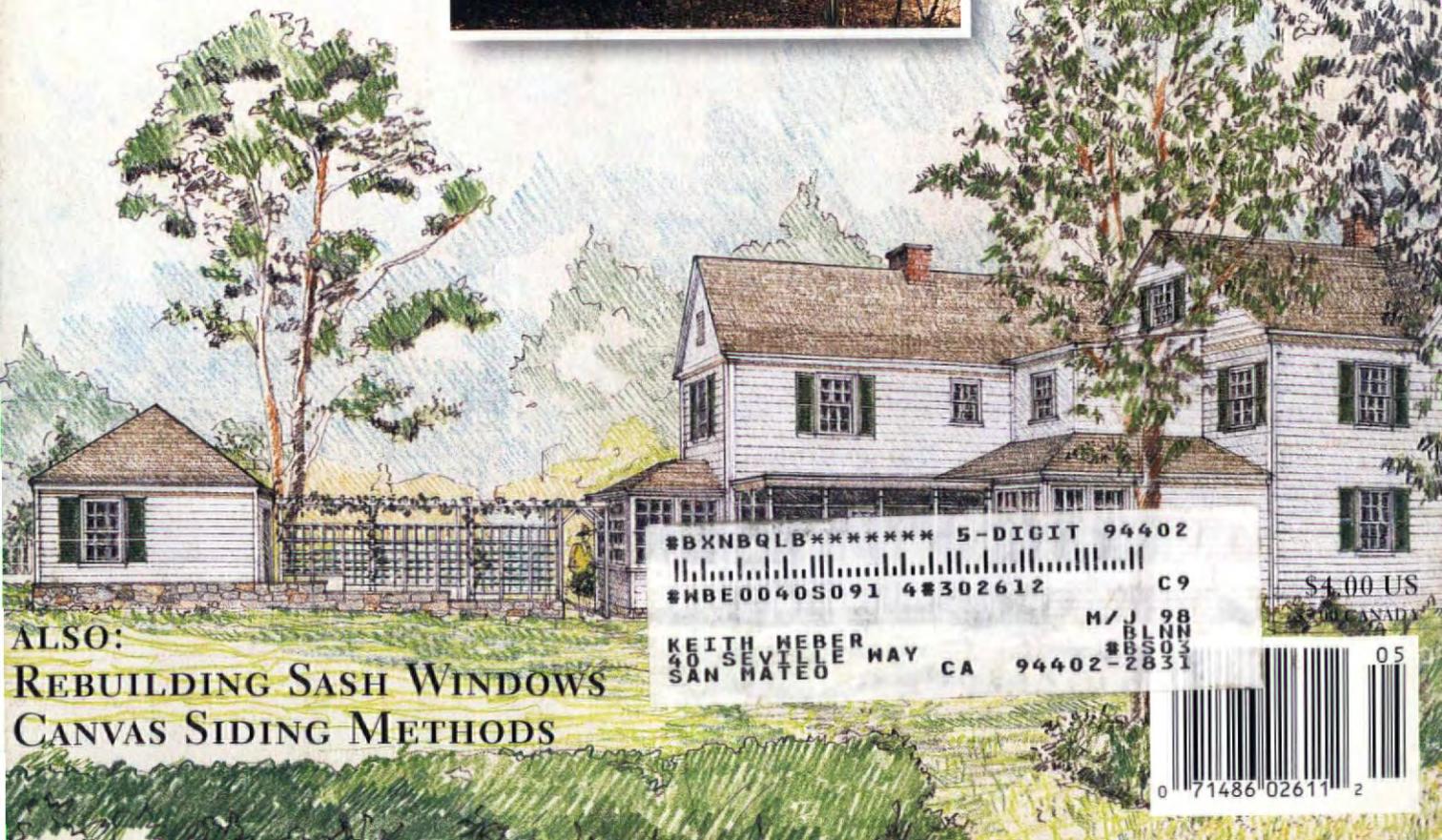
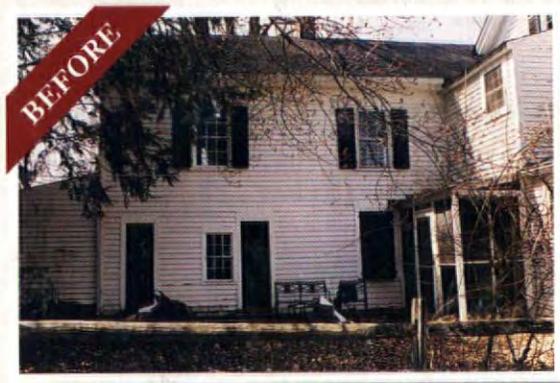


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MAY/JUNE 1995

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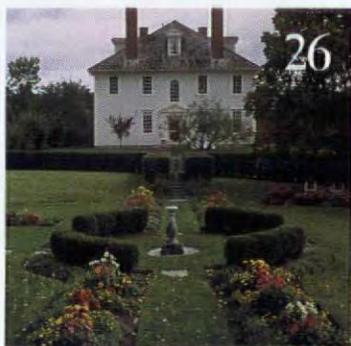
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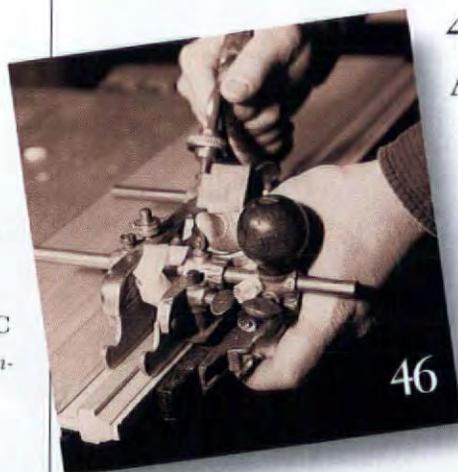
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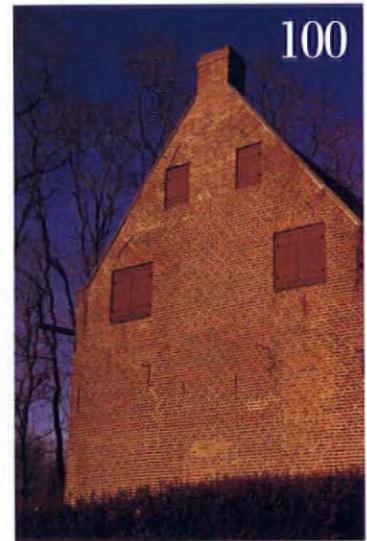
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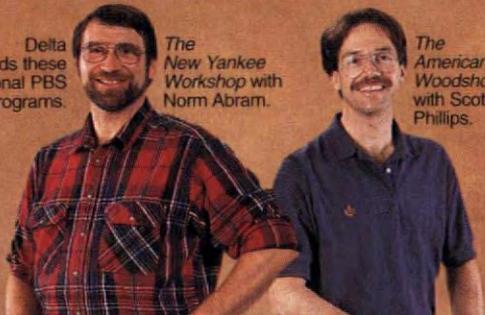
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The Language of Additions

AS YOU READ THIS *OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL*, YOU'RE bound to notice that the word *sensitive* pops up in several places throughout the issue. It's a popular adjective these days — almost politically correct. However, the sensitive we're talking about is not the same as being attentive to a "significant other" in a New Age way. It also doesn't imply a delicate or highly classified situation, as in "sensitive negotiations."

When it comes to old houses, sensitive means a respect for the historic integrity of a building and the work of those who constructed it. How do you treat a building with sensitivity? By first identifying and retaining the materials, details that give a period house its unique character. These features are tangible evidence of the past, and the trick to sensitive additions or major changes in an old house — the focus of this issue — is to work without radically altering or destroying them.

Here's some more architectural argot that may be ambiguous or unfamiliar to the man-on-the-street, but has specific meaning in the world of adding on to old houses:

ADDITION — A new structure, which is physically connected to an existing structure. In contrast, an *alteration* takes place within the existing structure.

ELEMENT — One of the defining architectural features of a building, such as a porch, balcony, chimney, or dormer.

ELEVATION — A two-dimensional drawing (or other graphic representation) showing the vertical, upright parts of a project — a very common example being

the front view of a house as seen dead-on.

ELL — A wing that is secondary and positioned at right angles to the main building.

FENESTRATION — More than a five-dollar word for windows, fenestration is the arrangement of these elements in a building.

FOOTPRINT — The area directly underneath a structure and having the same perimeter as the structure.

MASSING — Seen from the outside, the overall effect of a building.

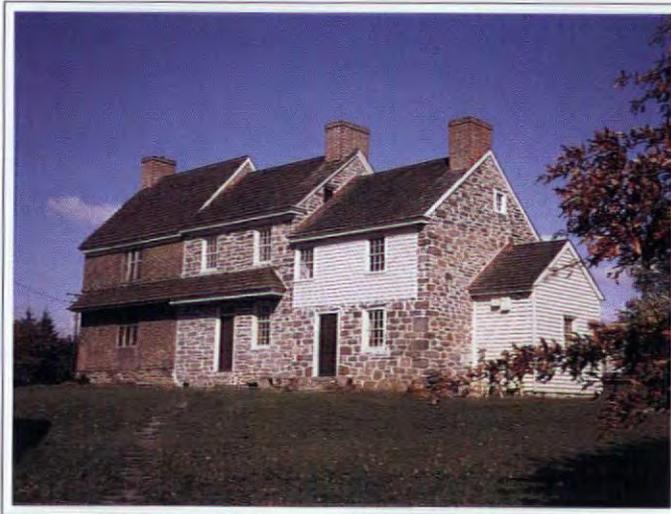
PROPORTION — The width-to-height relationship of openings, such as windows and doors, or the combined area of openings to the area of the wall.

RHYTHM — The result of repeating an element — regularly or irregularly — to produce a desired visual effect.

SCALE — The apparent size of a building as it relates to man or another structure.

WING — An auxiliary part of a building that extends out from the main portion.

IT IS A MAXIM OF ARCHITECTURE THAT THE BEST OF OLD and new will stand successfully side-by-side. Good design is timeless, and sure enough, many of the communities — and individual buildings — we enjoy and seek to preserve are not homogeneous, but made up of infills and accretions from different eras. To borrow another truism from a different discipline, once you've identified the issues concerning additions to old houses, the solutions become a lot clearer.



The local tradition of multiple addition "telescope houses" provided answers for the sensitive expansion of this stone residence in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Edwin Keel



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JOURNAL

EDITOR
Gordon H. Bock

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Lynn Elliott
History and Design

Josh Garskof
Techniques

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

John Leeke
Sanford, Maine

James C. Massey
and Shirley Maxwell
Strasburg, Virginia

Marylee MacDonald
Evanston, Illinois

J. Randall Cotton
Philadelphia

DESIGN DIRECTOR
Patrick Mitchell

DESIGN ASSOCIATES
Inga Soderberg
Claire MacMaster

ART ASSISTANT
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PRODUCTION MANAGER
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Ellen Higgins

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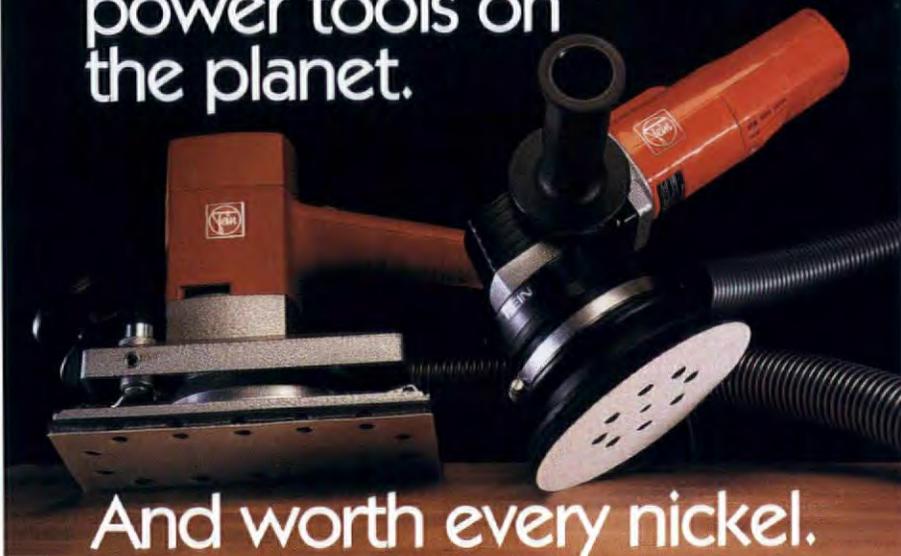
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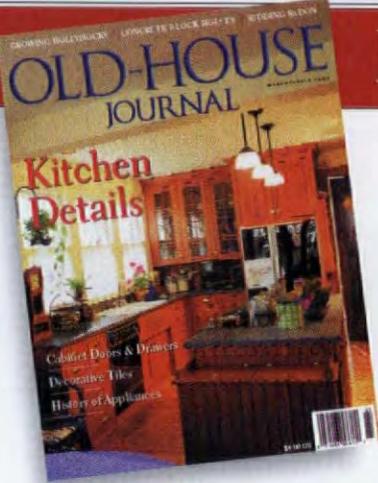
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and boxes referred to their products as “refrigerators.” Interestingly, the name preceded refrigeration technology.

— The Editors

installed the cover counter is Fireslate-2, 47 Hamel Road, Dept. OHJ, Lewiston, ME 04240; (800) 523-5902.

— The Editors

COUNTER COVER

WE LOVE THE COUNTERTOP SHOWN on the cover of your March/April 1995 issue. What is it?

— WENDY SPELLMAN
Oakland, Calif.

It is called Fireslate. Similar to high-school lab tabletop, it is a portland cement product. Manufactured by Flurgrit, in Germany, it comes to the States in 4'x8' sheets, which are cut, edged, and finished by a number of installers. (Seams are filled with matching epoxy.) The company that

RESTORER'S NOTEBOOK FAN

I WAS READING THE MARCH/APRIL 1995 OHJ (I have read it cover-to-cover for at least 15 years). When I turned to Restorer's Notebook, I thought, what a great paperback publication a compilation of those tips would make. The ideas are great, the illustrations excellent, and the infrequent photos make the notebook a lively, high-interest item for old house people — and anyone interested in working on their house.

— FRED YOUNG
Moorestown, N.J.

REFRIGERATORS OR ICE BOXES?

Dear OHJ,

IN YOUR ARTICLE ABOUT THE HISTORY of refrigerators and ranges (“Fire & Ice,” March/April 1995), you refer to early coolers as “refrigerators.” Yet these units did not use refrigeration, they were chilled by large blocks of ice. To my knowledge, the first such appliances, which opened from the top, were called “ice chests,” then around the turn of the century, they stood upright, and were properly termed “ice boxes,” and only after the introduction of electric coolers, did the name “refrigerators” come into use. Why did you call all of them refrigerators?

— THOMAS M. SMITH
Cambridge, Mass.

NEO-GEORGIAN COTTAGES



I SUSPECT THAT A NUMBER OF OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL READERS recognized the Maryland neo-Georgian cottages depicted in “Defining the Cape Cod” (March/April 1995). There are examples of this house type here in upstate New York, and, probably, in many areas. The houses likely have their origins with “The Cornell,” a mail-order plan from the 1925 catalog of Standard Homes Company in Washington D.C. The plan seems to have been a very successful one, since variants without jerkin-head roofs and with different floorplans (probably to avoid copyright infringement) were quickly marketed by other companies.

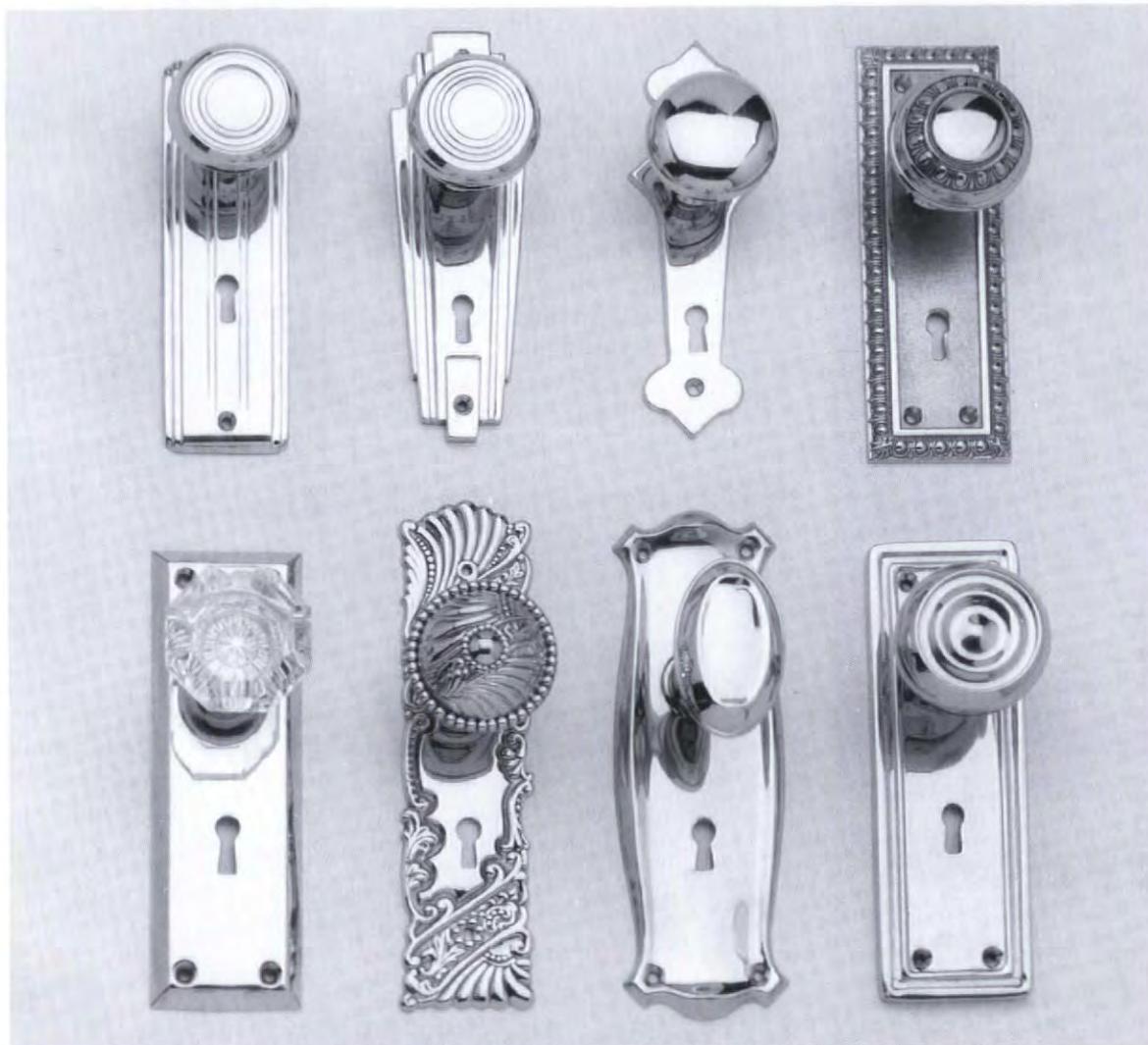
— DANIEL D. REIFF
State University of New York, Fredonia, N.Y.



A portion of an 1890 advertisement for Baldwin’s “refrigerators,” which were cooled with ice.

Good question. Researching the article, we were surprised to find that, almost without exception, manufacturers of the earliest ice-cooled chests

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MANSION CORRECTION

AS THE OWNERS AND OPERATORS of the Morse-Libby Mansion, the Victoria Society of Maine was pleased to see an image of the house included in the Jan./Feb. 1995 issue ("Porch and Paint Palaver for a Stylish Italianate"). However, the caption contained inaccurate information. Henry Austin, of New Haven, Connecticut, was the architect of the building (1860).

—ARLENE PALMER SCHWIND
Victoria Society of Maine
Portland, Maine

MERCER TILE FACADE

YOUR ARTICLE ON HENRY MERCER (Who They Were, Jan./Feb. 1995) prompts me to send these pictures of our old house, which was completely faced with Mercer tile in 1914. The then-owner was very unhappy with the results and wrote to Dr. Mercer that it made him the "laughingstock of the neighborhood." He threatened suit, but



The ornate Mercer tile added to this Philadelphia row-house in 1914 did not please its owner.



never followed through. I suppose this could be an early remuddling, but we love the house anyway.

— KATHARINE KRIEBEL
Philadelphia, Pa.

OHJ'S MASSEY TO TEACH COURSE



James Massey's course, *Restoration and Preservation of Historic Properties*, will be held in Drew University's restored 1835 Greek Revival mansion, a subject for class study.

OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL contributing Editor James C. Massey will lead a two-week course on the preservation of historic buildings at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. Through slide lectures, case studies, field work, the course will teach students to identify building styles and periods and to analyze changes and additions. The class will run from June 5 through June 16, meeting Mon. through Thurs. from 9 a.m. to noon. Contact Drew University's continuing education department, at (201) 408-3400. Enrollment is limited. In addition to teaming up with his wife, Shirley Maxwell, as OHJ's architectural historians, Massey is the former Vice-President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a co-founder of the National Preservation Institute.



Top Picture: Rococo Chandelier by Starr, Fellows, New York C: 1857

Center: Deer's Head sconce by Gibson Gas Fixture Works, Phila., PA C: 1890

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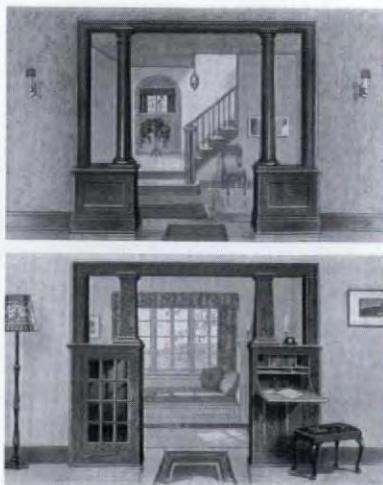
Period Colonnades

Our 1905 house apparently had a room divider between the entryway and the parlor. Judging by ghosts on the floor, we think it had columns and panels. What might it have looked like?

— A.B. Loeschen
Austin, Minn.

COLONNADES WERE EXTREMELY popular at the turn of this century, especially for Colonial Revival and Arts & Crafts style houses. “The colonnade [is] at once a wall and a door, but neither,” exclaimed Curtis Lumber & Millwork Company’s 1917 catalog. “It is the handsome go-between of rooms, the neutral arbiter of space, a stately portal, ever open, inviting friendly intercourse and passage.” Indeed, nearly every building products catalog of the era offered numerous designs available by mail order. The

Stock colonnades did not include jamb or baseboard moulding. Shelves and desktop could face opposite rooms (Roach & Mussler Co., 1927).



standard colonnade had columns and chair-rail-height woodwork that picked up the wainscot or panelled door detail of the house. Fancier models offered book shelves with glass doors and even desks.

