

EXISTING AND PREFERRED HOUSING OF AGED
COUPLES OF MODERATE INCOME IN MANHATTAN, KANSAS

by

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INTRODUCTION

The increase in the life span of people in the United States has produced a large old age population. The number of aged people 65 or over in the United States increased 6.8 percent between 1930 and 1940. That this is a continuing trend is shown by the estimate by the United States Bureau of the Census that the 1950 census report will show the aged population to be 11,000,000 or 7.6 percent of the total population.

The many social and economic problems created by the rapidly increasing proportion of older people in the nation have been brought to the attention of research and lay people in America by the National Conference on Aging held in Washington, D. C. in August, 1950.

Among the problems of the aged are the attitude of industry and business toward the employment of this group, the attitude of the community and of the immediate families, those psychological and physical changes which occur within the aged persons themselves during the aging process, and the attainment of satisfying living arrangements.

The physical and financial changes which occur to aging people may necessitate a revision of their dwellings to meet the requirements of their older years. It is believed that many of the aged married couples of America in moderate cir-

cumstances do not have housing which meet their requirements.

There has been little research in the field of housing for the aged. In developing a housing program for the aged it is believed necessary to know more about the aged families themselves, about their activities in the home, present and preferred housing features and facilities. This study aims to investigate these factors, to make recommendations and develop a floor plan for a house which meets the requirements of this age group.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the existing housing of aged couples of moderate income.
2. To study their preferences for housing facilities.
3. To determine space requirements indicated by certain of their activities.
4. To make certain recommendations for housing which meet the requirements of this age group.
5. To develop floor plans which make adequate provision for meeting these requirements.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Philosophy of Housing for the Aged

During the past decade research in housing has been increasingly concerned with the functional approach to house

planning. There has been an awareness of the importance of knowing the emotional and physical needs of the family and of individuals. The kind of activities, and their extent, and the facilities and features desired must be known in order to provide housing that adequately meets the needs of the families for which it is designed.

The sociologist, Riemer (17), in discussing the livability of housing said:

Housing is made of a stubborn material; so are family customs. Residential structures must be aimed at a life-length of at least half a century. During that time, they don't give way. It's the family that will have to change its habits, to eliminate activities that don't fit into the home, to suffer from undue congestion and from the interference of different activities with each other.

A broad interpretation of the role which the house plays in the whole of family life has developed. In summarizing this interpretation Agan (1) stated:

Thus it seems that housing may affect family life as it provides adequately or inadequately for the private order, which includes the whole of family life and the recreational and social activities centered about the family.

Housing should provide for rest and quiet, relaxation and a sense of peace, opportunity for self-expression and freedom of action, the routine activities of the home, and companionship in the home. It should provide for satisfying social contact between members of the family and the world outside. The house should remain important as background; it should not become a fetish that hampers rather than contributes to the life of the group.

Shelter has been translated into the term "housing" which nowadays is defined as something much more than mere

shelter. Going a step further Donahue (4) substituted for shelter the term "living arrangements" and thereby invested shelter with another factor--that of orderly planning. This seems to be particularly apt because housing, to be suitable for older people requires the element of orderly planning perhaps even more than does housing for any other group in our society.

In approaching the study of living arrangements for the older members of our society it is apparent that in view of their present needs and future demand relatively little conscientious planning has been done.

There are several reasons for the apparent lack of thoughtful research in housing for the aged. These are:

1. The lack of demand for such housing.
2. The lack of interest and understanding of what is involved.
3. The variability in the needs of older people.

As further confirmation of these reasons Donahue (4) has said:

During the past several decades the growing number of older people has forced upon us an awareness that they are persons and individuals and that almost all their needs continue to be much what they have always been, although in changing degrees of intensity. This has meant the gradual recognition that no single plan or living arrangement necessarily remains suitable for a person just because he is old. In fact, this may be the very reason for the direct opposite to be true, unless the person has been placed for terminal care in what is definitely known to be the last stages of illness.

Satisfactory living arrangements for older people take

into account personal choice, and psychological, economic, social, and health requirements at any given time. Of great importance to older people, as to people of all ages, is the human need for personal privacy. Living arrangements which do not provide for such privacy fail to meet the primary requisite of suitability.

Old age, according to Donahue (4), is a period when losses affect the social status of persons more deeply than do similar losses at an earlier period of life---loss of one's partner if married, loss of relatives and friends through death or distance, loss of community recognition because a younger generation has taken charge, and loss of employment and income. Often older people remain in unsuitable housing because they are reluctant to relinquish anything that is tangible evidence of their former status in a community.

Usually older people prefer to remain in familiar surroundings and neighborhoods, but they can adjust themselves to a new environment if given encouragement and help in doing so. Important in the choice of location for a new home is the proximity of church, library, shopping facilities, and recreation, or easy transportation to them.

Among the social changes having an impact upon the lives of older people is the urbanization of the population. Relative to this change, Tibbits (19) stated that 16 percent of the people in the United States in 1850 lived in communities of 2,500 population or over. In 1940, the urban population

was 57 percent of the total population and in 1947 it was 59 percent of the total population. Only 19 percent of the aged lived on farms, although it is recognized that it is easier to provide housing for older people in farm homes than in many urban apartments and dwellings.

Foremost among the problems faced by the aged which have a bearing on their housing is economic difficulty. Steinhaus (Platform, 7) stated that only 20 percent of those over 65 have been able to retire on pensions or investments of any kind. Of the remaining 80 percent, 27 percent are still self-supporting through work, 25 percent depend on public agencies and 28 percent depend on families, friends, and private charities. Dean (2) stated that in 1944, among the aged couples and single persons 60 years of age and over in urban areas, 26 percent were in the \$1,000-\$1,500 income group, 33 percent earned between \$500 and \$1,000, and 56 percent earned less than \$500.

Other reports confirm these data. One, in the Monthly Labor Review (15), stated that of almost 11 1/2 million persons 65 or over in 1948, about 3 1/2 million had no money income of their own; 7 1/2 million had some income, but of these one-third earned less than \$500. According to the same report a survey made in April, 1950 showed that six percent of the persons seeking opportunities for employment through public employment offices were 65 and over.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (14) reports that in 1945 at the peak of the war effort only one-third of those 65 or over were employed by others or were self-employed. Only nine percent of the women were gainfully employed, although they make up the larger part of the old age group.

The manner in which indigent old people use the resources available to them for supplying their shelter is shown in a study of recipients of old age assistance made by the Federal Security Administration in 1944. It covered 19 states and is reported by Tibbits (19):

30 percent lived in homes of other people,

70 percent lived in their own establishments, owned or rented; of these

25 percent with spouse only,

17 percent with spouse and other,

28 percent alone.

Taking cognizance of these facts, Hill (9) has said that private industry is not likely to solve the housing problem of the aged, and the only solution seems to be government housing for the indigent aged person. For this purpose funds could be set aside through housing authorities just as funds are spent for other groups of people.

By 1946 the Federal Government had recognized the need of public housing for the aged. Dean (2), in an address before the National Conference of Social Work in 1946, stated that the Federal Public Housing Authority was considering revision

of its policy in order to provide special housing for aged couples and individuals. The Taft-Ellender-Wagner Bill would have made housing for persons as well as family groups eligible for federal aid. This would have aided single, aged persons. However, there was no such provision in the Housing Act of 1949.

In some cities local public housing authorities are beginning to give attention to the needs of the aged. As reported by Kraus (11), one such development is Fort Greene House. This was built by the New York City Housing Authority with state funds and includes apartments for the aged. Another development is Roosevelt Park, Millville, New Jersey, a small colony of 18 bungalows built for the aged. The state of Washington has been the first to encourage cooperative housing for small groups of elderly people.

Europe has experienced the same population change as has occurred in America, an ever increasing proportion of aged people. There, the aged are housed frequently with their children and friends and less often as separate households. According to Denby (3), the patriarchal system is universal in Italy. By custom aged parents live with their married children, who would be held in disrepute if the aged were allowed to live in an institution of any kind.

In England, according to Donahue (4), progress has been made in public housing of the aged during the twenty year

period between the last two wars. Of 1,250,000 units built under the jurisdiction of local housing authorities, 70,000 to 75,000 units were suitable for and occupied by aged persons. In addition, there was housing for about 50,000 persons in the four great housing trusts in London. There were also several score of housing societies operating with public and private assistance that had given considerable attention to the housing of aged persons. As reported by Garrow (6), the Ministry of Health in England has endorsed the principle that aged people are happiest when housed in small homes with a family atmosphere and has urged the building of homes to accommodate 30-35 people. Although these are usually intended to be self-supporting, the rates are low.

According to Denby (3), the first municipal poor-law home for aged people in Sweden was built in 1914 and housed 1,400 persons. It was designed for 80 couples, one member of each having to be over 60. It had an elevator, central heating, and was composed of one-room apartments. When a member of a couple died, the one remaining moved to adjacent "single quarters". There the aged person shared a room with another pensioner. These homes were designed primarily for persons with old age pensions, but persons with private incomes were accepted also.

As reported by Donahue (4), the local government in Sweden, especially in Stockholm, provides parish homes for the aged at the present time. Most of the money for building is provided

by the parish council with some subsidy from the municipality. Before the war there were 20 of these parish homes in Stockholm. In addition, five homes built by the municipality itself, and 29 homes built by private organizations were scattered about the city, thus permitting the aged to remain near friends, relatives, and familiar neighborhoods.

In a report made by the Vancouver Housing Association (10), it was estimated that over a long period five percent of all housing built in Vancouver should be especially designed for older people. A higher proportion is required initially to correct the present deficiency. It is the consensus of opinion of the members of this association that private enterprise cannot provide housing accommodations for the aged at rents which a majority can afford. They believe that the municipal governments must assume responsibility for the housing care of its older citizens, either by building the accommodations themselves or through the medium of a Housing Authority, or by assisting non-profit organizations to do so. The following types of accommodation are regarded as requirements:

1. Self-contained dwellings in cottages or apartments for married couples,
2. One-room apartments or hostels for single person,
3. Homes for persons no longer able or willing to live independently,
4. Integration of the different types of accommodations

so that persons can move from house to hostel to home according to their changing requirements.

The contrast between the prevailing situation in the United States and Europe regarding housing provisions for its aged population has been drawn by Garrow (6). She noted that in the United States the indigent, sick, and infirm aged people are cared for in public homes provided mainly by private charity. In Europe, the government has assumed the responsibility. It is usual in the United States for many of the aged persons to be cared for in private homes, a large number of these being recipients of public assistance. Experiments in housing of the aged in the United States have been largely by private organizations, while in Europe the governments have undertaken many experiments.

Philosophy of Geriatrics

Concurrent with the development of a philosophy for housing the aged is the development of the philosophy of geriatrics. This is primarily the science of the medical and hygienic care of, or the diseases of, aged persons. In its hygienic aspects one of its objectives is to add life to the older years. Only those phases of the philosophy of geriatrics which bear on the housing needs of the aged are discussed in this thesis.

In an address before the Kansas Conference on Aging in 1951, Dr. Edward H. Hashinger (8) said that it was not enough to add years to life but that we must add life to years. Science has not actually lengthened the number of years of life, but it has made it possible for more persons to reach the maximum life expectancy. More people live to reach the age 45. In 1900, of 100 live births two-thirds died before the age 45 while one-third died after reaching the age 45. In 1950, of 100 live births, one-third died before reaching the age 45, while two-thirds died after reaching the age 45. A man reaching age 45 has a life expectancy of about 20 additional years.

Although more people reach old age than formerly, scientific research to date has not lessened chronic illness among the aged. Present data show that chronic illness is increasing. Statistics appearing in Platform (7), showed that of every 1,000 persons

At 60 about 250 suffer from chronic illness,

At 80 more than one-half need regular medical care,

At 90 more than 900 need regular medical care.

Further amplification of the effects of chronic illness is stated by Stieglitz (18):

Chronic disease is most prevalent in the two decades between thirty-five and fifty-five, whereas disabling invalidism is at its peak from 50 to 75. A great share of the disability occurring in the senescent age group arises from the progressive disorders so common 20 years earlier. This should remind us that we must start before the beginning of the second forty years if we are going to prevent illness in the latter part of senescence.

Although many people over 65 do suffer from chronic illness, between 70 and 80 percent of them can live in their own home if the services of a visiting nurse and clinical supervision are provided. From a study of 356 persons receiving Public Welfare Services in Warren County, North Carolina in June, 1949, Linqvist and Wilkie (13) found that 66 2/3 percent were able to care for themselves, 28 percent required considerable care from others, and 5 percent were bedridden. Medical and health care had been provided for more persons in the study than any other type of non-financial help. Slightly more than one-third had received help of this kind. Many persons with minor ailments would have been able to maintain their own homes happily and efficiently if the services of visiting housekeepers and nurses could have provided periodic routine services.

Stieglitz (19) summarizes the philosophy of the hygiene of geriatrics as follows:

If society fosters research to save and prolong life and applies these procedures which increase the average longevity, it must accept the responsibility of the lives thus prolonged. This responsibility entails far more than a mere monetary dole for the aged. It involves the effective utilization of older people and the reorientation of their part in and usefulness to, society as a whole. Furthermore it entails the individual responsibility of maintaining health and vigor until senility becomes true infirmity, for the value of life is to be measured not only by its length.

Some of the changes in the housing needs of the aged stem from ill health. Statistics show that if people live

long enough nearly all will have some measure of illness, therefore the living arrangements must be adaptable to meet the physical changes which occur during the process of aging. Relative to this Donahue (4) has said:

For architects and other experts in creating the physical structures of housing it should be simple to design facilities for subsidizing and reducing the adverse handicaps of age, such as lameness, deafness, failing eyesight, tremors and general debility.

The unusual site and physical planning which has gone into designing adequate housing for handicapped veterans prove the possibility of adapting the same amount and kind of thought to housing for handicapped civilians and to those veterans of life itself, who are our concern today.

Although the physical needs of the aged are important, their emotional needs should also have consideration. The value to an aged person of clinging to familiar surroundings and possessions and to old friends may outweigh any other consideration in importance. As long as people retain control of their activities they prefer to accept some physical hazards in order to attain other satisfactions.

Of prime importance in housing programs for the aged is the provision of an adequate number of small dwellings suitable for one or two persons at low and middle price levels. According to Kraus (11) and others, the dwellings should be convenient and easy to manage, requiring the minimum of house-keeping effort. They should be freed of common hazards likely to injure persons of slowed reactions, impaired vision and

hearing, and decreased mobility. About 20 percent should be designed for persons actually incapacitated, who may be in wheel chairs and require help in bathing, toileting, and dressing. It is highly desirable that such dwellings be planned in groups large enough for the economical development of group services such as housekeeping, attendant and nursing aid, as well as recreational facilities, both indoors and out.

Nicholson (16) has said that the importance of "home" to every human being should be recognized and that society must appreciate all that this implies in terms of personal recognition, physical and emotional security, and freedom to express one's own personality as an individual. Human beings continue to show great individual variation even though they may have become old or sick. The ideal home is one which meets the needs of the people living in it.

Many aged persons in the United States live in the homes of their children. Pertaining to this, Lawton (12) has stated that this condition gives rise to three classes of family relationships:

1. Those families in which young and old work out their living plans happily or at least with reasonable satisfaction.
2. Those families in which the difficulties of adjustment are greater for the older person whether for emotional, economical, or social reasons.

3. Those families in which the difficulties of adjustment in acceptable relationships are greater for the younger generations. The difficulty may be financial or emotional.

Although many aged persons live with their children, the theory that the aged are a responsibility of their children is becoming less effective as urbanization increases. Thus it seems important that local authorities, private builders, or organization-sponsored projects set aside an adequate percentage of dwellings suitable for aged people. According to Tibbits (19), these housing units should not be segregated. Older people want to be a part of a "moving world". Even though their part may be that of observers, it is a mistake to remove them from it. They should, however, be protected from excessive noise and confusion and should have easy access to churches, shopping centers, libraries and recreation and other community facilities.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

This study of the existing and preferred housing of selected married couples in the city of Manhattan, Kansas was made to determine the housing requirements of aged married couples and their preferences for certain housing facilities.

The density of the aged population in Manhattan, Kansas was determined from the county assessor's ward books for 1950.

Those persons 65 years of age or older were indexed by name, age, place of residence, and ward number. Included among the aged were 296 married couples, the husband of which was between 65-74. The financial limits imposed for the study reduced this number to roughly half, or 154 couples. These were located by place of residence on a ward map of the city.

Married couples, rather than widowed or single persons, were chosen because they represent the normal family and are likely to maintain separate dwelling units. The age range of 65-74 for the husbands was selected for two reasons. It represents the first decade following the normal age of retirement. Beyond this age there is a marked tendency toward a lessening of activity and toward financial or physical inability to maintain separate living establishments.

Only couples of moderate income were included. They comprise a large and important segment of the population and probably also comprise the largest group within the ages set for this study. They were thought to be among those maintaining living establishments. Couples receiving old age assistance were eliminated, not because for them there is an absence of housing problems, but because they were thought to be less likely to live in and maintain separate homes. Couples whose incomes exceeded \$3,000 were eliminated because they are less likely to have housing problems and are more likely to be in a financial position to resolve them.

In conferences with personnel from the two local banks

it was decided that the upper limit of the annual income should be no lower than \$3,000 because of the difficulty of elimination and an increasing possibility of error. Although a \$3,000 annual income is relatively high for the couples living solely on retirement funds, the opportunities for persons of this age to be employed, and to add to their income through room and apartment rentals made this income seem reasonable.

Personnel from the two local banks, the comptroller at Kansas State College, and personnel from the Riley County Social Welfare Office assisted in the elimination of those couples who did not fall within these financial limitations. Although there may have been some opportunity for error by this method of elimination, the homogeneity of the group studied is evidence that there were no wide discrepancies.

In order to obtain a representative sample for interview, a statistician from the Kansas State College Experiment Station drew a random sample of 50 couples proportioned among the eligible old age couples residing in each of the wards. This sample consisted of approximately one-third of the aged couples eligible for interview in each of the wards and was regarded as adequate. Referring to a numbered list of the old age couples identical numbers were drawn from the Statistical Tables for Biological, Agricultural and Medical Research by Fischer and Yates (5). Substitutions were drawn to maintain the sample at 50 couples should there be refusals, or if some

of the couples were found to have moved. These were used when two of the selected couples refused an interview, and for three who had moved from the wards.

