

# Modern Building Methods Cutting Costs of New Houses Here

### Parts of 600 Homes In So. Alexandria Are Prefabricated

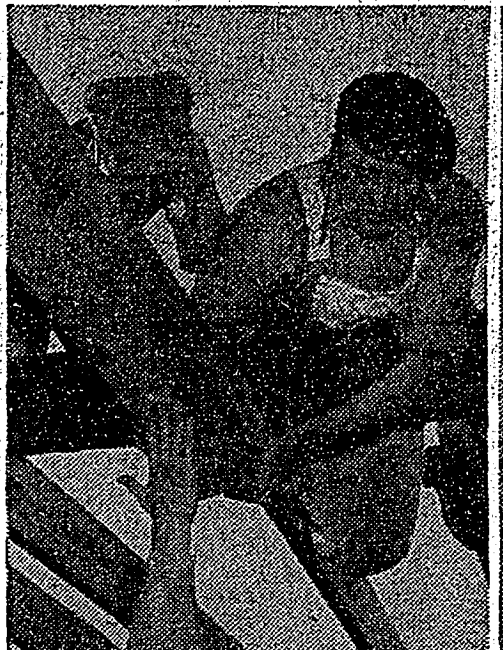
**Conrad P. Harness**  
SPEED is the password at sprawling "Jefferson Manor," immense housing development under way in south Alexandria. The man with the saw and "saw horse" has given way to electric power saws and planes.  
The site adjoins the Penn-Daw Hotel off Highway No. 1.  
Crews are now working on 108 homes. When the whole subdivision is finished, the public will see 600 homes spread over 80 acres of rolling Fairfax County land.  
The work schedule provides for the completion of 12 to 16 homes per month with the first section ready for occupancy in early spring.  
Clarence W. Gosnell, Inc., is the builder, working under contract for Monroe Development Corp. Homes are of three types, all frame, all brick, and half brick and frame. The price range is from \$3500 to \$9300. All are semi-detached, with five rooms and full basement.



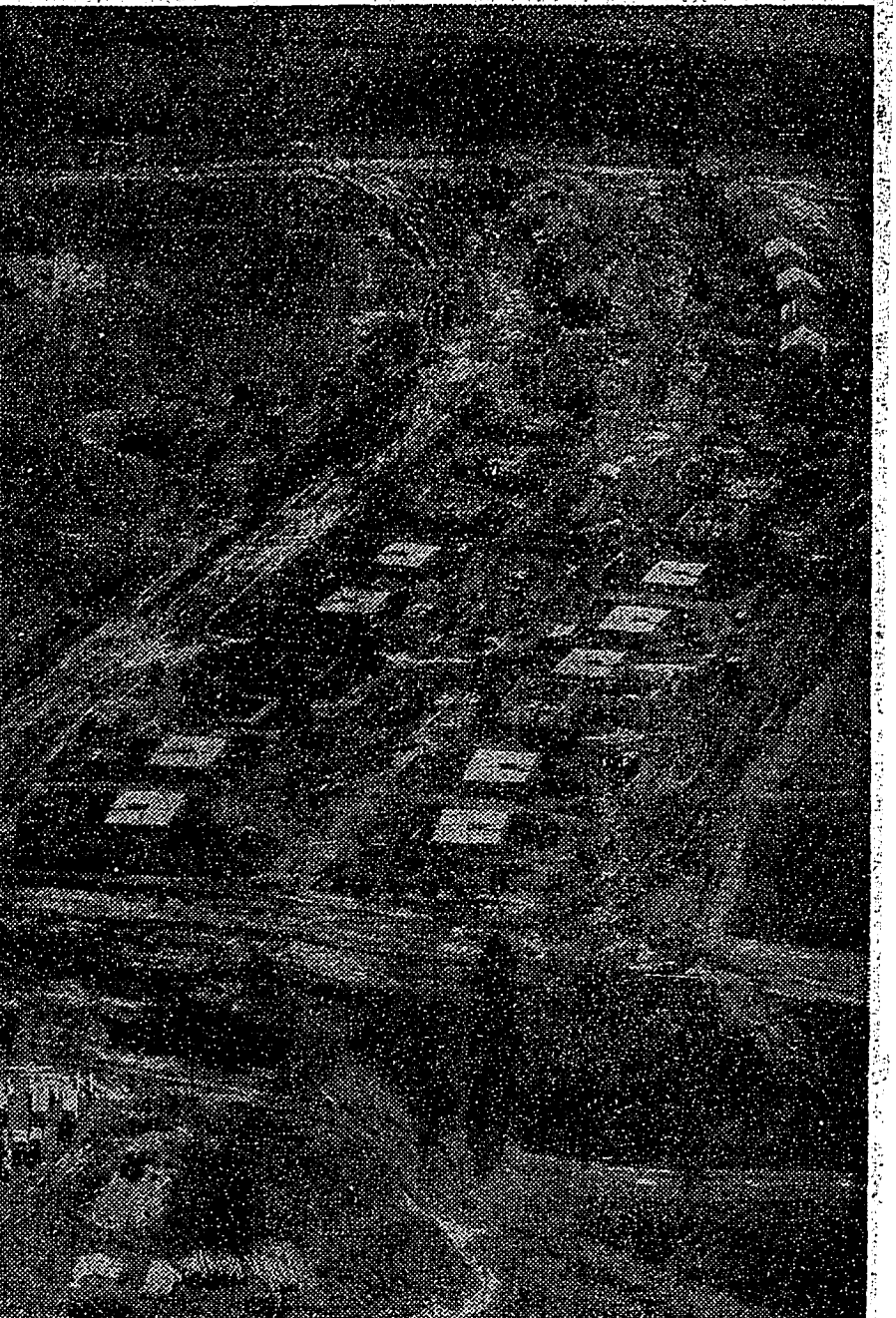
1. Power saws cut lumber to prescribed lengths. This method saves much time over the hand saw, run by elbow grease. Lengths are then set on frames where carpenters transform them into housing sections.



