

**THE MODERATE AND THE MODERN  
ALADDIN BUILDINGS IN DELAWARE  
1914 – 1920**

by

Elizabeth Grace Peebles

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy

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## **ABSTRACT**

The sales of the Aladdin Company, one of the leading manufacturers of mail-order buildings, reflect emerging architectural and cultural trends during the early twentieth century. This study of Aladdin orders in Delaware from 1914 to 1920 provides insight into mail-order housing within Delaware, especially bungalows and cottages in the suburban communities near Wilmington. The survival of the Aladdin Company's national sales records, both sales indexes and detailed order forms, grant the opportunity to researchers to study the mail-order housing industry using the details of individual purchases of Aladdin Read-Cut buildings as the basis of analysis for local and regional studies. The primary sources of research for this thesis were the Aladdin sales records that identify Delaware as the delivery destination, as well as the U.S. Population Census records associated with the name of the purchaser.

Building on existing published scholarship, this thesis establishes Aladdin's role in the mail-order housing industry and provides a context for understanding the Aladdin purchases in Delaware. In the study of these purchases, specific factors examined include railroad station delivery locations, distribution patterns, architectural models and styles, and motivations and demographic characteristics of the purchasers. This thesis is organized around these factors, with separate chapters addressing the history and strengths of the Aladdin Company, the delivery locations and models of Aladdin buildings ordered in Delaware, and a methodology to examine the motivations and demographic trends of Delaware purchasers.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The formative decade for the mail-order house phenomenon in the United States was the 1910s, with its popularity peaking in the 1920s. The sales of the Aladdin Company, one of the leading manufacturers of mail-order buildings, reflect emerging architectural and cultural trends during the early twentieth century. Some of the major trends associated with the Aladdin Company sales in Delaware include the emergence of the modern suburban home in industrial communities along the new streetcar lines, as well as the use of the railroad to open rural areas for material transport in the development of factories and supporting communities. This study of Aladdin orders in Delaware from 1914 to 1920 provides insight into mail-order housing within Delaware. Specifically the study reveals the relationships between the residents and local architectural and cultural trends of the time, such as the increasing sales of modest suburban single-family homes, including bungalows and cottages, to families moving from urban and rural communities. The fortunate survival of some of the Aladdin Company's national sales records, both sales indexes and detailed order forms, grants researchers the rare opportunity to study the mail-order housing industry using the details of individual purchases as the basis of analysis for local and regional studies.<sup>1</sup> This thesis uses the Aladdin sales records that identify Delaware as the

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<sup>1</sup> Aladdin Company records are located in the *Aladdin Company Records 1907-1989, Collection*, Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University. Hereafter known as *ACR, CHL*.

delivery destination and U.S. Population Census records associated with the name of the purchaser as the primary sources for research. Using these sources reveals the purchasers' primary motivations for ordering mail-order buildings, which can be grouped into three main categories: personal use, employee benefits, and investment.

The body of literature encompassing the study of mail-order housing has been steadily growing for the last twenty-five years. The early 1980s bore witness to an increasing awareness of the presence of mail-order housing and the valuable role of mail-order housing in the study of American domestic architecture. In 1986, three definitive books were published on the American home and mail-order housing. Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. used pages of mail-order house catalogues as illustrations in his comprehensive survey, *The American Family Home, 1800-1960*.<sup>2</sup> Also using mail-order catalogues as illustrations was Alan Gowans' *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture 1890-1930*, which placed a stronger emphasis than Clark did on the role of mail-order housing in the development of the American suburban home.<sup>3</sup> Gowans used mail-order houses as a medium to clarify the diversity of architectural styles and define the social function aspects of *The Comfortable House*. For this thesis, the most valuable research included by Gowans is his Chapter 3, "The Builders of Post-Victorian America," which provides a history of many of the mail-order house companies including Sears, Roebuck and Company and the Aladdin Company. The third major text published in 1986 fueled the interest of individuals and preservation groups in the identification of Sears mail-order houses in local

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<sup>2</sup> Clifford Edward Clark, *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture, 1890-1930* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986).



communities.<sup>4</sup> The National Trust for Historic Preservation produced *Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company* by Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl in direct response to the newspaper and magazine feature stories on mail-order houses.<sup>5</sup> *Houses by Mail* includes excerpts of oral histories of Sears house owners, a short history of Sears as the self-proclaimed largest producer of mail-order houses in America, and a compendium of the models of houses sold by Sears based on the known catalogues at the time.

*Houses by Mail* continued to serve as the primary, if not only, resource used by professional and amateur researchers for many years. But by 1991 two more texts, both featuring the Aladdin Company, expanded and developed the research on mail-order housing styles. In addition to being a style guide for popular houses, Robert Schweitzer and Michael W. R. Davis' *America's Favorite Homes: Mail-Order Catalogues as a Guide to Popular Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Houses* offers the history and practices of the mail-order housing industry, including many of the primary companies, and focuses much of the discussion and illustrations on the Aladdin Company.<sup>6</sup> Scott Steven Erbes chose the Aladdin Company as the sole focus of his master's thesis, *The Read-Cut Dream: The Mail-Order House Catalogs of the Aladdin Company, 1906-1920*.<sup>7</sup> Erbes used the catalogs to examine the plans and

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<sup>4</sup> Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl, *Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> Stevenson, *Houses by Mail*, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Schweitzer and Michael W. R. Davis, *America's Favorite Homes: Mail-Order Catalogues As a Guide to Popular Early 20th-Century Houses* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> Scott Steven Erbes, *The Read-Cut Dream: The Mail-Order House Catalogs of the Aladdin Company, 1906-1920* (MA thesis, University of Delaware, 1990).

styles of Aladdin houses through the Aladdin rhetoric related to aesthetics, practicality, and comfort.

In 1998, Evie T. Joselow wrote her doctoral dissertation, *The Ideal Catalogue House: Mail-Order Architecture and Consumer Culture, 1914-1930*, to provide the much needed historic context for mail-order architecture and its relationship to consumer culture, and to explore the popularity of mail-order buildings during the housing booms from 1914 to 1930.<sup>8</sup> Joselow draws on publications that link consumer culture and mail-order housing, oral histories, existing mail-order community surveys, and the geography of known mail-order purchases to suggest that the variety of products and services appealed to an economically and socially diverse group of consumers looking to build their own version of an ideal home. Joselow concludes that additional research is needed to understand more fully the presence of mail-order housing. She encourages future researchers to utilize the newly found Aladdin Company records at the Clarke Historical Library to examine the specifics and trends of purchases and for more research focused on the experiences of catalogue consumers. Unfortunately, it does not appear that Joselow's work is widely known. Most work published since 1998 that is related to mail-order housing does not include Joselow in their bibliographies.

Simultaneous to Joselow's research, one of her supervisory committee members, Dr. Daniel Reiff, was also producing research that included the study of

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<sup>8</sup> Evie T. Joselow, *The Ideal Catalogue House: Mail-Order Architecture and Consumer Culture, 1914-1930* (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1998).

mail-order housing.<sup>9</sup> In 2000, Reiff published *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738-1950*, which places mail-order housing within a historic context of houses built or ordered from books. Reiff used selections of catalogs and books to represent the full spectrum of houses, derived from books, in American architecture.

Interest in refining a methodological approach for identifying and confirming the existence of Sears, Roebuck and Company mail-order houses grew in 2003 – 2004 with the publication of three separate texts. Two were written by independent researchers, Rosemary Thornton (*Finding The Houses That Sears Built*) and Rebecca Hunter (*Putting Sears Homes on the Map*), to develop techniques for identification of Sears houses and to expand (and revise) the information about Sears found in *Houses by Mail*.<sup>10</sup> Both Thornton and Hunter also worked on surveys of mail-order houses for communities in the mid-west. The third text, published in 2003, was *Discovering Mail-Order Dreams: How to Identify Sears, Roebuck & Company*

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<sup>9</sup> Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738-1950: A History and Guide* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> Rosemary Thornton, *The Houses That Sears Built: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sears Catalog Homes* (Alton, Ill: Gentle Beam Publications, 2004); Rosemary Thornton, *Finding the Houses That Sears Built: A Guide to the 60 Most Popular Designs* (Alton, Ill: Gentle Beam Publications, 2004); Rebecca Hunter, *Beyond Sears: Mail Order Homes in Elgin, Illinois from Aladdin, Lewis, Sterling, Harris Brothers, Gordon-Van Tine and Montgomery Ward Companies 1906-1940* (Elgin, Ill: Elgin Illinois Heritage Commission, 2004); Rebecca Hunter, *Elgin Illinois Sears House Research Project* (Elgin, Ill: Elgin Illinois Heritage Commission, 1999); Rebecca Hunter, *Putting Sears Homes on the Map: A Compilation of Testimonials Published in Sears Modern Homes Catalogs 1908-1940* (Elgin, Ill: R.L. Hunter Press, 2004).

*Catalog Houses*, a master's thesis by Cynthia Anne Liccese-Torres.<sup>11</sup> Liccese-Torres used the Lyon Park neighborhood in Arlington, Virginia, as a case study to establish how to authenticate genuine Sears mail-order houses and how to distinguish them from similar traditionally constructed houses of the period.

Thus, the majority of existing literature on mail-order housing can be categorized as focusing on mail-order company histories, using mail-order catalogues to study American housing styles, surveys, identification of mail-order houses and communities (primarily Sears), and most recently, the development of historic contexts about mail-order housing and houses from books. One gap in the existing research is an examination of individual Aladdin purchases, with an emphasis on the delivery location, type and style of buildings, and the people who chose mail-order housing. This thesis works on closing this gap by examining the Aladdin purchases in Delaware during the period from 1914 to 1920.

A few texts are extremely helpful to understanding the history of Wilmington, Delaware and the development of its industries, housing, and suburban communities. Two texts focused on suburbanization of the northern Delaware region around the urban center of Wilmington. Both *Suburbanization in the Vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware, 1880-1950+/-: A Historic Context* by Susan Mulchahey Chase, David Ames, and Rebecca Siders and *The Process of Suburbanization and the Use of Restrictive Deed Covenants as Private Zoning, Wilmington Delaware, 1900-1941* by Susan Mulchahey Chase described the typical architectural characteristics and

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<sup>11</sup> Cynthia Anne Liccese-Torres, *Discovering Mail-Order Dreams: How to Identify Sears, Roebuck & Company Catalog Houses* (MA thesis, Goucher College, 2003.)

settlement patterns for the Wilmington suburbs.<sup>12</sup> *Suburbanization* and *The Process of Suburbanization* include mentions of the likely presence of mail-order housing in the suburban communities around Wilmington, but neither identify or research specific examples outside of a 1913 advertisement in the *Sunday Morning Star* for an Aladdin home in Gordon Heights.<sup>13</sup> Christina Radu's master's thesis, *Industrial Housing Communities in Northern Delaware Begun During the First World War: The Search for a Model Environment*, examined the housing choices made by Northern Delaware companies for their workers.<sup>14</sup> Carol Hoffecker included in her book, *Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century*, research about the development of Delaware industries and their impact on transportation and community growth.<sup>15</sup>

Building on the existing research on early twentieth-century Delaware development, this thesis examines the contributing role of Aladdin mail-order buildings. Even though no previous research on the history of mail-order housing has directly addressed Aladdin buildings constructed in Delaware, it is an ideal subject for

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<sup>12</sup> Susan Mulchahey Chase, David L. Ames, and Rebecca J. Siders, *Suburbanization in the Vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware, 1880-1950+/-: A Historic Context* (Newark, Del: Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware, 1992); Susan Mulchahey Chase, *The Process of Suburbanization and the Use of Restrictive Deed Covenants As Private Zoning, Wilmington, Delaware, 1900-1941* (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> Chase, *The Process of Suburbanization*, 161, 213.

<sup>14</sup> Christina Radu, *Industrial Housing Communities in Northern Delaware Begun During the First World War: The Search for a Model Environment* (MA thesis, University of Delaware, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Carol Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983).

a case study that uses characteristics of individual purchases as the basis for research of an entire state. Delaware's solitary urban center of Wilmington, its small geographic and population size, and the predominance of industrial manufacturers make this case study both manageable and representative. This case study of Aladdin buildings in Delaware examines the motivations of purchasers and their demographics to understand the development of the mail-order housing industry and housing within the state of Delaware.

### **Methodology**

After studying the existing literature related to mail-order housing, I identified the Aladdin sales in Delaware, researched additional information in Sanborn fire insurance maps and U.S. Population Census records related to the sales, conducted street surveys, as well as analyzed the information gathered by location, building model, purchasers' motivations, and purchasers' demographic characteristics in order to understand the presence and role of Aladdin mail-order buildings in Delaware from 1914 to 1920.<sup>16</sup> By examining the sales indexes and individual order forms in the Aladdin Company Records at the Clarke Historical Library, I was able to identify 48 orders delivered to Delaware residents from 1914 to 1920.<sup>17</sup> Using the delivery locations and purchaser names listed on the order forms, I examined additional

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<sup>16</sup> Sanborn Map Company, "Digital Sanborn Maps: 1867-1970." ProQuest. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2102/> (accessed February 6, 2010). Sanborn maps were created periodically for towns and cities to assist fire insurance companies and include streets, parcel boundaries, building footprints, and notations about building use and materials.

<sup>17</sup> Refer to Appendices A, B, and C for illustrations and information about the 48 Aladdin deliveries to Delaware from 1914 to 1920.

resources including Sanborn maps for towns that received Aladdin deliveries and the U.S. Population Census records for purchasers. The delivery locations, Sanborn maps, and the occasional listing of a street address for purchasers in the U.S. Census records enabled me to conduct a strategic street survey to try to identify construction locations for Aladdin buildings that are still standing. After compiling the data, I conducted both quantitative and qualitative analyses to identify trends and patterns within the delivery location, building models, and purchasers' motivations and demographic characteristics. This methodology provided the framework for this case study of Aladdin mail-order buildings in Delaware.

The research for this thesis began with an examination of the Aladdin Company records at the Clarke Historical Library in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, to assess the extent of information available about Aladdin sales delivered to Delaware.<sup>18</sup> Although the first sale for the company was in 1906, the surviving sales indexes begin in 1914 (Figure 1.1).<sup>19</sup> The sales indexes are organized first by year, then by the first letter of the purchaser's last name, and finally by the order number. The sales indexes

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<sup>18</sup> The Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University received the Aladdin Company corporate records in 1996. The collection for the company, which operated from 1906 to 1981, includes a nearly complete set of catalogues, sales indexes, order forms, post-World War II architectural drawings, financial records, and correspondence. The sales indexes and order forms from most of the regional sales offices are not included in this collection. Sales indexes from before 1914 and order forms from before the middle of 1914 are also missing. The locations of the regional office records are unknown. No other mail-order building company has such a detailed surviving record of their operations and sales.

<sup>19</sup> Aladdin Company, *ACR*, *CHL*, box 90.

1/30-2420	Miller H. D.	Uicksburg	Miss	Portland	2/15-14
2/3-2424	Miller F. B.	Barnan	Allee	Columbia	3/17/14
2/27-2482	Marconi W. W.	Idaho	Idaho	Idaho	Idaho
3/26-2509	Merwin, J. W.	Mentor	Ohio	Tremont	
3/16-2516	Moore, W. S.	Evanton	Ill.	Brighton	
3/30-2532	Moore Bros.	New Egypt	N. Y.	Tremont	
3/30-2533	Moore Bros.	New Egypt	N. Y.	Tremont	
4/4-2549	Metuchen Realty & Imp Co.	Metuchen	N. J.	Delta	
4/1-2559	Moore H.	Harvey	Ill.	Lakewood	
" 2553	Munty Day	Dubuque	Iowa	Barson	
4/9-2572	Mumford, Geo.	Cassion	Ohio	Special	
4/14-2588	Merriam, M. C.	Pontiac	Mich	Tremont	
4/15-2596	Mallon, J. E.	Harrodsburg	Ky.	Jiff #1	
4/16-2598	Moore B. E.	Port Clinton	Ohio	Ky #2	
4/17-2611	Morror, A. P.	Jersey City Heights	N. J.	Tremont	
4/20-2628	Metuchen Realty & Imp. Co.	N. Y.	N. Y.	Delta	
4/20-2639	Metuchen Realty & Imp. Co.	N. Y.	N. Y.	Delta	
4/7-2559	Moore, E. E.	Edge Moor	Del.	Del.	
4/25-2660	Maguire, C. J.	Huganok	S. D.	Drayton	
4/13-2579	Marshall, Geo.	Andadale	S. D.	Drayton	
4/27-2676	MacFarlane, Mrs. D.	Kenasburg	N. Y.	Tremont	
" 2675	Matheny, Joseph	Elwood	Pa.	Tremont	
4/29-2701	Marley, Edwin	Niles	Mich	Port #1	
4/4-2728	Manning, Arthur	Kokomo	Ind.	Rodney	2
4/2-2716	Marce Anson	Amherst	Mass	Roxton	
4/5-2737	Martin, E. M.	Key West	Fla.	Mopis	

**Figure 1.1** North American Construction Company (later known as the Aladdin Company) 1914 Sales Index (Source: Box 90, Aladdin Company Records 1907-1989, Collection, Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University. Hereafter known as ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)



list the order number, purchaser name, city and state, and the building model.<sup>20</sup> A search through the sales indexes from 1914 to 1925 only revealed purchases that listed a Delaware location from 1914 to 1920. This is likely not due to an absence of Delaware purchases, but rather due to the Aladdin Company's establishment of regional sales offices, with separate sales books, in 1920.<sup>21</sup>

The information about Delaware sales contained within the 1914 to 1920 sales indexes and order forms is the foundation of the research for this thesis. After the Delaware sales were identified in the sales indexes, the order numbers directed me to find the full order form for each sale (Figure 1.2).<sup>22</sup> The surviving order forms begin with order number 3789, which is dated near the end of 1914. For Delaware, the order forms only exist for the 1915 to 1920 sales. The order forms changed in format over the years but always contained the same key information about the orders. Although the time range used for this thesis was dictated by the survival of sales records, the period from 1914 to 1920 was formative for both the Aladdin Company and the growth in construction of single family houses in Delaware.

After the Aladdin sales in Delaware had been identified, I began to search for the construction locations of the buildings ordered. A few of the purchasers could be linked to 1920 U.S. Population Census records that listed a street in the same town

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<sup>20</sup> If the order form listed two names, a purchaser and recipient of delivery, the sales index would record the order twice, once under each name.

<sup>21</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes*, 1919(?), *Aladdin Company Records* (Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University) Box 43. Page 3 outlines the new division offices in Bay City, MI as the central office and Northern Division; Portland, OR for the Western Division; Hattiesburg, MS for the South Central Division; and Wilmington, NC for the Southeastern Division, which includes Delaware.

<sup>22</sup> Aladdin Company, *ACR*, *CHL*, boxes 93-107.

**ALADDIN**  
HEAD-UP  
HOUSES  
and the Colonials

DATE: Apr 20 1915 CK: H30.20 DATE: 1/21/15 CK: 10.00 CREDITS: CK: BALANCE:

Order No. 3814 Rec'd 1/21/15 Ack. 1/21/15 Ship From \_\_\_\_\_

Ship to Lana Vanderwende  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Harrington  
County Kent  
State Del.  
Via Penn.  
**FREIGHT CHARGES COLLECT**

Station Open Yes Closed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Shipped \_\_\_\_\_

Ordered by Lana Vanderwende  
Street R. F. D. #8, Box 77,  
Town Harrington  
State Del.

STYLE Gretna SIZE \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. RECEIVED	BALANCE
Price	<u>399.95</u>		
Extras	<u>30.25</u>		
Freight			
Total	<u>430.20</u>	<u>430.20</u>	
Discount			
Allowance			
Total			

REMARKS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. 10x16 Living room.
2. Out house size 5'6"x5'6" with 2' corner posts, shingled roof and one window of suitable size \$18.00
3. Four cellar windows 18x24 complete 7.40
4. One cellar door size 3x7 complete with frame and hardware 4.65

\$50.25

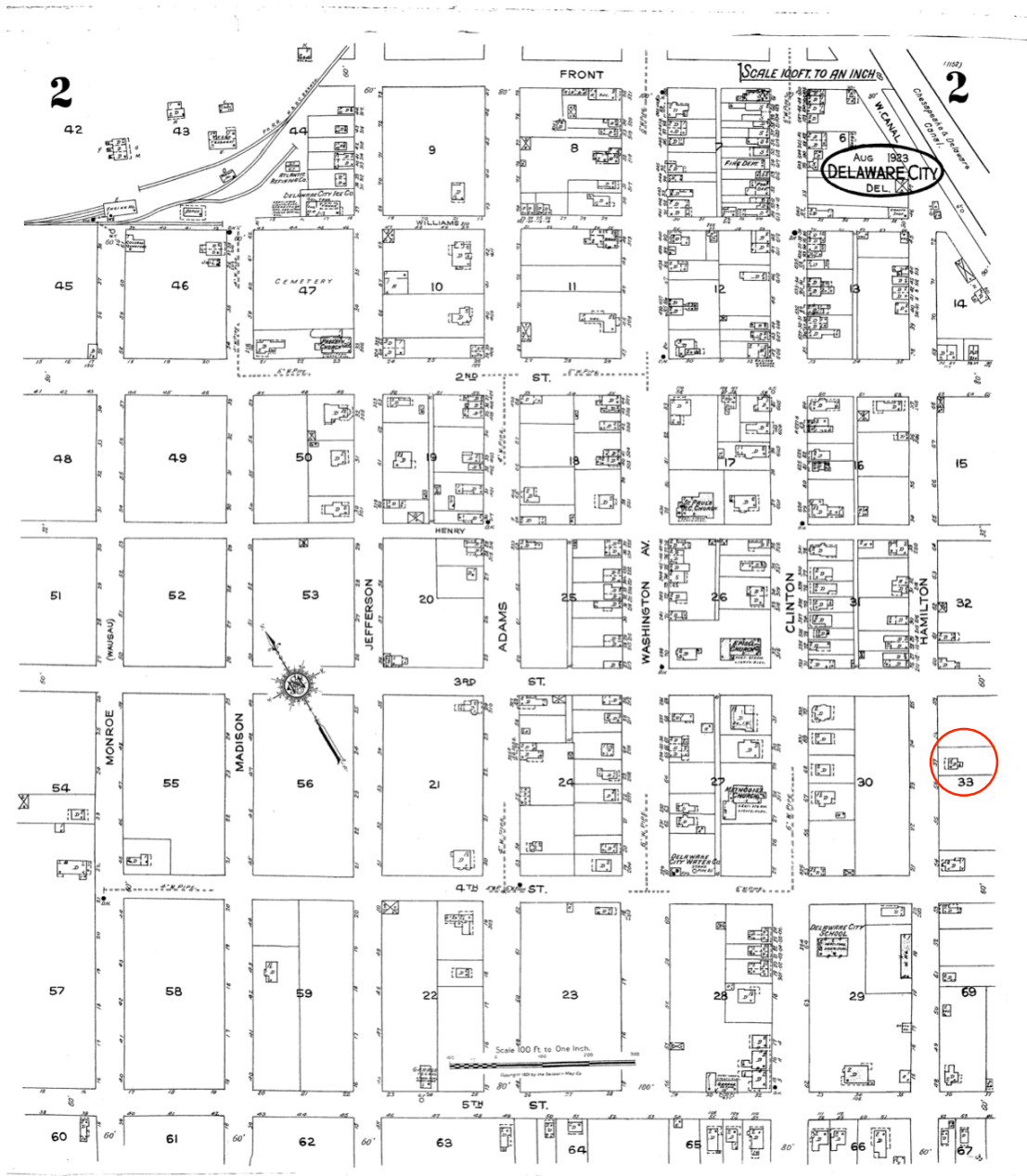
Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_  
Plaster Board Yes Lath and Plaster \_\_\_\_\_  
Paint \_\_\_\_\_  
Body Dark Green  
Trim White  
Porch Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Porch Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Sash \_\_\_\_\_  
Inside Light Oak Stain and Varnish.

AMOUNT  
CR.  
CHG.  
ITEM  
DATE

**Figure 1.2 Aladdin Order Form 3814, Lana Vanderwende, Harrington (Source: Box 93, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)**

as the delivery location on the order form. Comparing early and later Sanborn maps for towns that received Aladdin deliveries revealed which streets had new buildings constructed during the 1910s, narrowing down potential Aladdin construction locations (Figure 1.3). The information garnered from these sources provided a basic guide to shape a street survey in the vicinity of train stations that received Aladdin deliveries. I began the street survey by driving to the specific street mentioned in the U.S. Population Census records, when available. Once at a location, I examined the building(s) on the street, referring to the images from the Aladdin catalogues to match the expected rooflines and fenestration for the particular Aladdin building. When potential streets were not available, I used the new or altered building footprints in Sanborn maps to determine potential construction locations for Aladdin houses, and again examined the parcel for characteristics of the expected Aladdin house. When all that was available was the delivery train station, I examined the area around the station in a grid street search in hopes of identifying any of the known orders of Aladdin buildings. Since Wilmington is very large, I was unable to conduct this level of survey in this area of the state. The street survey and analysis of the information found in the U.S. Population Census and Sanborn fire insurance maps for the 48 known orders resulted in finding seven Aladdin buildings still standing, two other buildings that are likely from Aladdin, and four locations where an Aladdin building was likely demolished (Appendix B).

Even without having specific construction locations for most of the Aladdin buildings in Delaware, knowing the delivery locations allows for analysis of the orders' distribution, type, and purchasers by town. The order forms provided information about the building model purchased and any specific modifications or



**Figure 1.3** Delaware City, Aug. 1923, Sheet 2, Sanborn fire insurance map (Source: Sanborn Map Company. "Digital Sanborn Maps: 1867-1970"). Red circle indicates found location of Aladdin order number 5451.

additions. Examining the corresponding Aladdin catalogue for the year of purchase provided more detailed information about the models ordered including architectural styles, room arrangement and purpose, and the advertising language and graphic design. Searching the U.S. Census Population records for the names of the purchasers allowed me to find information about the purchasers' families, age, ethnicity, housing, and occupation. These records along with the order forms allowed for a closer examination of individual purchasers as a basis for a broader analysis of the demographics of Aladdin purchasers.

### **Organization of Thesis**

This thesis sets out to establish Aladdin's role in the early twentieth-century mail-order housing industry and to provide a context for understanding the Aladdin purchases in Delaware. In the study of these purchases, it is important to examine specific factors including delivery locations, distribution patterns, architectural models and styles, and motivations and demographic characteristics of the purchasers. These particular aspects of the purchases provide the basis for establishing a larger understanding of Aladdin mail-order housing in Delaware. This thesis is organized around these factors, with separate chapters addressing the history and strengths of the Aladdin Company, the delivery locations and models of Aladdin buildings ordered in Delaware, and a methodology to examine the motivations and demographic trends of Delaware purchasers.

Chapter Two, "The Rise of Read-Cut Houses," examines the cultural and economic trends that created an atmosphere conducive to the development of the mail-order housing industry and identifies the defining characteristics of the Aladdin Company within the context of the larger mail-order house industry. The Aladdin

Company's success can be found in its early history, during the first quarter of the twentieth century, in its development of the Aladdin system of construction, and in its skill at communicating the Aladdin lifestyle to its customers.

Chapter Three, "Aladdin in Delaware," studies the presence of Aladdin buildings in Delaware. The distribution and location of the 48 Aladdin orders delivered to Delaware during the 1914 to 1920 period demonstrate a clear relationship with the growth patterns of local industry and new residential construction in the "streetcar" suburbs surrounding Wilmington. The characteristics of style, cost, and size of the Aladdin buildings ordered illuminate the nature of the buildings that Delaware residents chose to purchase.

Chapter Four, "Aladdin Purchasers," introduces a methodological approach for understanding the mail-order house phenomenon on local and national levels by conducting in-depth research on Aladdin purchasers. This approach establishes a framework that others might use to conduct similar research in other states and communities. Information garnered from Aladdin purchase order forms and U. S. Population Census forms can be used to understand and categorize characteristics of the purchaser. Specific examples of Delaware Aladdin purchasers illustrate the benefit of a combined analysis for understanding the nature of the purchase. Once individual purchases are understood, those insights can be brought together to reveal and to be used as supporting evidence for the connection between mail-order housing and larger cultural trends.

## **Chapter 2**

### **THE RISE OF READI-CUT HOUSES**

The history of Aladdin is interwoven with the cultural developments of American social and industrial history at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century that created the ideal environment for the rise of interest in marketing and purchasing pre-cut mail-order houses. House pattern and plan books had long been the medium used in the development and communication of the American architectural vocabulary. But it was not until two factors combined - the presence of the railroad and the emergence of a national consumer culture - that pre-cut mail-order houses were economically viable. Many companies were formed wholly for the production of mail-order houses; other existing companies adapted their product lines to include mail-order houses. Of the top companies that achieved a level of business that could be considered mass production, the North American Construction Company, later known as the Aladdin Company, was the first to develop the concept of the complete package of a "Readi-Cut House" delivered to the nearest train station. Many of Aladdin's manufacturing and construction techniques were taken from other industries in order to streamline and refine the mail-order house process. The Aladdin Company's advertising was innovative through the use of language and images that appealed to emotions as well as endorsing the concept of the modern home with its clever use of space and simple style. The Aladdin Company intentionally provided a wide range of affordable products in order to appeal to the

broadest base of customers possible, contributing to the national trend of increasing home ownership by working and middle class families.

### **An Atmosphere for Houses in a Box**

The century leading up to the era of the pre-cut house companies was a time of great transition in the United States. The 1840s and 1850s were “...the era of the ‘Jacksonian Common Man,’ the rapidly advancing Industrial Revolution, and the onset of the machine age. This became the period of improvement, ranging from gas lights, water systems, canals, and railroads to – thanks to street cars – the beginnings and steady growth of suburbia.”<sup>23</sup> The rapid industrialization of the nation created the ability to manufacture new types of products at great speed and increased the demand for labor, which was met by multiple waves of immigration. At the same time, the railroads’ spread across the nation led to an unprecedented access to both natural resources and markets for finished products. In order to tap these new markets, many companies turned to advertising, especially in popular lifestyle magazines. This increase in advertising and the establishment of a national catalogue consumer culture, as well as a long history of obtaining architectural designs from plan books and other published sources, created an acceptance of mail-order buildings and a national venue for architectural discourse.

The nation experienced an industrial revolution and moved away from the dominance of rural agricultural models to an urban-centered society focused on modern invention and industrial manufacturing. Successive waves of industrialization began with the New England textile industry and continued with the great expansion

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<sup>23</sup> Schweitzer and Davis, *America's Favorite Homes*, 42.



of the iron and steel industries.<sup>24</sup> New possibilities for manufacturing and transportation emerged with the advancement of steam power engines. American industrial economic growth was due to manufacturers utilizing mechanization and mass production. Kenneth Jackson illustrates this by observing in the auto industry, “In 1913, when Henry Ford introduced the moving assembly line for the Model T, the American nation had become the world’s leading industrial power... The rapid growth of the economy – coupled with the quickening pace of the Industrial Revolution – provided the basis for the organization of business on a scale undreamed of in the antebellum period.”<sup>25</sup> Manufacturers across the industries were investing in and reaping the benefits from the new technologies developing infrastructures and tools for mass production.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the size and frequency of waves of immigration to the United States increased and one of the largest impacts on urban centers was the demand for housing. The incoming population provided labor for the increasing number of factories and met the growing demand for an inexpensive work force.<sup>26</sup> Immigrants were packed into inner-city tenements in unsustainable and unhealthy conditions.<sup>27</sup> Manufacturers felt pressure to provide better housing

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<sup>24</sup> Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns* (Haymarket Series. London; New York: Verso, 1995), 29.

<sup>25</sup> Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 87.

<sup>26</sup> Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003), 36.

<sup>27</sup> Gwendolyn Wright, “Americanization and Ethnicity in Urban Tenements” in *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983).

opportunities for their labor force. Poor living conditions fostered a climate of unhappiness that led to labor unrest and undermined the creation and stability of a solid labor force.<sup>28</sup> Investment in company housing and relocation to suburban locations were some of the techniques used to reduce the effects of labor unions and to pacify their workers for increased stability and productivity (Figure 2.1).

The overall population growth of the nation, combined with ethnic and class stigmas, encouraged segregation and a desire to escape from urban “ills” to new outlying idyllic communities. This escape was not available for the majority of urban residents, as Dolores Hayden starkly stated, “Millions of workers, concentrated in the vast slums, could only dream about the small, clean, middle-class suburbs of houses surrounded by grass and trees and advertised by one builder as ‘the working man’s reward.’ At the end of the nineteenth century, two-thirds of American urban residents were still tenants, most of them in the tenements.”<sup>29</sup> Despite the seemingly unattainable nature of homeownership for tenants, Hayden also remarked that “...single-family, suburban houses represent Americanization for a nation of immigrants....”<sup>30</sup> The demand for new and better housing only increased at the turn of the twentieth century as densely packed populations placed unbearable stress on

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<sup>28</sup> Dolores Hayden, *Redesigning the American Dream: The Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life*, Revised and expanded. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 48-49.

<sup>29</sup> Hayden, *Redesigning*, 40.

<sup>30</sup> Hayden, *Redesigning*, 34.

# Industrial Housing and Its Effect on Satisfied and Dissatisfied Labor

.....  
*First of a series and sugges-  
tions on industrial housing*  
.....

“**A** CHALLENGE not only to the sound judgment, but to the idealism of the American business man lies in what has come to be called the ‘industrial housing problem.’ Behind these matter-of-fact words is a world of vital significance affecting the greater, more efficient, more beautiful America for which forward-looking men are beginning to plan.

“The solution rests neither in sentiment alone nor in unmitigated business sense; it is comprehended, however, in that mixture of the two qualities which makes for the greatest social value and success in industry.

“The practice in providing suitable homes for workers is in its infancy in America. England has solved the problem with characteristic British slowness and thoroughness. But in America, the land is as yet too new, the genitive forces of industrial opportunity as yet too prolific, labor as yet too plentiful to have brought this incidental but vital problem to more than a merely tentative solution.”

## Housing Never More Important

“**T**HERE never was a time when housing was more important and its relations to industrial and social work so clearly recognized.

“The war has suddenly brought to light the relations of housing to all classes of people, to industry, to Government employes, to the winning of the war and to the successful carrying out of the great readjustment period.

“The appropriation by Congress of \$110,000,000 for housing, following a hold-up of ship building and ammunition making, due to the lack of housing facilities, is the strongest word that can be spoken in regard to this subject.

“During the war the industries of this country, as well as the Government, were confronted with many trying problems and production has been handicapped by these obstacles. Shortage of labor resulted in reduced output, dissatisfied labor resulted in strikes and often times long

**Figure 2.1** *Industrial Housing and Its Effect on Satisfied and Dissatisfied Labor, Bulletin No. 1, Aladdin Company, Bay City, Michigan, 1920* (Source: Box 43, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

urban communities and the expansion of transportation networks supported the growth of suburban industrial towns.<sup>31</sup>

The development of the railroad brought many significant changes to America during the nineteenth century, all of which proved advantageous to the mail-order housing industry. It connected urban centers with rural areas, allowing for greater ease of transportation of goods, improving access to areas not near navigable waterways, and opening up new ways of thinking about the shrinking scale of space and time for the transport of both people and goods. Railroads expanded possibilities for higher density settlement across the country. The development of the railroad, and subsequently the streetcar, encouraged wider areas of suburban settlement around urban centers. In the mid-nineteenth century, “Railroad and telegraph systems would expand in tandem, often following the same routes, and together they shrank the whole perceptual universe of North America.”<sup>32</sup> The railroad created a reliable and fast network for exchange and commerce. The rail network opened vast rural landscapes for the transportation of agricultural products and natural resources to market towns.

William Cronon links the railroad and lumber industries together as transforming the western landscape. “In the second half of the nineteenth century, city and country, linked by ‘the wild scream of the locomotive,’ would together work profound transformations on the western landscape... The white pines of the north woods would become lumber, and the forests of the Great Lakes would turn to

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<sup>31</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*; Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Publications of the Joint Center for Urban Studies. Cambridge: Harvard University Press and MIT Press, 1962).

<sup>32</sup> William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 76.

stumps.”<sup>33</sup> But this transformation was not confined to the western landscape. Changes occurred across North America for every aspect of life, from the domestic to the industrial landscapes. During the mid-nineteenth century, the white pine trees of the northern Midwest were viewed as a commodity, synonymous with lumber and profit. Profits increased as milling technology improved; the move from a circular saw to a band saw reduced the amount of waste in saw logs.<sup>34</sup> White pine had the advantage of a low density, which allows it to float down river for easy transportation.<sup>35</sup> Chicago was a major lumber hub in this era because of its access to both water and rail.<sup>36</sup> This advantage eventually became a limitation; when all the trees near rivers were cut, the industry was no longer tied to waterways. By 1880, 95 percent of the lumber moving through Chicago was transported by railroad.<sup>37</sup>

The railroad opened up the possibility for the decentralization of market towns and the financial incentives for “direct sales” of lumber.<sup>38</sup> With the increased use of the railroad, and with people’s frustration with dealing with middlemen, in the form of wholesale dealers in Chicago, the majority of logging moved away from the upper Midwest in the late part of the century. Higher quality woods became more popular as loggers followed rail lines to the south and the Pacific Northwest, to cut the

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<sup>33</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 93.

<sup>34</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 159.

<sup>35</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 152.

<sup>36</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 155.

<sup>37</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 181.

<sup>38</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 185, 193.

denser yellow pine, cedar and fir.<sup>39</sup> Mills in the Midwest had enjoyed a monopoly in the lumber industry due to their proximity to Chicago, which had been a central distribution hub. By the late 1800s, those mills lost their dominance because of a number of factors - the over-logging in the Midwest, the increased use of railroad lines, decentralization of market towns, more competitive prices, and logging becoming more widespread throughout the nation. Midwest mills began to look more towards their local markets and began producing finished wood products; many became involved in the mail-order house industry as the twentieth century dawned.<sup>40</sup>

One new trend that meant growth for the lumber industry was the standardization of smaller lumber dimensions and the corresponding need for a machine-driven mill. With the increased use of balloon framing, which used dimensional lumber, and the popularity of pattern books and builders' manuals, people wanted to buy lumber cut as close to the specified dimensions as possible.<sup>41</sup> The quality of lumber purchased by consumers varied greatly. When lumber arrived at market towns, the wholesale yards had to sort the lumber by grade in order to achieve the highest profit for the materials being sold. The most expensive lumber was called clear stock, "broad boards entirely free of knots or sap stains." This clear stock was generally only used in the construction of expensive homes and wealthier towns, to

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<sup>39</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 196, 201.

