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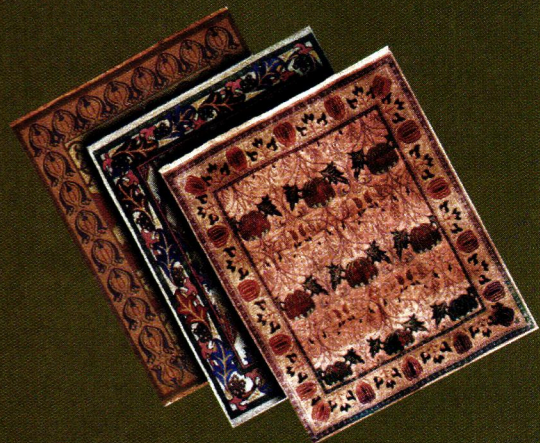
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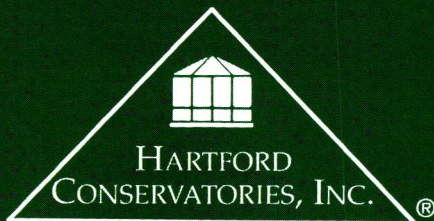
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publisher

William J. O'Donnell

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Subscription service (800)462-0211, back issues available at \$6.50 per copy (978) 281-8803. ADVERTISING: (978) 283-4721. EDITORIAL: (978) 283-3200. Two Main St., Gloucester, MA 01930. WEBSITE: oldhouseinteriors.com POSTMASTER: Send address changes to OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS, PO Box 56009, Boulder, CO 80328-6009. © Copyright 2000 by Gloucester Publishers. All rights reserved.

Printed at The Lane Press, South Burlington, Vermont.

House in the dream

I have had variations of “the house dream” all my life. Not the nightmare in the midst of renovation, the one where the kitchen ceiling plaster bulges and you hear water running. No, I mean dreams better interpreted by Carl Jung than by your building contractor. ■ In the early dream, I would be home—in my grandmother’s house, or my little New York apartment—when I would find a passage to . . . where? Upstairs or through a never-seen door, I would go exploring, always alone, to find a room of great beauty and tranquility. It was a long room unbroken by partition walls, but its lovely rugs and furniture would suggest a place by the fire, a reading nook, a comfortable spot for murmured conversations. Through an end wall of glass, tall green trees rustled in the breeze. I would wonder how I could have lived here so long and not known this room existed. ■ (When I began to study architecture and interior design, I recognized that the room in the dream was vaguely Arts and Crafts. I don’t think this is hindsight, but who knows? To this day, I have a special place in my heart for a peculiar, not-very-textbook A&C style like the one in my dream.) ■ Near middle age, the dream changed. Again there would be the unknown room—now an entire storey or wing. But this was not a beautiful sanctuary. It was breathtaking in its degree of . . . ruin. Often it would be a time capsule of another era: bathrooms with rusted taps over porcelain and marble, a candlewicked spread yellowed and frayed on a sagging bed. Room after room, I would hold my breath, aghast and delighted by my discovery. I would imagine cleaning and fixing it all, and what I would do with such rooms! ■ Other people, I eventually learned, have similar house dreams. They tell me the dreams are metaphorical—about a search for your center or for God, or about greater things to come in life if you take the time to develop the skills. I think there is a relationship between such dreams and what we strive for in making our homes.

■ My brother, whose only house dream involves a 1970 Mercury Cougar waiting in the garage, says I’ve been in this business too long. “Either that,” he offers, “or you’re just nuts.”



A large, stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Poore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

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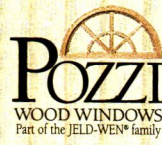
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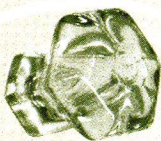
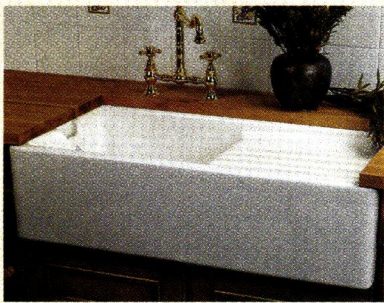


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Letters

ALL THAT JAZZ

YOUR WONDERFUL ARTICLE about Jazz-Age style between the Wars was just the right thing to support what you said in your editor's column. [Both references are to the June/July issue.] Colonial and Victorian are great but seem even better in context with the whole panoply of design times.

—PETER BROOKS
Seattle, Washington

The backgrounds can be even better than the movie itself. (Okay . . . I was the geek who yelled, "cool jadeite Alice cups!" during the movie *Seven*. Most people went to see Brad Pitt.) I'm glad I am not the only one who looks at house interiors when watching something! [See "Victorian Goes to the Movies," May/June 2000.]

—EMILY MAYER LOSSING
Havre, Montana

PEOPLE POWER

A FRIEND INTRODUCED ME to *Old-House Interiors*, sharing the Feb./March 2000 issue.

As an artist, a woodworker, and the owner of a Tucson bungalow, I was drawn to your "Swedish Arts and Crafts" article. The issue also introduced me to the wood-filler products made by Abatron (advertised therein).

The next issue that included a profile of owners of Abatron ["News & Views," p. 24, Apr./May 2000] sold me on your publication. Your people-centered approach to old-house restoration came through. I look forward to experimenting with their fillers... the big proof will come when I launch into my kitchen restoration, which will be very soon if I have any interest in staying married to my lovely but increasingly impatient spouse.

—RHOD LAUFFER
Tucson, Arizona

NICE BOAT

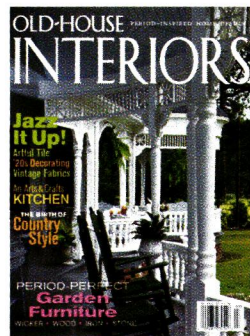
THE ONLY REASON I purchased [the movie] *Titanic* was for the re-creation of the interior of the ship and the clothing styles. I could care less about the plot. The interiors in the TV series *Little House on the Prairie* are unforgettable.

ANOTHER MOVIE HOUSE

SAMUEL ANDREWS, one of John D. Rockefeller's original founding partners in the Standard Oil Company in Cleveland, built his estate on Euclid Avenue between 1882 and 1885. The home had upwards of 80 rooms on three floors, with only six (massive) rooms on the first. The following is a paragraph from a turn-of-the-century *European Journal*, quoted in *Cleveland Architecture* 1876–1976.

"Not long since we had Mr. Vanderbilt's hideous construction paraded before our eyes; and now Cleveland, Ohio, takes up the running . . . An American gentleman who has seen the interior of the house at Cleveland, and who happens also to have casually dropped in at the "principal palaces of Europe," is of the opinion that none of them can beat the Ohio product. And fancy! All this dazzling splendour—exceeding that of Windsor, or Versailles, or the Winter Palace—has been produced by the easy, steady, oleaginous flow of oil."

The house, demolished, was featured in three movies: *House Without Children*, *Women Men Love*, and *Dangerous Toys*. I do not have any addi-



tional information about the films, but the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland does.

—GEORGE PARRAS
Shaker Heights, Ohio



HOOKING EWE

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT be interested in an old art form that my mother taught herself to do. She does primitive rug hooking, the way the original hooked rugs were made. By using recycled wool material and through overdyeing, she can use any color and at the same time she makes the piece look old. She likes to use tweeds and checks to help build the rugs. She has been hooking for over twelve years and now does demonstrations, teaches and makes up kits—when she isn't taking care of her large flock of sheep, or helping out on the family farm. Having raised sheep all her life, she has a great appreciation for wool; sometimes she uses the raw wool from her sheep in the hooking. She can promote sheep and at the same time teach others to make an heirloom.

—JULIE HARWOOD
Ionia, Michigan

On a bad day when you wonder if a decorating magazine is a worthy enough use of your life, you find it gets you a letter about a woman with a large flock of sheep who hooks rugs in the year 2000, and the sky is blue again.—PATRICIA POORE

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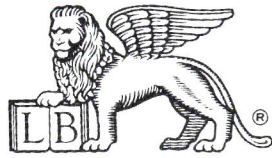
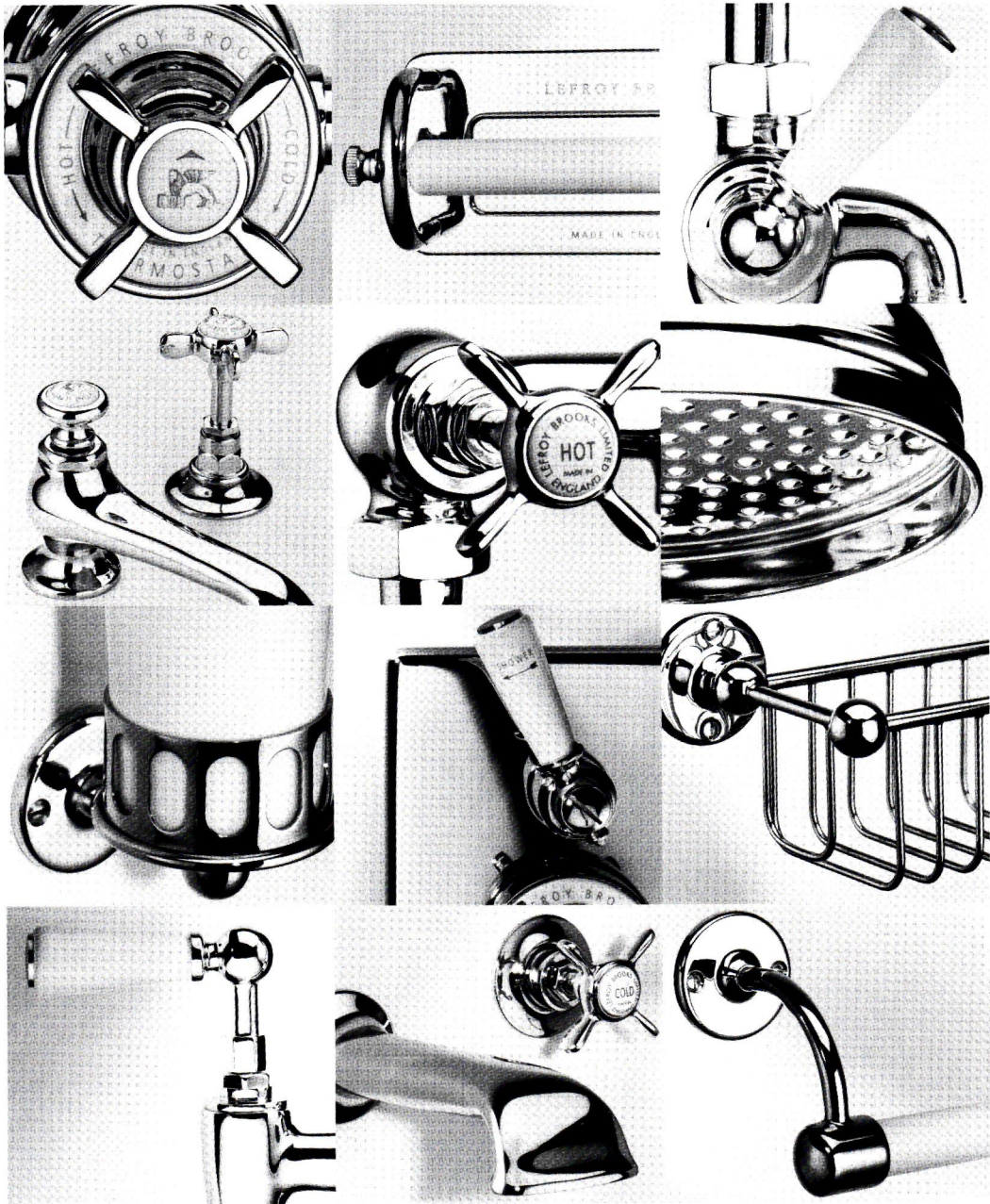


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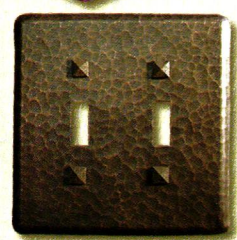
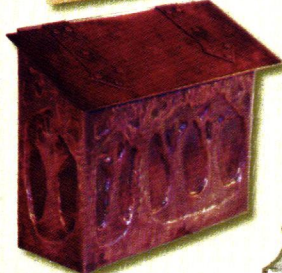
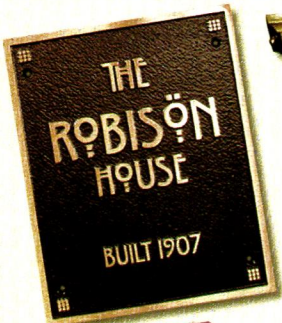


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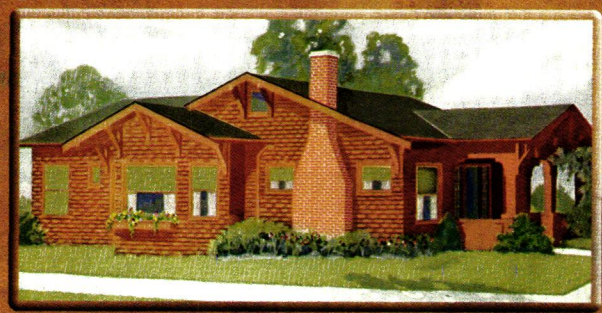
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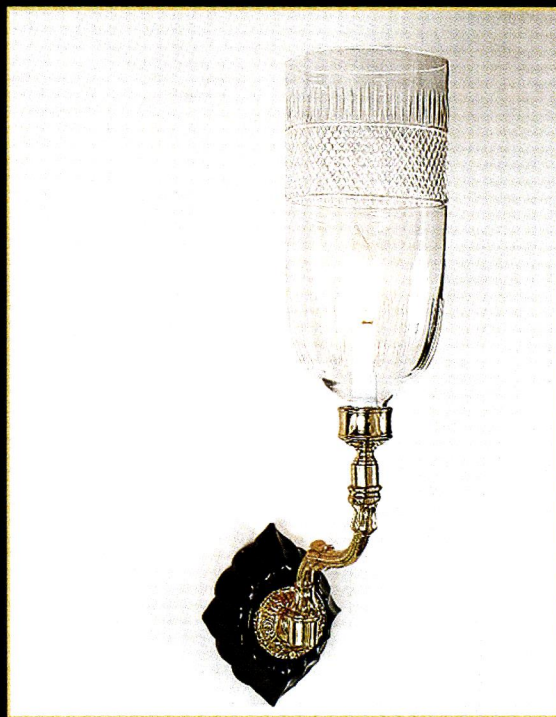
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Websites and information page 119



◆ East Meets West ◆

Debey Zito's Asian-influenced server (\$12,635) was crafted in the true spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement: Zito designed and built the piece, Terry Schmitt did the carvings, and Audel Davis made the copper pulls and top. Call (415) 648-6861.

◆ Bungalow Colors

With names like homespun, honeysuckle, cottage rose, and clinker brink, glazes and solid colors from the Craftsman Palette recall an earlier, simpler time. The base is about \$35 per gallon. The glaze is about \$19 per quart. Call (818) 766-6384.



◆ 1880s Revival

The patterns in the Thomas Strahan 115th Anniversary Collection not only date to the 1880s, they're printed on the original rollers.

Brookfield (top) dates to about 1850; the other papers are from the Strahan archives. They're \$50 to \$55 per roll. Call Waterhouse Wallhangings, (617) 423-7688.



◆ Gothic Glory

Crowned, lionized, and embellished with Gothic arches, the Davide thumbblatch is part of a line of classically styled pieces made in Lithuania by Baltica. About 21" long, it weighs a hefty 4.7 pounds. Call (508) 763-9224 for a price quote.



◆ Aladdin in Topaz

Aladdin's Topaz/Vaseline Grand Vertique lamp features yellow-green crystal glass, which is struck, or reheated, to create an opalescent translucency. The limited edition lamp retails for \$995. Call (800) 457-5267 for a distributor.

◆ Five Stars

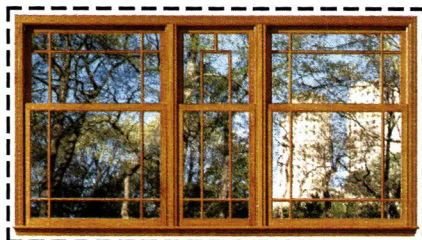
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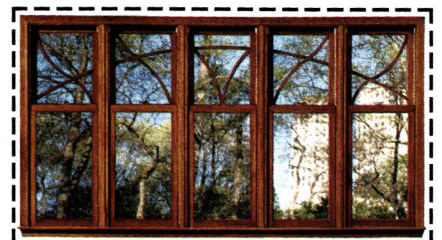
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Commodious

The hand-decorated Venetian Italian bath cabinet in antique wood features a dramatic framed mirror as a backpiece. With a white Carrara marble countertop and undermounted china sink, the ensemble shown costs about \$6,380.

Call Lacava, (888) 522-2823.



Cool It

Ceiling fans were as much a part of Victorian living as the shaded porch. The Vista model, shown here in brushed nickel, is a descendant of the first electric ceiling fans introduced by the Hunter Fan Company in the 1880s. It sells for about \$220. Call (901) 743-1360.



Italian Renaissance

From Tuscany comes the Renaissance double vanity in antique reclaimed wood. Shown in a beige finish, the hand-painted base measures 92" x 25" and is topped with honed limestone. As shown (without sink or fittings), the piece retails for \$8,900. The Umbria mirror, also in antique wood, is \$1,496. Call Del Mondo, (978) 449-0091.

Fit for Your Castle

Park Avenue

Re-create the elegance of a posh Art Deco *piéd-à-terre* with bath accessories from Kallista's Michael S. Smith Collection. The solid-brass wall sconce in sterling silver with hand-cut Baccarat crystal lens in cobalt blue retails for \$2,560. Call (888) 4KALLISTA.



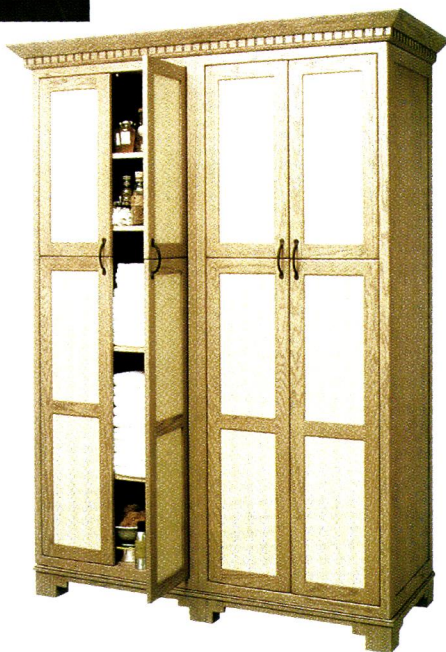
◀ Slow Soaker

Stoutly built of cast iron with a vitreous enamel glaze, Sunrise Specialty's pedestal bath is a roomy 68" long and 30" wide. In white with an 8" faucet drilling, it retails for \$2,400. For the tub-filler/handshower and waste assembly in polished brass, add \$885. Call (800) 444-4280.



Mother Cupboard ▶

From Plain & Fancy's Cottage Kitchen line comes a towering bath cabinet with flat-panel Shaker styling and dentil accents. Constructed of oak, it's finished in an antique-distressed maize with enameled panels in cornsilk. Call (800) 447-9006 east of the Mississippi for a custom quote.



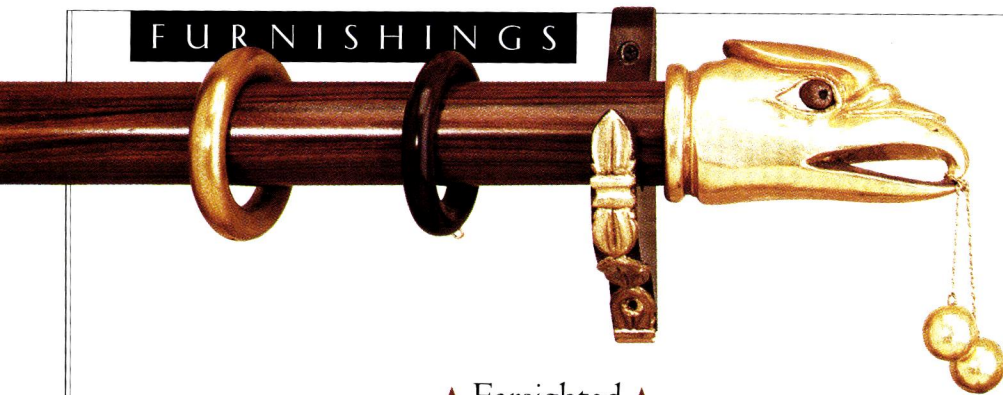
Phone the Colonies ▶

The St. James Collection incorporates the best traditional British Victorian design with the latest in plumbing technology. The bath mixer with telephone handshower with deck fixing is available in chrome for \$824. In antique gold, nickel, and brushed nickel, it's \$1,048. Call Walney Ltd., (800) 650-1484.

▶ Centennial Suite

Owen Woods celebrates its 100th anniversary this year with Mission vanities and accessories in quarter-sawn red oak and select veneers. The 48" and 24" face-framed vanities feature dovetail construction. Bottom drawers are fitted with aromatic cedar. For a price quote, call (800) 735-6936.





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Daniel Scuderi's rosewood curtain rod with water-gilded eagle finial is modeled on an 18th-century European antique. The rod sells for \$70 per foot in a French polished finish. The finial retails for \$220 in metal leaf, \$400 in 24-carat gold.

Matching brackets begin at about \$110 each. Call (212) 947-2499.

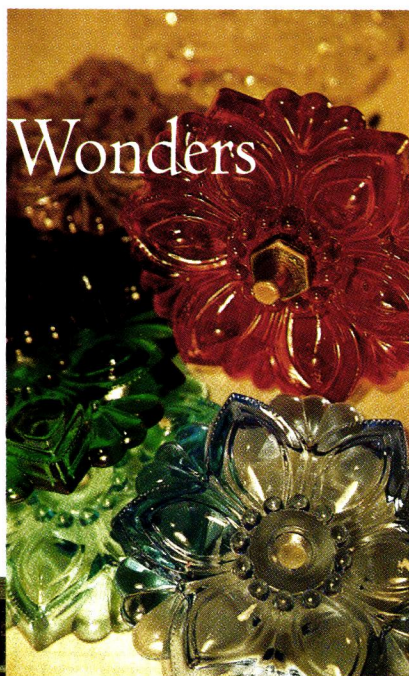


Window Dressing Wonders

Websites and information, page 119

♦ Quietly Private ♦

Best known as a maker of authentic colonial wooden blinds, DeVenco also offers the ultimate in period privacy: colonial raised panel shutters in a choice of woods, colors, and finishes. Call (800) 888-4597 for a custom quote.

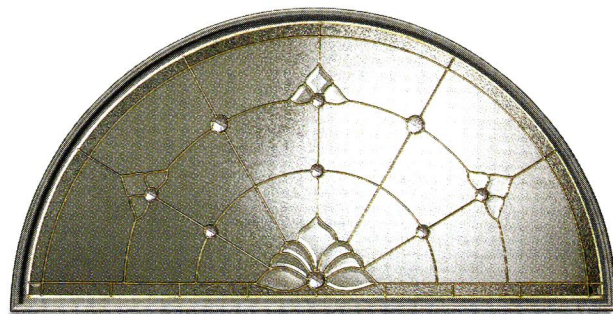
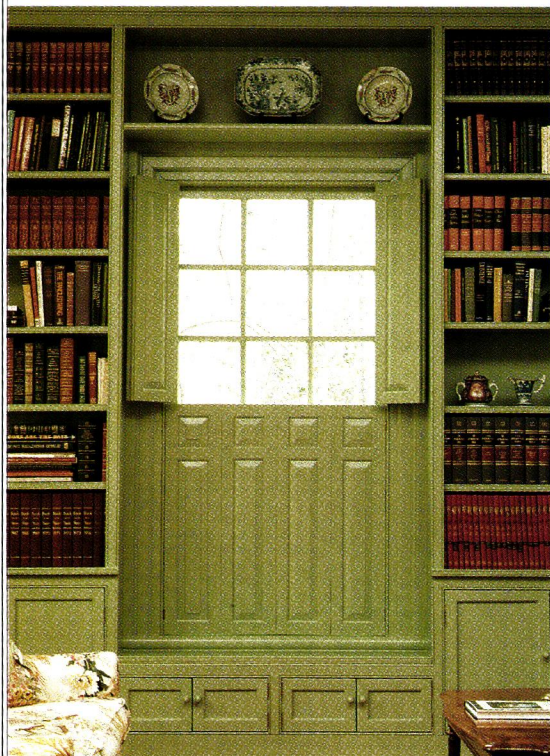


♦ Nicely Done ♦

Smith and Noble Windoware makes specifying a moulded window cornice as easy as one, two, three. Choose a style, select a finish color, and order at prices that range from \$61 to \$274 for lengths up to 192". They'll deliver free within 10 days, too. Call (800) 248-8888.

♦ Window Jewelry

Curtain tiebacks are a charming way to hold Victorian draperies or lace panels in place. In aqua, dark blue, light green, clear, and purple, they measure 4¼" in diameter. They're \$14.95 a piece from Antique Hardware & Home. Call (800) 422-9982.