2. Workmen nail the cut lumber to a gable frame. It is much easier and faster by this method than at the house site itself. Component parts are made this way.



3. Skilled carpenters place the pre-cut joists into place on the steel eye-beam foundation.



AERIAL view shows the lumber piles, cutting mills and finished housing sections in left foreground. The material is earmarked and delivered to a specific house from the cutting mill. Note the various stages of home construction.

## Home Buying Returns to Sanity

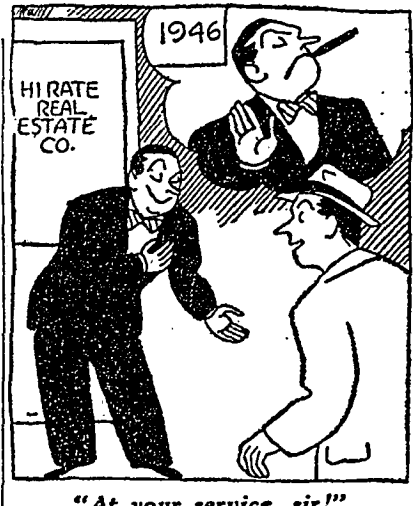
By Cholly Blanford

AMERICA must be returning to the pace of the \$2 white shirts. I say this because real estate has always been a fair barometer of business and my latest dip into property promotion revealed a wide chasm in the inflation dike. Things are looking better.

Last March I embarked on a three-month campaign to buy a home. Realty agents rushed me out to patched-up shacks sporting \$14,000 price tags and gave me their one-sentence sales talk: "Look Mac, the owner is moving to Florida and she wants 14 grand and I'd advise you to snap it up because it's liable to be sold by some other salesman by the time we get back to the office, anyway. Hub?"

Other agents, especially those who had listened to their cash registers banging loudly through the war years, explained wistfully: "If you folks like this house, that's fine. Frankly, it's over-priced, but you won't find anything better. I'm not even going to give you a sales talk because my commission would just shove me into a higher income tax bracket. The Government takes everything I make," the salesman would add, picking his teeth with a gold toothpick.

That was nearly a year ago, but how things have changed! The agent asked what hours he could call on holidays and if it was



"At your service, sir!"

Last week I resumed my search for a home. I've decided I might as well pay off a mortgage as shovel out dough for my apartment. I believe my landlord was the only one in Washington who wasn't asking for a rent increase. He knew when he had a good thing.

