MILTON AVENUE/CONRAD COTTAGES

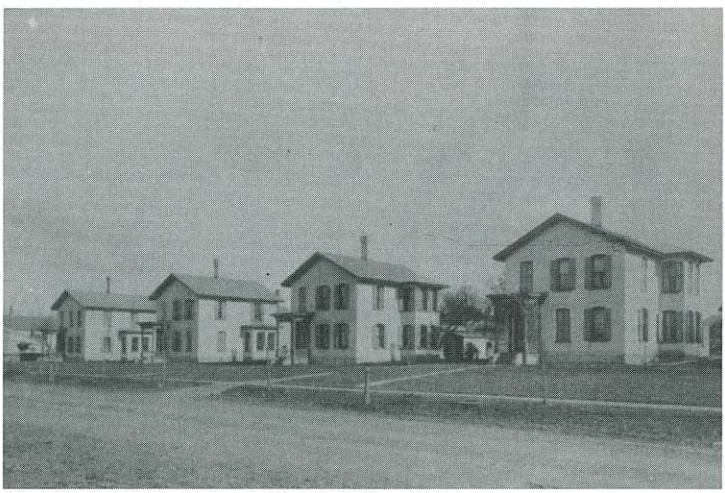
...the neat cottage of Major Hiram Taylor, with its large vegetable, flower and fruit garden--an evidence of the taste, the thrift, and energy of its proprietor.
Janesville City Directory and Business Advertiser, 1859-1860

When this description of the Greek Revival style house at 306 Milton Avenue was written for an early Janesville city directory, Milton Avenue (originally known as Milton Road) was at the eastern edge of the city. The Conrad Cottages Historic District contains a small group of buildings fronting this historic route. The district includes four nearly identical workers' cottages, dating from 1882, and three other early houses. The buildings represent several phases of east-side residential construction: from early country estates to streetcar-era "tract-house" development.

312, 318, 324, and **330**
1882
(324 shown)

Window detail, 330.

These four cream brick houses are known as the Conrad Cottages after their builder, Charles B. Conrad. They have been used as rental properties throughout much of their history. Conrad was a Janesville grocer and son of the previous owner of the Milton Avenue land on which the houses are built. Although the architectural details vary slightly from house to house, the tall windows decorated with brick label arch moldings are an important feature common to all.



The Conrad Cottages in a view of 1888.

306
Hiram Taylor House
c. 1845

The Taylor House is a survivor of the first years of Janesville's settlement. Notable Greek Revival features are the low-pitched gable roof, returns at the cornice, and the sidelit entry. The veranda is probably a c. 1900 addition. Hiram Taylor was a Janesville attorney and lived in this house until his death in 1875. Since then, it has been owned and occupied by only three families .

Skip Drew

235
John Nichols
1855

A 1976 survey of Rock County noted this house as the "finest small Gothic cottage in the city." It has a number of details influenced by the Gothic Revival style. Tall, double-hung sash at the upper story have nine-over-nine lights. Thin label window moldings and the sidelit entry, also trimmed with a label molding, are other distinctive features. John Nichols, the first owner, was an early Janesville attorney. The house has been well cared for by a succession of later owners.

327
John C. Jenkins
1870

This compact cottage is one of only a few in the city with a mansard roof. The roof is pierced by dormers with round-arched windows, and the porch is carried by thin columns and an arched cornice. John C. Jenkins owned the house until 1875. He was an owner of Dow, Jenkins and Co., a Main Street business which advertised "thermo-water cures." Members of the Zeininger family lived here between 1877 and 1939.