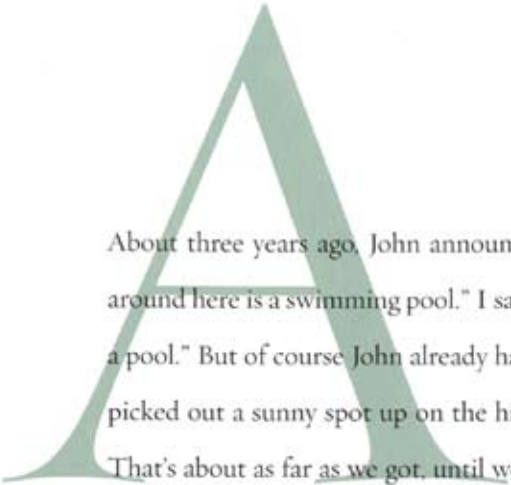


THE POOL HOUSE

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About three years ago, John announced, "What we really need around here is a swimming pool." I said, "There's no place to put a pool." But of course John already had that figured out. He had picked out a sunny spot up on the hill just beyond the orchard. That's about as far as we got, until we were standing in a stone-cutter's lot in the south of France. John was poking around, looking for items for our garden shop, Treillage, when I suddenly heard him shout, "I've found the swimming pool!" I came over to his side, and stared down at these huge blocks of limestone, suitable for a Parisian *bassin*. John thought they would make the perfect coping for our pool, so that was that.

Let me just say I don't advise shipping a warm French stone to cold Connecticut. It's not as hardy as we would like. But it does look beautiful.

Once we had a pool, we needed a pool house. (A fatal progression with which we're all too familiar—one project begets another.) Clearly, the pool was too far away to rely on the main house. So now we were faced with the delightful question—what should we build? I had no interest in the typical white-latticed

pool house. While we were in France, I had picked up a book on 18th-century garden follies and one picture caught my eye. It showed a brick building with a porch, and the porch columns were made out of tree trunks. That was the genesis of the idea, and then it grew from there. The village in Connecticut where we live is full of wonderful Greek Revival architecture. Why not erect our own little Greek temple, and make it out of tree trunks?

I talked to a friend who is an architect and asked him to give me the mathematical formula for a classic Greek temple—what were the proportions of height, width and depth? Then I took these figures and the book and went to see our local carpenter, Gerald McMahon. I sketched out a design on a napkin and he took it from there and did an amazing job. It's not easy to find 10 trees that could work as columns with straight trunks of about the same height and width. But Gerald did. He located an old

OPPOSITE: The idea for the rusticated temple pool house came from a book I found on 18th-century garden follies, and it seemed appropriate since our town is famous for Greek Revival architecture. One side of the pool is lined with underwater steps—the perfect place to cool off on a hot summer day. John and I will often get in with the dogs and read the paper. We shipped the eight-foot-wide bamboo umbrellas home from India.

