

1918 Government Housing Tour

September 19, 2006



1918 GOVERNMENT HOUSING

The year is 1917 and the events of World War I have topped the news. But much has happened locally in Rock Island as well. Businessmen formed a new organization, the Chamber of Commerce. A fire station was built at 30th Street and 7th Avenue. City Hall got a new roof at a cost of \$910.00. Enrollment at Augustana College had reached 244 students. The Tri City Symphony was having a pops concert on Sunday and admission was 45 cents plus 5 cents war tax. Army and Navy men in uniform would be admitted for free.

Employment at the Rock Island Arsenal during the year had risen to 13,400 and with the influx of new workers and their families there was a critical need for additional housing. Rock Island architects Olof Cervin and Ben Horn wanted to work with the U.S. Housing Corporation to meet this need. They drew plans for at least 14 different home designs, drove to Washington, D.C. to present their plans, and returned home with a contract in hand larger than even they had hoped for. The federal government agreed to the building of 400 homes in Rock Island, Moline, and East Moline.

According to records released by the Rock Island city inspector in early 1919 there were 200 structures containing 217 housing units built in Rock Island at a cost of \$671,241.00. The structures were of eight different basic designs and they were built in 4 different areas just north of 18th Avenue and east of 30th Street. Henry W. Horst & Company of Rock Island served as the project contractor and although the homes were not lavish, they were very well built and in keeping with the Cervin philosophy that everyone should have a quality place in which to live.

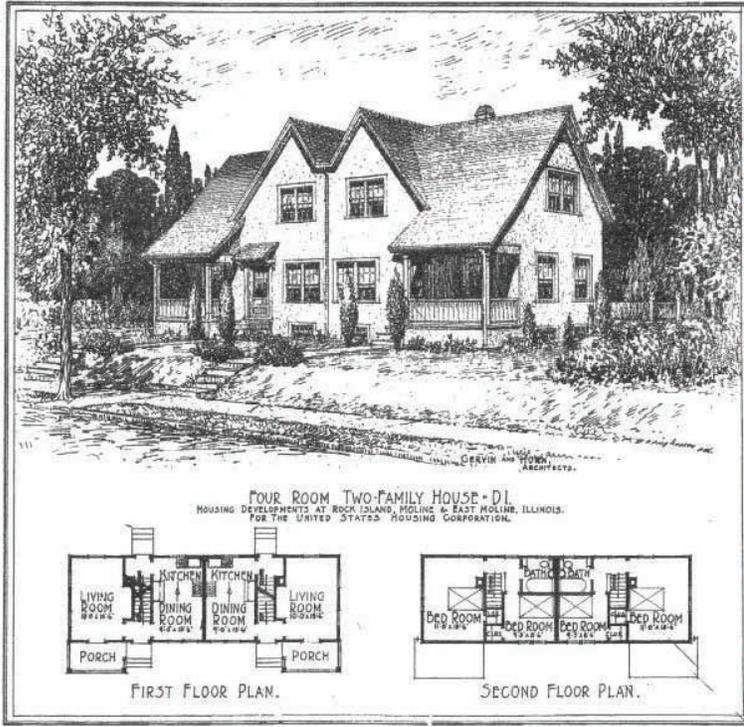
There were 75 similar U.S. Housing Corporation projects underway across the nation when the war ended. Only four of the projects were allowed to continue. Our Illinois Tri City project, the second largest project in the nation, was not cancelled because the project was on budget and work was so far advanced. The identical architectural designs were used in the smaller Moline project, which is located just east of I-74 north of 23rd Avenue. Fortunately all four World War I housing neighborhoods in Rock Island remain fairly intact today.

A special thank you to Scholz Gowey Gere Marolf Architects for the original architectural drawings. The architectural firm is a descendent of Cervin and Horn and their offices are in the Safety Building in downtown Rock Island, a building designed by Cervin himself. The cover drawings are reprinted from an advertising brochure for Henry W. Horst, Contractor and Builder. A copy is located at the Rock Island Historical Society Library in Moline.

This brochure is based on a tour presented by the Rock Island Preservation Society on September 9, 2006. The Rock Island Preservation Society is a not for profit organization supporting historic preservation and preservation education in Rock Island, Illinois. Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at various locations. The public is welcome to attend.

Rock Island Preservation Society
P.O. Box 3261
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www.rockislandpreservation.org

House Style D1



All drawings courtesy of Scholz Gowey Gere Marolf Architects.

