

1925

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Recommended Citation

Hansen, Joanna (1925) "A Better Home Project," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 5 : No. 1 , Article 8.
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A Better Home Project

By JOANNA HANSEN

Professor of Home Economics



Colonial Influence for the Small House.

THE GREAT possibility for making our present homes as well as our future homes better, both within and without, depends not only upon good instruction in our secondary schools and colleges, but upon actual experience under capable guidance.

Modern education emphasizes the project method of instruction wherever possible and feasible, since it gives the students working both individually and cooperatively, rich experience in carrying thru to some desired end the things in which they are vitally interested. According to Dr. Kilpatrick of Columbia University, the term project refers to "any unit of purposeful experience, any instance of purposeful activity where the dominating purpose, as an inner urge, fixes the aim of the action, guides its processes and furnishes its drive, its inner motivation."

Of the many courses offered in home economics, few are so engrossing to the average girl as those of adapting or planning, furnishing, and equipping a modest home. That this home may eventually materialize is possible, and even probable, since a larger number of students enter the vocation of homemaking than any other field.

The eagerness with which students in house design visit and discuss the best of the small homes in the community, and study books and magazines on house planning and furnishing should make for homes that are better in proportion, finer in line and design, better related to their site and grounds, more economically and conveniently planned, more healthful because of better sanitation; safer because of less fire risk; less costly in maintenance as compared to initial cost, better adapted to the family and its needs as well as its income, and finally equipped and furnished simply, beautifully and colorfully with the idea of having unity between the exterior and the interior.

With these aims as a basis, what then could be more welcome to house classes than an opportunity to furnish a house for Better Homes Week? Thru the Ames, Iowa, Chamber of Commerce, and with the hearty cooperation of the merchants and the instructors of the Applied Arts department of the home economics division, the project began.

The house was of Colonial influence, good in design, and consisted of five rooms; a living room, a dining room, a

front bedroom, a back bedroom which was to be used as a child's room, a bath, a kitchen and a breakfast alcove.

Two hundred students, most of whom came from small towns in Iowa were to have the experience of organizing and carrying thru a piece of work that would be similar to their own individual problems. The furnishing for a home utilized the things a small town could provide and here it may be noted that the things the college town could offer were as satisfactory for the little home as those offered in the nearby city. Each student visited the house. The finish of floors, woodwork and walls was discussed, as was the type of furniture and furnishings which seemed suitable to a small home of moderate cost. The students decided that the classes meeting at the same time each week should be responsible for a particular room of the house. Three classes took the living room, two the front bedroom, two the child's room, two the dining room, two the breakfast alcove, and one group was responsible for the lighting fixtures and the bathroom. The class in Structural House Equipment cared for the kitchen, laundry, and other necessary equipment.

Each class elected a representative to work with those chosen by the sections meeting at the same time. It was the duty of this joint committee to visit the stores with the idea of determining not only what was available in every needed line of furnishings, but of securing samples and cost sketches where necessary to make clear their ideas, and all necessary information for the class discussion which followed their presentation of the various possibilities. After this discussion the entire class made plans, worked out possible color schemes, combined textiles, and sketched possible furniture

placement and wall elevations. They finally decided which suggestions were considered best to take to the joint meeting of the class representatives who made the final plans which were executed under their direction. All during Better Homes Week, girls were at the house to answer questions and explain the project to visitors. Approximately 500 visitors daily attended the demonstration.

Not only did this cooperative project necessitate organization by the classes in Interior Design that participated in the work, but furthermore the merchants learned the needs and desires of young women who are alert as to what things are good in taste, why they are good, and where they may be suitably used. The girls found, too, that the merchants of the average small town are anxious to meet these needs and that they too, are selecting furnishings that are good in design and suitable for the average home in that particular locality.

Besides the experience in organization the problem is of benefit to the girls in other ways. They had been taught the theory and fundamental principles of good design. Here they had a chance to apply this knowledge, and to see the results in concrete form. They had the problem of wise and economical selection, which is perferable to too much designing on paper. They were dealing with actual costs and not using things which appealed to them regardless of price. They had to surmount the difficulties which one encounters when dealing with an actual house; problems which seldom present themselves when planning in imagination.

Better Homes Week, then, gives something to the owners and builders of homes, to the merchants who carry in stock

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Careful Selection and Arrangement Makes this Home-like Living Room.

The Transformation of Our Back Yard

By VERA B. SMITH

It was truly a case of the old saying "Necessity is the Mother of Invention," for we did not know when we moved into our house and looked out upon the miserable, forlorn patch of yellow clay which composed our back yard, that it could be evolved into a truly lovely garden spot. My father was the first one of us to see the possibilities of that ugly strip of hard-packed, weed-fringed earth. It really seemed an impossible task because of the unsightliness of the bare earth, the rubbish and tin cans.

