue-Sharing began in 1981 when we realized that OHJ was spending a fortune in postage to acquire new subscribers through the mail. Wouldn't it be better, we thought, if OHJ could find a way to give this money to local preservation groups rather than the Post Office? And so the idea for the Revenue-Sharing Program was born.

Besides raising money, of course, the Revenue-Sharing program also provides other benefits to participating groups:

- ◆ The 22% discount on OHJ subscriptions provides a tangible reason to join -- or renew -- membership in your organization.
- ◆ Having all your members and neighbors reading OHJ helps the entire community's ASQ (Architectural Sensitivity Quotient).

Win A \$1,000 Grant...And More

Participants in OHJ's Revenue-Sharing Program also become eligible for one of the six unrestricted \$1,000 grants that The Old-House Journal awards each December. The first \$1,000 grant goes to the group that sends in the most names before the deadline. The other five grants are determined by a drawing.

Besides tapping into the more than \$30,000 that OHJ will make available this year, there are additional bonuses for your group:

- ◆ Permission to reprint copyrighted OHJ how-to information in your group's publications;
- ◆ The opportunity to purchase the OHJ Catalog in bulk at a 50% discount;
- ◆ Up to 100 free issues of OHJ to distribute at one of your events;
- ◆ Receipt of a package of carefully selected manufacturers' brochures and catalogs for your member-service files.

To learn more about OHJ's Revenue-Sharing and Grant Program -- and to obtain the appropriate forms -- just return the coupon below.

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69A SEVENTH AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11217

TV HEAT GUNS AREN'T SO HOT...

...figuratively or literally. We've tried every paint stripping heat gun on the market. And in the opinion of the OHJ editors, the Original Red Metal Master HG-501 takes off the most paint in the shortest time. It's the tool we reach for when stripping paint in our own houses.

In unbiased, get-to-the-bottom-of-it testing for our upcoming Paint Stripping Manual, the Old-House Journal editors tested every heat gun around — including the new mass-market heat guns that are advertised on TV.

Based on this research, we found that the original red, all-metal Master HG-501 is still the best-performing heat gun. This same conclusion was reached by *Family Handyman* magazine in test results published in their April 1985 issue.

After testing all available heat guns, here's what *Family Handyman* magazine said about the HG-501:

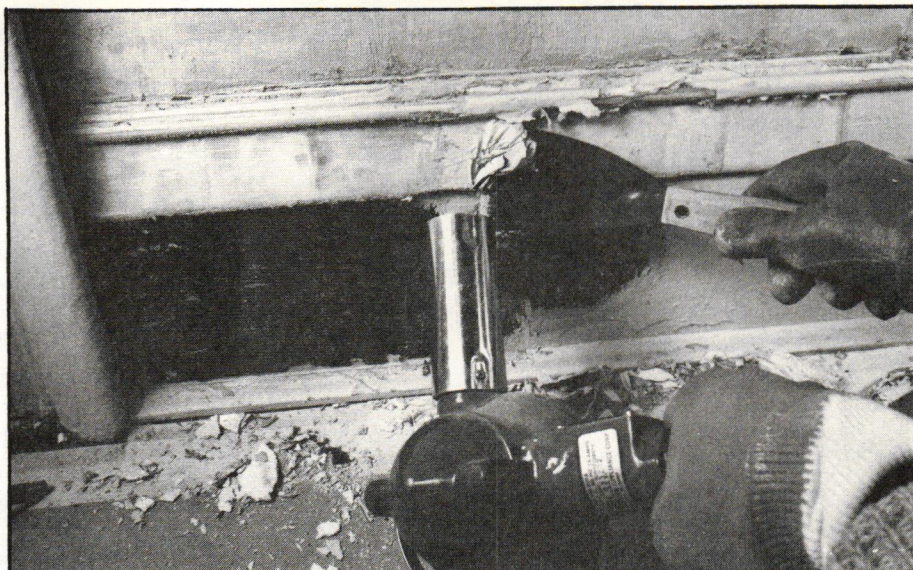
"It did the best job for me."

Mark Bittman, *Family Handyman*, April 1985

Although The Old-House Journal has been selling the Master HG-501 for several years, we have no ties to Master. (We are free to sell *any* heat gun — or no heat gun at all.) We offer the Master HG-501 because it is an industrial tool that is not generally available to homeowners. For our readers who want the best, we'll continue to make available the all-metal HG-501 by mail.

THE HG-501 vs. TV HEAT GUNS

In our tests, we found three major differences between the Master HG-501 and the mass-market TV heat guns: (1) the phrase "high-impact corrosion resistant material" means "plastic." The HG-501, on the other hand, has an industrial-quality cast-aluminum body that will stand a lot of rugged use. (2) With cheaper heat guns, heat output drops off after a while — which means slower paint stripping. The HG-501 runs at a steady efficient temperature, hour after hour. (3) When a cheaper heat gun is dead, it's dead. By contrast, the long-lasting ceramic heating element in the HG-501 is *replaceable*. When it eventually burns out, you can put a new



During tests for the OHJ Paint Stripping Manual, the professional-quality HG-501 stayed hotter longer than other heat guns — giving it more paint stripping power.

one in yourself for \$8. (OHJ maintains a stock of replacement elements.)

Also, with the HG-501 you get two helpful flyers prepared by our editors: one gives hints and tips for stripping with heat; the other explains lead poisoning and fire hazards. OHJ is the *only* heat gun supplier to give full details on the dangers posed by lead-based paint.

ABOUT "HOMEOWNER" TOOLS

Tools fit into two categories: serious dependable tools used by professionals, and "homeowner quality" — which are less durable. Manufacturers don't sell professional-quality tools in hardware stores, believing that homeowners can't tell the difference in tool quality. The makers assume that *price* is the primary consideration in the do-it-yourself market. ...and that since most homeowner tools don't get hard use, the lower quality isn't important.

However, if you've ever stripped paint, you know that any stripping tool gets *heavy* use under dirty, dusty conditions. The all-metal HG-501 is the *only* industrial-grade, heavy-duty heat gun.

HOW WE CAME TO SELL THE MASTER HG-501

The Old-House Journal created the market for paint stripping heat guns. Back in 1976, Patricia & Wilkie Talbert of Oakland, Calif., told us about a remarkable way they'd discovered to strip paint in their home: using an industrial tool called a heat gun. We published

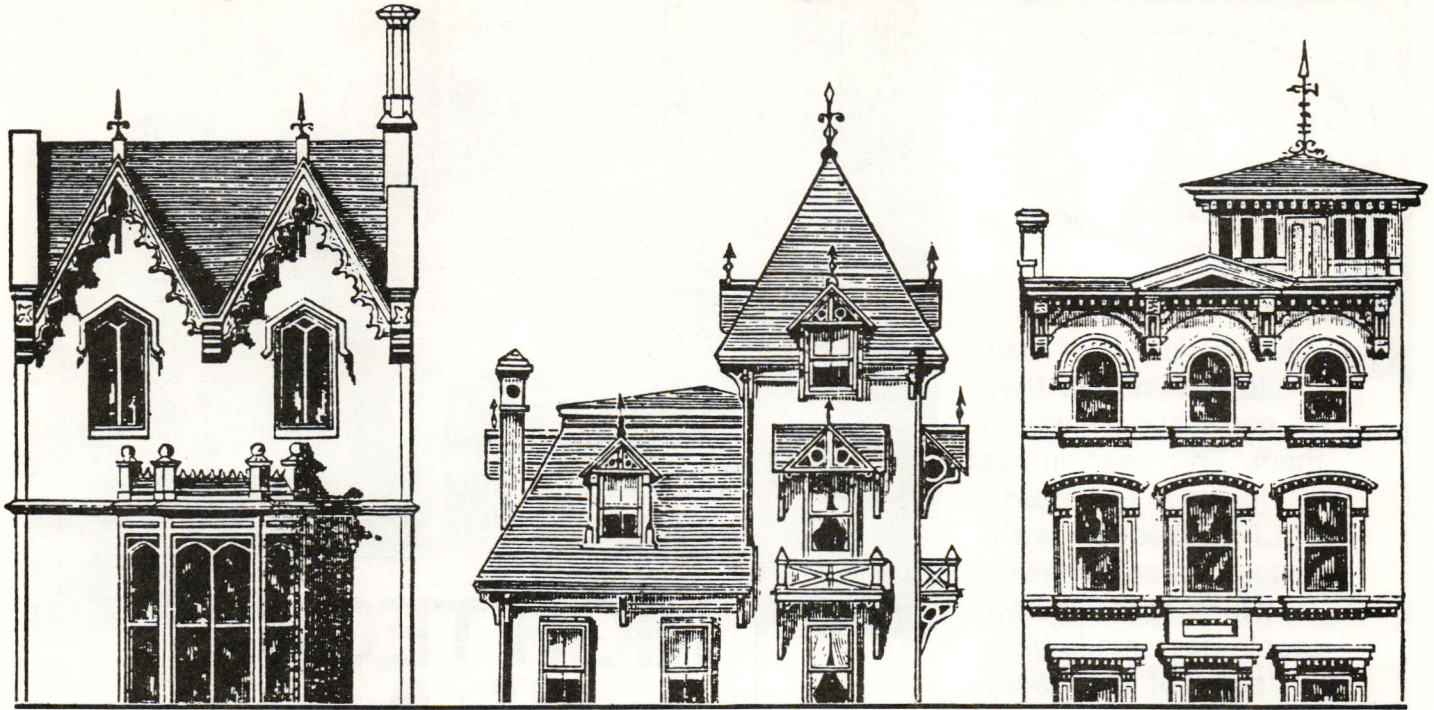
their letter. ...then were deluged with phone calls and letters from people who couldn't find this wonder tool, the HG-501.

Further investigation revealed that it was a tool meant for shrink-wrapping plastic packaging. The HG-501 was made by a Wisconsin manufacturer who wasn't interested in the retail market. So, as a reader service, The Old-House Journal became a mail-order distributor. Since then, more than 10,000 OHJ subscribers have bought the HG-501. ...and revolutionized the way America strips paint.

Specifications for the HG-501:

- Fastest, cleanest way to strip paint. Heat guns are NOT recommended for varnish, shellac, or milk paint.
 - UL approved.
 - Adjustable air intake varies temperature between 500 F. and 750 F.
 - Draws 14 amps at 115 volts.
 - Rugged die-cast aluminum body — no plastics.
 - Handy built-in tool stand.
 - 6-month manufacturer's warranty.
 - Guaranteed by The Old-House Journal: If a gun malfunctions within 60 days of purchase, return it to OHJ and we'll replace it free.
 - Price: \$77.95 — including UPS shipping. Use Order Form in this issue.
-

If you're restoring one of these...



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Your guide to thousands of hard-to-find restoration products.

Whatever kind of old house you're working on, you'll love the new **Old-House Journal Catalog!** It's the only where-to-buy guide to products and services for every old house.

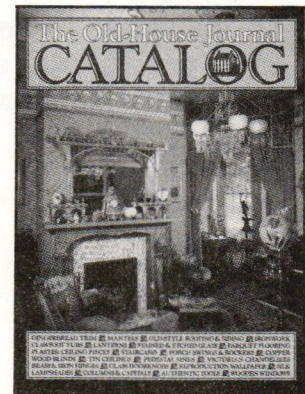
You'll love how it eliminates "hard-to-find" from your vocabulary. One thing we've learned at **The Old-House Journal** is that you can spend as much time searching for the right materials as in actually doing the work. But when you own the **Catalog**, the search is over almost as soon as it begins. All you do is look in the index section for the item you want, and the **Catalog** directs you to the company (of 1,416 listed) that has it.

You'll love how the **Old-House Journal Catalog** clues you in on sources of practically everything you need to restore your house. And we mean **everything**. There's even a

source for a reproduction of the 1876 Edward Johns Dolphin Toilet to make your 1876 "john" look right. From fabric to furniture, parquet flooring to tin ceilings, architectural parts to old-style craftsmen, the **Catalog** is the "Yellow Pages" for every old-house owner — pointing the way to 1,416 companies you need to know about.

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The Old-House Journal Catalog. If you're restoring a house, you'll love this timesaver. Order your copy today by sending just \$14.95 with the coupon below. (**Old-House Journal** subscribers pay just \$11.95.)



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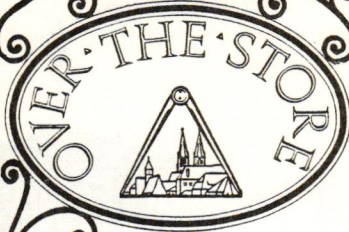
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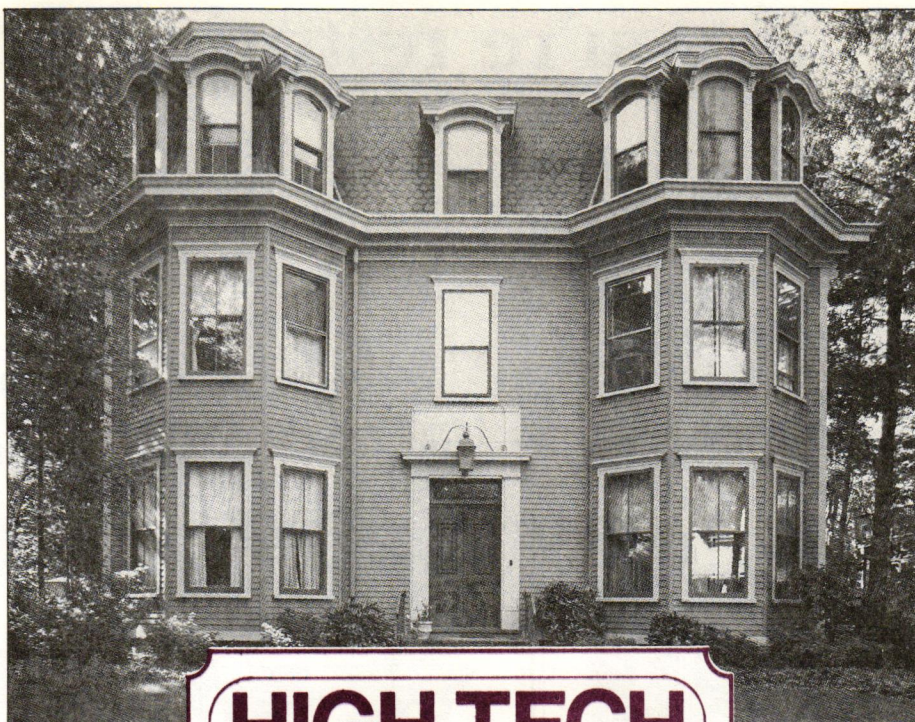


Our readers love their old houses, but they can't always afford them. This year, in our popular Old-House Living section, we'll feature several articles which describe how people have made back some of the money they've spent on their old house -- and in some cases, have even turned a profit.

by Shirley Maxwell

When Robert Hill talks about the sprawling industrial buildings and warehouses his architecture firm designs, he speaks in terms of acres, not square feet. His firm stays at the forefront of their specialized field by using state-of-the-art technology: computer-aided drafting equipment, cost-estimating programs, and word processors. Yet Bob and his staff of ten pursue their high-tech activities in a 97-year-old mansard, which the firm, known as Hill Associates, shares with both the Hill family and a third-floor apartment.

The first time Bob and Eleanor Hill saw a "for sale" sign in front of the twin-towered house on the



HIGH TECH

IN A

High Victorian

main street in Haddonfield, New Jersey, they didn't even consider buying the place. Its 8,000 square feet were clearly beyond both their means and their needs. But when the house came on the market again, a few years later, the Hills' architectural firm had outgrown its space in a modern office building. The couple also had a new set of goals: They wanted a place where they could work together and be near their two sons, then in adolescence, during the long days which an expanding business demands.

The issue, as they saw it, was not merely financial, but also a matter of life choices. As Eleanor put

it, "We like a little bit of uniqueness. Nothing way out or off the wall, just a little bit different. And we like choosing our lifestyle rather than having it forced on us."

Seen from that perspective, the 24-room house began to look just right. It was in a prime location, on a part of King's Highway zoned professional/residential. It was less than 15 minutes from downtown Philadelphia via high-speed rail line. It had a large lot, access from two streets, and plenty of space for off-street parking. Despite its large size, the house was neither the biggest nor the most expensive in the neighborhood -- an important con-

sideration for conservative investors like the Hills, who are wary of "over-buying."

As an architect Bob had the expertise both to evaluate the house's physical condition and to transform it into part family home, part office, and part income-producing apartment. In addition, he and his wife were veterans of several old-house rehabilitations. The Hills were convinced they'd found a feasible project.

Still, it was a big step. The couple had paid cash for their first several homes; this time they put down only a third of the \$129,000 purchase price and secured a conventional 8-3/4% mortgage for the rest. They reasoned that a high initial investment would pay off eventually as the property appreciated. They now believe they were right. Similar houses in Haddonfield's central business district, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, currently sell for between \$300,000 and \$450,000. And the Hills live, in effect, rent-free, thanks to income from Hill Associates' office and the apartment.

The firm had only five employees when the Hills moved into the building, but already the couple was planning for expansion. They applied to the zoning board for permission to install two offices, two living units, and 12 parking spaces. The township's design review board and historical commission granted their request, with the stipulation that the parking area be shielded from the street by landscaping.

Zoning regulations aimed at preserving the block's residential nature created a much stickier problem. For one uncomfortable year, a Hill Associates conference room occupied the family living room from 9 to 6 each working day, because a local regulation required all commercial functions be confined to the first floor. Eventually the Hills won a variance that allowed them to move the conference area to the "business" side of the house.

Except for an 18-month period just before the Hills bought the 1890 dwelling, it had been owned by the family of its original owner. The front porch had succumbed to a 1940s renovation, and the plumbing and mechanical systems were outdated, but the house was essentially sound. Early on the Hills made -- and held to -- some basic decisions. While respecting the existing fabric of the building, they would update mechanical systems and refurbish rooms, but forego major restoration. (They decided, for instance, not to replace the missing porch.) They would refinish badly scarred floors and repaint walls and woodwork as necessary. They would not paint over any bare woodwork, nor would they scrape and refinish any painted woodwork. Fortunately the stunning panelling in the front hall had never been painted. In the few cases where remodeling required the removal of doors or trim, the pieces were carefully stored in the basement.

The offices were painted white to increase reflectivity, giving better light for drawing, and window air conditioners were installed ("you can't draft with sticky hands"). The initial refurbishing of the space was accomplished over a weekend; the staff moved in on Monday morning without missing a day of work. Much more has been done in the years since, including installing a bathroom and adding a conference area and drawing vault in the basement. The family quarters were readied at a more leisurely pace, as the Hills lived in their previous home awaiting a suitable buyer.

The renovation process has never ended, its progress being dictated largely by the needs of the architectural firm and the Hill family's personal priorities. Since the Hills did much of the work themselves, and also had access to trade discounts, their actual costs were comparatively low even by 1977 standards. Bob estimates that if he were doing a similar job for a client today, the cost would be close to \$100,000.

The Hills regret having missed out on the 25% tax credit, available since 1980 for owners rehabilitating historic commercial/ residential properties. (The tax credit does not apply to any portion of the house used as the owners' residence, and it has been reduced to 20% by recent tax reforms.) The Hills benefitted, on the other hand, from 1977's slightly depressed real-estate prices and interest rates.

Family members enter through a spectacular tiled vestibule, while the office and third-floor apartment share a separate side entrance. Just beyond the vestibule, a wide center hall, with sliding doors on either side, divides the house. To the right are family quarters, to the left office space. The family's half of the first floor contains a large living room with fireplace, a homey dining



The Hills (and some built-in cabinetwork).

room, and a big kitchen with a glassed-in eating area. Family bedrooms occupy the second and third floors.

At first the Hills feared they would never utilize all that space. Now nearly every square foot is in use. Even dirt-floored basement rooms have become storage areas; a conference room and drawing vault occupy the rest of the basement. Room usage continues to change as Hill Associates grows. Offices are moved, then moved again; storage and conference areas are created; space is carved out for new computers.

"You can't really have a five-year plan," says Bob. "You sort of have to have a two- or three-year plan."

Although he concedes it would be easier to arrange and re-arrange offices in the anonymous interior of a modern shopping center, Bob much prefers the character of an older building. And his clients appreciate it too, he explains; home-based offices are no longer considered "unprofessional," and his clients often prefer to meet in his relaxed environment than in their own offices.

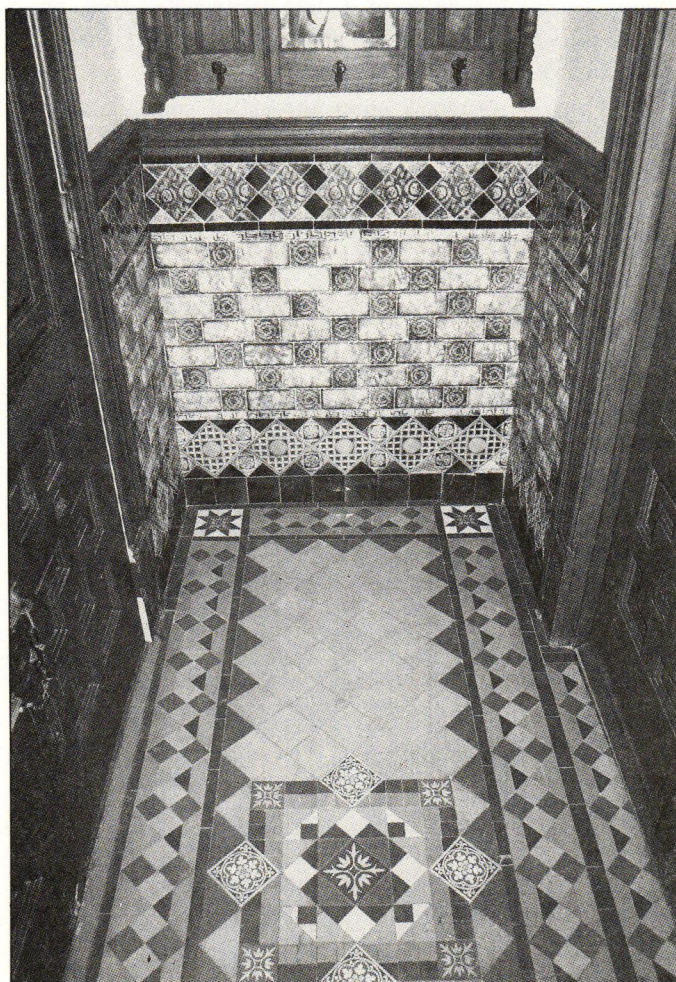
Eleanor agrees that the house has helped the business, and she's learned to live with its limitations: "From time to time we toyed with the idea of putting

up our own building on the edge of town. But then we made a conscious commitment not to exceed the space here."

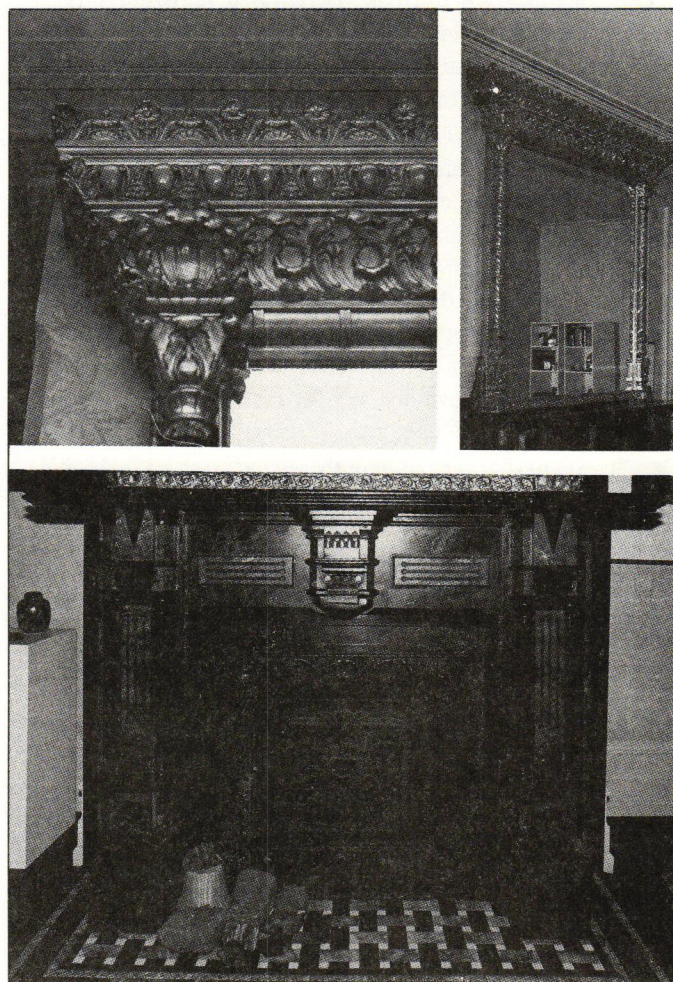
Privacy has never been a problem on either side of the sliding doors, except for the year the living room doubled as a conference room. (The walls, thanks to solid 19th-century construction, are relatively soundproof.) Hill Associates employees work late when they need to, without disturbing the family. The family goes about its business without disturbing the staff. At lunchtime the office workers eat in the screened porch overlooking the pool and sometimes go swimming. Not surprisingly, they seem to love their working environment. As Bob points out, when they're hired, they know they become part of the family.

Bob himself has no trouble separating the two halves of his life. "You have to divorce the two. You have to treat the business as if it were in an office across town. I close that sliding door, and I'm not in the house; I'm in the office."

Eleanor admits to having felt, more than once, that she should be on both sides of the sliding door simultaneously. Still, she says, the flexible work/ home



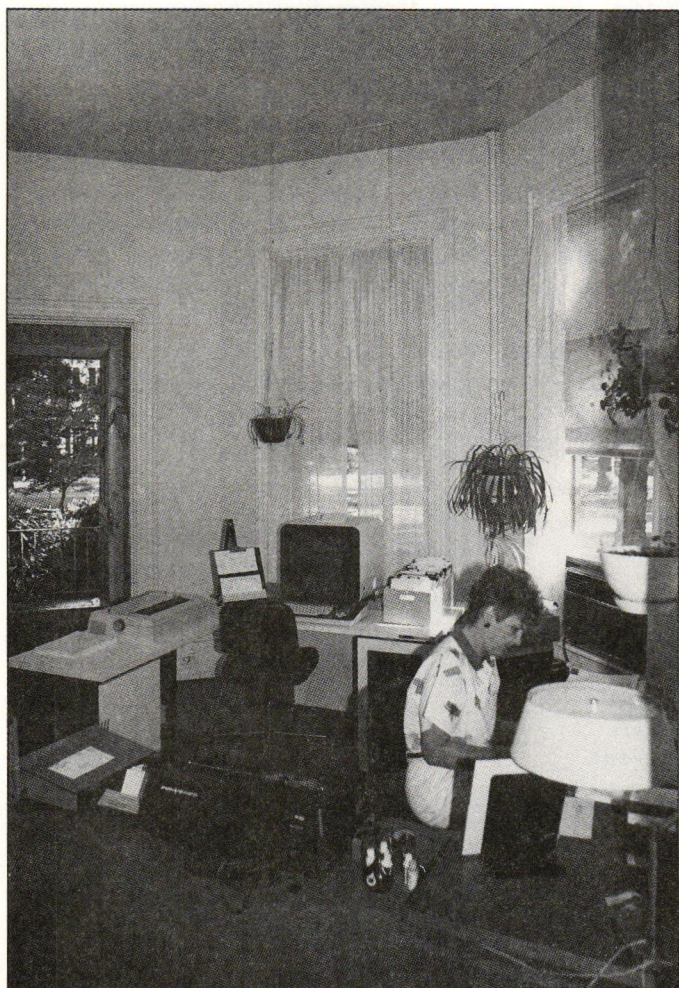
The Hills respected all intact details, such as the vestibule's encaustic and embossed tiles ...



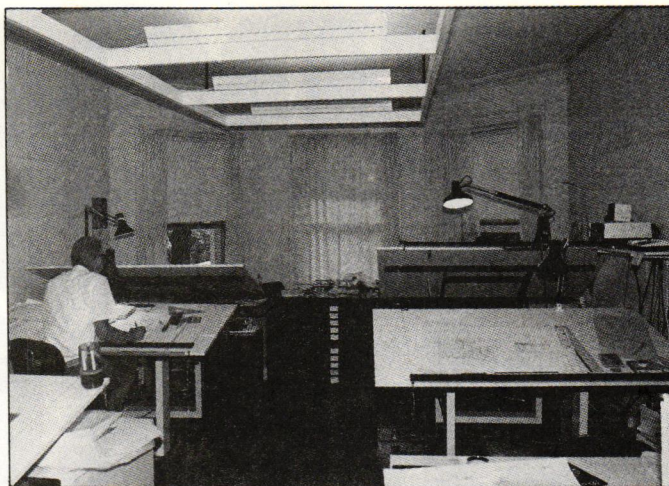
... mantels, and the extraordinary mirror frame.

arrangement made her life easier. She lost no time in commuting, for one thing, and the boys could always reach her, especially after an intercom system was installed between home and office. The Hills' children, Rob and John, were encouraged to respect their parents' office as a place of business. When they did pay a visit, they were more often than not put to work. Both sons, in fact, still help out around the office, preparing blueprints or operating equipment. Rob, now 23, works in the industrial design field, and hopes they'll never sell the house.

The Hills have handled the financial aspects of their residence/ office as carefully as the physical aspects. As landlords, Eleanor and Bob charge Hill Associates \$8 per square foot. That is below the area's going rate (about \$11 per square foot), but the office includes a substantial amount of basement storage area, which rents for less than above-ground space. The office rental brings in approximately \$18,000 annually. Bob calculates that, given depreciation write-offs and other advantages, he's given his firm approximately twice the space they had in their previous office, for the same net expenditure.



The office side of the home is practical, but not permanently intrusive on the architecture.



This hung-light grid is a reversible addition to the room.

The apartment rents for about \$400 a month, also at the low end of the local scale (\$400 to \$525). Even at that price, the \$5,000 apartment renovation paid for itself in less than two years, as the Hills had anticipated. The attractive layout and choice location have guaranteed steady occupancy and little turnover. The Hills have a waiting list of prospective tenants.