<sup>40</sup> Dale Patrick Wolicki, *The Historic Architecture of Bay City, Michigan* (Midland, Mich.: Bay County Historical Society, 1998), 9, 15.

<sup>41</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 178. For a good description of balloon framing and its role in relation to the development of mail-order housing see Schweitzer and Davis, *America's Favorite Homes*.

achieve the highest quality of finish.<sup>42</sup> But mail-order house companies, such as Aladdin, also made the decision to use only clear stock for their homes, thus making high quality wood available to people of middle and lower income groups (Figure 2.2).

The mail-order house industry helped contribute to the exponential growth of commercial advertising from 1900 to 1920. In those two decades, commercial advertising more than quadrupled, expanding from \$200 million spent nationally in 1900 to more than \$850 million in 1920.<sup>43</sup> In 1919, approximately 66 percent of newspaper and magazine revenues were from advertising. In a paper focused on advertising from 1890 to 1930, Deborah A. Smith noted, “Family-oriented magazines were perhaps the most prevalent example of a specialty publication, and many of them were founded in the 1880s and 1890s strictly for the profits that could be made from advertising.”<sup>44</sup> Specialty magazines like *Ladies’ Home Journal* (founded in 1883) and the *Saturday Evening Post* (1897) “provided a homogenous group of consumers for advertisers.”<sup>45</sup> Many of these advertisers were focused on lifestyle products like home furnishings and even mail-order houses. Architectural historian, Evie T. Joselow, expounded on the relationship between the mail-order house and the American

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<sup>42</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 177.

<sup>43</sup> Deborah A. Smith, “Coaxing the Consumer: Giveaways and Gimmicks, 1890-1930,” *The Consumer Culture and the American Home, 1890-1930*, Edited Proceedings from the Second Annual McFaddin-Ward House Museum Conference (Glenda Dyer and Martha Reed, eds. Beaumont, Tex.: McFaddin-Ward House, 1989), 11.

<sup>44</sup> Smith, “Coaxing the Consumer,” 14.

<sup>45</sup> Smith, “Coaxing the Consumer,” 14.

## Perfect Lumber

And this leads us to inspect the famous Dollar-A-Knot Siding in Mill 8. Under this roof are thousands and thousands of feet of the choicest raw material. It is the finest collection of blemish-free lumber imaginable. Each piece is stamped with our "Dollar-A-Knot Guaranty." Adjoining is the flooring warehouse—Mill 7 with its own mitre saws and trimmers, and glazing rooms, where carloads of glass are stored, cut and put in the windows and doors. We make our own leaded glass, but this work is done in Mill 6 because that is the mill in which Aladdin cabinets, bookcases and fine woodwork are manufactured, and where leaded glass is used. Beyond are the outside finish yards and sheds. And you'll look in vain for knots or defects here.

"I never heard of such a wonderful stock of fine lumber," stated a large contractor who was inspecting the mill recently. "It's not hard to find narrow or short clear lumber, but look at those 18-foot 12-inch wide boards. Pile after pile of them, beautiful in grain and not a defect to be found in the YARD!"



**Figure 2.2** *A Little Journey to the Home of Aladdin, Aladdin Company, Bay City, Michigan, 1920(?)* (Source: Box 43, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)



consumer culture, stating “The role of the consumer as well as the influences of popular culture directly contributed to the marketing methods and stylized presentations of the mail-order house.”<sup>46</sup> Marketing through the press and through sales catalogues was central to the success of mail-order house manufacturers (Figure 2.3).

Catalogue consumerism paved the way for people to become comfortable and confident to purchase merchandise through mail-order catalogues. It would be difficult for someone to have the confidence to purchase something as major as a whole house by mail, unless the cultural norm of reliability and acceptance for this kind of commerce had been previously established. Catalogues supplied access to a nearly unlimited list of items for the family, home, and farm. Thomas J. Schlereth identifies catalogues as “modernizing institutions” and goes on to say, “Often called ‘Farmer’s Bibles,’ the mail-order catalogues of the Chicago giants – Montgomery Ward and Sears, Roebuck – often expressed a secular hope for salvation from want.”<sup>47</sup> Beyond unlimited access to modern goods, catalogues established a national venue for a discourse on material culture. Schlereth feels that “Mail-order catalogues ... served to standardize the American language, inasmuch as the Chicago-based mail-order houses homogenized the nomenclature of much American material culture.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Joselow, *Ideal Catalogue House*, 141.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas J. Schlereth, “Country Stores, County Fairs, and Mail Order Catalogs: Consumerism in Rural America,” *The Consumer Culture and the American Home, 1890-1930*, Edited Proceedings from the Second Annual McFaddin-Ward House Museum Conference (Glenda Dyer and Martha Reed, eds. Beaumont, Tex.: McFaddin-Ward House, 1989), 30, 37.

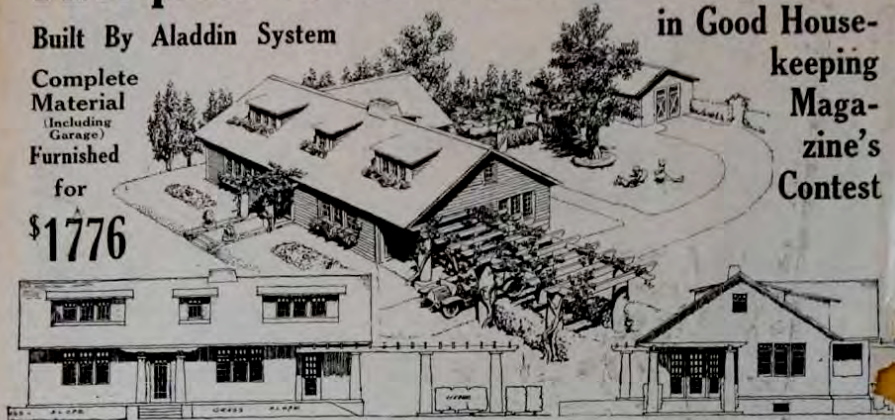
<sup>48</sup> Schlereth, “Country Stores,” 39.

# First prize of one thousand Bungalows

Built By Aladdin System

in Good House-keeping Magazine's Contest

Complete Material (Including Garage) Furnished for \$1776



First Prize Bungalow announced in April issue of GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAGAZINE

By permission of the GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAGAZINE, we have added the first prize bungalow to the Aladdin line of dwellings, bungalows and cottages. One thousand designs were submitted in the GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAGAZINE contest and the above design, which received the first prize, was published in the April issue. By the Aladdin system of construction, you receive all of the lumber cut to fit, all the mill work, siding, flooring, shingles, finish, doors, windows, nails, paints, varnish, plaster board, including pergola and garage, shipped anywhere for \$1776.

In every section of this wide country you will find these sturdy houses giving 100% satisfaction and every single one the pride of its owner. On the wind-swept plains of the Dakotas, in the scorching rays of Florida's summer sun, or on the bleakest coast of Maine, you will hear the warmest praise from every owner; praise for the staunch construction; praise for the unsurpassed timber and lumber; praise for the wonderfully low cost.

Charming Bungalows, City Dwellings, Summer Cottages, Farm Buildings and Garages are fully described with prices in the attractive Aladdin Catalog 90

Every single piece of material in an Aladdin house is cut in our mill to its proper length, breadth, and thickness and ready to be nailed together without further measuring, sawing or fitting, eliminating the necessity for skilled labor. The Aladdin system of cutting and fitting saves over half the labor required in the erection and completion of the house and more than cuts the time of erection in two. Yet, Aladdin houses are real dwellings in every sense of the word. Each house consists of every item of material necessary for the erection and completion of the building with the exception of the foundation and chimney. A completed Aladdin house is exactly the same as any first-class dwelling house. But it is better and lower in cost than you can secure in your own town.

Shipments made direct from our mills in Michigan, Florida, Texas, Kansas, Oregon, and Toronto, Canada

Aladdin houses are manufactured and shipped from the four greatest of lumber producing sections of the country. High prices are thus eliminated and the material is purchased from the original producer. The price on each house includes material guaranteed to be sufficient for the completion of the house as follows: all framing lumber cut to fit; siding cut to fit; flooring cut to fit; all outside and inside finish cut to fit; windows, frames, casings, stairways, glass, hardware, locks, nails, paint and varnish, for the outside and inside, shingles, plaster board for all rooms, with complete instructions and illustrations for erection, eliminating the necessity of skilled labor. Seven years' success of Aladdin houses has proven their money-saving and time-saving advantages. Dwellings of from two rooms to twelve rooms are illustrated with prices from \$125.00 up.



Quick Shipment

Complete 5-Room House \$298

NORTH AMERICAN CONSTRUCTION CO., Bay City, Michigan

Send stamps today for Catalog 90



Advertising Index, conveniently arranged on page 12

Figure 2.3 Unidentified Aladdin Advertisement, May 1912 (Source: Box 42, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

Catalogues facilitated and were the path for fashions and modern innovations to quickly become established national trends.

Another way national architectural trends were established was the prevalent use of architectural style and pattern books throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. American architecture evolved through a dialectic relationship between the published pattern books and the vernacular and high style buildings constructed around the nation. Daniel Reiff asserts that after a career of architectural research, he “realized that the role of the printed book in influencing the domestic architecture that we see all around us was considerable.”<sup>49</sup> Many of the leading pattern book authors, like Andrew Jackson Downing and Calvert Vaux, were male architects who linked architectural design with morality and social reform.<sup>50</sup> Catherine Beecher published her house plans, which “articulated a set of female design principles that emphasized utility.”<sup>51</sup> Alan Gowans explains the popularity of mid-nineteenth century pattern books by the “...new ease of postal communication plus new conditions in the 1840s that enabled local builders to carry out plans from books without benefit of professional building apprenticeship: standardization of

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<sup>49</sup> Reiff, *Houses from Books*, ix.

<sup>50</sup> Downing and Vaux were both publishing during the 1840s and 1850s. For a detailed history of pattern book authors refer to Reiff, *Houses from Books*.

<sup>51</sup> Nancy A. Holst, ‘*The Wise Woman Buildeth Her House*’: *Catharine Beecher and Nineteenth-Century House Pattern Books* (MA thesis, University of Delaware, 1996), 105. Beecher was active in shaping the discussion about the role of women in the American home for most of her life. Two prominent texts written by Beecher are *Treatise on Domestic Economy*, 1841, and *The American Woman’s Home*, 1869.

millwork for balloon-frame construction and a network of railroads to carry timber to sites all over the country.”<sup>52</sup>

Palliser’s *American Cottage Homes*, published in 1878, was the first attempt to establish architectural services through the mail to accompany the plan books.<sup>53</sup> As the century progressed, plan books offered more detailed guides for construction purposes, and mass-circulation magazines such as *Ladies’ Home Journal* furthered the interest in mail-order plans by offering to give away or sell inexpensive blueprints to their readers.<sup>54</sup> Publishers adapted their forms of communicating architectural patterns using books and newer media like magazines. Reiff has observed, “The printed architectural book, whether a sophisticated treatise or a modest builders’ manual, is now abundantly recognized as a significant factor in the history of buildings.”<sup>55</sup> Thousands of unidentified houses across the country were built using plan books and mail-order blueprints. Many mill companies by the end of the nineteenth century were in the business of selling brochures with house plans, and also sold the components for building houses. These companies had not yet arrived at the concept of selling all the components pre-measured, pre-cut, and pre-packaged.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 41.

<sup>53</sup> Gowans. *Comfortable House*, 42-43.

<sup>54</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 46; William L. Price and Frank S. Guild, *Model Houses for Little Money*, Ladies’ Home Journal Household Library (Philadelphia: Curtis, 1898.)

<sup>55</sup> Reiff, *Houses from Books*, 1.

<sup>56</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 46.

### **Mail-Order Pre-Cut House Companies**

Throughout the nineteenth century, many individuals and companies offered a variety of house construction services but few of these operations achieved a large-scale level of production of mainstream popular housing styles. Both George F. Barber, in 1889, and the E. F. Hodgson Company, in 1892, began shipping whole prefabricated<sup>57</sup> sectional houses.<sup>58</sup> The first quarter of the twentieth century saw the emergence of the mail-order housing industry and its peak in popularity in the teens and twenties. This was a defining period in American domestic architectural history and the Aladdin Company was the earliest and one of the largest and longest lasting of all the manufacturers. It is hard to imagine that a small, upstart company with no pre-existing customer base could rival two of the largest department stores of the twentieth century, Sears, Roebuck and Company and Montgomery Ward.

The Aladdin Company based in Bay City, Michigan, and begun in 1906 as the North American Construction Company, was the first to offer pre-cut houses, “full build-it-yourself-entirely services.”<sup>59</sup> After 1906, many companies across the country entered into the business of mail-order pre-cut houses. Some of these were Sears, Roebuck and Company, Gordon-Van Tine, Pacific, Bennett, Hodgson, Lewis-

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<sup>57</sup> Among mail-order house companies, there is a distinction between prefabrication and pre-cut products. Prefabricated houses often were assembled in sections before they were shipped to the purchaser. Pre-cut houses’ building components were measured and cut exactly for the building specifications, and often were dry-fitted in the factory; but were shipped completely unassembled for the purchaser to construct themselves on site. One of the distinctions made in advertising pre-cut houses, also commonly known today as “kit” houses, was the higher quality of construction over prefabricated houses.

<sup>58</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 48.

<sup>59</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 48.

Liberty, Sterling, Minter, Montgomery Ward, and Harris.<sup>60</sup> All mail-order house companies offered the opportunity for affordable and individualized houses. “The catalogues contained everything from modest two-room cottages to eight-to-ten room residences, in a range of colonial, English, Spanish, Norman and other architectural styles.”<sup>61</sup> The most popular homes were the single-family houses that were moderate in both size and cost. With limited available documentation and research, it is hard to say definitively which of these companies sold the most number of houses. However, it is generally believed that Sears, Aladdin, and Montgomery Ward were the three leading pre-cut mail-order house manufacturers of the twentieth century.<sup>62</sup>

Today, most people think of “kit houses” as Sears houses. And yet private researchers investigating possible kit houses find that fewer than half of them can be identified as Sears houses.<sup>63</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company had been selling construction materials through its mail-order catalogue since 1895, but it was not until 1908 that it began selling pre-cut house kits through its Modern Homes division.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> It is possible that not all mail-order house companies have been identified in current research. The identification of these companies is dependent on the survival and discovery of catalogues and advertisements. Reiff, Joselow, Gowans, and Schweitzer and Davis are good sources for companies currently identified.

<sup>61</sup> Stevenson and Jandl, *Houses by Mail*, 25, 29.

<sup>62</sup> Gowans, *The Comfortable House*, 52. Gowans, Reiff, Joselow, Stevenson and Jandl, and Schweitzer and Davis all identify these companies as the leaders in sales based on existing evidence. Gordon-Van Tine might also be added to the list but they were also involved in the manufacture of houses for Montgomery Ward. Dale Patrick Wolicki, an architect in Michigan, is the leading Gordon-Van Tine researcher.

<sup>63</sup> Hunter, *On the Map*, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Stevenson and Jandl, *Houses by Mail*, 20.

None of the Sears Modern Home division sales records have survived, so researchers' wide-ranging estimates of Sears sales are based on advertised amounts in catalogues and national housing trends. During the years from 1908 to 1940, when Sears marketed pre-cut mail-order houses, estimates suggest the company sold between 50,000 and 100,000 kit houses.<sup>65</sup>

Since Sears, Roebuck and Company and Montgomery Ward were large mail-order catalogue companies and department stores, they used their mail-order house sales as a venue to encourage purchases from their other departments to furnish the entirety of a customer's house. The Sears Modern Home division, as well as many of the other mail-order house companies, offered financing to assist individuals in the purchase of their new home. For Sears, this had mixed results. Their mortgages did allow many more people the means to afford a new house; however, during the Depression, Sears was forced to repossess many of the houses they had sold and financed. This caused financial difficulties and bad publicity for the division and the company as a whole.<sup>66</sup> Aladdin was different in both of these aspects. Aladdin marketed its home furnishings for consumers to complete their homes, rather than marketing their homes as a place for consumers to put their furniture. Also, Aladdin did not provide credit to consumers and therefore did not have to repossess homes during the Great Depression. Throughout its history the Aladdin Company continued to differentiate itself with innovative business models, creative advertising, and desirable and affordable products.

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<sup>65</sup> Stevenson and Jandl, *Houses by Mail*, 19; Thornton, *The Houses That Sears Built*, 9; Hunter, *On the Map*, 9.

<sup>66</sup> Stevenson and Jandl, *Houses by Mail*, 22.

### **The Aladdin Company**

The history of the Aladdin Company begins with William and Otto Sovereign, two brothers who founded the North American Construction Company. They grew up in northern Michigan, children of a family that worked in the lumber industry. Neither brother had experience in construction or architecture. As young men, Otto worked for newspapers and advertising agencies and William, known as Bill, was a lawyer. Bill got the idea of starting a business building ready-cut mail-order houses, based on the successful experience of an acquaintance who had a mail-order boats business located in Bay City, Michigan.<sup>67</sup> When presented with the idea, Otto was skeptical about Bill's enthusiasm for a venture with which neither of them had experience. But Otto told his brother, if he could design a house, Otto would write him the ad copy. Bill then went straight to work, talking to builders, visiting construction sites, and examining the buildings of his hometown, Bay City. Once Bill felt confident that he understood how a building is constructed, he sat down in his mother's kitchen and drafted, on her butcher block, schematics of floor plans and elevations of houses, and details of each piece of lumber needed, diagrammed with the appropriate angled cuts.<sup>68</sup>

The company was founded as the North American Construction Company, and during the early years they sold garages, boathouses, and summer cottages. Otto Sovereign wrote the advertising copy that went into newspapers and magazines, and designed brochures and catalogues (the first catalogue was published in 1906).<sup>69</sup> In

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<sup>67</sup> Otto E. Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars on a Shoestring: A Tale of Fifty Years in Business (and Fifty Years of Fun)* (S.l.: s.n., 1951), 15.

<sup>68</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 16.

<sup>69</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 107.



1907, one year after the company's founding, the Sovereigns launched their national advertising campaign even though they still did not own a single piece of lumber and operated out of their mother's kitchen.

Before their first building was sold, Otto started to define the company's character by naming the houses that they would produce. "I've decided to call our project 'Aladdin Houses' after the famed Arabian Nights legend of the palace that was built in a night. The name is euphonious, easily pronounced, easily spelled and easily remembered, and appropriate because a house which is all cut to fit by machinery in the mill can be erected in a much shorter time than usual."<sup>70</sup> They continued to operate under the name of North American Construction Company until 1916, when they changed their name to the Aladdin Company to match the most popular product line – single-family houses.<sup>71</sup>

Their first year's gross business was \$1,300. In 1910, it had reached \$87,000; and by 1920 it was \$5.1 million.<sup>72</sup> In attempting to explain this phenomenal growth, Otto wrote in his memoir:

Credence must be given to our cash terms for permitting us to grow and expand so rapidly from an initial 'shoestring' investment of \$200 to a gross business of over fifty million dollars to January, 1951. No additional capital has ever been added, except from the profits of the business. During the first eight years we didn't own a foot of lumber, or a saw or woodworking machine – no plant except our offices. A local lumberyard and cabinet mill entered into contract with us to

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<sup>70</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 16.

<sup>71</sup> Clarke Historical Library, *Aladdin Company Records, 1907-1989, Finding Aid* (Mount Pleasant, Mich.: Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, 1999), 3.

<sup>72</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 16, 109.

purchase and stock lumber and millwork and to manufacture and ship our houses.<sup>73</sup>

Bill was the President of the Aladdin Company, and Otto was the Secretary, Treasurer, and General Manager. During the first few years of their company, they ran ads in publications such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, and the *Farm Journal*.<sup>74</sup> Their business continued to grow, and in 1914 they received their first large order from the Delaware based DuPont Powder Company for houses to be erected in their company town of Hopewell, Virginia.<sup>75</sup> It is at this point in Aladdin's history that the business can be considered to have arrived at the point of mass production.<sup>76</sup>

Because of the high volume of product required, Aladdin used two Bay City lumber suppliers in the early years - Lewis Manufacturing and International Mill and Timber. A woman, Adna Lewis, headed Lewis Manufacturing and she was also vice-president of Aladdin in 1910.<sup>77</sup> Eventually both of the lumber companies separated from Aladdin to go into the booming mail-order house business themselves. Lewis changed its name to Liberty in 1913, and International Mill sold its homes under the name of Sterling by 1915. Both companies suffered mill fires and neither ever achieved the same level of success as Aladdin. With the loss of those lumber suppliers, Aladdin purchased a local mill in Michigan, and then purchased mills in

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<sup>73</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 18.

<sup>74</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 19.

<sup>75</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 24.

<sup>76</sup> Schweitzer and Davis, *America's Favorite Homes*, 99.

<sup>77</sup> Schweitzer and Davis, *America's Favorite Homes*, 70; and Wolicki, *Bay City*, 181.

Oregon, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Canada to reduce the distance of shipments from mill to purchaser (Figure 2.4).<sup>78</sup>

With the start of World War I in 1914, America's war-related industries grew exponentially, and created a housing demand for company towns and industrial suburbs. Aladdin received many large orders from manufacturers, and also individual orders from people who worked in related industries.<sup>79</sup> When the United States joined the war in 1917, the U.S. Army ordered several thousand Aladdin barracks and mess halls.<sup>80</sup> However, the majority of the Aladdin Company's business remained affordable single-family homes and, Schweitzer and Davis observed, "As a measure of the company's importance, Aladdin's 1918 sales of about 2,800 homes comprised an astonishing and significant fraction – 2.37 percent – of the 118,000 U.S. 'housing starts' in that war year."<sup>81</sup>

From Aladdin's founding until 1950, Otto Sovereign noted, its gross business reflected the national trends in home construction.<sup>82</sup> Their company was able to succeed and survive during national economic swings. "Bill and I have passed through four 'panics' during the past forty years: the 'Money Panic' of 1907; the 'Farm Panic' of 1914; the 'Inventory Panic' of 1920; and the 'Stock Panic' of 1929;

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<sup>78</sup> Wolicki, *Bay City*, 181.

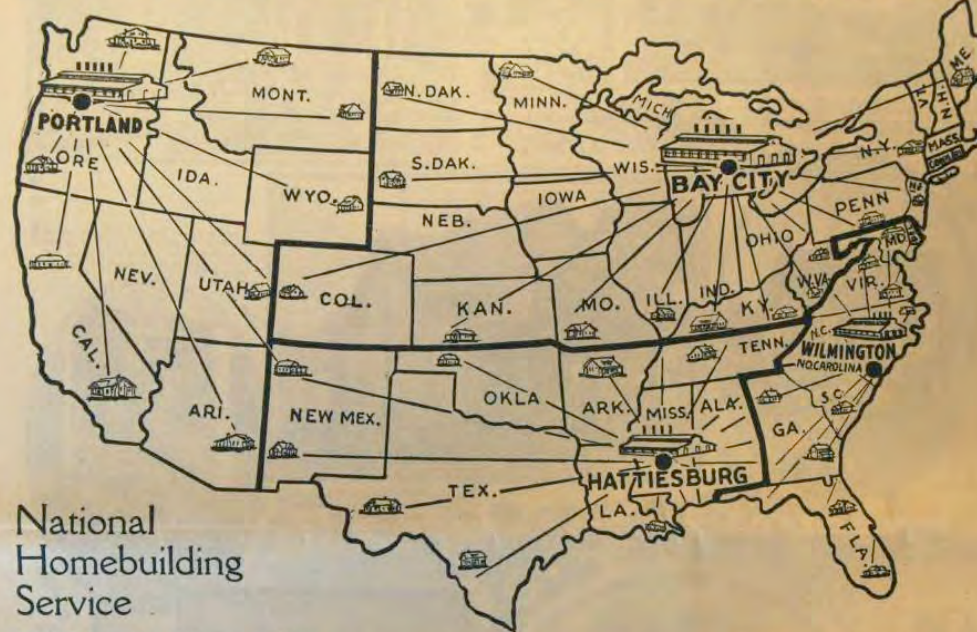
<sup>79</sup> See Joselow for more on Aladdin Company large orders, specifically for the connections between the Aladdin Company and DuPont industries.

<sup>80</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 30. These buildings were constructed on bases around the country and Sovereign describes in great detail the challenges of working on government contracts.

<sup>81</sup> Schweitzer and Davis, *America's Favorite Homes*, 81.

<sup>82</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 109.

# Homebuilders to the Nation



## National Homebuilding Service

**T**HE four points of the compass, North, South, East and West are now the guiding points to ALADDIN mills. In four sections of the country the familiar hum of the buzz-saw that has become famous for its waste-eliminating proclivities can be heard as it eats its way into the products of these great timber lands.

In the west, Portland, Oregon, which is on the Pacific ocean, in the south, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, which is on the Gulf of Mexico; in the east, Wilmington, North Carolina, on the Atlantic ocean and in the north, Bay City, Michigan, on the Great Lakes are the offices and mills of THE ALADDIN COMPANY.

These four great manufacturing establishments, located in the four great timber regions of the United States form the greatest Homebuilding Service in the World.

From these four points the vast growth of timber, will be tapped, the giant trees cut down and hewed into homes for the people of the nation.

Each division is a complete unit of The Aladdin Co. Builders in each territory are enabled to transact business more rapidly, secure prompt shipment of material and in many cases visit the division offices before purchasing.

This great organization which has spread its influence and power over the entire country is divided into four divisions as follows:

### Western Division

After sites in a number of cities had been looked over, the city of Portland, Oregon, was chosen for the general office and mills of the Western Division of THE ALADDIN COMPANY. This city, the metropolis of Oregon and the big railroad center of the west, has unsurpassed shipping facilities. No less than eight rail-

roads have tracks to the ALADDIN CO.'S loading platform. The standing timber adjacent to Portland is sufficient to supply the world's needs at the present rate of consumption for the next one hundred years.

These new offices and mills save western builders of Aladdin homes considerable in the way of freight alone. They eliminate days of time, thousands of miles of hauling and consequently a great deal in freight charges. Fully 80 per cent of the correspondence from our customers of the west will reach us within twenty-four hours after it is sent on its way.

The Western Division includes the following states: Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Wyoming and Montana. Residents of these states should send inquiries or other correspondence directly to THE ALADDIN COMPANY, Portland, Oregon.

If there are opportunities anywhere in the United States they lie in the west, the land of the sunset. With these opportunities for fame and fortune arising daily, that part of our country is building up swiftly and in this building THE ALADDIN COMPANY hopes to better render the same valuable assistance that it has to the north, the east and the south in the past.

### South Central Division

With building operations in the central south increasing in great strides, the Aladdin Company, in the spring of 1919, at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, opened the General Offices and mills of the south central division.

Less than fifteen miles distant from the greatest forests of southern pine in the south, Hattiesburg, is proving an ideal location.

From these mills every point in the south central division comprising the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico lies in a straight line making shipping facilities unexcelled.

Already in operation the mills in the south central division have proved a decided success. The mill at the present writing doing approximately four times as much business as was anticipated when it was opened less than a year ago.

With an abundant supply of standing timber in easy access and with shipping facilities par excellence, the home builders of the south central division are securing the best possible service.

### Southeastern Division

At Wilmington, North Carolina, on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, with shipping facilities both by rail and by water, the general offices and mills of the Southeastern Division, comprising the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, have been erected.

A thriving sea coast city of thirty-five thousand people, Wilmington is practically from a geographical standpoint the center or hub of the southeastern division. From Wilmington prompt and efficient service will be given to all ALADDIN customers of the southeastern division with nearly all shipping points of the division less than eighteen hours distant from the offices and mill.

Not far from Wilmington are the great pine forests of North and South Carolina and with a mill so situated it is an easy matter to tap these and secure the lumber for ALADDIN Homes at the least possible expense.

So with shipping facilities both by land and by sea, and a lumber supply close at hand, the situation of the southeastern offices and mills is almost unimprovable.

### The Northern Division

The home offices and mills of THE ALADDIN COMPANY, will continue at Bay City, Michigan. Established a number of years ago, the mills of the Northern Division have a capacity that will serve this territory promptly and efficiently.

The forests of Michigan will, of course, continue to supply the mills at Bay City. With standing timber sufficient to supply all demands for the next fifteen or twenty years these mills occupy a secure position in regard to supply.

Located on the Great Lakes, the mills at Bay City are provided with excellent shipping facilities by water and also by land. Five railroads have tracks leading to THE ALADDIN COMPANY'S loading platforms at these mills, thus making shipping conditions ideal.

The Northern Division is comprised of the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia and Illinois.

Page Three

Figure 2.4 Aladdin Homes, Aladdin Company, 1919(?), 3 (Source: Box 43, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

and ...a series of so-called emergencies.... called variously depression, recession, deflation, devaluation, reflation....”<sup>83</sup> The company continued operations until the early 1980s. Throughout the whole history of the company, it was a family-operated business. After the two brothers passed away, Bill’s son William continued operations.<sup>84</sup> The company’s early success and continued survival can be attributed to many factors, including an innovative product, an ambitious national advertising campaign, award-winning house designs, an efficient business model, and catalogues that resonated with the desires of the growing middle class.

### **The Aladdin System**

The North American Construction Company was founded on the belief that the Aladdin System of Construction was the most efficient way to build quality affordable houses for the American public. The Aladdin System begins with their famous “Board of Seven” (Figure 2.5). It included “first, the master designer, for accuracy; second, the master builders, for practicability, strength, and structural harmony; third, factory experts, for elimination of waste, standardization of lengths, and economy of costs.”<sup>85</sup> The Board of Seven, a changing group made up of experts from these three areas, was established to insure the quality and efficiency of all their house designs. They intentionally did not include an architect since they believed architects exhibited little concern over the waste of their customers’ money.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 34.

<sup>84</sup> Clarke Historical Library, *Finding Aid*, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no.29* (Bay City, Mich.: Aladdin Co., 1917) 4.

<sup>86</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no.29*, 6.

## Aladdin's Famous Board of Seven



### Master Designers, Builders and Manufacturers

**B**EFORE this Board of Seven comes every Aladdin house for the acid test of perfection. No detail escapes the keen and searching analysis of these experts. The designer must prove his plans to the complete satisfaction of, First, the Master Designer, for accuracy; Second, the Master Builders, for practicality, strength, and structural harmony; Third, Factory Experts, for elimination of waste, standardization of lengths, and economy of costs. Unless the cost of these high-priced men's time could be spread over a hundred or more houses of each design the cost would be prohibitive. But when they spend two or more hours' valuable time on the design, drawings, and cutting sheets of an Aladdin house the cost is not all charged to that *one house*, but to *several hundred* houses of that *same design* sold during the year.

No other organization—but the Aladdin organization—can afford a group of high-calibred men such as this Board of Seven, because no other organization in the world produces and sells the vast number of houses and buildings produced by the North American Construction Company.

No other organization can afford to put such high quality into its goods—and no other organization does.

No other lumber manufacturer ever dared back his lumber with a dollar-a-knot guarantee.

This organization was called upon by the United States Government to cooperate with it in the production of an Ideal Cottage. This cottage was erected for the Government at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco and was awarded the highest honor and granted a medal.

Could higher recognition be received by any institution than this which was accorded to the Aladdin organization, and to Aladdin houses?

Aladdin's Board of Seven is waiting to help *you*.

"There is a feeling of character and individuality about Aladdin designs that is difficult to describe in words, and that most certainly does not exist in any other houses I have seen."

**Figure 2.5** Aladdin's Famous Board of Seven. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 28, 1916, 4* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

One of the innovations created by Aladdin was its Readi-Cut system of construction, which the company compared to the pyramids and the Woolworth building (Figure 2.6). The Readi-Cut system was based on the principle that all of the building materials are pre-cut and fitted in the factory, and then assembled on site. The catalogues describe the materials-savings and in turn money-savings gained when the Readi-Cut system obtains twenty feet of lumber from a sixteen-foot board (Figure 2.7). The Readi-Cut system is designed to guarantee perfectly cut lumber for a tightly fitting house. It also reduced the customer's cost through minimizing waste, maximizing the efficiencies of mass production, and bypassing local dealers to avoid material mark-ups. Aladdin was so confident in its system and quality of materials, they advertised a "dollar-a-knot" guarantee for any knots found in their cedar siding material.<sup>87</sup>

Part of the cost saving for the customer was based on the company's financial policies. A cornerstone of the Aladdin system was that they did not offer credit financing.<sup>88</sup> They believed that by not having to carry bad accounts, they could sell their houses for a lower price. This policy likely saved them during the Depression, and they were never put in the position of having to repossess a customer's home. A second policy was providing a five percent discount when the customer sent the full purchase payment with their order.<sup>89</sup> These two policies both encouraged the consumer to be fiscally sound as well as helping the company avoid bad accounts.

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<sup>87</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no.29*, 10.

<sup>88</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 50.

<sup>89</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 18.

## From the Pyramids to the Woolworth Building



**T**O him who says the Read-Cut System is not possible or practicable, point to the Pyramids of Egypt, refer to Solomon's Temple as described in the Bible, or inspect Washington Monument, or the 57-story Woolworth Building in New York City. You will find that each was prepared, erected and completed by the Read-Cut System. But it remained for W. J. Sovereign to first apply the system to *your* benefit in the building of a home. And thousands of American families scattered over this broad land will testify to its economy and practical success.

The pyramids aren't portable, the Woolworth Building is not portable, *nor are Aladdin houses portable.*

If you attempted to tear apart, or dissect an Aladdin house, the most expert contractor could not tell it from any other first class frame dwelling because *there is no difference.*

At the bottom of this page is a striking illustration of the Read-Cut System of construction successfully used for twenty-five years in steel-building construction. Note the "studding" for the two side walls, all in position with the "joist hanger" placed. These studs are about thirty feet high. In the foreground are shown some of the rafters, with the marks and numbers indicating their respective positions—"6201-16-Col-22." There is no fitting or cutting on the ground. The sawing, measuring, and fitting were done in the steel mills in Pittsburgh.



Read-Cut System of Construction.

How can they do this work? Why, the structural engineers know how. It's *their* particular business. It's their lifework. So it is with Aladdin Read-Cut houses. The same *principles* govern each job. *It's the same system.*




6

**Figure 2.6** From the Pyramids to the Woolworth Building. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 6* (Source: ACR, CHL.[http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

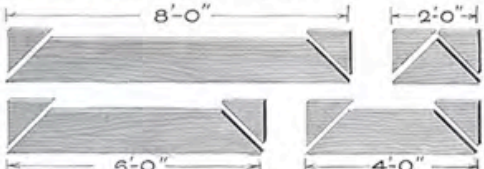


## Twenty feet of lumber from a sixteen foot board- How it's done

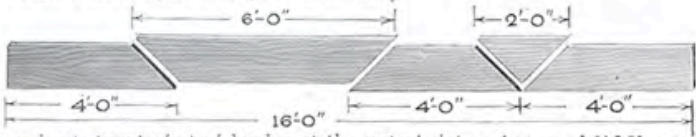


*To cut the sheathing for this gable:*

*The carpenter usually takes an eight-foot board, a six-foot board, a four-foot board and a two-foot board and cuts them this way:*



*The carpenter requires twenty feet of lumber for the job. Aladdin takes a sixteen-foot board, cuts it this way:*



*and gets twenty feet of lumber at the cost of sixteen feet—and YOU get the saving.*

**T**HE wonderful money-saving results of the Aladdin Read-Cut System will be understood after reading this page. Nowhere in the history of manufacturing or building since history began can be found an example equal to that which is a part of every day's work in the Aladdin designing rooms and in the Aladdin mills.


*Think of taking a six-inch board sixteen feet long and getting twenty feet of six-inch board out of it!*

*Think of applying this system of saving throughout all the lumber used in building your home!*

*Think of your own good money it saves!*

To eliminate waste by scientific planning, designing, and cutting of lumber is to save *your* money from the waste pile.

W. J. Sovereign, president of The Aladdin Company, conceived this tremendous thought, originated, perfected, and established the system.



Machinery of the Most Modern types are used to manufacture Aladdin Homes. This machine hoists and fits a staircase in less than five minutes.

