

HEATING SHOP



Fig. 1. 115 North Mills Street 1994. Note the curve of the south wall along the railroad right-of-way. [Author Photo, AP-30]

Among the several south of the tracks properties acquired by the University in the 1960s was the warehouse at 115 North Mills Street. This property was owned by Patrick Hennessey, who had purchased it from the Illinois Central Railroad in July 1951. A month later Hennessey as president of Badger Feeds Incorporated had plans drawn, by architect Grover Lippert, for a warehouse on the site. The building was 200 feet long, and following the shape of the railroad right of way to the south tapered from a street width of 109 feet to 58 feet at the rear of the property. The building was constructed of concrete block and sheathed in face brick.¹

This building housed a number of different businesses in the next decade. The earliest tenant to share the building with the Badger Feed Company was the Hoover Vacuum Cleaner Company, followed in 1960 by the Hennessey Heileman Beer wholesaler, and Winkler's barber shop. As measured by the increasing level of indebtedness on the building Hennessey's businesses were not fairing well; by late 1963 there were more than \$270,000 worth of mortgages, liens and back taxes against the property.²

The University purchased the property from Hennessey and his wife on January 21, 1965 for \$250,000. It was used as storage until 1973 when the heating department was moved from its home in the old heating plant on University Avenue. In 1985 the building was insulated and stuccoed at a cost of \$160,000. It is now the home of the heating-steamfitter's department of the physical plant who repair and maintain all heating utilities on campus, and the safety department who collect and dispose of dangerous materials from labs and other sources on campus. The department of heating maintains offices in the front of the building.³

1) *Regent's vault*, Hennessey file; Plans in plans room of University physical plant.

2) *Madison directories*; *Regent's vault*, Hennessey file

3) *Regent's Minutes*, October 11, 1985.