

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 1918.—Copyright, 1918, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

BUYING OUR HOME—OUR GREAT ADVENTURE

Confronted by Rent Increase, Home Was Purchased and Living Cost Reduced

We bought our home by accident. We had been renters for eighteen years, had paid during that time \$45 to \$60 a month rent, and were then housed in an unpretentious, comfortable frame house on a narrow lot in a side street for which we were paying \$50 a month rent. While waiting to sell as to size and arrangement of rooms, it was not the sort of house one would fancy picking out to buy. It certainly did not look like the kind on the covers of magazines, and we had never considered buying a house anyway. Then the day came when a notice arrived to the effect that the floor was practically bankrupt and that the real estate was in the hands of a holding company.

Our lease would be good until May 1st, but then September 1st—but as there was no money in the treasury, our request for plumbing repairs was refused. Our landlord had not the faintest idea of a plumber, and the fact that many a builder in these difficult times. With very little capital and the lack of materials, he had been caught short and was paying the penalty. Our house was for sale at \$7,500, which was the original price they asked for it, and we had the alternative, either to buy, or stay out the lease, paying arrears for such minor repairs as were necessary.

In a tentative search for new quarters in the same neighborhood, two things struck me: first that rents were going up; not in the same proportion as food perhaps, but still our limit—\$50 monthly would not get us nearly as good a house as we had and, second, that the choice of available houses was small, owing to the fact that speculation in building in our locality had almost ceased.

The situation was an awkward one for a large family, three of us working in New York, and with little time to look around. Reasoning that it might be even more awkward for the holding company, which would probably have to dispose of the property at a sacrifice, we studied the financial advantages and disadvantages of buying versus renting, and learned some important things.

We asked a friend in the building business to look over the house and tell us approximately what it was worth, and what condition it was in. The cellar and attic were where he made his main observations. Floor beams, he said, should not be more than 29 inches apart, preferably 16, by 2 inches thick, and the rafters supporting the roof the same. Our house was neither as good nor as bad as it might be, but it was only six years old, was in excellent condition, and erected when materials were cheaper, cost probably \$4,500 to build, whereas to-day it would take close to \$6,000 to reproduce it. Other advantages worth noting were that the house had a slate roof, and was shingled in natural color, which left only the trim to be painted. This was an important item in saving when the cost of paint was considered.

Altogether I began to see our house from a different view, which not often taken by the average prospective buyer, and that is the investment side. I believe that to-day a home is more than a desirable investment, and that this condition has been brought about by the cessation of speculative building, which puts a premium not only on the house already built but on the house built by the individual, because according to experts in the building trades, the cost of building will not come down for some years after the war, and land at present is at its lowest.

There were certain features about our house that appealed particularly to us, such as most people see it, is the financing. This, so far as our house was concerned, was comparatively simple. There was a mortgage on it of \$3,500, and this the mortgagee was willing to continue without raising the interest. When we finally compromised with the holding company at a price of \$6,000 it left us with \$2,500 to raise. Two thousand of this we had in cash, the remaining \$500 the mortgagee agreed to take on as a second mortgage at 6 per cent interest, to be paid off by instalments. By the time it will be seen how our expenses in carrying the house compare with the \$600 a year rent and water rent besides which we had been paying. The main advantage is that we do not have the

such, for instance, as seven finished bedrooms, three on the third story, a sleeping porch on the second floor and two bathrooms.

What we have also enjoyed, and last summer found really paid us, was the lot 25x117 feet, so that it gave us sufficient space for vegetables such as radishes, lettuce, onions, beans, beets, carrots, and we had all the home, streets, shutting out light and air and depressing value. Another question of vital interest in comparing renting and owning is taxes. I found that while the tax rate is high in our town, the assessment is low on our house we would have to pay for this year \$77.70. This was a rate of \$2.22 on an assessment of \$3,500. Next year there will probably be a new school, which will raise the rate, but taxes are bound to be a slightly fluctuating sum

expensive and inconvenient of moving. We own a comfortable home which we could rent for from \$55 to \$60 a month, and we bought it reasonably enough to be pretty sure that our \$2,000 is safely invested.