♦ Sunburst Halls ♦

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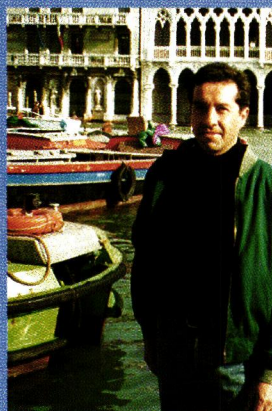


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news & VIEWS



ELMO BACA is a man of many cultures. Himself boasting Mexican, Spanish, and Apache roots, the New Mexico native had just returned from a Samuel H. Kress Foundation Fellowship in Rome when he was appointed State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in his home state. He was quickly hit with his first crisis: the disastrous loss of several prehistoric Pueblo villages in the wake of the Los Alamos fire in May. Ironically, he had been in Rome to study the threat to culture and architecture from another source: hyperreality, a term coined by author Umberto Eco to describe a preference for the fake over the real. "What impressed me is how the need to preserve traditional culture is ingrained in the Italian people. They don't think twice about it," says Baca, who writes for this magazine



and is the author of *Romance of the Mission*. "In America, we have to make our case for that."

Decorative Arts

The material past of North Carolina's colonial tidewater will be the focus of the fall meeting of The Decorative Arts Trust Oct. 26-29 in New Bern. The symposium will also address the collection of English furniture at Tryon Palace, the reconstructed colonial governor's mansion in New Bern. Tours

offered Oct. 25-26 will visit Hope Plantation (ca. 1803), with its magnificent collection of provincial furniture, the historic towns of Edenton, Bath, and Washington, and view several private collections. For more information, contact The Decorative Arts Trust, 106 Bainbridge St., Philadelphia, PA 19147, (215) 627-2859.

Grave Robbery

The good news is that Americans are returning to historic cemeteries to enjoy nature and view exquisite works of art. The bad news is that some of these visitors are modern-day grave robbers, who destroy priceless funerary art and strip some of America's finest cemeteries of irreplaceable urns, statuary, and leaded glass.

Cemeteries have always been vulnerable to vandalism. But when hooligans broke into Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln, Nebraska, and damaged some valuable 19th-century statues last August, they clearly were not run-of-the-mill pranksters. "The angels' faces were deeply cut," says Mike Hutchinson, the cemetery's manager. "One face was split right down the middle."

The vandals toppled the half-ton Woodward angel

from her perch, then cleaved her face in two.

Although the cemetery staff was able to find someone able to expertly repair the statue, finding ways to prevent future vandalism is the real challenge. Grave robbery is often more pronounced in large urban areas, like Boston, Washington, D.C., and New York.

[continued on page 26]



"I wish I could convey to you the inner peace to be gained from spending a few hours each day in a garden . . . Gardens enable us to experience beauty regularly, so that it becomes our daily bread; unconsciously, with no particular effort, we begin to meditate, and all stress falls away." —Architect Louis Barragán in 1951, quoted in *The Garden* by Filippo Pizzoni [Rizzoli, 1999]

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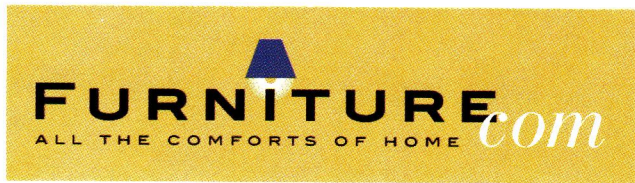
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In New Orleans, where many burial plots are above ground, cemetery theft had been a particular problem. When police caught three looters in the act, however, an investigation led to a sweep of 25 antiques stores and the arrest of two high-profile antiques dealers and a respected anesthesiologist. So if you encounter funerary art in an antiques shop, be sure to ask questions regarding its source and documentation. In these times of funerary art as fashion, it isn't much harder to unload a statue of the Archangel Gabriel than a Rolex.

—DOUG KEISTER



Furnishings from the Heart

The recently formed National Furniture Banks Association (NFBA) got a big boost recently when furniture.com, a major web furniture retailer, joined its efforts to promote donations of used furniture to help homeless families start a new life.

of the Framingham, Massachusetts, web retailer. "Millions more live in overcrowded temporary housing. . . . Unfortunately, when these individuals finally save up the resources to move into their own homes, there's often little left over to purchase essential household items."

Although the organization was only formed this year, the NFBA has already given help to nearly 100,000 families. Most NFBA agencies will accept bedroom and dining sets, sofas,

"On any given night, 750,000 Americans are homeless," says Andrew Brooks, chairman and CEO

chairs, lamps, linens, rugs, and other items. Since repair and cleaning of donated items is expensive, it's imperative that all donations be in good, usable condition. Donations are tax-deductible, and pick-up can be arranged at no charge. For a list of local NFBA agencies, go to www.furniture.com/nfba.asp.

Is Your Bathroom a Stunner?

If you have an original bathroom built between 1895 and 1940, Jane Powell and Linda Svendsen want a look-see. Co-authors of *Bungalow Kitchens* (Gibbs-Smith, 2000), Jane and Linda are already hard at work on an aptly named sequel, *Bungalow Bathrooms*. You don't have to have a bungalow to participate—just a great bathroom in an early-20th-century house of any style. The authors are particularly interested in baths with colored or art tile, unusual fixtures and built-ins. If yours is an all-white, "sanitary" bath, that's fine, too. Send snapshots to Jane Powell, P.O. Box 31683, Oakland, CA 94604; e-mail: hsdressng@aol.com.

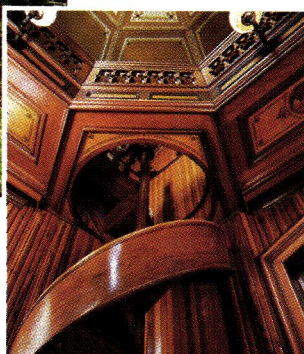


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OPEN HOUSE Very few houses in America were built in the Swiss style, and even fewer remain standing. The Tinker Swiss Cottage Museum, in Rockford, Illinois, is a delightful expression of mid-19th-century eclectic architecture. During a pleasure tour of Europe in 1862–63, Robert Tinker became fascinated by Swiss architecture. Tinker, the son of Hawaiian missionaries, also drew inspiration from the cottages of Andrew Jackson Downing when he built his home in 1865. Even the deep-eaved, bracketed barns were based on Swiss models. The heart of the house is undoubtedly the two-storey library, with its spiral staircase seamlessly sheathed in sumptuous walnut veneer. Many of the beautiful and symbolic images and murals throughout the house have been restored, including those in the kitchen, dining room, and most recently, the parlor. Tinker Swiss Cottage is at 411 Kent St. in Rockford, Illinois, (815) 964-2424.



LINDA SVENDSEN (TOP)
NELS AKERLUND (BOTTOM LEFT & INSET)



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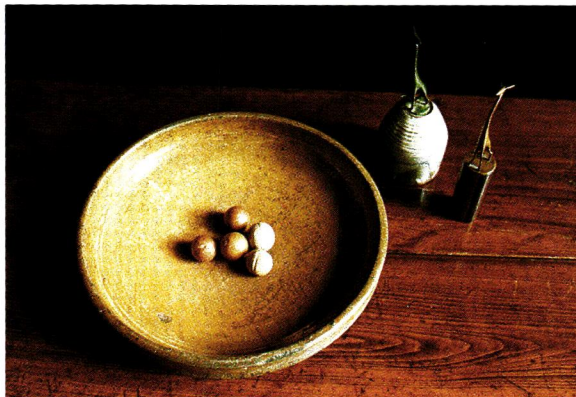
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INTERIORS

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Meditations on Design

BY JOHN WHEATMAN

ONE OF MY FAVORITE teachers in college, Ed Rossbach, taught me the single most important lesson I've ever learned about design. "Cultivate the mind of a three-year-old," he commanded. Every day is an adventure. Young children don't spend a lot of time thinking about what other people expect of them. They know how to have fun. I encourage you to try it yourself.

An open mind is essential to good home design. Yet I often find that people come to the project of decorating their homes with their minds full of ideas about what they should do or not do. When I have persuaded them to clear their minds of preconceptions, my clients find our work together more creative and fulfilling. Reject the common myths about interior design.

re invention

FOR INSTANCE, MANY PEOPLE believe that no one but a design professional can decorate a house. They feel they must either copy schemes they see in magazines, or hire a designer to make their homes look "tasteful." Just as no two people are alike, no two houses are alike. If you point to a picture in a magazine and say, "I want this," you have skipped the most important phase of the design process. Analyze who you are and how you use that room. Only after you've figured out how to be comfortable doing the things you do in that space can you move on to the question of looks.

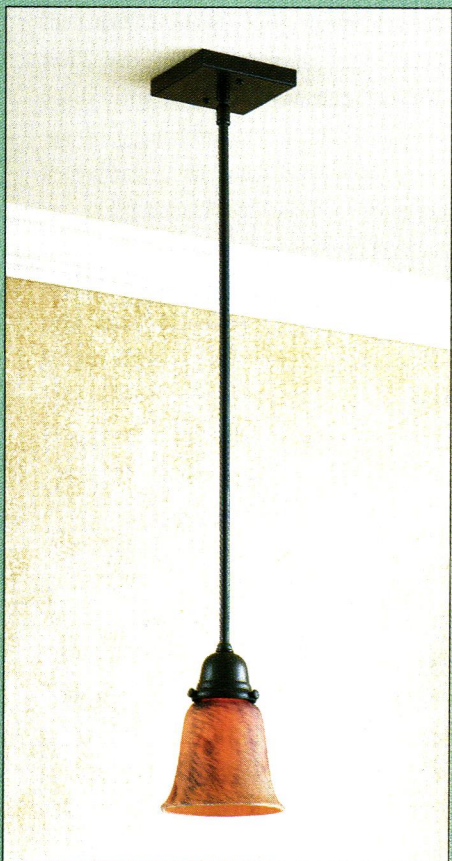
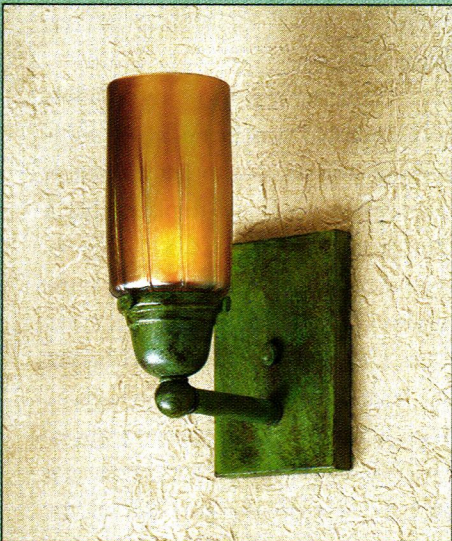
I have encountered the notion that interior design

consists of casting out what you have and buying everything new. Some of my most satisfying projects have not involved the purchase of any additional furnishings. I begin by editing what is already in place. I help people discard the items that don't work and organize the others so that everything makes sense—functionally, visually, and financially. Sometimes that's all that's necessary.

Many people believe you should keep resale value in mind when remodeling. (No wonder they're full of insecurity and dread.) If you arrange your space for a nameless, faceless prospective buyer, you are cheating yourself out of the comfort of a home that meets your needs now. You may also create something bland and boring. Consider the difference between appointing a space that won't offend anyone, and composing a room as a reflection of who you are and what you love. I think the latter is more exciting.

It's a mistake to think of a house as only an interior space. Step back and start with what leads up to a home . . . trees and shrubbery, your neighbor's property. Protection begins with the transition from outside.

Finally, people come with the expectation that we will "do" their homes together and then the job will be "done." But who you are and what you want to say about yourself is continually changing. How you live and what you can afford also changes: You start a family, or your children grow up and leave; you take up a new hobby. A good home changes and evolves with you. A home is never "done." *[continued on page 30]*



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Collections begin when you take the things you love and arrange them in a way that is beautiful.

Possessions are part of your life, and they enrich a home. Clutter, however, is the enemy of a beautiful home. You can have as many possessions as you want, but it shouldn't appear that you have too many. When you invest some thought and care into how your objects will be displayed, you transform a jumble of things into an attractive collection.

You can mount superb pieces on a stark white background, as some museums do. But if your things aren't all absolutely exquisite, their flaws will be very evident. Instead, use a softer background color. The same technique works well in subduing a room that has too many objects. My wife and I travel quite a bit. A few years ago we found that our collections were beginning to take over our house. When we painted our white walls a soft golden color, our things became less visually overwhelming.

Some things can stand alone,

and others need a lot of friends. You might have one

thing that is really great and two other items that aren't so wonderful—but for one reason or another you love them all. Group the three together, which takes a little bit of importance away from each of the individual items, but creates an arrangement in which no object fails to please the eye.

One of the most memorable assignments I was given as an architecture student was to get a ream of plain white paper and to place a black dot on each of the 8 1/2 x 11 sheets: one dot per page, never in the same place. Once I'd done that to every one of the those 500 sheets, I had to go back and select the best-looking page. The majority of students agreed that the most successful placements put the dot on the top half of the page, closer to the right edge than the left, with the distances from all four edges of varying lengths. That dot has been with me constantly since then. It is the key to placing a house on a property, trees in a garden, a lamp on a table, food on a plate.

The space around an object is as important as the object itself. Don't line pieces of a collection up, one after another in a row, with equal spaces in between. Play with the distances so that, in the end, one object rests with another and is complemented by yet another.

what lies inside

HOME IS SHELTER from the world: the hearth that warms you, the roof that keeps out the rain, the table where you eat with the people you love, the bed where you sleep. Home is also the springboard for life's adventures, and the safety net that gives you courage to soar [continued on page 32]



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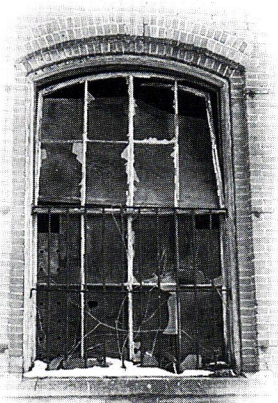
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into the world. At home you are accepted for the least you are, yet reminded of the most you hope to be.

Putting together a space that reflects and supports the quest for an authentic life is an exhilarating creative challenge. Look inside yourself. Then begin to reinvent your home with three simple principles: Weed out unnecessary possessions. Move things around, giving fresh life to furnishings you've tired of. Start looking for ways to highlight your house's charms, instead of being frustrated by its physical limitations. A space that meets your everyday needs, gives expression to your interior life, and encourages you to live the life you want is a glorious thing.

meditations

EDIT WHAT YOU HAVE; rearrange things; make the most of limitations. Bring the outside in. Let nature and travel inspire the colors in your home. Collect shadows, textures, and reflections; find a light for every purpose. Display the things you love. Invest in quality. Realize that something special is often very simple, simple as a stone with algae patina. Discover new ways to store things; buy furniture that's flexible. Pay attention to transitions; create a focal point in each room. Work with illusion and scale; consider the space around the object. Plan a kitchen that helps you cook. Design children's rooms to expand with their imaginations.

Set aside a place in which to be happy alone. ✦

JOHN WHEATMAN *has owned a San Francisco design firm for 35 years and was selected as a Top American Designer by House Beautiful in 1999. This essay was adapted from his book Meditations on Design (Conari Press, © 2000).*



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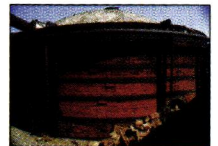
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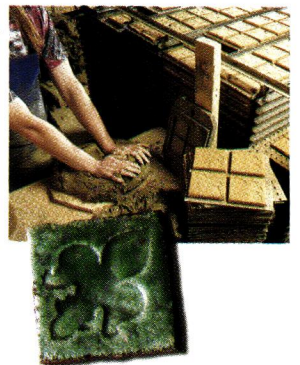
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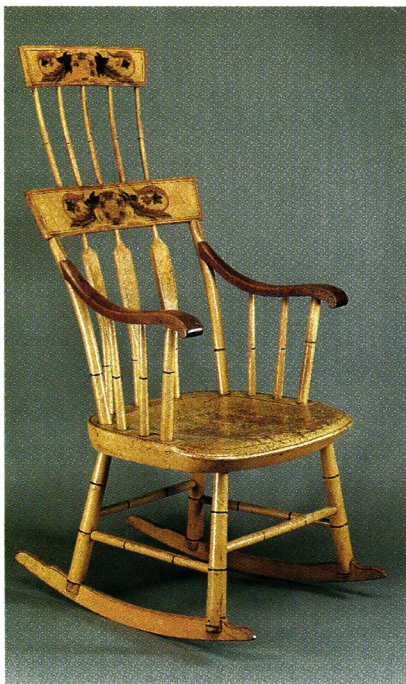
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The rocking chair has iconic status for Americans, who have always loved its comfort. Benjamin Franklin has been credited with its invention, but evidence indicates otherwise.



Americans Rock BY WENDELL GARRETT



This early-19th-century, painted rocking chair was made in Maine of maple, pine, and mahogany. It is clearly patterned after a comb-back Windsor chair.

TOP: Bird's-eye maple chair ca. 1850.

AMERICANS HAVE a unique relationship with furniture that rocks. One of the earliest known pieces of furniture extant in this country is a 17th-century cradle on rockers, which is displayed at Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth, Massachusetts. During the 18th and early 19th centuries, invalids and sick adults were bedded down in full-sized rocking cradles; examples survive in several of the New England Shaker communities that are now museums. Old age, too, is associated with rocking in this country, particularly when it comes to older women. In American tradition, both ends of life's spectrum can be said to be bracketed by rocking: in cradles in infancy and in comfortable rocking chairs at the end of life. Not surprisingly, then, the rocking chair was a thoroughly American invention.

Benjamin Franklin was long believed to have been the inventor of the rocking chair, because of an entry

in the pioneer minister Manasseh Cutler's journal of July 13, 1787: "After it was dark, went into [Franklin's] house, and the Doctor invited me into his library, which is likewise his study. . . He showed us. . . his great armed chair, with rockers, and a large fan placed over it, with which he fans himself, keeps off flies, etc., while he sits reading, with only a small motion of his foot, and many other curiosities and inventions, all his own." The Reverend Cutler seems to imply the great armchair on rockers, with the additional mechanism of a small treadle operating a fan to create a breeze and scare away the flies, was Dr. Franklin's invention.

Documentary evidence has since come to light that the Philadelphia cabinetmaker William Savery billed Mrs. Mary Norris on February 11, 1774, "to bottoming a rocking chair," one shilling, ten pence. The early furniture historian Dr. Irving P. Lyon found "rocking [continued on page 36]

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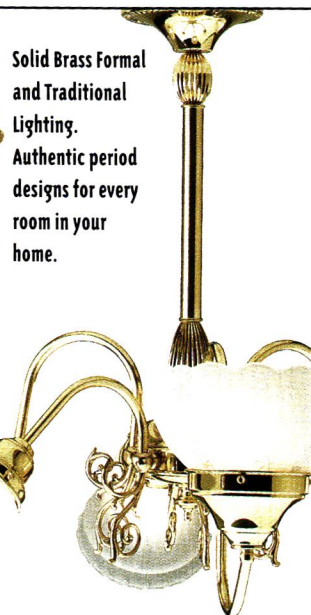
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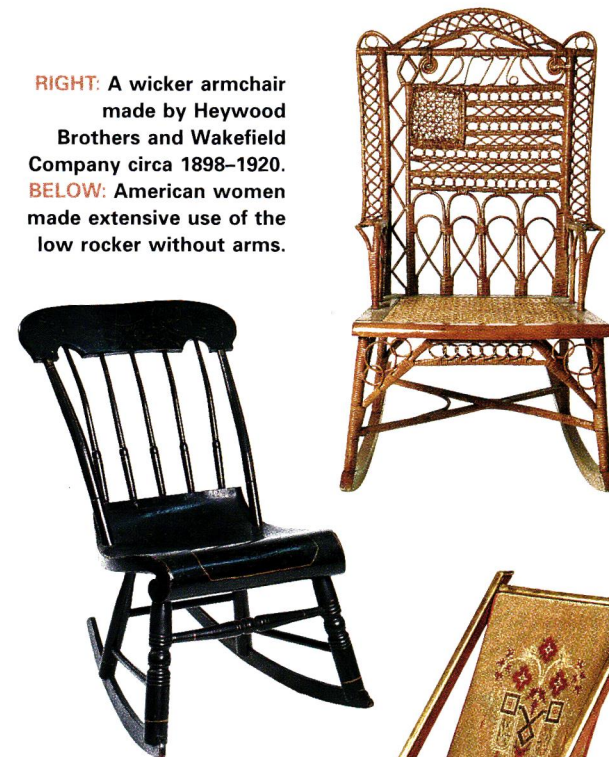
In the 19th century, as the rocking chair increased in popularity, its form was diversified and its style changed to reflect the shifting pattern of tastes during the century.

chairs” listed as early as 1772 and 1775 in household inventories in the probate records of Hartford County, Connecticut. But the *Oxford English Dictionary* continues to give Franklin’s “great armed chair, with rockers,” mentioned in Cutler’s journal, as the earliest usage. What does seem clear—from the comments of foreign travelers in America—was the early admission of the undisputed fact that the rocking chair was an American invention. The *Oxford English Dictionary* quotes philosopher Alexander Bain (1818–1903) in 1855: “The rocking chair, introduced by the Americans . . . is another mode of gaining pleasure from movement.”

“Foreigners call the rocking chair a peculiarly American luxury,” observed J. Wayland Kimball in his book *Designs, Furniture and Drapery* (Boston, 1876).

In the nineteenth century, the rocking chair became an essential feature rather than a novelty in the American domestic interior.

As it increased in popularity, its form was diversified and its style changed to reflect the shifting pattern of tastes during the century. The earliest type of rocking chair to be made in great numbers throughout the century was the Boston rocker, which appeared as early as 1825. The Grecian rocker was another early development. Whereas the Boston rocker was essentially derived from the eighteenth-century Windsor chair, the Grecian was modeled directly on Empire and Restoration forms of the nineteenth century. The Grecian



RIGHT: A wicker armchair made by Heywood Brothers and Wakefield Company circa 1898–1920.
BELOW: American women made extensive use of the low rocker without arms.

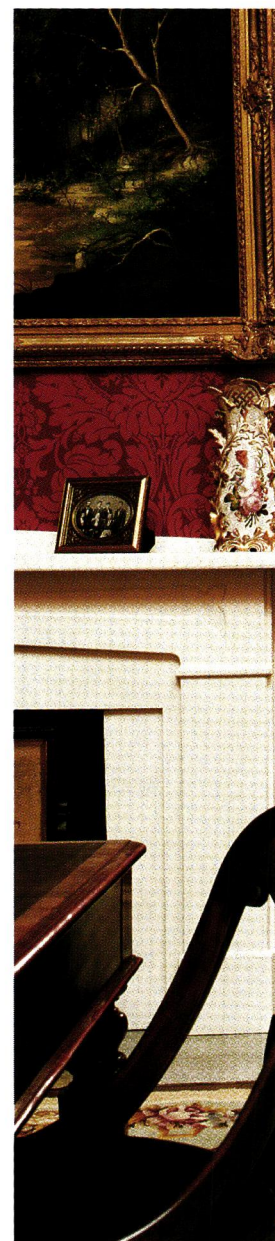


RIGHT: A folding rocking chair made by George Hunzinger circa 1870.

rocker came upholstered or with caned seat and back.

In the middle of the century, a rocking chair made especially for women became common. It was variously called a slipper, sewing, or nurse rocker, but the last term was most widely used. Frances Trollope in his *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London, 1832) wrote of the habits of the American ladies: “They sit in a rocking chair, and sew a great deal.” Essentially a diminished version of the Grecian rocker, this type

of slipper or sewing rocker was a small, low-seated chair without arms or with half arms, but never with full-size arms. It was scaled to allow a woman to sew or nurse comfortably. An outspoken critic like Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher might preach in *All Around the House* (New York, 1878), “We never believed that the motion of rocking was good for a child . . . and never held a child in a rocking chair for the sake of rocking,” but many women must have thought otherwise, for the nurse



In the parlor of an 1845
Greek Revival house
in Tennessee, a Grecian
upholstered rocker
lends weight and style.



rocker was very popular. Perhaps it was the American female experience with this particular kind of chair that led to today's association of rocking chairs with elderly women. As young and middle-aged women used them for nursing or sewing and became accustomed to the comfort a rocking chair provided, they were loath to give it up.

