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THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY

NINE REPORTS PREPARED FOR THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY COMMITTEE

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THE SCHOOLS OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

LEONARD P. AYRES, Ph.D., Director, Division of Education, Russell Sage Foundation.

II

RECREATION IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

LEE F. HANMER, Director, and CLARENCE ARTHUR PERRY, Associate Director, Department of Recreation, Russell Sage Foundation.

III

THE CHARITIES OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

FRANCIS H. MCLEAN, General Secretary, American Association of Societies for Organizing Charity.

IV

INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

LOUISE C. ODENCRANTZ, Committee on Women's Work, and ZENAS L. POTTER, Department of Surveys and Exhibits, Russell Sage Foundation.

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D. O. DECKER, Department of Surveys and Exhibits, Russell Sage Foundation.

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FRANZ SCHNEIDER, JR., Sanitarian, Department of Surveys and Exhibits, Russell Sage Foundation.

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HOUSING IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS.

JOHN IHLDER, Field Secretary, National Housing Association.



HOUSING IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

A STUDY BY THE NATIONAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

JOHN IHLDER



THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY
HOUSING SECTION

SPRINGFIELD SURVEY COMMITTEE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
November, 1914

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FOREWORD

This does not purport to be a detailed study of housing conditions in Springfield. As the time devoted to the investigation was very brief, it was necessary to accept without verification the opinions of local people on a number of points; such as, for instance, that there is considerable room overcrowding in the city. I was able, however, to get a clear idea of housing conditions in general and of the methods now used to keep these up to standard.

I am indebted to many with whom I came in contact during my inquiry. Among these I would especially mention Dr. George Thomas Palmer, former health officer; Paul L. Skoog, acting superintendent of the health department; Dr. B. B. Griffith, the present health officer; Commissioner H. B. Davidson of the department of safety; and Edgar Offlighter, the building inspector. All of these gentlemen showed not only a knowledge of present conditions but a constructive desire to improve conditions in the future.

In Springfield, as in many of the other cities I have visited, the public officials would do more if they had constant and intelligent support from an organized body of citizens. If Springfield is to have and to keep good housing it is recommended that a housing committee, a housing association, or some organization with similar purpose be formed.



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UNAPPROVED

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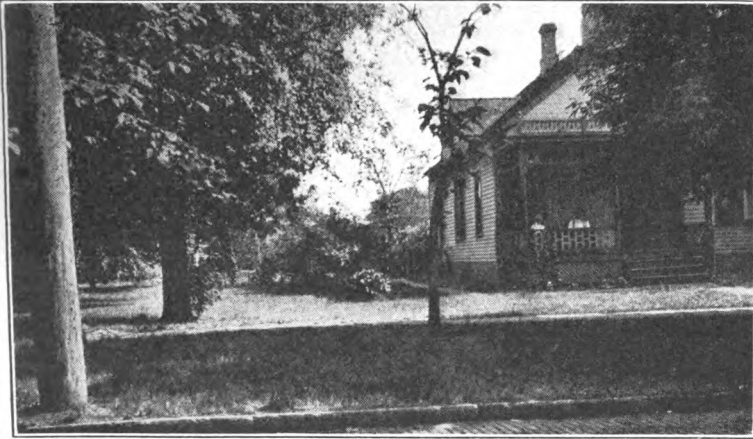
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Springfield is unusually fortunate in that it is not hemmed on any side by natural barriers. The handicaps to expansion posed by nature, of which the people of other cities have reason to complain, are absent. There are the wide prairies of central Illinois for additions to the city's 55,000 to 60,000 people spread out upon, and until recently the city has freely taken advantage of this great opportunity. One has only to compare



SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES WITH LAWNS

The single family house with a good-sized yard is the rule in Springfield

it with less fortunate, congested cities in the East to understand how great this advantage is.

The older eastern cities were hampered, however, not only by the natural barriers presented by hills or rivers or estuaries, but even more by traditions brought from crowded old-world countries in days before we recognized the value of sunlight and fresh air. Now they are being forced to cure ills that Springfield

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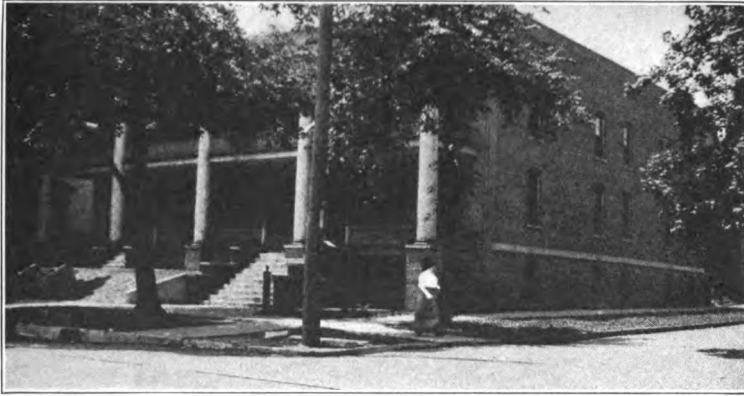
THE MULTIPLE DWELLING APPEARING IN SPRINGFIELD
Many owe much of their attractiveness to their neighbors

need never suffer. The ignorance of sanitary laws, which is the more serious handicap, no longer exists. If the future of Springfield has land overcrowding and tall tenements it will be due entirely to the indifference or inertia of its people. Even the excuse sometimes given, that our people prefer to live in barracks or in filth and squatters' rights, is an excuse that has very slight basis in fact—can not be used in Springfield, which is in unusual degree a city of the native-born.