Perhaps some, studying the table given below, will question the allowance of only 1 per cent, or \$36, for repairs, but this is not supposed to include outside painting. It includes the everyday minor repairs and the occasional re-surfacing of the roof. The determination of the cost of a house is a difficult one to determine and depends so much on how well the house is kept in order and upon its situation. At any rate, we now fondly believe that deterioration is pretty well balanced by the cheapness of our purchase.

hardly flowers which we needed for the table. Small as the space is, I mean to add a row of six carnation bushes at the back, and plant a cherry tree.

Again returning to the investment point of view, I will say that I consider the narrowness of our lot the main disadvantage of the whole proposition. At present the houses on either side of it are of the same height, and the other is 15 feet away, do not constitute a danger, but potentially the situation is dangerous and that is why I do not consider this particular investment a first-class one, and why I warn prospective buyers to take this point into consideration. While I feel that we shall always be able to get our money out of the house, it is mainly because we bought it so reasonably. Nothing is more important than this question of protection, and particularly in the suburbs, because the restrictions are so lax, and the ubiquitous apartment house springs up almost overnight on our choice.

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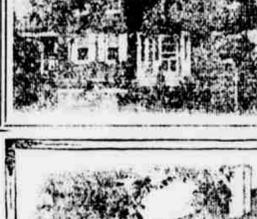
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U. S. GREATEST BUILDER NOW.

Overwhelming Construction Under Way for Government's Use.

With the vast Government construction activities omitted from the tabulation of building permits issued in the principal cities of the country and with present work running strongly toward war necessities, the showing made by the cities becomes necessarily unfavorable. The statistics of building permits issued present only a partial view of the current work, whereas a year ago they represented an overwhelming percentage of it. And the volume of Government work is still increasing. Ordinary building operations—that is, private building—have sunk to less than half the normal amount, when the increased cost of construction is taken into consideration. In estimated cost it is something more than 50 per cent less. It is quite evident that the current amount of normal construction is considerably less than the actual requirements. Households are "doubling up" all over the land, business structures are not kept strictly up in repairs. The construction of needed buildings of all kinds is being deferred to more propitious times. But the crowding of necessary work makes a very fair showing, all things considered.

In 110 principal cities of the United States the building permits issued in February, as officially reported to the American Contractor, New York, total \$29,074,331, as against \$22,739,254 for February last year, a decrease of 44 per cent. Of these cities, thirty-two show an increase over the corresponding period a year ago. In most instances this increase is due to the issuance of permits last month for one or more unusually large structures. Thus, in Baltimore the gain of 114 per cent is accounted for by the issuance of a permit for an addition to the Bartlett-Hayward Company munition plant, at a cost of \$277,500, and a \$283,443 permit issued to the Consolidated Power Company, Harpersburg, to obtain its heat gain through a permit for a \$170,000 school building. Sioux City's splendid increase comes from a permit for a \$400,000 department store building.

Helping You to Own a Home

Interest shown in the previous articles on the pleasure of buying a home indicates that the subject is of great concern to readers of THE SUN. With spring's arrival on scheduled time the desire has been accentuated. The bright skies and warm winds have intensified the yearning for the country. It is the hope of THE SUN to help those who are now feeling the call of the country to approach the subject of buying intelligently, and it believes that real service can be rendered by reciting the experiences of those who have purchased or built homes. These stories will be published on Sundays throughout March, April, May and June. Five dollars will be paid for every article published, and at the end of the series the writer of the article which the editors of THE SUN deem of greatest interest will be rewarded by a special prize of \$25.



AT BEAUTIFUL SCARSDALE

A Sacrifice Sale to Settle Estates

This is one of the bargain houses being offered in the \$2,000,000 sacrifice sale of the holdings of the Scarsdale Estates now being conducted to settle the Estates of Welcome G. Hitchcock and Clara F. Hitchcock.

Description: Hollow tile and stucco, variegated slate roof; 9 rooms, 3 baths; sleeping porch; steam heat; on private court; short walk from railroad station, at Greenacres, Scarsdale, one of the most charming developments in Scarsdale, New York.

This place could not be duplicated for less than \$17,500 and can be bought for \$14,500 on reasonable terms. Send for illustrated pamphlet of other offerings.

