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NEGRO HOUSING AND RENTS
IN THE HILL DISTRICT OF
PITTSBURGH

By
Wilcy A. Hall
A.B. Virginia Union University 1917

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FORWARD

There is an increasing tendency on the part of students of human relations to subject the Negro to scientific investigation and study. This tendency has been manifested particularly in those northern urban centers in which our leading universities are located, and to which the Negro migrants have gone in large numbers.

This material has been collected primarily as an addition to facts already established, and if these findings indicate, even in the smallest measure, how the new citizen is adjusting himself to the conditions of an urban, and highly industrial, community, the writer will feel amply repaid for his efforts.

The success of this study was assured largely through the kindness of the 227 families, upon interviews with whom our findings are based. Although reluctantly at first, they finally admitted the writer into their personal and home life sufficiently to permit him to secure the information here presented. To them we wish to express our indebtedness.

To Mr. John Hilder, Executive Director, Pittsburgh Housing Association, who gave his hearty cooperation to this study; to Professor Francis D. Tyson, of the Department of Economics of the University of Pittsburgh, a faithful advisor and helpful critic during the period when the study was in progress; and to the staff of the Urban League in general, and Mr. Alonzo C. Thayer, Executive Secretary, in particular, who gave many valuable suggestions, the writer extends his deepest appreciation.

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Definition of Terms

In order that the reader may understand the sense in which certain terms are used, the following definitions are given:

DWELLING. This term is used to denote the habitation of a family group (including boarders and lodgers) whether the habitation consists of one or of many rooms.

APARTMENT. This term refers to a part of a house (but not the whole house) designed and used as the habitation of one family group.

HOUSE. This term is used to indicate a residential building.

HOUSEHOLD. This term refers to the family group (including boarders and lodgers.)

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SUMMARY

1. The Negro migrants have moved into the same sections, and often the same houses, occupied by practically all new groups on first coming to Pittsburgh.
2. The average size of the Negro family found in this study consisted of 4.03 persons. This was the exact size of the Negro family found by V. C. Wright in a study of the Hill district in 1927.
3. The average number of rooms occupied by the Negro family was 3.79 rooms; the average number of persons per room was 1.05; and the average number of families per dwelling was 1.13. Specifically, 13 families occupied two room dwellings; 30 families occupied three room dwellings; 123 families occupied four room dwellings; 32 families occupied five room dwellings; 25 families occupied six room dwellings; and four families occupied dwellings with more than six rooms.
4. Of the 227 dwellings studied, 21 had outside toilets; 14 had outside water; 153 had baths; 217 had gas; 182 had electric lights; 56 had laundry tubs; and 14 had furnaces for heating.
5. The average earnings of the male head of the household was \$27.09 per week. This is slightly less than the \$28.72 given by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor, for Pittsburgh, as of the week ending December 15, 1928, and based on the earnings of 59,306 Pittsburgh wage earners. The most frequent weekly wage was \$25, which was received by 46 men; twenty-four men received less; and 130 more than this amount.

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The minimum weekly wage was \$10 and the maximum was \$68.75.

6. The average weekly income of the 227 families was \$32.02. This amount is made up of the earnings of the head of the household, augmented by the earnings of the housewife in 41 instances; of the children in 37 instances; by income from lodgers in 73 households; and a single instance, by alimony of \$25 per month. The family income most frequently reported was \$25 - by 35 families; thirty-five families reported less, and 153 families more than this amount. The minimum family income was \$10, and the maximum family income \$85 per week. The median income was \$31.00 per week.
7. The average rent per month paid by these 227 families was \$8.93. The range of rents was from a minimum of \$11.50 per month for a two-room dwelling to a maximum of \$100 per month for a dwelling of twelve rooms. The median monthly rent was \$38.00.
8. These Negro families pay on the average 24.4% of their income for rent. The percentage paid varies with the size of the dwelling occupied. For the two-room dwellings it is 20.8%; for the three-room dwellings 25.8%; for the four-room dwellings 29.3%; for the five-room dwellings 29%; and for the six-room dwellings 30.9%.
9. Of the 200 male workers included in this study, 63 are reported as skilled workers or salaried employees, and 137 as unskilled workers.

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I INTRODUCTION

(A) Purpose

"The Negro in American cities has been the subject of much discussion and conjecture, much pity and censure but little unbiased study and investigation. As a result he has suffered not only from the hostility of his enemies but also from the mistaken and often misdirected sympathies of his friends."¹

Since the beginning of the war time migration period, about 1917, there has been a growing number of studies, which have attempted to substitute actual knowledge for supposition, and deal objectively with facts rather than subjectively with fancy. Notable among such studies may be mentioned the following: "The Negro in Chicago" made by the Chicago Race Commission in 1920; "The Negro in Toledo", by Forrester B. Washington in 1923; "Negro Population in Minneapolis", by Abram I. Harris in 1925; "Negro Survey of Pennsylvania", made under the direction of F.B. Washington in 1925, and "Negro Problems in Cities", a study made under the direction of T.J. Wooster Jr., in 1925.

The present study is an attempt to secure the facts on rents, housing conditions and conveniences, and family income among Negro families in the Hill district of Pittsburgh. Very few studies have been made showing the relation between rents and income of Negroes, and as a result little actual data exists showing how close the income for the family is to the margin of

1. Elmer A. Carter: Introduction to a Study of the Negro in Minneapolis, p.3

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dependency; Moreover, there is an increased interest manifested in workers' homes, and the data here presented will throw light on the question whether it is possible for Negroes to secure decent accommodations on their earnings.

The residents of the Hill district include a large number of the Negroes who came to Pittsburgh when the demand for workers was great, and during the years that have followed they have tried to adjust themselves to the conditions of urban life. It is hoped that the data here presented will give some idea of the extent to which this adjustment has been made and also indicate the problems which these families are now facing, to the end that agencies interested in the welfare of the citizens of Pittsburgh may direct their attention towards these problems.

In a study of housing and rents among Negroes in eighteen cities of the United States during the latter part of 1925 and early 1926, the following conclusion was reached: "The rent of Negro dwellings is a plain indication of the exploitation of Negro neighborhoods. These rents are excessive whether they are measured by the kind of house and equipment; by the relation of rents paid by Negroes and those paid by white people for similar quarters; by the relation of rent to the value of the property, or by the proportion which rent forms of the family budget."¹ As Pittsburgh was not included in the eighteen cities, it is hoped that the data here presented will indicate the extent to which the statements are applicable to conditions in Pittsburgh.

¹ Negro Problems in Cities—a study made under the direction of T.J. Woofter Jr., p.121

(B) Scope and Method of Study

The Negroes in Pittsburgh do not find their residence in any one section of the city; they are to be found in large numbers in several distinct districts. The information for this study was gathered in the Hill district, which comprises a part of the Third, and the greater part of the Fifth wards. It was confidently believed that this district was fairly representative of Negro housing conditions throughout the city, particularly as respects those houses now offered for rent.

In order to gather the data, a schedule¹ was prepared on which the writer recorded information given him by some adult member of the household when the house to house canvas was made. Often the writer was admitted into the house and made his own observation of house conveniences and the general condition of the house; in some instances the tenant permitted the writer to go through all the rooms in order that a complete picture might be secured.

In the house to house canvas, information was secured covering two hundred and twenty-seven separate dwellings, in which were housed two hundred and fifty-two families as renters, subrenters and lodgers. It was found necessary to check some of the information, which was usually given by the housewife. This was particularly true in connection with the amount given as the weekly wage of the male head of the family.