The interview-schedule, a copy of which appears in the Appendix, contains questions bearing on the activities typical of aged couples which determine their space requirements and their preferences for certain housing facilities and features. These were to be used to make recommendations for housing which meet the requirements of couples in this age group. The divisions of subject matter were arranged to establish rapport between the interviewer and respondent rather than by a logical order.

During the months of October to December, 1950, personal interviews were made with the wife, the husband, or the wife and husband. The wife was the person usually interviewed. Both the husband and wife were present in 12 interviews, in each of which the husband took an active part. In three other cases only the husband was present and he felt that he could express accurately their joint opinions, so he gave the interview.

The interviewer read the questions and checked the answers in the blanks provided in the schedule. When respondents were asked to make a choice among several different living arrangements they were given a typed copy of these to facilitate their choice. The data obtained from the interviews were tabulated and tables were made.

Although this was an homogeneous group it seemed to the interviewer that there was a lessening of activity, less employment, and more illness among those aged 70-74. Therefore, for purposes of tabulating and analyzing the data, the couples were divided into two groups, the younger group, 65-69, and the older group, 70-74, with a report whenever there were notable differences in the data. In certain instances where there was a difference between the desires of private families and those of quasi-families, these differences were also noted. Conclusions and certain recommendations for housing which meet the requirements of this age group were made.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data are presented describing the old age couples studied, their space requiring activities, present and preferred house planning facilities and features. These all affect plans for their living arrangements.

The Couples

The aged couples, 154 of whom were within the age and financial limitations of this study, were located by place of residence in the ward map of the city of Manhattan, Kansas as is shown in Fig. 1 (Appendix). A sample of approximately one-third or 50 proportioned according to the old age popula-

tion in the wards, was drawn for interview, Table 1.

Table 1. Population by wards of the city of Manhattan, Kansas of all old age persons, all couples, number eligible and number chosen.

| Wards | Aged persons | Couples | | |
|-------|--------------|---------|----------|--------|
| | | All | Eligible | Chosen |
| 1 | 125 | 29 | 16 | 5 |
| 2 | 151 | 31 | 13 | 4 |
| 3 | 193 | 55 | 35 | 11 |
| 4 | 190 | 60 | 34 | 11 |
| 5 | 128 | 46 | 29 | 10 |
| 6 | 52 | 14 | 9 | 3 |
| 7 | 168 | 61 | 18 | 6 |
| Total | 1007 | 296 | 154 | 50 |

All of the couples selected for this study maintained their own homes, although 13 had relatives living with them as part of the family group.

The determining age for selection of respondents for interview was a minimum of 65 for the husband, because this is retirement age and affects the status of employment more frequently for the husband than for the wife. All husbands were thus 65 years of age or over. Thirty-one, or approximately two-thirds of those interviewed, were in the age group, 65-69, and 19, or approximately one-third, were in the age group, 70-74.

Because the age of the wife was not considered in the selection of respondents, certain of the wives in the study

were found to be younger than the lower age set for the husbands. Among the wives, 20, or two-fifths, were younger than 65 years. Seventeen, or about one-third, of the wives were between the ages 65-69, and 12, or about one-fourth, between the ages 70-74, Table 2.

Table 2. Ages of husbands and wives.

| Age | Husband | | Wife | |
|----------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Under 55 | - | - | 3 | 6 |
| 56-64 | - | - | 17 | 34 |
| 65-69 | 31 | 62 | 17 | 34 |
| 70-74 | 19 | 38 | 12 | 24 |
| Over 74 | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |

Occupation and Status of Employment

Aged people in Manhattan who desire employment are apparently in a fortunate position because employment opportunities for this age group are greater than is popularly believed to be true over the nation. The proximity of Kansas State College and of the Ft. Riley Military Reservation make employment possible for a number of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, as well as providing opportunity for income from rental

of rooms or apartments.

It is apparent that the husbands in this study were an active group, as 70 percent of them were still employed. Farming had been the occupation of 36 percent of all husbands and 20 percent remained active in this occupation. Semi-skilled occupations such as floor finishing, stone masonry, plumbing, cabinet making, and clerking had been engaged in by 30 percent of the husbands, and 20 percent were still thus employed. Of the 20 percent who were employed in unskilled work such as janitoring, lawn and yard maintenance, trash hauling, and street cleaning, only two percent had retired. Fourteen percent of the husbands had been engaged in professional occupations and only two percent had retired.

When the age groups were compared, a tendency toward less employment among those of the older group was observed. Among the older couples 16 percent of the unskilled and 10 percent of the professional workers are still employed, as compared to 19 percent and 13 percent among the younger couples, Table 3.

The wives were more active as homemakers than as workers outside the home. Forty-four percent had been employed outside the home at some time during their marriage but only 14 percent were so employed at the time of the interview. Of those having been employed, a considerable number had been engaged in semi-skilled occupations such as cook, maid, nurses' aide, janitor, presser, and a few in professional

Table 3. Occupation and status of employment of all husbands, and by age groups.

| Occupation | Status of employment | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | All | | | | 65-69 | | | | 70-74 | | | |
| | Employed | | Retired | | Employed | | Retired | | Employed | | Retired | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Farmer | 10 | 20 | 8 | 16 | 6 | 19 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 21 | 4 | 21 |
| Semi-skilled | 10 | 20 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 23 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 16 | 3 | 16 |
| Unskilled | 9 | 18 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 19 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| Professional | 6 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 35 | 70 | 15 | 30 | 23 | 74 | 8 | 26 | 12 | 63 | 7 | 37 |

occupations such as journalism, library, and stenography.

Fewer of the wives in the older age group than in the younger group had worked outside the home, only 21 percent having been so employed. The younger age group reflects the present tendency for wives to work outside the home, 58 percent of the wives having been gainfully employed, as is indicated in Table 4.

Health of the Couples

Science has contributed greatly to the increased life span of people today, but it has not eliminated for aged persons the tendency to suffer from chronic illness or accidents. It is known that of every 1,000 persons having good health at the age of 60 nearly 25 percent will develop a chronic illness within five years. The couples in this study likewise showed a tendency toward illness, 30 percent having required bed care for an illness during the past year. There was more illness among the older couples, over one-third of whom had had illnesses requiring bed care during the past year as compared to only one-fourth of the younger group.

Illnesses generally were of relatively short duration. Only six percent of all couples had been ill for as long as one or two months. Those in the older group tended to have longer illnesses. Ten percent of this group had had an illness of as much as one to two months as compared to three

Table 4. Status of employment of all wives, and by age groups.

| Status of employment | Wives | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Never employed | 28 | 56 | 13 | 42 | 15 | 79 |
| Past employment | 22 | 44 | 18 | 58 | 4 | 21 |
| Presently employed | 7 | 14 | 6 | 19 | 1 | 5 |

percent of the younger group.

Although accidents were not prevalent among couples in this study, it was found that seven, or 14 percent, had had confining accidents during the past few years. Again the older couples were those most affected. About 20 percent of the older couples and 10 percent of the younger couples had had confining accidents, Table 5.

Because of the tendency toward illnesses requiring bed care, it seemed suitable to inquire concerning the arrangements regarded as convenient for the care of the sick. Most of the couples in this study were satisfied with the present arrangement of their homes for caring for the sick, approximately 90 percent expressing satisfaction.

The bedroom and the dining room were the usual rooms used during any illness for the last several years. About nine-tenths of the couples used the bedroom and the dining room and about one-fifth used the living room. Because of the short duration of the illnesses, it is possible that a considerable number used the living room during convalescence. Most couples preferred to keep medicines and first aid supplies in the bathroom, Table 6.

Table 5. Requiring bed care, length of illness, and having accidents, by all couples and by age groups.

| Item | Couples | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Requiring bed care last year | 15 | 30 | 8 | 26 | 7 | 36 |
| Length of illness | | | | | | |
| 1-3 weeks | 9 | 18 | 5 | 16 | 4 | 21 |
| 1-2 months | 3 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Other | 3 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| Having accidents | 7 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 20 |

Table 6. Arrangements for care of the sick.

| Item | : Number | : Percent |
|--------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Satisfied with arrangements | 44 | 88 |
| Not satisfied | 6 | 12 |
| Rooms used | | |
| Bedroom | 45 | 90 |
| Dining room | 44 | 88 |
| Living room | 11 | 22 |
| Storage of medicine and first aid supplies | | |
| Bathroom | 44 | 88 |
| Kitchen | 6 | 12 |
| Bedroom | 2 | 4 |

Among older people there is a tendency to rest during the day, many preferring to lie down. In this study, one or both of 41 couples, or 82 percent, wanted to lie down during the day. More of the wives than the husbands, about three-fifths of the former and one-half of the latter, desired a place to lie down. The living room was chosen as a place to lie by slightly more than half of these couples and the bedroom was chosen by over one-third of them. Some couples use more than one location for lying down during the day, Table 7.

As people age they become conscious of features in their homes which cause accidents. It appears that the aged people in this study found their homes were satisfactory in this

respect, or they had not become conscious of hazards. Only about one-fifth of the couples had made changes as a precaution against accidents. Because stairways are hazardous for aged people, they were found to have received attention when accident prevention was considered, 10 having repaired steps or installed handrails, as is shown in Table 8.

Table 7. Preferred location for a place to lie down by those couples lying down.

| Item | Number | Percent |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Lying down | 41 | 82 |
| Location of place to lie down | | |
| Living room | 26 | 52 |
| Bedroom | 19 | 38 |
| Dining room | 8 | 16 |
| Basement | 1 | 2 |
| Porch | 1 | 2 |

Table 8. Changes made in the home to prevent accidents.

| Item | Number | Percent |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Making changes | 11 | 22 |
| Kind made | | |
| Installed handrails | 7 | 14 |
| Repaired steps | 3 | 6 |
| Removed scatter rugs | 3 | 6 |
| Built new stairway | 2 | 4 |
| Installed lights in basement stairway and halls | 1 | 2 |
| Changed door swings | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 17* | 34 |

* More than one change per couple.

The Dwelling

The single family dwelling is the predominant type chosen by the couples in this study, four-fifths of whom live in this type. The two-family house was chosen by only one-seventh of all couples. More of the older group preferred it than did the younger group. Only six percent of all couples, all of whom were in the younger group, chose to live in an apartment, Table 9.

Slightly more than two-fifths of all couples used their dwelling as a source of income as is shown by the number living as quasi-families.¹ More of the younger group than of the older lived as quasi-families; 51 percent of the former and only 26 percent of the latter.

Older people fatigue easily, engage in few activities, and have few or no other members of their families in their homes. Thus it appeared likely that they would desire dwellings with fewer rooms than are desired by younger families. Because of rental opportunities in this community the number of rooms desired in the dwellings of certain of the couples studied was greater than had been expected.

The number of rooms in the dwellings varied from 3 to 13.

¹ Groups consisting of persons related either by blood, marriage, or adoption, together with unrelated persons, such as lodgers, who live in the household.

Table 9. Type of dwelling unit by all couples and by age groups.

| Item | Couples | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Type of dwelling unit | | | | | | |
| 1-family | 40 | 80 | 25 | 80 | 15 | 79 |
| 2-family | 7 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 21 |
| Apartment | 3 | 6 | 3 | 10 | - | - |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 |
| 1-family dwelling | | | | | | |
| Private family | 19 | 38 | 9 | 29 | 10 | 53 |
| Quasi-family | 21 | 42 | 16 | 51 | 5 | 26 |
| Total | 40 | 80 | 25 | 80 | 15 | 79 |

Quasi-families had the larger dwellings, the number of rooms in their dwellings varied from 4 to 13, while in no case did the number of rooms in the dwellings of couples living as private families exceed 7. An average of 8 rooms was desired by the 21 couples living as quasi-families and an average of 5.8 by the 19 couples living as private families.

There is a tendency for a little less than half or 42 percent of the couples to prefer larger houses than they now occupy. Only 3 couples out of the 50 would reduce the number of rooms in their present dwelling if they could. Of the 7 couples having four rooms or less, 5 were satisfied and 2 would add rooms. Of the 50 couples, 31 had the common size of five or six rooms in their dwellings. Of these, 13 were satisfied, 16 would add rooms and 2 would reduce the number of rooms. Twelve couples had larger houses of 7 to 13 rooms. Eight of these were satisfied, but 3 would add rooms and 1 would reduce the number.

These tendencies were determined for the 31 couples in the younger age group, the 19 couples in the older age group and the 40 couples living in single family dwellings as private or quasi-families.

Those couples in the younger group and those living as quasi-families were the least satisfied with the number of rooms in their dwelling. Of those in the younger group 49 percent were satisfied. Those living in dwellings of 5-6

rooms or less were least satisfied. Of the 21 living thus 12 would add rooms and 1 would reduce rooms. Even of those living in the larger 7 to 13 room houses 2 would have added rooms if they could and only 1 would reduce the number of rooms.

Of the quasi-families, 11 lived in dwellings having 7 to 13 rooms. Of these 7 were satisfied, 3 would add and 1 would reduce the number. Ten lived in dwellings having 5 to 6 rooms, of these, only 1 was satisfied, 7 would add rooms and 2 would reduce the number.

Those couples in the older age group and those living as private families were most satisfied with the number of rooms in their houses. Of those in the older age group 57 percent were satisfied with their number of rooms. Those having 4 rooms or less and those having 7 to 13 rooms were almost completely satisfied. Of the 14 having 5 to 6 rooms, 7 were satisfied, but 6 would add rooms and 1 would reduce the number. Of the 19 couples living as private families in single-family dwelling all but 2 lived in a 5 to 6 room house. Ten were satisfied and 7 would add rooms. The couples having 4-room and 7-room dwellings were satisfied with the number, Table 10.

Among the couples desiring to add rooms to their present dwelling, the majority appear to desire rooms for rental purposes. Of the 21 couples desiring to add rooms, 17 would add bedrooms. Thirteen couples would be satisfied with 1 additional bedroom in their homes, but 4 of the couples would add 2 or 3 bedrooms. Among other rooms desired were bathrooms, utility

Table 10. Number of rooms in present dwelling and preferences for adding or reducing the number.

| Item | 4 or less rooms: 5-6 rooms: 7-13 rooms: | | | Total |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------|----|----|-------|
| | Number | | | |
| All couples | | | | |
| Having | 7 | 31 | 12 | 50 |
| Satisfied | 5 | 13 | 8 | 26 |
| Add | 2 | 16 | 3 | 21 |
| Reduce | - | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Ages 65-69 | | | | |
| Having | 4 | 17 | 10 | 31 |
| Satisfied | 2 | 6 | 7 | 15 |
| Add | 2 | 10 | 2 | 14 |
| Reduce | - | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Ages 70-74 | | | | |
| Having | 3 | 14 | 2 | 19 |
| Satisfied | 3 | 7 | 1 | 11 |
| Add | - | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| Reduce | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Private family | | | | |
| Having | 1 | 17 | 1 | 19 |
| Satisfied | 1 | 10 | 1 | 12 |
| Add | - | 7 | - | 7 |
| Reduce | - | - | - | - |
| Quasi-family | | | | |
| Having | - | 10 | 11 | 21 |
| Satisfied | - | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| Add | - | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| Reduce | - | 2 | 1 | 3 |

rooms, rooms for eating and sewing, and kitchens, as is shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Rooms preferred by couples desiring to add rooms.

| Item | Adding rooms | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent |
| Desiring to add rooms | 21 | 42 |
| Rooms desired | | |
| Bedroom | 17 | 34 |
| Finish a basement room | 3 | 6 |
| Bathroom | 3 | 6 |
| Utility room | 2 | 4 |
| Dinette | 2 | 4 |
| Dining room | 2 | 4 |
| Kitchen | 1 | 2 |
| Sewing room | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 31* | 62 |
| Number of added bedrooms desired | | |
| 1 bedroom | 13 | 26 |
| 2 bedrooms | 3 | 6 |
| 3 bedrooms | 1 | 2 |

* Some couples would add several rooms.

Aged couples tend to be satisfied with the present room arrangement within their homes unless the home has been inconvenient and unsatisfactory for the performance of the activities of the family, but about one-third would make changes. The following changes in room arrangement of dwellings were desired:

Relocation of bathrooms, bedrooms, stairways, and front entrances.

Combine dining and living room.

Separate living room and bedroom.

Provide opening between kitchen and dining room.

Enlarge stairways and bedroom.

Remodel kitchens.

Several changes would be made by most families desiring room rearrangements.

Of the aged couples interviewed for this study, 92 percent were home owners. Although some had lived in their present dwelling as long as 35 years, it appears that ownership of the present home for these couples may have become desirable within 10 years of the age of retirement. Seventy percent of all couples had lived 10 years or less in their present home. Among the older couples, about 58 percent had chosen their present home no more than 10 years ago, or when they were between the ages of 60-64. Of the younger couples, over 75 percent had chosen their house no more than 10 years ago, or when they were 55 or older, as is shown in Table 12. The 4 couples who did not own their present home had chosen it within the past four years.

Table 12. Time lived in present home by all couples and by age groups.

| Number of years | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| 0- 2 | 8 | 16 | 7 | 23 | 1 | 5 |
| 3- 5 | 15 | 30 | 9 | 29 | 6 | 32 |
| 6-10 | 12 | 24 | 8 | 26 | 4 | 21 |
| 11-15 | 3 | 6 | - | - | 3 | 16 |
| 16-25 | 7 | 14 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 16 |
| 26-35 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 10 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 |

The community chosen by a family for its home usually is one which offers the advantages of educational facilities, opportunities for employment, pleasant environment for retiring, or nearness to relatives. Among the couples in this study four-fifths chose this community to be near work, for retirement, or to educate children. Only about one-seventh chose this community to be near relatives. More of the older group than of the younger came here for the purpose of educating their children, Table 13. One-sixth of the couples who had located in this community to be near work had lived more than 10 years in their present home. Only one couple who gave retirement as the reason for locating in this community had lived more than 10 years in their present home, Table 14.

