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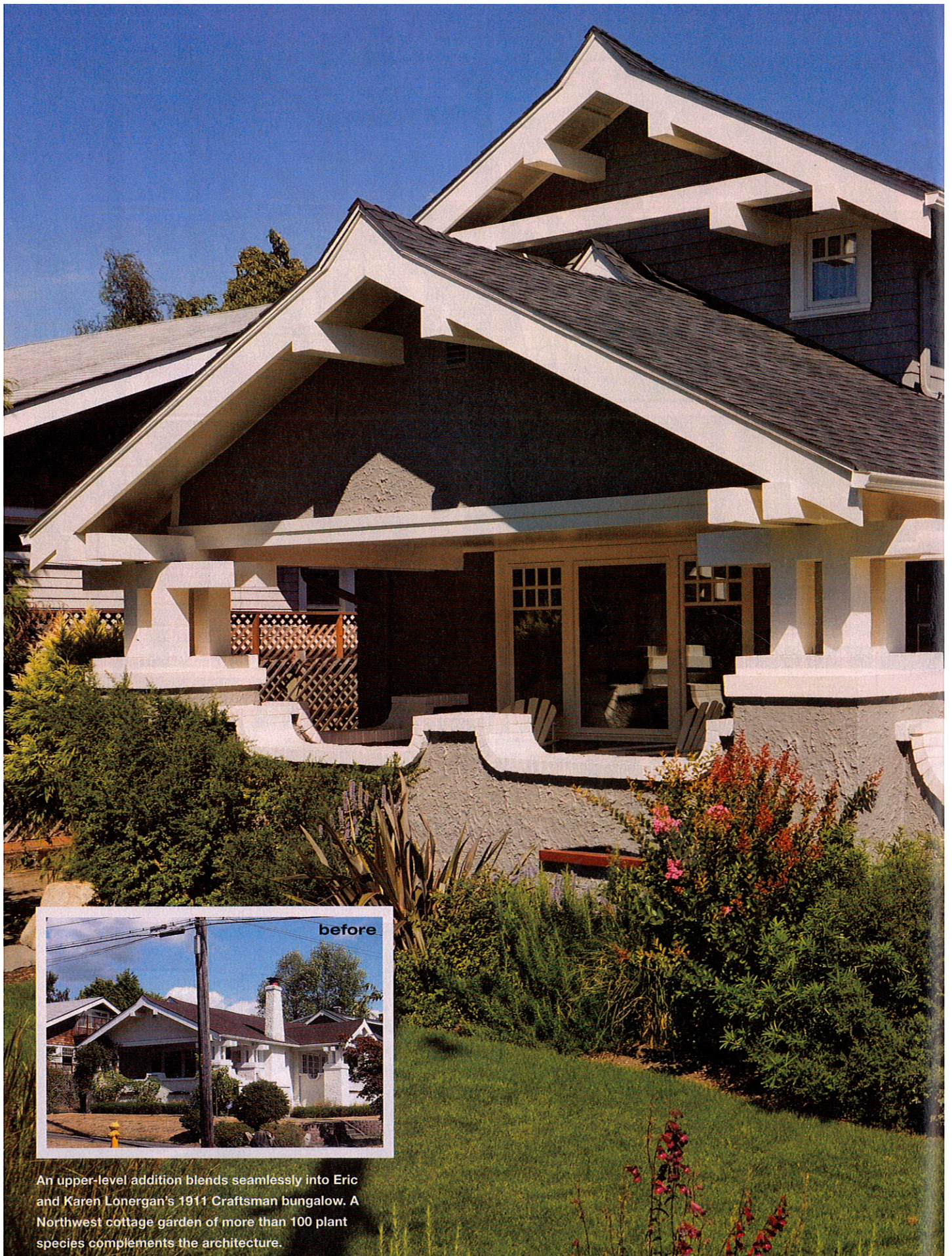
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An upper-level addition blends seamlessly into Eric and Karen Lonergan's 1911 Craftsman bungalow. A Northwest cottage garden of more than 100 plant species complements the architecture.



special delivery

A Seattle couple needed space to grow a family, but they refused to destroy the iconic character of their Sears catalog home.

by steve slack *photography by* john granen
produced by linda humphrey

When the roof came off, the neighbors got worried.