Hill Associates pays for office renovation costs (except for capital improvements), while the Hills pay for major maintenance and repair costs. A house this large has expenses to match, such as \$8000 to paint the exterior about eight years ago. The Hills were also shocked at their first window-washing bill; they didn't know they had 100 windows!

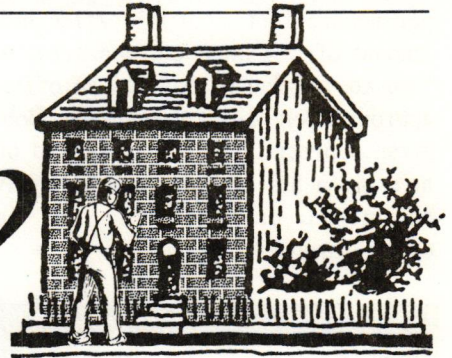
The office uses electricity when it is most expensive, in the daytime. The Hills have developed a sliding percentage system for figuring out what the firm's share of the energy bill is, based on the percentage of the building the office occupies, the number of employees, and the daytime rate. Bob ruefully points out that installing separate meters for residence and office would require re-wiring, not a simple or inexpensive task in a house with solid brick walls.

Now that the Hills have managed to shape an uncommonly unified approach to work and family life, they are ready to test it all over again. This year they expect to leave architecture and move into property development full-time. After selling Hill Associates to one of Bob's partners, Eleanor and Bob will set to work on Hill Properties, a group of projects that includes a modern shopping center. After Hill Associates is sold, the firm will remain in the house, occupying virtually the same space. The Hill family will still live across the hall. And where will the new developers hang their shingle? Why, right there on King's Highway, of course. They'll move into the big front room, on the business side of the sliding doors. 

REPOINTING MASONRY

WHY REPOINT?

BY
SUSAN M.
TINDALL



When I was young and foolish and wildly naive, I listened to my father's advice. "Never buy a wooden house!" said he. "It will always need maintenance. You'll spend your summers painting and spackling instead of going to the shore." Like generations before him, my father firmly believed in the value of buying a brick home. He was right about the brick house not needing to be painted, but he was wrong about it not needing maintenance. Shortly after buying my first house, I discovered it needed to be repointed.

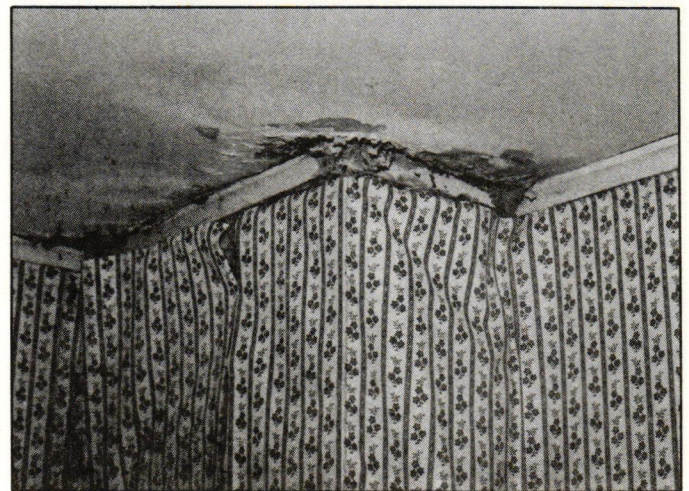
Repointing is the process of repairing deteriorated mortar joints in brick or stone walls. Your joints are deteriorated and need repointing if they exhibit: mortar eroded back more than 1/4" from the face of the masonry; cracks (hairline size and larger) running vertically or horizontally through the mortar; mortar bonds broken or pulled away from the masonry; or joints from which the mortar has literally fallen out, most often horizontal joints (sometimes a few vertical joints were deliberately left open to permit water to "weep" out of the wall).

Failure to keep mortar joints in good repair permits water to penetrate the masonry, which can result in severe damage to both the interior and exterior of a building. This damage is often the first-noted evidence that repointing is required.

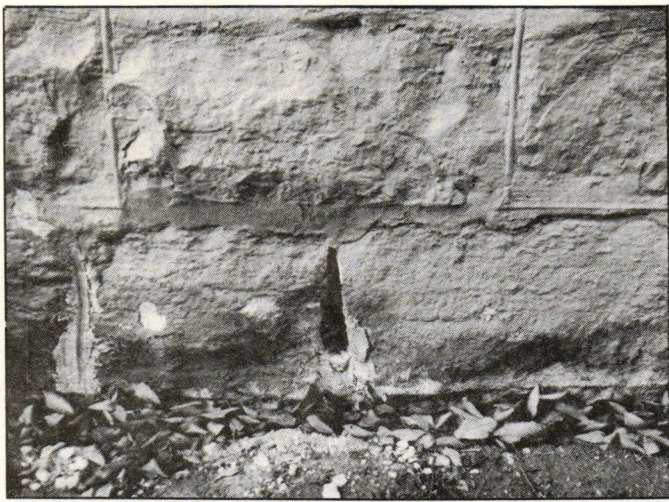
Typical exterior damage includes open joints, efflorescence (a white "bloom" of salt crystals), spall-

ing, and loosened masonry units. In severe cases, enough water penetrates into the wall to corrode inset metal elements, such as shelf angles above windows. The metal then exfoliates, separating into its multiple layers and expanding up to ten times larger in cross-section. This expansion causes the masonry around the metal element to "jack" and torque out of place, eventually breaking free from the building.

Even mortar joints that don't appear badly deteriorated may permit large volumes of water to enter the wall, which can trigger interior damage such as failing plaster and stained wallpaper. Such damage is not



Here's an example of what can happen if you fail to keep your chimney properly maintained — ruined plaster.



Open joints in the foundation admit water to the basement. The damage this causes is seen in the photo at right.

always limited to exterior walls -- monitor for water damage, too, in rooms and attics through which a chimney stack passes. Large open joints in the foundation can contribute to efflorescence in the basement and, in severe cases, basement flooding. Openings may also permit entry to foraging mice and insects.

There are five major reasons for mortar joint failures:

- **Weathering action:** Weathering is inevitable. Masonry mortar, particularly that used in older walls, is purposely soft to allow the wall to flex with expansion and contraction caused by temperature changes. Wind, rain, and pollution eat away at this soft mortar. On highly exposed areas, mortar joints can weather away to a depth of several inches. Only regular repointing maintenance can prevent severe erosion.

- **Settling:** Both mortar and masonry can crack due to uneven settling of a building's foundation.

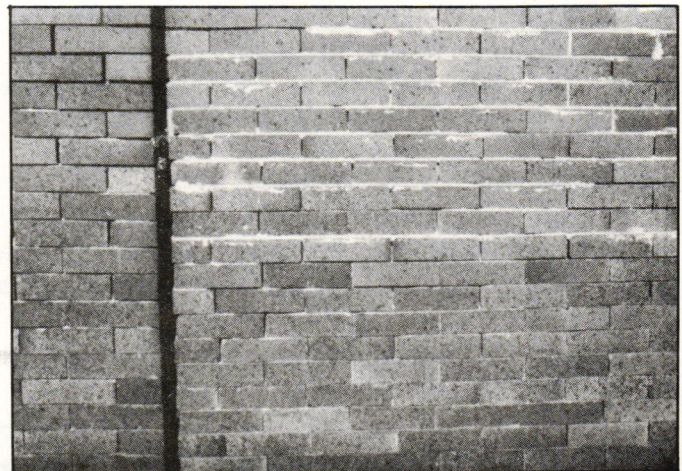
- **Temperature cycle:** Moisture entering at a bad mortar joint may freeze and expand, causing a section of the joint and perhaps a portion of the surrounding masonry to pop off. This is called spalling. The seasonal cycle of hot and cold, too, causes masonry and mortar to expand and contract, often at different ratios. This eventually breaks the masonry's bond to the mortar.

- **Poor original design and materials:** The ability of a mortar joint to shed water and preclude penetration is largely the result of its profile. Concave joints provide superior protection from water entry; raked joints, popular because their top-to-bottom inward slant makes for dramatic shadows, are susceptible to premature failure. If the original mortar was too hard, it will have shrunk excessively, resulting in numerous hairline cracks. If it was too soft, it will have yielded quickly to weathering action.

- **Lack of exterior maintenance:** Water sitting in a joint or flowing across it speeds joint erosion. Poor-



This is how the other side of the wall pictured at left looks. Paint is peeling, and efflorescence is spreading.



Weathering action has taken its toll on this wall. Someone has randomly "repointed" the deepest joints.



Differential expansion and contraction rates have this portland-rich mortar popping out -- and damaging the bricks in the process.

ly functioning gutters, downspouts, or flashings contribute to excessive mortar failure. This deterioration is logarithmic in nature. Ignoring a problem speeds up the rate of deterioration.



The process is easy. You won't need the combined experience of these two seasoned contractors to do your own repointing.

Can the homeowner do his own repointing? The process itself is not that difficult. It essentially entails four stages: preparing the area to be pointed (including removing old mortar); mixing new mortar to match old; filling the joints; and tooling the joint to the appropriate profile and finish.

Foundations and inconspicuous areas can easily be successfully repointed by the average homeowner. (My soon-to-be-five-year-old had great fun assisting me in pointing up a portion of my foundation.)

Repointing old masonry, though, can be a tedious, exacting chore. A professional pointer experienced in

old masonry should probably be employed in any of the following areas or conditions:

- Chimneys need repointing.
- Window lintels must be rebuilt.
- Masonry is loose or missing.
- Work must be done from scaffolds or extension ladders.
- The original mortar joints were "beaded," that is, tooled with a raised, round-profiled joint that projects out from the wall.

Ideally, you should choose a local, established contractor whose previous work you have inspected. The contractor should be willing to make a commitment to you in a formal, written proposal, which should detail the scope of the work to be done, the time necessary to complete the project, the responsibilities of the owner (you), terms of payment, and a not-to-be-exceeded price that covers all materials, fees, and labor costs. A certificate of insurance, current and carrying at least one million dollars in liability coverage, should attach to the proposal.

The contractor should provide you with both his federal identification and state registration numbers. A call to the Better Business Bureau or the Secretary of State's office should reveal any complaints or investigations pending against the contractor or his identification numbers.

After the contract has been signed, any change-orders or messages should be put into writing, initialed, and carbon-copied to avoid misunderstanding.

TUCK POINTING: *WHAT'S IN A NAME?*

"Tuck pointing," "repointing," and "pointing" are each terms used to describe the replacement of old mortar with new mortar. "Pointing" and "repointing" are interchangeable terms. "Tuck pointing," however, is more precisely used to describe a specific type of repointing that gives the appearance of a thinner joint. Usually, a background mortar that approximates the color of the masonry fills the joint, and a mortar of contrasting color is shaped into a thin line that protrudes from the surface of the background mortar. It can be done with just one color, too.

True tuck pointing originated in England in the early 18th century to provide the more expensive appearance of narrow joints among the era's commonly rough-shaped, irregular bricks. In the early 19th century, the technique was moderately popular for middle-class brick dwellings, particularly around London.

In America, tuck pointing was rarely practiced, although the historical record shows that such work was done in New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia,



Albany, Buffalo, Toronto. Other examples can be found in Oregon, Wyoming, Ohio, Indiana, Ontario, and Quebec. The historical archives of tuck pointing, however, are quite sketchy, and we must assume that many buildings that once boasted the work have seen it weather away.

True tuck-pointing is difficult to perform and expensive to contract out. Even the most skilled contemporary mason

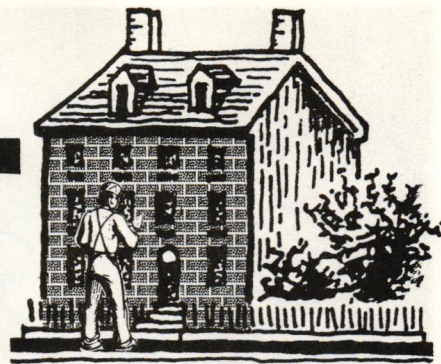
rarely has experience in it. Its use to improve the appearance of irregular brick is of questionable aesthetic necessity. It is attractive in stone work (as with the granite pictured.)

Use of the term "tuck pointing" for "repointing" in the United States seems to have begun in Chicago in the last quarter of the 19th century, among masons either ignorant or confused about the term's true meaning, or eager to adopt the term for its attendant cachet of higher-quality repointing work.

To avoid confusion, OHJ urges its readers to limit the use of "tuck pointing" to its especial use. While we're at it, why re-pointing? Why not just "pointing"? Ah, but that's a different windmill at which to tilt.

-- Historical data abstracted from August 30, 1985, draft "Will the Real Tuck Pointing Please Stand Up?" presented at the 1985 annual conference of the Association for Preservation Technology in San Francisco, by Michael Shellenbarger, University of Oregon.

HOW TO REPOINT



BY GREGORY S. WOROCH

Repointing is perhaps the most common procedure necessary in restoring and preserving old masonry structures. When done correctly, repointing will keep your old house weathertight while maintaining the historical accuracy of your brickwork. The effects of misguided repointing, however, can be costly or impossible to correct, and may cause irreparable damage both to the building's appearance and to its physical structure. Armed with a bag of redi-mix, a case of beer, and just enough know-how to get into serious trouble, a do-it-yourself repointer can inflict more damage in one weekend than mother nature had in the last 100 years.

Yet be not discouraged! Let me share with you some of my secrets of just how to do this procedure correctly, avoid expensive mistakes, and end up with a finished product you can be proud of.

Pointing, repointing, and pressure grouting all mean the same thing (see box): that is, replacing old, deteriorated, or missing mortar with new mortar. Frederick Herman's article (*June 1979 OHJ*) would be a fine place to begin boning up on the nature of the task at hand, just to get a feel for what you're up against. If you are still under the impression that tuck pointing is something done only between consenting adults, you should definitely go back and read this article.

Okay, let's assume you've assessed the condition of your brickwork and you've determined that repointing is in order. Close inspection of the masonry surface probably revealed that the mortar has receded in varying degrees, ranging from little to no weathering under the soffits and overhangs to perhaps a quarter of an inch erosion (or more!) where the exposed brickwork takes the brunt of the weather. Old mortar joints are constantly in a state of recession; water is the chief culprit, although wind, pollution, and seasonal and diurnal temperature changes add to the erosion.

Perhaps some sections have suffered accelerated damage because of leaking gutters or downspouts. If damaged gutters or leaking soffits are allowing excess

water to run across your masonry, fix them before repointing.

REMOVE THE OLD MORTAR

A decision you should make early on -- before removing any mortar -- is whether you will have your building chemically cleaned. Cleaning will alter the color of your mortar by removing decades of dirt and grime. Cleaning is best done before removing the old mortar, to deter the chemical cleaner from penetrating the soft sides of newly exposed bricks.

The first step in achieving a professional-quality repointing job is careful surface preparation: that is, clearing the old mortar out to make room for the new. I estimate that forty to fifty percent of the total time spent on a repointing job is consumed by this task. I sympathize with those who abhor such tedious, thankless chores, but please, don't skimp here. Poor preparation leads to poor adhesion of the mortar to the masonry. The whole job may count for naught in a year or less. A good job, adequately prepared, should last twenty years or more. Diligence in the prep phase will vastly improve the outcome of your work.



Power grinding the joints of this stone wall is grueling work. It requires steady hands and a lot of muscle.



Knocking the old mortar out manually is your best bet. It's time consuming, but you're less likely to damage the brick.

With a small mason's chisel (no wider than half the width of the joint) or a cheap, expendable screwdriver and a hammer, take the mortar back to a depth of about 3/4" from the brickface. A 1/2" depth is usually sufficient if the mortar joint is only 1/4" wide or less. Some experts advocate raking back a depth of about two and a half times the width of the joint. Remove all obviously deteriorated mortar.

Take your time and be especially careful not to chip or damage the surrounding bricks. Pieces of brick do sometimes fall off; if they're large enough they can simply be glued back with any good ceramic glue. Pulverized brick mixed with glue can also be used to fill small holes left by lead anchors, nails, etc.

It's not unusual to find that you are not the first person to repoint sections of your house. Your predecessors' distinctive styles and materials are often quite noticeable; sometimes that old mortar proves stubborn. If you're finding it hard going, stop here and scrutinize your work. Is the stuff you're trying to remove hard as nails? Are you taking off chunks of the surrounding bricks along with the mortar? Does it appear, then, that earlier repointing was executed solely with portland cement? If so, this is the time to weigh a major decision; perhaps you should consider laying aside your hammer and chisel to reach for a power grinder.

Many historical architects and restoration purists decry the use of machinery to remove mortar; but my experience is that, if done carefully, mortar joints of one-half inch or larger can be raked out with little risk using power grinders. If you're adept with power tools and are of sound mind and steady nerve, a tuck-point grinder with a 4 x 1/4-inch abrasive blade will do the chisel's job considerably faster, eliminating many hours of vexatious, and sometimes destructive, hand work. Don't use an electric saw with a masonry blade-- they're much too awkward to handle accurately.



If you use a power grinder, use it on horizontal joints only. You're sure to damage the brick if you try it on the vertical ones.

I usually rake just the bed joints (horizontal) with the grinder, then go over them thoroughly with my screwdriver to clean right up to the edges of the brick. I chisel the head joints (vertical) by hand to minimize the risk of nicking the brick.

Working with a grinder takes lots of concentration; one mental lapse can lead to unsightly gouges in the bricks. Again, mortar joints of over one-half inch are the narrowest that I would recommend using a grinder on, especially for a beginner. (When he's on a roll, however, my partner Bill can rake 1/8" wide joints by machine with indescribable dexterity.)

Don't let my detailed description of power grinders overshadow the value of hand work, however. Nine times out of ten the old hammer and screwdriver method will work just great, and generally leads to fewer accidents.

If you are unsure whether certain portions of mortar are deteriorated or not, go ahead and clean them out. Repointing a long joint is easier than filling in small spots, and makes for a neater, more uniform appearance than new mortar interspersed with old (regardless of how closely you match the mortar).

REMOVE LOOSE BRICKS & GRIT

If some bricks need to be taken out and replaced, now is the time. You can safely remove sections of six to eight bricks without jeopardizing the structure. I use a Sawzall (reciprocating saw) with a six-inch, carbide-impregnated blade. It zips right through soft old mortar. Harder mortar may have to hand-chiseled.

Finally, clean the joints of all dust and dirt. The joint may be vacuumed, blown clean with compressed air, or flushed with water. If the joints to be pointed had weathered severely, there will probably be a crust of carbon or dirt clinging to the masonry. Mortar won't adhere to this. It may be necessary to scrub the joint with stiff brushes and a detergent (not soap, which leaves behind a residue).

This extensive preparation stage may have taught you something: You'd rather call a professional and go bowling instead. Don't despair if you get cold feet at this point; you can still hire someone to formulate your repointing mortar and press it in. If you're still game, though, press on!

MATCH OLD MORTAR'S CONSISTENCY

To produce the most pleasing results, your repointing mixture should match as closely as possible the appearance of the original mortar. Generally speaking, the texture and, to a certain degree, the color of the mortar is determined by the type of sand or aggregate used in the mortar mixture. To isolate the aggregate for identification and duplication, take a small amount of the old mortar and crush it in your fingers (if you can), then place it in a glass of water. (Old, high-lime mortar will crumble easily and dissolve in water. Modern portland cement will break, not crumble, and will not dissolve in water.) Use muriatic acid instead of water, if you have some. Examine closely the pieces of sand or shell that settle out.

Old mortar materials -- even sand granules of a certain size -- may not be readily available today. Go to a sand and gravel yard with your sample and see what they have. Talk with some old-time masons: What do they remember of local materials and methods? A little detective work here will give you a big jump on achieving accuracy with your final formula. If precisely matching your sample proves unfeasible, get as close as possible.

Now that you've gathered the proper type of sand or aggregate, you're ready to start putting it together into a mixture compatible with the old bricks and their original mortar. The basic ingredients involved are type I or type II grey or white portland cement, hydrated lime, and your sand. Don't confuse portland cement with masonry cement -- the latter comes premixed with lime. If you live out West or in the Northeast,

hydrated lime is sold at just about any building supply house. In certain parts of the east, though, lime is scarce. If you have trouble acquiring materials, call United States Gypsum -- they'll give you the nearest location where you can buy their products. Lime usually comes in fifty-pound bags, portland cement in ninety-four pound bags: Get one of each.

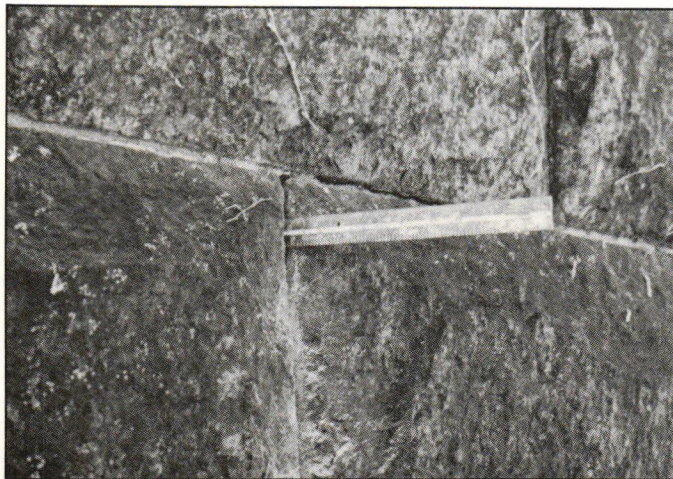
I start concocting my mortar with a base mixture of portland and lime. Because you're going to experiment to achieve the proper color and consistency, you may want to limit the amount of material you begin with. If I'm matching a weathered-looking mortar joint that hasn't been chemically cleaned, I use grey portland. If the building has been chemically cleaned and its mortar is stark white, I use white portland.

Contrary to many formulas, I use as much as six parts lime by volume to one part portland. You may go to a five-to-one mix if you need something a little greyer or harder. I've rarely used stronger than a four-to-one mix on a pre-1920 house because it sets up too hard. A small wheelbarrow makes a handy mixing bin; use a garden hoe or square-ended shovel to mingle the ingredients. The lime/portland mix should resemble grey cake flour at this point: light and fluffy.

This mix is now ready to have the aggregate added. If you can see lots of exposed sand on the surface of the original mortar, start by mixing two parts of sand with one part of the cementitious material. If the original mortar's sand seems to be pretty well hidden within the matrix, start with a ratio of two parts sand to one and one-half parts portland-and-lime mixture (4:3). Mix it all up -- still dry. Remember, though, these are not hard-and-fast proportions. They can be altered to fit your particular situation. Experimentation is the only way to get it just right.

MATCH OLD MORTAR'S COLOR

Now look again at the existing mortar. What color is it? Is it off-white, grey, beige, red, black? Some-



The joints between these stones have been chipped out to a depth of three inches, and are ready to receive the new mortar.



Finding the right aggregate is the only tough part in preparing the new mortar. Actually mixing it takes only minutes.

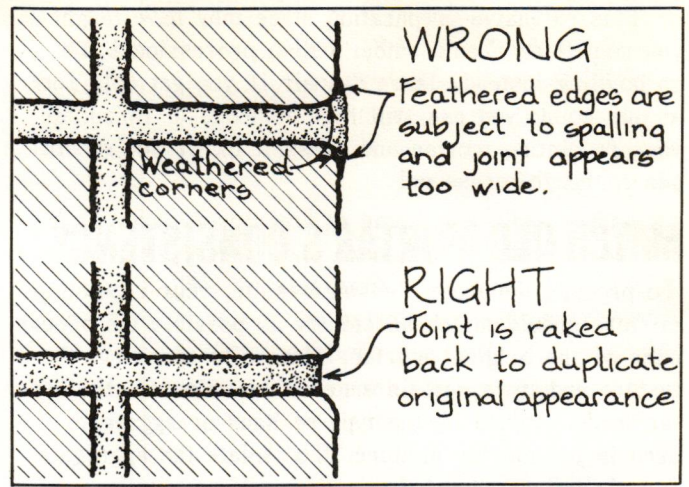


Pressing the new mortar into place. Press firmly to fill the joint completely without creating voids or air pockets.

times sun and weather will bleach portions of a wall, so a single wall may boast half a dozen different shades of mortar. If this is the case, match the color that predominates in the most noticeable areas. Because the colors of lime and cement are white and grey, a mixture of just these two materials can vary in hue from pure white to dark grey. You can also alter your mortar's overall color by increasing the proportion of sand to cementitious material, thereby emphasizing the color of the aggregate.

I'm going out on a limb now by recommending the use of color additives in your new mortar mix. Other enlightened sources have declared that there is no way to match colors exactly; to a certain extent that may be true. Yet over the years, my company has specialized in compounding mortar formulas that in the majority of cases are indistinguishable from the original, even after fifteen years. Perhaps some time in the next century some persnickety soul will be able to spot the difference; in the meantime, no one will be the wiser if you mix your colors right. Here's the secret: Take a garden hose and soak a portion of the old brickwork. Notice how the color of the wetted mortar gets darker. Your new mixture, when you add water to it, should be the same color as that section that you hosed down. Such a mortar mix will dry to exactly the same color as the old mortar.

To match an off-white mortar, I may use about one-eighth to one-quarter cup of dark buff dye to five gallons of dry mix (sand and cement and lime). You may have to intermix some cement colors to match your particular mortar; sometimes I will use a walnut brown in combination with black and red to match complex burgundies. Off-white and beige mortars are probably the easiest to match; black too is quite simple. Reds and burgundies can be troublesome. Add your dye to the mixture dry and stir the compound thoroughly; that way the final color blend will come out more uniform. Limit your dye to less than ten percent of



Regardless of the shape of the joint, the mortar should be recessed from the brick to prevent spalling.

the volume of your cement (you'll probably require far less than that).

When you're ready to add water to your final mixture, add only enough to make it damp. You should be able to shape it into a firm ball, but it should not be all gooshy. At this somewhat dry consistency the mortar mixture will be much easier to pack into the wall and it will not be as likely to smear onto adjacent bricks. With the mixture in a wheelbarrow, use your garden hoe in short, chopping strokes to get the mixture evenly damp.

Some experts advise pre-hydrating your mortar. That is: Stir the mix up with very little water, let it rest for one or two hours, then bring it up to proper consistency with a bit more water. Personally, I've found my simplified approach works fine.

Now, press a little of your mortar into the wall next to the original. Does it look like the original that you had wetted down? Great! If it doesn't, you may add or subtract minor amounts of ingredients to your mix. More likely, you should throw out your first, trial batch and start again. Keep a record of your proportions so when you get it right you can duplicate the result.

PRESS IN NEW MORTAR

Once your mix passes the eyeball-on-the-wall test, you're ready to fill the joints. To ensure a good bond, wet the cleaned joints with water before applying the mortar. If you're working inside, a spray bottle plant-mister works great. Allow any puddled water to soak into the wall; the joints should not be visibly wet.

Grab up a ball of mortar in one hand (wear rubber gloves) while wielding a trowel in the other. The trowel should be just slightly narrower than your joint (sometimes called a caulking trowel). Begin by packing the mortar, using the narrow trowel, into the deepest voids. Then fill the back of the entire joint

with a 1/4" layer of mortar. Press the mortar mix into the joints firmly and, in a succession of 1/4" deep layers dried to thumb-print hardness, bring your work up to the same depth as the original. Use long, smooth strokes, and do the vertical joints before the horizontal ones.

Some people load some of the mortar onto a mason's hawk -- a flat square plate with perpendicular handle -- or onto the bottom side of a regular mason's trowel, and push the mortar off the hawk or trowel into the joint with their caulking trowel.

A tool sometimes marketed as a "tuck-pointing trowel," shaped like a small-scale mason's trowel, is not, despite its name, much good here; don't waste your money.

When your mortar is almost flush with the wall, tool it to match the original surface profile or to mimic the surviving pointing work. If in doubt about your tooling profile, a smooth, slightly concave surface is a standard shape, and has excellent water-shedding capabilities. Don't overfill the joint so that it overlaps onto the brick, though -- the joint will appear too wide, and the bricks may spall.

Let your repointing job set up for half an hour or so, then brush it with a wet whitewash brush to feather in the edges to the original. If you need to match a particular style of tooling, do it soon after you put in the mortar; retool if necessary after you brush with water.

VERY NARROW MORTAR JOINTS: A CHALLENGE

Very thin joints (sometimes called butter joints) present special problems. What's the secret? No magic answer: Just assume the job will take longer and cost more in labor.

Power grinders are out of the question here. The old mortar must be chiseled out by hand. Even then, you must work with extreme care; the bricks are easy to damage. In the photo, each mason holds a cold chisel perpendicular to the joint, then strikes the chisel to break the bond between the mortar and masonry. The crumbled mortar is raked out with an old screwdriver. This method lessens the likelihood of chipping off corners of the brick.

A narrow caulking trowel is helpful to regrout. New mortar in buttered joints should be recessed, and tooled with a narrow jointer (either beaded or concave).

MATCH OLD MORTAR'S TEXTURE

Getting that slightly weathered look can be accomplished with a fine mist from a garden hose. Another texturing technique, called stippling, is performed with the end of a whisk broom or whitewash brush. If you're working on a particularly hot day, you may need to mist your surface periodically to keep your work from drying out too fast. Don't be afraid to experiment here; if you don't like what you've done you can always wash it out with the hose and start again.

Replacement bricks can be laid as you're pointing, using the same mortar mixture. Simply spread a bed of mortar onto the bricks below and point the replacements into place. You will, of course, use replacement bricks that match the old as closely as possible in appearance and characteristics. Remember, old bricks are generally much softer, and more elastic, than new ones. An unyielding patch of new bricks in an old wall will lead to mortar cracking and brick spalling.

Let your work dry for a minimum of a week, then come back with a mild solution of muriatic acid (one part acid to five parts water) or an organic brick cleaner. With a stiff nylon brush, remove any mortar smudges or film that you left on the masonry. Be sure to thoroughly flood the wall with water when you're finished to remove any traces of acid.

If you worked carefully, following my suggestions, your repointed walls should keep you and your family snug until well into the next century. 





THE CHICAGO

Richard J. Daley, one of the most powerful mayors in the history of Chicago, ruled the city from, and raised his family in, a humble brick bungalow located in the Southside Irish enclave of Bridgeport. Long after he could afford to move into a more expensive home, Daley chose to continue living in a bungalow. Wanting to maintain an image as the people's mayor, he managed to live very comfortably in a single-family dwelling that's known as the Chicago Bungalow.