Table 13. Reasons for choosing this community by all couples and by age groups.

| Reasons for choice | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Near work | 15 | 30 | 9 | 29 | 6 | 32 |
| Retirement | 14 | 28 | 10 | 32 | 4 | 21 |
| To educate children | 11 | 22 | 5 | 16 | 6 | 32 |
| Near relatives | 7 | 14 | 5 | 16 | 2 | 10 |
| Other | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 |

Table 14. Time lived in present dwelling by reasons for choosing this community.

| Reasons for choice | Years lived in dwelling | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | 10 yrs or less | | 11-25 years | | Over 25 years | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Near work | 7 | 14 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 6 |
| Retirement | 13 | 26 | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| To educate children | 7 | 14 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Near relatives | 6 | 12 | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Other | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Total | 35 | 70 | 10 | 20 | 5 | 10 |

The specific location of the home in a community is important to the comfort and convenience of aged couples. A neighborhood that is friendly to the aged, the location of the home within walking distance of their church, and a quiet neighborhood were important considerations in the choice of location within this community by the aged couples in this study. Other requirements were conditioned by such factors as physical incapacity and possible lack of private transportation which made them wish to be near a bus line, a grocery store, and the park. Other factors seemed to reflect loneliness or a desire to be a part of this moving world. Among these were the desire to be near friends, to be on a busy street, and to be near town.

Among the couples in this study more of the older group than of the younger desired to be near a church, in a quiet neighborhood, and near friends. It was important to couples in the younger group to be near town; about one-fourth of the former and only about one-tenth of the latter considered a central location to be important as is shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Reasons for choosing present location in the community by all couples, and by age groups.

| Reasons for choosing | Couples | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Near people friendly to aged persons | 47 | 94 | 29 | 93 | 18 | 95 |
| Near their church | 40 | 80 | 22 | 71 | 18 | 95 |
| In a quiet neighborhood | 39 | 78 | 22 | 71 | 17 | 90 |
| Near the bus line | 36 | 72 | 22 | 71 | 14 | 74 |
| Near a grocery store | 35 | 70 | 20 | 64 | 15 | 79 |
| Near the park | 31 | 62 | 20 | 64 | 11 | 58 |
| Near friends | 30 | 60 | 17 | 55 | 13 | 69 |
| On a busy street | 11 | 22 | 7 | 22 | 4 | 21 |
| Close to town | 10 | 20 | 8 | 26 | 2 | 11 |
| Other | 5 | 10 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 5 |

Features Preferred in the Home which Add to
the Comfort of Older Couples

It is known that as people age, going up and down stairs becomes both difficult and hazardous. This is one of the reasons for their preference for one-story houses. In this study 78 percent of all couples preferred one-story houses and 22 percent a two-story house. Not all couples, however, had the preferred number of stories in their houses. Only 42 percent lived in one-story houses while 58 percent lived in two-story houses. Couples in the older group showed a greater preference for one-story houses, 84 percent expressing a desire for that type. In contrast, only 74 percent of the younger group desired one-story houses.

Because of their desire to rent rooms not all aged people live in one-story houses. Living in a two-story house is made easier for them if there is a bedroom and a bathroom on the first floor. Data in this study show that almost all of the couples desired a bedroom and a half bath on the first floor. If they could have only one bathroom in a two-story house, about 90 percent of the older group and 80 percent of the younger group wanted it on the first floor. If costs were not a consideration, all of the older group and 87 percent of the younger would have a half bath on the first floor. It thus appears that bathroom facilities on the first floor become increasingly important as people age, Table 16.

The location of the bathroom in a one-story house is likewise important to aged people. Because they frequently find it necessary to go to the bathroom during the night, its location adjacent to or near their bedroom seems desirable. The aged couples in this study showed such a preference, 94 percent expressing a desire for that location.

Table 16. Preference for location of bedrooms and baths of two-story houses.

| Item | : All | | : 65-69 | | : 70-74 | |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | :Number: | Percent: | :Number: | Percent: | :Number: | Percent: |
| First floor bedroom | 49 | 98 | 31 | 100 | 18 | 95 |
| First floor halfbath | 46 | 92 | 27 | 87 | 19 | 100 |
| First floor bath | 42 | 84 | 25 | 81 | 17 | 90 |
| Second floor bath only | 8 | 16 | 6 | 19 | 2 | 11 |

A good traffic route to the front door from the room or rooms in which aged people spend much of their time, and an outside entrance from the kitchen make possible the saving of steps and a resultant saving in energy. All of the couples in this study wanted a good traffic route to the front door from the rooms in which they spent most of their time and about 95 percent had it. A large number of couples, 90 percent, desired an outside entrance from the kitchen. Eighty-

four percent had an outside entrance from their kitchen.

Restful sleep depends partially upon a comfortable bedroom temperature, and this is especially important to older people because they are sensitive to both heat and cold. All of the couples interviewed wanted and had a cool bedroom in summer; about four-fifths expressed a preference for a heated bedroom in winter.

Basements provide needed storage space for the numerous articles and belongings accumulated over the years by aged people. Usually facilities are available in the basement for laundering and for drying clothes indoors, and space may be provided for a work-shop for the husband. These were among the reasons given for desiring a basement in their dwelling by four-fifths of the aged couples who had and desired a basement. More of the older than of the younger couples wanted a basement; 94 percent of the former and 84 percent of the latter expressed such a desire. Those couples not desiring a basement stated that the stairway had become too hazardous for them.

Aged people consider a porch a desirable feature because it provides a comfortable place from which to observe the activity of their neighborhood, for resting, and for carrying on certain of their activities. Every couple in this study wanted a porch. Slightly more than two-fifths of the couples wanted both a front and back porch. One-half of the younger couples wanted it on the front only and one-half of the older

group wanted both a front and back porch.

A garage may be used for the storage of garden equipment as well as for housing an automobile, and for that reason was desired by some couples who did not own an automobile. In this study 76 percent of all couples stated they wanted a garage. Although attaching the garage to the house would eliminate the hazard of an icy walk, one-half of the couples desiring a garage wanted it detached. About one-fourth would locate it on the alley and only one-fourth wanted it attached to the house, Table 17.

Waste disposal is a difficult problem for aged couples, especially during the winter when ice and snow make it difficult to carry waste and trash to containers on the alley. In spite of this hazard, about three-fifths preferred to locate the container for waste disposal on the alley and the container for unburnable trash beside an incinerator, also located there. A few couples stated they kept a small garbage container on the back porch during the winter, taking it to the alley only on "pick-up" days, Table 18.

Table 18. Disposal of waste and preference for location of container.

| Item | Garbage | | Unburnable trash | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|------------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Having collected | 41 | 82 | - | - |
| Feed it | 9 | 18 | - | - |
| Other | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| Total | 52* | 104 | - | - |
| Location | | | | |
| In garage | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Near back door | 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| On the alley | 31 | 62 | 32 | 64 |
| Beside incinerator | - | - | 14 | 28 |
| Other | 8 | 16 | - | - |
| Total | 41 | 82 | 50 | 100 |

* Two families feed some garbage and have some collected.

Facilities Provided or Desired

Certain facilities making daily routines easier and life more pleasant, such as electricity, running water, central heating, and flush toilet, are desired by families everywhere. Because of the handicaps of the aging process, it is especially important that the homes of the aged be equipped with those facilities. The couples in this study were fortunate in this respect, as all homes were equipped with electricity and running water, and all but one with a flush toilet.

Central heating was desired by nine-tenths of the couples and three-fourths of them had it. Some couples not expressing a preference for central heating stated that it was desirable but too expensive for their financial circumstances. Gas was the fuel used in 88 percent of the homes, in 12 percent coal was used, with 10 percent of those couples being satisfied because coal was less expensive than gas. Automatic heat control adds to the comfort of the home. About three-fifths of the couples stated they had automatic control and one-fourth more desired it.

Bathrooms were equipped with a bathtub and lavatory in 94 percent of the homes, and those couples not having a lavatory desired one. One couple found getting into and out of the bathtub too hazardous to desire one in their bathroom. Although aged couples experience this difficulty, a shower was not regarded as a complete substitute as no more than 68

percent of the couples had or desired one.

A telephone, radio, and refrigerator have become standard equipment in many homes of moderate income. The aged couples in this study were no exceptions, as is indicated in Table 19. About nine-tenths of the couples had a telephone, all but one an electric refrigerator, and all but one a radio. In each of the latter cases they expressed a desire for these pieces of equipment.

Activities Performed in the Dwelling

The amount and character of space required for any room of the house depends upon the number, kind, and frequency of activities carried on there, as well as the number of persons involved in or present during the activities. The activities in the homes of the aged couples studied centered around food; its preparation, preservation, serving, and clearing away; the care of clothing, laundering, ironing and drying; entertaining at meals and overnight; and the pursuit of leisure time activities. The kitchen was the scene for many of these activities.

It is known that as couples age they tend to find opportunity to spend more and more time together. To some extent, the aged couples in this study seemed to take advantage of the opportunity to be together in the kitchen when meals were prepared and when dishes were washed. Although the wife was the usual person in the kitchen while these activities were

Table 19. Preferences for selected facilities by all couples and by age groups.

| Facilities | Couples | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|------------|---------|--------|---------|------------|---------|--------|---------|------------|---------|
| | All | | | | 65-69 | | | | 70-74 | | | |
| | Have | : | Would like | : | Have | : | Would like | : | Have | : | Would like | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Running water | 50 | 100 | - | - | 31 | 100 | - | - | 19 | 100 | - | - |
| Electricity | 50 | 100 | - | - | 31 | 100 | - | - | 19 | 100 | - | - |
| Central heating | 37 | 74 | 9 | 18 | 25 | 81 | 5 | 16 | 12 | 63 | 4 | 21 |
| Fuel, gas | 44 | 88 | 1 | 2 | 27 | 87 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 89 | - | - |
| coal | 6 | 12 | - | - | 4 | 13 | - | - | 2 | 10 | - | - |
| Automatic heat control | 30 | 60 | 13 | 26 | 18 | 58 | 8 | 26 | 12 | 65 | 5 | 26 |
| Flush toilet | 49 | 98 | 1 | 2 | 31 | 100 | - | - | 18 | 95 | 1 | 5 |
| Bathtub | 47 | 94 | 2 | 4 | 30 | 97 | - | - | 17 | 90 | 2 | 10 |
| Shower | 19 | 38 | 15 | 30 | 13 | 42 | 8 | 26 | 6 | 31 | 7 | 36 |
| Lavatory | 47 | 94 | 3 | 6 | 30 | 97 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 90 | 2 | 10 |
| Telephone | 44 | 88 | 3 | 6 | 28 | 90 | 1 | 3 | 16 | 84 | 2 | 10 |
| Refrigerator | 49 | 98 | 1 | 2 | 30 | 97 | 1 | 3 | 19 | 100 | - | - |
| Radio | 49 | 98 | 1 | 2 | 31 | 100 | - | - | 18 | 95 | 1 | 5 |

in progress, among approximately two-fifths of the couples the husband or other family members were also present. The husbands were in the kitchen more when dishes were being washed than when meals were being prepared. It would appear that aged couples require space in the kitchen for several persons to engage in the activities of meal preparation and clearing away or to sit while the activity is carried on, Table 20.

Table 20. Persons in the kitchen during meal preparation and dishwashing.

| Persons in the kitchen | : Meal preparation : | | : Dishwashing : | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | : Number : | : Percent : | : Number : | : Percent : |
| Wife | 40* | 80 | 26 | 52 |
| Husband and wife | 10 | 20 | 22 | 44 |
| Daughter | 4 | 8 | 7 | 14 |
| Son | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Granddaughter | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Husband | - | - | 1 | 2 |

* The family members other than the husband were in the kitchen during meal preparation when some of the wives but not the husbands were there, too, and in the kitchen during dishwashing when some of the wives but none of the husbands were there, too.

Food preservation, an activity which requires kitchen space, was practiced by 80 percent of the couples who preserved food by canning or freezing. It would appear that

most of the wives had been accustomed to preserving food and had continued that practice in their older years. Other activities such as ironing, laundering, and indoor clothes drying were done in the kitchen by 50 percent or more of the couples.

The kitchen as a place to serve meals was the choice of over three-fourths of these couples, but the dining room was also the choice of an equal proportion. Thus, nearly three-fifths served meals in both the kitchen and the dining room, while only one-fifth served all meals in the kitchen and a like proportion served all meals in the dining room. One-eighth of the couples used a dinette adjacent to the kitchen for serving meals and of these only one couple served any meals in the kitchen, Table 21.

Table 21. Where meals are served.

| Location | :Number:Percent | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----|
| Kitchen and dining room | 29 | 58 |
| Kitchen only | 10 | 20 |
| Dining room only | 10 | 20 |
| Dinette | 6 | 12 |
| Living room | 1 | 2 |

Today, the dining room has become a room of many uses in the homes of many families. The aged couples in this study were no exception. Although the dining room was preferred by most couples as a space for serving meals, few of them desired it solely for eating. Of the 41 couples having a dining room, the following uses were made of it:

about 68 percent used it as a second living room,

15 percent used it only for eating,

12 percent used it for ironing,

7 percent used it when sewing.

Laundering is an important productive activity carried on in many homes of aged couples. It should be considered when planning space requirements for the home not only because of the amount of space needed for the equipment, but in order that a desirable and convenient location may be chosen. Unless an automatic washer is used, laundering consumes considerable time and energy even with a convenient location and the best of equipment. It was an important activity to the couples in this study, 90 percent of whom did all or most of their laundry. In 10 percent of the homes little or no laundry was done.

The couples in this study were fortunate in the location of their present laundry facilities, 70 percent stating their present location was satisfactory. The places used for doing the laundry were the basement, the kitchen, the porch, the bathroom, and the utility room.

The basement is an important place to do the laundry. Among the couples in this study who did laundry in the home, 60 percent stated it was done in the basement and of this number 46 percent were satisfied with the basement as a location. Of those not having a basement laundry, 10 percent preferred to have it done there; thus the basement was the desired location for 56 percent of the couples.

A first floor location for the laundry is desired by some of the couples who find basement stairs a hazard. Although many aged couples want a first floor laundry, the kitchen is not the room desired. Only two percent of the couples had a utility room in which to do the laundry but 18 percent wanted one. The porch was the location for the laundry of 16 percent of the couples, of whom 12 percent were satisfied, as is shown by Fig. 2. The bathroom was used for laundering by only six percent, with two percent expressing satisfaction with the arrangement and no one not having it, expressing a desire for it.

The basement or the utility room were the locations desired by three-fourths of the couples doing laundry in the home. Of the 14 couples not satisfied with the location of the laundry activity, over half preferred a utility room and a basement was the next choice. The porch was chosen by only one. All of the couples not satisfied with their laundry in the basement preferred the utility room for its location, but a large proportion of those not satisfied with the kitchen, the porch, or the bathroom preferred the basement, Table 22.

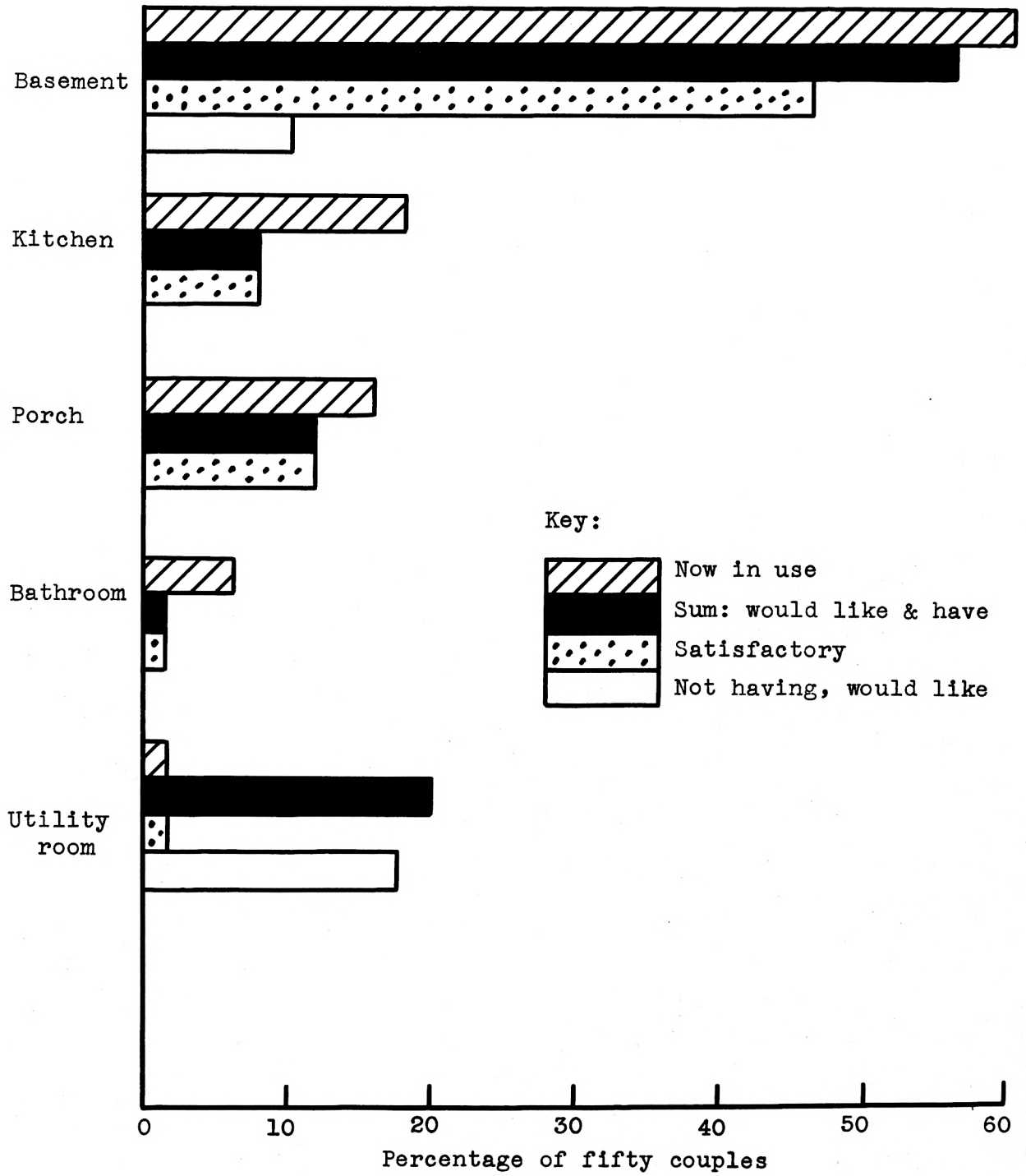


Fig. 2. Preference for location of laundry.