SPRINGFIELD'S FIRST DUTY TO ITSELF

Springfield's first duty to itself is to keep what it has—single family houses surrounded by good yards and lawns. It is such houses as these that form the basis of good homes and of wholesome, normal family life. Their importance increases each year as the population of the United States becomes more and more urban. When the cities were few and the population small we could be relatively less concerned for the fate of the people; we could accept with comparatively less misgiving the old saying that three generations measure the average life of a city family. But now the nation goes as the city goes. Death

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THE MULTIPLE DWELLING APPEARING IN SPRINGFIELD
Some fill nearly all the lot

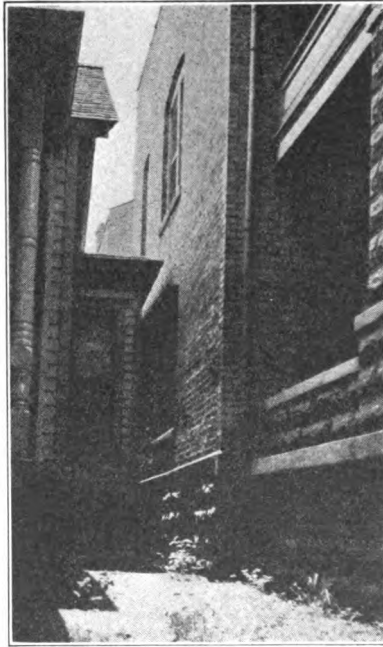
disease, immorality, inefficiency, the disintegration of family life in the cities are of more direct concern to the whole nation.

My inspections have shown that in every part of Springfield the single family house with a good sized yard or lawn is the rule. Even in the newest sections and in those real estate developments designed for wage-earners this rule holds good; the houses and cottages are usually more than 15 feet apart, which should be the minimum in order that every room may have adequate light and air, that the danger of flames leaping from one house to another may be lessened, and that each family may enjoy a privacy which is impossible when a neighbor's windows directly overlook their own. This, I repeat, is the great advantage that Springfield has over many other cities of its size and larger. It is an advantage that once thrown away can never be regained.

MENACE OF THE MULTIPLE DWELLING

But there are indications that Springfield is in danger of throwing away this great advantage. In several parts of town there have already appeared multiple dwellings—apartment houses, flats, or tenement houses. The differences in title depend chiefly on differences in rent charged, for fundamentally

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A HOME UNDER THE SHADOW OF A MULTIPLE DWELLING

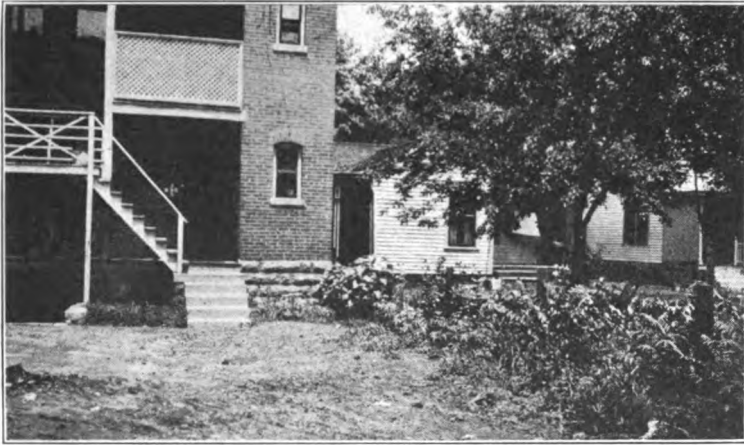
In this picture taken in Springfield the new apartment house stands within a few inches of the dwelling next door. Light and air in the apartment house thus depend upon the neighbor not following this example

they are all the same. These multiple dwellings are of two sorts, those made by converting old residences to their present use and those erected as multiple dwellings.

There are two especial dangers in the converted dwelling, particularly in the poorer parts of town. One is that the old rooms will be subdivided so that some of the new rooms do not open to the outer air. The other is that water and toilet facilities, even if installed, will be insufficient in number, will be semi-public in location, or will be placed in out-of-the-way corners where they are inaccessible or are dark and unventilated. Usually the converted house has around it sufficient open space.

