

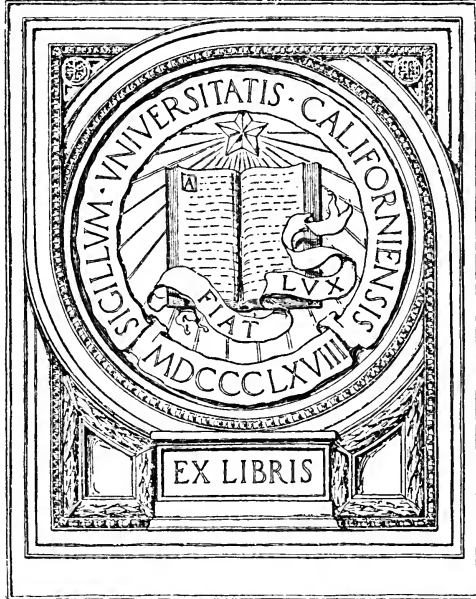
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REPORT ON  
HOUSING CONDITIONS  
IN  
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



Presented to the Housing Committee  
of the

**UNION RELIEF ASSOCIATION**

By

Carol Aronowicz, Ph. D.

*Director of the Bureau of Social Research of New England*

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REPORT ON  
**Housing Conditions**  
IN  
**SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**



UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

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TO VIMU  
AMBOLIAO



This shows two dark bedrooms opening from a very gloomy kitchen—one bedroom has a window about 24 x 30 opening into a poorly ventilated hall. The bedroom on the right has a window (full size) opening outside, but the adjoining building is so near that very little light enters here. The same is true of the kitchen. This tenement is cold and damp.

Italian

37.38%

Jewish

14.38%

Polish

12.98%

Irish

8.72%

Syrian

8.61%

Colored

3.94%

American

3.01%

All Others

11.44%

Nativity and Race  
of Population by  
Heads of Family

Two Stories

39.4%

Three Stories

51.9%

Four Stories

68.7

Five Stories

79.4

Lot Occupancy  
by  
Height of Building



# HOUSING CONDITIONS

## IN SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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### INTRODUCTION

The present report relates to a housing investigation carried on in the city of Springfield by the Bureau of Social Research of New England (Mr. Carol Aronovici, Ph.D., Director) under the auspices of the Housing Committee of the Union Relief Association (Society for Organizing Charity) with the coöperation of the Springfield Anti-Tuberculosis Association, Industrial House Charities, People's Institute, Baby Feeding Association and other philanthropic organizations.

The investigation was undertaken mainly with a view to ascertaining existing conditions in old buildings and the extent and efficiency of the administrative machinery provided for the control of unsanitary conditions; examining existing laws and determining their effectiveness as a means of controlling the construction of new and the alteration of old buildings; and, finally, suggesting changes in the present system of legislative and administrative control that would make possible the removal of objectionable conditions and prevent the construction in the future of buildings which are below a normal standard of safety and sanitation.

The point of view of the committee was constructive and with an outlook into the future rather than critical and of the present. When the investigation was started, neither the committee nor the agent engaged to undertake the work expected to find any serious housing evils such as were discovered later, and it was a source of considerable disappointment to find that much had been left undone in preventing the development and existence of housing conditions which are a menace to the community.

In engaging the Bureau of Social Research of New England it was felt that an outside agency would be better prepared to gather the material and to consider it from the broad point of view of the student of social conditions, without local prejudice.

In making public the contents of this report, it is our conviction that a knowledge of existing conditions must lead to further changes in the building code which determines the construction of all new buildings, and to greater efforts on the part of the Board of Health to do away with the abuses now existing in some of the old buildings.

Housing Committee

{ AUGUSTUS P. RECCORD, *Chairman*  
JOHN H. ASHLEY  
FLORENCE F. BESSE  
FRANK L. DUNLAP  
AUGUST H. GOETTING  
THERESE W. POWERS  
FREDERIC M. JONES  
DANIEL W. MELLEN  
ISABEL Y. PACKARD  
FREDERICK B. SWEET  
EMMA C. YOUNGQUIST

Springfield, December 1, 1912.

# REPORT

TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE OF THE UNION RELIEF ASSOCIATION:

The investigation was made with a view to ascertaining the extent, character and distribution of unsanitary housing conditions throughout the city. The selection of sections to be investigated was made by the writer with the assistance of members of the committee familiar with local conditions.

## FIELD OF INQUIRY

The field covered included 404 buildings with 1,427 apartments in which were housed 7,370 persons, or about 8% of the population of the city. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that the investigation covered all the territory that might be included in a housing survey, but sufficiently representative districts have been examined to secure facts which are indicative of the prevailing conditions in the poorer sections of the city. Whether there are other districts in sufficiently serious condition to have been included in the present study or not is a matter that should be left to the discretion of the public to decide, but the limited field covered represents in itself a problem of housing that is sufficient to call forth immediate and constructive action along the lines of administrative and legislative control that would prevent in the future the building of unsanitary houses and would either improve or legislate out of existence the buildings which at present constitute the main housing problem of Springfield.

However limited the field covered by the present investigation the intensive study of individual buildings and apartments has made possible accuracy and thoroughness of record which, with the appropriation available, could not have been secured over a larger territory. The facts herein presented are as accurate and as complete as the experience of trained workers and the tried-out method of record used, combined with the good will of the tenants, made possible.

Because of the scattered location of the territories covered, they included a variety of types of houses and a considerable amount of racial and national representation, thus giving the investigation a wide scope without unnecessarily extending it over the entire community.

## METHOD OF WORK

After the field of investigation was decided upon and the main features to be covered were determined, in consultation with members

of the Committee, two field cards were prepared for use in gathering the necessary data. The first card was used in designating the condition of the buildings and the yards and the second was used in noting the condition of the interior of the apartments occupied by the families studied.

With the cards as a means of recording conditions found and a properly prepared map, an agent of the Bureau of Social Research was placed in the field. Each building and apartment within the building was thoroughly examined and conditions noted. Most of the inquiries were made personally by the investigating agent. The questions upon the cards call for answers which vary but little from person to person.

In but few cases were any apartments within the buildings examined closed at the time of the investigation and only in four instances did the tenants object to the questions asked and the personal inspection of the premises by the agent.

In the body of the present report, some rather striking cases of neglect will be referred to. In order to avoid any charge of exaggeration of conditions found, the most serious abuses were reinspected at different intervals, members of the committee being taken on tours of inspection and a number of striking photographs taken.

The agent of the Bureau represented himself as a student of housing conditions, without official authority to enter any of the homes, but with the exception of the four cases referred to above there seemed to be a willingness to assist in the inquiry which made the work of the agent pleasant and, as far as can be ascertained, unusually accurate.

Although repeated attempts were made to secure the most accurate data concerning lodgers living in private families, it is feared that some of the tenants, conscious of the crowding caused by the lodgers and recognizing the danger of the conditions under which they were living, hesitated to give complete and accurate data concerning this aspect of our inquiry.

## THE PEOPLE

The problem of congestion and of the general character of the buildings is determined mainly by two factors,—first, the people who occupy these buildings and, second, the rental that they can pay. The former factor is the more important since upon nationality, age and economic condition the housing standards must depend. In the course of the present inquiry an effort was made to secure information concerning the distribution by age of the population housed in the buildings and apartments examined. This distribution is as follows:



One room of a 10 and 15 cent lodging house, containing 5 cots. At time this picture was taken, H. A. M., 1 man were asleep in room. The only window in the room was closed tightly. In four rooms of this house there is room for 16 men to sleep, two rooms of 5 each and two of 3 each.



AGE	NUMBER	PER CENT.
Children under five	1365	18.52
Five to fourteen years	1542	20.92
Over fourteen years	539	7.31
Adults	3035	41.18
Adult lodgers	889	12.07
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7370</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It is to be noted that 53.25% of the population was adult and that of this number 889, or 12.06%, were persons living in families with which they had no blood relation. In several cities where an investigation similar to the one pursued in Springfield was recently made by the Bureau of Social Research, the distribution by age was as follows:

AGE	PER CENT.		
	NEW HAVEN	WATERBURY	SPRINGFIELD
Children under five	16.38	18.04	18.52
Five to fourteen years	20.03	18.72	20.92
Over fourteen years	10.10	7.01	7.31
Adults	53.49	56.23	53.25

The distribution of the population by age seems to be subject to little variation, except in the case of the adults in Waterbury, where the proportion of lodgers was extremely large.

The proportion of lodgers in some of the cities studied by the Bureau of Social Research is shown by the following table:

	TOTAL NUMBER	LODGERS	PER CENT.
Buffalo	1714	220	12.83
Fall River	5980	601	10.05
Stamford	3031	298	9.83
Waterbury	5620	1235	21.97
New Haven	6454	764	11.83
Springfield	7370	889	12.07

The figures indicate that Springfield has a considerable number of lodgers when compared with other cities. In Waterbury the large proportion of lodgers was due to the special conditions that prevailed in the limited sections examined.