### The Worm Turns

A KINDLY voice answered my telephonic request for information on a home advertised in the papers. The facts were cheerfully given. The broker listened sympathetically while I outlined my home wants and then described each listing which might appeal to me.

The agent asked what hours he could call on holidays and if it was

okay to call after 11 a. m. on Sundays if he had something especially suited to my requirements.

This brought to mind the numerous occasions last year when alert young salesmen, beginning as embryo realtors, needed Morpheus at 8:30 a. m. on many Sundays with the urgent ultimatum: "Get down here quick before this little gem of a rambler is snatched up..."

Talks with numerous realty agents disclose that the whole profession is changing garb. The inept promoters are being weeded out and it takes talent to sell homes in the present "buyers market."

The realtors are even going to school to learn their trade. Weekly sessions in successful sales tactics, property management, methods of increasing listings, etc., are attended by hundreds.

Increased advertising, budgets, plus promotional sales ideas are now soliciting new business. No longer will a two-line classified ad bring a deluge of home-hunters. Spotlights now gently light up homes for sale, something that hasn't been done since Pearl Harbor.

One old-timer in the realty business summed it up thusly: "Things are settling down to normal. Not a single one of my salesmen have left this month to open up his own office."

## Decorates Apartment in Mexican Styles on \$900

# An Ex-GI Goes Latin in Manhattan

By Eugenia Sheppard

THIS is the story of a former GI who went around the world in the course of the war and fell head over heels for the tropics. Out of the service and back in the city with his wife, he didn't want a sleek, modern or a warmed-over Victorian apartment. He couldn't forget the charms of Latin-American living.

This particular former GI took his problem to Juanita and Fred Leighton, who have a similar feeling for things Mexican, and the result is an apartment on Stuyvesant Square, just finished yesterday. Complete decorations for a living-bedroom, dining-kitchen and bathroom will cost its new tenants around \$900.

If your idea of Mexican is something slightly gaudy and on the tourist side, prepare to be surprised at this latest development in budget apartments. Its colors are soft and subdued and its furniture not only has a custom-order look about it but is, for the most part, handmade.

This little apartment that has gone Mexican is one flight up at the back of a remodeled brownstone. Strangely enough there is nothing about the tawny, desert tones of its new throw rugs or its touches of tin and rawhide that strikes a discordant note with the old white marble mantel piece.

Most expensive pieces in the living room are, as should be, a studio couch that converts for sleeping, and a comfortable, upholstered chaise longue. These are covered with red-made through from the Bates collection. Designed for the tropic-minded, they echo the rug colors. The Leightons have split another pair to make draperies.