By the late 1870s, the rocking chair had become socially acceptable and was found in the parlor as well as bedroom and kitchen. Among



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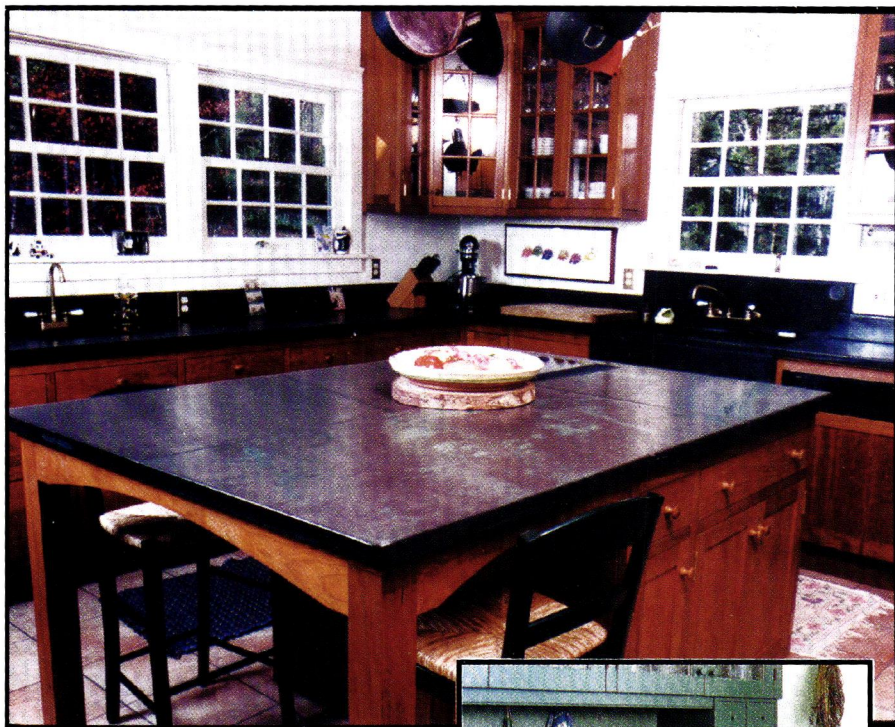
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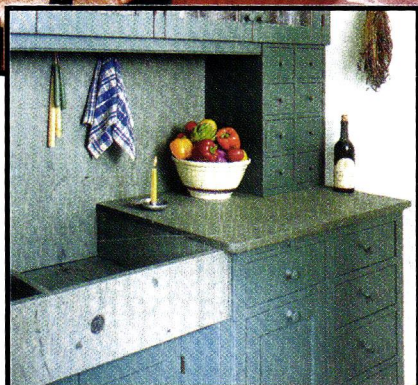
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This red silk, damask-covered rocking chair from Ford's New Theatre was reserved for Abraham Lincoln.

the more inventive forms of rocking chairs produced in the last century were folding varieties, most of which were related to the common carpet-seat camp chair with turned legs. Others, however, had caned seats and backs; still others not only folded but also reclined. While these were the more typical and distinctive nineteenth-century American contributions to the rocking chair, there were also "common sense" rockers, Shaker rockers, many late-nineteenth century forms made of oak, and imaginatively upholstered wicker and rattan rockers. In 1838, an English builder called James Frewin recorded his impression of hospitality while traveling here: "In America it is considered a compliment to give the stranger the rocking-chair as a seat; when there is more than one kind in the house, the stranger is always presented with the best." ✦

WENDELL GARRETT is Senior Vice President, American Decorative Arts, at Sotheby's. Among his many publications are *Colonial America*, *Classic America*, and *Victorian America*.

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Arts & Crafts Carpet Talk

COMPILED BY REGINA COLE

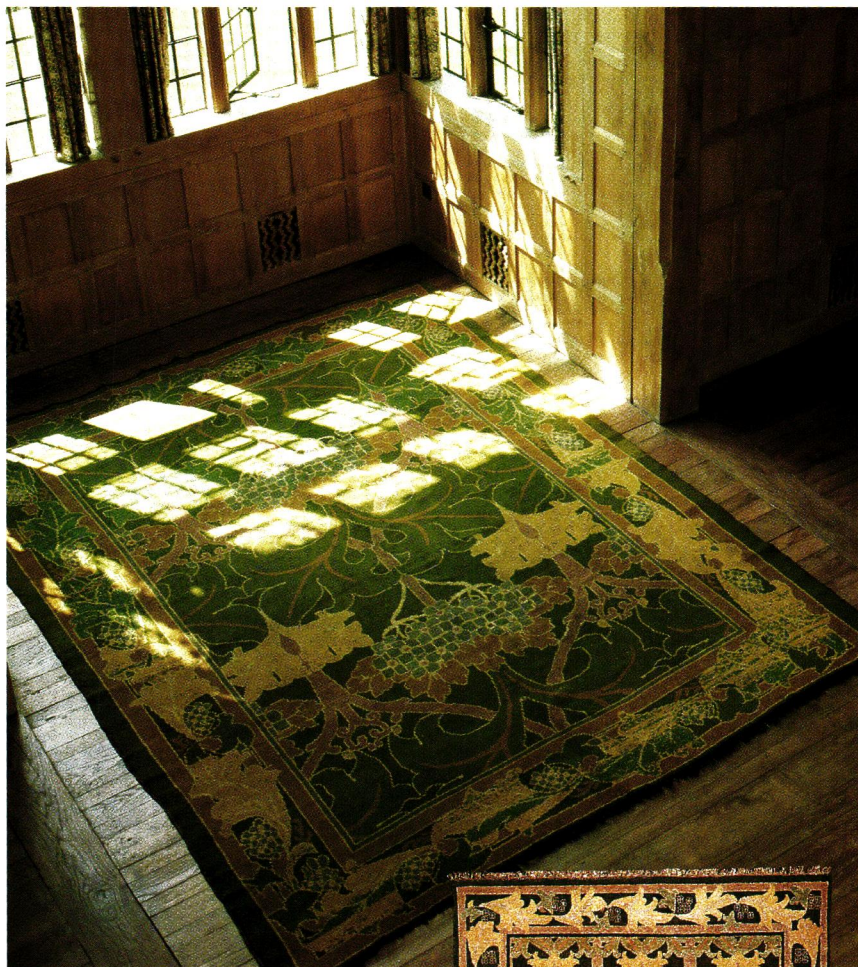
WE'LL ANSWER HERE some of the questions we've been asked about the new breed of A&C carpets, reproduction and adapted, prevalent in today's rug market.

What's with the new Arts and Crafts carpets I'm seeing these days? They seem to have Voysey designs I've never seen before!

There are, indeed, new carpets eerily familiar to those who know the Donegal carpets of a hundred years ago. Hand-knotted primarily in India, but also in Nepal, to the specifications of American carpet companies, they are patterned after old designs, many of them by English architect C.F.A. Voysey. There is one major difference—the colors. They have been greyed-down, and original colorways that featured bright oranges and acid greens have been reproduced in the cooler blues and greens and subtle earth tones in favor today.

Why are Donegal carpets being reproduced now? And when and why were they made in the first place?

It all started with William Morris (as did most things Arts and Crafts). With his Hammersmith carpets, made between the late 1870s and the 1890s, he strove to make Western carpets that were the equal of Persian rugs—but with designs derived from Western history and motifs. In 1898 Eng-



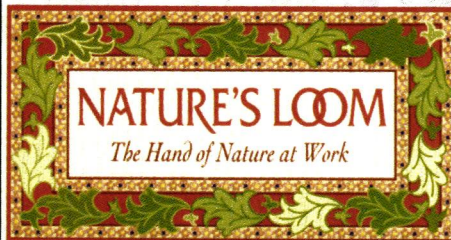
land's Alexander Morton and Co. established carpet weaving workshops on the north coast of Ireland, in Donegal. The venture intended to fill consumer demand by going to the part of the British Isles where the cost of labor was lowest, creating manufacturing jobs in an economically depressed area. Early designs resembled Turkish carpets, but the rugs now associated with the name "Donegal" were designed by Voysey, Gavin Morton, G.K. Robertson, and Archibald Knox.

Several things have awakened new interest. One is the ongoing Arts and Crafts Re- [continued on page 42]



TOP: The Fintona, a Donegal carpet possibly designed by the Silver Studio and woven for Liberty's in 1902, is shown here in the "Great House" setting for which many of these rugs were commissioned. **ABOVE:** Nature's Loom, a New York carpet company, produces a contemporary version called Bloomsbury.

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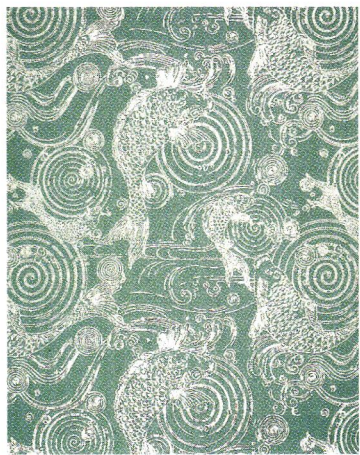
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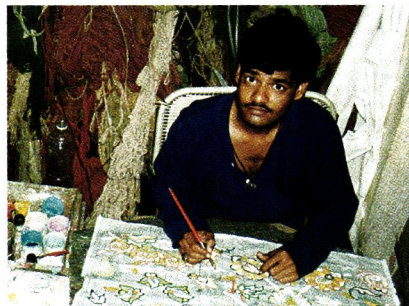
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CLOCKWISE: (from above) The
Donnemara, a 1903 Voysey design,
as it looks today. The original in a
grand English house. Two Archibald
Knox designs in contemporary carpets
at the Persian Carpet Co. An Indian
designer maps out a new carpet.



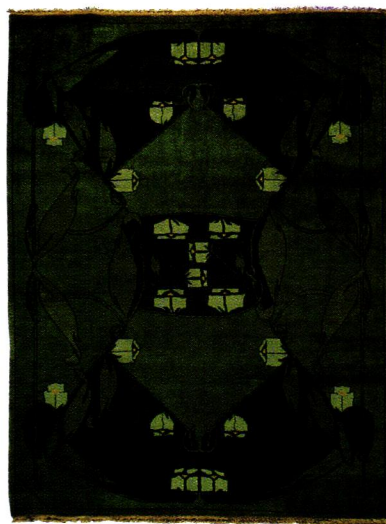
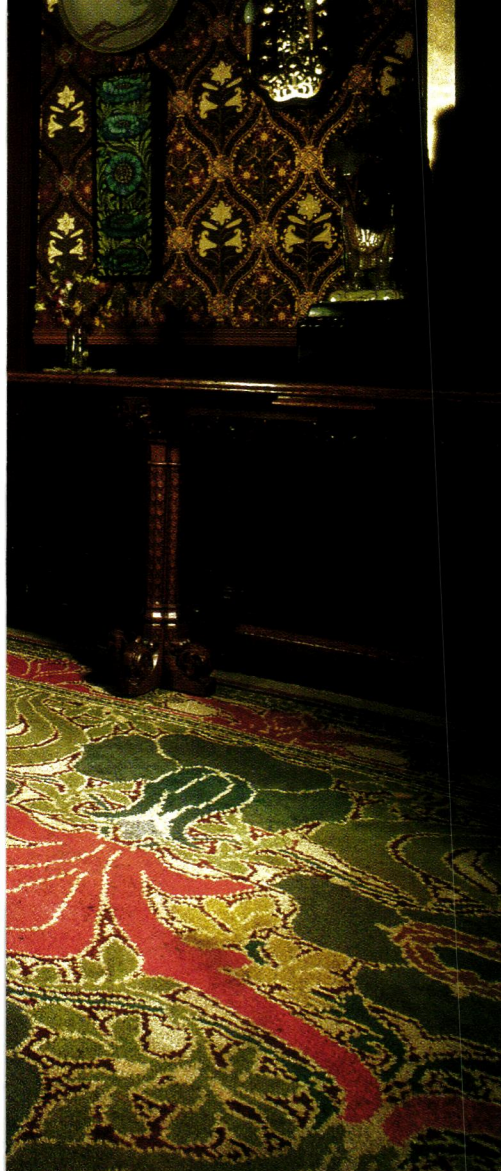
vival. Collectors who first bought furniture and lighting have turned their attention to textiles, but few original carpets survive. Those that do are too big for most American rooms; they were made for the large houses of wealthy English trendsetters.

Then came the publication of *Arts and Crafts Carpets*, a 1991 book by Malcolm Haslan (foreword by David Black) that told the story of the Donegal rugs. Modern American carpet manufacturers, seeing the gorgeous illustrations, did something similar to what Alexander Morton had done: took original designs to the Indian and Nepalese manufacturers who'd been making carpets for Western export for many years.

Besides the colors, what are the other differences? How are they the same?

The new rugs are knotted by hand from hand-spun Nepalese and New Zealand wool, essential for the textural interest of this type of carpet. Mark Harounian of Nature's Loom reports: "We use chrome dyes instead of vegetable dyes, but we have the yarn dyed in small batches. This gives the characteristic *abrash*, or color variation, that you get in the old rugs."

John De Wert of the Persian Carpet Company points out the original rugs were woven very coarsely. "They had 15 to 30 knots per square inch. The lifespan of one of those rugs was about 50 years. Ours today are about 40 to 60 knots per square



inch, which gives you a lifespan of about 75 to 100 years." Many of the Persian Carpet Company's carpets are faithful reproductions of the original colors and designs.

Del Martin, principal of Jax Rugs, says, "Lots of the Donegal rugs are garish by today's standards—homes were darker then." Jax Rugs reproduces the designs of Dard Hunter as well as several of those of Morris and Voysey.

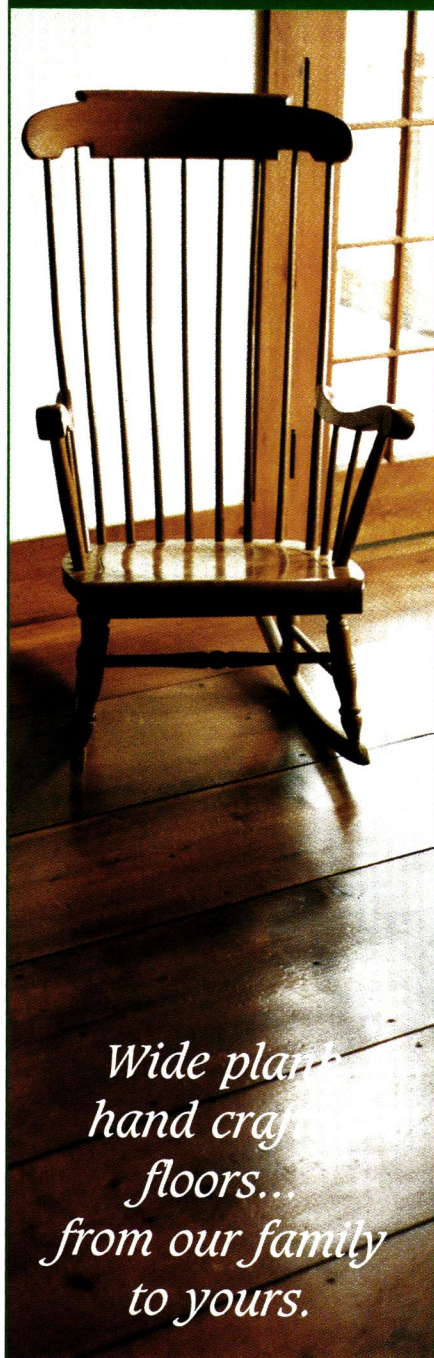
Who buys new Arts and Crafts Carpets?

Interestingly, many customers of the simple yet sophisticated rugs are not Arts and Crafts enthusiasts at all. These bold, colorful rugs enhance many casual, eclectic, and post-modern interiors. Major manufacturers have found that new A & C carpets sell best outside of traditional carpet stores—in design centers, top furniture stores, and, of course, at outlets featuring other Arts and Crafts furnishings. ✦

SOURCES

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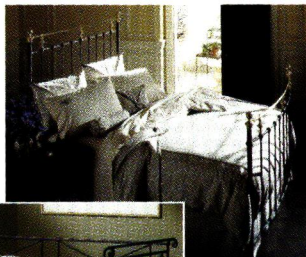


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WHIMSY IN RED & WHITE

Checks, polka-dots, and a red rooster or two liven up this re-created 1940s kitchen on a Seattle hilltop. (page 52) ♣



PLEASINGLY PENNYROYAL

It's easy to see the power of beauty in this Arts and Crafts interior associated with Candace Wheeler. (page 56) ♣



SHELTERED FROM THE CITY

It's always summer here when the owners are in residence. Banning browns, greens, and greys, they opened up a Victorian cottage with soft, monochromatic whites. (page 46) ♣

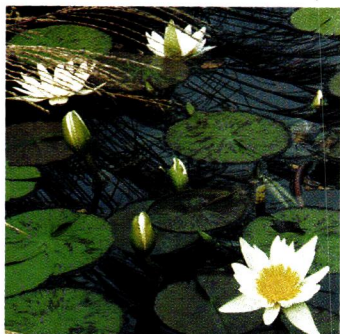
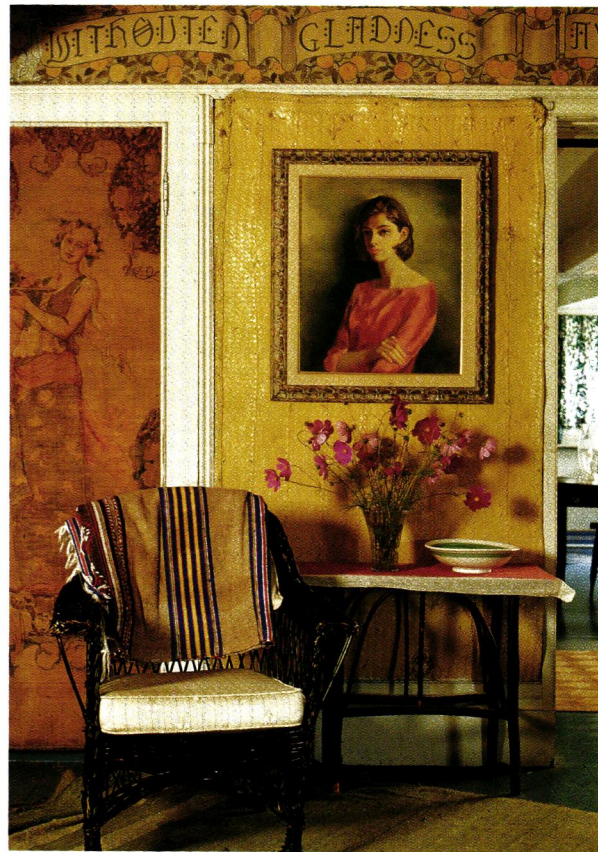


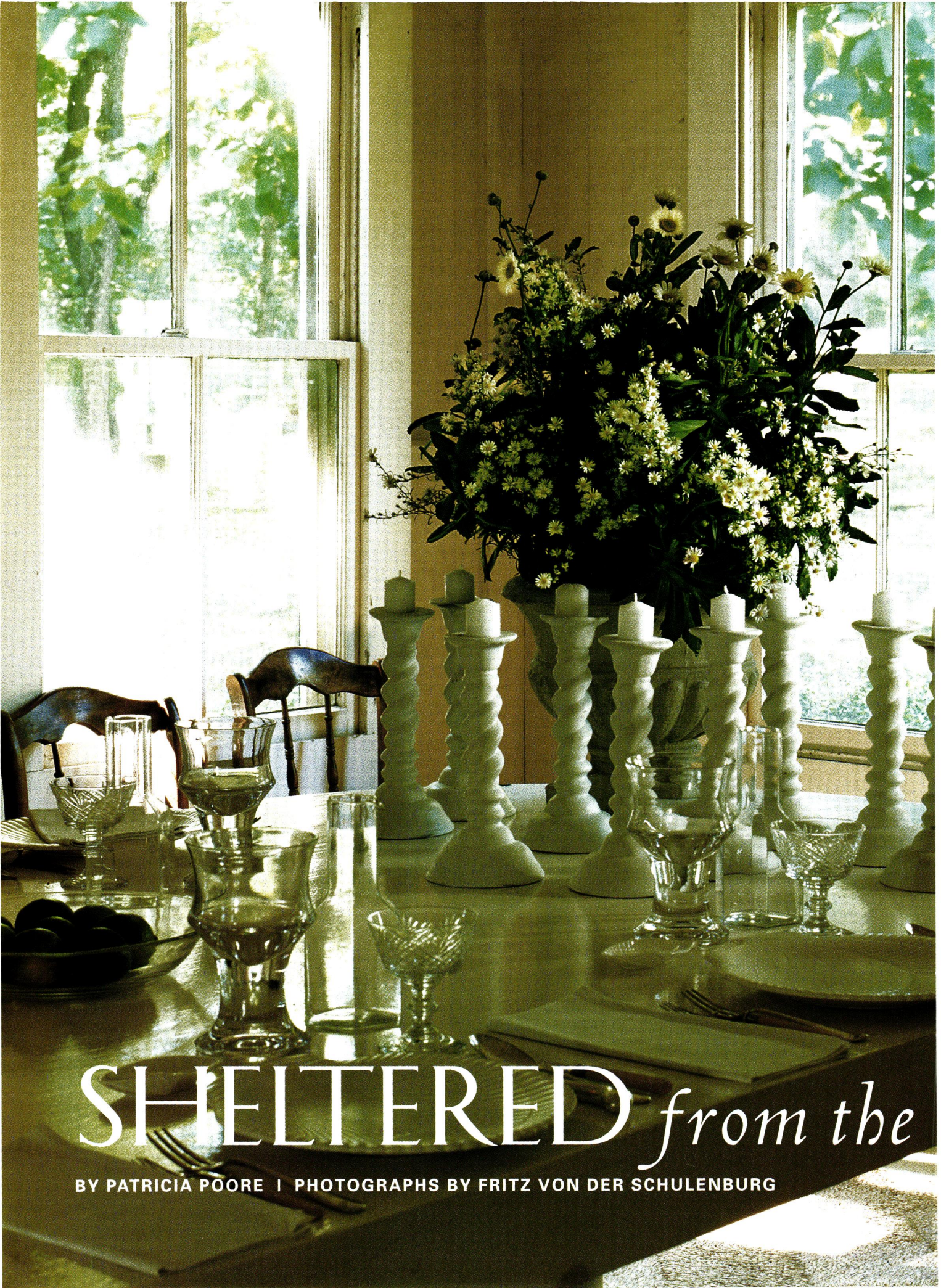
**DETAILS OF
THE COTTAGE BATH**

New baths in the style of the 1920s blend seamlessly with originals in the relaxed atmosphere of a Shingle style house. (page 76) ♣

**THE BOWER
IN THE BRONX**

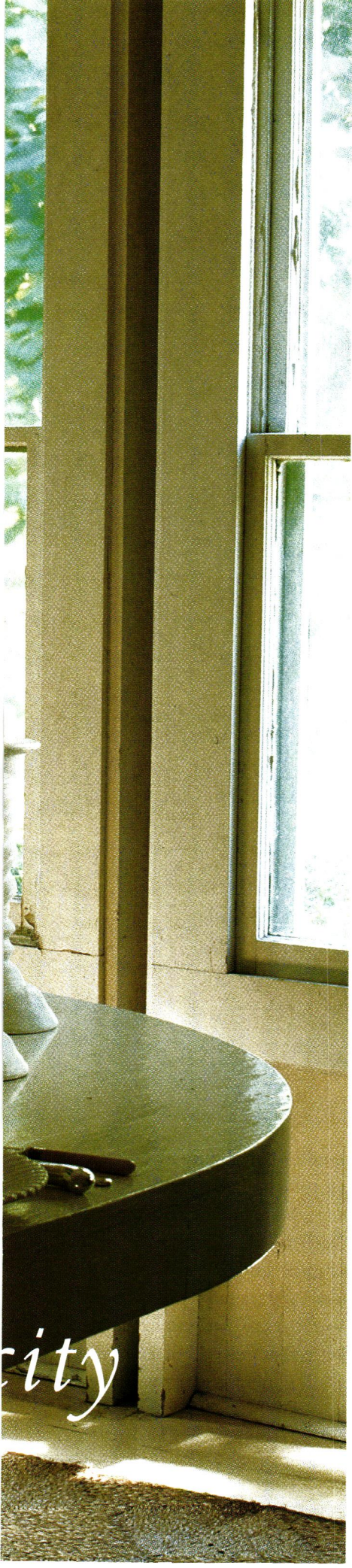
On the edge of the city that goes on forever, a garden flowers, thanks to a few farsighted men. (page 70) ♣



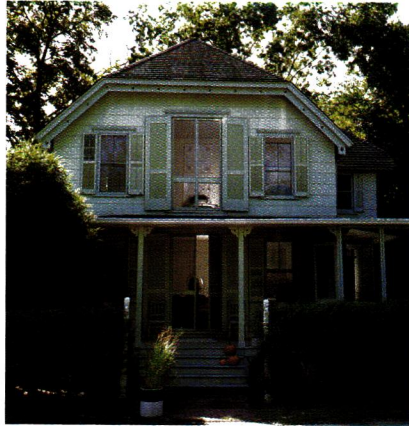


SHELTERED *from the*

BY PATRICIA POORE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



Found objects and flea-market treasures acquire a soft patina painted milky white in this Shelter Island summer cottage done in restful monochrome.



THE COTTAGE was white with black shutters, its many tiny rooms fussy and dark with undercurtains, overcurtains, window shades and drapes. The minutiae of a previous owner's life crowded every corner. Joanne Creveling and Frank Lookstein spent that first summer letting in the light, and sorting through the inherited furniture. It was like a treasure hunt, yielding cupboards in the closets, mirrors hidden away in armoires, jewels and junk in kitchen cabinets. Unwanted finds were swapped for more appropriate things at flea markets.