Although conditions as indicated by the figures are not alarming, specific instances indicate considerable serious congestion due to the absence of provision for the housing of the single man or woman who has responded to the labor market demands of the city, but whose families have so far not found it possible or advisable to transfer permanently their residences to Springfield. How intense is this problem of housing the population without local family ties will be shown presently.

NATIONALITY OR RACE	NUMBER	PER CENT.	LODGERS
Italian	2756	37.38	371
Jewish	1060	14.38	27
Polish	957	12.99	257
Irish	643	8.72	48
Syrian	635	8.62	49
Colored	246	3.34	36
American	223	3.03	17
French and Canadian Fr.	154	2.09	4
Greek	51	0.69	15
Hungarian	30	0.41	
English	16	0.23	
German	10	0.14	
Scotch	9	0.12	9
Chinese	7	0.09	
Albanians	8	0.10	4
Russians	4	0.05	2
All others and unknown	561	7.61	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,370</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>889</b>

The figures concerning the racial and national distribution of the population whose homes were examined in the course of the present housing inquiry indicate beyond a doubt that the main housing problem is to be found among the residents of foreign birth, although some of them have been in the United States for some time. It is interesting to note that the population of families whose heads were born in the United States amounts to 3.03% of the total population examined. The population of English speaking parentage is 15.44% of the total population examined.

That such a large proportion of the foreign elements should be living under the sanitary conditions which were sufficiently below the average to cause them to be included in the present inquiry is not surprising, but the responsibility for existing conditions must be placed upon the owners and the local authorities who tolerate conditions which are causing the foreign elements to live under the worst housing conditions. It would seem that the foreign elements need more protection and more careful supervision than the natives because they have not been accustomed to the types of houses used in the United States and also because the strongest Americanizing element among the foreigners is their adjustment to American living conditions.

A study of the distribution of lodgers according to the number of persons of various nationalities shows the following:



	LODGERS	PER CENT.
Italian	371	13.46
Jewish	27	2.54
Polish	257	26.85
Irish	48	7.46
Syrian	49	7.71
Colored	36	14.22
American	17	7.17

These figures show that the Polish immigrants keep lodgers more frequently than any other nationality. This fact is not surprising since the Polish population is comparatively new in Springfield and in the United States as a whole and it is, therefore, to be expected that a considerable number of them would be living without their families until they are sufficiently well established.

The most serious evil in the housing of the lodgers is to be found in the crowding which is caused by their presence in the family and the lack of privacy which results.

Of the total of 1,427 families which were the object of the present investigation, 393 families, or 27.5%, kept lodgers. The number of persons affected by the lodger evil is 2,478,—33.6% of the population examined—a proportion which is considerable when we realize the importance of keeping out of the family all elements which may lead to congestion and a reduction in the amount of privacy possible.

The lodgers living in lodging houses present a very serious sanitary problem and conditions found in at least two of these houses were such as to be a serious menace to the health of those affected. The only advantage that the lodging house has over homes where lodgers are kept is to be found in the fact that in the former case the persons affected are the lodgers alone, while in the latter case the families are affected as well as the lodgers. The living conditions in lodging houses where eight and ten persons are sharing the same room, where the beds are being used both day and night by different shifts, and where there is a complete absence of any standard of cleanliness and decency constitute a problem that should command the attention of the health authorities as well as the interest of the Y. M. C. A. and other agencies interested in the welfare of the immigrants. Some cheap hotels provided by a welfare agency where the foreign man or woman without a family could find comfortable and cheap accommodations would be as much of a factor in Americanizing this element of our population as any of the evening school work that is at present being carried on in our cities. The photograph opposite page 6 is indicative of the type of lodging house that is available for the average recently arrived immigrant man and it is not to be wondered that he prefers to live in the home of his friends where he can at least count on some cleanliness and companionship. This aspect of the housing problem has so far

received little if any attention, and in Springfield there are at least 2,000 men who are in need of proper housing facilities outside of the families of their compatriots.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

The problem of congestion of population has frequently been the subject of discussion when the distribution of population over the city's area was being considered. The problem of taxation, the extensive and intensive use of lands for building purposes and the crowding of population into small land areas have been the most seriously considered within the last few years. That these important factors have a fundamental bearing upon the sanitary, moral and educational standard of the community cannot be denied, but in what relation they stand to the actual living conditions and the type of building has not been made clear by any of the recent investigations. We can conceive of a congested settlement where the buildings are small and where the population per acre is not more than five hundred. We can also find sections in some of the largest cities where a population of two thousand persons per acre could be well housed and live under conditions which could in no way be designated as congested. There is, therefore, a relation between the land and the character of housing accommodations which it holds. The relationship that exists between the open space and the land that is covered with buildings, coupled with the relative floor area or air space per person living in the apartments constructed upon the land, seems to the writer to be the only sound criterion upon which to base any estimate of congestion. Cases of 35% of the land being covered by buildings were found frequently in New Haven in houses which provided accommodations for only one or two families and yet the conditions were not such as to be classed as very far superior, from the point of view of congestion, to some of the land in the more central part of the city where three-story buildings accommodated six families with more than half the land occupied. Congestion is relative in the highest degree and whatever we shall say in this connection relative to Springfield conditions will as far as possible be considered from this point of view.

One of the most striking facts in connection with the present investigation is the distribution of unsanitary conditions. These seem to have been found much more frequently in the buildings which were less than three stories in height and where the land was not congested to any very considerable degree. That this is due more to the age of the buildings and the lack of proper legislation for the control of the maintenance of old buildings cannot be stated. Certain it is, however, that the new buildings are more or less under legislative control, the requirements of safety and sanitation being above the average found or required in the old buildings, while the incentive given to the owner of old property to maintain it in proper condition is almost nil. The new building is almost legislated out of existence, not because the

requirements are so very high, but because the owner of the old building is placed in a position where he can compete to advantage with the owner of the new building, and the poorer class of tenants are always ready to accept poor conditions in order to save on the rental.

The accommodations of the 7,370 persons whose homes were examined are as follows:

USE OF ROOMS	NUMBER	PER CENT.
Kitchens	1437	24.86
Bedrooms	3589	62.07
Attic Bedrooms	21	0.36
Spare Rooms and Parlors	439	7.59
Dining Rooms	296	5.12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,782</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The above table indicates that all the families had a kitchen and that 62.43% of the rooms available were used for bedroom purposes, while only 7.59% were used as spare rooms and still fewer rooms were available for dining room purposes. These figures, when interpreted in terms of families, show that all the families had separate kitchens and that in ten cases the families had some special space outside the apartments where the cooking was done in the summer. When we distribute the 3,609 bedrooms by hundred families we find that there were 251 bedrooms per hundred families. In the case of the parlors and spare rooms the condition should be a subject of serious consideration. Of the 1,427 families whose homes were examined only 439, or 30.76%, had a spare room and only 296 families, or 20.74%, had dining rooms.

These facts are significant since they indicate the intensity of room use. In the families where there is no spare room the entire social life must be carried on in the kitchen or in the bedrooms and in 79.26% of the cases all the meals are taken in the kitchen. The condition is still more serious where lodgers are causing an increased congestion and where the proportion of spare rooms and dining rooms is less than in the families where lodgers are not kept. A condition which reduces the home life of the family to the kitchen and the bedrooms cannot be attractive and, where the lodger is present, privacy and the enjoyment of the home are reduced to a minimum. Is not the problem of the amusement and the street life of the boys and girls as much of a housing problem as it is a problem of satisfying a desire for variety and excitement? The condition revealed by the investigation is worthy of serious thought.

After considering the accommodations per family it is important to examine the proportion of persons per room in order to determine

the amount of room congestion which, from the point of view of housing, is of extreme importance.

There were in all 7,370 people in the homes examined and a total of 5,782 rooms used as sleeping quarters, kitchens, dining rooms, parlors, etc. In other words, there were 127 persons for every hundred rooms. As the age distribution of the population that came under our observation in Springfield is not different from the age distribution in the other cities examined by the writer, a comparison between the total number of persons per hundred rooms may be made. The results of such a comparison are as follows:

CITY	NUMBER OF PERSONS PER 100 ROOMS	
	ALL FAMILIES	FAMILIES WITH LODGERS
Waterbury	147	163
Fall River	130	170
Buffalo	131	147
Stamford	120	133
New Haven	138	145
Springfield	127	151

The comparative figures show that on the average the condition of congestion in the apartments examined was below the amount of congestion found in other cities with the exception of Stamford, which is not an industrial center and is much smaller in size than any of the other communities examined.