Residents in this Seattle neighborhood are protective of their early 20th century homes, nestled in an area so lush with gardens it feels like the countryside. A little eccentricity is OK here. (Heck, at one house chickens scratch the front yard). But whatever you do, don't bungle a bungalow.

So when Eric and Karen Lonergan began an upper-level addition and their Craftsman appeared topless one day, people started to talk. "There were a lot of strong opinions on what we were doing," Karen laughs. "We started getting a lot of advice."

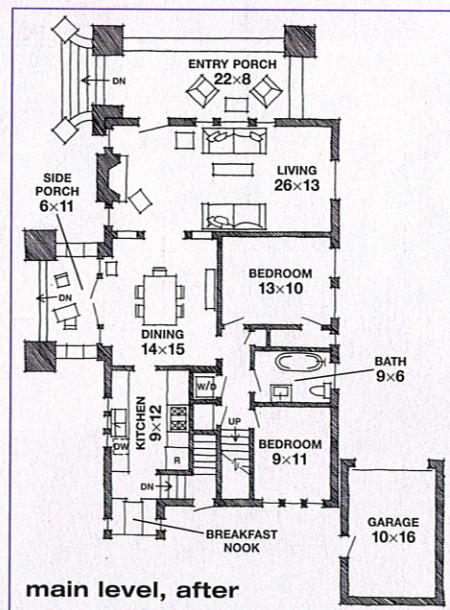
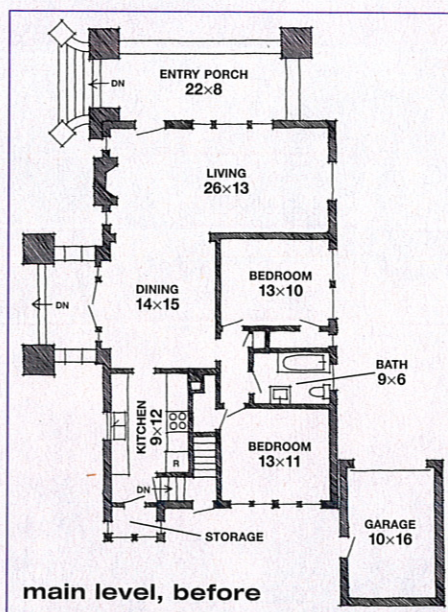
After all, their house was a neighborhood favorite. It had charm. It had character. And it had real provenance: In 1911, the entire house arrived via boxcar, ordered right out of the Sears & Roebuck Modern Home Mail Order Catalog. There were 30,000 pieces to house style 264, delivered to build "a cozy, well-planned, artistic little home," as the copywriter described it. All for \$1,106.

"We didn't know it was a Sears house when we first found it," Eric says. "The guy we bought it from told us, and we thought it was kind of cool that the parts and plans had all been shipped right to the site. It's sort of an

early version of Internet commerce." Designer Steve Hoedemaker, a principal in the architecture firm Bosworth-Hoedemaker, understands why the neighbors were nervous. When people start pulling at the loose threads of these bungalows, everything can unravel in a hurry.

"These Sears catalog houses are well-thought-out buildings to begin with," Hoedemaker says. But, he adds, "They don't lend themselves to renovation. People these days get greedy for space because they perceive space alone as having value. So they put second stories on these cute bungalows and create monsters."

