OLD MARYLAND FARM HOUSES

(Continued from page 99.)
and the mischief is done. So if you must
design your own house without professional
taid, keep away from the gambrel
roof!
But, turn back to Figure 3-A
again. The kitchen wing of the old
building is utterly clumsy; so we
de-vise it. The old front porch
is fairly good, but too low; we
raise the cornice to line up with the
main house cornice, and cut off the
gingerbread brackets from the
posts. That reduces the center
dormer somewhat, but makes no
other change.
The plan is quite simple, since the gam-
rel roof gives us ample bedroom space in
the second story, and we therefore don’t
need any first-floor bedrooms. A
central hall, with rooms on either
side—that’s the plan of both floors,
as shown in Figs. 3-C, 3-D. Still, if
one more bedroom is needed, it’s
very easy to run a living room, bal-
ancing the kitchen, on the right;
this gives a first-floor bedroom,
with storeroom or sewing room
above.

Figure 4-A is another type of
the gambrel, an old house on the
Choptank River, in Talbot Coun-
ty. Here we have something dif-
fent: an interesting, L-shaped
wing, at one end of the porch.
The scheme is good, but the pro-
portions are wrong; the wing is
too high and narrow for the rest
of the building. So we widen this
wing, and work out a few other little
changes in the exterior; then we go at the
plan. (Figs. 4-B, 4-C, 4-D.)
A rather more elaborate layout, this; liv-
ing room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, den
and toilet, on the first floor; four bedrooms
and bath on the second. The den may be
used as a servant’s bedroom with bath, if
desired; and various other changes may
be made.

Finally, we come to Figure 5-A:
“Otwell,” the old Goldsborough
mansion lying between Tripp’s and
Goldsborough Creeks, in Talbot
County—wonderfully picturesque,
with its jumble of additions; but a
trifle ill-proportioned. Figs. 5-B, 5-C

FIGURE 1-C: FLOOR PLAN OF OLD MARYLAND COTTAGE: SEE PAGES 94 AND 95 FOR EXTERIOR VIEW.

FIGURE 1-D: SECOND FLOOR PLAN: SEE PAGE 95.

FIGURE 2, C AND D: FOR EXTERIOR SEE PAGES 92 AND 93.
IN almost every part of America there are old farmhouses to be found, the property of people whom the hardships of the old country life have worn out or of people with the old frontier spirit still in their blood who have moved on to form new civilizations. In Maine, indeed all through New England, in Pennsylvania, in New Jersey, in parts of New York State, as well as in the South, are these beautiful, simple old houses—well planned, well constructed, with good outline, picturesque windows, and chimneys that do not smoke. Some of the most charming homes today are reconstructed farmhouses of the East.

The great advantage in remaking a house, instead of building it, is that there are very few chances to make mistakes yourself, and you have every opportunity of obliterating the mistakes of the original owner and builder. You start with a good foundation, with good walls, houses built by people who needed comfort, who had no joy except in their own homes, who had to have an outlook over the hills or the meadows, and warmth for their bodies and sunlight for their spirits. If there are difficulties in these old houses it is mainly in the size of the rooms and the height of the ceiling; the former, however, can easily be adjusted, for these old houses are so well built that the changing of a partition does not mean any direct injury to the structure. As for the low ceilings, they help to keep rooms warm and cozy and if the plaster is taken off and the beautiful old beams revealed, cleaned and oiled, a certain
beauty of color and structure is given that few modern houses possess.

As a rule, in the most moderate-sized old farm and village houses there were too many rooms, the space was broken up. Either there was a vogue for many-roomed houses or else there were large families; also the old patriarchal feeling still existed and married sons and daughters came home to live with mother and father. But the tearing out of partitions, the bringing of rooms together even where the floors are on different levels often induces unusual outline and a certain picturesque quality that it is impossible to secure in the modern new house.

The Craftsman has frequently recommended the careful study of old houses to those of its subscribers who have written asking for advice about building. Also in our architectural rooms, we have more than once undertaken the remodeling of old houses, with results both satisfactory and attractive. It is not so difficult to add modern improvements where a complete renovation of a house is necessary. And quite wisely today the metropolitan people who are moving out to the country take with them the comforts which have seemed luxurious in rural life,—electric lights, and telephones and fireplace furnaces and model kitchen equipment.

Mr. Brinckloe’s article on the old Maryland farmhouses which precedes this is a very interesting study in the reconstruction of old-time houses. He seems to have the ability to leave the old beauty and add the new comfort, making a combination in architecture which does away with all the ordinary objections to rural life. It was women who suffered most in the old way of living in the country, and today the architect who designs new houses or who makes over the old, must study the convenience of the mother and the housewife if he is to prove a success and if the movement toward the country is to progress as swiftly as we hope and as it should for the benefit of the nation. And judging from the results that have already been accomplished in this direction, there is every reason to believe that the future will see more and more beauty and comfort in our rural homes, both old and new.