Christening this vernacular form was purely a matter of necessity, and had nothing to do with jingoistic pride. The Chicago Bungalow is a unique architectural genre, found in great abundance throughout the city's neighborhoods, and sprinkled about the counties that form a collar around it. Yet outside of a few scholarly efforts published in *Chicago History* (the magazine of the Chicago Historical Society), this prolific housing style has generally been ignored in architectural surveys.

While Frank Lloyd Wright applied his talents to residences of the wealthy, the Chicago Bungalow was the affordable domicile for the working class of the 1920s. According to Daniel J. Prosser in an article that appeared in the Summer 1981 issue of *Chicago History*, more than 100,000 bungalows were built in Cook County alone between 1920 and 1930. Prosser's theory is that the "Bungalow Boom" erupted because of a pent-up demand for housing created by shortages during World War One, and by a 25% increase in population during the '20s. At the same time, middle-class workers were highly mobile because of improved public transportation and the automobile. The American dream of a home of your own had come within reach of a sizable segment of the population.

All renditions of the Chicago Bungalow style share a core of elements, but there are countless embellishments that permit individuality within a row of bungalows which at first glance may appear identical.

Without exception, these houses are constructed of



BUNGALOW

BY GARY MOFFAT

brick. If it's frame or stucco or stone, it is something else, not a Chicago Bungalow. Following the Great Fire in 1871, brick became the basic building block in Chicago. (Even today, it remains the dominant material used in residential construction in the city.)

These houses are of solid masonry construction; the brick is not a veneer. Beyond the fireproof quality of brick, the incredible selection of colors, styles, and textures made it a key design element of the Chicago Bungalow. This is a crucial factor because bungalows were often mass produced in tracts, with limited elevations from which to select. So it was frequently the brick which distinguished one home from its neighbor.

The masonry techniques employed on Chicago Bungalows are often amazingly complex. Difficult patterns

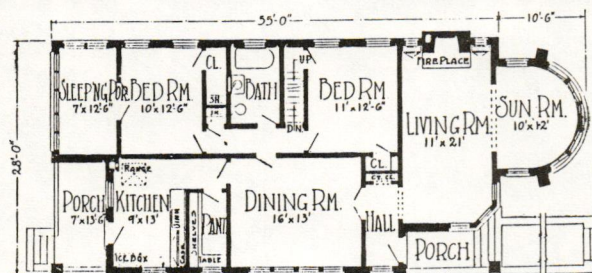
are routine and typically include decorative-cut stone trim. Window sills are frequently stone, as are caps on porch and stair walls.

Face brick is always used on street exposures. On a home in the middle of a block of these bungalows, face brick will be found only on the front and wrapped for a short distance around the sides, perhaps just past the first window or end column. A corner house, however, will be fully half face brick.

Roofs are most often hipped or gabled or combinations of

both. Wide, overhanging eaves are mandatory. Roofing materials run the gamut; asphalt shingles are fairly standard, although tile is a natural complement to the style.

The word 'bungalow' was used to describe these houses from the start, though they bear little resem-





blance to the Southern California type. 'Bungalow' in the '20s was a synonym for cottage -- which by then had taken on a rural connotation.

Chicago Bungalows are uniformly 1-1/2 storeys -- long, narrow structures, like trailer homes without wheels. This design is essential to match the 35-foot-wide city lots on which these homes commonly rest. Window-studded gables or dormers provide light for the upper storey of an unfinished attic, with potential to be upgraded to several bedrooms and a bath.

Many Chicago Bungalow features are reminiscent of the Prairie-style house. That, of course, is the important difference between the Chicago Bungalow and other small, urban house forms of the period. The Prairie School influence is what made it a style unto itself.

But there's more -- specifically, more windows everywhere. These houses are loaded with glass, and it's not uncommon for a modest-sized home (say, 1,500 sqft) to have more than 20 first-floor windows. Generally, windows maintain the same line all the way around the house, except for kitchen windows above sinks, and bathroom windows. Because basements are only half below-grade, another band of windows wrap all the way around the bottom of most Chicago Bun-



Top: Uncommon quality and detail for houses built on speculation.

Above: The Octagon (so-called because of its faceted sun-room) is the ultimate version. Note the tile roof.

galows. This wealth of windows provided two further opportunities for customization: a wide range of sun-room applications, and the use of decorative glass, both leaded and stained.

The most highly-prized version of the Chicago Bungalow is the Octagon, which has a four-sided sun-room at the front of the structure. Some models have as many as eight windows forming the perimeter of the sun-room; others are comprised of four Palladian windows. More common sun-rooms offer bays or are squared.

The manufacture of stained and beveled leaded glass was a major business in Chicago from the 1800s until the Great Depression, and decorative glass was used liberally in Chicago Bungalows. Most patterns are simple designs ordered from catalogs; fancy glass is most common in living- and dining-room windows and in entrance doors, which are often located on the sides of the buildings along with a small porch.

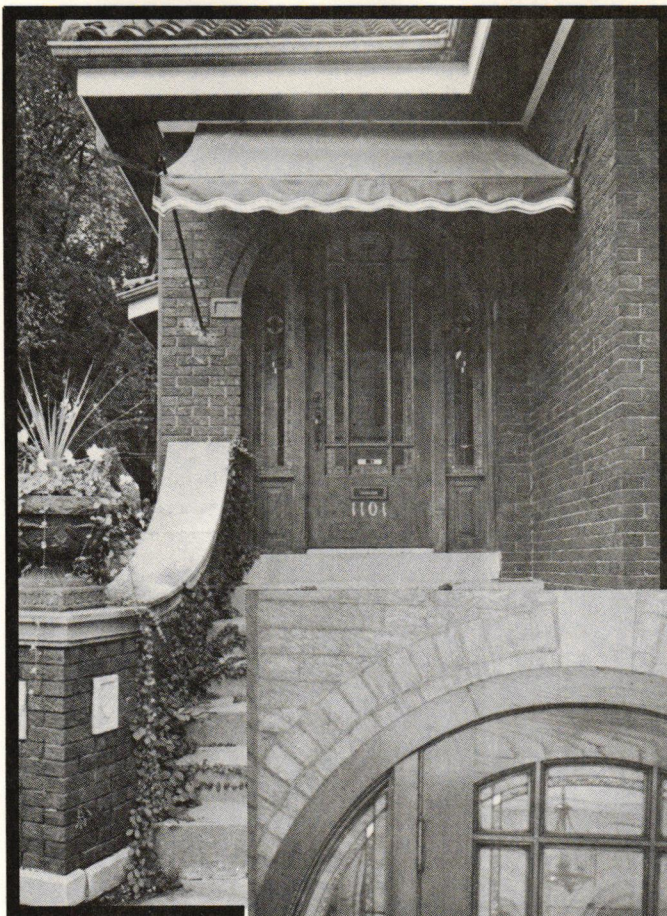
From the street, Chicago Bungalows appear deceptively compact. In reality, the style offers a generous living area, principally because it doesn't squander space on hallways or foyers.

In a classic configuration, you enter the front door and walk directly into the living room or a small ves-



Above: The bow-front Bungalow is another prized model. Note the windows, extravagant in number and shapes.

Top: High-style examples boasted extras such as terra-cotta ornament.



The typical entry is to the side, through an oak door flanked by sidelights.



A close-up of the entry door shows a predominant muntin detail and the brick arch.

The Chicago Bungalow became a style unto itself. From the interior of one of those sun-room bays, it's clear that Prairie glass played an important part in its fame.



tibule. Turn right and you're in the parlor and sun room. Go left, perhaps through French doors, and you enter the dining room, which may also provide access to a bedroom. Pass through a swinging door, and you enter the kitchen. To the right is a small hallway packed with doors. One leads up to the attic; another serves the linen closet, right next to the bathroom. Two other doors lead into the back bedrooms. (Chicago Bungalow bedrooms are usually small but comfortable.)

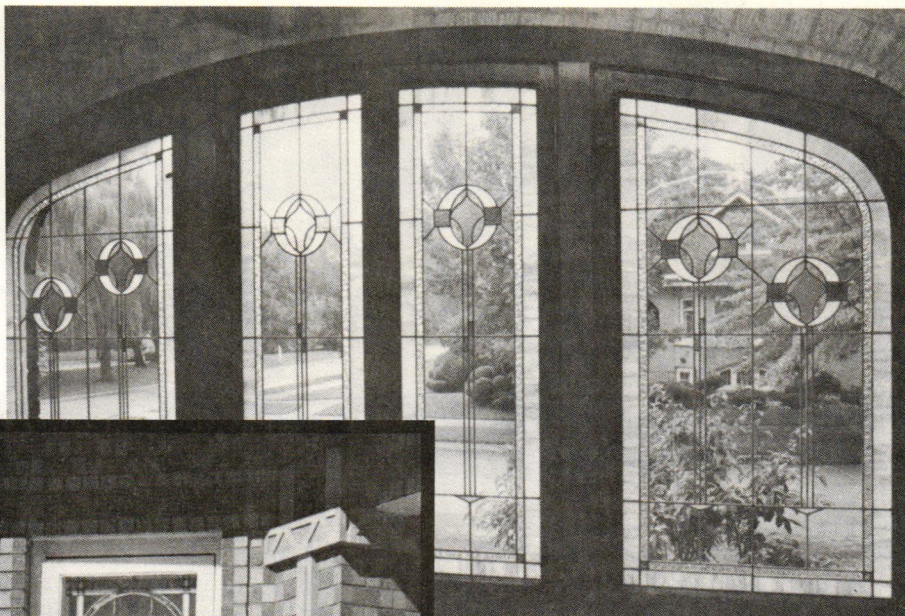
Although Chicago Bungalows were designed as basic housing and built on a budget, interior finishes are of a remarkably high quality. And no matter what neighborhood or suburb you visit, you find the same materials used.

Bathrooms are a prime example. White hexagonal floor tiles and 3-x-5-in. wall tiles set in mud are as standard as black on a Model T. And there must be an Illinois statute requiring Chicago Bungalow baths to be equipped with pedestal sinks and chrome fixtures! Even the toilet-roll holders seem to come from a single mold.

A three-member baseboard is another staple, as are 3-1/2-in. trim, double-hung windows, and two-panel doors. Hardwood floors, of either oak or maple, top off the woodwork package. Quality wood must have been inexpensive then, or else Chicago homebuyers followed this advice from the March 1925 issue of *The Delineator* when it came to Bungalow construction:

"Woods for interior finishes of

In another view of a Prairie-glass window, the delicacy of the glass and leading contrasts with the dark woodwork.



Prairie-School influence is apparent in the stylish leaded-glass windows and ornamentation on the fine masonry work.



We like mansard roofs, too, but really . . . (dare we say it?) a bungled-oh bungalow in the middle of a bungarow.

the house cannot be chosen too carefully. Hardwoods, such as walnut or mahogany, are the most satisfactory. It is not true that those woods are prohibitive in price; they may be obtained at but a few cents more per running foot than the ordinary woods, to which must be added the expense of a special finish in the way of paint or stain. The durability gained by use of hardwoods is indeed worth the difference, and it is well to remember that hardwoods give an increased market value to the little house if the owner should ever desire to sell it."

Today, it's not just the hardwoods that make Chicago Bungalows so prized. Some homebuyers are attracted to the low-maintenance characteristics of an all-brick home. Others appreciate the classic features and roominess of these houses. And everyone is impressed with their energy-efficiency: The homes stay cool in the summer and, thanks to hot-water heat, are economical to keep warm in the winter.

A casual survey of several Chicago-area real-estate brokers reveals that these houses are being snapped up as soon as they hit the market. This renewed interest in the Bungalows, along with the recent real-estate bonanza, is driving up prices quickly: A bare-



bones Bungalow in a modest neighborhood now costs about \$75,000 -- double its price of ten years ago. And the Octagon Bungalows located in upscale communities are demanding big dollars. Restored homes that listed for \$100,000 just two years ago are now selling in the range of \$130,000. Premium examples of the genre commonly are on the block for up to \$200,000. The Bungalow may be the last frontier for home renovators in Chicago; at these prices, however, it may not last long. 

Gary Moffat grew up in a North Side bungalow district and, after brief affairs with new houses, settled into a Chicago Bungalow for keeps. He writes on home repair for the Chicago *Tribune*.

BLASTED! ...NOW WHAT?

BY J. RANDALL COTTON

Do local historical society members shake their heads in dismay each time they pass your house? Do you find your house used as an example in a lecture on what not to do in a restoration? Do you get threatening late-night calls from preservationists demanding that you turn in your National Trust membership card? In other words, do you own an old brick house that has been sandblasted!?

Yes, it's true that sandblasting can be damaging to brick. But in spite of warnings by the National Park Service, OHJ, and other preservation-minded groups, sandblasting still occurs on a regular basis, perpetrated on unsuspecting homeowners by callous contractors. So you may find yourself to be the owner of a sandblasted house -- either because you bought it that way, or you mistakenly (we'll give you the benefit of doubt) had it blasted.

All may not be lost. Before you put your house on the market, hoping it sells before turning to brick dust, you should be aware that there are measures you can take to help mitigate the negative effects on sandblasted brick.

But first, what are the problems with sandblasting old brick? Because OHJ has written extensively on this topic before, we'll be brief. The inescapable fact is that sandblasting is by nature an abrasive process by which dirt, stains, and paint are removed from the surface of the bricks. Unfortunately, so is much of the outer layer of brick. This is particularly troublesome for older brick because the "skin," or outer layer, is much harder than the softer core. The skin

serves to protect the brick from water penetration and pollutants. When it is sandblasted away, the brick becomes more permeable and susceptible to these hazards. Sandblasting also erodes mortar joints, one of the most vulnerable areas where problems arise.

The pitted surface of sandblasted brick and mortar allows a freer penetration of water from precipitation, run-off, and even moisture in the air. Because brick is so porous, moisture can normally evaporate out; the problems arise from what is left behind. Water-soluble salts and other pollutants (such as sulfates, nitrates, acids, etc.) are deposited as solids inside the brick surface as the water evaporates. For example, when salt deposits crystallize, they expand and break off the face of the brick (this is known as spalling). The problem may also be manifested as crumbling, powdering brick and mortar, or as efflorescence (a white salt deposit on the face of the wall).

Increased water penetration can also result in chronic dampness that does damage to interior walls and rots adjacent wooden members. In northern climates, moisture in brick walls can freeze, also a cause of spalling.

What to do then with sandblasted brick? The first solution is to do nothing. Well, not exactly nothing, but before running out to buy some miracle "cure" take stock of the damage -- if it's not causing any immediate problems, leave the masonry alone. Your strategy should be to give a thorough and periodic inspection of the sandblasted surfaces (once a year at a minimum). Look for the following danger signs:

BLAST-AIDS: SEALERS & WATER REPELLENTS

AMERICAN BUILDING RESTORATION
9720 S. 60th Street, Franklin, Wisc.
53132. (414) 761-2440. Old 200 Hydro-Seal. Paraffin and resin sealer. Excellent breathability and repellency.

DIEDRICH CHEMICALS: 300A E. Oak Street, Oak Creek, Wisc. 53154. (414) 761-2591. Diedrich 303, a 10% resin solid in a volatile thinner.

HYDROCLEAN: P.O. Box 2078, Hartford, Ct. 06145. (203) 527-6350. Eon-Clad Water Repellent.

HYDROZO: 1001 "Y" Street, P.O. Box 80879, Lincoln, Neb. 68501. (402) 474-6981. PP/Hydrozo Clear Double 7.

PROSOCO: P.O. Box 1578, 755 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, Kan. 66117. (913) 281-2700. ConserVare line.

THORO SYSTEM PRODUCTS: 7800 N.W. 38th Street, Miami, Fla. 33166. (305) 592-2081. ThoroClear 777.

TROCAL: Dynamit Nobel of America, 10 Link Drive, Rockleigh, N.J. 07647. (800) 631-1668. Chem-Trete-Bsm.

V.I.P. ENTERPRISES: 9690 N.W. 41st Street, Suite 1, Miami, Fla. 33178. (800) 327-7479. Ombrella Clear No. 9100.

■ Spalling brick ("sheets" of brick which have detached from the surface).

■ Crumbling, powdering, or "rotting" brick and mortar. (See page 42 for method of determining severity of the damage.)

■ Cracks in the brick and, especially, between the bricks and mortar joints. You'll be looking for a pattern of cracks caused by deterioration, not by structural problems.

■ Efflorescence, a white deposit on the brick surface caused by soluble salts leaching to the surface.

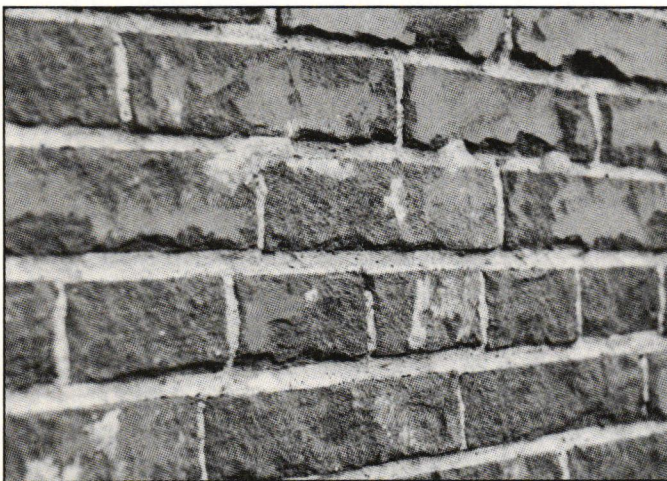
■ Constant dampness in the brick walls, evidenced by staining of interior walls, peeling paint or wallpaper, presence of mildew, mosses, etc.

PREVENTING PROBLEMS

If any of the above conditions appear to be chronic and spreading, it may be time to take some action (which will be discussed shortly). But if the brick seems sound after each regular inspection, you may have escaped much of the potential damage that can be wrought by sandblasting. If that's the case, follow the old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." However, you must ensure that water penetration in the future be kept to a minimum. The following preventive maintenance practices are advisable for any brick buildings, but are particularly crucial for sandblasted masonry:

■ Make sure all the gutters, downspouts, and other water run-off systems are in good repair and clear of debris. Leaky or clogged gutters can cause rain run-off to be diverted down the brick walls -- deluging them with water-borne pollutants.

■ Ensure that the mortar joints are sound. Check for erosion and cracks and repoint if necessary. As much as 20% of a brick wall's surface area may be represented by mortar joints -- they're a prime source of entry. Be sure to consider the special needs of repointing old brick with a fairly "soft" mortar mix.



Sandblasting was the first crime perpetrated on these bricks. They were then repointed with a hard mortar -- speeding erosion.

(See "Repointing Masonry" on page 24.)

■ Correct conditions of "rising damp," splashback, and foundation wetness. (See OHJ's "Wet Basement" articles, June and August 1981.)

■ Caulk all joints between brick and other materials (wooden window frames, doors, eaves, etc.).

■ Remove water-entrapping vegetation from on or near the brick walls.

■ Replace or repair missing and deteriorated pieces of coping on parapet walls; repair all flashing around chimneys and openings; repair all rotted sections of eaves, cornices, roof, etc.

■ Don't use salt to melt snow anywhere near masonry walls.

If you follow the recommendations above and continue regular inspections, you can greatly reduce the potential for problems associated with sandblasting. But if problems still persist despite your remedial efforts and there is serious spalling, dampness, or brick rotting, consider one of the following "last resort" approaches.

PAINTING

Normally, painting brick is not necessary -- it's an added maintenance problem and offers little extra protection to sound brick. But deteriorating sandblasted brick is already seriously compromised, and a paint job can add a measure of protection. Properly done, paint can prevent liquid water from penetrating, while allowing vapor water to escape from the bricks underneath. Some paints can seal the surface, preventing evaporation and actually compounding the problem. Stay away from oil- or epoxy-based paints and other non-porous coatings.

As with all painting tasks, preparation is critical. Because the brick is already sandblasted, you shouldn't have to remove any old paint, but you may have to attend to these chores:

■ Remove all loose and crumbling mortar and brick



An eave overhangs this wall just a few courses above the top of the photo. The blasted bricks most exposed are "rotting" fastest.



A brick house can be sensitively painted. This building has been successfully painted in a Georgian color scheme.

with a wire brush, screwdriver, or chisel to provide a sound surface.

■ Remove any efflorescence by dry brushing at first, followed by clear water and a stiff brush if necessary.

■ Remove moss and other organic growth with an ordinary weed killer. Wet the wall with clear water first, so the weed killer is not drawn into the brick. Rinse and scrub the wall well afterwards to remove all traces of the chemicals.

■ Remove mildew and surface dirt. Try the following homemade cleaner:

- 3 oz. trisodium phosphate (TSP)
- 1 oz. detergent (Tide, All, etc.)
- 1 qt. 5% sodium hypochlorite (bleach)
- 3 qt. warm water

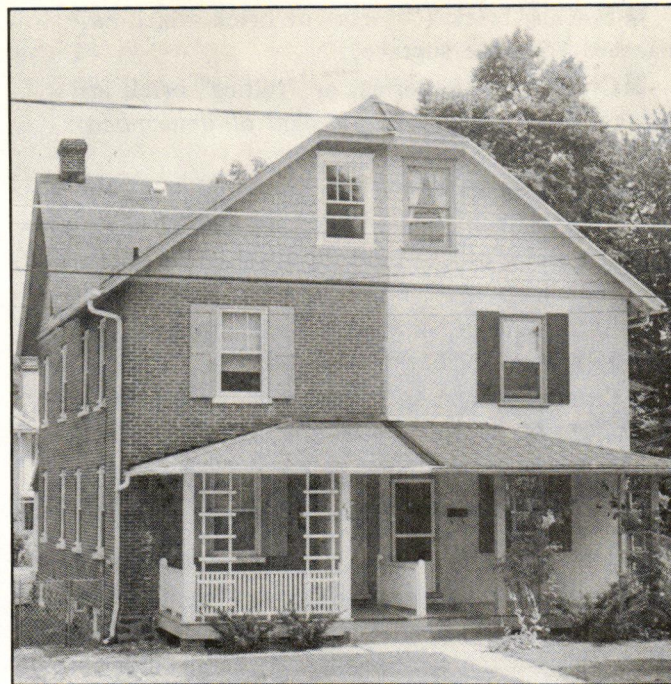
Scrub the brick surface with the solution using a medium soft brush and rinse with clean water.

■ Complete all repointing and caulking before painting.

■ Check the label on the paint you'll be using for the acceptable moisture and temperature conditions during application. Match these as closely as is feasible.

What kind of paint should you use? Generally, a water-thinned emulsion paint (latex) is best: either acrylic latex or vinyl latex. These paints allow the brick to "breathe" while offering protection from water penetration. Additionally, they are usually mildew- and alkali-resistant (alkali resistance is important when you apply paint over lime mortar). They're also easy to apply, clean up quickly, and readily available.

Most major paint manufacturers make a latex paint



Then again, painting brick can create an eyesore — as evidenced by this schizophrenic house.

suitable for masonry, and the label should list brick as an acceptable surface. To ensure proper adhesion, most manufacturers will strongly recommend using a specially formulated undercoat before using their latex as a finish coat. Be sure to use the specific undercoat made for the latex you're using -- don't mix brands. For example, use Sherwin-Williams Masonry Conditioner (A5V2) as a base beneath their latex top coats, or Wonder Bond (16100) if you use one of Devco's latex paints. Most of these undercoats should be thinned, as directed, to prevent glazing.

If the sandblasting has caused extensive pitting or cracking, you might consider another type of paint. Cement-based paints are capable of filling in these fissures. Cement-based paints aren't complete waterproofers, but they are capable of filling in heavily marred areas, and they do allow water vapor to escape from the brick. These paints come in powdered form and begin to hydrate when mixed with water, so they must be used immediately.

Although masonry paints can be applied by roller or spraying, brush application is preferable to ensure adequate coverage over coarse-textured brick walls. You can expect a well-prepared job on masonry to last three to eight years. As you can see, painting brick is a major and regular commitment.

What colors should you use? Traditionally, brick was often painted (you guessed it) brick-red. This can reduce the visual impact of painting brick that had previously been unpainted. Other colors run the gamut from pinkish salmon to dark reds and browns. Choose a color appropriate for the style and era of the house. White or pale yellow might be suitable for

a Colonial Revival house, earth colors such as grey or beige for a Gothic Revival, for example.

When considering color placement, think of the brick walls as the "body" of the house. The body color should be complemented with appropriate trim colors in the same manner as a frame house. Beware of dark body colors, though, as they may make the building look too heavy and foreboding.

WATER REPELLENTS

Like paint, water repellents are unnecessary for sound masonry; they can be expensive, need to be reapplied periodically, and can sometimes cause more problems than they cure. But for deteriorating sandblasted brickwork, they can be helpful because they prevent the penetration of water in liquid form, yet allow water vapor to "breathe" out.

Water repellents (also known as "sealers") differ from paint because they are colorless and are not just a surface coating but penetrate the brick to a depth usually from 1/8" to 1/2". Transparent sealers work by changing the capillary angles of the pores in the face of the brick wall from positive (suction) to negative (repellency). Their initial cost can be tolerable (15 to 25 cents per square foot) but they will probably need to be renewed every three to seven years.

There are problems with sealers -- they might trap crystalline deposits of salt in the brick and thus contribute to spalling. Sealers can also change the color of the brickwork, even though they are transparent. They can make future pointing and removal of efflorescence more difficult; therefore, these procedures should be done before applying sealers. In fact, all the preparations listed for painting apply for sealers as well.

There are numerous, colorless water-repellent products on the market, including silicones, stearates, waxes, resins, acrylics, rosins, polymers, silanes, and siloxanes. But in general, these products come in two types of solution: water-based and solvent-based. Usually, better penetration is achieved from solvent-based solutions, although they are more expensive.

All manufacturers of water repellents will claim that their product is better than the others. Read the product literature carefully. (See *list of suppliers* on page 38.) The Brick Institute of America recommends the following checklist when using a sealer:

- Choose a sealer made by an established, reputable manufacturer with a proven track record. Nationally-known brand names are the best bet.

- Use solvent-based sealers -- their molecular structure is smaller, permitting better penetration.

- Apply sealer only to a clean surface that's properly caulked, pointed, and free from all loose mortar and brick.

- Choose a sealer with not less than 5% solids,

preferably over 7%. The label should also indicate the effectiveness of the sealer, expressed as a percentage figure of repellency, and a percentage figure of "breathability."

- Try a test panel in an inconspicuous place; let it cure for several months and check for satisfactory performance in regard to color change, water permeability, etc.

- Apply the sealer in two flood coats with a 12-inch rundown, or at the application rate recommended on the product label.

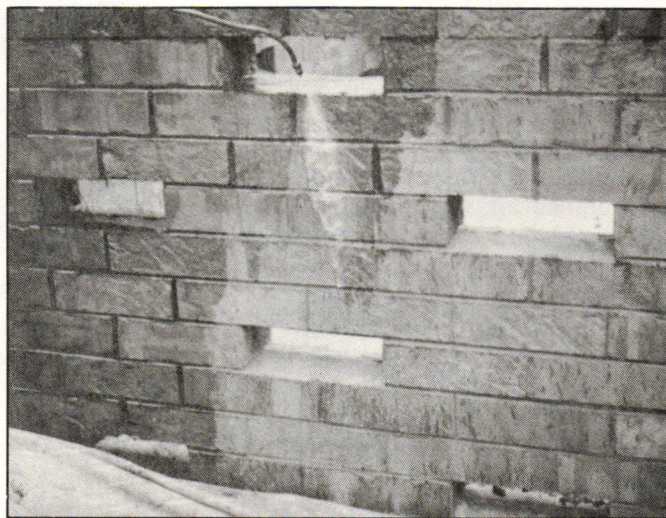
- Hire a contractor with experience and ask to see samples of his work. If possible, get a written warranty from the contractor. Also check the manufacturer's warranty.

Remember, we recommend using water-repellent sealers only to alleviate problems of damaging water penetration which cannot be solved in more conventional ways.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES

If the sandblasted masonry has seriously deteriorated to the point where it has lost much of its integrity and is visually objectionable, you may want to consider opaque "waterproofers" such as bituminous-based coatings or stucco. These are really last-ditch remedies though; they will drastically alter the appearance of your house. In some parts of the country, however, brick and stone buildings were traditionally stuccoed, thereby making this solution more acceptable. This is a major project and will require the services of an experienced contractor.

Failed and deteriorated brick units can also be selectively replaced with similar brick. This too is a job for a professional mason and can run into a lot of money. But usually only certain isolated sections of brickwork that are highly vulnerable to weather will require this remedy. 



Applying a test patch of masonry sealer to brick in new construction. Photo courtesy of American Building Restoration.

ASSESSING THE CONDITION OF MASONRY

Restoration architect Max Ferro and masonry conservator Tom Russack have devised a scale which quantifies the deterioration of brick by assessing its relative hardness (or softness). To use this simple method, you'll need only a mason's hammer, a cold chisel (1/2 to 1-1/2 inches), and a sturdy slotted screwdriver. Because the method is destructive, use it sparingly and only for areas you suspect are deteriorating. There is a separate scale for both mortar and brick. Both scales go from 0 to 10, with 0 being most deteriorated, and 10 being the hardest. When you scratch brick, always scratch both vertically and horizontally. When you strike mortar joints, always strike them along their center lines.

BRICK CLASSIFICATION

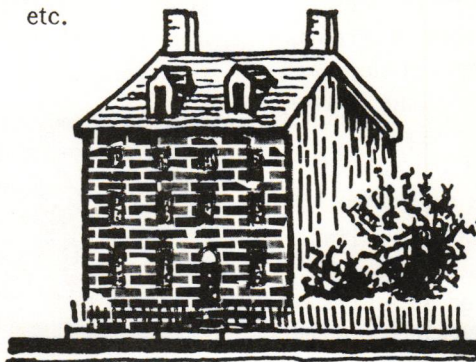
- ☐ 0 Bricks totally disintegrated.
- ☐ 1 Bricks have spalled 1/4 to 3 inches within the wall plane.
- ☐ 2 Bricks have a fairly intact face, but rounded, eroded corners. Surface can be loosened by rubbing with the hand, or powdered by scraping with a fingernail.
- ☐ 3 Bricks are spalling in scaly layers that can be pulled apart by hand. Their component crystalline, jagged fragments are better bonded, and do not powder.
- ☐ 4 Bricks cannot be scratched 1/4" with fingernail, nor crumbled by hand, but can be broken apart with poking and jabbing of the screwdriver. Crystalline pieces can be semi-hard, or weathered and resembling compacted clay.
- ☐ 5 The screwdriver carves into the surface of the brick approximately 1/4" by hand, but bricks won't crumble after a dozen jabs. This is the first classification of stable, structurally sound brick.
- ☐ 6 The screwdriver must be driven in with the hammer to make the 1/4" indent. In doing so, it causes enough cracking to dislodge coarse, jagged pieces.
- ☐ 7 The screwdriver no longer penetrates, but does make a weak impression when hit with the ham-

mer. A slight ring and bounce attest to the solidity of the brick.