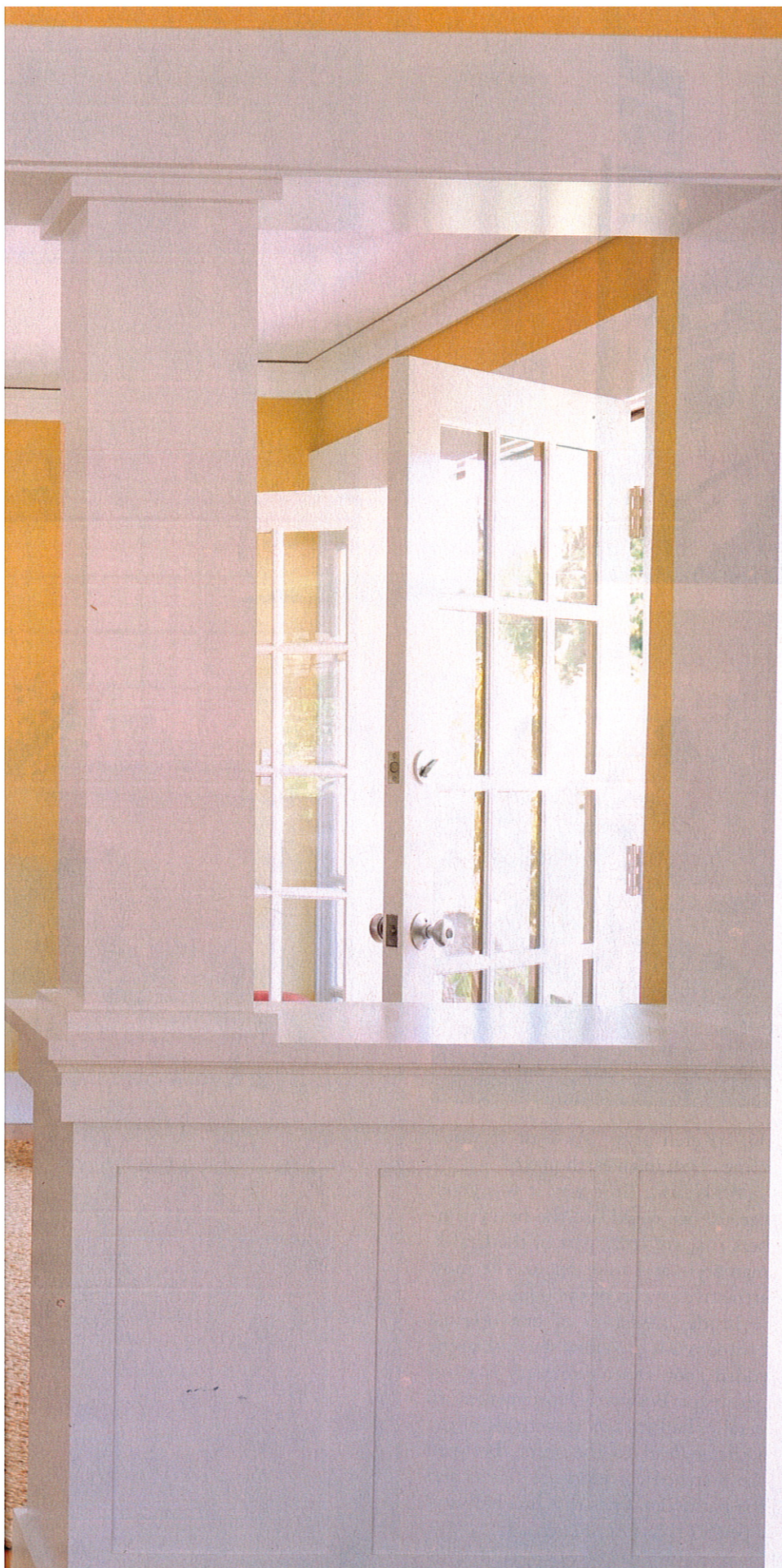
OPPOSITE ABOVE: The columned divider is a recent addition, although the architects and homeowner are certain one existed originally. Karen keeps dishware and books and toys for 1½-year-old Tate in cabinet space below. OPPOSITE BELOW: "As much as we love original Craftsman finishes, it can be pretty dark here in the Northwest," designer Steve Hoedemaker says. "So we painted the fireplace to brighten up the place." A previous owner had replaced French doors flanking the fireplace with sidelights.





before





Eric and Karen needed more space. They hoped to make their duet a trio, and two bedrooms and one bath would not be enough. "Even though our practice is more with new homes or major renovations, we decided to do it," Hoedemaker says. "The couple is charming, and the house equally charming. And they said something you don't hear that often: 'If it can't be done correctly, then we don't want to do it at all.'"