They removed an interior wall or two. Joanne banned the dirty browns, greys and greens and painted everything in soft whites—the walls,

the floors, the furniture. Outside, clapboards were refinished in a color called Silver Fox, which reflects the garden's spruce and bamboo. Only the kitchen breaks with the rest; it is painted red and yellow (copied from an early Dutch house) to lend warm color on chilly evenings.

The easy monochrome scheme lends grace to a simple house filled

LEFT: The dining room's large oak table, ten chairs, and an armoire in this room were purchased with the cottage. The chairs have caned seats, and may have been used in the chapel. Inexpensive terra-cotta candlesticks were painted white by the owner.

RIGHT: A cool and restful monochrome. **ABOVE:** The board-and-batten cottage is a folk Victorian design.





with common objects. On a speck of land off Long Island, the cottage is a restful retreat from New York City's din.

SHELTER ISLAND is an anomaly. Tucked between the North and South Forks and protected by larger Gardiner's Island on the seaward side, its religious and pastoral history is intertwined with settlement by vacationing boaters.

The oldest settlement dates to 1722, when Shelter Island was taken by Quakers. By 1890 they were replaced by Methodists who built "summer camps" here. Shelter Island is not The Hamptons.

Joanne and Frank own the cottage on the hill, one of many built for the children and help of boat-owning vacationers who stayed in a big hotel on the island. (It has since

burned.) Their house overlooks a lovely prayer chapel appointed with stained-glass windows that incorporate seashells. Shelter Island Heights, a National Historic District, today numbers approximately one hundred Victorian-period summer homes. Strict regulations all but ban wood fires and woodstoves in an effort to preserve the place from loss by fire. It is still a summer-only place.



The small library, a rainy-day refuge, has cozy chairs slipcovered in khaki with Winterthur's "Sun, Moon and Stars" fabric on the skirts. Framed engravings are from an 18th-century architectural encyclopedia. **TOP RIGHT:** The screened living porch is furnished in wicker. The blankets spell out "Lufthansa." **RIGHT:** Flea-market treasures and found objects, made to match in white.





The beds with scroll headboards and pineapple finials came with the cottage. A handpainted wooden chandelier adds some fantasy, but, as in the rest of the cottage, the sunlight streaming into simple rooms is the main attraction. **OPPOSITE** In the unrenovated bathroom, a homey collection of semi-antique, Lustreware condiment boxes carries through the creamy color scheme.

On Shelter Island there is no cinema, no dry cleaners. Newspaper headlines provide all the excitement necessary (or desired by residents). Ferry service is suspended at night, discouraging late-night revelers.

Joanne Creveling relaxes here, just enough removed from her busy public-relations career. (Her clients are in the decorative and fine arts. Frank Lookstein reps for home-fur-

nishings manufacturers.) With their two sons, the couple have spent 22 summers on Shelter Island, arriving for long weekends to enjoy the peace and quiet.

They love it, despite the enormous maintenance an unheated, seasonal house demands. It must be taken apart at the end of each season, Joanne explains; what with no heat and wet winters, even the interior is subject

to mildew and decay. On the other hand, she says, the family sees the house anew as they ready it for each summer season. Rooms can be edited as they come out of mothballing—undoubtedly the reason this cottage remains calm and spare after two decades of family visits. ✦

FOR PAINT COLORS, see *Resources* on page 119.

*This 1940s-era kitchen,
created twenty-five years ago,
continues to elicit broad smiles.*

Whimsy in red & white

BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LINDA SVENDSEN

WHEN ELIZABETH and Clint Miller bought a house on Seattle's Capitol Hill, the dimly lit kitchen held remnants of a bad 1960s remodel: cheap wood paneling, aluminum-framed windows, a wood stove raised on bricks. "We certainly didn't buy our house for its kitchen!" they laugh. Restoration was impractical (their Dutch Colonial house dates to 1914), so the couple decided to turn the clock back to a 1940s vintage. They pretended, that is to say, that they had inherited a quite good kitchen remodeled after the War, one with enough whimsy and color and light and cheer to balance Seattle's often overcast skies. Clint, an architectural designer, went to work enlarging the cramped space. An adjoining back porch and utility room were opened up to become a breakfast nook. Morning sunshine





Red-and-white, Art Deco-inspired wallpaper sets the theme. Ceramic chickens (collected, usually, for \$1 apiece) sit on a polka-dot cloth, under which is one of her whitewashed wood tables. The children's plates displayed are French. **INSET:** The more sober exterior of the 1914 Dutch Colonial Revival house hardly hints at the exuberant kitchen.



streams through a bank of French glass windows along one wall.

"Restoration in the Seventies," Clint reminisces, "was not as easy as it is today. Very few period products were on the market." Reproduction kitchen tiles, for instance, were not available, and so Clint used "good, old-fashioned, square hospital tiles" for the backsplash and drainboards. Several months of persistent scouring of local antiques and junk stores yielded enough black porcelain knobs to outfit the cabinets; nowadays, of course, reproduction glass knobs are easy to find. Porcelain coverplates, a 1930s American Standard faucet from a thrift shop, and Art Deco light fixtures all add to the vintage look. A stained-glass window of the Art Deco era replaced the aluminum one over the sink.

The heart of the kitchen is the six-burner commercial gas stove from the 1920s. Double ovens make cooking for large parties easy. (Clint added





ABOVE: A commercial gas range from the 1920s is the heart of this “modern” postwar kitchen. Period details include the black pulls, an old stained-glass window, and pots and pans from the Forties. Period ceramics and toys fill the room.

OPPOSITE: The light-filled breakfast room was once a back porch. The enameled table is from the 1930s. A cabinet has been invaded by helicopters and autogyros; perfected during World War II, helicopters became popular toys during the Forties and Fifties.

a ca. 1910 shaving mirror so Elizabeth can check her appearance before she serves.) There’s an Art Deco stove hood and a period school clock overhead.

“Red and white seemed to go with all the sunlight,” Elizabeth explains. She began collecting vintage linens and plates, all in red-and-white. A set of Little Lulu dishtowels, one for each day of the week, was uncovered at a tag sale. She found polka-dot dishes in the “Mid-Winter” pattern on a trip to England. (These

historic dishes, Elizabeth points out, have one of the first new designs to come out of England after World War II.) Red-and-white enamel cookware (from the 1939 Chicago’s World Fair, with the \$1 price labels intact) fit the stove. Soon the room was filled with cheery utensils and appliances, from a fire engine-red Coca-Cola dispenser to a tomato-red bubbling Bakelite teapot (actually an electric kitchen clock).

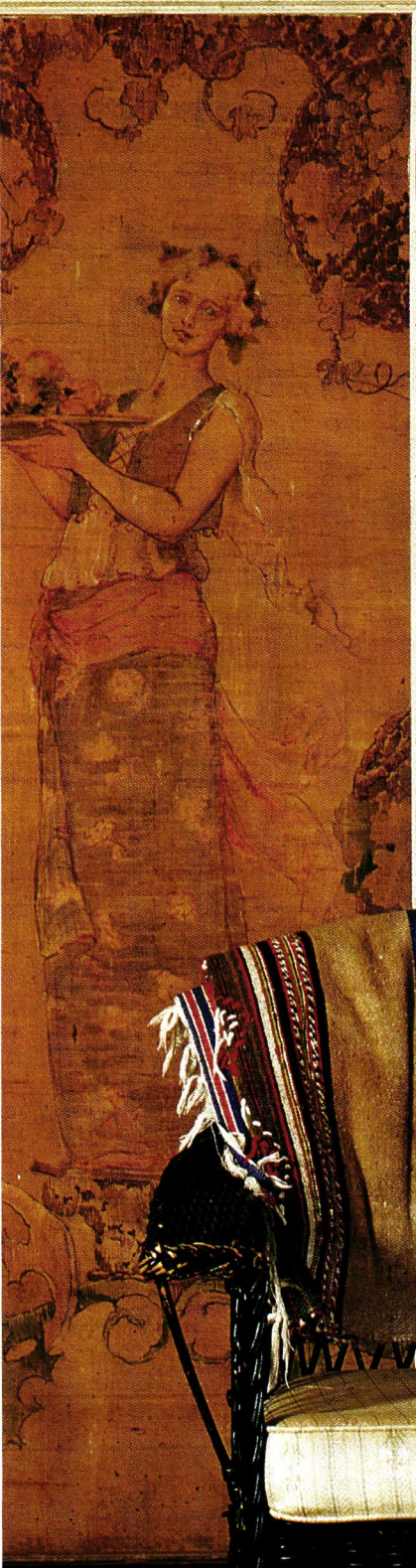
Elizabeth isn’t the only collector in the family. “I’ve always loved

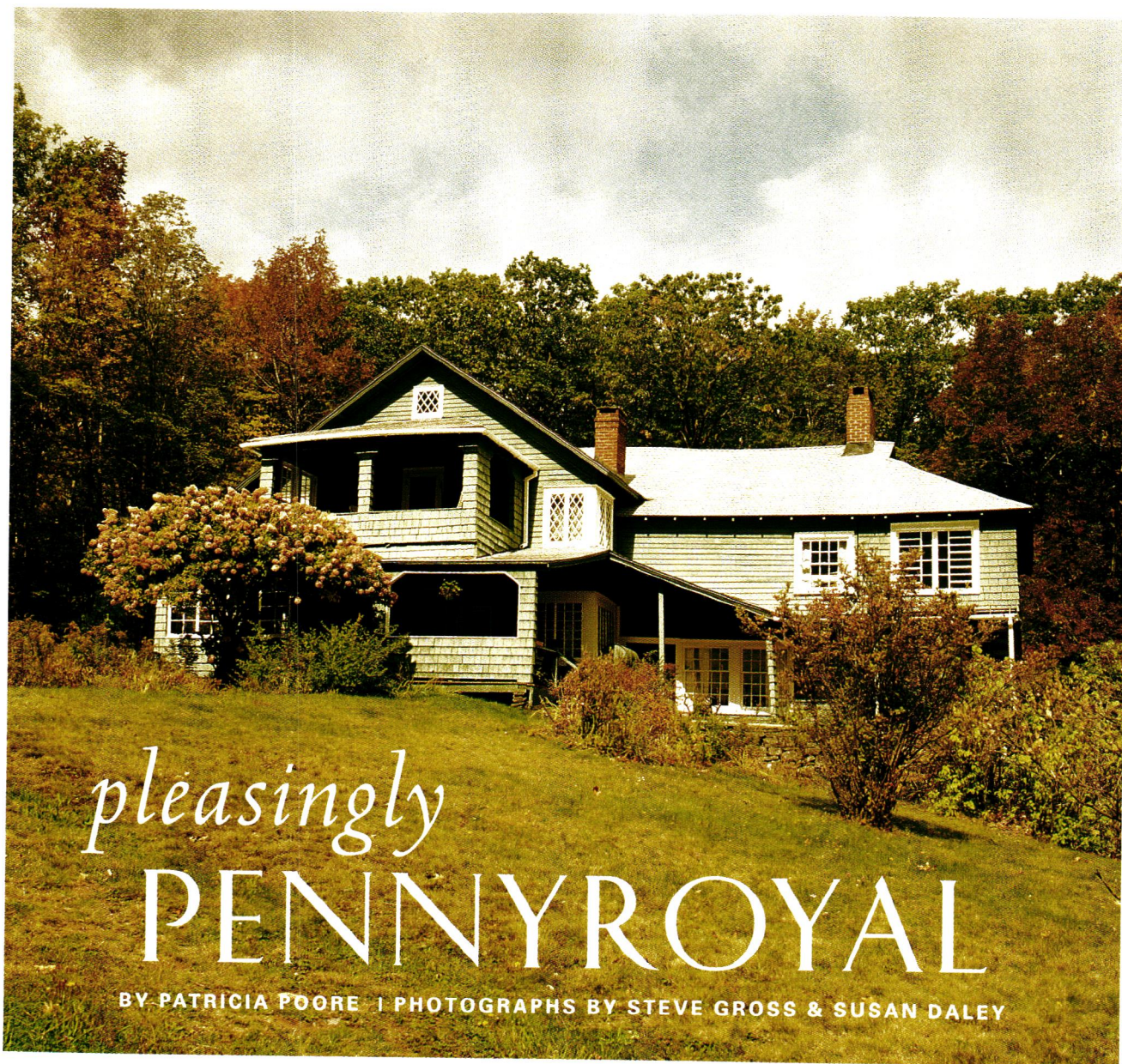
old toys,” Clint confesses; what began as an antique train collection burgeoned into . . . a toy helicopter collection. Models range from one of the first made in 1938 to the Japanese, one-man autogyro from the mid-1950s. Spilling out of the upstairs den, Clint’s colorful helicopters have long since invaded the kitchen. “Most were made in the 1930s to 1950s,” he says, “so our Forties kitchen turned out to be a perfect backdrop.” Elizabeth doesn’t really mind, “as long as he keeps them away from my cooking!” ✦

WITHOUT

GLADNESS

BY





pleasingly
PENNYROYAL

BY PATRICIA POORE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY

Candace Wheeler made this cottage, in the artist's community she developed at Onteora, New York, in 1883. Pennyroyal (named for the herb) is not a museum house; it has changed over the generations of family ownership and is only lightly inhabited today. But in its early Colonial-Revival sensibilities, its use of plain materials like grasscloth and

beaded board, in its homespun and hand-decorated character, it is an emblem of the kind of beauty in common design that Wheeler espoused at the end of her career.

Onteora is today a private, summer community with nearly 100 original houses and other buildings. At least a dozen of them were designed by Candace Wheeler. The stained green and brown buildings are in the

OPPOSITE: Today a contemporary portrait hangs where there was once one of Candace Wheeler, who designed this early Colonial Revival cottage.

ABOVE: Pennyroyal is in New York's Catskill Mountains, in Greene County.





Furnishings have changed over the generations, but the underlying design, colors, and unpretentious furniture are true to Candace Wheeler's commitment to common beauty. The frieze reads, "Who Creates a Home Creates a Potent Spirit Which in Turn Doeth Fashion Him That Fashioned."



rustic colonial manner, most shingled or sided with logs. Paths wind through magnificent vistas. Onteora, according to Wheeler, means “hills of the sky” in a local native language.

It began when Candace Wheeler and her husband, along with her brother Frank Thurber and Frank’s wife Jeannette, bought land in the Catskill Mountains of New York to build an artistic community. The two families each built a cottage, called Lotus Land and Pennyroyal. The Thurbers’ cottage is patterned after an 18th-century log house, but that method of construction was deemed too expensive for the Wheelers’ Pennyroyal. Wheeler had it built from simple, affordable, easily available materials. Her vision at Onteora was not the Colonial Revival of such architects as McKim, Mead & White, whose grand “cottages” mixed English Colonial elements with Queen Anne massing. Wheeler’s was a plain and natural version, low-ceilinged and barely landscaped.

Wheeler worked in what historian John Burrows now terms “the Old Colonies Style,” a late-19th-century blend of nostalgia with Arts and Crafts taste. Like her contemporaries, she assumed “colonial” interiors should be whitewashed and plain. Such revival motifs as rag rugs and crewelwork were introduced by Wheeler.

At Pennyroyal Wheeler developed her idea of the cottage as the essential American home. Leaving behind the lavish commissions she had taken in collaboration with Louis C. Tiffany and Associated Artists (the White House, New York’s Seventh Regiment Armory, distinguished clubs and the wealthy cottages of Newport), she aimed her writing at readers with modest means. In *Principles of Home Decoration* (1903), she de-

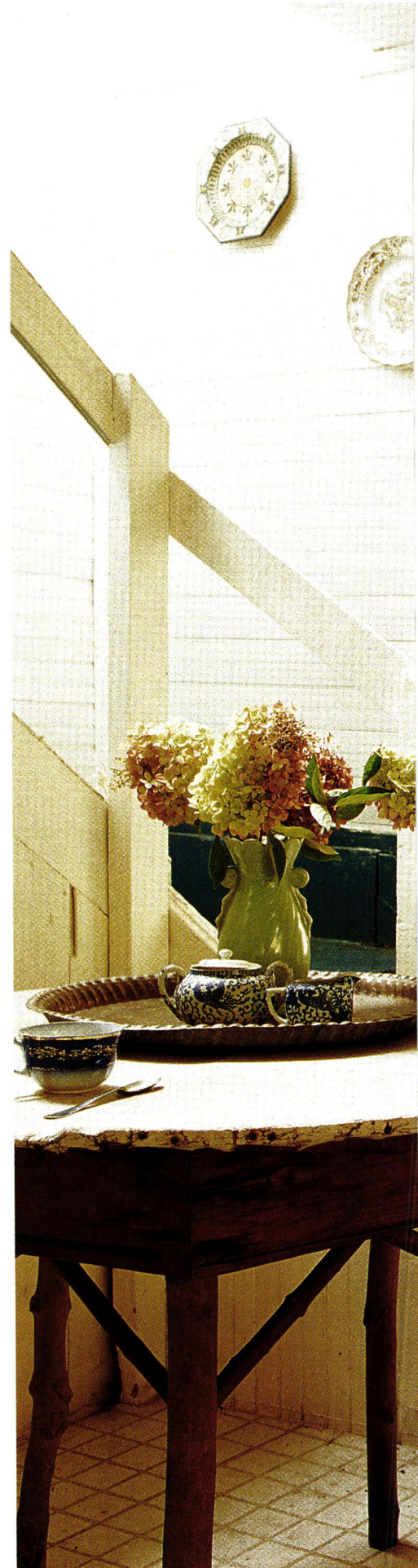


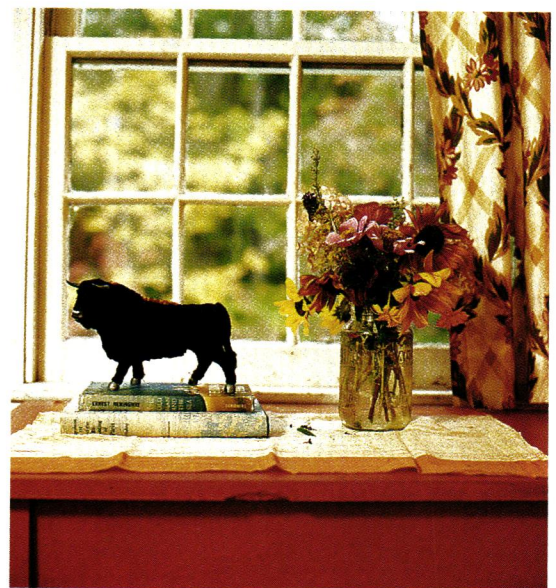
clared: "There is no influence so potent upon life as harmonious surroundings, and to create and possess a home which is harmonious in a simple and inexpensive way is the privilege of all but the wretchedly poor." Comfort was her philosophy.

At Onteora, cottages are pleasingly intimate, with open fireplaces, inglenooks, and low ceilings. With rubble foundations and no basements, buildings are almost crude. Unlike such tastemakers as A.J. Downing, whose cottage drawings were Gothic- or Swiss-inspired, Candace Wheeler

stuck to an American vernacular. Plainness was a virtue. Stairways are tight; denim fabrics add longwearing color and comfort.

ASSOCIATED ARTISTS had established Wheeler's reputation as a needlework specialist. She was an artful innovator. (Her portières at the Seventh Regiment Armory were sheathed in metal links much like chain-mail. At the Mark Twain house in Hartford, Conn., portieres are made from a silk bridal sari.) But she designed much more than embroidery. Wheeler was





FAR LEFT: Colorful but utilitarian dishware against white-painted board walls, a decorated cottage cupboard, and a stove make up a pleasing vignette. **LEFT:** Wheeler expounded a "colonial" ideal: tight stairs, whitewashed interiors, and common furnishings and fabrics. **ABOVE:** A simple house, even crude, Pennyroyal still exudes the grace of common and personal things.





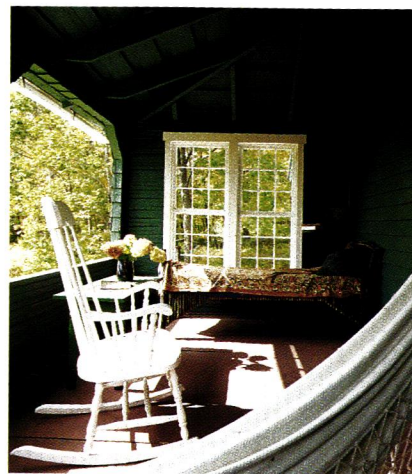
Cottage furniture and wicker, a handmade rug and quilt in a bedroom at Pennyroyal are all emblems of the early Colonial Revival or "Old Colonies" taste. **BELOW:** A porch furnished for easy living. **OPPOSITE:** Rustic elegance in this cottage at Onteora, where Wheeler's simpler "colonial" sensibility left nature largely untortured by human design.

a color specialist with a genius for color theory. A contemporary critic called her "a founder of the new American school of design."

Wheeler was overshadowed by Tiffany—a man and a showman. And it is in the nature of textiles to be used and worn and cast away. Her work remains only at the Mark Twain House and in 27 textiles which her daughter and collaborator, Dora Wheeler Keith, gave to New York's Metropolitan Museum in 1928. They are

consistently American in color design, sensibility, and motifs. Here we have seashells and nasturtium leaves, honeybees and carp—not pimpernels and palms.

Her legacy is also here at Pennyroyal, in its plain beauty. She left Onteora when later residents of the community insisted on indoor plumbing. Until her death in 1923, she spent her summers at her house Nestledown on Long Island, and her winters in Thomasville, Georgia. ✦



IF ANYONE DESERVES to be credited as a primary influence on American social movements, interior design, feminism, and taste-making, it is Candace Wheeler. Yet she is little more than a footnote in books on the Aesthetic Movement, and in biographies of Louis Comfort Tiffany, in compendiums of late-19th-century textile design. This American counterpart to William Morris is as yet unknown to most Americans.

Candace Wheeler, like Morris, was the product of privilege who worked to bring economic betterment and a sense of meaning to the poor. She, too, believed in the power of beauty and in the spiritual value of hand-made objects. But

AMERICAN DESIGN

Wheeler's focus was on women. Taking England's Royal School of Needlework as her model, she founded the New York Society of Decorative Arts in 1877. Her impetus was the plight of Civil War widows who struggled to raise children in a society that denied upper-middle-class women economic opportunities. She described needlework as a "suitable occupation for women who could not become mere laborers."

In 1879, when she was in her early fifties, Candace Wheeler formed a pro-

THIS PAGE: (from top) Detail of a portière fabric made by Cheney Brothers, Hartford. One of Wheeler's sturdy cotton textiles. Her bees with honeycomb wallpaper was printed by Warren, Fuller and Company of New York.

"Today we have an American School of Design, with a distinct national character of its own, and our women are to the fore in every one of its branches." —Maude Howe Elliott, 1893

fessional partnership with Louis Comfort Tiffany, Lockwood de Forest, and Samuel Colman known as Associated Artists. The firm's best-known commissions include the White House, the Veteran's Room of New York's Seventh Regimental Armory, and the homes of English actress Lillie Langtry and American author Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain.) Wheeler's professional reputation, like that of de Forest and Colman, was eclipsed by that of the high-profile L.C. Tiffany, but when the partnership dissolved in 1883, she took the name Associated Artists for a bolder

professional enterprise: a firm of women profiting from the textile arts. She directed the company until 1900, when she turned it over to the control of one of her sons, who ran it until 1907.

Wheeler's books include *How to Make Rugs* (with the wonderful subtitle *How to Make Happiness and to Awaken Social Consciousness*), *The Development of*

Embroidery in America, which ascribes the artistic genius to the quill work of American Indian women, and *Principles of Home Decoration*, which is, at long last, being republished.

That, and a forthcoming exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, should help revive the name of this designer, business-

woman, and social reformer. What does her work mean to Americans of today? Plenty, as it turns out. A brief look at her output reestablishes a precedent for the decorator of the common, smaller home.

A printed denim (first made for the Mark Twain House in Hartford, Connecticut) reproduced today by J.R. Burrows & Company as "The Carp," is simple and graceful, the fabric eminently practical. But more broad-reaching than the modern appeal of her wallpapers and fabrics is the way Candace Wheeler personified the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement. ✦



by Regina Cole

ABOVE: The parlor at the Mark Twain House, one of the best-known commissions of Associated Artists. **RIGHT:** One of Candace Wheeler's designs for this house is found in a portiere she entitled "Consider the Lillies (sic)."





The long-enclosed front porch is a garden room filled with plants and Arts and Crafts furniture. LEFT: Jim Anderson's handsome Shingle house is a bulwark in a fine old neighborhood.



An elegant survivor of the neighborhood's heyday, this Shingle-style house found an owner who filled it with antiques and personality.

ASHMONT VICTORIAN

by Regina Cole

photographs by Eric Roth

“I KNEW THERE was a beautiful neighborhood in Dorchester, but I never could find it,” says Jim Anderson, the artist behind Anderson Glass Arts. “Like most people in the Boston area, I used to think of Dorchester as all triple-deckers [a vernacular apartment-house style]. But before those were built, Ashmont Hill was the first garden suburb favored by Boston Brahmins.”

