1934

New Deal in Houses

Hazel Moore

Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation


Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol14/iss3/3

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Is Your Kitchen Built
For Working or Walking?

By Laura Christensen

TWO of our most important American institutions—our mothers and the food we eat—spend the greatest part of their lives in the kitchen. In consideration of this fact, perhaps kitchens deserve more attention than their lowly reputation signify.

If we intend to glorify the American kitchen, we should start from the beginning. The beginning naturally would be the location, for before a kitchen can be, it has to have a corner of a house to be in. Which corner this is to be, depends upon several things—the view, the climate and convenience of the location. On a farm, it might be desirable to have a view of the barnyard. If there is by any good fortune a brook or a beautiful hillside within sight, the kitchen should be placed so that this view can be seen while washing dishes. Those of us who live in climates where summer days are very, very hot, like to have our kitchens on the north so that all unnecessary heat is avoided.

The next step in the plan is to decide upon the size of the kitchen. This also has some definite determining factors. It depends upon the number it serves, its purpose, and the number of people working in it. In cooking for a family of ten, obviously one would need more room than in cooking for two. If a kitchen is used only for cooking and washing dishes it can be smaller than if it were necessary to have laundry equipment in the kitchen. And if your mother-in-law or sister lives with you and there are two or more in the kitchen, it had better be larger than if only one person were cooking. An average size for a kitchen of four with one person cooking is from 90 to 100 square feet. This would be a room of about 8 feet by 12 feet or 9 feet by 11 feet.

And this, logically, takes us to the shape of the kitchen. There are three common shapes—oblong, square and L-shaped. Of these the oblong is the most convenient as a rule; it is easier to place equipment as well as to use it. Square kitchens are in their element either as very small or very large rooms. In small apartment kitchens a square one is best, for the cook can stand in the middle, reach out, and everything is within grasp. In a large square kitchen a work center can be placed in the center and two people can easily work around it. The L-shaped kitchen is rather unhandy, and should be used only when necessary; when it is used, it is best to place all of the equipment together at one end.

A room, even a kitchen, has more to it than shape and size, so let us next consider the doors and windows. Although doors are necessary, they are something of a nuisance after you once get in, for they take up so much valuable wall space. So use as few of them as possible—often two will suffice, and group them together so that traffic across the entire length of the floor will be avoided, and so that wall space will be broken up as little as possible. If the door to the outside is not direct, a great deal of mud-tracking will be done away with. The door to the dining room should be wide, easily opened and easily accessible from the stove, yet it should hide kitchen clutter from the view of the diners.

By Hazel Moore

"WHAT does your generation think of these new houses and furnishings?"

My friend and I were walking down from the sun porch on the roof of the last of the homes in the modern trend at A Century of Progress in Chicago when a voice behind us asked this question.

We turned around to see a middle-aged man. He continued, "Now I'm more than twice your age and I'd really like to know how you young folks feel about all this."

He told us that he was a furniture retailer and was having a hard time to accustom himself to such different furnishings. So we discussed the "New Deal" in houses.

What opinion do we come to with regard to the latest in homes? They are vastly different from anything we are accustomed to.

One of the houses was of glass through which the occupants can see out, but outsiders cannot see in—and best of all—the whole house revolves on a central axis, thus making it possible to get the sun's rays in all rooms, or the light in whichever room it is wanted!

Every one has roof porches, making
use of the former waste space known as an attic, and providing a place for the family to relax in the sun. Such an arrangement is not practical in the winter, however, with these porches covered with snow. In this way they are almost as useless as the former front porch. But they are attractive and add a great deal of charm to the new houses.

On the whole the houses are constructed simply, with the liveable qualities in mind. They make the most of space. The windows placed at the corners of the room give added light and make the placement of furniture much easier than before. The rooms thus become lighter and more airy.

Perhaps I am "food-minded," but the most interesting of all rooms to me was the kitchen. Here there has been more change and more sensible planning than kitchens have received for a long time. The new kitchen equipment makes meal preparation a pleasure instead of drudgery. Tables and sink are raised to prevent that old "back-breaking," and many are the steps saved in walking from cupboard to sink or stove.

Windows are many. In one house two sides of the kitchen were windows, with shuttered windows which are adjustable as desired. Under them were the table spaces with drawers below. It would be a joy to work there. Just off the kitchen was a little porch with brightly upholstered iron furniture. And a radio nearby. It seems a very sensible thing to have a radio in the kitchen. Music has such a soothing effect while working—and during the 4 or 5 hours a housewife spends in or near her kitchen she can keep abreast of the news and hear a lot of enlightening programs.

I think we will like the new kitchens. They are such a contrast to the inefficient, poorly-planned, old ones.

Of course there are some modernistic houses which are trying so hard to be different that the beauty of the whole structure is lost. But as always, we have the privilege of choosing the best.

Then there are the furnishings. They are in a style which bases design upon the function of the piece, and aims at simplicity. They are built substantially and rely upon sound proportion, graceful line, interesting material, and rich but quick coloring. For years we have been copying the old furniture masters whose work, though artistic and beautiful, was nevertheless designed for ladies who wore bustles, stiff corsets, and numerous petticoats. The new chairs and divans fit the body and are so comfortable that it is actually hard to get up after once seated.

In one of the houses were two pieces of furniture placed before a fireplace and especially designed for this purpose. One, an easy chair, had only one arm, that on the side near the fireplace and by the other side a low book-cabinet and table combination. The other was a long, low divan with its only arm on the fireplace side.

Glass is made great use of. Many of the new clocks are of this material, which has a transparency which does not make it too obvious, but has its own distinctive luster. An effective flower pot covered a green plant in a round, inverted fishbowl of a glass which admitted ultra-violet light for its growth.

Although many of the floor lamps and wall lights are of strictly modern design, some of the hanging, center-lighting fixtures are quite reminiscent of our old-fashioned, gas-lighted chandeliers. However, these do not appear out of keeping with the simplicity of the rest of the room.

Dr. Hill Tells Classes
Prevent That Disease
By Bernice Borgman

Parents' chief responsibility in sparing their children from childhood tuberculosis is keeping them away from adults who have been reinfected with the tuberculosis bacilli. This was the warning given by Dr. L. F. Hill of Des Moines, one of Iowa's leading pediatricians, in a discussion of childhood tuberculosis before child development classes on the campus recently.

The first infection of tuberculosis comes only from the bacilli of the adult disease, he continued. In almost every case of childhood tuberculosis the victim comes from a family in which one or more adults have the adult disease. Dr. Hill exhibited the heavily infected lungs of a 7-months-old baby whose father unknowingly had been exposing his family to the plague for several years. The baby, whose resistance was not so great as that of the adults in the family, contracted the disease from the father. When the child was brought into Dr. Hill's clinic the ravages of the disease had already done their work and the baby succumbed to tuberculosis. This, he said, was not an unusual case. Many parents and relatives, in this same manner, are ignorantly taking the lives of the children in the home.

Too bad nature didn't make an arrangement whereby people with tuberculosis would grow horns or break out with a rash," said Dr. Hill. This insidious disease would be far easier to check if it could be noted in its earliest stages by some outward evidence. But tuberculosis is a sneak. He has his prey well ensnared before the victim is even aware of the demon's presence. The physical findings are not indicative of the seriousness of the disease in the primary infection.

Physicians formerly believed that every child had tuberculosis in some degree before the age of 10 years.

(Continued on page 16)