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If there are more than the six generations, for which space has been allowed on preceding pages, they can be given upon a separate sheet of paper. Names of the children of each generation with dates of birth, death, marriage and to whom married, can also be given on a separate sheet; also additional remarks.

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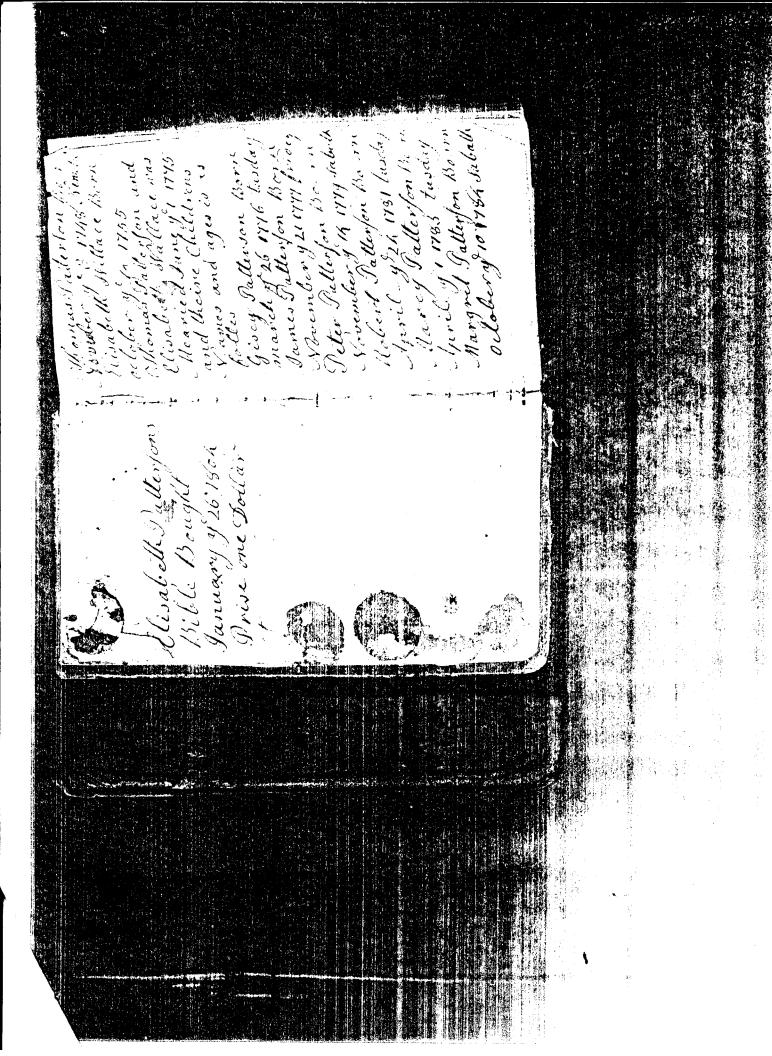
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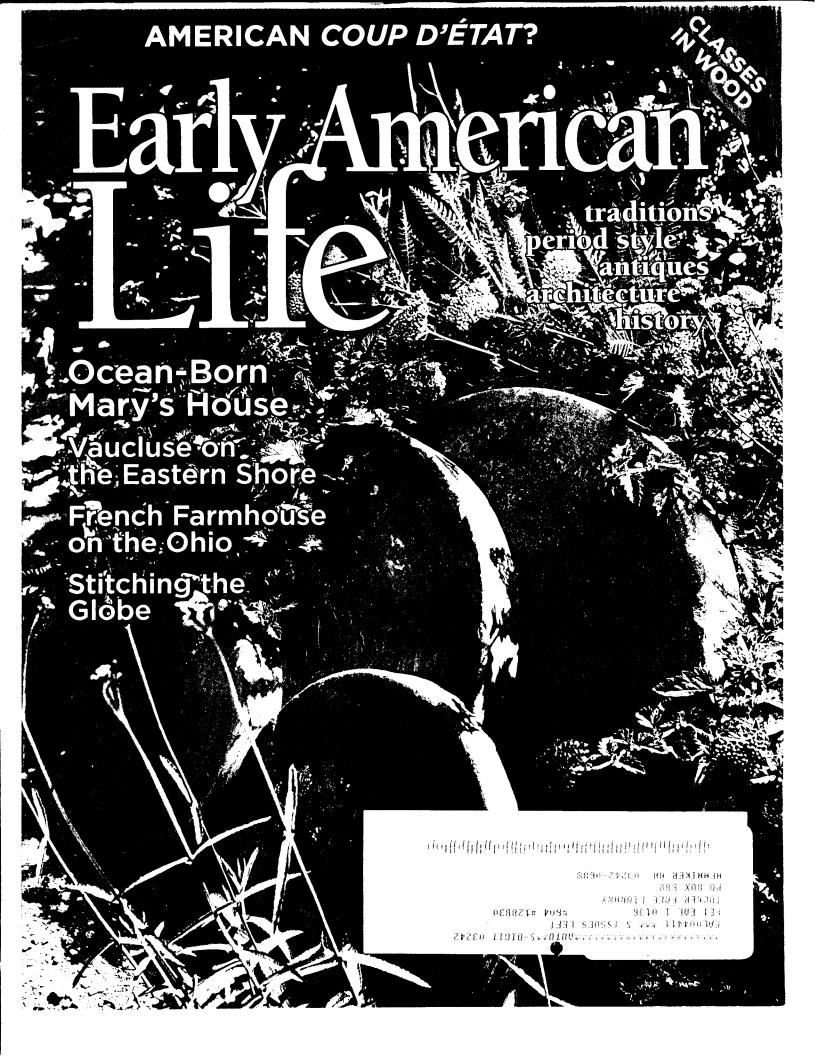
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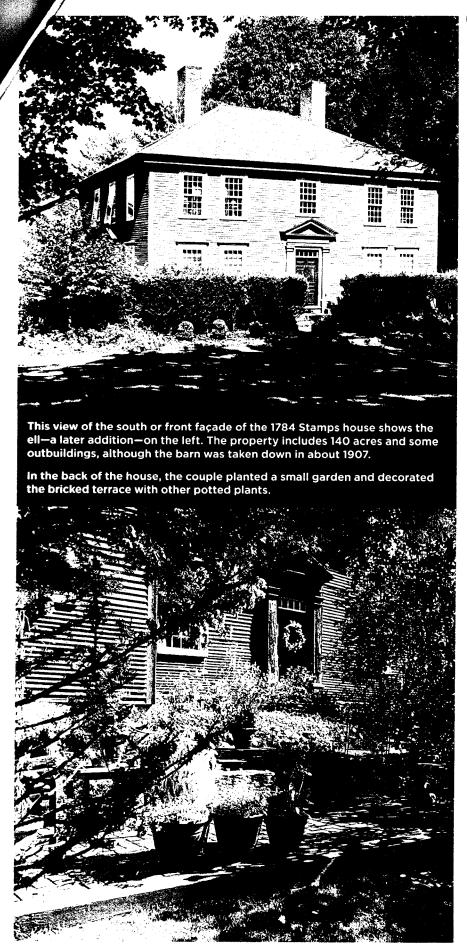