**Figure 2.7** Twenty Feet of Lumber. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 4* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

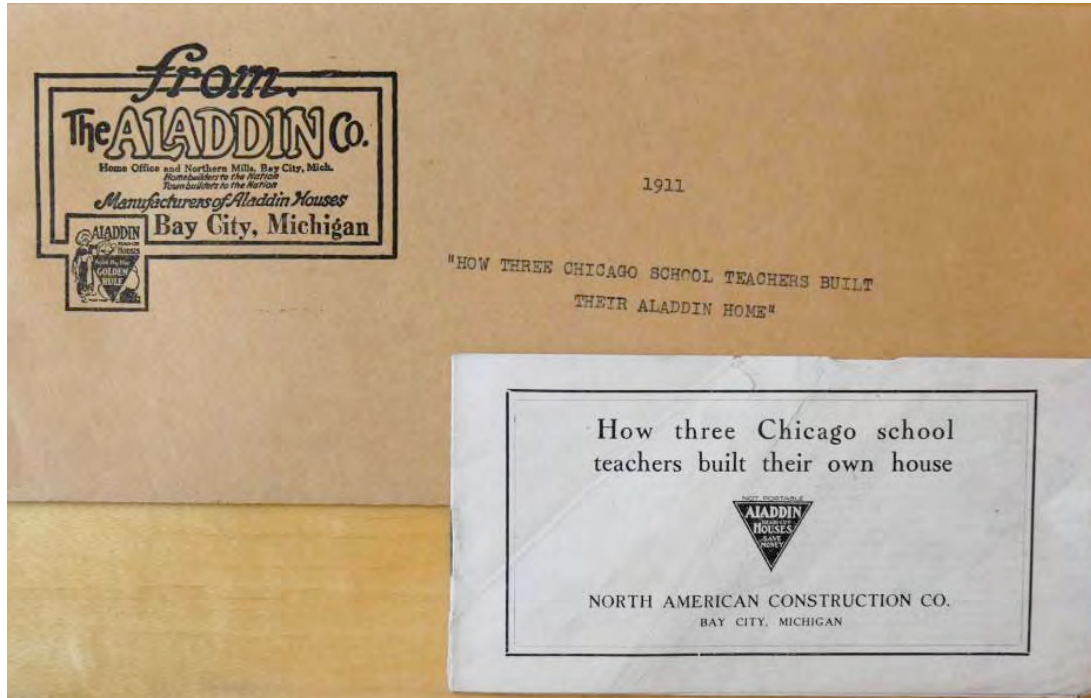
The process for a customer to get materials for the house delivered was fairly simple. After the customer made a selection from a catalogue, he or she would send in the order and specifications. All the building materials needed, with the exception of masonry, plumbing, and electrical, were packaged onto rail cars and shipped to the nearest train station. The building materials and blueprints also came with a construction manual that made assembly easy enough for customers to do it themselves without any prior construction experience (Figure 2.8).<sup>90</sup> A few of the Aladdin houses were advertised as being able to be built in one day by two people. Aladdin advertising stated that even if customers did not wish to construct the houses themselves, their REDI-CUT system radically reduced the amount of construction time needed, thereby saving on the costs of skilled carpenters' time.

### **Communicating the Aladdin Lifestyle**

Aladdin's advertising department was very skilled at understanding how to encourage customers to visualize themselves in their houses. Even the earliest catalogues included not just floor plans, but also photographs and artistic illustrations of the homes, complete with people and landscaping (Figure 2.9). Aladdin's catalogues were far more sophisticated than those of the other mail-order house companies. Earlier and more frequently they incorporated appealing design elements

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<sup>90</sup> The Aladdin construction manuals covered every aspect of the process from preparing the land, mixing the concrete to nailing the roof shingles in place. The Clarke Historical Library has a number of these manuals from different years.



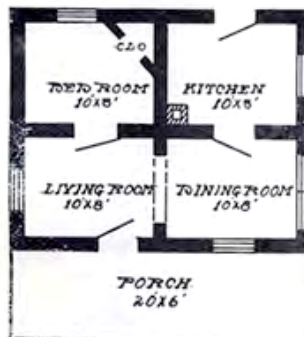
**Figure 2.8** “How Three Chicago School Teachers Built Their Own House” Aladdin Company, 1911, direct mail material (Source: Box 42, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)



**THE RODNEY**

**F**OUR rooms, a 20 x 6 ft. porch, double casement window in dining room, and generally of harmonious design—these are the special features of The Rodney. It is a particularly good seller and always gives the highest pleasure to its owners. Whenever another room or two is desired it can be added to the rear at very slight effort and expense. Size, 24 x 26 ft., has four 10 x 12 ft. rooms.

The Rodney is well lighted and ventilated. Note the direct line of openings formed by front window, rear door, and the door between dining room and kitchen.



Floor Plan, The Rodney

**SPECIFICATIONS**

Size, 20 x 22 ft. Price, \$334. Cash Discount, 5%.  
 Net Price, \$317.30. See Terms.  
 Size, 24 x 26 ft. Price, \$390. Cash Discount, 5%.  
 Net Price, \$370.50. See Terms.

All lumber selected Yellow Pine and Huron Pine.  
 Height of ceilings, 8 ft. All ceilings square, not hipped.  
 Joists, 2 x 6 in.  
 Studling and rafters, 2 x 4 in.  
 Joists, studding, and ceiling joists placed every 16 inches.  
 Flooring, 1-inch matched, 3 inches wide.  
 Sheathing lumber. Bevel siding.  
 Roof, 1-inch lumber, overlaid with best prepared roofing or shingles.  
 Patent plaster board or lath and plaster.  
 Base board and all interior trim and finish clear Yellow Pine.  
 Windows, sash, 30 x 28 in., two sliding sash, glass double strength.  
 Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, upper half glass.  
 Porch columns, 5 inches.  
 Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, paint for two coats inside and outside. Steps not included.

*I know positively by experience how much money may be saved by your method, also what splendid quality is used of everything.*

*Will try and induce all prospective builders of homes to buy an Aladdin house. I will endeavor to do my best for your firm, for I know it to be exactly as represented in all things. I am sincere in my praise of your method.*

LAURA E. CASTLE,  
 Ripley, N. Y.

**Figure 2.9** The Rodney. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day": Catalog no. 25, 1914, 12* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

like full-color pages (Figure 2.10). Gowans casts Aladdin in a favorable light in comparison to other companies:

By 1919 the catalogs provided well-drawn elevations, many in color; plans of all floors set out; and, most valuable to amateurs, cut-back isometrics of each floor, with indications of furniture placement. Descriptions were lucid and – by comparison with, say, Gordon-Van Tine’s, which irresistibly bring to mind some farmer squinting and licking a stubby pencil to underline ‘the barn is brown in color’ – well-written. Aladdin’s advertising was aggressive and imaginative.<sup>91</sup>

Much of the credit for the well-designed and captivating descriptions can be attributed to Otto Sovereign and his experience with advertising agencies.

Aladdin catalogue text eloquently described the highlights of the home, and asked questions of the reader to trigger key emotional responses (Figure 2.11). To attract people to the Winthrop model the text evokes the naturalistic architectural features and the pleasures of a home retreat, by asking, “Can you imagine this bungalow nestling among trees and shrubbery on your own lot? ... Can you help falling in love with this interesting bungalow?”<sup>92</sup> Aladdin advertising identified key points that were important to consumers at the time, in terms of style, efficiency of floor plan, and modern conveniences. The ad copy about household efficiency was often addressed directly to the female customer, with ideas similar to those used by domestic reform leaders Catherine Beecher and Christine Frederick (Figure 2.12).<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 50.

<sup>92</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30* (Bay City, Mich.: Aladdin Co., 1918), 77-78.

<sup>93</sup> See works by Hayden and Wright for additional information about domestic reform and architecture.



**T**HIS charming bungalow nestling in this setting of trees represents one of the best pieces of work of our master designers. Individuality is portrayed in all its lines and it is distinctly American in character. Extreme simplicity is the motif behind the planning of this home. Simplicity implies character, quality and taste. Sunshine implies cheerfulness, happiness, prosperity and light. Could a more fitting name than "Sunshine" be given to this home? It radiates that sweet, simple home atmosphere everyone wishes to secure in their home and to see in the homes of others. The roof lines are particularly graceful, the main roof extending down over the porch, it being evenly balanced by a dormer of just the right proportions. A study of the interior reveals an exceptionally well laid and thought out plan. Light in any home is an essential feature and we have provided an abundance of it for every room. The large living room gives access to the dining room and front bedroom, as well as small clothes closet. See page 35. The opening between the living room and dining room is a prepossessing cased archway. The fireplace and outside chimney are shown in the photograph and floor plan although it is not necessary that you build these should you favor this house. The two back bedrooms have regular closets built off of them. At the rear of the bungalow one of our regular Addition No. 4 is furnished, this providing for a combined cellar and rear entrance. If the "Sunshine" appeals to you, write us so we can send you still further details. Refer to inside of front cover for prices. See Terms on page 2. Specifications on pages 12 and 13.



**Figure 2.10** The Sunshine. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 71* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



**Figure 2.11 The Winthrop. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 77-78* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)**

# Efficiency for the Housewife

By Mable Lorenz Ives

Have you ever gone for a walk on a winter's day and noticed in the snow the tangled trail of some rabbit in search of its dinner? If the busy housewife left a visible trail of footprints on the kitchen floor as she goes back and forth and back again in that domestic rite known as "getting dinner," I believe she would study as never before the art of saving steps.

Make a little diagram of your own kitchen and dot in your steps while preparing a meal, all the way from getting the food from the icebox, through preparing, cooking, serving and washing up—to the final sigh of relief as the dishes are laid away till tomorrow. Aren't your tracks almost as intricate as the rabbit's?

"But what can I do?" asks Aurora. "We must have our three meals a day!"

What can you do? First of all Think. Imagine your kitchen a vacant room with only the windows and doors. (Perhaps you can do something to these after awhile, if need be.) Where would you **choose** to place the main articles necessary to despatch your work to best advantage? The living-room, remember, can be arranged with an eye mainly to beauty. In the kitchen efficiency should reign. It is your workshop.

The "roomy" kitchen of our grandmothers was often sitting- and dining-room as well. But the first step toward efficiency in the modern kitchen is to have the room just large enough for the work in hand. It is far wiser to make the kitchen small and devote any extra space to storage closets, living-room, or in a bungalow to bedroom space. In the smaller kitchen the work is through sooner; then the tired cook can rest elsewhere than in the room where she has worked, amid surroundings that will divert her mind. Half the monotony of meal-getting is simply the treadmill feeling of never being able to get away from the kitchen.

The ideal kitchen is nearly square or only slightly longer than wide; 10x12 is a good size for an ordinary family, though I have

experienced great satisfaction in one fix. We all know what toothsome wonders come from the really minute quarters on a dining car. And that should be our ideal: compact convenience.

Now into our kitchen of very moderate size let us put the needful equipment. Never locate sink and stove side by side; the bitter experience of more than two years impressed that upon me. "But why not?" asks Aurora. Because there are just two processes in kitchen work, **preparing** a meal and **clearing** it away: the stove belongs to one group of equipment and the sink clearly to another. Suppose we look at these two processes in detail.

### Preparing Meal

- 1 Preparing. Equipment: icebox, pantry, kitchen cabinet, table.
- 2 Cooking. Equipment: Stove, utensils.
- 3 Serving. Equipment: Table, trays.

### Clearing Up

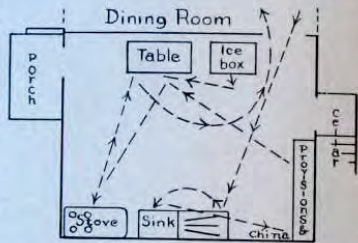
- 1 Removing to kitchen. Equipment: Trays, table or right drain board.

- 2 Scraping and washing. Equipment: Sink, left drain board.
- 3 Putting away. Equipment: icebox, pantry, closets or hooks.

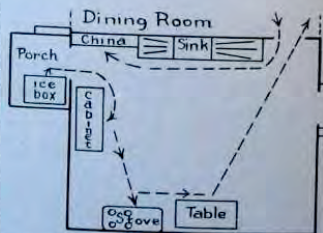
The easiest way to get a meal is to take the materials from icebox and pantry or cabinet, prepare them on table or cabinet surface placed next, take one step to stove and cook,

dish up on serving table next stove and carry to dining-room. The simplest way of clearing up is to carry soiled dishes to sink table or right-hand drain board and place left-over food on table. First put away left-overs, scrape dishes at sink, wash and lay on left drain board, put away on shelves to hot, and hang utensils within reach of the main equipment they are used with.

This last is important. It is within the reach of if sink and stove are badly placed. Why walk the straining spoon when the stove? Why fumble (Continued on page 12)



1 Diagram showing badly arranged equipment, which makes unnecessary steps in either preparing or clearing away a meal. Note stove and sink side by side and the only drain board at left; hence no place to lay unwashed dishes.



2 Diagram showing well planned equipment. Notice that there is no "going to and fro" in doing the work; it is accomplished by successive steps.

every woman, even dresser are ever so across the room for it should hang over

Figure 2.12 "Efficiency for the Housewife." *The Wedge*, North American Construction Company, Bay City MI, Vol. V No. 5-6 August-September 1915, 8 (Source: Box 49, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)



The catalogues stirred the customers' imaginations, and helped them believe that dreams could be realized. The advertising text also integrated references to the ease of construction and high value for cost. To help potential customers feel comfortable with such a major purchase, Aladdin inserted numerous testimonials within the catalogues, and offered to send local referrals for existing Aladdin homeowners (Figures 2.13 and 2.14).

In addition to the catalogues, Aladdin published *The Wedge*, a lifestyle magazine for Aladdin homeowners that included feature articles about Aladdin house models, company news, recipes, garden competitions, and poetry. *The Wedge* even printed photographs of babies born in Aladdin houses. For a brief time, Aladdin also published *Homecraft*, a catalogue for home furnishings and fixtures to complete the Aladdin household.<sup>94</sup>

The Aladdin Company offered a balance of standardization and customization. They sold their houses on the appeal of efficiency through mass production, but offered a wide range of styles, sizes, and costs to appeal to customers' desires for individuality. They encouraged their purchasers to customize their houses if desired by reversing the floor plans, adding additions, and rearranging window placements. Aladdin was looking to insure the homeowners' happiness and proudly advertised that they operated by the Golden Rule.

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<sup>94</sup> The Clarke Historical Library has most of the issues of *The Wedge* (1913-1920) and *Homecraft*. *The Wedge* in particular established and fostered a cultural community of Aladdin owners.

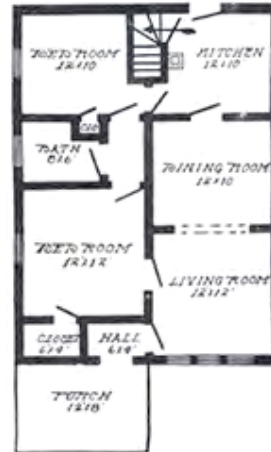


**THE WARREN**

**T**HE Warren is a little different from the ordinary and will appeal to folks who like something to attract the eye without being undignified. Porch columns in pyramidal groups support the porch roof which joins the main roof. They rest upon strong columns, making an excellent porch plan. The interior has vestibule hall with good-sized rooms throughout. At the price quoted this house will save its owner four or five hundred dollars and give the highest satisfaction.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

Size, 24 x 32 ft. (exclusive of porch). Price, \$790. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$750.50. See Terms.  
 All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine.  
 Height of ceilings, 9 ft.  
 Sill, 6 x 8 in.  
 Joists, 2 x 6 in.  
 Studding, rafters, and ceiling joists, 2 x 4 in.  
 Joists, ceiling joist and studding placed on 16-inch centers.  
 Flooring, 1-inch matched, 3 inches wide.  
 Sheathing lumber.  
 Bevel siding.  
 Roof, inch lumber, overlaid with best prepared roofing or shingles.  
 Patent plaster board or lath and plaster.  
 Base board and all interior trim and finish clear Yellow Pine.  
 Windows, sash, 30 x 32 in., two sliding sash, glass double strength.  
 Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, upper half glass.  
 Porch columns, square.  
 Front and rear steps.  
 Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, paint for two coats inside and outside.



Floor Plan, The Warren

WYOMING, DEL.

*I have worked at the trade for twenty years and never saw any building go together nicer. We didn't have any cutting to do; every piece went to its place, and you sent a very good quality of lumber and plenty of it to finish the house. Saved about \$300.*

GEORGE PYOTT.

**Figure 2.13** The Warren. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day": Catalog no. 25, 1914, 69* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

## EXACT WORDS OF OWNERS

New York.  
 Would say I am more than pleased with my Kentucky bungalow which is built on Laurel Ave. It comes up to all the requirements of my needs. A number of my friends wonder how a bungalow like it can be cut at the factory and then constructed; or as you say, Read-cut. But I can understand it as I am a carpenter. Am enclosing two views of my bungalow.  
 EDWARD C. SAYRE.

Ohio.  
 I am very thankful to say I am well pleased with my house in every respect. We are now comfortably fixed up with all modern conveniences and you can think of us as a happy little family in a beautiful, little Aladdin bungalow. So many others could be proud owners of Aladdin homes if they only knew what a good, honest firm you are to deal with. You surely have been loyal to me in every respect and if I ever build again I will prove to you I appreciate your interest and kindness.  
 J. L. SANDERS.

Ohio.  
 I am sending you a small picture of the 2 "Edison" bungalows we got from you over a year ago. We had some very cold weather last winter but were kept very comfortable in our new homes. They were very easy to keep warm. We are still improving our homes and when we get them up to our ideas we will send you good pictures of them.  
 H. W. SANDERS.

Indiana.  
 We are glad to recommend you to others, as we are so well satisfied with our house and all our dealings with you. We have had so many to admire our little cottage the "Chester" and are very proud of it. All the material was "No. 1," every piece fitted well and saved carpenters bills.  
 ORUS J. WHITE.

Pennsylvania.  
 I think the Aladdin Read-cut system is the only way to build a house, because you save a lot on both labor and lumber. I saved at least \$500.00 on my house. People came to see it from a distance of 60 miles and all liked it very much. I am always glad to show it to anyone as I am proud of it.  
 CLAYTON W. FARBER.

Ohio.  
 We surely are pleased with our Maples Bungalow and cannot say enough to praise it. Everything fit fine and am pleased to say I saved between \$600.00 and \$700.00 in building by the read-cut method.  
 FRED WENT.

Ohio.  
 The material in my Winthrop was just as represented and I am well pleased with it in every way. I have considered neither time nor workmanship on it and it has gone together perfectly. The painter told me that he found the joints more perfect in this house than any he has ever worked on and he has painted some of the highest priced ones in this city. I assure you that anyone who wishes to see it will be allowed that privilege. I estimate that I saved more than \$200.00 on my home. Yours truly, H. W. SIKFER.

Oklahoma.  
 I am more than pleased with my "Plymouth" bungalow. The carpenters didn't use a saw in putting up the frame and everything went together perfectly. It is an ideal little home—not only a house. Everyone who has seen it praises the beautiful finishing lumber. We only had the pleasure of living in our Aladdin three months when I was called to this city where I am teaching. I hope in the next few years I can build another Aladdin. There's a pleasure or pride which accompanies the Aladdin home that we cannot get away from. I figure I saved \$900.00 by building by this method.  
 THOS. R. STEMEN.

Massachusetts.  
 I have found everything in all my dealings with you just as represented and I also know for a fact that on the lumber bill alone I saved easily \$500.00. All the lumber was there and had plenty of everything. I shall take great pleasure in showing my bungalow, the "Burbank" to others and feel ready to recommend you to all.  
 GEO. S. HARDY.

Maryland.  
 My Edison is completed and to say that I am pleased is putting it very mild indeed. My house is built upon a knoll and raised three feet above ground. The picture in the catalog entirely fails to do it justice. During its construction it was visited and watched by scores of people and was fairly commented upon by our local newspaper on two occasions as to its appearance and the material entering into its construction. "Edison" is the password and all is well.  
 PATRICK REEDY.

Pennsylvania.  
 We believe our "Marsden" is second to none; are more than satisfied both with the house and your Golden Rule business methods. We wish you increasing prosperity. If we were to build again, we would surely have another Aladdin.  
 J. A. McHUGH.

Pennsylvania.  
 My experience in building my Rochester has been very beneficial to me, not only from a financial viewpoint but from a practical side, as I have followed the mode of construction from foundation up, and tried to find the weak points with the result that I can truly say that neither my carpenters or myself can say today that there are any. The entire transaction was completed in a pleasant businesslike way and I feel assured we are mutually benefited by same. Your method of dealing with a customer makes it impossible to be anything else than genuine boosters for Aladdin.  
 T. J. McDERMOTT.

Indiana.  
 I have just finished building one of your Read-cut houses, the Stanhope, and want to express my gratitude to you for making it possible for a poor man to have a home. Having made a personal investigation and inspection of the Read-cut houses of the largest mail orders in the world, I am satisfied that the Aladdin Read-cut material is far superior to theirs and the prices the most reasonable.  
 Rev. C. C. CRIFE.

Figure 2.14 "Exact Words of Owners." Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 117* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

## **Conclusion**

The many technological and cultural shifts of the nineteenth century contributed to the emergence and popularity of the mail-order home in American society. The railroad increased the access to raw materials and consumer markets and increased immigration provided both cheap labor and a wider consumer base. Companies like Aladdin took advantage of these changes to find a niche for themselves and for the mail-order home. Through the catalogues and products, the mail-order house companies added to the development of the American ethos of the single family home, changing the landscape of American suburbia. The Aladdin Company was a leader in the industry from its early founding in 1906. The story of the Aladdin Company is a remarkable tale, made notable by the achievements of the founders who, with no previous experience in the building industry, were able to develop innovative strategies and quickly grow a business that sustained its role as a leader for decades. The company developed highly evolved business and construction models of efficiency, as well as cutting edge catalogues, which communicated the ideal lifestyle of the American people during the early twentieth century.

## **Chapter 3**

### **ALADDIN IN DELAWARE**

The delivery locations and types of Aladdin buildings purchased in Delaware from 1914 to 1920 identify the choices individual purchasers were making, and also facilitate an analysis of the commonalities found among Aladdin orders within the state. The presence of Aladdin Read-Cut buildings in Delaware reflects the 1910s dominant housing trend of new growth and construction focused among the streetcar working class suburbs surrounding Wilmington. Aladdin provided a variety of choices so that each individual purchaser was able to select his or her own version of an ideal home. However, both in Delaware and nationally, the most popular styles of Aladdin buildings selected were the simplified bungalow and cottage.

#### **Distribution and Location**

The delivery and construction locations of Aladdin buildings in Delaware, like others across the nation, were dependent on the rail system. In Delaware, the majority of Aladdin sales were delivered to suburbs that developed in conjunction with the railroad and streetcar. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, some of the population moved away from the overcrowded urban environment into lower density suburbs removed from the center cities. Identifying the locations of Aladdin deliveries create distribution patterns on national and local levels. The numbers of sales on national, regional, and local levels provide insight into Delaware's key position in Aladdin's market.

The Aladdin Company experienced exponentially increasing sales in response to the growing need for affordable single-family housing in early twentieth-century America. Nationally, from 1914 to 1920, Aladdin recorded approximately 16,000 orders.<sup>95</sup> The increased need for housing was present in Delaware as well. Although Delaware is geographically the second smallest state in the United States, from 1910 to 1920 the city of Wilmington experienced a large population growth (26 percent) and its surrounding suburbs also grew (New Castle County grew 7 percent) (Table 3.1). This population growth created an urban housing shortage, partially due to the growth of industrial manufacturing in the region. The number of Aladdin sales was a direct response to the need for affordable single-family homes in Delaware.

**Table 3.1 Delaware Population Changes 1910 to 1920**

	<b>1910</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Delaware</b>	202,322	223,003	10%
<b>New Castle County</b>	123,188	148,239	20%
<b>New Castle County without Wilmington</b>	35,677	38,071	7%
<b>Wilmington</b>	87,411	110,168	26%
<b>Kent County</b>	32,721	31,023	-5%
<b>Sussex County</b>	46,413	43,741	-6%

Source: Created by author based on 1920 U.S. Population Census<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Aladdin Company, ACR, CHL, boxes 90-107.

<sup>96</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Volume III, Population 1920, Composition and Characteristics of the Population by States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922).

Analysis of Aladdin sales patterns reveals that Delaware was in a region with a high concentration of Aladdin sales. The state with the highest number of sales in the United States for each individual year and the three combined years of 1918 to 1920 was Delaware's neighbor to the north, Pennsylvania, with a combined total of 1,401 sales.<sup>97</sup> New Jersey also ranked high in sales and was in the top ten in both 1918 and 1920. For the combined years, New Jersey ranked ninth in the nation with 230 sales.<sup>98</sup> The other state bordering Delaware is Maryland, which ranked sixteenth with 109 sales.<sup>99</sup> Despite Delaware's small size it ranked thirty-third with 24 sales from 1918 to 1920.<sup>100</sup> Altogether these Mid-Atlantic states accounted for 24 percent of the Aladdin sales in this time period.

This concentration of Aladdin sales in the Mid-Atlantic region is especially remarkable given the fact that it is so far away from the company headquarters in Bay City, Michigan. For the combined years from 1918 to 1920, Aladdin's home state of Michigan ranked fourth out of forty-nine in Aladdin sales

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<sup>97</sup> Ryan Michael Schumaker, *The Aladdin Company Corporate Records: Sales Analysis and Finding Aid 1918–1920* (Unpublished paper, Eastern Michigan University, 2007), 11, 45-47. Unfortunately, a complete reference database has not been created for all of the sales from 1914-1920; however, Schumaker has compiled sales documentation for the period of 1918 to 1920 for 7,285 sales across 49 states, including Delaware.

<sup>98</sup> Schumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 11, 45, 47.

<sup>99</sup> Schumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 11.

<sup>100</sup> Schumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 11. I was unable to find records for one of the three sales Schumaker identified for 1920. It is possible he misidentified the state due to the fact the sales index handwriting makes Illinois (Ill) look very similar to Delaware (Del). It is also possible that the sales index listed the purchaser from another state and it was only on the order form that indicated a delivery to Delaware.

(562 sales), behind the top-ranked Pennsylvania.<sup>101</sup> Including sales from before 1918 increases the concentration of Aladdin buildings in the Mid-Atlantic. For instance, records show that in 1915, the DuPont companies alone ordered more than 100 Aladdin houses for their new company towns in New Jersey.<sup>102</sup> The high Aladdin sales figures in southeastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and northern Delaware can be attributed to Aladdin's appeal to the growing industrial manufacturing companies in the region, like DuPont.

### **Distribution Within Delaware**

The vast majority of Aladdin buildings were delivered to New Castle County, the most urban and industrial county within the state and the region that was experiencing rapid growth of industry and a need for worker housing. The distribution of Aladdin orders across Delaware exhibits clear patterns when examined by delivery location, first by county and then by town/railroad station (Table 3.2). Of the 48 orders shipped to Delaware in the 1914 to 1920 period, 41 were delivered to New Castle County, 4 to Kent County, and 3 to Sussex County (Figure 3.1).

**Table 3.2 Distribution of Delaware Aladdin Orders**

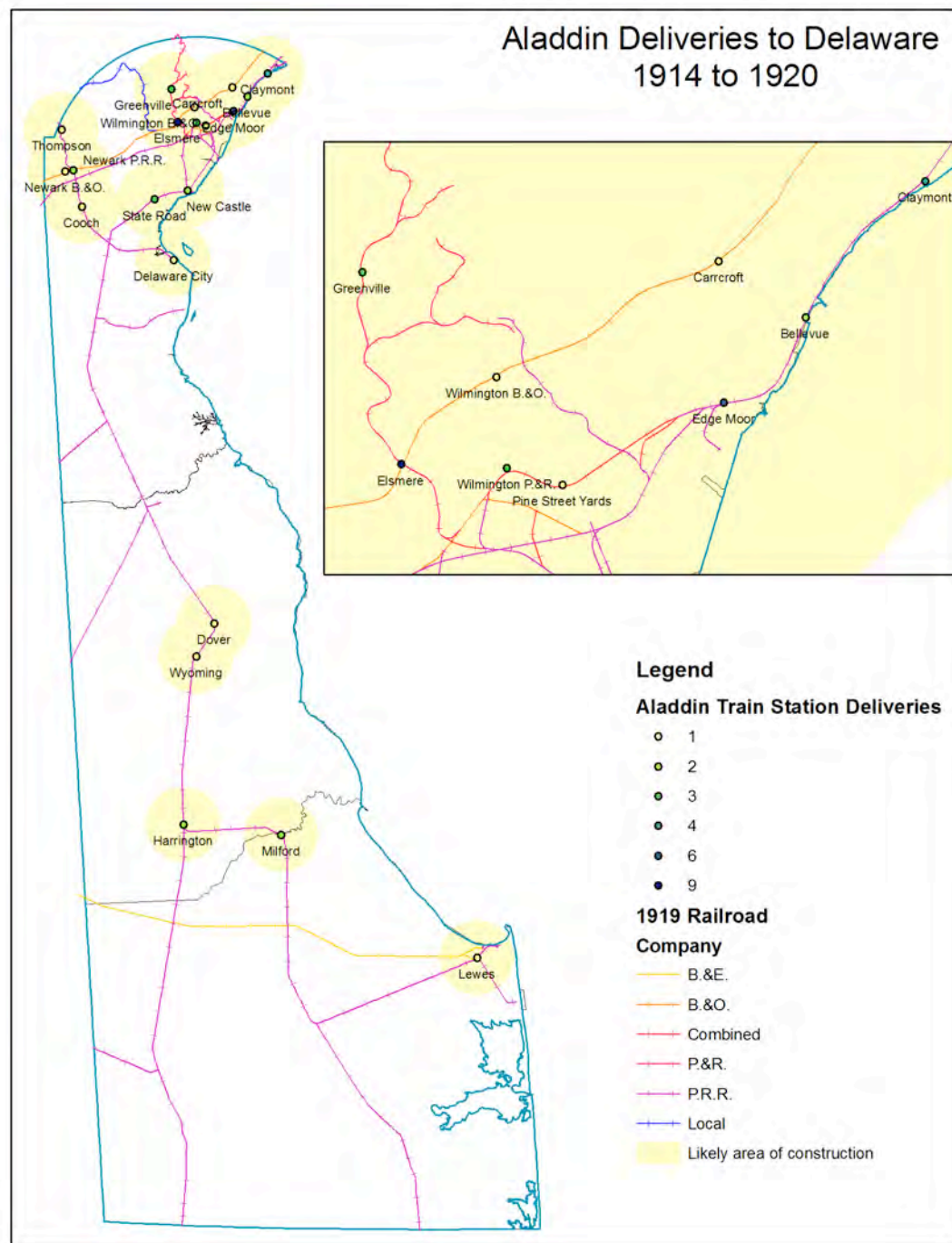
	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	Total
<b>New Castle County</b>	3	5	1	13	7	10	2	41
<b>Kent County</b>	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	4
<b>Sussex County</b>	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	3
<b>Total</b>	4	6	2	14	8	12	2	48

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Indexes, ACR, CHL, box 90.

<sup>101</sup> Schumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 11.

<sup>102</sup> Aladdin Company, ACR, CHL, boxes 90 and 94.





**Figure 3.1** Map of Aladdin Train Station Deliveries (Source: Created by author, 2009, based on Aladdin sales records, ACR, CHL, boxes 90-107.)

Almost all of the Aladdin buildings were ordered from high-density areas with a growing population and large amounts of new construction. From 1910 to 1920, the population of New Castle County increased 20 percent. Outside of the city of Wilmington, the areas with the highest levels of new construction were along the streetcar lines in the new working class suburbs. The vast majority of the Aladdin orders were houses and automobile garages delivered to these new suburbs of Wilmington (Table 3.3).

Not all of the Aladdin orders were intended for construction in a suburb.<sup>103</sup> A few of the purchases were for farms and homes in small towns and rural areas. Two of the three orders delivered to Sussex County, the most rural of the three counties, were sent to the Town of Milford, which is located on the line between Kent and Sussex counties. One of these houses was constructed near the downtown area on the Kent County side of town.<sup>104</sup> Aladdin orders also went to four farms in New Castle County, one farm in Kent County, and one farm in Sussex County.<sup>105</sup> The

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<sup>103</sup> For more information about specific orders mentioned in this thesis cross-reference the order number with Table B.1 and Table B.2 found in Appendix B. For illustrations refer to Appendix A for catalog pages of the orders delivered to Delaware and Appendix C for photographs of known extant Aladdin buildings in Delaware.

<sup>104</sup> Order 10830, James H. Stanton, The Rochester is still standing today at 406 North Walnut Street, Milford, DE (Figure C.11).

<sup>105</sup> New Castle County orders 8419, 12517, 12518, 12519, 19080, 4587; Kent County order 13484; Sussex County order 14223. Although order 4587 was delivered to the Thompson train station in New Castle County, DE the 1910 U.S. Census for John T. Peck, the purchaser, shows him living on a farm in London Britain, PA, which is just across the state border from Thompson, DE; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910, London Britain, Chester, Pennsylvania; Roll T624\_1328; Page: 5A; Enumeration District: 34; Image: 339.

Aladdin orders intended for farm use confirm that farming was still a feature of the Delaware landscape and the region's economy in this time of industrialization.

**Table 3.3 Train Station and Style Distribution of Delaware Aladdin Orders**

Train Stations by County		Barn	Bungalow	Cottage	Four-square	Garage	Revival	Spec. House	Total
New Castle	Bellevue	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
	Carrcroft	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Claymont	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	4
	Cooch	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Delaware City	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Edge Moor	-	1	-	-	2	2	1	6
	Elsmere	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
	Elsmere Jct.	-	5	1	1	1	-	-	8
	Greenville	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
	New Castle	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
	Newark	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	3
	State Road	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	3
	Thompson	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	Wilmington, Cox's Siding, Pine St Yrds	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	5
<b>New Castle Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	
Kent	Dover	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Harrington	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
	Wyoming	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	<b>Kent Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
Sussex	Lewes	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Milford	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
	<b>Sussex Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Delaware Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>48</b>

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Records, ACR, CHL, boxes 90-107.

As the delivery locations illustrate, Aladdin houses were more a part of the suburban rather than the urban or rural landscapes in Delaware. Within New Castle County, 27 orders were delivered to Wilmington and its surrounding suburbs of Elsmere, Edge Moor, Bellevue, Carrcroft, and Claymont. Elsmere has the highest density of Aladdin orders within Delaware and Edge Moor the second highest. Many of these locations are streetcar suburbs whose development was enabled by the construction of the streetcar lines running through the subdivisions (Figure 3.2).<sup>106</sup> Aladdin delivered five orders to Wilmington train stations and at least two of those houses were built outside of the city limits, in the suburbs of Holloway Terrace and Bellefonte.<sup>107</sup> The other three Wilmington deliveries were likely built either on the fringe of the city or in the suburbs as well because their wood frame and siding would have been prohibited by the city's fire code.<sup>108</sup>

The early suburbs of Wilmington generally took a couple of decades for all of the parcels to be built upon. In 1889 a map of Elsmere was printed and it is considered the first suburb of Wilmington.<sup>109</sup> Elsmere was subdivided farmland west of the city along a new trolley line that would take passengers downtown for a five-cent fare.<sup>110</sup> Real estate developer and banker, Joshua T. Heald, laid out and

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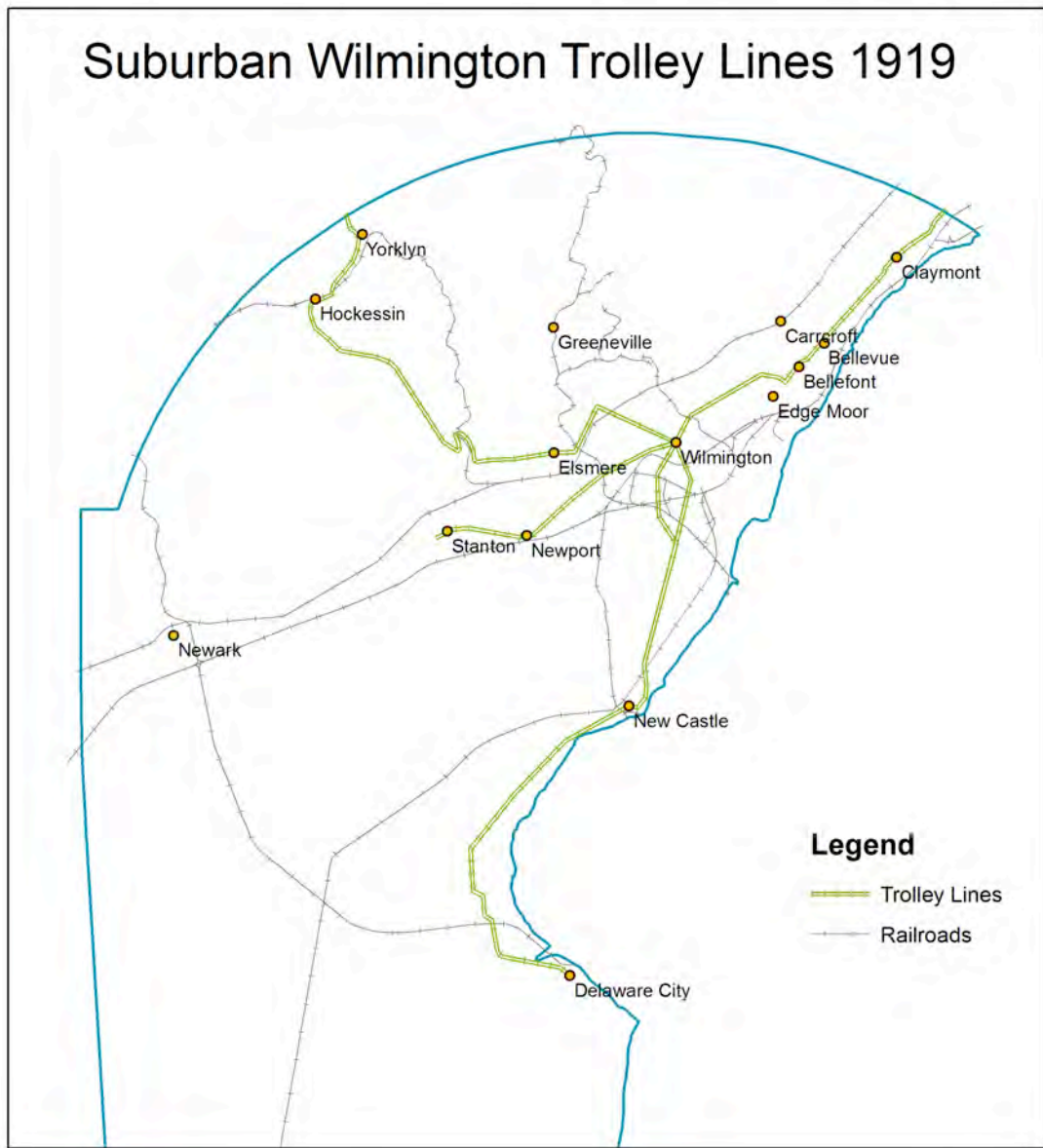
<sup>106</sup> For more information about "Streetcar Subdivisions, 1880-1920+/-" in Delaware, refer to Chase et al., *Suburbanization in the Vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware 1880-1950+/-: A Historic Context*.

<sup>107</sup> Bellefonte order 10111; Holloway Terrace order 15201; (Figures C.9, C.10, C.14).

<sup>108</sup> Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 57.

