FRANKLIN KING HOUSE

Fig. 1. King House in 1955, looking north. A corner of Babcock Hall is visible at far left. [9/3 F. H. King folder jf-12]

This house was built by Professor Hiram King and his wife Carrie in 1889. It stood at 426 Farm Place, a street behind the current Babcock Hall. It was purchased and demolished by the University in 1955.

In 1888 Franklin Hiram King was teaching natural science at the River Falls, Wisconsin normal school when he was invited by Dean of Agriculture William Henry to become the world's first professor of agricultural physics. In a letter to UW President Chamberlin, King says, " We have together considered the matter of coming to Madison ... and in view of the prospect of being able build on the University Farm, in case we should so desire have concluded to call the matter definitely settled and I have this day tendered my resignation to the Normal Regents."[1]

King arrived in Madison in August of 1888 and began looking for a place to build a house. In September he obtained from the university the "use of a tract of land at some point between the main road and the farm house ..."[2] Besides the land on which he built the house, King speculated on a small scale in land around the University farm.

The King house [see Fig. 1] was built in 1889, and incorporated some of Professor King's theories regarding ventilation for which he later became famous and held patents.[3] It was home to the King's and their five children, three of whom were born there. Franklin King died in 1911. Mrs. King sold the family land holdings to the university in 1946 for $16,000.[4] Mrs. King was allowed to stay in the house until December of 1954. After 65 years in the house Carrie King moved out. The house was demolished in 1955 to provide parking space for Babcock Hall. Mrs. King died at age 100 in May of 1957.[5]

1) *Regent Minutes,* July 2, 1888.
2) *Regents Minutes*, September 4, 1888.
3) *Milwaukee Journal*, December 12, 1954.
4) *Regent Minutes*, March 9, 1946.
5) *Regents Minutes*, June 16, 1955.