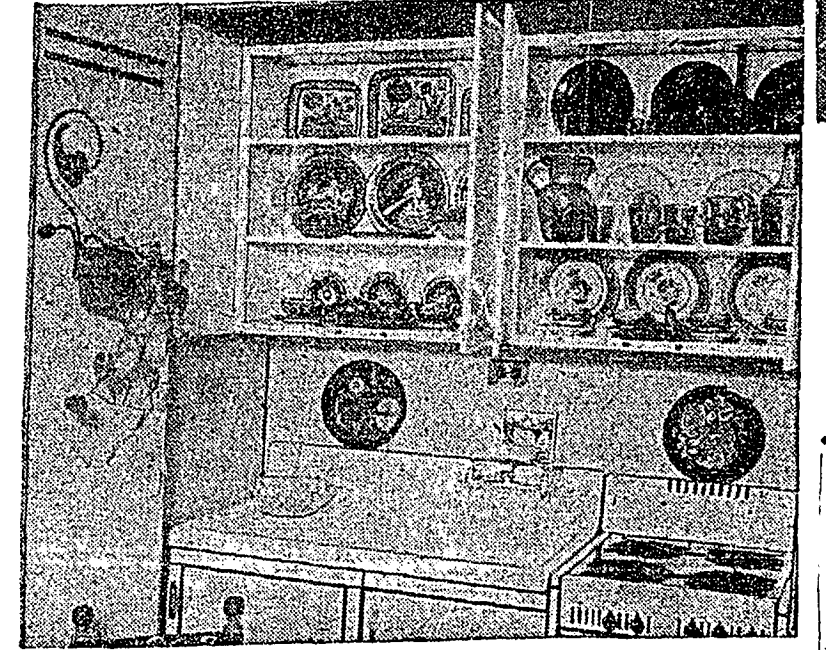
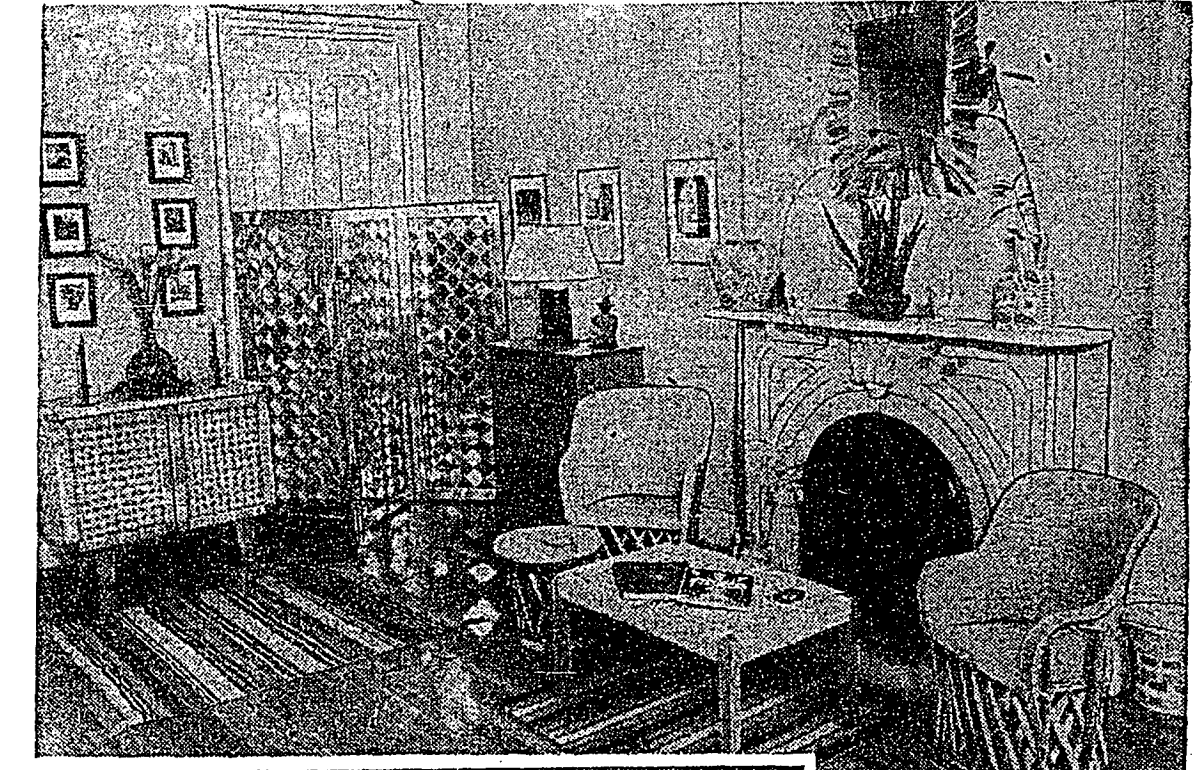
Handsome and comfortable are pigskin chairs with splitwood frames that make the fireplace grouping. Their pigskin backs, stretched into resful curve, are easy to keep clean with saddle soap, Juanita Leighton says. They weather gradually to a warm, rich russet.

Small chest and coffee table, hand-woven of palms, have a contemporary look. Their wooden legs match the pair of chests, bought unpainted and stained the same blond shade. A tin mirror over the fireplace and a tiny statue of the Virgin in a tin and glass shrine above the door are characteristic of Latin-American rooms.

Colors start with pale green walls and sand-colored rugs—a far cry from the cut and dried red and black Navajo. Lamp bases are hand-blown Mexican glass or pale colored pottery, all included in that \$900 budget.

### Peasant Kitchen

THE kitchen-dining room is bright as they come and looks like real fun with its palm table



CABINETS in a dining-kitchen hold an assortment of hand-blown Mexican glass in pale blue and amethyst. Kitchen utensils are of heavy pottery, earthen color decorated in white. They can be used on top of the stove and brought straight to the table.