1567-1569 40th Street

According to early records Cervin and Horn designed two double houses - one with a side *gable* roof as in the drawing and one with a side *gambrel* roof as we see here. Both designs have double front gables. Front door placement varies in the two designs. While the

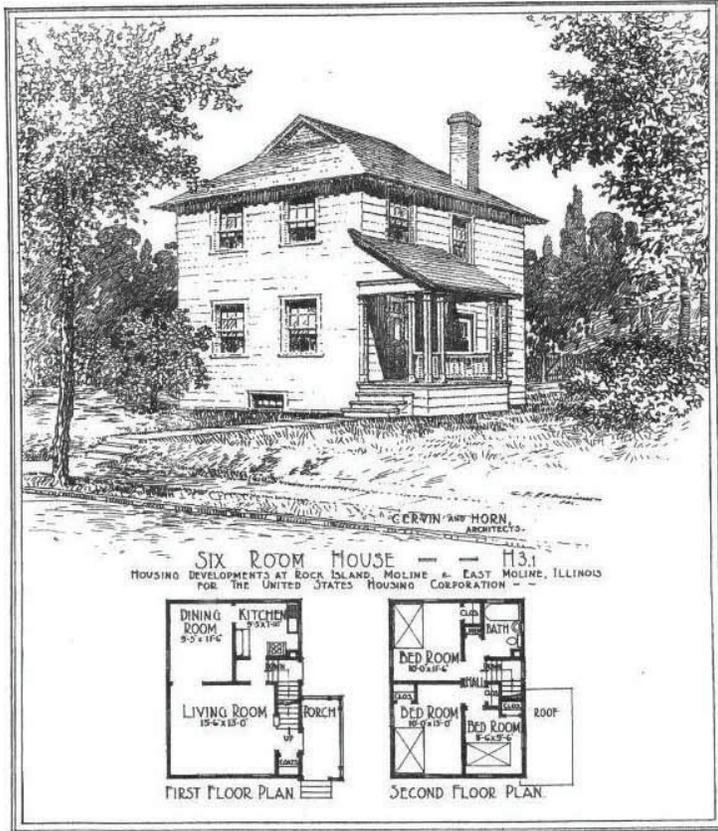


design in the drawing has front doors next to the porches, our house here has them under the porch roof. Original craftsman style balustrades remain on

this double house as does the 6 over 6 window design. Seventeen two-family double houses were built in Rock Island. An example of the side gable design is located at 4105 18th Avenue.

A variety of families called this double house home over the years. According to city directories neither side was owner-occupied until the 1980's.

House Style H3.1



1545 40th Street

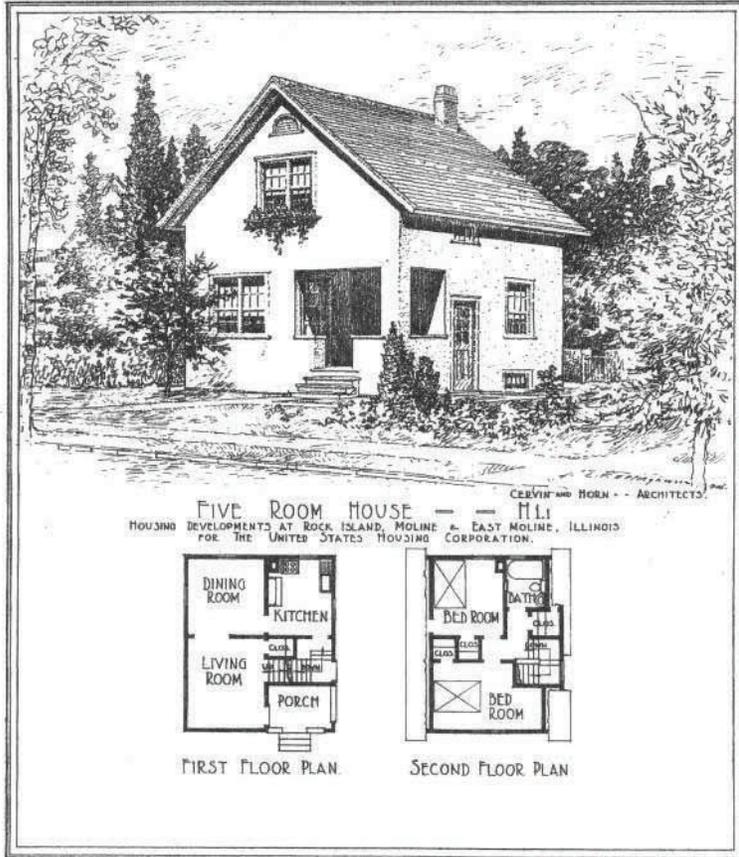
The original drawing of this house presents with a strong sense of symmetry. The roofline has a small front gable peak that spreads out into a lower hip-like extension. The porch is added to the side of the house and has a shed like roofline emulating the hipped portion of the main house. Porch detailing included classical square columns in clusters of 3 connected with an open balustrade. This particular house was built in reverse of the drawing with the porch on the opposite side.



Building mirror images of several of the home designs added variety to the neighborhood. As with many of the homes in this neighborhood, porches have been enclosed over the years and additions have been added.

A review of city directories show this home occupied by only two different families from the time it was built until 2005. The original owners were James and Amanda Clark. James was a manual arts teacher. Tim and Susan Granet appeared in the 1981 directory and in 2005 they were listed as living in the home for 28 years.

