

City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
 LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

**Name of Building or Site**

*Common*

Terrace Homes Apartments

*Historic (if applicable)*

Terrace Homes Apartments

**Location**

*Street Address*

114 - 118 N. Breese Terrace

*Aldermanic District*

Tenth

**Classification**

*Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)*

Cooperative apartments.

*Zoning District*

RS HIS - UH

*Present Use*

Cooperative

*Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)*

*Name(s)* Terrace Homes Company. c/o Anna Garner-Strickon

*Street Address*

114 North Breese Terrace D

*Telephone Number*

233-6961

*Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)*

*Parcel Number*

0709 - 222 - 2321 - 2

*Legal Description*

Commercial apartments.

**Condition of Property**

*Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)*

Maintained close to the original with necessary updating.

*Altered or Unaltered?*

Unaltered

*Moved or Original Site?*

Original Site.

*Wall Construction*

Stone brick and tile

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

*Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.*

In the original advertising brochure, realtors described the building having, and as it remains today, "a modified form of English architecture designed by Philip M. Homer." The brochure notes the "foundation is of stone and the exterior walls are brick and tile. The floors are of reinforced concrete." Front and side windows are all leaded. Still operative wood burning fireplaces, each having unique hand carved stone work, are found in all apartments. The front rooms have solid brass hardware throughout. The Stephens System is used to sound proof the building by having "the joists rest upon cushioned steel chairs, and the space between the cement and wood floors is filled with a sound-deadening substance." Present owners testify that the architect accomplished his goal of providing "an attractive, compact, but roomy home." The building has 12 resident owned apartments, with one apartment for maintenance persons.

Perrin found the modified English architecture became popular in the 20's and 30's for affluent Wisconsin residences. In these pre-depression days, they chose to utilize this labor intensive, heavily detailed style for their show place homes. During this period, homes utilizing this style were built in Brookfield, Milwaukee, Appleton, and Madison by Kiekhefer, O'Connor, Kohler, Sensenbrenner, and MacLaren. The O'Connor home, built in the Tudor style with stables on Lake Mendota by Philip Homer, later was donated to become the residence of the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Madison. It was a style Garner tells us that appeared in numerous architectural magazines of the day.

For Homer and Stark, the best in everything that went into the building was modeled after the luxury cooperatives they knew of in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, Miami and Minneapolis. The brochure brags such residences were owned by corporate executives of such firms as Marshall Fields, United States Steel, International Harvester and Carson Pirie Scott.

The building is essentially the same as originally built in 1927 except for necessary modifications required to meet present day codes and utilize modern conveniences. Kitchens have either, in part or completely, been modernized. An arch between the main building and garages was removed because it was said to be causing too much structural pressure on the garages. A security lock system was installed but utilizing as much as possible the building original inter-com system. An original gas mangle remains operable in the basement.

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 LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

<b>Original Owner</b> Terrace Construction Co. including Paul E. Stark and John Findorff and Sons.	<b>Original Use</b> Apartments
<b>Architect or Builder</b> Philip M. Homer, Acrchitect	<b>Architectural Style</b> Tudor Revival
<b>Date of Construction</b> Built 1928 Incorporated in Wisconsin August 10, 1927	<b>Indigenous Materials Used</b> Stone basement and appointments.

**List of Bibliographical References Used**

Capital Times, October 3, 1928.  
 Clurman, David and Edna L. Hebard. Condominiums and Cooperatives.  
 New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970.  
 Cameron, John. A Short History of Terrace Homes Company. July 15,  
 1985, n.p.  
 Condit, Carl W. The Chicago School of Architecture: A History of  
 Commercial and Public Building in the Chicago Area 1875-  
 1925. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.  
 Garner, Thomas and "Arthur Stratton. The Domestic Architecture  
 of England During the Tudor Period. New York: Charles  
 Scribner's Sons, 1929.  
 Gloag, John. The English Tradition in Architecture from Roman  
 Britain to Coventry Cathedral. New York: Barnes and Noble,  
 1963.  
 Kehoe, Patrick E. Cooperatives and Condominiums. Dobbs Ferry:  
 Oceana, 1974.

(continued on reverse)

**Form Prepared By:**

**Name and Title**

Douglas H. Schewe, appointed by Terrace Homes Board.

**Organization Represented (if any)**

Terrace Homes Shareholders.

