This thesis aims to understand the technological and architectural particularities of prefabricated metal houses produced in the United States from the 1930s to the mid-1940s. The analysis of five case studies (Aluminaire House, Motohome, General House Inc., Harman House, and Vultee House) enables an understanding of the specific and unique features of this typology, their various attempts to facilitate mass production, and the most common problems faced by preservation in terms of their materiality, design, and physical configuration.

Although these houses have much in common with other prefabricated dwellings, they stand out by way of their original design and production logic which aimed to define a new concept of housing that can be approached through an analogy with the automobile industry: Houses like Fords, in other words, the house as a consumer object. Innovative yet modest materials, assembly-line construction, and compact proportions were all solutions to the challenge of affordable single-family housing. The house would envisioned be transformed by these mean into a commodity, little different from the purchase of a car.