¹ q.v. Appendix A.

The houses studied represented every fourth house in the blocks of a section of the Hill district. The use of such method of random selection meant that many houses visited were owned by the occupants, and some were occupied by white tenants and owners; but in neither cases was information secured, as it was the purpose of the study to secure information from Negro renters only.

(c) Time of the Study - Winter Conditions

In order that the reader may get a clearer picture of the conditions described, it is felt necessary to state the time when the information was secured. The study began on January 2nd, 1929, and was continued almost daily throughout January, February, and March. These months represented the coldest part of the winter, and, as a result many conditions were found which would probably not exist at another season. Among these inconveniences may be mentioned frozen hydrants; water pipes which had burst in bath rooms, cellars, and kitchens; water pipes frozen which lead to water toilets; and in a few instances water frozen on the floors of cellars and basements.

Six houses were found in the 2900 block on Bedford Avenue with water frozen to the inside walls. This condition, the tenants explained, was caused by "sweating" of the walls while the gas stoves were in use; the moisture froze after the stoves were shut off. In four of the six instances, the rooms with the frozen walls were used for sleeping purposes.

(D) Population

The population of Pittsburgh, as given in the Fourteenth Census Report, 1920, was 587,986, of which 37,725 were Negroes. This same report gives the population of the Third and Fifth wards as 16,165. In 1925, the Negro population of Pittsburgh was estimated as 45,166,¹ an increase of 7,441 for the five year period. If we assume the same rate of increase, the entire Negro population for 1928 would be 49,630, and for the Third and Fifth wards 19,349, or 38.9% of the total Negro population.

The Pittsburgh Department of Public Health announced the population of the city as 673,800 on July 1, 1928 and their figures for the Negro population on the same date was 52,422. This latter figure represents an increase of 14,697 Negroes since the 1920 census. If we assume the rate of increase for the Third and Fifth wards to be the same as the city increase, the population of these wards, which comprise the Hill district, would be 22,469 or 42.8% of the total Negro population as of July 1, 1928.

1. Negro Survey of Pennsylvania, Tabled, p.12

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(E) Composition of the Households

In the two hundred and twenty-seven dwellings visited, there were 1017 persons. Three hundred and eighty-one of these persons were reported as children, of whom three hundred and six were under 16 years of age. The remaining seventy-five were 16 years and over. Of those over 16 years, eight were reported as graduates of high school. It was difficult to ascertain how many more were in high school, or had stopped school to go to work.

The number of families per dwelling was 1.13. The excess over one family per dwelling is explained by the presence of subrenters or lodgers. The attempt to ascertain why some of the families preferred to subrent or lodge rather than rent direct from the agent brought forth answers such as the following; "My husband and I could not afford to rent a whole house". "Well, me and my husband don't have any children, and we don't need but two rooms". "My husband left me with these children and I moved here with my sister, so I could work and have somebody to look after my children". Such answers help to explain the situations which necessitate this doubling-up of two families in what was built for a single family house. They reflect the inability of the family to pay the rent for the whole house. This was not always the case, however, for a letter carrier, earning \$175 per month, was found living with a chauffeur who earns \$25 per week, in a four room house for which they paid \$47.50 per month. Neither family had children.

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Lodgers were found in 73, or 32% of the two hundred and twenty-seven dwellings. Included among the 180 lodgers were 105 men, 64 women and 11 children. It is interesting to note that more than half the lodgers were men. Many housewives stated that they preferred male to female lodgers, that they proved less troublesome, paid their bills more promptly, and were less inclined to pry into the family affairs.

The average size of the family studied was 4.03 persons, which is exactly the same size as that of the Negro families found in the study¹ made by V.C. Wright in the Hill District in 1927. This average family is smaller than the average family for Pittsburgh, which was given as 4.5 persons in the 1920 Census Report. This difference is partially accounted for by the fact that¹ 77, or 35.3% of the families consisted of man and wife, with no children. This may be due to the fact that many of the husbands and wives are still young people. Forty, or 18.3% of the families had one child; 33, or 15% of the families had two children; 20, or 9.1% of them had three children; 26, or 12% of them had more than three children. It is interesting that about as many had no children as had two or more.

In three cases of the 42 broken homes, the woman cared for one child, and in 19, or 8% of the total, she cared for more than one child (including 4 with five children and one with seven children). Table I shows the composition of the 218 families of the renters. It is here noted that in two cases a man alone was the renter, and in seven cases a woman alone was the renter of the house.

1. V.C. Wright: Social Aspect of Housing, Master's Thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Pittsburgh, p. 69.

TABLE I
COMPOSITION OF 218 FAMILIES IN THE HILL DISTRICT¹

Composition	Number of Families	Total Number of Children	Number Under 16 years
Man and wife	77	0	0
Man, wife and one child	40	40	28
Man, wife and two children	33	66	52
Man, wife and three children	20	60	53
Man, wife and four children	8	32	28
Man, wife and five children	5	25	24
Man, wife and six children	9	54	45
Man, wife and seven children	1	7	6
Man, wife and eight children	2	16	15
Man, wife and nine children	1	9	7
Man and one child	1	1	0
Man and six children	1	6	6
Woman and one child	3	3	3
Woman and two children	4	8	2
Woman and three children	5	15	12
Woman and four children	3	12	6
Woman and five children	4	20	14
Woman and seven children	1	7	5
Total	218	381	306

1. Two households were rented by men alone, and seven by women alone.

Having given some idea of the composition of the households, let us now consider, in a detailed manner, the kinds of houses in which the people live and the conveniences which they enjoy in these houses.

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II HOUSING

(A) Physical Condition of Houses

In his discussion of the physical condition of Negro dwellings, C. S. Johnson draws the following conclusions: "In most cities of this country the Negro population lives near the business districts. These are properties inherited after a series of transfers from the early white residents who have moved to more desirable sections. These factors as a consequence characterize the dwellings:

- (a) They are old and out of repair.
- (b) The dwellings are no longer desirable for residence, but the land is potentially valuable for business. It is thus difficult to buy, and the dwellings hopeless to repair.
- (c) Few new dwellings are erected.
- (d) These dwellings are out of date and frequently fall within the class tolerated as "Old Law" houses, with few of the sanitary provisions required in new structures for the preservation of health.
- (e) The dwellings were erected for purposes and family habits different enough from the habits and necessities of the new Negro families to introduce difficulties. For example, the intimate arrangement of the early houses for private families is dangerously unsuitable for the new families which must take lodgers into the households. Privacy is destroyed and other social problems introduced.

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(f) Where this population is set off without influence there is a temptation for city government to neglect it in matters of street cleaning, garbage disposal, paving, police protection, etc., as interest centers upon improvements in new areas.¹

The above statement describes the general housing condition of our group so adequately that further comment is almost unnecessary. It is true that the lower part of the Hill district is an old settlement with a new population. It has served as the place of residence for tides of newcomers into Pittsburgh, first the immigrants and now the Negro migrants--each group remaining in the district long enough to become adjusted to city life, and to prosper enough economically to seek new and more desirable places of residence.

