COUNTRY HOMES IN GOOD DEMAND AS SOON AS HOSTILITIES ENDED

Market Comes to Life Suddenly and Builders Form Plans for Active Season to Make Up for Lost Time—Restrictions Removed From Construction

The heavy and black war cloud which hung long and low over all Europe cast its darkening shadows over the city to the extent of materially curtailing the wishes of may people who were desirous of owning and occupying cosy little homes of their own in near by country places. The war's influence almost brought suburban trading to a standstill, but there was sufficient confidence in the hearts of the developers to pursue their determination to build as many homes as they conveniently could without interfering with the progress of the war. They are now jubilant over the prospects that the suburbs will soon experience a revival of interest which will mean a healthy, substantial growth.

This optimism which is so prevalent among suburban developers is based on the cessation of hostilities in Europe and is in reality a reflection of the lifting of the restraints which have long curtailed building and buying in the suburbs. A great buying power has been released by the order from Washington to stop further conscription. Suburban realty men claim that the order affects that class of men between the ages of 31 and 46 who have reached the "settling down" age and who form the chief source of prospective country home buyers. They argue that men of these ages, who usually have strong family ties, were removed as possible home owners when the conscription age was raised because it was natural for them to refrain from contracting to purchase homes while the war lasted. Inclination to buy has been indicated strongly: In fact prospective buyers have said that possible conscription was the only reason which kept them from carrying out their wishes. With the signing of the armistice this restriction has been removed and inquiries and sales are daily increasing. One sale which depended upon the cessation of hostilities was closed within twenty-four hours after the Austrian armistice had been signed. The buyer, by his quick action, gained the advantage of securing a house which had been constructed of materials secured before the rise in building costs.

Another influence, directly due to the stoppage of the war, and which adds greatly to the prospects of larger activity in the suburbs, is the new rulings laid down by the War Industries Board. It has issued orders permitting building which does not cost more than $10,000 to proceed without permits other than those secured from the building bureaus and has released building material manufacturers from the restraint of production and granted dealers permission to supply operations which do not exceed the cost of $10,000. The War Industries Board has also given the local bodies, working in conjunction with it, the power to issue permits for building operations where the cost is more than $10,000 but does not exceed $25,000.

These two influences are perhaps the greatest, but others which go to make up the whole have much bearing on the outlook. One suburban developer said that patriotic people who have been placing their funds in Liberty bonds will have the opportunity of owning their own homes if they choose to part with these bonds. The bonds will in most cases be accepted at their face value, the reason for the willingness to take the securities in lieu of cash being that they are accepted by banks as first class collateral and the developers can readily use them to secure loans and proceed with their operations.

How great the return of interest in suburban realty is, may be seen from the assertion of a Long Island developer. He said that since the close of the war more people have visited his property and more inquiries have been received than during any one week since the United States entered the conflict. In fact he was so enthusiastic over the prospects that he started out immediately to make arrangements to build homes on a larger scale than he had ever before contemplated. While there was a general admission among suburban developers that houses were being sought more particularly, many people were buying land, basing their decision on the fact that of all the commodities which have risen in value, real estate is the one exception. This too must rise, and the time for the advance is said to be close at hand. Plot buyers are securing their sites for homes now, pending the readjustment period when labor will be more plentiful and home building somewhat cheaper than at the present time.

Developers who have been in a position to place contracts for large quantities of materials before the war, but who did not receive them and in fact were not anxious to get them, while the war was on, are now demanding the fulfilment of their contracts so that they may proceed with building operations. Many developers have kept the nucleus of an organization together by keeping their construction superintendents and foremen employed on repair work and are now in a position to round out the organization and proceed at once.

Mountain Lakes, Inc., invested about $500,000 in materials, most of which were bought in 1913 and 1914. This included 100 cars of cement and 50 cars of lumber, part of which has not yet been delivered but which will now come through. The company proposes to increase its building programme because of the increase in demand. It is the opinion of the officials that sales will only be limited by what there is on the market and can be built. They base their prophecy on past records. In 1913 this company sold fifty-five houses valued at over $500,000. When the United States entered the war the sales dropped to twenty-three valued at about $277,000, but since Austria was forced out of the war six houses have been sold to people who were waiting for the cessation of hostilities. They aver that of the six not more than one would have bought if the war had continued. If the same ratio of sales, six a month, continues, the next year in the suburban field will be a record breaker.

At the Joseph P. Day offices it was said that there has been more business transacted in suburban realty in the last ten days than has been done in many months. City Island seems suddenly to have found many admirers and inquiries have poured in. As a result about $35,000 worth of houses and lots have been sold there. There has also been a revival of interest in Manhattan Beach realty and many other developments with which the Day organization is identified. It was also said at this office that as soon as the Government released materials a big building movement would be started in Queens to supply homes for hundreds of high grade artisans who will be employed in the peace industries which are expected to quickly revive in that borough.