An 1835 portrait of Isaac Franklin, a relative and namesake (Bob's full name is Robert Franklin Stamps Jr.), hangs in the living room or northwest room. It is one of numerous pieces Bob has acquired over the decades to remind him of his deep Tennessee roots. Below the portrait is a maple 18th-Century New Hampshire blanket chest with its original surface. Previous owners commissioned the colorful mural.

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IN RELOCATING TO NEW HAMPSHIRE, BOB AND TERRY STAMPS VENTURED INTO UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY, PURCHASING NOT JUST A HOME BUT A LEGEND IN THE FORM OF THE FAMED OCEAN-BORN MARY HOUSE.

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CEAN-BORN
Mary still walks
these halls though
her worldly body
lies under that
heavy hearthstone,"
you might have heard Louis "Gussie"
Roy cajole local sightseers at the start
of the 20th Century. "For only a
quarter, you can see her house and
her possessions—and you might even
catch a glimpse of her eternal soul
lingering at her spinning wheel!"

Roy spun such stories inspired by an apparition that was more likely of a great fortune rather than Mary herself—the mortal Mary never set foot in the home he promoted. Her spirit, however, saved what was the 1784 Robert Wallace mansion from worldly decay and gave its current residents, Bob and Terry Stamps, a unique imprimatur for their Henniker, New Hampshire, home—it will forever be the Ocean-Born Mary House.

What an impressive house it is—then and now one of the grandest in town. Although nestled almost invisibly among the rural woods, once you approach the home you cannot help but be impressed. A pair of symmetrical chimneys, the full-hipped roof, and subdued ornamentation mark it as an early approach to what would become Federal style.

As originally constructed, the house had four large rooms plus a through hallway on the first floor and a front landing with four or five bedrooms on the second (sources vary on the date of room partitioning). The center staircase is finished with raised paneling. The lofty nine-foot ceiling height is explained in local lore that Robert Wallace wanted his six-foot-five-inch-tall brother William to feel comfortable when visiting.

The house might have been patterned after the 1766 Henry Sherburne II mansion in Portsmouth. Wallace likely saw it on his many trips to the colonial seaport as a member of the state legislature as well as on personal business. The homes share a similar five-bay façade, but Wallace simplified his design by eliminating the dormers, quoins, and broken pediment at the doorway of the earlier

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home. To get everything right, Wallace even hired Portsmouth house wrights to erect his mansion.

After Wallace passed away, the rural locale doomed the home—it was too far from civilized society for its grandeur—and a series of country owners let the grand manse revert to the wild. It was abandoned and falling down when Roy turned it into an attraction. His work on building a legend proved enduring.

The Stamps still call the mansion the "Ocean-Born Mary house," but inside it's all their own. Their collection of early American antiques fits the formality of the house perfectly—not the high style you would expect in Philadelphia but still a notch above the vernacular of rural New Hampshire. Even so, the collection remains highly personal. For example, Bob's early clocks—all working—fill nearly every room with ticks, tocks, and chimes.

LEFT COASTERS

Bob is a native of Nashville, Tennessee, and Terry of San Francisco, California. Terry relocated to Bob's neck of the woods when she enrolled in George Peabody College for Teachers (now part of Vanderbilt University). They met through one of his Vanderbilt fraternity brothers, an attorney at the firm where Terry held a summer job, and they married in 1978.

The couple settled in Silicon Valley, where Bob started working for Hewlett-Packard and Terry worked for an engineering consulting firm before also joining Hewlett-Packard. They both worked for H-P in the computer business for twenty-five years, careers quite in contrast to their deep passions—history and antiques.

Terry didn't grow up with antiques, though Bob did.

"However," Terry explained,
"we both had always been interested
in history and old things, so when
we got married it was a natural next
step to start collecting and furnishing our house with antiques. We
started with an interest in Victorian
pieces, but after a few years began to
appreciate the simpler lines of early
American furniture."

That change of taste redirected their course of pursuit and led to the impressive collection of colonial and early American decorative arts that graces their home today.

In California, they lived in a contemporary home furnished with pieces from the past, many of which they no longer own. "Since starting out," Terry explained, "other than family items, we have sold things as our tastes changed or we moved into a different house with different needs. But as we learn the stories of previous owners, pieces become more interesting and more compelling to keep."

Bob and Terry retired in 2003



The Stamps rarely use the original main entry to the front hall. The door's broad hinges are original. Gawen Brown of Boston made the tall clock c. 1760. Among Bob's collection of clocks are an 18th-Century English bracket model to the right of the front door, made by H. Dove. Thomas Washbourne of London made the bracket clock on the table in the foreground in the 1750s. A 19th-Century Chinese platter hangs on the wall. The original rear door of the through hallway was removed by the previous owners when they expanded the living room. Bob and Terry hired artist Lorraine Casinghino to create the period-style stenciling.