The Negroes themselves have illustrated this tendency to move to better quarters when they have become prosperous enough. Not all the settlers of this district have moved out. The presence of families of Jews, Italians and Poles in relatively large numbers gives an indication of the former occupancy of the Hill. The dwellings occupied by these families are freely interspersed among those occupied by Negroes. In some instances both Negroes and other groups may be found living in the same house. Although these Negroes are living under similar conditions as the whites, and are afforded the same accommodations, the evidence gathered shows that they pay a higher rental.

Many of the houses have only recently been provided with modern sanitary conveniences, and because no provision was made for such conveniences when the houses were built, toilets

1. U.S. Johnson; Research Memorandum on the National Interracial Conference, 1928, Housing, p.7

have been placed in cellars, on back porches, and in blocked-off sections of halls, often very near the kitchen. The same is true of bathing facilities--29 instances were found where the bath tub was placed in the cellar, or was a part of the back porch enclosed.

In the judgment of the writer, many of the houses were sadly in need of repair; thirty-four were in such condition as to make them seem unfit for habitation, and so were reported to the Pittsburgh Housing Association for inspection. The unsanitary conditions found included unusable toilets, inadequate water supply, leaky roofs, broken window panes, holes in flooring, broken panels in doors, defective flues. One instance was found where the holes in the front door permitted so much exposure that the family had tacked rags over the door and used the back entrance exclusively. Many of the defects arise out of the fact that nearly all the houses are old. Of the two hundred and twenty-seven dwellings studied, eighty, or 35.2% are of frame construction, and one hundred and forty-seven, or 64.3% are of brick construction.

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(B) Types of Houses

The distribution of the houses studied as to types is shown in Table II. One hundred and forty three, or 63% of the houses studied were of the one family type, that is, they contained but one room regularly arranged as a kitchen, and where there were bathing and toilet facilities, only one set of such facilities was provided. This does not imply however, that only one family was to be found in each of these houses or apartments, for, as will be shown later, the worst examples of overcrowding were found in the one family apartments.

Seventy-five, or 33% of the houses were constructed for two families. They were provided with two rooms arranged for kitchen use, and in forty-two, or more than half of these houses, each apartment was provided with separate bathing and toilet facilities.

The remaining nine houses, or 4% of the total, were of the multi-family type. Four of these houses were from eight to twelve rooms in size, and were being rented by one family and used as rooming houses. The remaining five were apartment houses, from each of which only one schedule was filled.

On the whole, the best rental property found in this study were the six room one family houses in Webster Terrace. These houses were built less than three years ago. Each is provided with a furnace, stationary laundry tubs, gas, electricity, and the best of hardware, and while they are found in the highest rent class, when we consider what is provided for the sixty-two dollars and fifty cents monthly rental, we are convinced

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF 227 DWELLINGS IN THE HILL DISTRICT
ACCORDING TO TYPES

Type	No. Dwel.	Per Cent	2-Rm. Dwel.	3-Rm. Dwel.	4-Rm. Dwel.	5-Rm. Dwel.	6-Rm. Dwel.	Over 6-Rms.
One-Family	143	63	0	0	86	32	25	0
Two-Family	75	33	13	30	32	0	0	0
Multi-Family	9	4	0	0	5	0	0	4
Total	227	100	13	30	123	32	25	4

that the rent is actually less than for the majority of the houses included in the study.

The apartment houses were considerably above the average in the facilities and conveniences afforded. One apartment house on Junilla Street, considered the best in the city for Negroes, provided janitor service, steam heat, and locker rooms in the basement for each of the five room apartments, all for the sixty-five dollar monthly rental. The other apartments provided janitor service, but do not furnish heat. The rent in these apartments ranges from forty to sixty-five dollars per month, and one has five rooms, while the other four have four rooms each.

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(C) Length of Residence

Contrary to the usual impression created by some real estate dealers, it was found that Negroes do not move about over the city at short intervals, if the findings of this study can be considered indicative. Table III shows the length of residence of these two hundred and twenty-seven tenants, classified according to the number of rooms which they occupied. The greatest dissatisfaction with their quarters is found among those occupying two rooms. The table shows that not one of the thirteen families studied remained in such quarters as long as a year. Of those occupying three rooms, sixteen families or 53% of the total, moved after less than a year of occupancy, while another 33% moved after occupying their quarters from one to five years. One family in this group had occupied its quarters for more than twenty-four years.

As the number of rooms increases, we get greater stability among the families. Of the families occupying four rooms, 69% remained in their quarters at least a year, while 13% remained five years and more. It may be suggested that those occupying larger quarters represent a higher income group, and can therefore rent a house which conduces to their satisfaction.

The shortest period of occupancy was two weeks, and the longest was twenty-four years. Forty-nine of the total number of families remained in their quarters from two to five years; forty-two families remained more than five years; and eighty-eight moved from their quarters within a year. Those

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families occupying four rooms appear more satisfied with their quarters than any other group. Ten families in this group remained in the same dwelling for more than fifteen years. Fifty-five families of this group remained in the same dwelling two years and longer. This may be explained by the fact that four rooms represent more nearly adequate space for a family, and that four room dwellings may be rented from a minimum of \$20.00 per month to a maximum of \$57.50 per month.

TABLE III
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE OF 227 RENTERS

	Total	6mos. or less	6mos. to 1 yr.	1 yr. to 2 yrs.	2 yrs. to 3 yrs.	3 yrs. to 5 yrs.	5 yrs. to 10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.
Two-room Dwel.	13	9	4					
Three-room Dwel.	30	7	9	6	4	1	1	2
Four-room Dwel.	123	19	19	30	32	11	2	10
Five-room Dwel.	32	1	10	10	6	1	3	1
Six-room Dwel.	25	5	4	2	7	5	1	1
Over 6 rooms	4		1			1		2
Total	227	41	47	43	49	19	7	16

(D) Conditions of Overcrowding

In considering the number of rooms per family it should be borne in mind that the number of rooms includes kitchen, living room, and in some instances a dining room. Consequently four rooms for a family of four persons does not necessarily mean a separate room for each individual, but may well represent a problem of congestion, as, for instance, in a family of father, mother and two grown children of opposite sex where at least three sleeping rooms are needed. Obviously when we go beyond two persons per sleeping room, we have that danger of overcrowding in the occupancy of bedrooms which will prove a menace to the health of the community in the time of epidemics. Yet, as shown in Table V, in sixty of the two hundred and twenty-seven houses, we have more than two persons per sleeping room. In eleven houses we have three persons per sleeping room, while in another eleven we have more than three persons per sleeping room.

In four very small rooms in a row of flats opposite Watt Street School, a man, his wife, eight children under 10 years of age and the wife's mother were found sleeping in three rooms not adequately partitioned. In another four room apartment on Webster Avenue, we found a household consisting of father, mother, eight children under 12 years of age and two male lodgers. The lodgers occupied one room, leaving two sleeping rooms for the family of ten persons. Table IV shows the condition of overcrowding on a basis of total rooms in the apartment and Table V shows overcrowding on a basis of the rooms set apart for sleeping quarters.