- ☐ 8 The chisel is needed to successfully crack the brick, first indenting the surface before causing a fissure to develop.
- ☐ 9 The chisel makes no indentation or impression, but shears brick cleanly. Strong vitrification of face. Crisp edges and corners.
- ☐ 10 A new brick, with absolute crispness of corners, and a clear ringing sound when struck by a chisel.

Use this scale to document the condition of your brickwork (sandblasted or otherwise). If your bricks rate a "4" or below, they are for all intents and purposes unsalvageable. In that case, an engineer should be consulted to determine the structural integrity of the building. If your bricks rate somewhere between "5" and "7," you might consider some of the remedial steps outlined in this article (sealing, painting, etc.).

A brick building typically (especially if it's been blasted) has some masonry units that are deteriorated, while others are sound. In that case, you can use this scale to decide which units should be selectively replaced, which side of the building would benefit most from sealing, etc.



MORTAR EVALUATIONS

- ☐ 0 No mortar present at least within 1-1/2" of the face of the wall. Mortar has leached or weathered away.
- ☐ 1 Mortar can be scraped away freely with a screwdriver or poked out with a finger. It crumbles freely and has an irregular surface. Joint treatment is unrecognizable and mor-

tar appears sandlike.

☐ 2 Mortar can be raked out easily with the screwdriver, but the face of the joint is still intact, with few surface irregularities.

☐ 3 Scoring the joint along its center line with the screwdriver, it is easy to collapse it and break its adhesion with the brick. The mortar disengages freely and cleanly.

☐ 4 When the mortar joint is scored and tapped with the screwdriver and the mortar prodded out, there is slight spalling at the edges and corners of the brick.

☐ 5 The mortar resists all attempts with the screwdriver. Scored with a chisel, it disengages and pops free from face of the brick without damaging the brick.

☐ 6 When mortar is lightly scored with a chisel, it disengages. The edges and corners of the brick are marred slightly because of mortar's adhesion to brick.

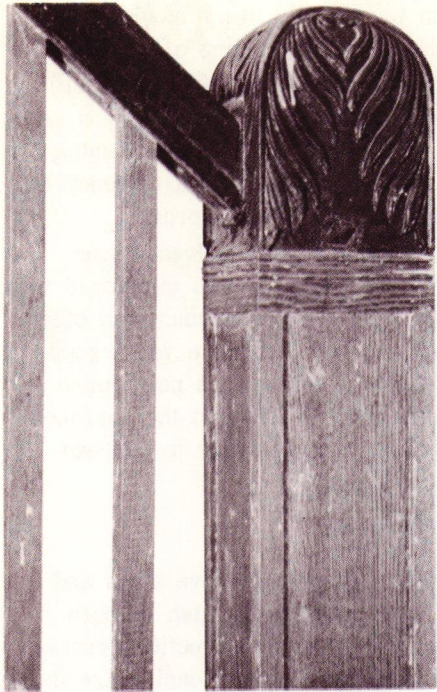
☐ 7 Successive blows of the hammer and chisel are necessary to crack the joint, but when the mortar disengages, there is still little damage to the brick.

☐ 8 Several blows with hammer and chisel are necessary to crack the mortar into short pieces, as in #7. The bricks are noticeably marred in the process.

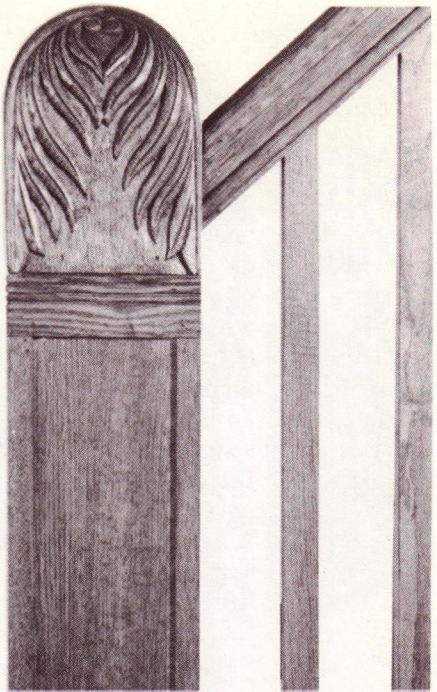
☐ 9 The mortar is tougher than the bricks, cracking the bricks after successive blows with the hammer and chisel. Rich mortar color, well-defined tooling marks. Solid adhesion apparent throughout brick-mortar interface.

☐ 10 The mortar has high content of portland cement, approaching the strength of concrete. When removed with hammer and chisel, the adjoining brickwork is pulverized.

Again, this scale is used for comparison. If mortar rates between "1" and "4," repointing is in order. If it rates "9" or "10," and the bricks are fairly soft, the mortar is too hard. In that case, it may be wise to have the rock-hard mortar ground out and replaced with softer mortar. Overly-hard mortar will damage the brick with seasonal and daily thermal expansion and contraction. 



AFTER YOU STRIP ... BEFORE YOU FINISH



by Bill O'Donnell

You've read articles about stripping paint. You've read articles about refinishing wood. But has anyone ever told you what to do in between? The newel post pictured above has been heat-stripped of several paint layers. The same newel (above, right) is now ready to be refinished. How did it get that way? Read on....

THE "CHEMICAL CLEANUP"

After heat stripping, remove the original clear finish with chemical stripper. Use a high-quality, methylene-chloride-based stripper, the kind with cellulose (not wax) filler. (Zip-Strip, Bix Tuff Job, and Strypeeze are typical brand names.) Lay the chemical on thick and allow it to work for 20 to 30 minutes. While the chemical is working, use a dental pick, awl, or similar tool to dig into corners and remove the paint you were unable to reach while heat stripping.

For close-pored woods like cherry, maple, or walnut, wipe up excess remover with paper towels; follow with a solvent rinse. For open-pored species like oak or ash, you'll also need a nylon brush to lift the remaining remover and varnish from the grain. If there's still a lot of residue, apply more stripper and gently brush with a brass (not steel) brush. Brush with the grain only. Wipe the wood down again with more towels. A film will remain, leaving the surface tacky. Let the piece dry for an hour or so, and give the wood a final brushing with a clean brass brush. This removes the film -- producing crumbs of dried stripper. Rinse the wood with mineral spirits.

Wait for the wood to dry. Test it occasionally with a piece of fine sandpaper; if the paper gums up or gets clogged, the wood is still wet. When the paper

produces fine sawdust, the wood is ready to refinish. Well, almost ready....

Look at the piece under a bright light. What do you see? Half-stripped paint in corners? A hazy film in open pores? Loose joints? Raised grain? Splits? These are the conditions to correct before refinishing.

Regardless of how carefully you stripped, paint will remain in corners, joints, and open pores. Be fussy as you groom the wood for refinishing -- even the slightest fleck of paint will come back to haunt you. Perhaps no one else will notice it, but it will catch *your* eye each time you pass.

PICKY, PICKY, PICKY

Return to corners with a heat gun and dental pick. Because the remaining paint has been weakened by your stripping, little heat is needed to break its bond and lift it off the wood. Don't bother digging all the old paint out of open joints -- you'll be refilling them with wood filler anyway. But make sure paint doesn't stick out of the joint above the surface of the wood.

Wipe the wood down with mineral spirits and fine bronze wool. (Threads of steel wool get caught in splinters and may cause rust stains under the new finish.) Mineral spirits removes surface dirt and residual stripping goo. It also highlights areas where paint residue remains in the wood.

Judicious use of a good paint scraper will remove the last bit of residue from hard-to-reach corners. Cabinet scrapers and hand scrapers are invaluable tools. Properly sharpened, they remove a super-thin shaving of wood. Use them on flat areas and in corners to shave off hazy or discolored wood. Moulding scrapers have interchangeable heads of varying pro-



files. They conform to virtually every moulding profile and minimize the risk of rounding off edges.

Sand the piece lightly with fine (#220 or finer) sandpaper. To avoid blistering your hands, use a sanding block on broad, flat areas. Don't use a sanding block on mouldings, though; you'll have a tendency to over-sand them, and you'll round off corners.

Finally, give the wood one more solvent rinse. Wipe the wood down with paper towels moistened with mineral spirits. This will remove sawdust and other dirt from the surface. It will also give you a good idea of how the wood will look with a new finish on it. Now that all the paint is off and the surface is clean, smooth, and dry, you're ready to fill and finish the piece ... or are you?

REMOVING MARKS

Perhaps you've followed all of the above steps and still feel the wood isn't ready to refinish -- burn marks, water stains, and other imperfections remain. It's time to make a decision: How offensive are these blemishes? Shut off the bright lights you've been working with and live with the wood for a couple of days. Do you think the discolorations and dents will really be that noticeable after the wood is finished? Or will they just add to the patina?

One or two spots may require more work. Minor nicks and discolorations are no big deal, but major staining or burning will be unsightly when the wood is finished. You won't be able to remove all evidence of a burn or water stain, but there are ways to minimize their impact.

Water Stains

Dark areas in the wood are most often caused by standing water. Rings on window sills (from houseplants) are common. These can be faded by bleaching the area, or hidden by blending the stain into the rest of the wood through selective staining.

Brush full strength Clorox onto darkened areas and allow to work for two minutes. Rinse with a damp terrycloth until all the bleach is removed. If the bleach changed the color too much, use a stain to blend the



Top: We're often asked what we mean by "a one-coat chemical cleanup after heat." This photo shows what we're talking about. The chemical stripper removes varnish, remaining flecks of paint, and some of the stain. The process isn't exactly tidy, but it sure is neater than trying to remove all the layers of paint with chemicals.

Left: It takes extra effort to remove paint and varnish from intricate carvings. Before wiping off all the stripper, use an awl or dental pick to loosen up the varnish and paint that remains around details. If it's not coming out easily, apply more stripper and let the chemical do the work.

area into the surrounding woodwork. Bleaching will raise the grain, requiring additional sanding. As always, test this method in an inconspicuous location first.

If the stain is extremely localized, blend it into the surrounding woodwork with an oil stain. Use progressively lighter shades of the stain (by thinning it) around the dark spot. The idea is to feather out the discoloration so that it doesn't have such a harsh visual impact.

Burns

Burns are more difficult to remove. If the burn caused an indentation, as with a cigarette burn, scrape away the charred wood and fill the low spot with tinted wood filler. If it's a large burn (possibly caused by a negligent heat-plate wielder), sanding the mark out is your only option. One caution: Burns go pretty deep -- it's tough to remove them completely. This is really important if the burn is in a thin veneer; removing it completely requires sanding away all the veneer. Again, don't try to completely obliterate the mark; rather, soften its effect, so it's not the first thing to catch your eye.

CARPENTRY REPAIRS

Paint buildup fills in the joints between adjacent pieces of wood. Instead of resealing woodwork that separated, previous owners probably caulked open joints and repainted. By the time someone (you) finally gets around to stripping the wood, the pieces are about to fall away from each other.

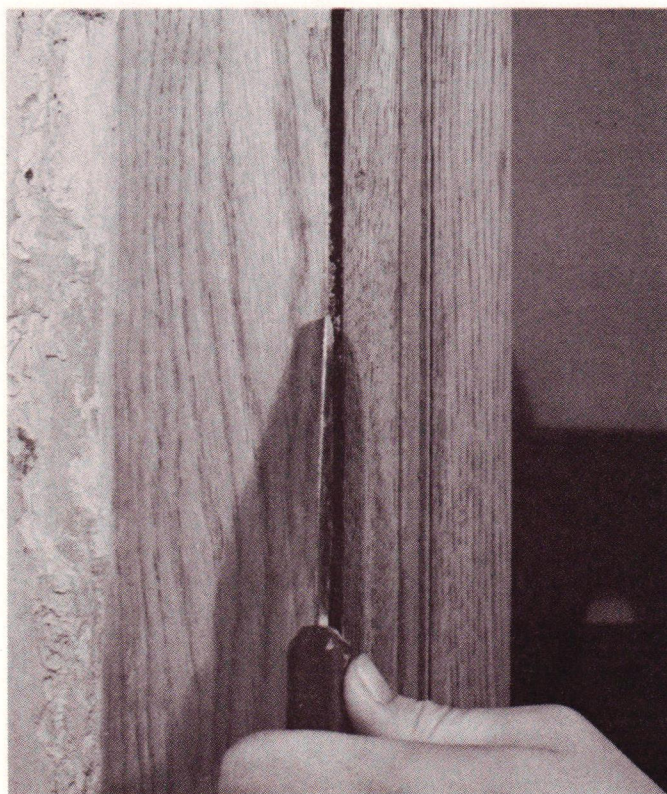
Resecuring trim is no big deal. The only tough part is getting all the debris out from between the pieces. Dental picks, stiff tapping knives, and sharp chisels help, but patience is your most important tool here. Of course, you could completely remove the trim, clean it, and reinstall the pieces, but in many cases, that requires more work than digging out the paint buildup that's clogging the joint.

Use a putty knife or flat prybar to open the joint a little wider. Rake a stiff tapping knife up and down the joint to remove debris (plaster crumbs, chunks of

Top: After the piece is "completely" stripped, you'll be disappointed to find that some paint remains stuck in corners. But don't despair: Another quick blast of heat softens the residue for easy removal with a dental pick or similar tool. Be very careful not to scorch the wood, though. It no longer has a coat of varnish to protect it from the heat.

Right: Successfully cleaning hard-to-reach areas requires a bit of creativity. Having a variety of scrapers on hand helps you cope with difficult conditions. A sharp wood chisel is also handy for removing paint that's stuck in corners. Never pull a scraper across the grain -- you'll mar the wood.





paint, etc.). Be thorough; if you simply nail the trim back in place without removing all the debris, the joint won't close completely, and the wood may split. Run a sharp chisel along the joint to remove built-up paint.

Set the existing nails beneath the surface with a nailset. Drill pilot holes and drive new finish nails wherever the two pieces aren't making solid contact. Glue together and clamp splintered or broken pieces of wood. Wipe off excess glue immediately with a damp cloth. The slightest film of glue will create a light spot when the wood is finished.

FILLING LITTLE HOLES

Nail holes, dents, and slight gaps that remain between adjacent pieces must be filled. The easiest way to fill nail holes is with wax filler sticks. These crayon-like fillers come in a variety of colors, closely approximating the shade of many wood species. But don't use them on bare wood, because the wax will leave a smear. Apply at least one coat of finish first. Rub the stick back and forth across the hole until it is filled and smoothed. Wipe off surrounding residue with a rag.

If an exact color match is important, you're more likely to achieve it by tinting your own wood filler with universal tints. Take a little dab of filler and mix in the appropriate tint. Add color as necessary until you arrive at the color you need. There's no scientific formula here -- just trial and error. When you get the right color, roll the filler into a little ball between your thumb and forefinger, press it into the hole, and wipe off excess. Don't use Plastic-Wood or similar products to fill small holes on interior wood. These fillers come out lumpy, uneven, and difficult to sand.

Filling Pores

If the wood has an especially open, uneven grain, fill the pores with a paste filler (Behlen's Por-O-Pac is one brand name). Otherwise, the wood will absorb the finish at different rates, leaving a rough, uneven surface. Fillers do change the color of the wood slightly, so test it first in an inconspicuous area. Mix

Top: After you've picked all the flecks of paint off the wood, wipe it down with mineral spirits. Paint thinner removes the dried chemical and accentuates those areas that might require more work. Rinse solvent-soaked rags with water and dispose of them outside -- spontaneous combustion really does occur. Left: The stair featured in this article has no open joints. Alas, this is not always so. This door casing has come loose from the jamb. It's easier to rake out the debris and resecure the casing than to completely remove and reinstall it. Smaller pieces of loose trim (like a door stop) are best removed, cleaned, and reattached.

the tinted filler to the consistency of cream and brush into the bare wood pores. Burnish off the excess by forcefully rubbing across the grain with a cork block. Sand smooth with #220 grit or finer abrasive paper. Allow the filler to dry for at least 48 hours before finishing.

COSMETIC TOUCH-UPS

Chemical stripper not only removes varnish from the wood, but also removes pigment from the wood filler that filled the original nail holes and joints. These areas will stand out from the rest of the woodwork.

Now comes the fun part. Mix some oil-based paints until you've come as close as possible to matching the color of the wood. If you can't match the color exactly, mix a color that's slightly darker than the color of the wood. Dark spots will look like natural imperfections, whereas light spots will look like left-over paint. After applying at least one coat of finish, touch up the imperfections with an artist's brush. Be careful not to overlap the paint onto the surrounding wood. If the prospect of painting many little nail holes seems daunting, tap the old filler out of each hole with a nailset. Then just go around and refill each hole with tinted filler.

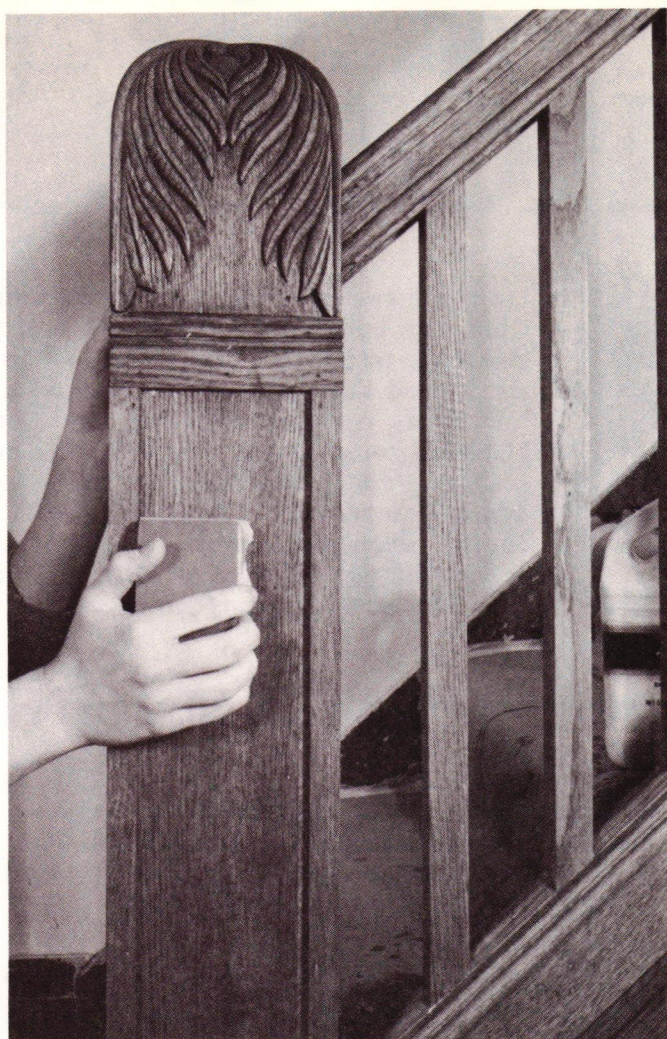
Some areas may have bleached out more than others during the stripping process (where you overlapped the stripper, for example.) Blend these areas back in with a quick application of thinned-down stain. The first time around, go with an application lighter than you think necessary. It's gentler and easier to apply some more stain than to bleach the area and start over.

Regardless of your finishing system, the wood must be completely free of dust, dirt, and grit. Give the wood a final wipe with a tack-rag. You can buy ready-made tack-rags at paint stores, or you can make your own. Shake a few drops of varnish into soft cheesecloth or linen. Work the varnish into the cloth thoroughly. Add a few drops of varnish now and then to spruce it up.

Now you're truly ready to refinish the wood. But you've already read about that. 🏠

Top: A light sanding smooths fuzzy grain, removes minor scratches (like where you slipped with a scraper), and softens the effect of minor color variations. Use a sanding block only on flat surfaces. Hand-sand mouldings to avoid over-sanding and rounding off corners. This step may not be necessary with close-pored woods like maple or walnut. Only sand if necessary. Before finishing, remove the sawdust you created with a tack-rag.

Right: After applying at least one coat of finish, touch up pigment-stripped filler with an artist's brush and color-matched paint. Apply the final coat(s) of finish after cosmetic painting to ensure even gloss.



RESEARCHING YOUR HOUSE HISTORY

Anyone can trace the history of a house. It is often a complicated jigsaw puzzle; but with equal quantities of luck and patience, the pieces can be assembled. And when the research is done, you may know both who owned your house and what it looked like in the past -- which can mean a more accurate restoration. There are many resources available to the amateur house historian: local museums and historical societies, old magazines and newspapers, physical artifacts, and city maps, to name a few. But your first step should be a title search in the local real-estate transaction records. The search will enable you to plot the "chain of title" to your house: when it was built, by whom, who owned it and for how long, how much it sold for over the years. All transactions, whether mortgage, sale, or conveyance by inheritance, are recorded and accessible (as long as the records still exist).

TITLE SEARCHING: THE BASICS

by David Baker

Every community has a Recorder's Office or Deed Office. It stores the permanent records of all transactions involving real property. You'll have to unravel the idiosyncracies of the local filing system for yourself, but you can be certain of two things: The office is open to the public, and its information is indexed according to the names of both buyers and sellers of property.

If you know either end of the chain of title, either the current or the original owner, you can recreate the chain of title using what is known as the "grantee" (buyer) and "grantor" (seller) index. You certainly know one end of the chain: your own name, when you bought the house, and from whom.

Start your search with the grantee index for the year in which you bought the property, and go backwards through each year of indexes. Look for the name of the people who sold you the house, to find out when they bought the house and from whom. When you find their name, read the actual deed to be sure it refers to your property. Take the name of the seller ("grantor") from that deed and use the grantee index to find out who sold *them* the house, and so on.

If by chance you're doing this from the original owner on, use grantor indexes to determine who sold the house each time, and then go forward to find out who that person sold to, and so on. Keep in mind that indexes, especially for earlier years, are not bound individually but rather in groups of years.

Each of these transactions can provide valuable clues to the early life of your house. A sizable increase in price, for example from \$1200 in 1860 to

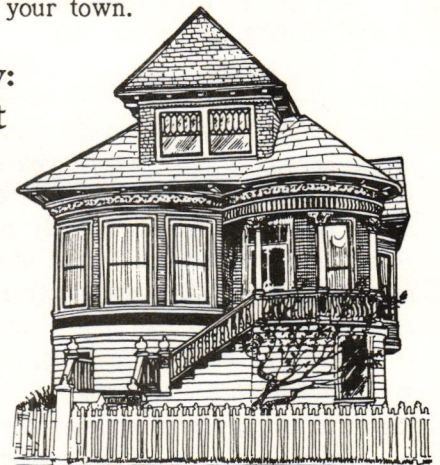
\$8000 in 1865, suggests a capital improvement like a new building. A mortgage on a property may coincide with the construction of a new wing or outbuilding. You can often confirm your guesses with a visit to the Building Department in your town. Building and alteration permit files may include the owner's name, date of construction, architect, builder, cost of construction, roof covering, dates of alterations, plans, even working drawings.

The Office of Taxation, or comparable municipal department in your area, may also yield clues. Increases in tax assessments from year to year may indicate improvements on the property. Be cautious, however, in making assumptions based on these increases. A city-wide re-assessment may have doubled everyone's taxes in one year. Inflation, real-estate booms, and other factors affect property values as well, so it is important to know something about the economic history of your town.

A case history: the house that coffee built

Before tackling the vagaries of the grantee-grantor index system, my wife and I visited our city museum and were fortunate to learn something of our

house's beginnings. The curator told us that our Victorian house in Alameda, California, was built in 1896





for one Max J. Brandenstein at a cost of \$2350, and that Max had sold the house that same year.

Several months later, while drinking coffee at a local restaurant, I spied an old coffee can on display. The label proclaimed the manufacturer's name: It was none other than M. J. Brandenstein.

It was not difficult to verify that this was the same M. J. Brandenstein who built our house. We surmised that Max had speculated in real estate with coffee money.

The longer we lived in the house, the more we came to feel that its design problems as well as its virtues stemmed from a get-rich-quick past. The fashionable architectural features -- the facade, front porch, front hall, parlors -- are beautifully crafted. But the living quarters left much to be desired: There was a miniscule bathroom and no closets. At first we assumed all Victorians had these glaring design defects, but this is not the case in houses of similar vintage we've seen, ones not built on speculation. Max and his contractors had obviously built the house for a quick sale, not for a lifetime of comfortable living.

Armed with the information about our original owner and anxious to learn more, I approached the grantor index for the 1890s, certain I would quickly determine the chain of title from Max all the way to the present. It did not take long to discover one of the pitfalls of title searching: The older the records, the poorer the indexing. It took an hour to check one year of the 1890s index.

After six hours of examining column after column of handwritten names, I abandoned my attempt to go from past to present, and decided to work backwards from the present. In five minutes I scanned the entries for the 1960s and soon found an entry involving the party from whom my wife and I bought the house. Although this entry did not identify the next link in the chain, it was extremely valuable. It indicated that our previous owner had bought the house from a title company, and that there had been a conveyance.

The reconveyance

A reconveyance means that someone is giving back an interest in land. Translated, this generally means that the owner of a piece of property has paid off the mortgage. A reconveyance also allows the house historian to skip many years of indexes.

Make sure you examine the reconveyance document itself. These documents are usually housed in the same building as the grantor-grantee indexes. The reconveyance will refer to the deed or mortgage it is extinguishing. The year in which the deed or mortgage was executed is crucial. In my case, the reconveyance occurred in 1950 and the deed was executed in 1944. Thus I was able to skip the indexes for 1944 to 1950 since I knew the property was held by the same owner in this period.

Probate

The reconveyance led me directly to the next link in the chain of title. In 1944, the people we bought from purchased the house. But it was not an ordinary sale: The entry indicated that there had been an "order of sale," and referred to a court file number.

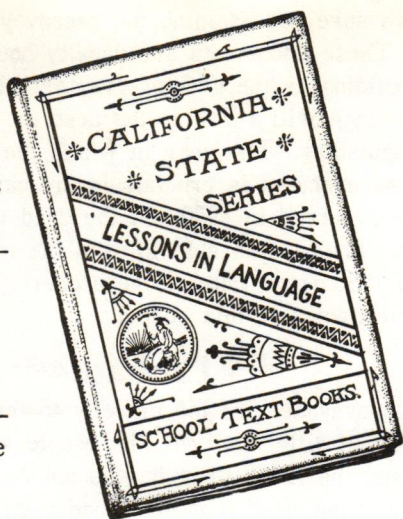
The term "order of sale" (or "decree of distribution") means that the owner died, and the house was sold following legal proceedings known as "probate." The documents contained in probate files frequently offer the house historian a fascinating detour and can provide useful clues for restoration. A will may indicate which family member inherited a lot, a house, or a piece of property. With luck, descendants can be found who might have old photographs. If the property was not willed, the administrator's records will show if the house was sold to pay expenses; often these records include correspondence or affidavits that afford insights into the personality and activities of the deceased. The file may also contain inventories of personal property drawn up when the estate was divided or sold. Lists of possessions and home furnishings can assist researchers in piecing together the life and circumstances of the property owner and his family.

In our case the probate office was located in the same building as the recorder's office. The file revealed that the house was sold in 1944 for the same price it was purchased for in 1896, a measure of the neglect it had endured. There was a list of the descendants of the deceased owner, one of whom had an unusual name (giving us hope that we could use local telephone books to track down descendants). The will was lost, unfortunately, and we could find no records that indicated the contents of the house.

Had the transaction occurred in the late 1800s or early 1900s, a city directory might have given us more information about the owners and their descendants. Directories at the time often listed the occupations of residents, along with their business and home addresses. Public libraries and historical societies maintain these directories.

Federal census information is available for years prior to 1880. Your nearest center that houses Federal archives may have questionnaires filled out by people who lived in your house.

Our probate file also explained the child's primer we found in our attic. Published in the 1890s, the book was inscribed with a girl's name. According to the file, the girl was the daughter of the deceased owner, and had the misfortune of spending much of her life in a mental institution.



❧ The widow ❧

With the name of the deceased owner, whom we will call "the widow," I returned to the grantee indexes to complete the chain of title back to Max J. Brandenstein. I was aided by a series of reconveyances. From 1930 to 1919, the widow refinanced the same debt four times, graphic evidence of financial distress (each refinancing, we later learned, coincided with some improvement to the house: a new water heater, the house's first wiring). Unhappily (for me), the reconveyances ended in 1919, and I was confronted again with the abysmal indexing of the earlier volumes. This time, rather than going blind examining handwritten columns, I took a calculated risk that resulted in an important short-cut.

The widow had the same last name as the individual to whom Brandenstein had originally sold the house. I made two assumptions: that these people were related, more specifically that they were husband and wife, and that the house had passed between them at a probate proceeding. This allowed me to use probate indexes rather than grantor-grantee indexes.

A probate index is organized like a telephone directory. By looking up the name of the person who has died, you can determine whether there was a probate proceeding on his or her estate. If such a proceeding took place, the index will list a court file number.

In my case, a five-minute search of the probate index produced the desired result: a 1904 probate proceeding indicating that title to the house passed from the gentleman who purchased from Max J. Brandenstein to his widow. I had completed the chain of title.