A BUDGET living room, decorated Mexican fashion by Juanita and Fred Leighton for a former GI and his wife. Located in a remodeled brownstone, it has chairs with pigskin backs and split wood frames. Chest and coffee table are basket-woven of palm fronds and accessories are tin and pottery. On the walls colored photographs of Mexican scenes by Mario Bucovich.

## Method Given For Enameling

When preparing furniture for enameling and decorating, first remove all traces of oily or greasy film. If the surface is not perfectly smooth, rub it down carefully with very fine sandpaper, then apply enamel undercoat, preferably two coats, with each coat gently sandpapered when perfectly dry. Finish with the desired color of enamel, being careful to follow the manufacturer's directions on the can.

If you then wish to apply floral or other designs to the piece, you can purchase decalcomanias from your art dealer, or if you wish to decorate by hand, ask your dealer to recommend such artists' colors as will stand up on furniture. These may be used either with or without the aid of stencils. Finally, apply a thin coat of clear varnish over the decorated surface, when it has become perfectly dry, to protect the designs.

## Between Kitchens Bath Found Safest Room In House

After an analysis of 4600 home accidents, the National Safety Council reports that fewer fatal and nonfatal accidents occur in the bathroom than any other room in the house.

The council found that only the hall and the garage, each totaling 2 per cent, were lower in accident rate than the bathroom.

The survey disclosed the following percentages of accidents in the various rooms of the home:

Yard	18.9
Kitchen	17.9
Outside stairs	12.9
Inside stairs	10.0
Living room	8.5
Porch	7.2
Bedroom	7.1
Basement	5.7
Dining room	3.1
Bathroom	2.7
Hall	2.0

To further reduce the number of accidents in bathrooms, the council suggests replacement of china faucet handles with metal handles; and the installation of safety grabbars over the tub, particularly if there is an overhead shower.

## Put It in a Sunny Spot Build Garden Cold Frame Now

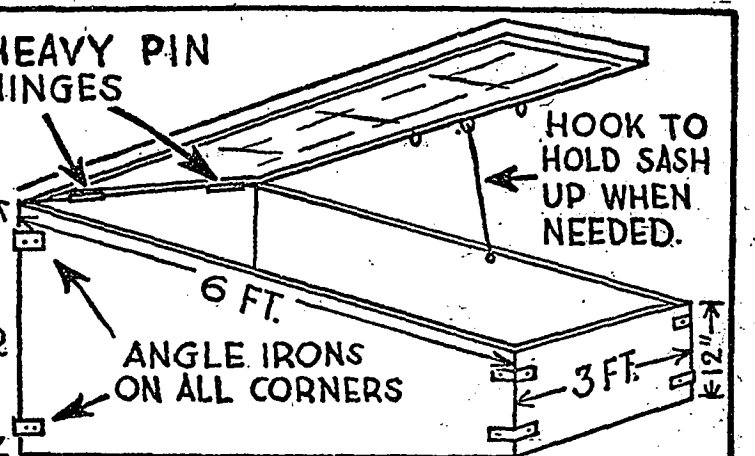
A GARDEN task which can be performed in winter is the construction of a cold frame. Every garden should have one; in every month of the year there is important service which it can render.

In some form cold frames have been used by gardeners for centuries. Originally they were pits open to the sun in which plants were sheltered from cold winds. Since glass has been available, to keep out cold air but let in the sun's warmth, cold frames have become more efficient and useful.

Standard glazed sash are difficult to get this year; but various glass substitutes are available which can be stretched on light frames and serve the same purpose, while being much lighter than glazed sash, and unbreakable.

To make a cold frame so easy, any one who can wield a saw and hammer can do it. It is usually made 3 by 6 feet, or some multiple of this, for the reason that standard hot-bed sash are of these dimensions. But a cold frame (or a hot-bed either) may be any size you wish, to fit old windows, or frames of any convenient size.

The frame should be constructed of heavy boards, of cypress, white pine or some wood which resists rot. Dig a hole-in the ground



STANDARD SIZE COLD FRAME SASH IS 3 X 6 FEET, DOUBLE GLAZED.

slightly larger than the size of the top of the frame, so it can be easily opened for transplanting purposes and airing.