Blown-in Back-Up

We recently had insulation blown in our walls. Our architect now tells

us we need a vapor retarder on the interior walls. Can you suggest an appropriate product?

— Larry Tyler
Rockville, Md.

BATT AND BOARD INSULATION typically come with their own vapor retarder — foil facing attached to one side. Installed on the living space side [continued on page 16]

Belted Bodies

Can you give me any information about the curious projection separating the upper and lower stories of my house? I have never seen anything like this on another house in my community. What is its purpose?

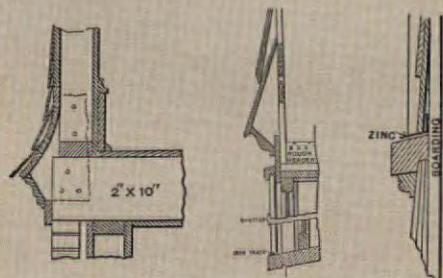
— Eileen M. Klees
Chicago, Ill.



A belt course divides the siding between stories — mostly for effect.

THE “BELT-COURSE” PROJECTION — a detail named for the similar masonry technique — is a fairly typical feature from the 1890s to the 1910s. In brickwork, such a course was designed to shed rainwater away from the building, protecting the foundation from moisture. This strategy also works for wood-sided buildings, but, for houses with clapboards or shingles, a belt course was mostly a decorative element. It often coincides with a double-body scheme — different types of siding on each side of the belt course. Painters often used belt courses to separate colors (or shades of a single color) for polychrome paint jobs. Sometimes it was painted the trim color.

Approaches to building a belt course, left to right: horizontal sheathing topped with short shingles ride on gussets (1894) for a curved profile: double coursed shingles rest on moulding (1901); and a simple, exposed horizontal moulding (1901).



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Ductless Split Air Conditioner with 4, 3, or 2-Way Air Discharge Capabilities

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The Answer: Ductless split air conditioner with 4, 3, or 2-way air discharge capabilities.

The Answer: Ductless split air conditioner/heat pump line with 36 models to choose from.

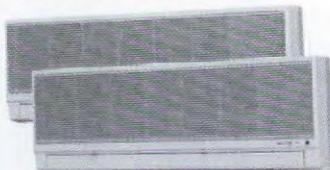
The Answer: Wall/floor/ceiling-mounted ductless split air conditioners with BTUs ranging from 7,000 to 45,000.

The Answer: Best ductless split air conditioners for small office applications.

The Answer: Ductless split air conditioners with the best design for today's decor.

For those not familiar with the Sanyo line of ductless split air conditioners/heat pumps, not coming up with the correct question "What is Sanyo?" will not put you in jeopardy.

And, for those who know the Sanyo line with 36 models, you already know it offers the best indoor climate control solutions to real-world problems.



SANYO

For more information please contact,
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Chatsworth, CA 91311
Phone: (818) 998-7322, Ext.750

Ask OHJ

[continued from page 14]
of the wall, the retarder inhibits moisture condensation in the insulation. Blown-in insulation, however, has no such facing. And since it's typically blown into walls that have siding and plaster intact, it's not possible to add a sheet vapor retarder, such as 6-mil polyethylene.

The solution is to use moisture inhibiting interior paint. One such product is Glidden's Insul-Aid, available at some paint stores. It's a latex product that can be applied with rollers and brushes. One coat is generally sufficient for smooth surfaces, but two may be required on porous areas, like masonry walls. Insul-Aid can be applied over old paint (as long as it is properly prepared) and can be overcoated. For a local source, contact The Glidden Company, 925 Euclid Avenue, Dept. OHJ, Cleveland, OH 44115; (216) 344-8000.

Marble Patch

We have a broken marble countertop. Is there any way to reattach it so that the patching material looks like the usual gray veins in the stone?

— Karen Purser
San Francisco, Calif.

USE A CLEAR, LOW-VISCOSITY EPOXY. If the crack is very fine, coloring may not be necessary. For large voids, try to match the color of the stone with marble dust from a marble supplier. (Very old marble that's developed a dark patina might be tough to match.)

To get the closest match, use dust from your marble countertop. Scratch the bottom of the stone with a diamond-surfaced hacksaw blade, collect the dust, then blend it with the epoxy as you combine the two parts.

Do some test mixes to get the color right. Then, overfill the crack slightly and let it harden. To finish the seam, cut it flush with a razor blade before it cures completely and sand smooth with 600-grit sandpaper.

Flip-Flopped Fixtures

These original chandeliers are in our 1929 house. One has standard bulbs hanging downward (left), and the other has the candle-flame type pointing up (right). Has one been altered?

— Denise Hill
Santa Rosa, Calif.



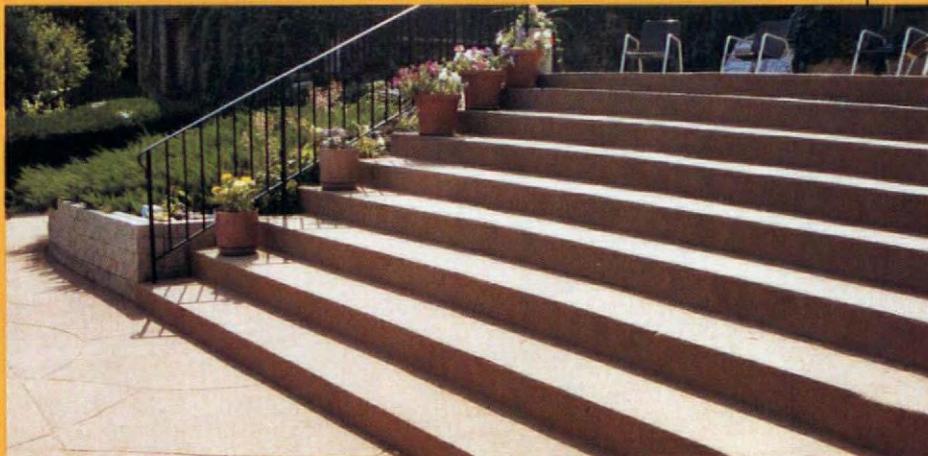
Teardrop and candle-flame bulbs in matching 1920s chandeliers.

YOUR FIXTURES ARE PROBABLY BOTH in their original form. In the 1920s and '30s, lighting manufacturers mass-produced fixtures in great variety, offering chandeliers with arms that could be oriented either up or down. By the roaring '20s, candelabra-like Colonial Revival fixtures were extremely popular. These were designed for ornamental, flame-shaped bulbs that romantically evoked 17th- and 18th-century America's light — the candle. Many models had sleeves with faux dripping wax. The bulbs were low-wattage and used for mood lighting — not for brightening work areas — which may explain the choice of two different bulb types in your house.

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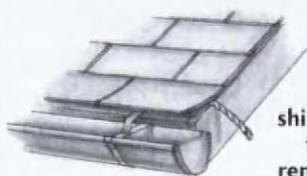


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RESTORER'S NOTEBOOK

REMOVING GUTTERS

HERE'S A TRICK I'VE DEVELOPED to make removing metal gutters — and their hangers — easier. I loosen each shingle along the bottom course and then push a rope underneath them. The thickness of the rope (1/2" or more) lifts the shingles and holds the entire row out of the way, freeing both hands to pull nails and remove hangers. I leave the



Rope makes a good shingle lifter for gutter removal and installation work.

rope in place when attaching new gutters. Then, I simply pull slowly on one end of the rope, releasing the entire loosened course, and tighten the shingles.

— DERK AKERSON
Roseville, Calif.

STRIPPING TOOL

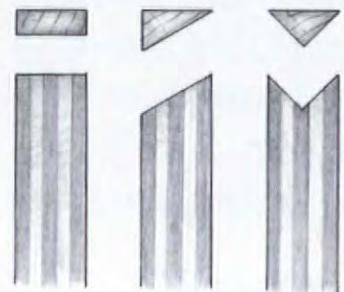
STRIPPING PAINT FROM SMALL crevices is difficult because tools that are thin enough to get into the grooves (like a blade or awl) are also sharp enough to damage the wood. Try crochet needles. They have different sized points, with rounded tips, perfect for removing paint from the smallest places without scratching the woodwork. I carry them in my tool bag.

— WILLIAM J. SCHMITZ
Athens, Ga.

EDGING PLYWOOD

WHERE THE EDGE OF PLYWOOD is exposed — on cabinets or built-in shelving — I have a good technique for edge-banding. Instead of attaching a thin, flat piece of solid wood, I use different shapes that better cap the laminated edges. For places where only one side of the plywood is visible, such as a

low shelf, I cut the plywood's edge at 45 degrees with the long point on the visible side. Then, I cut the edging strip with the same angle. If it's done right, the seam lines up with the corner and is undetectable. If both sides of the plywood will be in plain sight, I cut a V-groove in its edge and install V-shaped banding



Left to right: standard edge-banding; angled for one invisible side; V-groove for total camouflage.

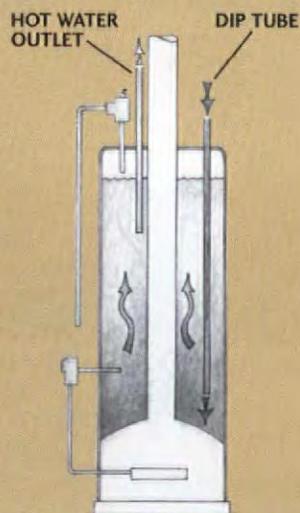
that meets the plywood at both corners and is invisible from both directions. Also, edging can be mitered to go around corners.

— RUDY WORTHTON
Evanston, Ill.

MORE HOT WATER

IF YOUR OLD WATER HEATER isn't providing enough hot water, check the cold water supply line inside the tank. A dip tube should carry the water down into the tank bottom. (As the water heats, it rises and the hot water is drawn from the top.) Often the dip tube breaks off or corrodes inside, so the cold water is released near the

The dip tube brings cold water to the bottom of the tank, where it's heated and rises to the top.



top of the tank, where it mixes with the heated water — and cools it. To check and replace a dip tube, shut off the power and water supplies to the tank. Then, disconnect the cold water supply line and remove what's left of the dip tube. Replace it with a matching new one (inexpensive and available from a plumbing supplier). Consult your dip tube supplier and the heater's manual for more information.

— T.J. FORREST
Sweetwater, Tex.

BASEMENT LIGHTS

THERE IS A DARK CORNER IN MY 6' deep basement. The light socket is not on the switched circuit, and the area is hard to navigate because it's behind the large center chimney. So I exchanged the pull-chain socket for a motion-activated light, common for outdoor use. Instead of the standard floodlights, I used 75 watt bulbs. Now the light automatically turns on for me.

MIRA CHIN
— *Syracuse, N.Y.*

Share your solutions! We'll pay \$25 for hints or shortcuts that might help other old-house owners. Send them to Notebook Editor, *Old-House Journal*, Two Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930.

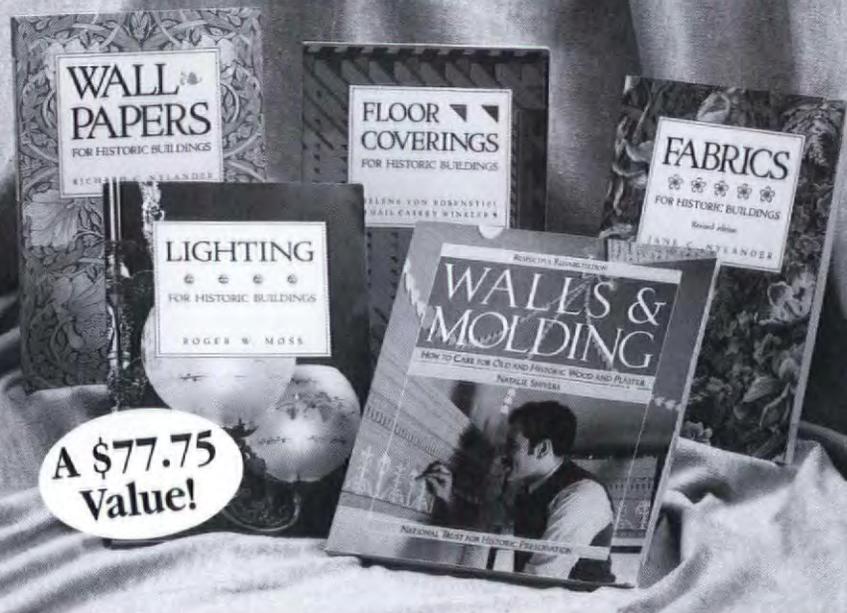
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Old House Journal 5/95

NEWBRIDGE

Coming Clean on TSP, MEX, *et al*

BY GORDON BOCK

TO LOOK AT THE MYSTERIOUS NAMES AND NON-SENSE packaging, you'd think TSP and MEX are secret formulas or military gear. In reality, these inexpensive, plain-Jane products are two of the best cleaners around for old-house work. So what's the deal on MEX, TSP, and the namesakes that share their shelf in paint and hardware stores?

For years, *OHJ* readers have praised the many powers of TSP, and for good reason. Short for trisodium phosphate, TSP is a generic compound that has been cleaning homes and industry for over a century. The Navy purges steam pipes on ships with TSP; commercial laundries call on it for textiles. In houses, TSP may show up as a water softener (in pellet form), but it's most often put to work as an all-purpose dirt fighter and paint deglosser.

Manufactured from phosphate rock, TSP's prowess comes from being very alkaline — ideal for lowering water surface tension and emulsifying grease. For average indoor cleaning, dissolve $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of TSP powder in 2 gallons of hot water. Follow with a rinse of clean water.

Outdoors, TSP is safe to mix with bleach for a mildew killer-cleaner (combine 1 quart chlorine bleach with 1 cup TSP dissolved in 3 quarts warm water). Water and TSP is also good for sludge clean-up after stripping paint with a water-rinsable remover. Recently, TSP has even found a role in lead paint abatement. The phosphates have an affinity for lead, and washing up with TSP is recommended for reducing paint dust levels.

Even better for restoration work, TSP's mildly caustic nature can conquer oil-based paints and var-

nishes. An average mix takes the sheen off enamels so new paint has a better hold. Stronger solutions actually soften old paint layers by breaking down the oil binder so they loosen with a stiff brush (latex paints are unaffected). One of the few ways to remove notoriously tenacious milk paint is with 1 lb TSP in 1 gallon very hot (not boiling) water. But why stop here? In an old house there's no limit to the light-duty paintstripping a strong solution of TSP can do — soaking painted door hardware in a bucket, for example, or wet-mopping a floor to lift drips and spatter. Neutralizing isn't necessary, but rinse well before refinishing. The downside to alkalinity is that TSP may darken hardwoods and can corrode unfinished aluminum. Test first before washing any surface. Like all strong cleaners, TSP should be handled with care by wearing gloves and eye protection. Outdoors, wet down plants first with fresh water to avoid "fertilizer burns" if they get splashed.

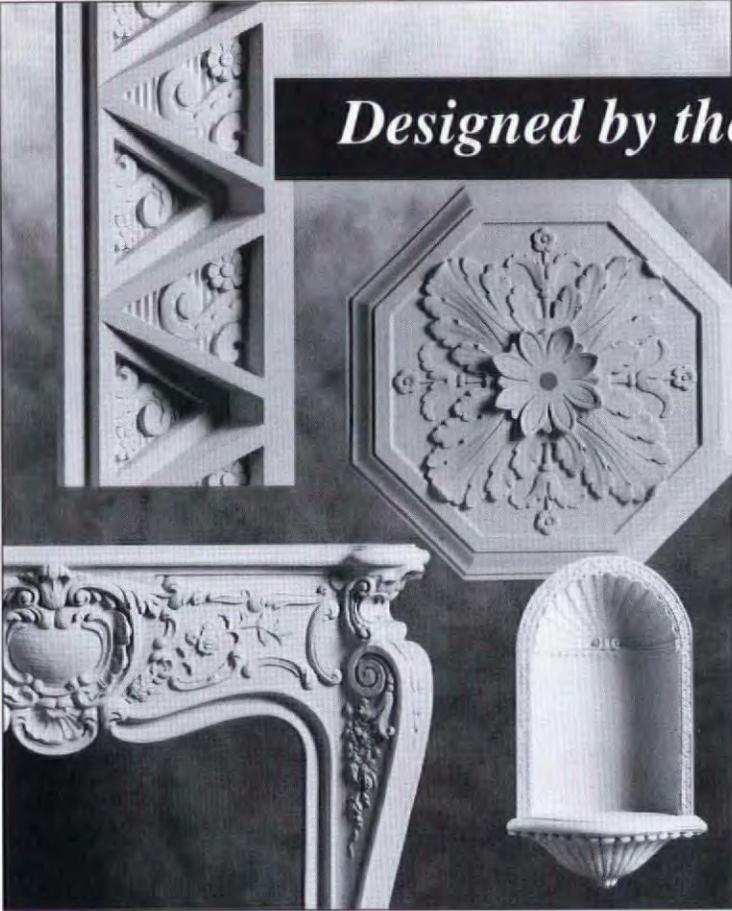


TSP and its clones are strong, yet clean with next-to-no sudsing. MEX has a flair for de-sooting brick and stone, such as fireplaces and outdoor grills.

Cheap, versatile, and easy to use, TSP sounds A-OK, but there's a catch. In locales where phosphates are restricted because they enter streams and lakes, causing algae growth, TSP may be unavailable. (Many states just prohibit phosphates in laundry cleaners, but New York and Vermont include TSP in this group.) TSP can also be hard to find just because it's sold by another name; check the wall-and-woodwork cleaners, as well as paint-prep materials.

Enter a different powder with a letters-only moniker: MEX. Rather than an acronym, MEX is the trade name for a product based on a non-phosphate group of chemicals. Chief among

[continued on page 22]



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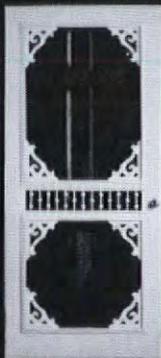
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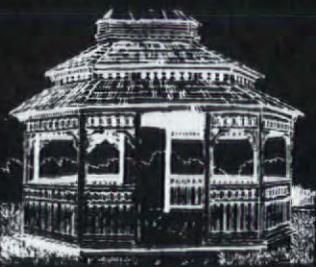
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[continued from page 20]

them is sodium metasilicate, another workhorse, heavy-duty cleaner that packs an alkaline punch. It's found in many hard-surface cleaning products, such as those for brightening whitewall tires. Like TSP, MEX mixes with water pretty much to taste for cleaning dirt and grease. It's particularly good at removing soot and smoke stains from brick and stone masonry, as well as oil and grease from concrete driveways and walls. While not a paint softener or deleader, a strong solution of MEX (1 cup powder to 1 gallon water) will lift shellac and wax — handy for restoring wood floors and woodwork.

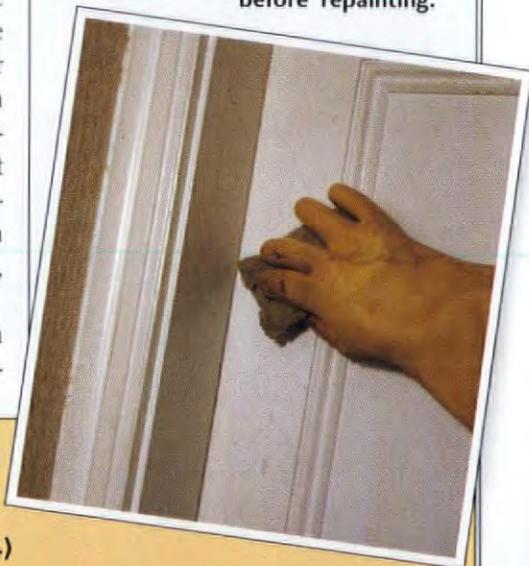
On the market for 35 years, MEX didn't start out as a stand-in for TSP, but over time it has assumed the role for some cleaning jobs. A case in point is removing grime from steam-heating boilers that are afflicted with "wet steam" (see "The Care & Feeding of One-Pipe Steam," Nov/Dec 1994 *OHJ*). Wear rubber gloves when working with strong solutions of MEX, and always avoid eye and lung contact with the powder. The manufacturer also says the mix can stain "open-grained woods" — that is, hardwoods — if left to stand.

Since the '70s, however, a breed of phosphate-free TSP prod-

ucts and substitutes have appeared. How do you make TSP without phosphates? You don't, so they're actually different compounds, often employing sodium metasilicate. Some are not even powders and turn instead to water-borne solvents and surfactants. These products are usually designed to perform the same basic jobs — deglossing and cleaning interior surfaces with minimal rinsing.

Speaking of washing, no matter what cleaner you choose, remember the old-time maid's rule: Always wash walls from the bottom — up. Sounds backwards, but if you start at the top, you'll get streaks where the cleaner drools ahead of you down the wall, and these light spots may remain even after you've washed the entire room.

Cleaners like TSP dull shiny paint surfaces as they remove dirt and grease — both important steps before repainting.