House Style H1.1



1537 40th Street

This home appears as a true English cottage in the original drawing. It has a front gable roofline with an eyebrow vent at the peak. The porch is enclosed in the body of the house adding to the sense of a smooth façade. The picture suggests that the house may have been

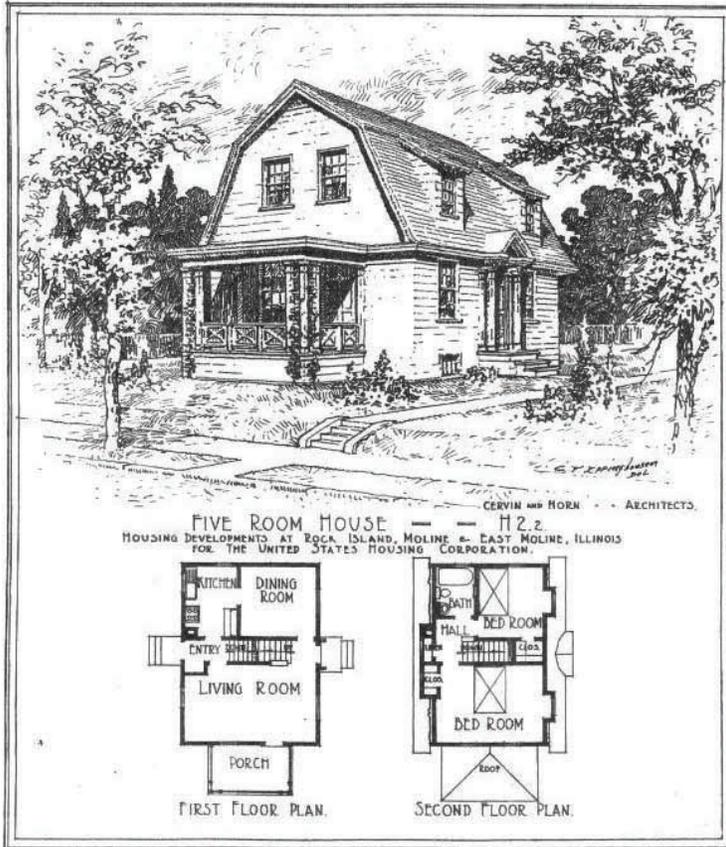


covered in stucco. A small rectangular window above the side door adds light and detail to the stairway. As with our previous home, the floor plan is in reverse of the drawing, the porch has been enclosed and

an addition has been added to the back of the house.

The 1919 city directory shows the home occupied by Louis and Dorothy Gloor. Mr. Gloor was a bookkeeper with Gelhart (or Gelbart) Co., an electrical supply company. But in 1920 the family is listed as living at our next stop 1533 40th Street. Engineer Donald Strauss and his wife Frances were living here. Family names to follow included Patton, Carlson and Huff.

House Style H2.2



1533 40th Street

Dutch colonial in style, this house has a distinctive gambrel roof punctuated with two small dormers on one side and a larger dormer on the other. The placement of these dormers allows for additional light and extra closet space in the upstairs rooms. The front entrance to the house is actually at the side and enhanced by a pedimented entry with classical square columns.

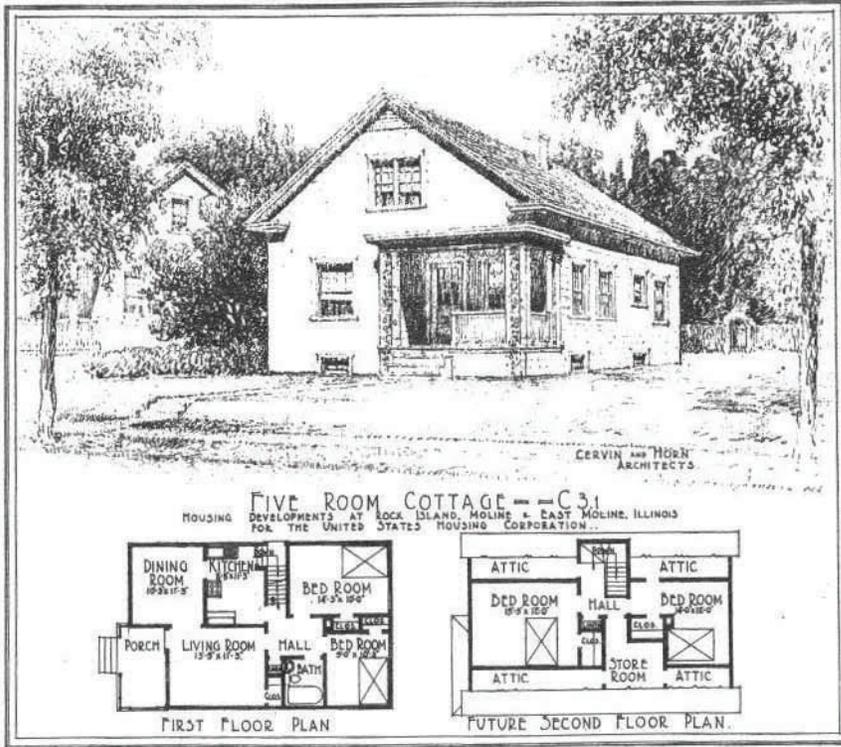


The front entrance to the house is actually at the side and enhanced by a pedimented entry with classical square columns. Access to the front porch on the house is gained thru the living room. The original porch design repeated the classical square columns. The balustrade was built in an “x” design. Today the

entry to the house remains at the side. Elements of the pedimented hood are still evident.