TABLE IV

CONDITION OF OVERCROWDING IN 227 DWELLINGS
INCLUDING ALL ROOMS

	Total	12-rm	3-rm	4-rm	5-rm	6-rm	Over
	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	6 rms
Less than 1 person per room	84	0	13	43	9	17	2
One person per room	53	8	4	33	5	3	0
More than 1, less than 2	66	1	8	33	13	4	2
Two persons per room	12	2	3	7	0	0	0
More than 2, less than 3	12	2	2	7	0	1	0
Total	227	13	30	123	32	25	4

TABLE V

CONDITION OF OVERCROWDING IN 227 DWELLINGS
INCLUDING SLEEPING ROOMS ONLY

	Total	12-rm	3-rm	4-rm	5-rm	6-rm	Over
	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	Dwell.	6 rms
One person per room	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
More than one, less than 2	68	0	5	31	13	17	2
Two persons per room	98	8	18	55	13	4	0
More than 2, less than 3	38	2	1	23	6	4	2
Three persons per room	11	0	4	7	0	0	0
More than 3, less than 4	5	0	2	3	0	0	0
Four persons per room	6	2	0	4	0	0	0
Total	227	13	30	123	32	25	4

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(E) House Conveniences

The value of a house to a tenant lies not only in the number of rooms but also in the facilities which are provided for making the house convenient as well as comfortable. No standard has been set by which to measure the serviceability of houses in different localities on a basis of these house conveniences, but one can get a fair idea from the type and number of facilities most commonly provided in any given community.

Probably because it is used so widely in Pittsburgh and its environs, gas was found as a convenience in all but ten of the two hundred and twenty-seven houses. It was being used for cooking, heating, and lighting. In connection with its use for heating, an interesting observation was made. In sixty-nine of the houses using various types of heaters, the walls were visibly wet with moisture caused by the heat. It was first thought that this condition obtained in only houses of frame construction, but more careful observation showed first; that while this condition was found in some frame houses, it did not exist in all; and second: it was found quite as prevalently in brick houses as in frame houses. The writer discussed the situation with Mr. John Ihlder, of the Pittsburgh Housing Association, who wrote a letter to Dr. Weidlein, of the Mellon¹ Institute of Research, for an explanation. The answer to this letter stated that a probable cause was that the walls were not properly constructed, and "that the remedy was rather extensive and would require a change in the construction

1. q.v. Appendix B.

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of the walls or else a replanning of the heating system so that the gas burners, or burner, would be located in rooms insulated from the rest of the house." Since neither of these changes can be put into effect easily, it must seem evident that these sixty-nine families must continue to live under a condition which is a definite menace to the health of their members.

Seventy-four of the two hundred and twenty-seven houses, or 32% of the total, were without bath, while twenty-six of one hundred fifty-three baths were used in common with at least one other family. All of the houses with baths were also equipped with hot water tanks. Only one hundred and eighty-two of the houses were provided with electricity; fifty-six were provided with stationary laundry tube in either the kitchen or basements; and fourteen were provided with furnace for heating.

fourteen of these houses had water outside of the apartments, usually in the yard. In every instance, the hydrant was used by more than one family. In the 2600 block of Mahon Street, two hydrants were provided for twenty-four families, and on the day that the writer visited this section, one of these hydrants was frozen, making it necessary for all the families to secure water at the one hydrant. These two hydrants were located at a distance of twelve feet on either side of a group of toilets.

Among the conveniences listed, toilets warrant special comment. A little more than 90% of these households had toilets within the dwellings, while the remaining 10% had toilets outside the apartments. Of the toilets within the buildings, thirty-five were located in the cellars. Nine of the twenty-one

outside toilets were in need of repairs, being frozen in seven of the cases. In the group of houses on Mahon Street, referred to above, one toilet was provided for every three families. These toilets were not kept locked, and as they were not enclosed, they were doubtless being used by many more than the members of the three families.

On the whole, the ventilation of these houses was considered good. Every room used for sleeping purposes was provided with a window. There were evidences to indicate that some of these windows never opened, but this observation was made in but a small percentage of the total.

The preceding pages have given a description of the houses, and listed the conveniences found in them, but no mention has been made of the cost of these houses. We now turn more definitely to the rents paid by these tenants, and the earnings of the members of their families.

II RENTS AND EARNINGS

(A) Range of Rents

Before discussing rents, at the risk of repetition, the age of the majority of the buildings, their bad state of repair and the absence of house conveniences must be mentioned again. These conditions should be constantly borne in mind in order to judge the fairness of rental rates. "In fact, in some buildings, instead of paying any sum, however small, as rent, it would appear the tenants instead of the landlords should be paid because of the constant risk to health and limb, which the houses force upon their occupants daily."¹

Another fact to keep in mind in considering rental is the matter of ownership. Two hundred and one of the two hundred and twenty-seven houses are owned by white people who live outside the district in which the house is found, and often they are not in a position to know the condition of their property. Moreover, by not having contact with the occupants of their property, they are less inclined to make repairs than they would be if they lived near enough to be neighbors. Only twenty-five of these houses are owned by Negroes, and in nearly all cases, both white and colored owners have given the collection of rents over to an agent. Many tenants report that when repairs are requested the agents tell them "I will take the matter up with the owners", which answer means at least a long delay, if not indeed a pigeon-holing of the matter entirely.

As shown in Table VI, the rents range from a minimum of

1. Elizabeth Hughes: *Living Conditions for Small Wage Earners in Chicago*, p.32.

TABLE VI
RANGE OF RENTS IN 227 DWELLINGS

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel:	% of total:	2 Room: Dwel:	3 Room: Dwel:	4 Room: Dwel:	5 Room: Dwel:	6 Room: Dwel:	Over 6 Rooms:
\$10. to \$14.99:	3	1.3:	3					
\$15. to \$19.99:	5	2.2:	3	2				
\$20. to \$24.99:	13	5.7:	1	2	10			
\$25. to \$29.99:	27	16.3:	6	12	17	2		
\$30. to \$34.99:	34	15.0:		10	19	1	4	
\$35. to \$39.99:	32	14.1:		4	17	10	1	
\$40. to \$44.99:	30	13.2:			22	6	2	
\$45. to \$49.99:	36	15.9:			31	3	2	
\$50. to \$54.99:	9	4.0:			3	5	1	
\$55. to \$59.99:	17	7.5:			4	4	8	1
\$60. to \$65.00:	8	3.5:				1	6	1
Over \$65.00	2	.8:						2
Unknown	1	.4:						1
Total	227	99.9:	13	30	123	32	25	4

\$11.50 per month for two rooms up to a maximum of \$100.00 per month for a house of twelve rooms. The median rent for the whole group was \$38.00. The majority of these two hundred and twenty-seven dwellings are found in the rent classes from \$25.00 up to \$50.00 per month. Thirty-seven of the families, or 16.3%, pay from \$25.00 to \$30.00 per month; thirty-four families, or 15%, pay from \$30.00 to \$35.00 per month; thirty-two families, or 14.1%, pay from \$35.00 to \$40.00 per month; thirty families, or 13.2%, pay from \$40.00 to \$45.00 per month; and thirty-six families, or 15.9%, pay from \$45.00 to \$50.00 per month. It is thus noted that 74.5%, or about three-fourths of the families fall within the range from \$25.00 to \$50.00 per month. Moreover, one hundred and two families, or 45% of the total, paid \$40.00 per month and over, and thirty-six, or 16% of the total, paid \$50.00 per month and over.

More interesting, however, is the amount of rent per room paid by these families, although one must consider the fact that rooms vary greatly in size and convenience. The average rent per room paid by the whole group is \$3.93 per month. Those families occupying two rooms pay an average of \$9.54 per room per month; those occupying three rooms pay an average of \$9.51 per room per month; those occupying four rooms (these constitute 54% of the total) pay an average of \$9.32 per room per month; those living in five room dwellings pay \$8.48 per room per month; those in six room dwellings pay \$7.27 per month. It will be noted that there is a steady reduction in the amount per room as the number of rooms increases.

