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The Latest in College Dormitories

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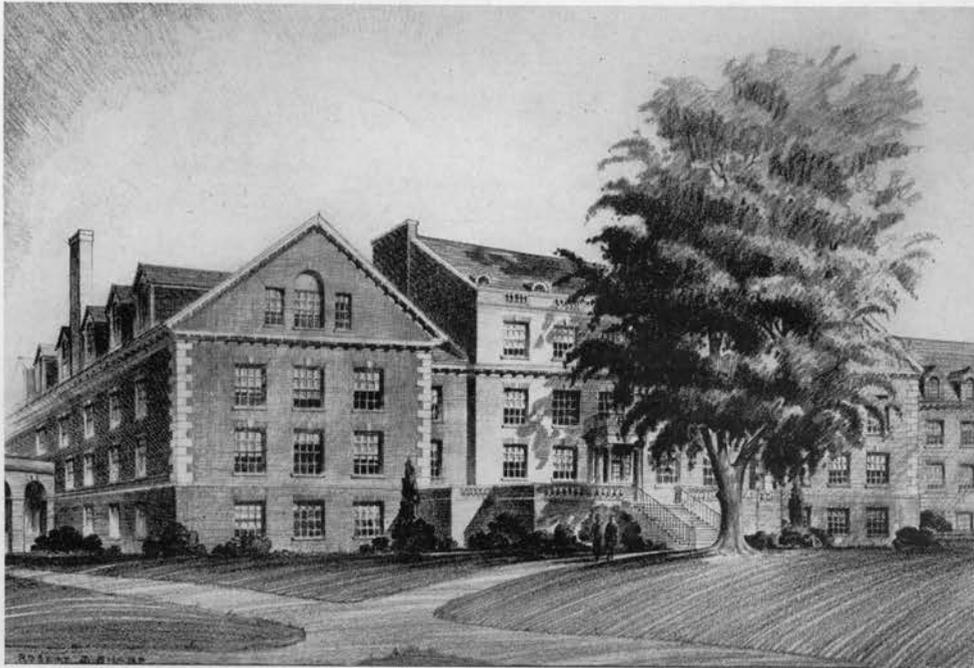


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Presenting The Latest in College Dormitories

New Hall at Iowa State

By Katherine Hoffman

A MOTHER sat in the upholstered chair in a room in New Hall, her gloves and purse in her lap, her hat on a head of white hair. She watched her daughter, the youngest in the family and one who so much had a mind of her own, unpack a few things before they went out to lunch.

"Do you know—" she started out, not heedful of the fact that her daughter's head was rather well buried in the closet while she arranged her shoes on the rack, "this reminds me a lot of unpacking in my room in Margaret Hall when it was the only dormitory on the campus. About 1901, I think it was."

"Uh-mm," came from the closet, "not that far back."

"Yes, I'm sure it was 1901. Why, that wasn't so far back. Some of the things about dormitory rooms are still the same, except of course with this modern furniture you feel quite different. Heavens! it's a long time since I've even thought of it, but our furniture was golden oak with curliques. We had to bring our own wash bowls and pitchers and the dressers were funny little things with an arrangement that swung out when we wanted to use the bowl. I think mine was blue and white enamel."

"Sounds messy to me," was the only response she got amid a scrambling on the bed for hangers.

"Yes," the mother continued, "and we had to bring our mattresses along with our bedding. It was awfully inconvenient to ship that big trussed-up roll, but we did it. We didn't have trundle beds—there were two white single beds to each room and some of them were certainly narrow. What was it? About 27 inches, I think. Oh, no, not all of them," she amended, seeing the look of disbelief that crossed her daughter's features. "But we thought a dormitory furnished with white iron beds was pretty swell."

"We studied on oblong oak tables without much drawer space," she reflected as the dark head of her daughter bent over the desk putting away stationery and ink in the drawer. "We stacked our books neatly in a row in front of us and each of us had a straight-backed chair—the most uncomfortable thing—and a rocker."

"Don't you think we'd better hurry, dear?" she interrupted herself as she pulled back her cuff to look at her watch. "Let those color prints of yours go till after lunch. My, but I do think that

low picture molding is a great boon. We used to put up madonnas and have lots of photographs around on our dressers. I even remember I had a collection on a wire rack behind the door."