<sup>109</sup> Heald and Company, *Elsmere* (Map on file with the Historical Society of Delaware. Wilmington, Del. 1889).

<sup>110</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 12.



**Figure 3.2** Map of Suburban Wilmington Trolley Lines (Source: Created by author, 2010.)

advertised Elsmere as “Wilmington’s New Suburb, Beautiful Home Sites”.<sup>111</sup> Elsmere’s grid plan was ideal for commuters who needed to be within walking distance of the trolley lines. Elsmere and Elsmere Junction train stations received nine Aladdin deliveries from 1915 to 1919 and five of those deliveries were in 1919.

The early subdivisions within Edge Moor, Bellefonte, Bellevue, and Claymont were established during the first two decades of the twentieth century. These subdivisions grew in a line northeast of the city following Philadelphia Pike (the historic road from Wilmington to Philadelphia), the trolley route, the railroad, and the industrial riverfront. Booming manufacturing companies such as Edgemoor Iron Company and Worth Steel located their facilities outside of the city, along the same line. This stretch of land was an ideal transportation situation for the industries because of the proximity of the parallel routes of the river, railroad, and turnpike.

Edge Moor has the second highest concentration of Aladdin buildings with six orders from 1914 to 1919; in 1914 it received the first two recorded orders for Aladdin in Delaware. Just up the trolley route were seven Aladdin buildings: one Aladdin house in Bellefonte, two more in Bellevue, and then four were delivered to the train station in Claymont near the Pennsylvania border.<sup>112</sup> The Claymont orders did not occur until 1917 and 1918, which reflects the delayed development of the Claymont subdivisions because of land speculation.<sup>113</sup> The housing in the Claymont

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<sup>111</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 25.

<sup>112</sup> Bellefonte was incorporated in 1915 when four Montrose developments joined with Bellefonte Heights. Chase, *Suburbanization and Covenants*, 167.

<sup>113</sup> Chase, *Suburbanization and Covenants*, 117. The Claymont Development Company purchased land in the area in 1916, which began the active development. The 1910 US Census shows all of the Aladdin purchasers in Claymont already living in the vicinity.

area before these subdivisions was primarily farmhouses and much of the land was just beginning to be developed for subdivisions and company housing.<sup>114</sup>

All of these subdivisions were developed with working class families as one of the key targets for future residents. There was a high demand for small affordable homes, which is evident in the large numbers of cottages, bungalows, and four-squares. These houses created the architectural makeup of the suburban neighborhoods at the start of the twentieth century.<sup>115</sup> Architectural historian Alan Gowans describes the early twentieth-century houses as “Neither city nor country houses, they represented a really new kind of dwelling, designed for a new, suburban kind of place.”<sup>116</sup> The analysis of the sales records detailed in this chapter proves that Aladdin played an undeniable role in the development of the early twentieth-century suburban landscape in Delaware and filled the need for affordable and modern housing for the new residents of these communities.

### **Aladdin Buildings**

The buildings advertised in Aladdin catalogues represented a wide range of sizes, prices, and popular architectural styles. The sales in Delaware were largely similar to the national purchase trends. Overall, the most popular types of Aladdin houses purchased in Delaware were the larger cottages and modest bungalows, which

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<sup>114</sup> Radu, *Industrial Housing*, 32-35. Claymont Terrace, Claymont Center, Claymont Heights, and Claymont Addition were subdivisions that started development during the 1910s. Overlook Colony was planned housing for employees of General Chemical Company and Worthland Village was for employees of Worth Steel Company – both were planned between 1917 and 1919.

<sup>115</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 38.

<sup>116</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 33.

were neither the smallest and least expensive nor the largest and most expensive. Aladdin advertised larger and more expensive specialty homes, but these did not sell in large quantities. The style, cost, and size of the buildings ordered from 1914 to 1920 reveal the moderate and affordable nature of Aladdin purchase decisions made by Delaware residents. Aladdin mail-order housing was an ideal choice for a working class or rising middle class family looking for an affordable and modern home in the suburbs.

Aladdin executives insured that their catalogue included a large variety of housing options so that their customers could always find a good match for their needs, tastes, and resources. As Gowans observed, “Aladdin’s catalogs (mostly the work of O. E. Sovereign) constitute a mini-history of American building and taste.”<sup>117</sup> From a business perspective, O.E. Sovereign himself remarked on the need for offering a diversified product during a discussion with a Ford executive: “A house to accommodate five people must have three bedrooms. You probably don’t know that 65 per cent of the homes in this country have only two bedrooms. A lone product would lose us either 65 per cent or 35 per cent of our market.”<sup>118</sup>

Mail-order house catalogues enabled the purchasers to take control of their housing decisions and influence the final design of their home. “The great benefit of these homes...was that they allowed individuals a range of choices. Each family home, while sharing a common house type, could express a distinctive family outlook.”<sup>119</sup> Despite the fact that the new suburban dwellers were buying homes very

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<sup>117</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 48.

<sup>118</sup> Sovereign, *Fifty Million Dollars*, 25.

<sup>119</sup> Clark, *American Family Home*, xiv.



similar to one another, the catalogues offered them the ability to feel that they could customize and make unique choices to create a home environment that reflected their own identity and social status.

### **Type and Style**

The selection of buildings offered by Aladdin was in keeping with the popular architectural styles of the time, and included the types of structures people needed. There is a distinction between the terms style and type: *style* addresses the visual effects of a building, whereas *type* addresses the function of a building.<sup>120</sup> Stevenson and Jandl point out, “One of the reasons for the popularity of Sears houses was that they consciously reflected popular American taste of the period; designs were selected for their broad appeal and acceptance.”<sup>121</sup> This is also true for Aladdin and all of the leading mail-order house companies.

Both nationally and in Delaware, bungalows and cottages were the most frequent type of Aladdin home purchases, with bungalows being more popular (Table 3.4). “The surge of interest in pre-fabricated bungalows after 1910 represented a logical extension of the attitudes toward efficiency and economy.”<sup>122</sup> During what Schweitzer and Davis define as the “National Period” of architecture, the bungalow emerged as the first “high style” architectural trend available to the masses. Plan books, catalogues and magazines created a national dissemination of an architectural movement that made unified modern household plans equally available all over the

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<sup>120</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 70-71.

<sup>121</sup> Stevenson and Jandl, *Houses by Mail*, 19.

<sup>122</sup> Clark, *American Family Home*, 181.

country. The bungalow was popular and attractive to homeowners and builders across the nation.

**Table 3.4 National and Delaware Sales by Type**

	<b>National Sales 1918-20</b>	<b>Delaware Sales 1914-20</b>
<b>Bungalow</b>	38.5% (2,581)	39.5% (19)
<b>Cottage</b>	34% (2,264)	27% (13)
<b>Four-square</b>	6% (406)	12.5% (6)
<b>Revival/Vernacular</b>	5% (319)	6% (3)
<b>Garage</b>	5.5% (365)	10.5% (5)
<b>Other</b>	11% (760)	4.5% (2)
<b>Total</b>	100% (6,695)	100% (48)

Source: Categorization by type and table by author. National sales data, Schumaker collected only 1918-1920; Delaware sales data, 1914-1920 collected by author from the Aladdin Sales Indexes and Order Forms.<sup>123</sup>

The Aladdin houses built in Delaware can be placed in one of four categories: bungalow, cottage, four-square, and revival/vernacular. In Delaware, nine models were purchased more than once. The most popular models were the bungalows Dresden and Stanhope, the cottage Gretna, and the four-square Herford.

During the beginning of the twentieth century, the national definition of a bungalow was broad and fluid, often referring to any new small modern single family

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<sup>123</sup> Schumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 50-52. Schumaker created a table organized by model name that was the basis for the National Sales data in this table. For the Delaware data, the sales percentages from 1914-1917 and from 1918-1920 do not change proportions by an amount greater than the uncertainty from the sample size, except for garages. It will not distort DE data to use this entire period of DE data. The remaining 11% of National sales include duplexes, the Colonial Revival and Craftsman houses. Other buildings sold in Delaware include order 2752 (a special house order that cannot be classified by type) and order 12518 (an Aladdin Barn).

house; but bungalows are most simply defined as one to one-and-a-half story dwellings with simple, clean lines.<sup>124</sup> The Aladdin Company tapped into this broader definition and marketed a wide range of its houses as bungalows and the language used in their catalogues reflected this variety. All were designed to offer interior convenience achieved through deep thought and planning, by promoting attractiveness in domestic architecture, featuring a conservative and stream-lined look, (away from the Victorian complexities and elaborations), and offering pleasant architectural features. Aladdin also promoted the bungalow as a new housing style for a “healthy” home, offering physical sanitation and fresh air pleasantness. “The dormer in the front roof gives light and air to attic and adds much to its beauty. The porch is formed under the main roof – its wide dimensions provide comfort and add much to the general effect of this home.”<sup>125</sup>

Bungalow designs and proportions emphasize their connection to the ground through the use of horizontal lines and the characteristic low sloping rooflines. Often, a full width front porch tucked under the roofline was a primary design feature. Commonly, the porch included substantial columns or footings that tied the house to the ground and gave weight to the small buildings. Another common feature is a dormer window centered on the front roof. Bungalows are often ornamented with Craftsmen details such as shingle siding, brackets, exposed roof rafters, and stone or brick chimneys. Both bungalow and Craftsman advertising linked their homes to

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<sup>124</sup> Currently, architectural historians have restricted the definition of a bungalow by creating strict sets of criteria that include height, massing, porches, and stylistic details. For more detailed bungalow definitions refer to Schweitzer and Davis, *America’s Favorite Homes*, 151-152; Clark, *American Family Home*, 173.

<sup>125</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1917, 55. The Boulevard.

simplicity and naturalness. The wood and stone materials, the wide porch, and the fenestration of the windows supported that connection to nature. A bungalow has more windows, or larger ones, than an average house of that size, thus integrating the interior and exterior spaces. Perfect proportions, balance, and a few carefully chosen details added charm to the exterior. “Naturalness, functionality, and inexpensiveness were thus the hallmarks of exterior bungalow construction.”<sup>126</sup> Since the popularity of bungalows was tied closely to the process of suburbanization, they are often longer than they are wide in order to fit onto the narrow suburban lots. Gowans described the smaller and simpler bungalows as a dressed-up worker’s cottage. Modest bungalows are more modern, a little larger, with more stylistic detailing than worker’s cottages and are located in the new fashionable suburbs. All of these characteristics elevated the social status of the bungalow above that of traditional worker’s cottages in the world of housing.<sup>127</sup>

Aladdin advertising materials further describe the bungalow in terms that emphasized the qualities of individuality, pride of ownership, convenience, conservative attractiveness, and space. The advertisement for the Cadillac model highlighted the fact that the model was designed by an Aladdin employee as his own home (Figure 3.3). “Thus an individuality was brought about that attracts the attention of every passer-by.”<sup>128</sup> The Dresden model description praises the bungalow as being the ideal home, emphasizing both the comfort and charm it brings to the home, through its stylistic elements including the wide porch and windows (Figure 3.4).

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<sup>126</sup> Clark, *American Family Home*, 173.

<sup>127</sup> Gowans, *Comfortable House*, 82.

<sup>128</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1919, 96. The Cadillac.



## The Cadillac

See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HIS bungalow is worthy of consideration because it was planned by one of our superintendents for a home of his own. It was made exactly as he planned it to suit his experienced sense, fitness and ideas. Thus an individuality was brought about that attracts the attention of every passer-by.

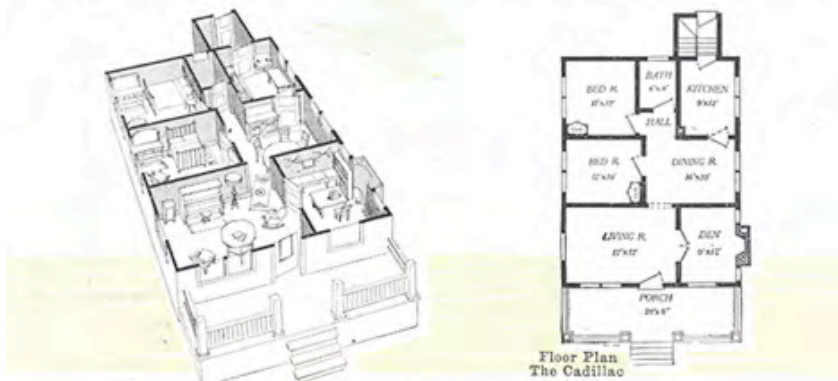
It is a home that is pleasant and has an abundance of space within for comfortable living and would give to anyone that possessed it a great pride of ownership.

The exterior is artistic and pleasing to the eye. The broad sweep of the roof carried out over the porch adorned with a dormer, breaking the wide expanse, is perfect in proportion and balance. The square divided lights in the upper sash of the windows lend an added charm to the exterior.

The main floor comprises a large living room entered directly from the porch. Off of this is a spacious dining room and den. Attractive French glass doors enable the owner to combine these rooms in one. The fireplace shown in the floor plan could be built in the opposite end of the living room, if desired, or could be omitted entirely.

Two bedrooms furnished with closettes as well as bath and kitchen finish the floor plan. Directly at the rear of the kitchen is a very convenient and modern grade cellar entrance giving access to the kitchen and cellar.

For price of the Cadillac refer to inside front cover. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Detail specifications for The Cadillac will be sent upon request. See Terms on page 2.



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**Figure 3.3** The Cadillac. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 96* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

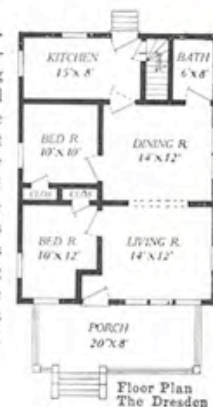


## The Dresden

See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HE DRESDEN will appeal to you as being an ideal home. The picture, which was taken on a midsummer's day, shows a number of features that are not found in the average home. Notice the porch—the shelter and relief it provides from the hot summer sun. Every inch of the one hundred and twenty square feet of floor space on this porch seems to hold a charm for the comfort seeker. And as much can be said of the inside of the home. Notice the picture, showing windows raised. It is possible to practically open up the home on four sides giving the utmost in ventilation, making all rooms light and airy, cool and pleasant.

Before reading further, look over the floor plan carefully. What do you think of it? Isn't it just right for convenience—doesn't it appeal to your ideas of "home?" Notice the long stretch—practically twenty-four feet—thru living room and dining room. The daylight rooms are arranged on one side of the home and possess every desired feature—plenty of light and air, spaciousness and ease in accessibility; adapted to any arrangement or setting of furniture. Plenty of space in the bed rooms with good closets in each, makes a home that will give you great satisfaction and much convenience. Your friends will agree with your judgment in selecting this home of homes—the Dresden. Turn to page 75 and notice the interesting views of the interior. For price of the Dresden refer to price list on inside of front cover. See General Specifications, pages 12 and 13. Detail specifications for the Dresden will be sent on request. See Terms on page 2.



**Figure 3.4** The Dresden. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 95* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

Some more stringent definitions of the term “bungalow” argue that a house is not a true bungalow if there is a finished room on the second floor, or if there is a basement. But all of Aladdin’s models had the option of a cellar or basement. Overall, Aladdin’s simple and conservative bungalows represent a new style of house: a small but stylish house, which any person could be pleased to own, “a natural and informal structure that fit the needs of the modern family...”<sup>129</sup>

For wealthier individuals, the bungalow spoke to their rebellion against the over-ornamentation of Victorian life; for lower classes, the simplified bungalow was a way to modernize their life, and a way to afford being a part of a national architectural trend. In Delaware, “The proliferation of the style is partly due to its wide marketing by companies selling plans and pre-fabricated versions of the houses. The low cost of bungalow construction and the style's great versatility added to its popularity.”<sup>130</sup> Overall, the bungalow style was representative of the moderate and the modern at the dawn of the twentieth century. Clark has written, “In place of the romantic Victorian justification of art and beauty as complex and inspirational was a new theory of aesthetics that stressed practicality and simplicity, efficiency and craftsmanship.”<sup>131</sup> Aladdin was a practitioner and promoter of this new theory of aesthetics.

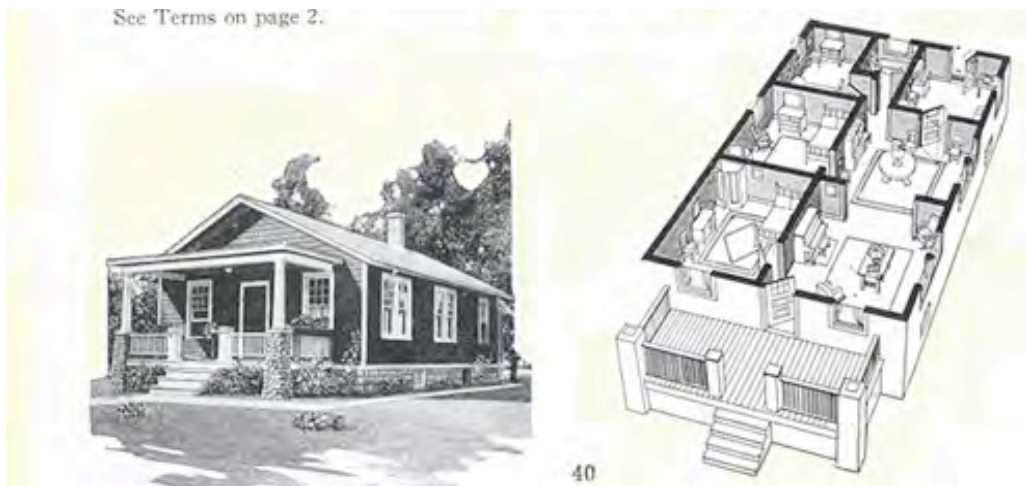
The Stanhope model, the simplest style Aladdin bungalow, was the most purchased bungalow nationally, and was also the most popular in Delaware in the 1914 to 1920 period (Figure 3.5). Architectural historians might hesitate to categorize

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<sup>129</sup> Clark, *American Family Home*, 147.

<sup>130</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 40

<sup>131</sup> Clark, *American Family Home*, 132.



**Figure 3.5** The Stanhope. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 40-42* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



the Stanhope as a bungalow, especially with its exterior simplicity, low height, and almost “shotgun” floor plan; however it does fit into the collection of Aladdin bungalows. It features elements characteristic to bungalows, including dominant porch supports, single and double windows, a living room and dining room that are open, and no separate parlor.

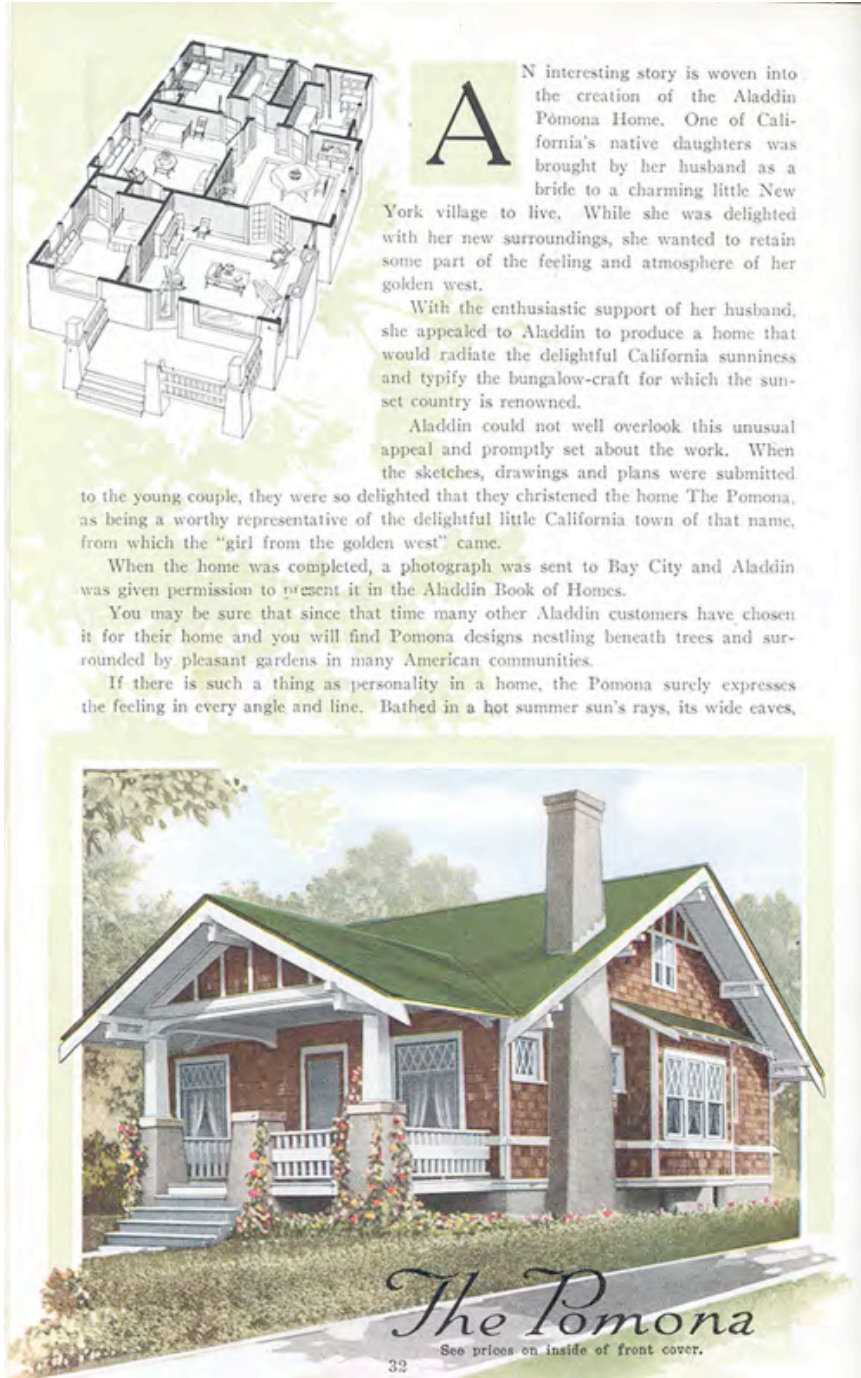
The Pomona model was the second most popular Aladdin bungalow home nationally (Figure 3.6). It was a more elaborate bungalow, with massing and many stylistic details that are typical of the most stringent high-style definitions of bungalows. It is interesting to note that no Pomonas were purchased in Delaware at this time. The sales data suggests that Delaware’s homebuyers simply were not as interested in this “high” style of bungalow. The Pomona seemed better matched to the more style-sophisticated purchaser, and made most of its sales elsewhere.

The Dresden model was the third most popular Aladdin bungalow nationally, and ranked second in Delaware (Figure 3.4). A mid-range bungalow (in price, size, and style), the Dresden featured a hipped front dormer, triple living room window (opening the interior to the outdoors), exposed rafters, and a full porch with narrower columns. While smaller and more conservative than the Pomona, the Dresden offered “daylight” according to Aladdin promotions: “It is possible to practically open up the home on four sides, getting the utmost in ventilation, making all rooms light and airy, cool and pleasant.”<sup>132</sup>

The Aladdin bungalows shared characteristics both common to and distinct from others’ definitions of the style. They offered both the lower-case “b” bungalow – a comfy home – and the Bungalow with a capital “B”, which featured the

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<sup>132</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1918, 95. The Dresden.



**Figure 3.6** The Pomona. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 32* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

specific stylistic emphases.<sup>133</sup> Aladdin did not call all its small homes bungalows, however. It recognized the stylistic distinctions among its small houses, and separated its small houses into “bungalows” and “cottages,” with cottages being smaller, simpler, and with fewer decorative exterior features.

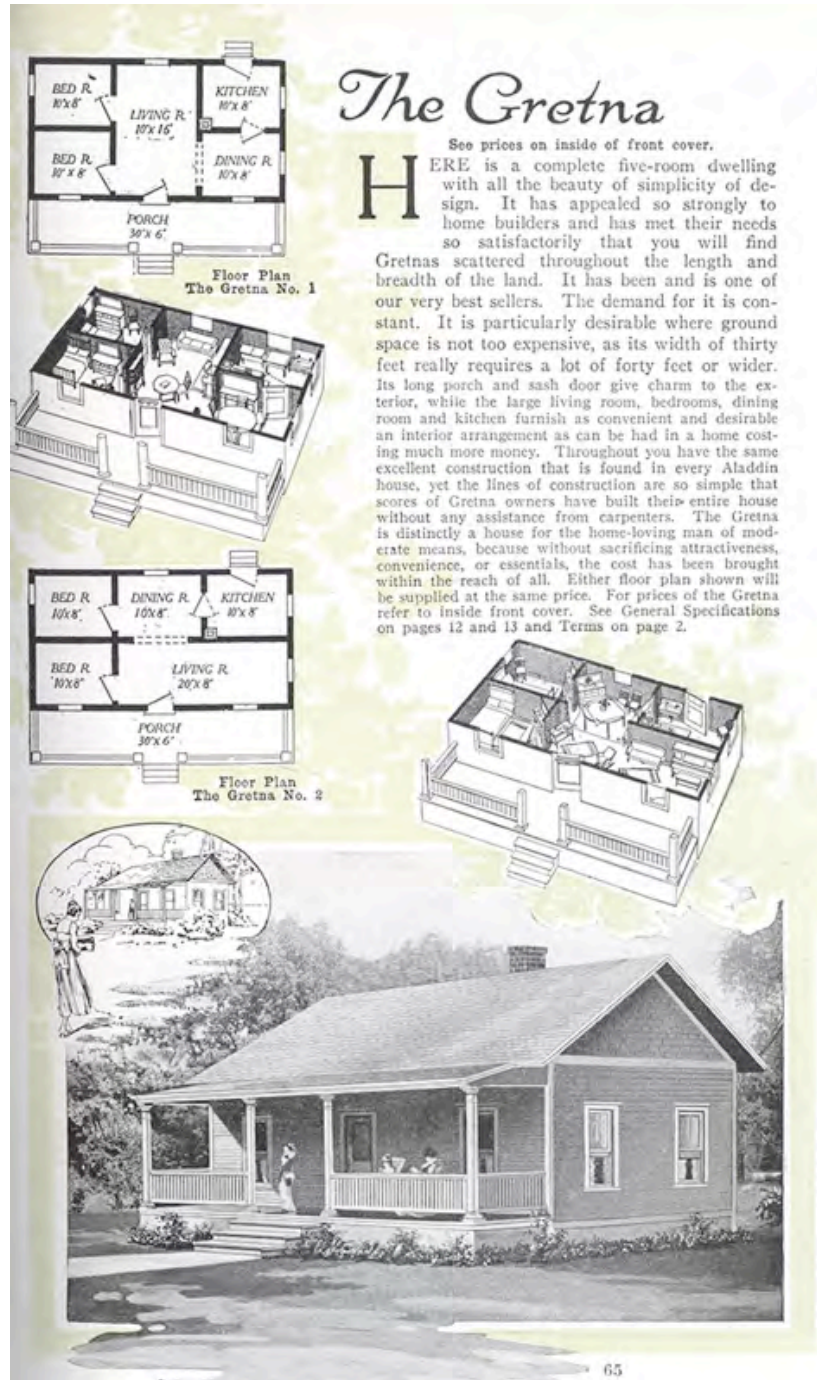
The second most commonly purchased Aladdin houses were under the cottage category and were the smaller and less expensive houses. Aladdin cottages were always small one-story dwellings. They were advertised for use as summer vacation homes, farmhouses, and industrial worker houses. The exteriors were very simple, often with shingle siding and very little trim or decorative features. “Many Wilmington subdivisions have interpretations of the front-gable cottage, but almost all are the more modest one-and-a-half-story version.”<sup>134</sup> In Delaware, the most popular Aladdin cottages - the Gretna, the Thelma, and the Emerald - were three of the four top sellers nationally (Figures 3.7, 3.8, 3.9). Not present in Delaware, but the number one Aladdin model sold nationally, was the Hecla model, which was very similar to the other Aladdin cottages (Figure 3.10). The main distinction of the Hecla was that it was not advertised in general catalogues, but was included in catalogues for industrial housing. Its high number of orders likely came from mass purchases by companies for worker houses.<sup>135</sup> The cottages were used a great deal in Aladdin’s promotional material specifically targeted at company towns and industrial housing.

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<sup>133</sup> Schweitzer and Davis, *America’s Favorite Homes*, 152.

<sup>134</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 52.

<sup>135</sup> Shumaker, *Sales Analysis*, 50.



**Figure 3.7** The Gretna #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 65* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



**Figure 3.8** *The Thelma*. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 55* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

**5 Room Cottage \$ 298**  
**Home Complete 298**




**THE EMERALD \$298 Net**

**T**HE Emerald is fresh from Aladdin's designing room—a charming home. We christened it the "Emerald" because it has so much value compressed into a relatively small space. It is certainly a jewel of the first water in design, appearance, and in convenience.

Shingled walls, which may be left to weather or may be stained any shade you desire, from the emerald green of the forest to the deep golden browns of autumn foliage. Our picture shows the sash and eaves touched with white—a splendid contrast. Roughly hewn brackets support the projecting eaves and the hooded entrance. Note the casement sash set in a mullion frame—distinctive. The red brick chimney enhances the general effect.

The interior affords five rooms conveniently arranged. The living room stretches across the front of the house and opens full width into the dining room. Two bed rooms and kitchen complete a little home that will delight its owner and friends. And \$298 pays for it. Can you imagine greater value—a cosy, snug little home for less than \$300. Of course, this price does not include the chimney, nor the Colonial seat at the front. This seat may be had for \$9.60. The material for the chimney is always procured locally. Can't you imagine this little cottage nestling 'neath a spreading oak, flower bordered and inviting—*your home?*

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.




Beautiful clear interior finish, in fact the same grades of material are furnished for the Emerald as for our large and more expensive homes. Send for detail specifications. 24 hour shipment.

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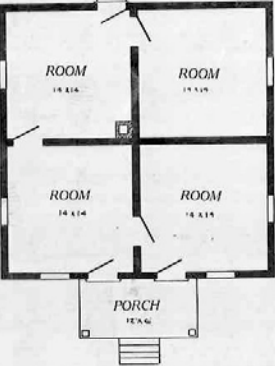
**Figure 3.9** The Emerald. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 28, 1916, 117* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)

612  
less 150/0




### The Hecla—4 Rooms

**R**APID industrial expansion demands a distinct type of home to meet the immediate housing conditions of an incoming population. No community is so fortunately prepared as to provide homes and shelter for workmen when needed quickly. The Hecla type of low cost home is capable of overcoming a serious over-flow in that it is quickly erected and spacious in size. It houses with comfort a family of four or five, besides boarders. The large rooms, size 14x14 ft., are sufficiently large to accommodate two double beds in each without crowding. One large room at the front is provided with separate front entrance which can be rented to boarders. This feature has been proven a necessity. Three handy men will have no difficulty in erecting the Hecla in six days. See special price sheet for prices and discounts. Price includes all material (except masonry) cut to fit, ready for erection.



**SPECIFICATIONS—THE HECLA**  
Size 28x28 Ft.

Sill, 6x6 in.  
Joists, 2x8 in.  
Studding, 2x4 in.  
Wall sheathing, 1 in.  
Siding clear beveled red cedar.  
Ceiling, 8 ft. 0 in. high.  
Rafters, 2x6 in.—2 ft. 0 in. O. C.  
Roof, ¼ pitch—1 ft. 0 in. projection.  
Boxed eaves.  
Roof sheathing, 1 in., overlaid with roofing or extra Star-A-Star cedar shingles.  
Windows, 26x24 in. check rail.  
Sash glazed.  
All doors mortised for lock sets.  
All flooring matched.  
All doors 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in. x 1½ in.  
Easeboard, casing and inside finish clear and knotless Oregon Fir.  
All hardware, glass, locks, hinges, nails, galvanized ridge roll, etc.  
Stain and varnish for interior woodwork.  
Two coats paint for exterior.  
Lath and plaster or plaster board.  
Complete instructions and illustrations for erection.



Community of Aladdin houses erected at one of the Illinois mines of the Bell & Zoeller Coal Co.

**Figure 3.10 The Hecla. Aladdin Company. Low Cost Homes Designed Especially for Industrial Purposes, Bay City, Mich., 1917, 10.**

Proportionally, Delaware has a greater preference for Aladdin four-squares than the nation as a whole. This difference is not seen in cottage, bungalow, or revival types of houses, which all have similar sales rates for Delaware and nationally. The four-square house has a rectangular plan, two full stories, and almost always has a hipped roof and a front dormer. Similar to the bungalow, front porches were a key feature of the four-square. But, distinct from the bungalow, porches on a four-square projected from the building and were not incorporated under the main roof line. Four-squares could be built in a variety of styles, depending on the siding materials and treatment of trims. They could include the more Craftsman-style treatments such as shingles or more classical styling such as Doric columns.

In Delaware, three of the six Aladdin four-squares purchased were the Herford model, which also was the most popular Aladdin four-square in this time period nationally (Figure 3.11). Both the Herford and the Hudson, another four-square built in Delaware, were very simple in their design with limited exterior stylistic details (Figure 3.12). Both have classical porch columns, but the Herford lacks a dormer. Both models were focused on providing convenience and space in a two-story house at an affordable price. The other two four-square Aladdin models built in Delaware, the Charleston and the Rochester, have more elaborate stylistic features (Figures 3.13 and 3.14). The Charleston has front and side bay windows and a hipped dormer. The Rochester has Craftsman characteristics, including exposed roof rafters, square windows on either side of the fireplace, as well as a front dormer with matching rafter tails. Both models offer more window space, ranging from single to double and triple windows, than either the Herford and Hudson.



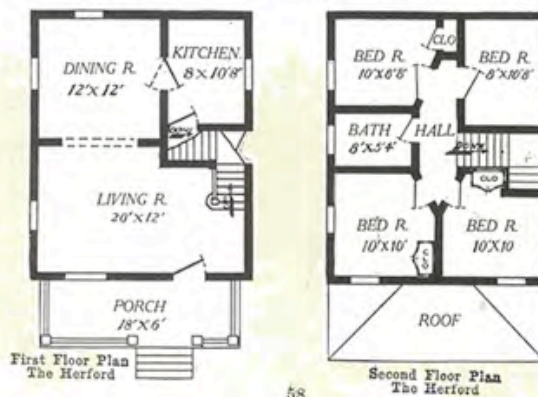


## The Herford

See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HE Herford is an achievement in building a two-story, four bedroom house at a price less than fifteen hundred dollars, yet the convenience and attractive appearance of this design is not impaired in the least. It is of the ever popular square type which gives an air of size and massiveness. Although the Herford is designed along conservative lines, it is not commonplace or plain. The hip roof and broad belt dividing first and second stories are always favorable touches that are in keeping with the design. The interior of the Herford will surprise you—the fact that it is a larger home than you expect could be possible at the price, is impressed upon you when you note the number and size of rooms.

A large living room across the entire front, large square dining room and kitchen make an exceptionally convenient and roomy first floor plan. The second floor has



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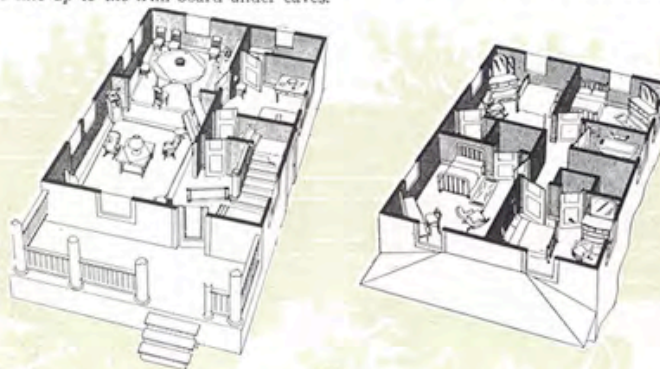
**Figure 3.11** The Herford. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 58* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



## The Hudson

See prices on inside of front cover.

**C**AN you imagine a better utilization of space than is obtained in the plan of the Hudson? The constant thought of Aladdin designers is toward giving a maximum of convenience and comfort for the lowest possible cost. It is doubtful if this result has been exceeded by any other Aladdin house. The exterior will please you, we are sure, as this home has a greater number of admirers. The design is practical and conservative with no sign of over-trimming being evident. Simple lines in the porch construction, heavy overhead boxing, and roof are in perfect harmony with the balance of the home. The windows of both first and second story are treated somewhat differently from the average. On the first floor the windows are capped by the wide belt dividing first and second floor. The windows on the second floor line up to the trim board under eaves.



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**Figure 3.12** The Hudson. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 62* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



## The Charleston

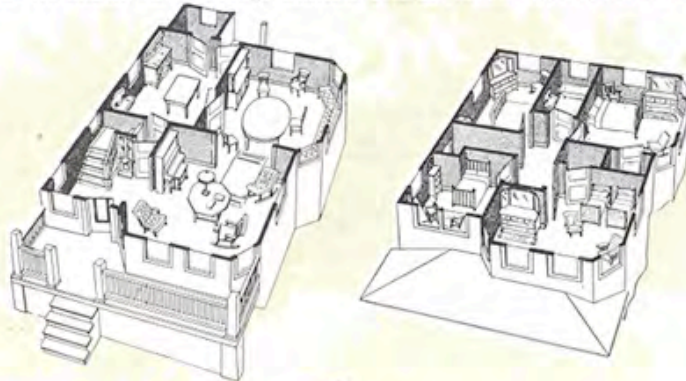
See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HERE are many good points in the Charleston, a modern square-type design. The first noticeable feature is the deep bay windows in front, both stories, also on one side. These give free sight in all directions and ample light.

The interior arrangement is one for convenience. Front entrance is gained through a large reception hall with semi-open stairway and arched entrance to large living room. This feature has proven popular, as it can be used for one room and still retain the convenience of two.

The kitchen has proved extremely attractive to busy housewives. A rear entrance leads to the back porch, while the grade entrance at the side leads to the out doors and basement, saving many steps.