A sunny spot in the garden, protected as much as possible from the full force of winds and driving rain, is the best situation for the cold frame. It may be too cold now to dig in the garden, but the sash may be procured and the lumber frame made, so that when the first warm days arrive you are ready for serious gardening.

## Let's Talk About Fruits and Berries

# Proper Time Now For Your Pruning

By James H. Beattie

LATE winter and early spring is the proper time for pruning fruits and berries. The work should be completed before the home owner is occupied with other outdoor activities. The fine sunny days which occur during late winter present an ideal opportunity to accomplish this important work. Proper pruning means neatness and increases fruitfulness.

### Tools for Pruning

A GOOD job of pruning can be accomplished without an extensive supply of tools.

Usually a pair of hand pruning shears, a pair of long-handled shears and a curved pruning saw are all that is needed. A heavy pair of gloves, a ladder, an ax for trimming brush and a fork for handling the brambles from blackberries are very desirable additions to the list of equipment.

### Apples

THE most important part of apple pruning consists in starting the trees properly when they are planted. Once correctly formed the apple requires little pruning. Sharp crotches between the limbs and the trunk should be avoided. They are almost sure to cause splits when the tree becomes large and begins to bear fruit.

When planting, remove all the branches except three or four, the lowest about 30 inches from the ground and the others on alternate sides of the main stem and about 8 inches apart. Cut the tips from each branch a few inches from the main stem and cut the tip of the main stem at 4 or 5 feet.

Thus pruned, the tree will yield sooner if given no further pruning, aside from the removal of winter sprouts. Later, remove dead branches, crossed limbs and thin out the center of the tree.

Efficient pruning while sap is dormant aids in producing fine fruit blossoms like the above.

is done at one time, roots and tops are thrown out of balance and excessive water sprout growth occurs. It is a good plan to thin out the center of the tree a little at a time until the inner limbs become accustomed to the full sunlight. Some varieties, particularly the old favorite, Grimes Golden, are quite subject to sun scald and the interior of trees of this class should never be trimmed too drastically.

### Peaches

THE pruning of peach trees is for the double purpose of shaping the tree so it will not split under a load of fruit and the removal of part of the fruiting wood to avoid overloading and crowding. If the tree comes from the nursery with no side branches it should be set out and cut off about 30 inches from the surface of the ground.

Side branches will form the first summer and the procedure will then be exactly like that followed for a tree planted with the side branches already formed. Remove the side

### Cherries and Plums

BOTH SHOULD be pruned very sparingly. When planted, they should be "headed" in the same general way we have described for apples and peaches, except that after the main branches are established, the trees should be allowed to grow with no further pruning than the removal of dead limbs and mild thinning out.

With both plums and cherries it is especially important that the trees be started right, with no sharp angle limbs which would be

almost sure to split down and ruin the tree.

For those who have large trees with "bad" crotches which are about to split, it is poor comfort to say that they should have been started differently. Such trees may be saved by placing rods across these bad crotches. Merely bore holes through each limb, some 2 or 3 feet above the crotch, slip a large piece of reinforcing steel through the holes, cut it off leaving about 3 inches outside each limb, then take a heavy hammer and bend the rod down against the limb.

A three-eighths-inch rod will keep a tree with limbs several inches in diameter from splitting. If tree has started to split, you will need a long, threaded rod, a half or five eighths inches in diameter, to draw it together again. Be sure to waterproof any crack that may have formed. This treatment is suitable for any fruit tree with limbs 4 or 5 or more inches in diameter.

### Pears

WITH PROPER "heading," as described for apples, the pear tree needs very little pruning. Dead or tangled branches may be removed, but this is dangerous if the tree or any tree in the planting is affected by fire blight, a disease which is easily spread by pruning tools. My neighbor has a fine Bartlett tree with a few dead branches which he refuses to touch because of the danger of spreading blight.

### Blackberries, Raspberries

BLACKBERRIES and raspberries bear on one-year-old canes which die after the fruiting season. They should be removed as soon as convenient, certainly before spring. Now is an ideal time to do this work. It is also a good plan to thin out the live canes, cut them back to a height of 4 or 5 feet and tie them to the trellis or other support.

Next week: "Triple Purpose Hotbeds and Coldframes."