When we compare the number of persons in families with lodgers as distributed by one hundred rooms, we find that there were 151 persons per hundred rooms, a proportion which was found to be lower in three out of the five cities for which the figures are available. A still more striking condition is found when we compare the number of persons per hundred rooms in the families in which lodgers are not kept with the number of persons per hundred rooms in which lodgers were found. The former shows a proportion of only 118 persons per hundred rooms while the latter shows a proportion of 151 persons for the same number of rooms, or a difference in favor of the home without lodgers of 28%.

Sitting rooms, kitchens and dining rooms are seldom used, except by small children, for any very large part of the day, especially in warm weather. The sleeping rooms, on the other hand, are occupied during at least seven or eight hours out of the twenty-four by all the members of the family and practically always at the same time. It is, therefore, of greater importance to determine the amount of congestion according to the number of bedrooms or rooms used for sleeping purposes on which basis the following conditions were found:

Total Bedrooms	3609
Total Number of Persons	7370
Persons per 100 Bedrooms	204

These figures are more valuable than the figures giving the number of persons occupying all rooms. When we segregate the population living in families with lodgers, we find that the total number of persons per one hundred bedrooms increases from 204 to 239. If we separate the apartments occupied by families with lodgers from the apartments in which lodgers are not kept we find that the total number of persons per hundred for the latter is only 193,—a difference of 23.8%. It would seem, therefore, that in every respect the lodger creates congestion. This is easily proven by the most casual observation of the figures. The contention that lodgers in Springfield assist the family in securing larger quarters, thereby reducing congestion, must, therefore, be declared as without foundation.

A comparison with other cities that have come under our observation within the last year shows the following:

CITY	NUMBER PERSONS PER 100 BEDROOMS
Fall River	209
Stamford	220
Buffalo	236
Waterbury	224
New Haven	234
Springfield	204

When the condition of congestion per hundred bedrooms is considered, it is clear that the Springfield situation is better than in any of the communities so far examined. It must be added also that where the kitchens and the bedrooms prevail in largest numbers the cleanliness of the rooms is materially affected.

Some specific instances of congestion were noted to indicate the degree of crowding that is sometimes possible. The following are some of the cases noted:

Seven persons in one bedroom.

One bedroom occupied both day and night by six lodgers.

Bed in kitchen occupied by two women.

Bed in kitchen in filthy condition occupied by two lodgers.

Bedroom containing 576 cubic feet of air space occupied by three persons.

Family of three occupy one room which is used as a kitchen.

Chickens in attic rooms occupied by three children.

Gloomy basement bedroom occupied by four persons.

Dark bedroom occupied by three adults and two children.

These are a few of the cases noted which deserve attention. They do not represent averages, but are indicative of the character of congestion that is possible under the present system of inspection and the

tendency among the foreign elements, particularly when of recent arrival. To segregate the nationalities by themselves and treat their problem as a nationality problem would be against the policy of the committee and those interested in the improvement of social conditions as such. If the law provides a minimum of sanitary and safety standards in housing, it matters little whether the objectionable conditions are found among one group or another of the people living in the city.

Before closing the discussion on congestion, it must be added that the figures relating to the housing of families with lodgers have special significance since they relate to a larger proportion of adults than is found in the general figures or in the figures relating to families without lodgers.

## RENT

In the wage earner's family budget are three main items: food, shelter and clothing. These three items vary with the standard of the population, the conditions under which the families are living, the degree of Americanization that the foreign elements have reached and various other personal elements which cannot be discussed fully in the body of the present report. There are, however, a few factors which determine rentals independently of the elements above mentioned and which are beyond the control of the individuals. These elements are taxation, concentration of population beyond the housing capacity of the community, housing legislation, cost of building and building materials, and wage standards. How these various elements control rentals cannot be discussed fully but certain aspects of these influences may be touched upon.

Rentals, more readily than any other of the wage earner's expenditures, change with the rise in the standards of living, the increase or decrease in the family income and the many accidents of unemployment and family increase. It is therefore of the utmost importance to guard the families of wage earners against the frequent necessity of going into homes which are far below the lowest standard permissible for normal existence. How rentals are affected by the market values of land and the other commercial influences we cannot discuss here, but in legislating on matters pertaining to housing the wage earners, these aspects should be considered carefully with a view to promoting the construction of sanitary houses which shall be within the reach of the average workers. Considerable of our present reform legislation fails to consider these basic aspects.

In examining the rentals paid by the families considered in the course of the present investigation, the following distribution of rentals was found:

NUMBER OF ROOMS PER APARTMENT	RENTAL PER ROOM PER MONTH	NUMBER OF APARTMENTS	MAXIMUM RENT	MINIMUM RENT
Two	\$3.06	20	\$10.00	\$4.50
Three	2.37	398	21.00	4.00
Four	2.72	472	18.00	5.00
Five	2.44	245	16.00	5.00
Six	2.08	55	21.00	9.00
Seven	2.00	16	21.00	10.00

The above figures indicate a rate of rental that is interesting from several points of view. The most interesting condition shown by the figures is the decrease in the price per room as the number of rooms increase. This is a tendency that has been noted in all but one of the nine cities so far examined. The apparent higher rentals derived from four-room apartments is due to the large demand for apartments of that size which of necessity causes the rentals to rise. The somewhat higher rentals for five room apartments is due to the better type of buildings in which apartments of this size prevail.

In order to obviate any objection to the validity of these figures relative to the rental per room and size of rooms, measurements were taken in 149 apartments in which were included all sizes of apartments. There was no perceptible difference in the size of the rooms with the increase in the number of rooms except a slight increase in height. This would seem to indicate that on the basis of air space there is an increase, rather than a decrease, in the size of rooms with the decrease in the rental per room.

The difference between the maximum and minimum rental per room as indicated by the table shows how varied the rentals for accommodations of practically the same size may be and with that fluctuation there must of necessity be manifest a difference in the character of the building.

It is also interesting to note that five-sixths of the total number of apartments for which rentals were obtained are of three, four and five rooms, the largest number being of four rooms.

The rental rates cannot well be estimated without comparison with other cities of the same character and in about the same section of the country as Springfield.

**Table Showing Comparative Rent Rates Per Room by Size of Apartment**

NUMBER OF ROOMS	NEW HAVEN	WATER-BURY	FALL RIVER	STAM-FORD	BUFFALO	SPRING-FIELD
Two	\$3.05	\$2.68	\$2.47	\$3.03	\$2.91	\$3.06
Three	2.80	2.86	2.13	2.60	2.24	2.37
Four	2.59	2.59	2.02	2.49	1.44	2.72
Five	2.61	2.65	1.52	2.46	2.08	2.44
Six	2.61	2.44	1.61	2.58	1.53	2.08
Seven	2.51	2.30	1.77	2.67	1.48	2.00
AVERAGE	\$2.67	\$2.64	\$1.93	\$2.56	\$1.91	\$2.40

The above table shows that rentals in Springfield are by no means lower than in other communities and in the case of the four room apartments, which are most in demand, the rentals are considerably above the average in the other five cities considered. On the whole, it must be said that rentals in Springfield are normally high and that in industrial cities with a large number of unskilled laborers, like Fall River, the rentals are considerably lower. The average rental for all the apartments where the rentals were willingly given by the tenants (1206 in number) is \$2.40 per month, per room, or less than in three of the cities considered and more than in the two others.

The absence of any building difficulties due to the topography and the composition of the soil, and the lack of serious territorial limitations in the expansion of the residential sections of the city, should aid in promoting the construction of sanitary and cheap dwelling houses for the working classes. That rentals are not lower is probably due to the lack of incentive to build new houses when, under the present law, old buildings can be more cheaply maintained and, by a reduction in the supply of homes, cause a comparatively high rental rate.

More stringent enforcement of the laws relating to old buildings and the removal of buildings unfit for human habitation would cause the construction of new homes which would of necessity be of a better class.

### **DARK ROOMS**

The evils of dark rooms need no exposition in the body of the present report. It is sufficient to say that in spite of the cheaper land and more favorable conditions that exist in Springfield as compared with other cities there were found in the course of the investigation 327 rooms which were either totally dark or gloomy to an extent that made proper lighting and ventilation impossible.

Ten rooms were found in which there was absolutely no way of lighting or ventilating except the door through which the rooms were entered from other rooms. These rooms were all used for bedroom purposes. In three instances they were occupied by four persons and in one case by a father, mother and three children.





Dark bedroom with no ventilation except from the door into the kitchen.



A one room tenement.



In nine cases the only source of light and ventilation was through a transom which opened into another room or into a poorly lighted hall. In 48 cases the light was obstructed from the outside by near-by buildings which were separated from the adjoining structures by narrow passage-ways, the only function of which seems to be the accumulation of rubbish and other refuse rather than the providing of light and air between buildings. In 41 cases the windows which opened either into the outer air or into some other room or store were subnormal in size and thereby made proper lighting and ventilation impossible. The balance of the dark and gloomy rooms referred to were caused by the narrowness of courts into which the windows opened and where the overhanging verandas, although a desirable feature in some cases, made the lighting of rooms difficult. The overhanging veranda, while a good feature in the construction of tenement houses, was found to be considerable of a handicap in providing proper lighting, especially where the rooms opening on to the veranda had no windows opening into the outer air. If in the construction of tenements the veranda is to be preserved, and it is undoubtedly a desirable asset in hot weather, some provision should be made whereby rooms opening on to the veranda would also have at least one window opening into the outer air. This is especially desirable where the kitchen in which most of the household work is going on happens to be the room adjoining the veranda.