Table 22. Preferred location of laundry by those not satisfied with present location.

| Item | : Now in: : use : Number | Desired location | | | | | : Utility : room |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|------------|---|---------------------|
| | | : Basement | : Kitchen | : Porch | : Bathroom | | |
| Undesired location | | | | | | | |
| Basement | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | 7 |
| Kitchen | 5 | 3 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Porch | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bathroom | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 14 | 5 | - | 1 | - | - | 8 |

Drying clothes indoors is a problem in this region because there usually are several months during the year when weather conditions make outdoor drying difficult. The basement is the preferred location for drying clothes indoors by the couples in this study. It seemingly is the only location warm and dry enough and of sufficient size to accommodate the drying lines.

Not all were so fortunate as to have a basement in which to dry their clothes. Three-fourths of the couples had this location but approximately nine-tenths wanted it. The porch was used by only 10 percent and was satisfactory for only 4 percent. None who dried clothes in the kitchen, bathroom, over the furnace, or in an unused bedroom found it satisfactory, although 16 percent of all couples found it necessary to use

one of these locations, Table 23.

Table 23. Present and preferred location for drying laundry indoors.

| Location | Present | | Preferred | |
|------------------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Basement | 36 | 72 | 45 | 90 |
| Porch | 5 | 10 | 2 | 4 |
| Kitchen | 3 | 6 | - | - |
| Bathroom | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| Unused bedroom | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| Dining room | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| Bedroom in use | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Over the furnace | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Washroom | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Utility room | - | - | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 53* | 106 | 49 | 98 |

* One couple did no laundry, so hung no clothes. Some couples hung clothes to dry in more than one place.

A convenient place to iron depends on such factors as adequate illumination and ventilation, location of convenience outlets, resiliency of the floor covering, and accessibility of the location to the telephone and front door. Ironing is an activity which is tiring to aged people, so it is important that a good place for this activity be a part of the house planning for those couples who do considerable ironing in

their homes. A place to iron was needed by the 48 couples in this study who did all of their ironing.

Ironing was done in the kitchen, the dining room, the basement, the bedroom, the porch, and in other locations. The kitchen and/or the dining room appeared to be the locations in which provision for ironing was most desired but this varied with the season. Approximately 75 percent of the ironing was done in the kitchen or dining room in the summer, as compared to 85 percent in winter. A cooler place seemed desirable in summer as is indicated by the increased use of the basement and the porch in that season. Those couples who ironed in a bedroom apparently found it acceptable the year round. Other locations for ironing such as a hallway, dinette, or living room were used by approximately one-eighth of the couples, Fig. 3.

Entertaining in the Home

Older couples, like families of every age, entertain relatives and friends in their homes. If their health permits they probably continue to entertain in about the same manner as during the middle years of life. The frequency and kind of entertaining and the number of guests usually present are important considerations when planning the housing needs of this group. Couples in this study entertained with company

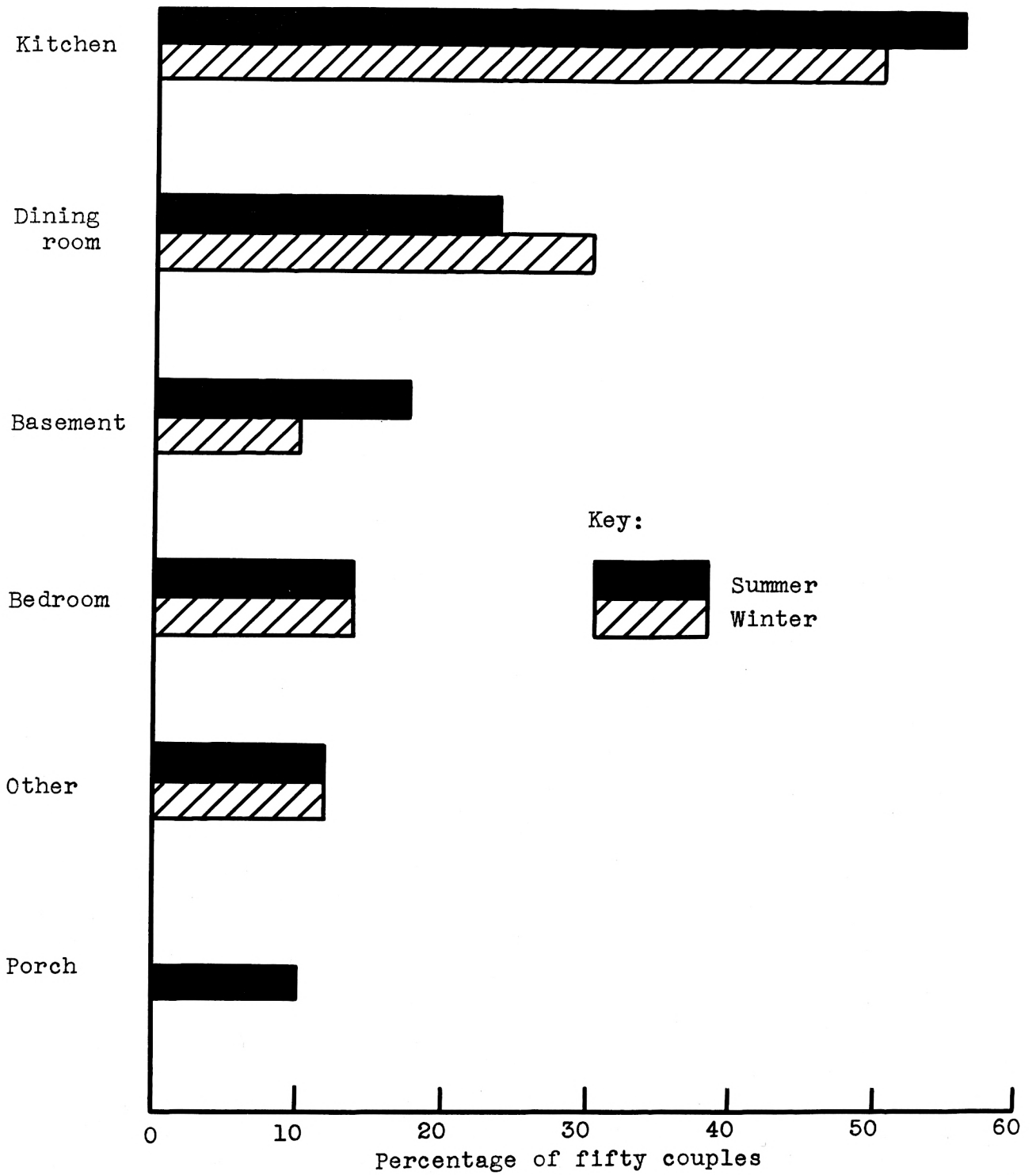


Fig. 3. Present location for ironing.

meals, family reunions, and with parties serving refreshments to a lesser extent.

The aged couples desired space in their homes for entertaining guests at meals, all but one having company dinners at least once a year. Nearly nine-tenths had company dinners six times or more a year. About two-fifths of all couples had them once a month, more of the younger than of the older group having company dinners as frequently as this.

Family reunions in which meals are also served are desired and had by members of these age groups. About three-fourths of all couples had family reunions once or twice a year, and only one-eighth of the couples did not have them. There was no appreciable difference in the frequency of entertaining in this manner between the older and younger couples in this study.

Many of the couples entertained guests to whom they served refreshments, only two-sevenths of all couples stating they never entertained in that way. However, about one-half of them served refreshments one to four times a month.

Large groups were entertained when serving refreshments or when having family reunions. The number of guests in these cases varied from 1 to 35; 32 or slightly more than three-fifths of all couples having such groups had more than 16 guests. It appears that for the couples in this study, provision should be made for serving as many as 16 guests at family reunions and for parties serving refreshments where

buffet or lap lunches may be served, Table 24.

It is more convenient and comfortable for the guests when entertaining at company dinners to serve them at a table. Because most of the couples, 48 or 96 percent entertained no more than 12 guests at company dinners, it is likely that they were thus accommodated. When having family reunion dinners the guests could be served at tables in relays or the dinner could be served buffet style. Thus it would not be necessary to provide space in a dining room for serving at one time the large number of guests which might attend a family reunion dinner.

The tendency to combine rooms was reflected in the preference for a combination dining and living room. One of the factors in this tendency is the desire for space for the entertainment of large groups. It is not possible to provide table space for serving large dinners in a small dining room or dinette. A combined dining and living room provides space for seating guests, and for serving them. Among the couples in this study slightly more than half, or 56 percent, stated a preference for a combined dining and living room, and 44 percent preferred a separate dining room. There was little difference in the frequency of entertaining by those desiring a separate dining room and those wanting a combined dining and living room. Half as many couples who had a combined dining and living room had family reunions as did those having a separate dining room. However, among the couples desiring a

Table 24. Frequency of entertaining at meals by all couples and by age groups.

| Item | Company dinners | | | | | | | Refreshments | | | | Family reunion dinners | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|--------|------------------------|--------|---------|----|-----|----|-----|--|
| | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | | All | | | All | 65-69 | | 70-74 | | | | | | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | | | | | |
| Frequency of entertaining | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Never | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 14 | 28 | 9 | 29 | 5 | 27 | 13 | 26 | 8 | 26 | 5 | 27 | |
| 2/week | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 1/week | 11 | 22 | 6 | 19 | 5 | 27 | 7 | 14 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 16 | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 2/month | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 10 | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 1/month | 21 | 42 | 14 | 45 | 7 | 37 | 12 | 24 | 8 | 26 | 4 | 22 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | - | - | |
| 6/year | 8 | 16 | 4 | 12 | 4 | 21 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 10 | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 3/year | 2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | |
| 2/year | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | - | - | 10 | 20 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 27 | |
| 1/year | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 10 | 21 | 42 | 13 | 42 | 8 | 41 | |
| Other | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | - | - | |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | |
| Number of guests | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 14 | 28 | 9 | 29 | 5 | 27 | 13 | 26 | 8 | 26 | 5 | 26 | |
| Only 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 2-5 | 18 | 36 | 10 | 32 | 8 | 42 | 8 | 16 | 5 | 16 | 3 | 16 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 5 | |
| 6-8 | 12 | 24 | 8 | 26 | 4 | 21 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 5 | |
| 9-12 | 16 | 32 | 11 | 36 | 5 | 27 | 8 | 16 | 5 | 16 | 3 | 16 | 9 | 18 | 7 | 22 | 2 | 10 | |
| 13-16 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 0 | - | |
| 17-20 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 21 | 11 | 22 | 5 | 16 | 6 | 32 | |
| 21 or more | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | 12 | 5 | 16 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 16 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 22 | |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 19 | 100 | |

combined dining and living room, larger groups were entertained at family reunions. Seventy percent of those desiring a combined dining and living room had 9 or more guests as compared to about 50 percent of those couples having a separate dining room, Table 25.

The majority of families have overnight guests, the number and frequency varying with the family. The best provision for overnight guests is a spare bedroom, and most families would prefer this. Provision for overnight guests was important to the couples in this study, 92 percent of whom had overnight guests. Those of the younger group entertained overnight guests more frequently than did those of the older group, about 38 percent of the former and 15 percent of the latter having had them one to four times a month. More than half of the older group had overnight guests only once or twice a year.

The space requirements for entertaining overnight guests is determined by the number of guests and by the frequency of entertaining them. The usual number of overnight guests entertained by couples in this study was 2 to 4, while some couples would entertain occasionally as many as 10.

The younger group had fewer overnight guests than did the older group. About three-fourths of the former and one-third of the latter had no more than 4 overnight guests, while about one-fifth of the younger and more than one-third of the older group had as many as 10 overnight guests, Table 26.

Table 25. Frequency of entertaining at meals by those wanting separate dining room and those wanting combined living room and dining room.

| Item | Company dinners | | | | Refreshments | | | | Family reunion dinners | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| | : Want separate | | : Want combined | | : Want separate | | : Want combined | | : Want separate | | : Want combined | |
| | : living room & | | : dining room | | : living room & | | : dining room | | : living room & | | : dining room | |
| | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent |
| Frequency of entertaining | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Never | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 32 | 7 | 25 | 8 | 36 | 5 | 17 |
| 2 per week | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 per week | 4 | 18 | 7 | 25 | 3 | 14 | 4 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 per month | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 per month | 9 | 41 | 12 | 42 | 7 | 32 | 5 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| 6 per year | 3 | 14 | 5 | 17 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 per year | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 41 | 12 | 43 |
| Other | 3 | 14 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 18 | 5 | 23 | 10 | 36 |
| Total | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 |
| Number of guests | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| None | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 32 | 7 | 25 | 8 | 36 | 5 | 17 |
| Only 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2-5 | 8 | 37 | 11 | 39 | 3 | 14 | 5 | 18 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 6-8 | 4 | 19 | 7 | 25 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 14 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 11 |
| 9-12 | 7 | 32 | 9 | 32 | 3 | 14 | 5 | 18 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 25 |
| 13-16 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 4 |
| 17-20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 14 | 4 | 14 | 3 | 14 | 8 | 29 |
| 21 or more | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 22 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 19 | 4 | 14 |
| Total | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 28 | 100 |

Table 26. Frequency and extent of entertaining overnight guests by all couples, and by age groups.

| Item | All | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | |
|---------------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| | Num-ber | Per-cent | Num-ber | Per-cent | Num-ber | Per-cent |
| Having overnight guests | 46 | 92 | 29 | 90 | 17 | 90 |
| Frequency of entertaining | | | | | | |
| 1 per week | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| 1 per month | 12 | 24 | 10 | 32 | 2 | 10 |
| 1-2 per year | 24 | 48 | 14 | 45 | 10 | 52 |
| Other | 7 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 21 |
| Number of guests | | | | | | |
| 1 | 3 | 6 | - | - | 3 | 16 |
| 2-4 | 30 | 60 | 23 | 74 | 7 | 37 |
| 5-7 | 8 | 16 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 21 |
| 8-10 | 5 | 10 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 16 |

Leisure Time and Keepsakes

It is known that satisfying use of leisure time has an important influence upon the happiness of aged people. Because 70 percent of the husbands in this study were employed they had less leisure time and therefore engaged in fewer activities than did the wives. The results of the interviews showed that the husbands spent their leisure time at home listening to the radio, watching people pass by, reading, working in their gardens, playing cards, and doing woodworking.

The wives, having more leisure time than the husbands, had a greater variety of ways in which they used this leisure. During the interview, it appeared that those wives who engaged in a variety of leisure time activities were making the most satisfactory adjustment to old age.

Listening to the radio, watching people pass by, reading, and working in the garden were as important to the wives as to the husbands. About half of the wives did needlework and approximately one-third made rugs and quilts. Most of the wives carried on these activities in the living room, dining room, kitchen, or basement of their homes; only four wives stated they preferred a special location for working at their hobby, Table 27.

It appeared that for couples of this age, a special room to work at their hobby is of importance to a relatively small number as no more than 14 percent of all couples desired a

special room. Of the hobby activities of the husbands only woodworking required a special location. Of the husbands who did woodworking, nine wanted a room in the basement and one husband preferred to work at his hobby in the garage.

Aged couples have possessions which they enjoy and which they wish to show to visitors. They also have treasured possessions which they keep put away and for which storage space is necessary. Greeting cards, photographs, fancy work, collections, childhood possessions of the children, and pictures were the items most frequently saved and stored in boxes and trunks in closets, attics, and basements. Shelf space and floor space of considerable quantity for storage were desired by the couples in this study, Table 28.

Table 27. Preferred use of leisure time of husbands and wives.

| Preferred uses | : Husbands : | | : Wives : | |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| | : Number : | : Percent : | : Number : | : Percent : |
| Listen to radio | 48 | 96 | 48 | 96 |
| Watch people go by | 45 | 90 | 46 | 92 |
| Read | 43 | 86 | 45 | 90 |
| Work in garden | 41 | 82 | 33 | 66 |
| Needlework | | | 27 | 54 |
| Play cards | 25 | 50 | 23 | 46 |
| Hook, braid or weave rugs | | | 15 | 30 |
| Make quilts | | | 13 | 26 |
| Entertain grandchildren | | | 6 | 12 |
| Sew | | | 4 | 8 |
| Textile painting | | | 3 | 6 |
| Attend club, organization, and church meetings | | | 3 | 6 |
| Visit sick | | | 2 | 4 |
| Do woodworking | 19 | 38 | 2 | 4 |
| Paint--oil, water color | | | 2 | 4 |
| Other | | | 10 | 20 |

Table 28. Distribution of keepsakes by preference for showing or storing.

| Kinds of articles | : Want to show | | : Want to put away | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| | : Number | : Percent | : Number | : Percent |
| Collections | 21 | 42 | 6 | 12 |
| Pictures | 11 | 22 | 4 | 8 |
| Houseplants | 11 | 22 | - | - |
| Old photographs | 7 | 14 | 25 | 50 |
| Fancy work and quilts | 4 | 8 | 12 | 24 |
| Paintings | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Books | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Children's childhood possessions | 1 | 2 | 7 | 14 |
| Family furniture | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Clock | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| Greeting cards | - | - | 25 | 50 |
| Letters | - | - | 2 | 4 |
| Clippings | - | - | 2 | 4 |
| Other | 4 | 8 | 5 | 10 |

Living Arrangements

Aged couples, as others, prefer their own home to that of any other type of living arrangement. Many aged people will, in fact, willingly undergo hardship and privation in order to maintain separate dwelling units. Many use portions of their homes for rental purposes in order to make separate living arrangements possible. It appeared that consideration of future living arrangements is a problem the aged couples in this study are reluctant to face and about which there is not always agreement between husband and wife. The couples in this study were asked to make four choices for living arrangements. All couples stated that their own home was their first choice of any living arrangements which now or in the future might be available. All of the couples were reluctant to state a choice for other than their own homes, Table 29.