With direction to create a master bedroom and bath, closet space, and a nursery, Hoedemaker and project architect Heather Cromwell began to consider how to add a story without making a monster. Their solution: Top the main level with a painstakingly detailed and smaller replica of the front elevation, centered and set back so it rides the ridge line. "If we

LEFT: The columns are recent additions to the interior. The divider, with cubbies on the opposite side, is typical of Craftsman-style homes. French doors lead to a side porch (above) that was falling down when the Lonergans bought the house.



ABOVE: Homeowner Karen Lonergan says the galley kitchen is plenty big for one or two. "But it can get crowded when we have guests and they want to help prep," she says. The Marmoleum floor is linoleum made with sawdust and natural oils.

RIGHT: The Lonergans hired JAS Design-Build to add the kitchen nook long before they added the upper level. "It is one thing that is really worth the money," Karen says. "We sit there and have coffee almost every day." The cabinets are cherry.



had taken the second story out to meet the edge of the first, it would have ruined the roofline and ruined the project," Hoedemaker says.

Setting a 700-square-foot addition piggyback in the middle of the roof required major structural changes. With JAS Design-Build in place as the contractor, the roof came off, steel columns were sunk into new footings, and reclaimed timbers were installed, all to transfer the additional load. It was an expensive surrender to architectural purity, but the Lonergans proved stalwart. "We just said, 'If that's what we have to do, that's what we have to

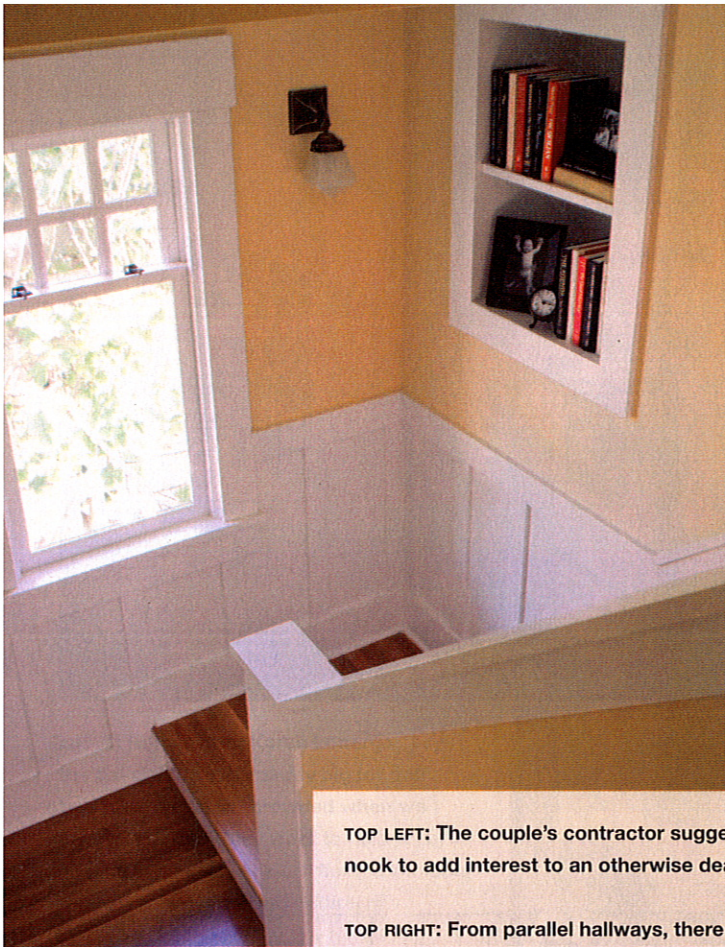
do,'" Karen says. "At least it won't come down in an earthquake."

