

BROGDEN HALL



Fig. 1. 1994, Brogden Hall from Johnson and Charter Streets. [Author Photo, AP-43]

Built in 1962 to house the scattered psychology department, Brogden Hall is named for Wilfred J. Brogden, the psychology professor who was instrumental in having the building erected.

In the mid 1950s psychology was housed mainly in the old and decrepit chemical engineering building at 600 North Park Street, with annexes in the Journalism building, Bascom Hall and old houses on University Avenue. The first plan for a psychology building was to build a single building to house both psychology and mathematics. This 1956 plan was an early part of the University's plan to expand across University Avenue to the south. This plan was discarded when the mathematics department approved a plan to build what became Van Vleck Hall. Not until 1959 would any further action be taken regarding a building for psychology.¹

In February 1959, the building committee of the department of psychology, chaired by professor W. J. Brogden unanimously recommended that the psychology building be located at the northwest corner of Linden Drive and Charter Street, pointing out the value to the department of its central location. This recommendation was rejected by the campus planning Commission. This, the last buildable site on Bascom Hill, later became the site of Van Hise Hall. Also in the spring of 1959, word came of a small grant from the NIH to help fund construction of a psychology laboratory. In January 1960, the regents approved a new site for psychology. It would be on the west side of Charter Street between University Avenue and West Johnson Street. It was explained that the building would come up soon on the building priority list. Preliminary sketches were made in early 1960 and showed a building that was estimated to cost about \$3 million. The state building commission recommended funding of \$2.25 million for the psychology building. In mid-1960 professor Brogden began to apply for grants from the NIH, the NSF and WARF. These federal agencies would support research facilities, while the state was inclined to fund only classrooms.²

In September 1961 the regents approved the preliminary plans for the psychology building. At that time the estimate of the cost was \$3 million, and the status of the grants from federal sources were still not known. The building was designed to accommodate an addition on its northern side. The architects for this project were Shattuck, Siewert & Associates of Neenah. Late in the September the NSF granted \$350,000 for the building. After further grants were received from the NIH, a schedule was set up that called for the building to be completed by February 1964. In January 1961 the state building commission authorized the preparation of final plans at a cost of \$48,000 in state funds. In March 1961 the commission arranged the bond sale to raise the authorized \$2.25 million.³

Final plans for the psychology building were approved by the regents on July 13, 1962. The budget was \$3.04 million, the architect noted that considerable difficulty was had with the exterior treatment of the research tower section. This was due to the disapproval of the state architect of the large blank, windowless mass on the plans. An artist was hired to develop a pattern in the brick facing of this section. There is no intended significance to these patterns, beyond their use in decorating the building. The building plan was a six story tower for research and administration, with a one story classroom and lecture hall wing. Construction contracts were let by the regents on September 14, 1962. The general contract went to the Siesel Construction Company of Milwaukee for \$1.2 million. Total cost was \$3.04 million. The source of funding was \$2.29 million from the state; \$350,000 from the NSF, and \$400,000 from the NIH. In the next three weeks the site for the building was vacated by the University Photo Laboratory, who moved into temporary quarters while waiting for completion of the new Extension Services Building on Spring and Charter Streets. Construction on the Psychology Building began in September 1962. By mid November 1962 the foundations were mostly completed. Construction continued without difficulty through 1963. The building was substantially completed in July 1964, when researchers began moving in.⁴

Dedication ceremonies were held on September 19. The public was shown a building that would accommodate 400 undergraduates, and 200 graduate students. The first floor with its entrance plaza at the corner of Charter and Johnson Streets, holds four large lecture rooms, five classrooms, and undergraduate laboratories. The building included closed circuit television wiring, and a large anechoic (soundproof) chamber in the basement. Above the classroom area is the office and administration tower with 41 offices, storage rooms and special purpose rooms. Connected, but structurally separate from the office wing is the six story research wing on the north side, nearest University Avenue. The first five floor of the research wing have identical floor plans with subject waiting rooms, and the rest filled with 9' by 13' and 13' by 18' labs. The north half of the fifth floor and all of the sixth floor are for animal research, rats rabbits and cats. In the late 1960s a plan was broached to relocate Charter Street and add to the building on the north to provide more space for clinical and animal research. This plan failed due to lack of funding.⁵

The dedication handbook says "The department is deeply grateful to Professor W. J. Brogden, who

in the capacity of Chairman of the Building Committee, carried most of the workload in planning the construction and outfitting the building." After the death of Professor Brogden on February 22, 1973, the regents voted to rename the Psychology Building the "W. J. Brogden Psychology Building".⁶

- 1) University directories; *Regent's Minutes*, June 14, 1956;
- 2) Memorandum to Steering Committee of Campus Planning Commission from Building Committee, Department of Psychology, February 2, 1959, series 24/9/2 box 11; *Regent's Minutes*, January 9, 1960; Brogden to Peterson, May 20, 1960, Peterson to Schmehl, May 25, 1960, Psychology Building Committee to Willard, December 5, 1960, series 24/9/2 box 12; telegram Allen to Peterson March 5, 1959, series 24/9/2 box 13.
- 3) *Regent's Minutes*, September 15, 1961; Peterson to Waterman, November 3, 1961, Sites to Nerdrum, December 18, 1961, Holt to Bradford, November 6, 1961, Sites to Nerdrum, October 24, 1961, Peterson to Hudson (NSF), September 22, 1961, series 24/9/2 box 13.
- 4) *Regent's Minutes*, January 5, 1962, March 9, 1962, July 13, 1962, September 14, 1962; Peterson to Dorman, March 22, 1962, series 24/9/2 box 13; *Daily Cardinal*, September 21, 1962, July 24, 1962; *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 13, 1962;
- 5) *Daily Cardinal*, September 18, 1964; *Wisconsin Alumni Magazine*, May 1965, p. 12.
- 6) Faculty Document 143, May 7, 1973, Archives W. J. Brogden biographical file; *Regent's Minutes*, January 11, 1974.