The fact that all of the dark rooms were used for sleeping purposes renders the problem of removing them more serious than if they were used for storage or sitting room purposes, since in the bedrooms the occupants spend a larger part of the day than in any other part of the apartment. A proper system of inspection for the purpose of ascertaining the exact number of dark rooms at present in existence in the city and the enactment of legislation which would provide for a reasonable improvement in the lighting facilities of these rooms would do away with the evil in a short time and at a very small cost.

The photographs showing the conditions that prevail in the dark rooms indicate a desire on the part of the families to keep their homes clean in spite of the evident difficulty of performing the work under poor conditions of lighting.

## CHARACTER OF BUILDINGS

The character of the buildings in which the 1,427 apartments examined were located was the subject of study because of the bearing that the size and conditions of buildings have upon safety and sanitation as well as upon the social life of the people. The question of type of architecture was not considered since there was little if any attempt to make the buildings beautiful beyond the stock ornaments which did not affect the cost of construction or maintenance. That the old buildings were especially unattractive needs not be stated, but even the newest of structures have about them a stereotyped monotony of

form which grows wearisome and gives the neighborhood an appearance of unattractive uniformity that is neither necessary to the carrying out of the plans for comfort, nor more economical than some of the same class of structures that are found in Europe and here and there in American cities.

Whether the larger or the smaller buildings are preferable from the point of view of comfort and sanitation cannot be stated in the present report since our investigation did not deal with that aspect of the problem in sufficient detail to furnish material for reliable conclusions. Certain it is, however, that crime, morbidity and mortality stand in some relation to the type of houses in which the majority of the population must live. Is the smaller or larger building most favorable to the maintenance of a low mortality and a high standard of morality? This is a question that we assume to have solved for ourselves in favor of the small one family building. There is still a vast field of investigation to be covered before a final decision is to be rendered in the light of economy and sanitary conveniences that are necessary for a proper maintenance of home life.

The examination of the buildings according to height was made with the idea in mind of correlating height with number of apartments. Owing to the discrepancy in the figures giving the number of apartments in each of the buildings that was found upon tabulation, only 361 buildings were considered in order to avoid any error or statement. The following table indicates the conditions found:

#### Apartments According to Height of Buildings

No. Apart- ments	STORIES								Total	Per cent.
	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	5		
1	6	16	7	1	3				33	9.14
2	2	2	121	7	3				135	37.39
3			18		12		1		31	8.59
4			68	1	4		1		74	20.50
5			8		8	1		1	18	4.99
6			7		30		3		40	11.08
7			4		1		1		6	1.68
8					4		3		7	1.94
9					5				5	1.38
10					2				2	0.55
11					2		1		3	0.83
12							1		1	0.28
13					1				1	0.28
14			1						1	0.28
15										
16							3		3	0.83
18							1		1	0.28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The above table shows that 269, or 75%, of the buildings for which accurate data were secured consisted of one, one and a half, two and two and a half story buildings, and the balance were buildings of three stories and over. The most interesting fact in this connection is the great frequency of unsanitary conditions in the small houses as compared with the larger and taller buildings. The fact that the tall building is of comparatively recent date is largely responsible for the greater frequency of the poor conditions found in the smaller buildings, which are also the older.

When we compare the number of apartments per building with the total number of buildings, we find that 46.4% of the buildings examined contained less than three apartments.

When we consider the buildings according to height and number of apartments we find the following conditions:

NUMBER STORIES	APARTMENTS
One	10
One and one-half	20
Two	685
Two and one-half	19
Three	420
Three and one-half	5
Four	145
Five	5
	<hr/>
TOTAL	1,309

The above table shows that 734 out of 1,309 apartments considered were located in less than three story buildings. In other words there are more than 56% of the apartments considered in the smaller structures, most of which are two stories in height.

When we consider the number of apartments located in buildings of various sizes classified according to number of apartments in the building, we find that only 303, or 23%, out of a total of 1,309 apartments are located in buildings of less than three apartments. This fact goes to show that there is a good deal of tenement life which is confined to these smaller types of structure. Here we consider a tenement any structure of three apartments or more. Whether the tenement life which is confined to the small two story buildings spreading over a large area and congregating about a common yard or court is preferable to the taller building with the same number of apartments cannot be stated on any scientific basis. If, however, the rise in the height of the buildings is to result in an increase in the open space and reduce the proximity of buildings, the choice of the latter would seem feasible.

## LOCATION OF BUILDINGS—REAR BUILDINGS

The relation of the building to the street is of considerable importance. A building constructed in the rear of the lot is of necessity shut off from the life of the street.

Of the 404 buildings examined 33, or 8%, were rear buildings. In 16 cases the buildings were located in a court which contained from 6 to 14 apartments and where the yard or court was designated for common use.

The rear buildings were without exception the poorest type encountered in the course of the investigation. The condition of repair was below the average of the buildings examined, the yards were less clean, although forming the only outlook of the tenements, the toilet facilities were poor and the general sanitary condition of the interior of the buildings seemed to bear the marks of neglect and carelessness. One of the worst, if not the worst, toilets found in the course of the investigation was located in the cellar of a rear tenement where four families expected to use it, although the cellar was full of ice, the toilet without water and in a filthy condition, and the approach to the cellar was through the outside by stairs which were dangerously out of repair and covered with ice.

These rear tenements housed 114 families containing a population of 697 people. That this is a considerable population to be living under the subnormal conditions which prevail in and about the rear tenements is not to be questioned. The remedy for the rear tenement is not at hand except in such legislation and sanitary inspections as would make them the object of a thorough cleaning up, or the complete removal when they appear to be a menace to health and beyond a reasonable possibility of repair.

## CONDITION OF REPAIR OF BUILDINGS

It is not possible to designate the condition of repair of buildings with a degree of accuracy that would leave no room for discrepancy, unless each part of the building were noted separately and with an elaborate system of scores. In order to avoid complication of records which were already burdened with detail it was agreed that buildings which had no exterior defects and where there was no evidence of neglect should be marked as in good condition. The buildings which were not painted properly, where the rain leaders were not in perfect condition, where the walls of the halls were out of repair and needed whitewashing or plastering were marked as in fair repair. The buildings which had defective stairs, broken doors and windows, leaking roofs and other features which interfered with the comfort, sanitation and safety of the tenants were marked as in bad repair. The classification as noted upon the field cards is as follows:

CONDITION OF REPAIR	NUMBER	PER CENT.
Good	94	23.27
Fair	161	39.85
Bad	149	36.88
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It is surprising to find that more than one-third of the buildings examined were in bad repair. Some of the most serious defects were found in the condition of the stairs, drain pipes and roofs. There was a general condition of dilapidation of the outside and the inside of the building. The cellars were especially in bad repair and windows were found closed up with boards in order to prevent the wind from coming in, or the rain water that accumulates in the yards from flowing into the cellar. In at least three instances were the walls found to be in such a condition of disrepair as to allow the wind and the rain to enter freely into the cellar of the building.

The specific condition of disrepair of outside toilets will be dealt with in another part of this report.

## OUTBUILDINGS

Aside from the main buildings which occupy the building lot there were found in the yards of the structures examined 182 outbuildings in addition to the 30 yard toilets which we shall consider later. The construction of outbuildings has the double disadvantage of crowding many of the already too crowded building lots and also of bringing into the yard foreign materials as well as animals which increase the difficulty of keeping the yards in a cleanly condition.

The outbuildings are usually of flimsy construction and in the case of Springfield only 8 out of the 182 buildings were of brick. The uses to which these buildings are put are as follows:

Storage	123
Stables	46
Chickens	38
Rabbits	1
Pigeons	2
Dogs	1
Sheep	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>212</b>

It will be noted that the figures in the above table add up to 212. This is due to the fact that some of the buildings are used for more than one purpose.

The keeping of animals is the most serious evil encountered in connection with the outbuildings. The stables are seldom kept in a

cleanly condition, and where chickens are kept the yard is naturally littered in a manner that makes its use unattractive.

In one case sheep were kept in an outbuilding, and in another instance the third story of a tenement in the Jewish quarter was used as a "sheep farm" where two sheep and six lambs were being kept at the time of the first inspection. It was a matter of regret that when the photographer went to take a picture of the sheep they had been removed.

The keeping of chickens, which seems to be most common among the Italians, has become a serious problem, both with relation to the cleanliness of the yard and that of the interior of the apartments. In eleven instances from four to a dozen chickens were found within the apartments and in two instances they were kept in bedrooms where the children were sleeping.