After the first choice of their own home for living arrangements now or in the future, second choices in order of preferences were:

1. Their own homes with the added service of a companion by one-half.
2. Separate quarters in the home of a son or daughter by one-third.
3. The home of a son or daughter as a part of the

family, a home for the aged, a hotel or rooming house, or some other arrangement by one-eighth.

Not all couples were willing to make a third choice; 90 percent of the younger and about 75 percent of the older group were willing to state a third choice. Among those who stated a third choice about one-third chose the home of a son or daughter with separate quarters, one-fifth chose their own home with a companion, one-eighth chose the home of a son or daughter as part of the family, and three couples in the younger group chose a nursing home, or a hotel or rooming house, while no one in the older group chose these.

Almost three-fifths of the younger and only one-fifth of the older group stated a fourth choice in living arrangements. More of those stating a fourth choice preferred their own homes with a companion than any other arrangement. About one-tenth of all the couples making a fourth choice chose a home for the aged and the home of a son or daughter as part of the family.

It appears that the aged in this study are reluctant to live in a home for the aged, but prefer their own home with a companion, or the home of a son or daughter if they can be provided separate quarters. The latter two living arrangements make it possible for the aged to have the personal privacy that is so essential to the happiness of people of that age.

Table 29. Preference for living arrangements by age groups.

| Living arrangements | Couples | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| | 65-69 | | | | | | | | 70-74 | | | | | | | |
| | First | | Second | | Third | | Fourth | | First | | Second | | Third | | Fourth | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Own home | 31 | 100 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 19 | 100 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Own home with companion | - | - | 15 | 48 | 5 | 16 | 6 | 19 | - | - | 12 | 63 | 4 | 21 | 1 | 5 |
| Home of son or daughter, separate quarters | - | - | 10 | 32 | 9 | 29 | 3 | 10 | - | - | 6 | 32 | 6 | 32 | - | - |
| Hotel or rooming house | - | - | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 10 |
| Home of son or daughter as part of family | - | - | 1 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 13 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 10 | - | - |
| Home for aged | - | - | 1 | 3 | 7 | 23 | 2 | 6 | - | - | 1 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 5 |
| Nursing home | - | - | - | - | 2 | 6 | 2 | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other | - | - | 2 | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 31 | 100 | 31 | 100 | 28* | 90 | 18 | 57 | 19 | 100 | 19 | 100 | 14 | 73 | 4 | 20 |

* Some couples did not wish to state preferences for living arrangement other than their own home.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study of the existing and preferred housing of aged couples in Manhattan, Kansas was made to determine the housing requirements of couples, the husbands of which were within the ages 65-74, and who had incomes above subsistence but not exceeding \$3,000. Of the eligible aged couples approximately one-third or 50 were chosen on a random basis for interview. All of these maintained their own separate living arrangements.

The Couples

About two-thirds of the husbands were in the age group, 65-69, and one-third in the age group, 70-74. The wives were younger than the husbands. Two-fifths of the wives were younger than 65, one-third were between 65 and 69, and about one-fourth were between 70 and 74.

Seventy percent of the husbands were employed at the time of the interview. About one-fifth of those who had been engaged in farming and in semi-skilled occupations were still thus employed. Of those engaged in professional and unskilled occupations, only two percent had retired.

Although 44 percent of the wives had been employed in work outside the home at some time during their marriage, only 14 percent were employed at the time of the interview. More of the wives in the younger group than in the older, 58 percent

of the former and only 21 percent of the latter, had been employed.

These aged couples reflected a general tendency of the aged everywhere to have illnesses and accidents, and to require day time rest. Thirty percent had required bed care during the past year. When the two age groups were compared the older group showed greater tendencies toward more frequent and longer illnesses, and confining accidents.

The bedroom, dining room, and living room were the rooms used for bed care and approximately 90 percent of the couples expressed satisfaction with these arrangements. Among approximately 82 percent of all couples, one or both of whom wanted a place to lie down during the day, the living room, and the bedroom were chosen as the best places. Only about one-fifth of the couples had made any changes in their homes to prevent accidents, and most of these changes had been made on stairways.

The Dwelling

The single family dwelling was the usual type lived in by the couples in this study, four-fifths choosing that type, one-seventh choosing the two-family type. The remainder, only six percent, chose to live in an apartment.

Although about three-fifths of the couples lived as private

families in their dwellings, a little more than two-fifths lived as quasi-families and used their dwellings for producing income. One-half of the younger and one-fourth of the older age group lived as quasi-families.

The number of rooms in the dwellings varied from 3 to 13. About half of all couples preferred larger houses than they now occupy. Only three of the 50 couples would reduce their present number of rooms. The couples living as quasi-families and those in the younger age group were the least satisfied with the number of rooms in the present dwelling. An average of 8 rooms was desired by the couples living as quasi-families and an average of 5.8 rooms by those living as private families.

The majority of couples who preferred to add rooms wanted them for rental purposes, as evidenced by the desire for extra bedrooms by 80 percent of those who would add a room. Bathrooms, utility rooms, kitchens, and space for the serving of meals, and for sewing were among the other rooms desired.

The majority of the aged couples found the room arrangement of their home satisfactory. The one-third, who would make changes, desired the following:

Relocate bathrooms, bedrooms, stairways and front entrances

Combine dining and living room

Separate living room and bedroom

Provide opening between kitchen and dining room

Enlarge stairways and bedrooms

Remodel kitchens

Ninety-two percent of the couples were home owners. Seventy percent had lived 10 years or less in their present home, indicating that it had been purchased at or near the retirement age.

This community had been chosen by a majority of couples to be near their work, for retirement, or for the educational facilities available to their children. The choice of the present location within the community was affected by their need to be within easy walking distance of the public facilities which they desired to use or to be near public transportation. It was important to the older group to be near churches, in quiet neighborhoods, and near their friends, whereas it was relatively more important to the younger group to be centrally located.

Features Preferred in the Dwelling

One-story dwellings were preferred by slightly more than three-fourths of all couples, but less than half had the desired one-story dwellings. When age groups were compared 84 percent of the older group and 74 percent of the younger preferred one-story dwellings. Almost all couples preferred to have a bedroom and bath on the first floor in two-story dwellings. In one-story dwellings the preferred location for the bathroom was near the bedrooms. Cool bedrooms in summer were desired by all couples and heated bedrooms in winter were

preferred by about four-fifths.

Basements, porches, and garages were considered desirable features by a majority of the couples. If they could have only one porch they preferred a front location. About one-half of the couples preferred a detached garage.

The aged couples in this study had been able to provide themselves liberally with modern facilities for their homes. All dwellings were equipped with running water and electricity, all but one with flush toilets, and 94 percent of the dwellings bathrooms were equipped with tub and lavatory. Showers were had or desired by approximately 70 percent of the couples. Ninety percent of the couples desired central heating and 75 percent of them had it. About 85 percent had or desired automatic heat control. Refrigerators and radios were in the homes of all but one couple, and 90 percent of the homes were equipped with telephones.

Activities Performed in the Dwelling

In addition to the usual activities of food preparation, preservation, and clearing away, approximately three-fourths of the couples preferred to serve some meals in the kitchen; one-half performed such activities as ironing, laundering, and indoor clothes drying. Although the wife was the usual person in the kitchen during the progress of activities there, others were present in about 40 percent of the homes during

certain of the activities.

Dining rooms were desired by these aged couples, but their use was not to be confined to the serving of meals. Sixty-eight percent of the 41 couples having dining rooms used them as second living rooms. Some used them as a place for ironing and sewing.

All or most of the laundry was done in the homes of 90 percent of the couples, 70 percent of whom found their present location satisfactory. Three-fourths of all couples desired the basement or utility room as a location for the laundry. All couples preferred the basement as an indoor drying location, although 16 percent found it necessary to use other locations.

Ninety-six percent did all or most of their ironing. The kitchen and/or the dining room appeared to be the desired locations for this activity, with some variation due to the season. Eighty-five percent of the ironing was done in the kitchens or dining rooms in the winter and 75 percent was done there in the summer. During the summer there was an increased use of basements and porches for this activity.

Entertainment

About 88 percent of the couples had company dinners six times a year and about 40 percent had them monthly. Family reunion dinners were had once or twice a year by three-fourths of the couples and only six couples did not have them at all.

Approximately 85 percent of the couples had parties at which refreshments were served, with about 50 percent having them weekly.

Larger groups were entertained when serving refreshments or when having family reunions than were entertained for company dinners. The number of guests varied from 1 to 35. Slightly more than 60 percent of all couples had more than 16 guests, thus it appeared that provision should be made for serving at least 16 guests at parties or at family reunions. Guests at company dinners were fewer in number, 92 percent of the couples need space for seating 12 at the table.

Ninety-two percent of the couples had and desired provisions for entertaining overnight guests. The younger group entertained overnight guests more frequently than did the older group, but they entertained fewer in number. Almost two-fifths of the younger couples had overnight guests one to four times a month and more than one-half of the older group had them once or twice a year. Although the usual number of overnight guests was 2 to 4, one-third of the older group had as many as 10.

Leisure Time and Keepsakes

The satisfying use of leisure time is perhaps more important to the happiness of aged couples than to any other age group. During the course of the interviews it seemed apparent

that those couples who used their leisure time in a way which was interesting and satisfying to them were making the most satisfactory adjustment to the later years of life.

The wives, seldom employed, had developed a variety of leisure time activities, most being connected with homemaking in some way, such as making quilts and rugs, embroidering, textile painting and caring for houseplants. Most husbands and wives enjoyed and spent time reading, listening to the radio, watching neighborhood activity, and working in a vegetable and flower garden. A special room for their hobbies was desired by comparatively few. A room in the basement would serve this need of the husbands and most of the wives.

Aged couples had many keepsakes and possessions some of which they desired to keep on open shelves or tables so that they could be shown to relatives and friends, and others which they desired to store in an enclosed space. Open and enclosed shelves in the dining room or in storage closets would provide desired storage space. Space for trunks was needed in storage closets, the basement, or an attic if it were accessible through an adequate stairway.

Living Arrangements

These aged couples appeared reluctant to face the problem of where and how to live in the event that maintaining their own homes was no longer feasible. In reality they have only

one preference for living arrangements and that is their own home. If they had to choose other arrangements the first choice was the service of a companion in their own home, and the second choice was separate quarters in the home of a son or daughter. These two arrangements permitted them to maintain the personal privacy which is so essential to happiness. Most of the aged couples in this study did not willingly choose a home for the aged, it being the second choice of only two couples.

Analysis of Recommended Floor Plan

The floor plan, Fig. 4, is designed to provide the arrangements, the space, and other facilities required by couples living as private families in one-story dwellings, this being the predominating pattern in the study. The study showed that couples in this group desired a minimum of five rooms. It was noted during the interviews that many of the dwellings of these couples were built about 30 to 50 years ago. Because of the financial limitations of the couples in the study and the high construction costs prevalent today, financing new dwellings would be difficult. Thus it seemed desirable to develop a floor plan based on that found in many dwellings of an earlier period, but also becoming popular in newly planned dwellings.

The floor plan thus developed is slightly irregular in

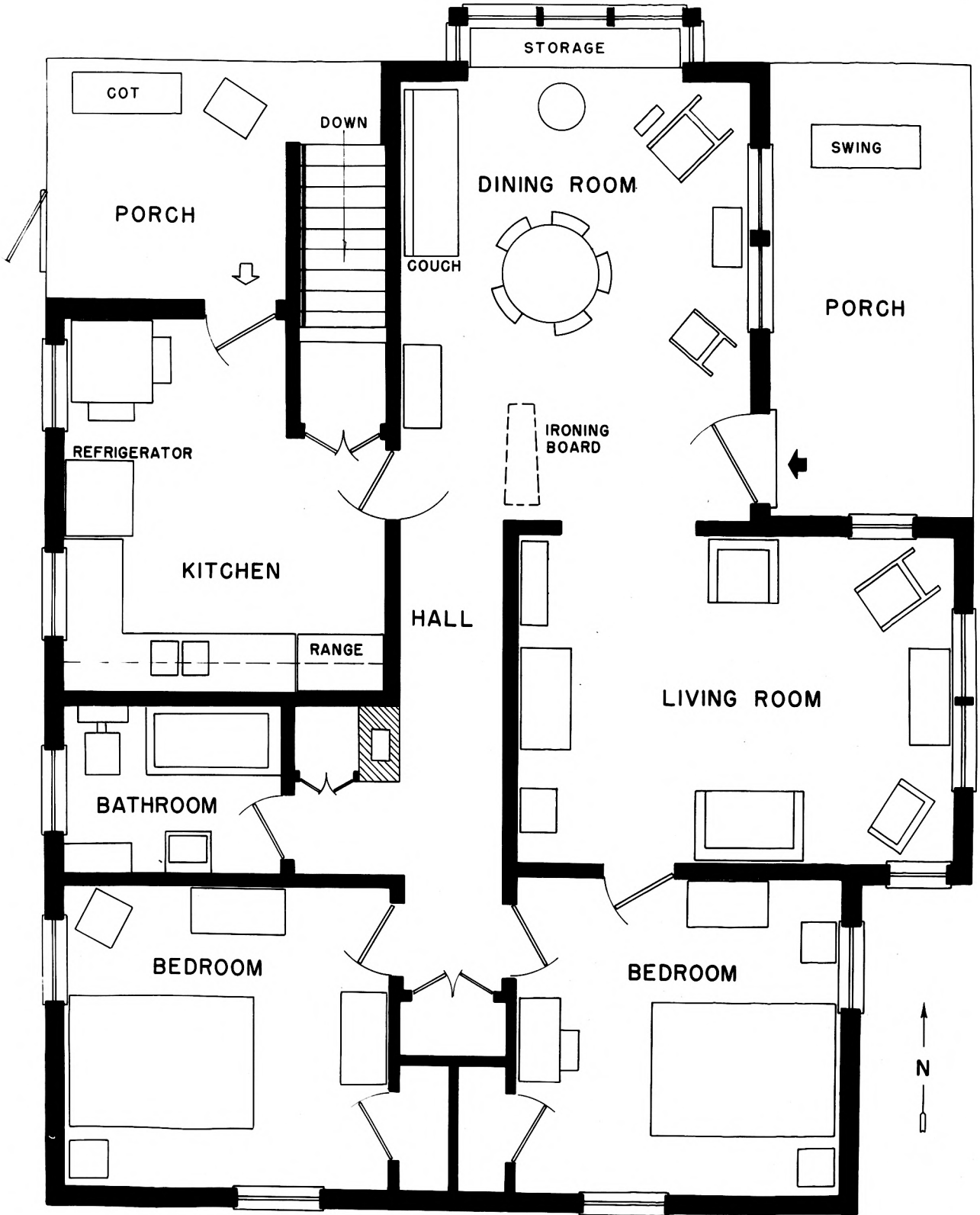


Fig. 4. FLOOR PLAN

shape. Departure from rectangular or square shape increases construction costs but many small, moderately priced homes now being built are somewhat irregular in shape. The improvement in livability is justification for this added cost. This arrangement makes it possible to locate the living room so as to afford considerable seclusion thus increasing its value as a guest bedroom when needed. In spite of its partial seclusion it has been arranged in such a manner as to permit its being used in conjunction with the dining room when large groups are entertained.

Adequate space has been provided in the various rooms for the activities which these couples desired to carry on there. Such features as a basement, front and back porch, and an adequate basement stairway have been included.

With the main entrance of the dwelling at one end of the dining room, good traffic routes are provided without use of space for halls except to reach the bathroom. Easy accessibility from the main entrance to the living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom and bedrooms is possible across corners or the short ends of rooms. Entrance to the basement is from a screened, back porch. Laundry is taken from the back porch directly to the drying yard.

Social Area. The living room, regarded by these couples as secondary in function, is somewhat withdrawn from the main rooms of the house and could serve as a guest bedroom should

the need arise. Space is adequate to accommodate a sofa-bed or a hide-a-bed. Library tables frequently were seen in the homes of couples interviewed. One could be placed in front of the living room windows where it could serve as a place for the family Bible or treasured pieces of china, books or magazines. A secretary type of desk frequently seen in these homes is planned as a place for writing letters.

Activities planned for the dining room included arrangements for serving 12 guests at the dining table. A day bed for resting or for use while recuperating from an illness has been provided. There is space by a window for chairs, and for a table on which a radio, mending, reading glasses, magazines, or books may be placed. Space for ironing has been provided in the dining room. Provision for storage of keepsakes such as photographs, cards, pictures, books, letters, magazines, and grandchildren's toys has been provided in a storage unit below the bay windows. The sill of these windows is 30 inches from the floor. Part of this unit could be developed as open shelves for display and other parts as enclosed shelves for the storage of private articles and play equipment for children.

Seating arrangements in the living and dining rooms are adequate for 16 guests, the usual number to be accommodated for parties or family reunions.

The front porch is provided with a swing and easy chair or rocker.

Quiet Area. Because the bedrooms were designed mainly for sleeping and dressing they are not large. They are accessible to the bathroom, and have adequate closet space for clothes. The orientation of the house is planned so that each of the bedrooms would receive southeast, south, or southwest summer breezes. The back bedroom is somewhat protected from street noises and could be used by the couple.

The bathroom contains tub, lavatory, and water closet. Included also is a built-in storage closet for supplies and equipment used in the bathroom. Medical supplies are to be stored in a recessed medicine closet over the lavatory, or on a high shelf in the storage closet, which was considered safer for the storage of medicines by some couples.

Two closets in the back hall provide storage for linen, bedding, and miscellaneous articles to be stored on shelves.

Work Area. Space is provided in the kitchen for the equipment necessary to the preparation, serving and clearing away of food, and for food preservation. A serving area has been provided in front of an east window in the kitchen. A closet over the basement stairway provides space for cleaning supplies, canning equipment and some canned goods. Alternate spaces for ironing in the kitchen, either on the east wall or on the west wall adjacent to the dining room door, are provided. Crowding at the doorways while ironing is in progress occurs but with only two members in the family this does not seem a great problem.

