

# HIRAM SMITH ANNEX



Fig. 1. Hiram Smith Hall on the right, Smith Annex on the left, from the north 1993. [Author Photo, AP-5]

*Built in 1909 as expansion space for the dairy school, the Smith Hall annex has since been home to veterinary science, the poultry department and is now laboratories for the soils department.*

In 1908 the regents, with the encouragement of the new dean of agriculture H. L. Russell, decided that the best way to alleviate the crowding in the agriculture long courses was to erect three new buildings, one of which was an annex to the dairy building to be built in the rear of the dairy building.<sup>1</sup> This building was initially planned to be a basement and one or two stories at an estimated cost of \$9000. The plans for the dairy annex were drawn up by the office of Arthur Peabody, the university's supervising architect in December 1908. By the summer of 1909 the building plans were ready for bids and were put out for bids at the same time as the plans for the west wing addition to the engineering building on Bascom Hill. Bids were sought in June of 1909 and opened on July 19, 1909, when the regents selected T. C. McCarthy who bid \$57,683 for the construction of both projects, the dairy annex and the engineering wing. McCarthy's bid is not broken down between the two projects, but judging from the University's bookkeeping, the part of the bid for the dairy annex was probably about \$11,000.

The specifications for the job specify that there was a frame structure (of which no other record is found) on the site of the annex, which to be removed as part of the contract. The old building was to be demolished, but the basement under it would be used as part of the basement for the annex. Construction on the dairy annex was begun immediately after the contract was signed, about

July 21, 1909, and the earth removed from the excavation was moved to the site of the horticulture potting house and greenhouses then on the drawing boards.

By December of 1909, the building was ready for the pouring of the second floor concrete. By March 1910 the walls were complete and roof trusses were in place. Through the summer of 1910, despite short delays due to labor difficulties, supply problems, and the overextension of the contractor, the building went steadily ahead. In September 1910, architect Peabody reports: "The building was practically completed during the month of September a few minor details still needing attention."<sup>2</sup>

In Dean Russell's report to the regents in October 1910, the dean describes the new building:

The facilities of the dairy department have been increased by the erection of a two-story and basement building, 46 X 84 feet, immediately in the rear of the old dairy building. The basement will be used for additional working space for creamery machinery and foreign cheese work, the first floor for a dairy laboratory for long course students, and for milk supply work, while the upper floor includes lecture and locker space.<sup>3</sup>

The finished building cost \$13,275.35 and was built with concrete foundation and floors. The exterior walls are of hydraulic pressed brick, the sills, courses and other cut stone work are of Bedford limestone. The second floor has applied decoration reflecting the style of the earlier Hiram Smith Hall to the west and the later soils annex to the north. The roof is red tile.

This building is in such an obscure location that few people on campus even know of its existence, and in fact the current occupants [1993] do not get direct mail delivery, but have their mail delivered to the soils building and transferred from there.

The dairy department did not find permanent relief in the annex. Some old-timers in Madison remember getting free buttermilk from the dairy labs in the annex during the 1930s. The department continued to expand and moved into other quarters around the agriculture campus including Agriculture Hall and the old agronomy building at 440 Henry Mall. In 1953 the department moved into Babcock Hall, and the role of the annex became that of temporary "surge space" for new or overcrowded departments.

After the dairy department left for good in 1953 the annex was remodelled and became the home of veterinary medicine. In a classic case of a little room going a very long way, the veterinary science building held in its 12,000 square feet bacteriology, immunology, virology and pathology (some of which now have large buildings of their own). This went on until 1962 when the veterinary science building went up on Linden Drive. After veterinary medicine the next occupant of the dairy annex was the poultry department who had outgrown their little frame house on University Avenue and moved into Smith Hall in the late 1950s and from there into the annex in the 1960s.<sup>4</sup>

Around 1969 the last of the poultry and food science offices left for the new animal science building, making way for the ever-expanding soils department. Previous expansions by the soils had required the construction of a separate horticulture building (1910), and the addition of the soils annex to King Hall (1916). A major (\$1.5 million) interior remodelling of the old dairy annex was done in 1993 to provide modern laboratory facilities for soils. The soils department remains the sole occupant of the old dairy annex.

1) *Regents Minutes*, December 16, 1908, vol. G p. 230. The other two buildings planned at that time were the addition to the soils building, which was not completed until 1916, and the head house and potting shed eventually erected behind the horticulture building.

2) *Minutes of the Executive Committee*, July 19, 1909. Monthly architect's reports are in the papers of the Executive Committee.

3) *Regents Report*, 1910 p. 155.

4) *University Directories*; and *Gordon Orr*, *Perspectives of a University*. At the regents meeting of November 1950, the building was renamed the Veterinary Science Building.