The lack of proper inspection in homes has made possible the keeping of animals without proper control on the part of the health authorities and, in the case of the stables, the waste and horse dropping were found in at least 16 cases to be such as to permit access to flies and interfere with the cleanliness of the yard.

A clear conception of the condition in which these outbuildings are kept may be gained from an examination of the figures concerning their cleanliness as noted upon the field cards at the time of the first inspection.

Clean	37
Dirty	116
Fair	20
Filthy	4
Nuisance	5

The nuisances were limited to the buildings in which horses were kept. The City Ordinances are quite explicit in the matter of keeping animals and in the care of the refuse, but there seems to have been considerable laxity in the enforcement of these ordinances. That only about one-fifth of all the outbuildings should be considered in clean condition is indicative of a considerable need for regular and systematic inspection, without which little can be hoped for at the present time.

The condition of repair of the outbuilding adds or detracts from the attractiveness of the yard and, in the case of Springfield, the following conditions of repair were found:

Good	30
Fair	70
Bad	82

These figures show that only one-sixth of the buildings were maintained in good repair while the remainder were either in fair repair or entirely out of repair.



Aside from the condition of cleanliness and attractiveness and the problem of properly guarding the waste materials against contaminating the air and becoming a medium for the transmission of disease, the fire hazard connected with these outbuildings is no small consideration. The Fire Department should be required to inspect such buildings and, in so far as is consistent with the law, they should pass upon permits for the construction of buildings.

### LOT OCCUPANCY

Owing to a desire to keep the investigation as quiet as possible it was felt that measurements of all the lots occupied by the buildings examined would cause suspicion and interfere materially with the willingness on the part of the tenants to furnish information and in some cases, where the owner lives in the neighborhood, information might have been refused. In order to secure some estimate of the proportion of lot occupancy according to height of buildings 187 lots were measured. The results were as follows:

LAND OCCUPANCY		
	NUMBER	PER CENT.
Two story buildings	92	39.4
Three " "	63	51.9
Four " "	29	68.7
Five " "	3	79.4

These figures indicate that there is a marked tendency to increase the lot occupancy with the increase in the height of the buildings. That with the increase in height there is a corresponding increase in the number of homes and people per a given area of land is a truism that we need not discuss, but the fact that this increase in the number of families for a given area carried with it a corresponding increase in the amount of land occupied is a matter that deserves serious consideration.

If there is to be no gain in the amount of land about the taller buildings, in spite of the increased congestion of population, there seems to be no reason for allowing the development of the tall building in a city like Springfield where there is little territorial limitation in the development of residential sections.

An interesting phase of the lot occupancy is to be found in the occupancy of the land by outbuildings which, in the case of the buildings examined, amounted to 6.4% of the total land area considered.

In 14 instances the outbuildings were found to occupy over 12% of the lot area and in 9 cases the lot occupancy by outbuildings was between 8 and 12%.

The reduction in the amount of open space due to the outbuildings is another, and by no means small, argument against their indiscriminate construction.

## LOWEST FLOORS

The discussion of the character of the buildings and the lot occupancy should be followed by a discussion of the actual use of the buildings and we shall, therefore, begin with the lowest floors, which are constructed either as cellars or as basements. Of the 404 buildings examined 43 had basements and of this number 16 were used for business purposes and 27 were used as dwellings.

The dwellings located in the basements were usually of a somewhat lower type than the apartments on the regular floors of the same buildings. The lighting in the rear rooms of the basements was generally poorer than in the rooms of other apartments in the same buildings and frequently the size of the court made proper lighting impossible. In one case the owner had stored a considerable quantity of lumber across the windows of the two rear bedrooms. In other instances the proximity of outbuildings made lighting difficult.

Of the 329 cellars for which accurate information was gathered 217 were found to be gloomy and 27 were almost entirely dark. When this condition of poor lighting of cellars is considered in view of the 300 families which are compelled to use cellar toilets, one-half of which were located in cellars which were either dark or gloomy, the seriousness of the lighting problem becomes more apparent.

The problem of avoiding dampness in cellars is one of construction pure and simple and, whatever the condition found, there is little doubt that with proper care it can be removed. In spite of this fact, out of the 329 cellars for which accurate data was obtained, 60 were wet and 16 had a sufficient quantity of water in them to make the approach to the interior of the cellar impossible. In 6 such cases the cellar also contained the only toilets provided for the use of the families. In two instances the taking of photographs of cellars with water in them necessitated the use of rubber boots. In two cases where there was a film of ice all over the cellar the approach to the toilets was unsafe. In several instances larger or smaller quantities of ice were found either in the path leading to the toilet or in some other part of the cellar.

In one instance, where there were more than 12 inches of water in the cellar, the tenants had been complaining for a considerable time but no steps had been taken to remove the evil. Two infant deaths had occurred in the same building within the time that the above mentioned condition existed.

The condition of repair of cellars is a matter that seldom receives attention on the part of owners and still more seldom are they the object of proper inspection. One hundred and twenty-six out of 329 cellars were found in bad repair. Their condition as to cleanliness also left much to be desired. One hundred and forty-three of the cellars examined were either in a very filthy condition or were at least the repositories of various kinds of storage materials which made their cleanliness practically impossible.



Gloomy kitchen, in bad repair, and toilet with no ventilation.



Cellar rendered filthy by mixture of garbage and ashes.

20 203

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

A photograph taken of one of the worst cellars is appended and represents the degree of carelessness that is permitted without action on the part of the health authorities. (See opposite page 24.)

### BUSINESS WITHIN DWELLING HOUSES

The maintenance of business establishments within dwelling houses frequently presents a serious social problem. In Springfield only 125 business establishments were found in 404 dwelling houses as compared with 138 business establishments in 274 dwelling houses in the city of New Haven. A list of these business establishments is here given:

<b>Business Establishments</b>	
Variety	5
Grocery	41
Shoemaker	1
Barber	5
Saloon	3
Meat	6
Fruit	2
Tobacco	2
Tailor	3
Dry Goods	10
Bakery	5
Jewelry	1
Pool Room	2
Market	1
Candy	3
Shoes	1
Hardware	1
Poultry	1
Furniture	1
Hall	1
Second-hand Furniture	1
Vacant	2
Not stated	27
	<hr/>
TOTAL	125

It is to be noted that there were only three saloons and two pool rooms, a proportion which is below the average when compared with other New England cities. The only other objectionable establishment was one in which live chickens were sold and which created a condition of uncleanness worthy of the attention of the health authorities.

### TOILET FACILITIES

The examination of the toilet facilities, owing to various causes, had to be limited to 1271 families. The location of the toilets as indicated by the larger table that follows may be generally classified as follows:

LOCATION	NUMBER	PER CENT.
Apartments	576	45.3
Hall	347	27.3
Cellar	301	23.7
Yard	47	3.7
TOTAL	<u>1271</u>	<u>100.00</u>

It is evident that, although a considerable number of the toilets are located in the apartment, over one-half are located in the halls, cellars and yards. That the placing of toilets outside of the apartments is not conducive to proper care is plainly evident from the figures given in the table that follows.

### Cleanliness

A general classification of the toilets according to cleanliness shows the following conditions:

Clean	650
Dirty	551
Filthy	<u>71</u>
TOTAL	<u>1,271</u>

It is evident that only about one-half of the families were using clean toilets at the time of the investigation. In 71 cases the toilets were in filthy condition and the photographs taken of some of the most striking instances warrant the use of this term in designating them. The following table shows the distribution of the toilets according to cleanliness and location:

LOCATION	CLEAN	DIRTY	FILTHY
Hall	157	162	28
Kitchen	149	144	1
Cellar	102	167	32
Bedroom	26	16	
Spare Room	1		
Store Room	1	1	
Attic	8	3	
Basement	2		
Outside	1	4	
Pantry	4	2	
Yard	22	19	6
Sink Room	3	6	
Dining Room	10	2	
Apartment	153	21	2
Balcony		2	
Veranda	7	2	
Sitting Room	3		
Shed	1		
Alley			1
TOTAL	<u>650</u>	<u>551</u>	<u>70</u>

The figures indicate that the toilets located in the halls and cellars are most frequently in dirty or filthy condition, while those located within the apartments were found to be filthy in only three cases as against 67 cases outside of the apartments.

It would seem that, if for no other reason than the matter of maintaining the toilets in cleanly condition, the placing of all toilet facilities in the apartment is necessary. The problem of finding a proper place for the location of the toilet within the apartment will be discussed later.

A detailed description of some of the conditions found in the toilets examined would make this report unreadable, but some peculiar conditions might be mentioned as a matter of completeness and to illustrate some of the characteristic abuses.

1. Toilet in cellar, water frozen for two months, pipes leaking; approach through cellar door opening into yard. Floor of cellar covered with ice. No light in toilet nor ventilation when door is closed.