A cot and rocker on the back porch provide for visiting and resting. There, too, space is provided for ironing.

The location of a dwelling constructed from the floor plan should be in a quiet neighborhood, near friends of the occupants, within easy walking distance to facilities such as a grocery store, church, park, or public transportation.

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Sincere appreciation is expressed to Miss Tessie Agan, Associate Professor of Household Economics and major instructor, for her time, efforts, and encouragement given in developing and directing this study; and to Dr. Florence McKinney, Professor and Head of the Department of Household Economics, for assistance in developing this study.

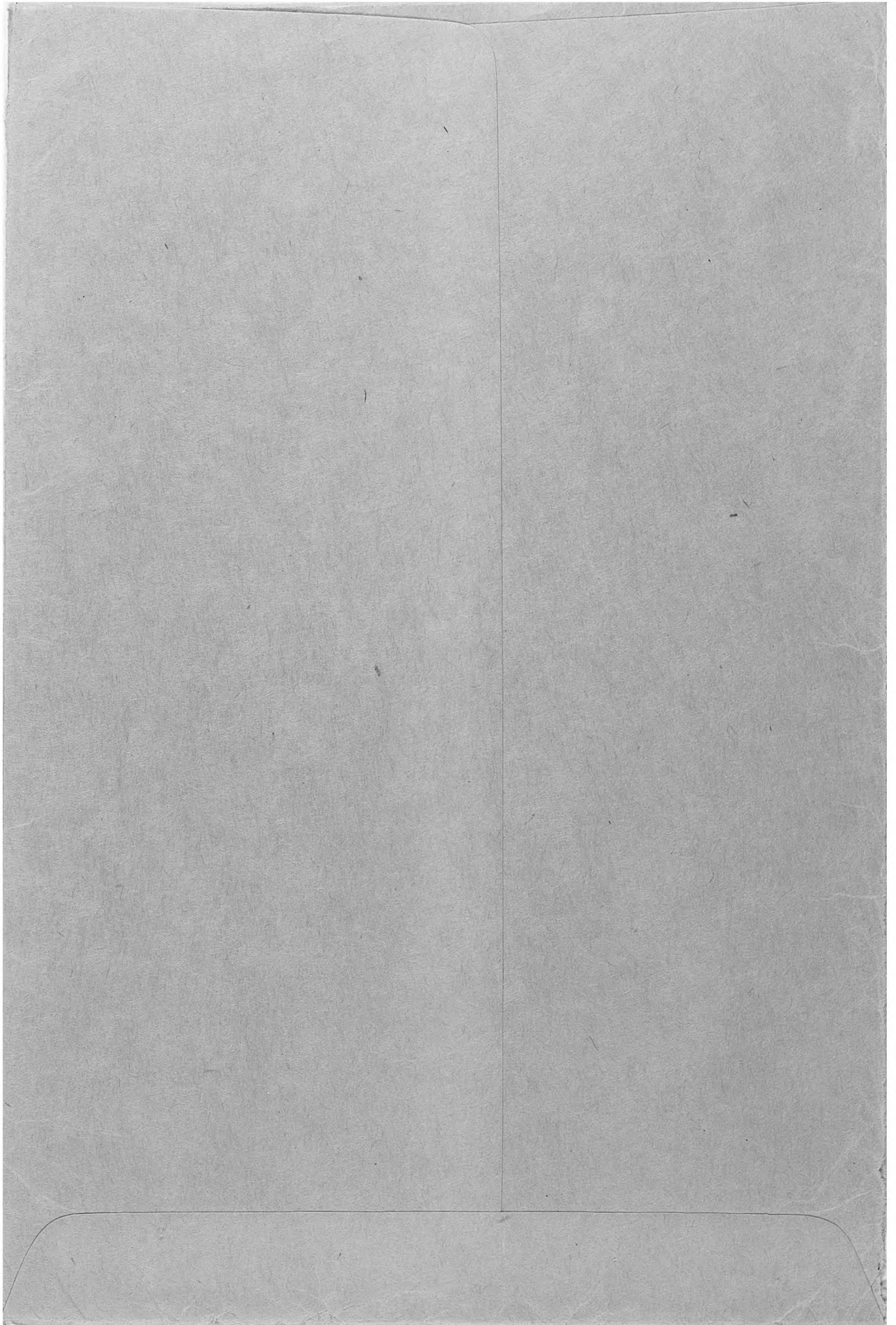
Acknowledgment is made to Mr. Will Ratliff, Riley County Clerk, for making available the Assessment Ward books of the city of Manhattan, Kansas; to Mr. Evan Griffith of the Union National Bank and to Mr. Joe Hayes of the First National Bank, Manhattan, Kansas; to Mr. Arnold R. Jones, Comptroller, Kansas State College; and to Mrs. Nettie Schuss of the Social Welfare Office, Manhattan, Kansas for their assistance in the elimination of those outside the financial limits of the study; to Dr. Holly Fryer, Kansas State College Statistician, for guidance in establishing the universe for the study and for drawing the random sample of the respondents; and to the 50 couples of Manhattan, Kansas who cooperated to make this study possible.

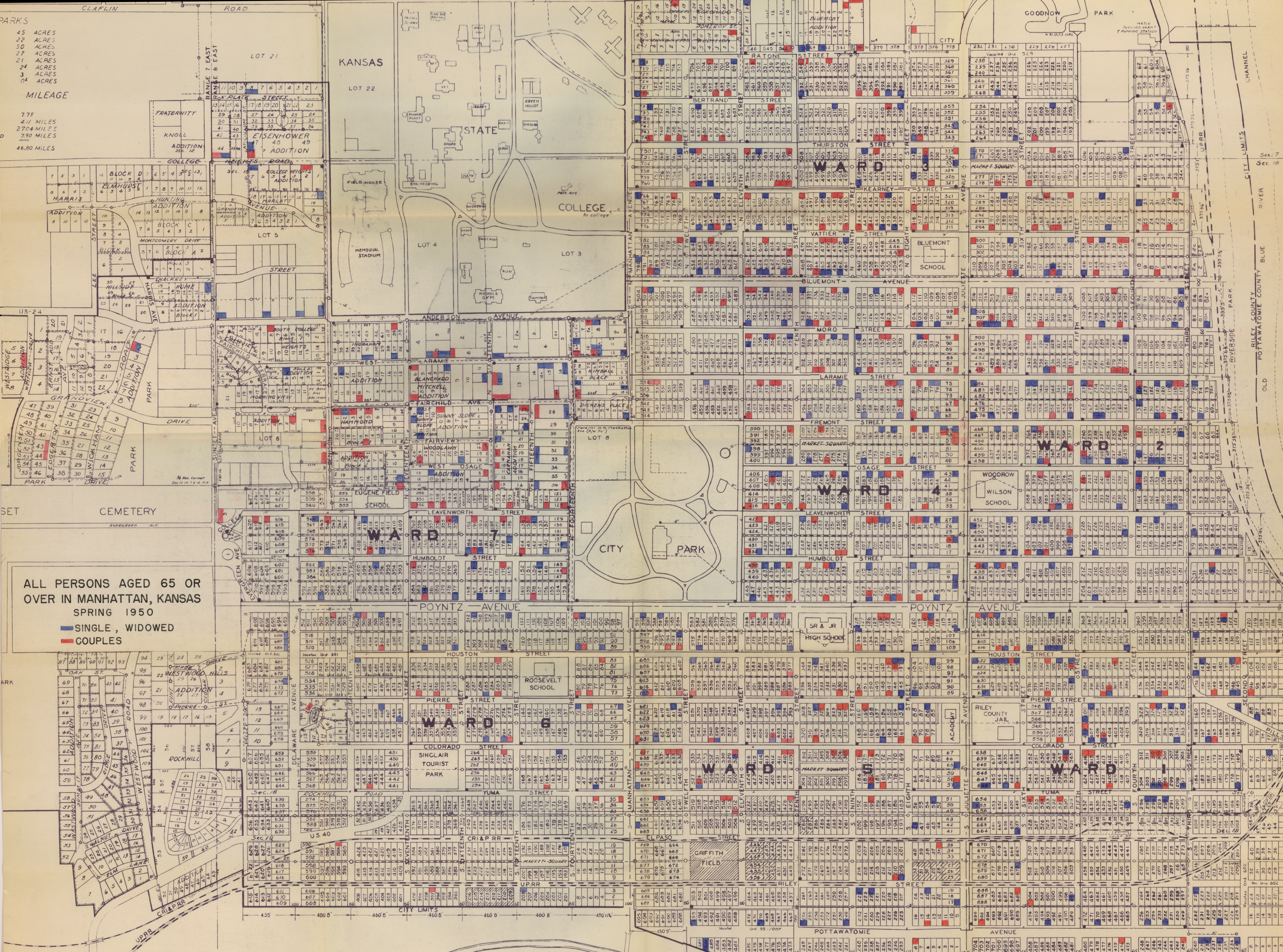
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APPENDIX

