

structed on American college and university campuses at the end of World War II, and, like Pammel Court, each was probably unique in its own way. The appearance of Pammel Court at Iowa State, literally and figuratively, broke new ground at the college; it represented new trends in higher education and helped create a generation of economic prosperity for the country. Although Pammel Court no longer stands, it remains an important part of Iowa State's history as an evolving educational institution, and it is still remembered by tens of thousands of students and their spouses and children who once lived there.

Stimulated by the GI Bill and the amendments to the Lanham Act, places like Pammel Court, in all their utilitarian simplicity, transformed the meaning of a college education to individuals and to the nation as a whole. ❖

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NOTE ON SOURCES

Iowa State University has a number of records that document the construction and early life of Pammel Court. Among the best are J. C. Schilleter's own account in *The First 100 Years of Residential Housing at Iowa State University, 1868-1968* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1970); Dorothy Schwieder and Gretchen Van Houten, eds., *A Sesquicentennial History of Iowa State University: Tradition and Transformation* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1998); David Leroy Harmon, *Pammel Court and Veterans Housing: An Administrative and Technological History of the Development of Post-World War II Veterans Housing at Iowa State College* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1996); and background information by H. Summerfield Day, *The Iowa State University Campus and Its Buildings, 1859-1979* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1980). Two master's theses include solid statistical information: Jeffrey William Henneman, "A Married Student Housing Development: Redevelopment of West Pammel Court Married Student Housing [at] Iowa State University" (Iowa State University, 1980); and Jason Chia-Sung Chang, "A Married Student Housing Redevelopment Analysis: Pammel Court, Iowa State University" (Iowa State University, 1991). A good contemporary view of the mechanics of construction is found in Carlos Krassa, "Housing Venture," *Iowa Engineer* 46:6 (May 1946), 201-3. The *Iowa State Daily Student* ran a scattering of articles on phases of construction and life at Pammel Court. Construction photos and a letter from B. H. Platt to Robert Blue are housed in Governor Blue's Papers in the State Archives, State Historical Society of Iowa (Des Moines center). Annotations for this article are in the *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* production files (State Historical Society of Iowa-Iowa City center).

Remembering Pammel Court

Charles Gradoville of Cedar Rapids, one of the early residents of Pammel Court who is now 89 years old, recently reflected on the two quarters when he lived there with his wife and oldest child. He had attended Iowa State from 1941 to 1943, majoring in general engineering and lettering in basketball. He left Iowa State to serve in the U.S. Naval Reserve the last two years of World War II and then returned to Iowa State in the fall of 1946 to finish his engineering degree (middle photo). The family moved into one of the Quonset huts that had been transferred to the campus just the previous spring. Their half of the Quonset hut was approximately 20x25 feet—only 400 square feet, an area considerably smaller than a standard one-bedroom apartment today.

Although Gradoville was fortunate to enjoy the benefits of the GI Bill in returning to college, there were several problems with their Pammel Court Quonset hut. No water heater was provided, and he remarked that their showers were always quite short. Their source of heat was a coal stove that did not always function properly. Occasionally coal particulates clogged the smokestack, and the hut would fill with smoke. At least once he had to go outside and clean the smokestack in the middle of the night. Whatever his feelings at the time, he related the story recently with great humor.

Gradoville did not own a car, so transportation around town was on the city buses. It was more difficult to get to Des Moines or other communities. Since individual phone service was not



FROM LEFT: IOWA STATE COLLEGE BOMB (1943, 1947); COURTESY CHARLES GRADOVILLE

available, residents had to use the few public phones scattered throughout the court. Despite these inconveniences, Gradoville apparently took it all in stride because he had other things to think about. Not only was he carrying a full load of classes along with tending to his family, but he also taught part time in the Division of Engineering. Despite his busy schedule, he and his wife, Agnes, got acquainted with a number of neighbors in Pammel Court and became such good friends that they corresponded with them for many years after graduating.

Gradoville graduated in March 1947, at the end of the winter quarter, so the family's stay in Pammel Court was only about six months. But 65 years later, his memories from those days are still fresh in his mind. He became an avid Iowa State football fan at that time and remains one today. With only one exception, he has bought season football tickets every year since 1947.

— David Holmgren