Four large bedrooms and bath are arranged on the second floor—plenty of light in all. All exterior walls of siding. Beautiful Colonial columns support porch roof and



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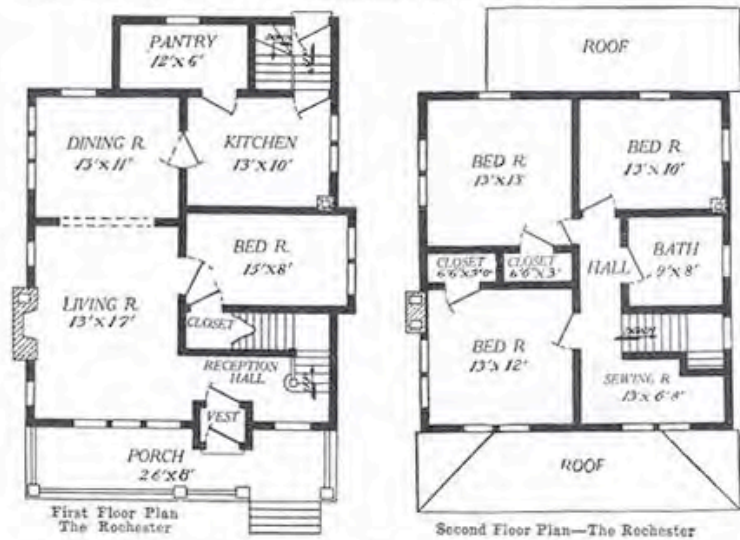
**Figure 3.13** The Charleston. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 46* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)



**The Rochester \$1,387.00** Price, \$1,460.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$1,387.00

**T**HE Rochester is of the strong, substantial American type. Square lines give the advantage of utilizing every inch of space to good advantage, while this particular house incorporates some features distinctive to itself. Note the vestibule, large living room with cosy bedroom having projecting bay window; group window in dining room; large pantry attached to kitchen and rear exit grade collar entrance. Three bedrooms, sewing room, bath and closets complete the second story. Most of the windows are grouped in pairs. Scrolled rafter ends embellish the eaves. Taken altogether, the Rochester is a most satisfying home. On a one-thousand-dollar lot the Rochester would normally sell for at least \$5,500. You can easily comprehend the profit available to the owner should conditions arise that he would want to sell it. Owners of Aladdin houses find that the high quality of finish, material, both inside and outside helps make quick sales when a sale is desired.

The Rochester was first built up in Northern Minnesota and the owner is high in his praise of the warmth of Aladdin construction.  
See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.



**Figure 3.14 The Rochester. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 39* (Source: ACR, CHL. [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html).)**

Only three Aladdin house purchases made in Delaware fall outside of the bungalow, cottage, or four-square categories: a two-story front gable vernacular, a transitional colonial revival, and a Dutch colonial revival.<sup>136</sup> These account for seven percent of the total number of houses purchased in Delaware. This small percentage is almost exactly the same as the national trend (six percent) for these styles of houses. There were no purchases in Delaware of any of Aladdin's large colonial revival or large craftsmen homes.

Other Aladdin structures purchased in Delaware in this period include garages and one barn. In Delaware, as in the nation, Aladdin played a role in the new industry of building garages for the booming car sales. The mail-order garages were one- and two-car garages, and had some of the same stylistic details as the houses. They were an extension of the suburban home, and matched the architectural style of the house.<sup>137</sup>

### **Cost**

Between 1914 and 1920 in Delaware, the most popular Aladdin category, with nineteen purchases, was the small bungalow that cost almost half as much as comparable houses in their neighborhoods. The Stanhope, priced at \$672, was the cheapest of the top bungalow models and the Dresden, the second most popular model, was just a little more expensive at the price of \$827.<sup>138</sup> Because they were mail-order houses, Aladdin homes were more affordable than standard-built homes.

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<sup>136</sup> Aladdin models Finley, Portland #1, New Eden.

<sup>137</sup> Aladdin models Packard, Winton, Maxwell.

<sup>138</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1916, 30, 75.

Testimonials in Aladdin advertisements in contemporary magazines quoted happy purchasers speaking of all their savings by purchasing an Aladdin home.<sup>139</sup>

Costs paid to Aladdin included the building plans, the majority of building materials, and the railroad freight fees for delivery. Additional costs for the purchaser were the cost of obtaining the land, additional building materials (most often masonry), and the cost of laborers (if the purchasers desired help with the construction). Aladdin offered a discount if the purchaser could pay in full at the time of placing the order. Delivery charges tended to be set by weight and volume; thus a smaller home cost less to ship. The homeowner could do most or all of the work to construct the home, further lowering the cost. In 1908, Sears estimated around \$700 of additional expenses to construct a mail-order house if the purchaser hired carpenters, plasterers, and painters.<sup>140</sup> Cost was also affected by the neighborhood and size of lot. The price of land in the new subdivisions varied depending on the neighborhood amenities, location, and lot sizes. Chase's study of Wilmington suburbs suggests the typical lots cost between \$100 and \$350.<sup>141</sup>

Aladdin gave the purchaser choices, with many optional upgrades on each model, and the purchaser could control the cost of a home by selecting whether or not to add those features to the home. One free way to customize the home was to request the floor plan to be reversed. Most of the purchasers in Delaware chose not to make upgrades to their homes, keeping very close to the original model as advertised. The

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<sup>139</sup> "Aladdin Houses Read-Cut" *Good Housekeeping Magazine* (March 191?), Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Company Records*, Clarke Historical Library, box 41.

<sup>140</sup> Thornton, *The Houses That Sears Built*, 5.

<sup>141</sup> Chase, *Suburbanization and Covenants*, 210.

majority of options selected were for windows for the cellar, or choosing a non-standard stain for roofing shingles. The first Aladdin purchase in Delaware for electric fixtures, bathroom outfit, and the pipeless furnace as an upgrade to the home did not occur until June 1919.<sup>142</sup>

**Table 3.5 Aladdin Sales Figures Delaware 1915-1920**

<b>Building Type</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>	<b>Least Expensive</b>	<b>Most Expensive</b>
<b>Cottage</b>	\$504	\$258	\$673
<b>Bungalow</b>	\$1,079	\$759	\$2,115
<b>Four Square</b>	\$1,381	\$836	\$1,740
<b>Revival</b>	\$698	\$596	\$754
<b>Garage</b>	\$196	\$173	\$256
<b>Barn</b>	\$319	\$319	\$319

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Records, *ACR*, *CHL*, boxes 90-107.

House prices increased from 1915 to 1920, ranging from \$298 to \$2115, with the average between \$600 and \$900.<sup>143</sup> The most expensive houses were the more detailed bungalows, purchase orders with multiple customized options, and all of the four-squares (Table 3.5). As a comparison to these costs, in 1919 a Wilmington contracting company, using traditional building methods, would build a seven-room

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<sup>142</sup> Order 14765, George Umflet, Hudson is still standing today at 2 Locust Ave, Elsmere, DE (Figure C.12).

<sup>143</sup> As seen in Table 3.5, DE purchase prices were consistently less than National prices, both for categories of houses and for models. There is not enough information for the National data to see a reason for this pattern. No 1914 order forms survive, leaving no record of the exact cost for those purchases.

bungalow for \$4300.<sup>144</sup> Mail-ordering housing was cheaper than traditional construction and Aladdin's variety of models and optional features allowed customers to modify their orders to a price point that they could afford.

### **Scale**

Understanding the scale of a house involves a combination of multiple factors, including the total number of rooms, the number of bedrooms, and the size of the rooms. The house plans that people purchase can be representative of their attitudes toward the family home in that they show how people conceive of the way they live and how they relate to one another within the household. Aladdin's advertising used their simple floor plans as a positive feature of their modern homes: "Isn't it just right for convenience – doesn't it appeal to your ideas of 'home?'"<sup>145</sup>

Historians Gwendolyn Wright and Sally McMurry both discuss the early twentieth-century house as the "minimal" house. "Their ground floor plans typically contained three basic rooms – kitchen, dining room, and living room; the kitchen was usually small and private, but the rest of the plan was open, compensating for the house's small size and also allowing informality."<sup>146</sup> The national trend toward the "minimal" house was replicated in Wilmington's subdivisions. There was a steady refrain endorsing small houses for buyers of modest means. In 1905, the local paper

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<sup>144</sup> Chase, *Suburbanization and Covenants*, 232. William H. Jones Contracting Company.

<sup>145</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1916, 30. The Dresden.

<sup>146</sup> Sally Ann McMurry, *Families and Farmhouses in Nineteenth-Century America: Vernacular Design and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 217-219.



reported “there is a general demand for small houses at present but the real estate men have been unable to meet the demands, accordingly more suburban residences will be built.”<sup>147</sup>

The new houses of the twentieth century focused on convenience and efficiency of the house plan, closing the gap between upper and lower classes. Lower-income families were increasing the size of their homes, expanding into more specialized space with more bedrooms and privacy. Upper classes were shrinking the size of their households and simplifying their homes, in a move towards servant-less households. Part of the new “comfortable” home was a move away from the formality of the Victorian home, abandoning a formal parlor, and opening up communal spaces to informality and regular usage.

Another major factor affecting the plan of houses built in this era was the introduction of indoor plumbing. While acknowledging the differences between cottages and bungalows in terms of style and cost, the overriding difference between these two types was the presence of the bathroom in the bungalow. Having indoor plumbing brought the respectability of a modern household. Some of the new suburban neighborhoods placed sanitation restrictions on the lots, and only owners willing to build with indoor bathrooms would be allowed into that new community.<sup>148</sup>

There is a progression of size from cottage to bungalow to four-square, both in terms of numbers of rooms, number of bedrooms, and the size of rooms (Tables 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8). There is also a progression in terms of the relationship of space. In the smaller cottages there was a compact one-story plan. Most of the

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<sup>147</sup> Chase et al., *Suburbanization in Wilmington*, 38.

<sup>148</sup> Chase, *Suburbanization and Covenants*, 130-131.

bungalows also had the one-story plan, but a cellar was more likely to be included and there was the possibility for expansion in the half story attic space as the family grew. The relationship of space in the bungalow was much more informal than earlier house patterns because of the openness between the living and dining rooms, and the fact that the bedrooms were accessed through those common rooms, rather than opening off a separate hall or a separate floor. The four-square divided space more by having a full two-story house, separating the communal family rooms on the first level, and the private individual bedrooms on the second floor. The four-squares in Delaware, with the exception of the Herford, had a separate entry or reception hall where the main staircase was placed, and they had a dedicated pantry off the kitchen. The Herford, in terms of plan and function of space, was more like a two-story bungalow than a fully developed four-square. For example, the Herford's first floor was more open and lacked the formal entry hall.

**Table 3.6 Aladdin Cottages**

<b>Model</b>	<b># of rooms</b>	<b># of bedrooms</b>	<b>Indoor bath</b>	<b>Special rooms</b>	<b>Total sq feet</b>
<b>Canton</b>	4	1	0		320
<b>Selwyn #2</b>	4	1	0		320
<b>Crampton</b>	3	1	0		320
<b>Emerald</b>	5	2	0		480
<b>Tremont</b>	5	2	0		480
<b>Thelma</b>	5	2	0		512
<b>Chester</b>	5	2	0		540
<b>Castle</b>	5	2	0		600
<b>Gretna</b>	5	2	0		660
<b>Gretna #2</b>	5	2	0		660

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Catalogs, ACR, CHL.

**Table 3.7 Aladdin Bungalows**

<b>Model</b>	<b># of rooms</b>	<b># of bedrooms</b>	<b>Indoor bath</b>	<b>Special rooms</b>	<b>Total sq feet</b>
<b>Dresden</b>	6	2	1	0	724
<b>Boulevard</b>	7	3	1	0	729
<b>Roseland</b>	7	3	1	0	748
<b>Kentucky</b>	6	2	1	0	753
<b>Lakeview</b>	7	2	1	pantry, fireplace nook	768
<b>Florence</b>	7	3	1	0	784
<b>Stanhope I</b>	7	3	1	0	792
<b>Stanhope II</b>	7	3	1	0	864
<b>Cadillac</b>	7	2	1	den	884
<b>Sunshine</b>	7	3	1	0	918

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Catalogs, ACR, CHL.

**Table 3.8 Aladdin Four-squares**

	<b># of rooms</b>	<b># of bedrooms</b>	<b>Indoor bath</b>	<b>Special rooms</b>	<b>Total sq feet</b>
<b>Herford</b>	7	4	1	0	880
<b>Hudson</b>	8	4	1	pantry, hall	1070
<b>Rochester</b>	8	4	1	pantry, sewing, reception hall	1300
<b>Charleston</b>	8	4	1	pantry, hall	1632

Source: Created by author based on Aladdin Sales Catalogs, ACR, CHL.

A feature of the bungalow that the Aladdin catalogue highlights is the creation of a relationship between exterior appearance and interior convenience.<sup>149</sup> Aladdin often praised the large size of rooms. By twenty-first-century standards, they are not really large – the Cadillac living room is 17' x 12' – but these rooms are larger

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<sup>149</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1917, 94. The Cadillac.

than those which had been in worker's cottages, farmer tenant housing, or urban tenements from which the new Aladdin owners were moving. Interior convenience also included bathrooms, closets, bedrooms, and common spaces all on one floor. This was a gift of both space and convenience for families with low income. Aladdin also focused on the pleasing sense of "home" that the bungalow plans offered. When Aladdin advertising praised the bungalow's plan and room arrangement, it would frequently speak to the woman of the household, "every housewife," appealing to her desire for convenience, attractiveness, efficiency, and a sense of home. The arrangement and size of the rooms allow for "excellent decoration and the utmost in convenience... The interior will appeal to every housewife who has a desire to make the home beautiful and comfortable."<sup>150</sup>

The Cadillac plan offers a variation on the bungalow. It includes a den, as opposed to another bedroom, which suggests a specialized use. And the design features glass French doors between the living room and den, allowing for expanded sense of space. In the Dresden plan, "daylight rooms are arranged on one side of the home and possess every desired feature – plenty of light and air, spaciousness and ease and accessibility: adapted to any arrangement or setting of furniture. Plenty of space in the bedrooms with good closets in each, makes a home that will give you great satisfaction and much convenience."<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1917, 51. The Boulevard.

<sup>151</sup> Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*, 1916, 30. The Dresden.

## **Conclusion**

Aladdin purchases in Delaware are representative of both national buying trends of Aladdin homes, and of the larger Delaware and Wilmington housing trends for worker and middle-income families during the 1910s. The largest numbers of Aladdin homes were built in the new suburbs of Wilmington, along streetcar lines, to meet the increased needs for housing the growing manufacturing industry in the region. Aladdin catered to leading trends, and their new designs were advertised nationally to a public ready for these styles, including in Delaware. The models chosen from the Aladdin catalogue tended to be the cottage and bungalow styles. The owners came from a wide range of professions, representative of the population moving into these new neighborhoods in the early twentieth century. Since the location and style of Aladdin housing was part of a greater populist movement, it is important to take a look at the individuals who were part of this trend.

## **Chapter 4**

### **READI-CUT HOME OWNERS**

The individuals who chose to purchase Aladdin buildings have an important place in the history of the Aladdin Company. Exploring the identity and lives of the purchasers of Aladdin mail-order buildings enhances the interpretation of the location and type of buildings that were ordered. Until now, very little research has been conducted on the individuals who purchased mail-order houses, instead being limited to general identification surveys of houses and considerations of large stylistic and cultural trends, such as architectural styles, advertising, and transportation, which affected the nature of house purchases from Aladdin and its competitors. Research into the individual purchasers of Aladdin buildings in Delaware revealed three primary motivations for ordering Aladdin buildings: personal use, employee benefits, and investment. This research also illuminates the personal and family backgrounds of the purchasers. After examining the individual stories of purchasers, broader conclusions can be drawn about Aladdin's role in larger cultural trends in early twentieth-century America.

This chapter proposes a methodology for researching Aladdin purchasers to establish patterns of identity in relationship to mail-order housing. Characteristics of individual purchasers, such as the location of their homes, the members of their households, and their occupations, combined with the details of what they purchased, can significantly expand our understanding of the possible motivations involved in purchasing a mail-order building.

Four basic steps shape the methodology:

1. Primary Data Collection – gather data from the Aladdin order form and the U.S. Population Census
2. Preliminary Analysis of Census and Order Form Data – combine the data to analyze location, occupation, household makeup, etc. for insight into the individual purchase
3. Secondary Data Collection – gather data from additional sources, i.e. deed records, as needed to address questions raised by preliminary analysis
4. Compilation – compile the information gathered about individual purchases to analyze possible trends amongst purchasers

Studying the relationship between the individuals and their purchases leads to insights into whether they were constructing the buildings for themselves or for speculative profit, and also expands an understanding of relationships between mail-order houses and other new houses, neighborhoods, demographics, and industries in a particular region. Without specifics about the individuals, it is difficult to gain a deeper understanding of the mail-order industry and how it is connected to the American populace and both cultural and housing trends. Delaware is an ideal location for this type of research because of its small size, single major urban center, and concentration of leading industries.

### **Data Collection**

Linking data from the Aladdin order forms and the U. S. Population Census for individuals purchasing Aladdin homes in Delaware provides valuable information about the purchasers. The Aladdin house order forms list purchaser names, recipient names, models, delivery locations, materials, special instructions, and

cost (Figure 4.1). The purchaser and recipient names, along with the delivery location, offer the means to narrow a search for U. S. Population Census records.

For the Aladdin purchases in Delaware from 1914 to 1920, the most helpful census years to examine are 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930. The two earlier censuses provide information about the individual's background. The two later censuses provide the most valuable demographic information since they illuminate life post-purchase. The census data from year to year varies, in terms of the specific information collected, but generally provides information about the individual's age, gender, race, nativity, family, place of residence, and occupation (Figure 4.2). Sometimes the census form will include the specific street address, which can be immeasurably helpful when trying to find the construction location of an Aladdin building.

For some of the Aladdin purchasers, the census data is fairly limited. What can be learned about a person depends upon the specificity of the name and location known about the purchaser. Finding information about a person in more than one census can give a fuller picture.<sup>152</sup> However, even one entry can shed light on a person. For example, Aladdin purchaser Rachel Minner<sup>153</sup> can be found only in the 1920 U.S. Census, but because this U.S. Census record was post-purchase, the data included the street that she lived on when she constructed her Aladdin house.<sup>154</sup> On

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<sup>152</sup> Examining consecutive census records for an individual illustrates the progression of their life by changes in occupation, family structure, and location of residence.

<sup>153</sup> Aladdin order 15015, Rachel Minner, ACR, CHL.

<sup>154</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Harrington, Kent, Delaware; Roll T625\_200; Page: 2A; Enumeration District: 17; Image: 535, Rachel Minner.



DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Jan 13	1918	599.45					
Sept 13	1918		150				
Jan 13	1919	449.45					
Jan 13	1919	599.45					
Jan 13	1919						

Order No. 15015 Rec'd 6/12/19 Ack. 7/10/19 Date Shipped 10/2/19

Ordered by Rachel Minner, Street \_\_\_\_\_

Town Harrington, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to Clarence S. Morris,

Notify \_\_\_\_\_

Town Harrington <sup>599.45</sup> County Kent State Del.

Via P. B. & W. <sup>71.25</sup> Freight Collect Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_

Shingles Yes. Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster Yes. Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_

Body Pearl Gray.

Trim White.

Porch Clng. White.

Porch Floor Pearl Gray.

Inside Two bed rooms white enamel

Balance of house Light oak

and varnish.

Style	Cretna #2 Rev.	Size
Price	599.45	
Extras	7.00	150.00
Freight		449.45
Total	606.45	599.45
		7.00
Total		

24.00 = 56.45 - 15.50  
" " # 6437 - 15.86

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Siding for outside walls.
2. Sill for solid foundation.
3. Reverse floor plans.
4. 7 gals. green shingle stain for roof.....\$7.00
5. Rush shipment.

Drew This 10/2/19 7.00

**CORRECTED ORDER**

Figure 4.1 Aladdin Order Form 15015, Rachel Minner, Harrington (Source: Box 104, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

State: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1920 United States Federal Census

Enumeration District: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Sheet Number: \_\_\_\_\_

City, township: \_\_\_\_\_ Call Number/URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Enumeration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Line number	Place of Abode				Name  of each person whose place of abode on January 1, 1920, was in this family	Relation  Relationship of this person to the head of the family.	Tenure.			Personal Description.				Citizenship.			Education.	
	Street, avenue, road, etc.	House number or farm	Dwelling Number	Number of family, in order of visitation			Home owned or rented	If rented, factor mortgaged	Sex	Color or Race	Age at last birthday	Single, married, widowed, or divorced	Year of immigration to the United States	Naturalized or alien	If naturalized, year of naturalization	Attended school any time since Sept. 1, 1919	Unable to read	Unable to write
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

Line number	Nativity and Mother Tongue						Occupation.				
	Place of birth of each person and parents of each person enumerated. If born in United States, give state or territory. If foreign birth, give the place of birth, and, in addition, the mother tongue.						Able to speak English	Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done.	Industry, business, or establishment in which at work.	Employer, salary or wage worker, or working on own account.	No. of farm schedule
	Person		Father		Mother						
	Place of Birth	Mother Tongue	Place of Birth	Mother Tongue	Place of Birth	Mother Tongue	25	26	27	28	29
19	20	21	22	23	24						

Figure 4.2 1920 United States Federal Census Form (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, <http://www.ancestrylibrary.com/trees/charts/census.aspx>)

the other extreme, even with numerous census appearances, if the purchaser's name is very common in a region, it is difficult to conclude which person listed in the census is the Aladdin purchaser. For example, H. H. Cloud made Aladdin Purchase Order 7355.<sup>155</sup> But examining all the censuses from 1910 to 1930, we find two Hiram Clouds and a Harlan Cloud, all living within proximity of the neighborhood of the railroad delivery station listed on the Aladdin form.<sup>156</sup> In such a case, it may be impossible to be definitive about which individual is the purchaser without finding another source of data to confirm the identity.

### **Analysis of Motivation**

The data from the order forms and census records can be analyzed to reveal aspects of the purchases and purchasers not readily apparent when viewed in isolation, including patterns that speak to the motivation for buying an Aladdin building.<sup>157</sup> The combined analysis for Aladdin purchases in Delaware suggests that the individual purchasers could be organized into three main categories descriptive of their possible motivations for purchasing an Aladdin building. The first type of

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<sup>155</sup> Aladdin order 7355, H. H. Cloud, *ACR*, *CHL*.

<sup>156</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Representative District 6, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_146; Page: 12A; Enumeration District: 73; Image: 91, Hiram H. Cloud. *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Bellefonte, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T625\_203; Page: 1B; Enumeration District: 146; Image: 859, Harlan Cloud; Census Place: Marple, Delaware, Pennsylvania; Roll T625\_1562; Page: 4A; Enumeration District: 176; Image: 505, Hiram H. Cloud. *Fifteenth Census*, 1930, Census Place: Lower Makefield, Bucks, Pennsylvania; Roll 2007; Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 35; Image: 966.0, Hiram H. Cloud.

<sup>157</sup> For the following examples of Aladdin orders, refer to Appendix A for associated catalog pages, Appendix B for order and purchaser information, and Appendix C for photographs of extant Aladdin houses in Delaware.

purchaser was an individual buying a building for his or her own personal/family use. This could include owners who intended to either build it themselves or hire a skilled builder to construct it, but in both cases, the building would be for the purchaser to live in or use. The second category includes purchases by employers or companies for employees' use. Some of these are purchased by a company to create a community of worker housing, in which case there is no indication on the order form of the specific resident. In Delaware there are no Aladdin company towns, but there were individual orders made by a company and shipped to an individual as an employee benefit. The third type of purchaser includes individuals and companies motivated by speculative profit, such as real estate companies, builders, or individuals subdividing personal land.

There are forty-eight known Aladdin orders in Delaware from 1914 to 1920. These are from forty-two purchasers, thirty-nine with individual names attached, and three with only a company identified. Of these, thirty-five of the purchasers are identifiable at least once in the U. S. Population Census records from 1900 to 1930 (Table B.2). Not all of the Aladdin purchases have enough supporting information from the order forms and the census to clearly suggest the motivation for the purchase, but for the majority, there is enough information to suggest which of the three types of purchasers they would be. For a few there is enough evidence to confirm the motivation of the purchaser. Evidence suggests that twenty-four, more than half, of the Aladdin purchasers ordered their buildings for personal use. Five of the orders are clearly linked on the order forms as a company purchase for an individual. Eleven, or approximately one-quarter of the purchasers, could be seen as seeking profit through a real estate venture.

To fully understand the presence of Aladdin in Delaware from 1914 to 1920, each one of the purchases would need to be researched in detail. However, since that is beyond the scope of work for this thesis, several examples of each type of motivation are included here to illustrate how basic research using the order forms and U. S. Census data can reveal key characteristics of Aladdin purchasers.

### **Purchase for Personal Use**

George Umflet, a purchaser in Elsmere, Delaware, represents a good example of how straightforward it can be to identify and understand a purchase (Figure 4.3).<sup>158</sup> The order form shows a purchase of a single building in 1919, a Hudson model four-square house, delivered to the Elsmere Junction station. The census data from 1910 and 1920 shows that Umflet moved with his sister from a farm in New Castle County to Locust Avenue in Elsmere during that decade.<sup>159</sup> The census also shows that his occupation changed from being a farmer to being a saw sharpener for a fiber works company. An Aladdin Hudson still stands today on Locust Avenue, confirming that Umflet's 1920 census address matches where a Hudson was built (Figure C.12). Umflet's Aladdin purchase is one of the few in Delaware that includes all the optional features, including electric, heating, and plumbing. His circumstances illustrate how individuals' lives in northern Delaware were changing in the 1910s,

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<sup>158</sup> Aladdin order 14765, George Umflet, ACR, CHL.

<sup>159</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Representative District 7, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_146; Page: 2B; Enumeration District: 77; Image: 208, Geo R Umflet. *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Elsmere, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T625\_204; Page: 5A; Enumeration District: 150; Image: 53, George R Umplet.

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
June 2 6-19	1769.00		400		1769		
June 10 6-19			134.65		1634.35		
June 20 6-19			41.50		1592.85		
July 8 6-19		11.25			1604.10		
Oct. 13 6-19		2.25			1606.35		
			16.25		1590.10		
					1799.40		
					1799.40		

Order No. 14765 Rec'd 6/2/19 Ack. 6/4/19 Date Shipped 7/11/19

Ordered by George R. Umflet Street \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Hockessin County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to George R. Umflet \_\_\_\_\_  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Elsmere Jct. County New Castle State Del.  
Via B. & O. Freight Station \_\_\_\_\_

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_ Style Hudson Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body Cream			
Trim White	Price 1548.50	400.00	
Porch Clng. Blue	Extras 191.15	1341.65	
Porch Floor Lead Color	Freight		
Inside Light Oak Stain and varnish	Total 1739.65	1741.65	2.00 Cr.
Slip # 3.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 4.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 5.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 6.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 7.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 8.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 9.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 10.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 11.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 12.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 13.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 14.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 15.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 16.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 17.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 18.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 19.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 20.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 21.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 22.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 23.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 24.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 25.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 26.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 27.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 28.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 29.13 - 10.25			
Slip # 30.13 - 10.25			

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Siding for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- Electric Fixtures 3E-1978 ✓ 25.65
- Bathroom Outfit 3E-300 ✓ 81.50
- Pipeless Furnace 3F-525 ✓ 84.00
- Rush shipment.

1548.50  
220.90  
1769.40

7/13/19

41.50

**CORRECTED ORDER**

Changes applied  
on building contract  
with your order  
changes applied

Figure 4.3 Aladdin Order Form 14765, George R. Umflet, Elsmere Jct. (Source: Box 103, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

moving from being a tenant farmer to being a industrial worker, and from being a renter to being an owner of a truly modern house.

One example of a challenging purchase to research, that resulted in finding both the house and indications about his motivation for purchasing the house, was that of Frank P. Long, who purchased a Dresden, a small bungalow, in 1915, delivered to Delaware City (Figure 4.4).<sup>160</sup> Records for Frank P. Long can be found in all four of the U. S. Censuses from 1900 to 1930, living in a different location each time.<sup>161</sup> However, none of them show him living in Delaware City.<sup>162</sup> The census shows that he worked for a railroad company, which could be the possible cause of his frequent moves. Since the delivery of his purchase was to a small town, a street survey in 2009 was able to discover a house matching an Aladdin Dresden on Hamilton Street (Figures C.3-C.6). A deed trace of the property back to 1915 revealed that Frank P. Long and his wife Charlotte Long owned the property from 1915 to 1917, and a significant increase in the sales value indicated that a house was built on the property in those years.<sup>163</sup> His Aladdin purchase was in fact made one month

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<sup>160</sup> Aladdin order 5451, Frank P. Long, ACR, CHL.

<sup>161</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census* 1900; Census Place: Odessa, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T623\_157; Page: 4A; Enumeration District: 62. *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 8, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_147; Page: 11A; Enumeration District: 53; Image: 818. *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Havre De Grace, Harford, Maryland; Roll T625\_675; Page: 4A; Enumeration District: 104; Image: 538, Frank P Long. *Fifteenth Census*, 1930; Census Place: Washington, Washington, District of Columbia; Roll 302; Page: 17A; Enumeration District: 336; Image: 146.0, Frank P. Long.

<sup>162</sup> 1900 Odessa, DE; 1910 Wilmington, DE; 1920 Harve de Grace, MD; 1930 Washington, D.C.

<sup>163</sup> NCCRD, Book U, Volume 25, Page 76 (1915); Book G, Volume 27, Page 325 (1917).

**ALADDIN**  
 READY-CUT  
 HOUSES  
 THE MOST ECONOMICAL

DATE	CK.	CHARGES	DATE	CK.	CREDITS	CK.	BALANCE
1/1/16	SR9	793.65	Mar 13	OPB	793.20	✓	45

Order No. 5451 Rec'd 3.13.16 Ack. 3/15/16 Ship From

Ship to Frank P. Long,  
 Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Delaware City,  
 County New Castle,  
 State Del.  
 Via P. R. R.  
Freight Collect  
 Station Open Yes Closed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Shipped 3-22-16  
 Ordered by Frank P. Long,  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Delaware City,  
 State Del.

STYLE Dresden SIZE \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. RECEIVED	BALANCE
Price	785.65		
Extras	8.00		
Freight			
Total	793.65	793.20	
Discount			
Allowance			
Total			

REMARKS

Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Plaster Board \_\_\_\_\_ Lath and Plaster Yes  
 Paint \_\_\_\_\_  
 Body Pearl Gray  
 Outside doors Dark Mahogany and varnish  
 Trim White  
 Porch Floor Pea Green  
 Porch Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sash \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inside Dark Oak stain and varnish

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Siding for outside walls.
2. Sills for pier foundation.
3. Arch 2A-64 between living room and dining room 8.00
4. Ship as soon as possible.

REIMBURSEMENT

DATE	ITEM	CHK	AMOUNT

Figure 4.4 Aladdin Order Form 5451, Frank P. Long, Delaware City (Source: Box 95, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)



before the purchase of the land, indicating a possible desire to construct a home as soon as possible.

The U.S. Census reveals not only information about the owners of Aladdin homes, but also information about their relationship to their neighbors and the potential influence of this relationship on the architectural makeup of the community. For example, the 1910 census shows that Vaclav Krejci and Charles Ottey were neighbors in Claymont, Delaware.<sup>164</sup> They each bought and built the same model Aladdin house, the Dresden, Krejci in 1917 and Ottey in 1918.<sup>165</sup> Krejci owned a farm in 1910 and likely built his house on that land. Ottey, a factory employee, rented a house near the Krejci farm in 1910; by 1920 he owned his own home in Claymont. The physical proximity of the two men and the short time frame in which they purchased the same model of Aladdin home suggests possible connections between these neighbors, and their awareness of and influence on one another about the homes they built.

### **Individual Purchases Related to a Company**

The second type of purchase is that by a company for an employee, usually in the form of company towns. However, Delaware does not have any of these mail-order company towns and instead has some purchases made by companies for individuals. These individual purchases by companies have similar motivations as the development of company towns, mainly to establish a happy and content workforce

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<sup>164</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Representative District 6, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_146; Page: 5B; Enumeration District: 71; Image: 12, Valac Krejci and Charles W. Ottey.

<sup>165</sup> Aladdin order 8419, V. Krejci; order 11412, Chas. W. Ottey, ACR, CHL.

with roots in the community. The DuPont Company ordered an Aladdin Portland #1 model home in 1915 to be delivered to G. P. Weatherlow in Edge Moor (Figure 4.5).<sup>166</sup> The 1910 and 1920 U.S. Censuses show that Guy P. Weatherlow was a draftsman for a powder company.<sup>167</sup> His occupation and the purchase by DuPont suggest that this was a purchase by a company for an employee as a benefit. The DuPont Company made many large purchases of Aladdin buildings, and constructed multiple Aladdin communities in their industrial towns in other states. What is a little unusual about this single purchase in Delaware is the location in Edge Moor. Edge Moor Iron was the major employer of Edge Moor residents and DuPont had little presence there until the mid 1920s, when it bought some of the local industrial facilities.<sup>168</sup>

The 1920 U.S. Census shows that Weatherlow lived on Beeson Avenue, one street away from the home of Weatherlow's mother-in-law.<sup>169</sup> A book of remembrances about the neighborhood talks about the Weatherlows living at 207 Beeson Ave.<sup>170</sup> Due to later modifications, the house at this address barely resembles

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<sup>166</sup> Aladdin 4400, E. I. DuPont de Nemours Powder Company/ G.P. Weatherlow, ACR, CHL.

<sup>167</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 5, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_146; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 32; Image: 1275, Guy P. Weatherlow. *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Representative District 6, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T625\_203; Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 147; Image: 897, Guy P. Weatherlow.

<sup>168</sup> DuPont, "DuPont Edge Moor – About Our Plant," DuPont, [http://www2.dupont.com/Edge\\_Moor/en\\_US/about.html](http://www2.dupont.com/Edge_Moor/en_US/about.html) (accessed February 7, 2010).

<sup>169</sup> NCCRD, Book P, Volume 47, Page 415.

<sup>170</sup> Gertrude F. Dunlap, *Fox Point Remembered: Early Development in New Castle, Delaware* (Wilmington, Del.: PLM Consulting, 1990), 40.



**ALADDIN**  
READY-CUT  
HOUSES  
*Sold by the Cripple Creek*

DATE	CR.	CHARGES	DATE	CR.	CREDITS	CR.	BALANCE
May 10	✓	744.40	May 24	013	✓	744.40	

**4400**

Order No. ~~4390~~ Rec'd 5/5/15 Ack. 5/5/15 Ship From \_\_\_\_\_

Ship to G. P. Weatherlow,  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Edge Moor,  
County \_\_\_\_\_  
State Del.  
Via P. R. R.

FREIGHT CHARGES COLLECT

Station Open Yes Closed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Shipped May 10

Ordered by E. I. DuPont de Nemours  
Street Powder Co.,  
Town Wilmington,  
State Del.

STYLE Portland #1 SIZE \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. RECEIVED	BALANCE
Price	839.00		
Extras	31.25		
Freight			
Total	870.25		
Discount 15%	125.85		
Allowance			
Total	744.40		744.40

Pd-5-28-15

REIMBURSEMENT

AMOUNT	CHECK NO.	DATE

REMARKS

B/2 mald 5/10/15

Shingles Red semi-slate Roofing \_\_\_\_\_  
Plaster Board Yes Lath and Plaster \_\_\_\_\_  
Paint \_\_\_\_\_  
Body Cream; gables and porch  
pedestals brown stain.  
Trim White  
Porch Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Porch Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Sash \_\_\_\_\_  
Inside Living room and dining room  
antique oak stain and varnish.  
Kitchen oil and varnish; bed rooms  
white; bath white enamel

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Siding for outside walls; shingles for all gables.
2. Red semi-slate shingles for roof. 31.25
3. 15% off gross price of house.
4. Ship before May 15th.

Order #550-Req. 3398½-ED

**Figure 4.5 Aladdin Order Form 4400, G. P. Weatherlow, Edge Moor** (Source: Box 93, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

an Aladdin Portland #1 (Figures C.1-C.2). If it had not been for the specific address, it is unlikely this house would have been identified during the street survey. An additional feature of this purchase is the presence of four identical houses all in a row very similar in form and style to an Aladdin Portland #1 down the street from 207 Beeson Ave. This suggests there was an architectural dialogue among the neighbors. If the Aladdin house had been built first, it is possible that the other neighbors might have used Weatherlow's construction manual to build their own homes.

Companies also bought Aladdin buildings for their own industrial use. William Sellers began the Edge Moor Iron Company in 1868, a company notable for all of the structural work involved with the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge.<sup>171</sup> The Sovereign brothers modeled the Aladdin Read-Cut system on this type of steel construction. His son, William F. Sellers, who was the president of the Edge Moor Iron Company at the time, purchased an Aladdin Maxwell garage, delivered to Edge Moor in 1919.<sup>172</sup> Shortly after his personal purchase of the Maxwell garage, the Edge Moor Company ordered its own Maxwell garage for the factory.<sup>173</sup> It is notable that a nationally known company as important as Edge Moor Iron would choose to construct Aladdin garages.

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<sup>171</sup> Joseph Wickham Roe, *English and American Tool Builders*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1926), 250.

<sup>172</sup> Aladdin order 15305, William F. Sellers, *ACR, CHL*.

<sup>173</sup> Aladdin order 157701, Edge Moor Iron Company, *ACR, CHL*.

## **Real Estate Profit**

This category of purchasers for real estate profit and investment is fairly diverse. At the time there were many different ways that people were involved in building and real estate development. Some builders were constructing houses one or two at a time, landowners were starting to sub-divide their farms near the new suburban towns, and real estate companies and investors were developing new neighborhoods. In 1913, a newspaper ad in Wilmington confirmed that real estate investors were aware of Aladdin houses and aware of how they could utilize mail order homes as an investment in northern Delaware.<sup>174</sup>

One purchase for profit that presents several challenges is the 1918 Aladdin purchase by the Edanna Land & Improvement Company in Wilmington. First, there was no individual's name associated with the purchase, and thus no way to gain further information through U.S. Census data.<sup>175</sup> Second, it was delivered to a Wilmington train station, reducing the likelihood that it will ever be found through a street survey. Wilmington had multiple train stations and the home could have been built anywhere within the city or along the periphery of the city.