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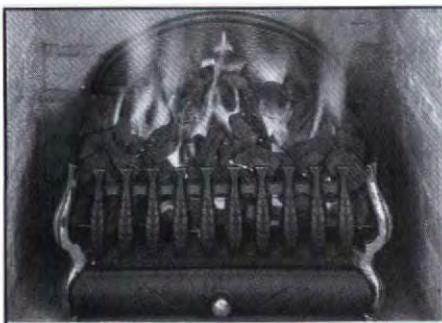


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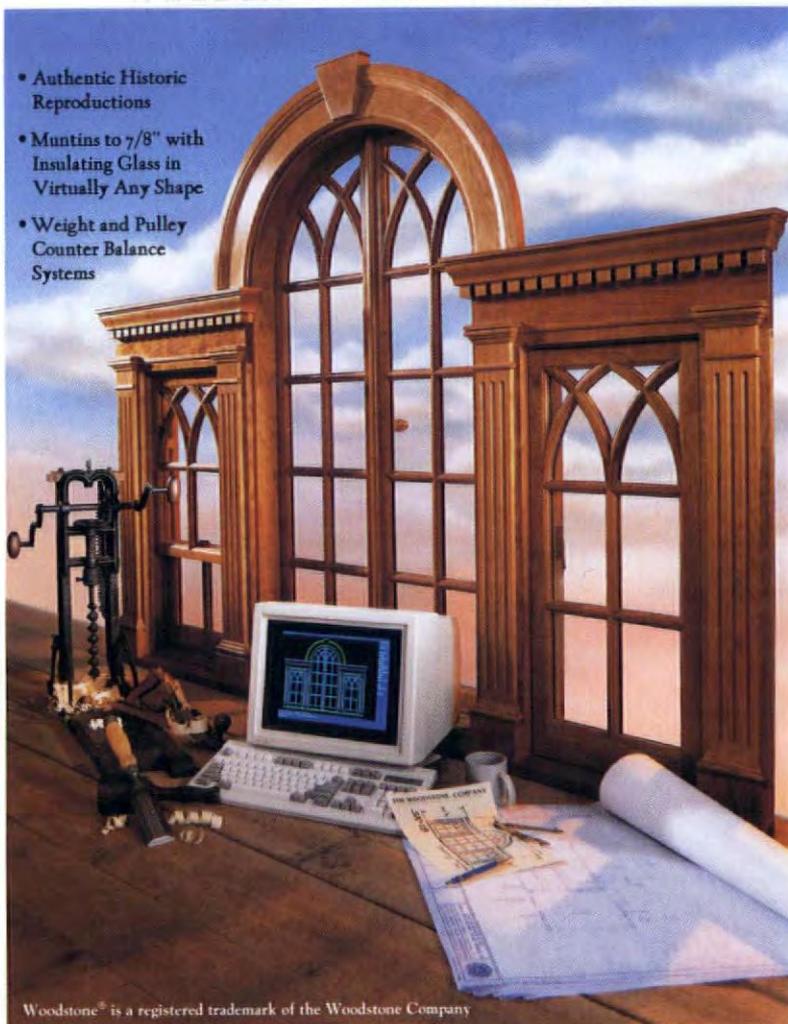
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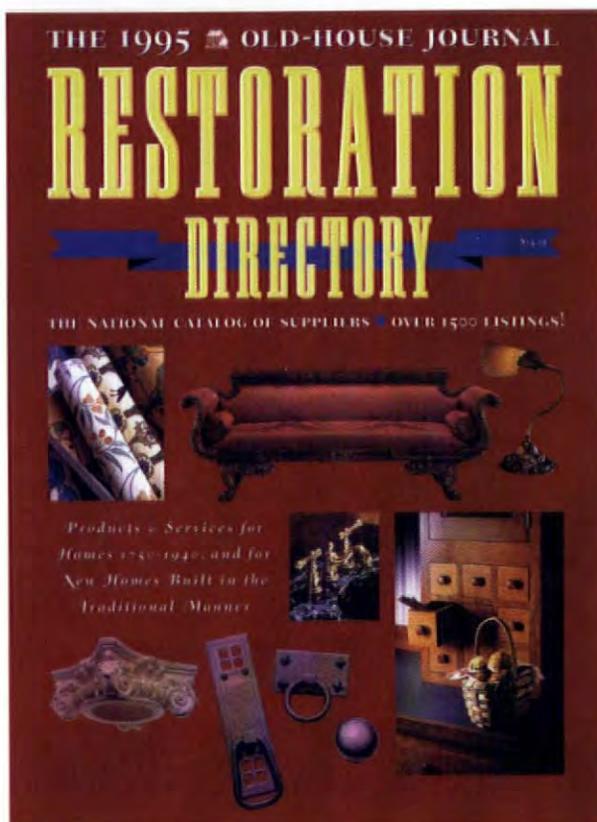
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The Colonial Pleasure Garden

BY JAMES ROBERT O'DAY

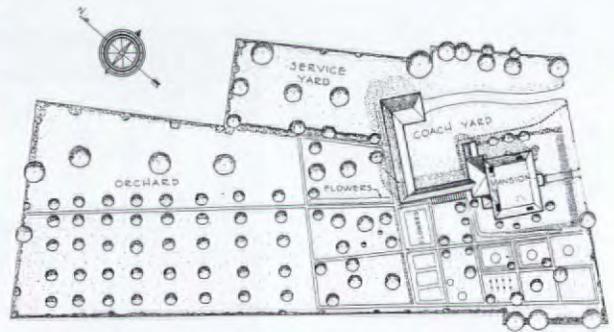
SETTLERS PLANTED RUDIMENTARY, UTILITARIAN gardens almost as soon as they arrived in the new world. Yet leisure time — and the opportunity to garden for pleasure — was not common until the 18th century, when the Colonial pleasure garden came into vogue. Almost an outdoor living room, these formal gardens reflected the tastes, styles, and attitudes of early America from the mid-1700s to the first quarter of the 1800s. If you have a Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, or even Colonial Revival house, a Colonial pleasure garden might suit your yard.

A Formal Plan

PLEASURE GARDENING, LIKE THE EARLY PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE, was largely the pursuit of well-educated gentlemen, who took their cues from a proliferation of garden books by British tastemakers. Gardens were laid out on a central axis and composed of simple geometric arrangements of planting beds and walkways. The beds, or *parterres*, were square, rectilinear, round, ovoid, or fan-shaped. The parterres were subdivided into smaller geometric beds by central footpaths paved with crushed shell or sand in coastal areas, rocks or gravel elsewhere.

Houses generally were built on high ground, so gardens tended to slope downhill — terraced accordingly. Also, Georgian and Federal houses were typically built close to the street; pleasure gardens were in back. Of

course, the native terrain dictated the siting of the garden, but hillocks were a popular location, offering vistas and pleasant breezes. Sometimes a garden might run down to the water's edge. Garden sizes varied, however the majority were on an intimate scale. Most were enclosed by a board fence or hedge, valuable for



The Rundlet-May House's garden typifies the symmetry of the Colonial pleasure garden.

privacy and, in New England, for protection from the harsh winter.

Not surprisingly, most of the plantings, too, were Old-World imports. Herbaceous perennials such as pinks, and, later, yew and boxwood, were used as border plantings. Orchards of plum, pear, and apple trees graced the evermore domesticated landscape. Increased trade with Japan, China, and the Continent enriched gardens with an abundance of new and exotic plant species — a sensation in Colonial society. Flowers such as asters, crocus, foxglove, poppy, larkspur, impatiens, fuchsia, chrysanthemum, and peonies were imported by the end of the 1700s. Boxwood, catalpa, and golden chain tree were also embraced. (See "Colonial Pleasure Garden Plantings," p. 28.)

Architecture in the Garden

"IT WILL BE REQUISITE TO HAVE IN THE MIDDLE OF ONE side of the flower garden, a handsome octagonal summer-house, roofed every way and finely painted with Landscips and other conceits, furnished with seats about and a table in the middle," advised John Rea's *Flora, Ceres, and Pomona*, published in England in 1676.

Summer houses — known as *bowers* in New England — had great prominence in the garden and were usually the terminus of the central axis, or placed to one side of the garden at an intersecting pathway. The summer house was to be used for entertainment as well as sundry garden tasks, such as putting up bulbs. Designs varied from the simple to the complex. Most were single-room structures with large openings for doors

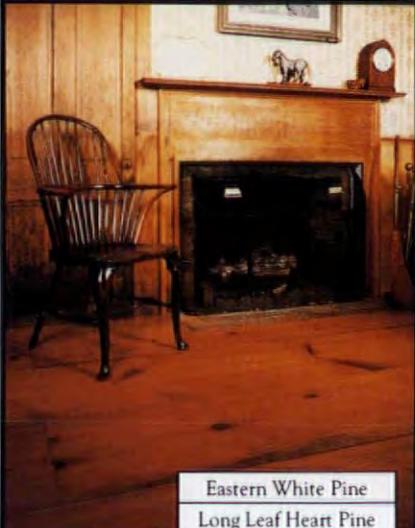


A 1904 Colonial Revival garden at the Hamilton House, in South Berwick, Maine.



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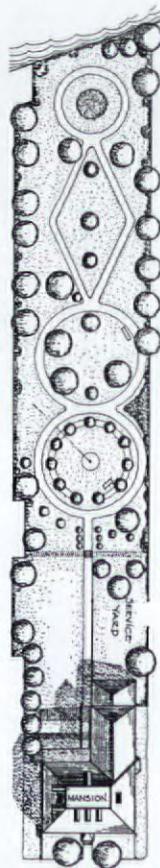
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and windows. Lattice was commonly used to take advantage of warm breezes and to anchor ivy. Bowers often included built-in features such as benches and tables. More elaborate ones had two storeys and several chambers. Summer houses were places for tea, for playing cards — and, of course, for a rendezvous.

Other garden buildings included the privy, tool houses, dove-cotes, and bird-houses. If a summer house was beyond the means of the resident, then trellises and arbors took its place. Round or ogee-arched gateways and arbors were located throughout the garden.

The Governor John Wentworth Mansion in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.



Back to Nature

AT THE THE END OF THE 1700s, there spread a revolt against formality in the pleasure garden. In the natural style — also an import from England — obstructions to views, such as walls and fences, were leveled. Courtyards were replaced by rolling lawns freely sprinkled with trees and shrubs. Parterres lost their geometric shapes for free-flowing forms. Paths began to

meander, and plantings became asymmetrical.

This back-to-nature movement overtook outbuildings too; romantic and revival styles became fashionable. In 1758, Theophilus Hardenbrook, a surveyor, placed an advertisement in the *New York Mercury* which stated his willingness to design summer houses and pavilions “after the taste of Arabian, Chinese, Persian, Gothic, Muscovite, Palladian, Roman, Vitruvian, and Egyptian.” Outdoor architecture gradually shifted away from the classical to the rustic and fanciful.

The natural style was particularly popular in the South. In New England, where harsh winters required moderate gardens with protective enclosures, the natural style was carried out to a lesser extent. And in the New England city, with its small, narrow lots, the formal design remained well-rooted.

Plant the garden in phases over several seasons.

Even small gardens can capture the Colonial pleasure garden's style.

James Robert O'Day is a garden designer and historian who lives and works in Boston; (617) 426-7214.

COLONIAL PLEASURE GARDEN PLANTINGS

In addition to those mentioned in the article, early varieties of the following plants were common for Colonial pleasure gardens.

TREES	FLOWERS	SHRUBS & IVY
dogwood	anemones	box
fringe tree	daffodils	clematis
magnolia	geranium	English ivy
mock orange	hyacinth	forsythia
peach	martagon lily	privet
quince	Persian iris	snowball tree
	tulip	spiraea

For period varieties, see *For Every House a Garden*, by Rudy & Joy Favretti, University Press of New England, Hanover, NH; (603) 643-7110.

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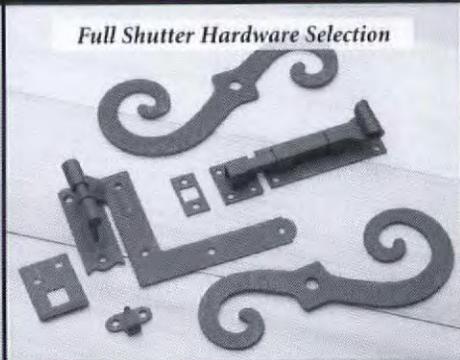
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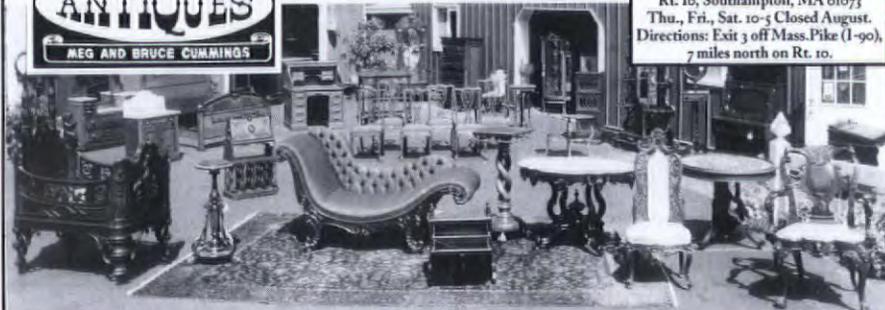
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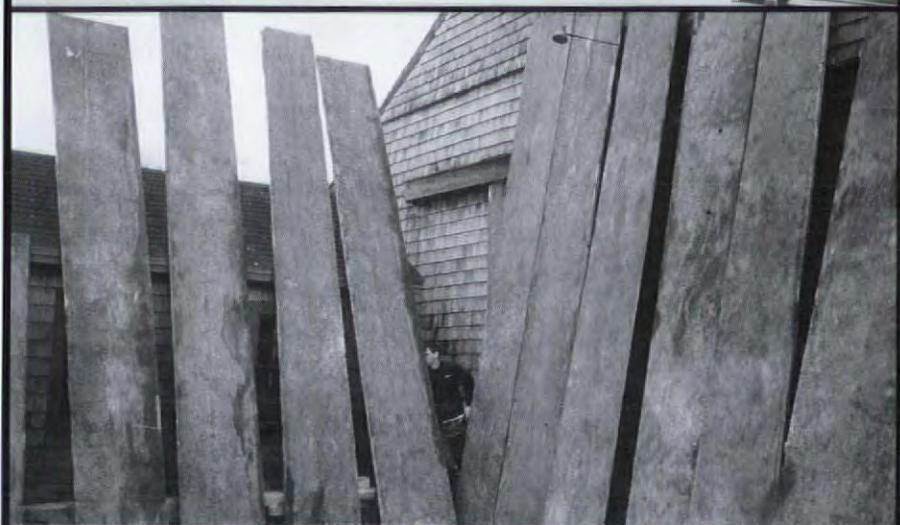
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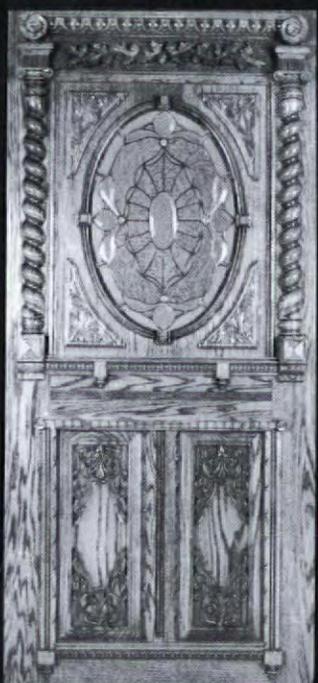
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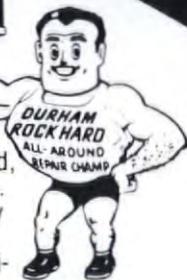


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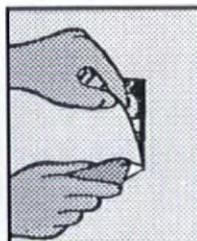
3. Apply fiberglass mat to wet surface.



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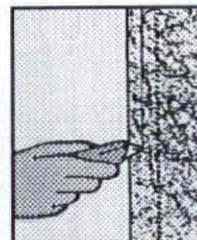
7. Apply second coat of saturant to wet mat.



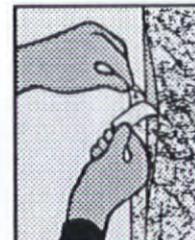
8. Apply 1st coat of saturant to adjacent area.



9. Apply mat to 2nd area, overlapping by 1".



10. Cut down center of overlap (both layers).



11. Remove mat strips on both sides of cut.



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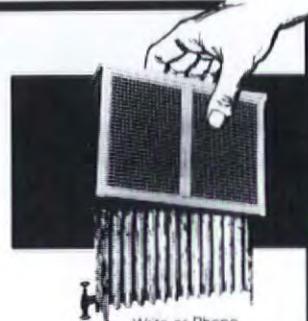
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ON ENLARGING OLD HOUSES

“ARCHITECTURE IS MY DELIGHT,” wrote Thomas Jefferson, “and putting up and putting down, one of my favorite amusements.” Indeed, the colonial president-cum-architect was not alone in his urge to alter his home. The structures of early settlers were intended to grow. Pens

were appended to log houses in the South; half-Cape Cod houses were starter homes that might grow when means and time allowed. ❖ The trouble with additions to old houses today is that they can pose dilemmas for many folks who feel strongly about maintaining or restoring their

period character. How do you reconcile the limitations of an antique house you love as is, with a

A lower roof line, recessed position, and white-painted brick make an enormous addition to a 1790s stone house in Glenwood, Maryland, read as secondary to the original structure.

BY GORDON BOCK



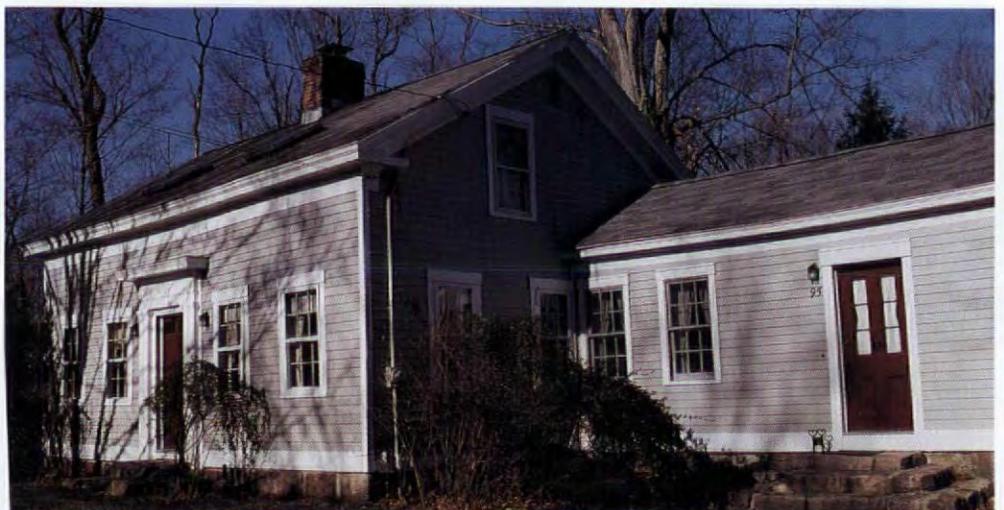
For the added portico on this 1887 house — home of the Preservation Society of Newport County, Rhode Island — matching materials were used, but the detailing — geometrical rather than round balusters — differentiates it from the original building.

growing family? What keeps an expansion from becoming a remuddling?

Additions, on old and new houses alike, begin to go astray when they are created from the inside, out. The need for space drives a shortsighted interior expansion. In the worst cases, wings and dormers pop out like embolisms to accommodate a new bedroom or an enhanced master



ABOVE: A reduced scale subordinates the proposed annex to this 18th-century Greek Revival house at Williams College. The connecting “hyphen” limits changes to the historic fabric. RIGHT: Setbacks have long been used to subordinate additions. Both main house and extension were built in the 1840s for the daughter of a pea farmer in Mount Carmel, Connecticut. The wing served as a buttery and contained an indoor well.



bath. Giving equal consideration to the impact on the exterior of the building should be a logical part of the design. Even before this, examine the real need for more room. Reorganizing existing space may yield acceptable results at far less cost.

Good additions to old houses are ultimately the products of good design, and having a good designer on your side — that is, not leaving important decisions to a contractor — is a big step in this direction. The philosophical issues behind additions to high-profile historic buildings are often many, and covered elsewhere (see Additional Reading, p.37). When it comes to the nuts & bolts issues faced by owners of garden-variety old houses who want to add on, opinions about the top “hot buttons” are surprisingly consistent. With this in mind, we’ll offer a few stepping stones.

A Little Preservation Education

“THE CONCEPT OF REHABILITATION ALLOWS some change for a contemporary use,” offers Kay Weeks, of the National Park Service’s Preservation Assistance Division, “but a new addition has the potential to damage or destroy the character-defining materials and features of a historic building.” Since part of the Park Service’s mandate is to protect the integrity of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, they have outlined the scope of sensitive additions from a preservation standing in a seminal piece of literature — Preservation Briefs #14. A new addition meets the standards of rehabilitation if it is within a “tri-

Two new wings on a Colonial Revival house in a Washington, D.C., historic district. Similar siding keeps some continuity with the main house; distinctly modern clerestory windows keep the addition as something new.

umvirate” of key points, that is if it:

1. Preserves significant historic materials and features.
2. Preserves the historic character.
3. Protects the historical difference by making a visual distinction between old and new.

Along with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Preservation Briefs #14 is often used as the basis for the design guidelines of local historic districts — the “rules of the game” in these communities, themselves required reading for anyone planning an addition. How the guidelines are implemented, however, is ultimately up to the skills of the designer and builder. In a survey of noted preservationists and architects, the following design issues are the ones we heard most about.

Materials and Detailing

EMPLOYING THE SAME BASIC MATERIALS helps maintain a continuity between new and old, but don't copy-cat the detailing. Additions don't need to look the same as the original building. In fact, the details are the place to make the statement that it's a new addition versus a replication — an approach strongly endorsed by the Park Service for historically significant buildings. You can't recreate the past, so don't try.

Windows work best when they take their cues from the old fenestration. Sizes can vary if the general proportions of the originals are continued. Opinions vary on materials — some say they're best kept the same, others say a difference is not a problem. However, most agree the pattern of the lights or sash should take their inspiration from the existing windows. Plate-glass or sliding aluminum windows don't mix with horizontal double-hung sash.

Though there is technically no hierarchy of building materials that applies to additions, most folks feel it is not easy to go “up” in materials on an addition — for instance, mating a brick wing to a wood-frame house. Picking up the same type of



foundation material, though, and using it in the addition will help tie the new and old parts of the house together.

Scale and Site

HOUSES ARE TRICKY TO ENLARGE. THEY'RE small, compared to public or commercial buildings, and almost any room-sized addition can dramatically change the overall bulk and appearance of a house. Two general ideas have long been used to prevent an addition from overpowering the main building:

KEEP THE SIZE AND SCALE OF THE ADDITION SMALLER — Most successful additions to old houses “read” as secondary.

RECESS THE ADDITION — This mitigates the addition's impact, even when its overall bulk approaches that of the original house.

“What the public sees carries a lot of weight” notes R. Christopher Noonan of Preservation Services, Inc., in Mendon, Massachusetts. Generally, it is the street side or front facade of a building that incorporates the most important features, materials, and overall design elements. In urban settings, rows of houses often share the same construction, window patterns, heights, or setback from the road, to make an architectural statement as a group. The less you tamper with the primary elevation, the less risk you run of compromising its historic character. In this light, the secondary, side

LEGAL LIMITS

Many old-house owners planning additions worry about the limitations imposed by a variety of historic designations. Here's the low-down:

If your house is on the National Register of Historic Places, you are essentially free to add-on or change the house. The register is an honorific list, and holds no regulatory powers over what you can and cannot do to the house. A total alteration of the house could result in removal from the list.

Local historic designation is a different story. Historic districts are mandated to regulate changes to houses within their jurisdictions. Their powers differ widely, but generally, their goal is to make sure that any changes or additions are compatible with the rest of the district. If your house is within a historic district, you'll need to submit any proposed changes to an architectural review board. Most districts have published their regulations in booklet format — all have some sort of written guidelines.



