NEWS OF THE BUSY HOME BUILDERS

GOOD WEEK FOR BUILDING

Weather Favorable and Outdoor Work is Hurried Along Everywhere.

MANY SMALL CONTRACTS ARE BEING LET

Y. W. C. A. Building Plans Will Have to Be Refigured to Come Within Money Available, but Change Will Be Slight.

Building has been very active during the last week on account of the unusually propitious weather and foundations have been laid or started for many new minor buildings. The frost has left the ground and afforded a clear field for foundation work, but contractors have been chary of beginning work on any large buildings until the weather becomes more settled.

It would appear that a great building boom is to be witnessed this spring in the erection of homes, which are going up in unusual numbers. The number of small cottages being built is believed to be greater this season of the year than for some time and this active condition is partially caused by the extreme scarcity of desirable cottages for rent. General prosperous conditions have also had much to do with the increased building of modest homes and the situation at present is the cause of much gratification among the real estate brokers and other business men of the city.

Razing of the old store buildings on the site of the new Young Women's Christian association on the triangular lot on St. Mary's avenue, between Seventeenth and Eighteenth streets, has nearly been completed by Ringwalt Bros., who were awarded the contract for removing the old and dilapidated structures. Bids have been received and opened for the new association building, but new figures will have to be taken in order to keep within the building fund recently raised by popular subscription. It is understood that most of the bids received were not within the limit of the funds on hand and minor changes will, therefore, be necessary. The question of the material to be used has not been definitely determined on account of the difference in price between gray and red facing brick. It is probable that the contract for the construction of the new association home will be awarded within a very few weeks.

It has been decided to add an additional story to the new building for the Creighton School of Pharmacy, which is being erected adjoining the building of the medical school at Fourteenth and Davenport streets. The extra story will make the building four instead of three stories in height, as was originally intended, and the additional space will be used for storage. Work on the pharmacy building has been delayed on account of the inability of the contractors to secure sufficient brick from the Kansas kilns, but the structure will be ready for occupancy before the fall term of school begins.

William G. Darkin, 3304 Meredith avenue, is remodeling his house and putting in the latest improved plumbing. D. W. Dudgeon is doing the work.

C. H. Foster is building six flats at Fortieth and Harney streets and a number of cottages.

"People about to build homes or other buildings should, if they intend to use cement blocks, make a careful investigation of the quality of the blocks they use," said a builder. "It is very easy to make cement blocks and therefore there are many persons in the business, but an inexperienced man will not make a block that will last like that manufactured by one who knows all about the business. It is said that one-twentieth of the earth is good cement and gravel. The cement type of construction has come to stay, at least until something better is discovered, for building the habitations than is now known."

The local aerie of Eagles has decided to build a home club house at Eighteenth and Capitol avenue. Fisher & Lawrie have been engaged to draw the plans and transfer of the site was made during the last week.

The contract for placing the plumbing in the new Brandeis building has been awarded to J. J. Hanighen. It calls for the most modern system for water, sewerage and heating.

Ernest Sweet has begun the construction of five modern dwellings at Thirty-sixth and Harney streets at a cost of $21,800. The first stories will be of concrete blocks and the upper part frame. The interiors will be finished in hard wood.

The down town streets are being torn up by the new telephone company, which is installing the underground conduits for the new independent system.

A one-story addition will be added to the store of the Singer Manufacturing company at Thirteenth and Harney streets. It will be of pressed brick. Work has already been begun.

The new M. E. Smith buildings are nearing completion. The interior painting is being done with a water paint preparation by Ward & Harpster. The painting work in the Douglas street building is about completed and the work in the Farnam street building is well under way.

Lumber is reported to be still advancing. This is said to be partly due to the congested railroad conditions.

The Brandeis building is to be handsomely finished inside as outside. John H. Harte, who has a contract for finishing the upper five floors, says there will be at least $50,000 worth of marble work alone.

The use of concrete shingles in Omaha houses is to be begun to relieve the shortage in wooden shingles. A number of houses have been standing in an unfinished condition because of the inability of the contractors to get shingles. But the concrete men are right there with the concrete article, which is said to be better than the shingle of wood. It grows harder with age and does not warp or rot. Some new houses being built by Hastings & Heyden will be roofed with them.

D. W. Dudgeon, the plumber, is arranging to camp out at Lake Manawa for six weeks during the summer. He will move his business into his new building at Twenty-ninth and Farnam streets about June 1.

Among the recent improvements made in the Paxton hotel is a handsome entrance from the main rotunda into the bar. The woodwork is of solid mahogany, the work being done according to special designs made by Fisher & Lawrie.

The lumber shortage continued and is blamed by the lumber men on the car shortage. Some contractors have adopted a plan which they believe will relieve them from worry on the lumber question. It is to arrange to pay for all the lumber of a building at once and to pay for none until the entire amount has been delivered. This will give the dealers an incentive toward getting the lumber on the spot with the greatest possible speed.

