

## PRESIDENT'S HOUSE ON CARR'S HILL



*Left: The center hall mantelpiece, as restored in 1985, has Doric details. Above: Diagonal grain in some first-story floorboards is from the use of quarter-sawn timber, a technique where the log is cut into four quarter logs first so that the individual cuts between boards may be made almost radially. The technique, which creates the added layer of grain, especially in quarter-sawn oak, was popular around 1900 and is most characteristic of that era.*

The hall has a number of finishes and details found throughout the first story, sometimes with minor variations from room to room. The floor is oak with a light-toned natural finish and some of the diagonal graining produced by quarter-sawn timber. The walls and ceiling, though composed of flat plaster, meet at a multi-stage decorative plaster cornice. The baseboard has a cap with either a three-quarter-round profile or a cyma recta profile, depending upon the room. The door casings are mitered at the corners and have backbands. Nearly all woodwork, whether baseboard or door or window casings, has a very thin strip of scotia molding where it meets the plaster. The doors to the larger rooms are recessed in paneled reveals. The panels were installed when the door openings were reduced in size in the process of removing the original pocket doors. The openings to the main rooms are about four-feet six-inches in width, although the original drawings call for them to be wider, in most cases, six-feet wide, to accommodate large pocket doors. As detailed in the McKim, Mead & White drawings, all but one of the openings had a single pocket door that rolled off to one side, while the remaining opening, from the living room to the dining room, had a pair with a pocket to each side. The pocket doors were replaced by the pairs of side-hinged doors by 1959. A set of drawings produced at that time show the openings at their current dimensions, with swinging doors. These replacement doors have since been removed from all but the dining-room openings and are stored in the attic of the house, above the portico.