It might prove interesting to compare this average of \$8.93 per room per month with figures compiled for Pittsburgh at other times, and with figures from other northern cities.¹ V. C. Wright, who included 212 Negro families in his study of the Hill district in 1927, found that these families paid an average of \$7.39 per room per month. It must be noted here that nearly all of his families were at or below the margin of dependency, as evidenced by the fact that they had applied to some social agency for relief within the year that the study was made. The following table shows the results of the study made by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare in 1925:

TABLE VII
COMPARATIVE RENTS PER UNFURNISHED ROOM
PAID BY NEGROES AND WHITES²

Pennsylvania Department of Welfare Survey 1925		
District	Negro	White
Pennsylvania as a whole	\$5.43	\$4.78
Philadelphia	5.60	5.20
PITTSBURGH	6.77	6.38

1. V. C. Wright: The social Aspect of Housing
2. Negro Survey of Pennsylvania, p. 41

A study of Rents of Rooms for Selected Cities¹ gives the rent per room per week for Buffalo as \$1.36; Philadelphia \$1.57; Gary, Ind. \$1.78; New York (Harlem) \$1.66; and Chicago (Lower North Side) \$1.25. If we put these figures on a monthly basis, the rent per room per month for Buffalo would be \$5.93; Philadelphia \$6.84; Gary, Ind. \$7.76; New York (Harlem) \$7.23 and Chicago (Lower North Side) \$5.45. It is apparent that the rent in all of these cities is less than the average for Pittsburgh, as found in this study. A more recent study² of the Harlem district of New York made by the New York Urban League in 1927, gives the average rent per room per month for heated apartments as being above \$10.00, and for unheated apartments as \$7.80. We are therefore compelled to agree with DR. Gillman, that "the average wage-earners family of Pittsburgh was paying a higher rent for its accommodations than did the wage earners' families in any other of the fifteen largest cities in the United States."³ This statement was made on the basis of figures compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, of the United States Dept of Labor. Their investigation covered the homes of white wage earners and small salaried men in ninety-two cities and localities scattered in forty-two states. When we remember that the rentals paid by Negroes are higher than those paid by whites for the same quarters, we get some idea of the plight of the Negro wage earner when he rents a house. But what are the accommodations afforded for the rents paid by these families?

1. T.J. Wooley, Jr; Negro Problems in Cities p.122
2. N.Y. Urban League; 2400 Negro Families in Harlem.
3. J.M. Gillman; Rent Levels and Their Causes, p.2.

(B) Rents in Relation to Conveniences

The figures in Tables VIII through XIII show more clearly than any description, the relation between the rents paid and the conveniences provided these Negro families. A few comments will suffice to explain these tables. Outside toilets are found in all rent classes up to and including the class from \$30 to \$35; the same is true, though to a lesser degree, with outside water. The lowest rent class in which bathroom facilities are found is the class from \$25 to \$30, and less than half the apartments in this class are so provided. Even the next higher rent class, \$30, to \$35, has 50% of its apartments without bath. One apartment in the \$45 to \$50 class has no bath. To be sure of securing a house provided with electricity, one must pay at least \$30, and only one house renting under \$40 has laundry tubs. Rental of at least \$50 is necessary to secure a house provided with a furnace, while the majority of the furnaces are found in houses renting above \$60.

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TABLE VIII

RENTS AND CONVENIENCES IN 227 DWELLINGS IN THE HILL DISTRICT

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwellings	Outside Toilets	Outside Water	With Bath	With Hot Water	Gas	Electricity	Tubs	Furnace
\$10 to \$14.99	3	1		3			2		
\$15 to \$19.99	5	3	2	5			3		
\$20 to \$24.99	13	8	10	13			10	9	
\$25 to \$29.99	37	4	1	19	18	18	35	17	
\$30 to \$34.99	34	5	1	17	17	17	33	25	1
\$35 to \$39.99	32			12	20	20	31	30	
\$40 to \$44.99	30			4	26	26	30	28	6
\$45 to \$49.99	36			1	35	35	36	36	26
\$50 to \$54.99	9				9	9	9	9	4
\$55 to \$59.99	17				17	17	17	17	10
\$60 to \$65.00	8				8	8	8	8	7
Over \$65.00	2				2	2	2	2	2
Unknown	1				1	1	1	1	
Totals	227	21	14	74	153	153	217	182	56

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TABLE IX
RENTS AND HOUSE CONVENIENCES IN 13
TWO-ROOM DWELLINGS

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel.	Out- side Toilet	Out- side Water	With- out Bath	With- out Hot Water	Hot Water Tank	Gas	Elec- tricity	Tubs
\$10 to \$14.99	3	1		3			2		
\$15 to \$19.99	3	3	2	3			1		
\$20 to \$24.99	1			1			1		1
\$25 to \$29.99	6			6	6	6	6	6	4
Total	13	4	2	7	6	6	10	6	4

TABLE X
RENTS AND CONVENIENCES IN 30
THREE-ROOM DWELLINGS.

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel.	Out- side Toilet	Out- side Water	With- out Bath	With- out Hot Water	Hot Water Tank	Gas	Elec- tricity	Tubs
\$15 to \$19.99	2		2				2		
\$20 to \$24.99	2	1		2			2	2	
\$25 to \$29.99	10		3	9	9	10	8		
\$30 to \$34.99	10			10	10	9	10	1	
\$35 to \$39.99	4			4	4	3	4		
Total	30	1	3	7	23	23	26	24	1

TABLE XI
RENTS AND HOUSE CONVENIENCES IN 123
FOUR-ROOM DWELLINGS

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel.	Out- side Toilet	Out- side Water	With- out Bath	With- out Hot Water	Hot Water Tank	Gas	Elec- tricity	Tubs
\$20 to \$24.99	10	7	10	10			10	6	
\$25 to \$29.99	17	16	6	16	1	1	17	1	
\$30 to \$34.99	19	2	1	13	6	6	19	14	
\$35 to \$39.99	17			10	7	7	17	16	
\$40 to \$44.99	22			1	21	21	22	22	6
\$45 to \$49.99	31				31	31	31	31	24
\$50 to \$54.99	3				3	3	3	3	3
\$55 to \$59.99	4				4	4	4	4	4
Total	123	25	17	50	73	73	123	97	37

TABLE XII
RENTS AND HOUSE CONVENIENCES IN 32
FIVE-ROOM DWELLINGS

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel.	With- out Bath	With Bath	Hot Water Tank	Dis- cuss- ibility	Tri- Tube	Fur- nace
\$25 to 29.99	2		2	2	2		
\$30 to 34.99	1	1			1	1	
\$35 to 39.99	10	1	9	9	10	9	
\$40 to 44.99	6	1	5	5	6	6	
\$45 to 49.99	3		3	3	3	3	2
\$50 to 54.99	5		5	5	5	5	1
\$55 to 59.99	4		4	4	4	4	1
\$60 to 65.00	1		1	1	1	1	1
Total	32	3	29	29	32	31	4

TABLE XIII
RENTS AND HOUSE CONVENIENCES IN 25
SIX-ROOM DWELLINGS

Amount of Monthly Rent	No. of Dwel.	Out- side Toilet	With- out Bath	With Bath	Hot Water Tank	Dis- cuss- ibility	Tri- Tube	Fur- nace
\$30 to \$34.99	4	3	3	1	1	4		
\$35 to \$39.99	1		1			1	1	
\$40 to \$44.99	2		2			2		
\$45 to \$49.99	2		1	1	1	2	2	
\$50 to \$54.99	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
\$55 to \$59.99	8		8	8	8	8	1	
\$60 to \$65.00	6		6	6	6	6	5	5
Unknown	1		1	1	1	1		
Total	25	3	7	18	18	25	19	7

(C) Earnings

How have these Negro families contrived to meet the rents analyzed in the last section? What are their earnings?