It started one day while I was washing dishes when looking out of the kitchen window I saw father coming out of the barn with a rake and spade in his hands and the light of a conqueror in his eyes. He set to work in an easy, methodical way, carrying boards, iron, wire, cans and other loose odds and ends and piling them into two stacks on the rear of the lot. He burned all he could of the things he could not use and buried the rest. The usable things he stored in the barn, which was both work-shop and garage. With the debris cleared away he began the task of raking, leveling off the bumps and filling in the hollows.

With the yard cleaned, the next task was the planning. The space to be gardened measured about 65x50 feet. Father divided it into thirds. The two thirds nearest the house he seeded to blue grass and clover. The third near the barn he packed down hard and covered with cinders. A good spring rain gave our grass a good start, and the cinders around the barn made an excellent driveway.

To keep down expense father carried home bundles of laths which he used for fences and trellises. First he made a low lattice fence to separate the cinders from the grassy lawn, and at either end placed a hollow tile which served both as gate post and flower urn. He then painted the fence and urn a dull green. With the remainder of the laths he made trellises for the kitchen window, for an out-building, and for the back porch. Truly the back porch was a master piece. It faced the street and so needed some clever transformation. Around the edge of the porch he laid red bricks for the distance of three feet. Five feet from this he built an L-shaped trellis which made a cozy corner and hide the porch from the public eye. The finishing touch to the permanent fixture for the yard was the building of two bird baths. These were made by cutting square holes in the yard and lining them with cement. The yard was now ready for color introduced by blossoming flowers.

There was a vacant lot next to our lot so father mowed the edge of this and planted a double row of red, pink and white cosmos to form a border. Along the barn and along the alley he planted hollyhocks and along the cinder path castor beans formed the border. As summer advanced the trellises were covered with maderia vines and cyprus. The green lattice fence became the support for sweet peas which bloomed in profusion. In the kitchen nook father carefully planted pansies, marigolds, verbenas, zinnias and narcissuses with utmost precaution as to the size and color of the flowers. This nook, tho simple in content, formed a lovely sight for the eye and was a source of cut flowers for the entire summer.

The ugly patch of yellow clay that met our eyes when we first moved into

the house had been transformed into a garden spot of no little beauty, but father was not entirely satisfied for he saw the possibility of making the yard useful as well as attractive. He enlisted the services of my brother and built a garage for my brother's car and a run-way to use while working on the car. Our entire family have had no end of pleasure out of our yard and it has been an incentive for many of our neighbors and friends to cause transformations to their own yards. It is possible to do it with very little money and the results are well worth the effort.

BETTER HOME PROJECT

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the necessities of household furnishings, to the visitors who may come to see the possibilities of a small house simply and economically furnished, and to the students who may be planning homes either as class work or for themselves. It is a worthwhile problem, and one which will mean much for America's better American home.

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Can you give me a recipe for stuffed baked pork chops and cabbage relish?

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Have pork chops cut thick, wipe carefully, and slit side of each chop, making a pocket. Fill this opening with a dressing (your favorite kind if you prefer) made of 1 cup of soft crumbs, two or three sage leaves, a little onion, one-fourth teaspoon each of salt and pepper, one-fourth cup of melted butter or bacon fat, if you prefer. Bake until thoroughly browned, basting while cooking.

Cabbage Relish

Select a heavy cabbage, take off outside leaves and shred finely. Combine with a cream salad dressing—one-fourth tablespoon salt, one-half tablespoon mustard, two tablespoons sugar, 1 egg slightly beaten, 3 tablespoons butter, three-fourths cup cream, one-third cup vinegar. Cook over hot water until thick. If you wish to make this salad more attractive, sliced celery and pimentoes may be added. Peanuts give a good flavor.

CHILD LABOR

By W. A. B., in the International Book-binder.

Down in the depths of the factory's gloom
They gather at early dawn,
Where the ceaseless whirl of spindle and loom

Goes on and on and on.
And the god of gold in the tainted air,
An invisible Moloch stands,
As he watches the fabrics woven there
By the toil of childish hands.

Backward and forward, over and up,
Steadily still they go,
But they hold to the lips a bitter cup,
Whose dregs are the dregs of woe;
For the hopes of youth grow faint and die
Held fast in those iron hands,
And the cold, hard world has never a sigh
For the patient, childish hands.

Ah, ye, whose darlings, in flowery ways,

Know naught of grim despair,
Think of the heated summer days,
And your children working there,
When never a cooling zephyr comes
Through the factory's stifling breath,
Where the looms weave on and the
spindle hums
In the treadmill 'round to death.

And onward, onward, upward and back,
In the close and crowded rooms,
In a dizzy race on an endless track,
Go spindles and shafts and looms;
Till the angel of death with fateful glass,
Shakes out the dusky sands,
As the merciful, longed-for shadows pass
Over worn-out childish hands.

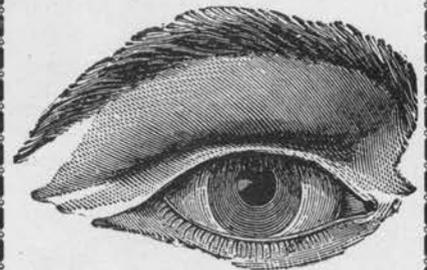
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