❧ The end of the chain ❧

We were lucky in knowing who built our house. But the index often does not state categorically that a certain owner built your house. To be on the safe side you should continue working back until you reach the first deed that describes your property accurately but

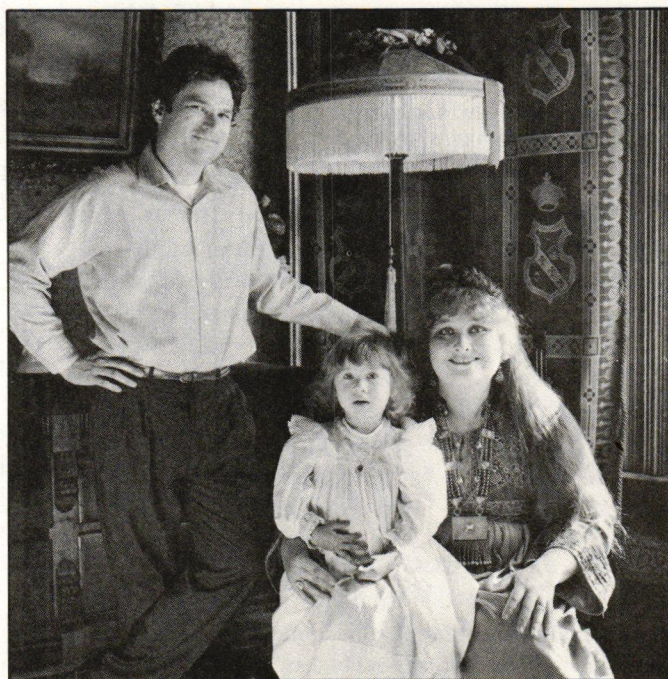
does not mention your house, or that conveys your property as part of a larger, building-less tract. Presumably, then, your house was built between the sale of the unbuilt land and the sale of the built-on land. Even so you should check the next deed back in the chain, to make sure no building is mentioned.

There may have been a succession of structures on the property, so make sure the building described matches yours, or that its construction date makes sense for your building.

❧ Living with history ❧

Title searching is not simply a technical exercise. The 1904 probate proceeding that completed our chain of title also rounded out the history of the house's first inhabitants, and changed our feelings about its four walls. For nearly 50 years one family conducted life in our home. When her husband died in 1904, the widow was left to cope with meagre financial resources and a daughter with severe emotional problems. Perhaps our widow wanted to keep the house exactly as her husband left it. Perhaps she steadfastly refused the entreaties of hucksters who would clothe the exterior with asbestos siding, put in lowered ceilings, or destroy her beautiful mahogany mantel.

Once you have immersed yourself in the history of your home, it takes on a new personality. Often the desire to remodel diminishes and the wish to restore increases; it becomes more and more difficult to make dramatic changes in a house that has meant so much to so many. I believe our house still bears the dignity of the widow's struggle. Somehow its history strengthens our desire to improve it.



The author with his wife Lisa Haderlie Baker (whose drawings illustrate this article) and daughter.

Epilogue

Over the years we continued to learn about the house. We found the widow's obituary in a local newspaper, and it mentioned the cemetery where she was buried. Visiting that cemetery, we found records indicating how the deceased buried there had been related -- meaning we knew more possible names of descendants. After checking the state death registry (available at the county seat) and probate records that named heirs,

we tracked down living descendants. Ironically, the poor widow's relatives were, and their descendants still are, among San Francisco's richest families.

We were excited to learn that one of the widow's relatives had been a photography buff who took quantities of pictures. At least one, we were sure, was of our house. Unfortunately, his heirs told us, "We threw them all away." Your experience with living descendants may prove more fruitful.

OTHER SOURCES

by Deborah Romano

The following sources may help you learn more about your vintage house.

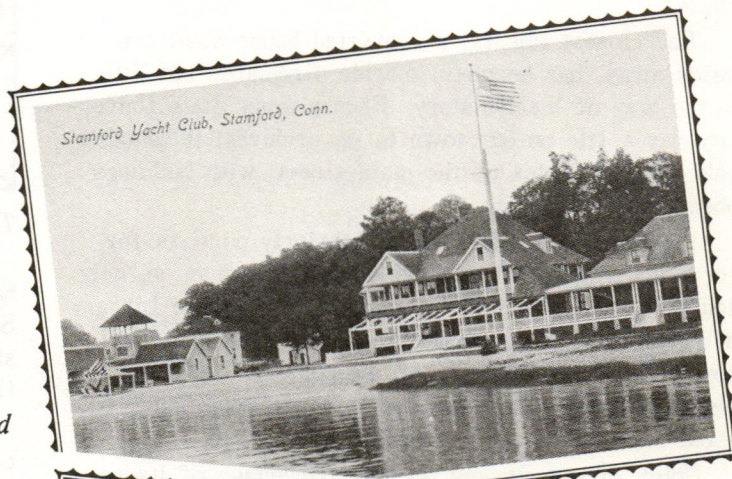
✧ *Oral history simply means talking to anyone who may know anything about your house: former owners, their descendants and friends; neighbors; an elderly local builder; anyone who's watched the town or neighborhood change. Local telephone directories may list owners or relatives who live nearby. With luck you might find photos (see hints below), or at least stories: how rooms were used, what kinds of additions and improvements were made, how the house was painted or decorated, or how holidays were celebrated, and the like.*

✧ *Photographs are, of course, the most accurate record of how your house looked: how furniture was arranged and walls decorated; how families dressed, planted their gardens. Look for background clues: office signs that would indicate tenants, or any outbuildings behind the house. Along with the "oral history" sources cited above, local libraries and historical societies are your most likely sources.*

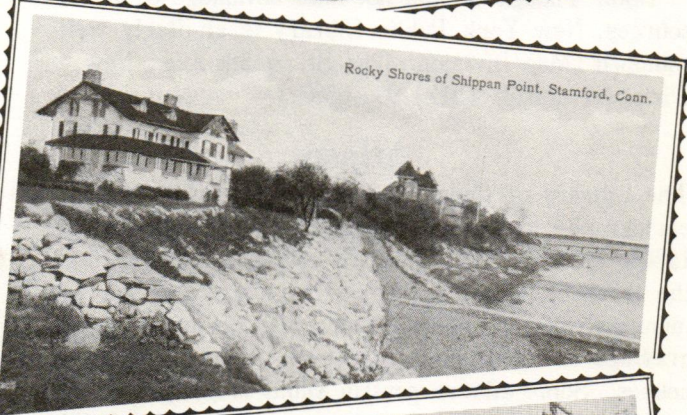
✧ *Paintings, watercolors, sketches, prints, notecards, stationery, and postcards also give information. Beware, though, of artistic liberties. Check your local library, museum, historical society, and antique shops.*

✧ *Periodicals are likely resources too. If your original owners were prominent citizens, detailed obituaries may have appeared when they died. Special issues of local papers, used to promote a town, often featured street scenes, or photos of citizens and their homes. If your house is elaborate, an architect may have designed it, in which case an architectural magazine may have written about it. These publications are available at research libraries, including New York Public Library and the Library of Congress; check issues from the year or two around your house's construction date. And don't forget that yours may be a pattern-book or mail-order house (see OHJ December 1980).*

✧ *Business records, if you know the name of the architect or contractor, can sometimes be tracked down. Local historical societies or libraries may have these papers; for more recent buildings, the actual firms may still be in business. Remember that, unlike law firms, architecture firms change their names when partners die; check old telephone directories to see if you can trace the firm's evolution.*



Stamford Yacht Club, Stamford, Conn.



Rocky Shores of Shippan Point, Stamford, Conn.



OAK STREET, Glenbrook, Conn.

Look for postcards like these in local antique shops.

by Kathleen Wolsiffer

The house that launched our research efforts is a 14-room mansard, built from handmade brick around 1860. Our town, Centre Hall, is just a dot on the map in central Pennsylvania, and is often described as "equally inaccessible from all directions." It is not only off the beaten track geographically, but it also lacks conventional research sources. For our house, real-estate records are incomplete; the earliest deed is dated 1878, at least 18 years after our house was built. We could not discover the name of the first owner, much less find any old pictures of the house.

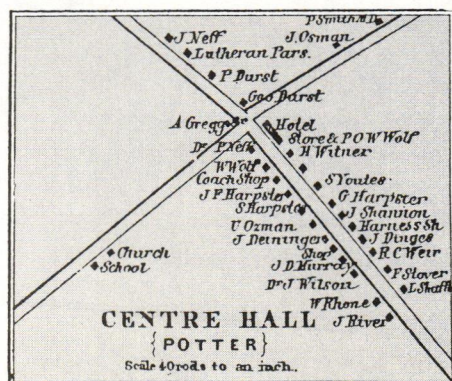
The closest library, a converted house some ten miles away, has beautiful marble fireplaces but little in the way of local history. Pennsylvania State University has a file on our town in its archives; it contains only c.-1920 photos of the main street, with buildings obscured by leafy trees.

We were ready to abandon scholarly pursuits for good, when help sprang from what seemed an unlikely source: the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. And if Centre Hall, population 350 at the turn of the century, can be researched there, think how much information you'll find about more substantial towns.

Note: Though we did not take advantage of its resources, New York Public Library is similarly well equipped (Map Division, 42nd St. & 5th Ave., New York, NY 10018. (212) 930-0587.)

Atlases

The Library of Congress boasts the world's largest cartographic collection. Among its 38,000 atlases are 1500 atlases of U.S. counties and states, dating from the 1870s. Many of them, particularly for larger communities, are profusely illustrated with prints and engravings of local points of interest -- such as elegant houses. Some atlases contain small maps of towns within a county; main streets are labelled, and buildings, shown in silhouette, are marked with the owner's name. Our town merited only a single, small, inset

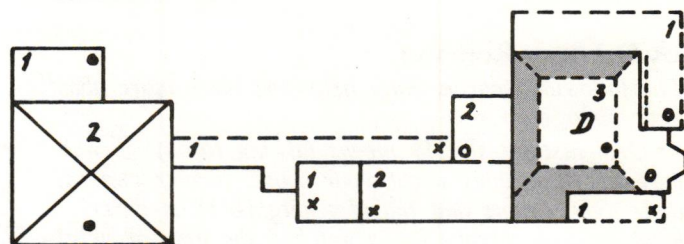


Centre Hall appeared on a county map in 1861.

map (which told us the name of the original owner of our house), but wall maps are devoted to larger towns.

Fire-insurance maps

Fire-insurance maps, also known as Sanborn maps (the Sanborn Map Co. has been producing them since 1876), can be an information gold mine. The Map Division's 600,000 large-scale fire-insurance maps, dating



The author's house, on a 1906 fire-insurance map.

back to 1884, cover more than 10,000 U.S. towns. Some cities are contained in one volume or on a single sheet, while New York City requires 80 volumes. (Local libraries also sometimes carry these maps.)

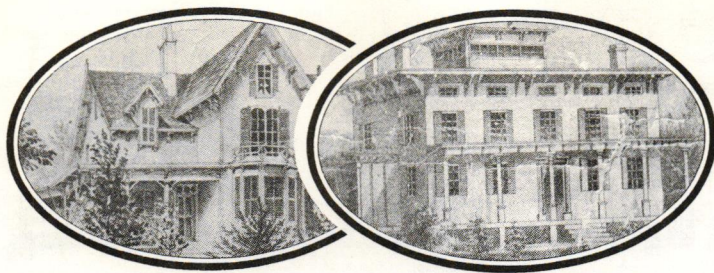
The maps were used, beginning in the mid-19th century, to provide underwriters with detailed fire-risk information. They show a property's location, function, street address, dimensions, construction and roofing material, number of storeys, porches and other exterior features, and location of outbuildings and wells. The maps use a simple color code to indicate construction materials, and symbols to represent number of storeys, porches, and the like.

The map for our property was dated 1906. A red tint on the main wing of the house indicated brick construction. Some other things we learned: A second side porch once existed; the rear addition to the main structure dates from at least 1906; three walls of the addition, now covered with synthetic siding, were originally wood (which saved us the trouble of peeking under the siding -- we'll rip it all off at once, without expecting brick underneath).

Panoramic maps

The Library of Congress has approximately 1500 panoramic maps. Popular during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, they were usually rendered from the perspective of someone looking down at the town from a hilltop.

Chambers of commerce and other civic groups often commissioned these maps, and they appealed greatly to house-proud Victorians. Communities depicted were always thriving: Smoke pours from factory smokestacks, people throng the streets, trains chug merrily



Small sketches of local landmarks appear in margins of old wall maps.

on tracks. Sometimes the artist would draw two trains running on the same track, one on each side of town -- blissfully unaware of impending collision.

This kind of artistic license illustrates one of the dangers of relying exclusively on panoramic maps. While they can aid in locating and dating buildings, their creators occasionally exaggerated, turning a single-storey porch into a double decker, or adding bountiful hedges and gardens to a barren lot. In other cases, maps were drawn so painstakingly and accurately that windowpanes and porch-railing spindles can be counted. Whenever possible, panoramic-map information should be double-checked with other sources.

Artists specializing in this genre were T. M. Fowler (Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, New Jersey), Oakley H. Baily (New York, New Jersey), and Lucien Burleigh (New York, New England).



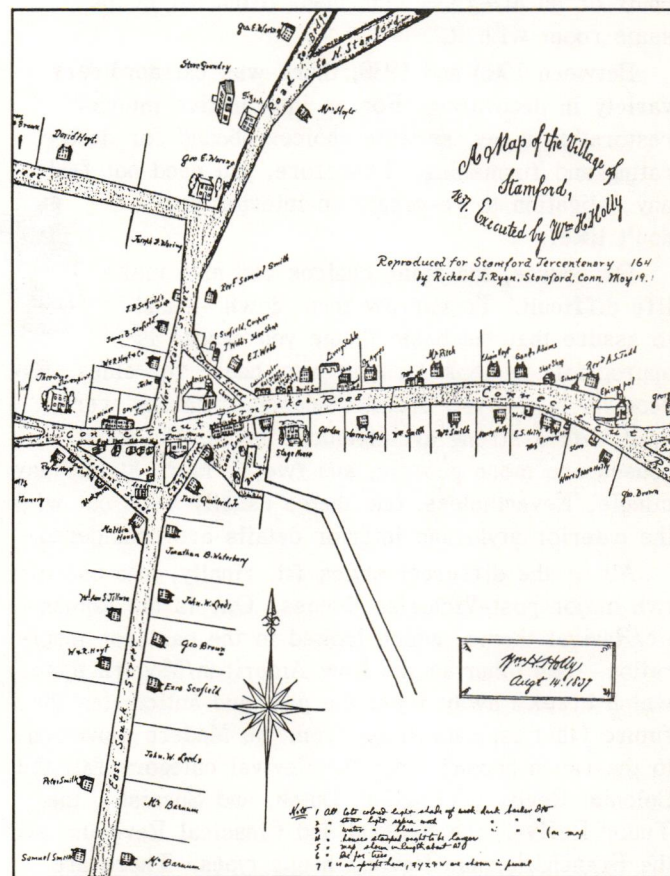
Panoramic views were made of many larger towns, such as Stamford, Conn. This one is dated 1883.

Geography and map division

The division is open to the public, and all materials are available for viewing. Upon written request, the Library will provide a list of maps of your area and itemize charges for reproduction and postage. Before contacting the Library, you should:

1. Check your local library's map holdings, particularly if you live in an area that panoramic map-makers often portrayed.
2. Ask if your local library has these guides: *A List of Geographical Atlases in the Library of Congress*, U.S. Library of Congress Map Division (8 vol.); *United States Atlases: A List of National, State, County, and Regional Atlases in the Library of Congress*, U.S. Library of Congress Reference, compiled by Clara Egli LeGear (2 vol.).

When you are ready to contact the Map Division, make your request as concise as possible. State either the exact map you want if you have located it in the two guides listed above, or give the area of which you would like a map: Include your complete address, lot number, or other information that may help identify the property (a list or sketched map of nearby landmarks and streets, a plan of the building, even a photo). Indicate what kind of map you would prefer. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, DC 20540. (202) 287-6277.



An 1837 hand-drawn map, also of Stamford, Conn., gives locations of residences and owners' names.

POST-VICTORIAN



I · N · T · E · R · I · O · R · S

"Post-Victorian" denotes a time, not a style, and as such covers many decorating approaches. Here, illustrated with period photographs, is an introduction to the major themes. (See OHJ, Jan/Feb 1986, for a review of post-Victorian house styles.)

by Patricia Poore and Eve Kahn

What does a post-Victorian interior look like? Rustic asceticism is post-Victorian, but so is a cluttered mantelshelf. Dark-stained oak panels capped with a plate rail is post-Victorian, but so is a low wainscot painted in white enamel. The spinning wheel was probably more in evidence in 1910 than it was in colonial days -- yet a Morris chair or an art-glass lampshade often sat in the same room with it.

Between 1900 and 1930, there was extraordinary variety in decorating. For an interpretive interior restoration today, suitable choices abound for decorating and furnishing. Therefore, you need not feel any obligation to re-create an interior you don't like.

Of course, too many choices can also make life difficult. To narrow them down -- and to assure that the basic theme you choose is appropriate -- look first to your house for clues. Expensive, high-style, architect-designed houses were built with a strong architectural theme. But most houses are more generic, and two or more styles may mingle. Nevertheless, one theme usually wins out when the exterior style and interior details are considered.

All of the different styles fit, finally, into one of two major post-Victorian themes. One is the Romantic/Revival theme, which looked to the past for inspiration. The other is the New American/Modern theme, which breaks away from the past and anticipates the future (that is, everything from the Modern movement to the ranch house). Into the Revival category fall the Colonial Revivals (English, Dutch, and Spanish), the Tudor Revival, the Federal and Classical Revivals, and the French/Norman Revival house types. There are many, many variations among these -- decorating styles in this broad category run the gamut from restrained

classical elegance to ye-olde quaintness.

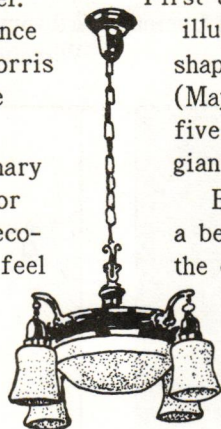
Into the second category fall Prairie School houses and their imitators, Craftsman-influenced architecture, and the ultimate Bungalows of Southern California, as well as the adaptable American Foursquare and millions of 1920s builders' bungalows. This "new architecture" popularized, among other things, the open plan, built-in furniture, the attached garage, and Mission furnishings.

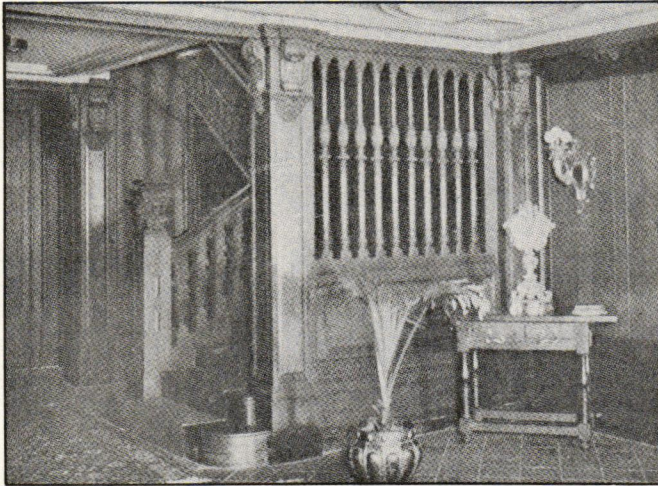
But back to determining your house's overall theme. First take a look at the outside. Compare it with illustrations in an architectural style guide. Overall shape will provide a clue. Is it low and broad? (Maybe it's a bungalow.) Is it symmetrical, with five windows across the front? (Maybe it's Georgian Revival.)

Exterior and interior *details*, however, may give a better starting point for your interior theme. Is the doorway pedimented or plain? Is the woodwork raised-panel or battened? Are the arches Moorish or Tudor? Don't be frustrated by eclecticism. In builders' houses of this period, details such as staircases and hardware were ordered out of catalogs, for reasons that had more to do with price, current fad, or the prospective owner's (possibly uneducated) taste than with aesthetic consistency. For that reason, you'll probably find a mixture of elements -- Chicago windows with Colonial Revival mantels. Take all the details into consideration and find an "average": What style camp wins out?

The photos on these pages are the beginning of an education in post-Victorian interiors. Despite innumerable variations and eccentricities, themes do emerge. Seeing them will help you read the clues built into your house, and from there you can begin to narrow the choices. Remember: Then, as now, people decorated with what they liked, what they could afford, and what they inherited. Few interiors are style-consistent.

Opposite: These staircases appeared on a single page in a building and decorating book of the period. Together they illustrate the many and varied faces of the post-Victorian interior.

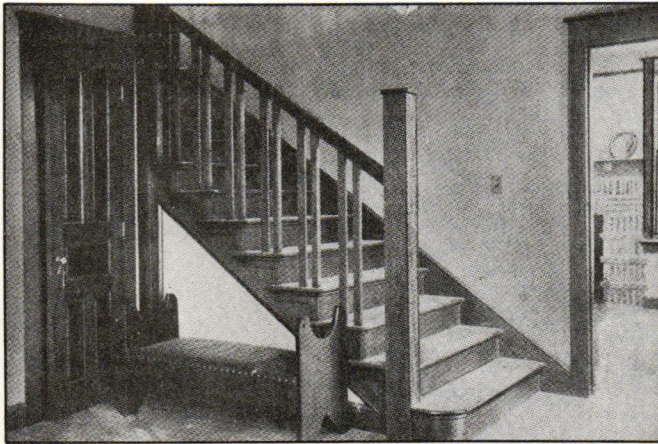




Here is a curious screen effect that serves to lend an air of greater privacy to the upper floor



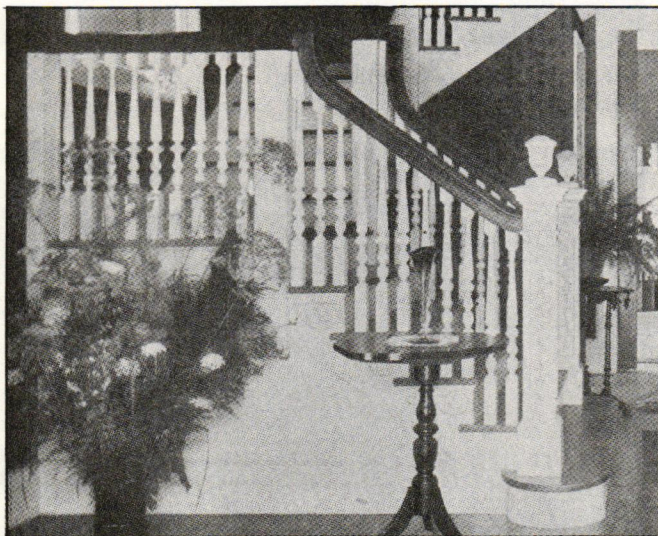
The better forms of Colonial stairways have the balustrade and hand-rail end at the bottom in a volute



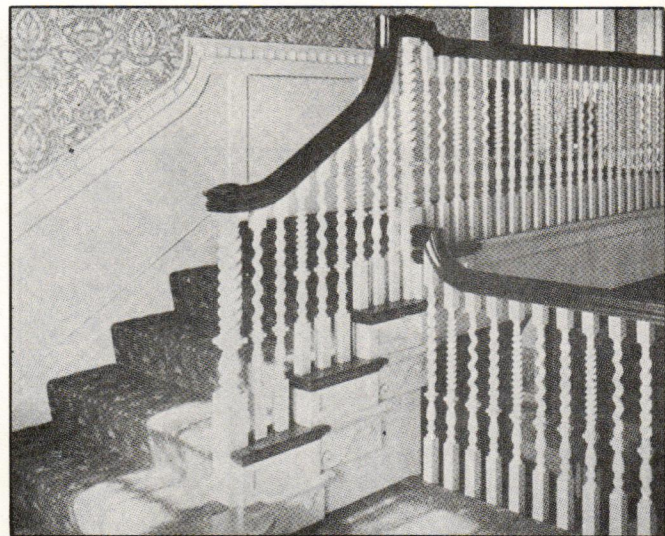
A very simple and inexpensive form of stairway that would be well suited to a house of the Craftsman type. W. D. Brincklé, architect



There is nothing that gives such a broad spacious appearance as a stairway separating at the landing and continuing up on both sides

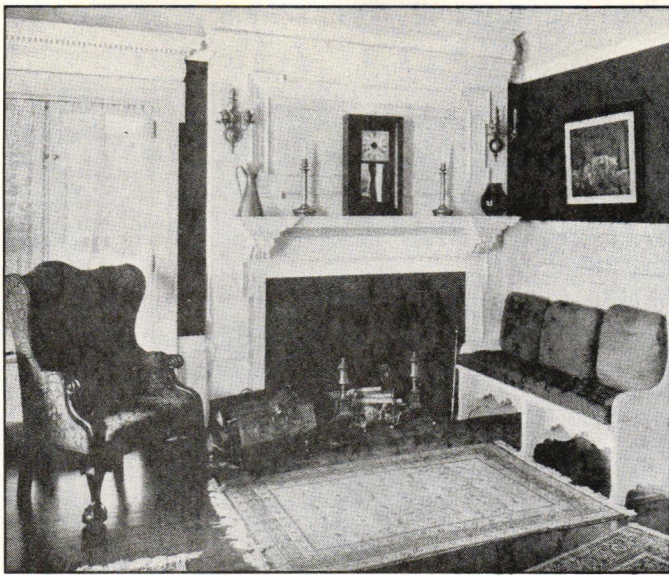


It usually results in a better appearance and requires less space to change the direction once or twice rather than having a straight run

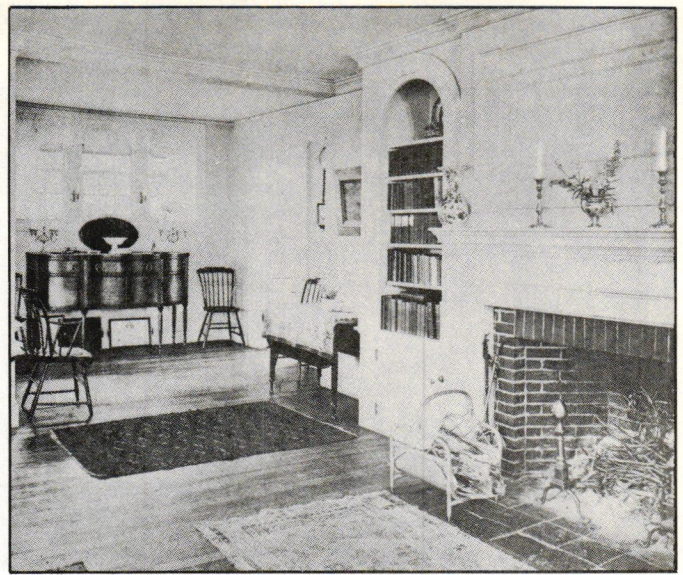


In the more elaborate Colonial stairways the balustrade alternates in three patterns. The hand-rail should be of mahogany

SIX TYPES OF AMERICAN STAIRWAYS



The fireplace settle in this colonial room proves that built-in furniture and nooks were not just for the Craftsman home.



Described as "a Colonial room in spirit and in detail, although the plan itself lacks the symmetry of the Colonial plan."

Look at the woodwork in a post-Victorian house for the greatest clues to its style. On this page, note the dentilled mouldings, classical round arches, raised-panel wainscot and doors in the Colonial Revival examples; note the beams and Elizabethan panels in the Tudor examples. Colonial and Federal woodwork was painted during this period, usually white, ivory, or a pale grey. Of particular interest is the division of walls by battens and a plate rail in the dining room below: It resembles the wall treatment in Craftsman interiors, as the Tudor Revival and Craftsman styles each have medieval antecedents.

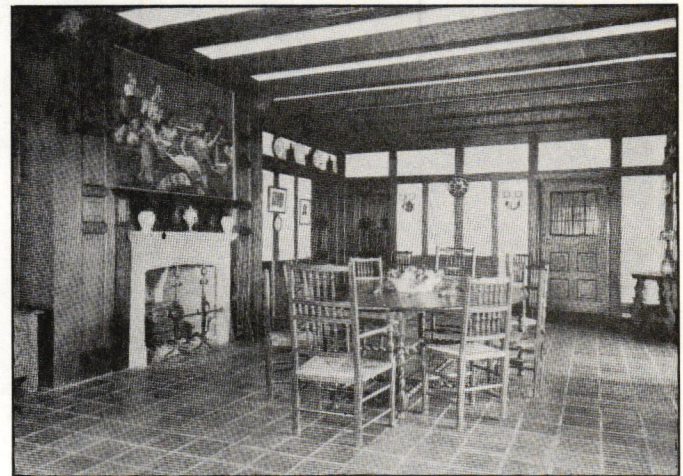
Regardless of outward signs of style, post-Victorian interiors share some common elements. Trowelled plaster walls with varying finish textures were used in many houses, especially English and Spanish Revival. Nearly all houses shared simple window treatments and those ubiquitous scatter rugs.



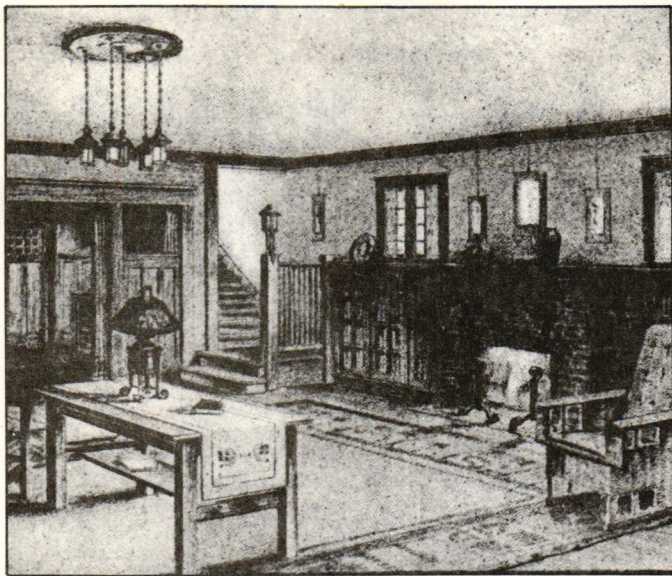
A restrained Colonial Revival dining room features scenic wallpaper, a striking alternative to plain walls and white woodwork.