**Address**

114 - 118 North Breese Terrace

**Telephone Number**

238-7077

**Date Nomination Form Was Prepared**

10/18/94

Perrin, Richard W. "Great Wisconsin Houses: Period Architecture of the Early Twentieth Century," Wisconsin Magazine of History, Summer, 1963.

Rouse, A.L. Heritage of Britain. New York: British Heritage Press, 1977.

Schewe, Douglas H. "United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination form, July 19, 1984. n.p.

Memo to Katherine Rankin, June 1, 1994. n.p.

"Terrace Homes: A Co-operative Apartment Project 'Where every tenant is his own landlord'." The Paul E. Stark Company and John S. Main, Madison, Wisconsin realtors. n.p.

City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

*Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation  
Criteria:*

Terrace Homes is of historic importance because: 1)the building is a fine example of Tudor revival that was popular in the United States in the 20's and 30's, and 2)is, as far as we know, probably the first and only cooperative apartment building in the historic era.

### Condominium History

Clurman finds co-operative type city living beginning with the "sparsest antecedents," to Roman times. The term condominium derives from the Latin roots dominium (control) and con (with). Wealthy home owners, Kehoe writes, wanting certain luxuries they could not get alone, built jointly-owned homes under the control of one or more owners.

Kehoe finds the condominium concept appearing again in the medieval walled cities to cope with problems of housing shortage and space efficiency. Eventually, Kehoe says from a disappearance of clear ownership and Clurman from the lessening of the threat of attack leading to expansion outside the walls, the "stories" of Germanic-Franco cooperative ownership declined. However co-operative ownership is still mentioned in the Napoleonic Code of 1804.

Kehoe though does trace some co-operative ownership laws under common law later in England around 1508. He found a court document at that time describing ownership of "one house on top of another." By the 18th century, the system was well established under common law in England and Scotland. There were regulations for property having the same fee with a simple title. It seems though there is little evidence of co-operative building existing during this period, there was continuity under the law.

Clurman sees the present laws stemming primarily from Italian codes of the 1930's. At the turn of the century, "coproprietaire" ownership was a major form of ownership in France. A major impetus was the housing shortage of Europe growing out of World War I. Paralleling Italy, the form of ownership appeared in Brazil 1928 and Chile 1937; most South American laws were written in the 40's and 50's. Mexico between 1967-68 utilized hundreds of millions of American dollars for mortgages to build condominiums.

In Europe, the cooperative movement fell into disuse because of the depression. Though it was employed in rare and obscure court decisions, there were statutes in England in the 20's. During this time, however, two segments of the population in the United States were building jointly owned property. They were the very wealthy who could take the financial risk, and the very poor with a government guaranteed risk.

It was during this period of risk, that Terrace Homes was built in 1928 to "bring the advantages of the co-operative ownership plan to Madison." It was the success of co-operative apartments among the wealthy in various American large cities, and more immediately Chicago, that led to the idea being tried in Madison. Realtor Paul E. Stark, and John H. Findorff, building contractor, and architect Philip M. Homer had recently visited the newly completed multi-million dollar cooperatives at Jackson and 59th Street and Lake Shore Drive, and seen the heavy demand for the units in 1927. They felt Madison was now ready for at least a smaller, quality co-operative.

#### Terrace Homes

Stark, Findorff and Homer chose the then very popular Tudor style architecture. In the 1920's English Tudor meant quality and

taste. In the decades following World War I, domestic American architecture "culminated in a new surge of eclecticism unparalleled in the annals of domestic architecture," Rouse writes. Rouse also tells us, the fortune favored class of Americans, well traveled in the days of the great ocean liners, returned home and "asked that the old air be created for them."

English Tudor, Rouse found, was generally the most costly because of the "lavish materials and highly skilled craftsmanship" needed to execute the design. Walter Kohler wrote he chose the design in 1929 for the home Riverend Farm because the "architects have to run the gamut of available material, using in close proximity, yet in perfect balance, brick, stone, stucco, slate, wood and metal."

Terrace Homes depicts well the proximity of diverse materials united into the balanced form Kohler so much admired. The building is not intended to be a copy of any one Tudor building. It is a composite of old manors built in 14th and 15th Century England and so much admired by well-traveled, well heeled travelers who wanted to show contemporaries how cosmopolitan they were.

Gloag and Rouse tell us, eclecticism was typical of architecture in Old England because the houses reflected changes in the nation's political-religious fortunes. Many of the grand country houses were built upon ruins of an earlier style, not infrequently going back to monastic times. So when American architects and home owners of the 20's chose to use architecture eclectically, it may have as much reflected British history as the fast moving widely-traveled American's in the endlessly optimistic Roaring 20's.

