

Guide to the Improved Housing Association of New Haven Records

MS 1310



compiled by John Espy

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1310

CREATOR: Improved Housing Association of New Haven

TITLE: Improved Housing Association of New Haven records

DATES: 1911-1920

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.75 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The records, which include correspondence, financial and legal papers, checks, and printed matter, are incomplete; they begin in 1911, when the association was incorporated, and end in 1920. They consist of two separate files, one kept by the secretary and one by the treasurer, as well as some general and miscellaneous papers. The collection does not contain Schwab's records, nor De Forest's, nor the minutes of the directors' meetings. The general papers include prospectuses describing the work of the Improved Housing Association of New Haven, and numerous summary financial statements. These papers are arranged chronologically, while both the secretary's records and the treasurer's are arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Secretary Berman's records include correspondence with the National Housing Association, and with other "model home associations" and "workingmen's dwelling enterprises" in various cities. There is also correspondence with the association's officers and supporters, and materials describing its formation and work. The treasurer's records, which form the bulk of the collection, are mostly from Day's tenure. They constitute a detailed financial record of the association, documenting the rental and maintenance of its houses, as well as its sales of stock, acquisition of further real estate, and tax payments.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1310>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1310>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

- b. box
- f. folder

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

Improved Housing Association of New Haven Records (MS 1310). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

The Improved Housing Association of New Haven was an organization which attempted to provide model houses for working people. Modeled on similar associations in London, Glasgow, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Boston and other cities, it was a response to the living conditions found in urban tenement houses at the beginning of the twentieth century -- overcrowding, dampness, darkness, poor ventilation, dirt, garbage, poor sanitary conditions, and disease, especially tuberculosis. It was not a charity but a stock association; as Irving Fisher explained to the New Haven Chamber of Commerce in 1914, "The proposition is to meet the bad landlord on his own ground by providing better tenements than he can offer and educating the public to demand them, proving that good tenements pay and making bad tenements fail to pay."

New Haven's association was incorporated in May 1911, on the recommendation of Lawrence Veiller, secretary of the National Housing Association, who visited the city in July 1910. Early in 1914 the association opened a block of eight two-family "model houses," which it had built, and which it continued to rent and maintain. According to city directories, the organization continued to exist until 1948. Its early officers were John C. Schwab, president; Charles S. De Forest, vice-president; Barnett Berman, secretary; and Frank B. Frisbie, treasurer. George Parmly Day succeeded Frisbie in 1916; and in the same year Schwab died, and the association, unable to find a replacement, functioned without a president. The original directors of the association were Schwab, De Forest, Susan S. Farnam, Irving Fisher, Edwin S. Greeley, George L. Hendrickson, and Emma Winner Rogers. The stockholders included a number of prominent New Haven citizens.

Scope and Contents

The records of the Improved Housing Association of New Haven, which include correspondence, financial and legal papers, checks, and printed matter, are incomplete; they begin in 1911, when the association was incorporated, and end in 1920. They consist of two separate files, one kept by the secretary and one by the treasurer, as well as some general and miscellaneous papers. The collection does not contain Schwab's records, nor De Forest's, nor the minutes of the directors' meetings.

The general papers include prospectuses describing the work of the Improved Housing Association of New Haven, and numerous summary financial statements. These papers are arranged chronologically, while both the secretary's records and the treasurer's are arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Secretary Berman's records include correspondence with the National Housing Association, and with other "model home associations" and "workingmen's dwelling enterprises" in various cities. There is also correspondence with the association's officers and supporters, and materials describing its formation and work. The treasurer's records, which form the bulk of the collection, are mostly from Day's tenure. They constitute a detailed financial record of the association, documenting the rental and maintenance of its houses, as well as its sales of stock, acquisition of further real estate, and tax payments.

The provenance of the records is unknown.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1 - 2	General	1911-1920
	Secretary's records	
b. 1, f. 3	A-F	1913-1918
b. 1, f. 4	G-O	1911-1920
b. 1, f. 5	P-Y	1913-1918
	Treasurer's records	
b. 1, f. 6	A-B, general	1914-1919
b. 1, f. 7	Berman, Barnett	1914-1920
b. 1, f. 8	C-G	1914-1920
b. 1, f. 9	H-M, general	1914-1920
b. 1, f. 10	Mechanics Bank of New Haven	1911-1916
b. 2, f. 11 - 12	Mechanics Bank of New Haven	1917-1920
b. 2, f. 13	N-T, general	1913-1920
b. 2, f. 14	Trowbridge, Hattie B.	1915-1920
b. 2, f. 15	Trowbridge, Hattie B.: rent statements	1914-1918
b. 2, f. 16	United States Internal Revenue	1912-1920
b. 2, f. 17	United States Liberty Loan -Y	1914-1919

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Housing -- Finance
Labor
Labor movement
Working class

Geographic Names

Connecticut
New Haven (Conn.)

Corporate Bodies

Improved Housing Association of New Haven
National Housing Association (U.S.)