The especial danger in the multiple dwelling erected as an apartment or tenement house is that it will overfill its lot, de-

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THE MULTIPLE DWELLING AND THE HOME

Contrast the bare desert back of the multiple dwelling with the pleasant tree-shaded lawn back of the home

pending upon adjoining unoccupied space for light and ventilation in some of its rooms. The owner in these cases relies upon his neighbor not to follow his example and build close up to the dividing line. This is a poor dependence, however, for as his building has depreciated residence values about it, his neighbors often feel that in self defence they must erect similar buildings, and in so doing they close his side windows, shutting out both light and air. Sometimes, of course, new apartment and tenement houses, even in the better districts of cities, have dark interior rooms, unless these are prohibited by law.

But it is not alone because of its menace to health that the multiple dwelling is a thing to be discouraged. We wish our cities to be cities of families so that they may perpetuate themselves; and families presuppose the existence of children. The multiple dwelling is not built for children. Even where, as in some of the old-world cities, tenements have been built with play courts and kindergartens and assembly rooms, they are at best only a poor substitute for the individual family house with its own yard.

If one would see clearly the difference between a multiple

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dwelling and a single family house in terms of home, let him look at the apartment building in the picture shown on the preceding page and the cottage next door which it overshadows and damages. Then, to make the lesson still clearer, let him go around to the back and contrast the bare desert behind the multiple dwelling with the grassy, tree-shaded lawn next door. The people who live in the big structure certainly can not have the feeling for it that those who live in the cottage have for their home. They are too far from the ground ever to strike roots down into the soil. If such dwellings multiply until Springfield becomes what one of our cities is, a mere group of barracks, it will mean a change for the worse in the whole social life of the community. Barrack dwellers are usually nomads to whom moving becomes a habit. To them the dwelling becomes more and more a mere temporary shelter. Their real life is lived outside, and for them the word home loses much of its significance.

Yet there is a place for a small number of multiple dwellings in such a city as Springfield. For married couples without children, and for the unattached, they offer certain advantages without too great disadvantages—provided they are properly built. The city should see to it that these structures are safe and sanitary. It should require protection against fire and adequate provision for light, air, and sanitation. If it does this it will greatly discourage the building of multiple dwellings, for adequate provision of this kind will add considerably to the cost.

I have dwelt at this length upon the menace of the multiple dwelling because once this menace has become a fact it is impossible ever to undo the damage, and because so few persons can foresee consequences until the damage is done. Most of us are prone to judge the multiple dwelling by a few scattered pioneers which establish themselves among the open spaces of a residence district and owe much of their attractiveness to the fact that they have neighbors of a different type. We must judge these barracks by what they will be when, having driven out the old dwellings, they line the streets in double ranks; for experience has shown that unless measures are taken to check them they will drive out the single family house.

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PRIVIES AND WATER SUPPLY

But if Springfield is to remain what it now is, a city of homes, it must take other measures than merely discouraging barracks construction. We have reached a degree of civilization in America where an abundant and convenient supply of pure water and convenient, sanitary water-closets inside the houses, are considered necessities for any progressive community. Springfield's ideals are up to standard. It has done a great deal to bring these twin necessities to the homes of its people, among other potent efforts being the sanitary survey by Dr. George Thomas Palmer several years ago; but it nevertheless has not done enough to actually get the results aimed at. Both water-main and sewer construction lag behind house building. Just how far behind, has been learned through the recent investigation made by the Springfield health department as a part of the Public Health division of the Springfield Survey. In his report, Franz Schneider, Jr., who directed the Public Health Survey, shows 7530 surface wells and 7431 privy vaults still persisting in the city.

There are admitted difficulties in the way of more rapid water and sewer extension, but in the case of a city as in that of an individual, to give up because of difficulties argues weakness of character. In some of the new subdivisions to the southwest a way has been found to extend mains and sewers, and if Springfield so determines there will be found ways to extend them in other districts. Springfield knows, as other American cities do, that the time is not far distant when to have a privy vault or a dry sewer within the built-up area will be considered an admission that the city in question has not quite outgrown barbarism.

With sewer and water-main extension should go house connection. Springfield has many sewered streets where only a fraction of the houses are connected; it has streets with water mains where, as already indicated, the people still drink water from wells. It has made but a half-hearted effort to improve this condition, requiring only that new houses or houses undergoing fairly extensive improvements shall be connected. Under

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such a policy it may be a generation before some of the dwellings cease to be sources of danger to their neighborhoods. Incidentally, while requiring that all dwellings on streets containing sewers and water mains be connected within a reasonable time—say one year—Springfield should also forbid the erection of any multiple dwelling on a street which is without these facilities.