2. Toilet located between two apartments, used by two families. Access from kitchen; in filthy condition.

3. Seven three room apartment families using one filthy yard toilet with water shut off at the time of the inspection.

4. Cellar in filthy condition, toilet so filthy as not to be usable. Families use cellar floor; odors all over the hall and apartments.

5. Toilet in cellar, four families using same. Approach by outside cellar door with broken steps and 12 inches of water in cellar. Toilet in bad repair and filthy.

6. Six families using cellar toilet which is in filthy condition. No seat and water pipes leaking.

These are some of the most striking illustrations of actual conditions as noted in the field cards at the time of the investigation. The wording has been preserved as far as possible.

### Lighting of Toilets.

It is hardly to be expected that toilets which are not provided with proper lighting facilities would be kept in a cleanly condition. The figures concerning the lighting facilities found in the toilets are as follows:

Light	488
Gloomy	304
Dark	479
	<hr/>
TOTAL	1271

These figures hardly need comment. They indicate clearly that the rooms or compartments, the use of which is so important and in which light is of extreme importance, have been constructed in a manner that would make almost two-thirds either gloomy or dark. The examination of the premises, as made in the course of the present investiga-

tion, shows that although in many cases lighting was impossible in the place where the toilets are located, the placing of these toilets at a point where lighting could not be secured was due neither to a desire to save expense nor to structural difficulties, but simply to a lack of intelligence on the part of the builders who undertake the construction of homes and those who do the altering and repairing work. An examination of 100 poorly lighted inside toilets indicated clearly that a change in the position of the toilet would, without any considerable cost, provide both lighting and ventilation from the outside.

The figures concerning the lighting of toilets located in the kitchens, of which there are many more than is necessary, show that a little planning could easily have obviated the absence of proper lighting and would have remedied the condition of ventilation which, as we shall see later, was poorly provided for even in the kitchens where the family cooking is being done.

The general figures relative to lighting are as follows:

LOCATION	LIGHT	GLOOMY	DARK
Hall	88	71	188
Kitchen	115	80	99
Cellar	63	96	142
Bedroom	27	10	5
Spare Room	1		
Store Room			2
Attic	6	3	2
Basement			2
Outside	2	3	
Pantry	4		2
Yard	5	27	15
Sink Room	4	3	2
Dining Room	7	3	2
Apartment	157	4	15
Balcony		1	1
Veranda	6	2	1
Sitting Room	3		
Shed		1	
Alley			1
	—	—	—
TOTAL	488	304	479

The above table shows that 479 of the families whose toilets were examined were using, at the time of the investigation, facilities which were entirely devoid of light, excepting what could enter by the door when it was open, and that 304 families were using toilets which were gloomy. The hall and cellar toilets show the largest proportion of poor lighting, although a very large number of the kitchen toilets were also dark.



## Ventilation of Toilets.

Quite as important as cleanliness and lighting is the ventilation of toilets. The figures concerning the ventilation of toilets used by 1271 families are as follows:

Adequate	506
Poor	320
None	445

It is surprising that the section of an apartment which needs the most ventilation in order to be kept inoffensive should be so poorly provided in more than 60% of the cases, the larger number of which were completely devoid of ventilation facilities. The following table shows the distribution of the toilets according to ventilation and waterproof flooring.

LOCATION	ADEQUATE	POOR	NONE	WATERPROOF FLOOR
Hall	86	52	209	26
Kitchen	141	68	85	17
Cellar	65	137	99	71
Bedroom	22	11	9	
Spare Room	1			
Store Room			2	
Attic	3	7	1	2
Basement			2	2
Outside	3	2		
Pantry	4	1	1	
Yard	7	23	17	28
Sink Room	6	1	2	
Dining Room	5	4	3	
Apartment	155	8	13	1
Balcony		2		
Veranda	4	4	1	1
Sitting Room	3			
Shed	1			
Alley			1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>148</b>

An examination of the above table concerning the location of toilets easily explains the difficulty of providing proper ventilation. The hall toilets seem to be the most numerous in point of complete absence of ventilation. The next in order are those in the cellar. It is easily conceivable that toilets in halls and in cellars, where the ventilation is of necessity inadequate, would be poorly provided with air. The construction of the doors in most cases is such as to make the ventilation that might be secured from the hall or cellar unavailable when the doors are closed and, in order to keep toilets in

these public places clean, they must be kept locked practically all the time.

In some instances artificial ventilating pipes are provided, but wherever tests of the ventilation were made it was discovered that they were either working poorly or were entirely useless.

Eighty-five kitchen toilets with no ventilation were found. This fact needs no comment and indicates a condition that could be remedied without much difficulty and by the expenditure of small amounts of money. How anyone could place a toilet in a kitchen and not provide some ventilation is difficult to understand and yet throughout the whole of New England this practice is very common. That only one filthy kitchen toilet was found speaks well for the families using them, but by no means excuses a practice which, in the case of families with lodgers, makes privacy impossible and makes the place, which should be entirely devoid of contaminating influences, a breeding place for disagreeable odors and general discomfort.

A casual reading of the list of places where toilets are located will indicate a variety of location that is far from uniform and which represents a complete absence of any standard of convenience.

The 148 toilets which had waterproof floors were generally in cleanly condition and represented a desire on the part of the builder to suit the convenience of the tenants.

In conclusion it must be said that the supervision exercised by the Health Department and its agents is not sufficient to meet the needs of the territory covered and, where toilets have been removed from the yards into the buildings, there has been little if any discretion exercised in locating them at a point where they would be convenient for use and properly provided with light and ventilation.

### **Yard Toilets.**

Comparatively speaking there were few yard toilets found. They numbered in all 27, but their condition was sufficiently serious to be worthy of mention. Out of the 27 found only 3 were in good repair while 15 were in poor repair and 12 were in a state of general dilapidation. Ten of these toilets were not clean and in 4 cases they were actually a nuisance. These toilets were being used by 75 families and provision for 49 seats was found. In only 5 cases were the yard toilets connected with a sewer and in proper working order.

It was claimed by the officers of the Health Department that some of these toilets were permitted to remain in use because the owners are financially not in a position to provide new accommodations. The condition of cleanliness, the absence of doors, etc., are matters that could be easily controlled and should be remedied.

### **Family Use of Toilets.**

The sharing of toilets by two, three or more families is a problem that seriously hampers the cleanliness, and, in many instances, by a

shifting of responsibility, causes conditions of disrepair for which no one can be held responsible.

The extent of toilet sharing as reported is as follows:

One family per toilet	987
Two families per toilet	134
Three families per toilet	31
Four families per toilet	14
Six families per toilet	6
Seven families per toilet	1

These figures indicate that over 69% of the families were provided with private accommodations while the balance of over 30% were sharing toilets with other families. The cases where there were more than two families using the same toilet were sometimes due to the condition of disrepair of the toilets originally assigned to the families, which compelled them to use the toilets assigned to their neighbors.

## LIGHTING AND REPAIR OF ROOMS

The lighting and repair of rooms are matters of importance, not only from the point of view of comfort, but they constitute a psychic factor in determining the cleanliness of the home and its general home-like atmosphere.

Out of 1,421 kitchens examined, there were 54 that were gloomy and three that were dark. The gloomy kitchens, where the largest amount of the household work is done and which in many instances are used also as sitting rooms and dining rooms, should be properly lighted. The condition of gloom was due to the proximity of buildings and to overhanging verandas upon which the only windows intended to light the kitchens opened.

The number of bedrooms which were gloomy and dark is still greater and represents a condition which, when closely observed in the field, shows that with gloom there is a condition of ventilation that cannot well supply the proper air for the people compelled to sleep in such rooms. Out of 3,528 bedrooms examined there were 138 that were gloomy and 55 that were dark. The 55 completely dark bedrooms are of the representative type, without means of access for light and air except a door and possibly a transom opening into another room. Photographs of special cases were taken to indicate conditions. (See frontispiece.)

It is interesting to note that the homes which had parlors and dining rooms had proportionately fewer gloomy and dark rooms than the homes in which there were no such comforts. This is a condition that would naturally be expected.

The condition of disrepair finds its best and most numerous types in the kitchens and bedrooms. The conditions vary from broken

windows with cloths used to keep out the wind and the rain, to broken doors, leaking pipes which cause a rotting of the floors, fallen plaster, broken walls, paper only partially adhering to the walls, etc. The fact that over 22% of the kitchens were in poor repair and that almost one-fifth of the bedrooms were in one way or another defective is indicative of a rather serious tendency to neglect the interior of the poorer homes.

The sitting rooms and dining rooms were found to be in better repair generally, although instances of disrepair were not wanting.