ABOVE: What's wrong with this picture? You cannot create a convincing Georgian-era garage, even in Washington, D.C., so why try? Better, perhaps, to keep detailing neutral.

CENTER: The Watts Sherman House, in Newport, Rhode Island, was designed by Henry Hobson Richardson in 1874. A service wing, added before the turn of the century, does not diminish or compromise the original structure.

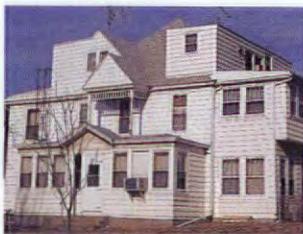
or rear elevations, which are usually lavished with less detail or visibility, regularly become the places to plan an addition.

Expanding Within the Footprint

A COMMON *DE FACTO* ADDITION INVOLVES enclosing a porch or turning a garage into a living space. This does not actually entail a new structure, but it does have a dramatic effect on the appearance.

Although sometimes accomplished with nice results, filling in a porch typically doesn't work well. In the worst cases, it debases the original idea of a transitional house area — half in the house, half outdoors — upsetting the void/mass proportions of the area.

There are sensitive ways to enclose a porch, however. For example, keep the plane of the new wall behind the columns or posts so the facade still reads as a porch.



Roof-top additions immediately change the proportions and character of a house, as in this Iowa City, Iowa, Queen Anne from OHJ's Remuddling page in 1990.

The Roof Line is Tricky

ROOFS ARE A MAJOR CHARACTER-DEFINING feature that can be quickly compromised by an insensitive addition. It's usually appropriate to maintain the same roof type and color in the addition. Try finding inspiration for form, pitch, and materials in the main house and surrounding neighborhood — but

this doesn't mean you have to copy them. **ROOF PITCH/ CORNICE LINES** — New roofs usually work best when they follow the same pitch as the old roof, typically at a lower level. This avoids creating uneasy and ungainly undulations. Eave and cornice lines, too, are most sympathetic when matched as well. Gable treatment might take its cues from the main house, continuing an open or closed gable scheme, for instance. "Beware of the shed roof," advises Washington, D.C., architect Mary Oehrlein. "Though it's cheap and easy to construct, it seldom fits most residential roof styles — unless your house is very early."

DORMERS — If there are no dormers in the main house, chances are dormers will look odd in the addition. Dormers that use windows inconsistent with the rest of the house are also trouble.

ROOFTOP ADDITIONS — Additions at the top of the house are seldom sympathetic. The problem is most pernicious in urban areas, where the only way to expand is up. Penthouses that perch on apartment buildings

are the classic cases. Adding a storey to an average-sized residence is particularly difficult, too. A common case is the house with the shed extension off the back, to which another extension is added at the second floor level — often with "hunchback" or "bustleback" results.

Garages

WHETHER FREESTANDING OR ATTACHED, garages are often an anachronism on an old-house lot. Some specific ideas to soften the situation:

BUILD SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T DRAW ATTENTION TO ITSELF. Avoid siting it on the the main face of the building, and go around the corner or at the back of the lot, if possible. Minimize detailing; garages are service wings and do not have to be fancy.

MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A PERIOD GARAGE — That means typically one car, with materials and details that fit the era. Archival houseplan books, early magazines, and local build-

ings of similar era are a source for ideas.

MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ADDITION — Attached garages, especially, can be sited and detailed to give them a “residential feel.” Connecting a detached garage via a breezeway is an approach in this vein.

DOWNPLAY THE IMPACT OF THE DOOR — Modern, roll-up garage doors are a dead giveaway on a period house. Choose a door with a panel or window pattern that is plain or nonexistent, then paint the door an unobtrusive color. Using earlier door types, such as barn or accordion doors is the ideal way to key the opening to a prior era.

Consider the Context

“UNDERSTAND HOW THE HOUSE MAY HAVE been expanded in its era,” suggests Jane Griswold, an architect in Andover, Massachusetts, who specializes in older buildings. Perform some research. Check period design books and local histories, then choose window, pillars, and trim accordingly.

Account for the context of your old house — that is, the immediate neighborhood and its history. Take time to look at the

regional traditions for house extensions, and use these as cues for your own project. Be conscious of vernacular designs. For example, in New England the four-part connected building addition has a long history. However, it would be out of place in the South, where the warm climate made separate outbuildings a much more practical way of gaining additional space.

Context also means being polite to your neighbors. Respect local codes — formal and informal — about how close you can come to lot lines in urban areas.

Keep it Simple

TRADITIONALLY, MOST ADDITIONS TO OLDER houses were functional, and so plain. Don’t let the addition overpower the original building. Its expression should be simple.

Sympathy for the original building should govern. “You want to complement and further enhance the the composition — not destroy it,” says James Massey, OHJ Contributing Editor and preservation consultant. “With creativity, care, and quality, you can do almost anything.”



A filled-in porch turns a classic bungalow into just a box.

ADDITIONAL READING

To order a copy of either *Preservation Briefs #14* or *The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation*, contact: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, P.O. 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250 (202) 512-1800



A 1910 Arts & Crafts house in Beaux Arts, Washington, with a recent addition (far left), was the hands-down grand-prize winner in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 1994 Great American Homes Awards.

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... ADDITIONS

A Perspective on How Changes Can Come Alive

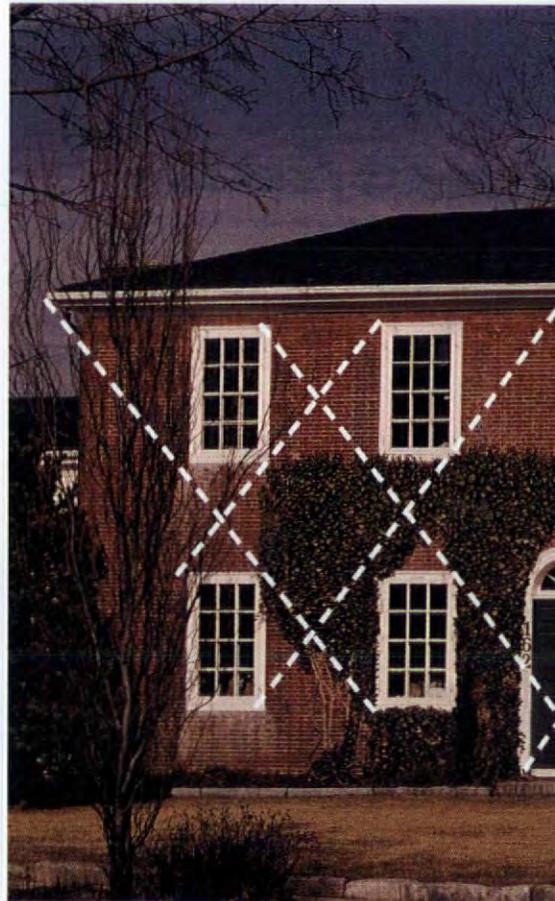
BY JONATHAN HALE

AROUND 1775, MOSES STONE BUILT A red-brick house in Belmont, a suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. The house had five bays, in the traditional Georgian manner. The front was very simple — a plain brick wall, nine windows, and a door. Yet today it seems to “come alive” in a way that makes its 20th-century Neo-Colonial neighbors look boring, awkward, somehow incompetent.

UNDERLYING THE DESIGN OF THE 18th-century house was a system of proportions. It guided the location of the windows and doors, the size of the walls, and the cornice line, providing a discipline so strong that flaws (missing shutters, streaks, blotches) merely enlivened the effect. The house, however simple, was designed as a pattern in light and shade. By contrast, the facades of its neighbors are not forms, but groupings of standard Colonial emblems. The newer houses have far more detail, but far less pattern, so it is the old house that looks richer.

I believe that if the design of any house or addition is to come alive, the starting point must be to look at buildings the way former builders did. We must see them as light and shade, walls and space. If we really want to be authentic, design must be a process of playing with geometric pattern. The additions to the Stone house are a perfect example of what I mean.

A decade later, Moses Stone's son, Jonathan, added two more bays to the house (left in photograph below). The new part



followed the original materials, style, and geometry. It also added a quietly playful sense of mystery: the blank space over the left door that was engagingly “wrong.” The addition throws off the original symmetry, but it gives more than it takes. The house continues to have charm.

Nearly 200 years after Jonathan Stone added those two bays another owner attached a much larger wing (title photo, facing page). Unlike the 1785 addition, which is a play on the pattern of the old house, the modern wing just duplicates the center of the five-bay original (making the entrance a bit grander), and plants the copy next door. One wants to praise the modern builder for making a careful effort, but while the new wing tries very hard to be appropriate, it has forgotten to play the music of pattern. The old charm is absent.

The Lines of Old Sight

THE INVISIBLE CONNECTIONS AMONG KEY points that make the patterns of architec-

ture are called regulating lines. Lines on the original Stone House focus dozens of elements on the fanlight above the front door. Without consciously knowing why, we are drawn to that unembellished door. A second pattern of diagonals organizes the windows into groupings of rectangles.

A truly appropriate and successful addition does not copy the original, but uses its proportional system to make a new composition. The geometry of the 1785 addition keeps the focus on the original door at the right. There is a break, a syncopation in the rhythm, and then the diagonals continue. Without thinking about it, we know to “read” the left door, seemingly almost identical to the first, as secondary. At the same time, the ambiguity of the two front doors and that blank spot draws us in.

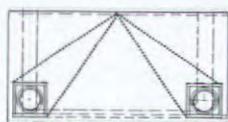
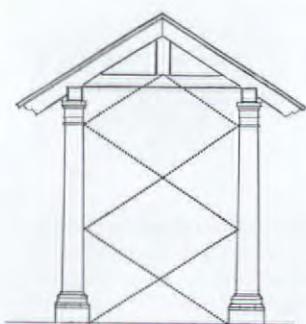
When you start leading the eye this way, involving it in a play of conundrums and patterns, it expects to go farther. The eye wants more to look at, so the streaks and blotches in the masonry become fun; the brick’s warm, red color and slight unevenness is satisfying. It isn’t just the interest



Dimensioning proportions are ancient design tools and inherently pleasing because they relate the natural world — the shape of a tree, for example — to the built world. The Golden Section is a very famous ratio of approximately 3 to 5 (or more precisely 1 to 1.618) that is found in the human body and face. It is also in the Parthenon facade (above), in Gothic cathedrals, and in Renaissance churches and palaces.



Underlying the simple facade of the Jonathan Stone House are two sets of patterns that relate the features through their key points. Rays from the fanlight (black) tie together the bays of the original house. Diagonals (white) organize the windows into groupings of harmonious rectangles in the ratio of 1 to 1.414, the square root of 2, a shape the ancient Romans favored.



It just so happens that regulating lines (top), at the same angle as the roof, tie together the key points of my little porch addition (below). They also show up in the plan and side elevation, where two 8-on-12 rectangles enclose the new porch in side view.



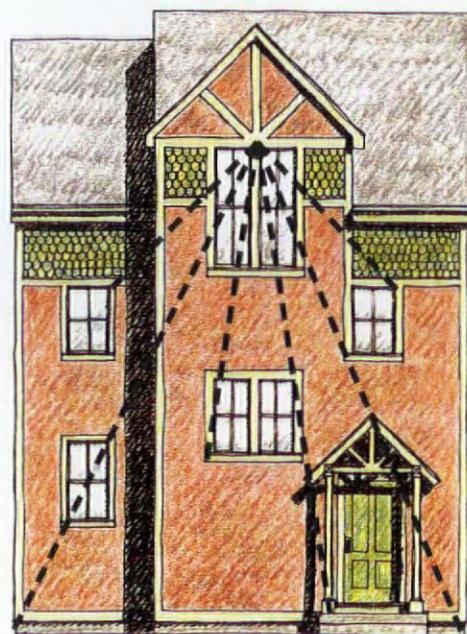
of shapes and colors that is attractive, it's the contrast between the order of the pattern and the disorder of the stains and flaws. Today the casual observer tends to think it is the wear and seasoning of age that draws us to old buildings. History does add to our enjoyment, but the eye, bent on exploring the shapes and shadows, knows very little of history. The deepest magic of old houses is all in the present. It's similar to great music. The reason people still listen to Bach is not because the music is antique, but because it is beautiful.

Additions in the Old Way

IN ADDITIONS TO 20TH-CENTURY HOUSES the designer's problem often is not so much to keep the building alive, but to bring the building alive. A client asked me to design a porch to replace a 1960s aluminum-and-wrought-iron entry on his 1920s house in Newton, Massachusetts. I had no information on the original porch, so I went back to the style of other 1920s houses in the area—a sort of Colonial-Craftsman look (photo at left). We made a porch that gave a sense of both authenticity and welcome. The process of design was to play with the shapes until they pleased the eye. Not until years later did I plot them out: they followed the 8-on-12 roof slope, 33.7 degrees.

Shortly after I designed the porch in Newton, I had a chance to use a variation of the design on a new house in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I changed the proportions of the porch and connected it with regulating lines that all pointed to the center of the gable over the two high windows. The client, a speculative developer, had asked that this house relate to a Victorian neighbor, and that it have a prominent gable facing the street. As I worked I was completely unaware of the regulating lines. Again, the way I created this design was to move the windows and doors around until it was satisfying and pleasurable to look at the facade.

If the design "sings," the regulating lines will be there. The patterns of my designs are so similar to those of old buildings that I believe the process of design was very similar 200 years ago. I don't get too analytical when I am designing; I want to



Regulating lines are very often the diagonals of rectangles—chiefly windows and walls. On a Cambridge, Massachusetts house, regulating lines emanating from the gable connect key points on windows and porch.

keep the design fresh. In some cases, it can be useful to analyze the patterns of adjoining old buildings. However, in designing a new building or addition I don't form a rigid grid and manipulate every element of the new design into it, because then the house won't come alive. I risk trusting my intuition to know what it is doing. Design is like dance; it is rhythm and movement, danger—you might fall, or look silly—and intuitive mastery. If I get stuck, on where to put this door or that window, then I may try seeing what a regulating line might suggest. Most of the time successful designs come from trusting that I know how to make patterns.

Playing with Patterns

IF YOU ARE DESIGNING AN ADDITION, I suggest you look at some key proportions on the facade of the existing building: the slope of the roof, the shapes of the windows, or the spaces between the windows. What are the angles? What are the proportions? (You don't necessarily need to measure them.) Then, start playing on paper, start adding, start seeing what happens.

Depending on the project, it may be

very important to stick close to the original style, or it may be possible to do something lively and harmonious in a different style. In our time, we are very concerned about authenticity, and we talk about accuracy of style and correctness of materials. To me, however, the most exciting and authentic aspect of old buildings — the “it” that is missing from so many new buildings — is the play of pattern. We have to get that play of pattern into what we build new, or the aspect of the old design that makes it lively, real, magical, will be missing.

While driving in New Hampshire one summer afternoon, I came upon a little group of houses that make up the town of Effingham. One five-bay house of the late 18th century stands very much as it did 200 years ago. The house has what I call “the old smile,” and a harmony that makes it look as if it has always been there (see below). It’s probable this house came from, or was strongly influenced by, a plan book. Yet, whoever designed it made sure to create enough imbalance to keep the dance moving. Note how the pairs of windows cluster tightly, leaving “too much” white wall around the entry and the center window.

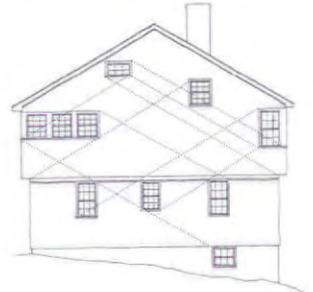
I believe the reason this house looks

so friendly, so familiar, is that its system of proportions is similar to the harmonies of the human face. (It is no accident that the front of a building is called its facade.) Plants and animals are proportioned in the same way. I believe we are innately attuned to these natural patterns, and this is why harmoniously proportioned buildings strike us as “real.”

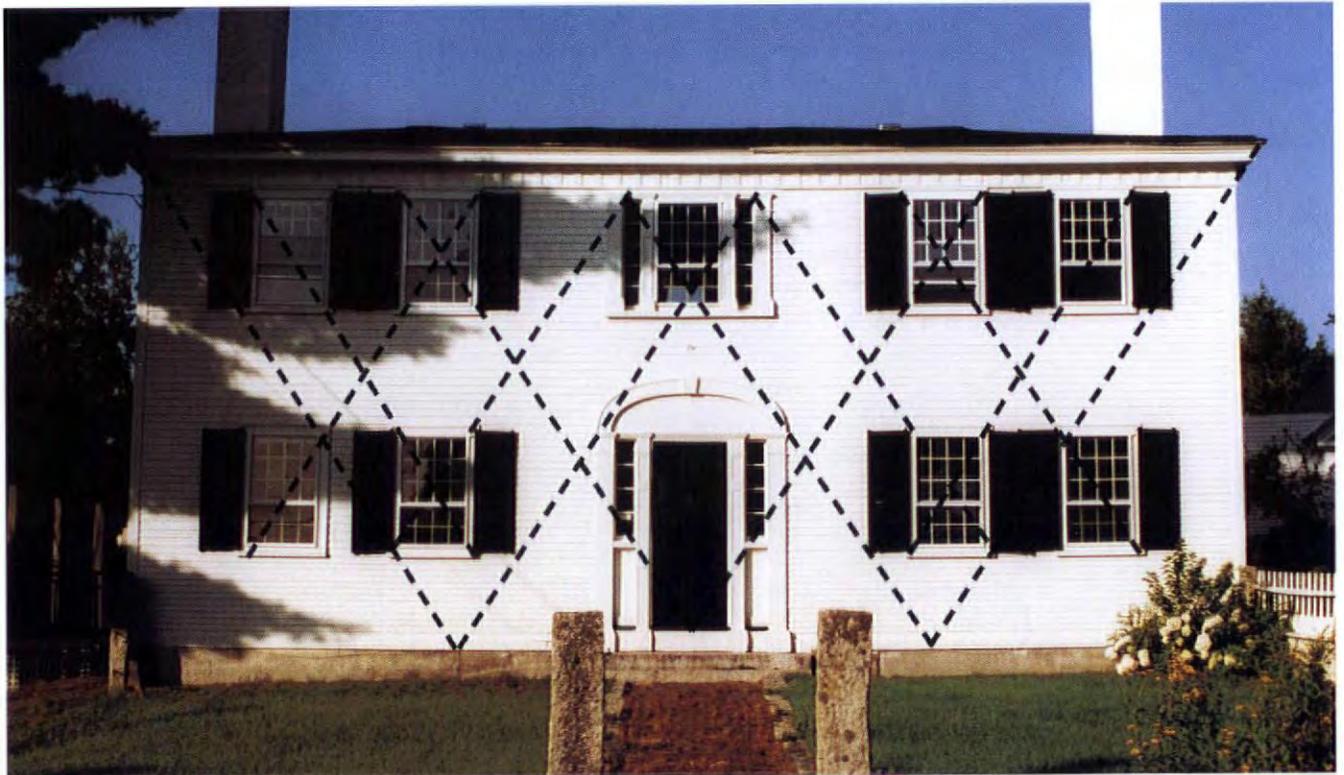
The predominance of pattern underlies the tremendous success and power of Gothic architecture. These gigantic buildings were built over centuries in styles that varied sharply, not only from one time to another, but even from one builder to another. Chartres Cathedral, commentators have said, is a mess, but such a mess! Chartres works because common principles underlie the designers’ work at every phase, in every era. The same principles of nature and the same process of play with pattern creates every part of its form. A new addition to an old house can, in the same way, add to its spirit.

Jonathan Hale is an architect in Watertown, Massachusetts. His new book, The Old Way of Seeing: How Architecture Lost Its Magic, and How to Get it Back, is published by Houghton Mifflin.

In order to put some life into a boring, postwar Neo-Colonial, I played with the patterns and the shapes of the windows when I designed a second floor. Instead of just matching up the windows, I made an asymmetrical composition, creating a complex and consistent pattern of regulating lines, connecting the new and old windows, and following the roof line of the house.



The pattern of the Effingham house (below) is in the Golden Section proportion. Very likely, the designer chose the proportion on purpose. The house’s Georgian style is derived from the Renaissance, but the Renaissance and its Classical sources derived from nature.



LOWERING OLD

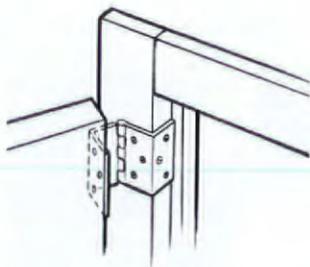


Sensitive Changes that Promote Accessibility

The very features we love in our old houses — elegant porches, door hardware, period plumbing fixtures — can be vexing barriers to people with disabilities. At one point or another, most old-house families will see a disabled guest, an elderly relative, or a teenager with a football injury struggle to get around their homes.

by

**James C. Massey
and the OHJ
Technical Staff**



Swing clear hinges are modern, but help to protect historic doorways while allowing wider clearance.

ALL PUBLIC BUILDINGS MUST BE ACCESSIBLE to the disabled in accordance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. While residences are not legally compelled to comply (see “What About the ADA?” p.45), the law presents good guidelines for a family seeking to make its old house accessible.

Since the ADA went into effect, architects, museum building stewards, and other preservation professionals have developed accessibility solutions that are sensitive to old buildings. Some of the least obtrusive techniques for public buildings are perfect for old houses with a disabled resident. In many cases they're simple, authentically old-house alternatives. If you're adding on or altering an old house, you can design your changes to make the living space friendlier for a disabled member of the family. Here are some ways to make the house accessible while protecting — to varying degrees — the qualities that define your old house.

CHANGES

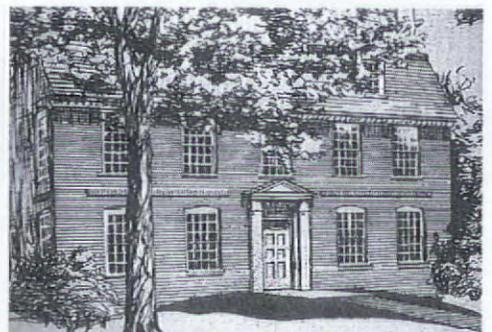
THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO RETROFIT for accessibility in an old house is with an addition. New space can be built to accessibility standards, while most of the original details in the primary house remain. A well-designed add-on can provide a bedroom, bathroom, and access to communal space such as the kitchen, dining room, and liv-

ing room, all on the first floor.

Whether adding-on or remodeling, there are two elements to an accessibility retrofit: changes in design and changes in hardware. A small, but growing group of restoration suppliers are making products that may be true to the house's period while making opening doors, turning on faucets, and other everyday activities much easier for a disabled resident.