GARBAGE AND REFUSE

Springfield, like other progressive cities, will some day we believe establish a system of municipal garbage and refuse collection, gauged on the needs of the whole city. The present system, or lack of system, of collection by private companies or individuals is and must be unsatisfactory. The prime reason for garbage and refuse collection is that these wastes, if not collected, become nuisances and also contribute to the problems of public health. The prime motive of the private collector is to make money. Consequently he is apt to neglect those districts where the people are least able to pay for his services, where the quality of the garbage is poor, or where the task is unusually difficult. Yet these are the districts that most need thorough and regular collection. Our cities must be clean if they are to be wholesome. Waste of all kinds must be frequently and regularly removed or destroyed, and this will be done best, as pointed out also by D. O. Decker in the Municipal Administration division of the Springfield Survey, when undertaken at city expense. The main objection to this plan in Springfield is that the present limitation in the tax rate makes it difficult to find the money. This difficulty will need to be squarely faced when the whole question of an adequate city-wide garbage collection program, wisely raised by Mr. Decker, is taken up for solution.

LAND OVERCROWDING

I have said that Springfield is unusually fortunate in that as a rule its dwellings are surrounded by large open spaces, and that once thrown away this great advantage will be gone forever. Yet already there are a number of instances of land overcrowding. In the downtown district are, naturally, some of

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the worst. Examples there will be mentioned in detail later. But even in the good residence districts there are instances which warn the people of Springfield that the time for them to act is now. Such a house as one which is to be found on South Fifth Street should be impossible in a city with Springfield's space. Not only does it fill its lot to such an extent that only a narrow passageway is left at the rear, but even one of its basements has been converted into an apartment. In this Springfield has already produced an evil against which New York, Boston, and Chicago are now engaged in a desperate struggle.

Another instance of lot overcrowding is furnished by an apartment house on West Monroe Street. A stranger shown pictures of these buildings alone would imagine that Springfield was suffering from a land famine, for surely nothing less could excuse them. A similar impression would be produced by the picture of the other apartment house on West Monroe Street, shown before, which crowds its little neighbor so closely.

THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

As already suggested, there are strong arguments for a small number of apartment houses, provided they are properly built and kept. A considerable proportion of these apartment houses will appear in the downtown district on the minor business streets where there is a demand for stores on the ground floor but no business demand for space on the upper floors. It is impractical to require that buildings in such locations be either kept to one story in height or that their upper floors be kept vacant until they can be let for business purposes. It is practical, however, and it is essential, that if the upper stories be used as dwellings, the health and safety of their occupants be provided for. Above the store the building is an apartment house and should be made to conform to all the requirements as to light, ventilation, sanitation, and protection against fire that are necessary for other apartment houses. This is not the case at present in the downtown section of Springfield.

That part of Washington Street which lies between Seventh and Eighth Streets is illustrative. Here is a solid row of two- and three-story buildings. The ground floors are used for shops,

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the upper floors in many cases for dwellings. When the building is only two stories high the middle rooms of the apartments are usually lighted by skylights. These, however, do not furnish good ventilation, especially as they are difficult if not impossible to open. When the building is three stories high the middle rooms are lighted, if lighted at all, by shafts extending to the roof. These shafts are covered and so, of course, furnish little or no ventilation. Other illustrations are to be found in the



APARTMENTS ABOVE STORES

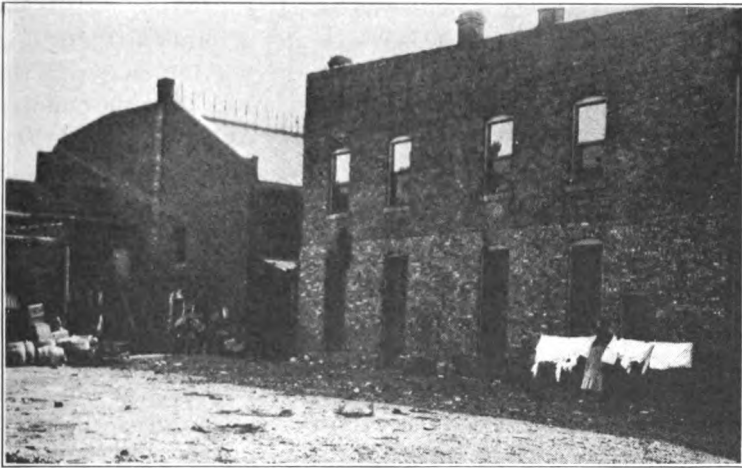
The floors above stores may well be used for apartments if properly built and maintained. The greatest danger is that they will contain dark, airless rooms

business district, among them being a large building on East Monroe Street, where the problem of dark rooms was not entirely solved. This building does not cover the whole lot; it has narrow light shafts, which provide a trifle of air and light for rooms that otherwise would have been dark.

