

INTERNS' DORMITORY



Fig. 1. 1952: The Interns' dorm from the hospital. Lorch street is at the left. The houses were still in use as temporary housing for medical personnel. [Series 9/4 Intern's Dorm ns-1506]

The intern's dorm was built as housing for interns and resident doctors in 1951. It has since housed, psychiatry and occupational therapy. In 1983 it became the home of Agricultural Economics and was renamed Taylor Hall.

One of the ways that the University had restrained the cost of the medical building in the 1920s and 1930s was to eliminate the dormitory facilities for the staff personnel common to most hospital buildings. Both the Wisconsin General Hospital and the Orthopedic Hospital had been cost-reduced in this way.

At Wisconsin, this housing was in a group of houses which had been acquired when the property between Charter and Lorch Streets was purchased. Nurses, residents and interns were housed (two and three to a bedroom) in the old homes along Lorch and Linden, and these houses held up under their use as dormitory space about as well as hundreds of other old houses in Madison; that is to say they aged quickly and gracelessly. By 1940 plans were begun for better and permanent housing for the hospital personnel. These early plans were done in 1940 mainly by Dr. Buerki of the medical school, and Albert Gallistel, the University's director of buildings and grounds. By 1941 they had planned a single wing dormitory "similar to the nurses dormitory." These plans and their funding were approved in August 1941, but disastrously high bids put an end to the intern's dorm until after WW II.

The second round of planning began during 1944, when hospital superintendent, Dr. H. M. Coon, wrote to state architect Roger Kirchhoff asking for plans for an intern's and resident's dorm to replace the old wood houses. At this time the plan is for the axis of the building to run east and west. The executive committee of the regents approved Kirchhoff's plans and approved advertising for bids if financing could be obtained that did not use the postwar appropriation of 1945.¹

Not until 1951 was such financing finally obtained. When the regents approved financing



Fig. 2. Architects drawing of the Interns' dorm shows the resemblance to the 1926 Nurses dorm. [Series 9/4, Intern's Dorm, ns-1505]



Fig. 3. Construction of the Interns' dorm 1951. [Series 9/4, Intern's Dorm, ns-1502]

the project with \$100,000 from the accumulated fund of the department of housing, and a \$610,000 loan through the Wisconsin University Building Corporation (WUBC). They also approved the awarding of contracts in the amount of \$710,000 for construction. The general contractor was J. H. Findorff, for \$457,194. There is a charge of \$15,000 from architects Phillips and Eble of Milwaukee for services on the project from 1951 to completion. By this time the axis of the building had been reoriented to lie north and south.²

Groundbreaking took place in June 1951, featuring Governor Walter Kohler, Dr. Harold Coon, and regent Matt Warner. It went into use about July 1, 1952.³ The building was a basement and four and a half stories in height, of steel, reinforced concrete, and sheathed in brick. It has a strong resemblance in style to the 1926 nurses dormitory, with its central section with side wings, two full height entry-ways at the ends of the center section, and a hipped roof over the center section, but is far plainer. It housed 80 occupants in single rooms. The partial fifth floor was intended to hold racquet ball courts, but was convertible to more dorm rooms.

For about 10 years the building was used as a dorm, then in 1963 the same integration theory that caused the nurses to be moved out of a special dorm caused the dispersal of the interns and residents into the general student population. From 1963-1966, the dorm was used as the home of the department of occupational therapy, which had been housed in temporary buildings nearby. In 1966 the scattered department of psychiatry, which had requested but never obtained a large building of its own, moved in and stayed until the new clinic and hospital complex was built on the west end of campus, in 1978. The dorm was then used as expansion space until 1983, when the current occupant, the department of agricultural economics moved from its cramped facility in Agriculture Hall. It was also at this time that the building was renamed Taylor Hall, after Professor Henry Charles Taylor, the founder of the subject of agricultural economics.⁴

1) *Regents Minutes*, April 17, 1948, p. 17. This appropriation was used only for the highest priority projects, the engineering building, Memorial library, Babcock Hall and the short course dorms. Kirchoff to Coon, August 1942, series 24/1/10 box 3. *Executive Committee Minutes*, August 26, 1940.

2) *Minutes of the Executive Committee*, March 7, 1951 p. 3; *Regent's Minutes*, June 15, 1950, September 30, 1950; *Daily Cardinal*, March 13, 1951, April 28, 1951.

3) *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 17, 1952.

4) *University Directories*; Gordon Orr, *Perspectives of a University*; *Regent's Minutes*, January 6, 1961, May 12, 1961, Orientation to Physical Facilities University Medical Center prepared for legislative study committee, series 40/1/2-1 box 14.