

# PRACTICE COTTAGE



Fig. 1. This 1931 photo was taken from the steps of Ag Hall and shows the Orthopedic Hospital at the top, and the practice cottage which was moved to make way for the hospital, in its new location at the right. The house's address before the move was 444 Warren Street, and after the move was 1501 Linden Drive. [series 9/3 Home Ec Practice Cottage, jf-42]

*Originally private this house was purchased by the University in 1911 and used as a home economics practice house until 1940. It was moved west in 1930 and demolished in 1951.*

In 1911 the University purchased the Schmelzer property at Linden (then Morris) and Randall (then Warren) Streets for \$8900. It was built about 1900.<sup>1</sup>

Director of home economics Abby Marlatt persuaded the regents to allow her department to use the house for homemaking practice. With about \$1200 for remodeling purposes, the department began using the seven room house as the "practice cottage". A home economics staff member, Mary Bunnell and her mother, lived in the house as supervisors. Every senior in the program was required to spend two weeks in the cottage, purchasing, planning, cooking and serving meals to other students. Another function of the practice cottage was the testing of labor saving devices. The reports by the department on inventions like the gasoline engine applied to washing machines and well pumps were written for Wisconsin publication to be read by the state's farmers and their wives.<sup>2</sup>

As the years passed the cottage became more and more unsuitable, because of deterioration under hard use and limited size. The new home economics building was too crowded to do homemaking practice there. So the old cottage was still in use in 1930 when the site at Linden and Randall was chosen for the new orthopedic hospital. The old practice cottage was moved west about a block (see Fig. 1). In this new location it served as the department practice cottage for another ten years, until in 1940 a new, permanent and much larger home management house was built. The old house stood, and was used for miscellaneous storage, and expansion space until 1951. At that time the lot was needed for the site of the state hygiene laboratory and the cottage was demolished.

1) *Minutes of the Executive Committee*, May 27, 1911; Madison city directories.

2) *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, October 1911, p. 365, March 1913, p. 4, June 1913, p. 13, June 1914; *Regent's Report*, 1913-1914, p. 136; *Wisconsin Alumni Magazine*, January 1931 p. 137, May 1978 pp. 5-6., For the Bunnells, see *Regent's Minutes*, May 31, 1912.