"Well, I'll bet you wouldn't have stuck a lot of photographs up if you'd had as good a mirror as this round one." The girl leaned toward it and put on a generous coating of lipstick in three swift movements and then wiped most of it off.

"Of course," her mother subtly observed, "we didn't use cosmetics much then—a little powder. That was about all. But we had plenty of beaus for concerts and lectures and walks. My, I remember how aflutter we all used to be when Ethelda, she was the office girl, brought up all the cards on a silver tray on Sunday afternoon. The boys would call at the parlors then. Well, come on, dear. Here are your gloves," she said, as she got up from the easy chair. "Those certainly are good-looking rugs they've chosen. Wouldn't a Scotch plaid something like that one look well between the doors of the living room at home? If we wanted rugs we brought them ourselves. My, I remember we

used to take turns scrubbing our floors every Saturday night."

"Yes," her daughter admitted, "I think they're pretty nice myself. Do you suppose we'd have time to take a peek at the parlors and kitchenette before we meet dad?"

"I guess so, dear. I do want so to see the rest of this place before we go back."

"Oh, look, Mother! Look at those modern chairs. I could just sink down in one and not move another inch. And look at that radio and that white leather chair—I just love modern furniture. Here's the kitchenette. Take a look at it, Mother. See those cupboards and that sink. Won't that be swell for making fudge and popping corn? Even the boys can come in, I guess—"

"Yes, it looks pretty nice," her mother agreed. "You're certainly lucky. Why, we used to dump the sugar bowls into our napkins, slide a couple of squares of butter on top of that and try to sneak past the dining room proctor. He was about six feet tall. Then we'd make fudge in our rooms over a little kerosene stove. We used to set jello, too."

Her daughter seemed to enjoy this last aside immensely. She had a fondness for tales of her mother's harmless escapades that she would never admit. But, "Dad's honking—we'd better go," was all she said. "I'll show you the recreation room after dinner."

But neither mother nor daughter nor many of the other girls who are living every day with the modern furniture of New Hall realize that this is the first

furniture in a dormitory at Iowa State that was picked by women for women. The committee of three faculty women who selected the designs have been working on it ever since last April—considering, reconsidering, looking at specifications and sample models. They even secured trial set-ups of the furniture and put it to actual tests in girls' rooms. In art classes they secured the girls' comments and reactions to this furniture. Chairs were really sat in; colors were carefully chosen. In the parlors alone ten different colors of upholstery were used. Even the minutest details called for careful decisions, because decisions became momentous when the results were multiplied so many times.

And then, picking the best features from each, they had the furniture built to specifications. The final achievement was very different from the old Margaret Hall furniture, as different as the 35 years between mother and daughter. Modern in spirit and execution, yet convenient and comfortable, the furniture provides a lasting basis and encouragement for beautiful arrangement.

A trundle bed with inner spring mattresses takes the place of the old white beds; a simple chest of drawers in a neutral brown relieved only by the black wooden drawer pulls replaces the old homely dressers. Complete desks similar in design to the dressers, with a tier both of drawers and of book shelves, is far advanced over the old oak study tables. A special posture chair was designed to go with the desks. An

easy chair upholstered in friese relieves the bed as a comfortable place to lounge.

The girls have certainly been individual in working out various color schemes to harmonize with the blue, rust, brown, and green rugs and occasional chairs. There is one room furnished with a rust upholstered chair, rust and gold plaid rug, with brown and gold plaid drapes and bed spread. A deep maroon red foliage plant adds a bit of warmth on the window sill. And the whole room is illumined with a floor lamp placed cozily beside the upholstered chair and handy sewing kit. Two ivory shaded lamps illumine the mirror above the chest of drawers.

At the window in another room are peach silk curtains trimmed in brown balls. The Mexican cut-work scarf on the chest perfectly matches the curtain and blends artistically with the brown chair and Scotch plaid throw rugs. Very modern is the coloring in a first floor corner room when indirectly lighted by ordinary study lamps hidden behind the heavy dark red drapes. The spread on the trundle bed is of a jade green corduroy velvet.

Quaintly colonial is another room crisply furnished with an ivory and green chintz spread banded in plain green. Curtains of the same material are made very full and tied back to expose delicate green glass curtains over the window.

It is all as modern as can be today—but in 35 years what will the daughter of the dark haired girl of today have to say when her mother starts reminiscing?



Where Recreation Abounds