Even with an individual's name connected with a purchase for profit, it can still be difficult to find the associated Aladdin home. A. H. Padberg in New Castle purchased two Aladdin houses, and is an example of someone who probably purchased them to build and then sell (Figures 4.6 and 4.7).<sup>176</sup> The street indicated

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<sup>174</sup> E. B. MacNair, "Have at Hillcrest and Gordon Height 30 Plots of Land." Sunday Morning Star, Wilmington, Del., Sept. 14, 1913: 12.

<sup>175</sup> Aladdin order 12678, Edanna Land & Improvement Company, *ACR*, *CHL*.

<sup>176</sup> Aladdin order 10092, A. H. Padberg; order 10093, A. H. Padberg, *ACR*, *CHL*.

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
July 16	La 63		113.50				
June 30	SPAS	697.30					
July 31	1135		176				
		697.30					
		113.50					

Order No. 10092 Rec'd. 6/30/17 Ack. 7/3/17 Date Shipped 7/24/17

Ordered by A. H. Padberg, Street \_\_\_\_\_  
Town New Castle, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to A. H. Padberg, \_\_\_\_\_  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town New Castle, County New Castle, State Del.  
Via P. E. & W. Freight Prepaid Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster \_\_\_\_\_ Plaster Bd. Yes Style Stanhope #1 Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body Green stain			
Trim White			
Porch Cng. Canary			
Porch Floor Lemont Stone			
Inside White, Mahogany for doors			
Price	697.30		
Extras	14.20	176.00	June 30
Freight	78.00	613.50	
Total	789.50	789.50	
Total			

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Shingles for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- One Aladdin closette 10.00
- Two cellar windows complete for 3'x2' wall opening. 4.20
- Hold until notified.

Total 14.20

CORRECTED  
ORDER

**Figure 4.6 Aladdin Order Form 10092, A. H. Padberg, New Castle** (Source: Box 99, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Sept 30	6.03	495.90					
Long 30	6.03		124				
Order	4.18/16	71	44.10				
Sept 1	6.03		363.80				
Sept 1	6.03		363.80				

Order No. 10093 Rec'd 6/30/17 Ack. 7/3/17 Date Shipped 5/24/18

Ordered by A. H. Padberg Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town New Castle County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to The Aladdin Co.  
 Notify A. H. Padberg  
 Town New Castle County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
 Via Penna Freight Prepaid Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster \_\_\_\_\_ Plaster Bd. Yes Style Thelma Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body <u>Green Stain</u>			
Trim <u>White</u>	Price <u>495.90</u>		
Porch Clng. <u>White</u>	Extras <u>6.00</u>		
Porch Floor <u>Lemont Stone</u>	Freight <u>65.00</u>		
Inside <u>Mahogany doors</u>	Total <u>566.90</u>		
Balance trim, white enamel			
	Allowance <u>79.10</u>	<u>124.00</u>	
	Total <u>487.80</u>		<u>363.80</u>

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Sill for solid foundation. *adj. CR # 2705-11.55*
- Shingles for side walls. *" " # 2507-3.30*
- Omit all subfloor sheathing, roof and side wall sheathing, allow 34.00
- Credit from #10092 to be applied on order 45.10  
Total Allowance 79.10
- Include 8 Gal. Red Shingle Stain, \$6.00

Drawn Thru Newcastle  
Trust Co.  
5/29/18 963.80  
*7/6/18*

**CORRECTED ORDER**

Figure 4.7 Aladdin Order Form 10093, A. H. Padberg, New Castle (Source: Box 99, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

for Padberg's residence in the 1920 census was not a likely street for new construction since it was already filled with brick row homes built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>177</sup> The fact that he purchased two houses from Aladdin and was not a resident of either indicates that he was a builder.

In 1917, George Raudman purchased only one Aladdin house but is still a very likely purchaser for profit due to several pieces of data (Figure 4.8).<sup>178</sup> First, the house was delivered to Elsmere even though Raudman and his wife owned a house in Wilmington in 1910 and 1920.<sup>179</sup> Raudman's occupations illustrate his progression into an occupation as a builder. In 1900 he was a cabinetmaker, in 1910 a carpenter who owned his own shop, and in 1920 a house carpenter. The combination of a delivery location in a different town than his residence and his profession as a house carpenter clearly suggests his Aladdin purchase was a building investment for profit. Since there is no record of Raudman purchasing another Aladdin building from 1917 to 1920, a few additional questions can be raised. Was the purchase of an Aladdin house at the request of a client? Did Raudman not find the Aladdin system helpful in

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<sup>177</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: New Castle, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T625\_204; Page: 14A; Enumeration District: 162; Image: 271, Herman A Padberg.

<sup>178</sup> Aladdin order 10018, George Raudman, *ACR*, CHL.

<sup>179</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census*, 1900; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 8, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T623\_155; Page: 3A; Enumeration District: 32, George W. Raudman. *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 8, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_147; Page: 20B; Enumeration District: 52; Image: 786, George Rodman. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census*, 1920; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 9, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T625\_202; Page: 1B; Enumeration District: 115; Image: 444, George W. Randman.



DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
June 29, 1917	585	788.50					
" 25 1917	648		788.50				

Order No. 10018 Rec'd. 6/25/17 Ack. 6/27/17 Date Shipped 8/1/17

Ordered by George W. Raudman, Street 403 Concord Ave.,  
Town Wilmington, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to George W. Raudman,  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Elsmere Jct. County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
Via \_\_\_\_\_ Freight Collect. Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_

Style Stanhope # 2 Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHANGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body <u>Brown stain</u>	Price <u>788.50</u>	<u>788.50</u>	
Trim <u>White</u>	Extras _____		
Porch Clng. <u>Oil and varnish.</u>	Freight _____		
Porch Floor <u>Olive Drab</u>	Total _____		
Inside <u>Light Oak stain and varnish</u>			
	Total _____		

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Shingles for outside walls.
2. Sill for solid foundation.
3. Rush shipment.

House Order No. 10018 788.50  
Hardware Order No. M-12536 157.50

**Figure 4.8 Aladdin Order Form 10018, George W. Raudman, Elsmere Jct.**  
(Source: Box 99, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

the growth of his business or did the Aladdin purchase simply serve as the project that developed his skills as a house carpenter?

Not all Aladdin purchases for profit were made by men. A. L. B. Taggart purchased two Aladdin houses in 1917 (Figures 4.9 and 4.10).<sup>180</sup> Both were delivered to Claymont and the 1910 census shows the only A. L. B. Taggart near Claymont to be Addie L. B. Taggart, living on a farm with her husband John.<sup>181</sup> Neither of them can be found near Claymont in the 1920 census. The inference that Taggart was subdividing her farm can be based on the purchase of two houses, the Taggarts move out of the area, and a period of active development in Claymont. In this case, as in a number of other Delaware Aladdin purchases, the sale is made to a woman in the household. However, in Addie Taggart's situation, it is unusual that this purchase was not for her own family home but rather likely as an investment.

The case of F. E. Patterson in Greenville appears similar to Taggart's on the surface because he purchased two homes from Aladdin (Figures 4.11 and 4.12).<sup>182</sup> However, the census data suggests another possibility.<sup>183</sup> F. E. Patterson was a high level employee in the textile industry and owned both a house in Wilmington and a

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<sup>180</sup> Aladdin order 8828, A. L. B. Taggart; order 8829, A. L. B. Taggart, *ACR, CHL*.

<sup>181</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Representative District 10, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_146; Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 85; Image: 464, Addie T B Taggart.

<sup>182</sup> Aladdin order 8693, F. E. Patterson; order 8707, F. E. Patterson, *ACR, CHL*.

<sup>183</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census*, 1900; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 7, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T623\_155; Page: 26A; Enumeration District: 28, Francis Patterson. *Thirteenth Census*, 1910; Census Place: Wilmington Ward 7, New Castle, Delaware; Roll T624\_147; Page: 13A; Enumeration District: 48; Image: 595, Frank Patterson.

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Apr 30 1897	836						
	C. 736		836				

Order No. 8828 Rec'd 4/30/17 Ack. 5/1/17 Date Shipped 5/12/17

Ordered by A. L. B. Taggart, Street \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Claymont, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to A. L. B. Taggart, \_\_\_\_\_  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Claymont, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Via P. R. R. Freight Collect. Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_

Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_ Style Herford Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body Cream			
Trim White			
Porch Clng. Oil and varnish.			
Porch Floor Lead			
Inside Kitchen French Gray. All other rooms white. Outside doors Light Oak and varnish.			
Price	836.00	836.00	
Extras			
Freight			
Total			
Total			

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Siding for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- Rush shipment.

**Figure 4.9** Aladdin Order Form 8828, A. L. B. Taggart, Claymont (Source: Box 98, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Apr 30 1917		788.50	✓				
		788.50	✓				

Order No. 8829 Rec'd. 4/30/17 Ack. 5/1/17 Date Shipped 5/8/17  
 Ordered by A. L. B. Taggart, Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Claymont, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
 Ship to A. L. B. Taggart,  
 Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Claymont, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
 Via P. R. R. Freight Collect. Station Open  
 B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_ Style Stanhope #2 Size \_\_\_\_\_  
 Body Centennial Brown  
 Trim White  
 Porch Clng. Oil and varnish.  
 Porch Floor Lament Stone  
 Inside Kitchen French Gray. All other rooms White. Outside doors Light Oak and varnish.

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Price	788.50	788.50	
Extras			
Freight			
Total			
Total			

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Siding for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- Rush shipment.

**Figure 4.10** Aladdin Order Form 8829, A. L. B. Taggart, Claymont (Source: Box 98, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Apr 24 1917	S. P. A.	922.75	922.75				

Order No. 8693 Rec'd 4/19/17 Ack. 4/20/17 Date Shipped 5/1/17  
 Ordered by F. E. Patterson, Street 1300 Rodney St.,  
 Town Wilmington, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
 Ship to F. E. Patterson,  
 Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town Greenville, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
 Via P. & E. Freight Collect Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_ Style Ronlevard Size \_\_\_\_\_

	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body			
Trim	Price <u>898.70</u>		
Porch Clng.	Extras <u>54.15</u>		
Porch Floor	Freight _____		
Inside	Total <u>952.85</u>		
	Allowance <u>30.10</u>		
	Total <u>922.75</u>	<u>922.75</u>	

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Siding for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- Floor plan re-arranged as per sketch. Allowance for omitting partition material, two doors and one window. 30.10
- 1"x1" strips to go between studding (See sketch) 8.75
- Full copper wire screens for all windows. 25.20
- Two copper wire screen doors. 7.60
- Six cellar windows complete for 3'x8'8" wall opening. 13.60
- Total 54.15
- Rush shipment.

Figure 4.11 Aladdin Order Form 8693, F. E. Patterson, Greenville (Source: Box 98, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

DATE	MEMO	CHG.	CREDIT	BALANCE	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS
Apr 27 1910		726.95					
	19 67.05		758.75				
May 9 1910			11.44				
July 3 1910			790.59				

Order No. 8707 Rec'd. 4/19/17 Ack. 4/20/17 Date Shipped 5/5/17

Ordered by F. E. Patterson, Street 1300 Rodney St.,  
Town Wilmington, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.

Ship to F. E. Patterson,  
Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Town Greenville, County \_\_\_\_\_ State Del.  
Via P. & B. Freight Collect. Station Open

B. P. Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Inst. Sent \_\_\_\_\_  
Shingles Yes Roofing \_\_\_\_\_ M. Ord. Given \_\_\_\_\_  
Lath Plaster Yes Plaster Bd. \_\_\_\_\_

	Style <u>Rossland</u> Size _____		
	CHARGES	CR. REC'D.	BALANCE
Body			
Trim	Price <u>687.80</u>		
Porch Clng.	Extras <u>101.55</u>		
Porch Floor	Freight _____		
Inside	Total <u>789.35</u>		
	Allowance <u>30.40</u>		<u>758.95</u>
	Total <u>758.95</u>	<u>758.95</u>	

758.95  
5/8/17

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Shingles for outside walls.
- Sill for solid foundation.
- Floor plan rearranged as per sketch. Allowance for omitting partition material and closettes. 30.40
- 1"x1" strips to go between studding (see sketch) 6.95
- Six cellar windows complete for 3'x2'8" wall opening. 12.60
- Full copper wire screens for all windows. 31.50
- Two copper wire screen doors. 7.60
- Addition #4, reversed. 42.90
- Total 101.55
- Rush shipment.

Figure 4.12 Aladdin Order Form 8707, F. E. Patterson, Greenville (Source: Box 98, ACR, CHL. Photo by author, July 2009.)

farm near Greenville, which bordered the DuPont estate, Winterthur.<sup>184</sup> The 1900 and 1910 U.S. Censuses show that he employed multiple servants. The delivery location of Greenville, which was not being developed for workers or middle income housing in the 1910s, is an unlikely candidate for a development of small bungalows. This suggests Patterson might have been making these Aladdin purchases to add housing to his estate for his employees, probably domestic staff or those working on the farm. Patterson's situation illustrates the need to closely examine aspects of the purchasers' domestic lives to inform the character of the purchases.

### **Analysis of Demographics**

Linking multiple records helps create a more nuanced picture of who chose to purchase Aladdin mail-order buildings and why. This form of combined analysis is useful to understand the specific story, but could become more valuable if conclusions and details of individual stories were combined with other purchases and especially if analysis of particular regions could be compared. Larger trends or characteristics could be revealed if significant samples of purchases were compiled with the information about the purchaser's background. In an examination of the Aladdin house purchaser in Delaware, the factors of nativity, family makeup, and occupation proved to be critical in creating a specific profile.

### **Nativity**

The nativity of Aladdin purchasers in Delaware can be examined through the U.S. Population Census records for the place of birth of purchasers and their parents. Many of the purchasers were from families with long-term roots in the

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<sup>184</sup> NCCRD, Book P, Volume 28, Page 124 (1919).

region, but not all. Of the 35 Aladdin purchasers who were identifiable in 1900 to 1930 census records, approximately 20 percent were immigrants from Europe. By comparison, in 1920 approximately 12.5 percent of the New Castle County population (and 9 percent of Delaware's population) were foreign-born white individuals.<sup>185</sup> In 1920, the highest percentages of nationalities represented among foreign-born residents in Delaware came from Poland, Italy, and Ireland. None of the Aladdin purchasers were from Poland and Italy, and the one Irish Aladdin purchaser was a builder, not the resident of the home purchased.<sup>186</sup> The rest of the foreign-born Aladdin purchasers were from northern European countries, which were nations less represented in the Delaware immigrant population at the time.

Of all the US-born Aladdin purchasers, only one was a second-generation immigrant. The other 27 came from local residents with multiple generations in the Mid-Atlantic: in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey or Maryland. In Delaware, the evidence suggests that Aladdin houses were not being used as a means for upper mobility of second-generation European immigrants. There is not a single case of a second-generation European immigrant moving from an urban rental into an Aladdin single-family home in the suburbs, even though it was true for some first-generation immigrants.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census, 1920*.

<sup>186</sup> Aladdin order 14983, Martin O'Toole, ACR, CHL.

<sup>187</sup> For more information about the immigrant experience in Delaware see Jennifer Cathey's master's thesis, *The Best Sort of Neighborhood Life: Settlement Houses and Progressive Reform in Wilmington, Delaware*, and Carol Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware: Portrait of an Industrial City, 1830-1910*.



### **Family Make-Up**

Between 1900 and 1930, the U.S. Population Census lists the residents of all households by name and their relationships to the head of the household. Following individuals over the course of multiple census years can reveal a great deal about their life story and their family relationships. Focusing just on the 1920 census, the first census after the Delaware Aladdin purchases in this thesis, the purchasers' family characteristics can be examined close to the point in their lives when they decided to purchase the mail-order buildings.

In Delaware, Aladdin purchasers were split almost evenly between families with children and those without. When sorted by motivation – purchasers for profit, for their own residence, and for company related purposes – the purchases retained equal percentages between having children and not having children. The only difference among the categories is found in the number of children in each family. Among purchasers for profit, when they had children, they had only one or two. Of the purchasers for their own residence, six of those families had only one child, but eight families had three or four children. About one-third of all purchasers included in the census had other people living in the household, either extended family or domestic servants. This indicates that there really was a diverse group of families who chose to purchase Aladdin buildings, ranging from those with limited resources and needing to pool family resources by having many members living in one household, and extending to families with enough wealth to employ live-in servants.

Not only those with families bought Aladdin houses; in fact five purchasers were not married. Two of those five were single men who bought houses for profit. The other three purchasers bought in order to build their own residence. Two of those three were single women, again suggesting the need for more detailed

research on the role of gender in the purchase of Aladdin homes. A quick review reveals that of all the Aladdin purchasers in Delaware, six were women. Two of the single women purchasing for their own residence were just mentioned; and two purchases were ordered by a couple for their farms, but it was the woman who filled out the order form and was listed as the purchaser. The woman of one of the couples ordered one of the purchases as a real estate investment.

### **Occupation**

Occupation can be a key indicator for describing the motivation for a purchase, but it is also a key for understanding the diverse profile characteristics of Aladdin purchasers. The Delaware purchasers were diverse economically and represented many levels of status and job positions, from laborer to skilled craftsman to CEO; the businesses in which they were employed were reflective of the leading industries in the state at the time. The occupations found among the purchasers for profit included farmers sub-dividing their land, carpenters, real estate dealers, and individuals with their own income, all of which are consistent with their motivation for purchasing the Aladdin houses. The other purchasers, both for their own residence and company-related, included farmers and those employed in either railroad, powder, iron, paper, or textile industries, all active during the first quarter of the twentieth century in northern Delaware. When the occupation matched the company that bought their house, it reinforced that relationship and motivation for the purchase. For those who bought their houses to live in, their occupations can also reinforce their move to the suburbs from both urban and rural communities.

These three categories are just three examples of how the purchasers' history can be used to create a broader understanding of the purchasers of Aladdin

houses. These people were the driving force for Aladdin's presence in Delaware and the national mail-order house phenomenon. More nuanced aspects of the profile could be answered with further research, such as the relationship between mail-order house purchasers and first time homeowners or what were the characteristics of purchases by gender?

### **Conclusion**

Using the information garnered simply from Aladdin order forms and U.S. Population Census data can provide a clearer picture of the appeal and presence of mail-order houses and larger cultural issues. Much more could be learned if this type of research were expanded to include many other sources of information, such as full deed traces once the property is found, mortgage documents, and tax assessments, all of which could reveal other property owned by a purchaser. Currently the manuscript U. S. Census data is only available for the beginning of the history of the mail-order house industry and the earliest of the mail-order house purchasers. Very soon, the 1940 manuscript census data will be released to the public, which will expand on the understanding of these early purchasers, but which will also provide information about subsequent owners of the houses and mid-twentieth-century Aladdin purchasers.<sup>188</sup>

Research focused on using the individual purchaser's characteristics as a basis for understanding mail-order houses should not be limited just to the Aladdin Company. It is easier to begin this type of research for Aladdin purchasers since many

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<sup>188</sup> Aggregate census data is released soon after the decennial census but the manuscript pages of the Population Schedules are held for 72 years, the average life expectancy, due to privacy concerns.

of the order forms still exist and are accessible in the Clarke Historical Library archives. But many localities across the nation have already identified mail-order houses from other manufacturers using cultural resource surveys and historic research. Once a mail-order house has been identified, deed traces and mortgage documents can reveal who were the earliest owners and residents. Much can be discovered about the history of our communities by using the U.S. Census and other records to learn about the people who built homes and the details of their lives.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

Unknown numbers of mail-order buildings have already disappeared from the American architectural landscape. Of the hundreds of thousands of mail-order buildings that were purchased during the twentieth century, only a small fraction have been identified and fewer still have been preserved through physical and historical documentation. The mail-order house phenomenon is an important element of the history of American domestic life and was a pivotal movement in the development of the modern single-family home in early twentieth-century America. At some point in mid-twentieth century history, the American people allowed the memory of houses arriving by train to fade and blur. The irony present in the study of the mail-order house industry is that now that individuals and communities are engaged and interested in learning about and preserving mail-order houses, those buildings are physically disappearing. The combination of neglect, new construction of houses, shopping malls, and highways, and a general ignorance about the significance of unidentified and unprotected mail-order houses has led to a severe loss in the physical memory of the mail-order house phenomenon.

There is still no clear idea of how many mail-order house companies existed, since the current knowledge of companies is based on the survival and discovery of original catalogues and advertisements. New catalogues are still being discovered, suggesting a more complex and diverse history of the mail-order housing industry than previously thought. The blurred memory of the mail-order housing

industry has left the false impression that all mail-order houses are synonymous with Sears, Roebuck and Company houses. The Aladdin Company deserves further examination and research due to the formative role it played in the development of mail-order housing business philosophies, rhetoric, and architecture. The company's high number of sales and the records of most of those sales are currently preserved, but have yet to be fully explored, in the collections of the Clarke Historical Library.

There is also not yet a clear and comprehensive knowledge about the individual purchasers. This knowledge would add to the understanding of the mail-order house phenomenon and its connection to other trends of the period. Each individual purchase is only a small fraction contributing to larger cultural trends, such as the growth of the middle class and single-family home suburbs, but without the individual purchasers no linkages to these trends would exist. The characteristics of the purchasers provide the needed elements for applying descriptors to these cultural trends. An understanding of the larger cultural trend of the mail-order house phenomenon can be an end goal, but research results are hollow when they are not grounded on the specifics of the lives of individuals that influenced their purchases.

This thesis used the Aladdin sales records at the Clarke Historical Library combined with further research about specific details of the individual purchases as a way to examine the Aladdin buildings in Delaware from 1914 to 1920. The research and analysis of these individual sales reached beyond an identification project and revealed aspects of these sales that created a collective understanding about the role of Aladdin buildings in Delaware.

The mail-order building phenomenon was a part of a very important period in American history and there is more knowledge to be gained with further

research. Mail-order housing was an innovative response to the needs of the times, of people striving for and creating a middle class, and of people whose jobs made it possible for them to build an affordable but modern home. The Aladdin Company was one of the first and most popular of the mail-order house businesses. The Sovereign brothers' Readi-Cut system, innovative advertising, and product design contributed to the growth and success of their company.

Many Aladdin buildings were built in Delaware and have never been documented before. The delivery locations of these sales were concentrated in New Castle County, along train routes in new industrial suburban communities near Wilmington. Delaware, especially in the northern Wilmington region, followed demographic and cultural trends of the early twentieth century, with the growth of industrial manufacturing and the desire for communities with single-family homes for the new developing middle class. From the wide variety of building models offered in Aladdin catalogues, Delaware residents ordered buildings that were modest in style, size, and price. Although modest, these buildings, including bungalows, cottages, four-squares, and garages, were still modern in style and convenience and represented efficient and affordable building technology. The combination of purchasers' data on the order forms and the census records revealed three types of motivations for purchasing mail-order buildings: personal/family use, employee benefit, and speculative profit. Knowing about the purchasers' occupation, family, and ethnicity gives insight into the population profile of mail-order house purchasers. The purchasers' occupations demonstrated that the majority of them were employed in the leading industries of the state. However, they were extremely diverse in occupation status from laborer to company president.

This research begins to describe the story of interconnected relationships between the Aladdin Company, its buildings, the Delaware Aladdin consumers, and their communities. Further research is needed to fill in the remaining gaps. Searches through deed records, mortgage documents, and building permit records for purchasers' names may reveal construction locations for more of the Aladdin buildings in Delaware. Identification of other brands of mail-order buildings in communities would allow for comparison of purchases across companies. The extant mail-order buildings in Delaware should be considered a valuable historic resource. They were not only a part of the development of the early twentieth-century Wilmington suburban communities, but they also influenced the architectural vocabulary used within neighborhoods, towns, states, and the nation.

Researchers in other communities and states should utilize the wealth of information held in the Aladdin Company Corporate Records at the Clarke Historical Library in Michigan. Many of the Aladdin catalogues have already been digitized, but further digitization of their collection, particularly the sales records, would be invaluable for preservationists across the country. Preservation efforts should be considered both on local and statewide levels. Nominations to available historic registers or inclusion as contributing resources for historic districts are both viable preservation options. An extremely beneficial future resource for researchers would be the creation of a state registry for all identified mail-order buildings. The consolidation of information about mail-order buildings would provide researchers an established base of information to use as they explore more detailed research questions. The contributions of Aladdin to the American landscape can be rediscovered and preserved before they are lost.



## Appendix A

### ALADDIN CATALOG PAGES ILLUSTRATING DELAWARE PURCHASES

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<sup>189</sup> All images except where noted are from the Clarke Historical Library, *Aladdin Company Records, 1907-1989*, [http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource\\_tab/aladdin/annual\\_sales\\_catalogs/aladdin\\_catalogs.html](http://clarke.cmich.edu/resource_tab/aladdin/annual_sales_catalogs/aladdin_catalogs.html) (accessed July 7, 2009).

# ALADDIN Readi-cut Barns

**T**HE word Aladdin means as much to barns as it does to homes. Aladdin barns are built for strength and durability. The quality of the material is far superior to that found in the average barn.

Each Aladdin Barn is very strongly constructed, in fact, stronger than it is usual to build barns of the same size erected by usual methods. The timber in every barn is heavier and stronger than it is really necessary to use in a building of the same size. We appreciate the great weight and strains that are put in farm barns at times, and each barn is constructed so as to stand a greater weight than it will ever be called upon to hold.

They are not only constructed of very heavy timber, but are braced and counter-braced wherever this bracing will increase the strength of the building.

Each barn has material cut to fit ready to nail in place the same as all our other regular dwellings and houses. In fact, they are better finished than it is usual to build ordinary barns throughout the country. All of the material is dressed so that the inside of each building presents a finished appearance and is not merely of rough, unfinished lumber.

We furnish all the different kinds and sizes of nails required in the erection of the building; heavy barn door tracks and rollers for the large doors to slide upon; hinges and locks for the smaller doors. The windows have the glass already in them.

We will furnish any colors of paint that you may desire for the outside of the buildings, two coats; shingles or roofing, whichever you prefer, for the roof of the building.

We have quoted the prices on the barns so that you can purchase either the barn itself, or so that you can leave out the first and second floors and the stalls, or so that you can purchase the building with the first floor added, or with the second floor added, or with both floors added. We have also quoted the price separate on the stalls, so that you can add any number of stalls you desire with the building. For example, a gambrel roof barn, size 20x40 ft., without first or second floors or mangers would cost \$463.00. First floor furnished with the barn would cost \$90.33 extra, or \$553.33 for barn and first floor complete. For a gambrel barn, size 20x40 ft., with first and adding second floors and mangers, for two stalls the cost would be \$599.48 complete.

Each barn as we furnish it, and as listed in the cost on the barns, will include a second floor at one end above the stalls. This second floor will be twelve feet long and the width of the end of the barn, and is always included in the first cost of the barn.

Many people prefer to purchase the barn without the first floor, which is really unnecessary in many cases, where hay and grain are intended to be stored into mows. Others prefer to put in either a part or the entire first floor in cement, so that we have quoted the price of the barn exclusive of both floors and stalls, and have listed separate the cost of each. This will enable you to purchase the barn itself and add either the first or second floor or any number of stalls desired.

The Aladdin Special Barn was built to meet the great demand for a barn large enough to shelter two or three horses with wagons, etc. Plenty of room on the first floor for three stalls, with a large mow on second floor for hay, straw and grain. At the price quoted, the second floor is included, but the first floor is omitted, as many owners prefer a cement or concrete first floor on account of the convenience in cleaning stalls, etc.

**SPECIFICATIONS:** Size, 16x24 ft. Price, \$319.00. Cash discount, 5%. Net price, \$303.05. See Terms on page 2.

Sills, 6x6 in. Studding, 2x4 in. Rafters, 2x4 in. Second floor joists, 2x8 in. Siding, 7/8 in., matched; roof sheathing, 1 in., dressed. Flooring, second floor, 1-in. lumber. Shingles or roofing for roof. Large door, 8 ft. 4 in. x 9 ft. 6 in. Small door, 3 ft. 6 in. x 7 ft. 2 in. Windows, sliding sash, glass in place. Paints, any colors, two coats, outside. All hardware, nails, barn-door tracks, hinges. At the price quoted above, second floor is included. Add \$39.42 to the above price for first floor of 2-in. planks, including first floor joists of 2x8 in.


## ALADDIN SPECIAL Barn



Geo prices on inside of front cover.



**Figure A.1** Aladdin Barn. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 114.* (Refer to order 12518.)



**The Boulevard**      **\$898.70**      Price, \$946.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$898.70

**T**HE Boulevard is the wonder home to many prospective home-builders. The design in both exterior appearance and interior convenience is the result of deep thought in planning. Stop and think of it—three large bedrooms, large living room and dining room with good sized kitchen, bath and closets—and all on one floor! Of course, this number of rooms may be included in other one-story designs, but look again at the sizes of the rooms!

In point of design, The Boulevard is one of the most attractive. Designed on conservative lines, this home is marked by a number of pleasant architectural features. The dormer in the front roof gives light and air to attic and adds much to its beauty.


The porch is formed under the main roof—its wide dimensions provide comfort and add much to the general effect of this home.

A wide belt divides the siding on the first story and shingles in gable—the treatment used here is excellent, white belt, brown stained shingles and sidewalls.

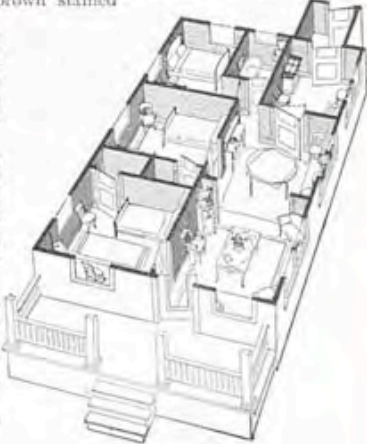
The interior will appeal to every housewife who has a desire to make the home beautiful and comfortable.

The arrangement of rooms and size of each permit excellent decoration and the utmost in convenience. See Interior Illustrations page 75.

Study General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Complete detail specifications will be sent you upon request. See Terms on page 2.

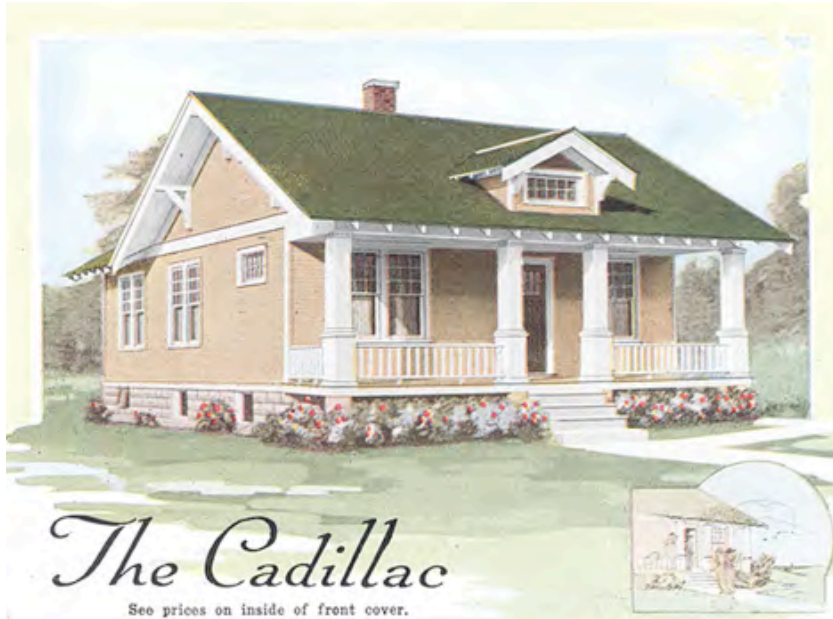


Floor Plan  
The Boulevard



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**Figure A.2** The Boulevard. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 55.* (Refer to orders 8693, 10111.)



# The Cadillac

See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HIS bungalow is worthy of consideration because it was planned by one of our superintendents for a home of his own. It was made exactly as he planned it to suit his experienced sense, fitness and ideas. Thus an individuality was brought about that attracts the attention of every passer-by.

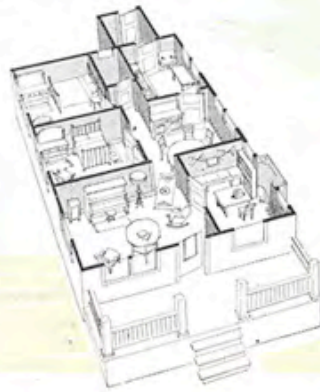
It is a home that is pleasant and has an abundance of space within for comfortable living and would give to anyone that possessed it a great pride of ownership.

The exterior is artistic and pleasing to the eye. The broad sweep of the roof carried out over the porch adorned with a dormer, breaking the wide expanse, is perfect in proportion and balance. The square divided lights in the upper sash of the windows lend an added charm to the exterior.

The main floor comprises a large living room entered directly from the porch. Off of this is a spacious dining room and den. Attractive French glass doors enable the owner to combine these rooms in one. The fireplace shown in the floor plan could be built in the opposite end of the living room, if desired, or could be omitted entirely.

Two bedrooms furnished with closettes as well as bath and kitchen finish the floor plan. Directly at the rear of the kitchen is a very convenient and modern grade cellar entrance addition, giving access to the kitchen and cellar.

For price of the Cadillac refer to inside front cover. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Detail specifications for The Cadillac will be sent upon request. See Terms on page 2.



Floor Plan  
The Cadillac

**Figure A.3** The Cadillac. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 96.* (Refer to order 15872.)



### The Canton—4 Rooms

**T**HE CANTON is a trim little house of four rooms. It is built as sturdy and warm and strong as the most rigid climate will demand. The one greatest feature is the size, it being large enough for the average family and easily erected. The four rooms, living room, bedroom, dining room and kitchen are well proportioned and make a cozy and pleasant home. There can be no doubt as to the popularity of the Canton. During the past two years' business, the large number of sales made has proven this type to be in big demand. Ninety per cent of our customers erect their Canton Homes themselves with no previous building experience. Two men can erect the Canton in five days. For prices see special price sheet enclosed with this catalog.

**SPECIFICATIONS—THE CANTON**  
Size 16x20 Ft.

Sill, 4x6 in.  
Joists, 2x6 in.  
Studding and rafters, 2x4 in.  
Flooring, clear and knotless.  
Roof, inch lumber overlaid with prepared roofing or shingles.  
Patent Plaster Board (taking place of lath and plaster).  
Sheathing, overlaid with bevel siding or shingles.  
Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.  
Front door, upper half glass.  
Window sash, size 26x24 in., glass measurement.  
Baseboard, casings and inside finish clear and knotless Oregon Fir.  
Hardware, glass, locks, hinges, nails and stain inside and outside.  
Complete instructions and illustrations for erection.




Two streets of Bristol Brass Company's Aladdin Village.

6

**Figure A.4** The Canton. Aladdin Company. *Low Cost Homes Designed Especially for Industrial Purposes, 1917, 6.* (Refer to order E-17487.)

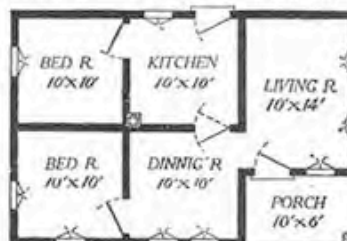


## The Castle

\$518.70

Price, \$546.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$518.70

**W**HERE have you seen a home that was better adapted to a corner lot or a lot between streets than the Castle? Notice the living room and dining room. Both are located at the front of the house, and both are separated from the kitchen, with no inconvenience to the housewife. But now, notice the price. Have you ever heard of a like bargain? It is hard to realize that this home can be purchased at this low figure.



Floor Plan—The Castle

Think of it, complete material at a price that would not ordinarily buy a three-room house at the local lumber dealers. In addition to your getting this home at one-half the usual cost, you get a better home.

The Aladdin Read-Cut System of Home Building is better than the old saw-measure-fit-on-the-ground system because it accomplishes the work *better, quicker, and cheaper*. Every piece of material in the house—siding, flooring, studding, joists, rafters, etc., is cut-to-fit in our mills by the finest machines. The result is accuracy of joints, and your house is stronger, warmer and tighter than if built by ordinary cut-to-fit methods. Waste in material cannot occur. Every inch of lumber you pay for is actually in and a part of your house. You know the lumber that's wasted costs just as much as the lumber that's used. The average house built by the old way wastes 18 per cent of the lumber—\$18 out of every \$100 of your money is wasted—burned up for kindling wood.



The Castle is shown here setting the narrow way on the lot. It can, of course, be placed the wide way to the street without changing the plans. In this case the steps would be placed on the other side of the porch.


Let us tell you more about this home. Write us today and we will send you complete detail descriptions and specifications.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

**Figure A.5** The Castle. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 40.* (Refer to order 8779.)



### THE CHARLESTON


**T**HERE are many good points in The Charleston, a modern square-type design. The first noticeable feature is the deep bay windows in front, both stories, also on one side. These give free sight in all directions and ample light. The interior arrangement is one for convenience. Front entrance is gained through a large reception hall with open stairway and arched entrance to large living room. This feature has proven popular, as it can be used for one room and still retain the convenience of two.

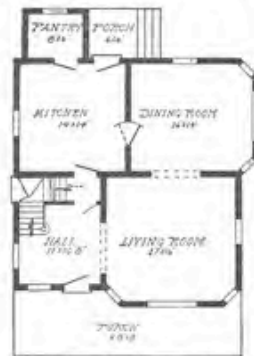
The kitchen has proven attractive to busy housewives. A rear entrance leads to the back porch, while the grade entrance at the side leads to the outdoors and basement, saving many steps.

Four large bed rooms and bath are arranged on the second floor—plenty of light in all. All exterior walls of siding. The Charleston is a good, substantial, roomy home.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

Size, 28 x 30 ft. Price, \$1,350. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$1,282.50. See Terms on Page 2. This floor plan can be reversed without extra charge.