ENTRANCES

WHILE RAMPS AND WHEELCHAIR LIFTS ARE options, and have been built quite unobtrusively in some historic museum sites, for most old houses, simpler solutions will work. Try regrading around one entrance — perhaps in the rear — to reduce, or eliminate any steps (see below). The grade should be 5 percent or less. Done right, re-



Regrading the yard at one entrance can provide a stairless entrance without a wheelchair ramp or lift.

BARRIERS



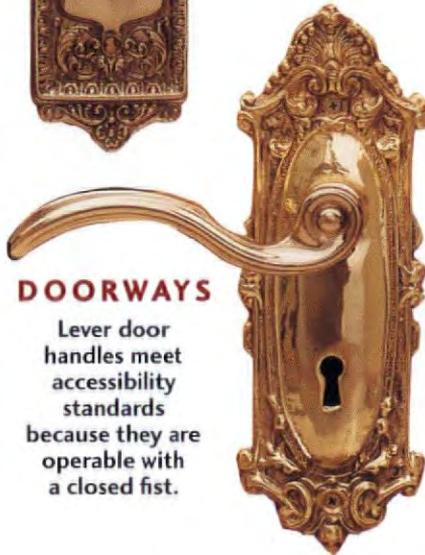
Forged lever handles from Acorn Manufacturing Co.



It looks like a doorknob, but the latch operates with a push-button on top.



Brass lever handles from Hardware Plus, Inc.



DOORWAYS

Lever door handles meet accessibility standards because they are operable with a closed fist.



grading can even provide wheelchair access. Install a bin pull about 33" above the sill and 6" from the edge of the hinge-side stile to make closing the door easier from outside.

DOORWAYS

NEW DOORS SHOULD BE 32" OR WIDER TO ALLOW wheelchair passage. Old doorways can be replaced with wider openings and doors, but this is a messy, destructive process. One compromise is to install extra wide or offset hinges, which allow the door to swing clear of the opening (see opposite). Sometimes this also requires rehangng the door from a different direction so it has room to swing fully open. You may also need to re-

duce the dimensions of stops. Where possible, remove tall thresholds and rip them down or replace them with beveled units that are no more than 1/2" high (see right). To make doorknobs operable with a closed fist, use reproduction lever door knobs — either on the existing spindle or a new mortise set (see above).

Prominent thresholds can be reduced to beveled transitions between surfaces.



STAIRCASES

IF A CHAIRLIFT IS NOT REQUIRED, BUT YOU want to make the stairs easier to navigate, install a heavy duty banister. Ideally, there should be handrails on both sides of the stairwell. They should be strong enough to support a person's weight. Mount them

For More Information:

Americans with Disabilities Act
Information Line
U.S. Department of Justice
(800) 514-0301
documents and information

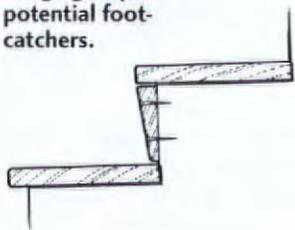
"Making Historic Properties
Accessible"
Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
P.O. Box 371954, Dept. OHJ
Pittsburgh, PA 15250
Preservation Briefs No. 32
(202) 512-1800

"Accessibility and Historic
Preservation"
Historic Windsor, Inc.
P.O. Box 1777, Dept. OHJ
Windsor, VT 05089
(802) 674-6752

**BATHROOMS**

Lever faucets can make bathrooms accessible, while maintaining an old-fashioned look. Period bathroom hardware by The Chicago Faucet Company, except bottom faucet, from Restoration Works.

Adding angled risers to stairs eliminates overhanging steps — potential foot-catchers.



with brackets that sit underneath the rail, so the supports do not interfere with use. Rails should return to wall, floor, or post at their end. Some old stairs present another potential hazard because they can catch a climber's feet. Any open stairs should get risers. And steps with nosings that overhang the risers should be altered — either cut off the overhang, or, better, attach beveled risers that eliminate the overhang (see left).

BATHROOMS

SHORT OF MODERN EQUIPMENT, SUCH AS tubs with doors and roll-in showers, there are some retrofits that will make the bathroom more accessible while maintaining the integrity of the room. Instead of a modern, high-seat toilet, you can reinstall the original fixture on a small stage. The seat should be positioned 17" to 19" above the finished floor. Wall-mounted sinks provide space underneath for wheelchairs. Cover exposed

hot-water pipes and any sharp edges to prevent injury. An often overlooked problem is that most bathroom mirrors are too tall for people in wheelchairs. Install full-length or adjustable mirrors.

Decorative grab bars look almost natural in an old bathroom (see opposite). Place them next to the toilet at 33" to 35" above the floor. If stud placement does not line up for grab bar fasteners, install a wood cleat across the wall and fasten to studs. Then fasten the grab bar to the cleat — which can be painted to match the wall or trim. Install grab bars above the tub and in the shower enclosure (easiest in a new bathroom). Lever faucets — a standard before modern compression valves — are historically appropriate for many houses and make turning the water on and off much easier for people with severe arthritis or other hand disabilities (see top). Provide a flexible, "telephone" shower with lever-handled operation.

KITCHENS

COUNTERS CAN BE INSTALLED AT THREE DIFFERENT HEIGHTS (30, 36, and 42 inches) to happily accommodate everyone from children or wheelchair users to six-footers. Raise the dishwasher about ten inches off the floor, making it much easier for everyone to use. Install the microwave in lower cabinets for use by a person in a wheelchair. Provide wheelchair space under counters to make it easier for those who need or want to work in a seated position. Again, use lever faucets (see right). Side-hinged oven doors make range use easier for people in wheelchairs.

Of course, every house presents its own accessibility problems, and every family has different needs. Clearly, the best per-



Everything, including the kitchen sink, can have accessible and appropriate lever handles. This kitchen sink unit is from Chicago Faucet.

son to determine what steps to take is a disabled person — either the individual who lives in the house, or a consultant. 



A brass grab bar from Hardware Plus, Inc.

What About the ADA?

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that all public areas be made accessible to people with disabilities. It is not a building code that can be mitigated with a variance, it is a civil rights law that supersedes all building code and historic preservation laws. It is far reaching legislation, but it does not apply to owners of old houses or even small bed-and-breakfasts.

All new public buildings must meet its standards, and alterations to old public buildings must also comply. Even public buildings that are not undergoing alterations must be brought in line with the ADA. However, the law does allow for conserving historic fabric. There are several levels of consultation and compromise set out in the ADA regulations. Primarily the change must be "readily achievable" — which essentially means that it is not prohibitively expensive. If making the property accessible would be too destructive to the historic fabric, the ADA offers some other alternatives — to be overseen by the State Historic Preservation Office.

The ADA does not legally apply to old residences — unless the house contains a bed-and-breakfast with more than five rooms, a restaurant, a store front, or another public facility, such as a museum. Nonetheless, the ADA sets up a good standard for alterations, often called "universal design." The ADA's provisions make for better, safer, and more comfortable living for everyone. (With lever handles, opening doors becomes easier when your hands are full; wider doorways and stairwells make moving furniture easier.) We see the precepts of the ADA coming into general use, much like the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation have for the treatment of historic buildings.

SUPPLIERS

Hardware Plus Inc.
701 E. Kingsley Road
Dept. OHJ
Garland, TX 75041
(214) 271-0319
lever handles, grab bars, invisible automatic openers, wide hinges

The Chicago Faucet Company
2100 South Clearwater Drive
Dept. OHJ
Des Plaines, IL 60018
(708) 803-5000
lever faucets

Restoration Works Inc.
P.O. Box 486
Dept. OHJ
Buffalo, NY 14205
(800) 735-3535
lever handles, faucets

Maguire Iron Corp.
215 22nd St.
Dept. OHJ
Richmond, CA 94801
(510) 234-7569
forged iron lever handles

Acorn Manufacturing Co.
P.O. Box 31
Dept. OHJ
Mansfield, MA 02048
(508) 339-4500
forged lever handles

GUSA, Inc.
250-S Executive Drive
Dept. OHJ
Edgewood, NY 11717
(516) 254-0400
brass grab bars

Stanley Hardware
P.O. Box 1840, Dept. OHJ
New Britain, CT 06050
(800) 622-4393
full line of swing-clear hinges



Some reproduction brass hardware makers offer grab bars that feel appropriate in an old-house bathroom. These are from GUSA Inc.

by John Leeke / Illustrations by Robert LaPointe

DIVIDED LIGHT WOOD SASH — THE TYPICAL 18TH- AND 19TH-century windows — are extremely prone to damage. Their small parts are no match for the ravages of weather (water and ultraviolet rays) and decay when paint and putty fail. Foul baseballs, rock-throwing vandals, and carelessness with interior sash locks inflict quick — sometimes major — injury. Yet old windows are character-defining elements of the house, and are the focus of many restoration projects.

A WINDOW ON SASH

HOW TO MAKE AND INSTALL REPLACEMENT PARTS



Divided light windows, in all their various configurations, are classic old-house details that can be repaired instead of replaced.

Repairing existing windows is relatively easy because individual parts of the sash can be replaced. This is more economical than buying new windows, and it preserves the original fabric of the building. Here I'll show you a few of my favorite methods for reproducing and replacing damaged sash parts using hand and shop woodworking tools. These methods work on all wood sash, but for some windows they might require adaptation. The more lights the window has, the more involved the repair will be.

REPRODUCING SASH PARTS

MEASURE AND ACCURATELY RECORD THE profile of whatever part you're reproducing: rail, stile, or muntin. Sash parts are small, and accuracy is extremely important for a tight, functional window. Use vernier calipers and a profile gauge to record the moulding size and shape. Dimensions can vary, especially on early handmade sash, so be sure to measure at several places to determine what the original maker considered standard, or strike an average. Often I file a matching pattern in a piece of soft sheet metal such as copper or aluminum.

Preparing Stock

USE BOARDS THAT HAVE AT LEAST ONE TRUE, flat surface and edge. If you are making a lot of stock, plane the boards to the thick-

ness of the sash. If not, size the parts to their finish thickness and width on the table saw. Cut out plenty of extra pieces for practice and testing, using the metal pattern as a model.

You usually won't go wrong using the same quality and species of wood as the original sash. (I have seen sash made out of white pine, yellow pine, fir, redwood, and mahogany.) When in doubt, use a stable, machinable wood with some resistance to decay — such as white pine or mahogany. Always use pieces with tight, straight grain (more than 10 growth rings per inch) and cut from heartwood. Curved or wavy grain results in weak members. Well-seasoned, edge grain lumber is a must.

If rails and stiles are longer than 30", I cut the width and thickness $\frac{1}{6}$ " to $\frac{1}{8}$ " oversized, and set them aside for a few days before milling to size. This is necessary because some planks have internal stresses that will cause the pieces to change shape after they are cut. The stock can be moulded in the following ways depending on your equipment and skills.

Shaping with a Hand Plane

WHEN YOU NEED ONLY A FEW FEET OF stock, a hand plane is a cost-effective way to make sash parts. (It's also probably what was used to make your windows if your

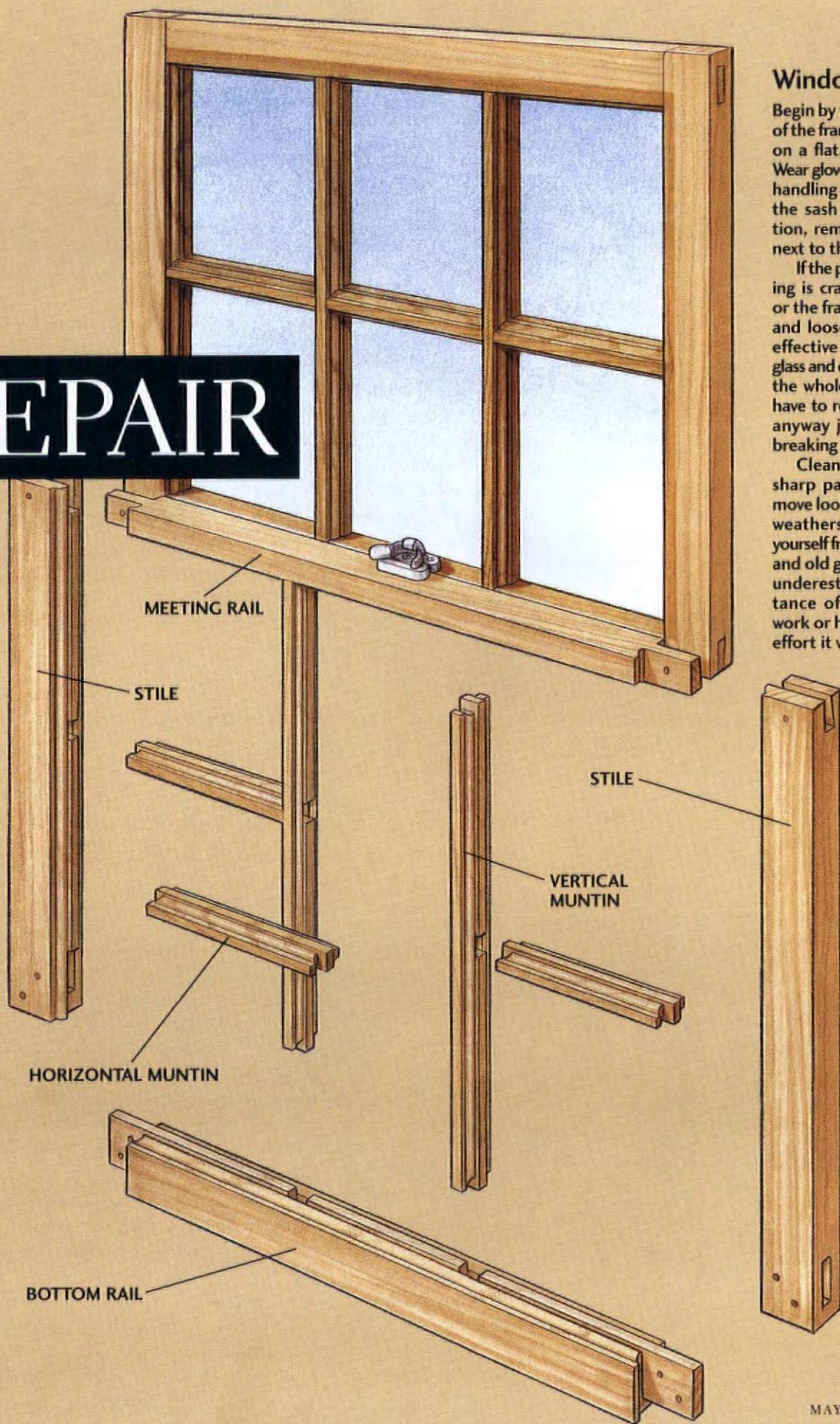
REPAIR

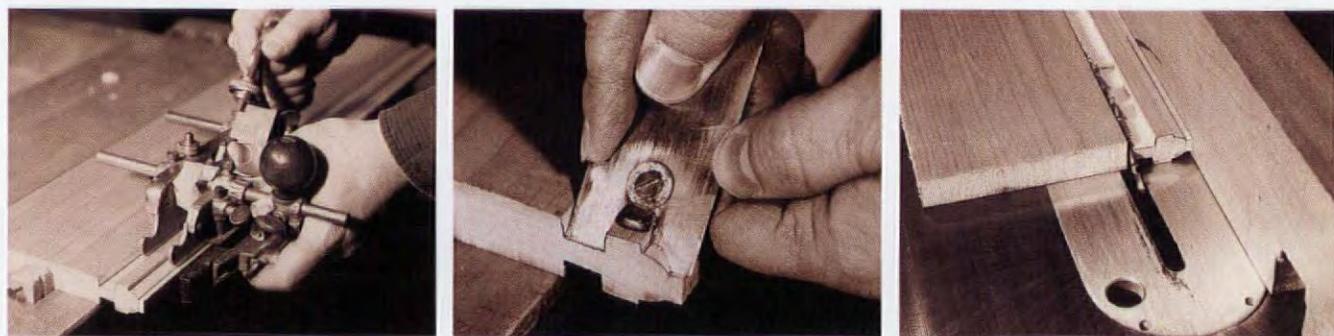
Window Work

Begin by taking the sash out of the frame and setting it up on a flat, solid work table. Wear gloves and goggles when handling glass. If the rest of the sash is in good condition, remove only the glass next to the broken parts.

If the paint has failed, glazing is cracked and missing, or the frame joints are open and loose, it may be more effective to remove all the glass and completely refurbish the whole sash. (You might have to remove all the glass anyway just to keep from breaking it while you work.)

Clean the frame with a sharp paint scraper to remove loose paint, putty, and weatherstripping. Protect yourself from lead in the paint and old glazing putty. Don't underestimate the importance of this preparation work or how much time and effort it will take.





ABOVE: A combination plane cuts the muntin detail. **RIGHT:** I had to grind the blade to the profile I needed.

FAR RIGHT: It's easier to work from the edge of the board and cut it off last.

house was built before the late-19th century.) Interchangeable cutters and multiple adjustments make a combination plane a versatile tool. It will cut moulding and rabbets with one blade.

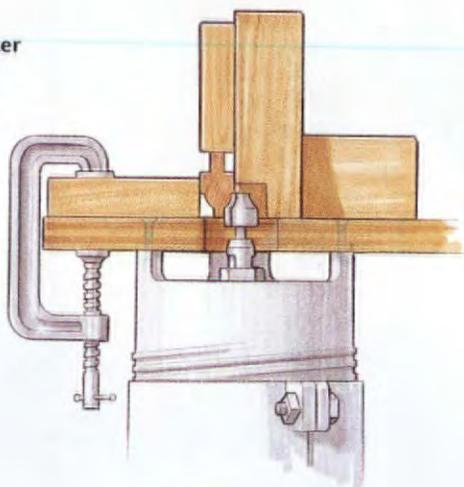
The single cutter of a combination plane shapes the moulding and glazing rabbet at the same time (see above middle). Since combination planes use only one cutter, it is often practical to custom-grind a cutter to a special profile. This is easier than grinding cutters with multiple blades, such as a router. Trace the profile from your metal guide to the blank and cut to the line using a slow-turning bench grinder. Set-up costs are moderate, making this an economical method if you need 10' to 100' of custom moulding.

Clamp or screw the stock to the work

cut to the needed dimensions. These adjustments can only be made by setting the guides and then testing them on scrap wood until the results are just right.

Once you're satisfied with your settings, set up with your straight-grain stock and plane with smooth, even strokes (see above left). If it looks like the grain is tearing up, try the other edge of the board — the grain's direction can affect the planing. It takes eight to 10 strokes to fully form the moulding profile. During production, check your dimensions often with your metal guide and vernier calipers. Even with the guides set just right, the cut may vary. A lot depends on how you hold the plane. Your technique may be what needs adjusting. Test and experiment. Think of yourself as a robot designed to hold the plane at exactly the same angle and apply the same pressure with each stroke. Muntins are symmetrical, so form one edge and then flip to the other. When the moulding is complete, rip it off the board on the table saw (see above right).

ROUTER TABLE
My makeshift router table turns my hand-held router into a fixed unit.



table, making sure there will be no interference with the plane's cutter or fences. Adjust the plane's side fence to give the needed muntin thickness. Then, set the plane's depth stop so the glazing rabbets are

Using a Router Table

YOU CAN USE A ROUTER TABLE TO QUICKLY form each side of the muntin or rail profile with a single pass. The router is mounted so the bit stands up through a hole — similar to a shaper (see left). In recent years a wide variety of router bit profiles has become available, so you are more likely to find a close match to your interior moulding profile (see "Suppliers," p.51). Some later hand-shaping may be necessary if the router bit isn't an exact match for your window's moulding. A standard rabbeting bit is used to cut the glazing rabbet. Attach a 2" x 5" wood fence to guide wood past the bit. I bored a hole through the fence and carved a socket for the end of a shop vacuum hose.

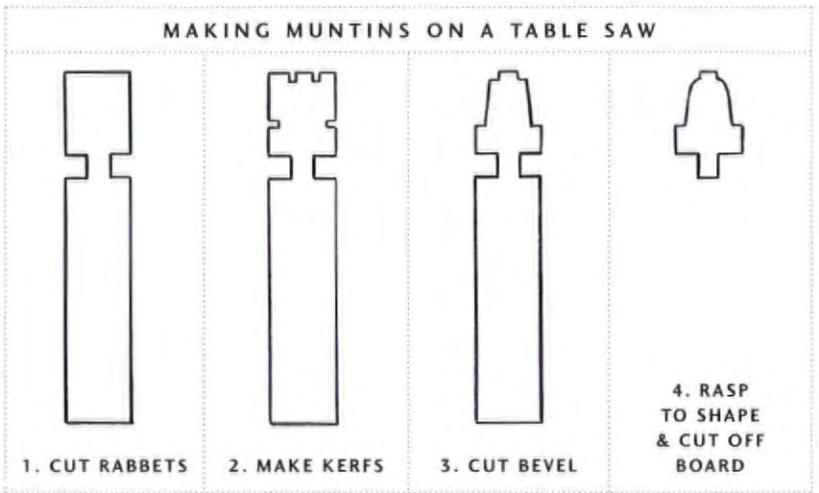
This setup efficiently removes chips so they don't clog the bit.

Adjust the height of the router bit and the fence and test the cuts to assure the proper size and shape. Clamp spring-type hold-downs to the table and fence to guide the sash stock past the cutter. Simply feeding the stock past the cutter by hand will not give consistent results. Hold-downs also make the task of feeding the stock much easier if you are cutting a lot. I cut all the rabbets and then all the mouldings in separate runs.

Cutting on a Table Saw

FOR SASH WITH LITTLE OR NO MOULDED detail, or no need for detail — such as a cellar, attic, or outbuilding window — a low-cost alternative may be cutting replacement parts on a table saw. Use a smooth-cutting planer blade (with an insert that fits close to the blade) for shape and a dado blade to cut the glazing rabbets. You can shape the pieces from the edge of a board and separate them from the waste wood later for safer and easier cutting. If you don't use oversized boards, be careful: use push-sticks and spring-type hold-downs. Remember, too, that long stock gives you more to hold than short sections.

Even if you need some simple detail, you can still make repeated cuts on the table saw to get the general shape, then rasp and sand to the proper profile. This process is simple, but it does take some practice and forethought. You must cut the piece in such a way that it always has enough square edges to ride on the table and the rip fence. It's a matter of the order in which you make the cuts (see top right). First, plane the wood to its overall thickness. Next, cut the glazing rabbets. Then, cut the moulding profiles by making numerous



passes on the table saw and adjusting the blade height so the kerfs take on the basic profile of the moulding you are attempting to reproduce. Hand rasp and sand the rough shaping into the proper detail.