One of the reasons for the tendency of the people to turn to the country for living accommodations, according to a developer of North Shore properties, is that they have learned that there is much to be gained from having a little land under cultivation. This man said that with a house on a plot 50x100 it would be possible to get enough vegetables for a family of four for eight months of the year. He suggests that more country home owners plant fruit and nut trees for shade and food purposes and that instead of having useless hedges, they substitute berry bushes, which will prove both ornamental and useful.

The Sage Foundations Company sees in the present situation an opportunity for prospective home owners to gain an advantage by buying home sites, because prices of land have not yet begun to rise, but are surely bound to do so before long. A plot owner could set out fruit or nut trees and berry bushes this fall and in the spring begin to build, so that by the time the house is ready for occupancy his trees and shrubbery would be producing.

At Kew Gardens it is reported that last Sunday there were more people out looking over the property than have been there during the whole war period. Inquiries are steadily increasing and the revival of interest has induced the company to give more than usual attention to a building programme which will help to fill the needs which are so strongly indicated.

The "Buy a Home" campaign which spread across the country before the United States entered the war seems to have revived of its own accord, and there is every reason to believe that with more settled conditions and prospects of plenty of work during the reconstructive period there will be a general movement to the country. Apartment house construction is still under the restraint of having to get permission from controlling bodies, since no operation of any consequence can be carried out which will cost less than $25,000. Such operations will require sanction from Washington, while operations of lesser cost, like the suburban home development, can be adjusted by local bodies. Where the cost is $10,000 or less, which is in the majority of cases of suburban home buildings, there is no restriction except the usual building bureau permits.

CONCERNS SOLVE SPACE PROBLEM

Continued from First Page.

which will send them back to the old figures and perhaps away beyond. There will therefore result as a by-product of this movement toward the purchase of buildings for occupancy an enhancement in value which will prove of the most material advantage to the purchasers.

Referring to the great expansion now looked for in our shipping, it is vital to every one interested in the upbuilding of the port of New York (and this means every man and property owner of the city) to uphold the activities of Dock Commissioner Hulbert to meet the demands of the steamship companies for more piers and shipping accommodations. Other Atlantic ports have been increasing their facilities from 50 to 100 per cent. in the last year, while New York city has been comparatively at a standstill, and there is grave danger that important steamship lines may leave New York city for other ports where accommodations can be provided for them. We should not be penny wise and pound foolish in this matter. In it is involved the future welfare of the city, for the feature which has made New York city what it is to-day is that it is a great natural port.

Commissioner Hulbert has specific plans whereby several piers can be immediately brought into service and rented at good prices to oceangoing steamship lines and also for the building of other piers which at an early date would also be available. These plans involve the coordination and consolidation of certain railroad traffic and the moving of the Sound steamship lines to the East River, thus releasing a number of North River piers immediately. The Board of Estimate should be urged to investigate and report upon the plans with the least possible delay. Furthermore, legislation should be passed freeing the Commissioner of Docks from any unnecessary red tape that may hinder his accomplishment of the above ends. If those who administer the affairs of the city will take a broad, comprehensive and businesslike view of these matters and act with the same expedition they would use in private business matters, New York city ultimately will attain its ambition to be the largest city in the world as well as its permanent financial and shipping centre.

HECKSCHER IN COUNCIL.

Alfred E. Marling, chairman of the Advisory Council of Real Estate Interests and acting chairman of the executive committee while Cyrus C. Miller is engaged in war work, has announced that August Heckscher has been elected to fill the vacancy in the council's membership of twenty-five. Also that the executive committee has been increased from five to seven and the election to that committee of Robert E. Simon, president of the Henry Morgenthau Company.

REMOVAL OF SOUND STEAMERS OPPOSED

Property Interests in Central Section Think Plan Very Arbitrary.

The suggestion of Dock Commissioner Hulbert to move the steamships in the Sound and New England trade from the North River to the East River has not the support of property owners in the shoe district, through Worth, Leonard and other streets from Broadway west to the water front. They claim that it would be one of the most arbitrary moves that the city government could make, and are prepared to fight the plan of the Dock Commissioner, who wants the dockage used by the Sound trade carriers for foreign cargo ships because of the great shortage of space for big shipping on the North River, which is the only water that can be used by the deep ships.

Alfred R. Kirkus, secretary of the New York, the Manhattan, Central and Colonial Real Estate Associations, in a statement issued yesterday said:

"From the real estate point of view the proposal of Commissioner Hulbert to change the Sound steamers from their present dockage on the North River to the East is a most startling and depressing suggestion.