Grand, late-19th century houses on tree-lined streets attest to the once-tony nature of Dorchester's Ashmont Hill neighborhood. Anderson's 1889 house was designed in the Shingle style by Harrison Atwood, who held the post of Boston City Architect from 1889 to 1891. Atwood designed a house for himself next door, as well as two nearby homes for his daughters. He also designed the Anderson's 1906 carriage house.

Besides a few 1910 alterations to the structure, the house had survived in its original condition when Jim found it in 1995. “It was a mess—plaster was cracking, it looked like the Addams Family house,” Jim explains. “But it was totally intact.”

Like much of the neighborhood, Jim's house had deteriorated as tastes changed. When



ABOVE: Colors used on the faux-painted parlor walls were created when the owner matched paint to the discolored bindings of old books. **BELOW:** The dining-room wallpaper, original to the house, was gently cleaned with a vacuum cleaner.



distance shrank with the automobile, Dorchester was one of the communities engulfed by the city. Waves of immigrants filled endless urban multi-family buildings, and elegant Ashmont Hill was forgotten. Still isolated from traffic-heavy Dorchester by steep and winding streets, the area's distant ocean views, cool summer breezes, and handsome, late-19th-century houses are being discovered by a new generation of educated Bostonians. Anderson was one of the first.

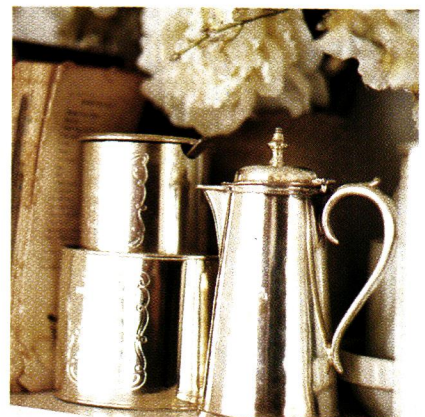
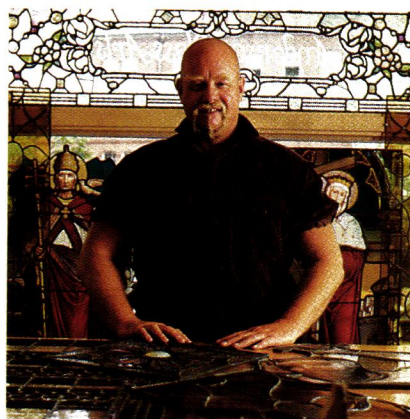
His is a highly personal home, each room with a distinct personality. A few remaining original furnishings coexist with inherited family pieces and the antiques Jim has been collecting all his life. Years of grime were stripped from oak and cherry woodwork. ("Thankfully, it was never painted!") To create "an oasis of calm among all the collectibles," Jim commissioned French faux painter Maddia Esquerre to make one room a neoclassical formal parlor. To create the colors of the *trompe l'oeil* walls, he took old books to a paint store in order to duplicate the tone of the discoloration and "foxing."

A front porch enclosed during the early part of the 20th century houses Arts and Crafts furniture eminently suited to the style and period of what is now a sunroom. The dining room, with its original damask-print wallpaper and carved woodwork, is the image of opulent Victorian propriety. A fireplace is angled into a corner of the cherry-paneled library, overstuffed furniture and animal heads on the walls adding to the male-refuge sensibility.

"I never was rich," Jim Anderson responds when asked about his skill as a decorator. "But I've always had a good eye—I'm an artist. ✦"



ABOVE: The library, which is tucked into a downstairs corner, is paneled in cherry beaded board and decorated with hunting trophies. **BELOW:** (from left) Jim Anderson's home is the result of assiduous flea-market shopping, which garnered these 18th-century French figurines. The artist in his studio. His collections include inherited furniture and found early silver.



HISTORY GARDENS

Just outside the hard urbanity of New York City, a 19th-century gentleman's retreat is thriving as one of the nation's greatest 20th-century gardens.

BY VICKI JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN DRUSE



The Bower in the Bronx



THE BRONX might seem like an odd place for a world-class horticultural center, but then again, the gem known as Wave Hill was conceived as a naturalistic outpost, deliberately set close to the dense, urban grid of 19th-century Manhattan. Once a private estate, this historic site and its renowned gardens now belong to the people of New York City.

When William Lewis Morris built a fieldstone farmhouse near what is now Riverdale in the 1830s, his 13-acre property possessed all the amenities of country living, just a few miles from Wall Street. "Far from being a rejection of urban life," writes Albert Fein in *Wave Hill, Riverdale and New York City, Legacy of a Hudson River Estate*. "[Wave Hill] was an expression of a new definition of home life in the city."

That Morris and later owners



of Wave Hill managed to preserve such a bucolic setting in the face of the burgeoning megalopolis is remarkable, given that as early as 1811, the City of New York imposed a rigid system of narrow, 20' x 100' lots citywide. Fortunately for Wave Hill, the 19th-century expansion of New York coincided with the development of the early landscape planning movement. Morris and later Wave Hill owners William Henry Appleton and George W. Perkins strongly identified with the philosophies of influential landscape architects Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted, advocates for a more natural and humanistic approach to the city vs. country dilemma.

Appleton, who bought Wave Hill in 1866, was a wealthy publisher who published Downing's last major work, *The Architecture of Country Houses*. During his three-decade-long tenure, Appleton successfully fought to keep the encroaching city from engulfing both the estate and nearby Riverdale. Appleton also helped Olmsted and others block private plans to blast the distinctive white cliffs of the Palisades for building materials.

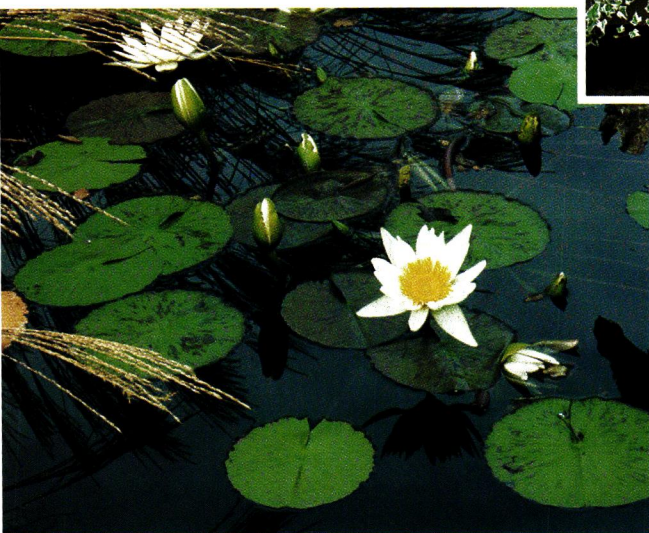
In 1903, George W. Perkins bought the house, adding it to his string of jewel-like properties along the Hudson River. An extremely wealthy and powerful man, Perkins could easily have built an architectural monument to his success. Instead, he chose to exercise a conservationist's attitude, sensitively adding

(top) Unusual potted plants, like the strappy-leaved New Zealand flax that serves as a centerpiece, rest on round pavers in the Flower Garden. (bottom) A late-winter display of colorful South African bulbs in the Greenhouse Conservatory.

Old-fashioned cosmos, perovskia, and grassy miscanthus brighten the Palm House entryway.

RIGHT: In the shade of a potting shed, a window box display offers two complementary varieties of coleus and the trailing ivy 'Little Diamond.'

BELOW: Ornamental grasses and other aquatic plants surround a formal pool in the Aquatic Garden, where water lilies bloom on the surface.

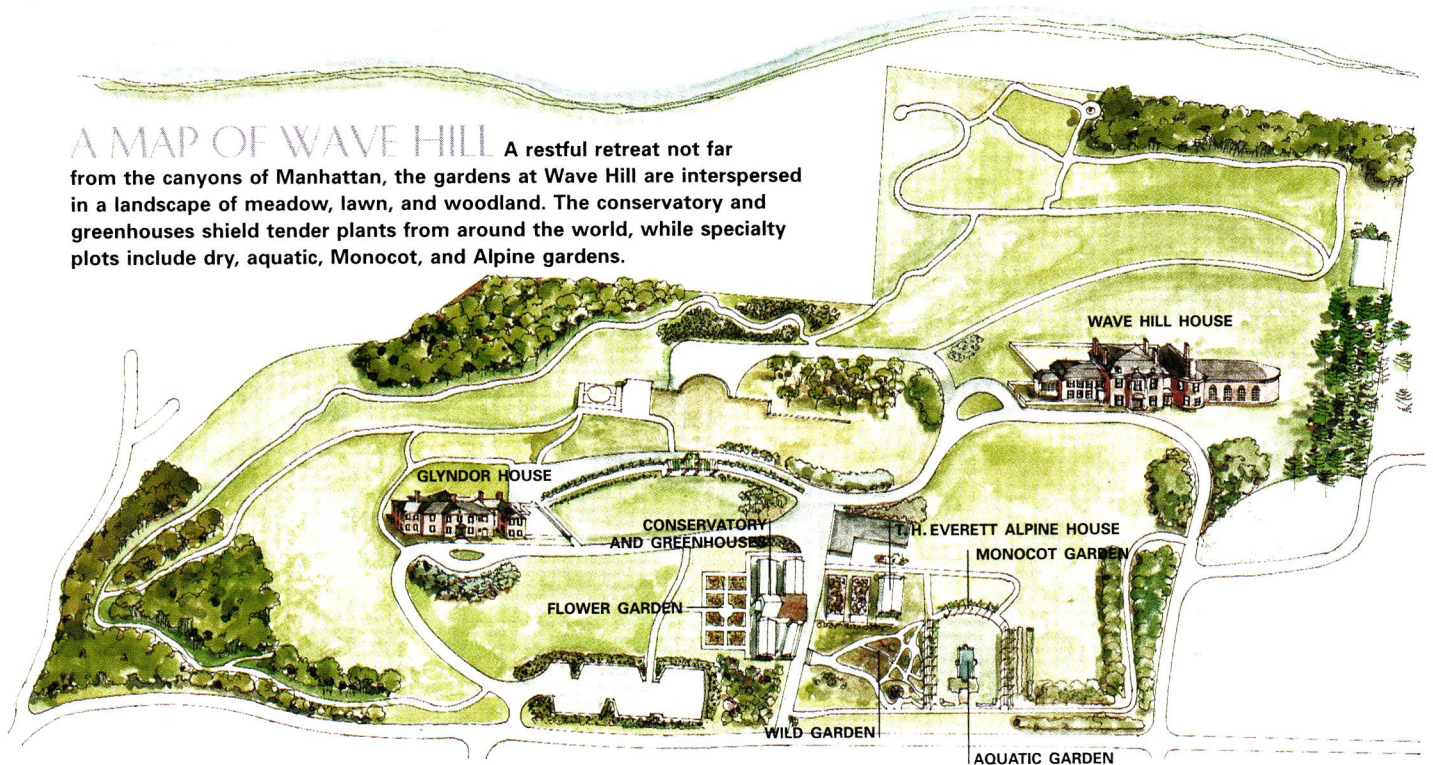


RIGHT: The informal Flower Garden provides a colorful entrée to the stately Palm House with its colonnaded doorway. Low beds of colorful plants and flowers are accented by architectural plants in containers, such as a the spiky cordyline at center and the four clipped, variegated boxwoods around the perimeter of the circular path.



A MAP OF WAVE HILL

A restful retreat not far from the canyons of Manhattan, the gardens at Wave Hill are interspersed in a landscape of meadow, lawn, and woodland. The conservatory and greenhouses shield tender plants from around the world, while specialty plots include dry, aquatic, Monocot, and Alpine gardens.





to the established landscape and its structures. He used terraces and pergolas to enhance rather than dominate Wave Hill's unique surroundings, and specified footpaths that carefully follow the contours of the land. He oversaw the planting of the now giant copper-leaved European beeches, along with other rare trees and shrubs. While he added gardens and greenhouses to supplement those created by Appleton, when he added a substantial structure—a recreation building that included a bowling lane—he had it constructed underground, where it would have the least impact on the landscape.

In spite of Wave Hill's identifi-

cation with the early landscape planning movement, the gardens of Morris, Appleton, and Perkins were not horticultural standouts. By the time Marco Polo Stufano arrived in 1967, the existing gardens were overgrown and weakened by time and neglect. "There used to be a beautiful American elm tree to the side of the rose garden," says Stufano, director of horticulture at Wave Hill. "Eventually, its shade canopy spread out, and the roses were not doing well."

Not bound by any historical precedent, Stufano and his partner, the late John Nally, removed the labor-intensive, chemically dependent roses and built a garden more appropriate

PROGRAMS AT WAVE HILL

More than 100,000 people visit the gardens, greenhouses, and woodlands of Wave Hill each year. Thousands participate in its exhibitions, readings, concerts, lectures, and workshops. The nonprofit cultural institution is also the home of the *Catalog of Landscape Records in the United States*, an index to collections of graphic and written documents related to landscaping and gardening. For more information about any program, use the website, www.wavehill.org, or call (718) 549-3200.

COMING EVENTS

WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Hike through natural areas blooming with jewelweed and Queen Anne's Lace, goldenrod and asters, and sketch a visual record of what you find. Aug. 26–27, Kerlin Learning Center.

GENERATED@WAVEHILL:

Beneath the Bark, Under Leaf and Log, a visual arts exhibition by Sylvia Benitez. Sept. 3–Oct. 30, Glyndor Gallery.

GARDENERS' FAIR & PICNIC

Supper, plant sale, and live and silent auctions of plants and garden ephemera, to benefit the horticulture program. Sept. 20.

CONCERT SERIES KICKOFF

Works by Beethoven with Susan Kagan on piano, Gerald Kagan on cello, and Ming-Feng Hsin on violin. *Armor Hall*, Oct. 15.

FALL FESTIVAL: PLAZA DE LA CALABAZA

Seasonal music, activities, and art projects for visitors of all ages. Oct. 21–22.

CLOCKWISE: (from right) Tropical plants, including the tall, potted *Cussonia paniculata*, enjoy a summer vacation on a walkway in the Flower Garden. A pair of spiky *Sisyrinchium* 'Quaint and Queer' flank a mounding dwarf Japanese holly. Colorful baskets hang from The Pergola overlooking the Hudson. Another winter floral display in the Palm House.





On the highest spot at Wave Hill, the Wild Garden features a collection of naturalistic plants from around the world. The silver-leaved ground cover in the foreground is Snow in Summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*).

to the setting—a casual cottage garden, filled with interesting plants. “Good gardening is about editing, putting in and taking out, standing back and assessing,” Stufano says. “You can’t be overly sentimental, and you have to learn to be a little ruthless. If a plant doesn’t work, rip it out.”

Stufano and Nally took an unusual approach to the Wild Garden, covering a knoll behind the greenhouses. “We’ve debated over the name ‘Wild Garden’ because it is not, as some people expect, a garden of native plants,” says Stufano. “It’s a garden inspired by the ideas of William Robinson’s writings of the 19th century, where species plants are used naturalistically. In other words, they look like they might occur together

naturally, even though they come from all over the world: Japan, the United States, China.”

The spectacular views of the Hudson River and Palisades have informed many of the garden decisions made for Wave Hill. The sunken parking lot is thickly planted around its perimeter, to deliberately conceal the view until the visitor emerges. “You come up out of that path, and bang! There it is.”

The view is the most important feature of the terrace garden at the Wave Hill house as well. In the early years of Stufano’s tenure, the horticultural staff would plant bright, pink begonias and other colorful annuals. Then they hit on the idea of setting out only gold- and silver-

leaved plants as a means of enriching the view without overpowering it.

Even though the estate belongs to the public and the award-winning gardens draw the horticultural elite from around the world, a very personal and intimate feeling permeates the grounds at Wave Hill. “This was once a private home and we have always tried to keep that air of domesticity,” explains Stufano. “Sometimes you can come here early in the morning when it is quiet, and imagine that you are visiting your rich aunt for tea.” ✦

VICKI JOHNSON, a garden writer and photographer in Newton, N.J., most recently wrote about state flowers for *Old-House Interiors*.



Details of the cottage bath

by Lynn Elliott | photographs by Steve Gross & Susan Daley

CREATE bathrooms with the comfort and luxury of the 1920s in this vintage, Shingle-style house: the mandate was clear. The reality was not so easy. Rick Esposito, a New York-based designer, planned and supervised the entire restoration of this East Hampton family home. Additions, which included multiple bathrooms, were also built. The owners did not want to lose the relaxed atmosphere of their 1907 summer getaway during the design of the expansion, so an empha-

sis was placed on restoration details.

Originally, the house had only two bathrooms: one from 1907 and another added in a 1920s renovation. The owners decided to restore those original baths and to add new ones in the style of the 1920s. Why the Twenties? “The bathrooms in that period had more amenities—they were a bit more deluxe,” says Esposito. Also, many of the popular features in 1920s baths are still compatible with today’s lifestyles. For instance, most bathrooms by the 1920s had center faucets, as opposed to sep-

arate hot and cold fittings. Multiple body sprays were also common in showers—and are making a comeback in modern baths. The 1907 bath in the house, however, would remain true to its period.

As the new additions were built, Rick Esposito began gentle renovation of original bathrooms. The one from the 1920s, now a guest bath, had only a tub, a toilet, and a pedestal sink. There was no tile, no shower, and no storage. When it was converted in the 1920s, the guest bathroom had [text continued on page 80]



LEFT: A tile border of crown moulding, copied from New York's Plaza Hotel, is a traditional 1920s detail added to this original guest bath. **ABOVE:** Because the house was raised, causing everything to shift, the wainscot and window trim in the 1907 children's guest bath had to be reproduced. **RIGHT:** Woodland-themed stencils add visual interest without detracting from the bathroom's relaxing simplicity.





This polished nickel shower enclosure in the master bath features a grille at the top, a detail common in the 1920s. **BELOW:** A turtle tile in an Arts and Crafts green glaze—near an original clawfoot tub—is one of the whimsical motif tiles that punctuate the floor in the children's guest bath.



FINDING THE DETAILS

DESIGNER RICK ESPOSITO

(212) 598-1898. He has also created a line of reproduction hardware called Circa2000; (212) 219-0000 or www.circa2000hardware.com.

GUEST BATH Tub fittings, Harrington Brass (201) 818-1300 ■ Soap dish, Urban Archaeology (212) 371-4646 ■ Tile, Country Floors (212) 627-8300 ■ Window and shower curtains, Martin Keehn (212) 719-0850.

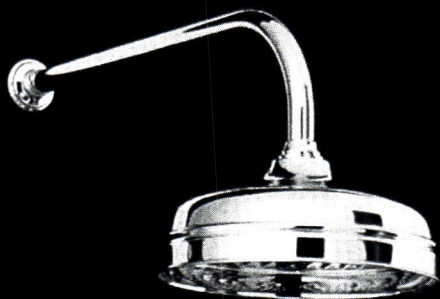
CHILDREN'S GUEST BATH Toilet, Oxford from Saint Thomas Creations (619) 474-9490 ■ Toilet paper holder, Architrove, Inc. (631) 329-2229 ■ Towel rack, Urban

Archaeology (see above) ■ Lighting, Architrove, Inc. (see above) ■ Stenciling, Karin Linder (212) 598-0559 ■ Tile, Country Floors (see above).

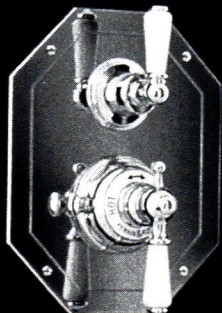
POWDER ROOM Sink, Architrove, Inc. (see above) ■ Medicine cabinet, Rick Esposito Design (see above); Cabinetmaker, Steve Truslow (718) 624-0119 ■ Toilet, Oxford from Saint Thomas Creations (see above) ■ Towel rack and toilet paper holder, Urban Archaeology (see above) ■ Antique Lighting, Leo Design, Inc. (212) 929-8466 ■ William Morris "Blackberry" Wallpaper,

Sanderson (212) 319-7220 ■ Tile, Country Floors (see above).

MASTER BATH Vanity, Rick Esposito Design (see above); Cabinetmaker, Steve Truslow (see above) ■ Marble countertop, Circa2000 (see above) ■ Toilet, Oxford from Saint Thomas Creations (see above) ■ Faucet and shower fittings, Harrington Brass (see above) ■ Shower enclosure, Circa2000 (see above) ■ Shower head, Speakman (302) 764-9100 ■ Tile, Country Floors (see above) ■ Window curtains, Martin Keehn (see above) ■ Door hardware, Circa2000 (above)



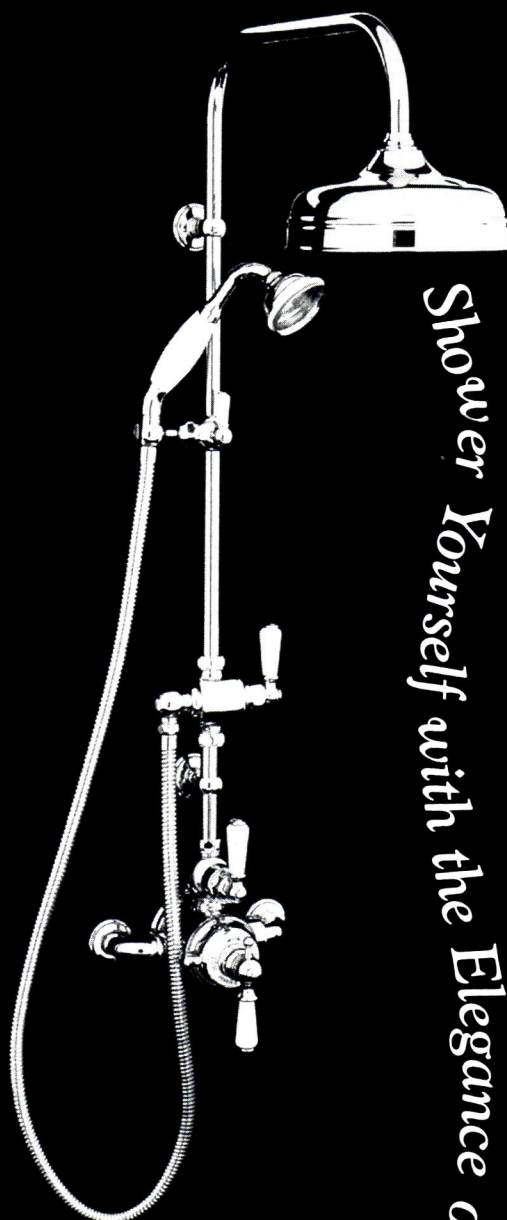
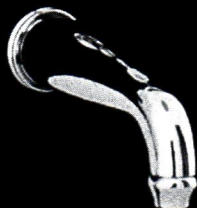
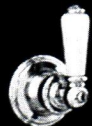
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In the newly built powder room, a pedestal sink, William Morris-designed “Blackberry” wallpaper, and wainscot reproduced from an upstairs bathroom tie the space visually to the house’s Arts and Crafts interiors.

been carved out of a bedroom situated over the front porch—a location that has caused pipes to freeze in the winter. To combat the problem, hot-water radiant heat was installed in the new tile floor. To keep the room authentic, Esposito chose running-bond tile with glazed crown moulding as a border, because it was traditional in 1920s baths. The attention to detail paid off: the tile-

work looks original to the room.


A hand-held shower was added to the old tub. Storage needs dictated that the pedestal sink be changed to a black-walnut vanity topped by an antique mirror. Reproduction hardware, such as the soap dish and towel rack, and a floral stencil finished off the room.

The original 1907 bathroom is now used as a children’s guest bath.

It was the most complete and authentic bath in the house, but it needed new wiring and plumbing. The room was dismantled and rebuilt exactly as it had been. The original clawfoot tub and pedestal sink were put back in place, including the separate hot and cold faucets on the sink. Damaged wainscot and window trim was reproduced from the room’s originals, right down to the thickness of



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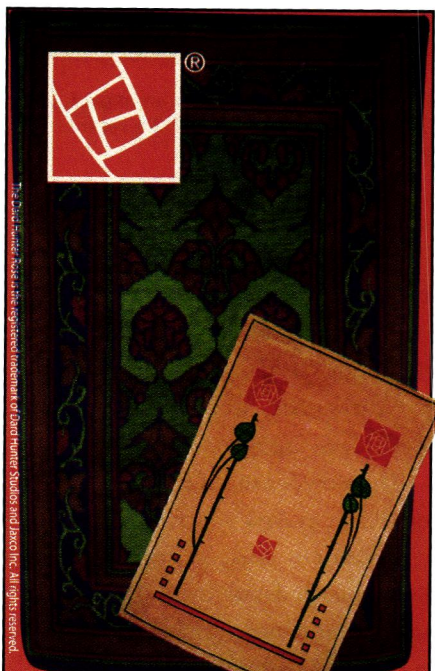


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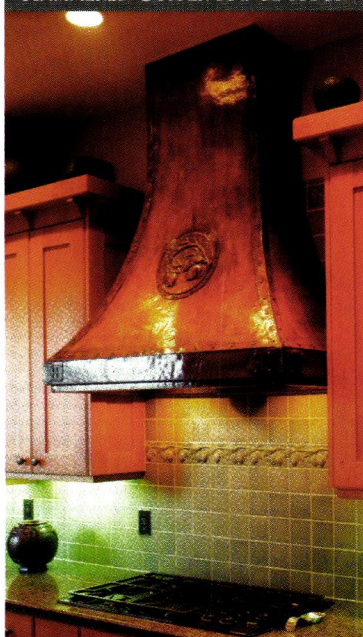
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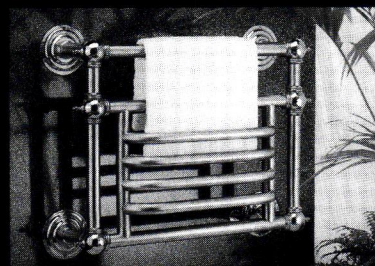
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Creating cabinetry for the master bath was a tricky proposition because of an angled wall. But the custom perfume cases, vanity, and medicine cabinet "benefit the room by adding interest," as designer Rick Esposito puts it.

the paneling. A new tile floor was added. (All tile was set in mud, the more traditional technique, not on green board.) The tilework is an Arts and Crafts green and features motif tiles of turtles and frogs. To add a decorative yet appropriate touch without changing the room, stenciled panels were painted on the walls.