The first family to live in this home was that of Peter and Catherine Conley. Peter’s occupation was listed in the city directories as a specialist at the Arsenal. The Meehan family (Charles and Mattie) were listed as living in the house from the early 1920’s to the late 1950’s. The Dean Stang family has been here for at least 27 years. The length of ownership by these two families is a testament to the livability of both the home and the neighborhood.

House Style C3.1



1525 40th Street

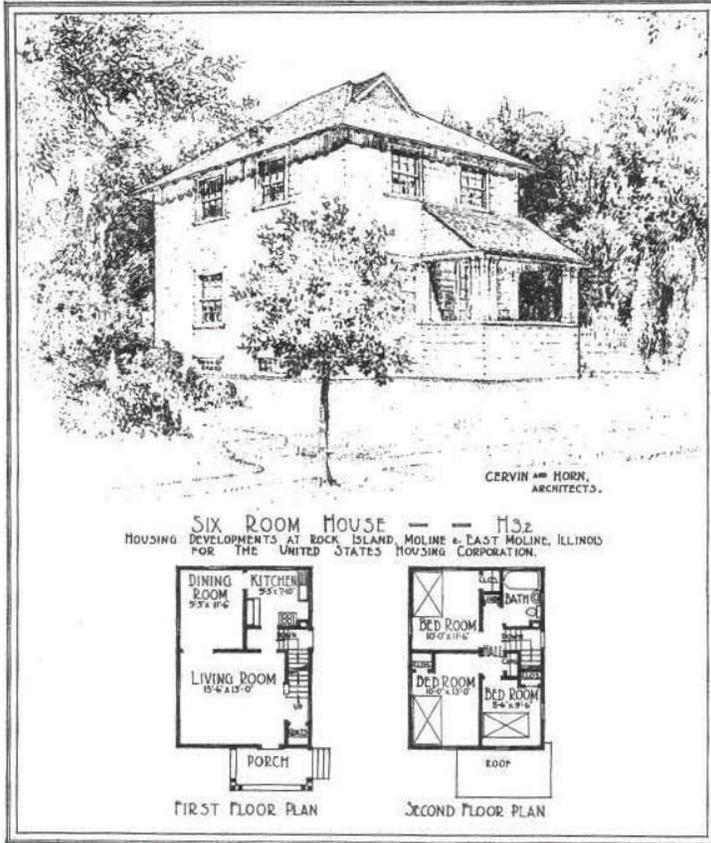
Listed as a five room cottage, this house was designed to have two additional bedrooms added to the second floor at some time in the future. The simple front gable design of the house is enhanced by slightly wider eaves accentuated by a return. As with all these houses a front porch was considered essential in adding to the livability and sense of neighborhood. Here the



porch is partially cut into the house. Again we see the classical square columns in sets of 3 and a simple balustrade.

This was the home of Beatrice and Thomas Beattie in 1919. Mr. Beattie was listed in city directories as a sheet metal worker and a turner.

House Style H3.2



1517 40th Street

This is the same house as 1545 40th Street but with the porch attached to the front of the house instead of the side and with different details. The base of the porch is finished in clapboard and the columns while still grouped in 3's are shorter sitting atop the solid porch walls. The front

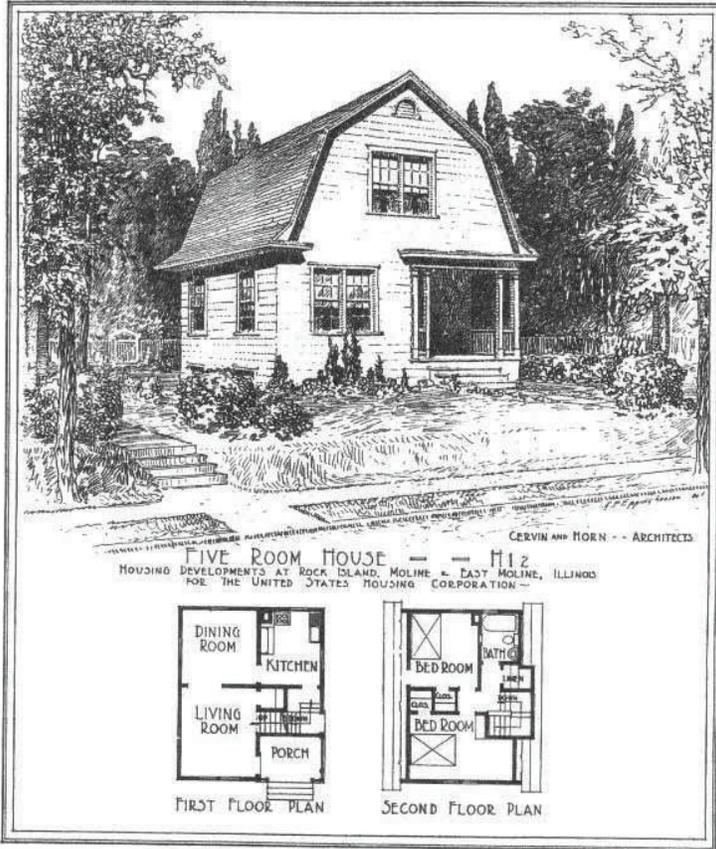


door of the house opens onto the porch as it did at 1545. So as you look at the floor plan, the door opening moved from one side of the coat closet to the other.