The story of the Washington Street Mission building is indicative of what will be many times repeated in Springfield's future if the city does not enforce good housing standards. The

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builder, according to the story I was told, proposed to make a good hotel of it. Upon receiving assurances from the owner of the lot next door that he had no thought of increasing the height of his building for twenty years, the hotel man lighted and ventilated his middle rooms with windows overlooking the neighbor's roof. But the very next year the neighbor came into possession of a considerable amount of money and decided that the best use he could make of it would be to erect a three-



AN EXAMPLE OF HOW NOT TO BUILD

The nearer building stands so close to the neighboring building that it darkens the rear windows of the latter. The nearer structure is also built flush with the lot line allowing for no back stairway. The garbage barrels stand on the adjoining lot, and tenants above are credited with having adopted the simple expedient of throwing their garbage from the windows at the barrels

story building on his lot. So he closed up all the hotel man's middle windows with a solid brick wall. Naturally, the hotel man thought himself aggrieved; and the neighbor, on the other hand, thought there was no reason why he should give another man light and air when it became to his own interest to do otherwise.

To the outsider it seems that the chief blame lies with neither of these owners but with the city which permitted both of them

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to erect buildings that are mutually damaging and therefore a detriment to the whole community. The multiplication of such buildings means the deterioration and lessening in value of whole districts. If both of these buildings had conformed to good housing standards, that is, if each had provided for all its own needs upon its own lot, they would not have damaged each other, and the multiplication of similar buildings instead of depreciating values would have increased them, for each investor would be assured that his property could not be injured by buildings on neighboring lots.

Another building that promises to give trouble in the future is shown on the preceding page. It is there seen how closely the nearer building occupying the rear of the lot stands to the building on the front of the lot, darkening the rear windows of the latter. The picture does not show, however, that this rear building is built flush with the side lot line. For that reason, I was told, the owner could not put on a rear stairway, the neighboring owner apparently not being willing to give him assurances for the next twenty years. This neighbor does, however, permit the garbage barrels to stand on his land. As the tenants on the second floor have no way of reaching these barrels except by going down their front stairs and walking around the building, they are credited with having adopted the simple expedient of throwing their garbage from the windows at the barrels. Perhaps it is because women are notoriously bad shots that so much of the garbage lies scattered about on the ground.

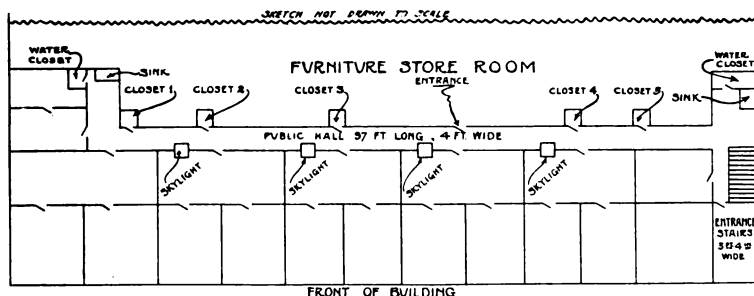
A FIRE HAZARD

But from the fire hazard point of view, perhaps the worst house of all those that I visited is found on North Seventh Street. Here is a long, deep building which last June sheltered four families having 10 children, one unattached woman and one unattached man. These families occupied a series of three-room second-floor apartments, stretching along the front of the building. The two apartments furthest from the stairway were vacant. The rough sketch on page 13 will give some idea of the arrangement. The two front rooms of each apartment get light and air from windows opening on the street. The rear

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room and the hall were until recently without any openings except doors. When Dr. Palmer was health officer he required the cutting in of skylights over the division wall between each rear room and the hall. This hall is less than 4 feet wide and is 97 feet long. It leads to a wooden stairway 3 feet 4 inches wide. This is the only means of egress for all these families, except, of course, that they may, if they choose, in case of fire jump from the windows to the pavement.

On the other side of the hallway are storage closets for the use of the tenants, one being nearly opposite the entrance door to each apartment. At the time of my visit these closets were used as follows: (1) contained a little rubbish, including



FLOOR PLAN OF A SPRINGFIELD TENEMENT

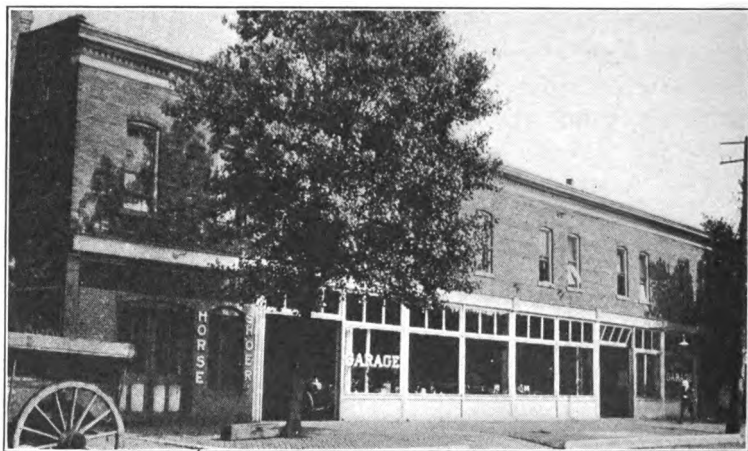
Rough sketch shows inadequate provision for health, comfort, or safe egress in case of fire

scraps of paper and an old broom (this was opposite a vacant apartment); (2) had a pile of clothes and similar articles; (3) was filled almost to the ceiling with crumpled waste paper; (4) contained coal and wood; and (5) had a garbage can for the use of all the tenants who chipped in to pay the private garbage company for emptying it, and *a pile of ashes dumped on the wooden floor*. Midway of the hall was an unlocked door opening to the rear of the building, which housed a great store room filled with new furniture still in its paper wrappings. In order that nothing might be lacking to increase the fire risk, the ground floor was occupied by a garage. This garage is possibly less objectionable, so far at least as sanitary surroundings

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are concerned, than the stable which preceded it—note the horse-shoer's sign in the picture—but it certainly does not lessen the fire danger to the tenants above.