The Terrace Homes brochure declares the Tudor style was chosen to break "entirely away from the ordinary commercial type of apartment building and has attempted to create a home atmosphere such as a man would want who is seeking a permanent location." The Tudor design carries around the building, a partial exception being the rear where the areas recess for air wells (designed to assure cross ventilation for all apartments) are made of white plain brick. However, in the recesses one row of facing brick is found under each window for continuity and accent.

On the Breese Terrace front, the top third of the basement, exposed above the ground to the beginning of the first floor, is made of horizontally placed rectangular rough-hewn stones with a cut stone slab under each window, or group of windows. Rough-hewn stones placed parallel and perpendicular form a contrast over the windows. The same rough-hewn stones frame the north and south corners of the front.

The main entrance breaks the front of each address with an entrance having a sculptured arch accented with rough-hewn stones. Under the top of the arch and over the doors are leaded windows encasing a clear glass shield. The polished brass handles from the original double, 14-glass paneled doors were replaced on the new single metal doors required when the security lock system was installed.

The slanted projection over the entrances is shingled with

colored asbestos shingles chosen to last a life time. The projection is supported by beams typical of timber-framed Tudor buildings. The timbers tie in with the eclectic stucco and red brick timber-framing found under the center leaded living-room casement windows. The only windows not leaded in the building are the double hung windows in the kitchens, the bedroom air-well window, and the bathrooms.

Of particular interest are the varied and highly elaborate Tudor chimneys running from ground to above the parapets in the center of the facade and on the north and south sides of the building. Each is completely unique in exterior design. Chimneys were major challenge to Tudor architects. The trick was to build a ground to beyond the roof chimney without having an overly bulky mass. As we can see in Terrace Homes, the solution was to pile masonry at the base and then by easy stages progressively lighten the design. Each chimney is topped off with variegated bricks surrounding the flues in squares and polygons. For added interest, rough-hewn stones as well as stone caps were introduced. Because of the onset of the depression, the decorative ceramic stacks and window shutters found in the architect's drawing were eliminated.

The functional furnace, incinerator and air vent flues of the building are of a simple design such as Gloag found on the roof of the gate-house of Richmond Palace. The Breese and north and south walls of the roof have parapets. They first were for reasons of fortification in British castles but later carried over for decorative purposes.

As Terrace Homes was designed from the start as a co-operative, there is only one rear entrance to the back halls of each apartment. The two addresses connect only in the basement by a fire door that provides access through a fire wall. For sound control and privacy, the front halls have only two apartments on each floor. Apartments have the only common wall in a large front room closet and, in the smaller inner apartments, the bedroom wall. This writer has been told by a neighbor, if her were to play his piano later at night in the living room, they would not hear it in their bedroom. By-laws, however, do not permit loud music after nine o'clock p.m. or teaching of musical instruments in the building.

Access to the basement is only through the rear kitchen doors of each apartment in 114. The 118 side does have an entrance to the basement from the front for access to the basement apartment for maintenance persons. Privacy, access and sound is well controlled.

#### Evolution of Co-operative Status

Because of the depression at that time, "THC didn't really function as a co-operative until December of 1945," writes Cameron. This was not unique for cooperatives in the United States. Many ran into similar difficulty. And Kehoe (1974) found it was not until the 1950's that the cooperative-condominium movement finally took hold in the United States.

The laws came indirectly to the United States. In 1958 Puerto Rico enacted the Horizontal Property Act. This was followed by the U.S. Congress in 1961 authorizing FHA insurance



of mortgages on condominiums. The result was that by 1963 39 states passed condominium laws. In 1969 Vermont was the last state to pass such a law and resulted in such law now being in every jurisdiction.

The Terrace Homes twelve luxury apartments were built across from the historic Camp Randall site with only the University football stadium and Field House. The promotional brochure says Terrace Homes was located here because the street car line went past the front door every ten minutes and was within walking distance from the University. Mrs. Homer told Schewe, "When Phil came home and told me he had bought an apartment in Terrace Homes, I cried. I didn't want to be so far out."

The idea of co-operative apartments was not new in the United States. The buying of shares in an apartment and having a 99 year lease, as noted earlier, had already been tried and true in such major cities as New York and Chicago. Being part of a co-operative gives share holders say over who buys shares. Former President Nixon, for example, was turned down when he tried, in the middle 80's, to buy into a co-operative in New York City. It was thought he would not find propinquity with present owners compatible to his life style.

