



Raising a Building by Hand . . . with Equipment from the Past

One cold winter day I got a call from Bill, a gentleman we did numerous jobs in the past for.

He said “Jeremy, I have a unique situation.” He bought a brick fraternity house and was going to change it into condos.

Due to its location overlooking the beautiful river on a hillside and close to the downtown area he had a challenge for me. Bill has been to my shop several times and has always admired the older structural equipment we have around on display. I'm a first generation mover but I love collecting part of such a beautiful history.

The city required him to remove the exterior walls to enable him to put parking under the structure. Because of the historical



location and the admiring of the old equipment; Bill put a challenge to me. The structure only needed to free the walls so permanent steel and posts could be installed to hold the structure up permanently.

He wanted us to raise this massive structure by hand. I thought at first; how hard could that be. We were only raising a small amount. Nothing to it I thought.

So we cut holes for our needles and because of the head height required, we had to use 4 x 4 x 1/4" tubing and put beams inside and out. Only using old technology became a great challenge one day when we had to dig the outside cribs in. With the help of an older back hoe this job was dugout in hours instead of days.



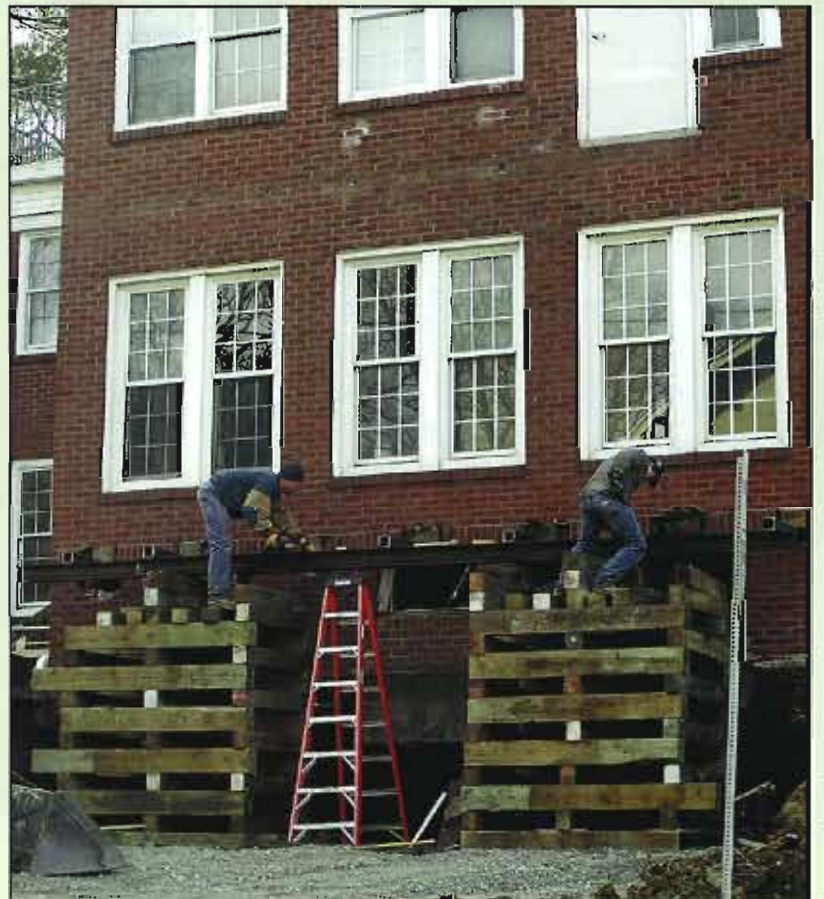




We then proceeded with building 4 x 6 cribs inside and outside on the wall sections.

We then placed two screw jacks in each crib so eight screw jacks on a 20' section of brick wall. My ego may have failed me. I had no idea how tough and hard going this way was. It gives me great respect for all the movers of the past that made structural moving what it is today.

I believed we were going to turn these things and be done in no time. After pulling on our 6' bars 1/8 of a turn, then working the next jack 1/8 turn, we finally achieved a cracking point. It makes me appreciate the hydraulics and the state of the art equipment we are blessed to have today.





We then removed all the walls by hand and the footings we dug. Then the cement was poured, posts and beams followed. We then repeated the process on the other walls.

This was a valuable lesson of how blessed we are today and my guys are in love with concept of painting the jacks and leaving them for looks.

The idea of bringing the past to the present seemed like such an easy task, but it turned out to be a difficult challenge.

Jeremy Patterson
Jeremy Patterson House Moving
1000 North 12th Avenue
Washington, IA 52353
(319) 653-2282