All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine. Height of ceilings, 9 ft. first floor; 8 ft. second floor. Sill, 6 x 8 in. Rafters and ceiling joists 2 x 4 in. Studding, 2 x 4 in. Joists, 2 x 8 in. down and 2 x 8 in. up stairs. Joists, ceiling joist and studding placed every 16 in. Sheathing lumber, 1 in. Side walls, siding, or shingles. Flooring, clear and knotless. Sub-floor. Building paper. Roof, 1-in. lumber, overlaid with shingles. Lath and plaster or plaster board. Base board, stairs, and all interior finish clear and knotless Oregon Fir. Windows, two sliding sash, double-strength glass. Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; double-action door; front door, 3 ft. x 7 ft., three-quarter length glass; grade cellar entrance. Front and rear steps. All hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, stain or paints, two coats outside; oil, stains, varnishes, inside. Complete instructions and illustrations for erecting.



First Floor Plan, The Charleston



Second Floor Plan, The Charleston

Aladdin Houses Help Make Happy Homes

ALADDIN *Read carefully pages 2-10, 101, and 127 of this catalog* READY-CUT

Figure A.6 The Charleston. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day"*: Catalog no. 27, 1915, 48. (Refer to order 4587.)

## The Chester

See prices on inside of front cover.

**B**ROWN shingles trimmed with white distinguish this little home from the ordinary looking cottages found in most communities. The Chester is a trim, neat, compact and pretty bungalow. Its five rooms are nicely arranged, its porch roomy and every room is well lighted. Note the spacious, airy living room that stretches the full width of the house and gives a view in both directions as well as in front. Arch separates dining room while two bedrooms and kitchen complete the home. You are privileged to choose any colors of paint and stain for shingles and trimming for the exterior, and you can have the most modern ideas worked out in your interior decorations with the wide variety of stains, varnishes and paints illustrated on our color cards. Most owners of the Chester write us about the pleasure they derived from erecting and completing it themselves. You can do this easily. With every Aladdin House we send complete instructions and illustrations for erecting. These instructions are so carefully written that anyone not a carpenter could easily understand them. It tells you how to start the work, kinds of material to use and in most cases gives illustrations of different stages of the erection. This information is sent to you in book form—over 100 pages—and includes information on every part of the erection from the digging of foundation to the time it is ready for occupancy.

For Prices see inside front cover. See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

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**Figure A.7** The Chester. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 94.* (Refer to order 15201.)





**ALLADIN FOUR-ROOM SUMMER COTTAGE—THE DRAYTON.**

**T**HIS SIMPLE four-room cottage has found favor in many localities, on the seashore, in the woods and on many rivers throughout the entire country. It may be used as one bed room, one sitting room, a dining room and kitchen, or three bed rooms and combined dining room and kitchen. It is remarkably low priced.

**SPECIFICATIONS THE DRAYTON.**

Size 16 x 26 ft. Price \$262.00. Cash Discount 5%. Net Price \$248.90. See Terms.

Three sills run lengthwise, one on each side and one through the center, and two sills at the ends.

Studding and rafters, 2 x 4 in.

Flooring, 1-inch matched.

Roof, 1-inch lumber, overlaid with best prepared roofing. Siding, 7/8 in.

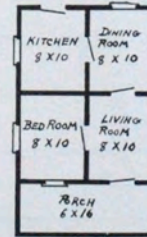
Windows, size 30 x 66 in., two sliding sash, glass double strength. Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, upper half glass.

Porch columns, 5 inches.

Partitions of matched ceiling.

All hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails and paint for two coats outside.

All lumber selected Yellow Pine and Huron Pine.



Floor Plan, The Drayton  
Size, 16 x 26



Floor Plan—Crampton  
Size, 16 x 26

**CRAMPTON SUMMER COTTAGE—THREE ROOMS.**

Crampton gives a large 10 x 16 living room and a bed room 8 x 10 ft., and kitchen 8 x 10 ft. The only difference in the two styles is that one partition is left out.

**CRAMPTON—SUMMER COTTAGE.**

Price \$258.00. Cash Discount 5%. Net Price \$245.10. See Terms.

Page Two

**Figure A.8** The Crampton. Aladdin Company. *Aladdin: Summer Cottages, Garages, Pergolas, Sleeping Porches, Sun Rooms, Arbors, Trellises, (1915?), 2.* (Refer to order 2885.)

INTERIOR VIEW - THE DRESDEN - JUST AS YOU STEP IN THE FRONT DOOR



DINING ROOM, THE DRESDEN



LIVING ROOM, THE DRESDEN



**The Dresden**      **\$817.00**      Price, \$860.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$817.00

**T**HE DRESDEN will appeal to you as being an ideal home. The picture, which was taken on a midsummer's day, shows a number of features that are not found in the average home. Notice the porch—the shelter and relief it provides from the hot summer sun. Every inch of the one hundred and twenty square feet of floor space on this porch seems to hold a charm for the comfort seeker. And as much can be said of the inside of the home. Notice the picture, showing windows raised. It is possible to practically open up the home on four sides giving the utmost in ventilation, making all rooms light and airy, cool and pleasant.

Before reading further, look over the floor plan carefully. What do you think of it? Isn't it just right for convenience—doesn't it appeal to your ideas of "home?" Notice the long stretch—practically twenty-four feet—thru living room and dining room. Now inspect the interior photographs of the Dresden shown on this page.


The three views shown give you an idea of the attractiveness of this exceptional home. Can you wonder why hundreds of builders over the country have selected it for their home?



**Figure A.9** The Dresden. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 28. (Refer to 1915 order 5451 and 1917 order 8419.)



**Figure A.10** The Dresden. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 29.* (Refer to 1915 order 5451 and 1917 order 8419.)





## The Dresden

See prices on inside of front cover.

**T**HE DRESDEN will appeal to you as being an ideal home. The picture, which was taken on a midsummer's day, shows a number of features that are not found in the average home. Notice the porch—the shelter and relief it provides from the hot summer sun. Every inch of the one hundred and twenty square feet of floor space on this porch seems to hold a charm for the comfort seeker. And as much can be said of the inside of the home. Notice the picture, showing windows raised. It is possible to practically open up the home on four sides giving the utmost in ventilation, making all rooms light and airy, cool and pleasant.

Before reading further, look over the floor plan carefully. What do you think of it? Isn't it just right for convenience—doesn't it appeal to your ideas of "home?" Notice the long stretch—practically twenty-four feet—thru living room and dining room. The daylight rooms are arranged on one side of the home and possess every desired feature—plenty of light and air, spaciousness and ease in accessibility; adapted to any arrangement or setting of furniture. Plenty of space in the bed rooms with good closets in each, makes a home that will give you great satisfaction and much convenience. Your friends will agree with your judgment in selecting this home of homes—the Dresden. Turn to page 75 and notice the interesting views of the interior. For price of the Dresden refer to price list on inside of front cover. See General Specifications, pages 12 and 13. Detail specifications for the Dresden will be sent on request. See Terms on page 2.

Floor Plan  
The Dresden

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**Figure A.11** The Dresden. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 95.* (Refer to 1918 orders 11396, 11412 and 1919 order 16581.)

# 5 Room Cottage \$298 Home Complete



## THE EMERALD \$298 Net

**T**HE Emerald is fresh from Aladdin's designing room—a charming home. We christened it the "Emerald" because it has so much value compressed into a relatively small space. It is certainly a jewel of the first water in design, appearance, and in convenience.

Shingled walls, which may be left to weather or may be stained any shade you desire, from the emerald green of the forest to the deep golden browns of autumn foliage. Our picture shows the sash and eaves touched with white—a splendid contrast. Roughly hewn brackets support the projecting eaves and the hooded entrance. Note the casement sash set in a mullion frame—distinctive. The red brick chimney enhances the general effect.

The interior affords five rooms conveniently arranged. The living room stretches across the front of the house and opens full width into the dining room. Two bed rooms and kitchen complete a little home that will delight its owner and friends. And \$298 pays for it. Can you imagine greater value—a cosy, snug little home for less than \$300. Of course, this price does not include the chimney, nor the Colonial seat at the front. This seat may be had for \$9.60. The material for the chimney is always procured locally. Can't you imagine this little cottage nestling 'neath a spreading oak, flower bordered and inviting—*your home?*

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.



Beautiful clear interior finish, in fact the same grades of material are furnished for the Emerald as for our large and more expensive homes. Send for detail specifications. 24 hour shipment.

**Figure A.12** The Emerald. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 28, 1916, 117.* (Refer to 1917 orders 8234 and 10014.)



### The Roland

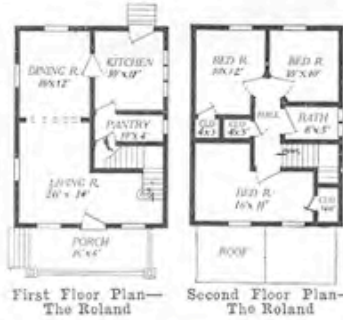
**\$797.05**

Price, \$830.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$797.05

**A** HOUSE with good lines outside and well arranged inside. Notice style of porch roof. This type hails from Kansas City. The gable placed broadside gives it an arch effect. First story in siding, second story shingles, or all siding, or all shingles can be furnished. One bed room across the front of second floor with two corner bed rooms at rear—bath room just off the hall between them. Living room, dining room and kitchen with pantry on first floor. The Roland is a great favorite, especially in cities where lots are often only 25 to 30 feet wide.

A very pretty effect is secured by painting the siding a gray, staining shingles a brown or green and trimming the entire house in white. Remember we furnish paint for two coats exterior and all interior trim. If you are looking for a six-room house with bath and pantry we are certain you will be pleased with the Roland.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.



First Floor Plan—The Roland  
Second Floor Plan—The Roland



### The Finley

**\$698.25**

Price, \$735.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$698.25

**W**HILE the Finley is popular with the owner of any sized lot, yet it finds special favor in cities where lots are sometimes as narrow as 30, or even 25 feet. The Finley can be built very nicely on a 25-foot lot and still leave ample space for a walk on either side.

In the Finley the architect has followed throughout plain, straight lines, yet when painted French gray or leather brown and trimmed in white, the owner of the Finley is invariably delighted.

A large, pleasant front porch, six rooms, bath and clothes closet are found in this remarkably low priced house. The ever popular plan is followed of a large living room across the entire front with wide arch-way leading to dining room. By a double-action door one enters the kitchen direct from the dining room. An attractive semi-open stairs leads from living room to second floor where there are to be found three sleeping rooms, bath and clothes closet. Those wanting a six-room, two-story plain house are invariably pleased with the Finley. See Terms, page 2 and General Specifications, pages 12 and 13.



First Floor Plan—The Finley  
Second Floor Plan—The Finley

**Figure A.13 The Finley. Aladdin Company, Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 28, 1916, 37. (Refer to order 7355.)**

## The Florence

See prices on inside of front cover.

**P**RIDE of ownership! The very attitude of every member of the family in this picture denotes pleasure and satisfaction with their home: even to the extent of painting a small, neat name, that all who pass may know. The Florence is quite extraordinary in the almost universal appeal it has on observers. It is as clean in outline as a Greek temple and surely as pleasant to look upon as any home could be. To the lover of simplicity the Florence has a strong attraction, its well balanced and commodious porch, finely proportioned roof and dormer window, wide front windows and shingled gables all being in perfect harmony. And the material from which the whole is moulded is all as perfect as can be taken out of the forest. The owner has no lingering memories of paint covered defects to spoil his pride of ownership. The siding, the trim, the shingles, and the porch work are entirely free from knots or other defects.

The interior will appeal to the housewife. It rather surprises you to learn that there are three fine bedrooms, giving a large family ample accommodations. Living room is centrally located, which is much desired by many families. The bathroom is well placed, while the kitchen is made more roomy by a light pantry. Well placed cellar stairs give access to the basement from the kitchen. Beautiful floors and woodwork distinguish all Aladdin houses and of course give the finished effect to the Florence as to all our other designs. Refer to inside of front cover for prices. See Terms on page 2, and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

Floor Plan  
The  
Florence

69

**Figure A.14 The Florence. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 30, 1918, 69. (Refer to order 13484.)**



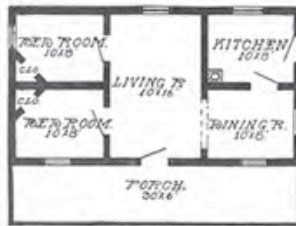
**THE GRETNA**

**T**HE Gretna has been the most popular of all our designs — the demand for it is constant. This is so because of its particularly attractive appearance and its general convenience. It is particularly desirable for the country, where ground space is not so valuable in frontage, for it is thirty feet long. Its long porch, attractive glazed front door, large central living room, two bed rooms, both placed on one side of house, and dining room and kitchen on the other, make it one of the most conveniently arranged homes imaginable. It is exceptionally well designed for strength and warmth, and when erected will last as long as any wooden structure ever built. As in all other houses, every piece of lumber in entire house is dressed on four sides, paneled doors are supplied for all rooms, flooring all matched, porch roof supported by handsome turned columns. You may have your option of either floor plan shown below at same price.

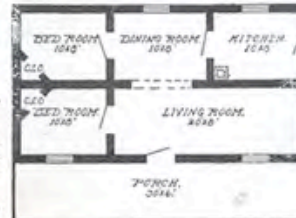
**SPECIFICATIONS**

Size, 22 x 30 ft. Price, \$421. Cash Discount, 5%.  
Net Price, \$399.95. See Terms.

All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine.  
Height of ceiling, 8 ft. All ceilings square, not hipped.  
Joists, 2 x 6 in. Sill, 4 x 6 in.  
Studding, ratters, and ceiling joists, 2 x 4 in.  
Joists, studding and ceiling joists placed every 16 in.  
Sheathing lumber. Flooring, 1-inch matched, 3 inches wide.  
Bevel siding.



Floor Plan, The Gretna. 22 x 30



Roof, 1-inch lumber, overlaid with best prepared roofing or shingles.  
Patent plaster board or lath and plaster.  
Base board and all interior trim and finish clear Yellow Pine.  
Windows, 30 x 28 in., two sliding sash, glass double strength.  
Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, upper half glass.  
Porch columns, 6 inches, with railing. Front and rear steps.  
Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, and paint for two coats inside and out.

*Josh Billings said: "There's no use arguing agin a success"— which exactly applies to Aladdin houses — nine years of success.*

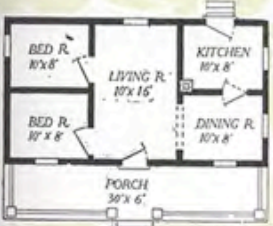
**Figure A.15** The Gretna. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day"*: Catalog no. 25, 1914, 13. (Refer to 1914 order 3079 and 1915 order 3814.)



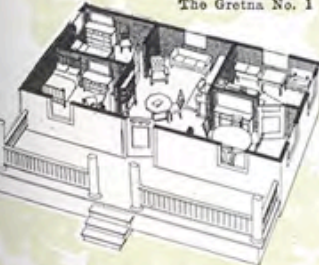
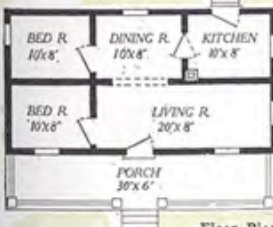
# The Gretna

See prices on inside of front cover.

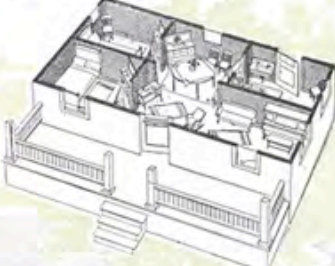
**H**ERE is a complete five-room dwelling with all the beauty of simplicity of design. It has appealed so strongly to home builders and has met their needs so satisfactorily that you will find Gretnas scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land. It has been and is one of our very best sellers. The demand for it is constant. It is particularly desirable where ground space is not too expensive, as its width of thirty feet really requires a lot of forty feet or wider. Its long porch and sash door give charm to the exterior, while the large living room, bedrooms, dining room and kitchen furnish as convenient and desirable an interior arrangement as can be had in a home costing much more money. Throughout you have the same excellent construction that is found in every Aladdin house, yet the lines of construction are so simple that scores of Gretna owners have built their entire house without any assistance from carpenters. The Gretna is distinctly a house for the home-loving man of moderate means, because without sacrificing attractiveness, convenience, or essentials, the cost has been brought within the reach of all. Either floor plan shown will be supplied at the same price. For prices of the Gretna refer to inside front cover. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13 and Terms on page 2.





Floor Plan  
The Gretna No. 1

Floor Plan  
The Gretna No. 2



65

**Figure A.16** The Gretna #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 31, 1919, 65. (Refer to order 15015.)

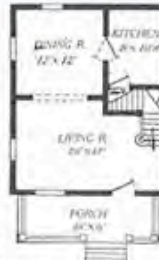


## The Herford

**\$836.00**

Price, \$880.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$836.00

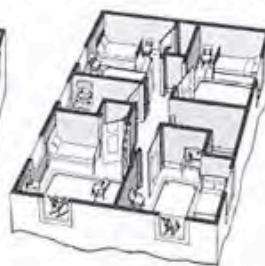
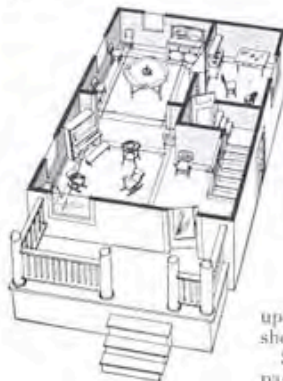
**T**HE Herford is an achievement in building a two-story, four-bedroom house at a price less than nine hundred dollars, yet the convenience and attractive appearance of this design is not impaired in the least. A large living room across the entire front, large square dining room and kitchen make an exceptionally convenient and roomy first floor plan. The second floor has four bedrooms and bath, with clothes closets. The large porch across the front and the grade cellar entrance, are features of this design seldom found in a house at this price. Handsome front door with three-quarter length glass and wide window front the house. You couldn't possibly better the design and arrangement of the Herford, try as you might and it would be utterly impossible to find better lumber than is furnished, for it doesn't grow in any forest.



First Floor Plan  
The Herford



Second Floor Plan  
The Herford



The carefully built semi-open stairway with circle first step, newel post and beautifully grained Fir lumber add a pleasing tone to the interior woodwork. All woodwork is very carefully sanded and ready to receive the stains and varnish. The Herford would show up beautifully if painted like the Charleston, which is shown in colors on another page.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

**Figure A.17** The Herford. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 34.* (Refer to order 8828.)

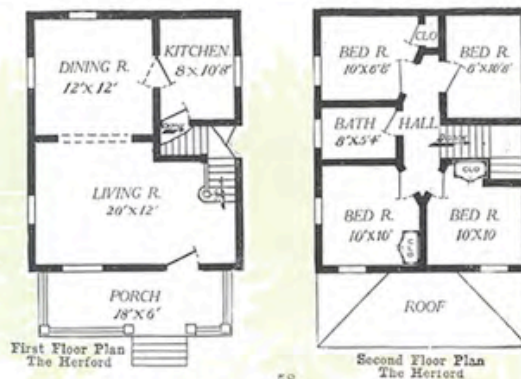


## The Herford

See prices on inside of front cover.

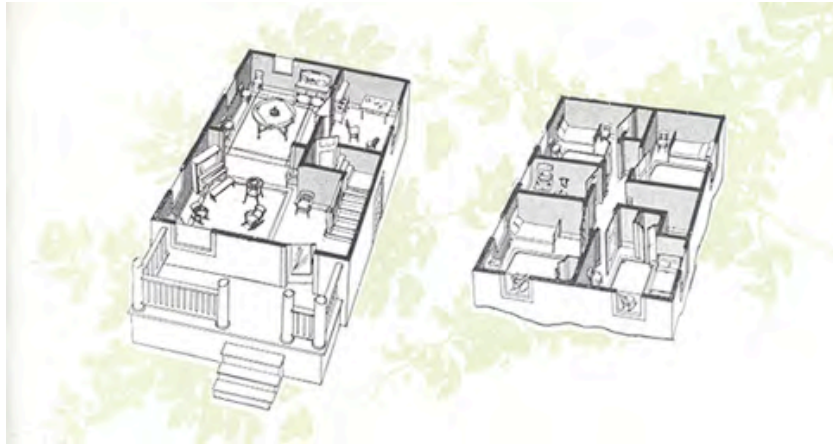
**T**HE Herford is an achievement in building a two-story, four bedroom house at a price less than fifteen hundred dollars, yet the convenience and attractive appearance of this design is not impaired in the least. It is of the ever popular square type which gives an air of size and massiveness. Although the Herford is designed along conservative lines, it is not commonplace or plain. The hip roof and broad belt dividing first and second stories are always favorable touches that are in keeping with the design. The interior of the Herford will surprise you—the fact that it is a larger home than you expect could be possible at the price, is impressed upon you when you note the number and size of rooms.

A large living room across the entire front, large square dining room and kitchen make an exceptionally convenient and roomy first floor plan. The second floor has



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**Figure A.18** The Herford. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 58.* (Refer to 1918 order 12678 and 1919 order 15962.)



four bedrooms and bath, with clothes closets. The large porch across the front and the grade cellar entrance, are features of this design seldom found in a house at this price. Handsome front door with three-quarter length glass and wide window front the house. You couldn't possibly better the design and arrangement of the Herford, try as you might, and it would be utterly impossible to find better lumber than is furnished, for it doesn't grow in any forest.

The carefully built semi-open stairway with circle first step, newel post and beautifully grained Fir lumber add a pleasing tone to the interior woodwork. All woodwork is very carefully sanded and ready to receive the stains and varnish.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

For price refer to inside of front cover.



59

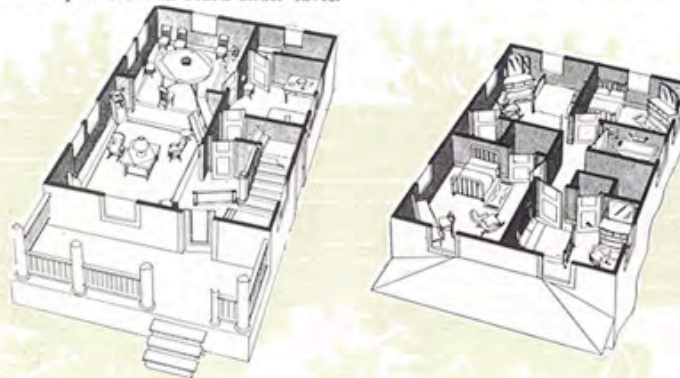
**Figure A.19** The Herford. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 59.* (Refer to 1918 order 12678 and 1919 order 15962.)



## The Hudson

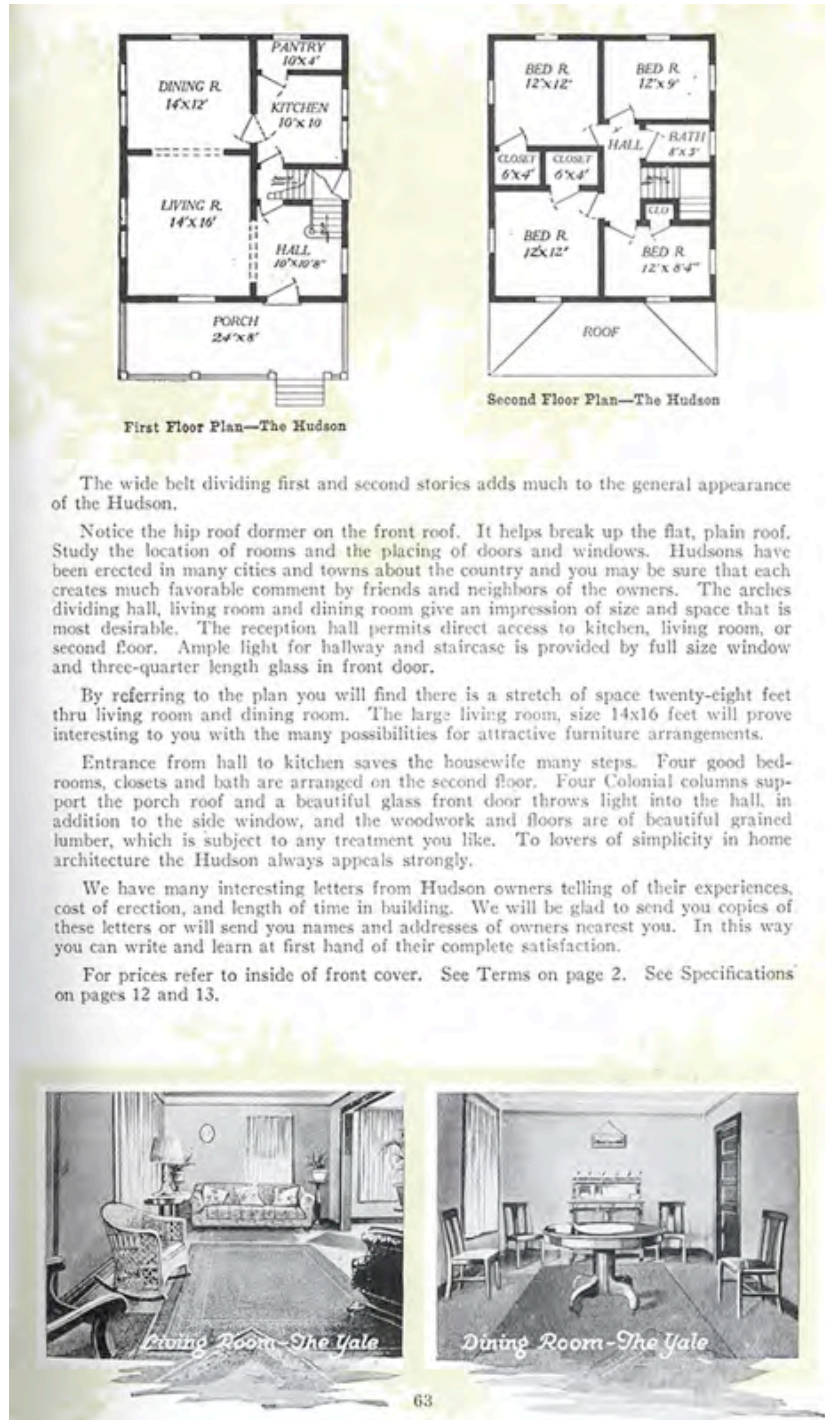
See prices on inside of front cover.

**C**AN you imagine a better utilization of space than is obtained in the plan of the Hudson? The constant thought of Aladdin designers is toward giving a maximum of convenience and comfort for the lowest possible cost. It is doubtful if this result has been exceeded by any other Aladdin house. The exterior will please you, we are sure, as this home has a greater number of admirers. The design is practical and conservative with no sign of over-trimming being evident. Simple lines in the porch construction, heavy overhead boxing, and roof are in perfect harmony with the balance of the home. The windows of both first and second story are treated somewhat differently from the average. On the first floor the windows are capped by the wide belt dividing first and second floor. The windows on the second floor line up to the trim board under eaves.



62

**Figure A.20** The Hudson. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*: *Catalog no. 31, 1919, 62.* (Refer to order 14765.)



**Figure A.21** The Hudson. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 63.* (Refer to order 14765.)



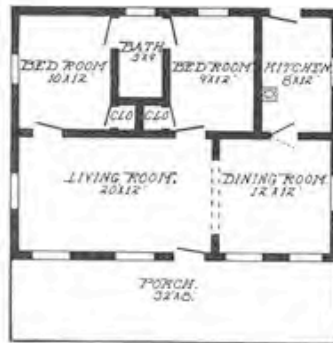
### THE KENTUCKY

EVERYONE who has ever read the Aladdin Catalog has admired the Aladdin Kentucky. Isn't it a beauty in every line? The photo shown here and the photo on the preceding two pages give two excellent treatments of this popular design. While it reminds one of the stately colonnades of old colonial mansions, it still retains the delightful atmosphere of modern American bungalows. Double front doors seem to open wide a hospitality of true American spirit. The Kentucky has made a most remarkable impression on our customers, having attained as great a degree of popularity as any design we have ever produced.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

No. 1. Size, 32 x 32 ft. Price, \$995. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$945.25. See Terms on Page 2.  
 No. 2. Size, 43 x 32 ft. Price, \$1,330. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$1,262.50. See Terms on Page 2.

All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine. Height of ceilings, 9 ft. All ceilings square, not hipped. Sill, 6 x 8 in. Joists, 2 x 8 in. Rafters, 2 x 6 in. Studding and ceiling joists, 2 x 4 in. Jobs, studding, and ceiling joist placed every 16 in. Sheathing lumber, 1 in. Flooring, clear and knotless. Sub-floor Building paper. Bevel siding or shingles for side walls. Roof, 1-in. lumber, overlaid with shingles. Lath and plaster or patent plaster board. Base board and all interior trim and finish clear and knotless Oregon Fir. Windows, glass double strength. Casement windows in front, balance two sliding sash. Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in. Porch columns, turned. Front and rear steps. Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, and paint for two coats outside; oils, stains, and varnishes inside.



Floor Plan, The Kentucky No. 1



Floor Plan, The Kentucky No. 2

ALADDIN Read carefully pages 2-10, 101, and 127 of this catalog READ-OUT

Figure A.22 The Kentucky #1. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day"*: Catalog no. 27, 1915, 66. (Refer to 1916 order 5398.)

ALADDIN DWELLINGS



**THE LAKEVIEW**

**T**HIS LITTLE beauty that seems to expand when you get inside. Plenty of space for average family. Owing to ell house gives appearance of being much larger and wider than it really is. Living room has corner-seat fronting fireplace, making quaint nook. Two bed rooms, each has closet. Main roof-line raised over living room in an ell that runs down in front to cover porch. Side walls shingle, same as porch pillars. Railing extends through post, mission style, a very distinctive feature.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

Size, 24 x 32 ft. Price, \$890. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$845.50. See Terms.  
 All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine.  
 Height of ceilings, 9 ft. All ceilings square, not hipped.  
 Sill, 6 x 8 in.  
 Joists, 2 x 8 in. Studding, rafters, and ceiling joists, 2 x 4 in.  
 Joists, ceiling joist and studding placed every 16 in.  
 Sheathing lumber.



Floor Plan, The Lakeview

Flooring, 1-inch matched, 3 inches wide.  
 Roof, 1-inch lumber, overlaid with best prepared roofing or shingles.  
 Side walls, shingles.  
 Patent plaster board or lath and plaster.  
 Base board and all interior trim and finish clear Yellow Pine.  
 Windows, sash, 30 x 32 in., two sliding sash, glass double strength.  
 Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, special design, 3 ft. x 7 ft.  
 Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, and paint for two coats inside and outside.



*“Why pay rent; buy an Aladdin and be content”*

**Figure A.23 The Lakeview. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: “Built in a Day”*: Catalog no. 25, 1914, 70. (Refer to order 2559.)**



### The Peerless

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). One door.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**D**ISTINCTIVE and attractive. The Peerless will do credit to any surroundings. It is furnished with siding half-way up and shingles on upper part of wall. Very wide eaves with supporting brackets set off building excellently. Large door with glass, together with windows on two sides, give plenty of light.



### The Winton

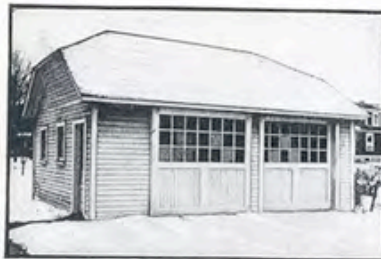
See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 12x20 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE Winton will take the largest car on the market, with ample room at sides for working about car and for supplies. It has swinging glass doors and one window on each side. It is of a splendid type and always looks good wherever it may be erected. Painted to match your house.

### The Maxwell

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 10x16 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**A**SHINGLE-COVERED Garage that nicely matches any house. Roof extends in front to afford protection during inclement weather. Eaves have exposed rafters. Good, wide double doorway. Compact, but convenient in every respect. Plenty of light.



### The Packard

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). Two doors.  
Size, 30x20 ft. (three cars). Three doors. With double sliding doors.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE broken roof lines of the Packard give it an individuality immediately apparent. The building is furnished with five windows, two large glass doors and small door.

Figure A.24 The Maxwell. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 113.* (Refer to orders 15305 and 15701.)

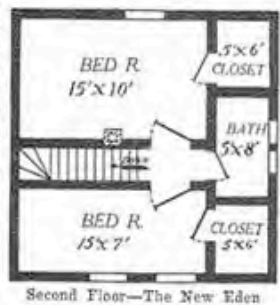
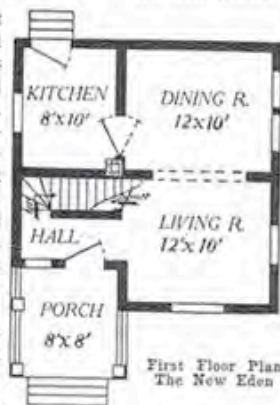


## The New Eden \$645.05

Price, \$679.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$645.05

**T**HIS home, the New Eden, shows the result of careful planning before building—and it is surely gratifying to its many owners among Aladdin customers. On a ground space of 20x20 feet, this home gives more room, more comfort, more convenience than has ever before been obtained. Two stories, having two bedrooms upstairs, a hall, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, an open stairway, a porch, and above all, an attractive looking house. It is so well liked by its many happy owners, that it is common for them to call it the "Wonder Home" on account of its low price, abundance of space, and its convenience.

Notice the exterior. A broad belt across the front of the house divides first and second stories, giving a pleasing and harmonious effect. The half-sheltered porch is a pleasant feature and is well built for strength, attractiveness and harmony. The full length column, fronted by pedestals, makes a comfortable porch. The diamond paned window to the left of the front door gives plenty of light to the stairway and adds attractiveness to the front of the house and porch. Living room and dining room are divided by a wide arch, making them practically one room. Both rooms are well lighted and of good size. Notice the double window in the dining room. Two men can erect and complete this house in about ten days. It can be done by any two men who are willing to work, assisted by our complete instructions and illustrations. See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Detail specifications will be sent you on request. See Terms on page 2.



**Figure A.25** The New Eden. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 29, 1917, 48. (Refer to order 7922.)



**THE PEERLESS**

Size, 20 x 20 ft. (two cars). Either wood or metal. Price, \$246. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$233.70. See Terms on Page 2.

**D**ISTINCTIVE and attractive The Peerless will do credit to any surroundings. It is furnished with siding half-way up and shingles on upper part of wall. Very wide eaves with supporting brackets set off building excellently. Large door with glass, together with windows on two other sides, give plenty of light.



**THE PACKARD**

Size, 20 x 20 ft. (two cars), one door. Either wood or metal. Price, \$198. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$188.10. See Terms on Page 2.

Size, 30 x 24 ft. (three cars), two doors. With double sliding doors, either wood or metal. Price, \$367. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$348.65. See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE broken roof lines of The Packard give it an individuality immediately apparent. The building is furnished with five windows, large glass door, and small door.

ALADDIN GARAGES ARE BUILT OF THE SAME GRADES OF MATERIAL AS ALADDIN HOUSES



**THE MAXWELL**

Size, 10 x 16 ft. Price, \$124. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$117.80. See Terms on Page 2.

**A**SHINGLE-COVERED Garage that nicely matches any house. Roof extends in front to afford protection during inclement weather. Eaves have exposed rafters. Good, wide double doorway. Compact, but convenient in every respect. Plenty of light.

Test the  
**ALADDIN**  
Golden Rule Service

**METAL  
SUMMER COTTAGES AND  
GARAGES**

**A**NY of the designs of summer cottages and garages will be furnished in metal sides and roof at the prices quoted. This metal is high grade, strong, and comes in the shingle and siding pattern as illustrated on this page. Metal garages can be built within the fire limits in any city. Paint of any color for outside is furnished.



ALADDIN

Read carefully pages 2-10, 101, and 127 of this catalog

READI-CUT

Figure A.26 The Packard. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day": Catalog no. 27, 1915, 111.* (Refer to order 4847.)

### The Peerless

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). One door.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**D**ISTINCTIVE and attractive. The Peerless will do credit to any surroundings. It is furnished with siding half-way up and shingles on upper part of wall. Very wide eaves with supporting brackets set off building excellently. Large door with glass, together with windows on two sides, give plenty of light.



### The Winton

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 12x20 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE Winton will take the largest car on the market, with ample room at sides for working about car and for supplies. It has swinging glass doors and one window on each side. It is of a splendid type and always looks good wherever it may be erected. Painted to match your house.

### The Maxwell

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 10x16 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**A**SHINGLE-COVERED Garage that nicely matches any house. Roof extends in front to afford protection during inclement weather. Eaves have exposed rafters. Good, wide double doorway. Compact, but convenient in every respect. Plenty of light.



### The Packard

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). Two doors.  
Size, 30x20 ft. (three cars). Three doors. With double sliding doors.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE broken roof lines of the Packard give it an individuality immediately apparent. The building is furnished with five windows, two large glass doors and small door.

113

**Figure A.27 The Packard. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 30, 1918, 113. (Refer to order 12519.)**



### THE PORTLAND

**F**OUR gables give The Portland a surprising amount of room on its second floor. Large front room, two rear bed rooms, bath and linen closet are secured with this excellent roof design. On the first floor a twenty-foot living room extends across the full front of the house, arch leads to dining room, and good kitchen, pantry, and inset rear porch are arranged. The porch railing is of the full length square spindle type and columns set on pedestals. Attractive group window fronts the upper part of the house, and the gable is furnished with shingles.

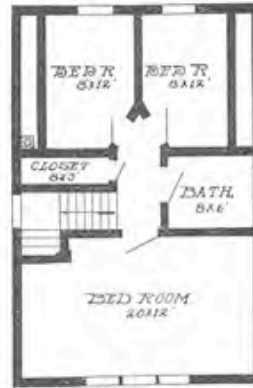
#### SPECIFICATIONS

Size, 20 x 38 ft. Price, \$839. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$797.05. See Terms on Page 2.  
 Size, 22 x 38 ft. Price, \$944. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$896.80. See Terms on Page 2.  
 Size, 24 x 38 ft. Price, \$1,052. Cash Discount, 5%. Net Price, \$999.40. See Terms on Page 2.



