



Pierson has scoured the surrounding countryside for antique wood, such as this hand-carved stair railing. In the Elliotts' old sitting room, below, Pierson prepares copies of his family's history for relatives and contributors to the restoration fund.



Even at that, the two centuries have taken their toll, and the restoration is a challenging project. The original logs were covered with weatherboards, which were stripped away at the outset. Then Pierson discovered that three of the huge wall logs were rotted beyond repair. Though the red pine they were fashioned from is now extinct, Pierson scouted the area and found an old barn that did have some replacements.

The front porch had to be dismantled.

Added long after Daniel's death, it was of lesser workmanship and the boards had deteriorated. Pierson found good material in another old house not far away and is rebuilding the porch now.

Another later addition to the cabin was a large back room, constructed of sills and frame. Not so sturdy as the original structure, it has slipped with time. Pierson plans to jack it up with hydraulic lifts, shore up the foundation and attach it firmly to the main building.

Also, the roof must be replaced. The original shingles are long gone and red painted tin now covers the building. Pierson plans to re-roof it, using materials much like those Daniel employed.

The project is more than any one man could handle, but Pierson says he has received abundant help from people throughout Chester and Lancaster counties. The Chester County Historical Society has taken a special interest, and a restoration fund has been established. The cabin and land have been deeded to the society by owner Betts Reid, and the society will maintain it once the restoration is complete.

More help has come from Clyde's brother, Glenn Pierson, also a retired Ohio public school vocational teacher. Glenn lives now in Mesa, Ariz., but has made three trips to the banks of Fishing Creek to help with the work.

The cabin's interior has become a combination home and workshop since Pierson started the project. In his station wagon he brings an assortment of tools on each trip—a power lathe, grindstone, drills, saws, as well as the usual hammers and chisels. The main downstairs room where Daniel and his family once gathered for meals and prayers is now cluttered with tools; the floor is covered with sawdust. There, Pierson can duplicate the hand-made items that old Daniel used in the original. The job is done faster, but scarcely neater.

The workshop is also a book bindery, where Pierson is assembling copies of a family history. The 200-page, soft-bound volume, started by a Nebraska uncle years ago and completed by Pierson, is given to relatives and to contributors to the restoration fund. It contains the story of the original homestead and the tragic end of Daniel Elliott and traces the family's migration over miles and years to the present. It is the product of years of research and genealogical investigation.

Living is spartan in the log cabin. One small downstairs room is a simply furnished bedroom where Clyde lies awake far

into the night "turning over in my head just how I'm going to work things out on the house." In the cold months, the only bedroom heat is an electric blanket.

The third downstairs room has become a small kitchen, equipped with an ancient refrigerator and a one-eyed hotplate where Clyde prepares his simple meals. Once troubled with an ulcer, he has found that his constitution has improved markedly since he threw himself into the project.

And sanitary facilities? An outhouse? "No," says Pierson, "a honeysuckle house down in the woods near the creek. And in the summer, it's a mighty fragrant, pleasant place to be."

Pierson won't venture to guess how long the project will take at today's leisurely pace—years certainly. But he seems in no hurry to finish. There is too much to admire, too much history to think about as each board and each hand-forged nail are put in place. And there is the feeling that the Elliott ancestors are watching everything he does.

"When I finished putting in a new window sill," Clyde recalls, "I stepped back and said, 'Elizabeth, does that suit you?' Well, of course she didn't answer, but I get the idea she was satisfied with the work."

Nobody knows where Daniel Elliott was buried after his untimely death; surely nearby. But if his ghost is walking the woods and fields and creek banks around the homeplace, he is no doubt pleased that this modern day craftsman has taken up the work.

When the job is done, the Elliott House will certainly become a major historical site. Busy new I-77 will pass a mere 300 yards from the house, which will be clearly visible to travelers on that major artery between Columbia and Charlotte. Easy access by way of S. C. Highway 9 near Richburg will bring visitors in droves (many already come on weekends just for a quick look). The travelers will no doubt marvel at the handiwork of Daniel Elliott, that patriot of the American Revolution who started it all.

But if Daniel were here, he would probably insist on giving great-great-great-grandson Clyde Pierson the credit for bringing a forgotten dream back to life. The two of them have made a pretty good team.

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