Original owners Elizabeth and

Allen Roberts lived in this home into at least the 1940's. As with many houses in the neighborhood, the house is listed as sided in the 1981 city directory.

House Style H1.2



1513 40th Street

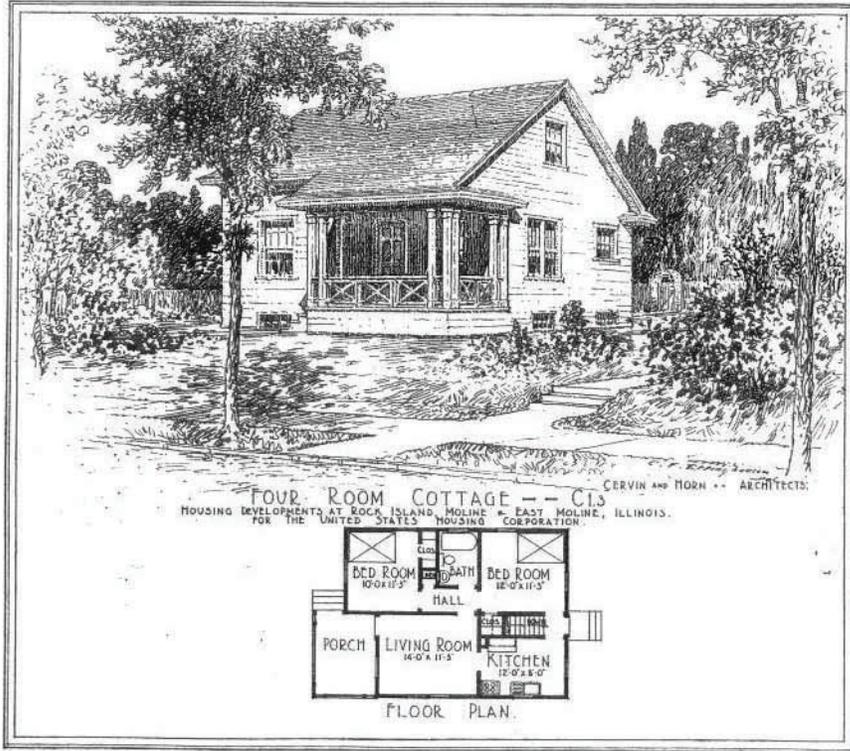
A second example of the gambrel roof Dutch colonial, this house appears in the original drawing to have a distinct flaring to the eaves. A dormer has been built into only one side of the roofline. A porch has been cut into the body of the house. The detailing remains intact – the clusters of classical square columns



connected with a simple balustrade. As with many of the houses along the street, the floor plan is built in reverse of the original drawing.

The first owners of this home were Frances and Maurice Raines (or Rains). Mr. Raines was employed as a switchman on the C, RI & P railroad. The 2005 city directory lists the owners as Kenneth & Donna Hill who according to the directory have lived in the home for 17 years.

House Style C1.3



1509 40th Street

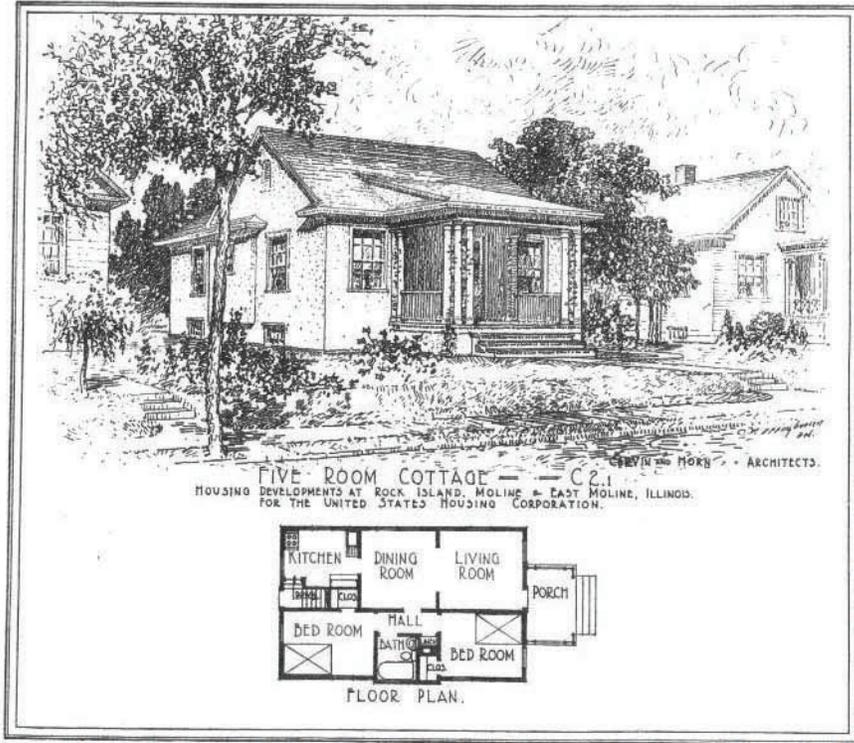
A small side gable cottage, the original drawing shows a spacious front porch at the front right corner complete with the detailing we have come to expect. The front porch steps have been placed parallel to the house to add variety.