REPLACING SASH PARTS

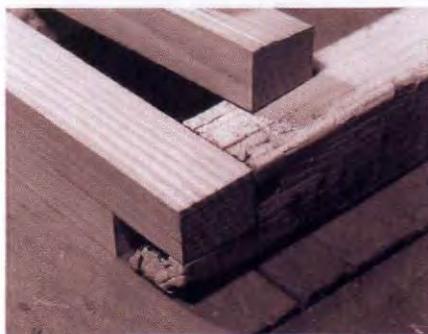
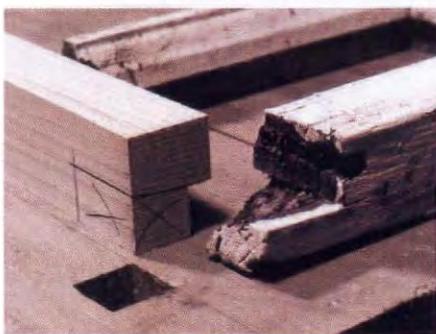
DIVIDED LIGHT SASHES ARE ASSEMBLED with mortise-and-tenon joints. This makes replacing individual parts a bit tricky because the whole sash interlocks. To install a new piece with the same joinery, you'd have to completely disassemble the sash and reconnect it with the new piece in place. A better idea is to adapt the parts slightly so they can be added to a sash that's still intact.

Rails

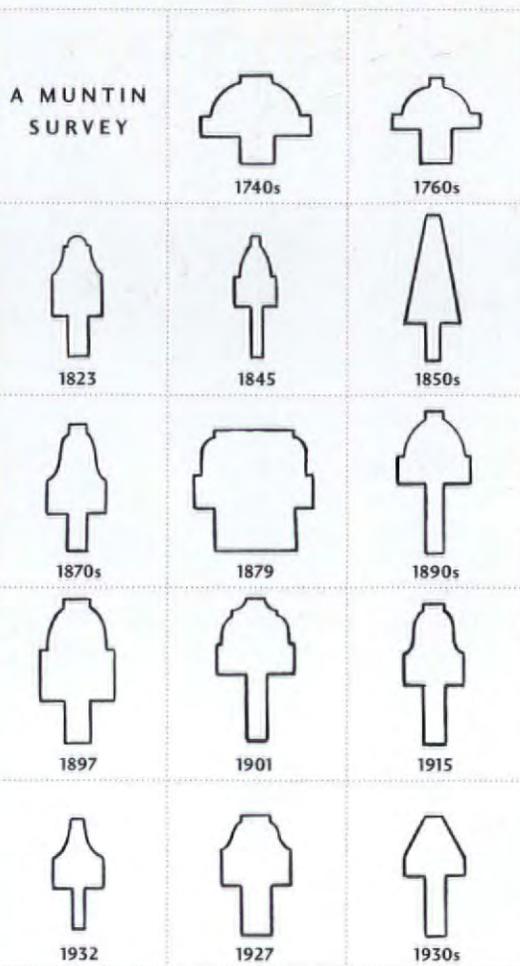
THE MEETING RAIL OF THE TOP SASH IS OFTEN the most weathered part of the double sash window. A relatively small member to begin with, it's exposed to high levels of sun and rain, so sagging and rot are common. The lower rail of the bottom sash, too, often needs replacement because of decay caused by ponding water on the sill.

To replace a broken rail, remove it and

FAR LEFT: Cut a lap joint for the new rail. **LEFT:** Any gaps can be filled with epoxy. **BELOW:** Bore and set the pins.



A survey of muntin cross sections from windows of the last three centuries shows the great variety of these tiny members. In general, muntins are thinner for sash with more lights and also on mass-produced sash later than the end of the 19th century. They also varied by era, style, region, and production method. Although you can purchase router and shaper bits designed to cut muntins, it is unlikely you'll find an exact match for yours. Putting the finishing touches on the moulding may require some hand rasp and sanding work. Or have your cutters custom ground to match. Muntin profiles courtesy of the Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service.



any remaining tenons on the ends of muntins. Trim away the decayed cheeks (moulded joints) of the stile joints. Lay out a lap joint on each end of the new rail with a try-square, bevel, and pencil (see p.49, bottom left). The cheek of the lap is angled slightly to match the cheek on the old joint. Cut the shoulder of the joint with a small fine-toothed back saw. Trim the cheek of the lap to the lines with a sharp chisel.

Test the completed joint against its mate on the old joint. It is always a good idea to practice on an extra piece of stock



Horizontal muntins run in short sections between vertical members. They're easier to replace than their full length top-to-bottom counterparts.

before cutting the actual joints. With the sash held vertically in a bench vice, temporarily clamp the rail in place. Bore $\frac{5}{16}$ " holes through the rail into the ends of the old vertical muntins. Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ " dowels and slip them part way into the holes.

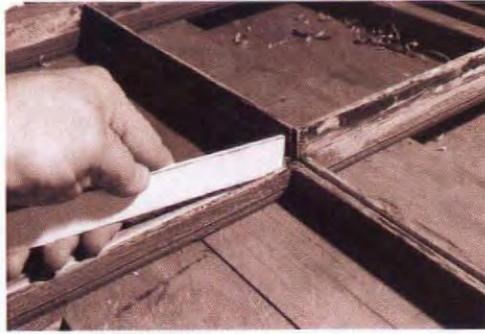
I soak the ends of the stiles and muntins with epoxy consolidant, especially punky wood, and prime mating surfaces on the new rail. I also apply a mixture of epoxy consolidant and epoxy paste filler to the mating surfaces as a gap-filling adhesive. After this, tip the rail into position with care to align the joints, pins, and holes correctly (see p.49, bottom right). Finally, clamp the stile-to-rail joints with C-clamps and the muntin-to-rail joints with bar-clamps. You can use countersunk screws with putty or buttons for the lap joint, or peg them to match original sash pegs (common in the 18th century).

Muntins

USUALLY A SASH DOESN'T NEED TO BE TAKEN apart to replace a single section of muntin. The original muntin has tenons on both ends that fit into mortises. Vertical muntins run from the top to the bottom rail of the sash. Replacing a vertical muntin requires fitting the horizontal muntins into it. Replacing a horizontal muntin — often smashed when the catch is left open while the window is raised or lowered — is easier. Horizontal muntins typically run in short spans mortised into the vertical muntins.

First, I remove the broken muntin and clean out the mortises. If the damaged piece is still fast in both mortises, you can cut through it in the middle and wiggle each side out. Next, I use a fine-toothed saw and sharp chisel to trim away a small triangular section of the interior moulding next to the mortise (see right). This allows the new muntin to slide into place. Then, I cut the new muntin to length. I measure to the side surface of each mortise to determine the length. Once the new muntin is cut to size, I trim the moulding with a sharp chisel to form a bevel that meets with the triangular section cut previously in the vertical muntin (see right).

To fit the muntin in place, slide it into both joints at once from the exterior side



FAR LEFT: Remove damaged strip. **LEFT:** Cut new stock for a snug fit.

of the sash. I like to make this a press fit so the part holds itself in place during gluing. To get this fit, I cut it long and trim the length with a sharp chisel or sandpaper. I use epoxy adhesive formulated for use with wood, or a mixture of epoxy consolidant and epoxy paste filler. If fasteners are needed, use wire brads.

Rabbet Strips

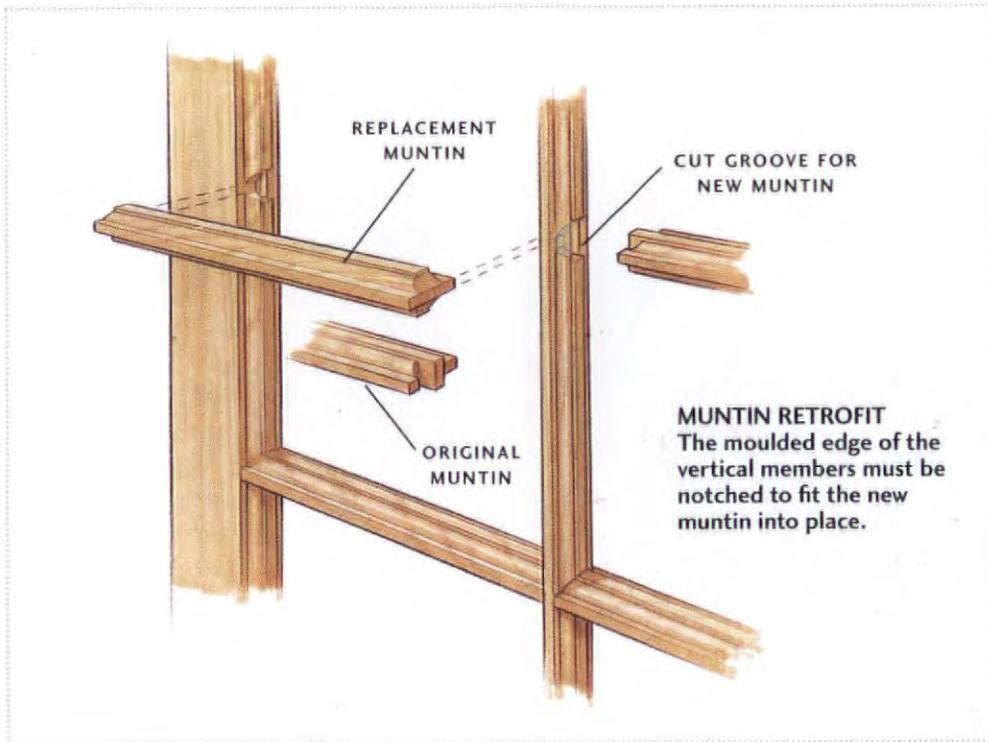
THE THIN, FRAGILE STRIPS BETWEEN THE glazing rabbets are easily damaged or weakened by decay. To replace one, trim away the damaged strip with a sharp chisel (see above). The resulting groove should be about as deep as the glazing rabbet.

For thin strips (less than $\frac{3}{16}$ " x $\frac{3}{4}$ "), I count on a press-fit to hold the strip in place while the glue sets, so a snug fit is important (see above right). To fasten longer

or thicker strips to the muntin I use thin wire brads with their heads broken off or the tips of sewing needles. Instead of pounding them with a hammer, I chuck the brad or needle in a drill and spin it into place. Then I remove the strip and apply adhesive in the groove, ends, and edge of the strip. Replacing the strip with the brads in their original holes I finish driving or spinning them in. A final tap with a hammer and nail set sinks the brad and seats the strip in the groove.

To wrap up the project, reglaze the sash, paint it, and reinstall it into the window frame.

John Leeke is a preservation consultant who helps homeowners, contractors and architects understand and maintain their historic buildings. You can contact him at RR1 Box 2947, Sanford, ME 04073, (207) 324-9597.



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CLASSIC CANVAS

Siding gables with canvas is an unusual — and historic — technique.

BY KURT HABEL

"THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE THIRD FLOOR gable, and we don't know what it is," explained the woman who hired me to paint her Victorian home. "It looks like old cement."

"Is it canvas?" I asked.

Sure enough, it was. Once you've seen it, there's no mistaking deteriorated canvas. I first came across this unusual siding on the exterior of another Queen Anne house. Typically, canvas is used to face gables and the pediments on dormers. It is installed over building paper and tacked to sheathing. Rakeboards, mouldings, window casings, and stickwork are nailed on top. Like the skin of a shedding snake, the century of paint covering canvas can split, crack, and pull at the siding, often tearing

wherever wood trim overlaps the fabric. It looks terrible, but the houses rarely experience leaks.

I knew enough about the job to estimate a price for re-canvassing and repainting two peaks. This time, however, I decided some research on the technique was in order. I've pursued wild geese before, but none as elusive as the canvas gable.



When the paint fails, installing new canvas and rosin paper is the only solution.

CANVASSING FOR INFORMATION

THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS to locate a canvas supplier. I

needed a 10' x 40' roll. I checked with eleven companies, none of which carried the canvas in stock. They also had never heard of using canvas for siding. Finally, I met the septuagenarian owner of Century Products (171 Medford St., Malden, Massachusetts 02148; 617-321-4333), who had #10 duck canvas — and nearly a century's worth of memory.

"Back in 1939, two Italian carpenters came in. I think they were gonna do what you're doing," he said.

Telling him it was my second canvassing job, we discussed techniques for painting canvas. "You know what you gotta do," he admonished. "You gotta go up to Canada and get some white lead. You can still get it there. Mix that up and paint it on real heavy. That's what the old timers used to do."

Not wanting to smuggle prohibited pigments, I called chemists at several well-known paint manufacturers and awning companies. They were unanimous in rec-

Fig.1: Make a map of the ornamental wood trim on the gable and then remove it. **Fig.2:** Number each trim piece as it is pried off. **Fig.3:** After the canvas and rosin paper is removed, pull out any nails or tacks, leaving a clean work surface.





ommending acrylic and latex primers and topcoats for the project, citing cloth adhesion, more flexibility, and color retention. But none had ever heard of canvas siding.

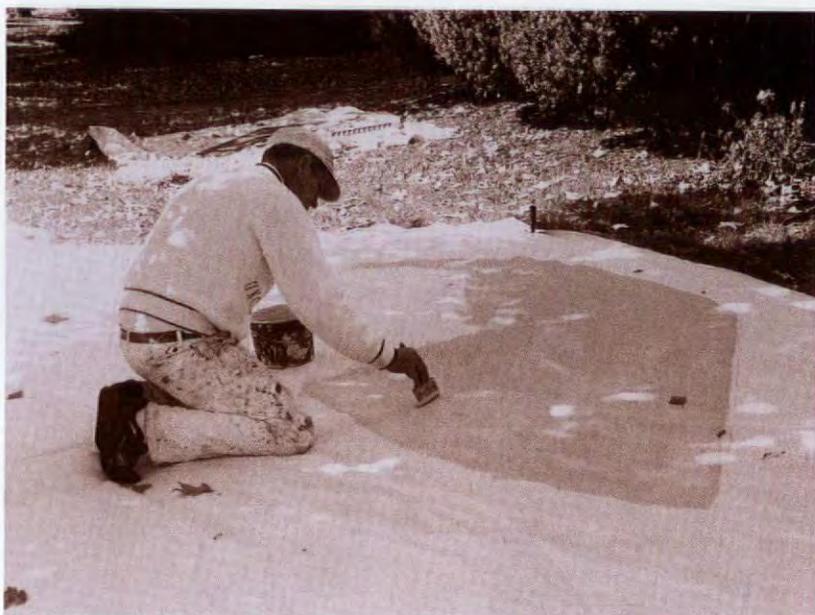
As usual, the advice of modern day professionals differed from the wisdom of the ages. Printed matter from the 1860s, such as *The Painter's, Varnisher's, and Gilder's Companion*, to present-day boatbuilding manuals specifically call for oil-based paints on canvas, stressing durability and penetration. None of the archival literature, however, mentioned the use of canvas for exterior siding.

Faced with contradictory advice, I did more research. I located more than 20 canvas-sided homes in many cities and

towns. A half dozen houses had covered the canvas with vinyl or aluminum or replaced it with plywood. Unfortunately, lengthy conversations about canvas siding with old contractors, architectural historians, preservation architects, and professors at Cornell and Boston universities ended with "never heard of it."

Builders may have chosen canvas because it simulates stucco for the half-timbered look. Invariably, canvas was applied on large, high-quality buildings, not cheap shacks. There are canvas-sided homes more than 100 miles from the nearest salt water, so it's not another use for canvas after the age of sail. Whatever the purpose, canvas seems to hold up for a century, so this pe-

The canvas on gables is often mistaken for stucco or cement. This newly canvassed gable should last as long as its predecessor — at least a century.



Lay the canvas on a large flat surface, such as a lawn. Carefully mark the dimensions and cut them out. The last step is to prime the back of the canvas and allow it to dry.

riod material is both historically appropriate and practical to retain.

REMOVING THE OLD CANVAS

HEAVY CANVAS IS QUITE DURABLE; IT'S THE paint that fails, not the canvas. The trouble is, neither heat (due to danger of fire) nor chemicals (due to absorption and difficulty of neutralization) can be successfully applied to strip the old canvas. Replacing the canvas, however, will provide the building with a lasting facelift.

Canvas is large and usually on the top floor only, making staging — not ladders — a requirement for the job. Extend the staging a foot or more past the end of the peak. Keep in mind that another ladder, in-

dependent of the staging, may be needed. Lead paint is likely on the old canvas. String a tarp under the work area to catch paint chips for proper disposal.

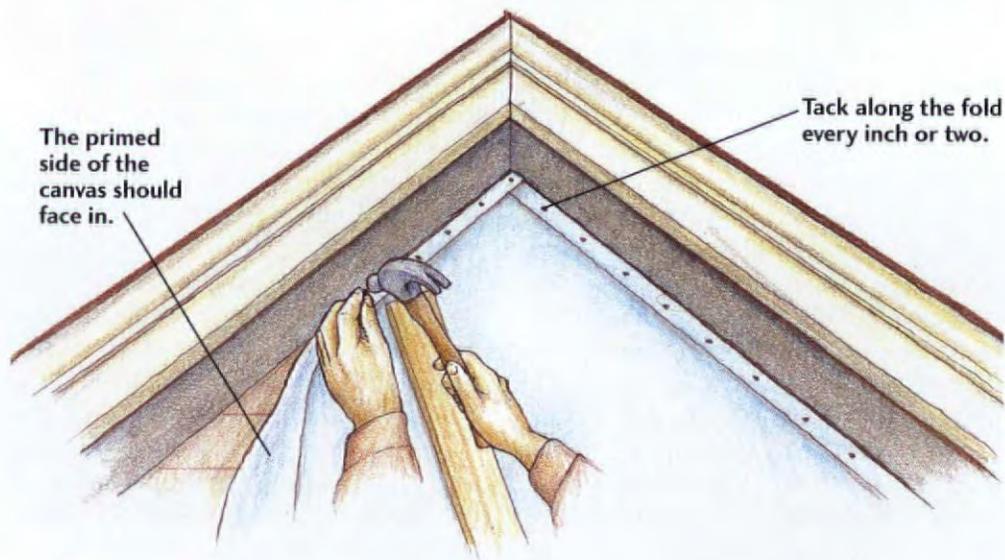
Some homes have complicated ornamental schemes. Before removing the wood trim, make a map of the peak and number the elements. Mark each trim piece with a corresponding number as you gently pry it off (remember this wood has been sitting comfortably for a hundred years). A reciprocating saw comes in handy to cut the nails on the window casing. Remove the trim from the staging so it can be scraped and primed later.

The old canvas I've seen is securely fastened with hundreds of small copper tacks, 1" apart at the seam edges and under the stickwork. Pull out the nails and remove the canvas. Repeat the process with the layers of red rosin paper underneath. Be sure to remove all the nails, staples, and tacks.

Once you've cleaned off the canvas and paper, check the sheathing boards and re nail any loose ones. Examine the flashing that runs along eaves and over windows. Re nail, patch, or replace the flashing as needed.

RESTORING CANVAS SIDING

MEASURING: Measure the gable in need of recanvassing and add an extra 2" for doubling up the edges. Lay out the canvas and mark the points of the triangle. Use a chalk-line to connect the dots. (If you're working



Once it has been secured along the bottom of the gable, lift the canvas to the gable peak and tack the top point into place. While an assistant pushes with a board, fold the edges over and secure the canvas to the sheathing.

alone, drive an awl or screwdriver through the canvas into the ground to hold the chalkline.)

After marking the dimensions, cut out the piece with sharp scissors. If you dare, cut out the windows at this point. However, it is better to do this after tacking the bottom edge of the canvas to the house. Measure carefully — the canvas is an expensive handkerchief to dry your tears if you mess up.

PRIMING: Prime the back of the canvas and allow to dry. Oil-based paints perform well over an extended period. For my job, I used an oil-based primer on the larger peaks. The smaller peaks were coated with an acrylic, water-based primer. Both were topcoated with a latex stain. There was an enormous difference in application. The material absorbed more than four times as much oil-based primer as acrylic primer. Nevertheless, both types have held up fine.

PAPERING: Get back up the ladder for the next step, bringing scissors, a roll of red rosin paper, and a staplegun or hammer tacker. Securely tack on the rosin paper, overlapping the sheets a few inches. (The more staples, the better.) Then put another layer right over the first. The paper is a traditional moisture and wind blocker. (Modern housewrap products may also work, but I haven't tried them.)

CANVASSING: Roll the canvas from top to bottom to make it easier to climb the ladder. Lay the canvas on the staging, primed side facing inward. Make sure the canvas reaches the right and left extremes before beginning. Tack the bottom edge to the sheathing, using $\frac{3}{4}$ " copper or 6d galvanized nails. Start from the center and tack through the flashing every 2". Keep the tacks about 1" up from the curve in the flashing.

With a partner, lift the canvas (primed side in) up to its highest center point. Stretch it into place (not too tightly) and tack the top point. Fold the edges over 1", like a hem, and secure with a few tacks. While one person pushes with a board or straightedge, the other secures the canvas to the sheathing every inch or two. When the canvas is in place, tack along the bottom edge, which is now doubled over.

Two hundred sq. ft. of canvas is unwieldy on a calm day — dangerous on a

windy day. Original canvas was installed two ways: in one piece, and in multiple pieces. The doubled-over and butted (not overlapped) seams in the multiple-piece method were completely concealed by wood trim nailed on top. I've learned the hard way that the second method is easier, but be careful with your cutting. The purpose of the canvas is to display unblemished panels; unsightly nails or seams gooped with silicone would defeat the purpose. If you leave a tack or two exposed, remember to seal copper nails with a stain killer before painting or a green oxidation stain will bleed through.

Before installing the scraped-and-primed trim, stickwork, and window casings, heavily coat the canvas your chosen primer. When dry enough to work on, install the rakeboards, stretching the canvas tighter before nailing. Use the map and markings as a guide to installing the wood trim as it originally appeared. Nail through into the sheathing with 8d and 10d galvanized nails. Once you've got a handle on the exact locations of boards, tighten the canvas with rows of additional tacks and then conceal them with the wood trim. Caulk the gaps along the tops of the rakes and trim boards, leaving the bottom edges open to shed water.

Now you can paint the new canvas and trim to match the house. Once the staging is down, you can gaze in satisfaction at a weatherproof system which is one of the more unusual architectural oddities. 🏠



Top: To prevent costly mistakes, cut out windows after the canvas has been stretched over most of the gable. **Middle:** Completely tacked into place, the canvas is heavily coated with primer. **Bottom:** Once the canvas is dry, install the rakeboards to tighten it and then follow with the wood trim.

