

In the opinion of this reader, *Early American Homes for Today* is weakened by the author's repeated references to the low level of Victorian taste that, in Congdon's opinion, prevailed after the decline of the Classical Revival movement. Excursions into the arena of aesthetic judgments of styles do little to help the man who is faced with the extremely difficult task of restoring an old house. Everyone will agree that Victorian porches and other late nineteenth-century overlays should be removed from houses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; but, by the same token, "Colonial" doorways and pseudoclassical porticoes should not be allowed to spoil Italianate or French Mansard dwellings as they so often do when fine old Victorian mansions are converted into modern homes and funeral parlors.

These observations aside, Congdon's book will make a first-rate addition to the library of anyone interested in early American architecture, and it will prove to be a useful guide for the man or woman who wants "to make the most of a neglected but worthy old building" (p. 3).

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Wilbur D. Peat

Papers of James E. Watson Desired

Peter J. Thayer, Box 251, Wright Quadrangle, Bloomington, Indiana, is seeking information about the late Senator James E. Watson of Indiana. Letters written by Watson are few in number and widely scattered. Anecdotes, speeches, letters, newspaper clippings, diaries, or any other information dealing with the senator's public or private life are desired. This material is being gathered for a graduate thesis and eventually for a biography of Watson.