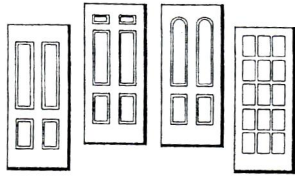
Work began on the new baths. The master bath, too, was once part of a bedroom. The homeowners wanted the room to be a comfortable scale appropriate for the house. Again, Rick Esposito relied on the details. Running-bond tile with an authentic crackle glaze and a border in blue-green was chosen. The repro-

duction shower enclosure has a typical 1920s feature—a grille on top—as well as multiple body sprays. For storage, a custom vanity was made in black walnut. "Its design picks up details . . . particularly from the house's mantels," says Esposito.

The powder room is a new addition, done in Arts and Crafts style to complement adjacent rooms. A Belle Epoque pedestal sink is the centerpiece. The wainscoting and trim from the 1907 bath were reproduced here. Green Arts and Crafts floor tiles (with occasional owl and rabbit motifs) were laid. Antique, hammered-copper sconces flank the medicine cabinet designed for the room. ✦

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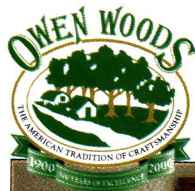
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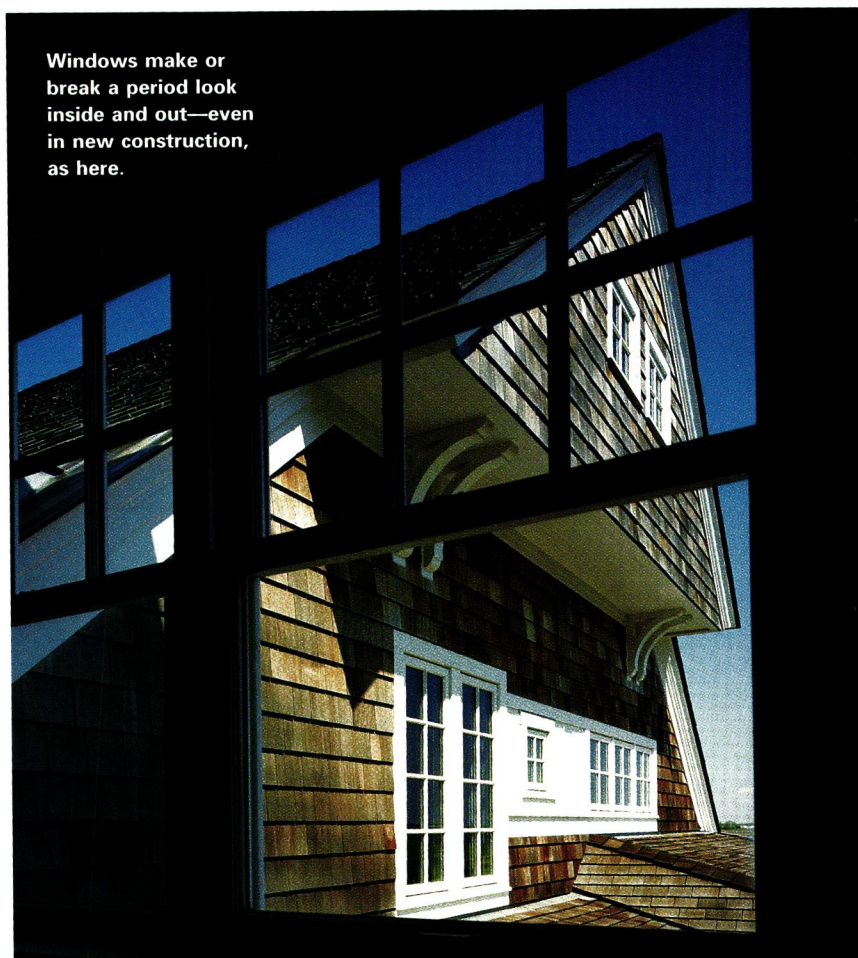
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A Good Look at Windows BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

WINDOWS are tough to get right in a period house. Like friendly eyes in a familiar face, the right windows make the house “read” as a recognizable member of a given architectural style or period through a subtle combination of details, from the number and size of panes, or lights, to the profile of the muntins, depth of the sash, and slope of the sill.

Until the advent of plate glass in the 1870s, the relationship between glazing, sash, and spacers in a double-hung window was a function of the size limitations and relative scarcity of a pane of glass. Whether the style was Georgian, Federal, or Greek Revival, “the proportions that developed out of those limitations defined the style,” says Jim Ialeggio of Architectural Details in Wood. Sash widths and depths, muntin and trim profiles, even the way the window was set into the frame, were carefully calibrated in re-



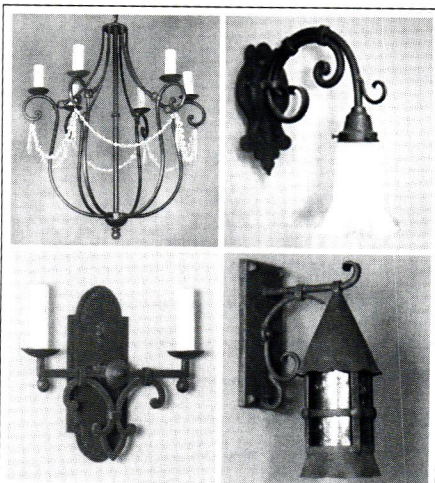
Until the advent of plate glass in the 1870s, the relationship between glazing, sash, and spacers was a function of the size limitations and relative scarcity of glass panes.

lation to the limitations of the medium.

The result was often a window as elegant in style and proportion as the finest crown moulding. “It’s the intersection of the different planes in a window that makes the trim look nice,” Ialeggio says.

These days, what’s expensive is the labor to produce all that trim, not the glass. “In modern windows, as few planes as possible intersect,” Ialeggio says. “That’s one of the biggest reasons new windows don’t look graceful.”

That’s not to say that Marvin, Weather Shield, or one of the Jeld-Wen companies can’t custom-build windows with as many intersecting planes as you specify. In fact, many companies can and do (see p. 86). What’s difficult is selecting new or replacement windows that blend well in terms of proportion, light patterns, sash and glazing, and moulding profiles. Even at the high end of the market, [continued on page 86]



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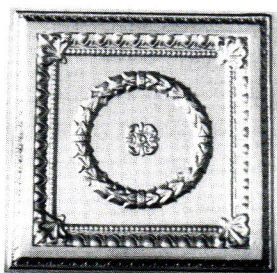
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“there’s no perfect solution,” says Ialeggio, who makes reproduction windows for museum-quality houses. “When I talk to a client, I ask them what kind of tradeoffs they’re willing to put up with.”

So how do you achieve a graceful transition between the old and the new when you must add or replace windows on a period house? The answer, of course, depends on the unique characteristics of your house and the state of your pocketbook. If your home is an especially fine example of a period style or is more than 150 years old, authenticity may be more important than cost or energy savings. If, on the other hand, your house is a plain 19th-century farmhouse, or was built in the 1920s from stock materials or even a planbook, the opposite may be true. No matter what your situation, here are some guidelines to consider.

First, the most critical element in specifying new windows for an older house is **PROPORTION**. Begin by looking for windows that match the

ratio of your originals in terms of width to depth. For example, if many of your double- or single-hung windows are 3' by 6', use that 1-to-2 ratio as a guide to selecting the new ones. The ratio theory works whether you're matching identically sized windows, or installing larger or smaller units.

It's also crucial to consider proportion when selecting a **LIGHT PATTERN**. This is true whether you're specifying windows with individual panes of glass held in place by muntins, or single-pane sash with mortise-and-tenon grilles affixed on either side in a fac- [continued on page 88]



THE EFFICIENT WINDOW

Even if you prefer traditional, single-glazed windows, there's no need to sacrifice energy efficiency in the name of authenticity. Most new and custom manufactured windows meet or exceed energy standards established by the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC).

Windows are rated by either R-value, a measure of resistance to heat flow, or by U-factor, which is the ability to transfer heat. The higher the R-value, the more energy-efficient the window. U-factors are the reverse; the lower the number, the better the window. From a thermal point of view, wood-framed windows have a U-Factor in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 and high R-values. If your windows are custom made, ask the manufacturer how they stack up in terms of NFRC standards.

While double glazing a window can reduce the amount of heat loss by up to 50%, single-glazed windows fitted with an effective storm window are comparable in efficiency. Another way to increase the efficiency of a single-glazed window is to give it a low-e (low-emissivity) coating. Low-e windows conduct visible light, but limit energy exchange. That means heat has a much harder time escaping on cold days and entering on hot ones. Low-e coatings also screen out ultraviolet rays, which fade furniture.

CENTER: Modern window makers approximate the look of divided lights by applying grilles on either side of a window.

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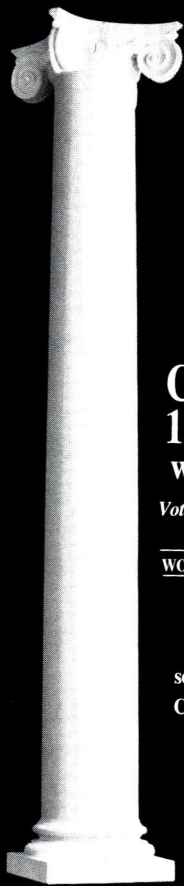
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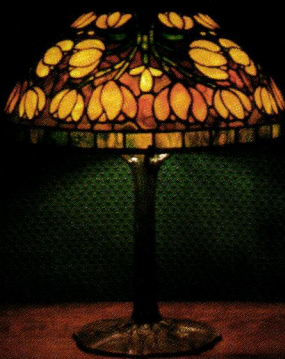
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simile of a true divided light window. The width and depth of the real or apparent panes of glass should be comparable to the width-to-height ratio of authentic panes elsewhere in your house.

Like moulding profiles, light patterns are often distinctly tied to architectural styles. If none of your existing windows is original, consult the style details in a general guide on residential house styles, like Virginia & Lee McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*, for a sense of which light patterns might be appropriate for your house. For more detail, turn to reprints of period builder's books, such as Asher Benjamin's *Practice of Architecture and the Builder's Guide*, or Palliser's *Late Victorian Architecture and New Cottage Homes* (check your local

still fall within that 1 3/8" to 1 3/4" range, they often don't read the same way as old windows, because of the prevalence of double-paned insulated glazing. The thicker glazing package (usually two panes of glass and a void) affects the apparent depth of the sash, as well as the appearance of the muntins and other trim.

That's why Ialeggio recommends using single **GLAZING**, usually in combination with an invisible storm window. "If the window is single glazed, the thickness will be similar to a period window," he says. "If it's double glazed, the depth of the glazing will be much thicker."

The trim lines on storm windows tailored specifically for historic buildings—such as those certified by the National Park Service—are prac-

While most window sash today still measure 1 3/8" to 1 3/4" thick, they often don't read the same way as old windows, because of the prevalence of double-paned insulated glazing.

library). You may also want the guidance of a good restoration architect to help you sleuth out the possibilities—both in terms of on-site archaeology and period-appropriate alternatives.

Until the mid-19th century, the design of **SASH** for a given house depended on the type and size of the glass, how the window would be held together, and how it would operate. Eighteenth-century windows tend to have narrow sash, usually no more than 7/8" to 1" thick. Early-19th-century window sash are more variable in size. "Once the Industrial Revolution hit about 1850 or 1860, things became standardized to some degree," Ialeggio says. "Sash became thicker—usually 1 3/8" to 1 3/4"."

While most window sash today

tically invisible, offer interchangeable screens and glass, and cut energy loss through the window by about 50%, the same figure often cited for double glazing.

Match **MOULDING PROFILES** on any new windows as closely as feasible to those on original windows. As a general rule, the more accurate the match, the more expensive the window. If none of your existing windows is original, take cues from other mouldings elsewhere in the house. Or locate a house that's similar in style and age to yours with intact windows. Obviously, this will be easier to do if your home is a 1915 Foursquare in a neighborhood with a dozen similar houses than if yours is the last colonial house standing in a sparsely populated town. ♦

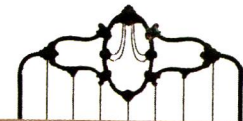


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Books on great houses abound. But no book until now has sought to tell the American story through houses grand and ignoble. Here is Val-Kill Cottage, where Eleanor Roosevelt found refuge from



TOP: The Frost farm in Derry, New Hampshire. **ABOVE:** Robert and Elinor Frost in 1911.

difficulties in her life. Here is the story behind the bookish Vanderbilt heir who imagined Biltmore, the 250-room French Renaissance chateau in North Carolina, the final masterpiece of the architect Richard Morris Hunt and a jaw-dropping spectacle even today. Here is the tenement in New York City's Tenth Ward, which Charles Dickens said made Calcutta look like Paradise—a tenement so filled with the hopes of thousands of transient immigrants striving to build a life, it was as much a “castle in the sand” as Biltmore.

THE IDEA HAD BEEN BREWING since her childhood, writes the author in her introduction—a childhood in New England, “where houses on every street had stories to tell that made the past [continued on page 92]

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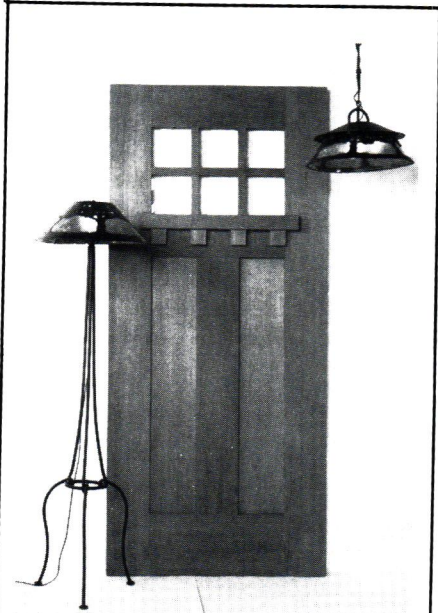
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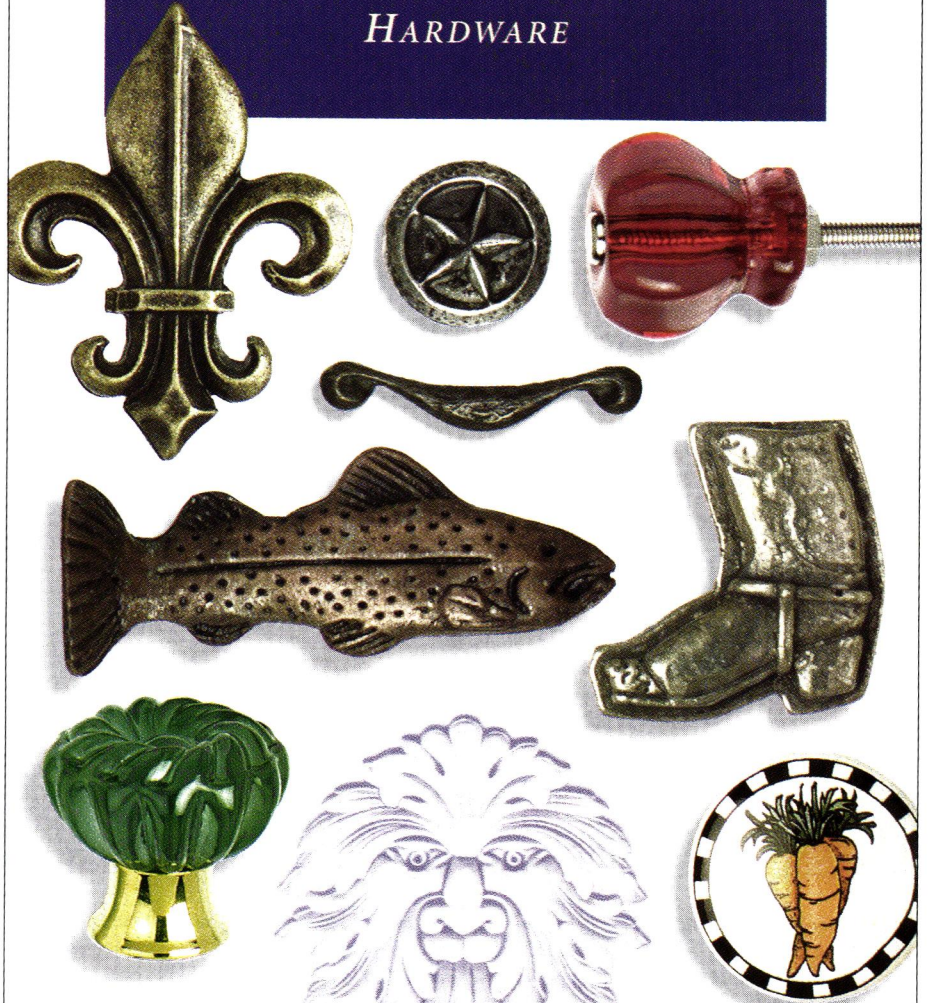
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Frank Lloyd Wright's Storer House in Los Angeles, part temple, part grotto, is a chapter in the saga of California. **INSET:** Wright circa 1924. **BELOW:** Images from the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, which tells of devastating hardship and the truth about the good old days.

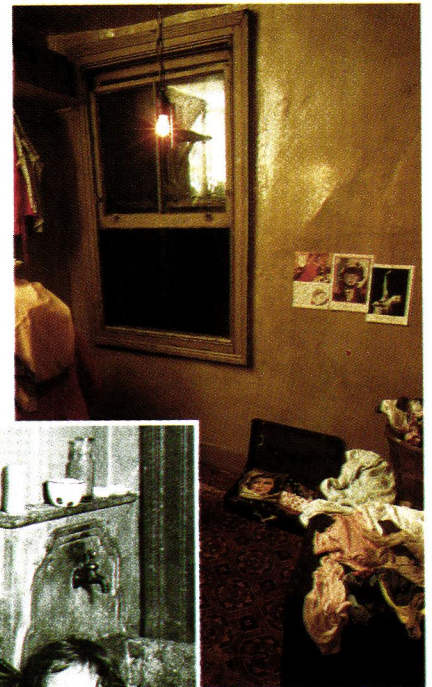
as present as today." What if someone asked, What are America's treasure houses? What stories do they tell that trace the great American drama?

Elizabeth Smith Brownstein wrote of her idea to a well known editor at Simon & Schuster—and got the encouraging call back from Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis only three days later. That launched Brownstein on a glorious adventure from Alaska to Florida, “across plains and deserts . . . through dusty attics and ghost towns . . . secret compartments and staircases in everything from a shining

palace to the darkest tenement. I wanted houses that gave a deeper meaning to the word ‘treasure’ than gold or glitter.”

She had already had a career as a writer and producer of public affairs programs and cultural documentaries for television. That vision compelled her to “choose houses that could serve as metaphors” for the larger events in our cultural history.

[continued on page 94]



TIM STREET-PORTER (TOP); FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT ARCHIVES (INSET); STEVE BROSNAHAN (ABOVE); SMITHSONIAN (INSET AT LEFT)



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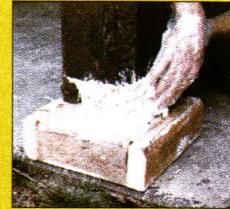
Structural Adhesives, Sealants and Caulks

meeting all kinds of specifications for composites, structural and decorative components, indoors and outdoors.

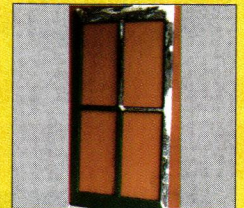
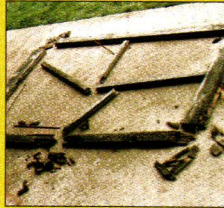
WoodCast: Light-weight, impact resistant pourable compound for interior and exterior castings.

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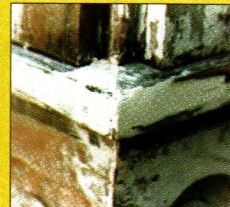
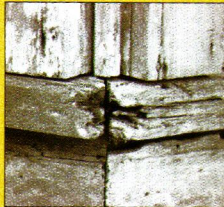
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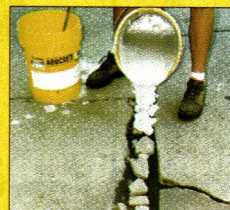
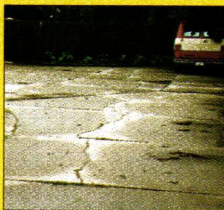
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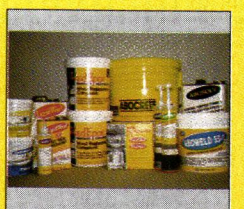
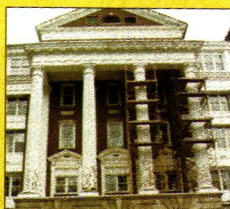
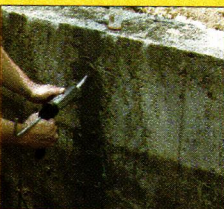
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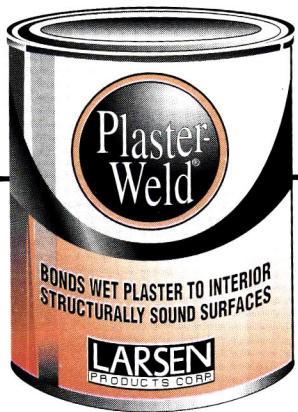
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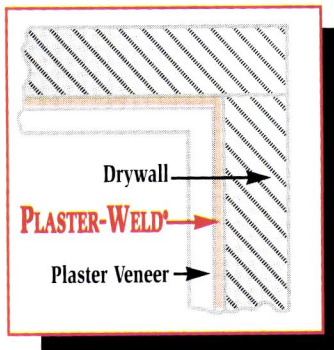
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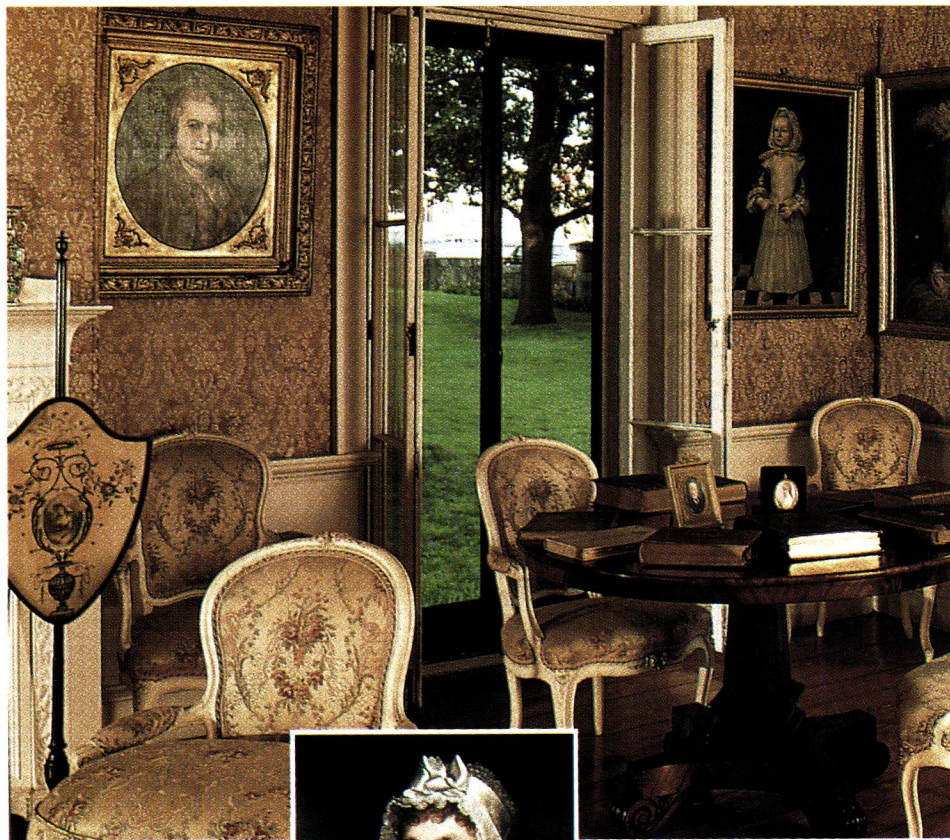
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The Long Room in the home of four generations of the Adams family in Quincy, Mass.—a house steeped in American history.