### **BATHING FACILITIES AND WASH TUBS**

Bathing facilities are not generally provided in the average apartment where the rentals are below \$3 per room per month. Of the 1,427 families whose homes were examined only 143, or about 10%, were provided with bath tubs, most of which were located in the bath room. Of this number 13 indicated that the tenants were not inclined to put them to their proper use, while in all other cases, with the exception of two, they were clean and in more or less constant use. The two cases where the tubs were not being used were due to a condition of disrepair which was apparently of long standing.

Wash tubs were provided in 91 apartments and in practically all cases they were found in cleanly condition and in tolerably fair repair.

### **RAIN LEADERS**

Considerable of the cleanliness and use of the yard depends upon the amount of drainage water that flows into it and the rain leaders have a considerable influence upon this condition when they are not in proper repair. It was found that out of the 404 buildings examined 117 had rain leaders out of repair. This large number of poor leaders cause many of the yards to be damp during the larger part of the spring season and at any other time when heavy rain necessitates a proper means of draining off the water. In all the cases where the leaders were out of repair there was also no drainage incline in the yard that would carry off the flow of water into proper channels.

### **CONDITION OF YARDS**

Of the 404 yards examined only 21 had properly constructed sewer drainage, while 314 had only surface drainage which varied in adequacy. Twenty yards were found to contain stagnant water and in 9 cases the yard was muddy and difficult of access.

The cleanliness of the yard from the point of view of accumulation of rubbish left considerable to be desired. In 62 instances considerable rubbish was accumulated and in 7 cases it had actually become a nuisance.

## FIRE ESCAPES

As the examination of the buildings was limited very largely to the older structures of two stories, the problem of providing proper fire escapes did not seem very serious.

The overhanging veranda, which is used also as a fire escape, while in some ways an additional comfort to the family and quite useful in the summer months, has its disadvantages. The use of the verandas for storage purposes makes their use in case of fire somewhat hazardous and also shuts off the light from the rooms adjoining them. Whether, with proper regulation and a systematic plan of inspection, they would be placed under sufficient control to make their use as fire escapes safe will have to be decided by experience in Springfield and in the other cities in which this substitute for a fire escape is permitted.

A striking case of lack of proper provision in case of fire was found in the Jewish quarter in a court which is formed by the joining of the balconies of two separate buildings. There is only one exit provided and all the balconies which serve as fire escapes are of wood.

## NEW BUILDINGS

For the purpose of ascertaining the adequacy of the law-enforcing agency dealing with the construction of new buildings 69 buildings with 329 apartments were examined. Nothing could be found, so far as the knowledge and understanding of the law was concerned, which would point to any serious misconstruction of the letter of the law, or any lack of enforcement. The buildings were, on the whole, larger than the general average found among the old structures. The land occupancy has also increased very considerably as compared with the average found in the case of the old buildings.

The main criticism of the new buildings resolves itself into a criticism of the law rather than of the enforcing agency, namely the Commissioner of Buildings.

## LEGISLATION

On the 16th of April of this year the City Council on the strength of the Enabling Act passed by the Massachusetts Legislature on April 6th, 1910 (Chapter 349) and revised on April 10th, 1911 (Chapter 262) revised its City Ordinance, "Relative to the Construction, Alteration and Maintenance of Buildings in the City of Springfield" and so organized its various sections as to make them more easily understood and usable. The work of reorganizing the Ordinance was done mainly by the Commissioner of Buildings.

It is to be noted that while the act might have established a minimum below which the city could not go, it is on the whole a document that makes possible liberal and effective legislation. The only difficulty in the use of a broad law without minimum provisions is the problem of meeting the local interests on points which involve extra

expenditures and of securing the approval of a local council whose members depend considerably upon the property owning class for their votes.

It would be difficult to enter upon a complete discussion of each section of the Ordinances and in most cases it is unnecessary to do so. There are, however, several sections which require special attention. Before discussing particular sections of the Ordinances a word should be said concerning the distribution of responsibility between the new and old buildings and between the law enforcing agency which has to do with the construction of buildings and the agency that has to do with maintaining them in sanitary condition. In other words the Health Department is made responsible for the proper maintenance of buildings over the construction of which it has no control. The conditions in all other cities that have come under our observation have been exactly the same, and in some instances, where the building inspectors or commissioners were not prepared to meet the local needs, the work of the health department was made inefficient through no fault of the department itself.

It would seem that some connection between the Health Department and the Building Department should be made, or, as an alternative, the Building Department should be made an inspecting agency for all buildings in the city, both new and old, and its head be made responsible for the proper repair and maintenance of all buildings. This would obviate criticism of the Health Department and would place at the disposal of the city a type of Tenement House Department that would reduce the work of the Health Department and concentrate the responsibility for proper housing conditions in the hands of one official who is best prepared to deal with buildings and their structural problems.

Passing on from the general question of supervision and inspection to the specific sections mentioned above we find the following :

Part I, Section 1. "There shall be in the City of Springfield a department to be called the Building Department, which shall be under the charge of the Building Commissioner. The Commissioner, who shall have had at least five years' experience as an architect or builder, shall be appointed by the Mayor, for a term of five years. He may be removed for cause by the Mayor. He shall receive such salary as shall be fixed by the City Council.

"The Commissioner may, with the approval of the Mayor, appoint such number of inspectors, employees and assistants as the City Council shall, from time to time determine."

The above quoted part of Section 1 gives the Mayor the appointing power and to the City Council the power to provide the salary. If the Mayor and the City Council fail to work in harmony or if the Building Commissioner becomes in any way objectionable to the members of the Council, the Commissioner may be legislated out of office either by a failure to provide for his salary, or by a reduction of the same to



Cellar toilet used by 3 families. Only approach to toilet is over piece of joist shown in picture. 12 inches of water in cellar when picture was taken.





a point where it would be impossible for the incumbent of the office to hold it any longer. If a fixed and attractive salary were provided by ordinance the position would demand a standard of ability and efficiency which cannot be guaranteed at the present time.

In Part I, Section 11, we read:

“For buildings ten thousand dollars or less in value the Commissioner may or may not require plans to be filed permanently.”

This section seems to limit the requirement of plans on a cost basis. The ideal plan, it seems to us, would be a use basis which would require, in the case of dwelling houses constructed for renting purposes, plans and specifications. Speaking from the point of view of housing legislation a \$5,000 minimum or a limitation of number of apartments would be much more adequate.

The section dealing with the plumbing regulations which is found in Part II, Section 1, gives the Building Commissioner considerable power. It reads:

“The Building Commissioner shall have control of the supervision and inspection of plumbing, and shall enforce all laws, ordinances and rules in relation thereto. Said Commissioner shall establish such rules and regulations in regard to plumbing as he may deem necessary, subject to the approval of the Board of Health.”

Such regulations, while of necessity best understood and framed by the Building and Health Authorities, should have the sanction of the City Council in order to remove the responsibility for inflicting expense from an appointive official whose position at best is very delicate and who is constantly under pressure on the part of the builders.

Part IV, Section 1, provides that “‘Tenement house’ shall include any house, building, structure or portion thereof occupied or adapted for occupation as a dwelling for more than three families living independently of one another.”

The definition of a tenement house as quoted above is far from meeting the needs of a city like Springfield where the small house still prevails to a considerable extent. Tenement House legislation should be replaced by housing legislation and the definition as found in the Springfield Ordinances should be changed at least from “more than three” to a definition limiting a tenement to two apartments. The “more than three” definition is a standard that is below New York City, the home of the large tenement.

Part VII, Section 77. “Every inclosure containing one or more water-closets shall be provided with adequate ventilation to the outer air, either by window or by suitable light shaft, or by mechanical ventilation.”

The above section dealing with the ventilation of toilets seems to be weak in so far as it gives the builder a choice of means of lighting and ventilation which may sometimes be abused. Shaft toilets are seldom well ventilated and mechanical devices for the ventilation of toilets, unless they are of the highest type of efficiency and very costly, are seldom if ever effective. There is no reason why all tenement

buildings could not be so planned as to provide window ventilation. The cities of the first class in New York are compelled by law to make such provisions in spite of the size of buildings constructed and the necessary crowding for space.

After the existing provisions have been partially criticised the question of the adequacy of the whole ordinance still remains to be considered. It is our opinion that the present ordinance is not intended to, and does not, prevent the evils which were found to exist in the old structures.

The lighting of rooms and the proximity of buildings or walls is not adequately provided for in the ordinance mentioned and yet one of the most serious evils is the poor lighting due to proximity of buildings and the construction of dark rooms as well as the construction of openings into shafts or rooms with subnormal windows.

The size of rooms is not regulated and is not mentioned in the ordinance, so that rooms of any size may be built, including the alcove rooms which are one of the most objectionable features of tenement construction.

The lot occupancy is only indirectly provided for by prohibiting the construction of buildings within six feet of each other. This does not limit the use of the lot and makes possible lot crowding, samples of which were found in the newer buildings. In a city like Springfield 50% of lot occupancy on interior lots and 60% occupancy on corner lots should be ample.