"For some years the holding of real estate had been approaching closely to the proverbial 'gold brick.' The stopping of speculative building and the resumption of all business through war conditions has brought it back to a tangible asset, so that investors are once more turning to it as a relief and security. With the approaching end of the war and reconstruction necessary thereto the least disturbance of real estate and other business is desirable. The healthy renewal of building activity may be necessary, but speculative change of localities with the possibility of creating a new neighborhood at the expense or destruction of an old is disastrous.

"The wholesale cotton goods and boot and shoes business has been located for around fifty years in the neighborhood of Duane to Leonard street, west of Broadway, and many tenants have been in their present buildings almost that length of time. These commodities are dependent largely upon the Sound steamers, which receive and discharge goods within a few blocks of their doors. They also require considerable space to carry, assort and redistribute their stock. It is now, after all these years and when the business refuses to leave the locality, proposed to disrupt their arrangements by the transformation of the shipping facilities to the other side of the city, necessitating the trucks crossing every main line of travel in the city. It is comparatively easy to transfer the extra expense to the poor, unfortunate ultimate consumer. It is never possible to make up for the valuable time lost in making these shipments, and the result of this change, if it is made, is likely to be most serious to the rental and taxable value of the district now threatened.

"The shortsightedness of owners in the old Greene-Broome street importing district in not keeping their buildings modernized resulted in the erection of the Fourth avenue district and the exodus from the neighborhood, with the result that while one neighborhood was improved another was absolutely destroyed. Rentals became impossible and values were reduced 75 per cent. or more, and yet the exodus was to a neighborhood that was not really, naturally or physically suitable.

"With the retail business in the centre of the city, the wholesale should have been to the west because of the storage facilities still further to the west and the shipping facilities on the west river front, and it has resulted in a very short space of time in the rentals in the Fourth avenue district, certainly up to a few months ago, steadily depreciating, along with the values of the property, while the old dry goods district is filled up, and with a waiting list, at prices that have not deteriorated but are steadily appreciating.

"To take the Sound steamers to the East River means not only that proper dockage must be provided, for the docks of the proposed location are not sufficient for the boats, but it will require a waterfront street to enable the trucks to enter or leave for loading or discharging goods. The natural improvement of the East Side should be with manufacturing establishments, where labor can easily reach its place of business from its homes on the East Side or Brooklyn. Wholesaling, involving heavy truckage, makes the East Side an impossibility as a permanency, owing to the congestion of the main thoroughfares and streets running north and south on account of the shape of Manhattan Island.

"This proposal of Commissioner Hulbert also comes at a time following a long effort to get better railroad facilities on the West Side, with the attendant removal of the lighterage and dockage requirements of the railroads and at a time when Comptroller Craig is presenting a new or possibly improved plan of handling this important subject. It also comes, as I said before, at a time when no important and expensive experiments should be tried to the annoyance of trade which naturally, under the existing conditions must be disturbed and worried.

"How unfortunate it is that with every change of administration, good, bad or indifferent, the Commissioners feel it necessary to suggest revolutions instead of settling or improving on existing conditions. If I took this matter up from a purely selfish point of view of the real estate owner, I think I should be justified in my objection to this proposed move, but when it is opposed by business interests of a magnitude of hundreds of millions of dollars a year, and of old established firms and localities, it is worthy of consideration that nothing should be done unless the necessity is beyond any question."

Palmer Estate Sells Century Old North Shore House to New York Man

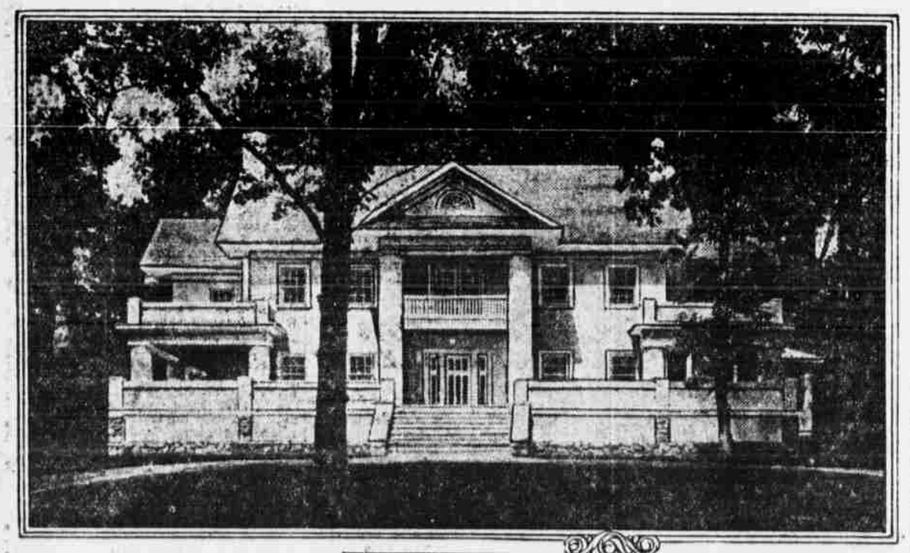
The "Little Farm" property of the late Elizabeth Palmer, consisting of eleven acres on Kings Point road, Great Neck, considered one of the estates on the North Shore, has been sold to Frank Duffy of Manhattan. It has a road frontage of 470 feet on Kings Point road, 480 feet on the shore. The old homestead on the estate is 135 years old, but had been thoroughly remodeled by Mrs. Palmer at a great cost. Every variety of shrubbery and trees is planted on the grounds. Besides the main house there are a cottage, three story steel and concrete garage, a barn over 100 feet long, boat and bath houses, and a 250 feet steel pier with glass inclosed house at the end. The former owner was the widow of Thomas Palmer of Michigan, a former United States Senator and Ambassador to Spain. At Mrs. Palmer's death her estate, amounting to $4,500,000, was left to the executors to build and maintain in Detroit an institution for the betterment of womanhood, but the women of America protested against such an institution and the whole of the estate went to the sole heir, an adopted son, Harold Palmer of Detroit, who sold the Great Neck property through I. G. Wolf. This property was held at $200,000.

