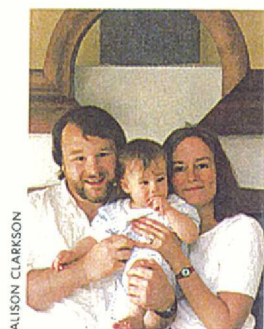


NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

MADISON, CONNECTICUT



Duo, Will and Liz Dickinson

DUO DICKINSON WROTE the book on the subject (his 1984 opus, *The Small House*, sings the praises of undersized dwellings). Now, he is showing us that small houses can expand—without becoming grandiose or sacrificing compact virtues. Built in

1984, this house was, he says, “a bit of a laboratory”: an 1,100-square-foot three-roomer that, despite its rural charm, was laid out like a condo. But when Duo’s wife, Liz, 35, got pregnant, the architect had less than nine months to find a way to add a child’s bedroom, bath and nanny’s quarters to the building. The addition he came up with celebrates values, not volume. Determined to keep the roofline low, Duo, 35, sacrificed wall space (meaning skylights, not picture windows, would have to bring the sun in). And he tapered the foundation to keep it from

impinging on the roots of a beloved, 200-year-old oak tree. The place was finished just three weeks before Liz gave birth to Will. Renovation, jokes the architect’s wife, “was less painful than childbirth, but definitely more traumatic.” Now mother—and house—are doing well.

—Fred A. Bernstein



“We had to turn our three-roomer into June Cleaver’s starter home—and we didn’t have a lot of time”

RACING NATURE, Duo Dickinson enlarged the house, while Liz readied her own addition. (Soon after learning his wife was pregnant, Duo drew plans on a dolly, below.) The finished house (built over a floodplain) is still smallish (less than 2,000 square feet), but big on charm. The entrance bridge (bottom) “has railings at adult, child and toddler heights,” says Duo. *See Resources*