John E. Reagen & Co. are building six houses at Twenty-first and Spring streets. The Grove-Wharton Construction company has the contract. The same company has the contract for a house in Benson for E. H. Hansen, one for George F. Miller on the Hospe farm on Dodge street, one for Stull Bros. on the Stull farm and three for Rouse Bros. & Co. in Benson.

Tile and marble finishing for floors and walls is coming into greater and greater favor among builders in Omaha. This type has long been a favorite in Germany and other European countries. It is durable, beautiful, easily kept clean and unharmed by water or dampness. Milton Rogers & Sons have a number of contracts under way for this type of work. They have just completed the tile work in the telephone exchange branch building at Twenty-third and Lake streets and also a beautiful piece of work in the cigar store of O. D. Kiplinger, 306 South Sixteenth street. They have the contract for a large amount of marble work in the new building of the Carpenter Paper company and also in the Wise Memorial hospital building.

Frederick W. Clarke, head of the firm of Frederick W. Clarke, architects, gave a stereopticon exhibition of the plans for the new Christian Science church last Wednesday. The plans were thoroughly explained to the members of the congregation who were gathered to see them.

How old is reinforced concrete? A note this week from Contractor F. B. Burness says he is working on Carpenter's warehouse at Ninth and Harney streets and the interior is of reinforced concrete, a new thing in Omaha. Reinforced concrete is comparatively a new thing in the building line all over the country, but is it really new? The architect says it is ancient; that he came across a bit of it in a Roman ruin, showing that the Romans knew it and used it and illustrating the fact that there is really "nothing new under the sun."

An additional story is to be added to the building occupied by the Omaha Rubber Shoe company at the northeast corner of Eleventh and Farnam streets and will be occupied by the Omaha distributing office of the Goodyear Rubber company.

All is quiet in the labor market and the relations between builders and labor, both skilled and unskilled, are most cordial. Contractors and builders do not look for any trouble and the workmen are said to be satisfied with their wages.

Oscar Keeline's handsome new home in Council Bluffs will be equipped with two tile-floored bath rooms and a mosaic tile-floored vestibule, the work being done by Milton Rogers & Son. The same firm will put a tile floor in the First National bank building in Beatrice and a large tile fireplace in the home of J. B. Hume at Madison, Neb.

The All Saints' Episcopal church heating apparatus will be installed by the Bellamy & Hornung company. This company will also put the steam heating plant in the new Northwestern freight house.

Several new houses are being built in Omaha according to the style used in Germany and some parts of Denmark and Sweden for country villas and even for city residences. This is the house plastered with cement on the outside in place of siding. In place of lath or other wooden foundation for the cement a kind of woven wire is used, which does away with the danger of cracking the plaster, which often occurred by reason of the absorption of moisture into wooden lath and the consequent swelling of the lath. A very pretty house at small expense is the result of the use of this kind of building material. It is less pervious to heat and cold and moisture than wood, never needs to be painted and is said to only improve with age.

The Sachs Cigar company, 220 South Fourteenth street, is having two show windows equipped for most brilliant illumination. The work is being executed by the American Electric company.

Dr. J. E. McGrew is building three brick flats on Chicago street near Eighteenth. The furnaces are being put in by the John Hussie Hardware company. The same company is installing the furnaces in four houses being erected at Twenty-eighth and Burt streets by J. N. Jensen.

The Dufrene business house on Farnam street between Eighteenth and Nineteenth streets is nearing completion. Bellamy & Hornung have the contract for the heating and plumbing. Milton Rogers & Son completed the tiling work in the building, which consists of the floor and walls in bath and toilet rooms and in the vestibule.

The electric wiring for the new Barker building at Nineteenth and Harney is being done by the American Electric company.

Plans and specifications have been prepared for a residence for Prof. Emil Richter, to be erected immediately, at a cost of about $2,500, on a lot near Eighteenth and Laird streets. Plans have also been prepared for a home for Theodore Vogel, to cost about $3,000, which will be built near Sixteenth and Martha streets.

The chief officer of the International Society of Building Inspectors arraigns the architects of the country in an able article in a recent issue of Building Management.

"Particularly is there apathy," says this high authority, "in the profession regarding fireproof construction. When first confronted with this apathy one is dumfounded, for it seems inexplicable, but we are face to face with the fact that if the city officers do not require it and the owner does not specifically call for it there is scarce one architect out of ten who would think of even advising, let alone insisting, upon anything beyond the old-fashioned, combustible and expensive mode of construction—wooden joists, framing, etc. This is a most peculiar state of affairs, but a fact nevertheless. For years our people have mistakenly bent their energies waterwards. We have devised wonderful alarm systems, splendid fire departments and other expensive inventions with which to fight fire, and we have paid our billions in insurance and other alleged cures, but have failed to grasp the cardinal principle that prevention is infinitely better and saner than any attempt to cure epidemical or other diseases, including fire. Building properly and offering little or no fuel for fire to burn is the one logical solution of this grievous problem."