SCARSDALE ESTATES, Robert E. Farley, President, 12 East 44th St., N. Y. City. Phone Murray Hill 7720.

Kew Gardens

16 Minutes from the Heart of Manhattan
Daylight saving means an extra rest hour each afternoon to every business man. Will you waste this chance for wholesome country life by living in the stuffy city?

Edgeworth Smith, Sales Manager
One West 34th St., N.Y.
Phone Greeley 5250
Office at Kew Gardens Station
Phone Richmond Hill 1713

RICHMOND HILL Richmond Hill, north of Hillside Avenue, and adjoining Kew Gardens—a charming old section, now brought close to the centre of business by new transit. Here are striking investment values far below the present-day cost of reproduction. Prices of Houses \$6,000 to \$20,000 on Terms You Will Like. A train to either Kew Gardens or Richmond Hill station, or Rapid Transit along Jamaica Avenue will bring you to these properties, or a list of houses will be sent you upon request.

Estate of A. P. Man (New Garden Corporation)
New York office: One West 34th St., (Greeley 5250)
Richmond Hill office: Richmond Hill 1713
M. J. M. & J. J. M. A. S.



Buy a Home

SEND AT ONCE FOR BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED BOOKLET PICTURING TWENTY-TWO ATTRACTIVE RESIDENCE PROPERTIES ON NORTH SHORE OF LONG ISLAND GREAT NECK TO HUNTINGTON FOR SALE AT MOST ATTRACTIVE PRICES AND ON EXCEPTIONAL TERMS. Full particulars of these beautiful properties not generally offered. **BAKER CROWELL, Inc.** 47 West 34th St., New York City. Phone Greeley 38.

This Charming Bungalow AT LAKE MAHOPAC

Delightfully situated on beautifully wooded plot, overlooking the most beautiful lake in New York State. Bungalow has six large rooms and bath, living room with open fireplace—oak floored sleeping porch, breakfast nook—in fact the Bungalow is ideally complete in every respect, all improvements being already installed. Lake Mahopac is one of the most beautiful sections near New York, elevation about 800 feet. Large colony of dairy companies, Club and a hotel. Close to the station. Every home has a large frontage on water rights. On account of situation it is doubly secluded and gives that privacy so desired in a summer home. Very satisfactory terms to responsible people. Two very attractive Bungalows ready for immediate occupancy. Further information and photos from **LEO BUGG, 40 West 32d Street** Phone Madison Square 9820.

AT LEONIA The Suburb Beautiful

This handsome English country house is constructed of stone, has asphalt shingle roof all copper leaders, gutters and flashings, in fact built for a real home for real people who appreciate artistic as well as substantial work. The first floor contains a large foyer hall, beautiful staircase, a dining room of ample size, beautifully finished with paneled side walls, fresco, etc., an exceptionally large living room with a most attractive fireplace, built-in seats, oak corner, etc. The entrance hall is a masterpiece of tapestry brick, made through French doors. The main's room or office with a factory room, connecting with the kitchen department, is a novelty. The sanitary section is most complete, has treatment of toilet, outside lock-box room, many innovations. The main's room and bath are of the highest quality. Second floor has the master's suite, consisting of sitting room with fireplace, bedroom, 2 closets, sleeping porch and handsome tiled bathroom with built-in seat, dishes, etc. Besides this there are other large bedrooms, 2 baths, tubs, etc. Third floor contains the billiard room with fireplace, additional bedrooms. This is a most complete home on large plot in best section. Price \$18,000. Small cash payment. Could not be duplicated for \$25,000. Full particulars and pictures. The Leonia Heights Land Co., 47 West 34th St., Phone 393 Greeley.

AT FREEPORT LI Houses and Bungalows FOR SALE.

House, 7 rooms, modern plumbing and electric lights, on plot 10x100. \$2500
Bungalow with 6 rooms, modern plumbing, fireplace, electric lights, plot 40x115 feet. \$3500
7 room house, modern plumbing, gas, hot water heat. Small garage. Plot 30x120. \$4000
Stucco semi-bungalow with 10 rooms and reception hall, modern plumbing, fireplace, electric lights, hardwood trim, paneled ceiling and wainscot in dining room and living room. Hot water heat. Plot 30x100. \$7000
Other Houses, 5 to 16 Rooms, \$2,500 to \$12,000. Easy Terms. Send for List 21. **JOHN J. RANDALL & CO.,** 47 West 34th St., New York City. Telephone Greeley 3125.