Fifteen four room cottages were built as part of the total project at a construction cost of \$2,935 each.

The original residents of this home were Elizabeth and Louis Deal. Mr. Deal was employed as a toolmaker at Universal Tractor Works.

House Style C2.1



1508 40th Street

The welcoming front porch with its wide front steps is part of the original charm of this side gable cottage. In a slight variation from other designs the clusters of columns are connected with square cut balusters along the porch sides.

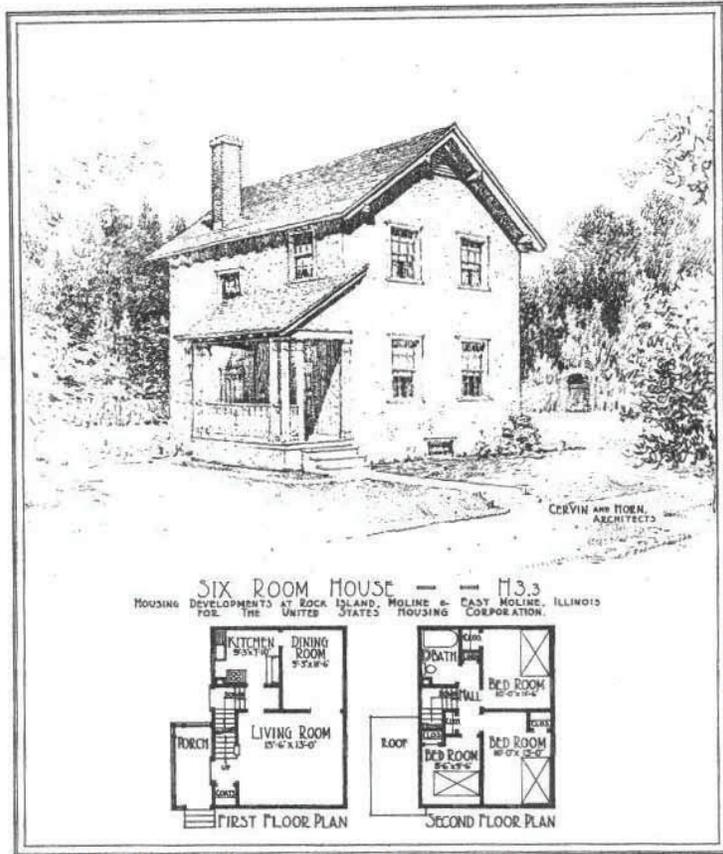


Additional detailing includes a side bump out bay window and arched louvered openings at the gable ends. The floor plan

of the cottage is typical bungalow with living room, dining room and kitchen on one side and bedrooms on the other. The economical use of space allows for not only a full dining room but also for small amenities like a built in linen closet.

A series of families have lived in this cottage over the years including Floyd & Lillian Carnes, James & Jeane Ward, Linda Anderson, Hilding Hultgren and Gary & Luann Marineau.

House Style H3.3



1512 40th Street

With the exception of the roofline this home is a mirror image of the house at 1545 40th Street. Here a front gabled roofline leaves framing timbers exposed in the craftsman style. The six room floor plan was one of the larger of the original homes. But as with others in the