A Twentieth Century Cottage

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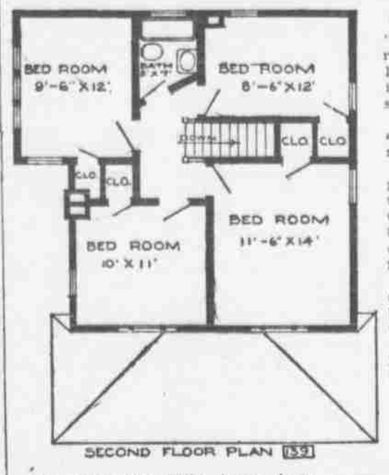
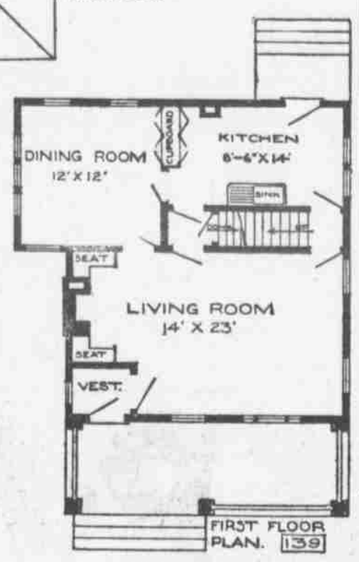


SECOND FLOOR PLAN 139



FIRST FLOOR PLAN. 139

The attractive little home here shown is a one-story cottage, but three good chambers, as indicated in the floor plans, can be finished in the second story if needed. The spacious porch with its substantial columns, while adding considerable to the cost, improves the appearance of the house to such an extent that it is money well spent.

After passing through the vestibule we enter a fine large living room, which is separated from the bright, well-lighted dining room by an arch.

A double cupboard is substituted for a pantry between the kitchen and dining room.

The bath room, opening off the back hall, can be conveniently reached from either the chamber on this floor or those on the second.

A linen cupboard is provided at the end of the hall under the window.

The location of the chimneys permit stoves to be used in heating these rooms if preferred.

This house will cost $1,850 to build, exclusive of plumbing and heating.

The second edition of the 1907 "Twentieth Century Cottages" is now ready, and although it contains a larger number of views and floor plans it will be sent to our readers for the same price, 25 cents.

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Dad Murphy's Brevity.

Old Dad Murphy, as he was affectionately known to the boys on the road, was a conductor on a trunk line, transporting large shipments of live stock from the west. Dad had been in the service so long that the rules of railroading had become second nature to him, and the result of the superintendent's frequent orders to the trainmen to answer with military brevity all questions and messages, especially those by telegraph, to relieve the burden on the wires, had reduced Dad to habitually short, concise replies even to his conversation. On a baking hot July day, when not a breath of air was stirring, and the sun beat on the car roofs until the pitch pulled the soles off the brakeman's shoes, Dad, in looking over his train, discovered that eight hogs had succumbed to the heat. When passing the next telegraph station he threw off a message to the superintendent:

"Burhans, Supt.—Eight hogs dead acc't heat; advise. MURPHY, No. 78."

At the second telegraph office he received his answer:

"Murphy, Condr. 78—What is the present condition of the hogs? Ans. qk. "BURHANS."

Dad grunted, shifted his quid of finecut and wrote as follows:

"Burhans, Supt.—Hogs still dead. "MURPHY, 78."

—Judge's Library.

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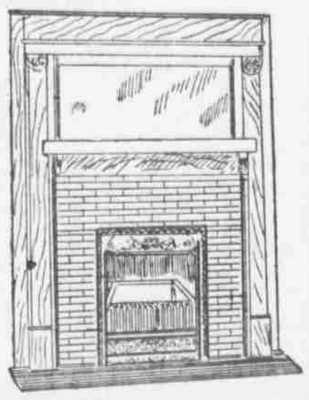

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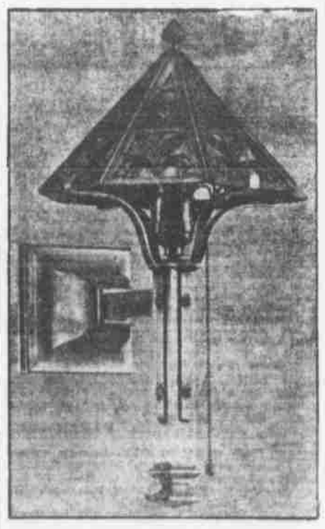

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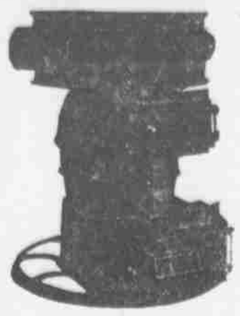

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