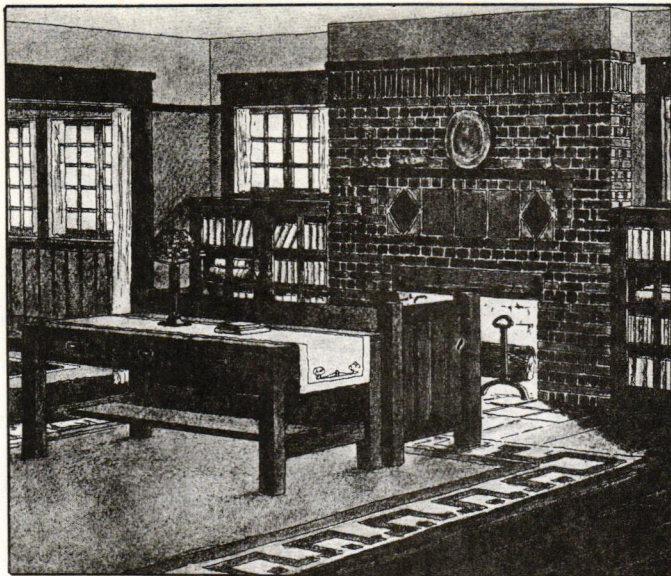
A living room in the English mode: Dark oak woodwork contrasts with the light value of trowel-finished plaster.



"In the dining room, the oak-beamed ceiling keeps in countenance the English limestone fireplace . . . in the Elizabethan style."



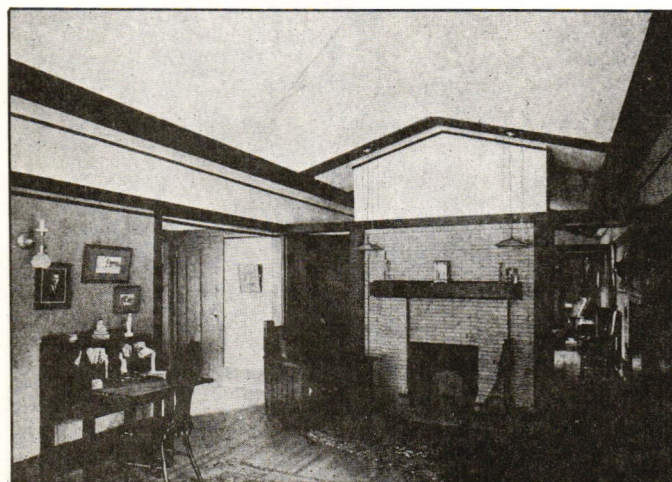
Craftsman magazine, February 1907: Note austere woodwork, Mission furniture, and the applied table scarf.



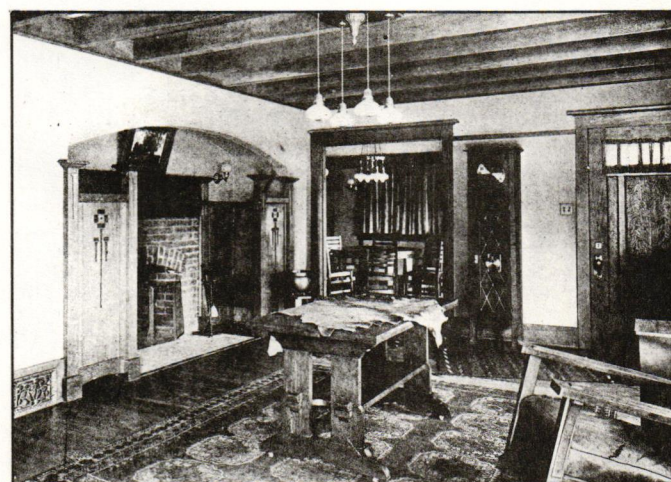
The Craftsman, May 1909: Built-in bookshelves and furniture placement are typical of Craftsman interiors.



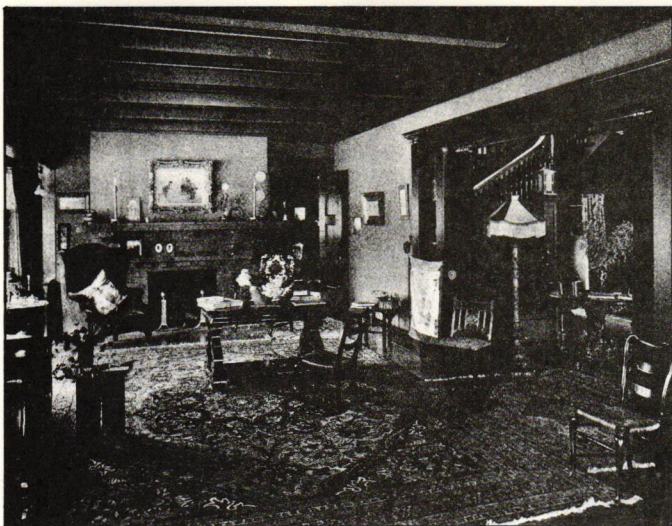
More than a decade after the two illustrations pictured above were published, this interior appeared in a book which featured a tasteful but eclectic mix of interior examples. Its style source is plain.



A Prairie interior, c. 1913, by Tallmadge & Watson: more high-style than Craftsman rooms, but it shares their vocabulary.



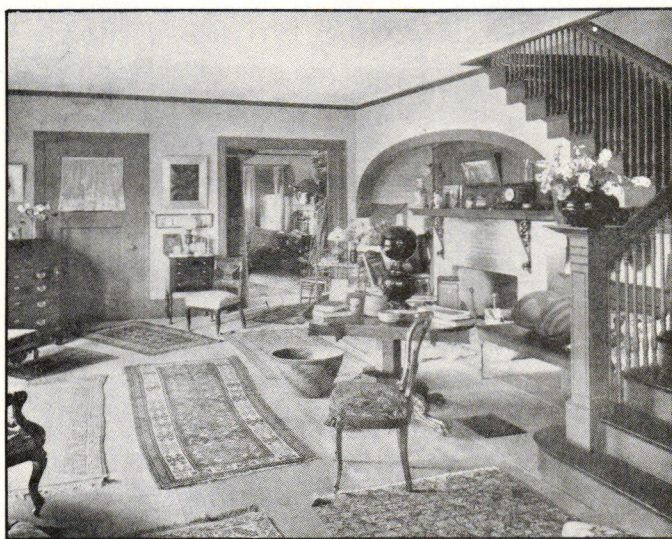
One of the living rooms in the St. Francis group of bungalows in Pasadena (published in *Bungalows*, 1910, by Henry H. Saylor).



The living room in a Wilson Bungalow, planbook copyright 1910 by Henry L. Wilson of Chicago and Los Angeles.

Advice said "simplify," do away with the drapery and knick-knacks and any other reminders of Victorian clutter. Many of Stickley's interiors, for example, were downright austere. But despite the model examples in the books, most interiors became eclectic as soon as the family moved in. The photos on this page show two living rooms eleven years apart. Both are somewhat haphazardly furnished, the later one in an almost Victorian manner.

The new domestic architecture changed interiors for good. (Remember that the ranch house is the bungalow's descendant.) In decorating motifs, however, the Colonial Revival has long held sway, growing strong during this post-Victorian period. (Some decorating books of the late '20s and '30s show how to turn your "gloomy interior of the Mission type" into a "cheery Colonial room.") In a restoration today, forget fads: Clues from the house itself are the best advice.



"... a number of small Orientals are sometimes more appropriate, and incidentally ... cheaper," read the original caption.

POST-VICTORIAN INTERIORS COUNTERPOINT

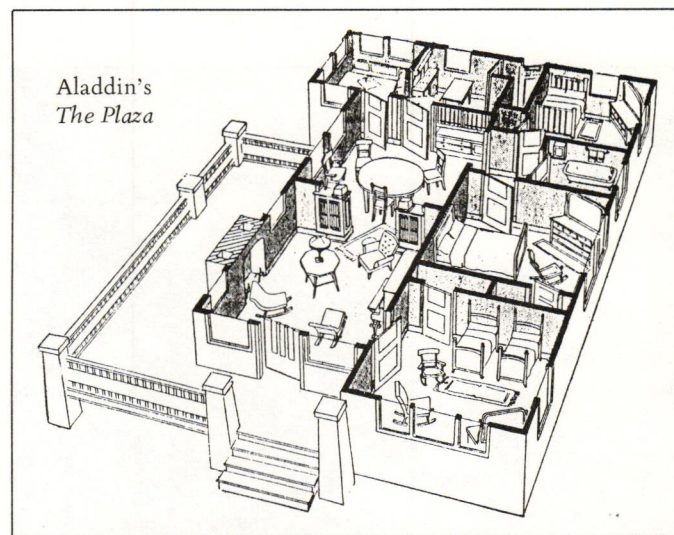
"Even if my opinions are neither correct nor well received, this piece will get folks to look at the stuff and think for themselves."

John Crosby Freeman

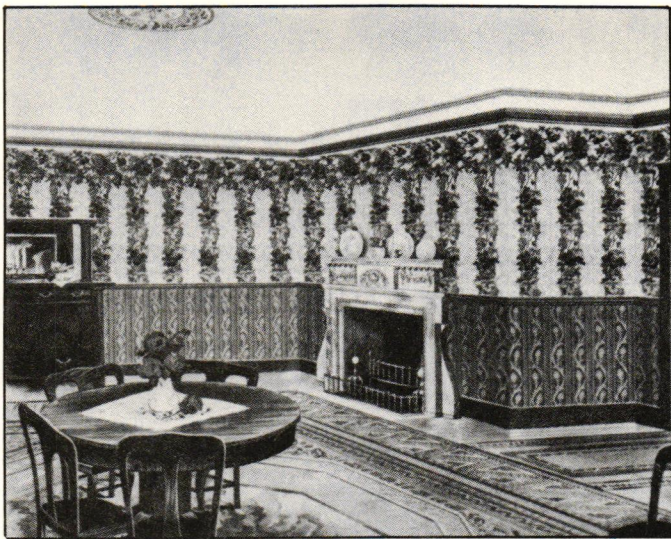
Post-Victorian interiors often give me the shudders, especially those of the 1920s. As a Winterthur-trained historian of American decorative arts, I react (badly) to early-20th-century commercial versions of the period styles by name-calling: Pseudo-Tudo, Frizzie-Lizzie, Phooey-Louis, and Phony-Colonie. Even the "modern" style of the period -- Mission, Arts & Crafts, Art Nouveau, and Prairie School -- were commonly misunderstood.

If you have ever wondered "Oh Victoriana! Where is thy sting?" the answer can be found in the commercial decorating catalogs and common interiors of the early-20th century. The Bosch Catalog, for one, is gruesome.

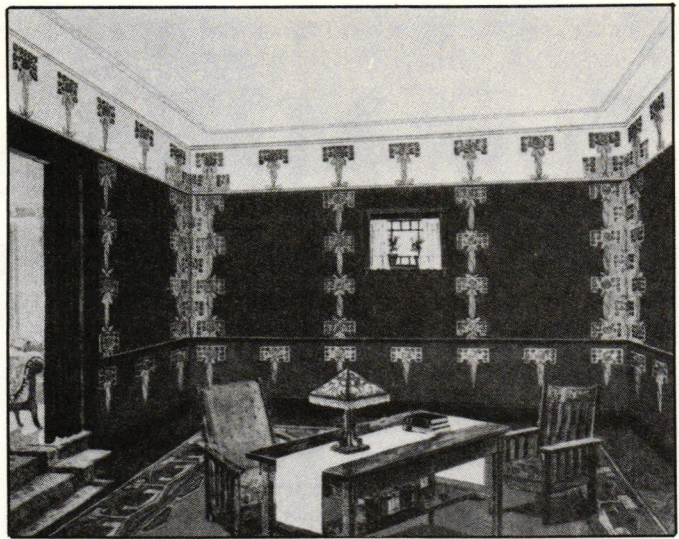
In 1909 the Henry Bosch Company published *Suggestions For Modern Home Decoration*, a pretentious color catalog of wallpaper treatments. Victorian panel and trellis effects survive in it; so does the Late Victorian



The furniture is at war with the interior: Corners are to be bridged, walls ignored, and straight paths bent.



"The crown and wall-hanging are well-nigh perfect," says Bosch in 1909. Fruit is blood-red and purple on green; dado, brown and lavender; rug, a bright grass-green.



Bosch calls this plate "For General Use." The dado is muddy red, the wall muddy green – fugitives from a Late Victorian exterior!

wall division of frieze, wall, and dado. But Bosch fails to understand that good Arts & Crafts or Art Nouveau patterns are energized by the invisible but pressurized fields they occupy -- like the contents of an aerosol can. Bosch manages to release the pressure and scatter fat patterns all over the wall. Pattern should sing on a wall, but Bosch's aria is more like the Anvil Chorus.

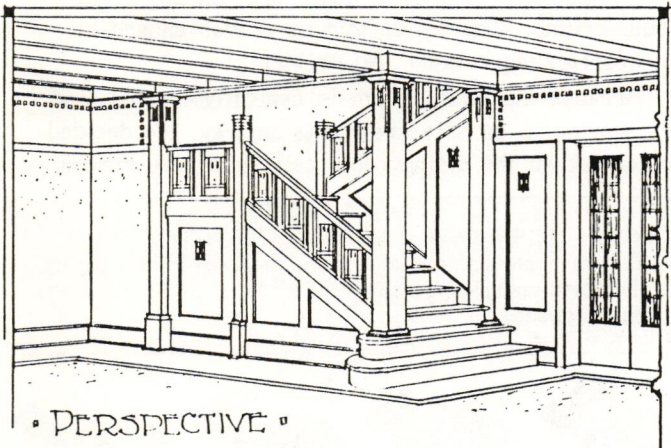
Above right, mundane Mission furniture antagonizes the room's geometry. A sort-of Art Nouveau motif struggles to carry a Victorian trellis effect through the dado. A double dose of decoration in the corners makes the room look more like a steamer trunk!

Aladdin Homes was the leading supplier of prefabricated housing in the 1910s and '20s. Interiors never got more common than those shown in their catalogs. All but the cheapest had the period's symbol of culture: an upright piano. It and other case-pieces, such as

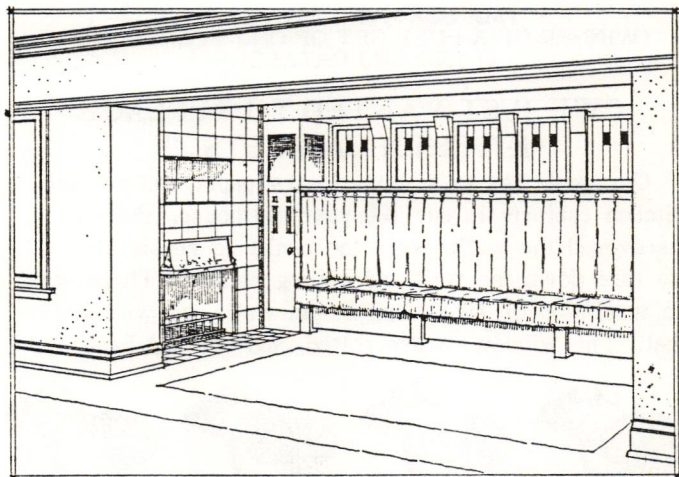
sideboards and dressing tables, were either chucked into corners or thrown across them. The "scatter rug" was used with a vengeance, usually to mark the diagonal path from one door to the next.

A sense of relief and surprise comes with the discovery of the interior designs of William Radford, a Chicago-based publisher and mail-order-house architect. The relief is the stylishness of their Prairie School designs. The surprise is that they appear in the 1920s. But architectural patternbooks were always a decade or two behind high-style fashion.

If you have a post-Victorian house and you're depressed by what you see in the interior-decorating books and magazines of the period, here is evidence that Prairie School interiors were successfully popularized in the 1920s. If you find something you like which is ten or twenty years earlier than your house, go ahead and use it.



"A Stairway" (1925) by William Radford is an exercise in monumentality for the 9-ft. ceiling. Ornaments are simple.



Radford's "A Living Room Alcove" (1921): Full-size tiles face the fireplace, decorated by a bronze hood and recessed panel.



THE MUSHROOM FACTOR*

RESPONSE FROM OHJ READERS CONFIRMS OUR WORST FEARS:
TMF IS A UNIVERSAL PHENOMENON!

— by Clem Labine —

You can't see it. You can't hear it. You can't touch it. But it is lurking in your old house nonetheless: The Mushroom Factor. If you are starting any repair or restoration project, you'll probably wind up in the clutches of TMF.

The first warnings about TMF were carried in our October 1986 issue. At that time, we identified and described the occurrence, and hypothesized that The Mushroom Factor was a widespread phenomenon. Letters and calls from readers have provided further documentation to the evidence already accumulated by the OHJ staff. So we are ready to declare The Mushroom Factor a universal law, with as much validity for old-house owners as Murphy's Law. In fact, one of our readers has already discovered TMF's First Corollary (read about it below).

Unfortunately, there is no known defense against The Mushroom Factor. Only symptomatic relief is possible. The best hope for retaining sanity when in the grips of TMF is clinging to the knowledge that you are not alone in your struggle. Countless others have been similarly entrapped -- and survived. But by all means, take prudent precautions: Keep away from the tops of tall buildings, and avoid sharp objects.

Proving that it is possible to encounter The Mushroom Factor and survive, here are the winners of OHJ's first TMF Awards:

TMF SURVIVAL AWARD #1
(WINNER OF A FULL SET OF OHJ YEARBOOKS
& 1987 OHJ CATALOG)

"WE JUST WANTED TO REPLACE KITCHEN CABINETS..."

Our goal was to scrape old wallpaper and replace kitchen cabinets in our 100-year-old house. But we discovered the walls were too punky to repair. So we tore down the wall and ceiling plaster. There was no insulation or fire stops in the walls, so we did that. The windows were rotted, and one had been

shortened. We replaced two windows and enlarged the third. At this point, we decided to install a central vacuum system (which later proved invaluable!).

The bathroom directly above the kitchen (our one and only) was becoming too small for our family of five. We thought: "Now's the time to rearrange the bath since the walls in the kitchen are torn out." When our plumber started moving the old fixtures, he almost fell through the rotted floor. A new floor got added to the "must do" list.

We also had to tear down the bathroom plaster, since the walls were in sad shape. Since the bathroom now needed new floor, walls, ceiling, window, insulation, etc., we knew it would be a long project because we were doing all the work except plumbing and wiring. So we decided now would be the ideal time to put a much-needed second bath on the third floor, since all the walls were torn up.

Our small kitchen job turned out to be to be a \$13,000 project that's still going on after nine months. This mushroom sure has grown!

DAN & SUE LISTERMANN
NORWOOD, OHIO

TMF SURVIVAL AWARD #2
(WINNER OF A 3-YEAR RENEWAL
& 1987 OHJ CATALOG)

"IT WAS JUST A WATER SPOT..."

We started out with a water spot on the dining room ceiling. The seller told us it was caused by an overflowing bathtub. No problem.

Because the dining room is centrally located, and we wanted to do some rewiring anyway, we decided to tear down the dining room ceiling to give access

***THE MUSHROOM FACTOR (TMF):** The mysterious universal force that causes any old-house project to expand endlessly until the limits of time and budget are exceeded.





to other spaces in the house. In the meantime...

...the bathroom plumbing seemed sound enough -- as long as you only took a bath. But a shower drenched anyone in the dining room! Not wanting to tear out tile around the tub, we opened a wall in the hallway to get access to the shower pipes. Couldn't find the problem. We checked the tiles more carefully, thinking regrouting might be in order. Found loose tiles instead.

Cement in hand, we pulled the loose tiles to reset them. Nothing to glue them to! Rotted wall. Searching for the moisture source, we pulled out the entire wall and part of the ceiling. Aha! A leak in the roof. Much money and weeks later, we had a new roof.

Since we couldn't possibly match the tile that was left, the rest of the tiles came out, along with the



"Where's the bathroom?" Isn't it obvious?

toilet, sink, and our sanity. In one corner, we uncovered a plumbing stack that had holes in some places, and was plugged in others. Kitchen wall had to come out to get that one.

In the opposite corner was flimsy gypsumboard covering a chimney that was hooked up to nothing. Logical step: remove the chimney and open the space for a closet.

At this point, all lath and plaster was down, toilet gone, window taken out (wasn't original and was in bad shape) ... and the summer parade of out-of-town visitors starts. "Where's the bathroom?" they want to know. We smile weakly and explain that it was where that big open space is. They mumble something about premature senility.

After moving the radiator (which was left standing in the middle of nowhere after the chimney was removed) we started framing and rebuilding. But only after doing some siding repair where the window was taken out.

Only now do we fully appreciate the wisdom of simply putting a can under a leak!

DAN & BEV BIRK
STILLWATER, MINN.

**SPECIAL TMF RESEARCH AWARD
(WINNER OF A 2-YEAR RENEWAL
& 1987 OHJ CATALOG)**

"THE FIRST COROLLARY"

My husband and I, owners of a 1900s poor man's Craftsman bungalow, were more than slightly interested in your discovery of The Mushroom Factor. Be assured that it is indeed a universal law.

We believe we have discovered the First Corollary of The Mushroom Factor: For any old-house project (X), there will be another project (N), which must be completed BEFORE project X can be started. And there will be another project (N-1) which must be completed before project N can be started. And so on to project N-n, where *n* is an extremely large number.

Alert readers will have noticed that while The Mushroom Factor governs the infinite progress of old-house projects, the First Corollary describes their infinite regress.

A typical series goes something like this: You should paint the ceiling, but before you do that you should repair the plaster. But it makes no sense to





fix the plaster until you repair the plumbing in the bathroom above. Yet before you deal with the plumbing, you really ought to buy and install the antique tub you've always wanted. But before installing the antique tub, you ought to regrout all the bathroom tile. And before doing that, you should....

MARY MULHERN
ARDMORE, PA.

TMF SURVIVAL HONORABLE MENTION
(WINNER OF 1987 OHJ CATALOG)

"THE MUSHROOMING DRIVEWAY"

After all the work of restoring our 14-room Italianate, we weren't expecting much excitement when we set out to repave our driveway and garage floor. Then we encountered The Mushroom Factor!

The first contractor began in July. He managed to break up most of the garage floor in 3 weeks -- with a sledgehammer. His power equipment, which we never saw, "kept breaking down." Our house has taught us patience, but this was ridiculous!

Steve, our second contractor, came with proper power equipment and cleared away all the old concrete. But under the debris he found soil so spongy it was totally unsuitable to support new concrete.

Many days later, Steve had dug down 5 ft. to solid subsoil. But now, the garage began to tilt; three of the walls had proper footings, but the front wall had been resting on the old concrete pad. Steve jacked up the garage and built proper footings.

Now we were considerably over budget, but things were moving along. Gravel was being poured into the huge driveway trench -- when the concrete truck arrived. There wasn't time to place all the gravel in the garage. Concrete trucks wait for no man, so the garage floor, although level, has 15 in. of concrete at the front, and the normal 4 in. at the back. It looks fine ... but I don't want to be around if it has to be torn out!

Then we discovered that construction activity had blocked the main house drain on its way to the sewer. In his search for the broken drain tile, Steve broke out the back porch stairs and dug up the newly laid gravel and lots of additional ground. He finally found the broken section, and replaced it. As I write this letter, Steve is now filling and tamping all the new holes he made.

All that remains is to rebuild the back porch, haul



We really dug ourselves into a hole this time.

away debris from the new holes, and -- finally -- pave the driveway. Unless The Mushroom Factor has more surprises in store!

JOETTE DENOFRIO
WEST DUNDEE, ILL.

There were many more examples from OHJ readers ... enough to provide proof that The Mushroom Factor is a universal phenomenon.

Those of us on the OHJ Research Team have mixed emotions about our ground-breaking discovery. We're proud, of course, to have helped push back the frontiers of science. But we're equally dismayed to learn that we all have TMF hanging over our heads ... like Damocles at restoration's banqueting table, with the TMF sword suspended by a single hair.

Knowledge is power. So at least we can advance into the restoration battle with a clearer idea of what lies in wait. Just remember: Inside every little problem lurks a big problem waiting to escape! 

Special thanks to all of you who wrote to tell about encounters with TMF. Your TMF Survival Certificate has already been sent.

And if any of you come across a cure or antidote for TMF, be sure to write to us c/o The Mushroom Factor Research Team at The Old-House Journal.



GOOD BOOKS

OHJ editors bring you books of interest which rarely show up in the chainstores.

The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture, 1890-1930, by Alan Gowans. MIT Press; available through Old-House Journal Bookshop, 69A 7th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217. (718) 636-4514. \$37.50 ppd.

This new book carries the same title as OHJ's ground-breaking article back in January 1982. In fact, the book was originally commissioned and its author selected by The Old-House Journal. Alan Gowans's task was immense, as virtually no previous scholarship existed on this period of American domestic architecture. He has written an excellent, readable book about the house styles and the social forces that created the period's building boom.

The book is illustrated with both period photos and prints, and photos of contemporary buildings. The author discusses each style, in depth, from its beginnings through its post-Victorian flowering. The 18th- and 19th-century models for each revived style are presented, and Professor Gowans also discusses how styles were interpreted in different parts of the U.S.

The American Historical Supply Catalogue 2: Newly Manufactured Items from 1900-1945, by Alan Wellikoff. Schocken Books, 62 Cooper Sq., New York, NY 10003. (212) 475-4900. \$18.95 ppd.

For you post-Victorian restorers contemplating the finishing touches -- you know: statuary, sheet music, and underclothes of the period -- here's a book full of illustrations, with today's manufacturers' names and addresses provided. Alan Wellikoff has compiled information about all kinds of things originally made in the first half of this century and still being produced, from vacuum cleaners and staplers to piano rolls, high-top shoes, Frank Lloyd Wright furniture, diner mugs, Art Deco jewelry, Arts and Crafts

china, even White Castle hamburgers. (Remember enamelled breadboxes? They're here....)

You can tell that Alan Wellikoff had a great time putting together this book.

Chicago Ceramics and Glass: An Illustrated History from 1871 to 1933, by Sharon Darling. University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. (312) 962-7700. \$25 ppd.

This illustrated volume -- not a new book -- is a sleeper from the Chicago Historical Society. It features both decorative glass (china, art pottery, engraved and art glass) and architectural glass (stained and ornamental, including lampshades and glass mosaics), and architectural terra cotta.

Special attention is given to the prolific and talented artisans of the period, their favorite methods and materials, and the evolution of their art from the late Victorian era through the Machine Age.

Ornament from the Industrial Revolution to Today, by Stuart Durant. The Overlook Press, RR 1, Box 496, Woodstock, NY 12498. \$62.40 ppd.

This is a hardcover book that had to be expensive because it's big and full of illustrations, many in carefully printed full color. It's a book for designers, for lovers of the history and theory of ornament, for homeowners who want to understand what's behind their choices in color and interior finish decoration.

Chapters are devoted each to a particular style: Gothic Revival, Nature and Geometric Ornament, Japanese, Oriental, Primitive, Eclectic, Arts and Crafts, Art Deco, Modernist are all covered, as well as Revival styles since 1945. Examples are taken from fabrics, papers, engravings, historic texts and prints, and architecture.



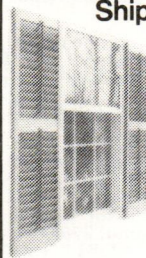
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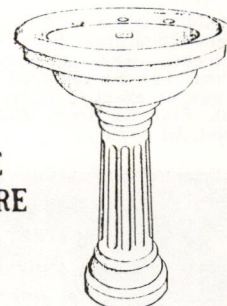
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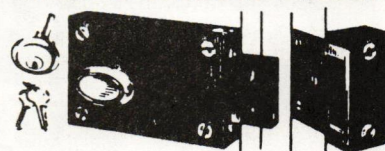
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HOME INSPECTORS' TRAINING seminar: 5-day comprehensive training course in home inspection, March 9 to 13. Those attending should have basic knowledge residential construction practices. Property Inspector's Training Institute, 8811 Stonehaven Ct., Potomac, MD 20854. (301) 983-9371.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

HISTORIC BUILDING FACADES: A Manual for Inspection and Rehabilitation. Also: The Restoration Directory: A Listing of Services in the New York City Area. \$18 each, ppd. New York Landmarks Conservancy, Dept. O, 330 W. 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. (212) 736-7575.

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CLEAN UP YOUR ACT with an Easy suction-cup, copper-tub washer or a rare, 1924 Maytag. Restored by expert, both in perfect cond. Asking \$700 for Easy, \$925 for Maytag. Offers considered. Mike Bienvenu, 778 Chenango St., Binghamton, NY 13901. (607) 723-0715.

BUTLER'S PANTRY: cherrywood, fine cabinetry, etched glass in doors, brass fittings, copper sink. Removed in large sections from landmark silk-mill manager's home. Nancy Temple, (617) 325-1249.

BRONZE BELL w/ yoke, trunnions, 6-ft. wooden pulley wheel, & base. About size of Liberty Bell. Cast by Meneely Bell Foundry in 1875. Box 5235, Clinton, NJ 08809. (201) 730-8604.

GARLAND WOOD COOKSTOVE, 1980, all parts except stove pipe. Gorgeous ornate chrome ornaments, warming shelf. Some rust in firebox, can be repaired; good possibility for gas or electric conversion. Charming! \$250. Frances Hogg, PO Box 78, Mackinac Island, MI 49757.



STOVE in excellent cond., \$450. Also old oak doors in all sizes. Fred Altwegg, RR 5 Box 1, Junction City, KS 66441. (913) 238-2445.

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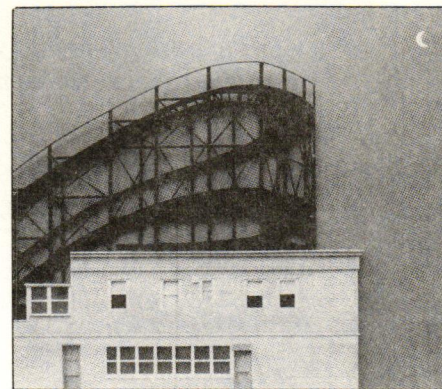
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ANTIQUE ORIENTAL RUGS, 2 afghans, c. 1910. One 9 ft. 10 in. x 4 ft. 11 in., exc. cond.; one 10 ft. 10 in. x 8 ft. 1 in., v. good cond. Both very good pile, lustre, & varied colors on red. \$800 each. Brooklyn, NY. (718) 859-6225.

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GOTHIC DOUBLE DOORS, oak, 2 sets. One pair: 76 x 92 in., other 86 x 100 in. Both 2 in. thick. Great for old-house restoration. Some Gothic-style carving. Best offer. Kathleen Miller, 39 Woodcrest Ave., Short Hills, NJ 07078. (212) 883-3529 days.