RIGHT: A portrait of Abigail Adams in the house.



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Visit, for example, the simple cottage in the then-rural Bronx where Edgar Allan Poe spent the last three years of his woeful life. It is here that his life can be told with compassion: “[Poe] was perched on the limb of a cherry tree near the cottage, tossing ripe fruit down to [his young wife] Virginia, all dressed in white, laughing and calling up to him. Suddenly, she began to cough up blood, her white dress spattered with it. Poe leaped down and carried her into the

cottage. ‘They were awful poor,’ the girl noticed. ‘We knew the sadness of their lives,’ said another neighbor.”

The tales told here are unexpected. Photos and archival pictures capture

the essence of place. The Salem witch trials are remembered, and the frontier West. The story of Hearst’s “castle” is told as if through the eyes of its architect Julia Morgan. Hollywood, that glittering chapter in America’s lore, comes to life in the Dolores Del Rio house. And the story is not finished, not at all, as we see in contemporary visits. ★

REVIEWED BY PATRICIA POORE

If This House Could Talk

by Elizabeth Smith Brownstein;
 Simon & Schuster, 1999.
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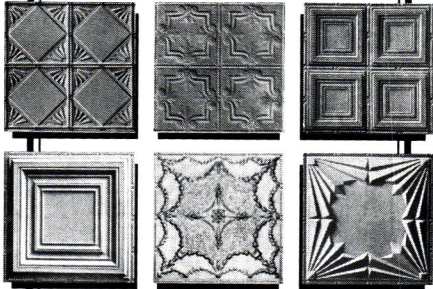
JOSHUA GREEN (TOP); COURTESY OF ADAMS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE (INSET) ROB HUNTLEY/LIGHTSTREAM (ABOVE)



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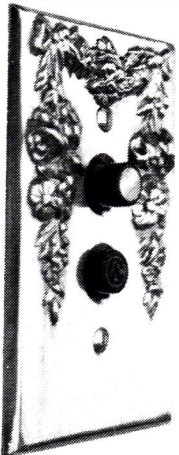
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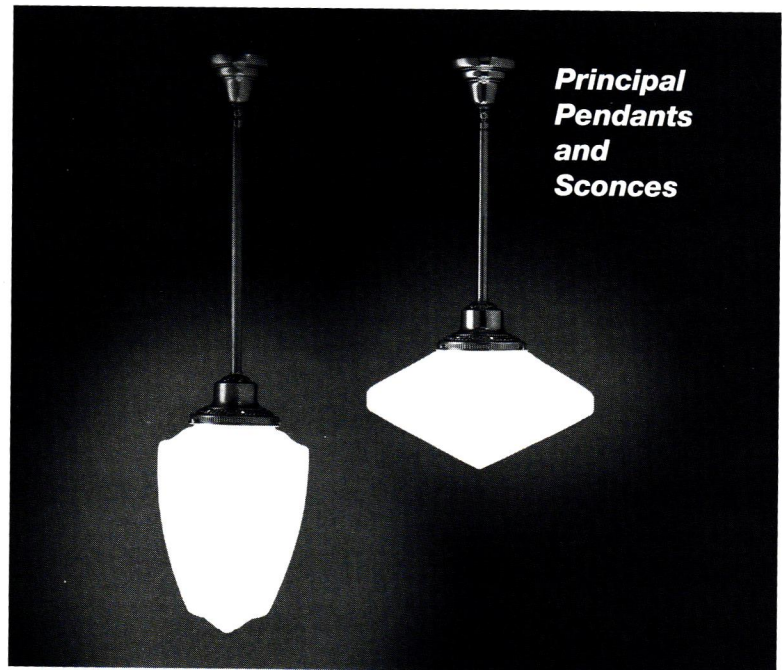
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ask THE EDITORS

The Case for Grasscloth

The living room walls in my Shingle-style house, built in 1897, are covered with coarse grasscloth. It's looking very worn, especially at the seams. There are some stains under a window, where there was probably water damage at some point. Could this grasscloth be original, and is it worth trying to repair? I like the look of it, and I'd like to be able to say I have an original wall treatment.

ANNE HOWARD
FALMOUTH, MAINE

It's certainly possible that your grasscloth is original. Grasscloth was a popular wallcovering in the late 1890s, along with burlap and other textured materials. Its popularity grew out of the fashion for the exotic in the 1880s and 1890s, the heyday of the Aesthetic Movement. Whole room schemes were given over to Japanese or East Indian themes. These schemes were pastiches of actual Asian décor, and used Asian materials in Western ways.

The first use of grasscloth on walls may have been tatami matting, a Japanese floor covering. Tatami was applied to the walls of three rooms at the home of sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens about 1900, including the sitting room shown above. The tatami may have been the suggestion of Saint-Gaudens's friend and collaborator, Stanford White, whose own house on Long Island—Box Hill—featured split bamboo and other split reeding in several rooms.



Sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens applied tatami matting to the walls of his home in Cornish, New Hampshire, as an expression of Anglo-Japanese aesthetics.

Although grasscloth is certainly appropriate for a Shingle-style house built in 1897, yours may have been applied in a later remodeling. Grasscloth remained in style through the 1960s, in part because it effectively conceals badly cracked walls. Look for evidence of earlier wallcoverings or paint underneath the material in a hidden area.

Grasscloth is prone to wear and staining. The fibers tend to lift up at the seams, and the material is subject to moisture damage. You could try re-adhering the individual pieces of reed; this will be tedious, and you should experiment with different adhesives in hidden areas to make sure the adhesive holds and does not discolor the material. For the water stains,

try a very mild bleach solution, applied with a nearly dry sponge, again experimenting in a hidden area. If you can live with the stains, your main task will be to protect the walls from any further damage.

There are many companies which produce grasscloth. If you decide to remove all or portions of your grasscloth and replace it with new material, you should be able to find a close match. Try F. Schumacher & Co. (www.fschumacher.com) and Kneeder-Fauchere Imports, among others. After several decades of disfavor, grasscloth is experiencing a surge in popularity. The inherent informality that made it a natural for summer houses of the Gilded Age also makes it comfortable and attractive in our

own dressed-down era.

The "grass" is actually a dried plant such as raffia or jute, the "cloth" a paper backing. The weave can be coarse or fine, horizontal, vertical, or herringbone; loose so that the backing shows through, or tight so that the backing is invisible. The weave can be natural or dyed. The backing can be a contrasting color to the natural grass. The tatami in the Saint-Gaudens house was attached to the walls with heavy-duty staples, but modern grasscloths are applied much like wallpaper. Grasscloth usually comes in 3' widths; most are treated with fire retardant. Since many companies recommend hanging grasscloth over a heavy-duty lining, installation is probably best left to professionals.

Drapes for an Italianate

We live in a beautiful Italianate-style house which we restored ourselves. It has 12' ceilings and a double parlor with eight floor-to-ceiling windows. We are just getting to the decorating, and are in a quandary over the windows. We can't afford to pay a fortune for custom-made silk draperies with all the trimmings, but the ready-made options are hideous and inappropriate. The windows themselves are quite plain, and don't look right without any hangings at all. Plus, we need privacy. Do you have any suggestions?

ANONYMOUS COUPLE
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

This is a tough one, and not at all uncommon. Houses such as yours are especially hard cases, for they were built to be grand, show-off places, and the furnishings would have been very expensive for the time. Also, this was the era of Victorian modesty: the windows were dressed in as many layers as the ladies. Not only would your windows

have had voluminous draperies of luxurious fabrics with much swagging and trim, but they also may have had elaborate, even gilded, rods or cornice boards, fine imported lace undercurtains, decorated pull-down blinds, and (possibly) louvered interior shutters. You're absolutely right that the wrong draperies are worse than nothing at all. Something simple, well done, is much preferable to something fancy, done poorly. Unfortunately, there's nothing simple about Italianate draperies.

One option is to have roller blinds made for the windows out of non-vinyl material. Stenciled with simple borders, they would look very appropriate, and provide the needed privacy.

You're obviously handy, so you might try making interior shutters. Your windows may even have had them originally. Study the shutters in old photographs and in house museums; you might be able to use stock shutter panels and hinge together as many as needed. Sometimes shutters combined paneled and louvered elements. If your woodwork is painted, use paint-quality wood, which costs less than hardwood. (Or paint the shutters a complementary color, or try graining them.)


Another option is to phase in the layered look. Beginning with lace panels added over your blinds or shutters. Start a search for old draperies or large quantities of appropriate fabric, as well as curtain hardware at vintage textile fairs, flea markets, and on websites. If you're not handy with fabric, however, resist the urge to make elaborate swags on your own. They require strangely shaped cuts and look like a bad haircut if not well made.

Answers in this issue were provided by contributing editor SUSAN MOORING HOLLIS, principal at Historic Interiors Inc., (978) 371-2622.

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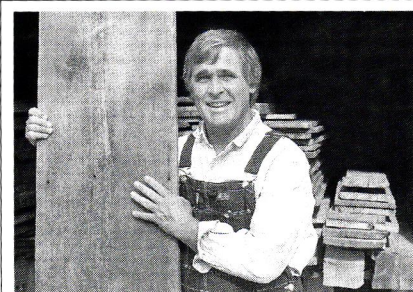
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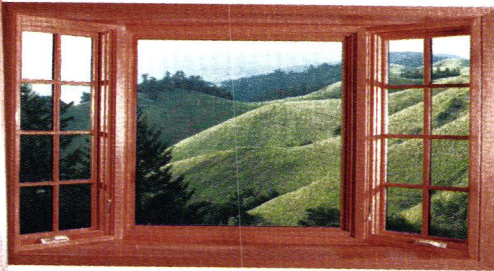
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Restored to Scale

BY REGINA COLE

THE URGE TO PAINT everything white in the style of a Soho loft or a house designed by Mies van der Rohe may well be the single biggest wrong turn today's homeowners take when they decide to create a livable period interior. But scale is also important—and not only in old houses. Furnishings that are too big or too small for the room can create as much dissonance as stark white walls abutting dark woodwork.

In the case of a townhouse in a historic 1870s Boston neighborhood, a formal front parlor echoes the tall and narrow proportions of the building itself. Not overly large, but with high ceilings, the room had been painted white by a previous homeowner; the effect was cold and cramped at the same time. The color also marginalized handsome crown mouldings and a marble fireplace that is, curiously, nearly 20 years earlier in style than the date of the house itself.

Interior designer Marisa Morra, who specializes in the decoration of old houses, notes that the room's proportions called for a light hand. She took her color cues from the soft rose shades in an antique oriental rug. "If you're lucky enough to own one of



ABOVE: In the softly colorful front parlor of a 19th-century rowhouse, a neoclassical frieze and a pair of sofas were chosen to work with the room's proportions. **INSET:** The look was awkward with white-painted walls clear to the ceiling.

these beauties," she says, "you've

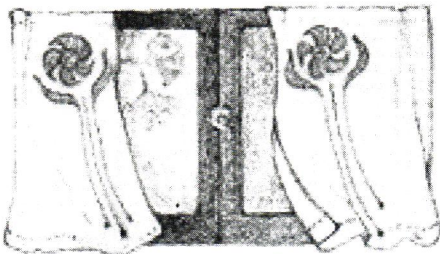
got a place to start in choosing the colors for your interior.

"I've heard people say that they think a specific period or color scheme is too limiting," she continues. "But I think those kinds of limitations are actually helpful—otherwise, there are just too many options. It's much harder to develop and carry out a unified theme without some guidance given by the age and style of

the house, or by furnishings that will play a key role."

The color of the carpet was echoed in striping applied to elements of the moulding, in swagged window treatments, and in silk pillows on a pair of custom sofas.

"We cut out pieces of cardboard and placed them on the floor to get the right size for the sofas," Marisa says. "The room is small, and could have been overwhelmed by a big couch." [continued on page 102]



PRAIRIE TEXTILES

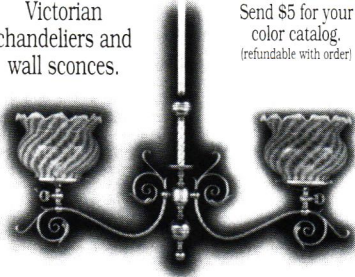
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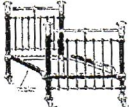
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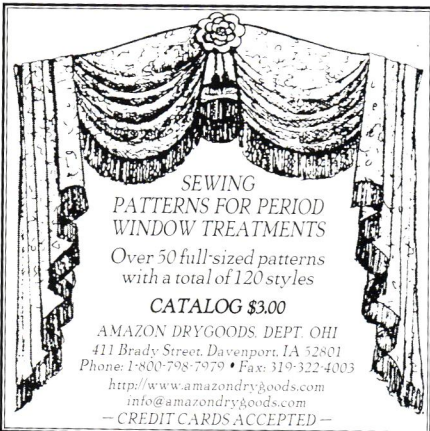
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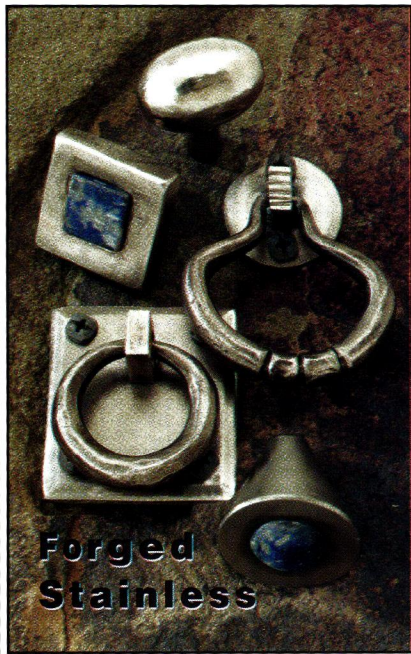
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LEFT: Unabashedly contemporary, the kitchen cabinets are finished in a pewter color that makes them nearly invisible when viewed from the adjoining dining room.
ABOVE: The configuration of the original bay was changed very slightly, but from the back of the building the effect is that of a conservatory.
BELOW: An exterior view of the building's front.

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102 AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2000

At the top of the high walls Marisa installed a Lincrusta frieze, its lower edge bordered by a picture rail. The frieze's neoclassical pattern is echoed by wallpaper with a similarly classical, swagged design. A tall gilt mirror over the mantel and an antique, late-19th century lighting fixture suspended from the ceiling complete a room that is refined and delicate, but with definite presence.

The kitchen presented another set of problems. As was customary in Boston-area townhouses, the original kitchen had been in the basement. A wall between the dining room and the butler's pantry had been taken down at some point in the past, and the pantry was made into a Melamine kitchen.

In order to restore the intimacy of the dining room, the wall was put back up, and the rear bay was bumped out to create space for a new kitchen separated from the dining room by French doors.

"When they took down the wall all those years ago," Marisa says, "they left the crown moulding, which made it easy to put the wall back in the same place. The pantry is back where it was, and the kitchen is convenient to the dining room. But you can close the doors and hide it when you want to!" she laughs. "And looking at the back of the building from the outside, the kitchen looks like a conservatory. Which suits the age and the style of the building perfectly!" ♦



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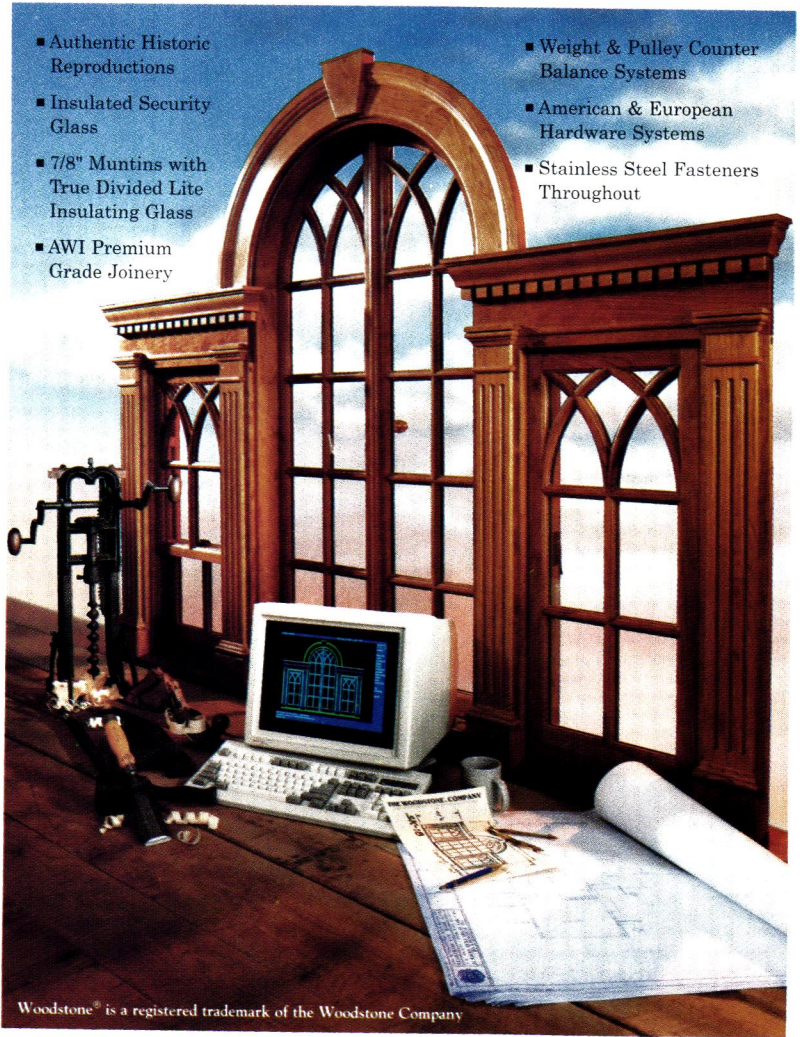
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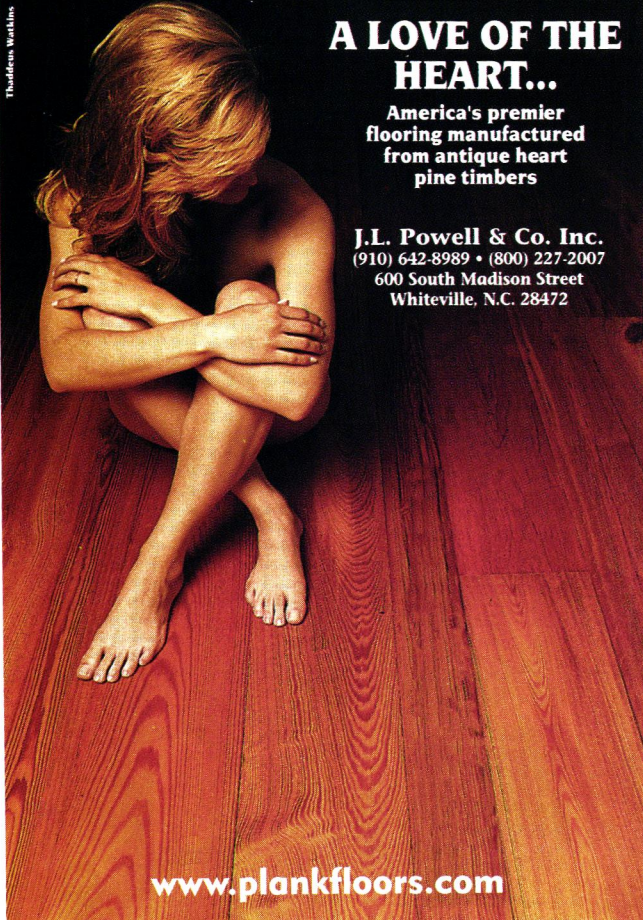
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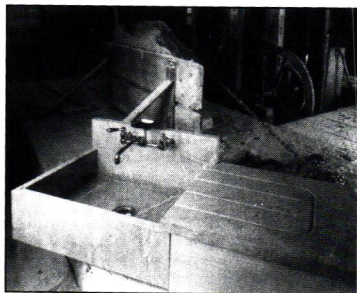
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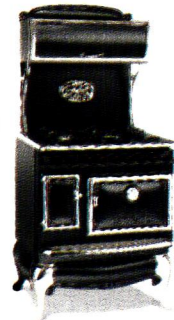
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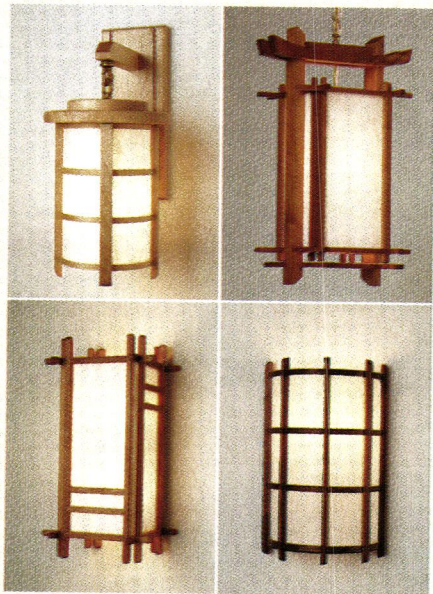
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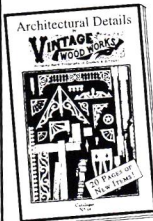
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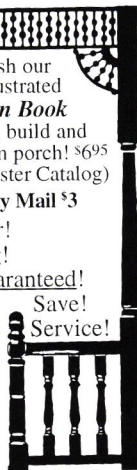
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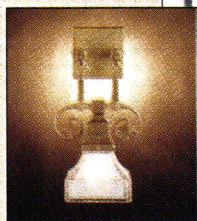


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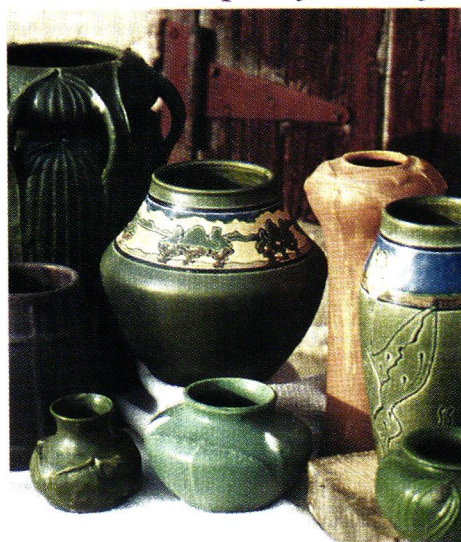
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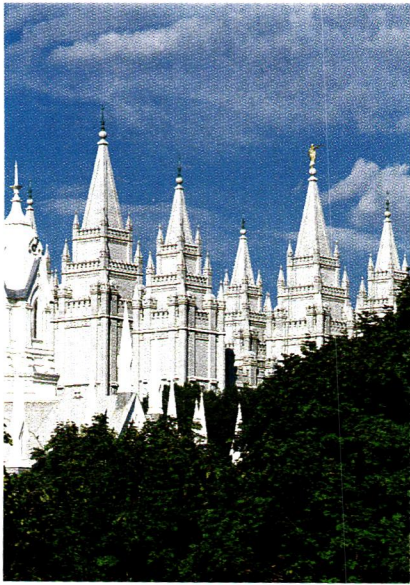
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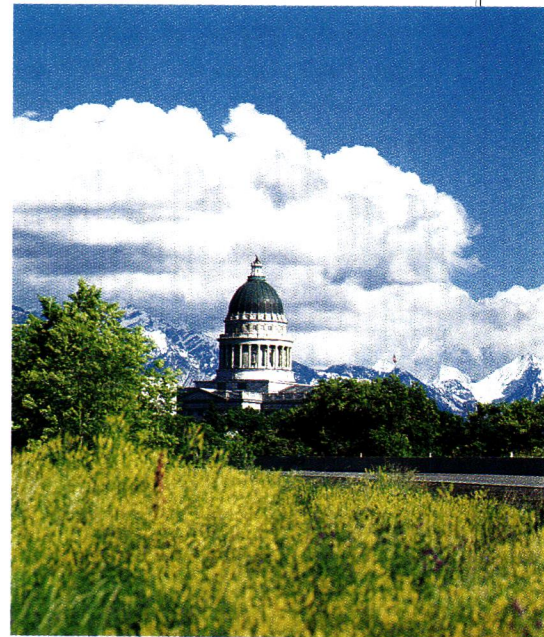
CLOCKWISE: (from top left) The angel Moroni tops the Salt Lake Temple. Idyllic Butte Gardens. The state capitol is sited above the city, below the mountains. Turn-of-the-century houses abound.