William H. Clark has sold his residence, a hollow tile stucco California bungalow on Myrtle Drive, Great Neck, on a half acre plot, to Mrs. Sallie B. Byington of New Port Richey, Florida. This property was held at $15,000.

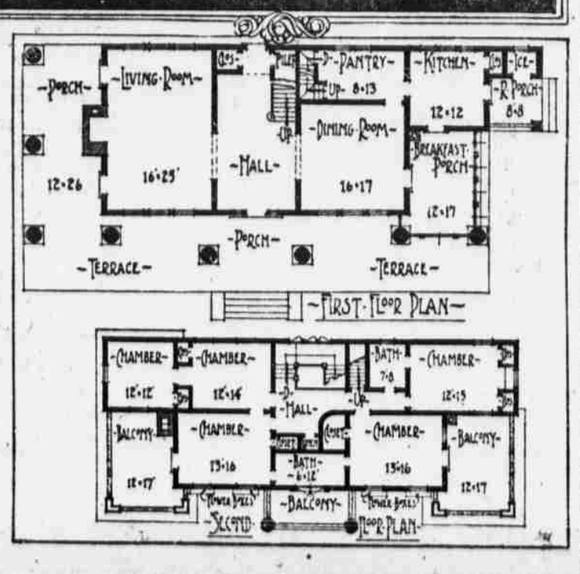
Rosie Wolf has sold the Dutch Colonial residence and garage on Maple street, Great Neck Estates, on a plot of 8,000 square feet, to Edith M. O'Donnell of Beechhurst, L. I. This property was held at $15,000. The same buyer also bought a corner plot adjoining, containing 6,000 square feet, for $3,000. The same broker bought four acres for a client at the absolute auction sale held by Joseph P. Day, November 6, for $8,200, and sold for the Finlay Realty Company to the Great Neck Building Company a plot containing 8,000 square feet on the north side of Nassau Drive, Kensington, Great Neck, L. I., for $4,500. Mr. Wolf believes that high-class country homes on the North Shore of Long Island will have the best market known for twenty years.

Edith O'Donnell's new Colonial home at Great Neck

Quick Sale at Mountain Lakes Reflects Demand for Suburban Homes



George J. Watson, a New York cotton broker, is one of the first prospective country home buyers to make up his mind that the close of the war will soon be reflected in the valuations of suburban real estate. He had been undecided as to whether it was prudent to purchase while the war was going on, ever bearing in mind the uncertainties which were in the air. But when the word came that Austria had signed an armistice he began carrying out a plan which he had under consideration before the war started, and purchased his beautiful house on Ball avenue, Mountain Lakes, from the Mountain Lakes, Inc. Because the building had been erected with materials secured before war prices prevailed he secured his home for $16,000. The builders estimate that the same house could not be reproduced for less than $25,000 at present prices.



BUYER FOR BAYSIDE DWELLING

Ida M. Morse has sold her house at 88 Titus avenue, Bayside, to Edward R. Lougee of Elmhurst. The house is on a plot 100x100. The sale was made by J. Albert Johntra of Flushing. Mr. Lougee is associated with the Every Ready Company of Long Island City. He will move to Bayside next month.

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100x 92	27-33 W. 20th St.	Store & Floors
58x200	16-18 W. 22d, thru to 21st St.	Floors
56x110	115-17 E. 23d St.	Floors
100x200	114-20 E. 23d St., thru to 22d St.	7th Floor
20x 90	162 W. 23d St.	Store & Basement
103x100	40-46 W. 25th St.	11th Floor
68x100	34-38 W. 27th St.	Floors
34x100	12-14 W. 32d St.	Store & 2d Floor
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