An attempt was made at the outset to secure the earnings of the members of the family for a period of a year, but this was found impossible as they had kept no records. The period was cut to a month, but the same difficulty presented itself, and it was finally decided to secure the earnings for the period of a week preceding the visit. Allowances must be made, therefore, for the fact that in many cases the weekly income given does not continue throughout the whole year. This is particularly true of the ten skilled and thirty-two unskilled workers in the building trades; of the one plumber and one steam fitter included in the study; of the seven miners and casual laborers.

In two hundred of the two hundred and twenty-seven dwellings a male was listed as the head of the household. These two hundred males had aggregate weekly earnings of \$5419.60, or an average of \$27.09 each. This amount is slightly less than the average of \$28.72, given by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor for Pittsburgh, as of the week ending December 15, 1923. Their average is computed from the earnings of 59,306 wage earners. Even so, our average is much higher than it would be if we did not include \$66.75 as the average weekly earnings of an executive secretary; \$60.00 as the average weekly earnings of a plumber, and \$55.00 as the weekly earnings of a steam fitter, (these last two are highly seasonal jobs); and \$43.75 as the average weekly earnings of one electrician and six postal employees.

The weekly wage most frequently reported was \$25, received by forty-six men. Twenty-four men received less than this amount, and one hundred and thirty men received more than this amount.

In addition to those noted above, the occupations given included the following: laborers in steel mills and in the building trades; hod carriers; carpenters; one engineering contractor; salesmen; truck drivers; porters and janitors; firemen; number writers in a clearing house number game; and in forty-three instances drivers for the American Reduction Company, which collects the garbage and rubbish for the city of Pittsburgh. These last are given special mention because they receive pay on a tonnage basis, and a wage considerably above the average.

In twenty-seven of the dwellings studied, a woman was listed as the head of the household. These women gave as their occupations cooks, laundresses, keepers of lodging houses, but in more than two-thirds of the instances, they were day-workers earning three dollars per day and car fare. These twenty-seven females earned an aggregate of \$467 per week, or an average of \$17.29 each, but in every case this amount was supplemented by earnings of children, or payments from lodgers. In one instance, a woman reported receiving \$25.00 per month alimony from her husband.

The forty-one wives of the male heads of the households, who were gainfully employed, added \$321.00 per week to the family income through their work, chiefly as day-workers. In the thirty-seven instances where children were found working, they earned an aggregate of \$551.00 weekly, or an average of \$14.89 each. If we are to judge from the statements of the persons

giving the information, very little of this goes to swell the family coffers, except as it is spent by these children for clothes and other personal items.

The seventy-three families who took in lodgers derived a weekly income of \$510.00 from this source.

From all sources, these two hundred and twenty-seven households had an aggregate weekly income of \$7269.18, or an average of \$32.02 per household. The range of the income is from a minimum of \$6.00 per week to a maximum of \$95.00 per week. The income most frequently reported was \$25.00, received in 35 households. Thirty-nine households received less than this amount, and 153 households received more than this amount. The median for the group was \$31.00.

(D) Rentals and Earnings

While the average earnings of these families may seem higher than in other cities, it will be interesting to see how large a share of these earnings must be paid for rent. "Budgetary studies customarily approve the apportionment of one-fifth of income for payment of shelter".¹ In a study made by the Peoples Savings and Trust Company of Pittsburgh, in 1926, the amount of the Pittsburgh Householder's Dollar spent for rent is estimated at 14.6%. The figures of our study show that these two hundred and twenty seven families pay 24.4% of their income for rent. This is 10% higher than the figure given in the bank study cited above, and almost 5% higher than the customary allowance for this item. If we consider rent as being paid out of the income of the male head of the family we find rent taking 30.1% of these two hundred male and twenty-seven female lessees of the house.

The rents that these Negroes pay vary with the wages earned by them. Usually where the wage is small, the rent of the house occupied by the family is small. However, there are some glaring exceptions to this statement. In a house in Webster Terrace, where the rent is \$62.50 per month, the only income reported was \$100 per month earned by the male head of the family as a chauffeur. This is a case in which 62.5% of the regular income is paid out for rent. The source of additional income was not found. On the other hand, a steam fitter was reported earnings \$55 per week, rented a four-room apartment

1. Elizabeth A. Hughes; Living Conditions for the Small wage earner in Chicago p. 36
2. Peoples Savings and Trust Co. Pittsburgh Purse.

for \$25 per month. This apartment is situated on Mahon Street, and has both toilet and water outside. And yet this man and his wife occupy two rooms, and subrent the other two rooms for \$12.50 per month.

The percentage of the family income paid for rent varies greatly among the different-sized dwellings. For the two-room dwellings only 20.8% of the family income is paid for rent.

In the three room dwellings 25.8% of the family income goes for rent; in the four room dwellings rent takes 29%, in the five room dwellings, it takes 29.3% and in the six room dwellings it takes 30.9%. It was impossible to find the family income of the dwellings larger than six rooms, as these were all rooming houses, and the housekeeper would not divulge the amounts received from their lodgers.

A clear picture of the range of family income may be secured from Table XIV.

TABLE XIV
AMOUNT OF WEEKLY INCOME IN
227 HOUSEHOLDS BY
DWELLING GROUPS

Income Group	No. of Dwel.	% of Total	2 Room Dwel.	3 Room Dwel.	4 Room Dwel.	5 Room Dwel.	6 Room Dwel.	Over 6 Rooms
Under \$10.00	4	1.8		3	1			
\$10 to 14.99	5	2.2	1	1	2	1		
\$15 to 19.99	8	3.5	1	1	6			
\$20 to 24.99	23	10.1	4	2	10	4	3	
\$25 to 29.99	54	23.8	4	11	27	7	5	
\$30 to 34.99	39	17.2	1	8	21	6	3	
\$35 to 39.99	42	18.5		2	29	4	7	
\$40 to 44.99	19	8.3	1		8	4	6	
\$45 to 49.99	11	4.8		2	6	3		
\$50 to 54.99	8	3.5			5	2	1	
\$55 to 59.99	2	.8			2			
\$60 and over	2	.8			1	1		
Unknown	10	4.4	1		5			4
Total	227	99.5	13	30	123	32	25	4

IV CONCLUSION

(A) The Social Value of Housing

While the purpose of this study has been served when the facts of rents, income and housing standards have been given, the temptation to offer some suggestions and to name possible remedies for the conditions observed is too great for the writer to resist. It is hoped that those persons or organizations interested in the future development of Pittsburgh may find some way to utilize such of these suggestions as commend themselves.

First of all, it might be well to call attention to some ideals in community housing. The following statements quoted by V. C. Wright in his study will help to give some idea of what should be the aim of society in respect to housing;

C. Aronovici, Housing and Housing Problems:The aim of our housing reform should be the furnishing of healthful accommodations adequately provided for privacy and comfort; easily accessible to centers of employment, culture and amusement; accessible to centers of distribution of the food supply; rentable at reasonable rates, and yielding a fair return on on the investment. p. 7.