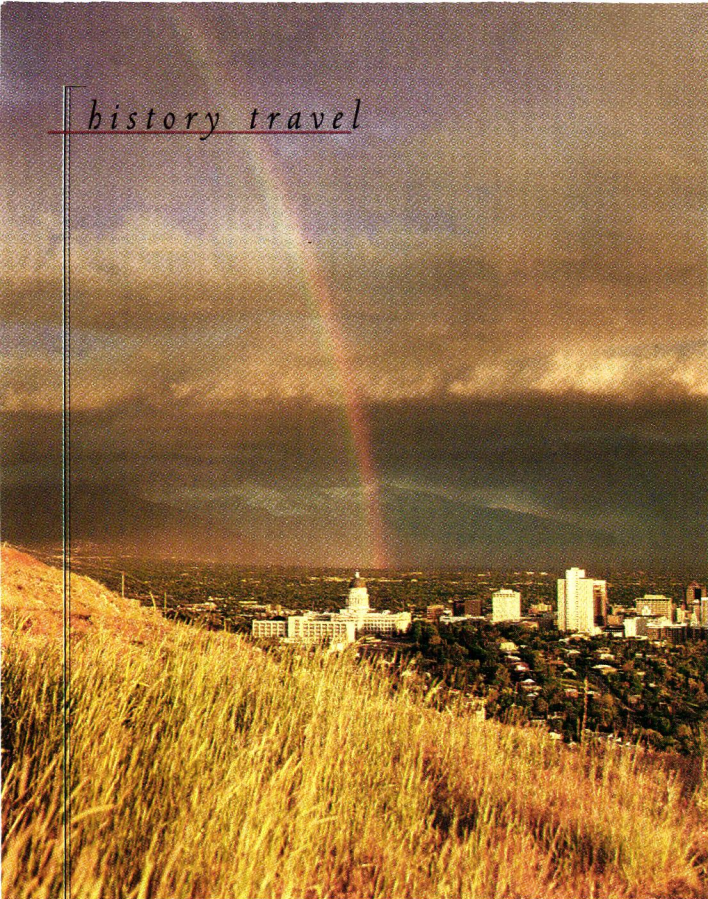
SALT LAKE CITY is the cultural, political, and ecclesiastical capital of Utah. It also has an unparalleled natural setting at the foot of the Wasatch Mountains, with the Great Salt Lake visible to the northwest and the Great Salt Lake Desert to the west. Utah itself is a state known for breathtaking scenery; fifteen national parks are within a days' drive of Salt Lake City. Some of this country's best skiing is within a half-hour drive of downtown, and most of its

best new movies are screened every winter in nearby **PARK CITY** during the Sundance Film Festival.

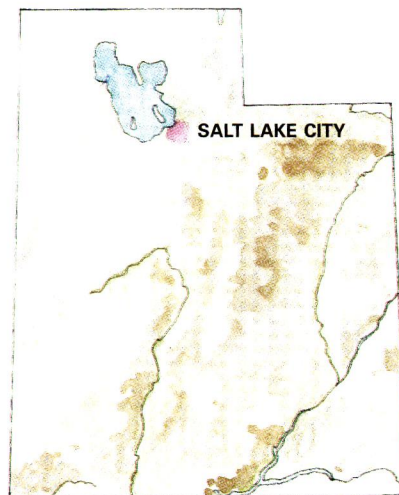
The history of both the city and of Utah is associated with the Mormons, more formally known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young and his followers founded Salt Lake City in 1847 as a community where they could practice their religion free from persecution. They were not the first white people to come here, but they



When he first looked down on what is now Salt Lake City from a pass in the Wasatch Mountains, Brigham Young said to his followers, "This is the right place." Local residents agree.



CLOCKWISE: (from left) Salt Lake City weather has four beautiful seasons. Inside Beehive House. The city is often called the "Gateway to the West."



were the first to want to settle: when he first looked down into the valley from a mountain pass, Brigham Young declared, "This is the right place." Before he uttered his famous words, what is now Salt Lake City was only valued as a gateway to more glamorous lands to the west. In 1776 Franciscan priests Escalante and Dominguez became the first Europeans to enter Utah: they were searching for a direct route to Monterey, California. They were followed in 1824 by Trappers James Bridger and Etienne Provost, who believed the Great Salt Lake to be an arm of the Pacific Ocean.

When the Mormons planted crops, dug canals to irrigate the parched earth, and laid out the streets of Salt Lake City, the United States was motivated to take the region from Mexico, which it did through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. The hard work and strong sense of community of the early Mormons is immortalized in the state's motto: "The Beehive State."

What is perhaps surprising to old-house lovers is the fact that Salt Lake City is full of architectural and historic interest. Although it is one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the United States today, its older downtown neighborhoods are flourishing, with late-19th and early-20th century houses kept in good repair. Property values are rising, and though there are less desirable areas to live in, Salt Lake City has no slums.

The streets of Salt Lake City fan out in a grid pattern from **TEMPLE SQUARE**. This is the site of the **SALT LAKE TEMPLE**, the **TABERNACLE**, the **ASSEMBLY HALL**, and a number of other Mormon church buildings. Not a Mormon building, but impressive nonetheless, is the Gothic Revival **CATHEDRAL OF THE MADELEINE**. Also worth a visit are the **GREEK HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL**, the **UNION PACIFIC RAILWAY DEPOT**, **HANSEN PLANETARIUM**, and the **CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. MARK**. The **KEARNS MANSION**, now the residence of Utah's governor, has been restored after a

devastating fire gutted the interior. The 1901 house was built with the earnings of an early miner, and mining is still a great source of wealth. Near Salt Lake City is **BINGHAM CANYON**, site of the Kennecott Copper Mine, which supplies 15% of the world's copper. It's so big that it is visible from space.

On Main Street between 300 and 400 South streets is the **EXCHANGE PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT**, which once served as the city's non-Mormon commercial center. It includes a number of circa 1900 neoclassical buildings. A premier residential neighborhood is called **THE AVENUES**, an area just to the north [continued on page 110]



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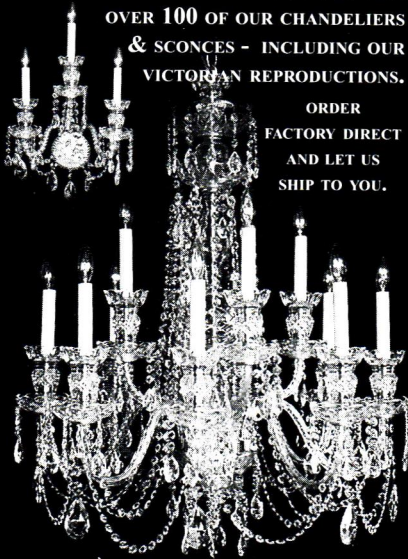
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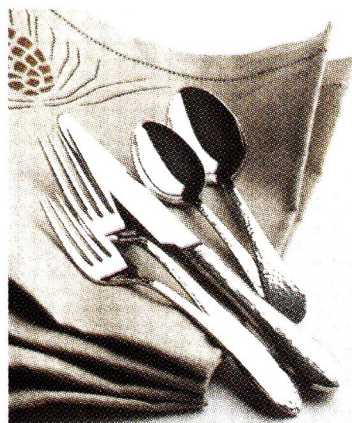
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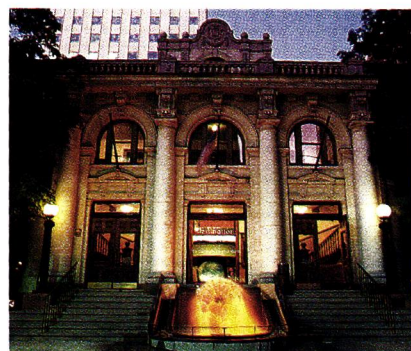
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The turn of the 20th century saw an economic boom. Among the handsome buildings dating to that time is the Hansen Planetarium.

and west of Temple Square. The home of the Utah Symphony and the Salt Lake Art Center are also nearby, at the **SALT PALACE**.

Several local museums offer glimpses into past lives; probably the best known and most visited is **BEEHIVE HOUSE**, the restored official residence of Brigham Young. The 1898 house at **WHEELER FARM** is also open to the public. The farm itself is a living-history museum; visitors can help gather eggs and milk cows. And for horticulture lovers, there is **RED BUTTE GARDEN AND ARBORETUM**, established in 1931 as a home for more than 9,000 tree and shrub specimens from all over the world.

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For the next few years, things will be hopping as Salt Lake City prepares for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. "The World's Best Snow," measuring in excess of 400 inches a year, makes local ski areas a natural venue. ✦

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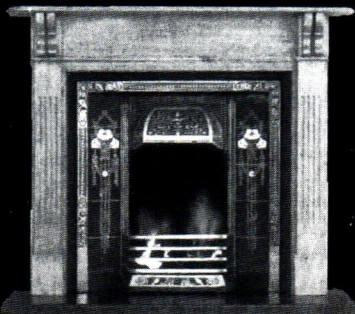
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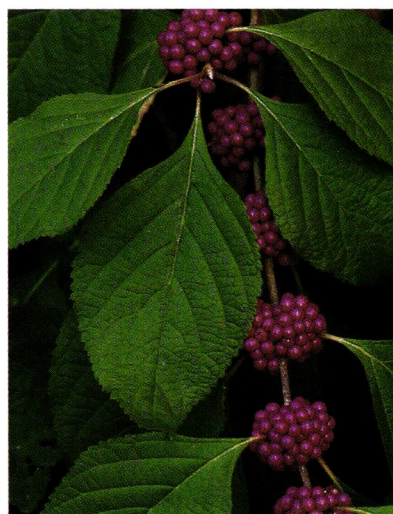
IN THE NEXT ISSUE

November 2000

MORRIS IN NY

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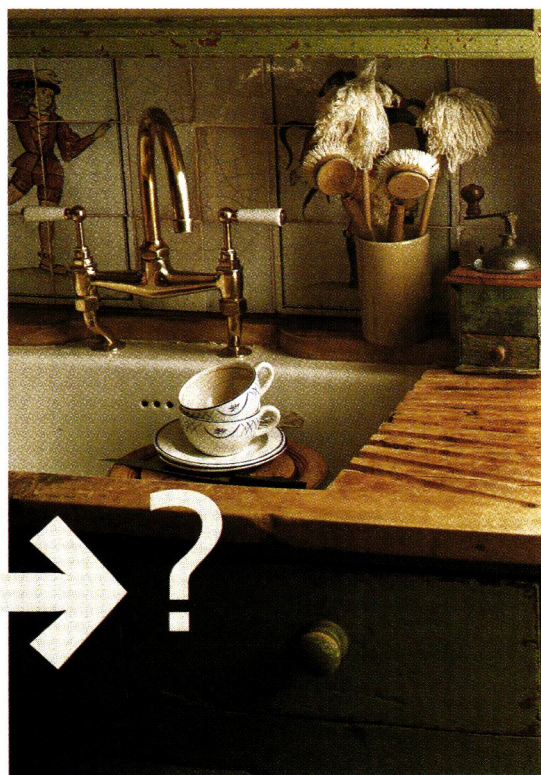
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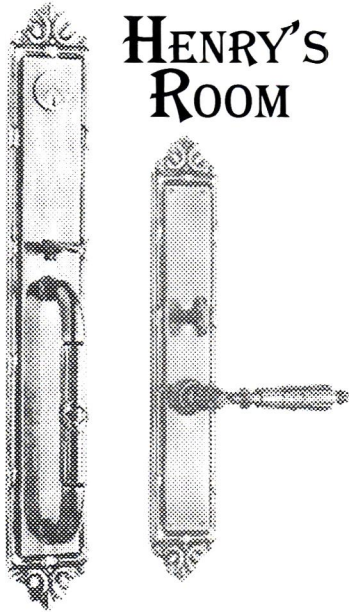
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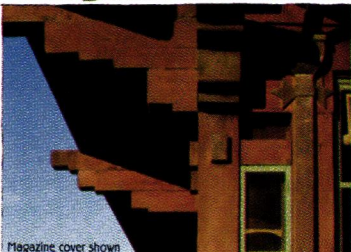
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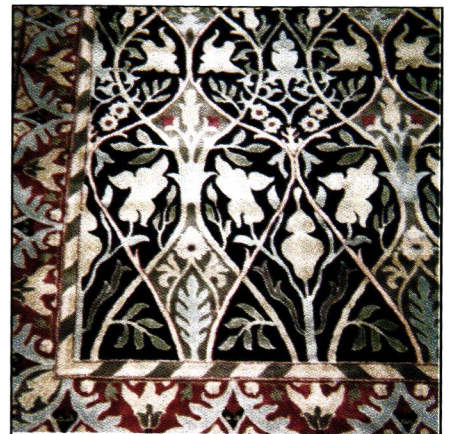
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Furnishings pp. 17-22

p. 17 Archive Edition Textiles offers twin, queen, and king bedspreads at prices beginning at \$520; www.archiveedition.com. ■ Furniture maker Debey Zito, wood carver Terry Schmitt, and metalworker Audel Davis are all members of the Arts & Crafts Guild of California, P.O. Box 5217, Berkeley, CA 94705. **p. 20** Kallista's For Town line will be followed by Michael S. Smith's For Country line next year; www.kallistainc.com. ■ Hunter Fan Co.: www.hunterfan.com. ■ Del Mondo: www.delmondolp.com. **p. 21** Sunrise Specialty: www.sunrisespecialty.com. **p. 22** Smith and Noble Windoware: www.smithandnoble.com.

Meditations on Design pp. 28-32

John Wheatman Design, 1933 Union St., San Francisco, CA 94123. (415) 346-8300. ■ Purchase *Meditations on Design* for \$24.95 on the web at www.amazon.com, through your bookstore, or by calling the author directly.

Sheltered from the City pp. 46-51

p. 47 Silver paint on porch furniture and exterior of house: Silver Fox by Benjamin Moore. ■ White paint throughout: Milky White #2510 and floors, "Desert Sand" deck paint by Pittsburgh Paints (PPG), #2510. **p. 48** Winterthur Museum's fabric collection, "Sun, Moon and Stars" available to the trade through Brunswick & Fils, (212) 838-7878.

American Design pp. 64-65

Visit J.R. Burrows & Co. on the web at www.burrows.com. Candace Wheeler reproductions: Carp Stencil, Japanese Carp, Lily, Nasturtium Leaf, Seashell & Ribbon. Currently working on "Honeybee" wallpaper, available in 2001. ■ The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is planning a retrospective of Candace Wheeler's work to open in 2001. ■ Applewood Books has reprinted Candace Wheeler's book, *Principles of Home Decoration* published originally in 1903. Call (800) 277-5312 or purchase on the web at www.awb.com.

Ashmont Victorian pp. 66-69

p. 68 Decorative Painter, Maddia Esquerre, (617) 524-4569. **p. 68-69** Antiques: Restoration Resources, 31 Thayer St., Boston, MA (617) 542-3033. ■ Sharon Boccelli & Co., 358 Broadway, Cambridge, MA (617) 354-7919. **p. 69** Anderson Glass Arts, 548 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02116. (617) 357-5166.

If This House Could Talk pp. 90-94

p. 90 Robert Frost Farm, Route 28, Derry NH 03038. Open seasonally. Call (603) 432-3091. **p. 92** Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 90 Orchard St., New York, NY 10002. Tours Tues.-Sun., call (212) 431-0233 or visit their website: www.tenement.org. **p. 94** Adams National Historic Site, 135 Adams St., Quincy, MA 02169. Open seasonally April-Nov. Call (617) 770-1175.

Restored to Scale pp. 100-102

p. 100 Marisa Morra, Artistic & Historic Interiors, (781) 891-5951. ■ Shutters: Barrows, Newton, MA (617) 964-4580. ■ Living room: Wallpaper: Colefax & Fowler, (617) 951-2526. ■ Frieze: Lincrusta, Crown Corp., (800) 422-2099. ■ Sofa fabric: Lee Jofa, (617) 350-6526. ■ Chair fabric: Schumacher, (617) 482-9165. ■ Pillow fabric: Scalmandrè, (516) 467-8800. ■ Pillow tassels: Clarence House, (617) 348-2870. ■ Mirror: Neena's, (617) 232-1900. ■ Light fixture: City Lights, (617) 547-1490. ■ Kitchen Contractor: Andrew Marvel, Marvel Construction, Newton, MA (617) 965-7551. **p. 102** Kitchen: Backsplash tile: Tile Showcase, (617) 426-6515. ■ Cabinets: Wood Mode, (800) 635-7500. ■ Countertops: Island, granite. Side counters, Corian. ■ Kitchen Windows: Marvin, (800) 346-5128. ■ Architect: Robert DeVries, Arlington, MA (781) 643-7561.

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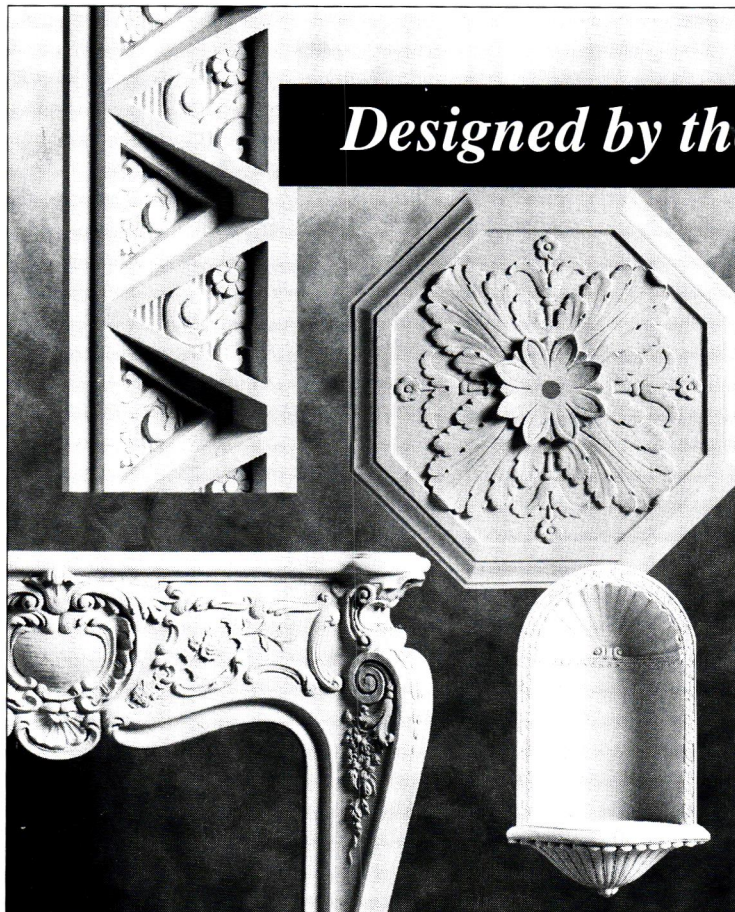
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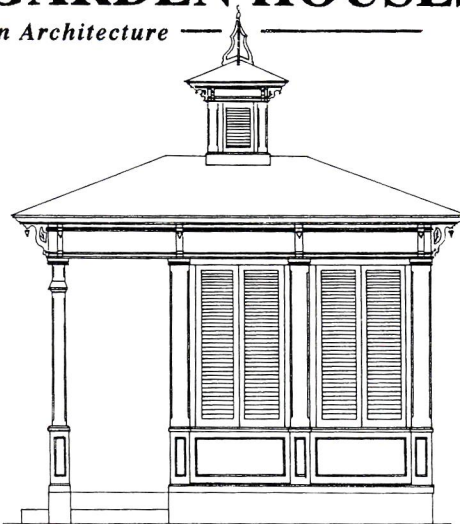
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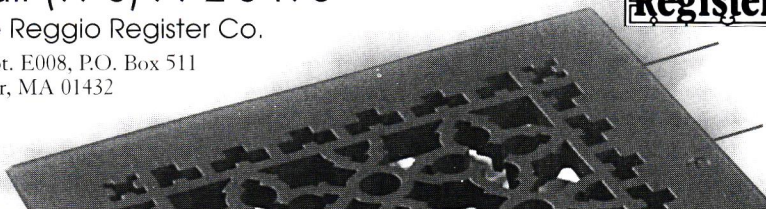
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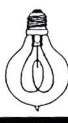


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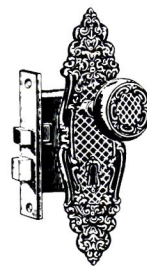
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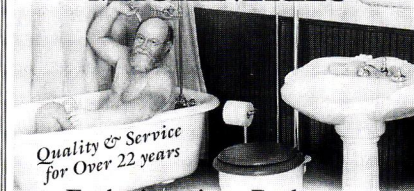
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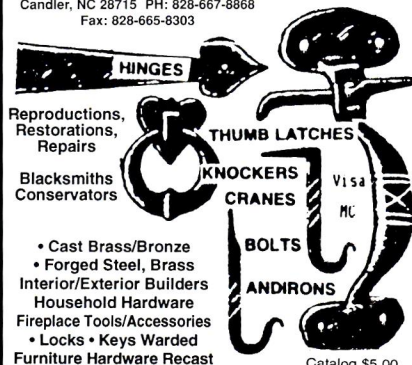
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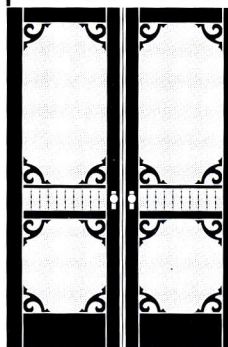
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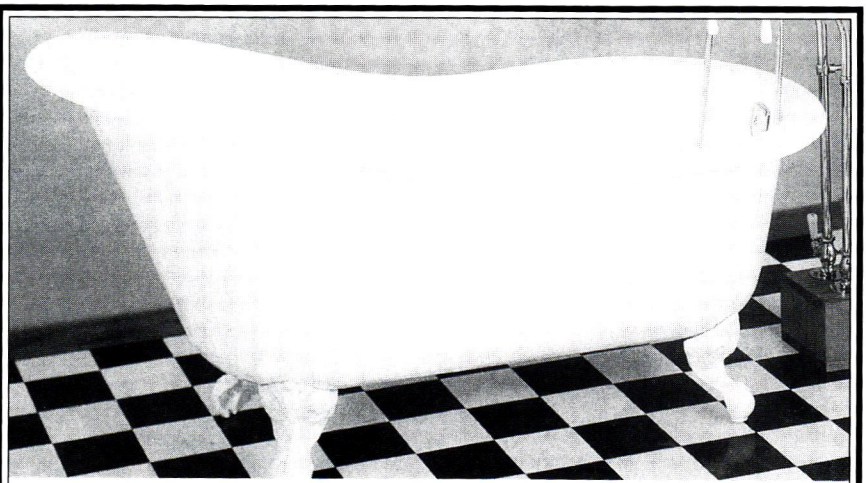


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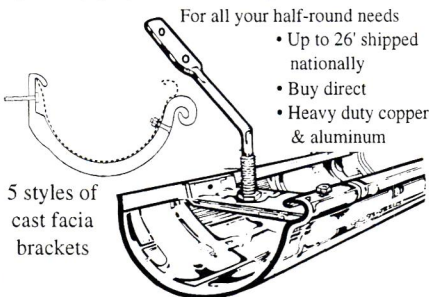
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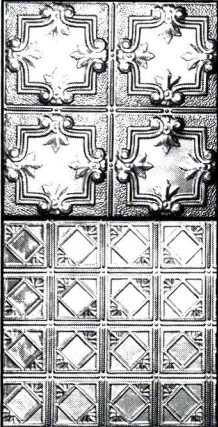
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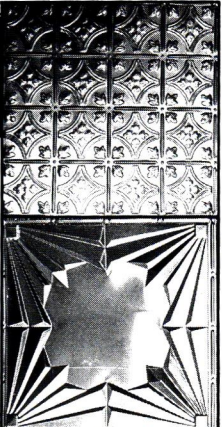
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Ancient Hands

hands are still in widespread use in Islamic cultures, as amulets conveying protection, power, and strength. What culture hasn't used linked hands to mean solidarity in the face of danger? Clasped hands are a common sepulchral motif, signifying either farewell, or reunion in the after-life. ✦ Leave it to Victorian design, though, to make the hand iconographic. Vases, curtain tiebacks, even jewelry rings in the form of hands were popular, in this period said to be modeled after the “delicate hands of Queen Victoria's ladies-in-waiting.” And we all appreciate that quaint hand, a sign pointing in the right direction.

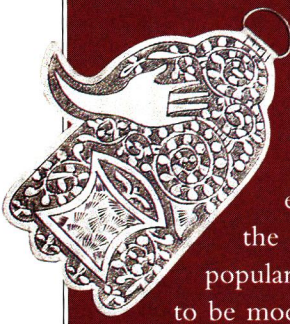
—BRIAN D. COLEMAN



ABOVE: The author's collection of pottery hand-motif enamel vases, late 19th-century. **RIGHT:** A brass hand tie-back draws aside a Victorian silk panel with, naturally, a hand motif.



FAR LEFT: Islam's Hand of Fatima hangs over the door to ward off evil. **BELOW:** Electrified gas jet in the form of a delicate hand. Michaelangelo's graceful hands of God and man on the ceiling at the Sistine Chapel.



OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS (ISSN 1079-3941) VOL. VI, NUMBER 5 is published six times per year for \$21 by Gloucester Publishers, The Blackburn Tavern, 2 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930. Telephone (978) 283-3200. Subscriptions in Canada are \$29 per year, payable in U.S. funds. Periodicals postage paid at Gloucester, MA 01930 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Old-House Interiors, P.O. Box 56009, Boulder, CO 80328-6009.