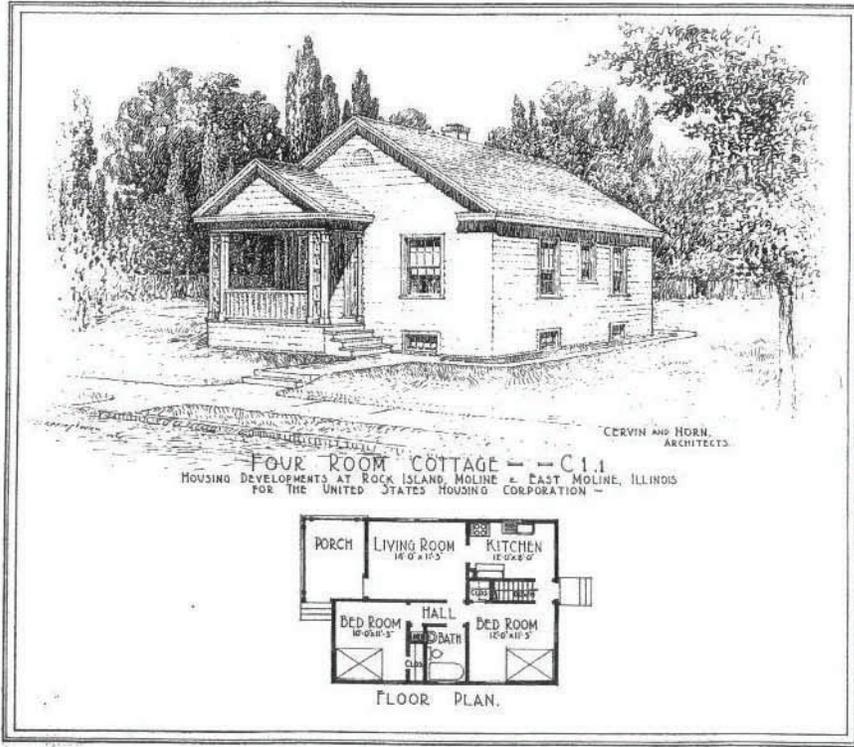


neighborhood, an addition has been added to the back of the house. And with the advent of air conditioning and patios, American families started spending their time indoors or in the back yard. Many

porches were enclosed to add to the living space inside the home.

Mallte E. Collins, a plumber with Moline Heating, lived here with his wife Edna as early as 1925 and at least as late as 1959.

House Style C1.1



1524 40th Street

Although the roofline design of this cottage is front gable rather than side, the interior floor plan appears to be exactly the same as the previous house. The porch, which is tucked

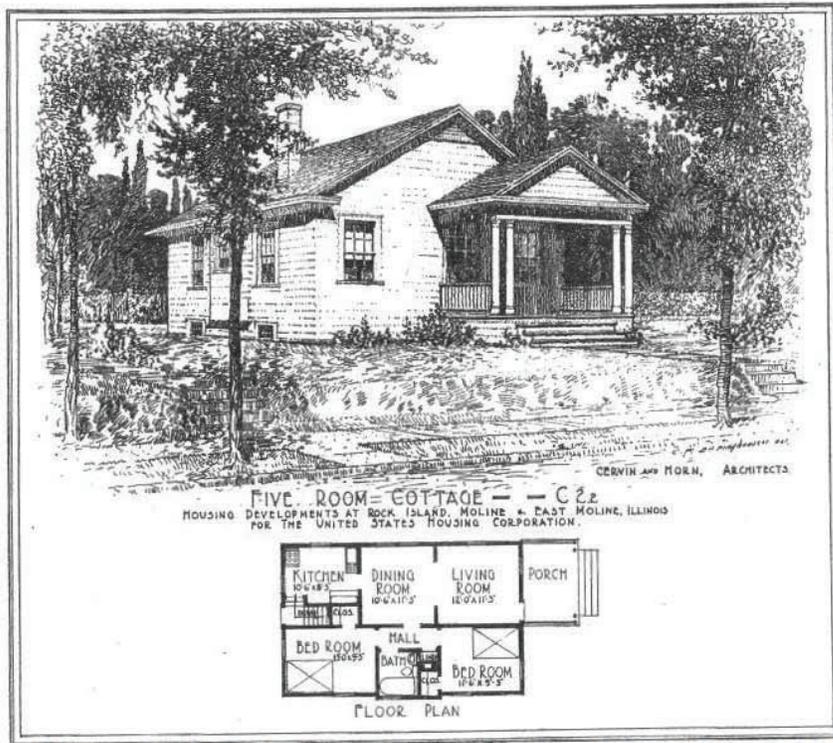


into a front corner of the house, has a front gabled roofline of its own. In the original drawing there appears to be a trellis-

like structure between sets of corner columns adding to the cottage feel of the home.

The number of craftsmen needed to build all these homes numbered in the hundreds. And these craftsmen needed housing. Temporary barracks for the workers were built at 18th Avenue and 38th Street.