GREAT GRANDMA'S COLLECTION: Antique player-piano rolls in orig. boxes, all in working order, \$19.95 each. Over 400 to choose from. Send SASE for list of song titles. Pat Kuypers, 1005 Jefferson, St. Charles, MO 63301. (314) 947-1617.

GRAND PIANO, square, rosewood, 1880s, William Knabe & Co. Highly carved, massive legs; museum quality. 6 ft. 11 in. W x 3 ft. 5 in. deep, \$2500 or best offer. Claudia or Basil Fett, Springfield, OH. (513) 325-3120.

OAK WAINSCOTTING, T&G, from 1892 building. Each section 3 1/4 x 35 in. Two coats of paint per side, large quantity available, \$.75 per piece + shipping. Sample cross-section available. Bill Lipfert, PO Box 726, Claremont, NH 03743. (603) 675-2120.

COAL/GAS KITCHEN RANGE, re-nickel w/ warming oven, plus 4 others in need of work. \$500 for all. Also 1920 long-leg gas range, \$100. Columbia cylinder phonograph, large horn, oak, \$475. Petit Godin wood/coal stove, small, \$300. Plainfield, NJ. (201) 757-4475 home, 985-7546 work.

FIREBACKS: Philadelphia Foundry, c. 1800. Adams, medallion-and-drape, or daisy design. Franklin stove parts. Photos available. (607) 563-1520 or (212) 475-3009.

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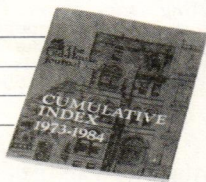
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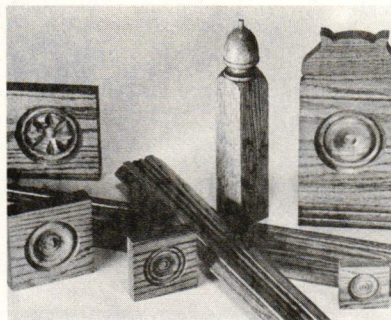
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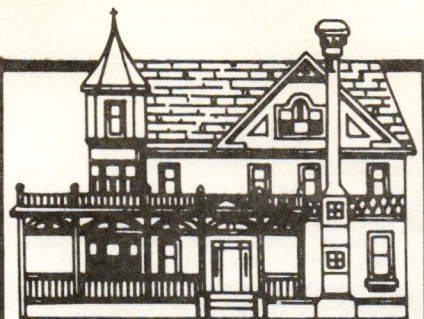
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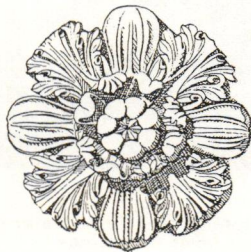
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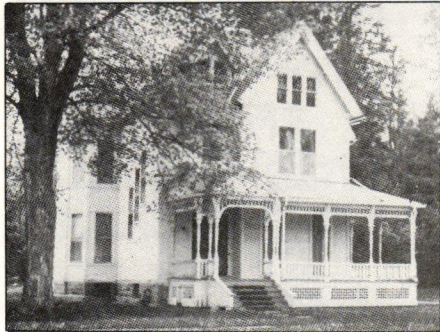
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FRIENDSHIP, NY — 3-storey 1880s Vict. house in hist. district. 5 FP, 6 BR, stained glass, mahogany woodwork, carriage house. Some gas fixtures and furnishings included. Butler's pantry. \$50,000 by owner. (716) 973-3090.

LARCHMONT, NY — Ready for sale 13-room, 3-level Vict. farmhouse on corner lot. 2 Car-rara FP, romantic, family-loving, move-in cond. Will collaborate on cleanup, arborist, landscaping; we are building on adjoining lot. Will vacate Aug. '87. Good schools, beach privileges, gorgeous trees. \$395,000. C. Golden, (914) 834-3871.

CHICAGO, IL — 1889 red-brick Vict. cottage w/ corbels & dentil trim. 8 rooms + 4-room garden rental apt. FP, library, hardwood flrs., country kitchen, old iron fence. Near park, tennis courts. \$74,000. Fran Sears, (312) 281-2887.

NEAR LEESBURG, VA — 3-storey log house, c. 1812, on 30 acres in Blue Ridge foothills. Orig. kitchen w/ large FP, fieldstone walls; 2 upper flrs. have 2 rooms each & random-width hardwood flrs. Gas heat, electricity, no water (well nearby). Unrestored but occupied. 1 1/4 hrs. to Washington, DC. Must sell, death in family. \$145,000. Call evenings, (703) 569-2764.



PADUCAH, KY — Vict. masterpiece on scenic Lake Barkley. 5000 sq.ft. Formal LR, DR, huge den, 6 FP, much bevelled & stained glass, 11-ft. ceilings. Dream kitchen w/ antique stove & FP, orig. brass footed tubs. Completely restored. \$275,000. Millie May, Griffin & Associates-ERA, (502) 362-4224.

PHOENIX, AZ — C. 1880 Second Empire Mansard w/ 8 dormers, 9 rooms, 2 baths, 3 FP, 1/2 acre. Only extant house this style in Phoenix. Nat'l Register qualified. 5 blks. State Capitol. Rehab underway. \$50,000 as is, \$80,000 restored. Art Auernheimer, 2726 W. Rovey, Phoenix, AZ 85017. (602) 249-3870.

BAINBRIDGE, NY — Turn-of-century fieldstone retreat, 200 ft. L, 5 BR & baths. 7 FP, terraced gardens. 3 hours New York City. \$350,000, (607) 563-1520 or (212) 475-3004.

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MARYLAND, NY — Unspoiled 3-BR Vict. on 60 acres on state highway. Woods, open fields, trout stream on property. Easy access to I-88. 60 mi. to Albany. \$50,000. Jeri, Oneonta Agency, (607) 432-1100.



NEW ORLEANS, LA — Queen Anne on hist. St. Charles Ave. (trolley line & Mardi Gras parade route). Fabulous details include hexagon-shaped, paneled library; charming porte-cochere, asstd. porches & balconies. 10 BR, 9 baths in 7500 sq.ft. Iron fence surrounds double lot. Latter & Blum, Ro Mayer, (504) 866-2785.

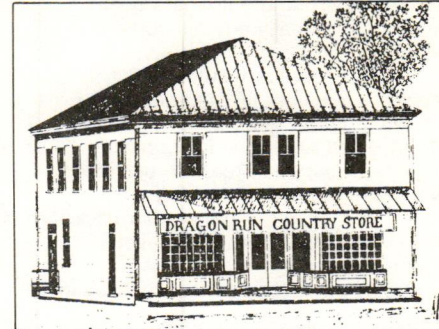
HARRISBURG, PA — Turn-of-century, single-family home in state capital. Brick & orig. shingle. No remuddling. 6 BR, 2 baths. Stained glass, elegant oak trim, hardwood flrs. 1st flr. restored. New wiring & furnace. Plumbing & steam heat well maintained. Needs an old-house lover to complete. \$63,000. (717) 233-4250.

BRADFORD, MA — 1690 Moses Day Homestead. Colonial, 12 rooms, 6 BR, 6 closed FP, pegged oak flrs. Unspoiled antique to restore. TLC would make this home an antique lover's dream. \$142,900. Di-An Realty, (617) 372-1561.

SW SOUTH CAROLINA — Hist. homes, from 1-storey cottages to ante-bellum estates. Some restored, some not; country settings & in town. Let us send information. Derrick Realty, PO Box 486, Johnston, SC 29832. (803) 275-3234.

GALVESTON, TX — 1886 J.L. Darragh House, major hist. landmark in East End Hist. District, for sale by Galveston Hist. Foundation. Totally restored roof w/ 3 towers, cupola, widow's walk. 6-ft. cast-iron fence. Needs extensive renovation. (409) 765-7834.

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MIDDLESEX, VA — "Dragon Run Country Store," classic, spacious, 75-year-old Tidewater Virginia store w/ orig. cypress panelling, butternut counters, imposing stairway reflecting superb craftsmanship. Currently operating as craft cooperative. Good tourist traffic. Also contains 2 apts. Great potential. \$125,000. Gayle Randolph, C.D. Vest Co., Deltaville, VA. (804) 776-9271.

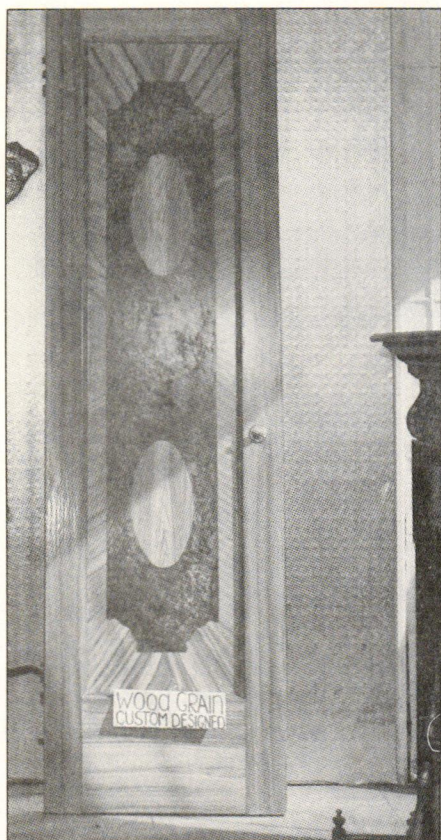
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HISTORIC LANDSCAPES for historic houses. Enhance your old house with a landscape and garden appropriate in style and period. Free brochure. Historic Landscapes, RFD 1, Box 297, Andover, NH 03216. (603) 735-5389.

WANTED

WOOD CORNER BLOCKS for interior door/window trim. 5-in. sq. w/ clematis flower carved in recessed circle. Any quantity; good cond., reasonable price. Roseann Lewandowski, PO Box 33, Buffalo, NY 14212.

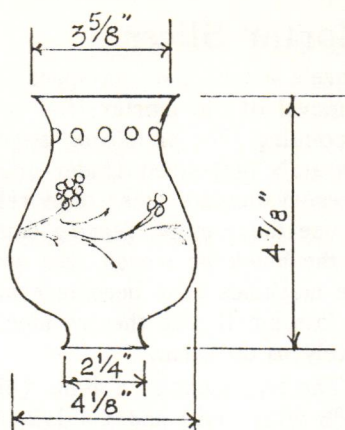
FURNITURE FROM THE 1950s wanted by collectors; especially pieces by Charles Eames, George Nelson, and Isamu Noguchi. (202) 667-0246 or (301) 699-9248.

HELP! We are searching for a Queen Anne or Second Empire Victorian home to restore within 30 mi. Philadelphia. \$50,000 to \$100,000, depending on cond. Mark & Luanne Leavitt, 6013 Amboy, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127. (313) 563-2214.

BATHROOM PEDESTAL SINK, old, in good cond. Manny Neuhaus, Milky Way Productions, 116 W. 14th St., New York, NY 10011. (212) 989-8001x53.

LUSTRON HOUSES: I'm studying these prefabricated, porcelainized metal structures, 3,000 of which were built between 1947 & 1950. I would appreciate information from contractors and owners. Rachel Barber, 408 East Auglaize St., Wapakoneta, OH 45895.

FORT CHURCHILL, military post in northwest Nevada: seeking photos dating from 1860 to 1869. B. Smith, Park Ranger, Fort Churchill State Historic Park, Silver Springs, NV 89429.

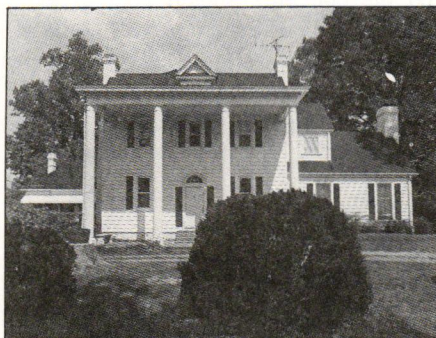


FROSTED-GLASS SHADES, 5 or more, matching, c. 1920-30, w/ clear incised design as shown. Lombard J. Pozzi, PO Box 711, Bristol, RI 02809. (401) 253-7979.

SMALL PEDESTAL SINK, no more than 21 in. W & 19 in. deep. Prefer 1900 to 1930. Must be in exc. cond. Marcy Werner, 5100 Maggiore St., Coral Gables, FL 33146.

BALL SHADE desperately needed for "Fenton Burmese Lamp 9201BR." Will trade the cat that broke mine or pay cash. Anita Mosteller, RD 2, Box 16, Mtsvl., PA 17754. (717) 368-8350.

INNS AND HISTORIC HOUSES



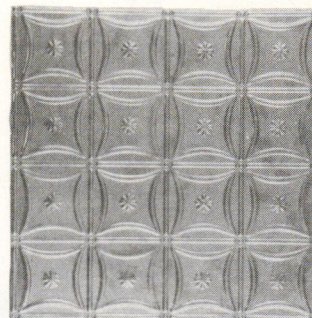
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Hardware Catalog

A few years ago, Tim Judge visited a reproduction hardware business, took one look around, and decided: "I can do this, and I can do it better."

The company he founded, known as the Antique Hardware Store, sells far more than the name suggests. Along with hardware -- from bar rails and brackets to locks and letterboxes -- the biggest seller is a tub-to-shower convertor. Complete, the unit sells for \$349 (components and accessories can be purchased separately). The store also sells lighting fixtures (colonial and Victorian), hinges, chair seats, shutter hardware, fishnet bed canopies, floor registers, and window and cabinet hardware.

The company's motto is, "If they still make it, we can get it." Customers can order what they need by phone or in person. "We get all kinds of weird requests," says Tim, "Like pork-pie moulds: We've got a dozen out back; I still don't know what they are."

Tim and company just put out a handsome new catalog, most of it in color, which they'll send out for \$3. The Antique Hardware Store, 43 Bridge St., Dept. OHJ, Frenchtown, NJ 08825. (201) 996-4040.

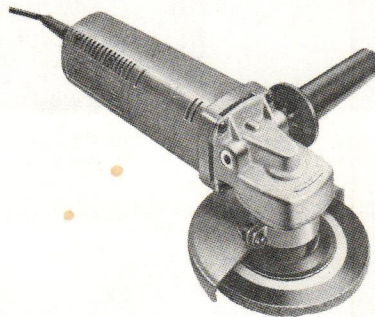
Mortar Slicer

Here's a tool that can speed the removal of old mortar, for easy repointing [see article on page 24]: Makita's pint-sized sander-grinder. Preservationists were once reluctant to use these tools, fearing damage to the brick or stones. But since the machines have become available in this small size they're much less likely to do harm.

The two models, a 4-in. (\$119, \$138 with case) and a 4-1/2-in. (\$166 with case), each weigh only about four pounds, which means they don't tire the user as much as heavier models did.

Equipped with a 4-1/8-in. diamond blade (32 teeth, \$80 from Makita), the tool is used to cut a slot into mortar joints. Once the joint is cut, it's easy to chip out the mortar with a chisel. The blade must be kept at a 90-degree angle to the wall, and the operator should rest often to avoid mistakes caused by fatigue.

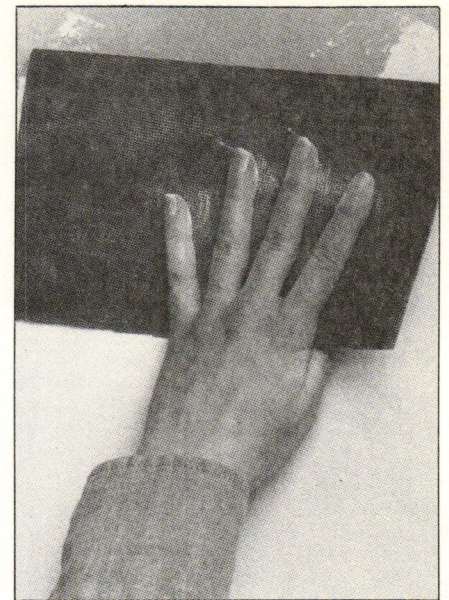
Makita has distributors around the U.S. and sends out a free catalog: 12950 E. Alondra Blvd., Dept. OHJ, Cerritos, CA 90701. (213) 926-8775.



Brass Bedpost Finials

Almost every old-house owner has a brass bed, either donated by Grandma or bought at a country auction. But brass beds aren't always in perfect condition: For one thing, the bedpost finials often get lost or dented.

Replacement finials are available. Phyllis Kennedy offers three in her \$2 catalog: in 2-1/4-, 2-, or 1-1/2-in. diameters, all with 3/8-in.



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We've all experienced clogged sandpaper: when the abrasive grains still work, but the gunk in-between makes the paper useless. Norton offers two solutions. If you're sanding joint compound, Screen-Bak™ is an abrasive screen that works like sandpaper, but the dust falls through the mesh instead of blocking the abrasive. Norton also sells sandpaper treated with No-Fil™, a zinc-stearate coating that resists clogging.

Screen-Bak™ costs \$6.59 for a packet of three 9x11 sheets. Sandpaper treated with No-Fil™ costs about \$3.11 for five 9x11 sheets. Most hardware stores and home centers carry Norton's products. Norton Consumer Products, 1 New Bond St., Dept. OHJ, Worcester, MA 01606. (617) 853-1000.

thread, for \$9.50, \$7.50, and \$6.75 respectively. The catalog also contains all kinds of furniture hardware, such as Hoosier cabinet parts, hinges, latches, pulls, locks, hooks, seats, and trunk hardware. Phyllis Kennedy, 9256 Holyoke Ct., Dept. OHJ, Indianapolis, IN 46268.

(317) 872-6366.



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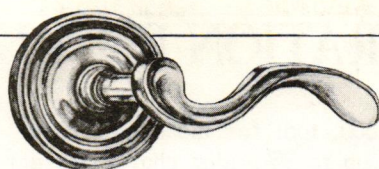
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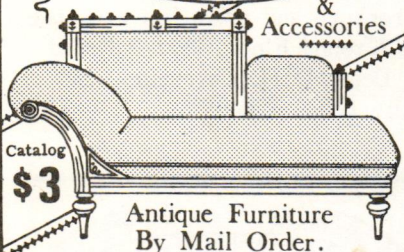
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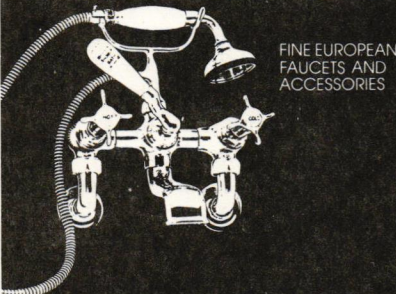
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To receive Old House Woodwork Restoration, check the box on the Order Form, or send \$16.45 to The Old-House Bookshop, 69A Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

PLASTERING SKILLS

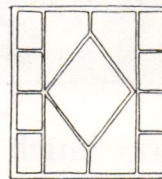


Here's the book for anyone interested in the "lost art" of wet plastering, whether you just want to re-create 10 feet of missing plaster cornice, or need to replaster an entire wall. *Plastering Skills* is a text-book for apprentice plasterers. It's been out of print for 10 years, but is now available in this special limited edition published by American Technical Publishers exclusively for The Old-House Journal. The book explains how to make flat plaster walls & ceilings; special finishes, including various stucco textures. There's a chapter on ornamental plaster that tells in detail how to make run-in-place plaster cornices. All the steps are covered: making a cornice-running mould, dotting and screeding, running the cornices, mitering. This chapter also explains how to make coves, hang coffers, and run circular and elliptical centerpieces.

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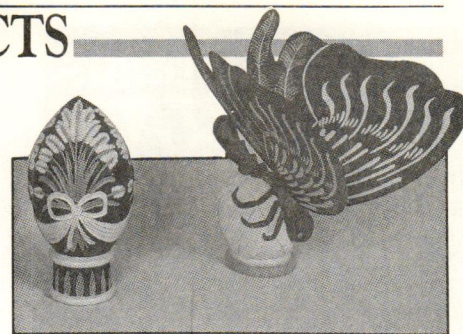
Wood & Bronze Plaques

Now that you've researched the history of your house [see page 48], you can display the results proudly, right by your front door. Erie Landmark Company offers custom bronze plaques with up to four lines of text, 15 characters each, for \$92.50 postpaid. The plaques come

in wood, too, for the same price, with up to 35 gilded characters per line. Oval (10 x 7 in.) or rectangular (11 x 8 in.) shapes are available, as well as custom shapes and sizes. Contact the company for a free brochure. Erie Landmark Co., PO Box 3024, Dept. OHJ, Troy, NY 12180. (518) 271-1096.

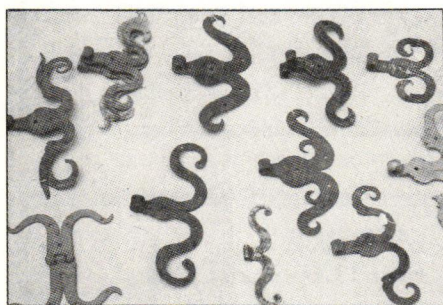
Curtain-Rod Finials

It's not easy to find stylish curtain-rod finials. The kind sold in the stores are usually pretty dull, and the hand-carved kind can be outrageously expensive. The ones John Ragsdale Interiors sells, on the other hand, are downright fun. They're so much fun, the company reports, that people use them to top newel



posts, as bookends, or mounted on bases as "sculpture." They come in designs like gourds, butterflies, and sheaves of wheat.

Made of composition, the finials come unfinished for \$60 per pair, or with a gold or walnut/mahogany finish for \$72. Brackets, rings, and custom painting are also available. A brochure and price list are free. The Ground Floor, 95-1/2 Broad St., Dept. OHJ, Charleston, SC 29401. (803) 722-3576.



Too Much Hardware

If you own a pre-1850 house, and you can't bear to install reproduction hardware, there's a guy in North Carolina you should talk to. He's got a basement full of colonial hardware that he's trying to get rid of.

Jim Leonard started collecting antique hardware about 20 years ago while building his own house, a copy of a Connecticut saltbox. One thing led to another -- a hinge here, a latch there -- and before he knew it, the basement was stuffed. "Nowadays old hardware is much harder to find," he laments. "It's all concentrated in the hands of a few people. I'm one of them."

All pieces he sells have been cleaned and sealed, are in working order, and come with all necessary parts. ("I'll even sell people the nails, if they want them.") So that

pre-1850

customers can find pieces appropriate for their houses, Jim indicates the ages and regions of origin of items he sells.

A packet of photos and a price list is free. Jim Leonard, Antique Hardware, 509 Tangle Drive, Dept. OHJ, Jamestown, NC 27282.



Kenmore's 9-by-9-ft. Doorway #800



Entrances & Ornament

Arthur Stickney, president of Kenmore Industries, makers of Georgian and Federal entrances, looks for doorways whenever he travels: "There are great doorways everywhere," he explains, "But I think my wife gets a little sick of them after a while."

The company's brochure reflects Arthur's affections: It calls their product line "the 15 most beautiful doorways in America." Some are exact reproductions, others composites of handsome 18th- and early-19th-century features. Prices range from \$2000 to \$8500.

All pieces are intricately carved in solid mahogany. Kenmore also sells architectural ornament: arched lights and louvers for doorways, a dolphin-pattern cornice that can also serve as a mantel. Ornament prices begin at \$350. A color brochure depicting all designs is \$3. Kenmore Industries, One Thompson Sq., PO Box 34, Dept. OHJ, Boston, MA 02129. (617) 242-1711.



RENOVATOR'S SUPPLY®

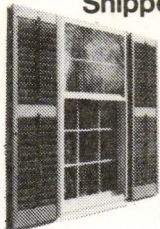
Manufacturer & Importer of fine hardware, plumbing, and lighting. For catalog, send \$3.00 to:

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STILL SEARCHING?

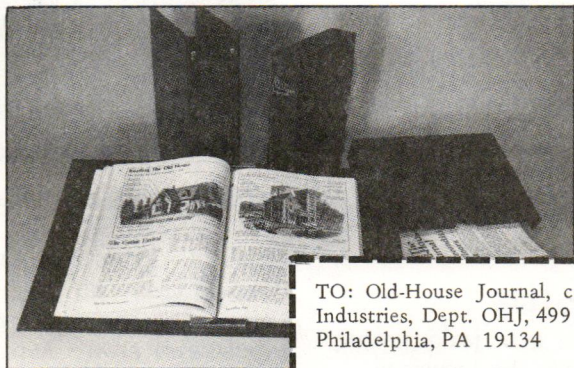
Searching for shutter hardware? Plaster mouldings? Period furnishings? Authentic wallcoverings? Sources for these — and nearly 10,000 other hard-to-find items — will be found in the annual *OHJ*

Catalog. It's the "Yellow Pages" for the old-house market. Whether your home was built in 1730 or 1930, you'll find what your house needs in the *OHJ Catalog*. There's an Order Form in this issue.



CATALOG

How To Save Your OHJs



Save your copies the same way the OHJ staff does. Use a file case (8-5/8" x 11-1/2") or a binder (9-1/4" x 12-3/4"). Binders have a wire for each issue, so you can open issues flat without removing them. Each binder or file case holds a year's worth of issues; both are library quality — handsome deep maroon leatherette with the OHJ logo embossed in gold.

NOTE: For fastest service, call toll-free 1-800-972-5858 and charge to VISA or Mastercard (\$15 minimum).

TO: Old-House Journal, c/o Jesse Jones Industries, Dept. OHJ, 499 East Erie Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19134

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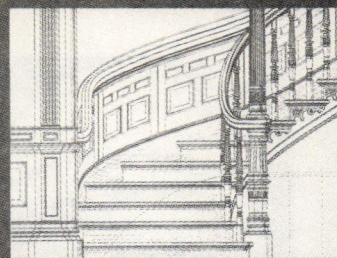
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A Treatise on STAIRBUILDING & HANDRAILING

W & A Mowat



The classic text for
joiners, architects & restorers

This republication of the 1900 edition of *A Treatise On Stairbuilding And Handrailing* provides a wealth of information regarding the design & construction of traditional wood (and stone!) stairs and handrails. William & Alexander Mowat wrote what is still considered to be the most understandable and practical book on this complicated subject, but their *Treatise* has been unavailable for over 50 years. With this new edition, designers, architects, joiners, & restorationists can master what has become nearly a lost art. The book isn't for non-carpenters; it requires some background in geometry & construction techniques. But if you have the proper training, it can raise you to a whole new level in old-house repair and restoration.

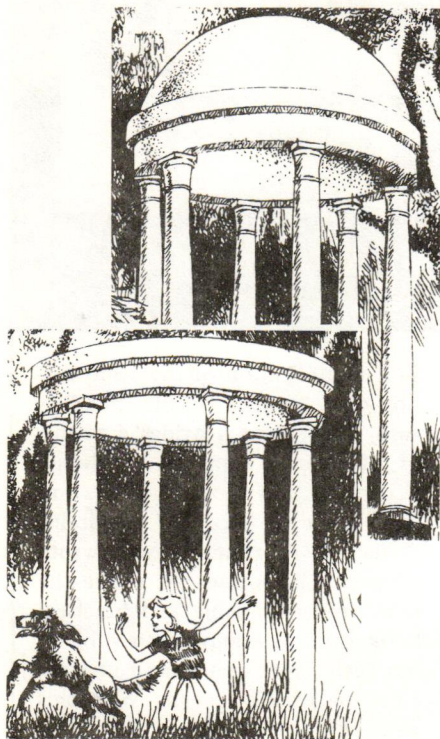
The Topics Covered Include:

* Newelled Stairs * Geometrical Stairs * Examples of 16th- & 17th-Century Designs * Development Of Face Moulds * Joinery * Moulding The Wreath * Stone Stairs * Handrailing * Circular Stairs * Plane And Descriptive Geometry * Classification Of Stairs * Stairs For Passenger Ships * Dog-Legged Stairs * Terrace Stairs * and much, much more!

A Treatise On Stairbuilding And Handrailing is 424 pages long and profusely illustrated. A quality soft-cover, it's available for only \$22.95 postpaid. Just check the box on the Order Form.

RESTORATION PRODUCTS

When you're stuck in the house for the winter, why not plan how you'll dress up the yard in the spring? These houses for birds, dogs, and poets may give you some ideas.



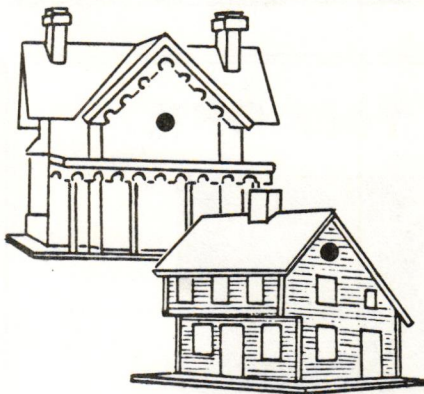
Backyard Temples

Every Greek Revival house should have a classical temple in the backyard. Bow House sells two kinds, with a roof and without (\$4505 and \$2915 respectively). Both stand seven feet tall. The roofed version is seven feet wide; the roofless one, eight feet. The columns are pine, the ring at the top is marine plywood, and the dome on the roofed model is fiberglass.

The temples are sent FOB Bolton, Mass., in eight pieces. Bow House also sells other period outbuildings: doghouses, gazebos, wells, arbors, bridges, and pergolas, in styles ranging from Chinese Chippendale and Queen Anne to Craftsman, many with pagoda-style roofs. The company's \$2 brochure features charming drawings of all buildings available. Bow House Inc., Randall Rd., Dept. OHJ, Bolton, MA 01740. (617) 779-6464.

Vernacular for Birds

You probably love your house a lot. You may even love it enough to buy your birds a tiny copy of it. The American Birdhouse Collection features whimsical versions of American vernacular architecture: saltboxes, Gothic Revival houses, Mission churches, Greek Revival temples, all miniaturized to accommodate chickadees, nuthatches, and wrens. The birdhouses, which cost between \$65 and \$125, are built to be mounted on a pole. Shipping is \$8.50, and an illustrated flyer is free. Wolfman Gold & Good Company, 484 Broome St., Dept. OHJ, New York, NY 10013. (212) 431-1888.