There is one other point in this building that deserves notice; that is, lack of provision of adequate water supply and toilets. At either end of the long hall are two short branch halls, at the rear of which, in darkness which lends them their only privacy, are two water-closets and two sinks, the only conveniences for the eight apartments. Such a dwelling should be looked upon



A TWO-STORY COMBINATION

The apartments upstairs open upon a hallway 97 feet long which has only one means of egress

as discreditable to any progressive community. It is in some respects the worst tenement house I have ever seen.

SOME DARK APARTMENTS

Another bad tenement house is a big block on Washington Street. This building is very close to one on the corner and the space between is filled with a stairway and platforms which so darken some of the side windows that, although it was early on a June afternoon when I visited the place, I had to light matches in order to find the kitchen sink and the stove. Life certainly

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will not be a joy for the woman who keeps house there. But this was not all. Following the hallway a little further we found an apartment situated in the center of the building whose rooms had no opening whatever to the outer air. Whatever light and air they got came from a gloomy public hall.

This building, I was told, has been condemned by the city authorities several times on the ground that it is not a proper place for habitation. No one who ever went inside could maintain that the authorities were other than conservative in their action. But unfortunately condemnation in Springfield seems to be merely an expression of opinion. The building is still open and occupied. Happily the dark, interior apartment mentioned, like the two apartments furthest from the stairway in the house on North Seventh Street, was not tenanted. Pressure of population evidently is not yet so great in Springfield that unfortunates must take any available shelter. But the fact that such shelters are waiting until people are forced into them, shows clearly that we can not trust to a *laissez faire* policy. The city that would banish preventable sickness and immorality and juvenile delinquency, to mention no other social ills, must do away with such fostering dwellings as these and see to it that none like them take their place.

A HANDICAP TO VIRTUE

In this connection I would call attention for a moment to an apartment above a store on Washington Street. The apartment last June was occupied by Negroes. The toilet is in the hall, public and inadequate. The middle room, gloomy and ill ventilated, was occupied by two Negro men. The rear room, separated from the middle room by a folding screen, was occupied by a Negro girl. The water faucet is in the girl's room. It is clear that decency is heavily handicapped in such quarters. It is in the nature of an anti-climax to mention that the waste pipe under the faucet in the girl's room was not trapped. Whatever menace there may be to physical health is slight compared to the menace to morals in such housing conditions.

The instances given above are not cited with an intention of singling particular houses out for special attention. They

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are mentioned simply because they are ones I happened to see. They are enough to prove the existence of real housing problems. It is for the city of Springfield to learn whether there are other houses like them, and then to set standards which will make the continuation of such conditions impossible anywhere within its borders. To clean up a few places and overlook others will not produce results worth the effort.

THE NEGRO DISTRICT

In the Negro district in Springfield, as in other cities, bad housing features are among the most serious. Houses are more



A NEGRO DWELLING

Many of the houses have ample yards, but landlords have not always provided houses meeting even minimum standards

dilapidated, water supply and toilets more inadequate, everything in a more rundown, shabby condition than in other sections. Part of this may be due to the character and habits of some of the Negro people themselves, just as bad living conditions among the whites often are. But there is no question in the minds of those who have studied Negro housing that a large proportion of these people desire better homes than those they are able to obtain in most of our cities. One who has inspected

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many Negro homes can not but be impressed by the evident desire for cleanliness and order that many of the housekeepers show, even under the most discouraging conditions. My own impression is that where conditions are approximately equal the homes of Negroes are cleaner and better kept than those of several nationalities among our recent immigrants.

But the Negro suffers under severe handicaps. He is usually segregated, if not by law then by custom, in one or more of the poorest parts of town. Being so confined he is more easily exploited by his landlord, who inclines to give less and charge more than he would in the case of white tenants. I was told that this is the situation in Springfield, although my stay was so short as not to allow time to verify the statement. If it is, Springfield is not unique; the same situation is to be found in other cities. But that is no excuse for allowing it to continue. Nor should the white citizens of Springfield persuade themselves that to improve housing conditions in the Negro district will be a purely altruistic endeavor. We have learned within the past few years that if any part of the city suffers, the other parts will suffer with it. Disease and immorality in the Negro district will have their effect as far away as the extreme limits of the community. To safeguard itself Springfield must set minimum housing standards that shall apply to every dwelling in the city.