The National Conference of Charities and Correction:Social welfare demands for every family a safe and sanitary home, with healthful surroundings; ample and pure running water inside the house; modern and sanitary housing conveniences for its exclusive use, located inside the building; adequate sunlight and ventilation;

1. V. C. Wright: The Social Aspect of Housing, pp.15,17,18

reasonable fire protection; privacy; rooms of sufficient size and number to decently house the members of the family; freedom from dampness; prompt and adequate collection of all waste material.

Housing Problems in Minneapolis: A problem which we, like every other growing city, are sooner or later brought face to face with, is that of seeing that the men and women who toil in our stores and in our mills, who lay our sewers, pave our streets, and in any way whatever contribute to the development of all that makes Minneapolis the great city that it is in which to live and do business in, are housed in such a way as will give them and their families homes in fact as well as in name. p.9. Wm. H. Matthews, The Kingsley House Record, Jan.-Feb.1907; The home has ever been the key to good citizenship. In any attempt to relieve the stress of poverty, the evils of intemperance, sickness, incapacity, and inability to work, one finds oneself in the search for the causes for these conditions driven back to the home. Until we have decent homes, we shall but see the need for hospitals, jails, reformatories, juvenile and other courts, homes for the orphans and other dependent classes increase each year.*

In his book dealing with the effect of bad housing, A. F. Bacon quotes Miss Harriet Fulmer, superintendent of the visiting Nurses Association of Chicago, as follows: "Two-thirds of the delinquent children come from homes where dirty, ill-ventilated rooms predominate; two-thirds of the physically ill come from the same; one-third of the shiftless mothers come from the same; two-thirds of the deserting fathers come from the same.

In a study of fifty backward children in an ungraded school of a large city, forty-three of these children lived in homes that it should have been the business of the State to see did not exist.¹

If, as these statements indicate, there exists such close connection between the problems of poverty, disease and crime, on the one hand, and the kinds of houses in which people live, on the other, Pittsburgh would do well to bestir itself about the housing of its citizens. It might be well to note that a definite step has been taken in the formation of the Pittsburgh Housing Association, which began its work last fall.

Many of the people of the city do not know the housing and sanitary laws, as these have not been published since 1913. Recently, the attention of the City Council has frequently been called to this fact. As a result, the Council, at a meeting held in February, 1929, appropriated funds with which to republish this code, and it is reported that this edition will be ready for distribution on or about June 1, 1929. In this connection it is recommended that the various social agencies be utilized in securing a wide distribution. (As if in anticipation of this, the Pittsburgh Housing Association, with this in mind, has already distributed among cooperating agencies brief digests of the code). The chief sufferers from bad housing are usually those who apply to these agencies for relief, and it is felt that if these agencies could be interested in educating their clientele in the provisions of the law, and distribute

¹ A. F. Bacon; What Bad Housing Means to the Community, p. 7.

copies of the code to them, a forward step will have been taken towards understanding of our housing problem.

It is further suggested that the work of the Pittsburgh Housing Association, a member agency of the Welfare Fund, be given wider publicity in the daily papers, to the end that individual citizens as well as the social agencies which are cooperating with it may learn of the assistance it can give in improving unsanitary and unsafe conditions in and about the homes.

(B) The Need for Increased Inspection

The present Sanitary Code, if it were rigidly enforced, would eliminate the worst housing evils. For example, it requires a sink with running water inside every house, so doing away with the drudgery of carrying water for all personal and household uses from distant outdoor hydrants in all kinds of weather, and frequently up flights of stairs. It would also help to solve the problem of what to do with waste water.

In some respects, however, this code is not adequate. For example, it permits the lighting and ventilating of inferior rooms by merely cutting a window to another room. Obviously such an interior room is not a proper sleeping place shut off as it is from all direct access to sun or outdoor air.

It is not the purpose of this report, however, to attempt a detailed analysis of the present city housing code. Attention is simply called to the need for improvement. Perhaps the more immediate need is stricter enforcement. That the present requirements may be more vigorously enforced there should be an increase in the number of inspectors employed by the Division of Housing and Sanitary Inspection in the Department of Public Health. Though the city has grown since 1916, both in population and area (due to annexation) the number of inspectors has been cut down. On April 25, 1929, the staff of the sanitary inspectors consisted of one chief inspector, three supervisors and thirty inspectors, which is inadequate to perform the duties imposed upon it by the laws. At the present time, these inspectors use most of their time answering calls received from individuals or organizations, and have very little time left for original inspections, especially, in outlying

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districts.

Obviously, there should be periodic inspections of all houses in the more congested sections of the city, otherwise violations exist a long time before being called to the attention of the authorities. In order to carry out this program the staff of inspectors should be sufficiently increased that each inspector will have a district small enough for him to inspect all dwellings within a specified time, and also to permit his being used elsewhere in case of an emergency. Just what this size should be must be determined only after a careful study of the situation. The fact that most of the time is consumed in answering requests for inspections, argues well for an increase in staff. Such an increase can come only through funds provided by the City Council. If the business, civic and social agencies in the city would bring pressure to bear upon the members of the Council, such an appropriation would be made.

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(c) Enforcement of Present Legal Requirements

It has been indicated that certain of the requirements of the law have not been enforced, and the suggestion was that this was due to the inadequacy of the staff of inspectors. There are two sections of the Code which are violated, and which could easily be enforced. Section 7 reads in part as, follows:

"Every owner, lessee or occupant of any building, premises or place of business shall provide, or cause to be provided, and at all times keep suitable and sufficient receptacles for receiving and holding all garbage that may accumulate from said building, place of business or upon said premises of the portion thereof, where they may reside."

A walk through the alleys of the upper Hill district will convince one that this part of the law is flagrantly violated. For example, the yard in the rear of the apartment house in the 2400 block of Wylie Avenue was littered with garbage and rubbish on February 2nd, when the writer visited this section, and this yard remained so littered for a month, perhaps longer. On March 15th, the writer visited the 2900 block on Crockett Street, and found the whole block littered with garbage and rubbish. He visited this section again on April 16th, and found that the same condition obtained.

Another section of the Code may be cited. Section 28 reads as follows:

"When any lot or excavation shall from any cause whatsoever become the repository of stagnant water, or of any decaying or offensive substances, liquid or solid, it shall be the duty of

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of the owner or occupant, within a specified time given in a written notice from the Department, to cause such lot or excavation to be drained or to be filled with clean earth or other inoffensive substance."

The yard in the rear of a row of houses in the 700 block on Chauncey Street: The front and rear yards of the houses in 600 block of Junilla Street, are all literal lakes after each heavy rain, and this water is allowed to stand until the sun dries it up, no matter how long this may be. A tenant was asked why they did not drain the water away from the Junilla Street houses, and the following was the reply: "The nearest sewer pipe is half-way up the block, and that's too far for me to dig a ditch."

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(D) Need for Demolition of Bad Houses.

