

Shaker Architecture

Herbert Schiffer

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Herbert Schiffer : Shaker Architecture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shaker Architecture:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Careless Editing By W. Foley 95% of the material contained in this book including text, photographs, and drawings, are a lift of materials obtainable free on the web from the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey (HABS), which if done well is not a bad thing in itself, but in this case the lift is done carelessly and is haphazard. Drawings, for example, were lifted without the title blocks which contain valuable information that the book's author neglected to include in the lift, and drawing selection relative to any one building is haphazard. If, for example, it is important to show building elevations, then it is important to show all elevations. If floor plans are important, it should include plans for all of a building's floors. It appears that the author selected illustrations with the purpose of filling space rather than any thoughtful purpose. In at least one case, the author included a photograph of a space purported to be in the meeting house at Mt. Lebanon which is not. In this case

he duplicated a HABS error, but if he had thought about the space he would have known the photo was not correct. There are other errors and omissions to be sure, but those indicated in the foregoing illustrate that either the author didn't have knowledge of the subject - Shaker Building - or didn't have the time to lift his materials with some thought behind the lift. Finally, much of the beauty of Shaker buildings is in the color the Believers used in the painting of the buildings and their interiors. Except for the covers, all photographs are black and white. This book would have benefited by the author's use of some of his own color photos.

Each of the Shaker communities is represented with very interesting photographs of the buildings that made up their world. The Shakers expressed imagination through their environment, and the details of architecture became their tangible art, while they achieved enduring beauty through the functionalism and simplicity of their design.