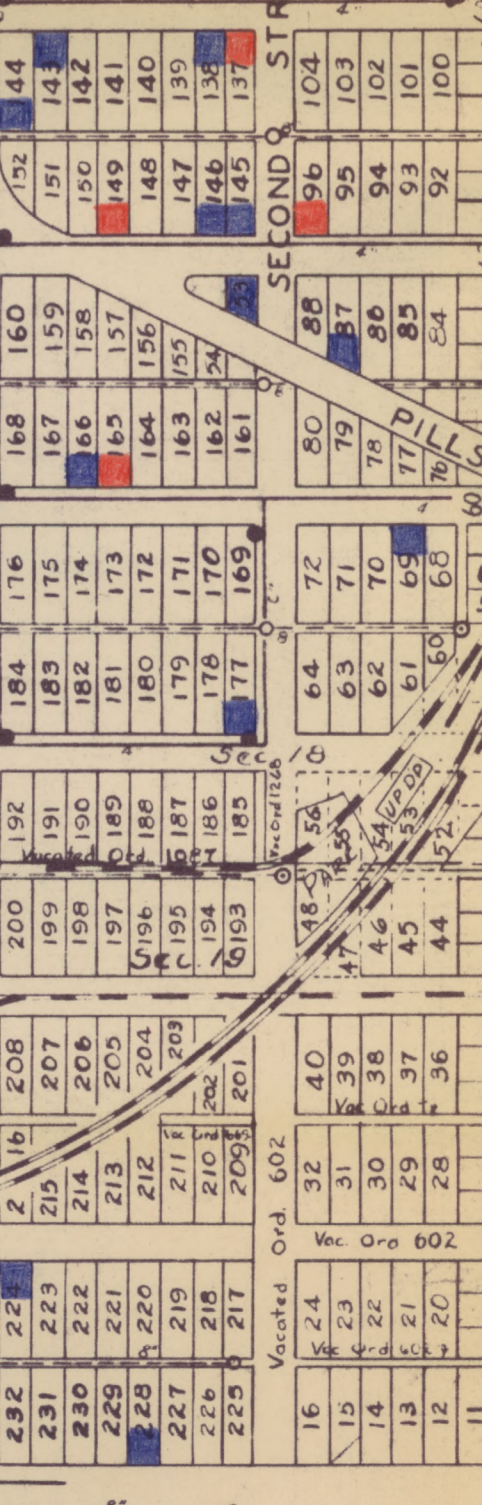
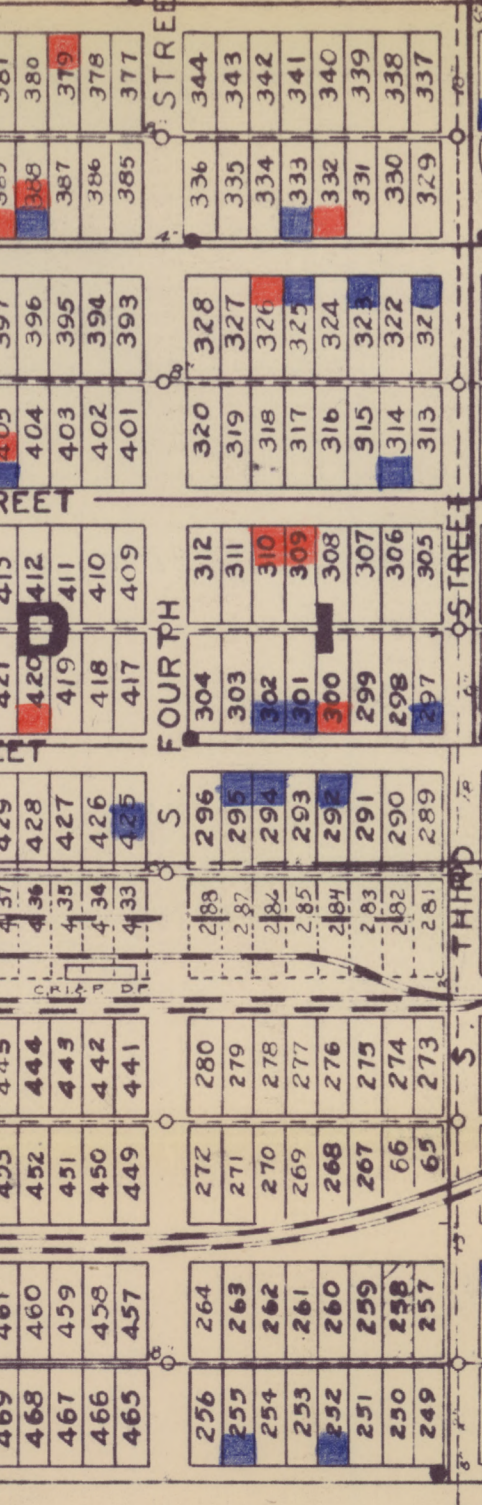
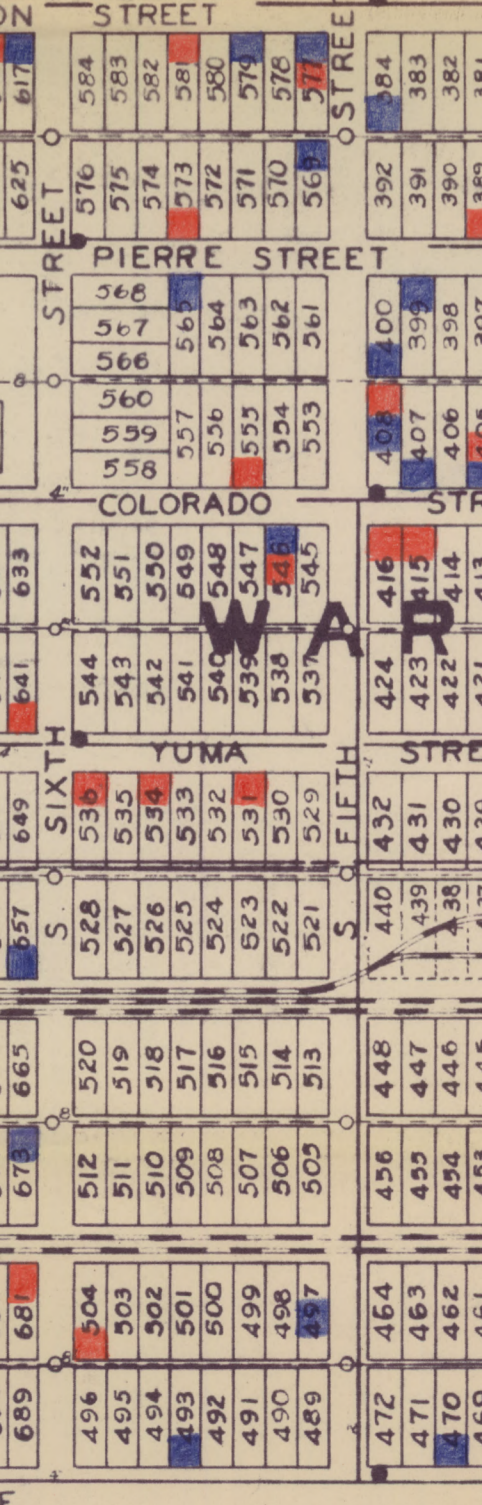
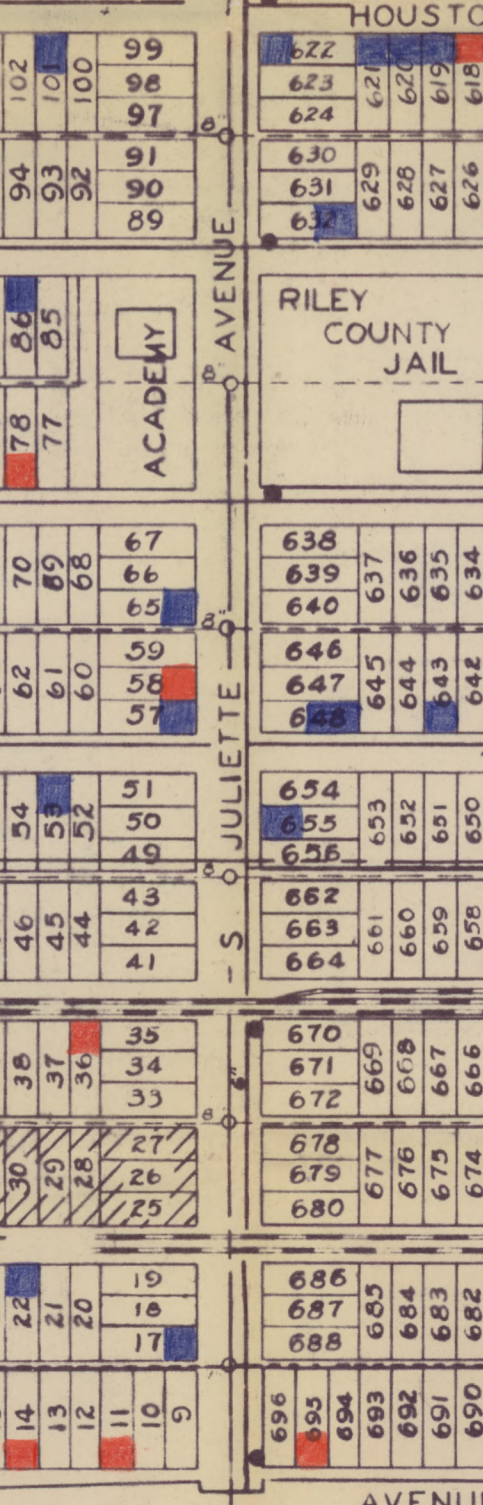
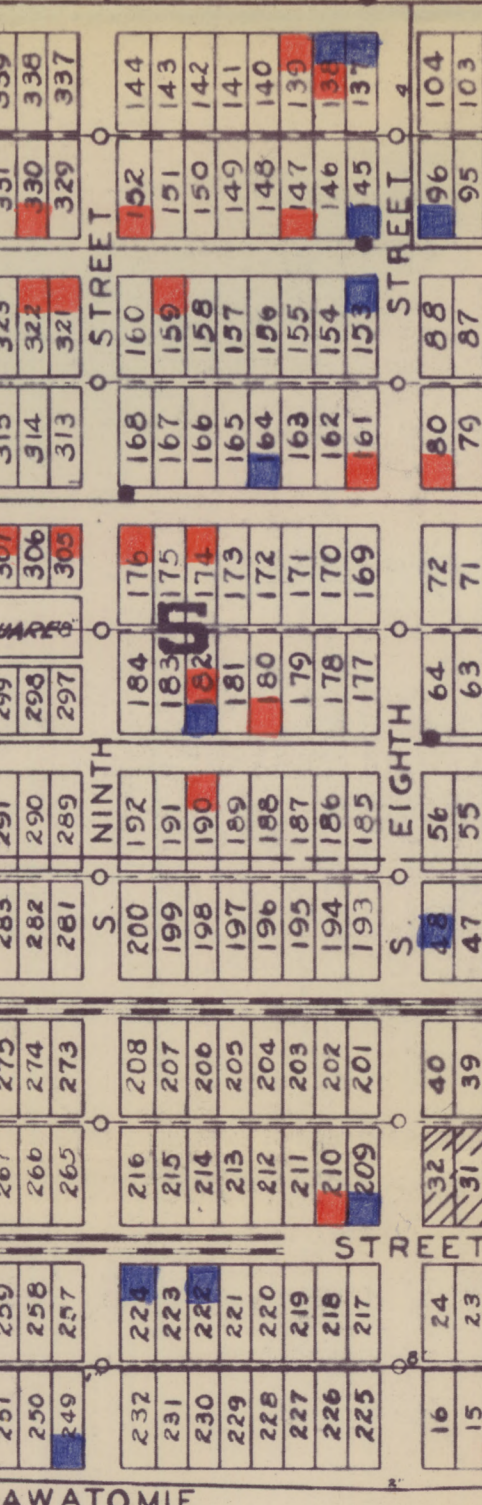
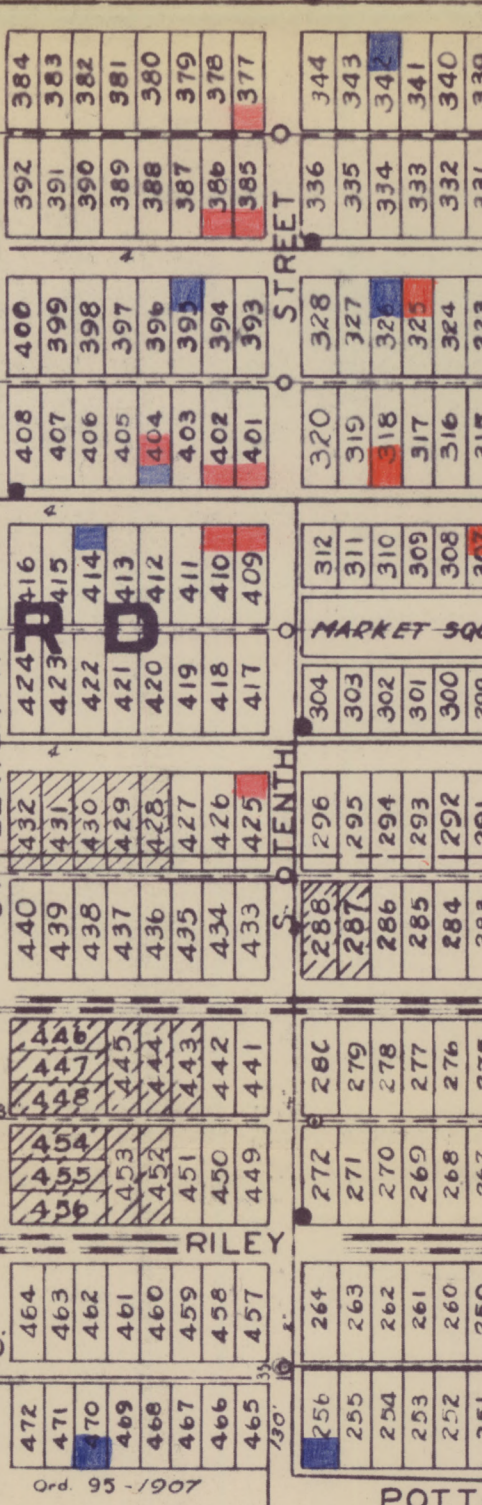
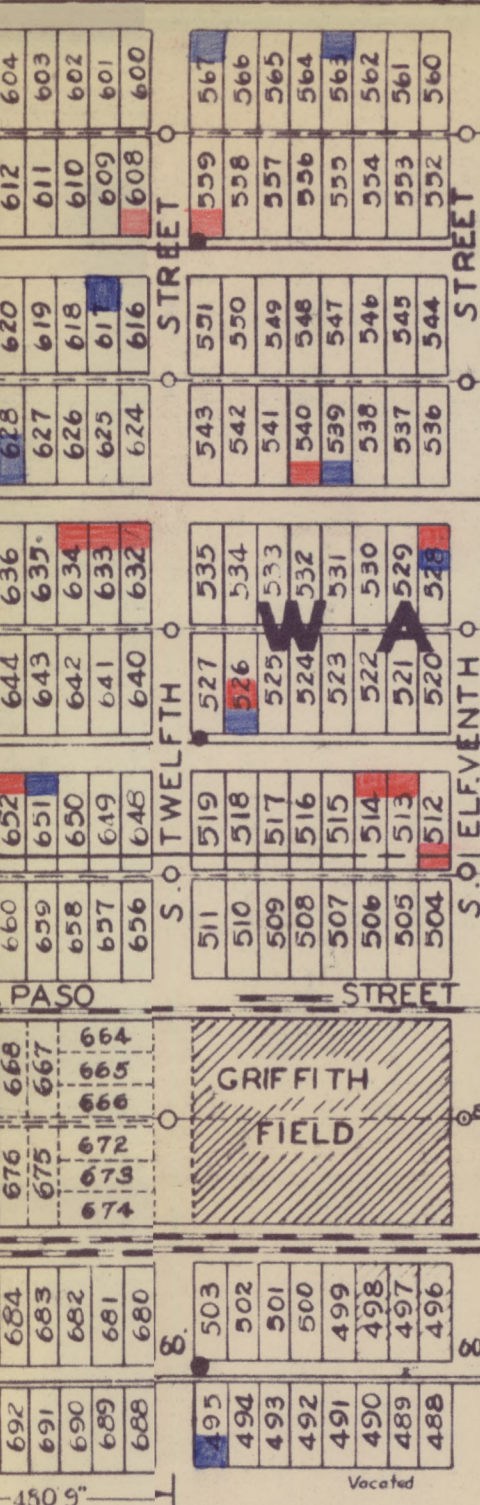
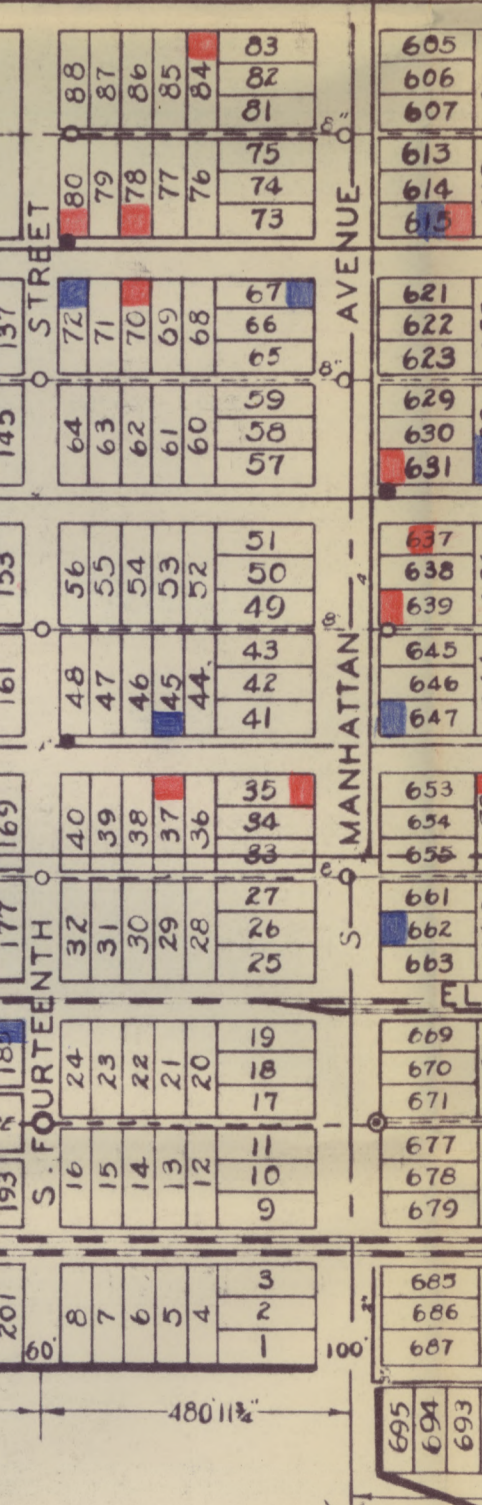
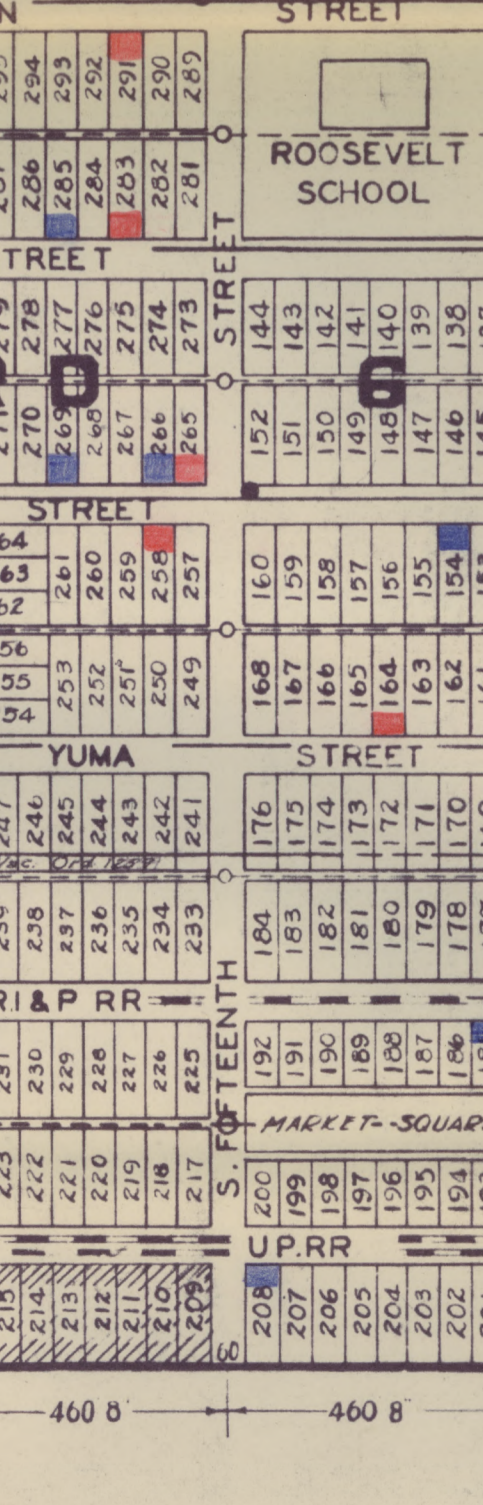
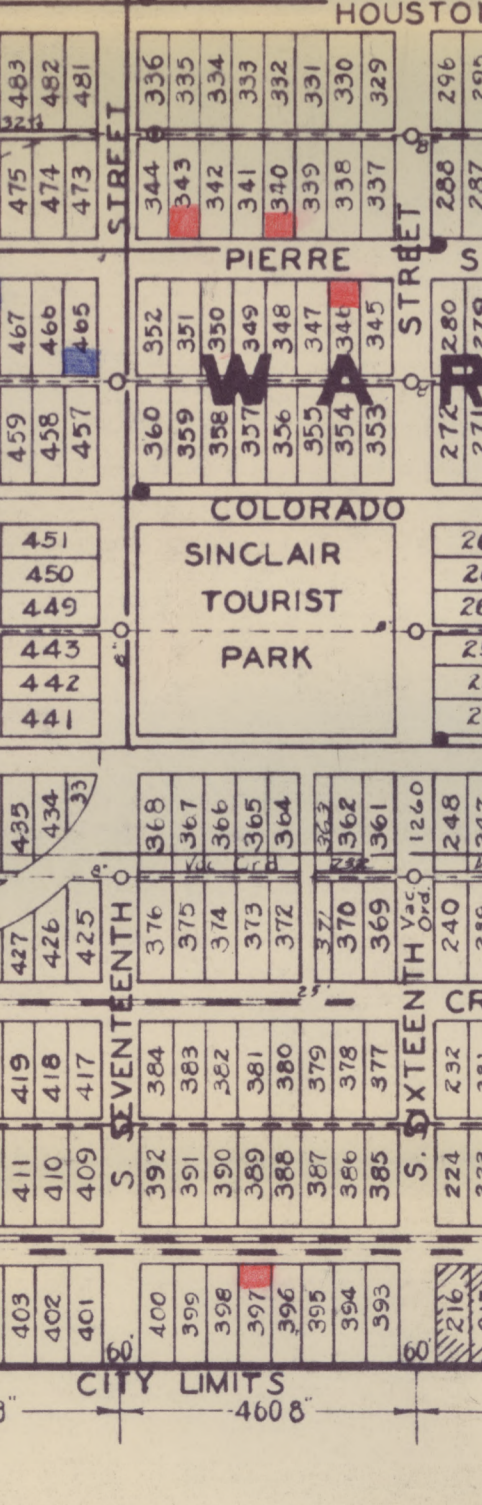
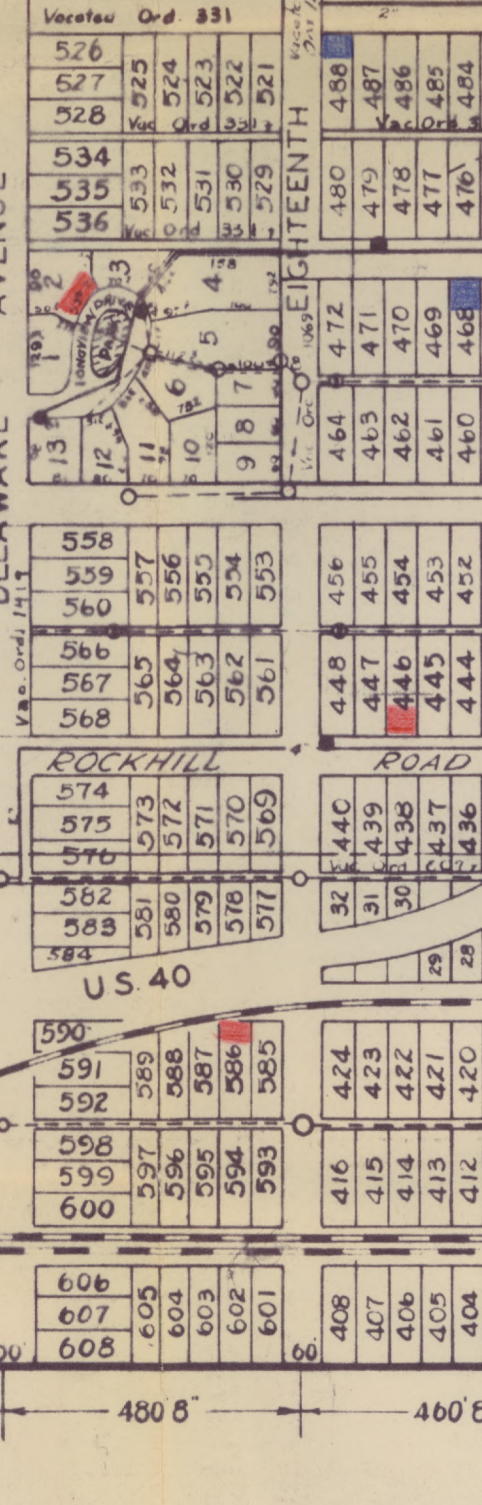
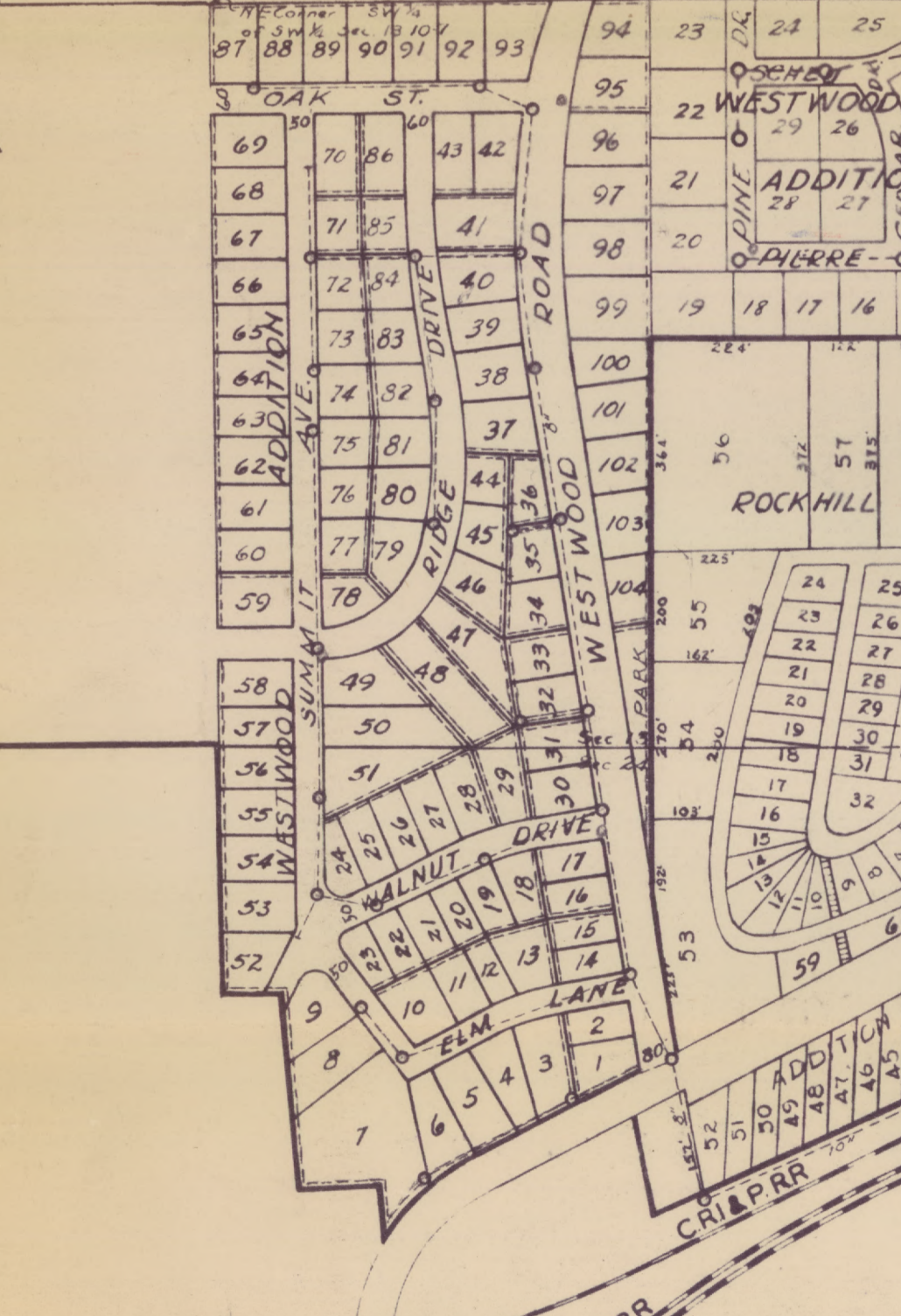