First Floor Plan, The Portland

All lumber selected Yellow Pine, Red Cedar, and Huron Pine.  
 Height of ceilings, 9 ft. first floor; 8 ft. second floor.  
 Sill, 6 x 8 in.  
 Studding, 2 x 4 in.  
 Joists, 2 x 8 in. down and 2 x 8 in. up stairs.  
 Joists and studding placed every 16 in.  
 Flooring, clear and knotless.  
 Sub-floor, Building paper.  
 Sheathing lumber, 1 in. Side walls, siding or shingles.  
 Roof, 1-in. lumber, overlaid with shingles.  
 Lath and plaster or patent plaster board.  
 Windows, two sliding sash, double-strength glass. One special group of windows.  
 Base board, stairs, and interior finish clear and knotless Oregon Fir.  
 Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; inside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.; front door, upper half glass.  
 Hardware, locks, hinges, knobs, nails, stain or paint for two coats outside; oils, stains, and varnishes for inside.



Second Floor Plan, The Portland

*The easiest, quickest, cheapest way — the Aladdin way.*

MRS. W. D. MEEHAN,  
 R. F. D. No. 1, Asheville, N. C.

ALADDIN Read carefully pages 2-10, 101, and 127 of this catalog READ-CUT

**Figure A.28** The Portland #1. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Houses: "Built in a Day"*: Catalog no. 27, 1915, 33. (Refer to order 4400.)



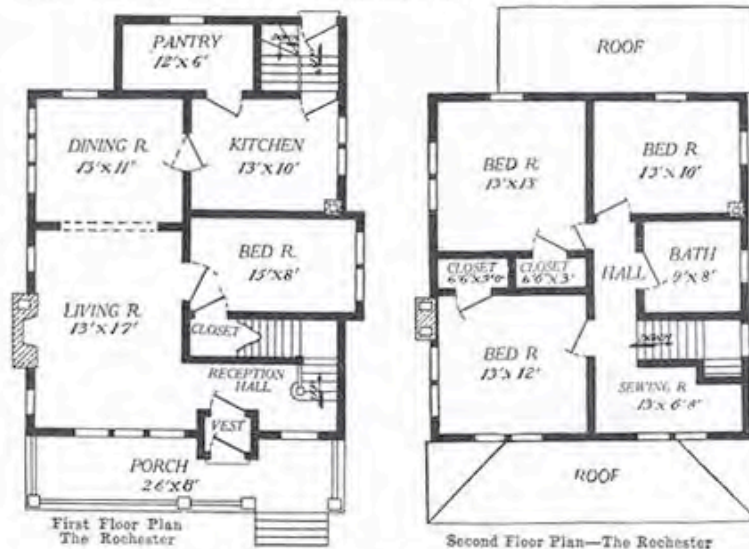
## The Rochester \$1,387.00

Price, \$1,460.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$1,387.00

**T**HE Rochester is of the strong, substantial American type. Square lines give the advantage of utilizing every inch of space to good advantage, while this particular house incorporates some features distinctive to itself. Note the vestibule, large living room with cosy bedroom having projecting bay window; group window in dining room; large pantry attached to kitchen and rear exit grade cellar entrance. Three bedrooms, sewing room, bath and closets complete the second story. Most of the windows are grouped in pairs. Scrolled rafter ends embellish the eaves. Taken altogether, the Rochester is a most satisfying home. On a one-thousand-dollar lot the Rochester would normally sell for at least \$5,500. You can easily comprehend the profit available to the owner should conditions arise that he would want to sell it. Owners of Aladdin houses find that the high quality of finish, material, both inside and outside helps make quick sales when a sale is desired.

The Rochester was first built up in Northern Minnesota and the owner is high in his praise of the warmth of Aladdin construction.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.



**Figure A.29** The Rochester. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 29, 1917, 39. (Refer to order 10830.)

**The Roseland**      **\$687.80**      Price, \$725.00  
Cash discount, 5%      Net price, \$687.80

**T**HERE is something very restful and satisfying in this artistic bungalow. The structural lines throughout are simple without excess adornment and in this lies the secret of its distinction. There is a roomy front porch with the pergola roof effect terminating at one end with the steps. Except to mention the simplicity of the structural lines it is quite impossible to intelligently define the popularity of this bungalow.

The interior of the house is planned so that the maximum of comfort may be had with the minimum of work. It is a pleasure to do housekeeping in this bungalow as it is easy to keep the rooms clean and sweet. The Roseland contains seven rooms conveniently arranged. The living and dining rooms are connected by a pleasing cased archway (see Interior Illustration, page 40). Each of the three bedrooms are furnished with closets. Should you intend to put a basement under the bungalow we would recommend using our addition No. 4 on page 116 of our catalog.

The cost of erecting the Roseland is small. When you receive the material it is all cut-to-fit ready to nail in place. All your carpenters do is the erecting—no sawing, no measuring, no cutting to fit. Besides, think of the saving in building an Aladdin—no waste material to pay for.

On file in our offices we have plans as basis for estimating costs. With this plan you will be able to arrive at an intelligent price for the complete home. It is impossible to give a fixed cost of erection for all localities on account of difference in cost of labor, etc. Hence you are able to find the cost of the Roseland erected in your home town by applying local figures and using the tables shown on the Aladdin estimate sheets. A copy will be sent you upon request.

See General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. See Terms on page 2.

**Floor Plan—The Roseland**

KITCHEN 12x10'    BED R. 10'x9'  
DINING R. 12'x12'    BATH 6'x5'  
LIVING R. 12'x12'    BED R. 10'x10'  
BED R. 10'x9'  
PORCH 18'x6'

**Figure A.30 The Roseland. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 29, 1917, 19-20. (Refer to order 8707.)**



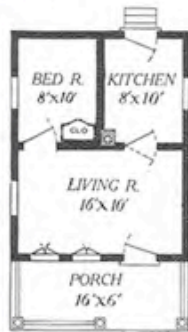
## The Selwyn

**\$318.25**

Price, \$335.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$318.25



The Selwyn



The Erie

**T**HE SELWYN! Isn't it a little jewel? Here is a real bargain. Here is a home that will be a great credit to you, to your building spot, to any location. How can we manufacture and sell this ideal home at this price? Here's the reason. Stop and think that your order is received today and enters the mill. Tomorrow it is rolled out of the mill yards and is on its way to you. Probably the same train has three or four more orders going in the same direction. Your house is but one of the many that leave the Aladdin mills each day, because Aladdin sells at wholesale prices and saves you the dealers' profits. Many a man of moderate means would like to own his little home, but the dealer's price, from \$500 to \$800, is too much, and it is difficult for him to engage carpenters. To all such the Aladdin Read-Cut System is a blessing because they can build it themselves at a cost of simply their own time plus the cost of the material, or they can have it put up in a few days by day labor.



This little home of four rooms and attractive porch is a beauty. It is warm and strong—is built of the same high grade material as the larger Aladdin houses. Two men with no previous experience, following Aladdin's instructions, can erect this house in four days' time. You will take great pride in this Aladdin home—the Selwyn. The Selwyn and Erie will be furnished in size 20x24 feet instead of 16x20 feet as shown in these plans at an additional cost of \$88.00 net.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

## The Erie

The Erie is the same as the Selwyn, except it has a large 10x16 foot room across front of house. Price of the Erie is \$329, cash discount 5%. Net price, \$312.55.

See Terms on page 2 and General Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

**Figure A.31 The Selwyn #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 29, 1917, 88. (Refer to order 10337.)**



# The Stanhope

**\$697.30**

Price, Size No. 1, \$734.00  
Cash discount, 5%  
Net price, \$697.30

**A**RE you not pleased with the Stanhope? Can you conceive how with straight architectural lines any more pleasing or substantial style of construction could have been worked out? Notice what a strong yet artistic appearance is given the entire front by the heavy porch pedestals, square porch columns and porch rail.



How in keeping are the small lights in bungalow door and the upper divided lights in all windows. And when it comes to interior plan, it would be very difficult to work out a more convenient arrangement. The wide arch between living and dining rooms gives an appearance of one large room.

The double action door leading to a kitchen large enough,

yet none too large, completes the living part of this compact, cosy home. Three well lighted, suitable sized bedrooms give as much sleeping room as is frequently found in a much larger home. For any one desiring a six-room modern house all on one floor, the Stanhope is a great favorite. The Aladdin readi-cut system of construction offers you a big saving on this home. You are now able to dodge the high cost of building because you pay for no waste of materials or labor in erecting an Aladdin. Match this against the excessive cost of waste in building on the old-fashioned method. Then compare market prices with Aladdin prices and you will realize the big advantage offered you in the Aladdin readi-cut system. It is estimated that 18% of the materials are wasted in building on the



Floor Plan  
The Stanhope No. 1

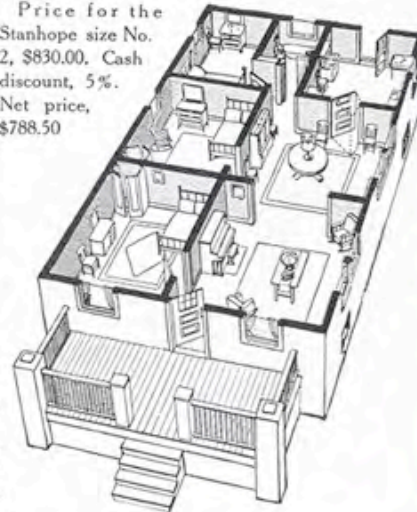


Floor Plan  
The Stanhope No. 2

waste actually lost! The Aladdin system has reduced this waste to less than 2%—put the \$18 in your pocket. Can you afford to build on any other plan? Do you care to make this saving? Ask us for names of customers

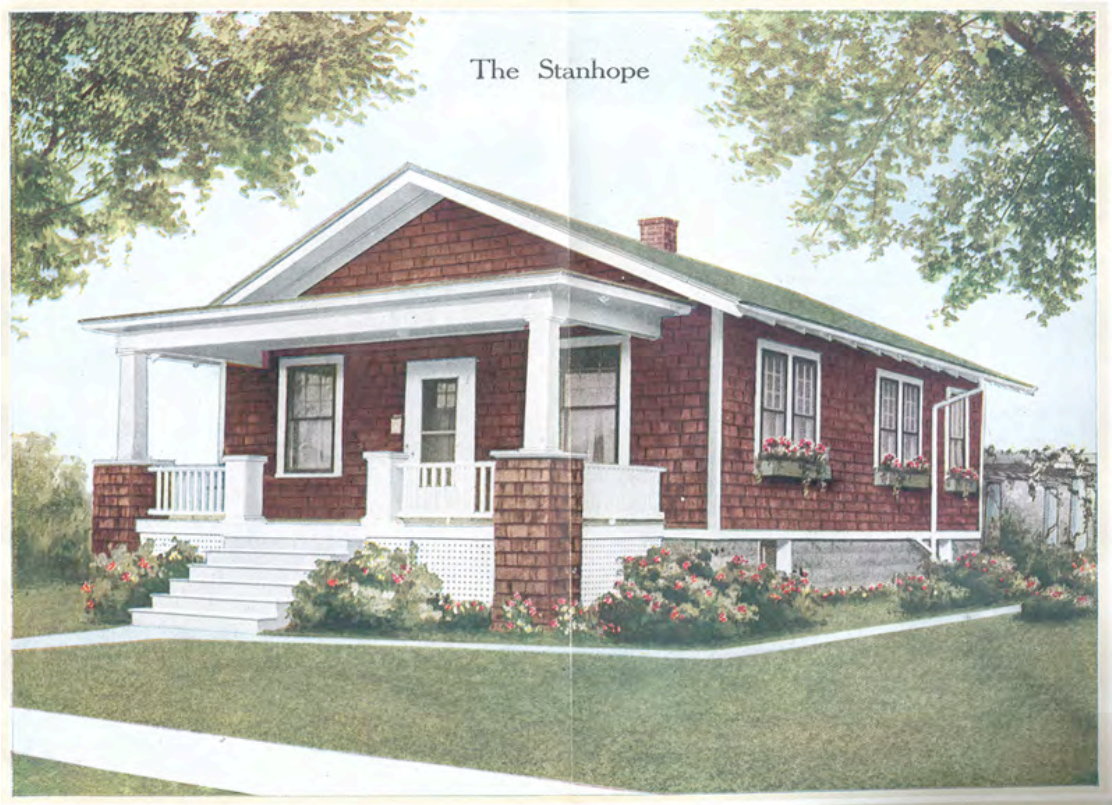
—let them tell you in their own words. There are many owners of the Aladdin Stanhope throughout the country. Probably there is one near you. We will send you names of owners—you can pay them a visit and inspect their home and material.

Price for the Stanhope size No. 2, \$830.00. Cash discount, 5%. Net price, \$788.50



Study General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Complete detail specifications will be sent you upon request. See Terms on page 2.

**Figure A.32 The Stanhope #1 & #2. Aladdin Company, Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 76. (Refer to orders 8829, 10018, 10092.)**



**Figure A.33** The Stanhope #1 & #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 29, 1917, 77-78.* (Refer to orders 8829, 10018, 10092.)

# The Stanhope

See prices on inside of front cover.

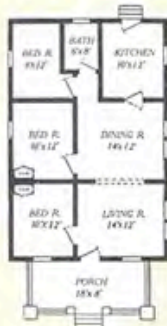
ARE you not pleased with the Stanhope? Can you conceive how with straight architectural lines any more pleasing or substantial style of construction could have been worked out? Notice what a strong yet artistic appearance is given the entire front by the heavy porch pedestals, square porch columns and porch rail.

How in keeping are the small lights in bungalow door and the upper divided lights in all windows. And when it comes to interior plan, it would be very difficult to work out a more convenient arrangement. The wide arch between living and dining rooms gives an appearance of one large room.

The double action door leading to a kitchen large enough, yet none too large, completes the living part of this compact, cosy home. Three well lighted, suitable sized bedrooms give as much sleeping room as is frequently found in a much larger home. For any one desiring a six-room modern house all on one floor, the Stanhope is a great favorite. The Aladdin readi-cut system of construction offers you a big saving on this home. You are now able to dodge the high cost of building because you pay for no waste of materials or labor in erecting an Aladdin. Match this against the excessive cost of waste in building on the old-fashioned method. Then compare market prices with Aladdin prices and you will realize the big advantage offered you in the Aladdin readi-cut system. It is estimated that 18% of the materials are wasted in building on the saw-measure-on-the-ground method. This means \$18 out of every \$100 is paid for waste actually lost! The Aladdin system has reduced this waste to less than 2%—put the \$18 in your pocket. Can you afford to build on any other plan? Do you care to make this

saving? Ask us for names of customers—let them tell you in their own words. There are many owners of the Aladdin Stanhope throughout the country. Probably there is one near you. We will send you names of owners—you can pay them a visit and inspect their home and material.

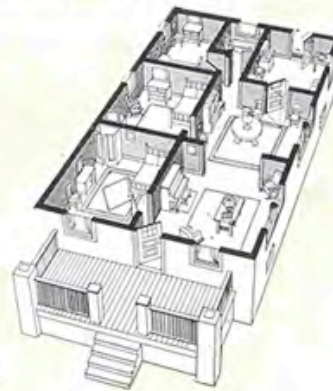
For price of the Stanhope refer to inside of front cover. Study General Specifications on pages 12 and 13. Complete detail specifications will be sent you upon request. See Terms on page 2.



Floor Plan  
The Stanhope No. 2



Floor Plan  
The Stanhope No. 1



**Figure A.34** The Stanhope #1 & #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 40.* (Refer to 1919 order 14983 and 1920 order 19080.)



**Figure A.35** The Stanhope #1 & #2. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 41-42.* (Refer to 1919 order 14983 and 1920 order 19080.)




**T**HIS charming bungalow nestling in this setting of trees represents one of the best pieces of work of our master designers. Individuality is portrayed in all its lines and it is distinctly American in character. Extreme simplicity is the motif behind the planning of this home. Simplicity implies character, quality and taste. Sunshine implies cheerfulness, happiness, prosperity and light. Could a more fitting name than "Sunshine" be given to this home? It radiates that sweet, simple home atmosphere everyone wishes to secure in their home and to see in the homes of others. The roof lines are particularly graceful, the main roof extending down over the porch, it being evenly balanced by a dormer of just the right proportions. A study of the interior reveals an exceptionally well laid and thought out plan. Light in any home is an essential feature and we have provided an abundance of it for every room. The large living room gives access to the dining room and front bedroom, as well as small clothes closet. See page 35. The opening between the living room and dining room is a prepossessing cased archway. The fireplace and outside chimney are shown in the photograph and floor plan although it is not necessary that you build these should you favor this house. The two back bedrooms have regular closets built off of them. At the rear of the bungalow one of our regular Addition No. 4 is furnished, this providing for a combined cellar and rear entrance. If the "Sunshine" appeals to you, write us so we can send you still further details. Refer to inside of front cover for prices. See Terms on page 2. Specifications on pages 12 and 13.

**Figure A.36** The Sunshine. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 30, 1918, 71.* (Refer to order 12517.)



**Figure A.37** The Thelma. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 55.* (Refer to 1918 order 10093 and 1919 order 14223.)

423 less 15% 1/6



### The Tremont—5 Rooms

THE house, the material, the design and the price are the results of the deepest study on the part of our expert draughtsmen, designers and cost clerks. You can, of course, understand how necessary this effort was to reduce the cost of a complete five-room winter house to the figure quoted in the special price folder enclosed with this catalog. In the process, our usually small margin of profit suffered considerably. We venture to say you will agree with our statement that it is absolutely impossible to design a house of five rooms that is simpler, stronger, warmer or better for the price.

Twenty-five Tremonts were erected by the Bell & Zollier Coal Co. Six months' later we received another order for an additional twenty-four.



**SPECIFICATIONS**  
For the Tremont

Sill. Joists, 2x6 inches.  
Studding and rafters, 2x4 inches.  
Flooring, clear and knotless.  
Roof, inch lumber overlaid with prepared roofing or shingles.  
Patent Plaster Board (taking place of lath and plaster).  
Shathing overlaid with bevel siding or shingles.  
Doors, outside, 2 ft. 8 in. x 6 ft. 8 in.  
Front door, upper half, glass.  
Window sash, size 26x24 in., glass measurement.  
Baseboard casings and inside finish, clear and knotless Oregon Fir.  
Hardware, glass, locks, hinges, nails and stain inside and outside.

**Figure A.38** The Tremont. Aladdin Company. *Low Cost Homes Designed Especially for Industrial Purposes, 1917, 11.* (Refer to 1915 order 4406.)



**Figure A.39 The Winthrop. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day:* Catalog no. 31, 1919, 77-78. (Refer to order 15707.)**



### The Peerless

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). One door.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**D**ISTINCTIVE and attractive. The Peerless will do credit to any surroundings. It is furnished with siding half-way up and shingles on upper part of wall. Very wide eaves with supporting brackets set off building excellently. Large door with glass, together with windows on two sides, give plenty of light.



### The Winton

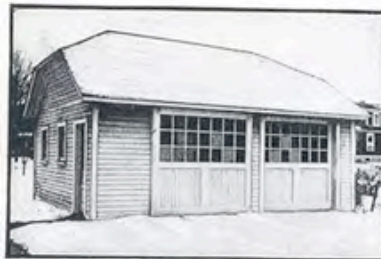
See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 12x20 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE Winton will take the largest car on the market, with ample room at sides for working about car and for supplies. It has swinging glass doors and one window on each side. It is of a splendid type and always looks good wherever it may be erected. Painted to match your house.

### The Maxwell

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 10x16 ft. See Terms on Page 2.

**A**SHINGLE-COVERED Garage that nicely matches any house. Roof extends in front to afford protection during inclement weather. Eaves have exposed rafters. Good, wide double doorway. Compact, but convenient in every respect. Plenty of light.



### The Packard

See prices on inside of front cover.  
Size, 20x20 ft. (two cars). Two doors.  
Size, 30x20 ft. (three cars). Three doors. With double sliding doors.  
See Terms on Page 2.

**T**HE broken roof lines of the Packard give it an individuality immediately apparent. The building is furnished with five windows, two large glass doors and small door.

Figure A.40 The Winton. Aladdin Company, *Aladdin Homes: Built in a Day*: Catalog no. 31, 1919, 113. (Refer to order 14067.)

## Appendix B

### ALADDIN ORDERS IN DELAWARE 1914 - 1920<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Aladdin Company, "Sales Indexes," "Order Forms," *Aladdin Company Records 1907-1989, Collection*. (Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University)

Boxes 90, 93-107;

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 Population Schedule*, Delaware, [www.ancestrylibrary.com](http://www.ancestrylibrary.com) (accessed February 6, 2010);

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population Schedule*, Delaware, [www.ancestrylibrary.com](http://www.ancestrylibrary.com) (accessed February 6, 2010).

**Table B.1 Purchase Orders**

Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
2559	4/7/1914	E. E. Moore	E. E. Moore	Edge Moor	Spec Lakeview	bungalow		
2752	5/7/1914	E. E. Moore	E. E. Moore	Edge Moor	Spec. House			
2885	5/27/1914	E. M. Webb	E. M. Webb	Wilmington	Crampton	cottage		
3079	6/29/1914	Rev. H. R. Hall	Rev. H. R. Hall	Lewes	Gretna	cottage		
3814	1/21/1915	Lane Vanderwende	Lane Vanderwende	Harrington	Gretna	cottage	1. 10x16 Living room. 2. Out house size 5'6"x5'6" with 7' corner posts, shingled roof and one window of suitable size 3. Four cellar windows 18x24 complete 4. One cellar door size 3x7 complete with frame and hardware	430.20
4400	5/5/1915	E. I. DuPont de Nemours Powder Co.	G. P. Weatherlow	Edge Moor	Portland# 1	transitional colonial revival	15% off gross price of house	744.40

Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
4406	5/7/1915	E. B. McNair, Pres., Montrose Co.	Montrose Company	Bellevue	Tremont	cottage		298.00
4587	6/12/15	John T. Peck	John T. Peck	Thompson	Charleston	foursquare		1368.00
4847	8/11/1915	E. I. DuPont de Nemours Powder Co.	P. E. Strickland	Elsmere	Packard	garage	Two sliding doors	200.10
5398	3/4/1916	A. N. Brown, c/o The Fruit Belt Co.	Chas. R. Brown	Wyoming	Kentucky #1	bungalow	\$236.83 to be taken out in advertising in the "Fruit Belt".	945.25
5451	3/15/1916	Frank P. Long	Frank P. Long	Delaware City	Dresden	bungalow	Arch 2A-64 between living room and dining room	793.65
7355	10/23/1916	H. H. Cloud	H. H. Cloud	Edge Moor	Finley	transitional colonial revival	All paints and plaster omitted.	754.55
7922	1/8/1917	Mrs. Tillie Thomas	Mrs. Tillie Thomas	Newark	New Eden	dutch colonial revival	Mail complete set of blue prints at once.	596.60
8234	3/1/1917	Benj. E. Harrar	Benj. E. Harrar	Elsmere Jct.	Emerald	cottage	Material for shelter shed.	411.05
8419	3/28/1917	V. Krejci	V. Krejci	Claymont	Dresden	bungalow		817.00

<b>Order #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Purchaser</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Delivery Location</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Building Type</b>	<b>Major Special Instructions</b>	<b>Purchase Cost</b>
8693	4/20/1917	F. E. Patterson	F. E. Patterson	Greenville	Boulevard	bungalow	1. Floor plan re-arranged per sketch. 2. Full copper wire screens for all windows. 3. Two copper wire screen doors. 4. Six cellar windows complete for 3'x2'8" wall opening.	922.75
8707	4/20/1917	F. E. Patterson	F. E. Patterson	Greenville	Roseland	bungalow	1. Floor plan re-arranged per sketch. 2. Full copper wire screens for all windows. 3. Two copper wire screen doors. 4. Six cellar windows complete for 3'x2'8" wall opening. 5. Addition #4, reversed.	758.95
8779	4/23/1917	R. M. Phillips	R. M. Phillips	Carrcroft	Castle	cottage		581.70
8828	5/1/1917	A. L. B. Taggart	A. L. B. Taggart	Claymont	Herford	foursquare		836.00

Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
8829	5/1/1917	A. L. B. Taggart	A. L. B. Taggart	Claymont	Stanhope #2	bungalow		788.50
10014	6/27/1917	Jas. Wilson	Jas. Wilson	Greenville	Emerald	cottage		341.05
10018	6/27/1917	George W. Raudman	George W. Raudman	Elsmere Jct.	Stanhope #2	bungalow		788.50
10092	7/3/1917	A. H. Padberg	A. H. Padberg	New Castle	Stanhope# 1	bungalow	1. One Aladdin closette. 2. Two cellar windows complete for 3'x2' opening.	789.50
10093	7/3/1917	A. H. Padberg	A. H. Padberg	New Castle	Thelma	cottage		487.80
10111	7/9/1917	Charles W. Conyers	Charles W. Conyers	Wilmington	Boulevard	bungalow		976.70
10337	8/9/1917	N. C. Armstrong	N. C. Armstrong	Bellevue	Selwyn #2	cottage	1. Door from kitchen to dining room to be placed in partition between kitchen and bedroom. Will use bedroom as dining room. 2. Cased arch opening between living room and regular bedroom instead of door. 3. Extra window in side wall of regular bed room.	445.30

Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
10830	10/19/1917	James H. Stanton	James H. Stanton	Milford	Rochester	foursquare	Beamed ceiling for living room.	1670.70
11396	3/8/1918	Chas. C. Hastings	Chas. C. Hastings	Elsmere Jct.	Dresden	bungalow	1. French door instead of front door regularly furnished. 2. Upper sash of all windows glazed square lights.	903.65
11412	3/8/1918	Chas. W. Ottey	Chas. W. Ottey	Claymont	Dresden	bungalow	1. Front door glazed half length; all inside doors five cross panel. 2. Omit one front window in living room, making space for front door and bring partition between living room and bed room out straight.	898.00
12517	6/7/1918	O. H. McCurdy	O. H. McCurdy	State Road	Sunshine	bungalow		1352.80
12518	6/7/1918	O. H. McCurdy	O. H. McCurdy	State Road	Aladdin Barn	barn		319.20
12519	6/7/1918	O. H. McCurdy	O. H. McCurdy	State Road	Packard	garage	Double doors.	256.25
12678	7/11/1918	Edanna Land & Improvement Co.	Edanna Land & Improvement Co.	Wilmington	Herford	foursquare		1135.25

Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
13484	10/17/1918	Mrs. Thomas Farrell	Thomas Farrell	Dover	Florence	bungalow	1. Rear porch 16'x6' with 4'x6' of one end enclosed for pantry. Cellar stairs to lead down from where the pantry is shown in regular plan. Cellar door to connect new pantry and kitchen. Pantry window to be used in new pantry. 2. Permit expires Nov. 6th	1245.40
14067	2/13/1919	Geo. C. Hughes	Geo. C. Hughes	Elsmere Jct.	Winton	garage		181.45
14223	4/1/1919	L. E. Walstrom	L. E. Walstrom	Milford	Thelma	cottage		673.05
14765	6/4/1919	George R. Umflet	George R. Umflet	Elsmere Jct.	Hudson	foursquare	1. Electric fixtures 3E-1978 2. Bathroom outfit 3E-300 3. Pipeless furnace 3F-525	1739.65
14983	7/10/1919	Martin O'Toole	Martin O'Toole	Wilmington (Cox's Siding)	Stanhope #1	bungalow	Ceilings 9' high	988.25
15015	7/10/1919	Rachel Minner	Clarence S. Morris	Harrington	Gretna #2 Rev.	cottage	Reverse floor plans.	606.45



Order #	Date	Purchaser	Recipient	Delivery Location	Model	Building Type	Major Special Instructions	Purchase Cost
15201	7/15/1919	Joseph Hardy	Joseph Hardy	Wilmington (Pine St. Yds.)	Chester	cottage		641.00
15305	6/25/1919	William F. Sellers	William F. Sellers	Edge Moor	Maxwell	garage		172.90
15701	7/13/1919	Edge Moor Iron Co.	Edge Moor Iron Co.	Edge Moor	Maxwell	garage	Mail two complete sets of blue prints, two sets of bills.	172.90
15707	7/17/1919	Henry P. Jones	Henry P. Jones	Elsmere Jct.	Winthrop	bungalow		1497.20
15872	8/1/1919	J. J. Barnes	J. J. Barnes	Elsmere Jct.	Cadillac	bungalow		1532.98
15962	8/5/1919	Chas. H. Moore	Jacob A. Gricker	Newark	Herford	foursquare		1538.92
16581	10/16/19	William D. Gray	William D. Gray	Elsmere Jct.	Dresden	bungalow		1508.08
E-17497	3/5/1920	Clarence S. Foster	Clarence S. Foster	Newark	Canton	cottage		646.55
19080	8/3/1920	Atlas Powder Co.	C. E. Happersett	Cooch	Stanhope #2	bungalow	1. 10'x8' rear porch enclosed w/lattice. 2. 3 extra windows; 1 in side wall of front bedroom; 1 in rear wall of rear bedroom, 1 in rear wall of kitchen. 3. Omit window in side wall of living room; furnish two 18x24 single sash casement, spaced for fire place.	2115.03

**Table B.2 Purchasers**

<b>Order #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>1910 Occupation</b>	<b>1920 Occupation</b>	<b>Purchase Motivation</b>	<b>Delivery Location</b>	<b>Construction Location</b>
2559	E. E. Moore	Farmer		subdivider	Edge Moor	
2752	E. E. Moore	Farmer		subdivider	Edge Moor	
2885	E. M. Webb	Train Dispatcher		personal residence	Wilmington	
3079	Rev. H. R. Hall			personal residence	Lewes	
3814	Lane Vanderwende	Farmer	House carpenter	Builder	Harrington	
4400	G. P. Weatherlow, recipient	Draftsman, Powder Works Co.	Draftsman, Powder Works Co.	employee benefit, personal residence	Edge Moor	207 Beeson Ave., Edgemoor
4400	E. I. DuPont de Nemours Powder Co., purchaser			employee benefit	Edge Moor	207 Beeson Ave., Edgemoor
4406	E. B. McNair, Pres., Montrose Company			real estate developer	Bellevue	
4587	John T. Peck	Farmer	Superintendent, Iron Foundry	personal residence	Thompson	
4847	P. E. Strickland, recipient	Book Keeper, Powder Co.	Auditor, Powder Co.	employee benefit, personal auto garage	Elsmere	
4847	E. I. DuPont de Nemours Powder Co., purchaser			employee benefit	Elsmere	
5398	Chas. R. Brown, recipient			company related residence	Wyoming	

Order #	Name	1910 Occupation	1920 Occupation	Purchase Motivation	Delivery Location	Construction Location
5398	A. N. Brown, The Fruit Belt Co., purchaser			employee benefit	Wyoming	
5451	Frank P. Long	Railman	Railroad Baggage Maty	personal residence	Delaware City	305 Hamilton St., Delaware City
7355	H. H. Cloud			personal residence	Edge Moor	
7922	Mrs. Tillie Thomas	spouse: Manufacturer, Paper Mill	spouse: Manager, Paper Mill	personal residence	Newark	Possibly 45 W. Park Place, Newark
8234	Benj. E. Harrar	Civil Engineer	Real Estate Dealer	real estate dealer	Elsmere Jct.	
8419	V. Krejci	Farmer		personal residence	Claymont	
8693	F. E. Patterson	Trustee, Cotton Manufacture	Manufacturer, Cotton Spinning	domestic employee housing	Greenville	
8707	F. E. Patterson	Trustee, Cotton Manufacture	Manufacturer, Cotton Spinning	domestic employee housing	Greenville	
8779	R. M. Phillips (Roberta)	own income	none	personal residence	Carrcroft	
8828	A. L. B. Taggart (Addie)	farm		subdivider	Claymont	
8829	A. L. B. Taggart			subdivider	Claymont	
10014	Jas. Wilson				Greenville	
10018	George W. Raudman	carpenter, own shop	house carpenter	builder	Elsmere Jct.	
10092	A. H. Padberg	retired	retired	builder	New Castle	Possibly 166 E. 3rd St., New Castle
10093	A. H. Padberg	retired	retired	builder	New Castle	

<b>Order #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>1910 Occupation</b>	<b>1920 Occupation</b>	<b>Purchase Motivation</b>	<b>Delivery Location</b>	<b>Construction Location</b>
10111	Charles W. Conyers	Blacksmith	Factory toolmaker	personal residence	Wilmington	408 Marion Ave, Bellefonte
10337	N. C. Armstrong				Bellevue	
10830	James H. Stanton		none	personal residence	Milford	406 N. Walnut St., Milford
11396	Chas. C. Hastings	Street Railway Conductor	House carpenter	builder	Elsmere Jct.	
11412	Chas. W. Otrey	Laborer, Ice Cream Factory	none	personal residence	Claymont	
12517	O. H. McCurdy	Laborer, Wholesale Upholstery		personal residence	State Road	
12518	O. H. McCurdy	Laborer, Wholesale Upholstery		personal barn	State Road	
12519	O. H. McCurdy	Laborer, Wholesale Upholstery		personal auto garage	State Road	
12678	Edanna Land & Improvement Co.			real estate developer	Wilmington	
13484	Thomas Farrell (purchased by spouse, Lydia)		Farmer	personal residence	Dover	possibly demolished on DuPont Hwy
14067	Geo. C. Hughes	Butcher	Meat Cutter	personal residence	Elsmere Jct.	
14223	L. E. Walstrom		Farmer	personal residence	Milford	
14765	George R. Umflet	Farmer	Saw sharpener, Fiber Works	residence	Elsmere Jct.	2 Locust Ave., Elsmere

<b>Order #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>1910 Occupation</b>	<b>1920 Occupation</b>	<b>Purchase Motivation</b>	<b>Delivery Location</b>	<b>Construction Location</b>
14983	Martin O'Toole	Own income	none	builder	Wilmington (Cox's Siding)	
15015	Rachel Minner, purchaser		none	personal residence	Harrington	213 Delaware Ave., Harrington
15015	Clarence S. Morris, builder	Machinist, Locomotive Works	House Carpenter	builder	Harrington	213 Delaware Ave., Harrington
15201	Joseph Hardy		Pipe Fitter	personal residence	Wilmington (Pine St. Yds.)	203 West Ave, Holloway Terrace
15305	William F. Sellers	Manufacturer, Boilers	President, Iron Company	personal auto garage	Edge Moor	
15701	Edge Moor Iron Co.			company related garage	Edge Moor	
15707	Henry P. Jones	Bricklayer	Construction Engineer	personal residence	Elsmere Jct.	possibly demolished at 7 Northern Ave, Elsmere
15872	J. J. Barnes	Cabinet Maker	Cabinet Maker, Dye Works	residence	Elsmere Jct.	possibly demolished from Rt. 141 expansion at 2916 Main St., Roselle
15962	Chas. H. Moore, purchaser				Newark	
15962	Jacob A. Gricker, recipient				Newark	
16581	William D. Gray	Flagman, Railroad		personal residence	Elsmere Jct.	possibly demolished at 123 Roselawn Ave., Roselle

<b>Order #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>1910 Occupation</b>	<b>1920 Occupation</b>	<b>Purchase Motivation</b>	<b>Delivery Location</b>	<b>Construction Location</b>
E-17497	Clarence S. Foster	Supervisor, Steam railroad	Electrician	personal residence	Newark	
19080	C. E. Happersett, recipient	College student	Farm manager		Cooch	
19080	Atlas Powder Co., purchaser			employee benefit	Cooch	

**Appendix C**

**EXTANT ALADDIN BUILDINGS IN DELAWARE**



**Figure C.1** Order 4400, Portland #1, G. P. Weatherlow, view of east elevation, 207 Beeson Ave, Edgemoor. (Source: Photo by author, December 2009.)





**Figure C.2** Order 4400, Portland #1, G. P. Weatherlow, perspective of east and north elevations, 207 Beeson Ave, Edgemoor. (Source: Photo by author, December 2009.)



**Figure C.3** Order 5451, Dresden, Frank P. Long, view of northwest elevation, 305 Hamilton St, Delaware City. (Source: Photo by author, August 2009.)



**Figure C.4** Order 5451, Dresden, Frank P. Long, perspective of northeast and northwest elevations, 305 Hamilton St, Delaware City. (Source: Photo by author, August 2009.)



**Figure C.5** Order 5451, Dresden, Frank P. Long, view of northwest and northeast walls of dining room, 305 Hamilton St, Delaware City.  
(Source: Photo by author, February 2010.)



**Figure C.6** Order 5451, Dresden, Frank P. Long, detail of interior door hardware, 305 Hamilton St, Delaware City. (Source: Photo by author, February 2010.)



**Figure C.7** Order 7922, New Eden, Mrs. Tillie Thomas, view of north elevation, 45 W. Park Place, Newark. (Source: Photo by author, January 2010.)



**Figure C.8** Order 10092, Stanhope #1, A. H. Padberg, perspective of southwest and southeast elevations, 166 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St, New Castle. (Source: Photo by author, August 2009.)



**Figure C.9** Order 10111, Boulevard, Charles W. Coyers, view of northeast elevation, 408 Marion Ave, Bellefonte. (Source: Google Street View, <http://maps.google.com/> accessed October 12, 2009.)





**Figure C.10** Order 10111, Boulevard, Charles W. Coyers, perspective of southeast and northeast elevations, 408 Marion Ave, Bellefonte. (Source: Photo by author, January 2010.)



**Figure C.11 Order 10830, Rochester, James H. Stanton, perspective of east and north elevations, 406 N. Walnut St, Milford. (Source: Photo by author, July 2009.)**



**Figure C.12** Order 14765, Hudson, George R. Umflet, perspective of west and south elevations, 2 Locust Ave, Elsmere. (Source: Photo by author, July 2009.)



**Figure C.13** Order 15015, Gretna #2, Rachel Minner, perspective of southwest and southeast elevations, 213 Delaware Ave, Harrington. (Source: Photo by author, November 2009.)



**Figure C.14 Order 15201, Chester, Joseph Hardy, perspective of southeast and northeast elevations, 203 West Ave, Holloway Terrace. (Source: Photo by author, December 2009.)**

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