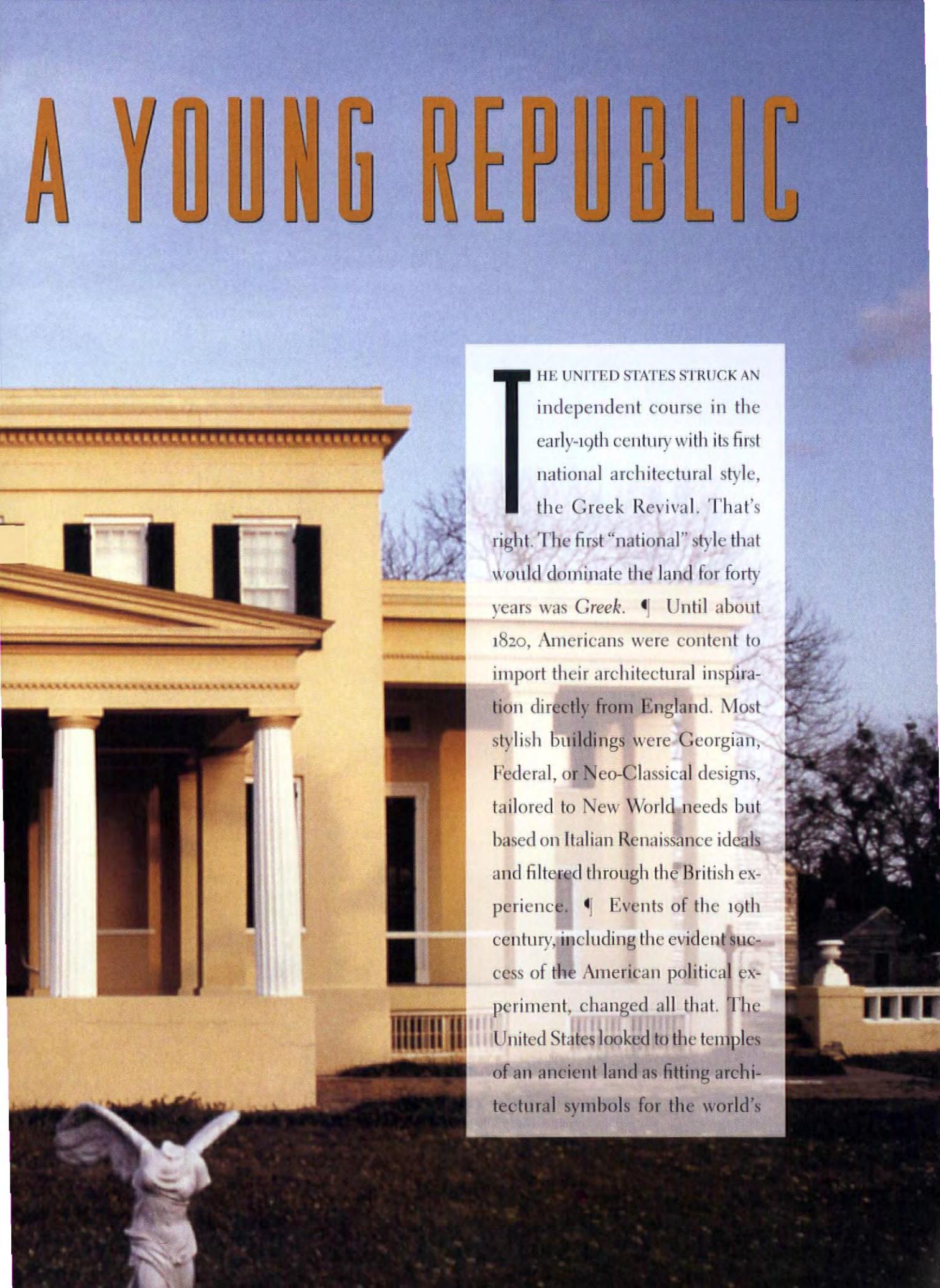
GREEK TEMPLES FOR

by James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell

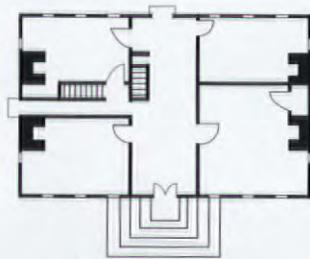


A terra-cotta and white color scheme highlights the stately southern plantation house of Gaineswood in Demopolis, Alabama.

A YOUNG REPUBLIC



THE UNITED STATES STRUCK AN independent course in the early-19th century with its first national architectural style, the Greek Revival. That's right. The first "national" style that would dominate the land for forty years was *Greek*. ¶ Until about 1820, Americans were content to import their architectural inspiration directly from England. Most stylish buildings were Georgian, Federal, or Neo-Classical designs, tailored to New World needs but based on Italian Renaissance ideals and filtered through the British experience. ¶ Events of the 19th century, including the evident success of the American political experiment, changed all that. The United States looked to the temples of an ancient land as fitting architectural symbols for the world's



Grander Greek Revival houses favored the symmetry of the center-hall floor plan. RIGHT: In South Carolina, Milford is a typical example of a southern plantation house, with a splendid horizontal entablature instead of a temple-front pediment.

youngest republic. Not surprisingly, Americans felt a kinship with the democratic and republican ideals of Greece and Rome.

However, for a couple of hundred years Roman architecture had been co-opted by the English who, in the aftermath of the War of 1812, were in remarkably bad odor with their former colony. Greek architecture, on the other hand, was untainted by British influence. Americans knew about ancient Greek buildings because of 18th-century archeological activities. Some had seen the measured drawings of Greek buildings published in *The Antiquities of Athens*, by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett (1761). Greece had also won the sympathy of the American public during a long but successful war of independence against Turkey. With the Turks gone, foreign tourists flocked to visit the great Hellenic monuments.

America adapted the temple form and classical orders of Greek antiquity to 19th-c. needs.

NO MATTER HOW INSPIRING 5TH-CENTURY B.C. buildings like the Parthenon are, they could hardly work very well in a 19th-century industrialized nation with modern tastes and functional requirements. The bulky,



post-and-lintel masonry construction of Greek antiquity was neither feasible nor necessary in an industrial culture heading quickly toward balloon framing with lumber. Certain hallmarks of Greek architecture did survive in the United States, including a devotion to symmetrical design, the pedimented temple form, porticos of every size and height (either pedimented or flat-roofed) and, most telling of all, columns and pilasters in the classical Greek orders.

The most prevalent building material was wood, often disguised with scored-and-lined stucco to simulate ashlar stone. Real stone and brick were also widely used, especially for public buildings. The idealized Greek temple may have begun the

S T U D Y I N G T H E C L A S S I C S

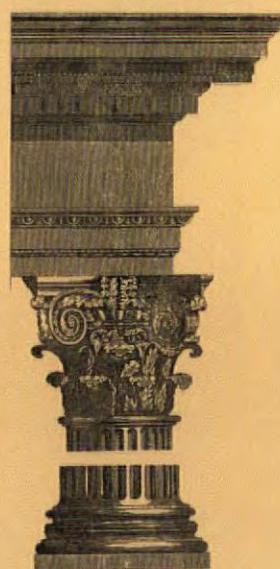


DORIC



IONIC

ALTHOUGH CLASSICAL ORNAMENT had been used extensively in the Georgian and Federal style, it was selected from the Roman rather than the Greek idiom and was loosely applied. In Greek Revival design, the classical orders (systems of decoration based on the design of columns) were taken seriously. The Doric order, the least elaborate, featured a fluted shaft, a simple moulded capital, and no base. Next in terms of ornamentation was the Ionic order with scrolled, cushion-shaped capital (volute), fluted shaft, and simple base. The ornate Corinthian column pulled out all the stops with fluted or reeded shafts, moulded bases, and large, carved floriate capitals. Orders were used according to strict standards. As a rule, the farther up on the building they were placed, the fancier they were.



CORINTHIAN

craze for white buildings in the United States (perhaps imitating white marble). However, many buildings of the Greek Revival period were painted in earthy yellows and terra-cotta colors, sometimes with gilded or polychromatic trim.

The first generation of professional architects in the United States was well represented among the important designers of Greek Revival buildings. Thomas U. Walter, William Strickland, Robert Mills, Ithiel Town, Philip Hooker, Francis Costigan, James Gallier, Minard Lafever, and Asher Benjamin — in short, most of the best-known architects of the time. All turned to Greek Revival projects for reliable profits. Many of them published carpenters' guides or pattern books with Greek Revival plans as well. Broadly circulated publications, such as Benjamin's *The Carpenter's Guide* and Lafever's *The Modern Builder's Guide*, carried the trend to far-flung outposts in the Midwest and even to California.

The Greek Revival style was adapted to nearly every type of building: city row houses, freestanding houses in villages and towns, mansions and outbuildings (including privies) on southern plantations and northern estates, churches, schools, and buildings of commerce and government, such as banks, theaters, statehouses, courthouses, and prisons. As one Greeked-out critic complained, "Everything is a Greek temple." The concentration of Greek Revival buildings is still thickest in the industrializing northeast and the newly settled midwest — the fastest-growing areas between 1820 and 1860.

AN OUTSTANDING RESIDENTIAL example of the Greek Revival style is Andalusia, the home of financier

Nicholas Biddle in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. An existing house was remodeled by Thomas U. Walter in the Greek Revival style in 1835-36. Handsomely sited above the Delaware River, Andalusia's massive peripteral portico supported by fluted Doric columns was as close to the

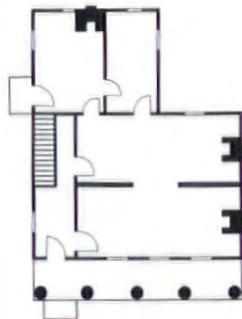


Greek ideal as an American building would ever come. The 1849 Tennessee State Capitol in Nashville represents the Greek Revival style as adapted to the statehouse, a large public-building type much in demand during this nation-building stage of American history.

Great plantation houses with Tara-like columned porticos have become a cliché of the antebellum South, but the surviving examples are evocative and often very beautiful. Louisiana's Chalmette, South Carolina's Milford, and Alabama's Gaineswood are a few Greek Revival dream houses among a distinguished and now diminishing company.

Modest vernacular houses weren't excluded from the Greek Revival mode. Columns or pilasters, pediments, and doorways with triple-light transoms and vertical sidelights were enough to establish a link with the fashionable Greek style. In the countryside, not even those embellishments were necessary. The farmhouse of choice through the late 19th century had a gabled-front main block with a slightly lower gabled-roof wing

A simple temple-front Connecticut house ornamented with a fine doorway and sidelights. LEFT: Overlooking the Delaware River north of Philadelphia, Andalusia's Greek temple addition is one of a few houses with columns on the front and side.



The street-facing gables of modest Greek Revival houses inspired a new floor plan: the side-hall scheme.



In addition to the expected portico, the Henry B. Clarke House in Chicago features a decorative square cupola. RIGHT: Note the full-length Greek Revival window with a cast-iron balcony and anthemion motif scrollwork.

at one side. Such a house might have no trim other than a vestigial *entablature* (a plain, broad band of wood under the eaves) around the entire house, turning in at the gable ends to suggest a pediment. City row houses benefited from the Greek influence as well. A columned portico or even a glorified stoop with a couple of pilasters beside the front door could enrich the narrowest urban dwelling.

Elaborate entries distinguish exteriors; woodwork dominates center-hall interiors.

A GREEK REVIVAL HOUSE MIGHT have had any one of several different roof lines. Low-pitch gabled roofs with pediment returns, hipped or deck-on-hip roofs, and nearly flat roofs with balustrades or panelled parapets, perhaps with projecting *anthemion* (honeysuckle leaf) ornament, were all commonly used. Square cupolas were frequent features, but chimneys were not prominent.

Ornament was always bold, in deliberate contrast to the Federal period. Greek

Revival ornament was easy to produce using modern tools, and the development of rail and water transportation made it easy to get the ornament to frontier areas. This was also the era in which it became possible to produce cut ironwork, and fine cast-iron window grilles, roof crestings, and porch railings were widely used. The style of building elements was determined mainly by the type of column that was used (see page 58).

The columns could vary almost infinitely in size, shape, number, placement, and decoration and still look Greek. In the Greek tradition, there was always an even number of them (generally four or six), in order to avoid a center column. Americans felt free to use five when it suited their purposes. The columns could be placed in front of the building only (*prostyle*) or all around it (*peristyle*). They could be beefed up with *antae* (square columns also called piers or pilasters), at the side of the building, or with engaged pilasters almost anywhere. If there were two columns in the middle with piers at the corners, the building might be described as *distyle in antis* (two columns between posts). Frequently, a bit of architectural sleight-of-hand implied the presence of columns where there were none, with ranks of shallow wooden pilasters set almost flush with the wall surface.

Whether they were located in a gable end or a long front facade, doorways were



unmistakable architectural features of Greek Revival houses. Rectangular transoms with one-to-five (or sometimes seven) fixed or movable lights, and multipaned sidelights with glazed panels set above wooden ones were standard amenities.

Windows were larger than ever, partly because glass came in bigger pieces and at lower prices. Large windows helped to

give a sense of depth to a plain facade as well as provide light within. Greek Revival windows were almost always rectan-

gular (Palladian windows belonged to the Roman tradition), but there were occasional variations, such as small oval or circular windows with wreathlike trim. Window frames varied from simple, flat post-and-lintel trim to pedimented, eared, or three-part moulded lintels. At the attic level, rectangular windows were glazed, louvered, or covered with decorative fretwork.

Generally, exterior wall surfaces were uninterrupted except by the vertical lines of pilasters that simulated



pavilions. Recessed rectangular panels were a popular trim for the upper walls.

Greek Revival interiors often had symmetrical center-hall plans with one or two rooms opening to either side of the hall. Side-hall plans were also common. Large sliding doors of grained or varnished wood separated double parlors or parlors and hallways. Staircases were impressive, with massive newel posts, heavy moulded banisters, and urn-shaped, turned balusters. Broad pilasters with bull's-eye corner blocks surrounded doors and windows; pedimented, eared, or three-part lintels topped

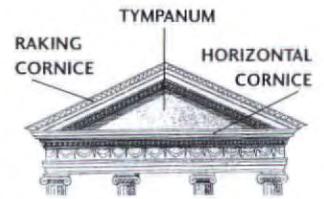
doorways, nearly reaching the high ceilings.

As time went by, the hard edges of the Greek Revival began to blur, softened by decorative elements such as carved, curving eave brackets borrowed from the increasingly popular Italianate style. There was no holding back the surge of romantic eclecticism

that overwhelmed the country in the mid-19th century. Critics pronounced the Greek Revival style static, outdated, artistically boring, and — uh-oh — not so American after all. By the 1840s, most architects

preferred the more “modern” Gothic Revival style. Greek Revival’s popular base eroded in the 1850s, washed away by Gothic and Italianate picturesqueness.

After the Civil War, the Greek Revival appeared finished for sure — unless you count the way it popped up in stripped-down form in 20th-century public buildings or in little front-gable-and-wing farmhouses and temple-style workers’ cottages built in the 1920s and 30s. Then it looks as if the Greek Revival style, like many high-born, hardworking immigrants, just made itself at home in America.



Pediments were either left unadorned or ornamented with decorative moulding. **LEFT:** A projecting entry with sidelights, corner pilasters, and an entablature turn a simple Gloucester, Massachusetts, saltbox into a study in Greek Revival ornament.



In Crystal Lake, Illinois, an unusual example of a small, rustic Greek Revival with a full peripteral colonnade.

A Detector in the House

BY JANICE DEAN

PICTURE THIS: YOU NEED TO RECESS AN ELECTRICAL outlet on a bedroom wall, but you can't remember exactly where the bathroom pipes run. Cut in the wrong place, you'll ruin the expensive reproduction wallpaper. Sound familiar? If you've ever been in this predicament, there's a novel solution to the problem — use a metal detector.

Metal detectors can uncover many old-house secrets, from lost pipes to the whereabouts of long-gone outbuildings. If your only experience with metal detectors is tripping airport security devices with pocket change, you're not alone. After eight years of restoring our 1889 home, I needed something to take my mind off plaster dust and plumbing. So I bought a hobby-style detector and joined the growing number of metal detecting enthusiasts.

Pieces of Eight & Treasure Maps

THE DETECTOR I CHOSE IS A LIGHTWEIGHT COMPUTERIZED model. With a few pushes of a key pad, I select a pre-set program and ground-balance the machine to correct for excess mineralization in the soil. Then I'm ready to swing the search coil over the ground.

Many hobbyists specialize in one aspect of the sport, such as relic hunting, coin shooting, prospecting, or underwater hunting. Others enjoy finding and returning lost items or helping law-enforcement officials at crime scenes. My initial plan was to concentrate on finding coins in my yard. If only one coin per year was lost there, more than 100 coins were waiting to be found. Find coins I did — at last count 253! However, I discovered other curious items, and soon my coin hunting turned into an archaeological dig outside my Victorian house.

One day I was sounding for a stud using the rap-the-knuckles-on-the-wall method when I realized the detector might be quicker. Normally it's a nuisance to find nails, so the machine is programmed to ignore them. This time, however, I set it to signal the presence of any metal.

Since there weren't any pipes or wires in that wall, I swept the detector's search coil over the surface and quickly located the nails in the stud.

After that, the detector was no longer restricted to my yard. I have found pipes, a drill bit lost in a pile of sawdust, wires, junction boxes, and nails in old beams.

Outdoors again, it turned up property stakes, sprinkler heads, shallow underground utility lines, and buried fuel tanks.

Mainly, I use the detector to find buried treasure. For an old-house owner, treasure is the missing key to the antique front door lock, a coin dated the same year your house was built, or a discarded drawer pull from the old kitchen cabinets. My cache of old-house booty includes coins, spoons, jewelry, toy cars, belt buckles, and buttons.



A display of the many items I've found, including a full ink bottle, toy cars, spoons, and a purse's worth of coins.

The oldest coin is dated eight years before my house was built; other coins — a Barber dime and a V nickel — I never heard of before digging them up. The prize find, buried near the back porch, is a tiny gold ring with

Originally, metal detecting was a welcomed relief from the rigors of restoring my Victorian home. Now I use it to find pipes and wires.

the initial "C". No doubt the ring belonged to Carlotta, a young girl who lived in our house at the turn of the century.

The detector, surprisingly, has helped discover some *nonmetallic* items, such as crockery, bottles, and marbles dug out of an old trash pit. In the days before weekly pick-up, trash pits and burn piles were common. Household rubbish was discarded around the property and sometimes in dry outhouse pits or wells. If there is a trash pit in your yard, it is easy to locate because metal is usually mixed in with the debris.

Metal or not, I record the location of everything I find. From these maps, I see patterns of everyday activities that occurred around my house. For instance, the concentration of older coins at the back door to the kitchen suggests that it was once the most-used entrance. By interpreting a pattern close to the house, I knew where to dig for the bed of an original sidewalk taken up in the 1930s. Toys and coins found in a large rectangular area in the backyard betrayed the location of a clothes line where several generations of mothers hung out the wash while their children played nearby. (Later I came across an old picture of the house showing the clothes line, complete with sheets billowing in the breeze.)

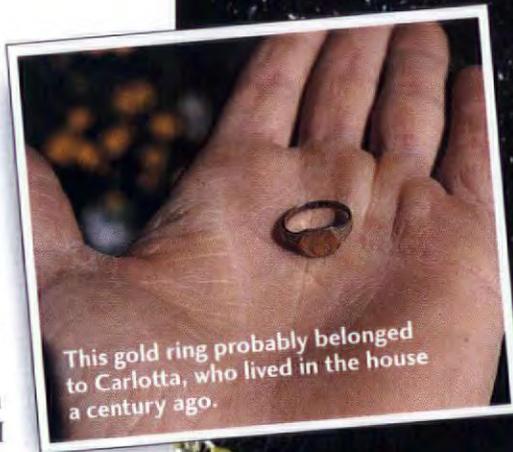
All of the discovered treasures have a sentimental value, but some have historic or monetary value as well. There is always the option of selling a rare or collectible find and using the money to help pay for the detector, or for the never-ending needs of the old house. Historic items can be donated to museums or local societies. One lucky detectorist uncovered a jar of silver dollars while searching at a friend's old house. Even after splitting the prize, he had enough to pay for a new detector.

Hunting for a Metal Detector

THINK A DETECTOR MIGHT BE USEFUL AROUND YOUR OLD house? Buying one is a bit more complicated than purchasing a heat gun or a hammer. So as you shop, consider these points:

COST — Prices start at \$150 and edge close to \$1000 for a top-of-the-line, computerized model. There are plenty of choices between these limits. Generally the more expensive the machine, the deeper it will detect

Old outbuildings are good treasure hunting spots. Here I slowly sweep the metal detector near the root cellar in my side yard.



This gold ring probably belonged to Carlotta, who lived in the house a century ago.





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and the better it is at rejecting junk items, such as pull tabs and foil.

BRAND — All major manufacturers make good detectors, but the features and styles vary. Call each manufacturer and ask for a brochure to study and compare before you buy.

MODEL — After deciding on your type of treasure hunting, choose between computerized and non-computerized models. Computerized models offer easy use and turn-key convenience, but they are also more expensive. Lower-priced, non-computerized detectors require some manual adjustment.

ACCESSORIES — Do you want headphones? A carrying case? A protective cover for the control box? Manufacturers periodically offer free accessories with some detectors. Ask if any specials are available.

If you are uncertain about which detector to buy, a local dealer will explain the features and how to use them. Look in the phone directory under Metal-Detecting Equipment or call a manufacturer for the name of a representative.

If your budget is tight, don't try to save money by buying a cheap, off-brand detector that is little more than a toy. Save by buying from a discount mail-order company in one of the treasure-hobby magazines. (Of course, unlike a good dealer, you don't get personal service or on-going support.) Detectorists are always trading up, so a dealer might have used models in stock, too.

As sophisticated as today's detectors are, you still need to learn how to pinpoint and dig a target, how fast to swing the search coil, what a good target sounds like, and much more that only comes with experience and practice. Read the manual thoroughly and familiarize

The site of the old clothes line yielded many exciting finds, including three well-worn metal toy cars.

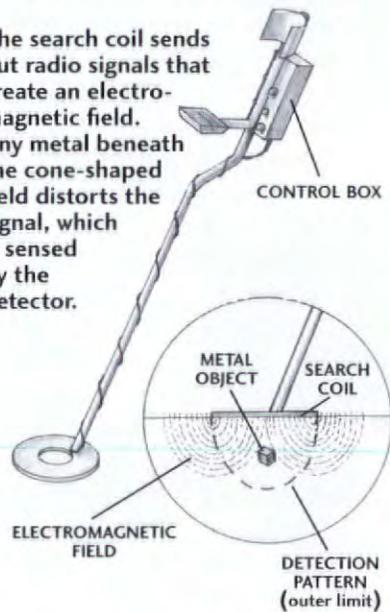


yourself with your machine before you begin. Pick up tricks of the trade from a treasure-hunting magazine or by joining a local club.