Because of the depression, Terrace Home company found it could not sell all units in the depression years. And it was not until December of 1945 that the original intent of the builders was realized. During that period, various investors, such as the Terrace Construction Company (nominal builder Paul E. Stark was president) and John H. Findorff and Sons (actual builders). The Findorffs were issued share for five apartments in lieu of payment for some construction costs.

By 1937 a majority of the shares, Cameron tells us, were owned by owner occupants. However, the Starks continued to operate and control Terrace Homes Company until 1945. In December of that year, the owner-occupants sought legal counsel to take control.

The first stocks for the Company had been sold in August of 1928. Two of the original stock holders, Philip and Gladys Homer and Dr. and Marguerite Baker lived continuously for over 60 years in this 66-year old building.<sup>1</sup> Until then, turnover in the building had been relatively infrequent, owners being pleased with the building and removal for employment being less frequent in those days.

Then, after World War II, on November 12, 1945 Secretary Carl L. Stark, at the call of stockholders, assembled a special meeting of stockholders in the offices of Attorneys Thomas, Orr and Isaksen. Orr represented the owner-occupants. An examination of the records revealed there had not been an election of

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<sup>1</sup> This writer questions the street car went to the front door. This may have been figurative language. Mrs. Homer told this writer the street car stopped at the Congregational Church.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Homer's apartment sold June 1987 to Jeff Hoerning. In October 1990 Mrs. Baker's apartment was purchased by Anna Garner-Strickon.

officers for over ten years. Therefore an election was held and officers duly chosen. In addition to Stark and Findorff as owners, it was found that the Randall Company, Julia Klovstad, and Grace Meyers owned several apartments. As a result, the officers and their selected board decided to issue new stock certificates, canceling the old.

Terrace Homes Company then purchased all shares for non-owner occupied apartments. In this way for the first time, Terrace Homes legally built as a co-operative, fully operated as an occupant owned co-operative apartment. Since that time apartments have only been occupied by owners, with short-term sub-letting at the discretion of the shareholders.

From this we can see Terrace Homes was a pioneer braving the early days of the cooperative-condominium movement in the United States. The history was not a steady development, but one of progress and reversals. From such efforts, co-operative condominium ownership has become significant in modern metropolitan living.

continued - see next page

Landmark Nomination

Terrace Homes Apartments, 114-118 N. Breese Terrace

Addendum

The Terrace Homes Apartments is also architecturally significant for its association with local architect Philip Homer. Homer designed the building and then lived in it, with his wife, Gladys, until his death.

Homer was born on a farm in Iowa in 1893. He received his childhood education in the La Crosse, Wisconsin, public schools. He apprenticed with the well-known La Crosse architectural firm of Parkinson and Dockendorff and worked for them for 3½ years. In 1912 he came to Madison where he did the architectural work for local building contractor Charles E. Marks for 2½ years. Around the year 1915 he entered into a short-lived (about two year) partnership with another young local architect, Robert Phillips. In 1917 the city directory shows Homer as vice-president and architect for the Capitol Construction Co., a contractor of well-crafted middle class residences. In 1919 he taught mechanical drawing in the Student Army Training Corps of the UW.

In the early 1920s Homer is listed as the architect for the Stark Land Co., which may have been the descendant of the Capitol Construction Co., since Paul E. Stark was the president of both firms. For the rest of the 1920s Homer was an architect in private practice, although his association with Stark clearly continued in some fashion, since Stark was the developer of the Terrace Homes Apartments. The Depression apparently made it difficult for Homer to make a living as an architect, since the 1933 city directory lists him as an automobile salesman. In 1935 he worked as an architect for the Wisconsin Emergency Relief Administration. In 1937 he was back in private practice, which he continued until his retirement ca. 1967.

In a 1924 biography, Homer is said to have made a "special study of residences," and several fine examples of his residential work remain. Among his larger commissions, Terrace Homes Apartments is one of his finest. Other large commissions Homer received include the Mifflin Arcade (117-125 W. Mifflin St., extant), Schenk's Department Store (2002 Atwood Avenue, altered), the Fairchild Building (122 W. Mifflin St., extant), and the Rennebohm/U. S. Post Office Building (317 N. Randall Ave., somewhat altered). Of these, probably the finest and most intact designs are the Fairchild Building and Terrace Homes Apartments.

(addendum prepared by K. H. Rankin, Dec., 1994)