Adds Eric, "In a way it was good, because we could use the heavy timbers that are truly part of the Craftsman style and were one of the most attractive aspects of the house to us."

Inside, a section of one original bedroom was used for a staircase to the added floor. Exact symmetry is a signature of Bosworth-Hoedemaker, so parallel hallways on either side of the addition lead to the suite. Between the matched corridors are closets and the bath. Tate finds the dual hallways a perfect racetrack, Karen says.







TOP LEFT: The couple's contractor suggested a book nook to add interest to an otherwise dead space.



TOP RIGHT: From parallel hallways, there are entrances to bath, closet, and nursery. Hoedemaker thinks one entry makes a room feel claustrophobic.



LOWER LEFT: The sloping rooflines of the addition give the master bedroom a cozy feeling.

LOWER RIGHT: In keeping with the symmetrical design, each side of the dual-basin vanity replicates the other exactly.





LEFT: House number 550 from a 1920s Henry Wilson catalog. At the time, a set of plans cost \$10, and the cost to build it was estimated at \$1,600.

A nursery now utilizes most of the space that eventually will become a walk-in closet. When Tate is old enough, he'll move to a bedroom downstairs, and a moveable wall will be pushed aside, merging existing closet space with the nursery.

The addition prompted main level upgrades, too. "There were some finish elements we wanted to improve," Eric says. "One difficult decision was to replace most of the windows on the first floor. They were only four years old and perfectly functional. The owner before us had gotten vintage Craftsman-style true divided lights, but the mullions were rectangular.

The ones the architects designed for upstairs were square. So we replaced them. It was the right choice."

The architects designed a pair of period-appropriate columns between the living and dining rooms. Upstairs, the Lonergans installed quartersawn-oak flooring to match the main level.

In the end, everyone—especially the neighbors—appreciated the finesse with which Eric and Karen expanded their bungalow. "Now we get a lot of compliments," Karen says. ■

Architectural designer: Steve Hoedemaker

Project architect: Heather Cromwell

Contractor / Designer: JAS Design-Build

For more information, see Resources on page 118.

Catalog Shopping

While Sears homes are widely thought to be the first-ever precut wooden mail-order houses, a couple of brothers in Bay City, Michigan, had the idea first. William and Otto Sovereign began the Alladin House Co. in 1906. Both Sears and rival Montgomery Ward had begun selling pattern books through the mail, but Sears did not offer *The Book of Modern Homes* and the materials to build them until 1908. That year's book offered 44 house plans and the building materials to construct them, priced from \$695 to \$4,115.

The company initially attempted to market grand, turreted Queen Anne Victorians but quickly discovered that the market was for simple, working-class cottages and bungalows. Sears also offered easy-pay mortgages. To qualify you had to answer one question: "What is your occupation?" If you had a job, you got a mortgage.

Montgomery Ward began selling its Wardway Homes line in 1922 and, unlike Sears, subcontracted out the business to an Iowa company, Gordon Van-Tine, which also sold its own version by mail order. Montgomery Ward discontinued its service in 1931, while Sears got out of the business in 1940. Alladin outlasted the department stores, selling precut homes until 1981.

About 75,000 Sears homes were built. While many people think their home is an authentic Sears model, many companies sold similarly designed precut homes in the '20s and '30s.

The largest collection of Sears houses in the country is in Carlinville, Illinois, where the Standard Oil Co. bought 192 to provide homes for its coal-mining employees.

BELOW: A nursery, just down the hall from the master bedroom, is designed to become a walk-in closet when Tate eventually moves to his own bedroom downstairs.