If you get a thrill uncovering beautiful woodwork beneath orange-painted mantels or discovering time capsules under floorboards, buy a metal detector and discover the treasure trove in your old yard.

HOW A DETECTOR WORKS

The search coil sends out radio signals that create an electromagnetic field. Any metal beneath the cone-shaped field distorts the signal, which is sensed by the detector.



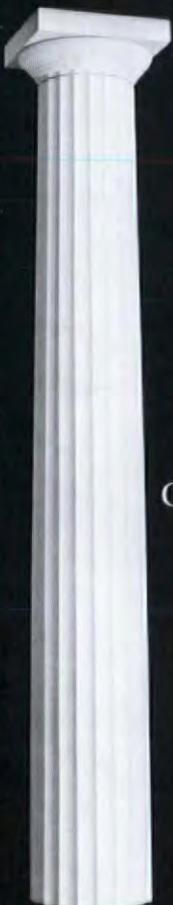
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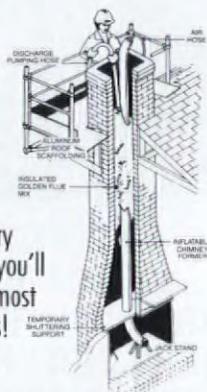


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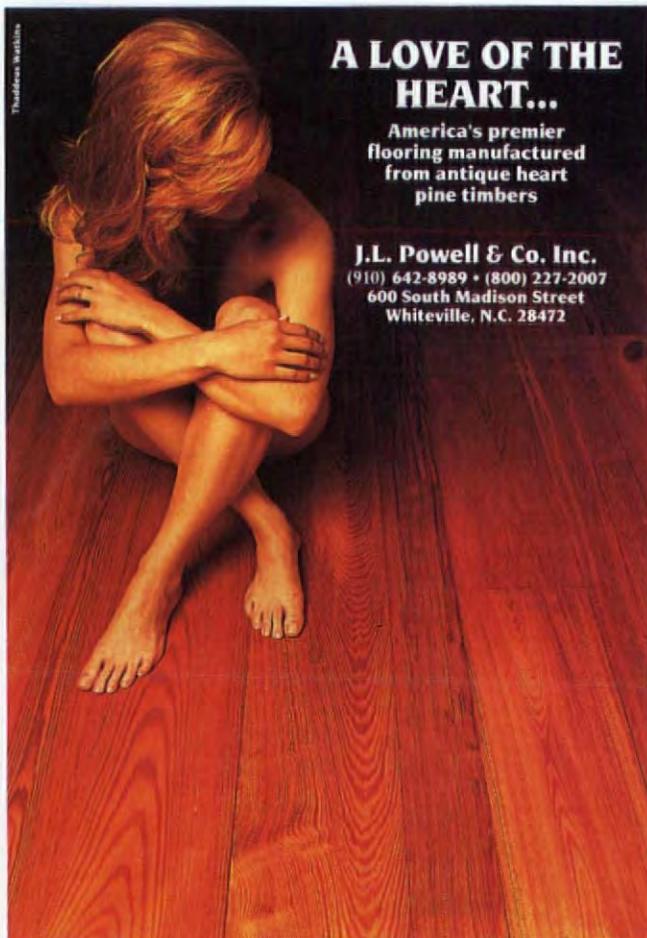
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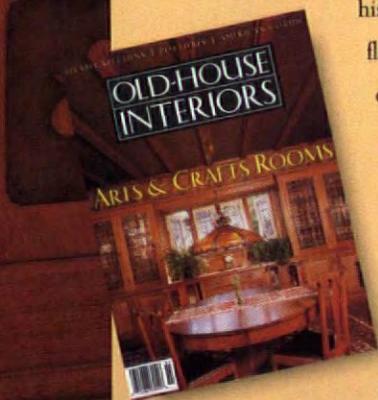
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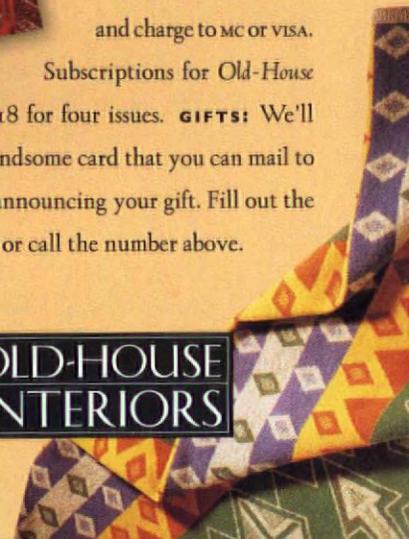
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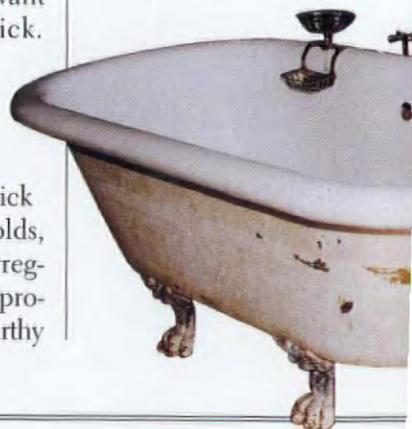
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- Building cross sections: cornice, fireplace, and cabinet sections when needed to help your builder understand major interior details.
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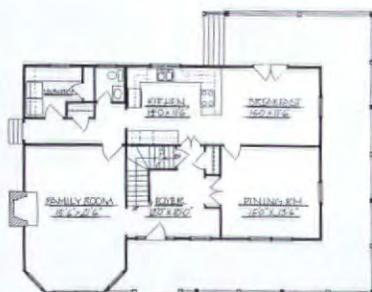


THIS UNIQUE VICTORIAN SITS WELL ON A LARGE lot. The verandah wraps all the way around to the back of the house for expansive views. Inside, large rooms revolve around a central foyer

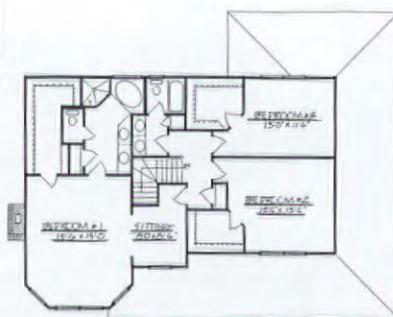
and curved staircase. The second-storey master bedroom is entered through a sitting area and enjoys a bay window and luxurious bath.

Plan BL-03-VI

Cost.....	\$260
Set of 5.....	\$320
Set of 8.....	\$360
Bedrooms.....	3
Bathrooms.....	2 ½
Square Footage.....	2,640'
first Floor.....	1,312'
Second Floor.....	1,328'
Ceiling Height	
first Floor.....	9'
Second Floor.....	8'
Overall Dimensions	
Width.....	56'
Depth.....	42'



first floor



second floor

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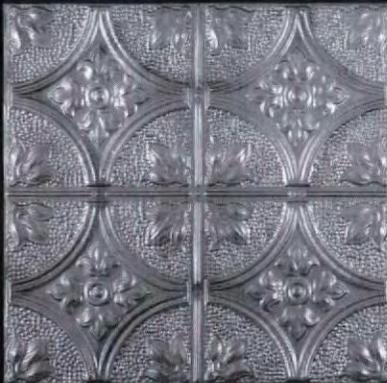
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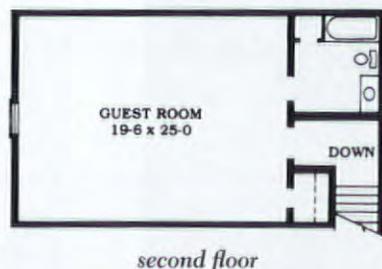
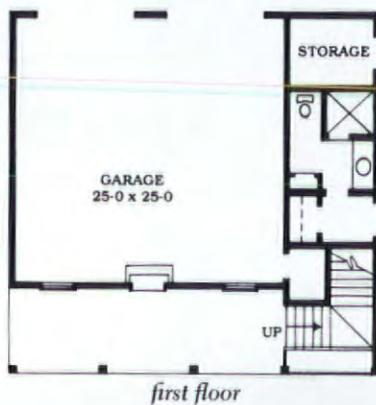
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Plan HR-23-GA	
Cost.....	\$50
Square Footage	685'
Bonus Room	12'
Overall Dimensions	
Width	12'
Depth	20'

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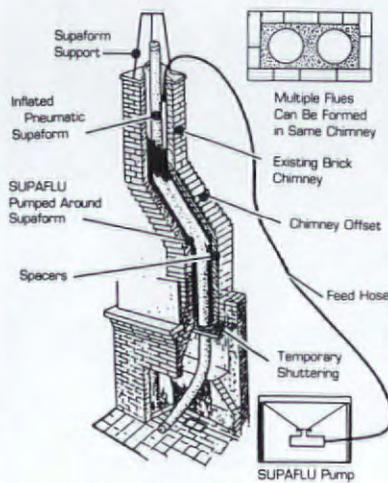
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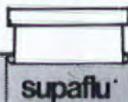
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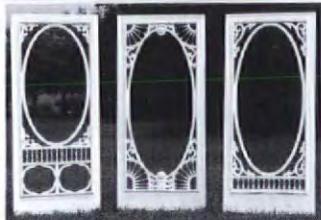
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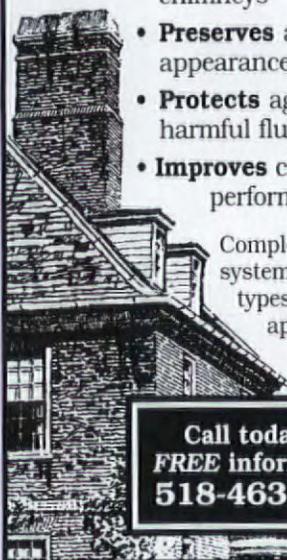
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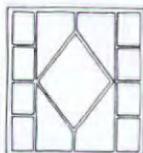
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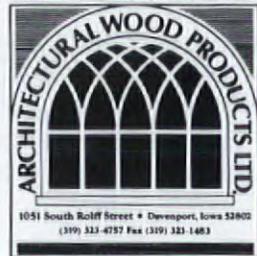
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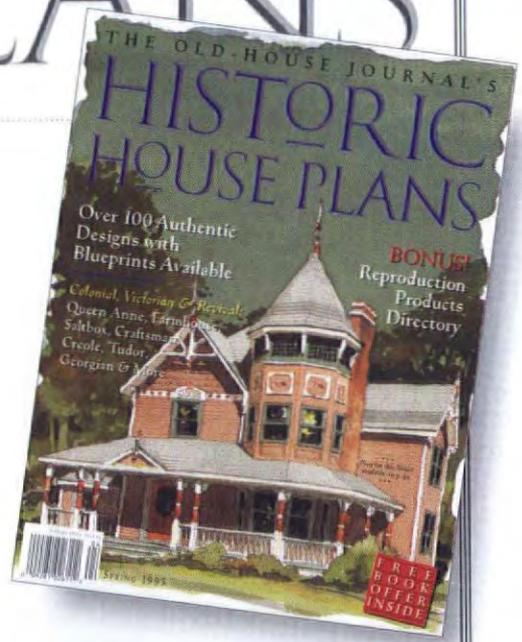
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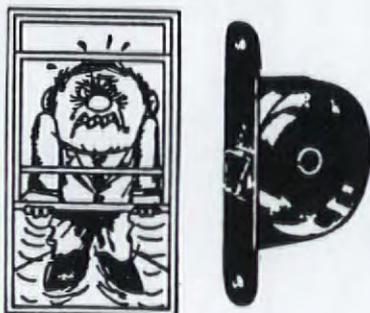
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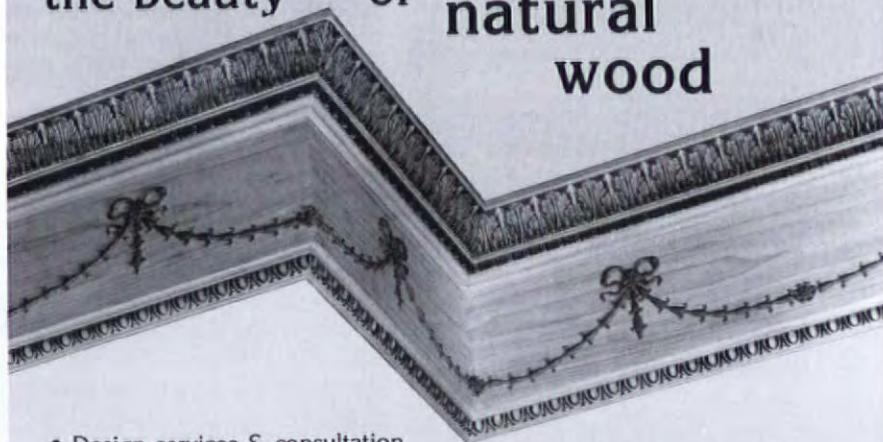
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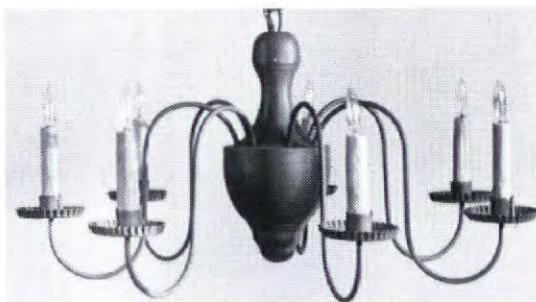
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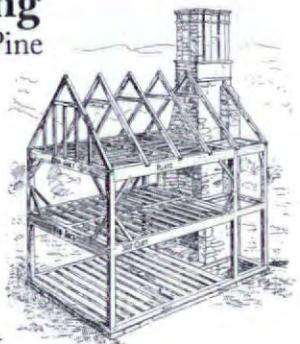
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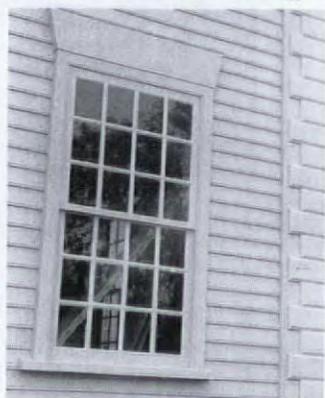
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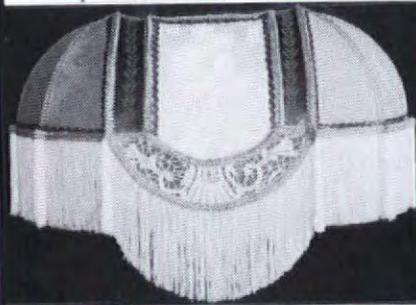
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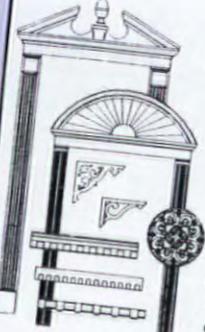
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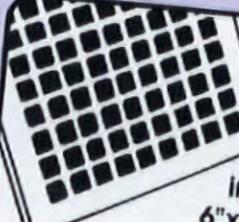
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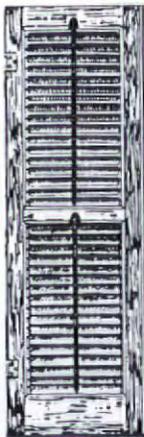
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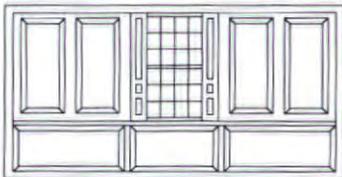
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The enclosed porch of this early-19th-century house looks squashed because the half-diamond "shutters" create a bent effect (inset).

That Sinking Feeling

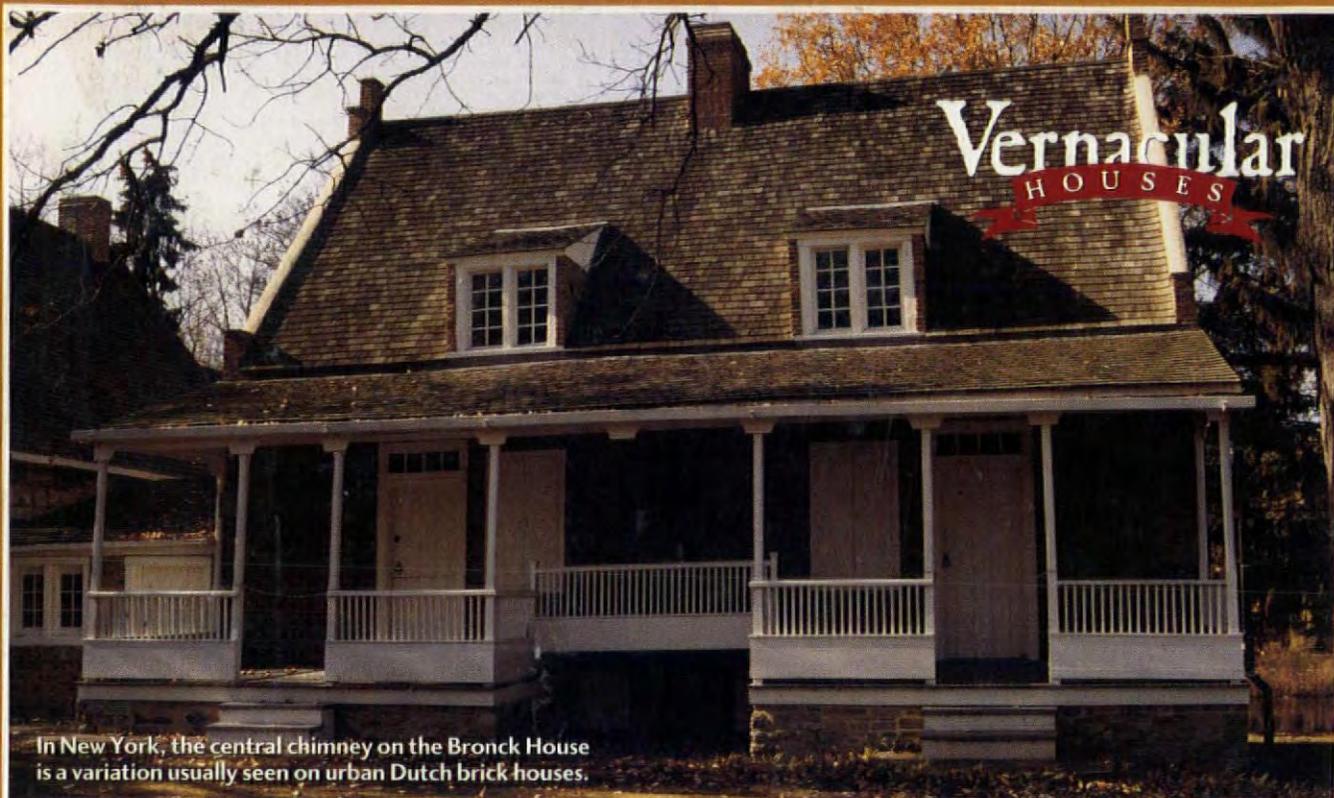
IS THE PORCH OF THIS I-HOUSE ABOUT TO COLLAPSE? NO, IT'S JUST BUCKLING UNDER THE PRESSURE OF remuddling. The North Carolina home is being crushed by the dead weight of an insensitively enclosed front porch. Usually a straightforward type of old-house remodeling, this alteration takes a new angle: Futuristic shutters in a half-diamond shape project out from the windows on the first and second floors. From the side, every vertical member looks bent — as though the house was squeezed like an accordion. The silver and red paint scheme, better suited to roadside diners, accents the peculiar effect. Bar lounge-like front doors echo the diamond motif of the bowed blinders.

Before its transformation, the early-19th-century homestead was similar to this nearby dwelling. Its the full-length porch with a row of graceful columns hasn't been weighed down by an overpowering enclosure. Avant garde architectural elements don't block sunlight from the windows. Basically, this I-House still stands tall — maybe someday its sagging neighbor will straighten out, too.



Simplicity has always been the hallmark of the I-House form, such as this North Carolina example. Thanks to Jim Casey for sending in the photos.

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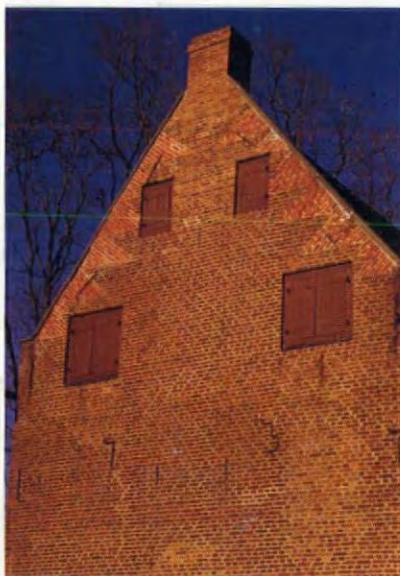


In New York, the central chimney on the Bronck House is a variation usually seen on urban Dutch brick houses.

THE HUDSON VALLEY'S DUTCH BRICK HOUSES

FEW COLONIAL DUTCH HOUSES reflect actual Dutch building practices. In the northern Hudson Valley of New York, however, there are seven houses that are part of the Dutch medieval tradition of brick construction — the only remaining examples of this distinct architectural style. Each has two steeply pitched parapet gables with ornamental brickwork, known as *mouse tothing*, along the edge. These brick walls act as a decorative shell. Iron wall anchors tie them to the house's wood frame, which is structurally independent.

Parapet-gabled brick houses were first built in American cities such as New York and Albany. As a class of affluent and aspiring farmers emerged in 1710, similar buildings began to appear in what was colonial Albany County. Although a sign of



Mouse tothing — the defining feature of Dutch brick houses — can be seen on the parapet-gabled end of the Van Alen House in Kinderhook, New York.

wealth, most parapet-gabled houses contained only two or three rooms laid out in a row. In the city, the houses had narrow gabled fronts to conserve space, but in rural areas, the gables were oriented as side walls.

Dutch brick houses were built exclusively in Albany county. Only in the northern Hudson Valley could the skilled labor and financing for these houses be found. The local masons had mastered this high-level construction by working on urban houses; the wealthy farmers were isolated enough from English influence to want a house in the outdated Dutch brick tradition. By the time of the French and Indian War, however, this medieval style of architecture had passed out of favor even in the northern Hudson Valley.

— WILLIAM BRANDOW
Albany, New York

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