GENTLEMAN'S HOME IN THE COUNTRY

On Beautiful North Shore of Long Island. With View of the Sound. Close to Country Club with Splendid Golf and Tennis Courts. Five minutes to Railroad Station; 26 minutes to Manhattan. Residence of Colonial architecture, hollow tile and tapestry brick; spacious, well kept grounds; 5 bedrooms and 3 baths; handsomely finished throughout; electric light; hot water heat.



Splendid Home—Beautiful Community

Here is a rare opportunity to buy a perfectly designed residence in one of the best sections of Long Island's North Shore at a price far below the reproduction value of the house. If you want a real home investigate this offer. **J. W. DOLITTLE,** 2265 Woolworth Building, New York City.

Forest Hills Gardens

FIFTEEN MINUTES FROM PENN. STATION
Around the corner from the Station Square is a new group of seven houses developed in 1914 which are now ready for occupancy. Eight rooms and two baths each, these houses are distinguished in appearance and easy for house-keeping. In view of the shortage of housing facilities here have increased and will continue to rise. Any thoughtful person will realize that if he wishes to own a home, a fine plan can be purchased on a small cash investment, paying the balance in rent. The supply of new houses is limited and the future cost of building will be excessive. The environment is pleasanter than living in Manhattan. The floor space is cheaper than living in Manhattan. The accessibility to the business, shopping and theatre districts is equal to living in Manhattan. The frequency of electric trains, with a running schedule of fifteen minutes, discourages the idea of commuting. 47 West 34th St., New York City. Forest Hills, Long Island.

THIS ATTRACTIVE HOME

7 Room Dutch Colonial Semi-Bungalow Fully decorated; electricity, steam heat, city water, screened shades, double doors, breakfast room, ample closets, extra shower in cellar plus utility; no payments; near school, 2 min. to electric trolley, 22 min. to Brooklyn; no rent; Broadway, close to waterfront and private bathing beach; splendid home, extremely title guaranteed; small cash down, easy monthly payments; \$2,500 first mortgage. Full particulars from **OWNERS,** Room 1111, 21 Chambers St., N. Y.

A Real Bargain—This House for \$4,500

would cost to-day \$5,500, without the land. \$300 Cash; Balance Monthly Installments
Built before Labor and Material advanced over 40%... An attractive, modern and well planned, with all improvements, on a well located corner plot 110 ft. x 100 ft., convenient to the station, one hour from Penn. Terminal, 3rd St., Manhattan, or Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, and one of the most beautiful sections of Long Island. Communication to city by Phone Madison Sq. 6124 or call or write for terms and appointment to inspect. **E. H. MAWHOPAC,** 1270 Broadway, New York City.

HEMPSTEAD NEW HOUSES

41 minutes from Penn. Station and Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. Well built, well planned, well located. Quality homes that are not mere houses; the equal of which will be hard to find anywhere at 50 per cent higher prices. In the home section of Hempstead, New York City's most popular suburb. What you would have as a city house, the practical side of it is a house, the practical side of it is a house, the practical side of it is a house. Construction, described in detail, from cellar to roof, with the turn of new houses, a full and complete list of features, including the most modern and up-to-date. For more information, call on or write to **O. L. SCHWENKE,** 275 Broadway, New York City, Tel. No. 6124.

Mountain Lakes

Healthy Mountain Air. Established 2nd of Community 800 Feet Elevation. Two Picturesque Lakes. 350 Homes Golf and Country Clubs. Ideal All-round Climate. Finest Express Service. A Wonderful Bargain. Plot 100x125. Very attractive. Price \$4,500. Little cash. Balance on monthly cash basis. A charming 10-room, light-colored, with three tiled baths, a full and complete set of fixtures, with comfortable veranda and sleeping porch also features, including modern and two-car garage, light-stained wood, parquetry floors, all conveniences. Call for terms. \$12,500 house anywhere. Photos of this and other homes in the MOUNTAIN LAKES, 170 Broadway, N. Y. Tel. No. 6124.