House Style C2.2



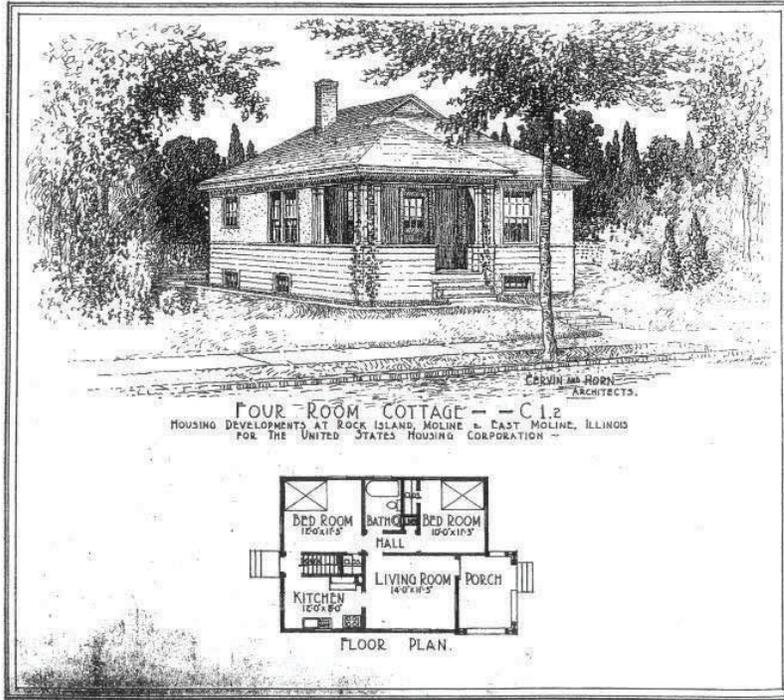
1528 40th Street

A slightly larger five room house, the double front gables are similar to the four room cottage at 1505 40th Street. The porch design and floor plan are the same as the bungalow design at 1508 40th Street. This shows how the architects used many of the same elements in a variety of arrangements to add interest to the streetscape and to individualize the homes.



This home has had very few owners. Curtis and Elizabeth Neill were associated with the house from 1920 to the 1970's. Mrs. Marcelline Kaiser has resided here since that time.

House Style C1.2



1532 40th Street

The original design of this small cottage includes prairie elements enhanced by craftsman detailing. The roof line of this cottage is known as a gable on hip. It is further enhanced with a hipped

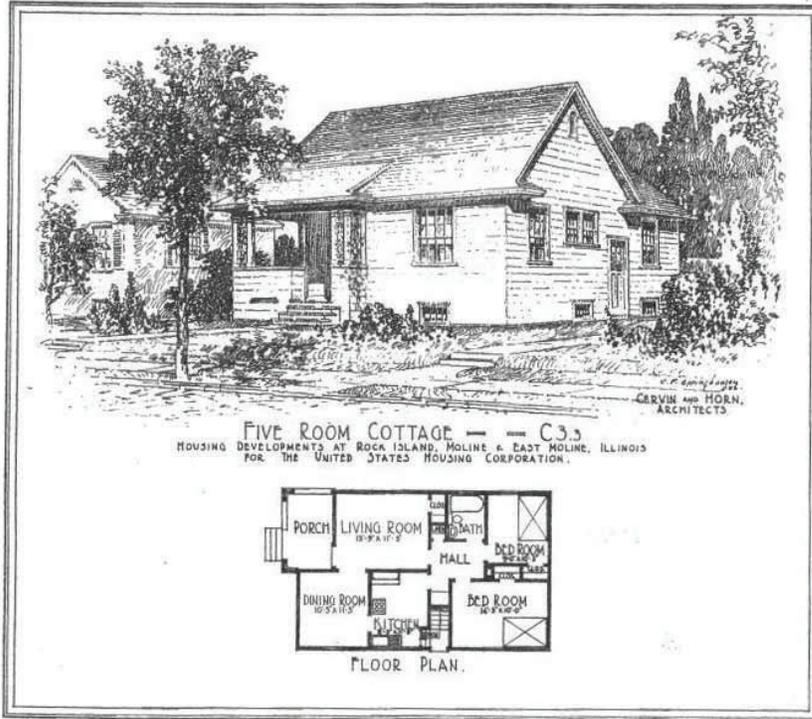


extension over the front porch. The end result is a drawing of the eye down towards the earth. Other prairie details include a possible stucco upper finish with wood siding below. To enhance the long low lines, the wood siding wraps around the front

porch eliminating the need for a balustrade. The trellis – like supports on the porch are craftsman in style, almost reminiscent of a pergola. The 8 over 8 windows add additional detail. Over time the front porch of this home has been enclosed and an addition has been added at the rear. Windows appear to have been replaced, but the 8 over 8 detailing has been retained.

First listed in city directories in 1919, electrician Joseph Fox and his wife Beulah were the first residents. In 1935 Glenn Haley is listed as owner and resident and it appears that the Haley family has owned the home every since, over 70 years.

House Style C3.3



1556 40th Street

The elements of this house are ones we have seen in other designs. The trademark 8 over 8 windows appear to be original. The use of space in this five room cottage exemplifies the architect's belief that quality and design should be incorporated into all housing. There is a small dining room for family meals. Room is made for a linen and coat closet. And this house, as do all the designs, had a basement, which had the effect of



effect of nearly doubling the living space. All the homes in the neighborhood were finished with hardwood floors and painted woodwork.

Over the years families who lived along this street were supported by a variety of occupations: carpenter, sheet metal worker, timekeeper, bookkeeper, toolmaker, switchman and plumber. Family names associated with this home include Gates, Park, Barker, Dunn, DeDobbelaere and Huber.

This area of 40th Street is part of a larger area of World War I housing known as the Colonial Heights Addition that starts at 39th Street and extends east to 41st Street. There are three other clusters of World War I housing in Rock Island. The first is between 32nd and 33rd Streets, 16th and 17th Avenues. The second is 42nd and 43rd Streets 18th to 15th Avenues. The third is 17th and 18th Avenues east of 44th Street. We encourage you to take the time to walk through all these enclaves as well. And watch for similar World War I housing neighborhoods that were built in Davenport, Moline and East Moline.