THE MINERS' HOUSES

During my stay I visited Ridgely and also saw some of the miners' houses outside the city. A built-up district such as Ridgely, whether within or partly without the city's legal limits, must be considered so far as practicable as if it were a part of the city. The standards that apply in other districts should apply there and the services, water and sewer, should be extended to it.

One of the most puzzling phases of housing work is how to exercise proper control over suburban areas that lie just outside the city's boundaries, but which are already a part of the city's problem and as the city grows will inevitably come under its jurisdiction. One of the proposals made is that certain city

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officials be given jurisdiction over an area extending some three or four miles beyond the city limits, in order to prevent the development there of bad conditions that they would later have to remedy when this area is annexed.

The miners' rows that are set down by themselves in the open country—such as that near the smelter—are in a somewhat different category from the houses in Ridgely. Mine houses are very often regarded as temporary affairs, and when they are not part of a thickly settled district one can not require that they be given all the services demanded in the case of city houses.



WORKINGMEN'S COTTAGES NEAR THE SMELTER

Though such houses are often temporary, there is little excuse for their being insanitary and unattractive in appearance

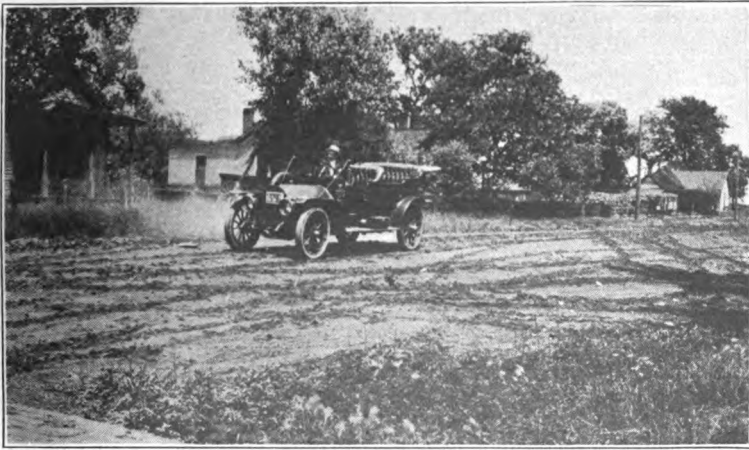
They should, however, be dry and warm and sanitary, and supplied with adequate and convenient water and toilet facilities. Moreover it would certainly be worth some effort to render them a little more attractive in appearance than the present bare, unsightly structures.

CITY PLANNING

City planning is so closely connected with housing that one can scarcely discuss one without mentioning the other. And this is especially true in the case of Springfield where the city seems to have been created by attaching one real estate develop-

HOUSING IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

ment to another without much thought as to what the result would be. The rectangular street system which makes lot platting easiest has been followed consistently, the only radials of consequence being formed by the railroads which cut up every quarter of the city except the southwest. Moreover, even the unrelieved checkerboard street system has apparently not been laid out with the idea that it was to serve a constantly growing city, but mainly with the thought of serving the real estate development then under consideration. Consequently there are



UNNECESSARY WASTE OF STREET

Street width should vary with street function. Roadways on minor residence streets that are too wide are a burden to abutting property both through the original expense and later costs of up-keep

numerous jogs on important streets, probably a convenience to the man who was plotting the acreage and wished to get as many lots as possible, but a perpetual obstacle to traffic. There are, too, a considerable number of dead-end streets, which are sure to become a serious disadvantage as the city grows. On the other hand, there are many streets that are considerably wider than necessary. As streets vary in their function, so they should vary in width and arrangement. Main traffic ways that are too narrow are a serious handicap to a city's business. Minor residence streets that are too wide are a serious burden upon abutting

THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY

property, both because of the original expense in laying pavement and of the later up-keep. As it is a blunder to put obstacles in the way of the free movement of business, so it is a blunder to impose needless expense upon the homes.

Definite recommendations as to width and arrangements of streets, block and lot sizes, the relations of the home to parks and playgrounds, as well as to factories and the business district, and other phases of city planning that directly affect housing conditions can not be made in so brief a report as this. The facts are cited here to show the need and urge the importance of a careful study of the local situation aimed at the adoption ultimately of a city plan which will insure economic and orderly growth of a more socially efficient city.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Experience has shown that no city can expect to get or to keep good housing conditions unless it has and enforces a city ordinance or a state law that sets definite minimum standards below which *no* dwelling is permitted to fall. With this as a basis, efforts to build and manage improved dwellings have a much greater chance of success. Such efforts are now being made in many of our progressive cities and Springfield is likely to feel the contagion before long. But it is to be hoped that the city will first have secured a thoroughgoing housing code, such as that given in Veiller's Model Housing Law* which has served as the basis for several recently enacted codes.

The responsibility for enforcing a housing code falls upon the health department and the building inspector. The latter must examine all plans for new houses to see that they conform to the requirements of the law, and must inspect them while in course of construction to see that no unauthorized changes are made.