Canine Castles

In case your dog gets jealous when you give the birds the luxurious quarters described above, you can buy him a handsome home as well: a French chateau, a Swiss chalet, or an Art Deco palace, all available from Villas Boas' Animal Manors Collection. Orders are customized to fit the individual animal (though some doghouses are in stock). Cost, ranging from \$3000 to \$3500, depends on size and materials used. Mail orders are accepted. Villas Boas, 74 Grand St., Dept. OHJ, NY, NY 10013. (212) 925-1113.

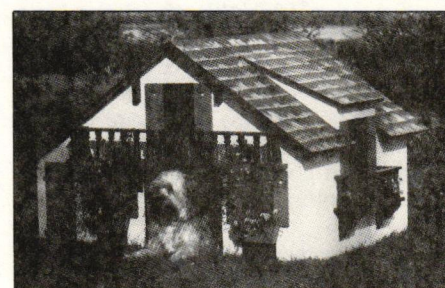


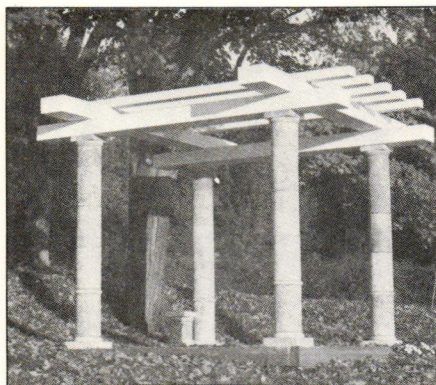
Thatching for Hatching

These adorable birdhouses would complement any English Country Cottage. Pictured below is the Exeter Dovecote (\$187), which has lapped timber sides, a landing platform, and a facade that can be removed for cleaning. It stands 29 in. high on a 26 x 13-1/2 in. base. Above is the Appledore Model No. 4 (\$60.35). The thatched roof, resting



on four posts, shelters a nesting compartment and a swing. The house is 25 in. high on a 13 in. square base. All prices include shipping. The company sends out a free illustrated flyer. Autumn Innovations Inc., PO Box 18426, 1 E. Wendy Ct., Dept. OHJ, Greensboro, NC 27419. (919) 852-0753.





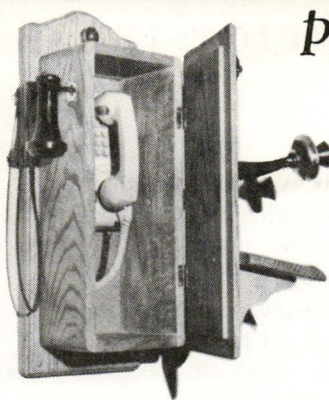
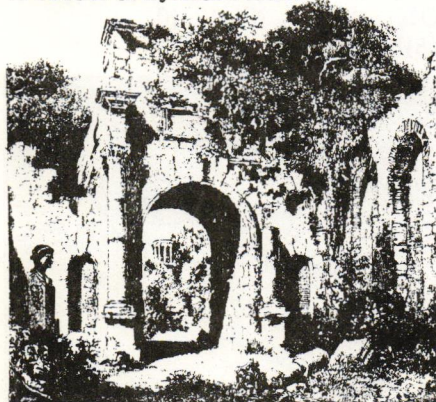
Classical Columns

Inspired in part by Romantic poetry that celebrated the ruins of Greece and Italy, Britons in the 18th century considered a ruin on one's property the ultimate status symbol. Those who weren't blessed with a real archaeological site had one built.

Columbine makes terra-cotta columns that have suitably ancient-looking surfaces. You can drape them with vines in the backyard, for the "ruin" look, or use them to support a porch or pergola.

The 16 colors available, all mottled, include pale pink, aquamarine, and deep brown. Expect to pay about \$1200 for an eight-foot column. Sections of columns are sold separately as pedestals or table bases (a 26-in.-high section with base costs about \$500). A price list and color flyer are free. Columbine, RD 3, Box 212, Dept. OHJ, Blairstown, NJ 07825. (201) 852-8953.

This old engraving, from House of Boughs (Viking), exemplifies the Romantic view that prompted people to create artificial ruins.

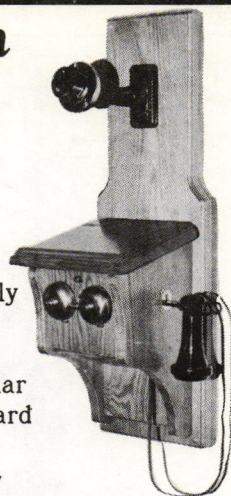


post-Victorian

Old-Fashioned Phones

Cherished Collectibles makes three kinds of reproduction wall telephones. One is a copy a 1907 model (\$275), one is based on a 1900 model (\$250, shown at right). They're handmade of oak with a hand-rubbed lacquer finish, and have fold-down dial compartments, brown cotton-covered cords, and brass

gongs that really ring. They're easy to install, too: The modular plugs fit standard outlets.



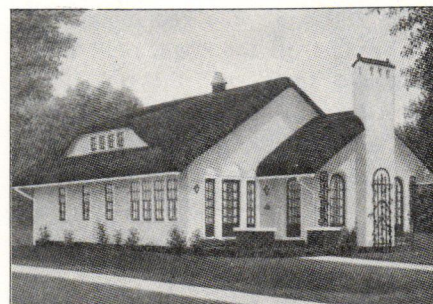
The company just introduced a telephone "cabinet," which looks like an old phone but conceals a modern apparatus inside (shown at left; \$195, telephone not included). A brochure is \$1, refundable. Cherished Collectibles, PO Box 1177, Dept. OHJ, Broomfield, CO 80020-8177. (303) 466-3187.



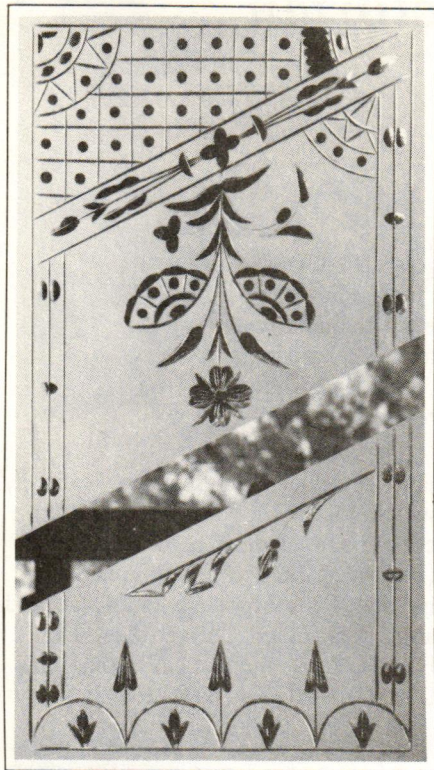
Bent-Wood Roofing

You can still get bent-wood shingles, just like the ones used on English Revival homes in the '20s and '30s. C and H Roofing does both entire roofs and partial jobs. The steam-bent shingles can be ordered in regular and random widths, and prices depend on the amount of bending needed. A color brochure is free; a packet with price list and specs is \$10. C and H Roofing Inc., 1713 South Cliff Ave., Dept. OHJ, Sioux Falls, SD 57105. (605) 332-5060.

In 1928, Home Builders Catalog offered the bent-wood roof below; above, a recent project by C and H Roofing.



Victorian



Brilliant-Glass Cutting

Robert Stewart is, as far as we know, the only craftsperson in the U.S. still doing large-scale brilliant-glass cutting. Popular in the late 1800s, the process consists of frosting a sheet of glass, engraving a de-

sign into it, and then polishing the engraved incisions. The result is a sparkling clear pattern on a white background.

Robert re-invented the technique, aided by an old photo of someone doing it and some advice from glass bevelers and crystal workers.



The cost ranges from \$120 to \$2000 (for the piece shown) and depends on the size and amount of engraving. For a price quote, send a rubbing of an existing piece or a sketch; include dimensions. B & B Glass, 6408 Hillyway, Dept. OHJ, Cary, IL 60013. (312) 639-3017.



High-Relief Medallion

Restoration Works is the exclusive importer of this ceiling medallion. With its high relief and intricate details, it's one of the best we've seen in a while. It costs \$39.95, and it's made of polyurethane.

There's more in the company's 29-page, \$2 catalog, including some items we don't often see: like brass doorbells (two models, \$11 and \$18.50) or brass Art Nouveau coat hooks (row of three, \$16). There's also hardware for doors and furniture plus plumbing and bath accessories. Restoration Works Inc., 810 Main St., Dept. OHJ, Buffalo, NY 14202. (716) 856-8000.

Encaustic Tile Revived



Monks in the 12th century originally developed the techniques for making encaustic tile.

When the monasteries declined after the Reformation,

the art was lost for centuries. In the 1800s, it was rediscovered and became all the rage, only to be abandoned along with the rest of Victoriana at the end of the century.

In the past decade, several firms have discovered encaustic yet again. L'esperance Tile Works is the only one we know of that is based in this country.

Encaustic is very difficult to pro-

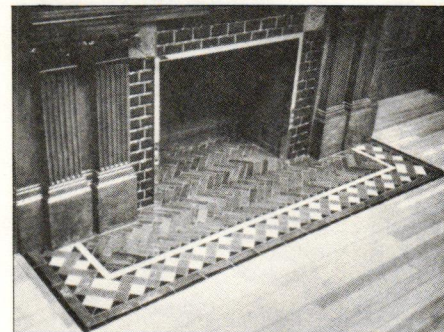
duce, which may account for the scarcity of manufacturers. Tiles are made by "inlaying" different colors of clay into a base tile. First a bas relief design is pressed into the base tile. The depression is filled with various colors of liquid clay. The tile is then re-fired.

The trick, explained Linda Ellett, L'esperance's founder, "is using compatible clays that don't shrink apart during firing."

L'esperance produces many other types of tile. Stock embossed tiles (\$3.50) feature human faces or Colonial Revival garlands. Geometric tiles, popular for Victorian-style fireplace surrounds, cost about \$40 per sq.ft. (shown at right).

The minimum order for custom work, including encaustic, is \$100.

You can send a sample to be reproduced, or have tiles custom designed. The company can accommodate everything from single-tile orders to entire wall panels. A brochure is free; a packet with sample tile is \$10. L'esperance Tile Works, 240 Sheridan Ave., Dept. OHJ, Albany, NY 12210. (518) 465-5586.



Catalogs and brochures worth writing for: Here you'll find products or services appropriate for houses built between 1750 and 1939. The Request Form below provides a handy way to get as many company catalogs and brochures as you need -- by just filling out one form, sending one check, and using a single stamp.

BUILDING MATERIALS & COMPONENTS

23. Chimney Liner -- It's dangerous to use an old unlined chimney for furnaces and wood-burning fireplaces. Protect old chimneys with a poured-in-place, 2-liner, no-mess process at a fraction of the cost of rebuilding. First liner strengthens and insulates; second liner seals and protects. Free brochure. **Ahren's Chimney Technique.**

73. Hand-Blown Glass -- Modern flat glass doesn't have the "wavy" character of hand-blown historic glass. Now, for authentic restoration, you can get handmade glass -- mouth-blown in the same manner since the Middle Ages. Two thicknesses: Full, approx. 1/8 in.; Light, approx. 3/32 in. Free brochure. **S.A. Bendheim Co.**

59. Cupolas & Weathervanes -- Aluminum cupolas, domes, steeples, weathervanes, cornices, louvers, and ornamental load-bearing columns. Have produced aluminum balustrades and cornices in exact detail for historic buildings. Baked-on finishes available. Free information. **Campbellsville Industries.**

78. Metal Roof Shingles -- Metal roofing shingles supplied in styles typical of the 19th and early-20th centuries. Available in galvanized steel, terne-coated stainless, copper, or terne. Also supplies galvanized roofing sheets, gutters, and leaders. Metal Shingle Catalog. **Conklin Metal Industries.** \$3.

70. Roofing Slate -- Need to repair or replace a slate roof? NY-VT region slate in all colors and sizes. Specializes in roofing slate for restoration and new construction. Also structural slate and flagging. Shipping arranged. Free color brochure. **Hilltop Slate.**

45. Terra-Cotta Roofing Tile -- Major supplier of terra-cotta, cast-stone, and interior plaster ornament specializes in the repair, precise restoration, and total production of new designs. Terra-cotta roofing tiles: barrel tile, Spanish, and various interlocking styles. Free product data sheets on roof tile. **Ludowici-Celadon.**

5. Bird Control -- Best way to get rid of pigeons and other bird pests: Inconspicuous long-lasting stainless steel needles that form an impenetrable barrier to birds, without harming your building. Used on many historic sites. See OHJ June 1981 for application details. Free Brochure. **Nixalite.**

56. Hand-Split Oak Shingles -- Authentic hand-split oak shingles from veneer-quality red oak, chestnut, and white oak logs cut from Tennessee trees. Oak shakes can last up to 80 years. Will ship anywhere. Free flyer. **Oak Crest Mfg.**

69. Handmade Brick -- Hand-moulded bricks, architectural brick shapes, and arches in 8 color ranges are all made in traditional way. Also makes detailed 17th- & 18th-century fireplace veneers, raised-relief brick, name brick, and cornerstones. Can match existing handmade brick. Illustrated brochure. **Old Carolina Brick.** \$1.

75. Window-Channel Replacements -- "Window Fixer" replacement window channels are an economical way to get a snug fit and reduce heat loss without expense

of replacing entire sash and frames. Fit all standard sash. Available through most home centers. Free brochure. **Quaker City Manufacturing.**

1. Traditional Wood Columns -- Wood columns can be furnished from 4" to 50" diameter in lengths up to 40 ft. with matching pilasters. 6 styles of classical capitals. For extended column life, ventilated aluminum plinth and column bases are supplied for columns from 8" to 30" dia. with load-bearing capacity of 22,000 lb. Custom work done. Free catalog. **A. F. Schwerd.**

7. Exterior Shutters -- Durable western white pine shutters with 2-1/2" movable louvers can be made in any size. Furnished unpainted, or primed and painted in 21 heritage colors. Moderately priced: Pair of 40" x 16" shutters are \$62.50 per pair, ppd. Free brochure. **Shuttercraft.**

14. Cast-Iron Victorian Staircases -- Space-saving Victorian metal spiral staircase based on original 19th-century pattern: modular cast-iron components; bolt-together assembly; 5-ft. dia.; optional brass handrail. Also available as straight stair. Complete renovation-supply catalog. **Stephoe & Wife.** \$2.

38. Chimney Liner -- Stainless-steel Ventinox chimney-lining system is sold and installed by nationwide dealer network. UL-listed type-321 stainless-steel liner is continuously welded, improves chimney safety, and reduces creosote formation. Connectors for safe installation of fireplace insert stoves. Free brochure. **Boatech.**

71. Columns -- Classical columns sculpted in Ponderosa pine. Many styles in stock, from Doric to Corinthian. Also, pedestals, table bases, and architectural elements in pine. Custom shapes and widths available. Two free brochures. **Worthington Group.**

DECORATIVE MATERIALS

20. Tin Ceilings -- 21 traditional patterns of stamped-metal ceiling are produced from original turn-of-the-century dies. 10 styles of cornice mouldings also available. Installation can be done as do-it-yourself job. Shipped anywhere. Send for brochure. **AA Abbingdon.** \$1.

17. Antique Furniture By Mail -- A changing inventory of antique American Victorian furniture available by mail. Specializes in Rococco, Renaissance Revival, and Eastlake styles. Careful packing insures safe delivery. Illustrated quarterly mail-order catalog. **Antiquaria.** \$3.

27. Victorian Roomset Wallpapers -- Victorian rooms were papered not with a single paper, but with coordinated sets of as many as a dozen papers and borders. Here is the only collection of complete Victorian roomsets -- which you can combine in infinite variations. Full-color catalog shows 7 different roomsets including: Neo-Grec; Anglo-Japanese (2 sets); Morris; Aesthetic Movement. **Bradbury & Bradbury.** \$8.

22. Nottingham Lace Curtains -- Real Victorian lace, woven on late-19th-century machinery in Scotland, using original designs. Panels are 60 in. wide, 95% cotton, 5% polyester blend. Rod pocket at top; scalloped sides and bottom. Available in

white & ecru. Brochure has details. **J. R. Burrows & Co.** \$2.

47. Tin Ceilings -- 18 patterns of tin ceilings made from original dies. Ideal for Victorian-look restaurants and commercial establishments, and for homes, too. Patterns range from Victorian to Art Deco. Come in 2-ft.-x-8-ft. sheets; cornices in 4-ft. lengths. Free catalog. **Chelsea Decorative Metal Co.**

42. Colonial Curtains -- Curtains in cotton muslin, permanent-press, and other fabrics, some with ruffles, others with fringe, braid, or lace trim. Also bedspreads, dust ruffles, canopy covers, and tablecloths. Tab curtains and wooden rods. Lined and insulated curtains. Free 56-page color catalog. **Country Curtains.**

25. Lincrusta & Supaglypta -- Embossed wallcoverings that adorned Victorian rooms are available again after a long absence. Made on the original embossing equipment, these wallcoverings are new originals. They are durable, easy to hang, and can be painted or finished in a variety of glaze coats. Send for free brochure. **Crown Decorative Products.**

8. Victorian Tiles -- Historic reproduction ceramic tiles, ideal for hearth and fireplace surrounds, are available in Anglo-Japanese, Arts & Crafts, Art Nouveau, and folk styles. Custom work available, including encaustic tiles. Full color brochure. **Designs In Tile.** \$2.

54. Victorian Ingrain Carpet -- Finest quality all-wool two-ply reversible 36-in. wide ingrain carpet available in two classic 19th-century designs: Maple Leaf pattern is \$125/yd.; Geometric is \$97/yd. Carpet has been used in finest Victorian restorations, including Abraham Lincoln home in Springfield, IL. Fact sheet. **Family Heirloom Weavers.**

63. Plaster Ornaments -- 50-year-old company offers traditional plaster castings, ornaments, panels, domes, and ceiling medallions. Can also supply entire ceilings: floral, Tudor, Victorian, Louis XV, and Renaissance styles. Also fireplaces, brackets, and columns. 44-pp. illustrated catalog. **Hosek Mfg.** \$3.

37. Period Drapery & Bed Ensembles -- A custom mail-order source for period drapery and bed ensembles, as well as tablecloths, pillows, etc. Historically accurate styles: Early American, Country Rustic, Colonial, Victorian. Send for catalog and fabric swatches. **House Of Vermilion.** \$4.

6. Radiator Enclosures -- Cover unsightly radiators with all-steel radiator enclosures. Protects walls, drapes, & shades from radiator smudge. Directs heat into room. Many styles & colors; baked enamel finish. For homes, offices, churches, institutions. Buy factory direct. Send \$1 for brochures -- refundable with order. **Monarch.** \$1.

64. Wood Mantels -- Elegant hand-crafted carved wood mantels are ready to install. Available in 26 styles, from Louis XV to Williamsburg Colonial to Modern. Standard fireplace openings are 50 in. x 37-1/2 in.; special sizes can be made on request. Booklet shows styles and diagram for taking measurements. **Readybuilt Products.** \$2.50.

24. Floor Registers -- Complete line of solid-brass & cast-iron registers: faithful reproductions of 19th- and early-20th-century originals in finely made castings. Use with forced-air or natural convection systems -- or as a decorative period touch. Send for detailed catalog. **Reggio Register. \$1.**

40. Documentary Papers & Fabrics -- A new collection of fabrics and wallpapers has been assembled from original documents found in some of America's great historic houses. The collection, "Historic Homes Of America," is available through interior designers and fine shops. Full-color brochure. **Richard E. Thibaut. \$1.**

67. Decorative Nails -- Cut nails with hand-formed heads are both historically authentic and decorative. Ideal for wide-plank floors, and any finish carpentry project where nailheads will show. Catalog and sample set of 20 different cut nails. **Tremont Nail Co. \$3.75.**

36. Authentic Window Treatments -- Finding ready-to-hang authentic window treatments has always been difficult. Now, get custom-made Greek Revival, Victorian, and early-20th-century soft drapery valances designed, cut, and sewn historically correct. Custom-by-mail service, with catalog and fabric swatches. **Vintage Valances. \$12.**

DOORS & WINDOWS

9. Replacement Wood Windows -- Free 16-page booklet tells what to look for in a replacement window, and even how to install it. It's possible to get a thermally efficient, genuine wood window in almost any size and shape. Brochure aids in selecting the window that's appropriate for your home. **Marvin Windows.**

16. Replacement Wood Sash -- Wood sash in any size and shape can be made economically: Divided lite, round top, double-hung, curved, fixed, casement, or storm sash. Insulated glass can be supplied. Period store fronts, shutters, screen doors, porch screens and trim also available. Send for free fact sheet. **Midwest Wood Products.**

32. Wooden Screen & Storm Doors -- Wooden combination screen and storm doors are ideal for old houses; they look perfect and are more thermally efficient than aluminum doors. Beautifully handcrafted in Douglas fir, these doors come in several styles (including Victorian and Chippendale) and all sizes. 16-pp. catalog. **Old Wagon Factory. \$2.**

53. Wooden Screen Doors -- Handsome wooden screen and storm doors that are energy-efficient as well as ornamental. Styles range from highly decorative Victorian patterns to plain styles suitable for any home. Available option: traditional white stencilling on screen. Brochure shows styles and options. **Oregon Wooden Screen Door Co. \$3.**

74. Traditional Wood Doors -- Large selection of handcrafted wood doors, with stained, etched, or bevelled glass inserts. Will also custom-build any type door or glass. Also offer carved components and will custom-make carvings in quantity. Color catalog. **Jack Wallis' Doors. \$3.**

41. Colonial Wood Windows -- Yankee Spirit wooden replacement windows feature low-E glass and true colonial-style divided lights. With a quality storm window, system is more efficient than triple glazing ... equivalent to insulating value of a 10-in. brick wall. Custom and stock sizes. Self-storing storm windows of Ponderosa Pine. Free brochure. **Wes-Pine.**

FINISHES & TOOLS

68. Exterior Varnish -- Marine products have greatest resistance to sun's rays and weather. This varnish, developed in Holland, has been used on some of world's finest yachts. Ideal for varnishing front doors and any other fine exterior wood. Compatible line of exterior paint. Catalog, color cards, technical data sheets. **Epifanes. \$2.**

79. Masonry Tools -- High-quality tools for the professional and serious-minded user who appreciates long-lasting equipment. Specialty chisels, masonry tools, rippers, slater's tools, paint scrapers, wall scrapers, cement edgers, star drills for concrete, etc. Professional tool catalog. **John Stortz & Son. \$5.**

LIGHTING FIXTURES

21. Mission-Style Lighting -- New lighting collection features the Arts & Crafts (Mission/Prairie) styling that was so popular in the early 20th century. Blends well with all historic periods. Solid-brass construction with polished or antique finish. Sconces and chandeliers come in 10 designs; glass shades can be purchased separately. Send for catalog. **Brass Light Gallery. \$3.**

60. Colonial Lighting -- Hand-crafted reproductions of colonial lanterns, chandeliers, sconces, cupolas, and 15 styles of weathervanes in copper, tin, and brass. Illustrated catalog. **The Coppersmith. \$2.**

10. Post-Victorian Lighting -- Craftsman lighting fixtures are precise duplicates of turn-of-the-century originals. Fit right into any Bungalow, Mission, Foursquare, Prairie, or Craftsman home. Both chandeliers and sconces available. Interior fixtures in solid brass; exterior fixtures in cast iron. Complete catalog of turn-of-the-century lighting. **Rejuvenation House Parts. \$3.**

33. Lighting Fixtures -- Victorian and turn-of-the-century chandeliers, sconces,

and fixtures: gas, oil, and electric. Complete source for antique and reproduction fixtures, as well as replacement parts and glass shades. Fixture restoration also done. Send for lighting catalog. **Roy Electric. \$3.**

4. Victorian Lighting Fixtures -- Authentic handcrafted reproductions of Victorian and turn-of-the-century electric and gas-style chandeliers and wall brackets. Fixtures are solid brass with variety of glass shades; UL listed. Complete Catalog. **Victorian Lighting Works. \$3.**

METALWORK

76. Cast & Wrought Iron -- Specialists in 19th-century cast and wrought iron, they make castings in their own foundry and fabricate wrought iron with historically accurate techniques. Will make custom castings and fabrications. Consulting services available. Catalog and services information. **Architectural Iron Co. \$3.**

3. Iron Fencing & Gates -- Manufacturer provides high-quality iron fences and gates in Victorian and many more traditional decorative styles. Installation available upon special arrangement. Catalog and price list. **Custom Ironwork. \$1.**

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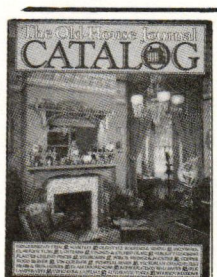
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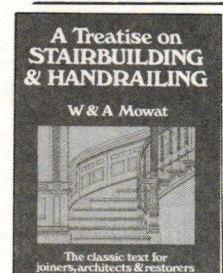
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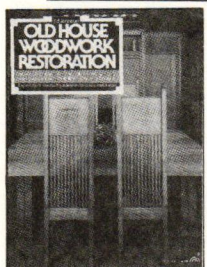


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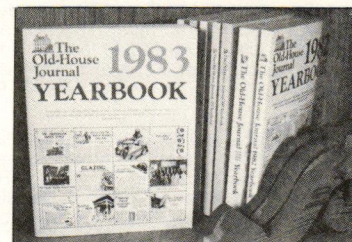
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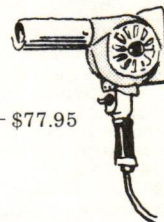
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The Comfortable House

North American Suburban Architecture
1890-1930



Alan Gowans

opinion... Remuddling



Tastes change,
but remuddling
lives on

Remuddling is not just a late-20th-century phenomenon. Our ancestors could be pretty insensitive to old buildings, too.

"Ludicrous changes are not all contemporary," as Arthur Meggett of Hamilton, N.Y., put it. He sent us the photo at left of a once-graceful stone house, built in 1820 on the main street of Cooperstown, N.Y. In the late 1800s, it seems, a huge Shingle-style dormer fell from the sky and landed right on the building's roof. (A plaque on a side wall explains that, actually, the dormer was added around 1890.) The poor house has been struggling under the weight ever since.

Paul Schoenharl of Cincinnati, Ohio, sent us the photo below of his home town. Paul explains, "During the 1920s or '30s, the owner of this c. 1850 brick house made changes in accord with the then-popular English Revival style. A porch was probably removed; a steeply-pitched gable overhang was added over each entrance; a 'skirt' roof was attached between gables; and a partial facade of fieldstone was applied. The result: a small, charming, Olde English cottage (?). Although it's often been said, it bears repeating: 'You can't make an English Cottage out of a vernacular Italianate.'" We agree. — E. Kahn



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

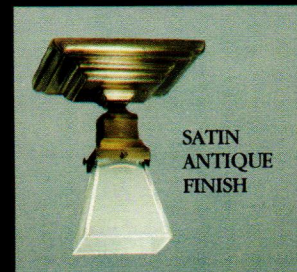
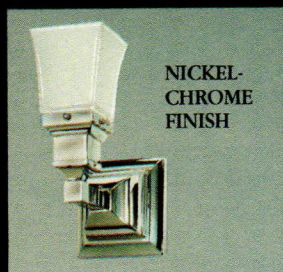
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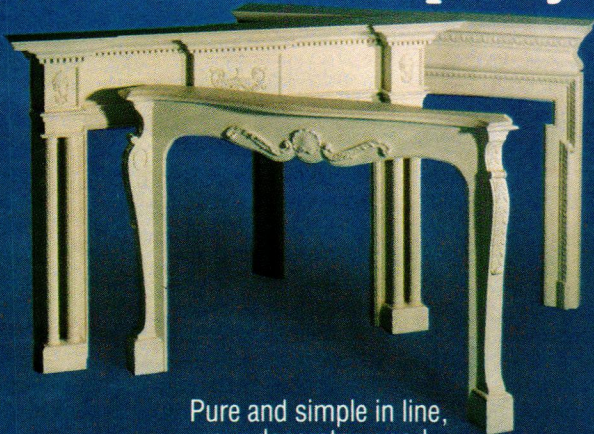
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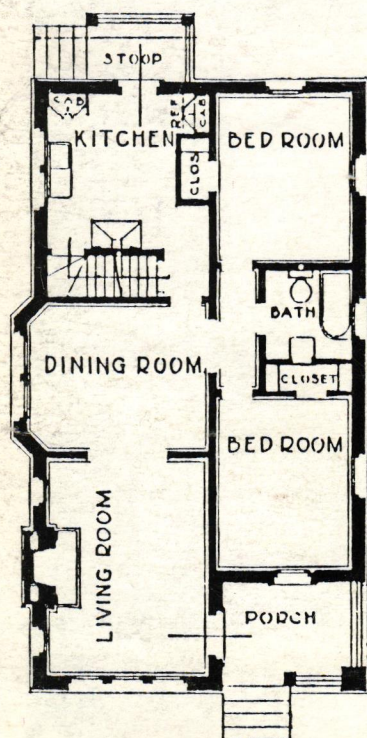
Keeping families warm for more than half a century.



Photo: Gary Moffat

The Chicago Bungalow

Vernacular
Houses



Take a northern city rebuilt in brick, consider the middle-class boom of the 1920s, pick up details from the new architecture of the region – and call the result a bungalow, the hot sell-word of the day. You have the Chicago Bungalow, a very special 20th-century vernacular house.

The only thing “bungalow” about it, of course, is its one or one-and-a-half storey height and its arrival in what was surely the Bungalow Era. It would be hard to trace its roots to the broad, outdoorsy Bungalows of California.

What is in evidence is Prairie School influence. Cast-concrete stringcourses and inset tablets, patterned brickwork (in colors ranging from yellow to dark brown), horizontal emphasis, and mullioned windows all are reminiscent of the work a decade earlier by Frank Lloyd Wright, Tallmadge and Watson, and the others. Most derivative – and exceptional – is the Prairie glass: rectilinear, abstracted leaded windows ornamented with stained glass and even gold leaf.

The Chicago Bungalow has been called an architectural style unto itself, a designation helped by the sheer number of them. More than 100,000 were built; whole neighborhoods came into being as developers speculated on row upon bungalow row, squeezing each house into its narrow, 1/8-acre lot.

—Patricia Poore

More on the Chicago Bungalow in this issue.