That part of the Sanitary Code which relates to the destruction of bad houses is as follows:

"SECTION 44: Whenever any building or any part thereof, in such cities, shall, because of age, infection with contagious disease, defects in drainage, plumbing or ventilation, the existence of a nuisance on the premises, or conditions tending to cause sickness among its occupants or among occupants of other property in said city, or constituting a danger to the life or health of the occupants of other buildings in its vicinity, or because it prevents proper measures from being carried into effect for abating any nuisance injurious to health or sanitary evils in respect of such other buildings, be unfit for occupation or menace to public health; and when such dangers or evils in or caused, by said building cannot be removed by repairs, or in any other way except by the destruction of the said building, or any portion of the same, the said Department of Public Health may order the same, or any part thereof to be removed. The said order shall specify the building or part thereof, to be removed, the reason or reasons therefor, and shall also specify a reasonable time within which said work, or removal shall be commenced and prosecuted to completion."

The careful execution of the above section of the law would soon rid any city of houses unfit for human habitation, for it has given very wide power to the Department of Public Health. A walk through the Hill District, and an inspection of some of the dilapidated houses that may be seen will impress one that this law

is not being enforced. The reason may be found in the fact that enforcement has been transferred from the Department of Public Health to the Bureau of Building Inspection of the Department of Public Safety.

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(E) The Need for Better Houses That May be Rented With Relation To Income

The fact that Negroes are found renting houses which exact a large percentage of their earnings is interpreted by the writer as an expression of their desire for houses provided with some of the modern conveniences which belong in a well-equipped house. Else, how can we explain why a Negro earning \$116.00 per month will rent a house renting for \$100.00 per month? It is true that he must subrent a part, but that which he reserves for his own family has conveniences which he could not purchase for the net rent that he pays.

Moreover, it is apparent that some of the rents that these Negroes pay represent, not fair returns on the money invested, but excessive returns. It is admitted that in some instances ~~xxxx~~ the owners have incurred expense in putting a few conveniences into the houses, yet if an investigation were made covering the total income received as rent, we believe the figures would prove that some houses had more than repaid the owner on his total investment.

There is a definite need for new houses which embody modern conveniences, and which can be rented to Negroes and other small wage earners at a reasonable rental. In this connection, attention is called to the Dunbar Apartment House, recently erected in the Harlem district of New York City by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. This house is modern in every detail, and provides quarters for several hundred families. Although they are not now rented to small wage earners, this latter group benefits from them, in that the houses vacated

by the business and professional groups which moved into the Dunbar, are made available to the small-wage-earning group. These are better houses than they occupied, and it is rumored that the low rental of the Dunbar has reacted to lower the rental of other apartments in the neighborhood. A similar plan has been announced for the Negroes of Chicago, with Mr. Julius Rosenwald as the backer. These efforts do not represent charity extended to the Negro, since both Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Rosenwald require that a fair return be made on the investment.

If some person, or group of persons, or an organization in Pittsburgh, can be persuaded to follow this example of providing good facilities at a return of 6% or 7% on the investment, it would relieve the housing situation greatly.

The facts of this study indicate that Negroes need higher wages than they are now receiving, in order that they may secure better houses. Particularly does this apply to the male head of the family. In order to do this some steps should be taken to raise these workers out of the class of unskilled and casual laborers into the semi-skilled and skilled groups. Industry has pointed the way by organizing training classes in which their workers may advance themselves. In New York alone it has been estimated that no less than 100,000 people are taking trade extension courses; and that there are 325,000 federally aided pupils in vocational schools. If such training courses could be offered in Pittsburgh through the joint support of industry and the municipality, the investment would yield a return in good citizenship which would far outstrip the original investment.

1. J.D. Hackett: Labor Management, p.365

With a little assistance, such as might be given by the ordinary building and loan association, some of the families included in this study could move into better houses, from which they are now excluded, by purchasing them. There are in Pittsburgh many neighborhoods with good houses available for purchasers, but which are not available for renters. If such associations could be effectively organized among residents of the Hill district, with the idea of assisting them in purchasing homes, it would render a great service not only to these families, but to the city as well.

The greatest need, however, is for an enlightened public opinion which will demand better houses for all the community. "It is a matter of public opinion. If the people of Pittsburgh wish to have existing conditions improved, if they wish that every child in Pittsburgh shall have a fair chance to become a self-respecting, self-supporting citizen, and if they wish it hard enough to stand back of public officials who are enforcing the law, to honor and commend owners who maintain their properties in good condition, then the days of bad housing in Pittsburgh are numbered."

1. John Hilder: Better Housing pamphlet of the Pittsburgh Housing Association.

Copy of Schedule Used in Gathering Data

FAMILY CARD

One card for each family. Answer each question with check, number or initial letter in blank space.

District Type of Building Surname	Ward 1-Fam. 2-Fam.	Precinct M-F C R-H Address	Date Visitor
1. Owner-White-Colored		15. House - Frame	
2. How long in this house.		Shabby - Well kept	
3. Rent-Dollars per week Dollars per month		Cellar or Basement	
4. Previous occupant, W-C		Dry Damp Wet	
5. Previous Rent and Date.		17. Roof - Sound Leaking	
6. House- size, width, depth Lot- width, depth No. stories.		18. Walls - Good, Fair, Bad	
Sloping - - Level		19. Steps -Inside, G. F. B. Outside, G.F.B.	
Drainage - good, fair, bad		20. Family occupies - Basement, 1st Floor, 2nd Floor, 3rd floor, Other (Specify)	
7. Total No. rooms. Separate bedrooms. Separate living room. Kitchen. Attic rooms. Bathroom. Basement or cellar		21. No. in Family Total Male Female Adults Children - 16 and over Under 16	
8. Inside repairs - G F B		Head of family	
9. Dark Rooms-No. Windowless. No. window to hall only. No. window to other rooms. No. to court only (25 sq. ft. or less). No. window to airshaft only.		22. Boarders - Lodgers Male Female	
10. Water supply-inside hall. Apt. In Yard		23. Occupation-Usk.Semi-sk. Skd. Father \$ wk. Mother \$ wk. Children-Age, Sex & wk. 1. 2. 3. 4.	
11. Toilet-inside cellar hall Apt. Basement Outside Privy or cesspool.		NOTE-On other side give employ- er, dept. hours per week, and rate per hr.	
12. No. families per toilet. Condition - cleanliness, Good - Fair - Bad Condition - Repair, Good - Fair - Bad		24. Income from Boarders. Income from Lodgers. Income-Other (Specify)	
13. House Facilities - Gas Electricity, Hot Water Janitor, Stoves, Grates, Cooking, Coal, Wood, Gas		25. Weeks lost last year. Father Mother Children	
14. Garbage - Covered Can Accumulated. How often removed. Rubbish - Accumulated. How often removed.		1. 2. 3. 4.	

REMARKS

APPENDIX B

Copy of Letter from Mellon Institute Explaining Damp Walls from Gas Heat.

Mellon Institute of Industrial Research

From: L.W. Bass
To : John Ihlder

March 11, 1929.

Mr. John Ihlder, Executive Director
Pittsburgh Housing Association
Granite Building
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of March 8 addressed to Dr. Weidlein has been referred to me.

It is possible that gas heating, whether the gas is properly mixed or not, may be a cause of dampness of walls, provided that the walls are not properly constructed. If the construction is such that there are no air spaces, the wall will remain cold in cold weather, since there is not sufficient insulation from the outside temperature. Since gas produces when burned a large quantity of water vapor, this vapor condenses on the walls.

As you can see the remedy for such a condition is rather extensive. It would probably require a change in the construction of the walls or else a replanning of the heating system so that the gas burners or burner would be located in rooms insulated from the rest of the house.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) L. W. Bass
Executive Assistant

LWB:GE

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APPENDIX C

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