The rear buildings, which were found to be serious evils in the course of the investigation, are not prohibited by the present ordinance, and although the construction of such buildings has not been encouraged by the present conditions, there is no reason why certain deep lots should not be used for that purpose when the owner so desires in order to save land. The law cannot prohibit their construction.

The proper construction of cellars does not seem to be regulated by the ordinances nor is the occupancy of cellars and basements for living purposes prohibited or restricted.

The number of toilets per family is not prescribed by the law and the only provision found is that relating to the powers of the Health Department to require any number that may be desirable. This is a discretionary power that cannot be used without danger, if proper provisions are to be made. The requirement that there should be one toilet for every 15 persons is absurd since in the tenements which most need proper regulation the families fluctuate and what may be adequate provision in a building to-day, may not be adequate the next day when a family moves and gives place to another with a larger number of persons. Lighting of toilets is not provided for.

Aside from these specific delinquencies in the ordinances there are a number of general considerations which must be taken into account. As far as we have been able to ascertain there is no provision for the

removal of objectionable sanitary conditions, which cannot be defined as an actual nuisance. Dark rooms cannot be removed, repairs cannot be ordered and all provisions for structural changes, intended to improve the general sanitary condition of the buildings, are wanting.

One of the most serious sources of complaint on the part of owners and one which most frequently causes ill feeling and lack of interest in the improvement of property is the fact that the tenant is not held responsible for the property he or she rents. If a penalty were provided for misuse of plumbing, or destruction and lack of care by the tenant, where the evidence is not to be questioned, without releasing the owner from making the necessary repairs, it would be found that considerable educational work could be done among the foreign elements and the present objection on the part of the owners obviated.

This is not the place to outline a new Building Code, but the defects already pointed out should lead to the appointment of a competent person or persons whose duty it should be to prepare a proper code and submit it to the proper authorities for approval. A minimum and maximum State Law with the privilege of changing the provisions to meet local needs would be the best foundation for future work.

## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that suggest themselves after a careful consideration of the conditions described more or less fully in the present report are as follows:

1. In Springfield the problem is a housing, rather than a tenement house, problem.

2. The most serious aspects of the housing problem are not confined to a particular territory but are scattered throughout the entire city.

3. The old buildings, which are under the jurisdiction of the Health Department, present serious sanitary defects which could be improved, under the present laws, if proper inspection and action on the part of the Health Authorities were exercised.

4. The structural defects in some of the old buildings cannot be remedied without an expansion of the present powers of the Health Department by the passage of specific regulations concerning such needed repairs and improvements as some of the buildings demand.

5. The congestion of population in the sections examined, while in itself not alarming, presents a serious problem when the families which keep lodgers are considered.

6. Rentals are not cheaper in Springfield than in most New England cities and there is a more or less regular decrease in the rental per room with the increase in the size of the apartments.

7. Lot occupancy is not regulated by law and the outbuildings are becoming a serious menace by causing unnecessary land congestion. With the increase in the height of the buildings there seems to

take place an increase in the proportion of land occupied by the buildings.

8. The cellar conditions are a serious menace to the health of the occupants of many of the buildings examined.

9. There is little of the type of business which might be called objectionable in the buildings examined. There was, however, a case of what seemed to be a house of prostitution.

10. The condition of the toilets is a serious evil and demands immediate attention.

11. The laws provided for the control of sanitary conditions in old buildings, the construction of new buildings and the regulation of alterations are seriously defective.

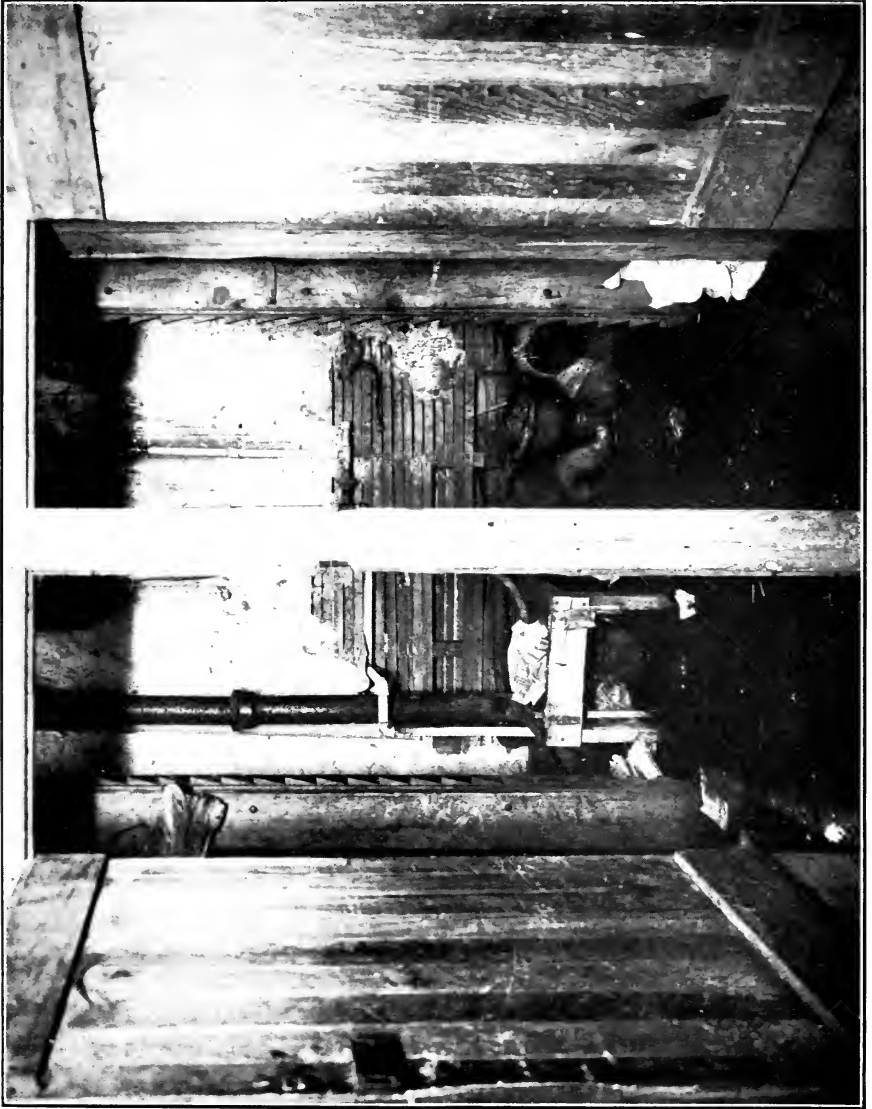
## RECOMMENDATIONS

The only purpose of the present investigation was the securing of sufficient accurate data upon which to base a program of action which would bring about speedy and permanent improvements in the general housing conditions of the city and prevent, in the future, the building of structures which do not provide for a reasonable standard of safety, sanitation and privacy. The facts revealed in the course of the investigation have a decided bearing upon these three aspects of the problem, and a program based upon them should bring about results of a constructive character. In the light of the facts revealed by the present investigation the following recommendations suggest themselves.

(a.) The appointment of a sanitary inspector whose exclusive duty it should be to inspect regularly and at frequent intervals all the buildings occupied by two or more families. The inspector should have specific powers as suggested in section B. He should keep a record of all the inspections made and record all conditions which are in any way contrary to the State Laws or City Ordinances. These records should be kept in the office of the Health Department and should be accessible to any physician or anyone representing a philanthropic agency chartered by the State of Massachusetts. Upon these records should be entered all complaints against property and the disposition of the cases, whether by order of the Health Department or through the local courts. The said inspector should report annually upon the number of inspections made, the abuses found and the disposition of each class of abuses.

(b.) The appointment of a Commission or Committee on Housing to devise means and plans for securing legislation covering the points discussed in the present report and such other legislative problems as may be needed to meet the local conditions.

(c.) The coördination, as far as possible, of the work of the Health Department with the work of the Commissioner of Buildings with a view to securing the structural changes that may be required for the improvement of the sanitary condition of old buildings.



Interior of first floor—there are two or three dark bedrooms opening onto the hall where these toilets are located.



(d.) The appointment of a special Housing Inspection Committee which would report cases to the Health Department and follow up the results of its action.

(e.) The organization of a campaign for the extermination of old houses by bringing to the attention of the Health Authorities buildings unfit for human habitation and by inducing banks and business men to refrain from buying unsanitary houses or lending money on mortgages upon unsanitary dwelling houses.

(f.) A careful study of the city's system of taxation with a view to determining the advantages and disadvantages of improved property from the point of view of taxation.

(g.) The providing of a City Ordinance compelling every owner of a building rented for dwelling purposes to register with the Health and the Building Commissioner such facts concerning his ownership and the character of the property as may lead to easy identification and thus facilitate prosecutions. Upon these records should be entered also all complaints made against the property.

CAROL ARONOVICI, PH. D.









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