45 ACRES
 22 ACRES
 50 ACRES
 27 ACRES
 21 ACRES
 24 ACRES
 3 ACRES
 04 ACRES

MILEAGE
 7.75
 4.71 MILES
 27.04 MILES S
 7.90 MILES E
 46.80 MILES

ALL PERSONS AGED 65 OR OVER IN MANHATTAN, KANSAS
SPRING 1950
 ■ SINGLE, WIDOWED
 ■ COUPLES



Interview-Schedule

Number _____

I. Activities in the House

A. Preparing and serving meals

1. Where do you serve meals?

Kitchen _____ D.R. _____ Porch _____ Other _____

2. Do you serve extra people at meals?

How often? How many served?
1/wk. 1/mo. Other 2-4 4-6 8-10 Other

Company dinners _____

Refreshments _____

Family reunion dinners _____

3. Who is usually in the kitchen?

When preparing meals? Wife _____ Husband _____ Both _____ Other _____

When washing dishes? Wife _____ Husband _____ Both _____ Other _____

4. Do you ever can or freeze as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel of food
at one time? Yes _____ No _____

B. Doing the laundry

1. How much of your family washing do you do in your home?

All _____ Most _____ Little _____ None _____

2. Where do you do your washing?

Basement _____ Kitchen _____ Utility Room _____ Bathroom _____
Porch _____ Other _____

3. Is this a satisfactory place? Yes _____ No _____ *

*If no, where would you like it? Basement _____ Kitchen _____

Utility Room _____ Bathroom _____ Porch _____ Other _____

4. Where do you hang the washing if you can't hang it
outside?Basement _____ Porch _____ Kitchen _____ Bathroom _____
Over the furnace _____ Unused bedroom _____ Other _____

5. What is your idea of the best place?

6. How much of your ironing do you do?

All _____ Most _____ Little _____ None _____

7. In what room do you iron?

(a) Summer: Kitchen _____ D.R. _____ Basement _____ Porch _____
Bedroom _____ Other _____8. (b) Winter: Kitchen _____ D.R. _____ Basement _____ Porch _____
Bedroom _____ Other _____

II. Facilities House Affords

A. Does the house have:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|-----------------|
| 1. Electricity | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 2. Running water | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Hot | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 3. Flush toilet | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 4. Central heating | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Fuel | | | |
| Coal | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Gas | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Portable gas | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 5. Automatic heat | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 6. Nonautomatic heat | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 7. Heater | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 8. Floor furnace | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 9. Bathing facilities | | | |
| Tub | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Shower | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Lavatory | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 10. Refrigerator | | | |
| Ice | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| Mechanical | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 11. Telephone | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |
| 12. Radio | Yes_____ | No_____ | Would like_____ |

III The Present Dwelling

A. Existing and preferred features

1. How many families live in this dwelling?
 1-family_____ 2-family_____ Apartment_____ Other_____
 Quasi-family_____
 2. How many stories does this house have?
 1_____ 1½_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4 or more_____
 3. How many stories would you prefer for your living quarters?
 1-story_____ 2-story_____
 4. Does this house have a basement? Yes_____ No_____
 5. Do you like a basement? Yes_____ No_____
 6. Does your house have a porch? Yes_____ No_____
 7. Do you like a porch? Yes_____ No_____
 8. If you like a porch, where would you locate it?
 Side_____ Front_____ Back_____
 9. How many rooms do you have in your living quarters?
 1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____ 6_____ 7_____ 8 or more_____
 10. How many rooms do you use?
 1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____ 6_____ 7_____ 8 or more_____
 11. Are you satisfied with this number of rooms? Yes_____ No_____*
- *If no
- (a) Is there a room you'd rather not have?
 - (b) If you could add one room to this house what room would you choose?

B. Location of rooms in the activity zone

1. Do you have a dining room? Yes ___ * No ___
 *If yes,
 Do you use the dining room for anything beside eating?
2. Can you go to the front door easily from where you spend most of your time? Yes ___ No ___ *
 *If no,
 Would you like to? Yes ___ No ___
3. Do you like the L.R. and D.R. combination? Yes ___ No ___
4. Where is the kitchen located in this house?
 Front ___ Back ___ Side ___
 Is this where you like it? Yes ___ No ___ *
 *If no, where would you like it? Front ___ Back ___ Side ___
5. Can you go directly outside from the kitchen? Yes ___ No ___
 Do you like this? Yes ___ No ___
6. What do you do with the garbage?
 (a) Put in garbage can to be collected by the city ___
 (b) Feed it ___ (c) Other ___
7. If garbage is collected by city where do you want to keep the large garbage can?
 In the garage ___ Near the back door ___ On the alley ___
 Other ___
8. Where do you collect tin cans, broken dishes and other trash that you don't burn?
 Container in garage ___ Container near back door ___
 Container beside trash burner ___ Other ___
9. Do you want a garage? Yes ___ * No ___
 *If yes, where do you want it? Attached to house ___
 Detached ___ At back on the alley ___ Other ___

C. Location of rooms in quiet zone

1. How many bedrooms does this house have?
 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 or more ___
2. Is this the right number for you? Yes ___ No ___ *
 *If no, how many would you like?
 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 or more ___
3. Is a cool sleeping room important to you in summer?
 Yes ___ No ___
4. Do you want a warm sleeping room in winter? Yes ___ No ___
5. Would you like some of your bedrooms downstairs if you had a 2-story house? Yes ___ No ___
6. In a 2-story house on which floor would you like the bathroom? 1st ___ 2nd ___
7. If you had a full bath upstairs would you like a stool and lavatory on the first floor? Yes ___ No ___
8. In a 1-story house do you want the bathroom:
 Near the kitchen ___ Near the living room ___ Near the bedrooms ___
9. Are you satisfied with the arrangement of your house?
 Yes ___ No ___ If no, what changes would you make?

IV. Health and Accident

1. Has anyone required bed care in the last year?
 Yes _____ No _____
 How long? _____ What rooms were used? _____

2. In the last few years have either of you had an accident that required bed care or kept you in the house?
 Yes _____ No _____
3. What rooms are used by you or your husband while you are recovering from an illness?
4. Are the arrangements for the care of sick satisfactory in your house? Yes _____ No _____*
 *If no, what arrangements would you like better?
5. Who lies down during the day time?
 Husband: Yes _____ No _____ Wife: Yes _____ No _____
 Where do they lie?
 Bedroom _____ L. R. _____ Porch _____ Other _____
 Is this satisfactory? Yes _____ No _____*
 *If no, where do you think is the best place?
6. Where do you think would be the best place to store medicines and first aid supplies?
 Bathroom _____ Kitchen _____ Bedroom _____ Other _____
7. Have you made any changes in your house or in the use of it to protect yourselves against accidents?

V. Leisure Time and Entertaining

1. Do you have overnight visitors? Yes _____ No _____
 What is the largest number you would have? Never more than
 1 _____ 2-4 _____ 4-6 _____ 8-10 _____ More _____
 How often do you have them?
 Once a week _____ Once a month _____ Once or twice a year _____
 Other _____
2. How do you spend your leisure time at home?

| | Husband | Wife |
|--------------------------------------|---------|------|
| (1) Listen to the radio _____ | | |
| (2) Read _____ | | |
| (3) Do needlework _____ | | |
| (4) Hook or braid rugs _____ | | |
| (5) Make quilts _____ | | |
| (6) Play cards _____ | | |
| (7) Sit and watch people go by _____ | | |
| (8) Do woodwork _____ | | |
| (9) Work in garden _____ | | |
| (10) Other, state _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
3. Do you want a special room to work at these things?
 Wife: Yes _____ No _____ Where _____
 Husband: Yes _____ No _____ Where _____
4. What keepsakes or hobbies do you have:
 (1) That you want to show _____
 (2) What you want to keep put away _____

VI. Location

1. Do you own this house? Yes_____ No_____
2. How long have you lived in this house?
3. Did you choose this community to be close to:
Relatives_____ Work_____ Retire in_____ Purpose of education
of children_____ Other_____
4. If you didn't have this house and had to choose a new location would you choose one that is:
 - (1) Near a grocery store_____
 - (2) Near a bus line_____
 - (3) Within walking distance of the church of your choice_____
 - (4) Where some of your friends live_____
 - (5) Where people are friendly to older people_____
 - (6) Within easy walking distance to the park_____
 - (7) In a quiet neighborhood_____
 - (8) On a busy street_____
 - (9) Other_____

VII Choice of Living Arrangements

1. Do you prefer to live in your own home as long as it is physically possible to do so? Yes_____ No_____
2. When you are not able to maintain your own home which of these arrangements would you consider as your first 3 choices?
 - (1) Live in the home of a son or daughter as a part of the family group_____
 - (2) Live in the home of a son or daughter but have your own rooms so that you would not have to take part in the family group if you did not want to_____
 - (3) Live in home for aged people provided by a church or other organization_____
 - (4) Live in your own home with a companion_____
 - (5) Live in a nursing home_____
 - (6) Live in a hotel or rooming house_____

VIII Occupation

1. What has been the husband's occupation?
Does he work any now? Yes_____ No_____
2. Has the wife ever worked outside the home? Yes_____ No_____
At what work?
Has the wife worked outside the home in the past year?
Yes_____ No_____
At what work?

EXISTING AND PREFERRED HOUSING OF AGED COUPLES OF
MODERATE INCOME IN MANHATTAN, KANSAS

by

ELINOR MURPHY ANDERSON

B. S., Kansas State College
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1939

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Household Economics

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1952

PURPOSE

Among the foremost problems of aged couples in the United States is the provision of housing adapted to the needs of their later years. The average aged couple of moderate income maintains separate living arrangements. This study investigated the existing housing of aged couples of moderate income in the city of Manhattan, Kansas, the activities performed in the dwelling, and the present and preferred features and facilities. From the findings a floor plan was developed which made adequate provision for the requirements of aged couples.

PROCEDURE

An interview schedule was used in gathering data during the months of October to December, 1950, from a random sample of 50 aged couples of moderate income residing in Manhattan, Kansas. For purposes of comparison the couples were divided into age groups, the younger group 65-69, the older group 70-74, and for certain purposes by those living as private and quasi-families. All couples maintained separate living arrangements; and had incomes above subsistence but not exceeding \$3,000.

The interview schedule consisted of questions asked of the respondents concerning (1) activities performed in the

dwelling, (2) facilities which the dwelling affords, (3) existing and preferred features in the dwelling, (4) state of respondent's health and tendency to have accidents, (5) amount and frequency of entertaining, (6) desired location of the dwelling, (7) choice of living arrangements, and (8) past and present occupation of husband.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

The Couples

Two-thirds of the husbands were in the age group, 65-69, and one-third in the age group, 70-74. Two-fifths of the wives were younger than 65; one-third between 65-69 and about one-fourth between 70-74. Seventy percent of the husbands and 14 percent of the wives were employed at the time of the interview. Thirty percent of all couples had required bed care for illness during the past year. There was a greater tendency for the older group than the younger group to have more and longer illnesses, and confining accidents.

The Dwellings and Preferred Features

This community was chosen as a location for their home by a majority of couples in order to be near their work, for retirement, or for the educational facilities available to their

children. The choice of the present location in the community was affected by their need to be within easy walking distance of the public facilities desired for use or to be near public transportation.

Four-fifths of the couples lived in single family dwellings, one-seventh in two-family dwellings and only three couples lived in apartments. About three-fifths of the couples lived as quasi-families. Ninety-two percent of the couples were home owners and 70 percent had lived no longer than 10 years in the present home.

The number of rooms in the dwellings varied from 1 to 13. Half the couples preferred slightly larger houses than they now occupy. An average of eight rooms was desired by couples living as quasi-families and 5.8 rooms by couples living as private families. Eighty percent of those adding rooms would add bedrooms.

Slightly more than three-fourths of all couples desired one-story dwellings; less than half had that type. More of the older group than of the younger group desired one-story dwellings. Almost all couples preferred a bedroom and bathroom on the first floor in two-story houses and in one-story houses the preferred location of the bathroom was near the bedrooms. Basements, porches, and garages were desired by most couples.

All dwellings were equipped with running water and electricity, all but one with flush toilet, and all but three had bathrooms equipped with tub and lavatory. Nine-tenths of the

couples desired central heating and three-fourths had it. Gas was the fuel used by most couples with about seven-eighths having or desiring automatic heat control. Nine-tenths had telephones; all homes except one had refrigerators and radios.

Activities Performed in the Dwelling

In addition to food preparation activities, approximately three-fourths of the couples preferred to serve some meals in the kitchen, one-half performed such activities as ironing, laundering, and indoor clothes drying. In two-fifths of the homes, the wife and other persons were in the kitchen during the progress of certain of these activities.

All or most of the laundry was done in 90 percent of the homes with 70 percent satisfied with the present laundry location. The basement or utility room was preferred as a location for the laundry by three-fourths of the couples; all preferred the basement for indoor clothes drying. Ninety-six percent did all or most of their ironing. The kitchen or dining room was chosen for ironing by 85 percent in summer and 75 percent in winter, the basement or porch being used somewhat more in summer.

Many aged couples desired dining rooms designed for flexible use; 68 percent of the 41 couples having a dining room used it as a second living room.

Entertainment

The majority of the couples entertained at company dinners once in two months, at family reunion dinners once or twice a year, and at parties for which refreshments were served weekly. The largest groups entertained were at family reunion dinners and at times when refreshments were served. Provision for seating 12 guests at the dining table and for serving at least 16 guests at parties was considered adequate.

Provision for overnight guests was desired by 92 percent of the couples. The younger group entertained overnight guests more frequently than the older group, but they entertained fewer in number.

Leisure Time and Keepsakes

The couples spent their leisure time together reading, listening to the radio, watching neighborhood activities and working in flower and vegetable gardens. In addition to these the wives engaged in activities related to homemaking such as embroidering, making rugs and quilts, textile painting and caring for house plants. Some husbands desired a room in the basement for woodworking. Open and enclosed shelves in the dining room and in storage closets were desired for their keepsakes and possessions.

Living Arrangements

These aged couples were reluctant to face the problem of where and how to live in the event that maintaining their own homes was no longer feasible. Actually, living in their own home was their only preference. If this arrangement was not possible, other choices were to live in their own home with the services of a companion, or to have separate quarters in the home of a son or daughter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of Floor Plan

The floor plan is designed to provide the arrangements, the space, and facilities required by couples living as private families in one-story dwellings, the predominant pattern in the study.

The floor plan, somewhat irregular in shape, provides a minimum of five rooms. Such features as a basement, and front and back porch are included.

The main entrance from the front porch is at one end of the dining room, and provides good traffic routes leading to the living room, kitchen, and basement, and to the bedrooms and bath by means of a short back hall. The dining room, in addition to providing space for serving food, affords facilities

for the activities of a second living room, resting, recuperating from an illness, ironing, and storage space for keepsakes. The living room, somewhat withdrawn to provide privacy when used as a guest bedroom, is arranged to enlarge the dining room space when serving a large group.

The bedrooms, designed mainly for sleeping and dressing, are accessible to the bathroom and have adequate closet space for clothes. The orientation of the house provides cool night breezes for the bedrooms and protection from the noise of traffic.

The kitchen is designed to provide space for the equipment necessary for the activities of food preparation, serving of meals and ironing.

The back porch provides an easy, safe entrance to the basement, and to the drying yard. Space is also provided there for a couch and chair for resting and/or visiting.