The dining room's interior window shutters are original, a feature used for controlling room temperature. An 1820s Boston mahogany extension table sits in front of the fireplace, surrounded by 18th-Century bow-back Windsor chairs. The table is set with imported China ceramics and pewter chargers. The brass candlesticks are 18th-Century English. The wrought-iron lighting fixture above is a New England piece from the 18th Century. The unidentified portrait, oil on wood from about 1800, came from Massachusetts. On the mantel is a pillar-and-scroll clock made by Eli Terry in 1815.

An 1820 cherry corner is filled with family china and crystal.

but began their long-distance search for the perfect property several years earlier and with the broad canvas of the entire New England region in the offing. As Bob explained, "We knew we wanted to live in an old house, one that was not too modified except for creature comforts. But we didn't have a destination; we just wanted an old home. So we just started wandering in our search."

The Henniker house, which met all their criteria, came up sooner than expected. They bought it in 2000 and immediately began long-distance restoration. All of the restoration, renovation, painting, and repair work was done by Brian Barrett, a local general contractor who quickly became a close friend and who looked after the house while the Stamps remained in California.

OCEAN-BORN LINK

Although there was more smoke than truth to the tale Roy told in hopes of luring tourist dollars, Ocean-Born Mary was real, she spent her final years in Henniker, and the Wallace home did belong in her family, specifically to an estranged son. Roy's story was good enough for later writers to

further embellish and lure still more of the curious to inquire at the Stamps' door.

In the most common

telling, the dread Welsh pirate Black Bart captured the English merchantman Wolf bound from Londonderry to Boston loaded with Scottish immigrants on July 28, 1720 (new style). Other sources call the ship the Essex. In most versions, Bart threatened crew and passengers alike with

watery death until he heard the first

cry of a newborn babe.

His curiosity piqued, Bart asked whether the newborn was a boy or girl. When advised the latter, he told the parents, James and Elizabeth Wilson, that if they named the girl after the pirate's own mother, Mary, he would spare the lives of all. The parents agreed, and Bart christened the girl with seawater. As a further kindness, he gave Mary's parents a bolt of green silk brocade for her

wedding gown, then Bart's black flag disappeared over the horizon.

A half-century later, people still stop by occasionally to ask if the owners conduct tours of the house.

The story has a few problems. Pirate Bartholomew Roberts was indeed in the North Atlantic in July 1720, but he was otherwise engaged with a fleet of six French ships. Besides, an immigrant ship was an unlikely target for pirates—it held no great treasure—nor did pirates seek to kill crews. They depended on them for public relations, to spread the rumors so vile that the pirates' very appearance would scare seaman and allow them to take treasure without a fight. Moreover, most pirate ships were uniquely democratic, and the decision to kill or plunder was not the captain's alone.

Later tellings of the Ocean-Born Mary story peg another famed pirate,

Don Pedro, as the culprit, but Pedro was a bit young for Mary, having been born in the 19th Century.

> Other than legend, no evidence links pirates and Ocean-Born Mary, although her mother must have been full of spunk to

attempt an ocean crossing in 1720 while eight months pregnant.

Whatever happened at sea, newborn Mary and her family landed in Boston, and her father became ill sources speculate smallpox, which was rampant in Boston in 1720—and died the following January. Mary and her mother assumed his land grant in Londonderry, New Hampshire.

Mary's mother, Elizabeth, remarried and lived out her life in Londonderry, dying in 1732.

When daughter Mary married James Wallace in 1742, she wore a gown made of the pirate's brocaded silk, one piece of which is in the Daughters of the American Revolu-

The Vermont corner cupboard in the southeast corner of the living room dates to the late 18th Century. Above the cooking hearth is an 1830 mantel clock made by Chauncey Jerome, flanked by antique pewter chargers and a lidded church flagon. Two 18th-Century slat-back armchairs grace the hearth. In the foreground is a two-drawer writing desk, a family piece from Tennessee, and an 18th-Century wrought-iron holder for rush and candles.