The records of the building department should show how many dwellings of the different classes—one-family, two-family, and multiple (three families or more)—are in existence, and how many are erected each year. Only in this way can Springfield know whether or not it is becoming a tenement-house city.

* Veiller, Lawrence: A Model Housing Law. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

HOUSING IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

The health department, too, should pass upon the plans at least so far as light, ventilation, and sanitation are concerned. It must then see that the buildings are maintained in a sanitary condition. This means that it must have enough inspectors to make an original inspection of nearly all the dwellings in the city at least once a year. At present, inspections are made chiefly on complaint. This is neither adequate nor fair, as it will sometimes happen that a very insanitary building has no complaints made against it while a much better building, perhaps next door, is frequently complained of. Such procedure not only leads to ill feeling and charges of favoritism, if not of actual corruption, but it fails to accomplish the purpose aimed at, to effectively improve the health conditions of the community.

The regular inspections should include not only privy vaults and wells—inspection of which we hope will some day cease because they no longer exist—but of water-closets and water fixtures, their location, ventilation, adequacy, cleanliness, and construction; size, number, and arrangement of rooms; size, number, and location of windows; drainage, and in multiple dwellings, size, lighting, and arrangement of public halls and the means of egress in case of fire. All these are necessary, as has been shown in the preceding pages, if the people are to be assured of dwellings that are safe and wholesome and have adequate provision for decency and privacy. Of course new buildings that have been erected in conformity with the proposed housing code and old buildings that are recorded as being up to standard need not, unless they have been altered, be inspected so thoroughly as indicated above. With them it is chiefly a question of proper maintenance, and thus after a thorough first inspection of all buildings in the city, it may be possible to handle the work without much increase in the present staff of inspectors.

PRESENT POWERS OF CITY GOVERNMENT

According to the present charter the city government has fairly wide powers, of which it has failed to take full advantage. I quote a few of the sections.

THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY

POWERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Sect. 61. To prescribe the thickness, strength and manner of constructing brick and other buildings and constructing fire escapes thereon

Sect. 62. To set fire limits.

Sect. 63. To prevent dangerous construction and condition of chimneys, fireplaces, etc., to regulate and prevent the carrying on of manufactories dangerous in causing and promoting fires, etc.

Sect. 75. To declare what shall be a nuisance and to abate the same; and to impose fines upon parties who may create, continue or suffer nuisances to exist.

Sect. 76. To appoint a board of health and prescribe its powers and duties.

Sect. 78. To do all acts, make all regulations which may be expedient for the promotion of health or the suppression of disease.

Sect. 81. To direct the location and regulate the management and construction of packing houses, renderies, tallow chandleries, bone factories, soap factories and tanneries within the limits of the city or village, and within the distance of one mile without the city or village limits.

Sect. 82. To direct the location and regulate the use and construction of breweries, distilleries, livery stables, blacksmith shops and foundries within the limits of the city or village.

Sect. 83. To prohibit any offensive or unwholesome business or establishment within or within one mile of the limits of the corporation.

Sect. 84. To compel the owner of any grocery, cellar, soap or tallow chandlery, tannery, stable, pigsty, privy, sewer or other unwholesome, or nauseous house or place to cleanse, abate or remove the same, and to regulate the location thereof.

Sections 61, 63, 75, 76, and 78 seem to give powers necessary for the enactment of a fairly good housing code, pending such time as the legislature may increase them or may enact a housing law for all the cities of the state. Sections 81, 82, 83, and 84 give power sufficient to make a beginning at least on a protected residence district ordinance such as Toronto and a number of American cities have enacted, and which should form part of the housing ordinance.

With such ordinances as Springfield is empowered to enact it would no longer be possible for the owner of a tenement

HOUSING IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS



THE SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE A CIVIC ASSET

It is such houses as these that form the basis of good homes and of wholesome, normal family life



SOME OF THE NEWEST DWELLINGS

The housing ideals of the majority of the people of Springfield are far above the requirements of any law. These buildings were being completed in June, 1914

THE SPRINGFIELD SURVEY

house to keep it occupied after it had been condemned by the local authorities.

HOUSING IDEALS OF SPRINGFIELD

The ideals of the majority of the people of Springfield are far above the requirements of any law. Not only are the more expensive residences near Washington Park typical of the best in the country, but the moderate priced dwellings show that Springfield people desire good homes. The community has to



A SAMPLE OF THE BEST

Some of Springfield's dwellings are typical of the best in the country

guard itself only against a few who through greed, or ignorance, or indifference are ready to sacrifice the general wellbeing for a temporary, personal profit. It can so guard itself only by setting definite minimum standards and saying to its few anti-social members, "So far you may go but no farther." If it fails to do this, bad conditions will obtain a firmer and firmer foothold until they can no longer be dislodged. Then Springfield will be obliged to do as have some of our older cities,—compromise with evil conditions.

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